

With best wishes for a Happy Christmas
& A Prosperous New Year from

Maynooth Newsletter

Serving the people of Maynooth



Local News - Dec'21/ Jan'22 - Issue No. 508 - Online Version

This publication is produced by Maynooth Community Employment Project, supported by the Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection, which is funded by the Irish Government.
The views & opinions expressed in this Publication are those of the contributors.



Problems with Christmas Shopping

Internet Fraud, Delivery Delays, Import Duties & Climate Change.

Solution: Shop Local & Buy Green

Keep your Business in Maynooth to Keep Maynooth in Business Christmas 2021

Christmas, the season of giving and receiving is upon us once again. This year in particular offers us a perfect opportunity to support our local shops and businesses in Maynooth. Small in size but huge in character, Maynooth comes alive with festive atmosphere for Christmas. The support of the public and local businesses in contributing to the funding of extra Christmas lights is most welcome and is a beacon of hope, showing the goodwill and tenacity of those involved. It gives us all that extra incentive to get out and shop local to give back to the community and its economy.

Lets buy our Christmas presents from our local businesses and self-employed people. If the goal is for money to flow back into the local economy, we must commit to choosing wisely. Driving an hour out of our town or shopping online does not contribute to the community we live in. This beautiful town is packed full of specialised shops, pretty boutiques and a variety of restaurants and cosy cafés where you can drop in for a hot chocolate to warm chilly fingers. You will find exceptional value for money is to be had in the smaller local shops where you get a more personalised service and friendly atmosphere.

Maynooth is a lively town with plenty of heart and history— many would say it has more going for it than other places on the commuter belt. It is also a pretty place with family-friendly housing. It hosts many walkways canal side, University grounds, the Avenue and Carton, and a main street that hasn't been hollowed out by retail parks. There is ample car parking in Maynooth and customers can park (check parking fees and time allocated) while shopping in Carton Retail Park, Manor Mills, Glenroyal, Greenfield and Beaufield Shopping Centres. There is also ample customer car parking in the Aldi and Lidl stores. Pay Parking is also available within the town enabling customers to enjoy the many retail shops, pubs and restaurants in and around the Town.

Maynooth has been described as the “Gastronomic Capital of Kildare” There are vast amounts of establishments in the town that offer the most sophisticated cuisine and the most appealing food and beverages. Maynooth is also a “Purple Flag” destination which indicates that Maynooth has earned this award for a town where a well-managed and

enjoyable night out can be had.

Stay local this year and take the stress out of shopping, avoid the cost of travel and expensive parking fees. When all the shopping is done there is a multitude of restaurants, bars and coffee shops to visit and enjoy the gastronomic delights and Festive atmosphere of Maynooth. Walking to the shops and doing your gift shopping a little bit at a time gives you time to think about the person and the gift. And meeting people along the way is a bonus. As they say it is the thought that counts.

Christmas Shopping is important to small-town retailers. It's a great opportunity to focus on your own business and give your customers a pleasant experience. Retailers need to say, “**Stay in Maynooth**”, we have lots to offer. Support our community, our businesses, our schools, our organizations. Everyone working together will continue to make Maynooth a great place to live in.

Shop Local, Eat Local, Spend Local & Enjoy Local in Maynooth this Christmas 2021



Maynooth Newsletter

This publication is produced by Maynooth Community Employment Project, supported by the Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection, which is funded by the Irish Government.

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The opinions and statements expressed in the articles are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Editorial Board. All materials to be included in the next edition of the Newsletter should be sent by e-mail or addressed to:

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Letters to the Editor

Letters to the Editor, for publication, should be sent by e-mail to: editor@maynoothcep.com

Mission Statement

The Maynooth Newsletter is a community focused publication available free to the people of Maynooth. It plays an important role in gathering together, recording and distributing community based news.

We encourage all groups and individuals in the community to submit material to let us know about their activities and any upcoming events. The Newsletter exists for your enjoyment and we hope you continue to enjoy your monthly read and keep us informed of your activities.

The Editorial Board endeavours to ensure independence and balance in the Newsletter content and reserves the right to omit/edit or abridge material which in its opinion might render the Newsletter as a promoter of sectional interests.

In addition we undertake the following:

- In the case of errors of fact we will publish corrections when we become aware of such.
- In the case of unwittingly or unfairly impugning the reputation of any person we hereby offer that person the right to reply.

Any contributor seeking further guidelines in this matter is invited to contact the Editorial Board.

Copy date for receipt of articles is published in the Newsletter. We must stress that material submitted after the copy date cannot be accepted.

Maynooth Newsletter Archives

The management and staff of the Maynooth Community Employment Project started a project in March 2011 to acquire and digitise all available issues of the Maynooth Newsletter dating back to 1975. These back issues along with current issues are available by following the archive link on our webpage - www.maynoothcep.com.

The Newsletter Archive can be viewed and searched in pdf format. In addition, there exists the capability to be able to search an entire year. Please be aware the single files associated with the year are larger and will take a little longer to load.

The Archive provides an important historical footprint of the Town and records the community profile of Maynooth from the mid-seventies to the present day. We hope you enjoy using it and that it brings back memories of people, places and times and that it equally provides an interesting insight to the development of the town and university for newly arrived members of our community.

Editorial Board - Maynooth Newsletter

Editorial

At the end of this year and the beginning of the next, we publish the December 2021/January 2022 edition of the Maynooth Newsletter. As a resource for the entire community the "Maynooth Newsletter" is a record of the successes and tribulations of the people of the town. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the many people that support the "Maynooth Newsletter". To our many advertisers, by supporting the production of this publication you are playing your part in the provision of employment and supporting many community groups to get their information out to the wider community of Maynooth, the care of our environment in Maynooth Harbour and the youth of Maynooth using Maynooth Town Soccer Club. Many thanks also to our many regular contributors with material and notes.

Everyone involved in the management of the Maynooth Newsletter give their time and skills for free and would always welcome others who are willing to get involved and likewise bring their skills and experience to support this important local resource. The Directors and Management involved in the sponsoring of Maynooth Community Employment Project who publish the Maynooth Newsletter as well as the other project work in Maynooth Harbour and Maynooth Soccer Club are unpaid and so give of their time and skills to the service of the local community.

Behind every community organisation there are people who volunteer their time and skills for the greater good of others. On behalf of the entire community I would like to acknowledge all volunteers who have been involved in the ongoing community groups. Just to call out two groups who are helping to bring a festive feeling to the town. The Maynooth Christmas Lights group and Maynooth Tidy Towns committees brings us the festive street lights and the Christmas tree and crib and I know that these groups need to fundraise and call in some favours to deliver these annual festive commitments.

At this time of year please look out for each other and if you have worries or concerns talk to someone as there has never been a problem that does not have a solution. Whatever your faith or none we wish you everything that you would want for yourself at Christmas and into the New Year.

Paul Croghan
Editor



Happy Christmas from Maynooth

Copy date for the next edition of the Maynooth Newsletter will be Monday 22nd January 2022



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See our websites:

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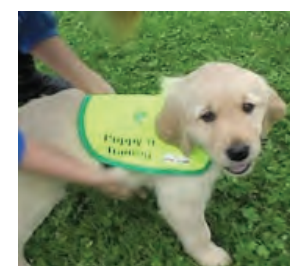
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you between the 1st - 20th
December

**Christmas Trees / Wreaths /
Christmas Planters**

Entry limited to three customers at a time.
All must wear a mask.
Sanitising provided.
Social distancing essential.



Royal Canal Notes

December 2021

Education ~~ Heritage ~~ Recreation

ACCOLADES

The Chairman, committee and board of directors would like to extend thanks to a number of people and groups for their help and support during the year.

First up are those on the 'scheme', staff and supervisor who: tidy the Harbour, trim the grass and carry out minor maintenance.

We would also like to thank the Maynooth Tidy Towns Committee who do some cleaning in the Harbour area as well as emptying the bins. They also provide additional bins and assistance when we run functions in the Harbour

We also appreciate the efforts, assistance and kindness shown by the MAYNOOTH NEWSLETTER staff and supervisor with regards to publishing matters.

Finally the Chairman and Committee take this opportunity to wish our loyal readers and supporters,

'A peaceful Christmas and a safe, healthy new year'.



**A Peaceful Christmas and a
Safe healthy New Year to
All those who support us**

ANNUAL MASS

Each November the Committee organises a mass for those who lost their lives in a canal boating accident in 1845 during the active business days of the Canal. This mass, took place at Porterstown Church near Clonsilla in Dublin, on Friday 26th of November last after which a wreath was laid at the canal bridge which is close to the accident site. Proceedings were in full compliance with Covid 19 regulations and because of social distancing was only attended by a few members.

May they all rest in peace.



RCAG members lay the wreath at the canal bridge adjacent to the accident site

POST CHRISTMAS JUMPER WALK

As mentioned in the November issue this walk takes place on Monday 27th December commencing at 12 15 pm. Intending walkers are asked to assemble at the Harbour in Maynooth

The route will be via: Main St., Dukes Avenue, Carton Estate, Pike Bridge and back along the canal. Refreshments will be available after the walk.

Trains:

Departs Connolly Stn. 11.15am Arrives Maynooth 12.00
Departs Longford 10.15am Arrives Maynooth 11.45am

Be sure to wear your Christmas Jumper and enjoy the walk

As always the Chairman and Committee are grateful to the management at Carton for graciously affording permission for the walk to go through the estate.



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*Happy Christmas and New Year
Looking forward to seeing
you in 2022*

MON/SAT 10AM - 5.00PM
Closed Sundays



The Treaty

London 6th December 1921

At a meeting of the British-Irish conference held in Number 10 Downing Street London, Tuesday 6th December at approx. 2.am - a Treaty was agreed. These talks beginning on 11th October, were made possible by the July 11th truce in the War of Independence. The Treaty was approved by Dáil Éireann on Jan 7th 1922 by 7 votes –64 in favour, 57 against. Under of the terms of the Treaty, all prisoners (over 4,000) were to be released. Patrick Colgan, Maynooth was released on the 9th December. On October 17th 1921 he was caught heading south after he escaped from the Ballykinlar Internment camp in County Down, he was court-martialled and sentenced to six months hard labour.



Delegates to the British-Irish Conference; Ministers Arthur Griffith TD. Home Affairs, Robert Barton TD. Agriculture and TDs Eamon Duggan and George Gavan Duffy with supporters at Hollyhead.



Missing from photo above, Michael Collins, he may have travelled separately with his bodyguard Eamon Broy from Rathangan

Count down to the Treaty

- July 11th-Truce/War of Independence
- July 14th- Eamon de Valera, Austin Stack, Arthur Griffith and Erskine Childers in London for talks with Lloyd George.
- Sept 14th-5 delegates selected by Dáil Éireann to negotiate with Lloyd George
- Oct 11th- Talks begin.
- Dec 6th- Anglo Irish Treaty agreed.

Compiled by Gerry Quinn

Final text of the Articles of Agreement for a Treaty between Great Britain and Ireland was signed London, 6 December 1921.

1. Ireland shall have the same constitutional status in the Community of Nations known as the British Empire as the Dominion of Canada, the Commonwealth of Australia, the Dominion of New Zealand, and the Union of South Africa, with a Parliament having powers to make laws for the peace, order and good government of Ireland and an Executive responsible to that Parliament and shall be styled and known as the Irish Free State.

2. Subject to the provisions hereinafter set out the position of the Irish Free State in relation to the Imperial Parliament and Government and otherwise shall be that of the Dominion of Canada, and the law, practice and constitutional usage governing the relationship of the Crown or the representative of the Crown and of the Imperial Parliament to the Dominion of Canada shall govern their relationship to

the Irish Free State.

3. The representative of the Crown in Ireland shall be appointed in like manner as the Governor-General of Canada and in accordance with the practice observed in the making of such appointments.

4. The oath to be taken by Members of the Parliament of the Irish Free State shall be in the following form: - I do solemnly swear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution of the Irish Free State as by law established and that I will be faithful to H.M. King George V., his heirs, and successors by law, in virtue of the common citizenship of Ireland with Great Britain and her adherence to and membership of the group of nations forming the British Commonwealth of Nations.

5. The Irish Free State shall assume liability for the service of the Public Debt of the United Kingdom as existing at the date hereof and towards the payment of War Pensions as existing at that date in such proportion as may be fair and equitable, having regard to any just claim on the part of Ireland by way of set-off or counter-claim, the amount of such sums being determined in default of agreement by the arbitration of one or more independent persons being citizens of the British Empire

6. Until an arrangement has been made between the British and Irish Governments whereby the Irish Free State undertakes her own coastal defence, the defence by sea of Great Britain and Ireland shall be undertaken by His Majesty's Imperial Forces, but this shall not prevent the construction or maintenance by the Government of the Irish Free State of such vessels as are necessary for the protection of the Revenue or the Fisheries. The foregoing provisions of this article shall be reviewed at a conference of Representatives of the British and Irish governments to be held at the expiration of five years from the date hereof with a view to the undertaking by Ireland of a share in her own coastal defence.

7. The Government of the Irish Free State shall afford to His Majesty's Imperial Forces
(a) In time of peace such harbour and other facilities as are indicated in the Annex hereto, or such other facilities as may from time to time be agreed between the British Government and the Government of the Irish Free State; and
(b) In time of war or of strained relations with a Foreign Power such harbour and other facilities as the British Government may require for the purposes of such defence as aforesaid.

8. With a view to securing the observance of the principle of international limitation of armaments, if the Government of the Irish Free State establishes and maintains a military defence force, the establishments thereof shall not exceed in size such proportion of the military establishments maintained in Great Britain as that which the population of Ireland bears to the population of Great Britain.

9. The ports of Great Britain and the Irish Free State shall be freely open to the ships of the other country on payment of the customary port and other dues.

10. The Government of the Irish Free State agrees to pay fair compensation on terms not less favourable than those accorded by the Act of 1920 to judges, officials, members of Police Forces and other Public Servants who are discharged by it or who retire in consequence of the change of government effected in pursuance hereof. Provided that this agreement shall not apply to members of the Auxiliary Police Force or

to persons recruited in Great Britain for the Royal Irish Constabulary during the two years next preceding the date hereof. The British Government will assume responsibility for such compensation or pensions as may be payable to any of these excepted persons.

11. Until the expiration of one month from the passing of the Act of Parliament for the ratification of this instrument, the powers of the Parliament and the Government of the Irish Free State shall not be exercisable as respects Northern Ireland, and the provisions of the Government of Ireland Act 1920, shall, so far as they relate to Northern Ireland, remain of full force and effect, and no election shall be held for the return of members to serve in the Parliament of the Irish Free State for constituencies in Northern Ireland, unless a resolution is passed by both Houses of the Parliament of Northern Ireland in favour of the holding of such elections before the end of the said month.

12. If before the expiration of the said month, an address is presented to His Majesty by both Houses of the Parliament of Northern Ireland to that effect, the powers of the Parliament and the Government of the Irish Free State shall no longer extend to Northern Ireland, and the provisions of the Government of Ireland Act, 1920, (including those relating to the Council of Ireland) shall so far as they relate to Northern Ireland, continue to be of full force and effect, and this instrument shall have effect subject to the necessary modifications. Provided that if such an address is so presented a Commission consisting of three persons, one to be appointed by the Government of the Irish Free State, one to be appointed by the Government of Northern Ireland and one who shall be Chairman, to be appointed by the British Government shall determine in accordance with the wishes of the inhabitants, so far as may be compatible with economic and geographic conditions, the boundaries between Northern Ireland and the rest of Ireland, and for the purposes of the Government of Ireland Act, 1920, and of this instrument, the boundary of Northern Ireland shall be such as may be determined by such Commission.

13. For the purpose of the last foregoing article, the powers of the Parliament of Southern Ireland under the Government of Ireland Act, 1920, to elect members of the Council of Ireland shall after the Parliament of the Irish Free State is constituted be exercised by that Parliament.

14. After the expiration of the said month, if no such address as is mentioned in Article 12 hereof is presented, the Parliament and Government of Northern Ireland shall continue to exercise as respects Northern Ireland the powers conferred on them by the Government of Ireland Act, 1920, but the Parliament and Government of the Irish Free State shall in Northern Ireland have in relation to matters in respect of which the Parliament of Northern Ireland has not power to make laws under the Act (including matters which under the said Act are within the jurisdiction of the Council of Ireland) the same powers as in the rest of Ireland, subject to such other provisions as may be agreed in manner herein after appearing.

15. At any time after the date hereof the Government of Northern Ireland and the provisional Government of Southern Ireland hereinafter constituted may meet for the purpose of discussing the provisions subject to which the last foregoing Article is to operate in the event of no such address as is therein mentioned being presented and those provisions may include:-

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7)

- (a) Safeguards with regard to patronage in Northern Ireland.
- (b) Safeguards with regard to the collection of revenue in Northern Ireland.
- (c) Safeguards with regard to import and export duties affecting the trade or industry of Northern Ireland.
- (d) Safeguards for minorities in Northern Ireland.
- (e) The settlement of the financial relations between Northern Ireland and the Irish Free State.
- (f) The establishment and powers of a local militia in Northern Ireland and the relation of the Defence Forces of the Irish Free State and of Northern Ireland respectively, and if at any such meeting provisions are agreed to, the same shall have effect as if they were included amongst the provisions subject to which the powers of the Parliament and the Government of the Irish Free State are to be exercisable in Northern Ireland under Article 14 hereof.

16. Neither the Parliament of the Irish Free State nor the Parliament of Northern Ireland shall make any law so as either directly or indirectly to endow any religion or prohibit or restrict the free exercise thereof or give any preference or impose any disability on account of religious belief or religious status or affect prejudicially the right of any child to attend a school receiving public money without attending the religious instruction at the school or make any discrimination as respects State aid between schools under the management of different religious denominations or divert from any religious denomination or any educational institution any of its property except for public utility purposes and on payment of compensation.

17. By way of provisional arrangement for the administration of Southern Ireland during the interval which must elapse between the date hereof and the constitution of a Parliament and Government of the Irish Free State in accordance therewith, steps shall be taken forthwith for summoning a meeting of members of Parliament elected for constituencies in Southern Ireland since the passing of the Government of Ireland Act, 1920, and for constituting a provisional Government, and the British Government shall take the steps necessary to transfer to such provisional Government the powers and machinery requisite for the discharge of its duties, provided that

every member of such provisional Government shall have signified in writing his or her acceptance of this instrument. But this arrangement shall not continue in force beyond the expiration of twelve months from the date hereof.

18. This instrument shall be submitted forthwith by His Majesty's Government for the approval of Parliament and by the Irish signatories to a meeting summoned for the purpose of the members elected to sit in the House of Commons of Southern Ireland and if approved shall be ratified by the necessary legislation.

(Signed)
On behalf of the British Delegation,
D. Lloyd George.
Austen Chamberlain.
Birkenhead.
Winston S. Churchill.
L. Worthington-Evans.
Hamar Greenwood.
Gordon Hewart.

On behalf of the Irish Delegation.
Art Ó Griobhtha.
Micheál Ó Coileain.
Riobárd Bartún
E. S. Ó Dugain.
Seórsa Ghabháin Uí Dhubhthaigh
6th December 1921.

ANNEX.
1. The following are the specific facilities required:-
Dockyard Port at Berehaven.
(a) Admiralty property and rights to be retained as at the date hereof. Harbour defences to remain in charge of British care and maintenance parties. Queenstown.
(b) Harbour defences to remain in charge of British care and maintenance parties. Certain mooring buoys to be retained for use of His Majesty's ships. Belfast Lough.
(c) Harbour defences to remain in charge of British care and maintenance parties. Lough Swilly.
(d) Harbour defences to remain in charge of British care and maintenance parties. AVIATION.
(e) Facilities in the neighbourhood of the above ports for coastal defence by air. OIL FUEL STORAGE.
(f) Haulbowline [and] Rathmullen[:] To be offered for sale to commercial companies under guarantee that purchasers shall maintain a certain minimum

stock for Admiralty purposes.

2. A Convention shall be made between the British Government and the Government of the Irish Free State to give effect to the following conditions :-
(a) That submarine cables shall not be landed or wireless stations for communication with places outside Ireland be established except by agreement with the British Government; that the existing cable landing rights and wireless concessions shall not be withdrawn except by agreement with the British Government; and that the British Government shall be entitled to land additional submarine cables or establish additional wireless stations for communication with places outside Ireland.
(b) That lighthouses, buoys, beacons, and any navigational marks or navigational aids shall be maintained by the Government of the Irish Free State as at the date hereof and shall not be removed or added to except by agreement with the British Government.
(c) That war signal stations shall be closed down and left in charge of care and maintenance parties, the Government of the Irish Free State being offered the option of taking them over and working them for commercial purposes subject to Admiralty inspection, and guaranteeing the upkeep of existing telegraphic communication therewith.

3. A Convention shall be made between the same Governments for the regulation of Civil Communication by Air.



Photo: Praying for peace, Downing St, 14 July 1921

OPEN ALL THE WAY CANOEING ON THE ROYAL CANAL IN THE 1950s

By D.M. HARTFORD

About the Author

Diana Mary Hartford nee Barton was born in 1918. The trip described here was undertaken in 1955 just after Douglas Heard completed the last official boat trip before closure of the canal. The trip was undertaken in two stages; Clondra to Mullingar and Dublin (Blanchardstown) to Mullingar. The city centre areas of the canal were not navigable at this time. This article was originally published in a number of Royal Canal Newsletters in the 1970s. The author had a children's book published after this trip, which is still widely used in primary schools today. The author of a number of other books, Diana passed away in 2002.

PART 2 HILL OF DOWN TO MULLINGAR

The next morning we did not resume our journey west on the Royal Canal until after 10 o'clock because the three postmen did not arrive on duty until that time and our friend the postmistress insisted they launched the 17ft. canoe for us ladies. It was so damp a day I recall we were glad of the dryness under D'Arcy's bridge to eat some chocolate. Just before the bridge we had enjoyed the long curve of beautiful beeches above the towpath hedge on our right that bounded Hyde Park, Colonel D'Arcy's demesne. Immediately the other side of the bridge we saw two more dark hulks drawn up which, we learnt from a C.I.E. man who helped us at a lock, carried gravel or sods for repairing the bank. We had seen one of these heavy boats tied up and

inhabited the day before.

Soon the first lock came. Our helper explained how these eight Killucan locks (Nos. 18 – 25) ascended with a short pound between each from the wide harbour covered with duckweed at Thomastown. Our hearts sank at the thought of portage at each and we decided to take turns walking the bank while the other paddled to the next lock. There was, however, the encouraging thought of the pub and shop near the fifth one at Killucan Station and it was very pleasant walking the smooth turf with a real Westmeath smell of turf and wet thatch in the air. Also, a little old very deaf man left off earthing up his potatoes and walked with us to help at the two locks after our pause at the licensed shop and the cottage at the last one was held by a blind lock-keeper whose wife was lonely and glad of a talk.

It was a long pull after that into Mullingar, including a beautiful stretch of open bog and then a long cutting through rock. When the town was finally in sight the canal curved high round one side of it, and we went along beside small houses with many Children on the towpath until we came to the ideal combination of a grassy bank, small boys to help us to land, a garage and a kind foreman who let us leave the long canoe there for the night.

To be continued.....

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Phone



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Stay safe everyone.



Wishing you all a Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year



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Cllr. Angela Feeney Maynooth Labour News

E mail: angelaemfeeney@gmail.com - Phone: 0872381962



Speeding Issues

Cllr Feeney supported the residents at Pikes Bridge, Grangewilliam and Ballygoran with their 'Go Slow Day' to raise awareness on the issue of speeding on their very busy and dangerous road. There has been a huge increase in the volume of traffic on this particular road. Thanks to An Gardaí Traffic Unit for their support.

Motion on the Lack of Childcare Education Provision

Cllr Feeney submitted a motion to the Labour Party National Conference in November calling for the issue of the lack of childcare education provision to be addressed by government, particularly in ensuring planned facilities in large housing developments are delivered. The motion received the full support of the delegates who attended in person or online.

School Warden Assigned

Cllr Feeney asked the Council to provide an update on the assigning of a school warden to serve both primary schools on the Celbridge Road Maynooth. The Council confirmed that the school warden is now in place.

International Day of Awareness of Disability

To mark and support International Day of Persons with Disabilities on December 3rd Cllr Feeney requested the Council to turn the runway lights at Courthouse Square Maynooth purple. The Council said the Square and Main Street are due to be revamped in the near future and the Council will install filters in the new light fixtures to allow for different colours to mark such days by lighting up Council owned spaces. Cllr Feeney is a member of the Maynooth Access Group and she praised the work of the group in turning the town purple to mark this important event.

Community Space Maynooth

Cllr Feeney asked the Council for an update regarding the re-opening and future management of the Community Space in Maynooth. Council Feeney explained that the many groups that used this space such as the Mother and Toddler group and other community groups are missing the use of this space. It can be very costly having to rent a meeting space.

The Council replied saying that its Facilities and Community team are currently working on opening Newbridge Town Hall to the public for one event before Christmas. If this event is successful, it is hoped to open other Community Halls throughout the county in the new year in accordance with the COVID-19 guidelines that are in place.

Planning Update

An Bord Pleanála has approved the Cairn Homes planning application at Dunboyne Road Maynooth, for 194 units. It is positive to see that the concerns expressed by myself and other Councillors about any proposed opening onto Carton Avenue were taken into account. The Bord ruled that no access onto the Avenue would be permitted on the grounds that there was insufficient "supporting information in relation to the potential impacts on Carton Avenue, which is of historical and landscape significance". Cllr Feeney is also happy to see that the Bord has locked out culture funds from bulk buying and the houses can only be sold to individual purchasers.

Kildare Joint Policing Committee Annual Public Meeting

Kildare Joint Policing Committee Annual Public Meeting will take place at The Glenroyal Hotel from 7.00 p.m. to 9.00p.m. on Monday 6th December. Guest Speakers at the meeting include Garda Commissioner Drew Harris along with Sarah Benson, Chief Executive Officer, and Women's Aid. The Kildare Joint Policing Committee provides a forum where Local Authority and senior Garda Officers responsible for the policing in Kildare, with the participation of Oireachtas members and community interests, can consult, discuss and make recommendations on matters affecting policing in Kildare. Members of the public are invited to attend the meeting and to do so, you can register here - <https://bit.ly/3F6kYVX>. In the interest of public safety, pre-event registration is necessary as numbers of attendees are limited.

Teresa Brayton Memorial

Cllr Feeney was delighted to attend the unveiling of the Decade of Commemoration 1913-1923 Plaque by the Teresa Brayton Heritage group in Kilcock. Well done to the committee for its great work and for the inspiring words spoken at the ceremony. Teresa Brayton was an amazing and formidable woman. The one and only Mr. Thomas O'Keefe also spoke so well and performed the unveiling of the beautiful plaque at his premises. Maith sibh go léir.

Little Way Cancer Support Centre

Cllr Feeney is supporting Little Way Cancer Support Centre in Clane with their annual Christmas Calendar fundraiser. She encourages people to call in and buy a calendar or some of the beautiful Christmas decorations and gifts they have for sale. You will be supporting a great cause. Thanks @LWCSC for all the great work your volunteers do.

Meetings attended by Cllr Feeney since last Newsletter

November 4th: 7.00pm KCC Community Awards at Westgrove Clane

November 5th: 10.00 am, Council MD Meeting, Aras Chill Dara

November 9th: NTA Briefing (online)

November 10th: 7.30pm BOM, Colaiste Chiarain (online)

November 11th: 5.00pm BOM, MPPS (online)

November 15th: 3.00pm KCC Meeting -Draft Budget (online)

November 17th: 2.30pm KWETB Audit and Risk Committee (online)

November 22nd: 3.00pm KCC Meeting-Budget (online)

November 23rd: 10.30am KWETB Board Meeting (online)

November 29th: 3.00 pm Council Plenary (online)

Please Remember to Shop Local to support our businesses and workers.

***Wishing you all a Very Happy Christmas and
Best Wishes for 2022.***



Maynooth University Town F.C



Leinster Senior League - Senior Division Sunday Town 3 St. Mochtas 1

With the cold evenings creeping in, this was a game to warm the cockles of one's heart. Town attacked right from the start and opened the scoring in the 12th minute. Paddy O'Sullivan scored a cracker following good play by Jack O'Connor and Conor Delahunty. Eoin McDermott was taken down in the Saints penalty area and Jack O'Connor neatly converted. Six minutes later Paddy O'Sullivan split the Saints defence to set up Jack O'Connor to stretch our lead. Town were in control now but were dealt a severe blow in the 68th minute when Jack O'Connor was sent off following a clash with a Saints player. Saints pulled one back shortly after but town remained solid and held out for a deserved win.

Leinster Senior League - Senior Division Sunday Town 3 Kilnamanagh F.C. 3

We continued our recent unbeaten run of late with this hard fought draw in a high scoring game. Goals by Jack O'Connor and Josh Hogan to two by the visitors had this game on a knife edge going into added time after a pulsating 90 minutes. It seemed all over for Town in the 92nd minute when Kilnamanagh scored what looked like the winner. Town were having none of it and swept down field for Macker to grab a dramatic equaliser.

F.A.I Intermediate Cup. 3rd Rd. Ardmore Rovers (Bray) 2 Town 3

On a pitch which was not conducive to good football, Town struggled to come to grips with the poor underfoot conditions. Town fell behind when failing to clear a high ball and the Rovers Striker tapped home. Town were struggling and conceded again to a good goal by the Rovers winger. A number of changes at halftime saw Town emerge with greater intensity for the second half. Macker pulled one back following good play down the left. Continuous pressure by Town forced a Rovers defender to head into his own net for the equaliser. Rovers were desperately defending and conceded a penalty with 10 minutes remaining for Jack O'Connor to settle the game and book our place in the next round.

Leinster Senior League - Senior Division Sunday Town 5 Crumlin Utd 0

This must rank as one of our best performances for some time. Highly rated Crumlin were swept aside by a town side who displayed all their talents in a five star performance. Town led 3- 0 at the break with a goal by Darragh Gannon following a raid down the right. Conor Dunne then swept home a corner before Paddy O'Sullivan scored with one of his specials. Town continued the trend in the 2nd half when subs Sean Traynor and Conor Delahunty rowed in with two goals to put the icing on a very rich cake. Our recent good run continues with a rich vein of form.

MAYNOOTH *Tidy Towns* CARING FOR OUR ENVIRONMENT



Gold Medal
Winner 2019

Welcome to the December edition of Maynooth Tidy Towns Newsletter 2021. Since we were in touch with you we have again retained our Gold medal status in the Tidy Towns Competition, that is 5 gold in a row, scoring 342 points, five more than 2020 and we came 4th in the County rankings out of 39 entries. Well done to the Committee members who completed the application form that we call the thesis - incredible work. We had cake to celebrate with the Volunteers. We will be presented with our Gold medal at a ceremony later in the year.



On the 17th of November we were awarded The Green Flag for our Sensory Garden from An Taisce. We were one of 19 volunteer green community groups to receive the award in Ireland for 2021. Thanks is expressed to Stephen Seaman, Maynooth University Head Grounds man, for all his help completing the application. We will erect the flag at a ceremony later in the year or early 2022.

It is with regret that we have postponed our AGM which was due to take place on the 9th December in The Glenroyal Hotel. This was due to the new restrictions that were introduced on the 18th of November by An Taoiseach Mr. Martin. We would like to acknowledge and say thank you to local residents, Debbie and Tony Kelly who donated a large bag of Nerine Bulbs for use by Tidy Towns. We will plant them around the town at various locations.



Our volunteers were very busy during the month of November. We cleared the rotten timbers from the Meadowbrook Link Road. Scuffling, bulb planting and litter picking were high on the agenda every Saturday since making our return to our streets last May. We are truly blessed with all the new volunteers who have joined us especially our young citizens. Our Christmas Tree will be delivered on Saturday the 27th November and lights should be turned on the 28th November at a ceremony in the Square.



We would like to take this opportunity to wish all our Volunteers and everyone who has helped us during 2021, a very Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year. If you would like to volunteer please contact us on Whatsapp from our Facebook Page. Please follow us for up to date information on Facebook and Twitter.

Mary Molloy, Secretary, Maynooth Tidy Towns Association.

Maynooth Castle Keep Art Group

Maynooth Castle Keep Art Group wishes all our friends a happy and peaceful Christmas and may 2022 re-energise us, bring us hope and joy. We are working towards an exhibition for Easter 2022, conditions permitting. Watch this space.....



Winter Berries by Eamon Burke

Maynooth Senior Citizens Committee

2021 has been yet another year of waiting patiently to see if we could open up our Club again, but unfortunately that did not happen. On a positive note the Committee has resumed monthly meetings since September 2021 which gives a glimmer of hope - to be ready when we are permitted to return to our normal activities activities, but it will not happen just yet.

In the meantime we have been attending to the necessary administrative responsibilities and thankfully the delivery of our fuel scheme was not affected by Covid restrictions. Also on a positive note, we are delighted by the continued generous support shown by individuals and businesses from our local community. It is clear and heartening to see that Maynooth still has a sense of the importance of and takes pride in looking after its community, in particular our senior citizens. A big thank you to all involved.

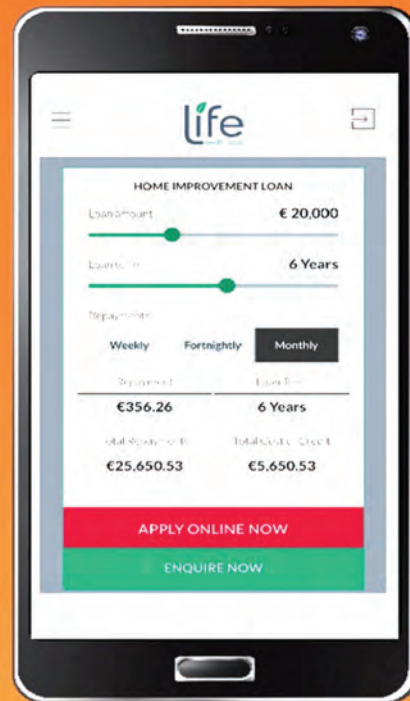
We wish you all a very happy and peaceful Christmas. We are acutely aware that this Christmas will be a time of sadness and reflection for many families who have lost loved ones in the last year. We think of Lima Higgins who was a steadfast supporter of member of our committee. Our thoughts and prayers are with you all.

May 2022 bring hope and joy to all.

Patricia Cusker
Chairperson - Maynooth Senior Citizens.



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- A. Fitzpatrick

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Writers’ Corner - Short Stories/Articles from our Readers

“Did you get toys at Christmas?” a friend asked recently. “Yes,” I answered, “we always got toys, not as many as children get nowadays, but that made them all the more special. Back then there was no electricity, no television, no central heating, no motorcars for private use, and no supermarkets. Tea, butter and sugar were rationed but that didn’t affect us children: we drank cocoa, our mother churned her own butter and if there was a shortage of sugar, we weren’t aware of it. World War 1 was far off and unreal, except when the seldom-heard drone of an aeroplane made us exclaim, “Hitler is coming!”

In our thatched, four-room farmhouse we looked forward to Christmas as a time of school holidays and the arrival of Santy. Actual preparations for the festival didn’t start till about the third week of December.

It’s only now that I recognise how many of our creature comforts were the products of our parents’ diligence, especially our mother’s. Our father certainly worked hard, mending fences, mucking out the cowshed or carrying back-loads of hay to the cattle. When he had finished, however, he sat before the open-hearth fire with his pipe and newspaper. Our mother, meanwhile, was constantly on the go, washing, cooking, baking, ironing, milking the cows and feeding the hens. As time went on we children lent a hand, bringing in turf from the rick and buckets of water from the well. In cold weather, every time the front door opened, a chill draught invaded the kitchen. We reluctantly made way at the hearth as our mother hung a kettle of water on the iron crane above the fire or with the tongs replenished coals on the lid of the oven. In this oven the Sunday roast was cooked and soda bread baked daily, shop loaves being then a luxury.

As darkness increased, Mam lit the paraffin lamp on the wall over the table – the only other light was the small red one under a Sacred Heart picture on the chimneybreast – and we children did our homework. There was no radio to distract us, though our neighbours had a battery-operated set that, whenever an inter-county football match was being played, drew men and boys from the entire neighbourhood.

When we were all indoors together there was little room to spare, though the fact that the smaller children sat on low, homemade stools helped. We had a cat and Ben, a much-loved Old English sheepdog that at night slept in the hayshed.

The first harbinger of Christmas was the arrival of a Switzers’ catalogue. Why it was posted to us annually is not clear, since Dublin seemed as far away as Mars.

Anyway, I used to pour over the pictures of toys with more enjoyment than any actual toy could ever give. Switzers was an Aladdin’s cave I could enter inside my head.

Excitement grew with the postman’s delivery of an early card from some relative and then one day our Uncle John and Aunt Kate would arrive in their big shiny car. Uncle John was my mother’s brother and, since he was the county engineer, he was given a petrol allowance. He always brought a large round tin of sweets for our eldest sister Molly, a treasure throne that she shared out, one or two a day. The rest of us were given pennies and even sixpences, precious money, which we stored in cocoa tins.

At this stage preparations for Christmas were well under way. Since we only kept hens and occasionally a few ducks, our mother bought a turkey that would have to be dispatched, plucked and gutted. Thought she was a kind-hearted person she had no qualms about killing poultry. My father purchased groceries in the village and brought them home in the well of our horse-drawn sidecar. A fruitcake was baked, Mam allowing us to seed the raisins and sultanas and eat the occasional one. Apple pies and oatmeal griddlecakes were also part of her cuisine. It was up to us boys to obtain holly, which the girls placed on windowsills and alongside pictures.

About a week before Christmas Aunt Lizzie, our mother’s sister, would arrive, having taken the train to our local

town and then cycled out the four miles to Droimeen. She enjoyed chatting to my father and they would sit before the fire discussing events in the big world. Her many presents always included the Dublin Opinion. She and Dad used to laugh over the jokes, most of which were inexplicable to us.

Aunt Lizzie slept with my mother and the girls in the bedroom below the kitchen, while my brother slept in the bedroom at the other end of the house and I shared the press-bed in the parlour with my father. On some mornings I might listen to a rat racing across the wooden ceiling or watch a mistle thrush gobbling berries on the cotoneaster by the window. When the parlour was used for entertaining the press bed could be folded up to look like a cupboard. On those occasions a fire was lit in the grate, a rug made from hare pelts laid on the hearth and an ornate oil lamp lit on the oval mahogany table, where its light was reflected from the sideboard mirror so that the whole room was transformed.

On Christmas Eve we went outside to see stars dancing in the eastern sky, though we were always called for bedtime before that happened! Not that we were too disappointed since we were sure that Santy and his reindeers would now be travelling south past the moon towards Droimeen. We did not hang up stockings, since we knew that he would leave the toys by our pillows. Undressing was done by candlelight and, since the bedrooms had no fires, we lost little time in getting under the blankets.

What delicious anticipation filled our heads as we lay down, determined to stay awake to get a glimpse of Santy with his red, fur-lined cloak and bulging bag but sleep always overcame us. Then at first light the delighted discoveries! “Daddy, look what Santy brought me!” I would chortle to my just-awakened father. There would be more excited outbursts as my brother and sisters arrived to compare their toys and display them to our parents. My mother would already be dressed, as, in order to prepare breakfast, she had to get the kitchen fire going by raking coals from the ashes and adding turf sods.

We didn’t get many toys, maybe a picture book and metal wind-up car or cap- gun each for us boys and a picture book and soft toy or doll each for the girls. One Christmas I got a shiny plane with circles on its wings that I later realised was a small replica of the Spitfire being used by the RAF to fight the Luftwaffe.

Our mother cycled to first mass in the village, then, when she returned to begin preparing dinner, our father harnessed the horse to the sidecar and drove us to second mass. Once out on the main road, he might urge the horse to a faster trot so that our neighbours in their trap wouldn’t overtake us. The three girls sat on one side of the car, while my brother and I sat with Dad on the other side, facing in the opposite direction. Since the car swayed when travelling at speed I was always afraid of falling off unless my father let me sit on top of the well, facing forward. On reaching the village we unhooked the horse at the creamery and tied him to an iron side gate before hurrying to the chapel.

In the crowded nave we divided, my brother and I kneeling with our father and the bare-headed men on the right-hand side, our sisters kneeling with the hat-wearing women and girls on the left. Father Charlie, a plainspoken man, said the mass in Latin: ‘Introibo ad altare Dei’ (I will go to the altar of God), to which the boy servers replied, ‘Ad Deum, qui laetificat juventutem meam’ (To God who gives joy to my youth). At intervals, the male choir in the gallery sang with lusty voices carols such as Adeste Fidelis and ‘Silent Night’. After mass we would hurry to admire the infant Jesus in his holly-decorated crib.

Outside the chapel we passed men who thronged the footpath, surveying the emerging congregation. Many of these would call out greetings to my father as he led us proudly past the few shops, blacksmith’s forge and police barracks to the sidecar.

Once home we played with our toys while waiting in the aroma-filled kitchen for dinner. The table was moved to the centre of the floor, where it was covered with a linen tablecloth, and our sisters laid out plates, knives and forks. Then with mounting tension Mam transferred the turkey from the oven to a large oval dish, which she carried to the table. Dad did the carving, and led us in reciting the grace-before-meals. Served with boiled or roast potatoes, peas, carrots and applesauce, the turkey was the main item of a meal fit for royalty. We children preferred breast meat to a wing or leg but what we really liked was the stuffing. There was always lots of banter over who would get the “Pope’s nose”, as the turkey’s tail end was called. The highlight of the feast was the custard and homemade trifle; we always wanted more and competed for the privilege of scraping the last pieces of trifle from its glass bowl.

After the fruitcake had been devoured there was the leisurely washing up, with Molly lending a hand, while my brother and I accompanied by Ben trailed behind our father as he carried hay out to the cattle. If the weather was good the girls and we might play ‘tip-and-tig’ around the hayshed while bats flitted overhead or bring in baskets of turf and cans of water. Then it was back to the fireside to look at picture books and play with our toys.

That evening our mother would treat us children to biscuits and let us sample her hot claret, which we sipped more out of curiosity than enjoyment. Later, we all knelt on the floor, arms resting on chairs, to say the rosary, my father, mother, Molly and, when older, my brother and I, leading us in turn through one of the mysteries, Joyful, Sorrowful or Glorious. Mam would then usher us to bed, she herself remaining behind to tidy up. Perhaps she sat down for a few moments of peaceful reflection, serenaded by a cricket chirruping in the hearth, before covering the fire with ashes to keep it alive.

Meanwhile, as we snuggled under the blankets we knew that tomorrow was St Stephen’s Day, when wren boys with their mouth organs, jew’s-harps and outlandish disguises would be arriving to dance before our front door and sing raucously for “money to bury the wran.” We might even be dreaming of a snowfall so that we could build a snowman just like the ones in our picture books.

By P.G. Nerney

Nativity Scene

Outside the Church of Ireland a large and roughly fashioned stable with full size, handmade, figures: three wise men – two with crowns –, Joseph, Mary, shepherds, faces tautened linen cloth; a donkey made of straw; the crib as yet without an infant.

Glimpsed on chill, December nights, this floodlit tableau raised all people’s hearts – or so we thought.

One Sunday morning walkers found the tableau smashed and flattened, figures trodden into mud, the cradle filled with rotten leaves. Believers – non-believers too – determined not to disregard an age-old, cherished emblem, reconstructed Bethlehem.

By Colin Scott



Maynooth University President Eeva Leinonen Congratulates new graduates at on-campus conferring ceremonies

Wednesday, October 27, 2021: Maynooth University President Eeva Leinonen has congratulated over 800 new graduates who are being awarded undergraduate and postgraduate degrees and diplomas over two days this week – Wednesday 27th and Thursday 28th October.

The occasion marks the first conferring ceremonies for new President, Professor Eeva Leinonen, as well as the first on-campus conferring since the introduction of Covid-19 restrictions.

In her conferring speech, Professor Eeva Leinonen paid tribute to the graduates as they embark on their new journey, and saluted their accomplishment during a particularly difficult time.

“Moments like this can pass all too quickly, and their true meaning and full importance can slip past us unconsidered. Let us not let that happen, as your achievements are simply extraordinary, and even more so given the context in which you have completed your studies, a global pandemic, that has changed many of our lives beyond recognition. You have all shown most extraordinary resilience, creativity and humanity,” Prof Leinonen said.

“I was in Australia, with no Covid in the community, for the past 18 months. I was in awe, hearing what you went through. What touched me most was the spirit in which you confronted the challenge. You looked out for your loved ones, you looked after others in your community. This is a very special thing about Ireland, your community matters and you look after each other. It is something to be truly cherished. I urge you, as you venture from our beautiful campus, do hold onto that sense of empathy for one another. It will stand you well.”

A total of 823 graduates are receiving their parchments in the Aula Maxima across a range of undergraduate and postgraduate degrees and diplomas. In total, just over 337 degrees and 190 diplomas are being conferred. Additionally, 254 Master’s degrees and 17 Doctorates are being conferred across five ceremonies. All ceremonies are being live-streamed for those who are unable to attend.

The occasion marks the first conferring ceremony for four new programmes offered, including a Postgraduate Diploma in Business Analytics, a Master of Social Science (Social Work), a Postgraduate Diploma in History, and a Postgraduate Diploma in Higher Education, Teaching and Assessment, which is open to staff of the University.

Graduates of the Class of 2020 and 2021 conferred in virtual ceremonies hosted by the University will be invited back to the campus for an in-person ceremony with family and friends in late January 2022.



(Photo: President Prof Eeva Leinonen, Megan Deacon, Bachelor of Science and Shane Brady, Bachelor of Science, pictured at the Maynooth University on-campus conferring ceremony.)



Photo: Empower Director, Prof Markus Helfert, MU

Christmas Houseplants

Winter is a time when a lot of the color of the outdoor world has faded away. The leaves have fallen and white snow and grey skies are becoming more frequent. Winter is also a time of happiness and cheer; a time that you spend with your loved ones.

Having festive plants in your home is a great way to brighten the atmosphere and bring a feeling of love, laughter, and joy to your Christmas gathering. This article will touch on some of the most popular Christmas houseplants and give you a few tips to help you properly care for these plants.

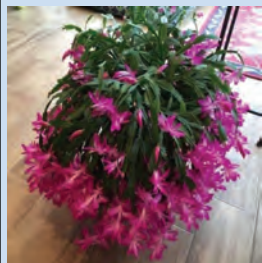
Poinsettia

A poinsettia is a pointed red flower that is often associated with the Christmas season. It is most commonly seen in red, but this plant can also bloom in shades of pink and soft yellow. Since these tropical plants are forced to bloom during the holiday season, they need a little bit of extra care to get the plants to re-bloom. They grow best in direct sunlight and humid temperatures that remain between 65 and 75 degrees Fahrenheit.



Amaryllis

Amaryllis is a plant that has been seen in homes around Christmas time more and more each year. The bell-shaped blooms are often beautiful shades of red that create a welcoming warmth in your home. Since these lovely plants are tropical, they do require relatively warm temperatures and humidity in the air. This is a plant that requires bright sunlight, but it should not be placed in direct sunlight though because this can hinder the bloom and result in a lack of color for your Christmas gathering.



Christmas Cactus

Christmas cactus is a tropical plant that originates in the tropical rainforests of southern Brazil. The flat, segmented stems of the plant remain green the majority of the year, but around the holidays, colorful red, orange, pink, purple, and white blooms form. They grow best with moist soil and a lot of indirect sunlight. If you want to ensure that your Christmas cactus will bloom during the holiday season, then be sure to provide the plant with 12 hours of darkness each night for six to eight weeks before Christmas.

Holly

Holly has been a part of the holiday season since it became part of the classic Christmas carol “Deck the Halls” nearly 150 years ago, but holly and berries have been a favorite to brighten the desolate winter since ancient times. The holly shrubs that we all know as traditional Christmas plants have pointed leaves, red berries, and small white blooms. Holly is a plant that requires full sun and well-drained soil that is a bit on the acidic side to grow properly.

Mistletoe

Mistletoe is a symbol of love that we typically hang in our homes during the holiday season, but this plant is actually a parasitic plant, so growing it indoors means that you will need a host for the mistletoe to grow. Seeding can occur in soil, but once roots form, the plant will need to be placed in a host tree’s bark. It will take about four years for a mistletoe plant to mature, and male plants will not produce white berries.

Paperwhite Narcissus

This is a delightful plant that stems from the Mediterranean. It is a close relative of the daffodil, and it is also a plant that creates bell-shaped blooms that are extremely fragrant and perfect for your home during the holiday season. The stalks of this houseplant are typically about a foot to a foot and a half in height, and the blooms are star-shaped delicacies that are pure white in color. The blooms can be yellow or orange, but these varieties are often more rare.



Winter Cherry

Winter cherry is a plant that blooms small white flowers in the summer, but they are mostly known for their tomato-like berries that can be seen near the Christmas holiday season. The longer the berries are on the stem, the redder they will become. These plants adore bright sunlight, but nothing that is too direct. They also need relatively cool temperatures, but nothing too drafty. In addition, this plant is also toxic so be careful if pets or small children are in your home.

The Christmas Berry

The Christmas berry is a shrub that can be found along most of the California coast. The leaves of the plant are dark and glossy, and star-shaped flowers that are white and beautiful are produced in the summer months. During the winter season, the plant will yield fruits that are plump and red. The plant requires several hours of direct sunlight a day, and it also prefers to grow in warm temperatures with a high level of humidity.

Cyclamens

Cyclamens plants are lovely Christmas plants that make your home feel more festive. It is a plant that originates from Europe and the Mediterranean area, and the blooms are often delightful shades of red that match the rest of your holiday décor. This plant is very particular when it comes to the temperature; in fact, temperatures below 40 degrees Fahrenheit or above 50 degrees Fahrenheit during the night or 68 degrees Fahrenheit are not tolerated at all.

Azaleas

Azaleas are evergreen shrubs that produce bright red blooms that vary in hue. The plant is loved during the holiday season because it blooms during the winter months and continues into early spring. It is not a plant that likes a lot of direct sunlight; in fact, it actually likes to grow in partial shade conditions. This plant enjoys relatively cool temperatures that do not rise above 68 degrees Fahrenheit, which is why it is such a great plant to have in your home during the winter months.

Source: blog.gardenloversclub.com/houseplants/christmas-houseplants/

**Wishing You and Your Family a Safe and Happy Christmas
and all the best for 2021**



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Catherine Murphy TD
Your Kildare North Social Democrats TD
Honest Politics, Strong Economy, Fair Society

Empower puts Ireland on track for data governance leadership

A new academic and industry research programme, designed to future proof EU data flows and drive innovations in data protection internationally, was launched today by Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Simon Harris TD.



The Empower programme will develop systems to protect citizens and work to their advantage while streamlining data exchange in the European business ecosystem. The programme represents research of almost €10 million focused on Data Platforms, Data Governance and Ecosystems, and will involve researchers from four SFI Research Centres: Lero, the programme lead, Insight, ADAPT and FutureNeuro, coordinated by Empower Director, Professor Markus Helfert, based in Maynooth University.

Speaking at the launch of Empower, Minister Harris said: “One of this Government's core ambitions is to build competitive advantage and to foster enterprise development through a world-class research and innovation system. Empower clearly demonstrates that when we combine talent and investment, we here in Ireland can undertake cutting-edge, impactful research. We can compete with the very best internationally and we can contribute solutions to global challenges. Empower is an important strategic research project for our country and I'd like to congratulate and wish everyone involved the very best for the project.”

Professor Helfert, Maynooth University, said the research would focus on developing a data ecosystem that benefits all users while defining and safeguarding the rights of data sharers.

“Data ecosystems, such as smart cities or connected health networks, present new challenges that require a fundamental reconsideration of how we manage and use data. While an effective data ecosystem can empower the exchange of knowledge from organisations and individuals, data movement can also give rise to risks that need to be managed from a socio-ethical perspective,” he added. “It is crucial that organisations offer individuals transparency and accountability of their user data to ensure they are truly empowered by data flows in new systems such as smart homes and smart cities.

“Empower will explore how we design and implement intelligent systems that leverage ‘shared’ data within the data ecosystems. Solutions need to respect the rights and freedoms of users while turning personal data into an asset for the population and society,” added Empower Director Professor Helfert.

Empower brings together multidisciplinary research in data governance from across the participating SFI Research Centres to achieve this goal. Lero, FutureNeuro, Insight and ADAPT, share a strong culture of academic-industry collaboration with companies across sectors experiencing disruptive transitions to data and AI-driven business models, such as software development, health, biotech, fintech, medtech, agritech, smart city, mobility, media and publishing, sports performance, automotive, and construction. Empower’s academic researchers will work together with a number of companies including Meta, Siemens, Huawei, Trüata, Trilateral Research, Genesys, P4ML, RedZinc Services and Analog Devices (ADI) to develop innovations in data governance that will have the potential to benefit individuals and companies.

Speaking at the launch, Professor Mark Ferguson, Director General, Science Foundation Ireland and Chief Scientific Adviser to the Government, said: “We are pleased to be supporting Empower, which brings together leading expertise from four SFI Research Centres with industry. Empower provides significant opportunities for Ireland both in terms of research reputation and economic impact. Empower will enable Ireland to take advantage of new opportunities provided by advances in data management and governance across multiple sectors.”

Professor Brian Fitzgerald, Director of Lero, the SFI Research Centre for Software, said: “World-class research is urgently

required to ensure that this transformation truly empowers individuals and that organisations can offer individuals transparency and accountability of their ‘shared’ data.”

Professor Vincent Wade, Director of the ADAPT Centre for AI-Driven Digital Content Technology said: “We live in a world where people are anxious about how their data is used and rightly concerned that it is not misused, yet wish to benefit from a digitally enhanced living and working world. In ADAPT we are applying our expertise in AI and data governance to research technology to address the worldwide problems of data control and privacy, in partnership with some of Ireland’s leading research centres. Empower is an international game changer, a flagship research and industry innovation programme that develops techniques and technology for protecting your data, and crucial information. As part of the Empower programme, ADAPT is committed to supporting the research spectrum from Ethics to AI-driven technology so that we all have the necessary protection and security in a 21st century technological world.”

Professor Noel O’Connor, CEO of the Insight SFI Research Centre for Data Analytics, said: “Given its value to society, data is often referred to as the new oil. Like oil, it needs to be refined, which is the role of data governance, ensuring that the highest quality data is available as the basis for making important decisions. Unlike oil, the amount of data in the world continues to grow, presenting ongoing challenges for citizens, governments and industry. Empower is a critical national initiative that ensures Irish research leaders in data governance are at the forefront of addressing these challenges.”

Professor David Henshall, Director of the SFI FutureNeuro Centre for chronic and rare neurological disease based at RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences said: “As a health-focused research centre, we welcome Empower as a national forum to drive the safe and ethical use of health data. The forum will create a community of interest, bringing together healthcare consumers, patient groups, clinicians, health policy-makers and managers, academic researchers, industry partners and data protection regulators.

The launch of Empower is an important milestone to facilitate collaborative, transparent and citizen-centric opportunities that will support continuous improvement in health diagnostics, therapeutics and models of care for the benefit of society.”

About Empower:

The vision for Empower is to develop a global data ecosystem that will effectively govern the vast amounts of data that move among actors within complex global information supply chains. The research will advance an alignment between business goals and societal needs to develop methodologies and tools addressing challenges around key areas such as reliability/reproducibility, privacy, provenance, consent, explainability, inclusiveness and avoidance of unfair bias. www.empower-datagovernance.ie

Empower is supported through the SFI Spokes Programme. This programme is a vehicle to enable the addition of new industrial and academic partners and projects to a SFI Research Centre, so allowing the Centre to expand and develop in line with new priorities and opportunities. It is expected that the Spokes Programme will enhance the ability of SFI Research Centres to deliver significant economic and societal impact for Ireland. The Spokes programme also provides a vehicle to link together different Research Centres, in a meaningful and relevant way. As part of the SFI Spokes Programme, a mechanism designed to support SFI Research Centres to work together on projects of strategic national value, these are funded equally by industry and the Exchequer. Empower can leverage the expertise from the Centres, forming a unique hub of knowledge, likely to position Ireland as the leader in AI-driven data governance internationally. Empower forms part of Ireland’s National AI Strategy (<https://bit.ly/2ZedgtB>), published in July by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment. It is also guided by principles of the European Commission Data Strategy 2020 (<https://bit.ly/3ndI1qq>), which prioritises the development of common European data spaces to allow safe and seamless data sharing between companies of all sizes across the EU.

About Maynooth University

Maynooth University is ranked #1 in Ireland and the only Irish university to be named in in the latest Times Higher Education (THE) 100 Best Young University Rankings. Tracing its origins to the foundation of the Royal College of St Patrick in

1795, Maynooth University was formally established as an autonomous university in 1997. Maynooth is Ireland’s fastest growing university with more than 14,000 students, including almost 1,800 taught postgraduate and professional students and 530 research students.

About Lero

Lero, the SFI Research Centre for Software, brings together expert software teams from universities and institutes of technology across Ireland in a co-ordinated centre of research excellence with a strong industry focus. The Centre is ranked second among software research centres worldwide for citations, and it partners with many of the top technology companies in the world.

Lero’s research spans a wide range of application domains from driverless cars to artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, fintech, govtech, smart communities, agtech and healthtech. Hosted by the University of Limerick, Lero’s academic partners include Dublin City University, Trinity College Dublin, University College Dublin, Maynooth University, National University of Ireland Galway, University College Cork, Munster Technological University, Technological University of the Shannon, Waterford Institute of Technology, Dundalk Institute of Technology and GMIT. www.lero.ie

About ADAPT

ADAPT is the world-leading SFI Research Centre for AI Driven Digital Content Technology hosted by Trinity College Dublin. ADAPT’s partner institutions include Dublin City University, University College Dublin, Technological University Dublin, Maynooth University, Munster Technological University, Athlone Institute of Technology, and the National University of Ireland Galway.

ADAPT’s research vision is to pioneer new forms of proactive, scalable, and integrated AI-driven Digital Content Technology that empower individuals and society to engage in digital experiences with control, inclusion, and accountability with the long-term goal of a balanced digital society by 2030. ADAPT is pioneering new Human Centric AI techniques and technologies including personalisation, natural language processing, data analytics, intelligent machine translation, human-computer interaction, as well as setting the standards for data governance, privacy and ethics for digital content. www.adaptcentre.ie

About FutureNeuro

FutureNeuro is the SFI Research Centre for Chronic and Rare Neurological Disease, hosted by RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences. Its partner institutions are Trinity College Dublin, Dublin City University, National University of Ireland, Galway, Waterford Institute of Technology, University College Cork and University College Dublin.

The FutureNeuro objective is to change the patient journey through research informed by the needs of both patients and neurologists. This includes developing rapid and accurate tools for diagnosis, the development of therapies to correct damaged brain networks, technologies to enable patients to monitor their own health and well-being, and linking this to Ireland’s national imaging, diagnostics and eHealth infrastructure.

FutureNeuro connects national and multinational industry with key academics and clinicians based in Ireland’s leading hospitals to provide diagnostic, therapeutic and eHealth solutions. Its projects with industry partners bring diagnostic supports to market, a pipeline of new drugs, and connected health solutions that enable patients to monitor and report their health better than ever before. Visit www.futureneurocentre.ie to learn more.

About Insight

The Insight SFI Research Centre for Data Analytics is a joint initiative between Centre leaders DCU, NUI Galway, UCC, and UCD. Insight also has researchers in MU, UL, TCD and the Tyndall Institute. Insight comprises over 450 data and AI researchers across a range of areas from data capture and storage to data mining, analysis and modelling. The sites collaborate in teams of researchers advancing projects in application domains such as Connected Health, Smart Enterprise, Smart Communities and Sustainability. Insight is one of the largest data research centres in Europe and is part of a network of industrial partnerships and European funding collaborations that puts the Centre, and Ireland, at the forefront of AI innovation in the EU. www.insight-centre.org

How to bake Gingerbread Men

Ingredients

- 1 cup Plain Flour
- 1 tsp Bicarbonate of Soda
- 1 tsp of ground Ginger
- 1 tsp of ground nutmeg
- 1 tsp of cinnamon
- 1 pinch of salt
- 50g unsalted butter
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 1 egg - beaten
- pre-heat the oven to 190 degrees C



Method

- sift the flour, bicarbonate of soda and ground ginger, nutmeg and cinnamon together in a mixing bowl
- chop the butter into small pieces, and rub into dry mixture until the consistency of fine breadcrumbs, then add the sugar and mix together
- mix the beaten egg and add to the mixture, mixing together to form a dough
- Roll out on a floured surface (ensure you flour both the rolling pin and the table very well as this helps when cutting into shapes once rolled) to about 3mm thick, then cut out what ever shapes you want. Put onto a tray lined with baking paper.
- cook for approximately 15 minutes depending on size of biscuit.
- When they are cooked, leave on the baking sheet for a few minutes, then transfer to a cooling rack, and leave to cool completely.

Decorate with icing sugar, sweets or just a good sprinkle of cinnamon sugar.

www.bbcgoodfood.com/user/214470/recipe/gingerbread-cookies



How to make a Christmas Garland

At Christmas time, we all want our homes to look perfect. There's nothing nicer than a natural garland at this time of year and knowing how to make a Christmas garland is a must. You can add to it with traditional festive pieces like pine cones, or even dry oranges just wire them in with a few cinnamon sticks for added holiday scent. You can also use baubles and bows.

Double up the greenery. Most pine garlands are too thin to look expensive. It's a simple fix... just wind two or three together for a luxe look and spend plenty of time fluffing out all of the branches.

Add lights. String them on thick and try to tuck the wires into the branches as much as possible. If your garland came with lights, you still might want to add more so it's extra bright and twinkly at night. You can use two different types of lights— mix standard lights with larger bulb lights or star-shaped lights. It adds dimension and interest to the finished garland. One other thing to consider with lights is whether your garland will be near a plug. If not, there are lots of battery-operated light strings that will work.

Add ribbon. The trick to getting ribbon to look great on a garland is to buy wired ribbon and to use florist wire. Prep your ribbon by twisting an eight inch piece of wire around the ribbon every 12 inches. Then use the florist wire to attach the ribbon to the greenery. You can also add a second, contrasting ribbon.

Add details. This is the fun part! Now you get to add all of the cute ornaments, floral picks and other accessories that take your garland to the next level and really make it special. You can use anything you'd like for this part. Just make sure to attach anything breakable securely with florist wire.

www.thecraftpatchblog.com/diy-christmas-garland/



Maynooth Cycling Campaign Notes



Road Safety

At a recent meeting of Kildare County Council's Strategic Policy Committee, there was a brief discussion about legislation currently going through the Dáil which included the legalisation of e-scooters. Cllr. Joe Neville, Chair of the Committee, expressed concerns which had been raised with him about scooters "killing" elderly people on footpaths. The EU recently publish data on road fatalities, specifically what road users were involved in fatal collisions. In 2019, 33 fatalities occurred as a result of cyclist/pedestrian collisions. However, the real threat to pedestrians is shown by the 4484 fatalities as a result of collisions with a motorised vehicle.

Aftermath of UN Climate Change Conference - COP26

The UN Climate Change Conference took place over early November. During the first week, there was a lot of news coverage from RTE with the presence of leading politicians from around the world. There was less media coverage during the second week but RTE "celebrated" the reopening of the USA to European travellers with the Ryan Tubridy Show offering the prize of a luxury weekend in New York. It begs the question did anyone in RTE question whether this was an appropriate response to the warnings of climate change at COP26?

Customer Care (1) at Kildare County Council

Like many other local authorities, Kildare County Council's website offers a centralised email address customer care@kildarecoco.ie to which the general public can forward queries. They will then ensure that the query is forwarded to the appropriate department/section. Maynooth Cycling Campaign has used this facility on a number of occasions.

One instance was a question to the Public Realm Team on how many projects were they managing and how many involved segregated facilities for cyclists. We had heard that they had approximately 60 schemes of various sizes and at various stages. The purpose of the question was to uncover the extent of "shared space" ie where schemes are designed with cyclists sharing the paths with pedestrians or sharing the road with motorised traffic – both of which suppress the number of cyclists as well as the former annoying many elderly pedestrians. Neither is good international practice.

To be fair, the Public Realm Team is under a lot of pressure to deliver but the question posed was one that could be answered in a single sentence and one to which the Public Realm personnel should know the answer without any research. More than three months and three emails later, Maynooth Cycling is still awaiting a response.

Customer Care (2) at Kildare County Council

The second instance of contacting Customer Services was in relation to Hayfield. Maynooth Cycling raised the issue of ponding at the main entrance from the Meadowbrook Link Road. To minimise a response to the query, a photograph was attached showing the ponding. Two weeks later, a response was received – the Area Office would send out an overseer to check the location. Maynooth Cycling does not expect the local office to drop all that it is doing in order to prioritise queries from the public. However, if the policy is to send out a letter of acknowledgement, we would expect it to be sent within a day or two.

If responding to a query, we would expect something more informative after two weeks than that an overseer would be sent out to look at the problem. The location is less than a kilometre from the Area Office in Leinster Street and it is likely that staff pass it on a daily basis. We were later informed that it would be "included for routine maintenance" and that "No major works are currently planned". What the relevance of the latter part to the former is anyone's guess. The more important question is why is Kildare County Council carry out the reinstatement works if the problem was caused by a private contractor?

Joint Policing Committee - Council

Just a reminder that on Monday 6th December there is a public meeting of the Joint Policing Committee in the Glenroyal Hotel at 8:00pm.

Maynooth Cycling Campaign is a non-party political cycling advocacy group. Further information on the campaign is available on our website.

We are a member of Cyclist.ie, the Irish Cyclist Advocacy Network and through it to the European Cycling Federation.



December Events at Maynooth Community Library

For further information contact: www.kildare.ie/librarymaynoothlib@kildarecoco.ie Ph: 01-6285530



[facebook.com/KildareCountyLibraryService](https://www.facebook.com/KildareCountyLibraryService)



twitter.com/kildarelibrary

December Clever Reach

Children

Saturday 4th December 12.00- 12.45 pm

Christmas theme stories and songs in English and Irish with Storyteller Helene Byrne for 5-8 year olds

Nollaig shona daoibh go léir! Christmas is almost upon us, so join storyteller Helena Byrne for this wonderful show in English agus as Gaeilge, with tales of Christmas adventures, interactive games, treasure hunts agus 'Amhráin Na Nollag' to bring you and your wee ones right into the festive spirit.

Booking required through Eventbrite: <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/211042623167>.

Wednesday 15th December 3.30pm – 4.30 pm / Ages 7- 10

Christmas at Hogwarts; Craft Session with Maynooth Library on Zoom

Join Maynooth Library's resident Potterhead for some Hogwarts themed Christmas decorations and cards. Whether you are a Gryffindor, Slytherin, Hufflepuff or a Ravenclaw, in this session you will get to make a Christmas bauble with your unique decoration and some Hogwarts themed Christmas cards for the loved one or bestie of your choice. Please note that this craft is specifically for library users in Maynooth and nearby as there is a craft pack to collect to take part. The only other thing you will need are some painting supplies. Places are limited so book your tickets now over on Eventbrite! <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/christmas-at-hogwarts-crafts-session-maynooth-library-zoom-tickets-212459350637>

Adults

Wednesday 15th December 11am - 12pm

Watercolour Christmas Cards Art Workshop Online

Join Laura from Florence & Milly for a wonderfully festive watercolour Christmas card painting workshop online on the 15th December at 11am. Let's get in the festive mood and paint together online to create some winter landscapes or Christmas characters. Packs with materials needed for the workshop will be available to collect from Maynooth Community Library before the workshop.

Booking Essential through Eventbrite
<https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/212558567397>.

Family

Thursday 9th December 6.00 pm – 7.30pm

Family Christmas Treats Demonstration with East Coast Cookery School

An interactive Zoom Class the whole family will love. Easy step-by-step instruction with a bit of fun and festive treats! Join Tara from East Coast Cookery School for an interactive Zoom Class the whole family will love. Easy step-by-step instruction with a bit of fun and festive treats that you can keep to yourselves or share with family and friends. Receive the recipes, equipment and ingredients list plus Zoom link via email in advance as well as any preparation needed. Approx 1hour long. Booking essential through Eventbrite: <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/family-christmas-treats-demonstration-with-east-coast-cookery-school-tickets-194997682317>.

Adults

Celebrating December: An evening of sharing poetry.

Thursday 2nd December at 6.30 pm, via Zoom.

Join us for an evening of poetry readings. Some of you may wish to read, and others might like to just listen, while we celebrate December and the season with your favourite poems.

Hosted by Maynooth and Ballitore Libraries.

All welcome. Booking via Eventbrite

<https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/celebrating-december-an-evening-of-sharing-poetry-tickets-187711037767>

German 'Stammtisch', informal conversation meet-up.

Thursday 16th December at 6.30pm, online via Zoom

Maynooth Library hosts a monthly informal German conversation meet-up, for anyone with an interest in the language and culture in German speaking countries. All levels from learners to native speakers are welcome. For more information please contact Maynooth Library at maynoothlib@kildarecoco.ie or 01 6285530. Audience: Adults and Young Adults.

Regular Events

Live Story Time & Sing Along Nursery Rhymes for 2-5-year old's Every Friday 10-10.30am

Join the Staff of Maynooth Library for some storytelling and nursery rhymes! Please be aware that a parent/guardian must be present for the duration of the event. Booking required through eventbrite.

Friday December 3rd <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/212459320547>.

Friday December 10th <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/212461777897>.

Friday December 17th <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/212471346517>.

Ciorcal Comhrá san Oíche / Evening Irish Language Conversation Group

Tuesday 7th December 7.00 - 7.45 pm / An Mháirt 7ú Nollag 7.00 – 7.45 i.n.

Beidh Ciorcal Comhrá ar líne thar Zoom ag tosnú ar an Máirt 7ú lá Mí na Nollaig ag 7.00 i.n. Seo deis iontach an Ghaeilge a fhoghlaim agus a chleactadh trí chaint agus chomhrá in atmaisféar réchúiseach ó chompond do bhaile féin. Fáilte roimh chách. Má bhíonn suim agat páirt a ghlacadh, cláraigh ag an nasc thíos eventbrite :

nó sheol ríomhphost chuig maynoothlib@kildarecoco.ie

There will be an online evening Ciorcal Comhrá on Tuesday 7th December from 7.00- 7.45pm. This is a great opportunity to learn and practice Irish through conversation in a relaxed atmosphere from the comfort of your own home. All welcome. If you are interested in taking part, please register at the Eventbrite link below :

<https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/211075802407>

or email Maynooth Community Library at maynoothlib@kildarecoco.ie

Ciorcal Comhrá/ Irish Language Conversation group via Zoom

Every Wednesday at 11am / Gach Céadaoin ar a 11 a Chlog.

Join us online every Wednesday morning at 11am for an informal chat as Gaeilge. If you have a lot of Irish or the cúpla focal, this an opportunity to practice your Irish and learn some Irish all from the comfort of your own home. To register, please call Maynooth Community Library or email maynoothlib@kildarecoco.ie.

Beidh Ciorcal comhrá ar siúil ar líne via Zoom gach Céadaoin ar a 11 a Chlog.

Má bhíonn an-chuid Gaeilge agat nó an cúpla focal agat, tapaigh an deis seo le do chuid Gaeilge a chleachtadh agus Gaeilge a fhoghlaim as do bhaile féin. Le clárú, cuir ríomhphost chuig maynoothlib@kildarecoco.ie. nó cuir glaoch ar 01 628 5530.

Readers of the Lost Ark Scifi Book club

Tuesday 14th December 6.30pm – 7.00 pm

The Readers for the Lost Ark Scifi book club meet currently online via Zoom on the second Tuesday of each month at 6.30pm. The December meeting will be on the 14th December 6.30pm. The club will be discussing 'Project Hail Mary' by Andy Weir, author of 'The Martian'. If you are interested in joining please contact Maynooth Community Library on 01 628 5530 or email maynoothlib@kildarecoco.ie



Catherine Murphy T.D. Social Democrats, Kildare North.

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This has been a month where significant developments in Transport are occurring. On November 28th Bus Connects was rolled out for customers on the C-Spine. I did a formal submission to the NTA at the public consultation phase and not all of the feedback was taken on board.

Details of all of the new routes are available here: <https://www.transportforireland.ie/c-spine/>

If you access the journey planner section you can plot your route from start to finish here: [Plan A Journey | Transport for Ireland](#)

For the first week of the service, the NTA will have ambassadors on site to deal with any queries that customers might have.

New routes have been added and there is the introduction of a regular night service and a 90 minute fare where you can change buses within that time.

Booklets with further information have been sent to all households. Please feel free to contact me should you require any additional information.

The NTA will be collating feedback and we would ask that people interact with the NTA to advise about how the roll out of the C Spine is working for you.

At a recent briefing with the NTA, I raised the issue of the lack of connection to the Moyglare Road. The W6 which will provide this connectivity is not being commenced for a year to 18 months. I asked the NTA to put on an interim route but the declined to do so.

Insert details of routes from this NTA Booklet / Info

The new BusConnects network is rolling out in West Dublin and East Kildare

Launching November 28, 2021.

C1 and C2: Adamstown Station – City centre – Sandymount.

C3: Maynooth – Leixlip – City centre – Ringsend Road.

C4: Maynooth – Celbridge – City centre – Ringsend Road.

Plus other new services.

Operators:

Dublin Bus and Go-Ahead Ireland.

We are now entering Phase 2 of the Network Redesign

Phase 2, which commences on the November 28, involves the introduction of the C-Spine (C1, C2, C3, C4), route 52, eight peak only routes (P29, X25, X26, X27, X28, X30, X31 and X32) and six local routes (L51, L52, L53, L54, L58 and L59). The Express routes have significant changes, particularly for inbound services.

Two night-time routes (C5 and C6) will also be introduced. These night-time routes will follow a similar routing to the C3 and C4, but will operate via Chapelizod instead of the Chapelizod bypass. The C5 will also serve River Forest and Green Lane. In addition, the C1 and C2 will operate 24-hours a day.

Phase 2 routes will be operated by Dublin Bus, with the exception of the L51 and L52 which will operated by Go-Ahead Ireland.

Other changes from November 28:

Route 1 will run between Santry and the City centre and will no longer serve Sandymount

Route 26 will be significantly enhanced to ensure capacity for Chapelizod and Islandbridge

Routes 15a, 15b, 15d will no longer operate to Ringsend Road, and will instead terminate/commence at Merrion

Definitions:

Spine: Spines are very frequent routes made up of individual bus services that are timetabled to work together.

C1 + C2 + C3 + C4 = C – Spine
(C5 & C6 are night-time services only)

Radial:

Other city bound services that operate into Dublin City centre. These services are not part of any Spine and operate to their own timetable.

Local:

Local routes are services that provide important connections within local areas, linking to local retail centres and to onward transport connections.

Phase 2 is introducing several new local routes for the first time. These will significantly increase bus coverage serving more areas, with better frequency. Brand new links are being introduced around Adamstown Station, Hazelhatch Station, Lucan, Leixlip and Celbridge.

Routes L51 and L52 together provide a service from Adamstown Station via Dodsboro to Lucan Village and on to either Liffey Valley (L51) or Blanchardstown (L52). This provides a new connection to rail at Adamstown Station and upgrades the current link to Blanchardstown.

Route L53 will provide a half-hourly service between Adamstown Station and Liffey Valley passing through residential areas in South Lucan including Balgaddy and Fonthill Road.

Route L54 is new and will serve Leixlip (River Forest), Lucan, Clondalkin and the Red Cow Luas stop.

Routes L58 and L59 provide a joint service between River Forest and Hazelhatch Station via Leixlip village and Hewlett Packard (L58) or Celbridge (L59). This provides long-requested links to rail at Hazelhatch and the first-ever all-day service in the residential areas of Celbridge.

Route Number (until 27.11.21)	NEW Route Number (from 28.11.21)	Journey Details
1 & 25a	C1	From Adamstown Station via Lucan Road, Chapelizod bypass and City centre to Sandymount
1 & 25b	C2	From Adamstown Station via Lucan Road, Chapelizod bypass and City centre to Sandymount
66	C3	From Maynooth via Leixlip, Lucan Road, Chapelizod bypass and City centre to Ringsend Road
67	C4	From Maynooth via Celbridge, Chapelizod bypass and City centre to Ringsend Road
66x	X25	From Maynooth (Straffan Road) via Green Lane, Leixlip and City centre to UCD
66x	X26	From Maynooth (Straffan Road) via Leixlip to Leeson Street
67x	X27	From Celbridge (Salesian College) via Aghards Road and City centre to UCD
67x	X28	From Celbridge (Salesian College) via Celbridge Main Street to UCD
25x	X30	From Dodsboro via Lucan Village to UCD
66x	X31	From River Forest, via Leixlip and Lucan Village to Earlsfort Terrace
66x	X32	From Hewlett Packard via Leixlip and Lucan Village to Earlsfort Terrace
25d	P29	From Adamstown Station via Newcastle Road, Chapelizod bypass and City centre to Ringsend Road
26	26	Route 26 will be significantly enhanced to ensure capacity for Chapelizod and Islandbridge
66e	52	From Intel via Leixlip, Green Lane, Chapelizod bypass and City centre to Ringsend Road
239	L51	From Adamstown Station to Liffey Valley, operated by Go-Ahead Ireland
239	L52	From Adamstown Station to Blanchardstown, operated by Go-Ahead Ireland
(N/A) New Routes	L53	From Adamstown Station to Liffey Valley via Fonthill Road
(N/A) New Routes	L54	From River Forest to Red Cow Luas via Lucan Village, Balgaddy and Clondalkin
(N/A) New Routes	L58	From River Forest to Hazelhatch via Hewlett Packard
(N/A) New Routes	L59	From River Forest to Hazelhatch via Green Lane

(Continued on page 21)



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C-Spine – Summary of stops served

C1:

Dumhach Thrá / Sandymount
An Baile Gaelach / Irishtown
Bóthar na Rinne/ Ringsend Road
Ceantar na nDugaí Theas / South Docklands
Lár na Cathrach / City centre
Stáisiún Heuston / Heuston Station
Seachbhóthar Shéipéal Iosóid / Chapelizod bypass
Baile Phámar / Palmerstown
Gleann na Life / Liffey Valley
Br Bhaile Eoghain / Ballyowen Road
Br Bhaile an tSionnaigh / Foxborough Road
Bóthar an Ghrífin / Griffeen Road
Bóthar an Ghrífin / Castlegate Way
Stáisiún Bhaile Adaim / Adamstown Station

C2:

Dumhach Thrá / Sandymount
An Baile Gaelach / Irishtown
Bóthar na Rinne/ Ringsend Road
Ceantar na nDugaí Theas / South Docklands
Lár na Cathrach / City centre
Stáisiún Heuston / Heuston Station
Seachbhóthar Shéipéal Iosóid / Chapelizod bypass
Baile Phámar / Palmerstown
Gleann na Life / Liffey Valley
Br Bhaile Eoghain / Ballyowen Road
Br Bhaile an tSionnaigh / Foxborough Road
Bealach Gheata an Chaisleáin / Griffeen Avenue
Bóthar an Ghrífin / Castlegate Way
Stáisiún Bhaile Adaim / Adamstown Station

C3:

Dumhach Thrá / Sandymount
An Baile Gaelach / Irishtown
Bóthar na Rinne/ Ringsend Road
Ceantar na nDugaí Theas / South Docklands
Lár na Cathrach / City centre
Stáisiún Heuston / Heuston Station
Seachbhóthar Shéipéal Iosóid / Chapelizod bypass
Baile Phámar / Palmerstown
Gleann na Life / Liffey Valley
Sráidbhaile Leamhcáin / Lucan Village
Léim an Bhradáin Stáisiún Dhroichead Louisa / Leixlip
Louise Bridge Station
Bealach isteach Intel, Léim an Bhradáin / Leixlip Intel
Entrance
Maigh Nuad, an tSráid Mhór / Maynooth, Main Street
Bóthar Theach Sraifáin / Maynooth, Straffan Road

C4:

Dumhach Thrá / Sandymount
An Baile Gaelach / Irishtown
Bóthar na Rinne/ Ringsend Road
Ceantar na nDugaí Theas / South Docklands
Lár na Cathrach / City centre
Stáisiún Heuston / Heuston Station
Seachbhóthar Shéipéal Iosóid / Chapelizod bypass
Baile Phámar / Palmerstown
Gleann na Life / Liffey Valley
Sráidbhaile Leamhcáin / Lucan Village
Cill Droichid / Celbridge
Stáisiún Mhaigh Nuad / Maynooth Station

For more information please contact:

Dublin Bus contact details:

Phone number: 01 873 4222

Email address: customercomment@dublinbus.ie

Website address: www.dublinbus.ie

Maynooth Transport Strategy

Maynooth Transport Strategy Submission November 2021

Background

Over a 20-year period (1996 to 2016), Kildare experienced a 64.8% (+87,512) increase in its population base - the second highest rate in the State. The more recent growth rate (2006 to 2016) of 19.4% is the fourth highest in the State. The Maynooth Municipal District (50,842) is the second highest in the County – with Maynooth Town the fifth largest settlement in Kildare.

The Maynooth Transport Strategy offers Kildare County Council an opportunity to not only identify and examine the current transport issues in Maynooth, but also provide a level of future-proofing in its planning.

The Issues

- Members of this branch have voiced significant concerns regarding the usability of Maynooth Town – with shops and services all but ‘out of bounds’ due to the consistent congestion on all roads serving the Town at all times between 8.00am – 8.00pm.
- This leads many to simply avoid the local businesses in the core of the Town, and instead travel to Leixlip / Celbridge and/or Liffey Valley for their custom.
- All public transport services are at their capacity, which adds further pressure on the road network.
- Maynooth is a University Town, and as such this brings heightened levels of congestion at certain times of the year. The Transport Strategy needs to reflect the times of peak issues.

The Solutions

- Identifying a series of ways to keep through traffic off the Main St. in Maynooth is imperative. Whilst we welcome the proposed Ring Road development in Maynooth, we would also propose a series of initiatives to be included in this Strategy:
- The Social Democrats Kildare North branch calls on this Transport Strategy to prioritise the development of a ‘Park and Ride’ facility on grounds to the perimeter of the Town to service both the Rail and Bus services.
- The Social Democrats also implores the Strategy to include a proposal to develop a new M4 Motorway Exit between Maynooth and Kilcock to service Maynooth University / Manor Mills / Shopping Centre / Dart+ Traffic. Data from the Transport Infrastructure Ireland website shows an average 34,206 vehicles go through the M4 junction at Maynooth.
- We need to think outside the box when it comes to school traffic – families find themselves in a precarious position where walking/cycling to school isn’t safe, yet taking the car adds to congestion and climate related concerns. We would propose a wrap-around shuttle service for all children and young people serving all schools in Maynooth.
- Safe, segregated pedestrian and cycle infrastructure within the core Town needs to be prioritised, considering schools, linkages to the Royal Canal Greenway and also local businesses.

Metro

Delays To Projects Like Metro A Catastrophe For Greater Dublin Area

Our climate action targets cannot be met without these large-scale public transport projects

The delay of Metrolink for at least ten years is a catastrophe for the greater Dublin region and means we are almost assured of missing our climate action targets, according to Social Democrats Transport Spokesperson Catherine Murphy.

“The revised Dublin transport plan will see costs more than

double and a wholesale dumping of previous deadlines for the delivery of critical infrastructure projects like Metrolink and Dart+. This is a catastrophe for the greater Dublin region.

“Between 1996 and 2016, population increases in the greater Dublin area and the commuter belt were largest in Fingal (41%), Meath (40%) and Kildare (39%). The areas which have the greatest amount of residential development, where people are most car dependent, are the areas that are not reflected in this revised plan.

“We need to get real about this. Our climate action targets cannot be met without these large-scale public transport projects. As it stands, the government is making very dishonest announcements at Cop26 – revealing ambitious targets, with no credible way to reach them.

“It is not tenable to say we will meet our targets by motorists swapping from petrol and diesel cars to electric cars. Over €250 million has been spent on Metrolink and the Dart interconnector without delivering anything.

“You can’t keep expanding the footprint of a city, which has happened in the greater Dublin area, without providing the requisite public transport capacity for people to be able to move around, quickly, at scale.”

“These delays are beyond disappointing. They are an abdication of responsibility by the government.”

Response from NTA re

Catherine Murphy, T.D. Dáil Éireann Kildare Street Dublin 2 -

Dear Deputy I am writing to you concerning the matter you raised in Parliamentary Question No. 207 on 16 November last to the Minister for Transport, which has been referred to the National Transport Authority (NTA) for reply. The NTA Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2016-2035 and the National Development Plan 2018-2027, both make provision for the DART+ Programme (previously referred to as the DART Expansion Programme) and identify its south western extent as being the expansion of DART services to Hazelhatch/Celbridge. The current scope of the DART+ South West project includes the completion of four tracking between Hazelhatch and Heuston station.

The project will significantly increase train capacity from 12 trains per hour per direction at present to 23 trains per hour per direction, comprising the existing 12 services plus an additional 11 train services provided by the DART+ South West project. This will facilitate enhanced services at Sallins without the extension of the current DART+ Programme beyond Hazelhatch. The NTA recently published a draft Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2022-2042 for public consultation purposes. The draft document proposes to extend DART services to Sallins in the longer term. While further extensions of DART services may be considered in the future, these are outside of the current scope of the DART+ South West project. Therefore, to avoid delaying the Page 2 of 2 progression of the current proposals, the feasibility of the extension of DART services beyond Hazelhatch would be assessed and evaluated as a potential follow-on project at a later date.

Passport

Over 300 temporary staff will be recruited between November 2021 and January 2022. Combined with recruitment carried out over the last number of months, this will result in an almost doubling of total staff numbers over a six month period, i.e. an increase from 463 to 920 by February next year. These increased staff levels will have a direct positive impact on improving processing times in 2021/22, particularly for First Time Applicants and applications for children.

This is in addition to a new office space that has been secured in North County Dublin for 140 staff from 1 December 2021. Measures have also been taken to allow increased numbers of staff to safely work on site in all passport offices.

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Catherine Murphy T.D. Social Democrats, Kildare North Cont/.....

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I would ask colleagues to urge citizens and parents applying for passports for themselves or for their children, particularly for first time passports, to ensure that they apply online in plenty of time. In the case of people planning to travel in 2022, whose passports are already out of date, I encourage them to apply now online. <https://passportonline.dfa.ie/Apply/Passport>

For urgent passport enquiries, please book an appointment here: [Irish Passport Service \(dfa.ie\)](https://passportonline.dfa.ie/Apply/Passport)

Urgent Passport Appointment Service Fee Schedule

Total fee payable equals the Appointment Service

Fee **plus** the Passport Book Fee

[Appointment Service Fee](https://passportonline.dfa.ie/Apply/Passport)

Same-Day Turnaround Service Appointment Fee€150

Four/Five-Day Turnaround Service Appointment Fee€75

[Passport Book Fee](https://passportonline.dfa.ie/Apply/Passport)

Adult Passport Fee€95

Child Passport Fee€45

Terms and Conditions apply

Please note that for the Same-Day Turnaround Service:

- your name must match that on your previous passport
- where the application is for a child, all of the child's guardians must be present for the appointment

Foreign Birth Registration

Separately, I wish to inform you that as of Monday, 15th November, the processing of Foreign Birth Registration applications has resumed on a phased basis.

As you may be aware, operations at the Passport Service were severely disrupted by public health restrictions brought about by the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. During this period, Foreign Birth Registration staff were reassigned to assist in the delivery of essential services. Unfortunately, this resulted in a pause in overall Foreign Birth Registration processing. Throughout the pandemic, staff continued to provide an emergency service for Foreign Birth Registration in cases of exceptional urgency, such as expectant parents, or stateless persons. Over 5,000 such emergency Foreign Birth Registration applications have been processed to date in 2021.

Foreign Birth Registration applications on hand are now being processed in strict order of date of receipt. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the processing time for Foreign Birth Registration applications stood at approximately 2 years. The processing time is expected to remain at 2 years due to the number of applications currently on hand as a result of Brexit and the rigorous validation process which citizenship applications undergo.

Update on the Maynooth Greenway

or Written Answer on : 24/11/2021

Question Number(s): 53 Question Reference(s): 57840/21

Department: Transport

Asked by: Catherine Murphy T.D.

QUESTION

To ask the Minister for Transport the date on which work will commence on the Leixlip to Maynooth section of greenway in view of the fact that it was due to commence in Q4 2021 and the estimated duration to completion and opening.

REPLY

As Minister, I have responsibility for the policy and overall funding in relation to Active Travel. The National Transport Authority, meanwhile, has responsibility for the allocation of funding to specific projects and oversight of their development, in cooperation with the local authorities themselves.

Noting their responsibility in this area, I have forwarded your question to the NTA for a more detailed reply. Please advise my private office if you do not receive a reply within 10 working days.

Vulnerable adults waiting up to 18 months for safeguarding assessment

Almost 500 vulnerable adults are awaiting assessment from the HSE's safeguarding and protection team, it has emerged.

The HSE has confirmed a backlog across parts of Dublin, Kildare and Wicklow means some residents of disability and older persons' services have been waiting since March of last year to have their safeguarding plans reviewed. The figures were released to Social Democrats co-leader Catherine Murphy, who had asked for details relating to the current backlog of unreviewed safeguarding concerns in respect of the abuse of adults.

The HSE confirmed that one HSE region, CHO7, has a backlog with 499 people awaiting review.

Ms Murphy hit out at the "postcode lottery" to which patients and vulnerable people are subjected in accessing services and assessments depending on where they live in the country.

"There's an issue that needs to be dealt with nationally, rather than just one area, to make sure that there's a consistency of service.

We've been calling for an objective resource allocation rather than this postcode lottery, where over years we have seen in one place there is a two-month queue for something, and in another place it's a two-year wait. It can't just be about being unlucky, there is either a national service provided or there isn't."

Responding to Ms Murphy's parliamentary question, Tim Hanly, general manager of the HSE's National Safeguarding Office, said work to address the backlog that developed in CHO7 was under way and additional resources had been allocated to assist with this.

"In addition, current concerns are being processed in a timely manner with work on the backlog happening simultaneously."

However, Ms Murphy said: "Essentially, there isn't a service there, that's the only conclusion you can read into this. This is an example of the postcode lottery. You can't say that there is a national service being provided by the HSE when there's such a big gap."

Mr Hanly said safeguarding preliminary screenings are submitted by designated officers within each residential setting to the HSE safeguarding and protection teams for oversight.

"Where there is an outcome of reasonable grounds or further information required, each service would also submit a safeguarding plan which is then also oversight reviewed by the HSE safeguarding team.

"The safeguarding plans are considered on a triage priority basis and currently one safeguarding team in CHO7 has a backlog of safeguarding plans for review," he confirmed. Separately, Sinn Féin health spokesperson David Cullinane has called on the Government to urgently advance adult safeguarding legislation and amendments to the Patient Safety Act, to mandate reporting of suspected abuse and to introduce safeguards to prevent abuse of adults in vulnerable situations.

He also wants to ensure there is accountability for organisations and management that fail in their statutory duty to protect patients.

"From Leas Cross and Áras Attracta, to the Brandon case in Ard Greine, and the ongoing investigation into the Grace case, we are unfortunately all too familiar with cases of abuse, neglect, and dereliction of duty in the health and social care system," he said.

To ask the Minister for Health the number of palliative care teams and staff by CHO area. Dear Deputy Murphy, The Minister has requested the HSE to respond directly to you. Apologies for the delay in my response which is as follows:-Please see the table below for the information as requested. CHO Number of Specialist Palliative Care Community Teams Total Number of Whole Time Equivalents i.e.

Every region within the country has access to a Specialist Palliative Care Community Team. Teams within CHOs are organised in a variety of ways including geography, population clusters, proximity to acute or community services and/or the location of local palliative care outreach bases. Some Teams cover a whole county whereas in other areas they cover part of a county. Although the number of teams in each CHO varies his has no bearing on access to care.

The number of posts rather than staff has been provided as some posts are shared by staff members working part-time/ reduced hours.

Submission Dart+ West Catherine Murphy TD - Aidan Farrelly MCC - Nuala Killeen MCC Social Democrats – Kildare North The Social Democrats welcomes the DART+ West project which entails the electrification of Maynooth/Parkway Lines. We acknowledge the longer-term benefits of this project in terms of increasing the frequency of trains and changing the power source to electricity. It is essential this project incorporates the full potential of the upgrade and that challenges during construction phase are fully understood and disruption is minimised. Cope Bridge - Leixlip Cope Bridge is in the Confey Area of Leixlip. The bridge is a single carriageway controlled by traffic signals. The provision of a footpath necessitated this approach as a temporary measure in the 1990's and widening of the bridge has been a policy of Kildare County Council since then.

The 2017-2023 Leixlip Local area Plan identified a significant land bank in this area with the potential to accommodate 1,765 residential units. 12.7 of the Local Area Plan states: These lands present considerable opportunities for a new residential and community neighbourhood with supporting social infrastructure. The lands are strategically located near the Dublin-Sligo rail line and near the M4 and M3 motorways. Whilst this area presents significant opportunities for the future development of Leixlip, careful consideration must be given to the overall design. Therefore, in order to ensure that any future development is carried out in a sustainable manner an Urban Design Framework (UDF) has been prepared (refer to Appendix A of this plan). This document has informed the zoning of the lands at Confey and acts as the preliminary design guide for the future. The Urban Design Framework includes the upgrading of Cope Bridge. The Leixlip Local Area Plan also seeks to improve access/ egress to and from the train station and the following objective is part of the Local Area Plan. MT2.5 To provide for improved access to Confey railway station in consultation with the National Transport Authority (NTA) and Irish Rail supporting the sustainable development of the Confey area. The proposal under Dart+ is to rebuild Cope Bridge as a single carriageway.

Given the level of disruption rebuilding the bridge will cause, the notion that it would remain a single carriageway is completely short-sighted and unacceptable. It is therefore essential that finances are identified to rebuild the bridge to accommodate two traffic lanes together with cycle and footpath facilities. During Construction Significant traffic volumes are evident particularly at morning and evening peak's but also throughout the day. It is essential that a traffic management system is put in place for the duration of this project. It is also essential that a strict timeframe for completion of this project once commenced is put in place

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and is part of any tender process. Consideration needs to be given to temporary pedestrian access to Confey GAA club which are essential facilities for the population of the area.

The Cemetery is located opposite the GAA club and caters for the whole Leixlip area, funeral arrangements during the time the bridge is out of commission needs sensitive and careful consideration as does access generally to the cemetery. Louisa Bridge A traffic management plan needs to be put in place for the duration of the enabling works at the bridge. It is acknowledged the extent of works required here are not extensive. Collinstown/Blakestown

The Leixlip Local Area Plan 2017-2023 includes the following objectives: MT2.6 To investigate the feasibility of local Park and Ride facilities in Leixlip in line with the principles set out in Section 5.10 of the Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2016- 2035. MT2.7 To liaise with the National Transport Authority (NTA) to consider the potential for the provision of a new railway station and strategic park and ride facility on lands at Collinstown. MT2.8 To liaise with the NTA to consider the potential for the provision of a new railway station and strategic park and ride facilities on lands at Collinstown. While the development of a new railway station is not part of Dart+ West project, it should be noted that a considerable land bank zoned Industrial/Commercial is located here and a new station should be an objective in this location as should a park and ride facility.

It is essential that sustainable modes of transport are integrated and the proposed removal of the level crossing at Blakestown will particularly impact walkers and cyclists. At the very minimum, a pedestrian bridge should be included as part of the Dart + West project. Concerns regarding the closure of Blakestown level crossing. Requests made for the consideration of a bridge for cyclists and pedestrians that can allow access to the Royal Canal Greenway in line with common cycling and pedestrian amenity routes in the town. Residents are opposed to the closure of XG014 Blakestown. The initial traffic assessment was undertaken in February 2019, a low season for pedestrians.

Closing the level crossing will increase the trips taken by car in duration and distance for many and this is not good for traffic levels overall in the area. The retention of this level crossing at Blakestown will have the least impact on the aim of DART+ West while relieving traffic congestion in the surrounding road network. Blakestown has the least number of closures of all level crossings selected in tables 3.4 and 3.4 of the technical Report. Option Selection Report - Volume 2: Technical Report (dartplus.ie) The closure times for Blakestown are also very low with under 24 minutes and 22 minutes respectively as per table 8-38 and 8-39. In the above Option Selection Report – Volume 2 Technical report item 3.5.3 Pedestrian and Cycle Counts demonstrates low pedestrian and cycle count numbers in Table 3-2. The count was undertaken on Tuesday 5th February 2019 between 07:00 to 10:00 in the AM, and 16:00 to 19:00 in the PM. This time period would indicate typically low usage due to the time of year and the cold weather on the day and the darkness of the afternoons and mornings at that time of year.

Since COVID 19 the level crossing usage has increased by a large margin and is now utilised by many more people walking and cycling to the areas of Leixlip and Maynooth. As you can see from the technical report it leads on to a large and busy interchange at Intel and enters on to the main road towards Maynooth and Leixlip which is incredibly busy at peak times. There is an additional housing estate at Westfield which is now mostly occupied, and another strategic housing development is planned for the Kilmacraedock area at Leixlip Gate. This will require residents have access to social infrastructure and amenities. The technical report at 5.6.10 indicates this is a mostly

rural area but does not include the linkage to populated areas and the planned future growth in residential units proposed for the adjacent sites. The “Do Minimum scenario” for level crossings considers the closure of the crossings with no alternative access provided and all traffic would be diverted to alternative routes around the crossing location including new expected traffic from the new housing developments. The Do Minimum option exhibits significant advantage as this option involves minimal initial investment and ongoing cost. – Where these assessments are underpinned by the cost of the interventions and not what is best for the people of Leixlip and future housing developments. See below 8.8.4.2.1

Economy Option 1 is rated Significant Disadvantage over the Do Minimum as it requires investment in physical infrastructure and commitment to ongoing inspection and maintenance costs associated with the proposed bridge. Such costs are not associated with the Do-Nothing Option. As part of the preferred option for the electricity substation at Blakestown it is indicated in Figure 5-32 indicates the requirement to create a road access from the existing road. The retention of the current road option would be more amenable to the needs of the community. (from technical report) 8.8.3.3.2 Integration the Do-Nothing option is rated as Some Disadvantage.

In terms of the Land Use Integration criteria, it would not support the Kildare County Development Plan Transport Objective PT07 which seeks to promote and support the upgrading of the Maynooth line and the Leixlip LAP 2020-2023 recognises the level crossing will be required to be removed therefore this option would not support these objectives or the DART+ Programme. The Do Minimum option and Option 1 are rated as Some Advantage as they would support the delivery if the DART+ Programme which is contained in the higher level national and regional planning policy documents. Both the Do Minimum option and Option 1 will reduce local permeability and reduce access to the Royal Canal Cycle Route. However, due to the Land Use Integration criteria, these options are the preferred options to consider in the MCA2 assessment 8.8.3.3.4

Accessibility and Social Inclusion Option 1, the pedestrian / cycle bridge with reduced diversion and designed to accommodate vulnerable users is rated Some Advantage as it maintains access to community facilities. All other options are rated Some Disadvantage as they effectively sever this access. The principal affected amenities in the vicinity of the level crossing include JM Motors south of the railway, the Business Barn, Intel and Jones Engineering Group, north of the railway. 8.8.3.3.5 Safety the Do-Nothing option is rated Significant Disadvantage as it does not secure removal of the level crossing from the railway network. The Do Minimum is rated Some Advantage as it diverts vulnerable road users onto longer more circuitous routes. The numbers affected are very low. Option 1 is rated Significant Advantage it provides local access for non-motorised users although it diverts vehicles onto longer more circuitous routes.

8.8.3.3.6 Physical Activity the Do Nothing and Do Minimum Options are rated Significant Disadvantage due to the curtailment of access over the canal and railway associated with them. Option 1 with reduced diversion and designed to accommodate vulnerable users is rated Significant Advantage as it maintains access to amenity spaces. The principal affected amenities in the vicinity of the level crossing include the Royal Canal and the agricultural zoned lands south of the level crossing. 5.6.10

Blakestown Electrical Substation The power study determined the requirement for an electrical substation in Blakestown, between Maynooth and Leixlip (Louisa Bridge) stations. See Figure 5-30 for an aerial view of the study area. Collinstown Industrial Park is located to the north of the study area. This area also includes residential

properties. South of the railway are the areas of Kilmacraedock, Grangewilliam and Glen Easton. In this area, both margins of the Royal Canal are connected via Deey Bridge. There is a level crossing over the railway at Blakestown, it is intended the level crossing will be removed as part of the project. The R148 runs east west along the northern extent of the study area. The area south of the railway is served by the R449 and the local road network which links to the both the R148 at Pikes Bridge and the R449. Most of the area of study is rural in character, with residential properties dispersed throughout. The assessment documents conclude that only closing Blakestown Level crossing and doing nothing will cost the project the least. This is the very basis of the decision and harms the access to historical and amenity sites and the permeability of the area. Proposed new residential at Leixlip Gate Adjacent to the site is a proposed strategic housing development at Leixlip Gate construction of 239 no. residential units (136 no. houses, 103 no. apartments), creche and associated site works.

Planning permission was granted with particular focus on the implementation of sustainable transport for residents and the development of cycling and walking infrastructure to enhance the development. Prior to the opening/ occupation of the Leixlip Gate development, a Mobility Management Strategy is required to provide for incentives to encourage the use of public transport, cycling, walking and carpooling. Closure of public access at Blakestown to the Royal Canal will impede this. In relation to S.37(2)(b) (i) the development is strategic in nature, as per the definition of Strategic Housing Development, as set out in section 3 of the Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016. The proposed development is of strategic importance to the development of Leixlip in line with national policies to provide for compact growth within the Dublin MASP, and in proximity to public transport. Nearby to the road is the Historical entrance for Leixlip residents to Castletown House, the only Palladian mansion in Ireland. Adjacent is a famine project, Connolly's Folly.

The Level crossing is also part of the Famine way and leads on to the Canal an amenity that is due to be significantly upgraded as an amenity. Parking and Cycling The entire project needs to factor in facilities for cyclists this should include ease of access to stations, including from over bridges and places to safely park bicycles. Adequate car parking at railway stations is essential if commuters are to mix modes and reduce the dependence on the car. In the absence of car parks being provided significant nuisance parking occurs in the vicinity of train stations, this is particularly evident in locations where inadequate provision is made such as Confey and Maynooth Train Stations. Maynooth Railway Station Enabling works for Dart+ West at Maynooth Railway station needs to take account of the lack of alternative routes available. At detailed design and tender phases minimisation of disruption must be a central feature and careful timing of works must be considered in that context. The inclusion of a substation at the station will mean the loss of a small number of cars parking spaces as far as possible the number should be minimised. Because there are more frequent services to and from Maynooth than are available in Kilcock or Enfield, Maynooth is the chosen station of a wider catchment; this puts pressure on the limited number of car parking spaces.

New Depot The proposed new depot between Maynooth and Kilcock should be considered for a new station which could also accommodate large park and ride facility to serve the wider catchment. Sub Stations Where sub-stations are required sensitivity with respect to visual appearance and noise when such facilities are to be located in proximity to existing homes. River-forest in Leixlip is a case in point. M4 Traffic Counts / Congestion Between

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Maynooth and Kilcock Average Daily Traffic (ADT) Official data sourced from the Transport Infrastructure Ireland Website shows a significant incremental increase in ADT between Junctions 9 Enfield, Junction 8 Kilcock and Junction 7 Maynooth on the M4. Enfield Kilcock Maynooth 2021 22,192 32,496 47,126 2020 19,432 31,877 42,333 2019 29,452 46,458 59,305 Between Junction 8 Kilcock and Junction 7 Maynooth 14,000+ additional vehicles are counted on the M4 in 2021.

This further supports the evidence of need for including the extension of the Dart+ West line to Kilcock at this point. We believe these statistics evidence an opportunity to remove a significant level of traffic congestion between Kilcock and Maynooth by extending the Dart+ West line. Extend Dart+ West to Kilcock The population of Kilcock has quadrupled since 1991 with growth accelerating in recent years.

According to the most recent census taken in 2016, the population of Kilcock stands at 6,093. Since 2016, several large new housing estates have been added with more under construction, and this figure is presumed to have increased significantly at the time of writing, to be confirmed in the 2022 census. The current proposal is to develop a new Dart Depot between the Kilcock and Maynooth Rail Stations. This proposal as planned will represent a missed opportunity in delivering a Station at the

Depot. Located a matter of metres from Kilcock, we believe it makes sense to plan for the inclusion of a station at the Depot.

This site should provide for a motor vehicle and bicycle parking solution to dramatically reduce the congestion at Maynooth Station, whilst offering the people of Kilcock the opportunity to utilise Dart services. Whilst the dual line is 2.75km from Kilcock station, the proposed Depot is located metres from the nearest housing estate in Kilcock. In view of the proximity to a residential area, the proposed Depot should undergo an impact assessment in the context of artificial light, noise and the hours of operations at the Depot.

Further to the above, it makes little sense to bring the line this far, without either: • Extending the dual line to Kilcock Station • Developing the Dart Depot with capacity to include a Station and Park & Ride facility. No engineering studies have occurred to consider the inclusion of Kilcock in this project, and we call for an Engineering feasibility assessment to be undertaken and this extension must come within the scope of this project. We estimate the approximate costs of including the dual line to Kilcock to be in the region of €1million per kilometre of track, a modest sum in the context of the budget for this project. We believe the proposals as outlined never considered Kilcock, but there's ample evidence to suggest now is the right time to include

Kilcock; from a financial and forward planning perspective, this should happen.

Local News

ABP Decision in Maynooth

We welcome the condition attached to the Cairn Homes site in Maynooth by An Bord Pleanála recently, stipulating against institutional investors from buying bulk units at this development. Cllr Aidan Farrelly was the first to raise the issue of Mullen Park in Maynooth at Kildare County Council meetings, which had seen potential first time buyers being prevented from purchasing homes in this development. With such large scale development taking place in Maynooth and right across the County, it's important that these developments are available for affordable purchase by individuals and families seeking to live in the community.

Communication Boards

Cllr Aidan Farrelly has secured Local Property Tax funding for the installation of Communication Boards in playgrounds across the Clane-Maynooth Municipal District. Communication boards are a wonderfully inclusive medium for children to communicate with their peers through pictures. This project is currently at design stage, and it is hoped the signs will be installed in early 2022 in the playgrounds throughout the District.

CHRISTIAN FAITH

I was about eleven or twelve when one November I was kept at home from school to pick the potatoes. We sold tons of potatoes back then so there was a great lot of them to be dug and picked. My father and my brother were the diggers and they didn't go out of their way to make it any easier for me. On the first day my father started digging at one of the field and if he did my brother started digging at the other. It was roughly a seven-score field, about 140 yards, and myself and the ass and cart had to traipse from one end of the field to the other to try and keep up with the pair. Fathers and grown up sons don't always work happily side by side!

Anyway we got the job done in about a fortnight or three weeks. Two-and-a-half acres, maybe, yielding about 30/40 tons of potatoes, every single one of which I had to handle. On the final day, with the last pit neatly covered with straw and clay, a method of storing potatoes well known to Patrick Kavanagh, my brother was first out the gate of the field and my father and I left together. He closed the gate and having secured it with whatever hoop was assigned to the job, he leant on the top spar and looking back over the field of brown clay and pits the words came from his heart: "What the hell is the use of it all?". My heart sank into my boots. I thought we had done a great job and I had played a notable part in it and now my father had rubbished the lot!

He was considered by all, I'm sure, to be an upstanding Catholic/Christian man, who wouldn't miss Sunday Mass if all the world were to fall in on top of him. But where was his «faith» that day? Or on any one of the other days when he said the same thing with no human ear recording his near despair? I wonder had he ever heard a homily on the purpose of human life and the nearness of God to each and every one?

Christian faith should be a vibrant influence on Christian lives. It is meant to colour everything one does as the sun transforms everything it shines on and everything should be seen in the light of Jesus' words: "I am the way, the truth and the life". The disciples on the road to Emmaus said that their hearts had been burning in their encounter with Jesus at the inn. Is that just an ancient, nice story? Is it not for today, for now, for moments when life's meaning is hard to fathom?

Christmas is an ideal time to enrich that faith. Not the Christmas of the major retail stores, but the Christmas of Luke and Matthew. They both recorded for the world the stupendous event of the birth of the Godman. God, who exists an eternity before the Big Bang which scientists tell us occurred 3.8 billion years ago, became one of us to formally introduce Himself to us, remind us of our divine origin and show us emphatically how much he is on our side. The next few weeks is the time to focus on that solid truth and put Christ back at the centre of Christmas!

GM.

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**Have a Healthy, Safe Christmas & a Prosperous New Year from
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Christmas Potpourri

Make your home smell like Christmas all season long with homemade potpourris. There is no better combination than citrus and cranberry mixed with cinnamon and spices.

Ingredients you can use for Christmas Potpourri

- Ginger fresh or ground
- Cloves
- Dried apple rings or slices
- Pine sprigs; clip a few from the base of your Christmas tree!
- Dry orange slices/lemon peel/grapefruit peel
- Small pine cones (painted or sprayed gold)
- Dried small crab apples
- Dried rosehips
- Dried acorns
- Cinnamon sticks
- Whole star anise
- Sparkly, red or gold decorations
- Cranberry



Dry Potpourri

Make sure that everything is perfectly dry before you start mixing the ingredients together. As the fragrance starts to fade, add a few drops of your favourite oil to the mix and sprinkle some water on it and this refreshes the dry potpourri and carries on releasing fragrance.

To make the Christmas potpourri extra special, add few small Christmas tree ornaments, baubles or some glitter.

Instructions

Slice the oranges, apples lemons or other fruits into medium to thin slices. Place the slices on a cooling tray set over oven baking tray and dry in the oven for 2-4 hours on about 100C. or you can dry them next to warm radiators. Just make sure you place them on something like a thick paper towel or baking cooling tray. Turn the slices of fruit regularly.

To make the Christmas Potpourri

Gather all the potpourri ingredients and mix them carefully together. Place in a decorative bowl and display in the room.

Extra tip – if you have a golden colour spray, you can paint the cinnamon, orange or the star anise in gold to add a festive colour.

If you're giving your Christmas potpourri as a gift, arrange it in a pretty cellophane bag or jars and tie with a colourful ribbons and your personalised Christmas tag.

Gaelcholáiste Mhaigh Nuad Comórtas Díospóireachta Uí Chadhain

The first round of Comórtas Díospóireachta Uí Chadhain, a debating competition for gaelcholáistí and gaeltacht post primary schools, took place on the 21st of October at 5pm in the Louis Fitzgerald in Dublin.

Gaelcholáiste Mhaigh Nuad debated against Gaelcholáiste an Phiarsaigh, Coláiste Íosagáin and Coláiste de hÍde and they progressed to the next round alongside Coláiste Íosgáin.

The team were against the motion " Ba cheart cosc a chur ar mhúinteoirí obair bhaile a thabhairt do dhaltai bunscoile"/Teachers should be banned from giving homework to primary school children.

The team, consisting of Caoimhe Ní Mhaoldomhnaigh, Niamh Másún, Aoibhinn Ní Chonalláin and substitutes Richard Ó Beacháin and Emma Ní Mhaonaigh, debated excellently and were delighted when it was announced that they had succeeded in progressing to the next round.

This is the first year that Gaelcholáiste Mhaigh Nuad has entered the competition and the school were very proud of the team for getting through.



Left to right: Niamh Másún, Caoimhe Ní Mhaoldomhnaigh, Aoibhinn Ní Chonalláin and their teacher Ciana Ní Tharlaigh.

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The Legend of Robin Redbreast

The Legend Of Robin Redbreast is from A Christmas Stocking by Louise Betts Egan. It tells the story of how the robin got his red breast after burning himself on a fire he fanned to keep the baby Jesus warm.

Another legend says that the robin’s breast is red because of his association with Christ’s death and crucifixion. When Jesus was on the road to Calvary it is said that a robin plucked a thorn from Christ’s temple and a drop of Jesus’ blood fell on the robin’s chest, turning it red.

On that first Christmas, it is said, the night was wrapped in a bitter chill. The small fire in the stable was nearly out, and the Mother Mary worried that her baby would be cold. She turned to the animals about her and asked them for help.

“Could you blow on the embers,” she asked the ox, “so the fire might continue to keep my son warm?”

But the ox lay sound asleep on the stable floor and did not hear her. Next, Mary asked the donkey to breathe life back into the fire, but the sleeping donkey did not hear Mary either. Nor did the horse or sheep. She wondered what to do.

Suddenly, Mary heard a fluttering of little wings. Looking up, she saw a plain, brown-coloured little robin fly into the stall. This robin had heard Mary calling to the animals

and had come to help her himself. He went over to the dying fire and flapped his wings hard.

His wings were like little bellows, huffing and puffing air onto the embers, until they glowed bright red again. He continued to fan the fire, singing all the while, until the ashes began to kindle.

With his beak, the robin picked up some fresh, dry sticks and tossed them into the fire. As he did, a flame suddenly burst forth and burned the little bird’s breast a bright red. But the robin simply continued to fan the fire until it crackled brightly and warmed the entire stable. The Baby Jesus slept happily.

Mary thanked and praised the robin for all he had done. She looked tenderly at his red breast, burned by the flame, and said “From now on, let your red breast be a blessed reminder of your noble deed.”

And to this day, the robin’s red breast covers his humble heart.

Source: www.birdspot.co.uk/culture/the-legend-of-robin-redbreast



Facts about the Robin Redbreast

The robin is one of Ireland's favourite birds. With it's striking red breast the robin is instantly recognisable. The robin is a plump bird with olive-brown upper parts and a white/grey belly. The legs and the beak are brown in colour. The male and female are very similar.

Juvenile robins do not have any red feathers and this may be a defence mechanism against attack from territorial adults. Until they reach adulthood immature robins have speckled buff-brown upper parts and underparts.

Resident robins are joined by immigrants from continental Europe birds from Scandinavia. The visiting robins are generally more pale than Irish residents and they tend to be less tame.



Robins are very territorial right throughout the year round. In the spring and summer this is for breeding purposes. During the rest of the year this is to protect feeding grounds. Robins will vigorously defend their territories to the point of death.

Although the average life span for a robin is just two years the longest lived robin was recorded at eight years and five months in 1977. The Irish word for robin is Spideog.

A robin's diet is largely based upon insects and worms. They usually swoop down on their prey after watching from a perch or other vantage point. Robins are renowned for following gardeners to pick off larvae and grubs left in the human's wake.

They are also known to have a sweet 'beak' and will relish any confectioneries left out although mealworms are a healthier option. With a little patience robins will learn accept food from the hand.

Both male and female robins command separate feeding territories in the winter and they will defend them. By midwinter robins will have paired-off and will remain together until the following autumn molt.

A robin's nest is made from grass, moss and dead leaves. It will be lined with hair, wool, or any other soft materials. They usually build their nests in a hole in a wall, tree cavity, ivy, or a bank. Notoriously, robins will nest in less orthodox locations including sheds, garages, cars, post boxes and garden barbecues. They have even been known to build a nest in coat pockets. If you wish to encourage robins to nest in your garden use a open-fronted nest box. Robin's eggs are smooth, dull and are white or pale blue with reddish spots. Only the female incubates the eggs however the young are fed by both female and male.

Source: Robin : Irish Bird : Description : Habitat : Feeding : Nesting : Eggs : Range : Ireland (irish-birds.info)

Our little red-breasted robin signals the coming of spring. The significance of seeing a robin is seen as a sign of new beginnings and renewal. Robins appear spiritually, reminding us to uncover happiness. These red-breasted birds are associated with entering a new chapter in life.



St. Mary’s Brass & Reed Band

With Covid numbers increasing as we write these notes times are difficult for everyone and the Band Mass for deceased members was another casualty. Our playing numbers were reduced to just 7 in the Organloft and our Treasurer Miriam doing the readings. Despite the small number involved the music added to the Mass and was really appreciated by everyone both in the Church and on live streaming. Hopefully next year will see our full Band taking part in remembering our deceased members.

At this point in time we have no idea whatsoever if our Christmas Concert, planned for the Glenroyal Hotel at 8pm on Sunday 12th December, will be going ahead but please check for updates on our Facebook page. Something that will be going ahead though are our Christmas collections on Saturday 18th and Sunday 19th where we will be shaking buckets to try to fill the holes that we have had to dig to keep the Band running throughout the year.

Having said all that we would like to express our sincere thanks to everyone who has supported us through their donations at our outdoor recitals during the year as well as buying our CD’s and Anniversary Calendars and to remind you that our Christmas CD will be on sale in the Maynooth Bookshop all through December. Finally can we wish our supporters at home and abroad a very Happy, Peaceful and Safe Christmas and hopefully we will see light at the end of the tunnel by this time next year.



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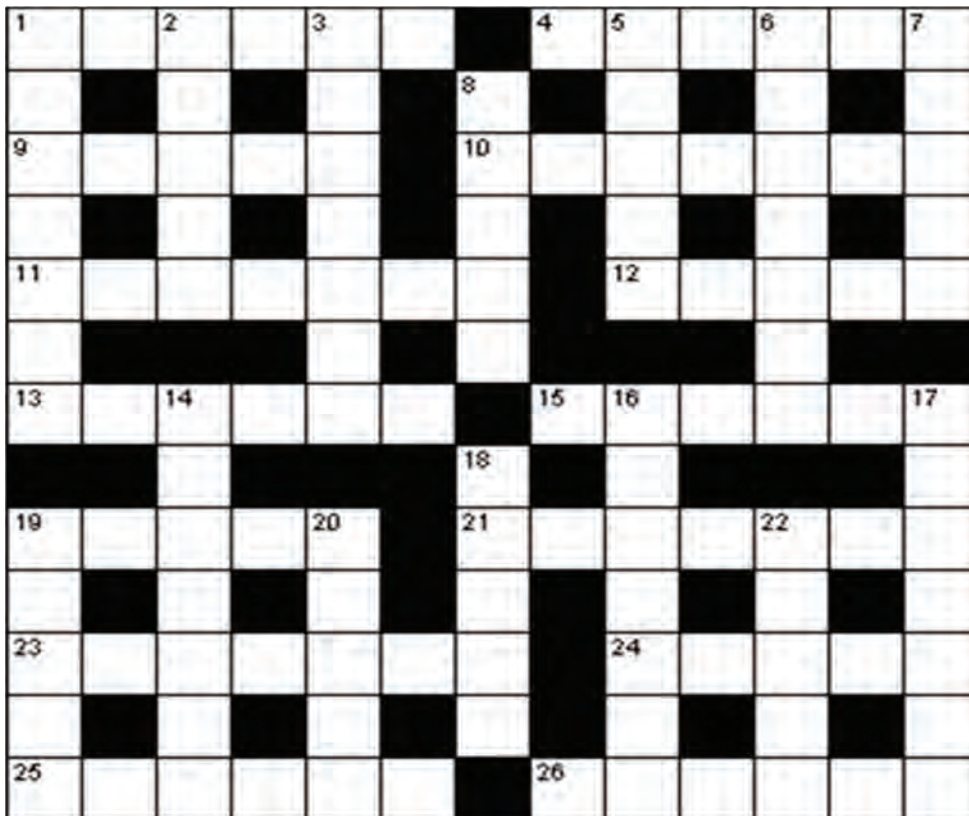
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Kildare Planning Applications for Maynooth Area				
Planning Applications received from 28/10/2021 to 29/11/2021 Information from Kildare County Council Website				
App #	Authority	Applicant Name	Development Address	App Date
21166 9	Kildare County Council	Kevin Farrell,	85 Griffinrath Hall, Maynooth, Co. Kildare.	25/11/2021
21163 0	Kildare County Council	MBCC Foods (Ireland) Ltd	Celbridge Shopping Centre, Maynooth Road, Celbridge, Co. Kildare.	18/11/2021
21160 7	Kildare County Council	General Paints Limited	Maynooth Road Celbridge Co.Kildare W23 X7R8 AND , the adjacent Burlwood House, Maynooth Road, Celbridge, Co.Kildare, W23 Y754	15/11/2021
21158 5	Kildare County Council	Philip Donnelly	18 The Arches, Maynooth, Co. Kildare. , W23 X8H7	08/11/2021
21158 6	Kildare County Council	Peter Robinson	Crinstown, Maynooth, Co. Kildare	08/11/2021
21155 4	Kildare County Council	Peter Robinson	Crinstown, Maynooth, Co. Kildare., W23 A891	28/10/2021

December 2021 Crossword - No. 508



Clues Across

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Counting device (6) | 19. Device in a brass wind instrument (5) |
| 4. A forceful consequence (6) | 21. Oval (7) |
| 9. Deport (5) | 23. Slowly moving ice mass (7) |
| 10. Relished (7) | 24. Large artery (5) |
| 11. Act of deliberate betrayal (7) | 25. Throws out (6) |
| 12. Movable staircases (5) | 26. Sternutation (6) |
| 13. Easily handled or managed (6) | |
| 15. Lithe (6) | |

Solution to crossword No. 507



Clues Down

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Turned away or aside (7) | 14. Assemble in proper sequence (7) |
| 2. Similar (5) | 16. Scoundrel (7) |
| 3. Kitchen implement (7) | 17. Promote (7) |
| 5. Commissioned military officer (5) | 18. Prolonged period of time (5) |
| 6. Unfathomable (7) | 19. Undefined (5) |
| 7. Periodic rise and fall of sea level (5) | 20. Live (5) |
| 8. Deceive by mock action (5) | 22. Sum of money offered a prize (5) |

Difficult

Sudoku Challenge

Super Difficult

	1	2									2	9		1		
					8	2				5					6	
5			3	6			1				6		8		3	
4						1	3	2			4	6		3		2
6	5						9	4			3	6			7	5
9	2	1						8		2			4		9	3
	3			5	6			9			7			1		2
		5	8								9					3
						6	7					8		3	2	

If you have access to a printer and wish to complete the Crossword and/or Sudoku for fun you can print the single page by going to File -> Print and print the current page only.

Junior Puzzle Corner

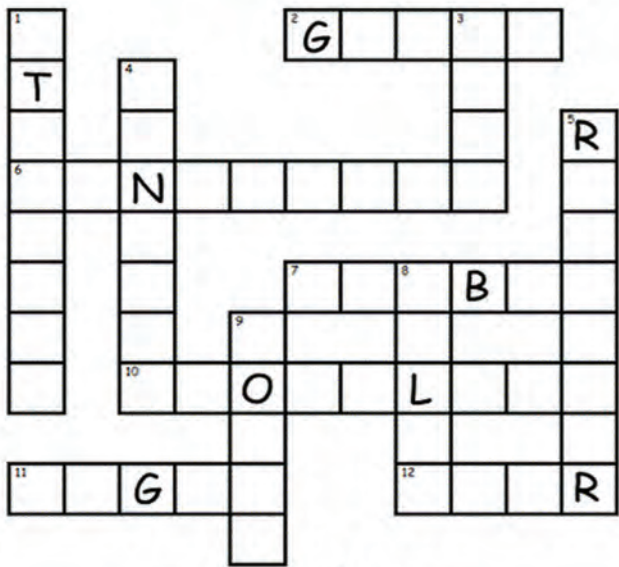


Children's Colouring

If you have access to a printer and wish to complete the colouring or Puzzles for fun you can print the single page by going to File -> Print and print the single page number only.

Be sure to avoid printing ALL the pages of the Newsletter unless you intend to do so.

'Tis the Season



Across

Down

2.	10.	1.	5.
6.	11.	3.	8.
7.	12.	4.	9.



Santa Strawberries



Ingredients:
1 dozen strawberries
1 cup whipped cream
Handful of chocolate sprinkles

Method
Using a paring knife, slice the leafy end off each strawberry so they stand up evenly. Then slice the tip off to make a little hat. **(Adult assistance required)**

Using a spoon or a large icing tip, place a large dollop (about 1-2 tsp) of whipped cream on top of the strawberry base. Plop the little hat on top. Add another small dollop of whipped cream to the tip of the hat to make a mock pom-pom.

Place two chocolate sprinkles in the Santa's "face" for the eyes. Using a toothpick, place two very small splotches of whipped cream down the front of the strawberry for buttons.

You're done! It's that easy. If you don't eat them right away, store them in the fridge to keep them cold. Santa doesn't do well with heat.

The Gingerbread Man

Once upon a time, in a land like yours and mine, there lived a baker. Her favorite thing to bake was gingerbread cookies. She was a friendly woman, but she had secret routines and some exciting animal friends.

One early morning, as she baked her daily gingerbread, she realized she had more flour, water, molasses, ginger, salt, and spice than she had anticipated. So, she decided to make a special gingerbread man for the local boy Billie to eat. You see, he delivered flour to her every afternoon.

On this day, the baker took a big lump of her smooth brown dough and shaped the gingerbread man's body, adding the silhouette of a neck and a round head on top. She drew on a couple of eyes with thick white frosting for good measure and a mouth.

Billie will surely love this gingerbread man, she thought. Before she placed her cookies in the oven, the baker added legs and arms with extra scraps of dough. She thought the little man might also need fingers and toes. But she had spent so much time adding other details to the gingerbread man that she had almost forgotten to put her cookies in the oven! By the time she got her mitts on and the cookie sheet in hand, the stove was scorching hot!

According to the baker, she thought she had prepared everything. She thought she knew to place the sheet precisely right so that the gingerbread man would have no chance of escaping when she opened the door.

There was magic in the spice, you see. And one had to be very careful when dealing with magic.

"Escape, you won't, little gingerbread man!" the baker cried out as she stared down at the uncooked doughy shapes before her. She giggled and began to sweep the bakery floor.

She swept and swept. She swept so much that she almost forgot to take her cookies out of the oven!

BEEP! BEEP! BEEP!

The lunch bell rang. It was well past time to take out her gingerbread.

"Oh, by golly!" she shouted to no one in particular. The bakery's cat, Bop, peeped his head out from behind a cozy blanket.



Oven mitts thrown on once more, the baker pulled the tray out of the oven. She had her eyes tightly shut, worried that her gingerbread was overcooked. The now-alive gingerbread man, realizing that the woman could not see him for a moment, peered out from his crouching position behind the cookie tray. He squealed.

Leaping from his perch and whizzing past the baker's head, he sang out: "Run, run, run..."

The baker had her eyes sealed shut in preparation for a ruined sheet of cookies. As she opened them to gaze upon her perfect golden-brown desserts, she saw

a flash of spice to her left.

"... As fast as you can..." the baker heard a tiny little voice continue.

It was time for her afternoon nap, you see, and she was exhausted. Luckily, she remembered the gingerbread man she had made for Billie—this surely woke her up.

Once the baker had turned to face the direction of all the commotion, she realized what the matter was: she had let Billie's gingerbread man escape! "I knew it. I knew it!" she shouted. "Bop, chase after the gingerbread man! Get him, get him!" she continued crying.

Bop looked up from his resting spot again, yawned, and stood up. As the cat stretched himself awake, the gingerbread man took his chance to escape through the bakery window and into the side garden. He had noticed a garden path that led somewhere. One giant leap and a cushy cat tail in his sights, the gingerbread man landed right on Bop.

The cat yowled and tensed straight up; the gingerbread man was flung high into the air. He raced out the window, singing:

"You can't catch me, I'm the Gingerbread Man!"

Now recovering from his injury, Bop shifted slowly towards the garden door. The baker followed suit. She didn't like this commotion, you see, and she didn't want to run. Panting, she opened the door and cried, "Bop, please follow that gingerbread man! Billie mustn't lose his treat!"

Bop dashed out the garden path as fast as his little kitty legs could carry him. The Gingerbread Man was very quick, however, and the cat was soon left in the dust, literally. Coughing and sputtering in the Gingerbread Man's dirty wake, Bop let out a loud "MER-OW," catching the attention of the yard dog, Plop.

Plop was usually known for chasing Bop around. But the sight of the baker in the yard was unusual. Hearing the cat's yelp, the baker's hollers, and the strange

singing of a magical running cookie, Plop began to guess what must be the matter. While the dog had a little more stamina than the baker or Bop, as she saw that magical gleam of spice, she realized she was soon in for a real race.

Plop bounded into action. Bop followed closely behind her, catching the dog's draft and holding speed. The baker, however, was gasping in the distance. She did not like to run.

The Gingerbread Man loved to run. It was his favorite thing to do—all he'd ever known. The Little Man ran and ran and ran as fast as his legs could. He approached a large metal gate crawling with vines, (perfect for a little gingerbread man of his size to scale up).

Scaling up the vines, he peered over his broad-sculpted shoulder and saw the baker far in the distance. But the cat and the dog were now almost at the gate! He gasped!

Bop and Plop approached the gate. They began to yowl and howl. The gate loomed, but neither the cat nor the dog knew the best way to get out, and the Gingerbread Man was getting away.

They saw him leap from the latch to the ground, and as he did so, the lock undid just a bit. Tired of waiting for the baker, who was just now catching up, the cat jumped carefully from the dog's back to the top of the wooden door and, too, leaped off.

The Gingerbread Man fell to the ground and stumbled slightly forwards before keeping on his fast and merry way.

"Run, run, run, as fast as you can, you can't catch me, I'm the Gingerbread Man," he sang as Bop meowed loudly, attempted to swipe the Man, and chased closely behind him.

The field was vast and dry. Dust flew up, causing quite a stir, and the Gingerbread Man traipsed the area as quickly as his little body could muster. A nearby tree emerged in the distance, and the Man jetted towards it in an instant.

"What is in that magic spice?" yelled the baker to no one in particular. She finally opened the gate for herself and Plop, and they ran together towards the dust trail, moving in the direction of the field willow.

Meanwhile, at a nearby rich man's menagerie, a teeny tiny monkey noticed a cloud of dirt and dust picking up in the baker's field. The monkey sprang herself out of her owner's plot and toward the fast-approaching disturbance.

The Gingerbread Man peered up at the large tree and grabbed hold of a single swaying willow branch. He giggled to himself: "I ran fast! They won't catch me!" He pulled himself high up the tree and leered down at the baker, cat, and dog who were now all gathered beneath him shouting, meowing, and howling.

"I am the Gingerbread Man!" he hollered from above and put his intricate gingerbread hands on his shapely gingerbread hips.

You see, the Gingerbread Man did not know what a monkey was. He quite honestly wasn't too sure what a baker, a cat, or a dog was, either, but he certainly thought he was the only one capable of climbing the large willow tree in the middle of the field.

As the monkey approached the tree, the baker cried out with glee: "Oh, Pip! What a wonderful surprise to see you! Please, can you climb the tree and catch that gingerbread man? We must get that treat for Billie!"

When the Man saw the monkey before him on the highest branch of the tree, he began to tremble just a bit.

I hadn't planned for this, he thought.

The monkey reached out and grabbed the Gingerbread Man. She smiled: this wasn't the first time someone had to catch one of Ms. Pastry's magical creations. The monkey had not expected Billie to have arrived right on-site to see what all the noise was.

"Send the cookie down!" shouted the baker.

"Drop him, Pip!" Billie called out.

Ms. Pastry, Bop, Plop, and Billie rallied below. Pip smiled brightly at them.

Without thinking twice, she dropped the cookie right into Billie's wide chompers! Before the Gingerbread Man could even shout, "I'm one-third, two-thirds, all-the-way gone," Billie had swallowed him up and was dancing with magical delight.





Caring for your Christmas Tree

When you buy your tree, recut the base – otherwise your tree will not take up water. Cut about an inch off the base and immediately place the tree in a stand that can hold at least 1 gallon of water. You should expect your tree to take up extra water. Water the new tree until the uptake stops.



Always keep the base of the tree in water. If the base dries out, resin will form over the end of the tree, preventing it from absorbing water again. Add a few spoons of sugar and it will help hugely! *Leave the faded flower heads* on your hydrangeas until the spring, as they will provide frost protection to the swelling buds further down the stems. If you still haven't planted your tulip bulbs there is still time, provided the ground isn't frozen.

Now is the perfect time to prune fruit trees to maintain an open, balanced structure and encourage quality fruit production. Plums, cherries and other stone fruits should not be pruned until the summer as winter pruning will make them susceptible to silver leaf fungus.

Make sure you use clean, sharp secateurs to avoid damaging your trees.

Avoid walking on your lawn when it is blanketed by heavy frost or snow, as this will damage the grass beneath.

If it's a mild winter, continue to cut the lawn if it's growing, but raise the height of the mower blades.

Choose a dry day to clear out the garden shed in preparation for the spring.

Group potted plants together in a sheltered spot in the garden to give them some protection from the winter weather.

Keep fleece to hand to protect hardy salad crops such as Lettuce 'Winter Gem', winter land cress, purslane, and corn salad on cold nights. Protect any remaining celery plants left in the soil by covering with straw or fleece. Cover heavy clay soil with polythene to keep it drier and allow winter digging.

If you are not quite ready to say goodbye to your Christmas Tree in January why not use it as a natural framework for other plants. A Christmas tree's beautiful conical shape makes it a perfect host for climbing plants such as the Nasturtium and Sweet Peas.



To turn your old tree into a frame for climbers is a really simple task. Simply place your tree in the garden with a stake for support and plant your seeds indoors to grow for a couple of weeks. The seedlings can be then transplanted outdoors at the end of February or early March. They should be planted around the base of your old tree allowing them to use the tree as a support while growing.

Your old Christmas tree provides a natural looking and attractive frame for these colourful plants. You can expect them to flower in June right through until November, and with a choice of many different colours in both plants they are a welcome addition to any garden. As well as this, sweet peas are perfect for cutting and bringing indoors for the summer months to add to your indoor display. You can expect the tree to last at least one and possibly two seasons before it deteriorates.

Fruit Trees: Gather and dispose of any remaining fruits or nuts on trees or the ground beneath them. This reduces pests and diseases next year.

Layered Holiday Centrepiece

Materials Needed

- * One large oval-shaped tray (larger than 14", widest point).
- * One 14" grape vine wreath.
- * One pedestal based candle holder and candle.
- * One cup faux berries.
- * 5/6 evergreen and pinecone floral picks.
- * Three Faux flower stems



Position Wreath on tray - Position Candleholder

Add Evergreen and pinecones inside the wreath, around the base of the candleholder. Place a candle inside the candleholder. Place a cup of faux berries around the candle. Randomly tuck a few faux flowers into the evergreen sprigs around the base of the candleholder.

Wishing you a warm, merry flower-brightened Christmas Day with family and friends....and the promise of good things to come in 2022

Shortbread biscuits

Ingredients:

- * 200g unsalted butter, at room temperature, cut into small cubes
- * 100g sugar, plus extra for sprinkling
- * 300g plain flour, sifted, plus extra for dusting



Method:

1. Preheat oven to 160°C and line a baking tray with baking paper
2. Mix together the butter and sugar, either by hand or using an electric hand whisk, until pale and smooth. Gently mix in the flour until completely incorporated (try not to work the flour too much or the biscuits will not be so crumbly). Using your hands, squeeze the mixture together into a ball of dough.
3. Gently roll the dough out to about 5mm thick (dust the work surface with a little flour if the dough sticks). Cut into shapes using a biscuit cutter. Transfer the biscuits onto the baking tray and chill in the fridge for 15 minutes to rest.
4. Sprinkle each biscuit with a pinch of sugar. Bake for 15-20 minutes, or until pale golden brown.
5. Transfer the biscuits to a wire rack to cool and serve.

Recipe tips:

- * You can also roll the dough into a sausage shape, refrigerate until solid and then slice with a knife and bake.
- * You can also add a sprinkling of your favorite fillings such as chocolate chips, nuts and orange zest for different flavors.

Roast potatoes recipe

Ingredients:

- * 10 large potatoes, peeled and cut into large chunks
- * 50g vegetable oil
- * 2 pinches sea salt



Method:

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C.
2. Simmer the potatoes in a large pan of salted boiling water for 4-5 minutes, or until the outside of the potatoes are begging to soften.
3. Thoroughly drain the potatoes and briefly shake them around in the colander or pan to roughen up the edges.
4. Add the oil in a deep flameproof roasting tray on high heat and fry the potatoes on each side until they begin to brown.
5. Sprinkle with salt, to taste, and roast for 30 minutes, or until starting to color.
6. Turn the potatoes and return to the oven for a further 20-30 minutes, or until golden-brown and crisp.

Tip:

You can add extra flavor to the potatoes by adding a few whole garlic cloves and sprigs of thyme or rosemary to the roasting tin before they are going in the oven.

Roasted whole duck (Crispy Skin)

Ingredients:

- * Whole duck
- * Boiling water
- * 1 Tbsp. Kosher salt
- * 1 and half tsp. Freshly Ground Black Pepper
- * 1 tsp. Paprika
- * 1 Orange, cut in quarters
- * 1 head garlic, paper removed and top trimmed
- * 2 celery stalks, cut into big pieces.



Directions:

1. Start a large pot of water (deep enough for the duck to fit) on the stove, bringing to a rolling boil. Preheat oven to 220°C.
2. Remove giblets and neck from interior. Save them to make the stock. Remove excess fat from body cavity and neck. Rinse duck inside and out under cool running water. Pat duck dry. With a large sharp fork, prick the skin all over being careful not to pierce the meat. Carefully put the duck in the pot of boiling water and boil for 10 minutes. Remove the duck and let cool and pat it dry.
3. Mix the salt, pepper and paprika. Rub the duck inside and out with the spice mixture. Place the duck on a rack in a roasting pan breast side up. Stuff the orange quarters, whole head of garlic and put celery pieces into the cavity of the duck. Fold the neck skin under, covering the cavity and secure with skewer.
4. Place the roasting pan in the oven. After 15 minutes, lower the oven temperature to 180°C. After 35 minutes remove duck from oven. Remove any fat that may have collected. Carefully turn duck over, place back on the rack in roasting pan, and return to oven for 35 minutes. At the end of the 35 minutes, remove duck from the oven and carefully turn duck back over so breast side faces up. Return to the oven and cook for another 15 minutes.
5. Transfer duck to a cutting board and let stand for 15 minutes. Remove oranges and celery from cavity and throw away.
6. Carve duck and serve.



Whishing you all a wonderful Christmas!



FILM/DVD MONTHLY BY BERNIE CLAXTON

Best Christmas Movies



'Tis the season to be jolly! It's that time of year again, when our thoughts turn to Christmas festivities, and we have the perfect opportunity to indulge in some seasonal movie fun! So, on these dark, cold winter evenings, take a cosy seat by the Christmas tree, open that box of Roses or Quality Street and escape into the warmth and glow of your annual Christmas favourites!

It's A Wonderful Life (1946)

For many families, this Frank Capra classic requires an annual viewing. James Stewart thinks his loved ones' lives would be better without him; his guardian angel Clarence (twinkly-eyed Henry Travers) turn up to show him how wrong he is. **It's a Wonderful Life** is a perennial Christmas favourite and on everyone's top ten list of seasonal movies to watch.



Frank Capra's enduring film is a life-affirming, emotional, funny and joyous masterpiece. It celebrates the triumph of the human spirit in the face of adversity. **It's a Wonderful Life** will remind you how important your family and friends are no matter the time of year. The perfect Christmas movie.

Die Hard (1988)

Many have argued that **Die Hard** is just an action movie that happens to take place on Christmas Eve. However, **Die Hard** is not only a great action film but one of the best Christmas films too. If you look closely at the cinematic elements that make up **Die Hard**, it is undoubtedly a Christmas movie. The imagery, songs and themes all point to Christmas.



The heart of the film is based around a family coming together for the holidays. Director John McTiernan was convinced initially that his story of terrorists carrying out a violent heist was missing something extra. He had the ingenious idea to incorporate Christmas into the mix, making **Die Hard** the atypical classic festive movie. It has terrific break-out roles from Bruce Willis, as the cop trying to save his wife and hostages, and Alan Rickman, as the blackest of villains. Add in a dynamite script with heart and bullets to make **Die Hard** must-see Christmas viewing.

Scrooged (1988)



A selfish, arrogant TV executive stages a live production of **A Christmas Carol**, and winds up living out a crazed variation of that very story in Richard Donner's amusing film update. No one does *Bah Humbug* better than Bill Murray's Scrooge-like, heartless and tight-fisted executive in this dark-comedy retelling of Dickens' classic tale. Nevertheless Murray, in his characteristic quirky way, manages to make his slimeball businessman funny and somehow relatable. **Scrooged** is the perfect prickly remedy to an excess of Yuletide sugary schmaltz.

Home Alone (1990)

It doesn't get more quintessentially Christmas than this children classic, **Home Alone**. An eight-year-old must protect his house from a pair of burglars when he is accidentally left home alone by his family on a holiday trip to Paris. 90's kid star, McCauley Culkin plays the quick-witted Kevin with charm as he battles the hapless villains, played by Joe Pesci and Daniel Stern, who have invaded his home. The shenanigans that ensue are nothing short of riotous and it's great fun for both adults and kids to watch Culkin outsmart the dim-witted thieves. **Home Alone** is an enduring children's movie favourite from director Chris Columbus and writer John Hughes.



Elf (2003)

Will Ferrell plays a clownish orphan raised as an oversized elf by Santa and his elves in the North Pole. He travels to New York City in an attempt to find his biological father (a cynical book publisher played by James Caan) in this comical, fish-out-of-water Christmas fantasy. Ferrell's performance as Buddy the Elf was hailed by both critics and audiences, with many calling it one of his best performances. Indeed, **Elf** benefits greatly from Will Ferrell's funny and charming performance as one of Santa's biggest helpers. The movie is loaded with heart, spirit, good-natured silly humour and is an entertaining Christmas box of a treat.



White Christmas (1954)

White Christmas is probably the most famous Christmas movie ever. Legendary Bing Crosby and Danny Kaye star as a song and dance double act who become professionally and romantically involved with a charming sister-act (Rosemary Clooney and Vera Allen). This is the simple premise of **White Christmas** and basically just an excuse to stage a series of dazzling Irving Berlin songs in Michael Curtiz's sentimental festive classic.



Crosby, Kaye, Clooney and Allen invest the production numbers with great zest and vivacity and are a real joy to behold. The spirited musical number 'Sisters' is a particular highlight and provides great fun involving the quartet of stars. Of course, the classic song and film title, 'White Christmas' was a huge hit for Bing Crosby and is primarily the reason the movie is so well-loved and remembered by audiences today. **White Christmas** will warm the cockles of your heart on a cold winter's evening this Christmas.

In Cinemas This Christmas

It's sadly timely, with the recent passing of musical legend Stephen Sondheim, that Steven Spielberg's eagerly anticipated reimagining of the former's masterpiece, **West Side Story** will hit Irish cinemas this December. Spielberg has described his new film version of the Bernstein /Sondheim classic about love and rivalry amongst the ethnic ganglands of 1950s New York as "that one haunting temptation that I have finally given in to." Ansel Elgort and newcomer Rachel Zegler reprise the roles of star-crossed lovers Tony and Maria, played in the original 1961 movie by Richard Beymer and Natalie Wood. Sondheim had the opportunity to view Spielberg's film before he died and was seemingly impressed by what he saw. He said the screenplay has some really 'imaginative' and 'surprising' things in the way the songs are interpreted in the story. According to Sondheim the film has a 'real sparkle and energy' to it, 'it feels fresh' and Spielberg has 'really nailed it'. Praise indeed. **West Side Story** opens on 10 December in cinemas nationwide.

Merry Christmas