



# Maynooth newsletter

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Local News - March 2022 - Issue No. 510 - 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.*



## MAYNOOTH ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE



### 17th MARCH 2022

FÉILE LÁ FHÉILE PÁDRAIG MAIGH NUAD

17Ú MÁRTA 2022

Closing Date for Entries 5pm Friday 4th March 2022

Parade will start from  
Greenfield Shopping Centre at 11 am

Entry Form Available Online @ [www.maynoothcep.com](http://www.maynoothcep.com)

Application Forms also available for collection at

Maynooth Newsletter Office Tesco Shopping Centre

Or e-mail to: [office@maynoothcep.com](mailto:office@maynoothcep.com) to request a form



Maynooth Community Council  
invites you to

## A Gathering of Remembrance

Sunday 20th March  
3-4pm Harbour Field

Poetry, Prose, Music



### Gathering of Remembrance

Maynooth Community Council invites you to a Gathering of Remembrance to remember and celebrate the lives of all who have been lost to Covid, and the lives of all those who passed away during the pandemic. We also gather to recognise and acknowledge the courage and sacrifice of all those who have been working throughout the pandemic, some of whom have lost their lives in that struggle.

The Gathering of Remembrance will be an hour of Prose, Poetry and Music. It will be held in the Maynooth Harbour Field on Sunday 20th March from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. It is free and open to all. There is no booking or ticket required. We have all been affected by Covid-19. As we look forward to the brighter days of Spring, please join us for this hour of remembrance and reflection.



## Happy St Patrick's Day to all our Advertisers, Contributors and Readers





# 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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Unit 10, Tesco S.C. Carton Retail Park,  
Maynooth, Co. Kildare. W23CT59  
Tel: 01-6285922

E-mail: [office@maynoothcep.com](mailto:office@maynoothcep.com) - Website: [www.maynoothcep.com](http://www.maynoothcep.com)

## Letters to the Editor

Letters to the Editor, for publication, should be sent by e-mail to: [editor@maynoothcep.com](mailto: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](http://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

Over the past two years we have mentioned the impacts at the various stages of the Covid 19 pandemic. While Covid 19 is still with us the need to impose restrictions on the population such as wearing face masks were finally removed at the end of last month. Restrictions have been replaced with guidance especially for people who are considered to be vulnerable to serious illness should they contract Covid 19. Take care of yourselves and each other while this virus is still around.

One feature of life over the past two years has been the use of technology to keep in touch with others be it family or for work or social activity. It is probably hard to find someone who managed to avoid using the Zoom Platform considering that most people never knew such technology existed before the pandemic. It was among a number of platforms that supported meetings for a large number of people with ease and there is no doubt that we will continue to use it even though most people will want to return to face to face meetings.

Maynooth University has planned a number of Zoom events in March and one such event that caught my attention is called "it's not a Chase it's a marathon – from Rathcoole to Oxford and ITVs The Chase via Maynooth University which is presented by Dr. Darragh Ennis who is better known as "The Menace" on the popular ITV quiz show. His talk will focus on the highs and lows of his life after the leaving certificate exam and his route to be successful in his chosen career and the other opportunities that can bring you in an unplanned direction. The Zoom event is scheduled for Wednesday March 23<sup>rd</sup> at 10am for an hour and will be of interest to young people in Maynooth.



*Dr. Darragh Ennis  
(ITV'S - The Menace)  
photo courtesy Maynooth University*

Elsewhere in this month's publication the issue of the shortage of General Practice doctors in Maynooth is being highlighted. Conscious that the problem will only get worse in a town that continues to grow with the range of new housing developments in the pipeline. Last year we had the retirement of two doctors who have taken care of the people of Maynooth for many years. Dr. Christopher O'Rourke had his practice at the Kingsbry Medical Centre in where he worked for over forty years. Nearby on the Straffan Road, Dr. Maurice Cowhey worked from the Park Lodge Medical Centre. Both men were well liked and in addition to their medical work were very supportive of community activities. Both men deserve to take it easy as the work of general practice has become very challenging. On behalf of the people of Maynooth we wish them a long and healthy retirement.

Talking about a long and healthy life one hail and hearty Maynooth resident has celebrated his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. Michael Caden reached this major milestone in February and was able to post a video on social media thanking everyone for marking the great occasion with him. Congratulations Michael on behalf of the many people in Maynooth like myself who have the pleasure of knowing you.

Many of you will have noticed that the growth has started for 2022 and although with frost possible it is always recommended that you do not give your lawn a big cut until after St. Patrick's Day. Of course the weeds are here, looking fresh and well. Unfortunately weeds can grow quickly and invade new spaces and are not always attractive. As you know Maynooth Community Employment Project work in the Maynooth Harbour area keeping it attractive as a public amenity. Part of the work that has already started for this year is the trimming back of the edges along the Royal Canal Towpath while allowing the wider verge to flourish and support natural flora and fauna.



*Maynooth Community  
Employment staff working  
in Maynooth Harbour*

With the recent lifting of Covid restrictions the Maynooth St Patrick's Day Parade Committee have decided to organise a Parade in Maynooth this year. The organising of the Parade would normally start behind the scenes in December. This year, due to the uncertainty, planning started in late January. What is normally a mammoth task has become more difficult this year and we wish the Committee ever success with the event. Happy St Patrick's Day.

**Copy date for the next edition of the Maynooth Newsletter  
will be Monday 28th March 2022**



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(Behind EBS Main St)

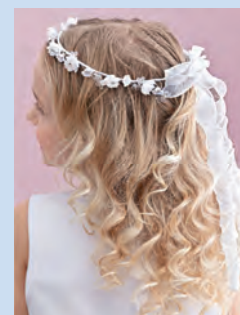
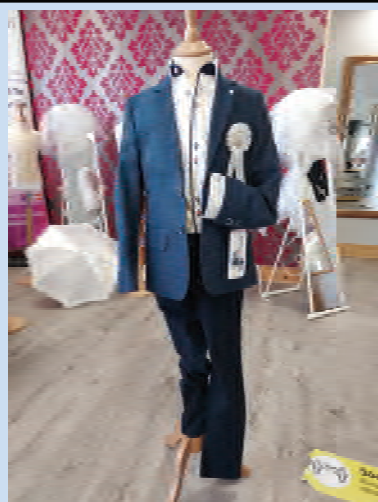
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It's immediately accessible and convenient



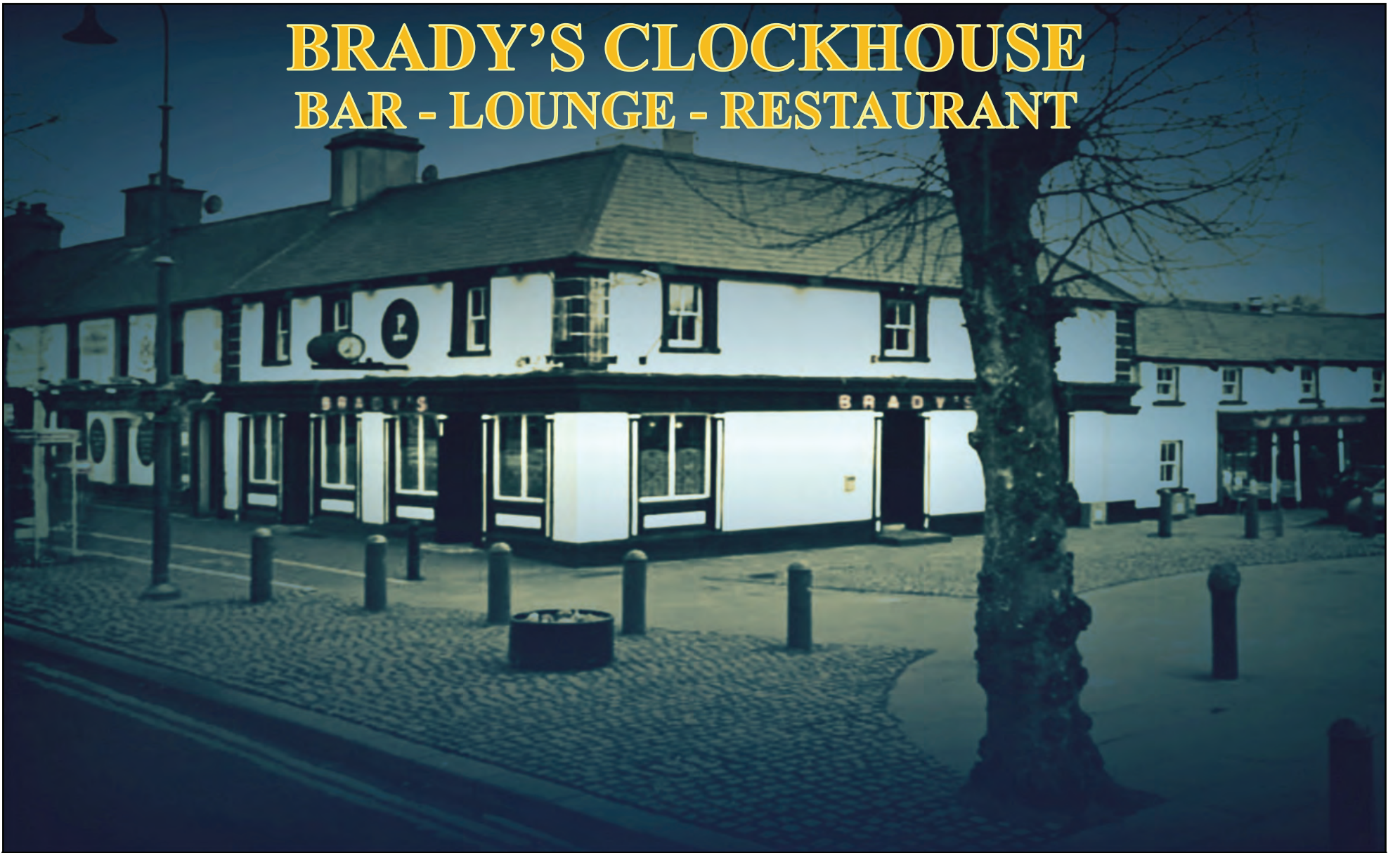
**SUNDAY 27TH MARCH 2022**



Don't forget to set you clocks forward on  
Sunday, March 27th, at 1.00 a.m.



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## Brady's Bar, Lounge & Restaurant



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**Join us for the craic**

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# Happy St. Patrick's Day

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## MEC PTA Maynooth 10K/5K – 3rd April @ 10am in the new MEC campus

After a two-year break because of the Covid pandemic, the Maynooth 10K/5K returns this year and it will be on **Sunday April 3<sup>rd</sup> at 10am**. This year the Maynooth 10K/5K will start at the brand new MEC campus on the Moyglare road where there is ample parking for everyone.

Maynooth Post Primary was founded in 1971 and this year the school celebrates it's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary and to celebrate this milestone the Maynooth 10K/5K committee have designed a really stylish collectable medal for all who participate in this event.



We greatly appreciate the sponsorship of these medals for the last three years by **Pearls Dental** and to **Specsavers** for the sponsoring the snoods. We would also like to welcome a new sponsor **Highfield Veterinary Maynooth** for sponsoring the race numbers. Both the 10K & 5K will start at the new MEC Campus and run down Moyglare Road and after the entrance to Maynooth University the runners will make their way across the newly opened Lyreen Avenue to the Dunboyne Road. The 10K runners will then make their way to Carton estate via the Blacklion Road and return to the MEC Campus by Carton Avenue, Dunboyne Road, Lyreen Avenue and the Moyglare Road. This event is a fundraiser for the upkeep of the multi-purpose playing fields shared by Maynooth GAA on the Moyglare Road and it also raise money for a Multi-Use Games Area located on the MEC Campus.

This is our tenth year organising this event and each year we call on all sectors of the community to assist us and without fail they gather and give their time and expertise.

This positive aspect of our community is greatly appreciated. Without the support of our business community, volunteers, sponsors and associate organisations, the organisation of the 10K/5K would not be possible. Financial support is vital to cover organisational costs, including health and safety measures which alone costs over €2,000. We also greatly appreciate the support from the Community Employment Scheme office to advertise the event. Register on-line at [www.popupraces.ie](http://www.popupraces.ie). Entry fee is €20 for an individual or €40 per family. Teams of 4 also get a 10% discount when they register on-line.



**Please note:** Both the 10K and 5K race get underway at **10am sharp at the MEC Campus**. All participants and friends are invited into the school after the race for our prize giving ceremony and refreshments, provided by our hard-working MEC PTA Committee.

We hope to welcome hundreds of runners, joggers, and visitors to our town on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> April. We wish all the participants in the 10K/5K, a most enjoyable day. Each participant will receive one of our stylish 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary collectable medal and fashionable snood and we hope that they will return on an annual basis. We are very grateful to Carton House Hotel for allowing us to avail of this scenic route and all our generous sponsors and volunteers on whom we depend to run this great event.

Photo below of the launch of the Maynooth 10k/5k.

L-R Pat Gilligan, Johnny Nevin (MPPS Principal), Francis Bradley, Conor Dewey (Specsavers), Teresa Murray, Hazell Mullins (Highfield Veterinary), Úna Phillips, Eimear White & Siobhán McCauley (MCC Principal).

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Maynooth





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- \* Social Housing
- \* Estate Issues
- \* Community Issues
- \* Environmental Concerns
- \* Employment Concerns
- \* Covid - 19 related queries



**Happy  
St. Patrick's  
Day to All**



**Phone**



**E-mail**



**Cllr. Angela Feeney**

**Tel. 087 238 1962**

**Email. [angelafeeney@gmail.com](mailto:angelafeeney@gmail.com)**

**Stay safe everyone.**





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## Maynooth Cycling Campaign Notes



### Meeting with An Garda Siochana

Following on from the public meeting of the Joint Policing Board in December, Maynooth Cycling Campaign held a productive meeting with Garda Superintendent Gray, who is in charge of the Leixlip District. The meeting covered a wide range of topics including close passing, illegal parking, speeding and drivers ignoring pedestrian crossings. A fuller report will be carried on the Campaign website.

### Critical Mass Event – Naas

At the time of writing, Naas Cycling Campaign has planned a second #Critical Mass Cycle on 26th February. The Cycle which is designed for all the family is to highlight the poor facilities for cyclists in Naas. Naas Cycling Campaign has announced that the cycle will become a regular monthly event.

### Newbridge

The town of Newbridge is the latest to experience “Bikelash” against the provision of Covid temporary cycle lanes on its Main Street. The “debate” centres on the location of the cycle lane – whether it should be located between the parked car and the footpath or than between the parked car and live traffic lanes. The former is Dutch best practice in the safest country for cycling but some locals hold a different opinion. The safety of narrow lanes for traffic also features. Like Maynooth, many of those who object to the measures on the pretext of safety but really want to maintain the status quo i.e. prioritising the place of cars on our roads.

### Temporary Traffic Orders

On the same subject, Eamon Ryan, the Minister for Transport, has announced that he intends to introduce temporary traffic orders to allow local authority officials to trial new road layouts without the consent of councillors. This is

in response to the court case which decided that Dublin City Council could not trial temporary cycle facilities in Sandymount which involved reducing a two-way road to one way for cars.

### Kiss the Gates Goodbye!

The government has announced that kissing gates and other restrictive barriers on walking and cycling routes are to be removed. This follows a campaign by Maynooth Cycling Campaign among others against kissing gates and substandard accesses on the Royal Canal. Maynooth Cycling Campaign wish to thank Catherine Murphy T.D. and Bernard Durkan T.D. for asking questions in the Dáil on the subject on our behalf. Maynooth Cycling Campaign had previously attempted to raise the issue at Kildare County Council’s Transport Strategic Policy Committee but was repeated blocked by the then Chair.

### Road Safety

In 2021, it is estimated that there were 8 road fatalities, 4 of which were pedestrians in County Kildare. In 2020, there were 6 road fatalities, 3 of which were pedestrians including 1 in Newbridge.

Recent reports from the RSA also showed the increased risk of serious injury to cyclists compared to drivers. For drivers, there are 6 serious injuries per driver fatality. For cyclists, there are 25, more than four times the figure for drivers.

**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.**





## New MU research shows North Atlantic and Eurasia jet stream moving northwards and increasing in speed

### Maynooth University ICARUS Climate Research Centre academic compares the jet stream over North Atlantic, Eurasia, America and North Pacific

**Maynooth Ireland; 22 February 2022:** New research at Maynooth University's ICARUS Climate Research Centre has found that the jet stream is moving northwards and increasing in speed, influencing storm activity and temperature patterns across the Northern Hemisphere.

The average winter northern hemisphere jet stream position over the North Atlantic and Eurasia has moved northwards by up to 330km, and the mean winter jet speed has increased by 8% to 132mph, during the 141-year period from 1871-2011.

Just this week, the jet stream brought storms Dudley, Eunice and Franklin to Ireland and the UK. Jet streams are fast bands of air which flow around the globe at around ten thousand metres above the Earth's surface, and have a significant influence on storm activity and temperature patterns across the northern hemisphere which can impact the weather through strong winds and flooding events. This is the longest regional study of the northern hemisphere jet stream and research finds that the trends observed are potential indicators of climate change.

According to the study published this week in the peer-reviewed scientific journal, *Climate Dynamics*, provides a regional (land - ocean) comparison of the Northern Hemisphere jet stream, and finds that jet stream trends vary on a regional and seasonal basis. Between 1871 and 2011 the average winter jet stream latitude over the North Atlantic moved from 44° to 47° north with a 10 mph increase in speed to 132mph, but no increases were observed over the North Pacific.

The lead author of the paper, [Dr Samantha Hallam](#), of the [ICARUS Climate Research Centre](#) at Maynooth University in Ireland, and the National Oceanography Centre in the UK, said:

"Significant increases in winter jet latitude and speed are observed over the North Atlantic and Eurasia which is consistent with the decreasing temperature and increasing pressure gradients observed between the equator and the Arctic over the period.

"Over the North Pacific, no increase in jet latitude or speed are observed, however, changes in the North Pacific sea surface temperatures explains over 50% of the variability in jet latitude.

"The results highlight that Northern Hemisphere jet variability, and trends differ on a regional basis. This is important for making climate predictions and in developing plans to combat climate change," she added. These findings are the result of a statistical analysis of the 250mb jet stream using the Twentieth Century Reanalysis dataset. The research was supported by the Marine Institute and funded by the Irish Government under the JPI Climate and JPI Ocean joint call and the Natural Environmental Research Council, and involved collaboration ICARUS Climate Research Centre at Maynooth University in Ireland, University of Southampton, UK, and National Oceanography Centre, UK.

Read the full article: A regional (land-ocean) comparison of the seasonal to decadal variability of the Northern Hemisphere jet stream 1871-2011  
Download the pdf: DOI : 10.1007/s00382-022-06185-5



**Dr. Samantha Hallam**



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Gold Medal Winner

We will be holding our Annual General Meeting on the **10th March 2022**  
at **7.30pm, in the Glenroyal Hotel and Leisure Club.**  
Everyone is welcome to attend.

We have lots of projects lined up for 2022, hopefully when the weather improves in April we will be able to complete the tasks.

Thanks again to all our volunteers who ventured out during January /February sometimes in very poor conditions, litter picking and the clean up on the Joan Slade river, Parsons Street.



We hope you all have a very happy St Patrick's day.

*Mary Molloy, Secretary Maynooth Tidy Towns*



## Lá Fheile Padraig for 2022



**Daily constituency clinics**

**Monday to Friday 10 to 1pm**  
**Telephone: 089 2444 793**

**Or, email:**  
**Catherine.Murphy@oireachtas.ie**

**Catherine Murphy, Your Kildare North**  
**Social Democrats TD**



## Flower Arranging Tips

The best tips for arranging flowers in a vase center on both aesthetics and practicality. Choose the most appropriate vase, Choosing a vase of not only the right size but also the right style is an essential part of flower arranging. Trim flowers and arrange them according to height, and pay attention to water quality. Flowers can be arranged in vases in a variety of ways to create a host of different effects. There is no right or wrong way to arrange flowers in a vase, but planning out how the arrangement should look before getting started is often beneficial.



Organizing and sorting the flowers comes next. Many bouquets combine floral stems with foliage, such as leaves or decorative sprays. These should usually go near the back or bottom, and as such should be set aside. Remaining flowers should be organized by height, bloom size, and color. The goal is to create a dynamic arrangement that highlights the individual features of each bloom.

For flowers to last a long time in a vase arrangement, they will need to be trimmed so that their stems can continue to receive moisture. Flowers that have been cut for some time tend to dry out at the ends of their stems, which can impede the flow of nutrients and shorten a bloom's vase life. The best way to trim stems is with a sharp pair of floral scissors or a paring knife. Stems should be cut at upward angle, at least ¼ inch up.

Flower longevity also depends at least in part on the water quality. Water should ideally be warm to the touch, but not hot, and should contain some form of plant food or bloom fertilizer. This fertilizer often comes with store-bought bouquets. White sugar is an easy at-home substitute. Adding about a teaspoon of sugar or bloom solution to a vase will help optimize the life of a vase arrangement.



Bouquets can be arranged to be front-facing, with the majority of the blooms facing the same direction, or they can be rounded. They can be minimalist, or brimming over the edges. In all cases, stems should be added to the vase one at a time, beginning with the tallest and progressing in order of stem height. Stems can always be removed, rearranged, and trimmed down to change the look.

Source: [www.wise-geek.com/what-are-the-best-tips-for-arranging-flowers-in-a-vase.htm](http://www.wise-geek.com/what-are-the-best-tips-for-arranging-flowers-in-a-vase.htm)



## Maynooth University Town F.C



### Leinster Senior League Noel Ryan Cup 1st Round Town 5 - Columbas Rovers 2

Town were always in control in this Saturday Division Cup game. Town had strength in abundance throughout the side and easily advanced to the 2nd round. Goals by Hancock, Walsh, Kinsella McKeown and Pierce ensured an easy victory.

and denied the Town on several occasions. Half-time with the game scoreless but Town upped their game in the second half and were rewarded in the 53rd minute when Jake Amour was hacked down at the edge of the penalty area. Alex Fitzgabbin fired home the resultant free-kick to the relief of the home side.

### Leinster Senior League Senior Division Sunday

**Town 1 - Cherry Orchard F.C. 2**  
This was a game the Town will want to forget in a hurry. The shortage of a number of regulars in no way minimized the disappointment of a poor result. With the game set for a draw Orchard stole in for the in added time. Jack O'Connor's lone goal was the only compensation for the Town.

In the 80th minute Town sealed the result when Dylan Kavanagh slotted home a chance setup by Paddy O'Sullivan. Town closed out the game and ran out easy winners. A pleasing aspect of the game was the return to the home side of Dylan Kavanagh after a long term injury layoff. Showing that he had not lost his sharpness in front of goal when he expertly finished Paddy O'Sullivan's neat pass. The Town are still competing in three cup competition with a chance of bringing home some silverware.

### FAI Intermediate Cup (Round of 16)

**Town 2 - Bangor G.G.F.C. 0**  
The score line fails to do justice to an excellent display in this much improved performance. Town took control of the game early. The Bangor keeper was in inspired form

Highlights of this game can be found on UTube by following the link below.

<https://youtu.be/F5rao4mMUyw>



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### THE MIRACLE PRAYER

DEAR Heart of Jesus, in the past I have asked you for many favours. This time I ask for this special one (mention favour). Take it dear Heart of Jesus and place it within your own broken heart where your Father sees it. Then, in His merciful eyes it will become Your favour not mine. Amen

Say this prayer for three days, promise publication and prayer & favour, will be granted, no matter how impossible.

Never known to fail.

Thanksgiving for favour received. (P.B.)

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DEAR Heart of Jesus, in the past I have asked you for many favours. This time I ask for this special one (mention favour). Take it dear Heart of Jesus and place it within your own broken heart where your Father sees it. Then, in His merciful eyes it will become Your favour not mine. Amen

Say this prayer for three days, promise publication and prayer & favour, will be granted, no matter how impossible.

Never known to fail.

Thanksgiving for favour received.

### SAINT THERESE Saint Expedite Prayer for Urgent Needs Prayers

(This prayer is to be said daily until your request is granted, Be sure to publish this prayer thanking Saint Expedite, so that his name and glory will grow.)

Saint Expedite, you lay in rest. I come to you and ask that this wish be granted.  
(Mention your urgent request)

Saint Expedite now what I ask of you. Saint Expedite now what I want of you, this very second. Don't waste another day. Grant me what I ask for.

I know your power, I know you because of your work. I know you can help me. Do this for me and I will spread your name with love and honor so that it will be invoked again and again. Expedite this wish with speed, love, honor, and goodness.

Glory to you, Saint Expedite! (P.B.)



## How to Protect yourself & your Family at home

Sharing our plans on social media, leaving out spare keys and forgetting to lock doors and windows are just a few of the simple mistakes we're making that are inviting burglars into our homes! With an increase in burglars breaking into homes lately, especially in remote areas it is vital to keep your home security a priority and learn how to keep your home safe from burglars<sup>1</sup>.

### Home Alarm

The most effective way to keep your home safe from burglars is having a home alarm system installed. If a potential intruder sees you have an alarm system in your home it will likely deter them for trying to break in, and if not, hearing a triggered alarm will definitely send them running!

### Garden

Keep trees and bushes neatly trimmed so that they can't block the sight lines and give criminals a place to hide. Also, ensure you don't leave any items around your garden that could be used to gain entry into your home such as hammers, ladders and shovels. Pick up a "Beware of Dog" sign to hang in your front window or porch.



### Doors & Windows

Double check you've locked your front and back doors when leaving your home, even if you're only popping out for a few minutes. A lot of break-ins occur when people are actually at home so it's vital you lock your doors even when you are at home. Have a chain lock on your door and only open it when you know who is outside.

Some people leave their windows unlocked in unoccupied rooms while at home. This is exactly what an opportunistic burglar is on the lookout for so make sure your windows in any unoccupied rooms are kept locked.

### Spare Key

If you want to have a spare key in case you get locked out, leave it with a trusted neighbour. A lot of people leave keys under mats outside & under flower pots which gives a potential intruder a great easy opportunity to gain entry into your home.

### Social Media

Many of us are in the habit of posting our whereabouts on social media however it's not a good idea to tell everyone about the fact your home's empty! If you really can't resist, make sure your social media accounts are set to private so only your friends can see what you post.

### Interior Lighting

Having the lights consistently on while you're not at home actually makes it more obvious nobody's home (and costs you a fortune!). One option is to set your lamps on a timer.

### Other activities burglars could take as a sign of an empty home:

- Blinds down or curtains pulled closed during the day.
- A build-up of newspapers and post in your porch or letterbox.
- An uncut or unmaintained garden.

### Exterior Lighting

Motion sensor lighting is probably the most useful outside lighting to provide extra security for either the front or the back of the house.



Sensor lights are quite inexpensive and act as excellent deterrents.

You can point them towards pathways, decking, patio areas or even heavy foliage areas where people could easily hide.

Make sure you position your security lights high enough up that they won't be easily tampered with. Check your lights regularly and replace bulbs as quickly as possible when needed.

While there's no surefire way to prevent a burglar from casing your house, remaining vigilant and taking precautionary measures will help protect your home and family in the long run.

**We all want to stay safe at home.  
It is meant to be a place of safety and comfort.**

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## Cllr. Angela Feeney Maynooth Labour News

E mail: [angelaemfeeney@gmail.com](mailto:angelaemfeeney@gmail.com) - Phone: 0872381962



### Installation of Electronic Speed Sign on Pikes Bridge Road

Cllr Feeney called on the Council to install an electronic speed sign on the Pike's Bridge Road given the increased volume of traffic on this road. Cllr Feeney supported the residents on this road and the Gardai before Christmas for the Slow Down Day to raise awareness not only of the volume of traffic but of the speeding that occurs. Cllr Feeney also added that there is no footpath on this road. The Council said it would arrange for a speed survey to be carried out on Pike's Bridge road and the results of the survey would determine if an electronic speed sign is warranted. Cllr Feeney welcomed this and the fact that the Municipal District Office confirmed that it is working with An Garda Síochána in relation to traffic on this road. Since the meeting, Cllr Feeney has been informed that a monitor box was installed two weeks ago and the Gardai were monitoring traffic on the road that same week. Cllr Feeney looks forward to receiving the results from the surveys.

### Parking for People with Disabilities

Cllr Feeney asked the Council to request that parking bays for disabled drivers be installed at the car park at Leinster Street, Maynooth. While the Council stated that this car park is a private car park and outside the remit of the Council, the matter has been referred to the Planning Department for a report on the conditions of the planning permission. At the meeting Cllr Feeney stated that this car park is beside the funeral parlour and the health centre and yet there are no designated disabled bays. Cllr Feeney looks forward to the feedback from the planning department on this.

### Retrofitting Programme Update

Cllr Feeney asked the Council to provide an update on its Retrofitting Programme for its housing stock in this municipal district. The Council confirmed that its Housing Department is currently completing works under the Midlands Energy Efficiency Retrofitting Programme (MEERP) at twenty-one (21) homes in Derrinturn. These works are substantially complete (19 units) and will be finalised during this quarter (Q1, 2022).

Cllr Feeney commented that this is good news for Derrinturn and great progress to hear it is near completion, she asked about the next steps for the Council's remaining stock especially given that some of the oldest houses in the county are in this MD. Cllr Feeney said that many older occupants residents have to go through the only other route to apply for housing adaptation grants for improved windows or doors and is onerous and a lengthy process, more piecemeal in approach compared to a complete retrofitting programme.

### Swimming Pool Saga

Cllr Feeney asked the Council to provide an update on the planned provision of a swimming pool in Maynooth. She was informed that an update of the appeals process was requested from the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sports and Media on Monday 10 January. The response below was received on Tuesday 11 January:

"In relation to your request for an update on the appeal the position as per the below email remains the same, a decision on the outcome of the review is yet to be finalised. It is expected that the review will be completed shortly. The response pertaining to the appeal will be issued directly to the project lead.

Please note once the review is complete the scope for awarding new grants to projects which missed out under the first set of allocations and the timing of any new call for proposals will be considered." Cllr Feeney added that the swimming pool saga continues and thanked the Council for requesting this update from the department; it is good to hear that the outcome of the review will be issued shortly. There is still hope there.

### Cllr Feeney's upcoming MD motions and questions:

#### Motions:

1. That the Council carries out an assessment of the Dublin Road in Maynooth from Doctor's Lane to Carton Retail Park to identify and address accessibility issues on this section of the town.
2. That the Council extends the footpath on Leinster Street Maynooth as far as the Health Centre.

#### Questions:

1. Can the Council provide a report on the implementation of the flood relief measures for Brookfield Avenue, Meadowbrook and Parson Street Maynooth.
2. Can the Council provide an update on the Masterplan for Carton Avenue?

### Meetings attended by Cllr Feeney since last newsletter:

- Feb. 1st 10:00 CDP Workshop (online)
- Feb. 3rd 14:00 Strategic Policy Committee (online)
- Feb. 4th 10:00 Council MD (online)
- Feb. 9th 19:30 BOM Coláiste Chiaráin (online)
- Feb. 10th 11:30 Twinning Liaison Committee (online)
- Feb. 24th 10:00 CDP Meeting in Newbridge Town Hall
- Feb. 25th 10:00 CDP Meeting in Newbridge Town Hall
- Feb. 28th 15:00 CDP Plenary Council Meeting in Newbridge Town Hall

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## Maynooth: a Socio-Economic Community Profile 1901-1911 Highlights from the past.

This research focused on the 1901 and 1911 censuses for Maynooth to get a picture of the population profile of the town and how it differed in the ten year period. The census for these years provides information about families, businesses, employment, housing, education, and religion. Other primary sources such as St. Patrick's College Wage Books for Servants, Labourers' and Tradesmen

for the period or part of the period were consulted and offered further information on employment. A "wage book" for the years 1887-1921 in the College archives and a book titled "country bills" which covered 1887 to 1928 provided valuable information about the college business dealings in the locality. Newspapers such as the *Kildare Observer* and the *Irish Times* contained information about the businesses and social life in the town and the changing relationship with Carton Estate.

The article will highlight findings and will be covered the *Maynooth Newsletter* over the next few months. It will outline a brief history of Maynooth and then focus on the population profile of the town as a whole. Place of birth, education, religion, family size will be examined. The college census for the years will be examined separately because of its unique identity and population size. The article will look at employment in the locality including occupation profiles, rates of pay, job descriptions, length of service and conditions of employment. Carton Estate employees, business, living and social aspects of the community will be addressed. Retail outlets, in particular Dawson's Shop, organisations and business dealings with the College will be included. Social events such as dances, racing, the drama society will be covered. Reports on the Royal visit and the Duke of Leinster's coming of age give some insight into the paternal relationship that existed between the towns people and Carton Estate.

### Brief History of Maynooth

Maynooth is situated in the Barony of North Salt in County Kildare. The origin of the lands around was known as Mag Nuadat in early Christian times. Mag meaning open plain and Nuadat being an early Irish legendary figure.

Maynooth's development began with the settlement and establishment of Maynooth Castle in the late twelfth century. This was followed by the development of Carton Estate to the east in the 18th century and the subsequent landlord planned town. The Royal College of St. Patrick situated at the west end of the town was established in 1795 for the education of seminarians.

Maynooth began with a small settlement around its Castle. The manor of Maynooth and lands were granted to Maurice Fitzgerald by Richard de Clare former Earl of Pembroke known as Strongbow in 1176. The Fitzgeralds established and developed the Castle and became the most powerful family in Ireland. Garret Mór the eighth Earl, known as the great earl of Kildare, governed Ireland in the name of the King of England from 1487 until his death in 1513. The idea of central government came into play which had consequences for the Fitzgeralds and their rule in Ireland. The power of the Kildare Fitzgerald was finally broken when the ninth Earl was dismissed as deputy. Thomas, Lord Offaly known as 'Silken Thomas' declared himself in revolt and was executed with his uncles as traitors on Tyburn Hill in 1537. Maynooth was restored to Gerald, half brother to Silken Thomas, by Edward VI in 1557. But the power of the family was never to be the same again. By 1750 Maynooth was a market



and post town. Its appearance was unplanned. At the east end of the town Carton House and Demesne, later the home of the Earl of Kildare, began a new phase of development. James the twentieth Earl succeeded to the title in 1744 and was responsible for the transformation of Maynooth town. By 1760 the demesne of 1,100 acres was enclosed with five miles of high wall. James built up the farms and built slated stone houses for tenant farmers. Carton remained a property of the Fitzgerald family until it was sold in 1949 to Lord Brockett. Maynooth College was established in 1795 and occupied a space beside the Castle at the other end of the town from Carton Estate.

### Town Development

The streets and townlands that make up the Maynooth area include the following: Backlane, Ballycurraghan, Ballygoran, Barrogstown, Barrogstown West, Blakestown, Carton Demesne, Catherine's Town, College Land, Convent Lane, Cormickstown, Courthouse Street, Crewhill, Crinstown, Dillon's Row, Doctor's Lane, Donaghstown, Double Lane, Dowdstown, Dublin Road, Fagan's Lane, Greenfield, Griffinrath, Kellystown, Laraghbryan East, Laraghbryan West, Leinster Street, Main Street, Mariavilla, Maws, Maynooth, Moneycooley, Newtown, Old Carton, Parsons Street, Parsons Street Upper, Railpark, Ravensdale, Rowanstown, School Lane, Timard and Treadstown.

In 1757 the first row of uniform two-storey slated houses appeared to the east end of the town on the north side of the main street. This was in line with Carton Avenue linking the landed estate with the town and subsequently with St. Patrick's College in 1795. By 1781 a market complete with Market Square had been established on the south side of the Main Street. The Leinster Arms on the south of the town was opened by Richard Vouden in 1777. Stoyte House was leased by the College from the Duke of Leinster's steward John Stoyte and became the nucleus building on the campus of St. Patrick's College.

The Royal College of St. Patrick was established in 1795. The Duke of Leinster was influential in having the College established at Maynooth. As student numbers rose by 1850s further buildings were constructed in the college. Extensive college building continued from the middle of the nineteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth century which offered employment in the town. Other college buildings were established in the 1930s.

By the 1830s Maynooth as it appears in 1901 was virtually complete. There was the addition of houses along Parson's Street, Pound Lane, Convent Lane and Dillon's Row. The Presentation Sisters established a school in the old Charter School in 1824. The new Catholic Church was built in a more prominent location between 1835-1840. In 1845 the Midland Great Western Railway Company bought the Royal Canal and built a railway alongside it. Kavanagh's Manor Mills on an original mill site was in business as early as 1863. A laundry was established in the convent in 1887. (Sean Durack)

*To be continued...*





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## Writers' Corner - Short Stories/Articles from our Readers

### The Fourth Musketeer

"That must be it!" Kathy indicated stone pillars surmounted by broken eagles. Donal jammed on the brakes of his hired Mazda before turning in off the public road. Beech trees fractured the sunlight as the car crawled up the rutted avenue. Glancing at the wristwatch his parishioners had given him in America he saw that it was almost two, fifteen minutes later than arranged. Not that Seamus was too fussy about time. In his friend Gerry's opinion he had regressed to a bygone age. What would Castle Ronan look like? Gerry maintained the place wasn't even a castle, just an 18th Century mansion that was eating up all Seamus' money – though as a retired solicitor, who had spent more time backing horses than representing clients, Gerry was in no position to scoff.

"Careful!" Kathy's warning alerted him to a giant pothole on their left. When they emerged from the trees the fields on either side looked untended, ragwort and thistles showing above the lush grass. In the distance they could see a two-storey, neoclassical mansion with steps leading up to columns fronting a brown door. As they drew closer he noticed that one window was boarded up and part of the roof's stone balustrade broken.

Before they got out of the car Seamus was coming down the steps to greet them. With his erect posture, tweeds and trimmed grey beard he looked every inch the country gentleman. After shaking hands warmly, he led them up to the open door, lamenting the state in which vandals had left the place before he bought it. The entrance hall was bleak, the mouldings chipped and the great wooden stairs looking distinctly unsafe. In rooms on either side of the hall salvaged tables and chairs, moulting stuffed animals, antique pictures and objets d'art had replaced the original furnishings.

Soon Donal was examining a 16th Century map on the drawing room table while Seamus led Kathy on a tour of the servants' quarters. The two had hit it off right away, the retired architect proudly showing his exotic visitor some prize acquisitions, while she enthused about how much they would fetch in New York. Why did she find it so hard to praise his-own watercolours?

He caught up with them in the library, where a log fire had been lit to offset the damp chill. Seamus produced an album with black and white photos taken when he and Donal were students.

"Oh, look at those mops of hair!" Kathy exclaimed. "You were both so handsome!"

"Meaning we look like old fogies now!" Seamus kidded. "No, I didn't mean that," she assured him. "You both look really distinguished – by the way, who's this guy with the glasses?"

"That's Gerry, the third Musketeer," Donal examined the photo, "the man we met on Friday."

"Oh, I'd never recognise him." She turned to Seamus. "He's really bald now and quite overweight – not like you two."

"Yes," Seamus smiled, "your father and I are like good wine, improving with age."

"If Gerry was the third Musketeer, I guess you were the other two?" Kathy said.

"Yes," Seamus grinned. "Father Tom, our English teacher, gave us the nickname when he nabbed us on the college roof."

"Wow!" Kathy's eyes lit up.

"Did you hear about the cottage outside Athlone Gerry was restoring?" Donal asked.

"What about it?" Seamus threw more logs on the fire.

"It burned down this spring," Donal told him. "Probably vandals. Gerry's devastated."

"Bloody vandals!" Seamus shook his head. "But sure he can always build another one."

"It's not so easy to begin again at our age," Donal remarked.

"Raméis!" Seamus snorted. "Come out, Kathy, till I show you the granary. I'm converting it into a studio for Paul –

my son's an architect-cum-artist up in Dublin."

After the two had gone Donal continued to examine the photos, fighting off sadness. He was past his threescore years and ten and what had he to show for it? Absentmindedly he twisted his wedding ring, remembering Lillian, for whom he had given up the priesthood. She was so beautiful and, after his years of celibacy, so life affirming, but then God had taken her away as if to show that earthly happiness is a mirage. He recalled his later years of teaching unruly teenagers in Saint Mary's and Kathy's resentment because he had replaced her father, the drunken ex-baseball player who had made Lillian's life hell. Four years ago Kathy had fled from their comfortable home in Queens to a tiny apartment in the East Village, where she worked as a bookstore clerk while trying to write. If only he could convince her on this trip that he really cared for her.

Putting the album down, he hurried out to the farmyard, a rectangle of derelict stone buildings. In one corner a grey horse was eating apples from a bucket. Voices floated down from the granary, against which a scaffold had been built. Donal mounted a ladder leading to the scaffold. Half way up he froze. Kathy was saying: "It's just that he doesn't know when a picture's finished."

Good God, was she dismissing his painting so lightly, the one thing that during his years of teaching had kept him sane? Crestfallen he descended and wandered over to the back of the house to inspect an arched window on the first floor. After a while the other two joined him.

"That originally had stained glass with the O'Mulloy arms," Seamus explained. "It was smashed before I got the place so I had to put in plain glass. The coat of arms hit you as you mounted the stairs, a magnificent sight – Ah well, come inside and I'll make you tea."

On the journey back to the hotel Donal forced himself to ask Kathy what the studio was like.

"Half finished like everything else," she chuckled.

"Seamus expects Paul to live there without a bathroom or running water. That might have been okay when there were lots of servants to fetch and carry but not now."

"Did you see Paul's paintings?"

"Yes, a few. They're good – but abstract. You wouldn't like them."

"Possibly. What do you think of Seamus?"

"He's a real nice guy." She hesitated. "I think he's lonely though."

The knowledge came to him like a knife stab: he reminds her of Joe, her real father! The same blind belief in some madcap enterprise. Thank God Joe was dead – No, he didn't mean that. "Why do you think he's lonely?"

"His wife's living in Salthill, so they rarely meet. And he's all alone out here."

Weren't they all like that? Gerry divorced these ten years, grieving for his cottage. And he himself – what was he? Another lost soul pining for – what exactly was he pining for? Not money; he had enough of that. Not recognition – he wasn't ambitious – Maybe to have Lillian back so that they could chat again or listen to Andy Williams singing Moon River? Maybe to be a father that Kathy would love, not just respect? Maybe to be a grandfather too, just to feel that life went on?

"He said you were real wild." She sounded intrigued.

"Oh, Seamus likes to embellish," he demurred.

"Why did you become a priest?"

The question startled him. It was something she had never asked before and he tried to explain that that was how he had been brought up. It was why his parents had sent him to Summerhill, the diocesan College.

"Do you know the gold cross I wear about my neck?" he said. "Mam gave me that on my ordination. She and Dad were so proud of me. But the life was lonely – always consoling others and then at night there was no one to turn to. When Lillian came to me for help my heart went out to her. But that's enough about me. What about yourself, Kathy? Are you happy?"

Instead of answering she began to cry. Dismayed, he asked what was wrong, but she wouldn't say, so he drove on till they reached the hotel car park. Then switching off the engine, he turned to her. "What is it, Kathy?"

"It's you and mam," she sobbed. "You were so wrapped up in yourselves you never thought about how I felt."

"That's not true," he protested.

"Oh, but it is!" she cried. "Did you know the kids at school mocked me because my mother had married a priest? Did you know that I was smoking pot and hanging out with the school rejects?"

"We knew you were a bit of a rebel," he admitted.

"A bit of a rebel!" she repeated. "You're so blind! Did you know that my writing is crap and that the guy I've been living with these past two years has just dumped me? Of course you didn't. You were too busy with your painting." Instead of defending himself he encouraged her to go on. Much – no, most of what she said was justified. He had been so preoccupied with his own problems he had failed to see beyond her self-confident facade. Thank God, his eyes had finally been opened.

When she had regained her composure they went into the hotel bar and he ordered toast and coffee. They said little till the barmaid arrived with their order then Kathy asked unexpectedly, "Dad, why don't you sell that house of yours in Queens, give Seamus the money for his restoration work and move in with him?"

"What put that idea into your head?" He looked at her amazed.

"You're a different person here in Ireland," she said, "far more relaxed. I could visit you each summer – if that was okay?"

Hope surged through him, threatening his composure.

"Wouldn't you like to have our house when I'm gone, Kathy?"

"Not really." She shook her head. "Possessions are a trap. I've met people in Laos and India who were living in huts and they were a thousand times happier than we are."

"Why waste money then on Castle Ronan?"

"That's different. It could be turned into a retreat for artists and writers."

"It would be a major risk – And Seamus might balk..." He paused. "Even the money I'd get for our house wouldn't meet half the restoration costs."

"You wouldn't have to do it all at once," she pointed out.

"You're an extraordinary girl," he touched her hand, "just like your mother. Let me think about it. Meanwhile, why don't we invite Seamus here for lunch tomorrow?"

At their dining-room table next day Seamus toyed with his wineglass.

"There's an awful lot of renovation to be done," he warned.

"But Paul could do the design work," Kathy pointed out.

"He'd probably jump at the chance of a summer getaway.

And Gerry could write about the castle's original owners. Everybody would be interested in a history of the O'Mulloys."

"Not in the branch of the family that built Castle Ronan," Donal said. "Their ancestor, Theobald, fought for King Billy at the Boyne."

"They were good to their tenants during the Famine," Seamus reminded him.

"Great!" Kathy declared "Isn't it contradictions like that that make history fascinating?"

"You're a very persuasive young lady," Seamus grinned. "No, I'm just pointing out what you already know." Her voice quickened. "It would be the three of you coming together again for another great adventure."

Seamus carefully filled his glass with more Bordeaux red wine, reflecting on her suggestion: "I might consider it on two conditions: that you help Gerry write the history and act as our PR."

"Yes," Donal urged. "You'll be the fourth musketeer and keep an eye on us when you aren't backpacking."

"Agreed!" Laughing, Kathy slapped hands with them: "All for one and one for all."

P.G. Nerney





Writers’ Corner - Short Stories/Articles from our Readers - Cont.

A Duchess of Connaught Who Became a Princess  
by Cheryl Devaney

Princess Margaret, born in 1882, was the eldest daughter of Prince Arthur, Duke of Connaught, who was the third son of Queen Victoria and his wife, Princess Luise Margarete of Prussia.  
By tradition, the British monarch’s first son is the Duke of Cornwall, Duke of Rothesay in Scotland and Prince of Wales; the second son is the Duke of York and the third son would be gifted the Dukedom of Connaught and Strathearn. Receiving the latter Dukedom was discontinued when the Irish Free State left the United Kingdom in 1922. There was some speculation that the title would be resurrected for Prince Harry on his marriage to Meghan Markle but the idea generally was not well received.

Margaret Victoria Charlotte Augusta Norah was known as ‘Daisy’ to her family. She lived with her parents in Clarence House, London, which is now the home of Prince Charles and Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall and at Bagshot Park, which is 11 miles south of Windsor. This is the present home of the Queen’s third son Edward Earl of Wessex and his wife Sophie.  
Margaret and her sister, Patricia, were great beauties and they were bridesmaids at the wedding in 1893 of the Duke and Duchess of York, who later became King George V and Queen Mary. They were Edward VII’s favourite nieces and he considered them eligible as wives for European royalty. The two girls were duly sent to Portugal in January 1905 to meet the two sons of King Carlos and Queen Amélie.

On a trip to Cairo, however, Margaret met Prince Gustaf Adolf, Heir Apparent of Sweden, and the two fell in love. A few days after Sweden’s union with Norway ended, they married on June 15th, 1905 at St. George’s Chapel, Windsor Castle. They honeymooned in Adare Manor, County Limerick, which was the family seat of the Earls of Dunraven.  
Margaret’s wedding present from her parents was the Connaught tiara, which has five distinctive upright loops of forget-me-not wreaths with a diamond pendant suspended in each. It remains in the Swedish royal jewellery collection and today is Princess Madeleine of Sweden’s favourite tiara.

After Margaret’s arrival in Sweden, she was known as Margareta and, within two years, spoke good Swedish and was well informed about Swedish history and customs. She became genuinely popular with the Swedes, especially after her reserved nature became more relaxed when she took up sports, including skiing, tennis and golf.

Margaret’s husband, Gustaf, had been raised in the Prussian military discipline and he welcomed her hands-on approach to raising their five children, which they had in ten years. She introduced many English customs to the Swedish court and created an English-style garden at their country home at Sofiero Palace, north of Helsingborg, which was a wedding gift from the Swedish Royal family. Today it is considered to be one of Europe’s most beautiful gardens. Known as the ‘flower princess’, she had her book ‘Our Garden at Sofiero’ published in 1915. It is full of tips about garden design – ‘there should be rhythm and variety throughout, like a picture’. Her second book ‘From the Flower Garden’ was illustrated with her own drawings and photographs.

When Gustaf’s grandfather, King Oscar II died in 1907, his father became King Gustaf V and Gustaf and Margaret became Crown Prince and Princess. Margaret helped to create Sweden’s civil defence and encouraged disability rights. During World War 1 when paraffin supplies diminished, she began a candle collection. She stood up for the welfare of prisoners of war in camps throughout Europe, particularly British nationals. Margaret founded a sewing society to support the Red Cross and formed an organization to teach girls how to farm and work the land. She encouraged the arts, especially modern painting and photography. She was very gifted in both of these fields.

In contrast to her mother-in-law’s pro-German support, she reached out directly to poor communities in Sweden. When many European royal families were disappearing, Margaret’s approach is believed to have helped preserve the Swedish monarchy.  
Thirty years before her husband’s accession to the Swedish throne, thirty-eight-year-old Margaret died from blood poisoning on May 1st 1920. She was eight months pregnant and Gustaf was heartbroken.

Grandmother of King Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden and Queens Margrethe II of Denmark and Anne-Marie of Greece, Margaret is buried in the royal cemetery in Haga Park, Stockholm. Three years later, Gustaf married Margaret’s cousin, Lady Louise Mountbatten, sister of Earl Mountbatten. Lady Louise was able to carry on Margaret’s English influence on the Swedish monarchy.

The hundredth anniversary of Margaret’s death was marked by an exhibition in the Swedish Royal Palace in the autumn of 2020. It was a celebration of the life of this dynamic and popular monarch.

Night Terror  
I. M. Anne Frank

In the night the stomp of jackboots marching through urban wastelands left my heart afraid.  
No courage woke, for half the world lay dreaming and heaven scorned the faithless prayers I made.  
  
But one young girl who kept her soul in sweetness mid attic walls and Bergen-Belsen’s shade entered the darkness round my bedside, smiled through remembered pain and said:  
  
“The stomp of marching jackboots woke me also for all I sleep where terrors come no more.  
In life those phantom soldiers overtook me,  
Yet this frail heart felt no congealing gore

but joy in drowsy waves ascending to wash me limp up Jordan’s tranquil shore.”  
*“You speak like this because your terror’s over. What of the living who must still endure?”*  
  
“Hearts of stone will always thrive among us, assured that what they want trumps every rule observed by kindly humans who endeavour to make the common good their goal,  
  
“so we must cry because our tears are holy, our pride and anger phantoms in the gloom.”  
I cried for all my selfish derelictions,  
Slept and woke up in a sunlit room.  
  
Colin Scott

Rayan Ayram

Rayan Ayram, you have become special to many,  
As the great diggers moved mountains of earth  
In a desperate effort to return you,  
To the safety of your loving parents,  
To your own little cot, family and familiar life,  
To see you play again with your friends,  
Go to school again, perhaps lisp your prayers  
Thanking Allah for life’s many good things.  
But it was not to be. Allah had other thoughts,  
And you died alone in no one’s arms save his.  
Now, because of your terrifying, heroic battle  
One hundred feet below the ground,  
You are special to us for good as you taught us  
The unspeakable worth of little ones like you.  
The world opened its arms and heart to you,  
And took you as its own in a vain effort to protect.  
It will tell your story from age to age  
For years and years to come; the efforts to save you,  
The widespread, breathless interest in your fate,  
The hashtags, the outpouring of good will,  
The TV stations, the nonsense of other

“news”,  
The hopeful enquiries: “any word of Rayan?”  
And then the almost unutterable: “Rayan is dead”!  
Yes Rayan, you taught us the worth of little ones,  
Showed us that we still cared for our own.  
Five years, five months, six months, two months,  
Special creations, unique, not to be repeated,  
Not to be discarded as so much trash,  
Unwanted in a world of “mé féin” and my comfort,  
And I belong to me! Indeed, as Jesus asked,  
We must all become more like you and your kind.  
You have turned our gaze also on other little ones  
In war-torn countries as they die in their  
Thousands from violence, hunger and disease,  
While all the time earth’s precious wealth  
Is turned into bombs and bullets and gases  
To keep the satanic wargames on the road.  
To wreak havoc and death on the weakest.  
You have shown us that love and love alone  
Is the original source of our heart’s yearnings,  
The cradle, the dearest friend of all its travels.

GM



## March Events at Maynooth Community Library

For further information contact: [www.kildare.ie/librarymaynoothlib@kildarecoco.ie](http://www.kildare.ie/librarymaynoothlib@kildarecoco.ie) Ph: 01-6285530



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



[twitter.com/kildarelibrary](https://twitter.com/kildarelibrary)

### March Clever reach

#### Children

**World Book Day Online Author Visit with Oisín McGann for 10- 12 year olds Via Zoom.**

**Thursday 3rd March 16.00 - 16.45**

For World Book Day this year, we are very excited to have author Oisín McGann give this online author visit, suitable for 10- 12 year olds, where he will discuss his book 'A Short Hopeful Guide to Climate Change' (Little Island Press, 2021). This is the story of humans and fire and how we've changed the world.

Climate change is a story about our civilization and our environment, about wildfires and glaciers, war and wilderness. It's about tiny ocean creatures, giant machines, and teenagers protesting on city streets. In this talk, Oisín McGann introduces the basics of climate change, explaining the subject in a simple and light-hearted way. Suitable for ages 10 - 12. All children attending this event must have a parent/guardian present with them during this event.

Booking essential through Eventbrite:

<https://worldbookdaywithoisinmcgann.eventbrite.ie>.

**International Women's Day Online Quiz for 8 – 12 year olds**

**Tuesday 8th March 3.30 – 4.30 pm**

**Online International Women's Day Quiz for Ages 9-12**

**Tuesday March 8th at 3.30pm**

To mark International Women's Day on Tuesday 8th of March, why not test your knowledge of famous women throughout history and what they achieved? There will be two teams of six and there will be a prize for the winning team. Teams will be arranged on the day at the start of the quiz. A parent/guardian must be present with the children participating in this event for the duration of the event.

Booking Through Eventbrite: <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/international-womens-day-online-quiz-2022-for-9-12-year-olds-tickets-269706167407>

**Seachtain na Gaeilge Online Learn and Explore Music Workshop with Mobile Music School for 5- 8 year olds. Via Zoom**

**Wednesday 9th March 15.00 – 16.00**

An bhliain seo, le haghaidh Seachtain na Gaeilge, táimid ag dul i gcomhpháirtíocht le Mobile Music School chun ceardlann 'Learn and Explore' ceoil trí Ghaeilge a chuir i láthair. Tá na ceardlanna 'craic agus ceol' seo dírithe ar pháistí bunscoile nó teaghlaigh. Áirítear sa cheardlann seo an-chuid cluichí ceolmhaire idirghníomhacha a mbeidh gach duine in ann páirt a ghlacadh iontu, ag cloí le téama Seachtain na Gaeilge! Beidh an cheardlann ar an 9ú lá Mí na Márta trí Zoom. Caithfear tuismitheoir nó caomhnóir a bheith in éineacht le haon pháiste a bhfuil ag freastal ar an gceardlann seo. Is féidir áit a chuir in áirithe don gceardlann ar <https://agfiosrucheoilsnagexploringmusicsnag.eventbrite.ie>.

This year for Seachtain na Gaeilge, we are partnering up with the Mobile Music School, to deliver an online 'Learn and Explore' music workshop through Irish. These "craic agus ceol" workshops are aimed at either children who are currently in primary school, or families.

This workshop will include lots of interactive and fun music making games that everybody can participate in from home, sticking to the theme of Seachtain na Gaeilge! All children attending this workshop must have a parent/guardian present with them during the workshop. Booking Essential through Eventbrite <https://agfiosrucheoilsnagexploringmusicsnag.eventbrite.ie>.

**Forest Tree House: Minecraft Show and Tell**

**Friday 25th March 3:30pm via Zoom**

Do you like to create and build in Minecraft? Sign up for our Zoom discussion and take part in our build challenge which will be sent to you in advance! Suitable for ages 6-10. Children must be accompanied on the video call by an adult. Places are limited and booking is essential. This month we want you to start building a Forest Tree House! <https://minecrafttreehouse.eventbrite.ie>

#### Young Adults

**Teen Writers Workshop with Author Dave Rudden/ Ages 12-15**

**Wednesday 16th March at 4.30pm/Online via Zoom**

Join award-winning author Dave Rudden (Knights of the Borrowed Dark, Doctor Who) for an in-depth workshop for teenagers on how to create relatable characters, intricate plots and believable worlds for your stories. Perfect for aspiring authors between 12 and 15 years old. Booking Through Eventbrite: <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/online-teen-writers-workshop-with-dave-rudden-tickets-271045894567>

#### Family

**Art Exhibition - Ruth Cahill of Duck Blue 7th - 24th March**

Ruth is a local artist from Maynooth. She is an artist and illustrator of Greeting Cards and Prints using ink, pens and watercolour paints. Her designs are imaginative and

colourful. She has also illustrated a children's book, "Our Baby has Sixty-Five Roses" written by Eilís Moroney. Ruth's artwork will be displayed in Maynooth Community Library from the 7th to the 24th of March.

#### Adults

**German 'Stammtisch', informal conversation meet-up.**

**Thursday 24th March at 6.30pm**

Do you want to practice your German? 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. Meetings take place on the 4th Thursday of every month.

For more information please contact Maynooth Library at [maynoothlib@kildarecoco.ie](mailto:maynoothlib@kildarecoco.ie) or 01 6285530. Audience: Adults and Young Adults.

#### World Poetry Day 2022

**Your World of Poetry: An evening of sharing poetry from around the globe.**

**Thursday 31 March at 6.30 pm, via Zoom.**

Literary globetrotters, pack a poem and join us as we celebrate World Poetry Day. Some of you may wish to read, and others might like to just listen, as we travel the world of poetry. Hosted by Maynooth and Ballitore Libraries.

All welcome. Booking via Eventbrite

<https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/your-world-of-poetry-an-evening-of-sharing-poetry-from-around-the-globe-tickets-223239895537>

#### Kildare Libraries FaceBook Club via Zoom

**Wednesday 30th March 8:00pm**

Our FaceBook Club is always welcoming new members, where we will discuss a new book from BorrowBox every month over Zoom. Join our Facebook group or email [maynoothlib@kildarecoco.ie](mailto:maynoothlib@kildarecoco.ie) for the details.

<https://facebook.com/groups/kildarelibrariesbookclub>

#### Regular Events

**Live Story Time & Sing Along Nursery Rhymes Online via Zoom for 2-5 years 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 4th March 10am – 10.30am** <https://onlinestorytimeandsingalongnurseryrhymesfri4thmar.eventbrite.ie>.

**Friday 11th March 10am – 10.30 am**

<https://onlinestorytimeandsingalongnurseryrhymesfri11thmar.eventbrite.ie>.

**Friday 25th March 10am – 10.30 am**

<https://onlinestorytimeandsingalongrhymesfri25thmar.eventbrite.ie>.

#### Book Busters Children's Bookclub

**Friday 4th March @ 3.45 pm**

Maynooth Children's Book Club "Book Busters" will meet up via Zoom on Friday 4th March @3.45pm We will be discussing Snow and Rose by Emily Winfred Martin and Rumaysa by Radiya Hafiza. Members can decide to read one or both books. Now accepting new members. Suitable for ages 7-12 yr olds.

#### Scifi Bookclub

**Tuesday 8th March 6.30pm**

The Reader's of the Lost Ark Scifi Bookclub meets online via Zoom the second Tuesday of each month. The March meeting will be on Tuesday 8th March at 6.30pm. The bookclub will be discussing 'A History of What Comes Next' by Sylvain Neuvel. If you are interested in joining the bookclub, please contact [maynoothlib@kildarecoco.ie](mailto:maynoothlib@kildarecoco.ie) or telephone 045 980 493

**Tuesday 15th March 7.00pm – 7.45 pm / Máirt 15ú Mí na Márta 7.00 i.n. – 7.45 i.n. Ciorcal Comhrá san Oíche ar Líne / Online Evening Irish conversation group**

Beidh Ciorcal Comhrá ar líne thar Zoom ag tosnú ar an Máirt 15ú lá Mí na Márta 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: <https://irishconversationgroupciorcalcomhra.eventbrite.ie>.

Nó sheol ríomhphost chuig [maynoothlib@kildarecoco.ie](mailto:maynoothlib@kildarecoco.ie)

There will be an online evening Ciorcal Comhrá on Tuesday 15th March 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://irishconversationgroupciorcalcomhra.eventbrite.ie>. or email [maynoothlib@kildarecoco.ie](mailto:maynoothlib@kildarecoco.ie)





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

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### Bus Connects Survey & Update

Catherine Murphy TD recently met with the NTA to discuss the roll out of the C-Spine through the Bus connects programme that impact Dublin Bus Services to Maynooth, Celbridge and Leixlip.

At this meeting, the NTA confirmed they will be going to tender for bus on the W6 Route proposed to link Tallaght to Moyglare, with a view to services commencing Q4 or earlier 2022 this year.

Catherine Murphy TD and a Leixlip Kildare County Councillor is calling on members of the public to take part in a survey on the new Dublin bus routes.

Cllr Nuala Killeen, Social Democrats, says that she and TD Catherine Murphy have received numerous complaints about the service since the new routes were introduced in November.

“This survey is intended to reflect how bus service users in the north of the county have been impacted,” Cllr Killeen explained.

“It has been just over two months since the new Bus Connects C Spine bus routes were rolled out. The survey will provide feedback that we will give to the NTA about how customers are impacted by the new routes.

“We have found that there was no central place to funnel feedback about Bus Connects. The survey is intended to reflect how bus service users in the north of the county have been impacted

North Kildare TD Catherine Murphy says that she has received “quite a bit of feedback to my office since the service was introduced in November.”

“In order to accurately reflect the experience of the new service and to seek changes where necessary, it is essential to ask bus users for feedback – and for that reason, I would appreciate it if you could take the time to complete the survey.”

“We felt it was important to allow some time for the service to roll out and now that people are returning to workplaces etc, there is wider use of many of the services.” “I will be asking for some changes to the routes to deliver the best service to the localities in the north of the County.” “I recently asked a parliamentary question about resources in terms of bus drivers and was told that there are an additional 400 bus drivers in place now to deliver the Public Service Obligation routes across Dublin Bus services.”

Link to survey – <https://forms.gle/usvL4CCjR8WuNDTC9> Paper-based forms are available in Catherine Murphy’s office for those who would prefer not to complete the online form.

Alternatively the public can email either catherine.murphy@oireachtas.ie or nuala.killeen@socialdemocrats.ie or text 089 2444 793 with your name and address and a form will be posted out to them.

### Government Response To The Cost-Of-Living Crisis Lacks Ambition

Tinkering around the edges will do little to help those struggling to survive in the long-term.

The government’s response to the cost-of-living crisis is not sufficiently targeted at those who need help the most, according to Social Democrats co-leader Catherine Murphy.

“The vast bulk of the funding announced today is for a blanket €200 electricity credit that will be paid to every household, regardless of income. In fact, the owners of 62,000 holiday homes in Ireland are set to receive a €12.4 million bonanza under the government’s plan. Many high earners who receive this payment do not need it, but there are others in desperate need of substantial support who are barely keeping their heads above water. The government had time to target this payment, but opted not to.”

“We know that low and middle income earners spend a disproportionate amount of their income on essentials like energy, rent, transport and food. It is therefore crucial that

supports are targeted at these workers and families. In that regard, the €125 increase in the fuel allowance is welcome, but the government should have increased eligibility for the payment. As it stands, those in receipt of the Working Family Payment are among those who do not qualify.”

“The 20pc cut to all public transport fares is also welcome. The Social Democrats had proposed reduced rates for off-peak travel to incentivise travel outside of peak times, when limited public transport capacity is under the most extreme pressure. An additional fare decrease for off-peak travel should be explored by the government.”

“Reduced caps on school transport schemes are positive, but the government should now confirm its intention to introduce a universal school bus scheme which would save parents time and money – and remove cars from roads at peak hours.”

“If the government wanted to make a significant difference to those on low and middle incomes, it had a number of options. Core social welfare rates, which have only been increased by a paltry €5 in the past three years, could have been increased; eligibility for the fuel allowance could have been extended; the Exceptional Needs Payment could have been doubled; the minimum wage could have been increased; a €300 refundable tax credit for those on incomes below €50,000 could have been introduced; and a ban on rent increases could have been announced.”

“Tinkering around the edges, without making targeted and substantive changes, will do little to help those struggling to survive in the long-term. It is regrettable the government has not taken this opportunity to be innovative and ambitious.”

### Government To Blame For Cuckoo Funds Snatching Homes From Families

“The cuckoos have come home to roost – because the government incentivised them to come here.”

Cuckoo funds outbidding ordinary buyers for family homes by up to 32pc is a direct consequence of government policy, according to Social Democrats Deputy Catherine Murphy TD.

“Young workers and families don’t stand a chance when they try to buy a home. Cuckoo funds with deep pockets are paying up to 32pc more for properties than households. This equates to a premium of more than €100,000 per home.”

“Funds are not just buying properties in the build-the-rent sector – which the government has deliberately designed to lock out first-time buyers. Last year, cuckoo funds spent €2.27 billion snapping up nearly 5,000 homes for the private rented sector.”

“They were actively encouraged to do this by the government, which last year slashed stamp duty rates for cuckoo funds that lease properties back to local authorities. At the time, the Social Democrats warned this tax cut would destroy ordinary buyers’ dreams of home ownership. The government did it anyway.”

“Recently, a government Minister said people should “stop complaining” and “shop around” to tackle the cost-of-living crisis. But, there is no escaping house price and rental inflation. Wherever workers and families look, they are locked out – of home ownership and, increasingly, even rental accommodation.”

“The housing market in this country is broken, but this is not an accident. It has been destroyed by design. Government policy has incentivised cuckoo funds to swoop in and snatch up homes from under the noses of first time buyers. Government ministers then cry crocodile tears when it is revealed that an entire generation has been condemned to a lifetime of rent.”

### No Clarity On How Targets Can Be Achieved In Retrofit Plan

*Over-promising and under-delivering has been a recurring theme of this government.*

The government has promised that 500,000 homes will be retrofitted by 2030, but there is little clarity on how this target will be delivered in the plan, according to Social Democrats TD Catherine Murphy.

“To reach this target, approximately 62,500 homes need to be retrofitted every year for the next eight years. Last year, just 15,457 homes were retrofitted under all of the SEAI schemes. Incredibly, just 10 homes underwent a deep retrofit in 2021. Is it remotely credible that an additional 50,000 homes can be retrofitted this year under this revised scheme?”

“There are three major barriers to the government’s plans: the large upfront cost to householders that a deep retrofit will still entail; the lack of qualified construction workers to do the work; and the lack of clarity surrounding the government’s proposed low-cost loan scheme, the details of which will not be announced until the autumn.”

“If we are to reach our climate action targets, and reduce the impact of fuel poverty on those low-income families who are currently struggling to heat their homes, it is crucial that we get this right. Retrofitting homes cannot just be the preserve of a minority who can afford the work. State supports must be targeted at those who would otherwise be unable to retrofit their homes.

“We know that those on low incomes, and pensioners, spend a disproportionately large amount of their income on energy costs. These people have also been particularly vulnerable to recent energy price shocks, which have left many making invidious choices about whether they should heat their homes or put food on the table.”

“A national retrofitting plan could make a hugely important difference to these people, but to do so it must work for the many – not just the few. The government has said it intends to spend €5 billion on retrofitting over the coming years, but the budget for this year is just a tiny fraction of this – €202 million from carbon tax revenue. When does it intend to ramp up spending, as it must to deliver its targets?”

“Of crucial importance also is the lack of qualified construction staff to do this work. The Construction Industry Federation has already raised concerns about whether the requisite number of construction workers exist to simultaneously build new homes and deliver on ambitious retrofitting targets. The government has dismissed these concerns, without providing any real detail on how these twin demands can be achieved.”

“Finally, the failure to provide any clarity on a central plank of this plan, the low cost loans, is a major failing. It is not clear why the government was unable to provide this detail, given the retrofitting targets were included in the programme for government and are now nearly two years old.”

*Catherine Murphy had a Leaders Questions slot in the Dáil on accountability within the HSE and the transcript of that debate is as follows:*

Whenever there are scandals in the public service the inevitable review concludes it is down to a “system failure”. It is a loaded term and suggests there is some kind of automated process that has gone awry in some way and there is no need to hold an individual or, indeed, an entity responsible. A succession of scandals in the health service have been in the news in recent weeks. Just yesterday, we learned of a further scandal in disability services in the north west.

(Continued on page 19)





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

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*(Continued from page 18)*

A resident was able to access child exploitation material online on multiple occasions going back to 2016. Basic safeguarding procedures seem to have been either ignored or abandoned. Vulnerable children were seriously harmed in south Kerry Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, (CAMHS).

Residents with intellectual disabilities in a care home in Donegal were sexually abused with impunity and a child, Grace, with special needs in the south east was abandoned to an abusive foster home. Our most vulnerable citizens, who relied on the State to protect them, were instead physically, sexually or psychologically abused, and some of that went on for decades. The abuse was not a secret. People in positions of power knew what was going on.

In Donegal, the staff and management in that care home were aware of the horrific sexual abuse being perpetrated by a resident called Brandon. Their response to the abuser was to move him to different wards where he had new victims who were non-verbal and unable to advocate for themselves. They were left to suffer for a decade. The DPP has directed there will be no prosecutions in that case. We may never know the full extent of the abuse suffered by Grace. The State was supposed to protect her but instead it sent her to live with demons. They tortured her for about 20 years. In addition to Grace, the whistleblowers paid a hefty price. We recently learned the DPP will not prosecute any of the officials or State agencies that had a duty of care to Grace, despite the fact the Garda has recommended prosecutions for endangerment and negligence.

In South Kerry, hundreds of children and their families suffered unimaginable trauma when they were prescribed inappropriate medications and it had devastating consequences, both physically and psychologically. A rogue junior doctor who was not supervised or managed by anyone in senior management for years is probably going to take the fall. The system will remain intact.

All these scandals have a central feature, namely, that there is no accountability and a lack of consequences. What is the Taoiseach going to do to consign the term "system failure" to history and instead have real accountability built into the system, accountability that has real consequences, including the possibility of prosecution? Does the Taoiseach believe the lack of accountability undermines the vast majority of really good people who work in those services?

**Response from Micheál Martin (Taoiseach, Department of An Taoiseach; Cork South Central, Fianna Fail)**

There has to be, and should be, accountability. I am not clear what the Deputy is proposing. These are very serious scandals in themselves, in terms of the Grace case and the case of Brandon and what transpired there. The Deputy referenced the south Kerry CAMHS. At this initial stage, I would put a question mark after the word "rogue".

I think that is judgmental of the individual because I do not believe it is one issue pertaining to one individual. There are issues in terms of prescribing and so on but whether it was wilful or not is a separate matter. That is part of the issue. It is easy for us in the Oireachtas to make judgments but when it comes to the law, the legal system and people's rights and entitlements, it is a completely different arena, and people have rights and entitlements.

It has been an accepted premise here that the DPP is independent of the political system. It has been long argued but I do not see how we could change that. I do not know whether the Deputy is suggesting we should change the status of the DPP and that there should be a different approach. On balance and having witnessed things over the years, I would not agree with the idea that somehow the DPP should be answerable to the political system because I

am not too sure justice would be done, if I am frank about it. We have to be careful about that.

We can perhaps look at other mechanisms to get better insights or explanations as to why certain cases are not proceeding but that then could in itself jeopardise cases into the future because no case is ever closed and new evidence can emerge that can lead to cases being progressed. The DPP must make assessments, and the Garda must make assessments on these matters. I can understand why people are very unhappy, in that the Garda wished for a prosecution in this instance but the DPP took a view, probably looking at the entire case, and made determinations. The DPP's office is independent of Government, and rightly so.

More broadly speaking, as I have said before in the House, we have established numerous commissions of inquiry on a whole range of issues. Invariably, one is never entirely satisfied with the length of time they take and the fact they never lead to prosecutions, because of their very nature, and can, in some instances, jeopardise prosecutions, in the sense there can often be a difficulty between the case being prosecuted in the courts and any material related to that prosecution being aired in a commission of inquiry.

There are very real issues for us to reflect on and consider in respect of how best we pursue these issues between, on the one hand, trying to get the truth and the accountability question on the other.

**Catherine Murphy TD replied:**

The Taoiseach's very first line that he does not know what it is I am proposing concerns me. I am proposing that we build accountability into the system. There has been a myriad of different reports. When harm has been done, the first response tends to be about financial compensation, which is appropriate, but very often whistleblowers and people who have been harmed want more than that.

They want to be sure that the same people who have failed in their positions of responsibility will be held personally responsible and will not be there to repeat those failures. We do not build those systems of accountability into our systems. It is very obvious because week after week we hear of different scandals. There is an origin for that. How can someone move an abuser from one ward to another and not think that is wrong? How can someone, for example, disregard things such as safeguarding and feel there is no accountability? Why is accountability not built into the system? That is the point I am trying to get to.

**Micheál Martin (Taoiseach, Department of An Taoiseach; Cork South Central, Fianna Fail)**

I 100% agree with the Deputy. Of course, people should not be moved. What happened was very wrong and it should not happen. It is incomprehensible that it happened as recently as some years ago, which is my understanding in respect of the Brandon case. Accountability is built into systems, but people contest who is or is not accountable. People will argue and will say it is not them but somebody else. It is not that simple because people have rights and they will contest whether they are the ones to be blamed for a given situation.

There should be accountability in every system. I have said previously that we need to build up the existing structures. HIQA, a body I established when I was Minister for Health, has brought more accountability into health than any other body, some of which is pre-emptive accountability. In other words, it is getting in there, doing unannounced inspections and forcing change in the system. Many in the health service complained about HIQA in the early days, but it has driven standards higher than they would otherwise have been. The agencies responsible for standards and regulation are the ones we need to strengthen and empower.

### Transcript of leaders questions:

**Catherine Murphy (Kildare North, Social Democrats)**

What does the Taoiseach have to say to workers and their families today who are desperately trying to save to buy their own home? He can hardly tell them to stop complaining or to shop around. Cuckoo funds are outbidding household buyers by as much as 32%, paying on average €105,000 more per property than household buyers.

Ordinary workers can shop around for an eternity, but increasingly they feel they are chasing shadows. They will never be able to outbid the cuckoo funds that are swooping in and snatching the homes they hope to buy. This is not just happening in the build-to-rent sector, the sector designed specifically by Government to be bought exclusively by cuckoo funds.

Last year, these funds spent €2.27 billion acquiring nearly 5,000 properties for use in the private rental sector. In some cases, the funds are buying these homes and leasing them back to local authorities that reward them with guaranteed extortionate rents, in some cases for up to 25 years, before they get the keys back. Again, this has been deliberately facilitated by Government policy. The Government voted to slash the stamp duty for cuckoo funds if they leased the homes back to local authorities. We warned the Government at the time that this would be the result, but it went ahead anyway.

The head of research of BNP Paribas Real Estate Ireland, John McCarthy, has explained further that "[cuckoo funds] believe that rents are well underpinned by existing market imbalances and Ireland's demographic potential". In other words, the rental market is so utterly broken and dysfunctional, these funds do not believe that sky-high rents are going to come down any time soon. Ireland has a young population who are going to be condemned to continue to pay crippling rents for the foreseeable future.

Rents are now 50% higher than they were during the Celtic Tiger peak. What level does the Taoiseach think is sustainable? In Dublin, rents went up by 4% in just the last three months of 2021. Nationally, year on year, they went up by 10%, with 20 counties seeing a double-digit increase. Rents increased by 25% in County Donegal. Meanwhile, the Government insists the rent caps, which are now set at a 2%, are working. It is plainly obvious the rent caps are not working.

The Government has to be straight with people. Most people believe this is out of control. The Taoiseach is going to have to tell us how he will get control of this. Does he accept the Government has incentivised the disaster by rewarding the cuckoo funds with tax breaks for buying what would normally be family homes? Does he accept rent caps are not working? Will he immediately bring in a three-year ban on rent increases? We really need to see an eviction freeze. There is a serious problem with evictions coming down the track.

**Micheál Martin (Taoiseach, Department of An Taoiseach; Cork South Central, Fianna Fail)**

I thank the Deputy for raising the issue. Again, the issue is a very serious one. Rents are too high for people. There are not enough houses out there. We can see from the Daft report there are not enough apartments to rent. There is not enough housing out there to buy. The whole purpose of the Government policy over the past 12 months and since we came into office has been to increase the supply of housing dramatically. A total of 31,000 starts happened in 2021.

*(Continued on page 20)*





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

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That is the highest number of housing starts since 2008. We are going to continue with that acceleration of house building if we are allowed and if people just remove the obstacles and allow us to get housing and apartments built.

We are going to have to build different types of housing. There will be a very large public housing programme. We want more than 10,300 on average as part of that 33,000 overall houses to be built every year. We want to get up to that 33,000 target. Supply is key here. People can rightly raise the issue and so on, but equally, we need solutions. I am talking about solutions in terms of supply and the type of housing we provide and to enable people to afford housing. Cost rental is one of those models that is developing and is in its infancy in this country.

I predict the cost rental model, which can offer a very substantial rent reductions below the market, will accelerate and be enhanced due to Government efforts in working with local authorities and others. Social housing is going to increase year on year, and specifically, direct builds. We are phasing out the leasing. We will increase direct builds on an unprecedented scale. Also, there will be 4,000-plus affordable houses built. That is what the State can do, but the private sector will be involved as well. It will also be providing housing and apartments, as has always been the case.

The one thing we cannot do is inhibit supply. It is easy to be political about this. I understand it fully and I have no issue with it, but I have to make sure we introduce the right policies for the long haul. We cannot develop housing policy on the basis of the outcome of the next election and who wins it or who does not. We now have to get a consistent housing policy that lasts the decade and brings stability to the market. The market is not stable right now; the rents are too high. However, a lot of thought has gone into this from people just outside of politicians in terms of what we need to do. I believe in a strong social housing programme and it is happening now. I believe in the idea of affordability and that we should help from the State perspective. I believe in the idea of cost rental.

However, I also believe that we need private sector investment as well. I think the Deputies in opposition need to speak out on that. Do they believe in private sector investment at all in the housing market or is it their view we should continue the decline in the number of landlords? They are leaving the market. We do not have enough rental properties. We do not have enough houses built for people to buy. We want more owner-occupiers. We want to give people the chance to buy their homes, which is why the shared equity and help-to-buy schemes and so on are coming in. There are huge issues here, and I acknowledge that. However, we need to be solution focused in terms of how we get to grips with it.

**Catherine Murphy (Kildare North, Social Democrats)**

Let me address the issue of private sector investment. Of course it has its place. It is a big part of the solution but it has to have constraints put on it. The Taoiseach stated that he has spoken to a lot of people in terms of designing the solution. I am wondering who he has been speaking to because the solution that has been designed really favours cuckoo funds over individual home buyers.

That is the obvious thing that is happening here. Does he ever question that he could be getting this wrong? Fianna Fáil has got it wrong before. Does he ever question that he is talking to the wrong people or taking the wrong advice? Look at the evidence. Look at the evidence of rental costs. Who can afford €2,000 a month in rent in perpetuity? It is only going to be a question of time before we see young people queueing up at airports to leave this country. They will do so because they cannot live in it. Housing is critical to that. For the past decade, I have been speaking

about the need to build social housing. When the housing assistance payment, HAP, was brought in, I said it would be a disaster if it was not accompanied by a big housebuilding programme and it would become a dominant feature in terms of the amount of State money that went into it. I am sick to death of predicting things that turn out to be right. Perhaps the Taoiseach might listen to some of us rather than saying the same thing. We know we need supply, but we need affordable supply.

**Catherine Murphy (Kildare North, Social Democrats)**  
**Response from Martin Micheál Martin (Taoiseach, Department of An Taoiseach; Cork South Central, Fianna Fail)**

I have been a long-standing advocate for social housing, along with the Deputy, even when I was in opposition. We are now looking at an unprecedented social housing programme. It is going to take time to build but it is happening right now.

**Catherine Murphy (Kildare North, Social Democrats)**  
I have been listening to that since 2012.

**Micheál Martin (Taoiseach, Department of An Taoiseach; Cork South Central, Fianna Fail)**

There were 31,000 starts last year. I accept and am glad the Deputy acknowledged the need for private sector investment. It does need to be constrained. We have already brought in planning constraints on funds in terms of housing estates and being able to bulk buy. They cannot do so. From a taxation perspective and a planning position, that has happened. In terms of apartment building, there has been a huge issue for some time in terms of the whole issue around viability of apartment building.

The daft.ie report and the BNP Paribas report state that, basically, if that funding was not available, those apartments would never have been built in the first place. We have an issue with apartments - there is no question about that - in terms of viability, particularly in terms of brownfield sites and trying to get compact living. That is all part of Housing for All and that is why the Croí Cónaithe fund is being established - to see if the State can help in terms of creating viability and affordability in that apartment sector. That is clearly a challenge but, again, let us be clear that we have to be very careful we do not inhibit supply even more in terms of just responding to the short-term issues.

**Catherine Murphy TD** asked the Minister for Finance the amount collected in VAT from gas and electricity bills in the past two years to date; and his plans to reduce VAT on energy bills. [7422/22]

VAT Collected 2020 €m: Gas - 60 Electricity - 228  
VAT Collected 2021 €m: Gas - 65 Electricity - 290

I am advised by Revenue that the VAT rating of goods and services is subject to the requirements of EU VAT law with which Irish VAT law must comply. The VAT Directive obliges each Member State to have a standard rate of VAT and also allows that a Member State may choose to have no more than two reduced rates of VAT, which may be no less than 5%, and which may be applied to certain goods and services: any of those listed in Annex III of the Directive. Within this framework, Ireland currently applies a standard rate of 23% and two reduced rates of 13.5% and 9%.

The EU Directive permits derogations from the general rules to allow an individual Member State to continue certain historic tax treatments, such as the application of one of their reduced rates to particular goods and services which are not included in Annex III. Ireland, in line with the VAT Directive and by way of special derogation from the general rule, maintains several "standstill" provisions and derogations that allow us to maintain reduced rates to certain supplies for historical reasons. It is on this basis that

Ireland applies its 13.5% reduced rate of VAT to the supply of fuel, gas, oil, and electricity services for both domestic and commercial use. The current 13.5% VAT rate applied to energy products is a 'parked rate', governed by Article 118 of the VAT Directive and standstill provisions from 1991 and cannot be reduced below 12%.

Article 102 of the VAT Directive provides that, after consultation with the EU VAT Committee, a Member State may choose to apply a reduced rate (no less than 5%) to the supply of natural gas, electricity, or district heating on a temporary basis. The EU Commission recently indicated that this provision could now be used by Member States without the requirement to consult the VAT Committee in advance.

Under its existing provisions, Ireland already applies a reduced VAT rate to a broader range of energy products (including the supply of fuel, gas, oil and electricity services) than would be allowed under Article 102, which is restricted only to supplies of natural gas, electricity and district heating.

Because a Member State may only have a maximum of two reduced rates, if Ireland were to consider introducing a new reduced rate, even on a temporary basis, for the supply of natural gas, electricity and district heating as allowed under Article 102 of the Directive, then it would not be permissible to also continue both of our existing reduced rates of 9% and 13.5%. This would mean that one of those existing rates would have to be removed and the goods and services covered by those rates would have to move either to one of the other reduced rates or to the standard rate.

However, there is a significant restriction on this, as the services to which the 13.5% reduced rate applies on a historic basis (i.e. the "parked" services) cannot be moved to a rate below 12%. Therefore, depending on the reduced rates chosen, this restriction could mean that the services that are currently at the 'parked rate', would have to move to the standard rate of 23%.

If Ireland did reduce the rate below 12%, even on a temporary basis, we would not be able to retain the derogation we currently hold that allows us to apply a reduced rate. This means that the VAT rate on electricity, gas, oil and fuel would increase to 23% when the temporary relief had expired.

I am advised by Revenue that traders are not required to identify the VAT yield generated from the supply of specific services on their VAT returns. However, a tentative estimate for the VAT collected on domestic electricity and gas supplies in 2020 and 2021, based on tax returns and other information sources available to Revenue, is shown in the following table.

**Catherine Murphy TD** has raised the issue of Low pay in the context so that our citizens can afford to live. Low pay is not a recent problem. It has been an issue for decades. It is a feature, unfortunately, of the Irish economy. We have the highest levels of low pay in the EU. It has a real impact on people's lives but it is having an especially big impact now as prices are rising so dramatically.

This is not something that just arose as a consequence of the pandemic. Front-line workers during the pandemic were people who went into work, gowned up and put themselves at risk in hospitals, nursing homes etc., but people also realised that so too were shop workers, the people who drove the buses and trams, and the ancillary workers.

*(Continued on page 21)*





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

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*(Continued from page 20)*

They were the people who cleaned the hospitals, for instance. There were sectors people did not realise were vital in just keeping things afloat. Many of those include people who are on low pay.

Then there are the areas where we have creativity, fun and joy in our lives such as entertainment, arts and hospitality, where there are very high levels of low pay. There is now a real issue in recruiting and retaining staff. People have to be able to work in an environment they want to work in but also to be able to afford to live. People have found other types of employment directly as a consequence of the lack of available work in those sectors and it is increasingly difficult to get them back. Much of that relates to low pay.

It is not only bad for the individual to struggle constantly but also bad for the economy and society. We are all impacted by this. Low pay results in a lower tax take and means higher need for supports such as housing assistance payment, medical cards and so on. Low pay has a wider impact and it is in all our interests that we get to grips with the problem. The Spirit Level was a book which measured this. Countries with greater levels of equality, and we have a lot of inequality here, do better in health, life expectancy and in many other areas. That is another societal gain from where people live in a more equal society. The Government has a role to play in bringing that about. We will support the motion and some of the amendments.

We have to recognise there was an underlying assumption in the budget around the level of inflation. Inflation has exceeded what was expected and therefore there has to be an adjustment. We called for a 60 cent increase to the minimum wage and it was increased by 30 cent. That was before inflation had accelerated. I am not surprised we are being told it is not short term but could be medium term. It is very difficult to judge

However, we need a review of the numbers for the living wage as those will have changed. Nor do we need just one review. It needs to be under constant review. A link to inflation is essential. We must acknowledge that countries that have done better have a system of free collective bargaining and they do not necessarily have to have a minimum wage as a point which people do not fall below.

The bargaining is done for, and sometimes through, particular sectors, and we need to see that here. We need to see a plan for how we will get to a living wage. It cannot just be a case of saying we will do it when we get around to it, without a fixed plan. The national minimum wage is to increase by 2025 from €10.20 to €12.90 an hour. That already looks very tame in comparison with the circumstances in which people find themselves at the moment, with rents, housing assistance top-ups and the increasing cost of heating and food. In an inflationary environment, money just does not stretch as far as it did. There has to be a clear recognition that there is an urgency about this and we need to see timelines for that urgency.

It is in the employer's interest not to have a constant turnover of staff, and retaining staff is at least as important as recruiting them. We will not see stability in certain sectors unless there is an environment where people earn enough to allow them to live in dignity, not just to survive. This low pay issue affects women to a greater degree than men, and that has to be considered especially in the context of sectors that are dominated by women.

The Government most definitely has a role to play. We would very much support a right to free collective

bargaining. It has been demonstrated in other jurisdictions that it has made a significant difference, so much so that in some cases they do not require a national minimum wage. They also compare favourably with ours as equal societies.

We will support the motion. [National Minimum Wage: Motion...: 9 Feb 2022: Dáil debates \(KildareStreet.com\)](#)

There have been queries about sports organisations offering houses as prizes and Catherine Murphy raised the issue and the response is as follows:

**616. To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Justice and Equality** if he will clarify the position in respect of sports clubs offering houses as prizes in the course of their fundraising activities in the context of the Gaming and Lotteries (Amendment) Act 2019 [8379/22]

**James Browne (Wexford, Fianna Fail)**

The Gaming and Lotteries (Amendment) Act 2019, which was commenced on 1 December 2020, modernises the Gaming and Lotteries Act 1956 to assist the better promotion of local gaming and lottery activity held primarily for charitable and philanthropic purposes. These activities are an important source of funding for sporting clubs and community organisations across the country.

Section 28 of the Act provides for a charitable or philanthropic cause to seek a District Court licence to promote a lottery on a continuing or once-off basis. With regard to the latter instance, a prize to a maximum value of €360,000 may be offered.

Following concerns about break ins in the Greater Dublin area and commuter belt areas, Catherine Murphy (Kildare North, Social Democrats) asked the question below:

**618. To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Justice and Equality** if she has engaged with the Garda Commissioner and/or the Garda traffic corps in respect of developing a proactive strategy to address the issue of the State's motorway network being used by criminal gangs and persons to commit acts of burglary and assault. [8397/22]

**Minister McEntee (Meath East, Fine Gael)**

I can inform the Deputy that both I and my senior officials are in regular and frequent communication with the Garda Commissioner and his senior management team. These engagements take various forms and cover the full range of issues of relevance to our roles.

As the Deputy will be aware, Operation Thor was launched in November 2015 and is focused on burglary and burglary-related crime, particularly over the winter months, when instances of burglary increase. I am informed that Operation Thor proactively targets organised crime gangs and repeat offenders through coordinated crime prevention and enforcement activity based on intelligence and the latest crime trends and patterns to protect communities.

This annual focus from Operation Thor has proved highly successful in tackling property related crime since its inception in November 2015, with incidents of residential burglary significantly reduced nationally since its introduction. In 2015, there were in excess of 18,800 residential burglaries reported. By contrast, to the end of 2021 there were just over 6,000 residential burglaries reported, a reduction of over 66% or approximately 13,000 less residential burglaries.

While the COVID-19 pandemic was clearly a factor in some of this reduction, with people more likely to be present in their homes throughout the day, there has been a marked and consistent downward trend in such offences

since the introduction of this Garda focus through Operation Thor.

One of the five main focuses of Operation Thor is Crime Prevention and Protecting Communities, including visible focused patrols at specific times of day, targeting burglary 'hot-spots', intelligence gathering on known offenders, high-visibility check points to prevent ease of movement, strong crime prevention communications and reassurance with communities.

The budget provided by Government to the Garda Commissioner continues to increase to unprecedented levels, with an allocation in excess of €2 billion for 2022, including funding for the recruitment of up to 800 additional Garda trainees and up to 400 Garda staff. This significant investment demonstrates the Government's commitment to increasing the Garda workforce to enable the organisation to keep our communities safe.

Budget 2022 also allocated €12m for investment in the Garda fleet, which means more high visibility policing in our towns and cities and on our roads. This continuing investment is intended to ensure that An Garda Síochána has a modern, effective and fit-for-purpose fleet and that Gardaí can be mobile, visible and responsive on the roads and in the community to prevent and tackle crime.

I am informed by the Garda authorities that a key element of the work of the Roads Policing Unit is denying criminals the use of the roads network. In addition to focusing on the lifesaver offences of speeding, seatbelts, mobile phones and driving under the influence, there is a significant focus on crime prevention and crime detection. Roads Policing work closely with crime units to target known criminals and to disrupt their activities through strict enforcement of road traffic legislation.

**Catherine raises the issue of ECCE in the Dáil**

168. To ask the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth if he plans to enhance funding streams to the ECCE sector. [8618/22]

**Roderic O'Gorman (Dublin West, Green Party)**

A review of the ECCE programme which is due to commence shortly. The review will give an opportunity to providers and parents to express their concerns and will also inform the future development of the programme.

The review will also give a range of stakeholders, including providers and parents, offering an opportunity to not only highlight the strengths of the programme as it has evolved in recent years but also identify potential barriers or unintended consequences that may have emerged as the programme has evolved. This review will then be considered by Government and form the basis of any future changes to the scheme.

The Deputy may also be aware of the recommendations of an Expert Group to develop a new funding model for early learning and childcare, which were adopted by Government in December. This marks a new departure in State funding of the sector and is a significant step towards ensuring high-quality, affordable, sustainable and accessible services.

The Expert Group report informed the transformative package of measures for the sector committed in Budget 2022, including the Core Funding stream. Core Funding will operate from September 2022 to support improved quality, affordability, and sustainability. Core Funding will be worth up to €69 million in 2022, equivalent to €207 million in a full year. A full list of Dáil questions can be found on the [Houses of the Oireachtas website](#)



## Maynooth Community Council calls for more GP services in Maynooth



Maynooth Community Council have expressed concern about the lack of GP services available in Maynooth, and pointed out that this situation will only worsen, given the many residential developments now being built and proposed for Maynooth.

Developments now in train include the Cairn Homes estate adjacent to the Dunboyne Road. This includes 119 houses and 74 apartments, and construction is under way. The Parson Street planning application by Glenveagh is well advanced, with 23 February deadline for submissions to be made to Kildare County Council. An application for a large development in Moygaddy, near Kilcoon, is expected soon, which, although in County Meath, will be in the hinterland of Maynooth.

The Dunboyne Road development, as a Strategic Housing Development (SHD) was granted planning permission directly by An Bord Pleanála (ABP-310865-21) in November 2021. The Inspector's report granting planning permission by An Bord Pleanála agreed with the Social Infrastructure and Provision Assessment submitted by Cairn Homes as part of their planning application that **"... there is a total of 7 medical centres in the town of Maynooth and it is concluded that there is sufficient capacity to accommodate the development"**.

This was in the face of several submissions, including from Kildare County Council, which pointed out that there is insufficient social infrastructure, including GP services, in the area to accommodate the proposed increase in population. The Inspector simply accepted what Cairn Homes had submitted in relation to medical services even though two GP's in the town, well-known for many years, had retired during 2021, before the planning application was approved. Neither GP has been able to source a replacement, and one practice has closed completely.

Patients from both practices have had great difficulty in sourcing alternative GP services, with many having to look outside Maynooth - Clane, Celbridge, Tallaght - as the remaining practices in the town are not taking on new patients. New residents to the town are also faced with this lack of services. Developments approved and expected soon in the town and immediate area of Maynooth, will likely account for well over 1,000 extra residents in the near future. On average, each GP provides services for about 2,000 population, and with current and future residential development expected to account for at least that number of new residents, the shortage of GP services is set to become even more acute.

The recent January meeting of the Maynooth Community Council was informed that the HSE has tendered for the provision of a Primary Care Centre for Maynooth, although this may not help with the worsening GP situation in the town. The Maynooth Community will warmly welcome any GP who wishes to establish a practice in Maynooth.

## How to reduce costs & make your home more energy efficient

While they often appear complicated, every household energy bill comes down to the same simple equation. The more energy you use, the more it costs. As a result, saving money on your energy bills is just as simple. If you can use a little less energy, you'll save a little more on your bills, and using less energy is easier than you might think. It starts with changing a few energy habits.

### Heating

Unless you want to spend all of your time at home under a blanket, you will need to use electricity or gas to heat your home. However, that doesn't mean that you can't control how much it costs to have a cosy home.

Outside of big energy efficiency changes like new windows or insulation, you can save money by changing your habits around heating. The first step is to ensure that heat flows freely around the areas you want to heat, so avoid blocking radiators with furniture or curtains. Once you know the heat is flowing effectively, you need to keep it in the right places. Close doors and curtains and avoid leaving windows open while the heating is on. The longer you can retain heat in your home, the less energy you will need to use on heating.

It's also important to think about waste. Turn off the heating when you don't need it; if the house gets too warm or you're going out. It's easy to set a timer and forget about it but remember that heating an empty house will cost you just as much as heating a full one. If you are fond of long, deep baths or power showers, you may be using more energy than you need heating the water.

- Opt for a shower rather than a bath to use less heated water.
- Shorten the length of your shower time.
- Dial down the pressure if you have a power shower so you're not heating more water than needed.

Finally, consider turning down the thermostat in your main living area, if you have one. Dropping the temperature by just one degree will make a significant difference to your heating bills but won't make your home any less comfortable. Turn your heating down by one degree and you could knock 10% off your heating bill.

### Lighting

Lighting is the other obvious opportunity for reducing energy costs. While individual lights don't require a huge amount of energy, lighting a home can be a big energy user if not monitored closely. Little things like leaving lights on in unused rooms start to add up on your electricity bill, but we all do it from time to time. Just cutting that habit will make a difference, but if you really want to reduce your energy usage, consider using lamps and dimmer switches to reduce the amount of energy you use to light each room. It's also worth investing in LED light bulbs, they may cost a little more up front but will use less electricity than a standard bulb and last up to ten times longer.

### In the kitchen

Keep your fridge & freezer cool

Ensuring your fridge-freezer runs efficiently can be a big help when it comes to saving energy.

Place the fridge-freezer out of direct sunlight or appliances that generate heat.

Keep the coils free from dust and 10cm away from the wall to ensure maximum efficiency.

Set your fridge temperature between 3 and 5°C and your freezer at -18 °C.

Defrost your freezer regularly so there is no build-up of ice.

Maintain the fridge-freezer at a steady temperature.

Make sure food is cool before putting it in the fridge.

### Hang your clothes out to dry

The tumble dryer is one of the most expensive appliances in our homes, using around 2.5 kWh per hour so use it sparingly.

Dry your clothes outside if possible or on a clothes horse next to a radiator.

Wash your clothes at a lower temperature it uses less energy and costs you less.



Lighting and heating are the obvious energy users but there are plenty of other potential energy savers around the home. For example, you can save money by making sure you fill the washing machine every time you use it. You will reduce the overall number of loads you run and a full load in a washing machine uses less energy than two half loads. It also helps to reduce the temperature of the cycle you use.

The same applies to the dishwasher, and you can make an additional saving by turning it off before the drying cycle and opening the door to allow the dishes to dry naturally. Another common bad habit is leaving the fridge door open while preparing food. For every 10–20 seconds the door is open it takes 45 minutes for the fridge to cool down to its original temperature, so it's important to keep the door closed.

### And the living room

A lot of the energy we waste in our homes on a daily basis is through appliances that we just aren't using. Appliances on standby can use up to 20% of the energy that they would use when switched on, so turn off all your appliances on standby (yes the TV too) at the switch on the wall. Or just plug them out.

It's also important to unplug your phones, tablets or laptops from their chargers as soon as they have reached 100%. One charger may not make much difference but, when you have multiple chargers and other devices on standby, they can be responsible for up to 10% of your electricity bills.

### Energy-saving gadgets and tools

There are some great energy-saving gadgets and tools to help you cut back even more on your energy bills. Some of the best savings are available with:

- Energy-efficient lightbulbs: they cost a fraction of the cost of traditional lightbulbs to run and could save you up to €22 a year, depending on the power of the bulb.
- Radiator boosters: designed to move the hot air around the room and away from the radiator and the windows, which ensures you have a consistent even room temperature.
- Solar chargers: mean you can charge your phone for free - simply leave the charger by the window during the day and then plug your phone into the solar charger at night.
- Draft excluders: fixed to doors and your letterbox will make a noticeable impact on your heating bills.
- Chimney balloons: can stop heat escaping up into your chimney and the cold descending down into your home.
- Lagging jacket and insulation: add to pipes will keep your water hotter for longer and reduce the amount of time the boiler is on.

There is always the option to switch your gas & electricity supplier and get the best energy rates.

**You don't need to renovate your home or stock up on blankets to save money on your energy bills. Just changing a few habits will mean less energy usage and smaller bills.**

Source: [switcher.ie/gas-electricity/guides/energy-saving-tips/](https://switcher.ie/gas-electricity/guides/energy-saving-tips/)  
[www.electricireland.ie/news/article/how-to-use-less-energy-and-reduce-your-bills](https://www.electricireland.ie/news/article/how-to-use-less-energy-and-reduce-your-bills)



## MU researchers to devise pioneering solutions for SFI -Defence Organisation Innovation Challenge

Two Maynooth University research projects have been shortlisted for the SFI-Defence Organisation Innovation Challenge.

Under the challenge, ten selected research teams will collaborate with the Defence Forces and compete for funding to develop solutions to a number of challenges identified by the Defence Organisation that are of wider application to society.

Announced today (Thursday) by Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science Simon Harris TD and **Minister for Defence and Minister for Foreign Affairs Simon Coveney TD**, €2.4 million in funding will be available to develop solutions to challenges facing the Irish Defence Forces.

### The two selected Maynooth University projects are:

**Co-pilot-AI:** Led by Prof Tim McCarthy and Prof John MacDonald (Computer Science), the project will look at addressing the problem of wildfires. Using Earth Observation and Artificial Intelligence technologies, this new system will be capable of providing real-time information to responders in the air and on the ground. The system will allow for the generation of useful information such as terrain, land-cover, weather, infrastructure, human activity - which can then be transmitted to responders, helping to direct crews to suitable water resources, identifying vulnerable humans, safe-guarding crops, livestock and infrastructure, to name a few examples of use.

**Smart Hangar:** Led by Prof Rozenn Dahyot (Computer Science) and Dr Marco Cognetti (Electrical Engineering), the project will provide a **cyber-physical system to assist in, or potentially automate, manoeuvring of aircraft between a hangar and apron..** The Smart Hangar system will develop a co-operative system that will allow a human controller and robot to work together to manoeuvre aircraft.



**The Rozen Team**

The selected teams for the competition will be awarded up to €220,000 and work through a series of stages to develop their ideas, to compete for an overall €1 million prize award that will enable them to continue development and explore deployment of their solution.

Speaking today, **Minister Harris** said: *"This is a really exciting announcement. Today's announcement shows the value of a partnership between our research community and the Defence Forces. The innovation on display can help address existing and future challenges within our Defence Forces."*

*"There is a myriad of innovative ideas and expertise from machine learning and virtual reality to data analytics, engineering, and robotics. Today, the ten*

*projects will be awarded funding to initiate their projects and one will secure €1 million in funding."*



Congratulating the shortlisted teams,

**Minister Coveney** said: *"From the time we launched this Challenge last July, I believed that it would confront emerging issues within the Defence Forces head-on, through the collaboration of leading researchers with the talented people behind our Defence Forces. At EU level, the role of innovation and disruptive technologies in delivering next generation military capability is already well recognised. I am looking forward to seeing the results that this synergy of innovators and practitioners under this challenge will undoubtedly generate for the Defence Forces going forward."*

Commending the researchers, **Prof Eeva Leinonen, President of Maynooth University** stated, *"Maynooth University highly values innovative research that focuses on solutions to address major societal challenges. The selection of two projects for the SFI-Defence Organisation Innovation Challenge is evidence of the excellence underpinning our research at Maynooth. These projects are being developed for a specific challenge, however their potential application across broader industry and society is clear. I wish our research teams every success."*



Prof Philip Nolan, Director General, Science Foundation Ireland, said:

*"Challenge-based research funding empowers talented teams to address significant national and global challenges. This kind of collaboration between Government Departments, agencies such as the Defence Forces, companies, researchers, and entrepreneurs is just one of the ways science delivers real and tangible benefits for our society and economy."*

*"I want to commend each team on their hard work and dedication and wish them every success in the rest of the competition. Having this level of talent compete in this Challenge not only bodes well for this particular initiative but the future of scientific research more generally. I look forward to seeing the different solutions that develop as the competition continues."*

**Members of the Co-Pilot team:** Prof Tim McCarthy, Prof John McDonald, Dr Stephanie Keogh, Dr Charles Markham, John Dooley, Prof Rozenn Dahyot, Dr Rowan Fealy, Dr Lars Pforte, Comdt Jay O'Reilly, Irish Air Corps, Daire Walsh, Fearghus Foyle, Leo Murray.

**Members of the Smart Hangar team:** Prof Rozenn Dahyot, Dr Marco Cognetti, Peter Redmond and Captain Tom Mullarkey, Irish Air Corps.

**Team Name:** Co-Pilot-AI

**Lead:** Prof Tim McCarthy (Maynooth University)

**Co-Lead:** Prof John Mac Donald (Maynooth University)

**DefOrg Liaison:** Comdt Jay O'Reilly (Irish Air Corps)

**Challenge:** Enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the fire extinguishing capability of rotary-wing aircraft.

**Solution:** Using Earth Observation and Artificial Intelligence technologies, a new system capable of providing real-time information to responders in the air and on the ground will be developed to assist in managing wildfires.

**Team:** SMART HANGER

**Lead:** Prof Rozenn Dahvot (Maynooth University)

**Co-Lead:** De Marco Cognetti (Maynooth University)

**DefOrg Liaison:** Capt Tom Mullarkey (Irish Air Corps)

**Challenge:** Cyber-physical system to assist in, or potentially automate, manoeuvring of aircraft between a hangar and apron.

**Solution:** Smart Hangar will develop a co-operative system that will allow a human controller and robot to work together to manoeuvre Aircraft.





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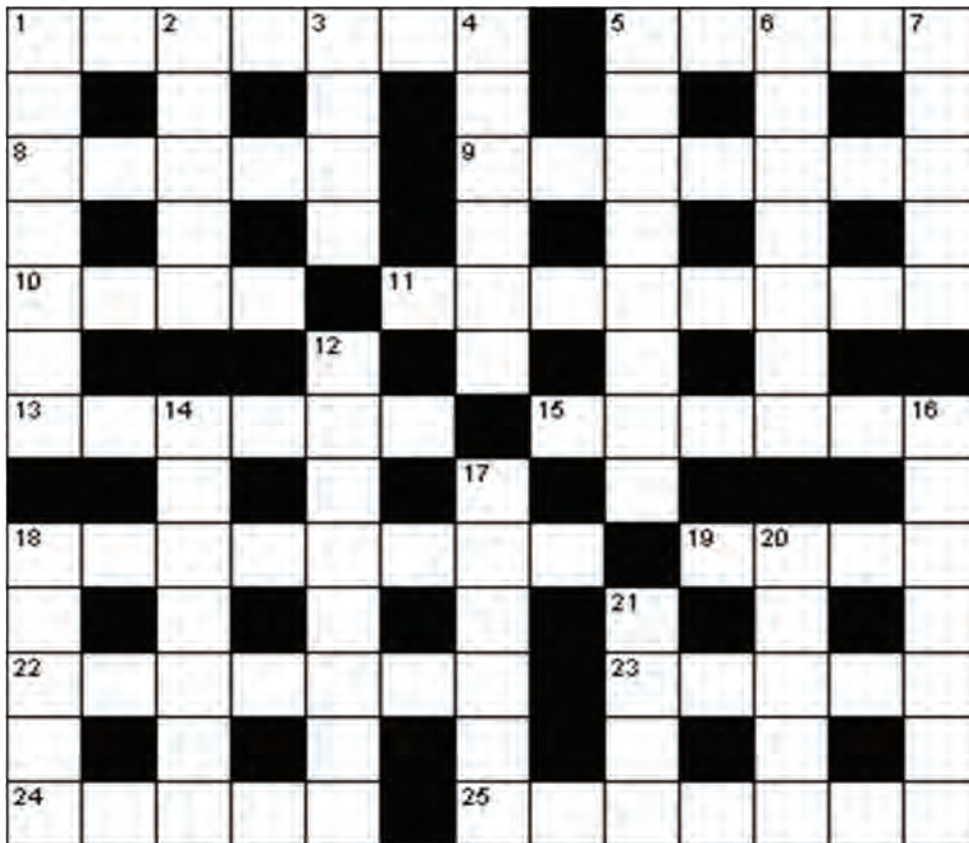
### Kildare Planning Applications for Maynooth Area

Planning Applications received from 19/01/2021 to 23/02/2022 Information from Kildare County Council Website

App #	Authority	Applicant Name	Development Address	App Date
<a href="#">22190</a>	Kildare County Council	Martin Heslin	Smithstown House, Smithstown, Maynooth, Co. Kildare.	23/02/2022
<a href="#">22172</a>	Kildare County Council	Stephen Hunter	No.35 Carton Court, Maynooth, Co. Kildare	18/02/2022
<a href="#">22157</a>	Kildare County Council	Paul Davis,	6 Lyreen Park, Maynooth, Co. Kildare, W23 Y5W9.	15/02/2022
<a href="#">22161</a>	Kildare County Council	Jimmy McMahon & Sons	Henry Grattan's Public House, Maynooth Road, Celbridge, Co. Kildare W23	15/02/2022
<a href="#">22151</a>	Kildare County Council	John & Laura Joyce	84 Windhurst, Newtown Road, Maynooth, Co. Kildare. W23 X7X2	14/02/2022
<a href="#">22132</a>	Kildare County Council	Joe Usher and Nicola	35 Carton Grove, Dublin Road, Maynooth, Co Kildare. W23 P6F2	09/02/2022
<a href="#">22127</a>	Kildare County Council	Brigitte and John McNeely	4 Beaufield Drive, Maynooth, Co. Kildare, W23 A0H4	08/02/2022
<a href="#">22120</a>	Kildare County Council	Flor McCarthy	Crinstown, Maynooth, Co. Kildare.	07/02/2022
<a href="#">2281</a>	Kildare County Council	Pat O'Hora,	12 Straffan Way, Maynooth, Co. Kildare.	28/01/2022



## March 2022 Crossword - No. 510



## Solutions to Crossword No. 509



### Clues Across

1. Fate (7)  
5. Animal with two feet (5)  
8. Musical instrument (5)  
9. Aerial (7)  
10. Professional cook (4)  
11. Delight (8)  
13. Mass leaving (6)  
15. Transparent gem (6)  
18. Entertainer (8)  
19. Cab (4)  
22. Planet nearest to the sun (7)  
23. Similar (5)  
24. Fishing Basket (5)  
25. Ruminant (7)



### Clues Down

1. Fiasco (7)  
2. Meaning (5)  
3. Metallic element (4)  
4. Annually (6)  
5. Treachery (8)  
6. Flightless Bird (7)  
7. Curtain (5)  
12. On Time (8)  
13. See (7)  
15. Spear with three prongs (7)  
16. Attorney (6)  
18. Ape (5)  
20. Nimble (5)  
21. Young whale (4)

### Difficult

### Sudoku Challenge

### Super Difficult

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

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

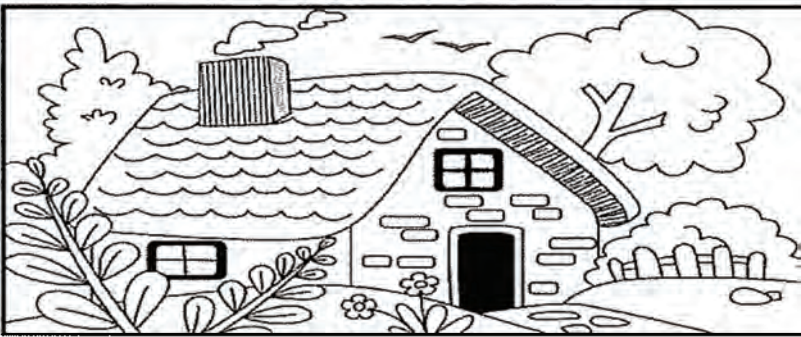
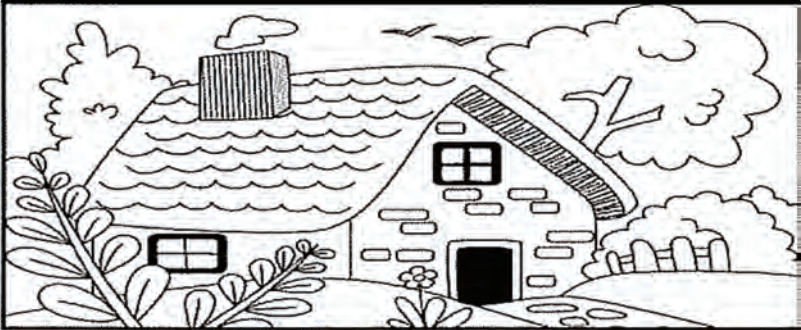
If you have access to a printer and wish to complete the Crossword and/or Sudoku for fun you can print the single page by going to File -> Print and print the single page number only.



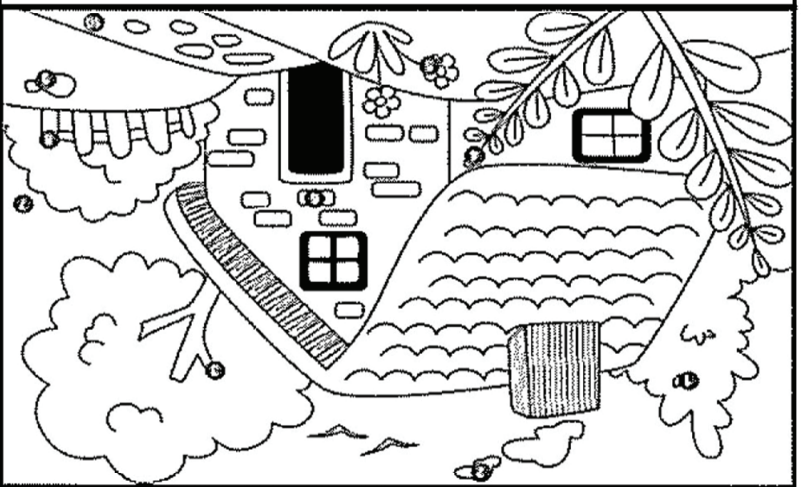
Junior Puzzle Corner



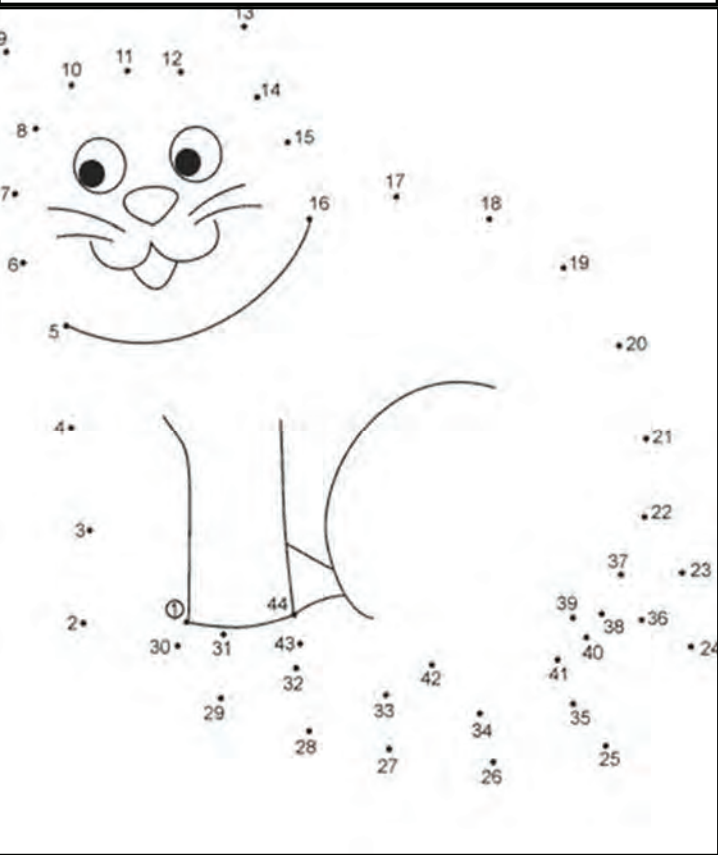
Spot the Difference



Answers



Join the dots



Word Search

P	M	G	P	N	E	E	T	N	E	V	E	S	M	G
S	H	F	R	Q	F	P	M	F	O	U	R	L	O	F
A	W	C	O	E	D	L	Q	F	O	W	D	L	W	D
I	E	S	R	E	E	O	W	K	I	E	D	I	E	S
N	W	A	R	A	A	N	E	C	R	R	A	R	R	A
T	O	Z	D	T	M	D	R	O	D	K	C	U	L	Z
J	B	X	J	Y	X	J	T	R	J	Y	X	J	Y	X
G	N	C	L	O	V	E	R	M	G	U	C	G	U	K
U	I	V	U	I	F	U	R	A	U	T	V	U	C	V
I	A	H	I	A	N	I	H	I	O	N	I	O	N	
E	R	D	E	P	D	E	S	S	E	P	R	E	P	D
W	L	L	W	L	M	W	P	D	W	T	M	W	L	M
S	H	S	I	R	I	S	L	Y	A	D	I	L	O	H
X	J	P	X	J	P	V	K	P	X	J	P	X	J	P
Z	H	L	E	P	R	E	C	H	A	U	N	Z	H	L


- See how many of these newspaper related words you can find in the puzzle. The words can be forward, backward or diagonal.
- |            |             |           |                |
|------------|-------------|-----------|----------------|
| 1. HOLIDAY | 5. GREEN    | 9. CLOVER | 13. LEPRECHAUN |
| 2. SAINT   | 6. SHAMROCK | 10. LUCK  | 14. RAINBOW    |
| 3. PATRICK | 7. FOUR     | 11. POT   | 15. MARCH      |
| 4. IRISH   | 8. LEAF     | 12. GOLD  | 16. SEVENTEEN  |

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.






# St Patrick's Day Recipes

## Multi-Seed Guinness Brown Bread

**Ingredients:**  
50g plain flour  
350g wholemeal flour  
75g porridge (rolled) oats  
50g pinhead oatmeal  
2tsp bicarbonate of soda  
1 large egg  
100ml Guinness  
400ml buttermilk  
2tbsp treacle (optional)  
3 tbsp mixed seeds (e.g. pumpkin, sesame, poppy, sunflower)  
Butter for greasing  
Pinch of salt




**Method:**  
Preheat the oven to 160°C/325°F/Gas Mark 3. Grease a 900g (9 x 5 x 3 inch) loaf tin. Place the flours, oats and salt in a large bowl. Sift in the bicarbonate of soda and stir together. Beat the egg in a separate bowl, add to the dry mixture and stir again. Add the Guinness, buttermilk and treacle (if using) and mix to a sloppy consistency. Finally, stir in two tablespoons of the seed mixture. Pour into the prepared tin and spoon the top with a wet spoon. Sprinkle the remaining seeds over the surface and bake for 1 hour. Turn the loaf out, then pop it back inside the tin upside down and bake for a further 15-20 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack to cool.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Bread & Butter Pudding

**Ingredients:**  
8 slices of white bread  
50g butter (more if required)  
50g sultanas  
Ground nutmeg or cinnamon  
2 eggs  
450ml of full-fat milk  
50g granulated sugar




**Method:**  
Remove the crusts from the bread. Butter each slice on one side only and cut into triangles. Use some of the butter to grease an oven-proof dish. Cover the base of the dish with one layer of bread triangles keeping the buttered side down. Sprinkle some of the sultanas on the bread with a little nutmeg or cinnamon. Repeat with another layer of bread, sultanas and spice, finishing with a layer of bread with the buttered side up. Beat the eggs with the milk and sugar and pour over the bread layers. Let it sit for half an hour so that the bread soaks up the liquid. Bake at 180°C/350°F/Gas 4 for about half an hour or until golden and puffy. Eat on its own straight from the oven.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Irish Oaty Apple Crumble

**Ingredients:**  
**For the Crumble:**  
150g plain flour  
150g jumbo oat flakes  
175g light brown sugar  
200g cold butter, cut into pieces  
Single cream, to serve  
**For the Filling:**  
600g apples, cut into chunks  
1 tbsp plain flour  
60g brown sugar  
Juice of ½ lemon



**Method:**  
Preheat the oven to 190°C/375°F/Gas Mark 5. Place the flour, oat flakes, brown sugar and butter into a large bowl. Using your fingertips, rub all the ingredients together until it resembles chunky breadcrumbs. In a large baking tin, toss the apples with the flour, sugar and lemon juice until combined. Add the crumble mix on top of the filling and spread over the top until everything is evenly covered. Bake in the oven for 35 - 40 minutes or until crumble topping is golden brown and the fruit is soft and bubbling beneath. Serve in generous portions with a drizzle of fresh cream. You can vary the ingredients for the crumble mix itself by using wholemeal flour and nuts.



# March Gardening



Now that there is a stretch in the evenings there is a little more time in the day to get into the garden. Here are some 'March Gardening Tips' to guide you on what needs doing in the garden!



In case there wasn't an opportune time in February to mow your lawn, March might look to be a better bet. The lawn may be looking a little tatty after the worst of the weather has passed and may be littered with fallen twigs and the last of last year's leaves. On a dry day start by picking up the larger debris by hand and then run the mower over the lawn on a high setting. Edges of the lawn on pathways and borders may also need a trim and you'll be amazed at how this improves the entire appearance of your garden. Use edging shears to cut any tufty edges around beds, borders, paths or patios. When mowing at this time of year the ground may be very soft and the grass can be very uneven and tufty. Therefore, adjust your mower to a high setting and just cut the top of the grass.

Cutting too low can cause the grass to be ripped out of the ground leaving you with bare patches. Sometimes it just takes a few fallen leaves to accumulate on the lawn to smother the grass eventually killing it off, leaving a bare patch visible. Once you've managed to run the mower over the lawn and tidy up any debris it is the perfect time to tackle this problem. Use a rake to 'fluff-up' the surface of the bare patch to give a tilth in which to sow your seed. Then throw on a generous handful of good quality lawn seed and rake it into the soil. Finally, give your seed a can-full of water and cover with fleece or polythene to accelerate germination (and also to reduce the amount that will be eaten by birds).

Roses need plenty of feed to give maximum display through the summer and applying a good layer of mulch to your rose beds is a great way of giving them all the nutrients they'll need. You can either put a layer of mulch over the entire bed or just apply a smaller amount around the base of each rose. Once you have applied your mulch, give your roses a generous helping of water so they can start absorbing some of the nutrients straight away.



As soon as the flowers on your daffodils start to look past their best, pull them off by hand. The energy the plant saves by not having to 'die-back' and produce a seed head will be put to good use in the bulb, giving you a bigger display next year.



Boost shrubs and perennials in containers by top dressing, gently scrape off the top 2-4cm of old compost, replace with fresh potting compost with and an added sprinkle of slow release fertiliser to enhance growth throughout the summer. Keep an eye on containers especially ones close to the house with spring bedding – "unbelievably" they often dry out at this time of the year as the walls and roof overhang shelter the pots from the rain and although the plants may not actually die, they'll end up looking tatty and not flower as well. Top dress with garden compost, spent mushroom compost or rotted farm yard manure to help improve the soil quality and structure while helping lock in moisture. Shrubs like mop-headed Hydrangea, Buddleia davidii and Perovskia need to be pruned back to encourage the growth of new flowering stems. Check over variegated shrubs and remove stems that are no longer variegated, tidy and trim hedges.

There is still time to prepare a plot to grow veg this year. Fork or rake over existing beds, breaking up large clods of earth. Cover new seedlings with fleece if a frost is due. Start your daily slug patrols and lay beer traps. Don't let new-season weeds take over – get on top of them with weekly hoeing.



Indoors: lettuce, aubergine, peppers, cucumbers, celery, celeriac, sweet corn, basil, leeks, summer cabbage, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, parsley, courgette, French beans.

Sow outdoors or under cover: broad beans, red cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, spinach, kale, Brussels sprouts, onions, leeks, turnip, peas, radishes, early lettuce, asparagus. Plant your first early seed potatoes, as soon as weather conditions allow.



House plants will react to longer days and brighter light at this time by putting out new growth. The end of this month is a good time to pinch them back to generate new growth and to thicken them. You can then begin fertilizing again with a dilute solution of soluble house plant food. Turn your houseplants a quarter turn each week to make sure all sides of the plant receive adequate light, and to keep the shape of the plant balanced. Mist or spray your houseplants to clean away the winters dust, prevent Spider Mites and add a little humidity.



*Gardening is medicine that does not need a prescription and has no limit on dosage*







# FILM/DVD MONTHLY BY BERNIE CLAXTON

## OSCARS 2022



### IRISH OSCARS NOMINEES

And the Oscar goes to....it's that time of year again folks. When the ladies and gentlemen of tinsel town put on their very best party frocks, suits, glamour hairstyles to attend the biggest celebrity bash of the year. It could justifiably be claimed that the Irish are coming in this year's Oscars race with an impressive number of nominations to their credit.



Ever since its introduction at the Telluride Film Festival last September, *Belfast* - Kenneth Branagh's sentimental and largely autobiographical love letter to his original hometown - has been winning critics and audiences over worldwide. The film's quiet charm and outstanding performances from a largely Irish cast quickly made it a contender in Awards season. Clayton Davis in *Variety* described *Belfast* as "the first movie I've seen this year that can be best picture winner."



So it was little surprise when Kenneth Branagh scooped seven Oscar nominations for his 60s *Troubles*-based film drama on 8 February last, including nods for *Original Screenplay*, *Best Director* and *Best Picture* as well as *Best Supporting Actress* and *Best Supporting Actor*.

On top of landing his second *Best Director* nod, the 61 year-old also made the *Best Picture* and *Best Original Screenplay* shortlist for the first time. When you add that to his previous Oscars recognition for *Best Actor*, *Best Live-Action Short Film*, *Best Adapted Screenplay*, and *Best Supporting Actor*, Branagh becomes the first actor/director to be nominated in seven separate categories at the ceremony, passing George Clooney's previous benchmark of six.



Kenneth Branagh's seven nominations for *Belfast* were in contrast to Jane Campion's Western drama *The Power of the Dog*, and Denis Villeneuve's sci-fi drama *Dune* which lead the Oscars overall with the most nominations. Branagh spoke of his joy over the nominations for *Belfast* "....I think of my mother and father, and my grandparents - how proud they were to be Irish, how much this city meant to them. They would have been overwhelmed by this incredible honour - as am I."

*Belfast* has also received a nomination in the *Best Sound* category while music legend Van Morrison - whose iconic music features heavily throughout the film - is nominated for his first ever Oscar. His reworking of his 1960s song, *Down to Joy* has received a *Best Song* nomination.



However, there were some notable Irish exceptions/snubs, including *Belfast* stars Jamie Dornan and Caitriona Balfe. In particular, the popular *Outlander* actress had been seen as a shoe-in by critics to get a *Best Supporting Actress* nomination for her superb performance as the strong matriarchal head of the household in Branagh's family drama. Balfe had garnered BAFTA, SAG, British Independent Film Awards, Golden Globes and *Critic's Choice* nominations in the run-up to the Oscar nominations, so her failure to get a Oscar nod was puzzling.

Caitriona Balfe's co-star, veteran actress Judi Dench came out of left-field (with less screen time in *Belfast*) to earn a *Best Supporting Actress* nomination instead. Dench hadn't really been on the Awards radar prior to the announcement of the Oscar nominations in early February. A sentimental vote by the Academy perhaps.

Dame Judi also holds the distinction at the grand age of 87 of being the oldest Oscar nominee ever in this category. The thespian will have strong competition from Ariana DeBose though, who is touted to win for her acclaimed Golden Globes winning role as Anita in Steven Spielberg's remake of *West Side Story*.



The veteran Irish actor Ciarán Hinds also received his first Oscar nomination for his superb performance as 'Pop' the wise and kindly grandfather figure in Branagh's *Belfast*. Well-deserved recognition by the Academy and a real sense that Hinds's time is due!

Ruth Negga was a surprising omission, with many pundits expecting her BAFTA nominated performance in *Passing* to receive an Oscar nomination. There was joy however for Kerry native, Jessie Buckley who picked up her first Oscar nomination in a *Best Supporting* category for her performance in *The Lost Daughter* alongside her co-star Olivia Colman.



In a controversial decision to shorten the duration of the usually lengthy Oscars ceremony and increase TV viewing figures, eight Oscars categories will be awarded off air for the first time ever in the history of the Academy Awards:

*Documentary short; Film editing; Makeup and hairstyling; Original score; Production design; Animated short; Live action short; Sound*

The 94th Oscars ceremony will take place on 27th March from the stage of the Dolby Theatre in Hollywood, where we hope Irish eyes will be smiling!

### 'The Troubles' Film Quiz Answers

- 1 b) 2 d) 3 d)
- 4 Daniel Day-Lewis and Peter Postlethwaite (*In The Name of the Father*)
- 5 c) 6 b) 7 c) 8 a) 9 c) 10 a)
- 11 Fionnula Flanagan and Helen Mirren (*Some Mother's Son*)
- 12 c)