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# CHILDREN WITH SCOLIOSIS NEED MORE THAN ANOTHER EMPTY PROMISE

TD for Dublin South West Seán Crowe has criticised the Government for the disgraceful manner in which it treats children with scoliosis and spina bifida.

Teachta Crowe said that An Taoiseach Simon Harris made a commitment seven years ago to these children and asked if it was just another empty promise. Teachta Crowe said "The treatment of children with scoliosis and spina bifida who are waiting for surgery is disgraceful. These children wait in agony for operations that can save and change their lives and the longer they wait, the worse their condition gets.

"It is a race against the clock and against the child's condition becoming inoperable and the prospect of

permanent paralysis. There are too many children in this awful situation. The case of Harvey Sherratt, an 8 year old boy who has scoliosis and spina bifida and was removed from the waiting list for surgery without his parents knowing, has rightfully received a great deal of media attention in recent days. Harvey is unfortunately not an isolated case.

"At the Health Committee recently, I raised the issue of a child who was faced with a weeks-long wait just to get an MRI in Crumlin Hospital.

"In general, there is a lack of transparency around waiting lists, including hidden lists and a lack of data collection on why people are removed

from waiting lists. "It has been seven years since Simon Harris as Minister for Health promised children with scoliosis that they would not wait longer than 4 months for surgery. An Taoiseach is good at making promises but we have yet to see him deliver on any of them. Parents of children with autism, scoliosis or special needs have all tired of hearing his promises.

"Last February, Sinn Féin put forward a plan for paediatric orthopaedic services that would eliminate waiting lists in cooperation with parents, advocates, and clinicians. The Government voted against that plan and here we are more than six months later and things are only getting worse for children like Harvey."



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# CLLR LINDA DE COURCY AS GENERAL ELECTION CANDIDATE FOR DUBLIN MID WEST

Independent Ireland is proud to announce the candidacy of CLLr Linda de Courcy for the Dublin Mid West constituency in the upcoming General Election. Linda, a long-time resident of Clondalkin and elected to South Dublin County Council in 2024, has built her reputation as a champion for local families and communities. With a strong background in health, wellness, and public service, she is determined to bring change and tackle the critical issues facing Dublin Mid West.

will focus on tackling the immigration crisis, which she describes as “out of control.” Concerned about the rapid demographic changes in Clondalkin and the misuse of local resources, she said, “The Crooksling centre, which was gifted to be a care home for elderly locals, has been repurposed for young migrant men. This isn’t right for our community, and we need real change.”

Linda also emphasises the need to address the soaring cost of living, which she believes is being worsened by carbon taxes that provide

no environmental benefit. “Families and businesses are struggling under excessive taxation. Meanwhile, the government is bending over backwards to accommodate people who arrive without documentation while threatening to jail Irish citizens for not paying a TV license. We need common sense policies to prioritise our citizens.”

As a local councillor, Linda has already witnessed the failures of a “top-down” approach in governance, making it difficult for her to assist the people she was elected to serve. “The current government has lost the faith of many people who now believe nothing can be done except build bike shelters and tents for migrants. Our streets are seeing more violence, and our cities are in decline. I believe a proactive government can turn this around,” she stated.

Linda’s vision is not just about tackling immediate

issues but also preserving and promoting Ireland’s heritage. She is an advocate for promoting Ireland’s indigenous industries of agriculture and tourism “Dublin should be a capital city we are all proud of, and we need to promote Ireland’s strengths to the world,” Linda said. She also promises to fight against visa abuse and advocate for Irish workers and industries, saying, “We need to seriously curtail visas to non-EEA workers and bring our own home to ensure Ireland’s future prosperity.”

Party Leader Michael Collins TD praised Linda’s dedication to public service: “Linda has proven to be a strong voice for her community, and I have no doubt she will bring the same passion and commitment to the national stage. Since she was elected as councillor she has been a strong voice for the people of Clondalkin and Dublin Mid West needs a leader like her to stand up for common sense policies

and for Irish citizens.” Richard O’Donoghue TD also voiced his strong support: “Linda represents exactly what Independent Ireland is about. She speaks her mind, stands up for her community, and is determined to fix the cost of living, immigration and housing crises. I am proud to support her.” Linda de Courcy is calling on the

people of Dublin Mid West to support her in the fight for a better Ireland. “This election is about restoring pride in our country, tackling the challenges head-on, and building a future that works for all Irish people. I’m ready to take this fight to the Dáil and stand up for what’s right.”



Linda de Courcy’s campaign



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# TEMPLEOGUE JOINS THE DUBLIN DISCOVERY TRAILS APP

Last week marked an exciting milestone as the Templeogue Heritage Trail officially joined the Dublin Discovery Trails app. Launched at

the vibrant Work IQ in the Innovative Quarter, the event brought together the Mayor of South Dublin County Council, elected members,

South Dublin County Council staff, and key figures from the tourism, culture, and heritage sectors. This trail, now part of a broader

initiative to showcase South Dublin's heritage, was made possible through a collaboration between South Dublin County Council's County Promotion Unit and South Dublin County Libraries.

The Dublin Discovery Trails app came about through a collective effort by all four Dublin local authorities, supported by Fáilte Ireland, working together to bring the city's rich, diverse heritage to life in a way that's accessible to everyone whether you're a history buff or just out for a casual stroll.

Mayor of South Dublin County Council Cllr Baby Pereppadan said "The addition of the Templeogue Heritage Trail to the Dublin Discovery Trails app highlights the historical and cultural significance of the area, offering users a valuable educational tool and an engaging way to explore our local heritage. The

app already features other South Dublin Trails, such as the Tallaght, Clondalkin, and Rathfarnham Rebellion trail, the latter funded by The Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media through their Decade of Centenaries programme."

The launch of this app and the Templeogue Heritage Trail is part of South Dublin County Council's ongoing mission to enhance local heritage experiences and boost the visitor economy with projects such as the upcoming Tallaght Heritage Centre, or the Castle Stables and Courtyard at Rathfarnham project.

Add to those existing treasures like Brú Chrónáin Round Tower visitor centre in Clondalkin, the recent purchase of Lucan House, and the archaeological wonders of the Dublin Mountains, and it's clear that South Dublin is a hotspot for heritage lovers.

"Through this app, users can explore Templeogue's rich past in a way that's engaging and interactive.

The trails are available in eight different languages including French, German, Spanish, Ukrainian, Arabic and of course Irish", said Ralph McGarry of South Dublin County Council's County Promotion Unit. "If you haven't already, it's time to download the Dublin Discovery Trails app free from the App Store or Google Play Store and experience Templeogue and the rest of South Dublin like never before. This mobile app is your go to resource for exploring the hidden gems of South Dublin. Whether you're a local or a visitor, it's an adventure waiting to happen."

Pictured: Mayor Baby Pereppadan, Cllr Pamela Kearns and Templeogue representatives that were in attendance.



Pic credit: Lafayette

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# TRANSFORMING HEALTHCARE INNOVATION CHALLENGE LAUNCHED

Tallaght University Hospital (TUH) alongside TU Dublin and AWS have announced October 4th and 5th as the dates for the Transforming Healthcare Innovation Challenge.

Previously known as the Health Hackathon, the event this year has changed to include students from different disciplines across the TU Dublin campuses accounting for the changing needs of healthcare.

Students from disciplines including Computing, Social Care Practice, Health & Sports Science, across TU Dublin will be presented with five different challenges that are set by healthcare professionals working in TUH and in the community. Working together as a team, students from the different disciplines will have the

opportunity to meet with the healthcare professionals on October 4th that set the challenges and answer any questions they have about the challenge set.

The students then have the night and following morning to create a solution and pitch the idea to a panel of judges, the presentations are judged on the prototype, the context of the idea and how it addresses the challenge set along with the presentation itself being scored. There are four award categories under which the winning projects will be selected including Innovation with greatest potential; Best use of technology, Innovation with greatest patient benefit and Most innovative solution.

“This event is constantly evolving and I am delighted

to see the inclusion of our healthcare colleagues in the community as well as students from different disciplines. It is only by working together across the healthcare journey of a patient and involving different experiences can we develop the best solutions to the challenges set for this event but also for healthcare delivery in the longer term.” Lucy Nugent, Chief Executive Officer, TUH.

“This event really aligns with the TU Dublin strategic intent of People, Planet and Partnership creating a better world together. Our students enjoy using their skills to solve real impactful challenges and it supports our value of supporting bright minds and creativity. Past participants have won national prizes on their work here and some of the challenges are still being worked on in follow on projects.” Thomas Stone Vice President, Partnerships, TU Dublin.

involved for the first time. Setting a real life challenge to students and offering them support of using AWS technologies to tackle those challenges is an incredible learning opportunity,” said Joanne Reynolds,

Community Engagement Manager, AWS. David Wall, Chief Information Officer at TUH “The Transforming Healthcare Innovation Challenge is a natural evolution from the previous hackathons. The aim is

to improve collaboration between industry, academia and TUH while encouraging increased participation from students off all disciplines in TUD. This events is one of the highlights of the year for TUH.”



“We look forward to this event each year, and are delighted to see students from different disciplines Pictured from left to right Barry Feeney, Head of School of Enterprise Computing & Digital Transformation TU Dublin; Lucy Nugent, Chief Executive of TUH; Joanne Reynolds, Community Engagement Manager AWS; Thomas Stone, Vice President Partnerships TU Dublin and David Wall, Chief Information Officer at TUH

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# HELLFIRE PROJECT CONSERVATION WORKS AT MASSY'S WOOD COMMENCE

Hellfire, the transformative project in the Dublin Mountains which will offer a range of exciting amenities and activities for visitors of all ages reaches a key milestone as conservation works recently commenced. Led by South Dublin County Council and supported

by Coillte, Hellfire will transform the area into a captivating destination for leisure, tourism, and cultural experiences. Previously referred to as the "Dublin Mountain Visitor Centre Project", the project has been named "Hellfire" following

extensive consultation with key stakeholders.

Key Features of Hellfire will include Visitor Centre: A state-of-the-art facility providing information, exhibitions, and a café. Treetop Canopy Walk: An immersive accessible

experience that takes visitors high above the forest canopy, offering breathtaking views of the surrounding landscape. Hellfire Club Restoration: Restoration and conservation of the historic Hellfire Club ruins. Massy's Estate: Exploration of the historic Massy's Estate, including its woodlands and trails. Provision of new walks and trails and improvements to existing walks/trails. Road improvements and construction of a new footpath. Increase in the capacity and size of the existing Hellfire Wood parking area. And Conservation works to architectural and archaeological heritage features on the site.

The conservation works began on the 17th of September and it is envisaged that these will continue over a period of three months. These sensitive works will take place across the area encompassing Massy's Wood and its walled garden. Visitors will still be able to access the Hellfire Club, Massy's Wood, and the walks and trails in the area during

the works. However, it may be necessary to temporarily restrict public access to the walled garden for health and safety reasons. Such closures shall only be for the minimum period of time needed to complete the works at that location and the public is kindly asked to adhere to all health and safety notices on site.

Speaking about Hellfire and the conservation works, South Dublin County Council Mayor Cllr Baby Pereppadan, said "South Dublin County Council's Tourism Strategy 2024-2029 reflects the Council's commitment to unlocking the full potential of South Dublin as a vibrant and sustainable tourist destination, of which, Hellfire is identified as a major initiative to support tourism development in the County. The planned investment in major projects such as Hellfire, demonstrates our aim to create sustainable experiences that resonate with visitors, while also preserving the natural beauty and the cultural and historic heritage of the area. I am excited about Hellfire's potential and the benefits that will accrue for the local community and visitors alike.

"The conservation works begin to reinforce the Council's commitment to safeguarding the area's natural beauty while making it accessible to all. These works will focus on protecting the existing structures in Massy's Wood, in particular its walled garden, which is an integral part of the historical fabric of the area. The Hellfire Project prioritises sustainability, ensuring that the natural beauty of the Dublin Mountains is protected during all works and in this instance, best practice conservation principles will be sensitively applied whilst also continuing to enable the public to both access and enjoy the beauty of the Massy Woods area.

South Dublin County Council Chief Executive, Colm Ward added "Hellfire represents an important gateway to the Dublin Mountains, offering visitors a place of orientation and interpretation, informing

them about the geography, archaeology and history of the area, particularly around Montpelier Hill, Massy's Wood, and, of course, the Hellfire Club itself.

The conservation work at Massy's Wood is an important milestone in safeguarding the historic character of the area and bringing it to life for the local community, visitors and generations to come. In delivering the Hellfire Project and enhancing the area's facilities, these conservation works will support the area's cultural identity and increase awareness of its rich history and heritage value. We look forward to these conservation works getting underway and when complete, are enjoyed by all visitors to the Dublin Mountains."

Mark Carlin, MD of Coillte Forest stated "Coillte is delighted to support Hellfire and the conservation works at Massy's Wood. It aligns with Coillte's ambition to balance and deliver the multiple benefits of forests for climate, nature, wood and people by creating and enhancing sustainable, accessible, and enjoyable outdoor experiences. Not only will the conversation works greatly add to the visitor experience in the unique setting of the Dublin Mountains landscape, but they also represent a celebration of the area's historic past and safeguard it for future generations to come."

Hellfire biodiversity enhancement will continue over the coming months with the removal of invasive species and trail improvements as well as carrying out ongoing monitoring and maintenance across the project area. A suite of trails of various length, degree of accessibility and difficulty class (accessible, easy, moderate or strenuous) and character, will be provided by retaining and upgrading existing roads and paths and developing new sections in places.

Further information will be communicated in advance of commencement.



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# BASKETBALL IRELAND GRANTED PLANNING PERMISSION FOR €38M REDEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL BASKETBALL ARENA

Basketball Ireland has been notified by South Dublin County Council of their decision to grant planning permission for the €38m redevelopment of the

National Basketball Arena. The project will see the multi-sport and multi-use arena double its capacity to 3,272, with works expected to take 18 months to

complete. The 8000 square metre facility will have space for four basketball courts, house a gym, café, corporate

facilities and office space for Basketball Ireland staff. The Arena will be fully accessible and inclusive and has the backing of a number of sporting bodies, including Volleyball Ireland, Badminton Ireland and Irish Squash, who all wish to use it.

Basketball Ireland CEO, John Feehan, said: "This is excellent news and a major step forward in bringing the new National Basketball Arena to fruition. The Arena will be transformative for Irish indoor sport, providing state-of-the-art facilities that will be on a par with our European counterparts.

Feehan added: "We haven't finalised when the Arena redevelopment will commence, with financing a key element and we remain hopeful of Government support for the project through the Large Scale Sport Infrastructure Fund (LSSIF). We expect news on whether we've been successful with

our LSSIF application in the coming weeks and that will help inform our next steps."

Basketball Ireland chairperson, Prof. Seamas Donnelly, stated: "This is an important milestone for basketball in Ireland. Having a new Arena is key part of our 5-year Strategic Plan and is essential to help maintain the growth of the

sport. Our registered playing population increased 21.5% last year alone and revenue generated from the Arena will filter down to every area of the game.

"Overall this is also a huge boost for Irish indoor sport, the new Arena will provide a best-in-class amenity, which is crucial as we all continue to strive for excellence."



Pictured Harry Scully, John Feehan, Ciara Bracken, Professor Seamus Donnelly and Sean Jenkins. Pic credit: INPHO/James Crombie

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# 45% CUT TO RETROFITTING FUNDS SINCE 2022

People Before Profit councillor Darragh Adelaide condemns the government's cuts to the Retrofitting funds. It was revealed in September's Council meeting that funding for South Dublin County Council's retrofitting scheme has been reduced by about 45% since 2022. Cllr Adelaide said: The cuts to the Retrofitting Programme for Social Housing is disgraceful, especially under

the watch of the Green Party, who championed the Retrofitting programme as a way to "reduce carbon emissions by half". In 2022 the council was allocated €5.1 million with a target of retrofitting 146 homes. In 2024 this was cut to €2.8 million with a target of only 83 homes. 61% of a household's carbon emissions come from

heating. Adelaide added that "Retrofitting homes is both a means to reach our climate targets and cut down on energy costs during the cost-of-living crisis."

Gino Kenny, local TD for people before profit added "Allowing cuts to the retrofitting programme shows that rather than looking out for our environment, the Green Party serves to greenwash government environmental failures"

# CLLR SARAH BARNES TO CONTEST DUBLIN SOUTH WEST CONSTITUENCY IN GENERAL ELECTION

Councillor Sarah Barnes has been selected by Fine Gael to represent the party in the Dublin South-West constituency in the General Election, alongside Deputy Colm Brophy. Fine Gael have now chosen 59 General Election candidates in 37 constituencies.

Cllr Barnes was added to the Dublin South-West ticket alongside Deputy Colm Brophy following a meeting of Fine Gael's Executive Council. Cllr Sarah Barnes said, "It is an honour to have been selected to contest the forthcoming General Election for Fine Gael in Dublin South-West. "I have lived in the constituency since the 1990s, having returned home after a number of years of living abroad. As my children grew up and attended local schools, I became actively involved in community life.

executive assistant and deputy company secretary both here and abroad, which gives me a well-rounded perspective on policy and governance. "I established my own small business during the COVID-19 pandemic, so I understand first-hand the hurdles that small business owners face and I believe that supporting SMEs is crucial, as they contribute to employment and community development.

"I was elected as a councillor in the recent local elections. "From my engagement with the electorate during that campaign, I believe I can represent the interests of the people and I intend to work tirelessly to get a second seat for Fine Gael in Dublin South-West by bringing a new energy and perspective to the constituency."

"Growing up in a Fine Gael political family, I was inspired by my mother, the late Monica Barnes, who served as a Fine Gael Senator and TD in the Dun Laoghaire constituency for over two decades. This strong political foundation has shaped my commitment to public service. "My professional background includes working as an



# MINISTER EMER HIGGINS TO CONTEST DUBLIN MID-WEST CONSTITUENCY

Minister Emer Higgins has been selected by Fine Gael to represent the party in the Dublin Mid West constituency at the next General Election.

Party members selected Minister Higgins at tonight's selection convention held in the Maldron Hotel, Newlands Cross which was chaired by Senator Barry Ward. Fine Gael have now chosen 57 General Election candidates in 36 constituencies.

Minister Emer Higgins said: "I'm honoured to be standing in the next General Election for Fine Gael. "As a sitting TD and Minister of State I have been working really hard

to represent my constituents across Lucan, Clondalkin, Palmerstown, the villages and Citywest.

"Ours is a rapidly growing community and I firmly believe infrastructure needs to be delivered in tandem with housing. I have a proven track record on this from having secured investment in local schools, public transport and our parks.

"I am really looking forward to the campaign and I hope to be re-elected to serve my community which I've been representing at both Council and national level for 13 years."

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# MAYOR OF SOUTH DUBLIN HONOURS OLYMPIANS AT COUNTY HALL

The Mayor of South Dublin, Cllr. Baby Pereppadan welcomed some of the South Dublin Athletes who represented Ireland at the recent Paris Olympics to a



reception in County Hall. Olympic Taekwondo athlete Jack Woolley, Irish Men's Hockey Olympian Shane O'Donoghue and Olympic swimmer Ellen Walshe were in attendance, with Irish Rugby 7's player Terry Kennedy represented by Paudge McGill of St. Mary's College RFC and Athletics star Rhasidat Adeleke represented by her mother Adewumi.

The Athletes were joined by local elected officials, family members, club members and local volunteers for a reception to honour their achievements and impact with all present commenting on the sense of pride they have brought to South Dublin.

The event also honoured and acknowledged the work of local sports clubs, such as Templeogue Swimming Club, Glenanne Hockey Club and Tallaght Athletic Club which have helped the Athletes achieve their success, with

members of St. Mary's Boxing also in attendance. St. Mary's boxing club, based in Tallaght is the home of Olympian Gráinne Walsh and double Olympic gold medallist Kellie Harrington.

Speaking at the event, Mayor of South Dublin, Councillor Baby Perappadan said; "As an avid sports fan, I know very well the impact and the effect that sport has on a nation and on the local communities within that nation. Club members here in South Dublin from Athletics, Boxing, Rugby, Swimming & Taekwando all stood taller, knowing that their guy or girl was there at the Olympics, performing at the pinnacle of sporting achievement." Elaine Leech, Director

of Housing, Social and Community Development at South Dublin County Council added; "Those athletes who represented Ireland and our local clubs in Athletics, Boxing, Hockey, Rugby, Swimming and Taekwando were introduced to their sport by volunteer coaches and I would also like to pay warm tribute to them for the great social benefit they have brought to our community."

"The South Dublin Olympians have created an ethos of success and respect for your sport, your club and your area. We will look to support that so that you can continue the path for this and the next generation for Los Angeles 2028 and beyond."

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# NEW NORTH STAND AND ENHANCED CORPORATE FACILITIES AT TALLAGHT STADIUM

South Dublin County Council is delighted to announce the official opening of the newly constructed North Stand and enhanced corporate facilities at Tallaght Stadium. This exciting development was unveiled by the Mayor of South Dublin Cllr. Baby Pereppadan and Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage Darragh O'Brien TD, during the highly anticipated League of Ireland match between Shamrock Rovers and Bohemians on Monday, September 23rd.

The North Stand, along with the improved corporate and hospitality offerings, marks a new era for Tallaght Stadium. The enhanced capacity now allows for over 10,500 spectators, up from the previous 8,000, solidifying the stadium's position as one of Ireland's premier sporting venues. The upgraded facilities provide for a state-of-the-art venue for sporting events, as well as a modern, versatile space for corporate events, media, and hospitality services.

Key features of the upgraded stadium development include: **North Stand:** With a capacity of 2,500 seats, the new stand offers modern seating with excellent sightlines and increased comfort for fans. **Corporate and Hospitality Facilities:** The Main Stand has undergone significant refurbishment, including new VIP seating areas and upgraded corporate boxes, ensuring a world-class experience for guests and media. **Accessibility Improvements:** Enhanced accessible seating with protective canopies in the South Stand and the addition of a Changing Places facility ensure the stadium is more inclusive for all patrons.

The investment of €13.5 million which was funded by South Dublin County Council and through the Department of Housing

Local Government and Heritage's Urban Regeneration and Development Fund ensures that Tallaght Stadium remains a UEFA Category 4 venue, capable of hosting top-tier European football matches. With the Women's National Team playing Georgia in the upcoming UEFA European qualifier and Shamrock Rovers qualifying for the UEFA Conference League group stages, the new facilities will play a crucial role in hosting internationally important sporting events in the months and years ahead.

In launching the new North Stand and Stadium Upgrade Works, Mayor Cllr Baby Pereppadan said, "This is a proud moment for Tallaght Stadium and South Dublin County. The completion of the North Stand and enhanced facilities ensures that our stadium continues to grow and thrive as a focal point for the community, both in terms of sport and events."

Tallaght Stadium has become a hub for major sporting events, regularly hosting Shamrock Rovers' men's and women's teams, FAI Women's National Team matches, and a variety of other sports such as rugby, GAA, and American football. The venue's expansion promises to attract even more events, including concerts and large-scale public gatherings, with the stadium's capacity for large-scale events now reaching 22,000 after the recent upgrade works.

Speaking at the launch, Colm Ward added; "The new North Stand and corporate facilities at Tallaght Stadium, supported by significant Urban Development & Regeneration Funding from government, completes a top-class facility that benefits the local and national sporting community while also providing a new venue for high-profile entertainment

events in South Dublin. This complements broader investment of over €80m in infrastructure projects in Tallaght, including the Innovation Quarter, Tallaght District Heating, Work IQ, a strategic new link road and public realm enhancements.

In addition, the signing of a new Memorandum of Understanding with the FAI ensures that Tallaght Stadium will remain at the heart of Irish football while I also welcome our upcoming partnership with Tallaght Martial Arts to support a long-standing local club with new facilities in the new North Stand for their many members, several of whom have already achieved international success."

As well as launching the Tallaght Stadium Fourth Stand and enhanced corporate

facilities, South Dublin County Council is also pleased to announce the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Football Association of Ireland (FAI) for the use of Tallaght Stadium. This agreement strengthens the relationship between the Council and the FAI, ensuring Tallaght Stadium will continue to be a key venue for future FAI matches and events, furthering the stadium's role as a home for Irish football at all levels.

With the launch of the upgraded Stadium and the strengthening of relationships with its sporting partners, the Council looks forward to welcoming the community, sports fans, and corporate partners to this newly improved facility and to celebrating the next chapter of Tallaght Stadium's storied history.



Pictured Mark Scanlon (Director of League of Ireland), Nicola Coffey (Tallaght stadium Development and Operations Manager) Jason Frehill (Director of Economic, Enterprise and Tourism Development) Colm Ward (Chief Executive South Dublin County Council) Cllr Baby Pereppadan (Mayor of South Dublin County Council) Minister Darragh O'Brien, John Martin (Shamrock Rovers CE) Laura Leonard (Senior Executive Officer Economic, Enterprise and Tourism Development) Ciaran Medlar (Chairman of Shamrock Rovers)



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ESB's Graduate Development Programme forms part of an ambitious drive by the company to recruit talent from third-level institutions across the island of Ireland, and internationally, to support the delivery of its Net Zero by 2040 strategy. This year's intake is the largest number of graduates

ESB has recruited to date and includes a record 73 graduate engineers. On average, one third of engineering interns return to ESB to take up graduate positions following their successful completion of the Internship Programme.

Graduates were welcomed to the organisation by Paddy Hayes, ESB Chief Executive and Tom McMahon, Capability Development and Resourcing Manager at their recent induction. Throughout the duration of the programme each graduate will receive a range of supports including being partnered with individual mentors from within their chosen business unit, IT equipment and access to allow hybrid working as part of ESB's smart working offering. Sinéad Kilkelly, ESB's Executive Director,

People & Organisation Development, said "At ESB, fostering both professional growth and personal development is at the core of our graduate programme. As we look towards realising our Net Zero by 2040 target, we recognise the immense possibilities that lie ahead for our graduates, both as individuals and as a group. Throughout their journeys at ESB, we look forward to working with them and extend our best wishes as they embark on their careers."

Recruitment for our 2025 Graduate Development Programme opened on the 23rd of September and ESB is inviting applications from all final-year and post-graduate students. Recruitment for ESB's engineering internship programme is currently open to applicants for 2025.

Applications can be made via the ESB website: [www.esb.ie/careers](http://www.esb.ie/careers)



*Pictured Graduates from Dublin pictured at ESB's recent graduate induction alongside Tom McMahon, ESB Capability, Development, and Resourcing Manager and Richard McEaney, Operations Manager, Learning & Development.*



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# GREENHILLS COMMUNITY COLLEGE CELEBRATES THE LAUNCH OF NEW AEN SPECIAL CLASS AND RESOURCE ROOMS

Greenhills Community College in Walkinstown under the patronage of Dublin and Dun Laoghaire ETB, is proud to announce the official launch of its new AEN (Additional Educational Needs) Special Class and resource rooms.

The event took place on the 25th of September

with special guest Minister Hildegard Naughton TD, Minister of State for Special Education and Inclusion, in attendance to inaugurate the new facilities.

The launch marks an exciting new chapter for the school, which has been a pillar of the local community since its founding in 1970. The newly

developed spaces include three classrooms, a kitchen, a sensory room, a locker room, a reading room, and a games room, all designed to enhance the learning environment for students with additional educational needs.

Minister Naughton toured the new facilities, met

with students, and officially unveiled a plaque to commemorate the occasion. She also delivered a speech celebrating the school's commitment to inclusive education and the well-being of all students.

Greenhills Community College's forward-thinking approach includes integrating AEN students into mainstream classes while providing comprehensive

support tailored to individual needs. The school's initiatives, such as the innovative "Cooking for Life" programme, showcase its dedication to both academic achievement and life skills development.

Principal Noirin Lannon commented, "We are thrilled to expand our AEN offerings with these state-of-the-art rooms. This

initiative reinforces our ethos of care, respect, and equality, ensuring that all our students thrive in an inclusive and supportive environment."

The event was also attended by representatives from the Dublin and Dún Laoghaire Education and Training Board (DDLETB), parents, students, and local community members.



Minister Naughton with SNA Cindy Nugent, teacher Samantha Finn and the boys from L2LP 3rd year class



Noirin Lannon Principal, Minister Naughton, Geraldine Leahy Deputy Principal, Mark McDonald Director of Schools, DDLETB.



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# AN COSÁN PROVIDED AN ANCHOR IN THE MIDST OF BEREAVEMENT

An Cosán community education centre in Jobstown, Tallaght, has provided a Firhouse mother with an anchor following the loss of her husband to cancer two years ago. Sharing her story of empowerment through adult education with over 100 golfers at An Cosán's 26th Golf Classic at Powerscourt Golf Club, Patricia Bailey said she couldn't believe the support An Cosán had given her.

"An Cosán has given me an anchor when I felt so untethered in life, and opportunities to get excited again about my future," she said. "I know the skills and confidence I'm gaining with An Cosán will help me get a good job."

Ms Bailey, who initially completed a 12-week Discover Your Path course and who is now in her second year of a QQI Level 5 course in Business Administration with

Digital Skills for Work, said she was hugely grateful not only for the free courses, but also the additional supports offered by An Cosán. "The community spirit and support of An Cosán is next to none," she said. "They offer a fully holistic approach to adult community education with one-to-one mentoring and counselling services. I got a loan of a free laptop, and IT support too."

Ms Bailey said the Discover Your Path course was exactly what she needed after losing her husband Phil. "I had given up my career in beauty therapy to be his carer through his long battle with cancer, as well as looking after our young son," she said. "A free 12-week course of self-discovery and confidence-building, re-discovering my skills, strengths and values with support to create a path forward to further education and/or work, was exactly

what I needed because, somewhere along the line, I had lost my confidence and felt so untethered.

"I met so many lovely women from all different backgrounds on the course, all with their own story to share, all wanting the same thing as me - personal development and a better future through education," Ms Bailey continued. "I felt a real sense of belonging. I made a promise to myself starting this learning journey and just turning 40, that I'd take up any opportunity that came my way and push myself out of my comfort zone. Well, it worked and I got offered an internship with Goodbody stockbrokers, which was extended throughout the summer. I really enjoyed my time there."

Reflecting on the past 18 months, Ms Bailey said: "I can honestly say I don't

know where I'd be without the An Cosán team. I tell everyone who will listen just how amazing An Cosán is and how life-changing it has been for me and my family. My 10-year-old son is only delighted I must do homework too, and likes to remind me to get the laptop out and study! It's been so inspiring watching him look up to me, knowing education doesn't stop at the school gates and is a lifelong journey."

An Cosán CEO Heydi Foster said "Patricia is the change we see at An Cosán every day. Her words show the world of possibility we want every individual and family to have access to."

Recognising that not everyone faced the same odds in life, Ms Foster went on to say that An Cosán worked to remove barriers and support people in overcoming hurdles. "Even if you're earning the minimum

wage in Ireland, you probably make less than €1,700 a month. That could all go on rent in many places. You may be struggling with your mental health. In Tallaght we have the highest rate of suicide for young women in the country. Getting the skills to find a better paid job is not easy for someone who is struggling to hold everything together.

"If you are a migrant, a Traveller, a single parent, trying to beat an addiction or cope with a childhood trauma, the barriers you face are many, even in our 'affluent' Ireland," Ms Foster continued. "At An Cosán we look at each individual person and see what they need to succeed, and we support them so they can do so."

Anna Durkan, Chair of An Cosán's Board of Directors, said: "An Cosán is all about giving opportunities to learners - adults and

children - to develop skills and confidence so that they have choices in life.

Starting off in 1986 with the aim of lifting the people of West Tallaght out of poverty through the empowerment of education, we are now working with communities across the country, supporting learners from every county to achieve their potential, while working at a national and policy level to address the digital divide so that everyone has an equal chance."

Ms Durkan continued: "We couldn't do this work without our generous supporters and without funding from SOLAS, the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Pobal, Tusla and the Dublin Dún Laoghaire Education and Training Board."

To find out more about An Cosán, see [www.ancosan.ie](http://www.ancosan.ie).

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Pictured: Heydi Foster, CEO of An Cosán, Patricia Bailey, adult learner, and Anna Durkan, Chair of An Cosán's Board of Directors

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# OVER 30% INCREASE IN GRANT LIMITS AND AN INCREASE IN INCOME THRESHOLDS OF 25% TO BE INTRODUCED MEANING MORE WILL NOW BE ELIGIBLE FOR ENHANCED GRANTS

Local Fianna Fáil General Election candidate in Dublin South West, Cllr Teresa Costello, has welcomed confirmation from the Minister for Housing Darragh O'Brien of his intention to increase grant limits by over 30% and the income thresholds by 25% for those applying for support under the Housing Adaptation Grants for Older People and People with a Disability Scheme.

The planned proposed changes follow the recent publication of the Report on the Review of the Housing Adaptation Grants for Older People and People with a Disability Scheme. The review recommends an increase in grant limits in excess of 30% and an increase in income thresholds of 25%. The report also recommends adjusting the burden sharing for local authorities by reducing the local authority funding contribution to 15% (from the existing 20%) together with a number of

amendments to the means test. These changes, which will mean that more people will qualify for these grants, are expected to take effect in Q1 next year.

Commenting, Cllr Costello said: "Having called for an increase to both the grant limits and the thresholds for some time now I am delighted to see that Minister O'Brien has received Cabinet approval to do just that. Grant limits will increase by €10,000 in some circumstances which will be welcome news to many. "I am particularly pleased to hear that the means testing arrangements will also be amended so that just the owner/tenant and their spouse will be assessed and that a person's income 'in year' can be taken account of in certain circumstances.

"These grants are a lifeline for many families and individuals. The ESRI projections indicate that the numbers of people aged over

65 will more than double to 1.3 million people by 2040.

As more people live longer lives, they will want to stay healthy and independent,

live in their own homes and communities and keep to a minimum their use of in-patient and out-patient hospital services. "Since taking office, Fianna Fáil in

Government has increased the investment in these grants by over 27% from €73m in 2020 to €93m in 2024. It's appropriate now that we make the grants

easier to access and to support as many people as possible to age with dignity in their homes," the local Fianna Fáil General Election candidate concluded.

## SUPPLY DROUGHT IN DUBLIN REIGNITES THE COMMUTER PROPERTY MARKET

A supply drought in Dublin has reignited the commuter property market as buyers battle to secure affordable family homes, the Q3 REA Average House Price Index has found. Frustration in the capital has led to the return of the previously unheated commuter market, which has risen by 2.9pc over the past three months to an average of €336,944. And further afield, large towns such as Ennis, Tralee, Tullamore and Athlone have experienced average increases of €20,000 in the past three months.

The REA Average House Price Index concentrates on the sale price of Ireland's typical stock home, the three-bed semi, giving an accurate picture of the second-hand property market in towns and cities countrywide. The actual selling price of a three-bed, semi-detached house across the country rose by 2.7pc in the past three months to €323,741. Time taken to reach sale agreed nationally has dropped to four weeks as low supply continues to drive sales. Actual selling prices in Dublin city rose by 1.3pc in the last three months, and the average three-bed semi in the capital is now selling at €532,333 - an annual increase of 7.4pc. The number of sales in the capital due to landlords leaving the market has

risen six points to 24pc in the past year, the Index revealed, but some areas are reporting a figure of over 50pc. "Lack of stock in Dublin has accelerated bidding in the commuter belt, with a number of counties such as Meath, Louth, Carlow and Kildare experiencing their largest quarterly rises of recent times," said REA spokesperson Seamus Carthy.

"There has been a drought of properties on the market in Dublin over the summer - the lowest seen in years according to our agent Anthony McGee of REA McGee. "Average selling time in the capital has fallen from five to four weeks, but in many cases it is as low as two. "A lot of stock in some areas is ex-rental and landlords are keen to close as soon as the bidding hits their expected figures - so while properties are moving, we are not necessarily seeing the rises that you might expect.

"While there is activity on every property, it is not as intense as people may believe and we feel that moderate increases in supply would take the heat out of the current market. "One area where we are seeing improvement is in the turnaround time for probate, which has been has previously been frustrating for potential buyers."



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