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# ONE MILLION ENROLMENTS IN ECCE IS SOMETHING TO BE PROUD OF

Fianna Fáil's Barry Andrews MEP has hailed the success of the Early Childhood and Education (ECCE) programme that has seen more than one million young children enrolled since it was introduced in 2010 during his tenure as Minister for Children. ECCE, which provides two years free preschool to all children within the eligible age, has uptake rates in excess of 96%.

MEP Andrews said: "The introduction of ECCE was far from certain. In 2009 when I was the Minister for Children, there was some serious pushback from the Department of Finance given the

choppy fiscal waters that we were in at the time. Thankfully, the Minister for Finance at the time, the late Brian Lenihan, had the vision and foresight to see the potential in such a scheme.

Following the publication earlier this week of an independent review of the scheme, it has now been confirmed that over one million children have been enrolled since its introduction in 2010.

Andrews added: "To have passed the one million enrolment mark is incredible and something that I am very proud of. That is equal to over one

fifth of today's population who have benefited from the programme.

"Credit must also be given to successive governments who have stuck with it, invested in it, expanded it, and helped it become the vital family resource that it is today.

"I welcome Minister O'Gorman's comments that work is underway to introduce statutory entitlement to ECCE and I want to echo his thanks to providers and early years educators across the country who are one of the main reasons it is such a success" concluded Andrews.



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# RED LINE BOOK FESTIVAL WAS A RESOUNDING SUCCESS

The Red Line Book Festival came to a rollicking close recently at the Coach House in Palmerstown with a superb comedy night with comedian Sharon Manion.

Sharon was writer in residence for this year's festival and mentored participants in a series of workshops looking at all aspects of comedy writing and performance, culminating in a fantastic showcase on the Sunday night. Over 40 literary events took place over the week of the Red Line Book Festival with an eclectic mix of established writers and new voices.

Highlights included an

evening with comedian Emma Doran in conversation with Amy Huberman about her debut book, Mad Isn't It? International bestselling authors, Donal Ryan and Marian Keyes had packed houses and Authors Sean Murray, Nicky Ryan and Christine Bohan shared the harrowing Stardust Tragedy as they discussed The Last Disco.

The festival's Family Fun Day returned to Tallaght's cultural quarter on the 19th of October and was a day of literary magic and Hallowe'en fun for all ages with activities including storytelling sessions, illustration workshops from top Irish artists working

in children's literature as well as live music, creative events, children's entertainment and lots more. 'Tallaween' was unleashed on Saturday 19th bringing the library's darkest tales to life. Monsters, demons, and zombies escaped the pages and haunt Parthalán Place every night from 5 PM to 9 PM until October 31st.

The events took place across

South Dublin County in locations such as The Civic, Rathfarnham Castle, Brú Chrónáin - Clondalkin Round Tower Visitor Centre, and the Pearse Museum highlighting the richness of the county's built heritage as well as introducing dynamic new venues such as Work IQ in Tallaght Innovation Quarter.

The Red Line Book Festival was a celebration of

literature, storytelling, and creativity and has grown to become one of the highlights of the cultural calendar. It offered an incredible opportunity to connect with the written word in its many forms whether you're a reader, writer, or simply a lover of stories.

From engaging discussions with authors to exciting workshops and performances,

this festival created a space for reflection, imagination, and community.

The Red Line Book Festival was produced by South Dublin Libraries and Arts at South Dublin County Council and offered a programme of events and workshops that appeals to people of all ages and interests, from children to adults, casual readers to bookworms.



Pic Credit: Ben Ryan



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# 'MY OPEN LIBRARY' LAUNCHED AT LUCAN LIBRARY

## New Extended Hours Offer Unprecedented Access to the Community

On the 28th of September, South Dublin Libraries officially launched its first My Open Library location at

Lucan Library with an event which was attended by Cllr. Liona O'Toole representing the Mayor of South Dublin

County. This initiative is designed to provide extended access to library members, beyond staffed

hours, offering greater flexibility and convenience, empowering them to visit at times that suit their

schedules. Anyone can now join the library and register for the My Open Library service which will give them access to the library from 8:00 AM to 10:00 PM, 365 days a year. Whether early morning, late evening, or during weekends, visitors can now enjoy the library's wide range of resources—including book collections, study spaces, internet access, and more—at their convenience.

in enhancing access to library resources for our community. It aligns with our vision of making the library a space for everyone at a time that's convenient to them, and reflects our commitment to evolving with the needs of our members."

Lucan Library will continue to offer full staffed services during its regular hours, ensuring that visitors who need support from library staff, or wish to attend events can still do so. How to Access My Open Library, to use the service, library users must register to attend a My Open Library induction. Registration is simple and available to any current library member aged 16 and over. Parents must be present to register 16 and 17 year olds. Inductions for My Open Library will take place from mid-October in Lucan Library and continue on an ongoing basis.

Key Features of My Open Library include Extended Access Hours: Library users can access the building from 8:00 AM to 10:00 PM daily, including weekends and public holidays. And Self-Service Options: Library users can borrow and return books, use study areas, and access computers and printing services without needing staffed assistance.

Commenting on the launch, County Librarian Paul Fusco, said, "We are thrilled to bring My Open Library to Lucan. This new service marks a significant milestone

To sign up, contact the team at Lucan Library on 01 6216422 or [lucanlibrary@sdblincoco.ie](mailto:lucanlibrary@sdblincoco.ie)



Pictured Geraldine O'Meara (Library Manager), Caroline Higgins, Cllr. Liona O'Toole, Paul Fusco (County Librarian), Emma Perry, Jason Frehill (SDCC Director of (SDCC Economic Enterprise & Tourism Development) at the launch of My Open Library at Lucan Library.

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# OVER €63,000 ALLOCATED TO SOUTH DUBLIN UNDER NEW PARTICIPATION NATION OUTDOOR FUND

Local TD and Minister for Business Employment and Retail Emer Higgins has welcomed the allocation of €63,750 under the Participation National Outdoor Fund, calling it “great news for South Dublin and our local communities.” This funding will support local Sports Partnerships across Dublin Mid-West, bringing key developments to several parks.

Higgins said “These projects will benefit diverse groups, including people with disabilities, and older adults and are a huge benefit to

our community. Making sure our community has access to amenities like this and ensuring they grow with our communities’ needs is a priority of mine and something I will continue to push for in Government.”

Higgins said “It’s great to see this fund include; outdoor exercise equipment to be installed in Quarryvale Park and Carrigmore Park, Citywest, aimed at adults and older residents, with modern resistance-based equipment, expanding amenities with new volleyball nets in four additional parks with nets

already installed in Griffen Valley and Corkagh Park, alongside a planned beach volleyball court and new box up units will be added to Airlie Park, Lucan, Rathcoole Park, and Tymon Park, following their success in Dodder Valley and Beechfield Parks”.

“The Participation Nation Outdoor Fund is a great example of how this Government is working to boost participation levels and I am confident that it will complement the fantastic community good that is already delivered under both the Community Sport Facilities Fund and the Large-Scale Sport Infrastructure Fund”, concluded Higgins.

A total of €2.26 million has been allocated to 30 local sports partnerships across the country to support the purchase and installation of permanent sport infrastructure that can be placed on public land for community use by The

Minister of State for Sport, Physical Education and the Gaeltacht, Thomas Byrne TD.

In line with the Programme for Government target of reaching 60% overall participation in sport by 2027, the fund is designed to spur physical activity in

local community settings by supporting Local Sports Partnerships with the development of barrier-free sport projects on publicly accessible land.

Allocations are funded by the Department and administered by Sport Ireland. Examples of the

type of projects supported under the Fund include 3x3 basketball courts, outdoor soccer tables, table tennis, and outdoor gym equipment.

**Any queries regarding the fund should be directed to [participation@sportireland.ie](mailto:participation@sportireland.ie)**



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# NEW BUS SERVICES FOR LUCAN

Fianna Fáil General Election candidate and local Councillor Shane Moynihan is pleased to confirm that three new additional bus services were introduced on the C2 route, effective from October 21st. This announcement comes after continued advocacy and efforts by Cllr Moynihan to address the concerns of residents, who have long called for improvements in local transport.

“For too long, Lucan residents have been dealing with overcrowded buses and an unreliable service. Too many people have had to walk to bus stops only to

be left behind by full buses or left waiting for services that simply don’t arrive. I’ve been working hard with the National Transport Authority (NTA) and Dublin Bus to find solutions to this issue,” Cllr Shane Moynihan.

Off the back of calls for an enhanced service by Cllr Moynihan, three new additional services will be introduced on Route C2 from next Monday. These new services will operate at 07.13 (Adamstown to Sandymount), 15.46 (Sandymount to Adamstown) and 18.25 (Sandymount to Adamstown).

This brings the number of additional departures to seven since Cllr Moynihan raised the matter with the NTA and while this is a step in the right direction, the Fianna Fáil General Election candidate said he remains committed to further improving public transport

options for Lucan and the surrounding areas.

“I’m delighted to bring this good news to our community, but we are not done yet,” he added. “While the introduction of these new services is a significant improvement, it is not a silver bullet. Lucan relies heavily on a single mode of transport, and we must ensure that our bus services meet the growing needs of our residents. More frequent departures are needed, and we need to look at starting more buses from the mid-point of the route to avoid overcrowding.”

Cllr Moynihan has pledged to continue working on these transport issues and advocating for better services for local residents. “I won’t stop until we get the services we deserve. Better public transport means a better quality of life for everyone in our community.”

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# FULL LUAS BEFORE REACHING CHEEVERSTOWN STOP LEAVING LOCAL RESIDENTS STRANDED

Fianna Fáil General Election candidate Lynda Prendergast, has expressed concern over capacity issues on the Red Line Luas service, which continues to cause daily frustration for commuters. In a letter to Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) Prendergast highlighted a range of issues impacting those who rely on the service, particularly between Cheeverstown and

Saggart.

“Every day, the Luas is full before it reaches the Cheeverstown stop,” she said. “At peak times, commuters are being left on the platform, as trams reach full capacity too early in their journey. This is compounded by frequent disruptions and diversion from the Saggart route along with delays without prior notice, which is making it nearly impossible for people to rely on this service.”

In response, TII suggested that passengers simply adjust their travel times by five minutes either way to avoid overcrowding, a suggestion that the local Fianna Fáil candidate has deemed completely unacceptable. “I am deeply disappointed by the disregard for the daily challenges faced by commuters. Asking passengers to adjust their travel times by a few minutes is not a solution to overcrowding or the lack of

reliable service. We need to ensure that people who choose to leave their cars at home have a safe and dependable public transport system.” Prendergast recently met with Minister of State at the Department of Transport James Lawless, to discuss these issues and press

for urgent improvements to the Red Line.

The meeting focused on ensuring that the Red Line Luas service becomes more frequent, has fewer disruptions, and experiences no unexplained route changes. “I’m hopeful that

with the combined efforts of Minister Lawless and Transdev, we can implement solutions that will improve the daily experience for commuters. “We need a service that runs smoothly and consistently, for the benefit of people who rely on it every day.”



## SCOIL MOCHUA WILL CONTINUE TO BE SUPPORTED BY THE DEPARTMENT

Local Councillor Trevor Gilligan recently confirmed that Scoil Mochua will continue to support a local school “All schools are required to have their own bank accounts in line with standard practice and good governance arrangements. This obligation is also set out in the Education Act and Governance Manual for Primary Schools 2023 - 2027. Scoil Mochua have been requested to open a school bank account, so that funding can be provided directly to the school”.

He continued “School funding is provided by way of capitation which is intended to contribute to the day-to-day running costs of schools and is used to meet the cost of items such as heating, lighting, cleaning,

insurance and general upkeep in schools. Current levels of funding to the school will remain unchanged and are in line with funding provided to all other special schools. Scoil Mochua will continue to be supported by the Department and current levels of staffing, such as teachers and special needs assistants will also remain unchanged”.

The Clondalkin Councillor concluded “Special schools such as Scoil Mochua, can access lower rates of insurance by liaising with the Financial Support Services Unit (FSSU) and relevant management body who can offer support and advice to school boards of management in relation to school accounts and funding generally”.



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## IRISH LIFE HEALTH EXPRESSCARE CLINICS

Irish Life Health have partnered with Affidea to launch three Irish Life Health ExpressCare Clinics, located in Tallaght and Santry, Dublin as well as Cork City. These clinics allow members fast access to care when they need it, aiming to see patients within 1 hour, with no appointment needed, and are open 7 days a week. Last year alone over 45,000 patients were treated across these clinics in Cork and Dublin, helping alleviate significant pressure on both A&E departments and busy GP clinics in the locality. These clinics are JCI\* accredited having achieved the international standard for quality of patient safety and care. An increase in the demand for access to minor injury clinics has been observed, with Irish Life Health noting a 50% increase in claims for minor injuries in 2023 compared to previous year.



Pictured is Ger Davis, Managing Director, Irish Life Health, Lisa Morris, Head of Provider Services at Irish Life, Cliona Merrigan, Head of Claims and Provider Strategy at Irish Life and Barry Downes, Affidea CEO for UK and Ireland.

## VAPING AWARENESS CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED LOCALLY



The local Vaping Awareness Campaign was formally launched by Mayor Baby Pereppadan recently in TU Dublin. This campaign was collaboratively developed by Tallaght & Clondalkin Drugs & Alcohol Task Forces, Slaintecare Healthy Communities and South Dublin County Partnership; building on the phrase coined by Connect 4, encouraging people to #kickthevape

The campaign looks at 4 key messages, how vaping impacts lung health, mental health, financial health and the environment. The

campaign includes an informative video that clearly outlines what a vape is and the potential harms vaping can cause, see video on youtube <https://youtu.be/Rjzrxv9ONT0>.

Lastly, the latest episode of the TDATF podcast series, Survive & Thrive, focus' on vaping is now live. Guests include Paul Perth (Connect 4 Project), Alan McDonnell (Slaintecare Healthy Communities) & Professor Bobby Smyth (Consultant, Child, and Adolescent Psychiatry). Podcasts are available on spotify.

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## CLONDALKIN LEADS IN HOUSING COMPLETIONS FOR Q3 OF THIS YEAR

Fianna Fáil General Election candidate Cllr Shane Moynihan has welcomed new dwelling completion figures for Q3 of this year which show Clondalkin recorded the highest number of completions in the country. The data shows there were 8,939 new dwelling completions across the country in Q3 of this year representing a 6.3% increase compared to the same period in 2023. Clondalkin Local Electoral Area recorded the highest number of completions, with 622 new homes delivered.

Cllr Shane Moynihan said the 622 new Clondalkin homes completed in July, August and September will have a real, positive impact on families and individuals looking for a place to call home. He said, "While others talk, Fianna Fáil is the party of action on housing. Everyone accepts that seeing the full impact of this takes time, but the facts show a major expansion in home building has been delivered and is accelerating across Dublin and indeed nationwide."

Since Fianna Fáil re-entered Government in 2020, over 100,000 homes have been built across the country, surpassing the number built during the last two Governments combined. "This is just the start," said

Cllr Moynihan. "Our priority is and will always be young people and families on lower and moderate incomes who need help to afford their own home.

The Help to Buy, the First Home Scheme, and the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant have together helped thousands of people take that first step toward homeownership. "Minister for Housing Darragh O'Brien has also focused on the delivery of much needed social housing. Last year alone, we delivered 12,000 social homes, and we will go much further. Thousands

more are already in the pipeline.

"In Government, Fianna Fáil are making real progress, but we understand that times are still very challenging for those struggling to buy a home or pay rent. Supply is the key, and in every part of the country, improvements are being made. "Our Housing for All plan is the single largest investment in housing in the history of our State and it is working. I am committed alongside my party colleague Minister O'Brien to continue to deliver housing for the people of Dublin."

## 88 SOCIAL AND AFFORDABLE UNITS FOR RESIDENTS

"88 further units are to be made available for social and affordable housing following a recent council meeting. The department of education sources alternative preferred site for a school, therefore this land has become available for housing. The Department of Education has stated that they weren't going to develop a school at this location as they have a preferred site for a future school adjacent to Deansrath Community College." "A total of 88 units will be provided on the site with 18 social homes and 70 affordable dwellings. The mix of residential units ranges from 1-bedroom apartments to 4-bed houses, including two and three bedroom homes." "More planning is needed in terms of reducing traffic congestion, more buses & feeder buses. Residents are also furious that SDCC have removed a lane on the outer ring road hugely increasing time spent in traffic on the outer ring road. SDCC planners must take this into account when approving planning applications." Stated Cllr Trevor Gilligan.



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# CLLR. CIARÁN AHERN LAUNCHES GENERAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN

Councillor Ciarán Ahern launched his general election campaign recently, in an event attended by Labour Party Leader Ivana Bacik T.D., former Labour Party leader, Minister, and TD for Dublin South West Pat Rabbitte, former Minister and TD for Dublin South Alex White SC, and dozens of supporters from across Dublin South-West.

Ahern is a labour law solicitor and represents Rathfarnham-Templeogue on South Dublin County Council. He was elected to this position in June 2024 alongside fellow Labour councillor Pamela Kearns, who together earned nearly 28% of their area's first-preference votes. This was one of the Labour Party's strongest showings nationally in the most recent elections.

In his speech to supporters, Ahern shared his vision for the campaign and for Dublin South-West "People

are open to new faces, new leadership, new ideas. They see a government that has run out of big ideas. They see a budget that is blatantly trying to buy short term votes at the cost of long term thinking. They see waste in our public services and procurement processes, they see a Taoiseach who's big on promises and PR, but low on follow up. They see bike lanes, but no offshore wind farms. They see a country that's incredibly wealthy on paper, but they don't feel it in their pocket or experience it in our public services - whether they're waiting on a hospital appointment or on a bus that doesn't come.

This election is about ideas and vision for the future of our country. We in Labour want to see the State do more - we want to harness the power of the State to deliver affordable housing to a generation who are still living at home, to

provide modern, effective, reliable public transport, to ensure parents can access and afford childcare, to ensure children can access healthcare and additional needs supports when they need them, to ensure that we become a net exporter of renewable energy and meet the ambitious and vital climate targets that have been set."

Labour Party leader Ivana Bacik said "We're delighted to have Ciarán represent us in Dublin South-West for this upcoming election. Ciarán is a devoted and dedicated community volunteer, activist, and county councillor, with a strong background in the law, and I'm looking forward to seeing him take on the challenges of national politics.

I look forward to campaigning alongside him, both during the election and in Leinster House, for an Ireland that works for all."



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# FANTASTIC TURN OUT FOR THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PURE MILE AWARDS

The 15th Anniversary and celebration of the 2024 Pure Mile Awards was held in the Brooklodge Hotel in Macreddin, Aughrim, on the 17th of October to celebrate the hard work and achievements of all the Pure Mile Volunteers in Cleaning Up The Wicklow/Dublin Uplands.

The Pure Mile is an environmental, community, heritage initiative, established by Pure, which encourages communities and groups living in rural areas of Wicklow, South Dublin and Dun-Laoghaire, to adopt a mile of road, or miles of road, in their local area, or in the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands and organise litter picks, clean-ups, anti-dumping campaigns, research information about their local wildflowers, plants, trees, animals, and the built, cultural, and social heritage of an area. The awards night is an opportunity for all of the Pure Mile Groups to meet up in one room, for one night and one night only, and celebrate all of their hard work and achievements in Cleaning Up The Wicklow/Dublin Uplands, and for Pure to thank them all.

The Pure Mile was launched in 2009 and since then over 450 communities and groups have registered with the initiative. Starting with 5 areas back in 2009 Pure now have individuals, groups, walking groups, hiking groups, cycling groups, running groups, scouts, beavers, cubs, schools, businesses and organisations, from all over Wicklow, South Dublin, and Dun-Laoghaire. Since the Pure Mile was initiated, Pure Mile Volunteers have collectively improved and enhanced over 1,400 miles (2,250 kilometres) of road, mountains, woodlands, valleys, forestries, upland amenity areas, car parks, pull-ins, and even some coastal areas.

One of the main projects involved in this years Pure Mile was, 'Cleanup The South Dublin Uplands,' with additional projects including, anti-dumping campaigns, natural heritage, biodiversity, sustainability, built/social/cultural heritage, community and

educations projects. The Pure Mile demonstrates that people want to make a difference and want to preserve our environment, and Pure gives them the assistance so they can make that difference.

Pure Mile Groups range from all over Wicklow, South Dublin and Dun-Laoghaire and on the night of the awards, each one received a Pure Mile Certificate of Participation, native Irish trees, and all will be included in the popular Pure Mile Calendar, which was also launched on the night. There were a number of Certificates of Recognition presented on the night by the Mayor of South Dublin Cllr., Baby Pereppadan, Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly TD., and the Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr. Paul O'Brien, with cash prizes reaching over €6,000 distributed to groups which will further assist them in their local projects to improve and enhance the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands.

A number of walking groups and businesses were recognised on the night for their work to 'Clean-Up The South Dublin Uplands', for their regular litter picks and clean-ups of South Dublin Upland roads, mountains, trails, woodlands and forest entrances. The Pure Mile Groups concentrated their cleanup events this year on areas that were frequently affected by both littering and illegal dumping, including, Glenasmole Road, Cunard Road, Piperstown Road, Glassamucky Road, Castle Kelly Road, Ballymorefinn, Kilakee Car Park, The White Road, Seehan Road, Stone Cross, and all sections of the R115 Military Road. Over the last fifteen years, Pure Mile Volunteers have organised thousands of litter picks and clean-ups resulting in the removal of tonnes of bags of litter and rubbish from the beautiful, scenic, South Dublin Uplands.

Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly said 'I'm delighted to be part of the Pure Mile Awards this year and to congratulate the participants from Wicklow and South Dublin and Dun Laoghaire. It is great to meet the fantastic volunteers who have gone



above and beyond with their efforts and dedication to cleaning our roads, fields, hedgerows, and uplands. Their efforts are making a meaningful difference, not just to the environment but also to the public health for all of us, as clean environments ensure less issues relating to pollution and public health. I also want to commend all who have been involved in Pure Mile for 15 years, and the growth from a starting point of just 5 areas to 1,000 areas in 2024. I cannot praise the team behind the project and the thousands of Pure Mile Volunteers enough for what they have done. The result is we can all embrace the beauty of our countryside and I'd encourage everyone to venture out to enjoy our mountains, lakes, and beaches, and for more of us to take up the challenge and protect our natural treasures.'

A number of Pure Mile Groups who were involved in litter pick events of the South Dublin Uplands were in attendance at the awards night and Certificates of Recognition and cash prizes were presented to, Windmill Hill Rathcoole Pure Miles, Trekkers Walking Group Pure Miles, Wayfarers Walking Group Pure Miles, Átha Cliath Clean Up the Uplands Pure

Mile Team, Glenree Walking Group Pure Miles, Friends of the South Dublin Uplands Pure Miles, and Cruagh Pure Miles. Certificates of Recognition for Corporate Engagement and cleanups of the South Dublin Uplands were also acknowledge on the night and included, Glendalough Distillery Pure Mile Team, Britvic Pure Mile Team, NTT Global Pure Mile Team, and Vagabond Tours Pure Mile Team.

Donnie Anderson from Glenasmole/Cunard Pure Mile received a Pure Mile Ambassador Award for all his hard work, dedication and commitment to the Pure Mile.

The Pure Mile is the perfect opportunity for communities and groups who want to make a positive contribution to the South Dublin Uplands environment, and assists people in improving and enhancing the place they recreate in. Special interest groups such as, walking groups, cycling groups, running groups, hiking groups, businesses, and organisations, adopt a mile, or miles of road, in the South Dublin Uplands and help Pure to 'Clean Up The South Dublin Uplands.

A member of The Glenree Walking Group summed up

their group's involvement in the Pure Mile, 'Our group regularly walk in Wicklow/Dublin Uplands, and we were appalled by the amount of litter dumped in the area, which is mainly thrown out of cars. We previously contacted Pure regarding illegal dumping, and they have always responded in a positive manner and removed the dumping quickly. Working with the Pure Mile, and by adopting these areas, and doing cleanups, it's our way of keeping the uplands clean.'

Pure provide all groups with Pure Mile signage, Pure Mile high-vis vests, Pure Mile bags, gloves, and litter pickers, and Pure also removes all of the rubbish collected by the groups.

Ian Davis, Pure Manager commented on the success and growth of the Pure Mile in South Dublin, 'The Pure Mile has grown every year and we now have thousands of volunteers involved. Over the years the Pure Mile Volunteers have removed tonnes of litter and rubbish from upland roads, verges, hedges, and drains, and they have made a huge difference to the areas they live in, or recreate in. All the Pure Mile Volunteers involved in Cleanup The South Dublin Uplands have a

shared objective, a common cause, a common goal, a common focus - committed volunteers working together to improve and enhance the South Dublin environment. I would like to thank and congratulate all of the Pure Mile Volunteers this year and for the past 15 years for their dedication and commitment in assisting Pure to keeping the South Dublin Uplands, Pure, Clean and Pristine, the way it should be. We want to engage with all types of groups and businesses who are interested in Cleaning-Up The South Dublin Uplands, and we will assist in any way they can.'

**If any groups, communities, individuals, schools, walking groups, cycling groups, scouts, businesses, anyone, want to get involved in Pure Mile, they can contact Pure at [info@pureproject.ie](mailto:info@pureproject.ie) or download an application from [www.pureproject.ie/what-we-do/the-pure-mile/](http://www.pureproject.ie/what-we-do/the-pure-mile/).**

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# EXTENSIVE ROLLOUT OF EV INFRASTRUCTURE BEGINS AS DUBLIN LEADS THE CHARGE

Drivers of electric vehicles (EVs) in Dublin who are unable to charge their cars at home will soon gain access to hundreds of additional public charging locations thanks to a joint undertaking from the County's four local authorities.

Over the next two years, some 200 chargers will be brought into operation around key destinations in the region. This collaborative effort will help pave the way for smoother infrastructure development, better resource allocation, and greater convenience for EV owners who may not have access to charging facilities at their home across the whole of County Dublin. It will also offer easy access for those travelling to Dublin from other parts of the country.

A market leader in EV charging and solar panel solutions, Irish company ePower was selected to undertake the rollout following a competitive Europe-wide tender process. For this, the 200 chargers will be placed at 50 locations, including local

authority-owned car parks in Dublin City, Fingal, South Dublin and Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown. Other locations will include the likes of community centres, libraries and sports clubs.

While Dublin has the most charging points for EV owners in the country, the majority of these are privately installed and there is a lack of public charging points available. With people still interested in EV ownership, particularly as prices for the vehicles reduce and the technology advances, that means there is likely to be a large upscaling of ownership over the next few years when it is expected that some 138,000 EVs will be registered in the Dublin region. Around a quarter of those EVs will rely on public charging.

To cater for that growth, the Dublin EV Strategy developed by the four councils has targeted some 1,650 charge points being deployed at highly frequented destinations. The initial rollout of these will include the likes of Bremore Castle, Howth Harbour,

Bushy Park, Tallaght Stadium and St Anne's Park, as well as a number of libraries and leisure centres. The rollout at these types of locations will play a critical role along with the deployment of neighbourhood and en-route charging points for different vehicle types.

The unique project marks the first-time local authorities in Ireland have cooperated in this way on widespread charging infrastructure rollout. It is being supported by Zero Emission Vehicles Ireland (ZEVI), an initiative which works to support people and organisations to make the switch to EVs. The Government wants to see at least 845,000 EVs on the road by 2030., an ambition which comes after the European Union adopted a law to make all new cars and vans sold in Europe zero-emission from 2035.

Fast chargers like those being rolled out in Dublin are typically installed along motorways to facilitate quick charging for vehicles travelling longer distances. Their installation in and around the city and across



the county, is designed to make the EV charging process simpler and encourage driving electric.

CEO of ePower, John O'Keeffe, says this first of its kind rollout is a huge recognition of the importance of infrastructure for EV drivers as we move towards zero carbon transport. "It's our mission to make charging easy and accessible for everyone. That is especially important for those living in apartments townhouses and terraces, as they don't always have access to home

charging. A programme like this really breaks down barriers in choosing to drive EV. The four Dublin Local Authorities have recognised that, and showed the vision and support required to help people choose more environmentally friendly personal transport. We are so looking forward to working closely with the four Dublin Local Authorities to deliver this ambitious project."

While the full list of locations where these chargers will be installed is being finalised, work is underway with ESB

networks to secure the required power supplies to potential local authority sites. It is envisaged that the first sites will become operational in the first quarter 2025.

Details on the locations will be updated on the website of each local authority, as well as on the ePower app. In the initial rollout across the 50 sites, 90% of the chargers will be offering 100kW speeds. All fast chargers will conveniently support tap and go contactless payment via debit or credit cards.

## NEWCASTLE SECONDARY SCHOOL CAMPAIGN PROVES THE NEED FOR DEPARTMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE

Councillor Shirley O'Hara expressed frustration with the Department of Education's school building unit after attending the public information meeting hosted by Newcastle parents in St Finian's Community Hall recently.

Cllr O'Hara said "There is unanimity across all public representatives, be they TDs or Cllrs and of all parties or none that Newcastle needs a secondary school. The Department is simply not listening to the people on the ground. Our community wants, and in my view, should have, a secondary school in Newcastle. The department needs to put its cards on the table and show us the stats it is working off. In the meantime, the community has been working hard to gather evidence on

the local educational needs, and this has to be taken into account.

There is a need for substantial reform of the Department's School Building Unit. As the Taoiseach outlined in his proposal for a new Department of Infrastructure, outdated public service agencies like the Department of Education's Building Unit no longer can deliver to school campuses in a timely manner or in the right place. They need total replacement with an agency led by people who know what they are doing.

I proposed that all politicians and parties support the local community by joint submitting the excellent research undertaken by parents in Newcastle and this be submitted by all 7

councillors and 4 TDs jointly to the Minister for Education and that they demand a meeting with the head of her Department's School Building Unit. This tactic was successful elsewhere and we need to copy it in Newcastle".

Cllr O'Hara concluded "What is happening in Newcastle proves the need for a total overhaul in the system and process for delivering school buildings. Fine Gael, if returned to government will establish a Department of Infrastructure. In the interim, while we are stuck with the old system all politicians need to form a united front to tackle the school building unit and not allow them to play games with the future of Newcastle children's secondary education".

## THE MILL SHOPPING CENTRE 30TH ANNIVERSARY

On Saturday 12 October, local Fine Gael TD and Minister Emer Higgins was delighted to join celebrations marking 30 years of the Mill Shopping Centre.

The milestone event celebrated the history and continued success of the Mill, a cornerstone of Clondalkin Village and home to 30 stores.

Minister Higgins was thrilled to see the centre play such a key role in supporting local businesses, "the Mill Shopping Centre has been at the heart of the community for three decades and it's fantastic to see it continue to grow and serve the people of Clondalkin", said Higgins.





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# CHILDCARE CRISIS IN SAGGART HIGHLIGHTS NEED FOR PUBLICLY FUNDED SERVICES, SAY SOCIAL DEMOCRATS

The Social Democrats in Dublin Mid-West are highlighting the recent sudden closure of a childcare provider in Saggart, leaving 100 children without

essential childcare services, as a clear example of the need for a public childcare system. According to Lynn Tierney, branch chairperson: "As the state continues to

rely on the private sector for childcare, families are left vulnerable when these services are disrupted. This is simply unsustainable."

Adding to the crisis, childcare facilities granted planning permission as part of larger developments in Saggart and Rathcoole remain unopened by the developer. "It's unacceptable that spaces meant for childcare have sat empty for decades while families struggle to find childcare in the wider Four Districts Area" Tierney added.

Saggart, named Ireland's youngest town in the latest census, has seen rapid population growth, yet essential services like childcare, school places, and youth services have lagged behind. Cllr Eoin Ó Broin, Social Democrats councillor and general election candidate, expressed his frustration on behalf of parents in the area: "This situation shows the failure of our current childcare system. A publicly funded childcare solution, capped at €250 per month, is crucial to ensure no family is left behind."

The situation in Saggart

reflects a broader issue. Saggart and surrounding areas have seen significant population growth, but essential amenities for children such as childcare and school places have lagged behind. "This has been a growing concern for years, and it's clear the

current model of childcare provision is failing families," Ó Broin added. The Social Democrats, if in government, would prioritise transitioning to a public childcare system. "We need state investment in childcare infrastructure to meet the needs of growing communities."



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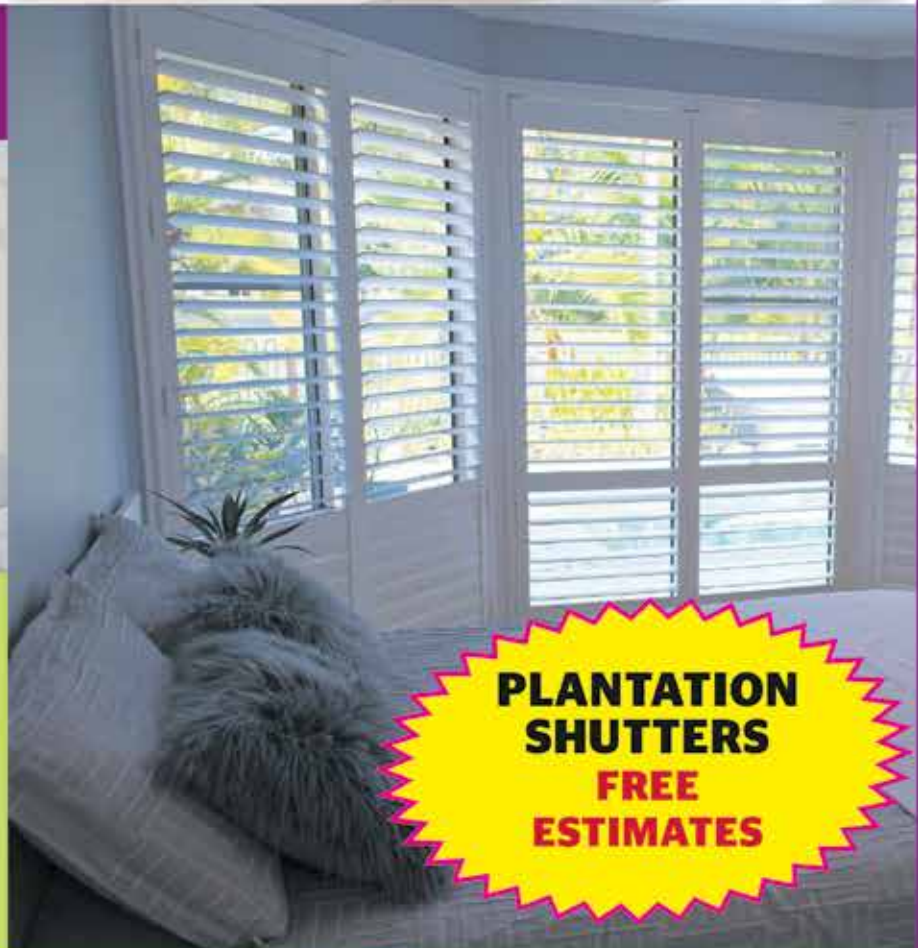
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