



Galway City

**Local Community Development
Committee (LCDC)**

Annual Report 2025



Claddagh boats – Photo by Chaosheng Zhang

Contents

Statement by the Chief Officer, Galway City LCDC	3
1. Introduction and Background.....	5
1.1 Role and Functions of Galway City LCDC.....	5
1.2 LCDC Membership and Meetings.....	6
2. Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP)	8
3. Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme.....	9
3.1 Progress under SICAP	9
3.2 Key Achievements of SICAP 2025 GCP.....	10
3.3 SICAP 2025 Case Study GCP.....	13
3.4 SICAP Audit 2024.....	13
3.5 Annual Planning for SICAP 2026.....	13
4. Community Development Initiatives.....	14
4.1 Community Development Initiatives and Supports - UCDO's.....	14
4.2 Community Participatory Budget	17
4.3 Galway City Street Feast.....	17
4.4 WRDATF Compass Recovery Hub.....	18
5. Integration and Supports to New Communities	19
5.1 Local Authority Integration Team	19
5.2 Galway City Intercultural Strategy and Initiatives.....	19
6. Healthy Galway City	20
6.1 Healthy Galway City 2025 Community Grant.....	21
6.2 Outcome Indicators	21
7. Age Friendly Programme.....	23
7.1 Galway Age Friendly Strategy 2026 – 2031	23
7.2 Age Friendly Initiatives 2025	24
8. Community Funding Schemes.....	25

8.1	Community Recognition Fund 2024	25
8.2	Local Enhancement Programme 2025 / 2026	26
8.3	Local Community Festivals.....	27
8.4	Community Action, Inclusion, Regeneration, Development & Environment (CAIRDE)	27
9.	Community Development Programme.....	28
10.	Galway City Community Network (GCCN / PPN).....	30
11.	Galway Volunteer Centre (GVC).....	33

Statement by the Chief Officer, Galway City LCDC

The Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) is required to prepare and submit a report to the Local Authority on its activities in the previous year. This report outlines progress in respect of the various LCDC functions in 2025, including a review of progress generally, details of meetings held, implementation of the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2024 - 2029 and details of the oversight, management, and collaboration in relation to public-funded programmes under the LCDC's remit.

Since the submission of the last report, Galway City LCDC and its sub-committees continued to meet and deliver on the Community element of the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) throughout 2025. The LCDC continued to provide the basis for a coherent, streamlined, and co-ordinated approach to local and community development programmes.

Highlights of the year include ongoing delivery of actions under the LECP Implementation Plan 2024 – 2025 and preparation of LECP Implementation Plan 2026 – 2027.

I wish to acknowledge the co-operation and ongoing commitment of all members and partners of Galway City LCDC which has seen benefits of real partnership arising from the existence of the valuable structures and programmes of the LCDC. I would like to acknowledge the work of staff in the Community section who have been supportive to the LCDC and for their support in responding to community needs in 2025.

In particular, I want to acknowledge the contribution and leadership of Cllr Helen Ogbu who was elected Chair for a 3-year term in 2024. I look forward to working with and supporting the LCDC in 2026 in carrying out its functions and building on achievements to date.

I set out below the report for 2025 for consideration and approval of the members of the Galway City LCDC.



Dermot Mahon
Chief Officer, Galway City LCDC

1. Introduction and Background

This document constitutes the Annual Report for the Galway City Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) for the year ended 31 December 2025 prepared in accordance with S.128B (1)(i) Local Government Act 2001, as inserted by the Local Government Reform Act 2014, which states that one of the functions of a Local Community Development Committee is *“not later than 31 March in each year, to prepare, adopt and submit to the local authority a report in relation to the performance of its functions during the year immediately preceding the year in which the report is submitted”*.

The Galway City LCDC was established in 2014 for the purpose of developing, coordinating and implementing a coherent and integrated approach to local and community development. The Committee is made up of representatives from the local government and local development sectors, public bodies and representatives of social, economic, environmental and community interests.

1.1 Role and Functions of Galway City LCDC

In accordance with the functions detailed in the Local Government Reform Act 2014, the LCDC has primary responsibility for co-ordination, planning and oversight of local development spend, whether that spend is delivered by local authorities, or on behalf of the State or by other local development agencies and structures. The functions of the LCDC are specified in the Local Government Reform Act, 2014 include:

- To prepare and adopt the community elements of a 6 year Local Economic and Community Plan.
- To implement or arrange for the implementation of the community elements of the Plan.
- To monitor and review on an on-going basis the implementation of the community elements of the Plan and, if appropriate, to revise the actions and strategies set to achieve the objectives of the Plan.
- To co-ordinate, manage and oversee the implementation of local and community development programmes that have been approved either by the relevant local authority or by agreement between the LCDC and a relevant public authority (e.g. Government Department, State Agency)

- To seek to ensure effectiveness, consistency, co-ordination and avoidance of duplication between publicly funded local and community development programmes, in addition to pursuing co-ordination generally of all local and community development programmes within the functional area of the Committee.
- To prepare an annual report on the performance of its functions.

1.2 LCDC Membership and Meetings

The Galway City LCDC comprises 17 members including representatives from the statutory (public) and non-statutory (private) sectors drawn from the Galway City administrative area. The membership brings together the skills of people actively working in local development and community development with local authority members, officials and state agencies to implement a joined-up approach to local and community development in Galway City.

The Membership of the LCDC was as follows on 31st December 2025.

Statutory Interests (8)		
Sector	Name	Organisation
Local Authority Elected Members	Cllr Helen Ogbu (Chair)	Galway City Council
	Cllr Josie Forde (Vice Chair)	Galway City Council
	Cllr Eibhlín Seoighthe	Galway City Council
Local Authority Officials	Derek Pender	Galway City Council
	Caroline McDonagh	Local Enterprise Office
State Agencies	Laurence Gaughan	Health Service Executive
	Sinead Morgan	Galway Roscommon Education & Training Board
	Aoife Glennon	Department of Social Protection

Non-Statutory Interests (9)		
Sector	Name	Organisation
Community, Social Inclusion, Environment	Justine Delaney	Galway City Community Network (GCCN)
	Joanne Laffey	Galway City Community Network (GCCN)
	Tommy Flaherty	Galway City Community Network (GCCN)
	Fiona McDonagh-Delaney	Galway City Community Network (GCCN)
	Lorraine Lally	Galway City Community Network (GCCN)
Trade Union	Elaine Harvey	Galway Council of Trade Unions
Social Enterprise	Shane Tuohy	Social Enterprise Sector (Link Galway)
Local Development	Linda Sice Brogan	Galway City Partnership
Volunteering / Civic Engagement	Donnacha Foley	Volunteering / Civic Engagement (Galway Volunteer Centre)

There were 5 changes in membership in 2025 with the following members resigning: Ms. Regina Higgins, Department of Social Protection and Ms. Charlotte May, GCCN / PPN.

Replacements from each organisation were sought and the following became members of the LCDC in 2025: Ms. Aoife Glennon, Department of Social Protection and Ms. Justine Delaney, GCCN / PPN. Three new members joined the LCDC following the agreed expansion of membership from 15 to 17 members: Cllr. Eibhlín Seoighthe, Local Authority Elected Representative; Mr. Shane Tuohy, Social Enterprise Sector; and Mr. Donnacha Foley, Volunteering / Civic Engagement.

Galway City LCDC held five meetings in 2025 on the 26 February, 30 April, 16 July, 10 September, and 5 November. The scheduled December meeting was cancelled as the attendance quorum was not reached. As set out in the Standing Orders, the quorum for meetings of Galway City LCDC is 9 members.

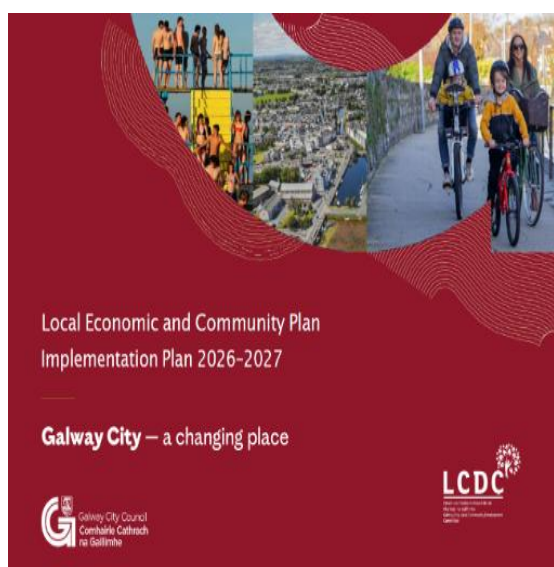
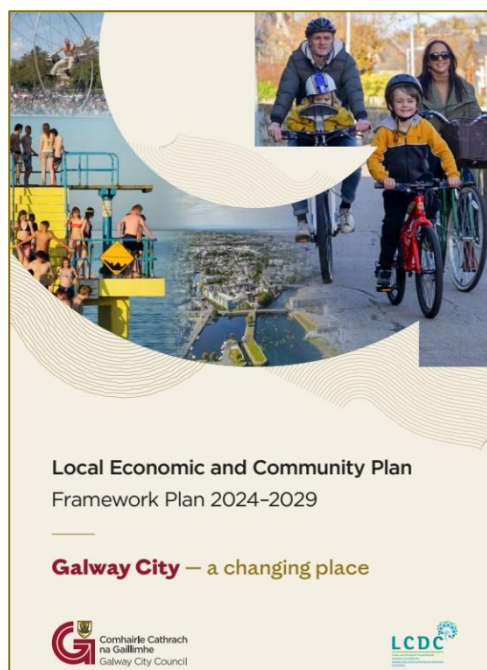
The work of the LCDC is underpinned by the commitment of its members to sitting on subgroups to consider matters in greater detail and prepare reports and recommendations for consideration at LCDC meetings. Subgroups of the LCDC met as required in 2025 including SICAP Subgroup and Healthy Galway City Steering Committee.

Agendas and minutes of the LCDC meetings are available on the Community section of the Council's website [here](#)

2. Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP)

The primary aim of the LECP is to set out, for a six-year period, the objectives and actions needed to promote and support the economic development and the local and community development of Galway City both by Galway City Council directly, and in partnership with other economic and community development stakeholders.

As the framework for the economic development and community development of Galway City, the LECP will be the primary mechanism at local level to bring forward relevant actions arising from national and regional strategies and policies that have a local remit.



Guidelines issued under Section 66B of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 support ongoing implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the LECP process.

The current LECP provides a broader, strategic framework that guides the preparation and delivery of a series of 2-year implementation plans, providing agility and flexibility required to react to emerging needs and opportunities on an ongoing basis over the 6-year period of the plan.

The LECP Implementation Plan 2026 – 2027 was agreed in 2025, based on the High-Level Objectives outlined in the LECP Framework 2024 – 2029. Five High Level Goals exist to help achieve the overall LECP vision:

1. a world class creative city region
2. an innovative city
3. an equal and inclusive city
4. a sustainable and resilient city
5. a city that promotes health and wellbeing

66 actions are contained in the Implementation Plan 2026 - 2027 as well as relevant key outcomes to facilitate evaluation. 56% of the actions will be delivered directly by Galway City Council while 44% will be delivered in partnership with other agencies / directly by other agencies. A final review of the first and second year of the LECP Implementation Plan 2024 – 2025 is to be completed and presented to the LCDC in 2026. The review outlines progress on each of the actions monitored by the LCDC.

3. Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme

The Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) 2024-2028 was a key initiative for the LCDC in 2025 with regular updates and progress evaluations being considered at LCDC meetings. Two years of the programme have now been completed and both the Annual Report for 2025 and the 2026 Plan will be reviewed at the February LCDC meeting.

3.1 Progress under SICAP

The SICAP Annual Plan 2025 was approved at the LCDC meeting in February along with the SICAP 2024 Annual Progress Report. The SICAP Subgroup of the LCDC met with the Pobal co-ordinator to conduct reviews of the 2025 SICAP Annual Performance review and the 2025 Annual Plan. The budget for 2025 was €1,047,857. Galway City Partnership once again exceeded the targets set for the programme in 2025. The Key Performance Indicator (KPI) 1 local community groups assisted and (KPI) 2 number of disadvantaged individuals engaged on a one-to-one basis target was exceeded. Supports and initiatives by Galway City Partnership under the SICAP Programme can be found on their website [SICAP](#)

3.2 Key Achievements of SICAP 2025 GCP

New Communities Supports: 2025 saw a continual increase in individuals seeking International Protection in Galway City. Demand for SICAP support across the programme increased, which necessitated innovation and flexibility in its delivery. Supports provided included assistance with asylum applications, family reunification, ESOL support and SICAP employment supports.

The IPAS Network remained consistently active, with members taking part in multiple trainings to strengthen frontline staff skills in working with the IPAS. The network with support from Galway City Council and Tusla delivered excellent work throughout 2025, working closely with other agencies to help provide supports. New thematic meetings featuring case studies and presentations have been introduced, helping staff deepen their understanding and build stronger, more focused practice.

Growing demands for the Migrant Service reflects both the effectiveness of the service and the sustained migrant supports delivered across the city. GMS actively promoted collaborative work across the SICAP programme within GCP which resulted in multiple referrals to training and employment supports, e.g English language classes, labour market training, CV preparation, and lifelong learning opportunities being provided.

GCP partnered with COPE, Galway Simon, and Galway City Council to provide art and creative activities for families in Emergency Homeless Accommodation. Workshops promoted wellbeing, self-expression and family bonding, with staff providing support to ensure everyone felt included. This strengthened connections between families and local community supports, enhancing engagement and inclusion.

Other initiatives included - *Voices and Visions*, a welcoming space where people come to relax, share, and connect through language and creativity. *Multinational Creatives* is a community organisation that encourages creativity, sustainability, and empowerment by running inclusive and ecofriendly activities. *SheMoves* is a welcoming and inclusive community group supported by GCP through SICAP. It creates a space where women, especially those who are new to Ireland or have faced marginalisation, can move, lead, and feel confident.

Children and Families: All DEIS Primary and Post-Primary schools have been supported under this Action. Including delivery of the Incredible Years Dina in the Classroom in four

city primary schools. Supports for Pre-school to Primary Transfer for all DEIS Primary schools in the form of bespoke School Readiness materials. A range of initiatives to develop Wellbeing, Self-esteem and Resilience in Schools and more targeted supports for young people with exam preparation. Other new initiatives in 2025 included -The 'Cuddle and Read' project in Scoil San Phroinsias, piloting of 'Bright notes' music workshop is a collaborative project with BRIDGE and Music Generation Galway City to engage children/young people in Centre Point Direct Provision Centre. An Inclusive Activity Day in Coláiste Muire Matháir run by the Galway Bay League was supported under this action.

Mental Health: The importance of social connection continued in 2025 and feedback highlighted the benefits of involvement in community groups with improved mental health. Events included *Emerald Wellness Space*: A new community group established to promote mental health and cultural exchange. Well attended workshops featuring guest speakers and a yoga session took place. *The Ballybane Men's Group* continues to meet weekly. The group has been actively participating in a Strength and Conditioning Programme. The Community Development Worker is working closely with the group's leaders to build their capacity, encouraging them to become more self-reliant and confident in leading the group. Alongside these activities *Five Healthy Food Made Easy Programmes* were successfully delivered across the city.

Delivery and Facilitation of Innovative Supports: SICAP Peer Support Workers engaged in multiple trainings with the SAOR Brief Intervention, screening being one example. A running group for people in addiction recovery was set up as an initiative to help individuals improve their wellbeing and confidence. *Managing Christmas* was an initiative during the Christmas period.

Eastside Arts Festival (EAF) has successfully run for two years and is now an annual highlight of cultural life on Galway's east side. Through it the festival reaches audiences who may not typically attend formal arts events. EAF breaks down barriers to arts participation in one of the city's most diverse and disadvantaged areas, supporting local artists and fostering social cohesion through shared creative experiences.

Art Education Workshop with Baboró - GCP organised in conjunction with Baboro an Art Education Workshop for staff and volunteers working in community-based afterschool settings within disadvantaged areas of the city. The workshop aimed to foster a relationship with Baboró.

Disability Awareness: Access For All was supported to use LECP funding to produce a film highlighting barriers for people with disabilities in Galway city. The short film will be used as an educational tool with councillors, state agencies, businesses, schools and more. The group has also expanded his steering group membership to include members of more disability groups and agencies in the city.

Community Response to Domestic Abuse Western Region Network: GCP continued to support the work of the *Community Response to Domestic Abuse Western Region Network*. GCP carried out a review of the work of the network over the past 3 years and developed a new Strategic Plan for 2026- 2028. The Network seeks to promote a collective, community-based response to domestic abuse, by working collaboratively as a Network in solidarity with women and our communities to challenge all forms of domestic abuse and coercive control - raising awareness, developing resources and promoting best practice.

Developing Collaborative Responses to Identified need: *Let's Get Galway Growing* hosted the Annual Autumn Gathering for Community Garden Ireland in October, welcoming around 50 community gardens to Galway. The event featured a panel on organic growing, a presentation from the Community Gardens, Allotments, and Climate Action Fund Officer, and lively discussions. The event highlighted the value of networking, learning, and community engagement. The Community Development Team at GCP, together with community representatives from Westside, Ballinfoyle, and Ballybane, took part in a Biodiversity Strategy Action Workshop to begin shaping a community-based initiative for 2026.

Social Enterprises: A big area of advancement in 2025 was the strengthening of cross-sector collaboration and collective problem-solving among social enterprises. The most significant achievement in this category was the continued development and formalisation of the Social Enterprise Galway Network, which meets monthly and serves as a vital platform for peer learning, shared resources, and collaborative responses to community needs. Through this network social enterprises engage in shared training initiatives in financial planning and marketing management. The Network will now continue to amplify the voice of social enterprises, addressing shared challenges, and driving coordinated responses that improve community wellbeing.

3.3 SICAP 2025 Case Study GCP

The SICAP case study video was titled ‘*Our Community, Our Climate*’. Climate change has become one of the most pressing challenges facing communities globally and across Ireland. Galway City Partnership developed this case study in the format of a video to tell the story of the inspiring work being carried out by a range of community organisations across the city with a shared commitment towards climate action, sustainability and a just transition. The case study was presented by Galway City Partnership at the September 2025 LCDC Meeting. Watch video here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wn3i8493wd8>

3.4 SICAP Audit 2024

As per the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht (DRCDG) LCDC Funding Agreement, the LCDC shall undertake an annual audit, inspection and / or verification of SICAP for the duration of the programme. The Department contracts the Local Government Audit Service (LGAS) to undertake independent SICAP audits on behalf of the Department. Galway City LCDC and Galway City Partnership were selected for a SICAP audit which commenced at end of January 2026.

3.5 Annual Planning for SICAP 2026

The allocated SICAP budget for 2026 is €1,052,202 made up of €820,990 for the Lot Budget and a New Arrivals allocation of €231,212. KPI targets for 2026 are outlined below.

Ref	Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Target 2026
1.	Number of local community groups engaged under SICAP	59
2.	Number of Individuals (aged 15 years upwards) assisted under SICAP on a one-to-one basis	483

4. Community Development Initiatives



Three new **Urban and Community Development Officers (UCDO)** were appointed by Galway City Council to provide targeted support for community and voluntary groups in the city. These roles support the growth and empowerment of local communities, working closely with residents, community groups and other stakeholders to implement community development initiatives and enhance community cohesion.

These new roles support the delivery of the LECP, and other initiatives, by building and maintaining strong relationships between Galway City Council and the community. Each local electoral area (LEA) in the city (West, Central, East) has a dedicated Urban and Community Development Officer, with the Officers also having thematic and programme responsibilities on a city-wide basis including working closely with groups and organisations supporting older adults, ethnic minority groups, young people, people with disabilities and LGBT+ communities.

4.1 Community Development Initiatives and Supports - UCDO's

Community Engagement: The UCDOs focused on getting to know their communities and understanding their strengths, challenges and needs. 127 community groups/service provider organisations were engaged with supports provided including access to funding, support with governance structures, financial procedures, and best practice for community and voluntary groups. Supporting ease of access for the community within Galway City Council is a vital role of the UCDO's and facilitating cross departmental engagement on community needs has been a key priority.

Community Response Centres: Working with community and sports groups to compile a list of Community Resource Centres / Hubs that will be available in the event of an emergency such as a power outage from a storm or flooding. This project will continue into 2026 as requested by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

HFA Social Investment Funding: Community Development Team secured €40,500 from the Housing Finance Association's Social Investment Fund to support the development of a community café in Ballybane. The Ballybane Needs Analysis highlighted a significant need for a local hub or focal point where residents can naturally gather and interact daily.

Traveller Interagency Group: The Traveller Interagency Group (TIG) of Galway City and County was established to improve the situation of the local Traveller community and support public service providers in this objective, by fostering collaboration among various agencies and stakeholders. Quarterly meetings took place throughout 2025. An action plan 2025/2026 was developed based on the objectives established for the TIG in its terms-of-reference and focuses on three key areas: service provision, national policy and linkage.

Youth: Galway City Council recognises the benefit that safe youth spaces have on the mental health and wellbeing of young people and is committed to exploring best practice in integrating youth spaces into the wider public infrastructure in partnership with the relevant stakeholders. Preparations for an Erasmus+ Study Visit to Helsinki began in December 2025 with the exchange taking place in January 2026. The initiative was born from a 2022 Planet Youth study where significant challenges for teens in Galway City was reported. Currently there is no dedicated youth space in Galway City. The delegation includes professionals from TUSLA, GRET, GCP, Youth Work Ireland, Foroige and City and County Councils.

Comhairle na nÓg: Comhairle na nÓg are child and youth councils in the 31 local authorities of the country, which give children and young people the opportunity to be involved in the development of local services and policies.



Because Comhairle na nÓg is for young people under the age of 18 and who therefore have no other voting mechanism to have their voice heard, Comhairle na nÓg is designed to enable young people to have a voice on the services, policies and issues that affect them in their local area.

The delivery of Comhairle na nÓg was put out to tender in September 2025. The contract was awarded to Youth Work Ireland Galway who engage a co-ordinator to work with the young people to ensure that they have a positive experience and facilitates the meetings

of the committee to work on the topic voted at the AGM. Comhairle na nÓg highlights included Launch of the Safety Report by the Mayor of Galway City and presentation on the report to the Minister for Justice, Jim O'Callaghan TD.



Galway City Comhairle na nÓg had their annual Youth Conference in October and the committee welcomed over 60 young people from the various secondary schools in the city. The topic for this year's Youth Conference consultation was 'Communication with Decision Makers'.

The young people discussed a variety of topics and how young people could discuss these issues with their local decision makers. After the consultation, the young people voted on the relevant topics and chose their number one

issue for young people in Galway City. The topics for 2026 were agreed to be Mental Health and Transport.

Access for All: Supports included liaising with community groups regarding access groups and the Council. Some positive improvements were made including representation by the Council at the monthly Access for All meetings, Walkability audit of the Christmas market and representation at event planning meetings such as St Patrick Day Parade.

A highlight has been working with disability groups and Galway City Council on improving beach access for people with disabilities. This is currently at Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment with further developments to continue in 2026. The groundwork to establish a 'Disability Network' in Galway City has commenced with positive discussions amongst all key stakeholders. It is hoped to progress this important community initiative in 2026. Galway City has approved the recruitment of a full-time dedicated Access Officer to commence in 2026.

4.2 Community Participatory Budget



The Participatory Budget is a new initiative introduced by Galway City Council in 2025 whereby proposals were sought from the public of projects they wish to see delivered in their area. For 2025 proposals were invited from communities and residents in the Galway City East Electoral Area. These proposals were assessed to establish validity and feasibility. The eligible proposals were shortlisted by the East Area Elected Members with three proposals selected to be put forward to a public vote from which the winning project was decided.



The project that received the highest number of public votes was the Mervue Playground Project. This initiative focused on the installation of accessible play equipment and overall improvements to accessibility at the playground.



For 2026 the initiative will focus on the Galway City Centre area. Proposals were invited from communities and residents in the City Centre area, giving them an opportunity to propose projects that are of direct benefit to them. These proposals were shortlisted and put to a public vote from which the winning proposal was decided, which Galway City Council will deliver during 2026. More information on The Participatory Budget initiative is available [here](#)

4.3 Galway City Street Feast

Street Feast took place across the country on Saturday May 24th and Sunday May 25th 2025. Street Feast is Ireland's weekend of community celebrations and neighborhood lunches. Street Feast aims to promote social inclusion and integration, tackle loneliness and build supportive and resilient neighborhoods in new and older communities across Ireland.



During April, Street Feast held a roadshow in the Galway City library. 25 street feasts took place across Galway City. More information on Street Feast is available [here](#)

4.4 WRDATF Compass Recovery Hub

Western Regional Drugs and Alcohol Task Force (WRDATF) regional recovery strategy is an evidence-based model to support physical, mental and social health and well-being of people in recovery and to support progression pathways back into communities, positive activities, training, education and employment.

Supported by Galway City LCDC, the Compass Recovery Hub has established itself as a vibrant, welcoming space for people in recovery, offering weekly physical, mental, and social health programmes alongside progression pathways through the Recovery CE scheme and Connector programme. Since opening in August 2025, attendance has grown to 50–70 participants weekly, with 12–14 active groups and strong engagement in leadership roles, 14 peer volunteers and nine recovery connectors, all maintaining sobriety despite challenges. Six former volunteers have progressed into employment, demonstrating the Hub's success in fostering recovery, resilience, and community integration.

Looking ahead to 2026, the Compass Recovery Hub will expand certified QQI modules and deepen collaboration with colleges to embed recovery principles within the next generation, driving cultural change around addiction and recovery.

5. Integration and Supports to New Communities

5.1 Local Authority Integration Team

The Galway City Local Authority Integration Team (LAIT) was established in 2024 comprising an Integration Support Co-ordinator, Two Integration Support Workers and most recently a Community Integration Forum Worker. The LAIT supports people who are International Protection applicants, Those with Refugee status, Those with Subsidiary Protection or Permission to Remain status, Programme Refugees, Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection and Unaccompanied Minors.

The LAIT Integration Support Workers guide people to services they require to integrate into the community. The team are connected with relevant services across the city and visit IPAS Accommodation Centres fortnightly to identify supports needed by residents. This includes conducting needs-based group information sessions, as well as one to one clinics with individuals to understand their specific support needs.

The LAIT Community Integration Forum Worker facilitates forum meetings six times a year bringing together key services and agencies to exchange information, discuss emerging needs of the client group, highlight blockages or issues that need attention and problem solve as a collective. The LAIT currently facilitates a touring anti racism exhibition – the SALAAM exhibit is a series of cartoon stories displayed in both Irish and English which was launched in March. The LAIT also run an annual ‘Open Training Initiative’ which welcomes partner agencies and organisations into City Hall to participate in a series of trainings to better enhance their knowledge and skills when working with asylum seekers.

More information in Galway City LAIT here [LAIT](#)

5.2 Galway City Intercultural Strategy and Initiatives

Galway City Council Community Section engaged extensively with the development of the Intercultural Strategy being developed for the city. The UCDO team facilitated a link between the strategy development team and the UNESCO Scientific Advisory Committee, through Galway City Council’s ECCAR membership, to secure and incorporate the Committee’s recommendations.

ECCAR: Galway City Council has reengaged with ECCAR (European Coalition of Cities Against Racism) and Cllr. Helen Ogbu (LCDC Chair) along with Oliver Lydon (UCDO) attended the Coalition’s General Assembly IN Zurich on October 23rd and 24th. The Zurich ECCAR General Conference proved to be highly informative, highlighting that while racism may never be fully eliminated, cities can establish strong systems to protect communities, promote inclusion, and foster a sense of belonging. The event also showcased effective models from other European cities, demonstrating the value of dedicated structures that support reporting, prevention, and accountability

Africa Day: Africa Day is an annual celebration held on the 25th of May. It is a nationwide celebration of the people, cultures and potential of the African continent. In 2025, Galway City Council administered grant funding—provided by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade—to support local Africa Day initiatives.



This year’s various cultural, artistic, and family-friendly events included contemporary African Irish culture, as well as family fun days, fashion, art, music, dance, and food.

6. Healthy Galway City



Healthy Ireland is a government-led initiative aimed at improving the health and wellbeing of everyone living in Ireland. Healthy Galway City (HGC) is an initiative of Galway City Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) which seeks to create a city where everyone can enjoy physical and mental health and wellbeing to their full potential. The Healthy Ireland Fund 2022-2025 Grant Agreement included €75,000 for 2025 to allow delivery of priority health and wellbeing initiatives.

Galway City was accredited under Phase VII as a World Health Organisation (WHO) European Healthy City at the 2025 WHO European Healthy Cities Network Annual Business Meeting and Technical Conference Meeting and Technical Conference in Bursa, Turkey. Galway City joins Cork, Limerick and Waterford as WHO Healthy Cities in Ireland

and as a part of the National Healthy Cities & Counties of Ireland Network. To learn more about Healthy Galway City, please visit www.healthygalwaycity.ie

6.1 Healthy Galway City 2025 Community Grant

Healthy Galway City launched the Healthy Galway City Community Grant to support community groups and clubs in Galway City Council's administrative area. This €40,000 fund helped 20 communities, community groups and clubs to provide valuable services to the people in their area, and in the process, to improve the health and wellbeing of people living and working in Galway City. Successful projects included alcohol risk reduction workshops, gardening activities, social inclusion programmes, physical activity and exercise groups, crafting and more.

6.2 Outcome Indicators

Percentage of adults and children meeting physical activity guidelines - As in previous years of the Healthy Ireland Fund Round 4, Healthy Galway City and Galway Sports Partnership (GSP) collaborated to deliver programmes to increase the percentage of adults and children meeting national physical activity guidelines. HGC funded activities targeting people with disabilities, older adults and people living in disadvantaged communities.

HGC and GSP partnered with the Western Regional Drug and Alcohol Taskforce (WRDATF) to fund initiatives aimed at increasing levels of physical activity amongst those in alcohol and drug recovery. These included 'On the Right Road' Cycling Leader Training and Cycling groups, Boxing Programmes and Running and Walking groups.

HGC funded the delivery of the 'Nature for Health' programme; a 10-week walking programme based in local woodlands that supports participant to enjoy gentle exercise, mindfulness, biodiversity, local history and therapeutic art. This programme ran throughout the year in Merlin Woods, and targets people living in disadvantaged communities and people with mental health issues. Nature for Health ran in spring, summer and autumn, and included evening sessions to accommodate a wider range of participants than in previous years.

HGC and GSP targeted men that do not engage in regular exercise through the 'Men on the Move' (MOTM) programme. MOTM is a physical activity programme that is aimed at adult men to increase physical activity, have fun and improve fitness levels. The programmes were delivered in Westside, Ballybane and Ballinfoile. A boxing fitness programme targeting traveller men was also delivered in Ballinfoile.

HGC and the Galway City Age Friendly Programme delivered the 'Social Steps' dance programme for older adults throughout 2025. Weekly social dance workshops took place in three areas of Galway City (Ballybane, Shantalla / Westside, Ballinfoile / Castlegar), with an average weekly attendance of 20 individuals per class. This programme will continue throughout 2026.

Increase in individual's level of positive mental health as per Energy and Vitality Index (EVI) - Galway City Partnership (GCP) and Galway Traveller Movement (GTM) were selected as implementing partners under HIF Round 4 2022 – 2025 to deliver initiatives under the outcome 'Increase in individual's level of positive mental health as per Energy and Vitality Index'.

HGC allocated €35,000 to GCP for the delivery of Community Singing Groups, Men's Social Clubs, and a range of art, wellness, and physical activities designed to increase levels of positive mental health amongst individuals living in disadvantaged communities.



HGC funding also supported the activities of the GCP Social Prescribing Service and the Ballinfoile Youth Activity project in 2025. HGC allocated €12,261 to GTM for the delivery of programmes designed to increase levels of positive mental health amongst the Traveller community in a culturally sensitive and appropriate manner. Initiatives included equine therapy sessions and groups for young Travellers, dance classes for Traveller women, a fishing programme and wellbeing groups for Traveller men and the purchase of exercise equipment for a newly established community gym at the Carrowbrowne Halting site.



GTM arranged a Wellness Excursion for 80 Traveller Women who enjoyed a trip to Mám Éan, where they could participate in a gentle hike and enjoy peaceful reflection at this culturally significant site. For National Traveller Mental Health Day, GTM arranged a trip to Knock Shrine for members of the community.

7. Age Friendly Programme

7.1 Galway Age Friendly Strategy 2026 – 2031



Galway City and County Councils contracted HUB Planning to develop the second joint Age Friendly Strategy in February 2025. Following an extensive consultation process and analysis of available data, action planning workshops were held with internal lead partners and external stakeholders to develop actions that will lead to a more age friendly society.

The draft Strategy was reviewed by both the Age Friendly Alliance and the City and County Older Person's Council, before further refinements following presentation at the Tourism Development SPC, the LCDC and the Age Friendly Interdepartmental Team. The draft Strategy was presented to Elected Representatives at a special information briefing, before formal adoption at the December Council meeting.

The Strategy was officially launched in January 2026. To view the Galway Age Friendly Strategy 2026 – 2031, [please click here](#).

7.2 Age Friendly Initiatives 2025

Positive Ageing Week (26th September – 3rd October 2025) is a national campaign that highlights the many positive aspects of ageing and celebrates the invaluable contributions of older people to our lives and communities. The ‘Local Heroes’ Exhibition, the flagship Galway City event for Positive Ageing Week, took place Tuesday 30th September in the Town Hall Theatre. 27 Local Heroes, nominated by friends, family and colleagues, received a professional keepsake photograph from the Cllr. Alan Cheevers, and the Cathaoirleach of Galway County Council, Cllr. David Collins. Photos and biographies of each of the heroes were displayed in City and County locations throughout October, celebrating the positive contribution that older people make our lives.

National Age Friendly Achievement Awards 2025 Galway City and County Councils shared the honour of jointly hosting the National Age Friendly Recognition and Achievement Awards, which took place on the 23rd October in the Galmont Hotel. The awards recognise and reward achievement in age friendly initiatives around Ireland. Organisations, individuals/members of the public, agencies and communities submit applications on projects or programmes that they consider to be age friendly, especially those initiatives that support older people.

The event was very successful and was attended by very special guests from all over Ireland, including Cathaoirleach, Mayors, nominees, Age Friendly Ambassadors, National Advisory Group members, and Older People’s Council members.



The Galway City ‘Positive Ageing Week – Local Heroes Campaign’ was shortlisted under the ‘Age Friendly Active and Healthy Ageing’ category.

Galway City Age Friendly Interdepartmental Team Galway City Council established an Age Friendly Interdepartmental Team in 2025 with the aim of embedding Age Friendly objectives into all service areas of the local authority. The primary aim of the team is to work together to identify opportunities for collaboration supported by the Age Friendly Programme Manager and Age Friendly Technical Advisor so that progress can be monitored and reported to the Age Friendly Strategic Alliance.

8. Community Funding Schemes

8.1 Community Recognition Fund 2024

The Community Recognition Fund was established to strengthen community infrastructure and facilities while delivering tangible benefits to areas that have welcomed new arrivals in recent years. Galway City Council received an allocation of €1,617,752. The projects are spread across the city to achieve maximum benefit and impact and must be delivered over the course of 2025 and 2026.



19 projects were sanctioned under CRF 2024, distributed across three funding windows: €936,693 for 11 projects in August 2024, €290,735 for 2 projects in February 2025, and €390,325 for 6 projects in June 2025. The latter focused specifically on the East side of Galway City to achieve balanced investment citywide.

Projects delivered during 2025 included lighting upgrades, energy efficiency improvements to community facilities, the purchase of community vehicles, refurbishment of local clubs and sports amenities, and enhancements to school yards.



8.2 Local Enhancement Programme 2025 / 2026

Local Enhancement Programme 2025

Supporting Community Groups and Clubs

Funding available for...

- Repairs
- Improvements to facilities
- Equipment. For example, tables, chairs, tools, signage, laptops and more.
- Running Costs such as energy costs like electricity and refuse
- Operating Costs such as rental costs and insurance bills



Apply before 4pm Friday 31 January

Capital Funding - Apply at www.GalwayCity.ie/LEPCapital

Current Funding - Apply at www.GalwayCity.ie/LEPCurrent

The Local Enhancement Programme (LEP) 2025 was announced in November 2024 by the Department of Rural and Community Development and administered by Galway City LCDC in 2025.

Over €137,000 in current and capital funding was allocated to 91 community and voluntary groups / organisations under the fund.

This funding helped to support groups particularly in disadvantaged areas, with minor capital works and improvements to their facilities, and the purchase of equipment for community use. Such capital works to



include carrying out necessary repairs and improvements to facilities, improved access for persons with a disability, improving energy efficiency of community facilities, or to purchase equipment for community use. The current element of funding helped to support groups with their non-pay running costs for example energy costs/bills rental/lease costs, insurance bills. The allocation under the Local Enhancement Programme 2026 to Galway City LCDC is €141,688.31 The funding will provide capital supports for small community groups and organisations, with a particular emphasis on those serving disadvantaged communities. Galway City LCDC will administer this funding in 2026. The Press Release announcing the fund is available [HERE](#)

8.3 Local Community Festivals



Galway City Council approved €25,000 in funding to support community-led festivals and events, representing an increase of €10,000 on the previous allocation. Funding was allocated to 24 community groups, enabling them to deliver events tailored to local needs and interests. These activities contributed to strengthening community cohesion, promoting a sense of belonging and pride, encouraging participation, and supporting positive relations across diverse groups.

8.4 Community Action, Inclusion, Regeneration, Development & Environment (CAIRDE)



In 2025 Galway City Council established the Community Action, Inclusion, Regeneration, Development & Environment (CAIRDE) Grant Scheme as part of its commitment to supporting communities, local development and regeneration. This Scheme offers financial support to community, sporting and voluntary groups, social enterprises and business associations for projects and initiatives that contribute to the

development of their communities and improve the quality-of-life experience in their areas. Online applications were invited during April, under five streams:

- **Community Action:** Projects that promote social, cultural, and physical well-being.
- **Inclusion:** Initiatives that foster equality and accessibility for marginalised groups.
- **Regeneration:** Revitalisation efforts in disadvantaged areas.
- **Development:** Economic growth, infrastructure improvement, and sports facility enhancements.
- **Environment:** Sustainable environmental projects and climate action



111 applications were received, and following review, €565,000 was allocated to 66 successful applicants at the June Council meeting. The projects approved for funding reflected a wide range of priorities, including community development, cultural initiatives, and the promotion of the Irish language. Other supported projects focused on regenerating public spaces and local amenities, developing sports facilities, advancing inclusion and accessibility, promoting environmental sustainability and climate action, and encouraging local economic development and tourism.

For the 2026 scheme, the application process opened in October, again inviting submissions online. 126 applications were received, showing an increase in interest compared to the previous year. The successful grants were approved at the January 2026 Council meeting.

9. Community Development Programme

AMACH! LGBT+ strives to promote inclusion, protect rights and to improve quality of life and wellbeing for LGBTI+ people enabling them to participate fully in Ireland's social, economic, cultural, and political life. In 2023, AMACH! LGBT+ Galway through Galway City LCDC was successful in securing funding under this programme, this funding has now been extended further until December 2026.

Galway City LCDC agreed to the positive impact of establishing Teach Solais Resource Centre and are satisfied with the work programme. Clear links are made with objectives and actions in the Galway City LECP 2024 – 2029 and Implementation Plan 2024 – 2025.

There is evidence of progress and achievement. Youth Work Ireland now use Teach Solais for their Youth group up to 18 years as they lost their former meeting space. This adds to the Importance of a Space for LGBT youth in the city. As awareness of the Teach Solais LGBT+ Resource Centre grew amongst the LGBTI+ community, so did engagements from further marginalised LGBTI+ people, especially notable was the increase footfall of LGBTI+ people in the IPAS/direct provision system.

AMACH LGBT+ hosted its very first Africa Day celebrations in the centre in May 2025 and it included an Africa night celebration as part of the Galway Community Pride Festival. As part of the Galway Pride Community Festival, through collaboration with Sexual Health West, Galway Rape Crisis Centre and Cope Galway, AMACH! hosted various health and wellbeing focussed events. They included Rapid HIV & Syphilis testing on site daily, sexual health workshop, SH24 home testing information workshop, Intimate Partner Abuse and the LGBTI+ community awareness talk and selfcare in activism workshop.

A comprehensive suite of training for volunteers delivered to staff and volunteers including Media, Messaging for Social Change, Youth Leadership, Peer Support, Management and Health and Safety procedures. Collaboration with a range of groups to address emerging issues and develop collective responses for the following three community development initiatives: Galway Community Resistance. Trans Collective Action Group, and development of a peer-led response to support LGBTI+ members in Direct Provision.

2025 was a significant year in growth for the organisation with an increase in community participation opportunities ranging from peer-led social groups to health and wellbeing focussed initiatives. They worked together with ShOUT LGBT Youth Project to co-create and facilitate an 18-24yr old Youth group, which met regularly throughout the term. This provides a stepping stone for young people aging out of youth services to engage in our setting, while still receiving the supportive environment of a youth worker-led space.

AMACH! also held and supported Youth Work Ireland in hosting a LGBT Parents group monthly. This is a facilitated group to provide support and information for parents of LGBTI+ people, a valuable outreach piece of work to ensure safety and security at home for young LGBTI+ people coming out.

AMACH! also hosts a Visibility Café within the Galway Technical Institute. Due to the annual changing of students, the college does not have an established LGBTI+ social group/society. AMACH answers that need through hosting a monthly term-time social group on site.

To support the health and wellbeing of the LGBTI+ on many fronts in 2025 AMACH planned and held a variety of events. Ranging from Forest bathing Mindfulness walks, self-defence classes, the purchase of sexual health products and continuing to support the AMACH softball team through Sports First Aid training.

During the last quarter of 2025 AMACH! restarted its indoor softball weekly training. This is an AMACH LGBTI+ softball team established last year, the Galway Gulls, which attracts quite a number of new community members each term. For further information on supports and services available please contact AMACH! LGBTI+ Galway on info@amachlgbt.com

10. Galway City Community Network (GCCN / PPN)

Galway City Community Network (GCCN), the Public Participation Network for Galway City, represents over 190 community, voluntary, social inclusion and environmental organisations. Guided by its vision of a creative, inclusive and sustainable city with transparent governance, GCCN continued to strengthen community participation, support representative structures, and advance social inclusion.

GCCN delivered a range of training opportunities in 2025. Two induction sessions for new and prospective members introduced GCCN's role. One session included ISL interpretation and an easy-read format, with recordings to be published online. A series of information webinars were conducted covering a wide range of funding streams. Training for members included Creative Storytelling for Social and Environmental Justice, Volunteer Management, Autism Awareness, and Sustainable Development Goals workshops. GCCN also organised LGBTQ+ Awareness Training for its Secretariat.

GCCN continued to facilitate community representation on key local structures including the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC), Strategic Policy Committees, and the Local Community Safety Partnership. Linkage group meetings were held before each committee meeting to support representatives and gather member input.

GCCN supported members in producing policy submissions on a wide range of public consultations, including BusConnects (Dublin Road), Salthill Village and Seafront Framework Plan, West Area Integrated Urban Strategy, Galway Inner Harbour Masterplan, Green Space Strategy, LECP Implementation Plan, and surveys on Renmore and South Park projects. A drop-in clinic was held in February to assist residents engaging with park consultations.



GCCN collaborated with Galway City Partnership (along with other stakeholders) on the Intercultural Strategy and participated in the Community Integration Forum.

GCCN supported Access for All throughout 2025 and co-developed a short educational film highlighting daily access barriers faced by disabled people in Galway City. Local Councillors participated to experience these challenges first-hand. The film has since been used widely for outreach and training, including screenings at Galway City Council and the GCCN Winter Plenary.



Following the film, a motion was brought forward for a full-time Disability Access Officer and a Disability Inclusion Steering Committee. GCCN contributed to the budget proposal, which was approved for 2026, with an Access Strategy to follow.

GCCN continued its involvement with NASC and the University of Sanctuary to support community sponsorship for two refugee students studying at the University of Galway.

GCCN was selected as a European good-practice model for community engagement. A staff member presented GCCN's work at an Interreg Europe conference in Amsterdam.

As a partner in Galway City Council's Waterways Project, funded by the European Urban Initiative, GCCN coordinated community engagement for the installation of three small-scale hydropower pilots. The first community engagement committee meeting took place in December 2025.



GCCN supported the Climate Community Assembly, which showcased local climate action initiatives. Speakers represented a wide range of community, environmental, youth and academic groups, addressing themes of water, mobility, nature, food and wellbeing.

GCCN continued its long-standing collaboration with the LCDC, Galway City Partnership and the HSE on the Healthy Galway Strategy and Healthy Ireland funding framework. GCCN representatives participated in the Healthy Galway Steering Committee throughout the year. ISL interpretation was provided at one induction session and three plenaries.

GCCN contributed to Age Friendly Galway and the West Regional Drug and Alcohol Taskforce, including input into a services leaflet to be launched in 2026.

GCCN worked with Galway City Council and members to review community actions in the LECP Implementation Plan 2024–2025 and to shape the draft 2026–2027 plan. Key areas included poverty reduction, social inclusion, housing supports for disadvantaged groups, and strengthening equality and human rights commitments. The newly combined City and County Traveller Interagency Group met for the first time in 2025. Work focused on implementing the National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy, cultural competence training, and renewing the Framework on Traveller Ethnicity.

GCCN remained a core stakeholder in Galway Communities Against Racism and Discrimination (GCARD), supporting events such as the March to the Arch and the launch of survey findings on racism and discrimination. GCCN also supported the Migrant Integration Forum and contributed to finalising the Intercultural Strategy.

11. Galway Volunteer Centre (GVC)

891 people living in Galway city registered to use the GVC service in 2025 with over 6,000 people in Galway city now registered with the service. These volunteers represent 85 different nationalities from around the world with 41% of people being non-Irish. GVC advertised 270 volunteer roles for organisations in Galway city. These range from small scale groups to national charities.

Supporting Community Events



GVC Community Volunteers programme grew again in 2025, with 250 volunteers assisting at 26 different events including Culture Night, St. Patrick's Day, Cruinniú na nÓg, and the Mayors Awards.

Supporting Galway City Tourism



43 Galway Street Ambassadors were busy again this summer, assisting visitors on the streets of Galway with directions, advice and general information to help them enjoy their visit to Galway. GVC also won the Galway City Mayor's Award in the category of Arts, Culture, Heritage & Cúrsaí Gaeilge.

Training and Vetting for Community Groups - In October and November 2025, with support from Galway City LCDC, GVC organised 10 online workshops on topics such as Team Dynamics, Collaboration and Social Media planning Management and Delegation Skills. The training was attended by 62 people from 36 organisations. GVC delivered volunteer management workshops in partnership with GCCN and processed 623 vetting applicants for 67 organisations and trained affiliated organisations in new vetting requirements.

Galway Collaboration Café



One of the highlights of the year was the Collaboration Café in May, in which representatives of community, state and business participated in an energetic afternoon examining how we all can collaborate better for the citizens of Galway. Details on report on the event here [Towards a More Collaborative Galway.pdf](#)

Supporting New Communities - Since 2022 GVC has been assisting the Ukrainian community in Galway and this has since expanded to all new communities. GVC delivered confidence building English language workshops, empathy skills workshops and conversation mornings and developed a Creative Ireland funded photographic exhibition 'In Our Eyes' that will tour Galway City in 2026.

Galway Climate Action Festival



In collaboration with the Galway City Council Climate Action Team, during the Climate Inspirations Festival in September GVC held its first Climate Action Fair where members of the public could meet nature focused groups to find out about them and get involved.



For further information regarding Galway City LCDC and what it does, please contact:

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Coiste um Fhorbairt Pobail Áitiúil
Chathair na Gaillimhe
Galway City Local Community Development
Committee

