



WESTSIDE NEWSLETTER



Supported by Westside Resource Centre and Galway City Partnership - Westside Project

Volume 10, Issue 3
Winter 2020

New Arrivals

Westside Resource Centre extends a warm welcome to AMACH! LGBT Galway to the Westside area. AMACH! advocate to achieve a solid and safe support structure for the LGBT+ community in Galway. Their aim is to provide awareness, educational and training events and workshops, and to support and promote a socially inclusive society. The arrival of AMACH! serves to underscore the range and diversity of services available at, and operating from, the resource centre and in the wider Westside area. info@amachlgbt.com



Christmas Wishes

The management and staff of Westside Resource Centre would like to wish all of our clients, patrons, friends and supporters a very Happy Christmas and a wonderful year in 2021. We are looking forward to welcoming all of our services users back to the Resource Centre as soon as possible in the New Year. Please keep in touch with friends and neighbours across the community and look out for those who many need a helping hand over the holidays. Remember to shop local and to support our local business, charities and social enterprises. *Nollaig Shona agus Athbhliain faoi mhaise.*

Westside Winners – Pride of Place 2020

Westside Arts Festival has won a coveted national Pride of Place award. The awards ceremony was streamed live on Saturday 21st November with Westside winning in the "Creative Place" category. In their citation, the Pride of Place judges said that the Westside Arts Festival is "a very strong community event, which continues to grow and prosper. It maintains a focus on local artists and involves engendering pride in the creativity of the local community. It is making a significant contribution to Pride of Place in the area."

Chairman of Westside Arts Festival organising committee, James Coyne, said that "all involved with the festival were delighted with the news and will feel reinvigorated and inspired to keep the event going and developing in the years ahead. This national Pride of Place award follows soon after a Galway City 'Mayors Award' for the volunteers of Westside Arts Festival. Taken all together this recognition and support is a great boost to our local festival." James thanked all of the people and organisations who have supported the festival and gave a special mention to Galway City Council for the nomination to this year's awards and for their unwavering support over many years.

IPB/Cooperation Ireland Pride of Place has been held since 2003 and is an all-island competition that acknowledges the work that communities are doing all over the island of Ireland. The competition focus is about people coming together to shape, change and improve daily lives in their communities.



Mayor of the City of Galway Cllr. Mike Cubbard presenting the Pride of Place certificate to members of the organising committee of Westside Arts Festival.



**NATIONAL ADVOCACY
SERVICE**

**FOR PEOPLE WITH
DISABILITIES**

People who have disabilities can often experience difficulties in asserting their views and/or securing their rights and entitlements and this can lead to their having limited choices and little control over their lives. The National Advocacy Service for People with Disabilities provides an independent, confidential and free, representative advocacy service that works exclusively for the person using the NAS service. NAS Advocates work with each person they support in a person centred and empowering way, to ensure that the person's voice, choices and preferences are heard and considered when their life decisions are being made, and that their rights are safeguarded.

The National Advocacy Service for People with Disabilities, funded and supported by the Citizens Information Board, is provided through four regions and a National Office based in Dublin. The NAS Western Region is led by the Regional Manager Anne Feehily. Western Region Advocates cover counties, Galway, Mayo, Roscommon, Clare, Limerick, Sligo, Leitrim and Donegal. The NAS Galway office is based in Westside Resource Centre.

During these times of Covid, NAS Advocates are continuing to offer professional independent advocacy services to the people it supports, in compliance with public health guidelines.

If you think you would be interested to find out more about the service that NAS provides to people with disabilities please visit the advocacy.ie website. And If you think you, or someone you know would benefit from NAS independent advocacy, the service can be contacted through the **National telephone number:** or by Email at: info@advocacy.ie

Crafty Alternatives

Unable to hold the normal range of events due to COVID-19, Westside Arts Festival has found alternative ways to celebrate creativity in the community this year.

The Festival linked up with local charity Westside Age Inclusion to sponsor 'Westside Creativity Packs', which were delivered to older people at risk of isolation. Each pack contained a copy of the recently-published 'Write-on Anthology 2021' and a set of Westside Resource Centre's Greeting Card Collection.

Keeping in touch with the younger generation was also important and this was done through a range of art and craft activities including the inaugural "Pumpkin Project". Assisted by the volunteers at Westside Community Garden, the festival was able to provide hand-decorated pumpkins to children attending Sunflower Crèche as Hallowe'en decorations.

Such artistic 'micro projects', whilst carried out in compliance with the current public health advice, will help to encourage Arts & Crafts during these difficult times and keep the fire of creativity burning across the community.

Artistic Greeting Cards

Westside Resource Centre's popular Greeting Card Collection features work by artists in the local community and the cards are ideal for any occasion. A pack of 12 cards costs €10 and they are available from Westside Resource Centre. All proceeds go to support the work of the Resource Centre, which is a registered charity working to support the local community.



Westside Resource Centre - Adapting to COVID-19

2020 has proven to be a difficult year for many community based organisations. COVID-19 has prevented a great deal of community activity from taking place and adapting to these unforeseen circumstances has been very challenging. Westside Resource Centre followed official government advice throughout the year and has been operating in a limited capacity so as to support essential workers. From March onwards it was clear that the Centre would be very deeply impacted by the loss of all the social and communal gatherings that usually take place in our meeting rooms. The normally busy meeting spaces were quiet and empty for months.



Even after restrictions were eased, it was still not possible to return to normal due to the social distancing requirements. These restrictions, whilst absolutely vital to protect the health and wellbeing of centre users, also led to a major reduction in capacity. As the strict 2-metre social distancing rules were implemented, spaces that used to be able to accommodate 20 people could now hold only 6 people. Nonetheless, some community groups were able to restart their activities in a limited way and this brought a welcome return of some familiar faces. However, in October 2020 the pendulum swung the other way, public health advice brought increased restrictions and almost all organised indoor gatherings were once again prohibited.

As part of our initial response to COVID-19 we made changes to our health & safety systems. New hand sanitising stations were installed along with signage, markings and protective

screens. We advised clients about enhanced precautions and set about reducing and minimising interpersonal contacts where possible. We also looked more generally at the whole building to see what changes and improvements could be made to help us adapt to the circumstances. This review led us to make some alterations. For example, we have changed the use of some rooms and we are in the process of making further changes that will give us a larger meeting space. We hope these works will be of benefit to all service users and will help us meet the challenges in the year ahead.

Westside Resource Centre gratefully acknowledges the assistance of Galway City Council, Galway City 'Local Community Development Committee' and the Western Development Commission in supporting these adaptations to our premises. We would also like to thank the Department of Rural & Community Development and Pobal for their continued support through the Community Services Programme during this very difficult time

Westside Community Tree

Community Groups from across Westside came together recently to work with local artist Billy Murray on a Galway City Council initiative "Together while apart". Participants choose a theme of 'Community' for their tree and the artist represented this by showing people coming together and highlighting some of the focal points in Westside and the different activities happening in the local community.



Westside Public Library

Westside Public Library has been supporting the community throughout the pandemic and Government restrictions with an array of outreach services. Our **Virtual Library** provides thousands of online resources, all free of charge at the click of a mouse. All services can be accessed with an email address, your library card number and PIN. If you don't have a card you can still join online free of charge at our website www.galwaylibrary.ie and click on joining the library option.

We offer access to newspapers and magazines from more than 120 countries. These include The New York Times, The Washington Post, BBC Wildlife and Good Food to name a few. We have a huge selection of eBooks and e-Audiobooks with quality titles on areas such as health, education, business as well as a vast children's collection of books and material. With many new titles loaded weekly, there is something for everyone all free of charge!

Our e-Learning courses platform is provided by Universal Class which offers patrons a unique online education experience. There are over 400 courses available from accounting, coding, creative writing to management. All free of charge. This service is now more valuable than ever as people upskill for future employment.

Westside Public Library is delivering book parcels to those who are vulnerable or cocooning. We are also part of the Community Call initiative so please reach out if you need assistance.

Our Facebook page sees a weekly story time session with further events, offerings and services all posted regularly.

For further information on all these resources just email us on westside@galwaycoco.ie or ring on 091-509091. Follow us on Twitter @Westsidelib or like our Facebook page Westside Public Library. ☺

Volunteers Rewarded

The volunteers at Westside Arts Festival were honoured at this year's Galway City 'Mayors Awards'. Mayor Mike Cubbard presented the award to Bernie Smith who accepted the award on behalf of all of the volunteers at a brief socially-distanced ceremony on 29th June 2020. Congratulations to all of those who have volunteered at the festival over the years.



Westside Community Garden



Westside Community Garden is a space where local people can come together to learn about gardening and manage their own community garden collectively. The garden has become a hub of community activity. In addition to working in the garden, we run classes and participate in community events.

Volunteers continue to meet in line with government guidelines and we are always looking for New Volunteers. **Everyone is Welcome** if you are interested in joining or want to know more please contact Suzanne on suzanne@gcp.ie or 087-0433376



Some of the Garden volunteers at last year's Open Day.

Westside Resource Centre – Many Services Under One Roof

Galway City Partnership - Westside Project coordinate and support community work and participation in the Westside area and engage with numerous individuals, agencies and service providers to ensure the needs of the community are being met and to empower local people for positive change.
(Contact Suzanne: 091-528325 or 086-0433376).

Big Brother Big Sister are an internationally renowned youth mentoring programme that forms friendships between a young person and an adult volunteer. This programme is operated in Ireland by Foróige, the national youth development organisation. The Galway regional office is based in the Westside Resource Centre.
(Contact Kirsten on 087-7996268).

WorldWide Global Schools is Ireland's national Global Citizenship Education (GCE) programme for post-primary schools. The aim of the programme is to increase the number of post-primary schools engaging in quality global citizenship education by providing a comprehensive range of supports and training.

Galway City Community Network is a network of community, voluntary and environmental organisations active in Galway City. The GCCN is the main link through which the local authority connects with the community, voluntary and environmental sectors.
(Contact Ann on 087-9326467).

Self Help Africa works with rural communities to help them improve their farms and their livelihoods.
(Contact Ronan on 087-6189094).

National Advocacy Service aims to provide independent advocates to people with disabilities who find it difficult to speak for themselves.
(Contact 076-1073000).

Westside Crèche & Pre School is a community based childcare service which aims to support and assist families and children in the Westside area through the provision of accessible, affordable, high quality childcare.
(Contact Pauline on 091-581707).

AMACH! LGBT Galway aims to reflect equally the diversity within the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community by encouraging positive participation from the community. We actively advocate to achieve a solid and safe support structure for the LGBT+ community in Galway.
(Contact info@amachlgbt.com).

MEAS Garda Youth Diversion Project is a community based and supported youth development project which seeks to divert young people from becoming involved (or further involved) in anti-social or criminal behaviour. These projects facilitate personal development and promote civic responsibility. (Contact Anthony on 086-0479707 or 091-554421).

OBAIR – Local Employment Service Network
If you are out of work and looking for employment, training or educational opportunities, we can help. Our service is free, respectful and client- focussed. All meetings are held in private. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT YOUR LOCAL OFFICE. Please Note: If you are in receipt of Job Seekers Allowance/Benefit, the Dept. of Employment Affairs & Social Protection will send you to us if deemed appropriate. (Contact Marguerite or Pádraig on 091-581955)

Epilepsy Ireland provides a professional information service to support and empower people with epilepsy and their families, who have problems coming to terms with the condition and its implications. (Contact Edel on 091-587640).

EPIC – Empowering Young People in Care in Ireland is an independent association for young people in care and with care experience. We provide information, advice and support as well as an independent advocacy service for young people in care, aftercare or with care experience. (Contact Brenda on 091-395605 or 087-6249344).

RISE Service is the provider of choice of person-centred, health and social care services that facilitate people who are disadvantaged to participate in the life of their local community in ways that match their choices, aspirations and needs. (Contact Kim on 087-3811796 or kim.murphy@rehabcare.ie)

Youth Work Ireland Galway Westside Youth Project

Art Packs: We sent out art packs to young people in our youth project to encourage creativity throughout the lockdown! These art packs were funded by the Westside Arts Festival. We invite all young people aged 10–12 and 13–15 in the Westside Area to send their creations in to our draw.

Youth Council: We are looking for young people aged 13–20 to join our youth council. The council has been involved in planning and holding various fundraisers, decision making within the youth centre as well as going on various group outings together.

We are currently planning a **Christmas Cracker Quiz**.

Despite COVID-19, we are making sure that we continue our services and support young people through these challenging times.



HANDS ON

COME AND CREATE WITH US!

Arts and Craft group for 10 - 12 year olds
Mondays: 3 - 4pm

Call, text or Whatsapp
Isabel: 087 9141522
Aoibheann: 0879371619

WESTSIDE
YOUTH
PROJECT

Youth Work Ireland
Galway

Westside Age Inclusion

Westside Age Inclusion Ltd. was established in February 2002 to deliver services to people (over-55's) who live in the Westside and surrounding area of Galway City.

The project aims to improve the quality of life and wellbeing of its client base by working directly with older people in their homes. The project works in partnership with other agencies to improve the quality of life of older people in the community.



Our services in the area:

- Community laundry service
- Home Help/supports/
shopping/ Office supports/
client's benefits/grant
applications/senior alert
scheme

All our services run Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 5pm. Contact us on 091-589861 or nichola@westsideageinclusionltd.ie

West Galway Family Services

A selection of the pieces of art created by young people aged 10-12 years in the West Galway Family Services after-school group.



Galway Positive Ageing Week

CELEBRATING THE CONTRIBUTION OF OLDER PEOPLE ACROSS GALWAY



Alice has lived in Renmore for over 19 years. As a carer for many people down through the years, her friends still call on her for advice and help, which she gives willingly.

Alice has friends around the country and makes sure to keep in touch. In her local community, she never forgets a birthday and often surprises someone with a card and cake. Her kindness, especially to those living alone, means so much. Every year she goes around the community with an empty jam jar and collects money for the Galway Hospice and other charities - you don't say no to Alice! She enjoys nature and the outdoors, helps look after the flowers and shrubs in the community, and feeds the hedgehog family.

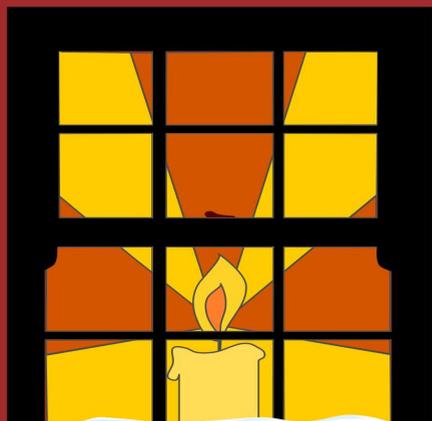
In 2019 Alice fulfilled a lifelong dream of going on a cruise to the US, visiting the Grand Canyon and San Francisco. Las Vegas was her favourite place. Her zest for life is infectious. Alice is 76 years old.



Sean is a native of Mayo but living in Galway for forty-five years. He retired nine years ago but that certainly didn't slow him down! He wanted to give back to his community and so he now

volunteers with the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. He says he finds home visitation difficult sometimes, but very fulfilling and a privilege. Sean also drives for COPE Galway's Meals on Wheels two/three days a week, delivering lunches to mainly older people usually living alone. He enjoys having a chat as some have very little contact with the outside world. It gives him a great boost to know that he could bring a smile to the faces of the people he meets.

And as if Sean is not busy enough, he also finds time to help as steward in the Cathedral for the annual novena and special occasions. He is also a member of the Residents Association and enjoys tending to the flower beds and open spaces in his area.



Merry Christmas



Art, Craft and Educational Classes

Meetings, Seminars & Social Gatherings



Meeting & training rooms available. Suitable for community and voluntary groups, residents associations etc. Reasonable rates.

Westside Resource Centre
Seamus Quirke Road, 091-528325

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

Community Education

GRETB Launch Winter Online Courses

The Community Education programme of the GRETB has a long tradition of working with community groups and community partners to deliver courses at grassroots level. Community Education essentially is where learners identify their own learning needs and learn in an informal setting in their communities.

In 2019 over 3,000 adults participated in Community Education courses in Galway City, Galway County and Roscommon. Courses such as Art, Cookery, Community Development, Craft, Furniture Upcycling and Yoga are usually delivered over six to eight weeks. The types of groups that participate in these courses are Men's Sheds, Women's Groups, Community Development Groups, Active Retired Groups, Migrants Groups, Homeless Groups, LGBT+ Groups, Refugees, Asylum Seekers, Disability Groups and Traveller Groups. Courses are also delivered in partnership with agencies and groups such as Westside Resource Centre, Ballybane Resource Centre and Ballinfolie Castlegar Neighbourhood Centre.

In response to the COVID-19 situation, the Community Education Facilitators and Community Education Tutors have, for the past seven months, delivered classes online and into the homes of learners. Many have spoken at their joy at being able to continue their course at a distance. Mary who lives in Galway City and is currently 'cocooning' says, 'I'm doing my Art class online. I can't believe I can do this at home. I had to get help using the computer, but now every Tuesday morning, I tune in and do my class'. Pádraig is participating in the Cookery course through YouTube and had this to say, 'I always enjoy going and meeting people at the classes. We learn so much and have good fun at the tea break. We obviously can't do that now, but we can learn new skills and help feed our families on a budget'.

Coupled with the online classes delivered by the Community Education Tutors, GRETB Community Education have a YouTube Channel with playlists dedicated to courses which would usually be delivered in the community. To date, the feedback has been positive as people can access YouTube Clips that have been recommended by Community Education Tutors. More online courses are going to start in 2021 in a number of areas such as Art, Basic Sewing, Digital Photography, Genealogy, Flower

Arranging, Health & Fitness, Introduction to Conversational Irish, Vegetarian Cookery, Gardening and Yoga. The team at Community Education are hopeful that there is something there to suit you and your community groups' needs.

For any further information, please contact Gráinne O'Byrne, grainne.obyrne@gretb.ie.



Tips for Keeping Well this Winter



Healthy
Galway City

2020 has been a challenging year for all of us, and now more than ever it is important for us to look after ourselves. This winter we can mind our own physical and mental health and wellbeing by adding healthy habits to our daily routines. Start with a plan to do one small thing to keep you well:

Keep active - keeping active and being outdoors, even during the winter, is important to help our physical and mental health and wellbeing.

Eat well – eating healthily is a huge part of looking after our general health and keeping ourselves well. Cooking simple nutritious meals for ourselves and our families is the best way to ensure that we meet all our nutritional needs to stay healthy.

Mind your mood – many of us are still getting used to the disruption of our daily routines caused by the spread of COVID-19 and the measures that have been introduced to help keep us all safe. It's normal to be worried or to feel stressed during this difficult time. For support on minding your mental health during COVID-19, visit yourmentalhealth.ie.

Switch off - switching off and giving some time to yourself to do the things you enjoy doing is so important in looking after your mental wellbeing. Simple activities like being creative, learning something new, spending time in nature or practicing relaxation, can help to restore and revive our spirits.

Keep in contact - connecting with other people is really important for our mental wellbeing. Planning a certain time or day that you talk to a family member or friend, will give you something to look forward to and will make you more likely to reach out and make that connection.

For more information on keeping well this winter visit healthygalwaycity.ie or gov.ie/healthyireland.

Healthy Galway City is working hard to organise programmes and initiatives to support you to keep you well in 2021. Follow @HealthyGalway on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to keep up to date with reliable health and wellbeing information and resources, and to stay informed on upcoming programmes. For further information on Healthy Galway City, contact Ashling on 085 8217547 or email healthygalway@gcp.ie.

Wishing you a peaceful Christmas and a healthy and happy New Year.

#Keepwell



The Local Employment Services (LES)



Do you want to return to work, education or take up that training course? Make 2021 the year you do it!

The Local Employment Service are based in Ballybane, Bohermore and Westside. We can give you the support and guidance you need. We are here to help you get back into employment through one to one career guidance, by giving you information on training and education options and employment opportunities that suit YOU.

If you are ready to take the next step on the road to work, education or training, why not call us today to register. The Service is free, confidential and community based.

Ballybane Resource Centre,

Ballybane Rd. Galway.

Phone: 091-768304 Email: vikky@gcples.ie

108 Bohermore,

Galway

Phone: 091-566617 Email: ben@gcples.ie

Westside Resource Centre,

Seamus Quirke Rd., Galway.

Phone 091-581955 Email: mcarr@gcples.ie

The Local Employment Service is under the umbrella of Galway City Partnership and is funded by the Department of Social Protection

Employment Supports

Throughout 2020, Galway City Partnership's Employment Supports Officer David Gorman has continued to provide supports around CV Preparation, Job Searching Skills and Interview Skills. In addition, valuable labour market training courses including Safe Pass and Manual Handling have taken place. In 2021 these supports will be made widely available and free of charge.

Community Education – Galway City Partnership

Galway City Partnership, in conjunction with GRETB ran a number of unaccredited and accredited courses in 2020. With the onset of the Covid 19 Pandemic in March 2020 online resources were provided. The GRETB You Tube channel provided online tuition in a variety of areas from Irish language to proper hand hygiene. One to one contact via phone was ongoing throughout the year by GCP staff.

Galway City Partnership, with GRETB, will run a number of unaccredited and accredited courses in 2021. The unaccredited courses will include Art, Cookery, DIY, Health and Fitness, Sewing, Crochet and Yoga and will run in the Westside, Ballybane and Ballinfolle areas of the city. These courses are free of charge to the unemployed and underemployed people living in disadvantaged areas and those who are socially isolated. The courses will run over five to eight weeks, for two hours generally from 10am until 12 noon.

Accredited courses will be offered in the areas of Business and IT, Healthcare, Art, Media and HACCP. With the exception of the HACCP course (QQI Level 4), these are full time one year courses with the option of a second year and are QQI Level 5 accredited after Year 1.

Covid19 restrictions and guidelines will be strictly adhered to in terms of social distancing, face masks and hand hygiene. In the event of another lockdown, online options will be made available to everyone who registers for the courses. Registrations will be done over the phone.

For further information and early registration, please contact Geraldine (geraldine@gcp.ie) 087-9939328 for unaccredited courses or alternatively, Donnacha (donnacha@gcp.ie) 086-1424904 for either the accredited or unaccredited options.

Support for Enterprises

Galway City Partnership Enterprise Development offers a wide range of supports to people who wish to set up their business, including:

- One-to-one business start-up mentoring support
- Developing a business plan
- Enterprise Training
- Applications for Back to Work Enterprise Allowance

We met with over 240 clients over the year despite the prevailing economic conditions. Early in the year we concentrated on mentoring businesses already established to ensure that they were able to restart when the economy reopened.

Contact Peter (peter@gcp.ie), 086-8537434

Support for Social Enterprises

Galway City Partnership's aim to work with groups in communities to tackle disadvantage and long-term unemployment takes many different forms. Social enterprise is an approach that several existing community groups use, and new groups are exploring to impact on social causes and include those from their communities whilst trading as a business. GCP aims to provide support to a vibrant, dynamic and sustainable social enterprise sector through the following supports:

- One-to-one mentoring support for start-up and growing of social enterprises
- Training especially designated for social enterprises
- Limited grants for specific funding needs
- Networking opportunities for social enterprises
- Resources on best practices for social enterprises

Contact Fiona (fiona@gcp.ie), 086-7709919



BRIDGE Building a Receptive and Integrated Galway of Equals

The focus of the project is to promote the effective delivery of reception and integration supports (including advocacy and capacity building interventions) to asylum seekers and third country nationals (people born outside the EU) living in Galway City and County.

BRIDGE provides:

One to One Information & Advocacy

Support on issues such as Citizenship Applications/Family Reunification/Accessing Social Welfare

Group Information Sessions (via Zoom):

First Thursday of every month

Integration Work: Diversity Training/Informing an Integration Strategy

Outreach: Gort/Loughrea/Ballinalsoe

Find out more on our

Facebook: [GALWAYBRIDGE](https://www.facebook.com/GALWAYBRIDGE) or contact one of our team:

Suzanne McKane – Project Coordinator.

086-0433376 or suzanne@gcp.ie

Katya Okwonko – Information & Advocacy

Officer. 086-6020580 or katya@gcp.ie

Joelle Azzam – Integration Support Worker.

087-9303468 or joelle@gcp.ie

Obert Makaza – Direct Provision & Advocacy

Officer. 086-0470120 or obert@gcp.ie



EUROPEAN UNION
Asylum, Migration
and Integration Fund



An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt
agus Comhionannais
Department of Justice
and Equality

This project is co-financed by the European Commission under the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund 2014-2020 and is supported by the Department of Justice and Equality

Free IT Support Tutorials

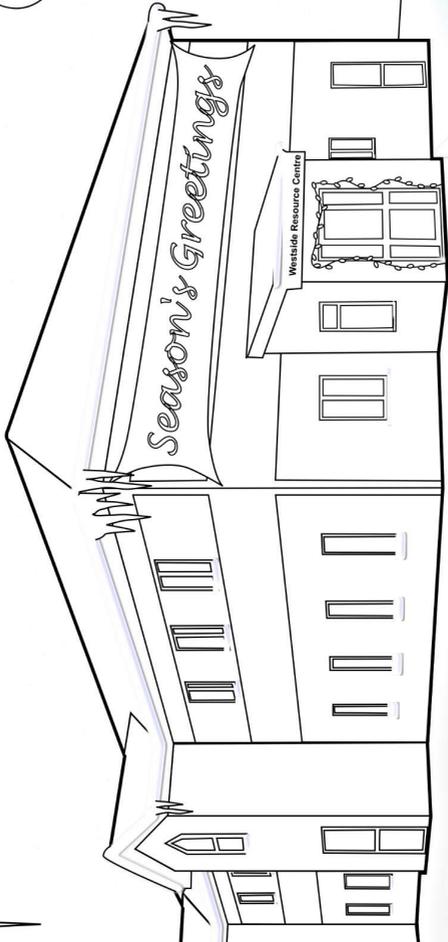
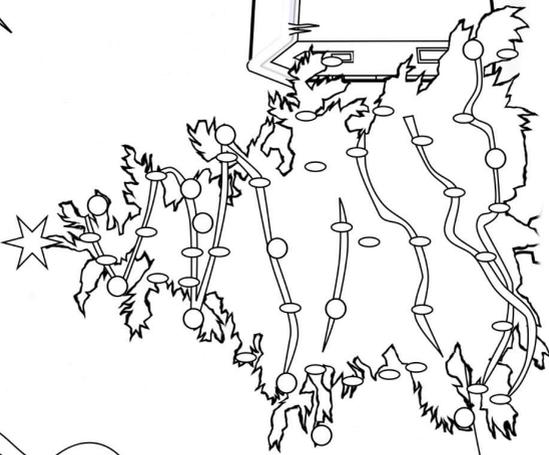
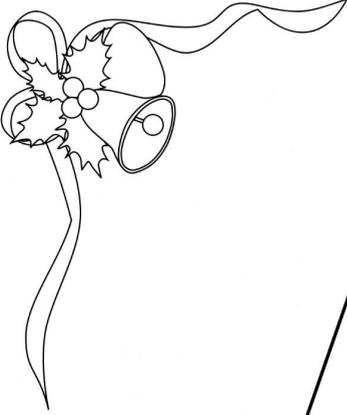
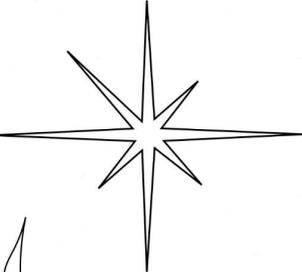
For people living in Westside

Learn how to use Zoom & other programmes so you can talk to family and friends online or join online classes.

Learn how to support your children on programmes like Seesaw.

Contact Suzanne (suzanne@gcp.ie),
086- 0433376

Children's Colouring Page



Merry Christmas from Westside Resource Centre



The Tús Initiative

Galway City Partnership has been delivering the services of the Tús Initiative in Galway City for almost ten years. Tús offers opportunities to long-term job seekers in the form of work experience with Galway's community, voluntary and not-for-profit organisations.

A significant degree of the Initiative's positive feedback is owed to the effort invested in satisfying the interests of our clients. If an individual expresses an interest in gaining retail experience, for example, we organise employment with one of Galway's many charity shops and likewise with the other types of work experience we offer.

The aims of the Initiative are to assist with the delivery of community services and to provide a pathway to securing further employment. Over the years our dedicated team has been rewarded with many cases where clients have utilised experience gained on Tús to progress into full-time employment.

If you wish to discover more about the Tús Initiative at GCP or you are interested in participating, our contact details can be found at www.gcp.ie

Galway Migrant Service

Galway Migrant Service, a project of the Galway City Partnership, was established in May 2007. The service provides dedicated information, advocacy, guidance and support for migrants and their families and supports other services and organisations who work with migrant populations. Over the years, GMS has developed into a highly specialised service dealing with complex migrant issues. GMS also provides information, practical guidance and support around accessing key local services and makes regular referrals to appropriate local and national services and organisations on issues such as employment support, education and training, health, domestic abuse, refugee/asylum issues, accommodation, etc. Our service is delivered in both English and Russian; it is free and strictly confidential.

GMS provides information and support on a comprehensive range of issues, such as Citizenship/Naturalisation, Residency under EU Treaty Rights, Permissions to remain in Ireland, Regularisation/Change of Immigration Status, Family Reunification, Employment Permits, Long-term/Permanent Residency Tourist/Visitors' visas, Voluntary Return

Contact Katya: 086-6020580 or katya@gcp.ie



Walk The Talk Galway was established to promote integration between individuals and families living in Direct Provision and the local community by participating in healthy activities while raising awareness of broader social issues. We organise activities in line with government guidelines, above is a picture of our event to mark World Mental Health Day.

Want to find out more or interested in getting involved? Contact Simba on walkthetalkgalway@gmail.com or Suzanne on 087-0433376

Reach out to an older person at Christmas

As the festive season approaches, the isolation and loneliness felt by those who will spend Christmas alone, can be felt even more sharply. With parties, Lunch Clubs and Christmas Day events cancelled this year, we need to come together as a community to reach out to our older neighbours and friends. A visit, phone call or festive invitation can make an enormous difference to someone feeling alone.

Meals4health: Tasty food delivered to your door

COPE's Meals4health prepares fresh, tasty, affordable food and delivers direct to your home. All of our meals can be adapted to suit your nutritional needs.

See our website for meals and menus and information about the service.

www.meals4health.ie
091-354000
info@meals4health.ie



COPE Galway

Let's help together

COPE Galway Services

Older People's Helpline
Practical help and support
085 876 7785

Meals4Health
Meal delivery service
091 354 000

Domestic Abuse Service
24-hour helpline
091 565 985

Teach Corrib Day Centre
Supporting homeless individuals
091 525 259

Family Support Service
Supporting homeless families
091 527 571

Cold Weather Response
Night beds for rough sleepers
085 800 9641 / 085 800 9709

Out of Hours Homeless Service
From 7pm to 11pm
1800 788 887

Modh Eile House,
COPE Galway's Domestic Abuse Service & Refuge.
remains open during the COVID-19 crisis.

We are available to women who are experiencing domestic abuse. If you or someone you know needs our help, please call our 24-hour confidential helpline.

Call our 24-hour helpline
091 56 59 85

We have COVID-19 prevention and social distancing measures in place to protect our clients and staff, ensuring all stay safe, whilst accessing the service.

DISCLAIMER: The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the author(s) of each individual piece and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Westside Resource Centre or Galway City Partnership.

Mapping Community Responses

Galway City Community Network & Galway City Council have developed a map of COVID-19 related responses, activities and services available to people in Galway City. The map is available online and is a useful information resource for individuals made vulnerable by COVID-19 and also for organisations or agencies that need to know where they may refer their clients to for support. The map is available at the following links:

Desktop version: www.galwaycity.ie/GalwayCityCommunityDashboard

Mobile version: www.galwaycity.ie/GalwayCityCommunityMap

Early Years Weaning Project



This year has proven a challenging one for all the people of Galway and there have been a lot of “small” new arrivals into our community. Galway City Partnership along with the HSE, Tusla and CYPSI have been running workshops on Feeding Your Baby for the last number of years. These took place in local community centres where new parents had the opportunity to meet each other in a group setting and share their experiences with a Community Dietician on introducing their babies to solids. This year, like several other workshops, these took place over Zoom. We have had to put on extra workshops to keep up with demand and will be running these online for the foreseeable future. Please contact us if you or anyone you know could benefit.

An additional focus of the Early Years programme is on maximising the health and wellbeing of children and families through the delivery of workshops on several topics. To this end, funding has been made available for a number of “Mud Kitchens” in Community Crèches in four areas of the city. These will support children to play in the outdoors in a creative, safe and learning environment.

Access For All

Access for All is a network of individuals who have direct lived experiences of disabilities and local disability organisations, who focus on continually improving the accessibility of the local built environment. This year has proved extra difficult for people with disabilities as many of the adaptations that took place in our public spaces ended up excluding those with disabilities. These included lack of access to both public and bathrooms provided by hospitality services, illegal parking or shops introducing traffic light systems that excluded those who are visually impaired.

Accessibility matters to us all and this has been at a time when disabled people have experienced

additional exclusions as a result of restrictions. Despite these restrictions Access for All have sought to champion the rights of disabled people to have their voices heard in conversations about “opening up the city” and “mobility plans”. The group has met up with Galway City Council Mobility Team, called on our own elected city councillors and contacted city businesses through Galway Chamber. Access for All wants to be included in the conversation and contribute to solutions around our local environment so we can all be in a better position to access it.



**For further information please contact
Fiona (fiona@gcp.ie) 086 87709919**

The Galway City Youth Advocacy Service (YAS)

Galway City Partnership's Youth Advocacy Service is a community based initiative whose aim is to provide career path planning and support to young people between the ages of 16 and 21 who are either at risk of leaving school or who have already left mainstream education with few or no qualifications.

Following a client referral, a one-to-one meeting is arranged with the person where previous education, training or work experience is discussed. All realistic options open to the client are explored along with stumbling blocks or issues which may prevent the client from re-engaging with education or progressing onwards.

The client's strengths are acknowledged with the aim of providing a positive future direction and a tailor-made career path plan is then put in place along with clear and attainable short term goals, with a view to motivating and progressing the young person to further education, training or employment.

Galway City Youth Advocacy Service also offers a range of psychometric assessments covering areas such as basic skills, motivation, personality and career interests which, where deemed appropriate, may be used to assist the client's decision making.

The Advocacy Service encourages young people to consider alternative education options such as Youthreach, the Community Training Centre, Dochas Don Oige and various GRETB options which will aid in acquiring the necessary skills and competencies to attain an Apprenticeship and/or employment. The Youth Advocacy Service employs three advocacy workers: John O'Donnell, Geraldine McNamara and Mike Haines.

Please phone 086-8537533 or email john@gcp.ie for further information.

Let's Galway Growing

Let's Get Galway Growing (LGGG) is a network of eight community gardens and gardening projects in Galway City. The network members come together to share information, learn from each other, chat about the challenges they may be facing and, most importantly, share the successes they have achieved.

During this difficult time the gardens have been a source of hope and a place of calm for communities, especially where people have not had their own spaces and the opportunity to meet others in a safe environment. In urban areas this has been of particular importance where access to nature for wellbeing is proving more important than ever. Work has continued in a limited capacity; maintaining the gardens and planting for the upcoming season.

LGGG continues to grow and welcomes any community gardens who would like to share their learning and seek the support of others.



Galway Integration Consortium

The Galway Integration Consortium is a network of groups with an Integration focus based in Galway City. Some members came together to work with local artist Emma O'Toole on a Galway City Council initiative "*Together while apart*". This included representatives from BRIDGE (Building a Receptive Diverse Galway of Equals), Walk The Talk Galway, The Russian Speaking Community, Galway 2020 Wave Makers and University of Sanctuary Participants chose a theme of **Celebrating Diversity and Culture** for their tree.



Is your community group interested in joining the Galway Integration Consortium? Contact Suzanne (suzanne@gcp.ie), 086-0433376

Galway Traveller Movement

Galway Traveller Movement was set up in 1994 and promotes Traveller leadership in both community and social enterprise work. We aim to ensure the inclusion of the Traveller community in all aspects of community life. Members of the GTM team work in the Westside area delivering an outreach programme focusing on the right to health, education, accommodation and work with a clear focus on ending discrimination against the Traveller community.

Our healthy food cook-along programme is currently being rolled out for the second time in the community. Another 7-week programme that covers such topics as stress management, diet and nutrition, smoking cessation, and physical activity was designed by members of the Traveller community in partnership with Croí and is currently running across the city.

GTM run a successful Community Employment scheme and would love members of the community to join us. Contact either Annemarie or Joanna to get more information.

In celebration of Traveller culture, GTM went online this year for both Traveller Pride in September and the second annual Misleóir festival in November. Both these events featured online screenings of videos made by and about the Traveller community.



Members of Galway Traveller Movement promoting the walking groups set up in conjunction with Healthy Galway City and Galway Sports Partnership

Our very successful mattress recycling social enterprise - Bounce Back Recycling - employs 10 Traveller operatives who have successfully recycled 20,000 mattresses in 2020. BBR as part of its service offers domestic and commercial collections and can be contacted at info@bouncebackrecycling.ie

Galway Traveller Movement would love to hear from you so follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Snapchat. Galway Traveller Movement can be contacted by phone on 091-765390, by email at info@gtmtrav.ie or on www.facebook.com/GalwayTravellerMovement

English Language Supports

Throughout the COVID-19 emergency Galway City Partnership has continued to support students with online learning and other services such as assistance with applications for Pandemic Unemployment Payments.

We are looking forward to welcoming students, old and new, back to classes as soon as Government guidelines for indoor gatherings allow. Details will be available on www.gcp.ie as soon as a timetable can be finalised.

Video Tutorials

Galway City Partnership has developed a series of short step-by-step tutorials as a guide to a variety of everyday technology set-ups. These videos will show how to set up an email on your phone and how to download and use apps on your phone. These videos are part of a collaboration with the Galway Traveller Movement and the School Completion Programme. The videos may be viewed free of charge on our website www.gcp.ie

DOMESTIC ABUSE

AT HOME SHOULDN'T MEAN AT RISK

An Garda Síochána are available to help and support anyone who is a victim of domestic or sexual abuse. Domestic abuse incidents, including coercive control, will continue to receive highest priority response by Gardaí. If you are subjected to this kind of abuse, or if you know someone who is, you should contact your local Garda station, or in an emergency call 999 or 112.

It is important that you know you are not alone – domestic and sexual violence support services have been adapted and increased to ensure they remain available to support you. Log onto www.StillHere.ie for a list of local support services in your area or contact your local Garda Station.

You can also download the free **Bright Sky Ireland** mobile phone App for additional information and supports on domestic abuse.



If you are in immediate danger call An Garda Síochána on 999 or 112

A guide to fraud prevention



1. Be suspicious of all “too good to be true” offers and deals.
2. Don't assume anyone who has sent you an email text message or has called your phone is who they say they are.
3. Never ever give banking details our personal details to someone you don't know or trust. Genuine organisations like banks and the revenue commissioners will never contact you out of the blue to ask for your PIN, password or bank details.
4. Always log on to a website directly rather than clicking on links in an email or text message.
5. When shopping on-line only buy from trusted sources. Use a credit card other than direct Transfers from your bank account or payment card!
6. Never send money to someone you have only met online no matter how much you trust him or believed her story.
7. Monitor your bank account regularly.
8. Don't return calls to international numbers that you don't recognise.
9. If you receive a notification of a change of bank account details from the supplier always verify this change directly using an established contact.
10. Don't be embarrassed if you have been scammed, always report crime to An Garda Síochána.

For more information on fraud prevention log onto www.FraudSmart.ie or contact your local Garda Crime Prevention Officer



An Garda Síochána
Crime Prevention

IF YOU LOVE IT, LOCK UP AND LIGHT UP.



Simple steps can help protect your home.
Whether you are at home or going out, remember to turn on some lights, use timer switches, lock all doors and windows, use an alarm, store keys away from windows and letter boxes, and don't keep large amounts of cash or jewellery in the house.

Lock Up and Light Up as part of An Garda Síochána's Operation Thor.
www.garda.ie



When home becomes a prison – Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is a term we hear quite often – but what does it mean? It means being in a relationship that is damaging to you, because your partner in that relationship abuses the trust you have given to them. They might be physical – hitting, punching, kicking; they might be verbally abusive – calling names, putting you down; maybe they control your money, tell you when you can leave the house, and who you can see. All of these things are abuse, and all of these things are crimes. If any of this sounds familiar to you, here are some things to remember: **It is not your fault** – nothing you do deserves this treatment. **You are not on your own** – we are here. **There is a way out** – it is a long journey, but every journey starts with a small step. **You do not have to stay at home – you can leave.** If you are ready, and can safely do so, contact us.

In Galway, COPE Galway offer support to any woman who thinks she may be in a relationship like this. We offer refuge – this is a safe place to stay while you make decisions; we offer outreach – a staff member who can meet you in a safe place to discuss what's going on; we offer support to children – children are often the hidden victims, and we also help them. Our service is open 24 hours a day, every day, so there is always someone to talk to. For most women who get in touch with us, at the start they may not want to give their names, or tell us much detail – and that is ok. We won't tell you what to do – we will ask you what you'd like to do. Our job is to help you work out what you want to do, what you need to do and what you can do. We will walk the journey with you.

Modh Eile House is a 24-hour support service for women and children who experience abuse. The service is also open to women who have left the relationship and are still experiencing abuse from their ex-partners. We provide refuge, a helpline and an outreach service. Most of all we provide a listening ear. Our helpline number is **091-565985**.

If you suspect that a woman you know is being abused or is parenting alone and needs support, reach out and check in on them, and if you think it is appropriate, tell them about our service.

Here Am I Film Project

Still from Good Morning by Yasujiro Ozu.

HERE AM I

MEET FRIENDS ONLINE
Put on the kettle and get out the phone! We will meet online, watch films together and learn to record images and sounds from our surroundings.

SHOW US YOUR WORLD
What are the things you notice around you? ...Or the things you are so used to seeing, you no longer notice them?
We will chat about the memories, associations and new perspectives our recordings conjure up.

LEARN TO COMMUNICATE ONLINE IN A CREATIVE, SUPPORTIVE & FUN ENVIRONMENT!

A Life Story Filmmaking Project
This film-making and storytelling project explores how we process consciousness and create our own personal mythologies, built around memory.

Here am I is a Galway-based collaborative film project, which will support and facilitate older people impacted by isolation and lockdown to make their own self-expressive film and sound projects. With the support of Age Action, Cope Galway and Galway City Partnership, the course will provide a light-hearted and supportive social outlet for people to learn basic online communication skills while engaging in creative practices. The group will use will use imagery, sound, words, collage and film to express their stories.

NUMBERS IF YOU NEED THEM

If it's an emergency, Dial 999

SAMARITANS

TALK IT THROUGH,
WE'RE HERE TO LISTEN



116 123

jo@samaritans.ie www.samaritans.org

pieta

1800 247 247

TEXT HELP TO 51444 mary@pieta.ie

Pieta supports people and communities in crisis by providing freely accessible, professional services to all.

Galway Centre: 091 502921 Tuam Centre: 093 25586

Athlone Centre: 090 642 4111

www.pieta.ie



**your
mental
health.ie**

Information | Support | Services

1800 111 888

www.yourmentalhealth.ie

text about it

TEXT
HELLO **50808**

A free 24/7 text service, providing support for people going through a mental health or emotional crisis –big or small

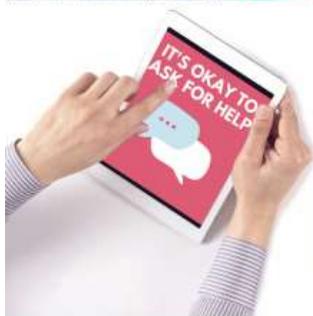
hello@text50808.ie

www.text50808.ie

For more information:
www.westbewell.ie



SCAN ME



My Eircode:

My GP:



Cúram Sláinte
Phobail, Iarthar
ag Inseal ar Chraicín
Máire agus Róna Connair

Community
Healthcare West
Galway, Mayo
and Roscommon



Connecting for Life
Galway, Mayo and Roscommon

A little reminder that St Vincent de Paul is here to listen, support & help you

We are living in very strange times, COVID-19 has changed our lives in so many ways. At this time, we are all encouraged to reach out to our neighbours, to help and to give to others who are in need. But we must also remember that we all need help sometimes. That is what the Society of St. Vincent de Paul is there for. We are here for you. Often, we can find it so hard to ask for help or admit that we simply can't cope, but now is not a time for that, now is the time to ask. Ask for that help that you are so good at giving, ask for that support that you have offered to others. Think of the St. Vincent de Paul as your friend, your neighbour, your someone that you can rely on for friendship and support.

St. Vincent de Paul depends entirely on donations from the public and corporate donors. This year, more than ever, we need your help to make sure that children and families have what they need to share in the magic of the Christmas season. Thousands of Irish families will enter the Christmas season filled with dread, anxiety and hopelessness. Many families are living in constant poverty and the thoughts of the costs ahead of Christmas can feel like a weight folding in on them.

We are asking people to support families through our Virtual Food Appeal. On our website, you can purchase a hamper so some essential food items and Christmas treats can be given to people in your community. If you are not in a position to donate online but would like to talk to someone about how you can make a donation please contact the number below.

May we take this opportunity to wish everyone a healthy, happy and blessed Christmas.

Contact SVP on 091-563233, email: info.west@svp.ie or visit our website: ww.svp.ie

Sexual Health West

Sexual Health West (formerly AIDS West) is a Galway-based sexual health organisation, providing support and information to people living with and affected by HIV and to those concerned about their sexual health in the West of Ireland. As a response to the COVID-19 pandemic, SHW created our 'Protect Packages' campaign. We are distributing these packs, which include condoms, lubricant and STI information for free. You can request one through our social media or email.

Sexual Health West provided an online seminar for **World AIDS Day** on December 1st for people living with HIV. They also had a 'Run/Walk 5, Donate 5, Nominate 5' fundraising event (with spot prizes for entrants), and an online book reading. This year's theme was 'Ending the HIV/AIDS Epidemic: Resilience and Impact'. Contact nicole@sexualhealthwest.ie for a recording.

The SHW team will be carrying out free, confidential **rapid HIV testing** in Galway city and county. Booking required, so please contact rapidtesting.booking.shw@gmail.com

Our **West of Ireland Sexuality Education Resource** RSE programme is now available to access through our website for schools. Please contact lorraine@sexualhealthwest.ie.

A very interesting piece of research was conducted by our Support Service Coordinator, Nicole McGuigan: "*Help!*" *How parents feel when talking to their children about Relationships and Sexuality*' explored the complexities of speaking to our young people. 115 people answered an online survey, overall the results were very positive but respondents felt the need for extra support to equip their young people with the right information. For a summary, contact: nicole@sexualhealthwest.ie



Looking After Your Mental Health This Christmas

As we face the prospect of a different kind of Christmas this year, it is now more important than ever to look after our mental health. We can do this by focusing on the things we can control instead of those that we cannot. Where possible, we should try to eat healthy meals, get enough sleep and do activities such as taking a walk or exercising, which can help us to relax and can have a positive impact on our thoughts and feelings. Christmas might be all about giving, but that means giving to ourselves too by looking after ourselves.

Sometimes, despite your best efforts, you may be feeling low, stressed, sad or anxious this Christmas. Our message to you is, don't suffer in silence. Sharing your feelings with someone else can help you to feel supported and less alone. Help is available. There is always someone there to listen. You could talk to a family member, message a friend or contact your GP. There are also support services available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. We have put together a list of these, which was circulated to all homes in Galway City in the Galway Advertiser earlier this month. We urge you to keep safe and display this information in your home, in case you or someone else needs it. More information and resources can be downloaded from www.westbewell.ie.

It is important to remain hopeful this Christmas, as it can help to make a tough situation more bearable. Hope reminds us that we can shape our future, as things won't stay the same forever. New opportunities can happen and this also gives us hope for the present. Hope can help us to manage stress and cope with life's challenges. It also acknowledges that we are part of a wider community, we are not alone on life's journey and our lives are connected with and positively affected by others.

Galway Contact (Organisation for Older People)



Established in 1981, our main aim is to ease loneliness and feelings of isolation among older people and to provide support for those caring for the elderly. We do this mainly through our befriending service and by enabling people to get involved in social clubs and outings.

Our Befriending service is unique in that our volunteers visit an older person each week on a one-to-one basis, providing company and friendship. Volunteers are carefully matched with their older friend and this relationship can continue for years. In the current COVID environment visits have paused but our volunteers continue to maintain contact with their older friend via the phone.

Referrals can come from the person themselves, their family or health professionals and always with the consent of the older person. All our volunteers are garda vetted and the service covers Galway City and environs.

Another service we provide is the Seniors Alert Scheme grant for over 65s, which covers all of Galway City and County. Early detection of falls and emergencies can save lives and minimise resulting side effects.

In "normal" times we run a Friday Morning Club for older people where everyone is welcome and people can socialise over a cuppa and refreshments. We provide transport to and from this club with our wheelchair accessible bus. We also provide transport to and from a weekly Lunch & Social Club so that those who would otherwise not be able to attend due to lack of transport can look forward to their weekly get-together with friends.

Galway Contact will celebrate its 40th anniversary in 2021. There is no charge for any of our services. Contact **091 867892** or email: galwaycontact@eircom.net or visit our website www.galwaycontact.ie



gretb

Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna
na Gaillimhe agus Ros Comáin
Galway and Roscommon
Education and Training Board



Comhairle Cathrach na Gaillimhe
Galway City Council



Community Call support is available

We are here if you need someone to talk to or practical help or support.

National government, local government and the community and voluntary sectors have joined together in the Community Call initiative to provide a dedicated helpline in each local authority area to offer support if you need it.

The Community Call can provide:

- Delivery of food, medication, fuel or other household items
- Someone to talk to or keep in touch with
- Other practical supports
- Signposting and referral to reliable information and services

Helpline numbers and emails for all local authorities are available at www.gov.ie/communitycall.

Calls can also be made via a national phone number **0818 222 024**.

Get in touch

You can contact the Galway City Council Community Call helpdesk by phone or email.

1800 400 150

Covidsupport@galwaycity.ie

Community Call is part of the Government's 'Keep Well' programme of activities and initiatives to help you look after your mental and physical wellbeing. Find out more about what is happening in Galway City at www.galwaycity.ie/wellbeing or at www.gov.ie/healthyireland.

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Galway City Partnership
Comhairleacht Chathair na Gaillimhe

Galway
Advertiser



KEEP WELL
IN YOUR COMMUNITY



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



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