



Saol

ISSUE 4 Summer 2021

Welcome to our Summer 2021 Newsletter. We hope you, and your friends, family and neighbours are safe and well.

Since our last newsletter in December 2020, Clann has celebrated its first anniversary...and what a year it has been! We thank you for your support over the last year, and for nurturing and growing your schemes' community spirit at a time that has been particularly hard for everyone.

We have another jam-packed issue for you, filled with stories and updates from across our resident community. If you would like to share your stories, or have any other suggestions for our next newsletter, you can email us at clann@clannhousing.ie

A year like no other

Eithne O'Connor, Ard Carrig, Cork

Like many other people, I have found the past year difficult. Faced with cocooning for much of the year and limiting social contacts, I missed the social activities, such as coffee mornings, which would usually take place on schemes.

Luckily, my neighbours have been wonderful. Some have checked on me daily, some have even brought me a hot dinner! The Zoom events organised by Clann, like the monthly Clann Zoom Music Event, have been fantastic and have helped so much during lockdowns and restrictions.

I am grateful that the vaccination process is up and running in Ireland and that restrictions have started to lift. Wishing everyone in Clann and my neighbours a happy and healthy summer.

See page 11 for more on upcoming Clann Zoom events.



Joe gets the jab

By Joe Boske

Being a little anxious about getting my Covid-19 shot, I wrote to my good GP here in Clifden. It read something like this: "Dear doctor, any spare jabs going before Rip Van Winkle here trips himself up on the auld beard and has a real reason for a visit?"

Several days later, the medical centre in Clifden contacted me to register with the HSE. I would have to travel to Galway to get looked after. They gave me two telephone numbers; I could also go online instead.

I got a repetitive strain injury trying to phone those numbers – no reply for two days. So, our good computer lady here in St Joseph's Court registered me online.

Later that week, the Clifden medical centre contacted me again with good news; could I come right away for my shot? No question.

There was a carnival atmosphere. The place was hopping – extra stewards and nurses. Everyone was in good cheer. It was like Father Christmas giving you an extra present for having been a good boy/girl. Smiles all around. I got the Pfizer jab. Happy Days. I had no ill effects.

However, this is not where the story ends. A few days later, I received a text message from the HSE to be at Ballybrit Racecourse at 10.30am for my shot. The message was sent at 9am that morning. I live 85 kilometres away.

Although I am German, my name is not Micheal Schumacher. Mind you, I know a helicopter pilot in Oughterard, but I don't think that my medical card would have covered that extravagance...



Marewood Court Fairy Garden and Easter Event

Thanks for all the support

To show their appreciation for the staff of the Taobh Linn Social Centre and all the work they do, the residents in Taobh Linn had a collection and got each staff member a hamper from the local Kenmare soap shop. The day centre delivers over 40 meals-on-wheels per day to Taobh Linn and the local community.



Marewood has a lovely outdoor garden, and Scheme Manager Mandy and resident Kathleen Darcy agreed to make a Fairy Garden with Kathleen's grandson, Alex, who visits his nanny.

Mandy and Kathleen supported Alex in creating a beautiful Fairy Garden for all the residents to see and enjoy. Alex often enjoys a chat with Mandy who brought him rocks and shells to help build the garden. Alex enjoyed painting them and creating a place where all our fairies have a place to live and play. The Fairy Garden comes to life at night time when all the solar lights come on.

We have included some pictures of the Fairy Garden and a picture of Kathleen and Alex, who won our Easter Egg hamper, on the scheme.



Clann's Emergency Call System

Clann's Resident Advisory Group (CRAG) were invited to review the documentation for Clann's tender for their Emergency Call System. As users of the system, Clann sought feedback on their experiences of using the system and suggestions as to how it can be improved or adapted if necessary.

CRAG fed back the benefits they have experienced using the system, some of which were:

- 1. It has allowed residents to get help when they need it.**
Residents have activated the system when they have fallen or felt unwell.
- 2. It provides peace of mind to their family and friends.**
Residents stated their family and friends feel more confident and comfortable when they know their loved one has a quick way of seeking emergency assistance.
- 3. Additional safety / security features.**
The average emergency alert system comes with other perks, such as carbon monoxide detectors or wake-up-call options.
- 4. Promotes independence.**
Residents like to remain independent for as long as possible – the emergency call system supports that and gives a sense of security.

We were delighted to have CRAG's input on this process and look forward to working with them on other projects down the line.

Daffodil Day fundraiser

Residents of Holy Cross Gardens, Oakwood and Coill na Darach, Killarney, have raised an incredible €900 for the Irish Cancer Society's Daffodil Day. The fundraiser was organised in memory of past residents and their family members who had passed away from cancer.

In 2019, the residents set about planting daffodils with the view to donating them to Daffodil Day in March 2020. Due to Covid-19, this was not possible, nor was it this year. Instead, they added to the crop, so by next year they are expecting a huge yield for Daffodil Day 2022.

Congrats to all involved – a great initiative that will reap further benefits for the Irish Cancer Society next year and in years to come.



Our Lady's Nursery Sillogue

Since 2018, Our Lady's Nursery Sillogue has had links with the Marewood Court scheme. Residents have enjoyed regular visits from the same group of children to the scheme.

The children would bring their toys with them to show the residents and they would all play together. The children also helped put new fish in the pond on the scheme.

In addition, the residents have also visited the nursery where the children had organised presents and a party for them; and they also attended their graduation from nursery.

During lockdown, the nursery was closed from March until June 2020, and even after it opened, it wasn't safe for the children to visit their friends in Marewood. Instead, they sent them pictures and messages. The nursery also very kindly donated dry food products throughout lockdown which was very much appreciated.

These are some examples of the projects undertaken in the last year:

- + The children planted six containers of bulbs, and delivered three of them to Marewood, and kept three at the nursery – that way the children and residents could share the experience of watching the flowers grow.
- + At Christmas, nursery staff donated small gifts which the children wrapped and dropped off at Marewood.
- + The children also sang Christmas carols using LAMH sign language outside the scheme, and in return received lovely chocolates from the residents.
- + More recently, Marewood hosted an Easter egg hunt for the children.



It has been a wonderful experience over the last three years building up the ties with Our Lady's Nursery Sillogue. Staff, residents and children all enjoy the activities and the chance to spend time together and learn from each other.

We look forward to a time in the future when we can meet properly in person again, but, until then, we'll enjoy each other's company at a safe distance.

Bringing the celebrations to your doors

For the second year in a row, St Joseph's Court were unable to party or parade on St Patrick's Day, so they did the next best thing. Joe Boske, Maureen Batley and Patricia Jacques went door-to-door delivering a wonderful two-course meal to residents and bringing the festivities with them as they went!

They also delivered meals to residents on Easter Saturday and the Easter Bunny, in the form of Kathleen Aspell Mortimer of Forum Connemara, went door-to-door delivering easter eggs!

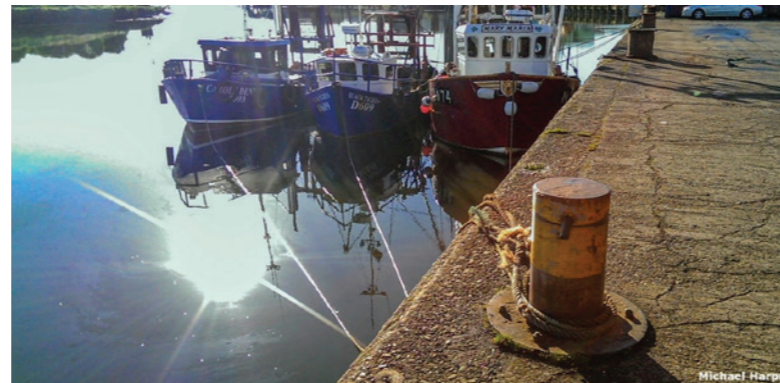


Enjoying the history and views

Barbara O'Flaherty

I live in the Great Northern Haven and am so lucky to have the harbour beside me. I am privileged to find this idyllic setting on my doorstep. It is a view we can see from our apartments and only a short stroll to sit on the harbour taking in the views all around us, which include the Cooley mountains in front of us.

The harbour was founded over 7,000 years ago. The town of Dundalk, said to be the birthplace of Cuchulainn, is probably one of the oldest and most historic in the country. An easy entry harbour combined with the many rivers which surrounded the area, and the fertile and warm soil (from the, thankfully, now extinct volcano of Slieve Gullion!) made the area a prime settlement area for our early ancestors.



The harbour has seen its fair share of drama from rumours of smuggling in the 16th century and stories of sunken treasure to being bombed in the Second World War by a German aircraft which mistook it for Newry. Of late, it has had a less adventurous time with cargo being its main feature.

In recent years, the last docker employed at the harbour retired, heralding a new era of automation in the history of what is still regarded by the town as a major asset for us all.

There is nowhere I would rather spend my later years living than having all this around me to enjoy.



The first coffee morning at St Joseph's Court held this year.

Computer Classes in St Joseph's Court

For several years, Anna Maria Nee has been facilitating a Computer Literacy class in St Joseph's Court. Learners attend the small computer room within the apartment building. Due to current safety guidelines, learners can only attend on a one-to-one basis.

Since the outbreak of Covid-19, being able to access information and communicate through the internet, social media (for example, Facebook), and mobiles has become even more important. Most of the learners who attend the class are over 70 years old and were advised by the government to limit their social interactions. This has created huge challenges for them as they are living alone in an apartment away from family and friends.

Technology and social media have become a part of everyday life, and Anna Maria has been providing a vital role in supporting the residents to:

- + To stay in touch with the wider community and their family and friends
- + Keep up with the news and access information online
- + Shop for food, clothes, and other items
- + Continue to enjoy their interests, hobbies and spiritual life through technology.

The learners have upskilled with a wide variety of technologies including:

- + Mobile Phones
- + Facebook and Facetime, Email, WhatsApp, and Zoom
- + Using PayPal and banking online.

Anna Maria has also supported them in continuing with their hobbies through:

- + Ordering materials online for crafts and hobbies
- + Using YouTube for listening to music and watching cookery demonstrations
- + Using photographic Apps (like PhotoBox) to create gifts for family and friends.

Overall, this programme has been a great success. This amazing group of learners have embraced technology and adapted to the changes brought to our lives by Covid-19.

Sustainability Matters

Welcome to Sustainability Matters – a new feature in the newsletter.

This section is produced by a group of residents who work voluntarily as part of the National Residents' Advisory Group (NRAG) and Clann Residents' Advisory Group (CRAG). We would love to hear from you. Do you have any sustainability projects in your home or community, or have ideas for topics that we could cover in future articles? If so, send us an email at: clann@clannhousing.ie



Gerry's Balcony Garden

Cúirt Róisín resident Amy Galvin caught up with Gerry Molloy, who told her about his balcony gardening experiences and growing tips. Gerry is a resident of Boithrín Beag in Galway. Here's what he had to say.

"I always had a garden up until about five years ago when I moved into an apartment. It's about 2m by about 5m. Very limited in space. I always grew flowers there, but last year due to the lockdown I said that I'd try a few veggies, which were quite successful, well, most of them. We had carrots, which weren't successful. We had onions, scallions, lettuce, radishes, broad beans and peas in the limited space, which I utilised by making frames from scrap timber from the building site near me. So instead of just the ground, I had three tiers – the ground, middle tier and top tier for growing stuff.

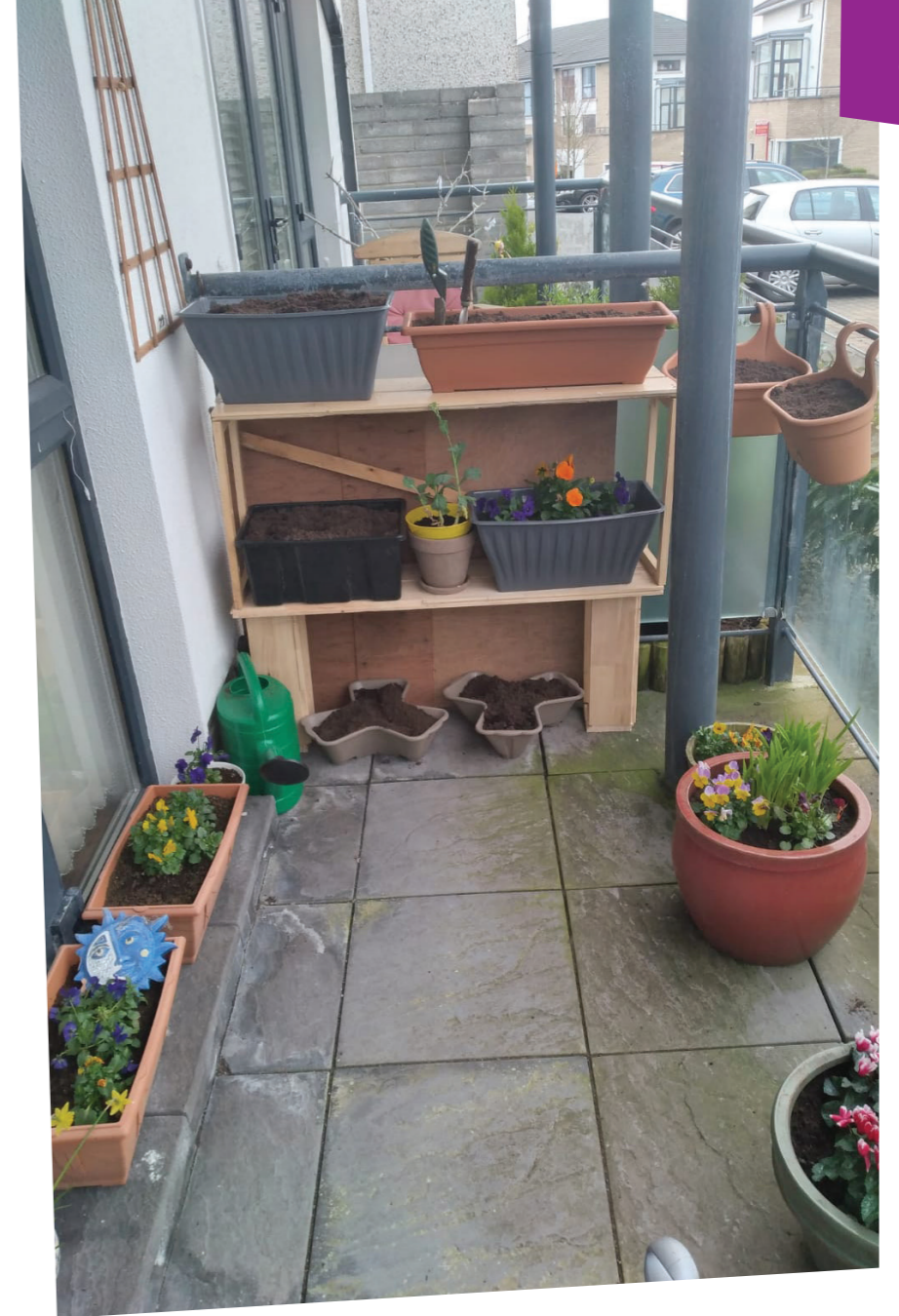
"Not alone did it provide therapy for the mind (keeping me occupied), it also provided a way for me to get to know my neighbours when they saw the veg when I'd be out on the balcony. So, I met people that would normally walk past, and people started to talk and, since then, it's been a progression within the community that people stop and talk.

"I find it had a two-fold benefit, that we had the fresh organic veg - we didn't put any fertilisers or anything on them, except for seaweed - and we got to know people. Even when you're out walking now in the estate where we live you meet people and they'll speak to you, which I find is even better therapy than the veg from the lockdown.

"Also, one of the best benefits I found out of it was that my grandchildren love mucking around in the garden so, all going well, this year their Dad, with them and myself, are going to have a veg patch for them!"

Gerry's tips for growing it yourself (GIY)

- + Use a mixture of real earth and compost – don't use all compost.
- + If you can, get some seaweed – the flat type – and put it in the bottom or the middle of your compost and as it decays it gives off great nutrients.
- + Keep everything extremely well-watered in pots, as they will absorb it. Any heat will evaporate it away.
- + Watch for creepy crawlies on the pots – you'll find that you might get slugs or snails. Unless you're lucky and your balcony is high up where you don't get them!



Did you know?

- + Gardening can make you happy. Inhaling *Mycobacterium vaccae*, a healthy soil bacteria, increases serotonin levels and reduces anxiety.
- + Bees pollinate 80% of the world's plants – three out of four mouthfuls of food are thanks to bees!
- + You can prevent water evaporation and protect your plants by adding a mulch (bark or other material) on top.

The benefits of recycling:

- + If you recycle one aluminium can today, it can be recycled and be back on the shelf in just six weeks.
- + Each ton of recycled paper can save 17 trees.
- + Recycling one tonne of plastic saves 1,000-2,000 gallons of petroleum

These facts are courtesy of www.mywaste.ie, www.housingagency.ie, and www.unchealthcare.org

Think before you flush campaign

This campaign is a public awareness campaign that is being run by Clean Coasts in partnership with Irish Water. Its main aim is to highlight all the things that you should NOT flush down the toilet.



The campaign refers to those items as the Dirty Dozen. They are:

1. cotton buds
2. baby wipes
3. facial wipes
4. cleansing pads
5. toilet roll tubes
6. medicines
7. cigarettes
8. plasters
9. nappies
10. tampons
11. tampon applicators
12. and sanitary pads.

Flushing these items down the toilet not only leads to blockages within our pipes and sewage systems, but also damages our environment. If these flushed items escape the waste water treatment plants, they can land in rivers, lakes and the ocean.

Our Environmental and Energy Manager, Susan Vickers, caught up with Margaret (Mags) Doyle, one of our Wexford residents, to ask her what she knew about the problem:

So, Mags, what kind of items do you think can be flushed down the loo?
Toilet roll – that's it.

Do you think that many people think the same?
No, not at all. I know my niece and some friends of mine flush make up wipes, cotton roll and sanitary products down the toilet – thinking that just because they are small items, it is okay to flush them.

Also, I know of a few times where expensive quilted toilet paper has caused blockages. The cheaper thinner toilet paper is much better.

Does it surprise you to hear that 75% of all blockages are caused by wipes being flushed down the toilet?!
Doesn't surprise me in the least! I've seen kids in school flushing wipes and if they're doing it in school then they are probably doing it at home. Also, with the pandemic I can imagine more people are flushing wipes.

Wipes cause huge problems – they don't break down. Even those that are labelled flushable aren't in fact flushable, they don't break down either. Plus, most have plastic fibres in them.

Do you think that people are aware that blockages can lead to sewer overflows which can significantly damage our environment

and ultimately end up in our rivers, lakes and seas? For example, items like cotton buds, wipes and sanitary products are regularly found washed up on our beaches.
I don't think people are really aware of the consequences of their flushing habits at all. It's shocking the problems that are caused. I think there's a huge education piece to be done around all of this.

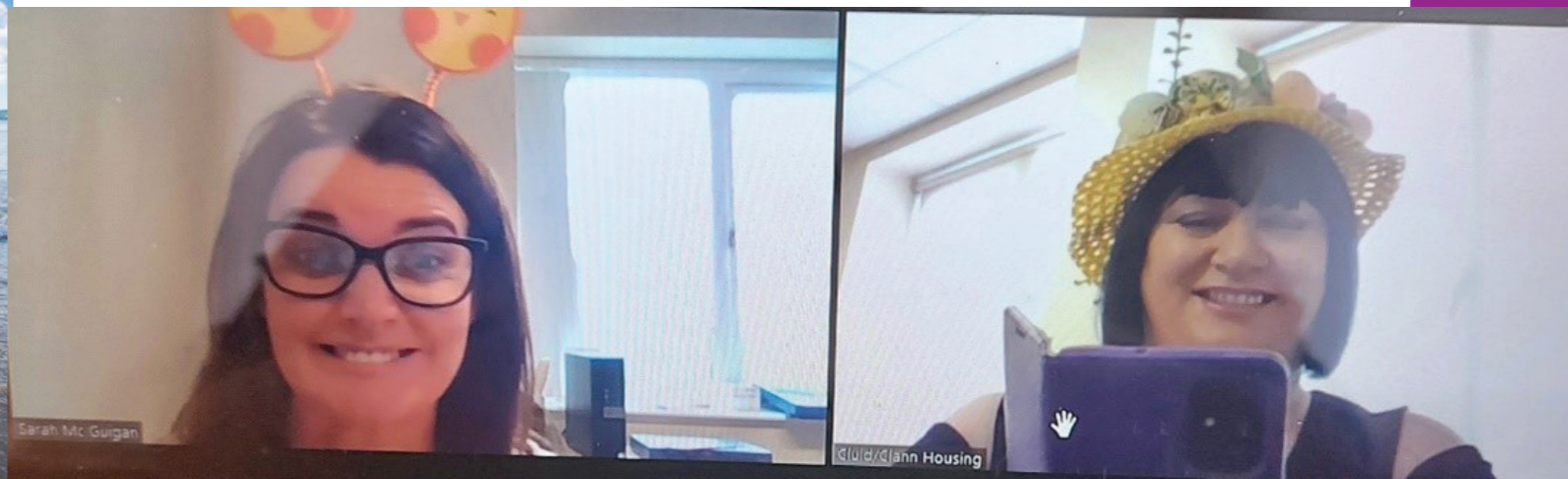
What suggestions do you think would help solve this problem?

Put a bin in the bathroom and try to use products that are better for our environment such as a facecloth instead of disposable wipes!

Teaching our kids is important, as well as spreading the word to our family, friends and neighbours.

Remembering the 3P's is useful too – only flush pee, poo and paper down our toilets!

See www.thinkbeforeyouflush.org for more information and ideas.



Zoomtastic

Our New Ways of Communicating with residents

Clann continues to run monthly social events on Zoom, both at scheme-level and national-level. To take part in these events you need a smart device like a smart phone, tablet or laptop and to have the Zoom app downloaded and a Zoom account set-up.

When there is an up-coming Zoom event we send out a link via text message and all you do is click on the link and you can take part in the event.

Some of our regular Zoom events include: our Desert Island Discs event; exercise classes; cookery classes; and music sessions. We also invite guest speakers to join from time-to-time.

If you are new to Clann, and have never used Zoom before, get in touch with your Scheme Manager who can send you step-by-step instructions to get set up.

Easter celebrations

Mandy Stevenson and Sarah Mc Guigan, Scheme Managers in the North East, held an Easter Quiz with added fun for all the residents.

As you can see from the photos, Mandy and Sarah both played the part well by making Easter bonnets and created a quiz with an Easter hamper to raffle off. The quiz was great fun, and Mandy and Sarah are busy at work planning future catch-ups for everyone to enjoy.

Upcoming national Clann zoom events:

- + Thursday, 15th July – Guide to meditation
- + Thursday, 22nd July – Let us hear your music (hosted by residents of Ard Carrig and external musicians)
- + Thursday, 12th August – Clann Desert Island Discs
- + Tuesday, 17th August – Celebrate National Heritage Week with the Heritage Council
- + Wednesday, 25th August – aerobics class

Zoom events generally run at 11am, but can be subject to change. Start times will be confirmed ahead of each event.

Great Place to Live Competition 2021

This is an annual competition that recognises and celebrates the efforts of individuals and communities to make their neighbourhood a great place to live.



St Jarlath's Court were awarded Best Neighbourhood in last year's competition. While people cocooned last year, the Residents Association there applied for a grant to supply hot Sunday dinners to any residents who wanted them. The members organised between them to collect the dinners from the local Centra store and to distribute them each week to people's front doors. This simple but thoughtful gesture helped keep the community spirit alive for everyone.

Each year, we have three categories

- 1. Best Neighbourhood:** This award recognises the neighbourhoods with strong community spirit. What has your neighbourhood been up to during Covid-19? Any Zoom events? What makes it a great place to live?
- 2. Best Community Project:** This award recognises the community projects that have taken place over the last year. Are there any youth groups, community gardens or neighbours' day events in your neighbourhood?
- 3. Community Neighbour Award:** Is there someone who really makes a difference in your estate? Is there someone who helps out or organises activities? What makes them great neighbours?

How to enter:

It is easy and free for you to enter. All you have to do is complete a short application form, which you can download from our website www.clannhousing.ie

You can also find out more about entering the competition:

- + from our Contact Centre on 01 707 2244
- + on our website www.clannhousing.ie

Entries are due by 13th August 2021 and it is planned to hold judging during September. Get your thinking caps on, you could win a voucher for that great place where you live!

Stepping Stones Awards

The Stepping Stones Award was set up in 2013 to support Clúid and Clann residents to access education and training. Since then, 213 residents have accessed a broad range of courses.

In 2020, we awarded the following:

Awards	26
Grants	€16,319
Third level qualifications	15
Certificate and skills' qualifications	11

How much is the award?

Third-level courses: we can help towards your costs to a maximum of €1,000 for one year.

Personal and career development: The award offers a maximum of €500 to help residents take part in such activities or courses that will assist their personal and career development.

Who can apply?

Stepping Stones is open to all residents and authorised people living in Clúid and Clann homes who do not have access to other sources of funding, for example SUSI.



How do I apply?

Please email steppingstones@cluid.ie for an application form. You can also go to the Clann website, www.clannhousing.ie, for an application form and the application deadline.

Here is what Elizabeth Kehoe of Killarney Court in Dublin 1 (pictured above) has to say about her experience of studying and having the support of Stepping Stones:

"I had always wanted to study history, so I applied to Trinity, got in much to my amazement and in 2019, I graduated with first-class honours. I have now completed a masters and am about to begin a PhD. All my work focuses on ordinary people and everyday life.

"Stepping Stones helped me for the first three years of my academic journey, and, as part of my application for this, I said that I would like to give something back to the

community. We all recognise the problems in this area, but alongside that there is a powerful community spirit, and a rich and abundant local history.

"So, here I am, at the start of what I hope will be a growing awareness in the local community of the cultural significance of this area. My ideas include walks and talks about the area, involving children in some projects to find out about the street they live on – perhaps working with teachers in the local school. Starting a local history group like the one they have in Eastwall, Cabra and other areas. Perhaps we can learn from their experiences.

"After all, that is what history is all about – storytelling."

You can read about other applicants' experiences of accessing the Stepping Stones fund on our website also.

Hobbies Corner

We'd love to hear from you about what your hobbies and interests are - you can send us an email at clann@clannhousing.ie and mark it for the attention of Hobbies Corner, Saol newsletter

A whole host of crafts to enjoy

Mary Ann Ridge

On the night before her 21st birthday, Mary Ann Ridge left her native Carna, in the heart of the Connemara Gaeltacht, and headed off to San Francisco. She trained as a hairdresser and beautician which funded her travel across North America. Upon resettling back home in Galway, she skilfully pursued many different hand crafts, particularly in fabric and has continued producing beautiful fabric in a variety of media.

Over the years, Mary Ann achieved FÁS qualifications in patchwork and textile design. For 10 years she knitted Aran sweaters by hand for O'Maille's of Galway; made curtains to order; and ran a small sewing and repairs business. She also drew and painted, her favourite subjects being the Connemara landscape, its flora and fauna.

Although leading a slightly more peaceful life now at St Joseph's Court, she is not idle. Mary Ann attends pottery classes one day a week while continuing crocheting and knitting for her family and friends.



The difference hobbies can make

Norman Coates

Let's hope that Covid-19 is coming to an end. It has been a hard time. I got bored at times, but I found things to do to take the boredom away. There were so many repeats on the TV. I started playing cards, painting by numbers and making jigsaws when I wasn't going for walks or spending time in the garden. I also spent a lot of time reading.

I'm sure if you have a lovely pet dog or cat that must make life easier, that's one thing I do miss. They are the best friend you could ever have. I have 4 goldfish who keep me occupied, I call them my best mates.

It can be very lonely if you live on your own like myself so try and take up a hobby, you will be surprised what a difference it can make, and you will be proud of yourself.

Why not phone or write to a friend you have not contacted in years and you will probably be glad to have your friend back. Life is too short to not do anything.

The Pandemic and Me

Adeline Hoggard

The pandemic did not impact as much as I expected it to as I have a keen interest in my garden and enjoyed planting and watching my flowers grow. During this year I even got to see my new great grandchild! I was so delighted and even took her to my garden to have a picture among all my colourful flowers.

Gardening is a hobby of mine which helps keep my mind busy. Spring and Summer is my favourite time of the year, everything is in bloom.

Four Seasons competition

We're delighted to share the winning images from our Spring competition. Congratulations to them all, and our thanks to everyone who entered.



1st place: **Rita Carter from Oriel Lodge**
Entry title: **New Family**
1st prize: **€100 One4All voucher**



2nd place: **Walter Carter from Oriel Lodge**
Entry title: **First Daffodils**
2nd prize: **€75 One4All voucher**



3rd place: **Jim Bailey from Lios Rua**
Entry title: **Wild Garlic**
3rd prize: **€50 One4All voucher**

Summer:

The Summer competition closed on the 15th June, and as we were going to print with this issue, the Summer winners were just about to be announced. Those winning images will be available to view on the Clann website. Congratulations to them all also.

Remaining photo competitions:

For anyone interested in entering our Autumn or Winter competition, the deadlines are:

- + **Autumn** – 15th September
- + **Winter** – 15th November

You have three options for entering:

1. Go to www.clannhousing.ie and go to the 'Contact us' tab. Put in your name and address and upload your photo.
2. Email your photo to clann@clannhousing.ie, with your name and address.
3. Print off your photo and send it to the following address with your name and address:
Freepost,
Photo Competition,
Clann Housing,
159-161 Sheriff Street Upper,
D01 R8N0

Please include the details of which competition you are entering (Autumn or Winter) so we can collect the entries correctly.

If you post in your photo, we will not be able to return it to you after, so please make sure you have your own copy of it as well.

Also, if you include anyone in your photo, please get their permission to use the photo for this competition.

You will find the full terms and conditions for the competition on our Clann Housing website also.

Best of luck!

Back home to my roots



My name is Patrick McGeehin. I was born in a Mother and Baby home in 1952 in Co. Donegal. I never knew my mother or father and I have no memory of my first few years within this setting.

My first memory as a child was when I arrived at the orphanage by ambulance to the nuns' convent in Drogheda, Co. Louth in 1957. The nuns were very strict disciplinarians with rigid bedtime routines that enlisted physical punishments if rules were not adhered to. I remember scrubbing floors like Oliver Twist and eating cold lumpy porridge. However, they did teach me to read and write and for this I was very grateful.

I spent six years in the orphanage and in 1963, when I was 10 years old, I was uprooted one morning with no luggage or no opportunity to say goodbye and transferred to the Christian Brothers School in Salthill, Galway. Rumours were rife about this place and fear engulfed me on my journey across Ireland. Although named as a school,

they were more reformatories for juvenile delinquents with criminal behaviours. To this day I still feel let down by the system as I had no reason to be placed in such a setting, to be treated so cruelly and at such a young age.

I spent six years confined in this place and, at 16, I was released and put to work on a farm. I was paid £1 per week plus room and board. I gradually saved up and ran away to Dublin where I lived on the streets until I was old enough to join the army.

In 1973, I left the army and moved to England to work on the building sites. I eventually emigrated to America in 1978 where I spent 40 years living and working. I was happily married until, unfortunately, my wife passed away in 2003.

I gained the opportunity to return to Ireland in 2014 and continue my retirement in a tranquil setting. I was fortunate to get offered a place in Radharc na Cille in 2019 and thoroughly enjoy it here.

Our Annual Review Update to You

We measure our performance across all areas of our work. This information is used to find out what is working and what needs to be improved, and also to ensure that Clúid/Clann remains accountable and sustainable. We report performance to the Regulatory Authority for approved housing bodies in Ireland and we would like to update you too on how we did in 2020.

2020 in numbers



Repairs

14,413

We completed 14,413 repairs across all Clúid/Clann homes.

7 Days

On average we took 7 days to complete a repair.

95%

The percentage of residents who were satisfied with the repair was 95%.



New Delivery

€160 million

We spent nearly €160 million on building or buying new homes across Ireland.

675

We delivered 675 new homes for people in housing need, including 42 new Clann homes.

8,114

This brought our total homes to 8,114 at the end of 2020, including 702 Clann homes.

Rent

Each year, we would have a total amount of rent we would expect to collect, based on how many tenancies we have. In 2020, we collected over that amount (104%), and this was due to people also paying off arrears. We also had 62 rent arrears agreement cases which were handled by the Residential Tenancies Board. These were cases where payment plan arrangements were made for people to pay their arrears over a set time.

Property maintenance

- + We fitted 83 new boilers and heat pumps in our homes.
- + 133 homes were fitted with new kitchens.
- + 485 new doors and windows were installed.
- + We invested over €3m to upgrade 234 homes and achieved an average of a 'B1' energy rating on the upgraded homes. We secured over € 1.7m in grant funding for these energy improvements.
- + Due to Covid-19 restrictions it took us an average of 7 weeks to let new homes and 14 weeks to get new residents into previously let homes.

- + On average only 2.5% of our properties were vacant during the year.
- + We repaired 222 empty properties and made them ready for new residents.

Customer service

- + 81,812 people visited our website at www.clann.ie
- + Our staff answered an average of 1,290 customer calls each week. This amounted to 81% of all incoming calls.
- + We investigated and responded to 78 complaints from residents.

Your feedback on Clann

Throughout 2020 our survey partner, Acuity, carried out customer surveys asking randomly selected residents about the services Clann provided to you. These surveys are continuing in 2021 and are focused on:

- + how we deal with your repairs
- + how we handle your complaints
- + how new residents find our lettings process
- + how satisfied you are with Clann's services overall.

- + 88% of respondents are satisfied or very satisfied with the overall services provided by the Scheme Manager.

The surveys give us a lot of useful information on what is going well and what can be improved.

Thank you very much for your participation in the surveys. It helps us to improve the services we provide to you.

Whilst most recent survey participants were highly satisfied with Clann and had no specific requests for improvements, here are just a few examples of feedback and suggestions:

In general, the feedback from Clann residents is very positive. Based on a recent survey in April:

- + 97% of respondents feel safe and secure in their home
- + 90% of respondents find Clann easy to deal with
- + 96% of respondents feel that Clann listens and acts in line with your requests

- + 'Help with forms, or easier forms'
- + 'Consider storage for things like bikes'
- + 'Upgrade heating to make it affordable/efficient'
- + 'Ensure that bin areas are close-by and accessible'
- + 'Resolve problems with TV signal'.

Poetry corner

Summer

Deep within a May night the Sun Gods arrive
Riding on chariots, thunder the sound of their wheels,
Lightening their whips,
Casting aside the last storm of winter.
I smile and yearn for liberty.
At dawn I awake, eyes closed tightly but I know they are here.
Their army of feathered angels fills my ears with melodies,
Camouflaged by leaves and branches in full green trees.
Singing, chatting, talking, praising;
Nature's natural orchestra, a choir of abundance.
My eyes open and Leprechauns' crocks of gold sparkle;
Dug up in the rainbows of April showers,
They reflect and flicker on my bedroom walls,
Bright and warm with happiness and hope.
Music and light fill my new day.
Town's folk wear brightly coloured clothes,
Their faces alive once more with elation.
Music is plentiful in streets, in concert with birdsong.
Everything is laughter, joy and heat.
Summer is here!
And if I am ever too old to hear the Sun Gods music,
And everyone I know has passed on,
I will always dance with summer
And, even if on my own,
Shine on.

Rita Carter

Thank you for reading this edition of Saol. We hope you enjoyed it.

If you would like to comment on any of the featured items in this edition, please email us at: clann@clannhousing.ie

We would love to hear from you.

You can also use the phone number on the right to log any requests for repairs by Clúid Works.

In an emergency call that same number - 01 707 2044 - anytime.

Rita says: "It was when I moved out to the countryside in England in 2001 that I first started writing poetry. While inspired by the natural environment, I also found writing poetry a great therapy for purging all my feelings, ideas and thoughts and putting them on paper. I enjoy writing poetry that is positive, inspiring and uplifting.

"After I had been writing for about six months, I was winner of the County selection for the UK National Poetry Anthology, which was published in 2001. This gave me great encouragement to carry on writing, to keep on learning, to work on improving my poetry and to continue submitting it to literary publications.

"To date, I've been fortunate to have around 50 of my poems selected for publication in anthologies, magazines, booklets and local newspapers, with many others having been featured on online poetry websites and e-zines".



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