

Your Council,  
working for you

Comhairle Contae  
Fhine Gall  
Fingal County  
Council



**October 2022**  
**Chief Executive's**  
**Report on Activities**

*Children's entertainer Sarah Sparkles meets students from St. Colmcilles Girls National School, Swords at the launch of the first Festival of Children's Literature in Swords Castle in September*



## A message from AnnMarie Farrelly, Chief Executive, Fingal County Council

At the October meeting Members will have the opportunity to set the LPT variation which will be an important steppingstone in forming part of the 2023 Budget which is to be presented to Members in November. We have put significant financial resources in place over the past number of years to keep pace with the continued increasing demand on services while also putting funding in place to assist the delivery of infrastructure projects which will be outlined in our ambitious capital plan 2023-2025.

As we are all aware there are significant adverse conditions that the Irish and international economy will have to deal with in 2023. We as a Council will not be immune from the significant inflation in the economy including with regards to energy costs. It will be important that the Executive, the Corporate Policy Group and Members work together to agree a budget for 2023 that will allow us to manage these costs while continuing to deliver on services and infrastructure for all the citizens of Fingal.

Additional staff resources and increased revenue funding has seen increased works in all areas of the public realm. Operations have successfully delivered on it's largest work programmes totalling €3.4m for all areas with an increase of €1m provided in the 2022 budget and a similar provision for 2023. Fingal has a very well maintained clean public realm. Additional works on our local roads, parks, beaches and open spaces have been delivered with the additional staff resources which were recruited. This included additional General Operatives in all areas dealing with street cleaning, management of litter, parks and beach maintenance and events. Over 100 solar bins have been rolled out with a further 100 on order and bench provision continues in all areas. The increased numbers attending our regional parks are testament to the facilities that are available with new playgrounds, accessibility equipment, paths for walking, playing pitches and a diverse range of events taking place throughout the year. A dedicated tree officer has been appointed to manage the protection of our trees and deliver on Fingal's Tree Policy.

Clerks of Works have been appointed, carrying out inspections on our local roads ensuring that the integrity of roads are maintained at all times following road openings by utilities which are putting critical infrastructure in place for the expansion of the county.

The increase demand and use of clean, well maintained public conveniences is in place with refurbishment plans for existing public conveniences due to commence. The Eco Toilets at our beaches have served the public well during the period of good weather and the installation of showers at our bathing areas has commenced. New casual trading pitches are now operational in all areas and the outdoor dining will be facilitated by the licensing of street furniture.

Work on preparation of the Fingal Draft Development Plan 2023-2029 continues. I would like to thank members and staff for their efforts during each stage of the plan making process. The Chief Executive's Report on submissions received was issued to the Members at the end of July and meetings to discuss proposed amendments to the draft plan are currently taking place. Following these, any material amendment to the draft Plan will go on public display for 4 weeks. This is expected to take place in November. The final plan is scheduled to be adopted by councillors in February 2023.

Preparations for Halloween are underway in a number of departments. The Fingal Festival of Fire returns this year with two new venues. Malahide Castle and Bremore Castle have been added to the Safer Halloween Events. These organised events have proven to reduce illegal bonfires and provide a safe area for families to enjoy the occasion. The Community Development Office is supporting 30 groups to participate in the Fingal Safer Halloween Programme. The purpose of this programme is to provide fun recreational and diversionary activities for young people to deter them from participating in antisocial Halloween activity. In addition, participating projects will promote the Fingal County Council's Stay Safe and Awareness messages and generate awareness of other deterrent initiatives including Bulb Planting, Recycling Amnesty, Bonfire Removal measures. Our Litter Wardens have commenced with Halloween business inspections in an effort to reduce the levels of material that may be collected by individuals for use in bonfires.

AnnMarie Farrelly  
Chief Executive



### WELCOME TO SWORDS!

EU Commissioner for Cohesion and Reform, Elisa Ferreira, visited Swords Castle in Sept.

Find out more on Page 4

### PUBLIC JPC MEETINGS HELD

A successful series of public meetings took place across Fingal

See Page 8

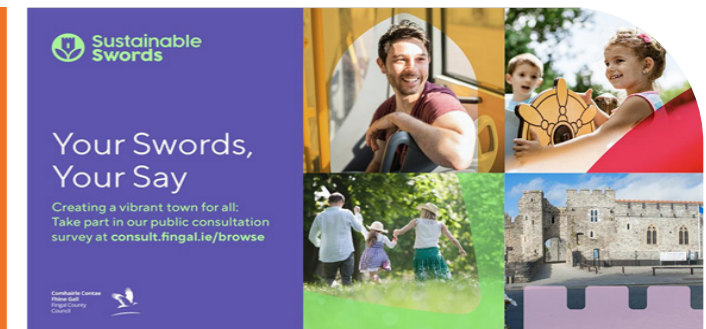


## Features

**SUSTAINABLE SWORDS**  
Your Swords, Your Say  
Full details on Page 10

**PROTECTED CYCLE LANES**  
See the progress  
Page 14

**DUBLIN BIKE DISCO**  
See page 15 for great photos from the event on September 23





## Microsoft Teams Meeting Rooms project

As part of the Fingal Digital Workplace Transformation Program of Works the Digital Services Section has completed a pilot project and implemented Phase 1 of the Microsoft Teams Meeting Rooms project.

Rooms to small, medium, and large meeting rooms throughout the organization. This includes County Hall Swords, The Civic Offices Blanchardstown and will eventually include Depots and Libraries.

Microsoft Teams Rooms brings HD video, audio, and content sharing to Teams or Skype for Business calls and meetings of all sizes, from small huddle areas to large conference rooms. With the move to Blended systems will support simple, consistent, and reliable meetings for users across the organization and with third parties.

The Pilot phase included three rooms small Office (4 people), medium meeting room (8 People) and large Conference Room (16 People). On successful completion of the pilot project, phase 1 was successfully rolled out to a further 6 rooms. Digital Services have moved to Phase 2 where Teams Rooms will be implemented in a further 14 rooms. Phase 3 will follow with a further 14 rooms.

In Fingal the program of works will deliver Teams

### Have you heard our podcasts yet?



There have been 21 episodes of the Inside Fingal podcast produced over the past two years and they have attracted a total of 9,486 listeners with 4,862 downloads and 4,624 internet listens. The most recent podcasts were about Sustainable Swords and Fingal Age Friendly. You can listen at [fingal.ie/podcast](http://fingal.ie/podcast).

## Recent Communication Activities

The Communications Unit produced ten videos during September and also produced a webinar on Sustainable Swords in association with the Planning and Strategic Infrastructure Department. The videos included one of the reopening of the iconic Great Hall at Malahide Castle which can be viewed at <https://youtu.be/vbS9ltx4Ck0> and one about the replacements of the sails on the windmills at Skerries Mills which is available at <https://youtu.be/PWgDzi9oFqk>. To mark Make Way Day on September 30 a video on how to safely park a bike in a public space so it doesn't interfere with pedestrians and other users of footpaths. It can be viewed at <https://youtu.be/6SnWgV8eLSA>

The Communications Unit issued 38 press releases during September covering a wide range of topics including public consultation processes in relations to Ward River Valley Regional Park; New Street,

Malahide; Skerries Active Travel and Sustainable Swords. There was also coverage of the visit by the EU Commissioner for Cohesion and Reform, Elisa Ferreira, to Swords Castle and the Ukrainian Family Fun Day which also took place there. The Unit also dealt with 39 media queries on a range of topics including housing, libraries, data centres and bathing water quality.



## FCC Social Media Stats



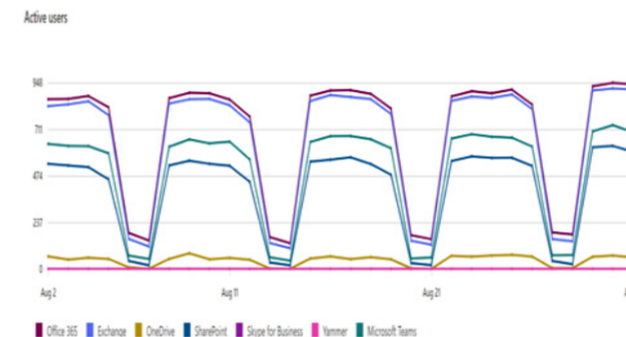
The @fingalcoco Twitter account registered 849,400 impressions during September which was the highest monthly total since August 2021. The number of new followers was 254 which was the highest monthly total since March 2020.

On Facebook, the number of followers has risen to 28,748 and a post on September 13 promoting a Sustainable Swords webinar had the most engagement during September with a 13.84% engagement rate after recording 4,320 engagements from 31,212 impressions.

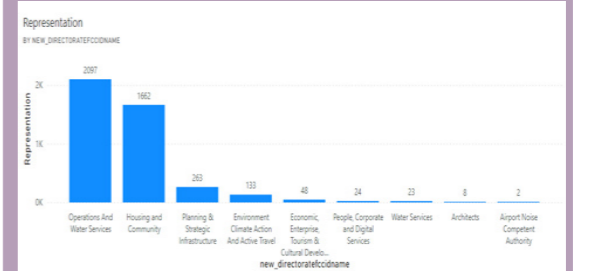
The number of followers on LinkedIn has risen to 6,138 while Instagram now has 5,667 followers.

## Digital Working

In September staff took part in 9,099 Teams meetings, 30,987 calls took place, and 845,027 emails were received or sent by the Council.



## 518 Elected Members' Reps in September



Staff continue to work on the Customer Relationship Management System (CRM) and issue responses to representations from Elected Members (Councillors, TDs and Senators) and complaints submitted by the public.

The month of September had a total of 518 Elected Members' representations.

## Energy Performance

As part of the ongoing Energy Improvement Works, 3 new high efficacy gas condensing Immergas cascade boilers has been recently commissioned in the Grove Road Civic Offices. The new system along with the existing burner as a backup will control energy more efficiently as the system allows multiple boilers to share the load of providing heating and hot water, it means less strain is placed on each appliance. Cascading also allows a multi-boiler system to maintain a fixed temperature with

less effort, helping them work more efficiently for a longer period. We are also exploring the use of non-fossil heat pump technology for use with our underfloor heating systems.

All Fingal Corporate buildings are to be heated to no more than 19c where appropriate in an effort to conserve energy use and reduce costs this winter.



## Customers Calling

For the month of September the Council's Customer Care Agents dealt with -

- 14,664 phone calls
- 442 emails
- 2,143 in person visits to our offices



## EU Commissioner visits Swords Castle

Fingal County Council welcomed the EU Commissioner for Cohesion and Reform, Elisa Ferreira, to Swords Castle on 20th September to view the conservation works which have been undertaken to date.

These works have been supported under the European Regional Development Fund through the Southern and Eastern Regional Operational Programme 2014-2020.



## Artist Paul Curley, Draiocht Theatre Artist-in-Residence School Tour



Fingal Arts Office are supporting artist Paul Curley to develop his practice as a theatre artist, to deepen his relationship with Draiocht arts centre and The Arts Council, and to create sustainable models within which he can deliver quality theatre experiences for children in schools.

Paul is creating and testing ideas and projects to make live theatre experiences accessible for children in schools. Now halfway through his 12-month residency, Paul is currently presenting his mobile show BAKE to children aged 5- 7 years primary schools throughout Dublin 15.



Fingal County Council has been awarded €150,000 by the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage under the Shared Island Local Authority Development Funding Scheme for a Feasibility Study for the development of regional innovation/enterprise hubs along the Dublin Belfast Economic Corridor.

The Council is leading on the project with the support of the eight local authorities and two universities of the DBEC partnership.

## Fingal Festival of Fire Returns!



The Fingal Festival of Fire returns this year with two new venues. Malahide Castle and Bremore Castle have been added to the Safer Halloween Events.

These organised events have proven to reduce illegal bonfires and provide a safe area for families to enjoy the occasion.



## Culture Night 2022 A Big Success!



There was a great response to Culture Night Fingal on Friday 23rd September.

Audiences of all ages enjoyed an exciting programme of free cultural events at participating venues and locations in Fingal. A variety of music, dance, poetry, performance, art, tours and talks were specifically programmed, highlighting the wealth of cultural facilities and talented people in the locality. Images below capture some of the events that took place at Blanchardstown Library, Draíocht, Our Balbriggan, Ardgillan Castle and the Irish Institute of Music and Song.



## Fingal Business Network Launch

Fingal Local Enterprise Office launched the Fingal Business Network on 27th September 2022. Fingal Mayor Cllr Howard Mahony launched the new "Fingal Business Network" on Tuesday 27th of September at the Carlton Hotel, Dublin Airport. Motivational Speaker Paul McNeive was on hand to detail his own journey in rehabilitation hospital and how he now sources motivation and positivity in his life. Facilitated by Noel Davidson, the networking event provided over 100 attendees with the opportunity to connect with other like-minded entrepreneurs in a relaxed and supportive

setting. The Network is aimed at owner/managers of small and medium businesses in the Fingal area to encourage information sharing, discussion, peer to peer learning and facilitated networking among local businesses.





# Joint Policing Committee Public Meetings



The annual series of Joint Policing Committee Public meetings started on Tuesday 27th September with the Public Meeting for Balbriggan area and continued on Wednesday 28th September in Blanchardstown. Both meetings were well attended and plenty of engagement and discussion with the attendees and Gardaí and Local Authority officials.

Further meetings will take place in October:

- Wed 5th October from 7pm to 8.30pm – Grand Hotel, Malahide – for Swords, Malahide, Santry, Portmarnock, Portrane, Donabate areas.



- Thu 20th October from 7pm to 8.30pm – Marine Hotel Sutton – for Howth, Sutton and Baldoyle (parts of) and area.

This is an opportunity for members of the public to come along to meet with their local Gardaí and Fingal County Council staff to discuss policing and safety issues in their locality.

All documentation and presentations to Fingal JPC are available on the Fingal Website at [www.fingal.ie/JPC](http://www.fingal.ie/JPC)

# Improvement works Completed in Fingal



Ward River Valley Park – Refurbishment of Steps Contract commences  
Contract has commenced on site with the removal and replacement of the first set out of 3 of the woodland steps in the Ward River Valley Park. The first set of steps is adjacent to Highfield Estate.

Right: As part of the continuing Beach infrastructure Improvements, two new beach showers have been installed at Rush South Beach and Balbriggan Beach. Additional surfacing works will be carried out around the base of the showers over the winter months.



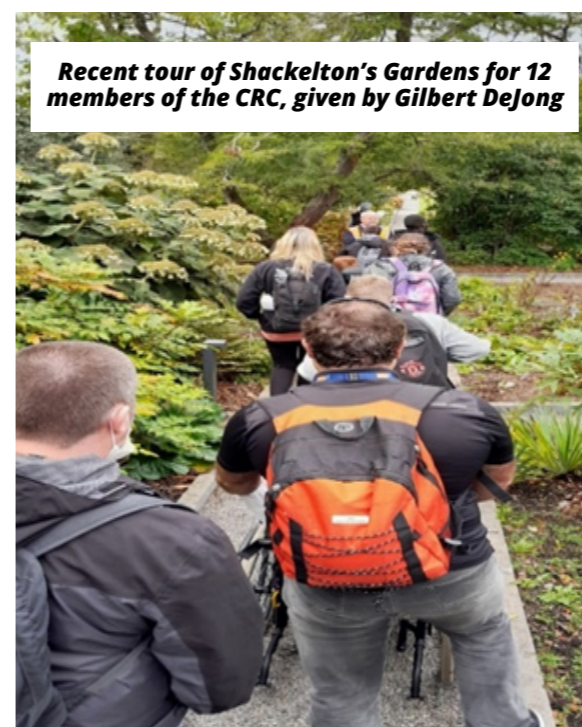
Equipment installed in Tír na nÓg Park in Carpenterstown and Waterville Park in Blanchardstown as part of the Capital Works Programme.

# Ward River Valley Park – Public Toilet and Temporary Changing Room installed



As part of the installation of the new All-Weather Sports Area in the Ward River Valley Park, the unused storage containers have been removed and are being replaced with temporary changing rooms and public toilets until a more permanent building is in place. The changing room units will be under the control of the sports clubs sharing the sports facility and the public toilets will be managed and maintained as part of the public toilet provision managed by the Operations Department.

# New Agility Trail at Hartstown Park



Recent tour of Shackelton's Gardens for 12 members of the CRC, given by Gilbert Dejong





## Sustainable Swords Strategy Update

The draft Sustainable Swords Strategy went on display on 7th September. The draft Strategy outlines 16 possible projects which would transform Swords.

A well-attended webinar took place on 15th September and staff were available at the Pavilions Shopping Centre on the 21st of September.

Consultation will be ongoing during September with submissions invited until 12th October. More information is available at [www.fingal.ie/sustainableswords](http://www.fingal.ie/sustainableswords)

## Progress on Fingal Coastal Way



The Emerging Preferred Route for the Fingal Coastal Way will take place later this month. This involves the publication of a single route corridor for this strategic 32km greenway project. Letters will be posted to approximately 1,000 affected properties/landowners and leaflets will be delivered to approximately 20,000 homes (including businesses).

There will also be social media engagement, local & national newspaper advertisements and an online webinar. In person events include four direct meetings with residents as required.

## Ward River Regional Park Development Project

The community consultation on the future development of Ward River Regional Park is underway. The aim of the consultation is to create a community vision for the development of the park - a place that can be healthy, connected and engaged with the local community.

The first phase of public consultation begins on Saturday 8th October from 1-4pm with an interactive design workshop at Rivervalley Community Centre where the public will be invited to meet with the design team and have their say.

In parallel with the in-person workshop the council have launched a survey to establish what the aspirations of the community are for the Ward River Regional Park.

The public have been notified of the survey by advertising in the local press and bus shelters, postering, social media and the councils own website. Meanwhile, the integrated design team have been conducting baseline surveys of the existing lands to inform future proposals for the park.

## Ten Tender Submissions received for Harry Reynolds Road Cycle Route Project

A total of ten tender submissions were received as part of the Stage 1 procurement process for a main works contractor for this project.

These submissions are currently being assessed and the successful candidates will be invited to submit a priced tender for the works in due course.

The expectation is that the tender process can be concluded this year with a view to starting works on site in early 2023.





## Church Fields Link Road & Cycle Network



The contractor is currently onsite constructing the Church Fields Link Road and Cycle Network which will facilitate the development of the entire Church Fields landbank with the potential to deliver 1,000 mixed tenure homes.



## Housing Loans Update



The Local Authority Home Loan continues to attract queries and applications from members of the public seeking to secure a mortgage with the Local Authority. There have been 196 applications so far.

To date €10.7 million of lending has been approved until the end of September, with applicants having gone sale agreed with €2.4 million of this approval. The scheme continues to be popular, and although the interest rate has risen marginally the product continues to be a relevant support for first-time buyers.

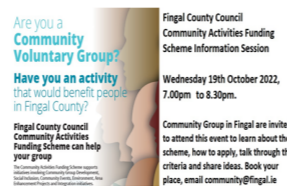
## Community Funding Information Evening

The Community and Sports Office is hosting an online information evening on Wednesday 19th October, 7.00pm - 8.30pm on the Community and Sports Office Community Activities Funding Scheme.

This scheme is available to Community and Voluntary groups in Fingal to apply for sports equipment, area enhancements activities, office equipment, publications, promotional material, community events,

environmental/ climate action initiatives, tutors fees and course material etc.... Each group can apply for up to €3,000. Join this event to learn about the scheme, how to apply, talk through the criteria and to share their ideas.

To book please look up the event on <https://consult.fingal.ie>



The Community Development Office is supporting 30 groups to participate in the Fingal Safer Halloween Programme. The purpose of this programme is to provide fun recreational and diversionary activities for young people to deter them from participating in antisocial Halloween activity.

In addition, participating projects will promote the Fingal County Council's Stay Safe and Awareness messages and generate awareness of other deterrent initiatives including Bulb Planting, Recycling Amnesty, Bonfire Removal measures.

## HAP Update

Since its inception in Fingal County Council in 2017, the HAP team has set up over 3,400 tenancies. In 2022 to date over 270 HAP tenancies have been set up for Fingal housing applicants.

The HAP team are on hand to deal with any queries from applicants and landlords in person at the Housing Department in the Fingal County Council Blanchardstown Office, by phone on 01 8905000 via the CCU or through email [hap@fingal.ie](mailto:hap@fingal.ie).

## SAMH Groups across North Fingal Supporting Recovery

The various Substance Abuse Awareness and Mental Health (SAMH) groups across North Fingal, all supported by the Community Office resumed their quarterly meetings in September which is International Recovery Month.

To mark the 30th September as International Recovery Day, Swords Castle and Bremore Castle in Balbriggan were lit in purple on Sept 30th.

The work of the SAMH groups will concentrate this quarter on rolling out the many findings of the Planet Youth Research into the behaviours and attitudes of young people across north Fingal on topics of drugs awareness and mental health, which was launched this summer by the North Dublin Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force.

## Housing List Positions

List Position letters issued to all applicants on 11th April. Choice Based Lettings information was communicated through this letter which advised applicants to obtain their secure username and password to access the Choice Based Lettings system. Applicants can view their list position at the 1st April 2022 through the CBL system. It is intended to update the list positions in January 2023 and applicants will be able to access them through the CBL system.

In accordance with Circular 32/2022 as released 11th August 2022, the Summary of Social Housing Assessment (SSHA) is due for return to the Department of Housing Local Government and Heritage by 29th November 2022. It is intended to provide a dual service for the completion of this assessment with an Online HNA system. This system is due to go live in early October following finalisation of the layout complete on 30th September. Hard copy forms will be available from all Customer Care Counters and Libraries for those who wish to complete the form by hand. Online Access will also be available in Fingal Libraires to enable those who do not have readily available internet access.

Further communication will issue to all applicants required to take part in this Assessment in the first week of October and will include details as to the Online System and instructions to complete their online SSHA.



## Fingal Public Participation Network

Round 4 of Linkage Groups will take place in October and November as follows

- 18th October: Community Safety, Crime and Policing
- 25th October: Arts, Community, Heritage and Sports
- 27th October: Housing, Planning and Transport
- 01st November: Climate Change, Water and Environment
- 15th November: Social Inclusion, Rural Development, Youth and Enterprise

## Fingal ParkFit Free Exercise Programme



Fingal Sports Office with support from HSE have launched the Men on the Move programme for 12 weeks. The programme offers an over 30, men only, safe environment to engage or reengage in physical activity.

The programme introduces the participants to strength and conditioning and caters for all fitness levels. The programme is onto its 3rd week in Mulhuddart Community Centre every Thursday at 7.30pm and has 8 participants, growing in numbers each week.

# Protected Cycle Lanes Update

## Baldoyle-Howth Protected Cycle Lane Scheme Phase 1

Upgrade works at Baldoyle Road/Dublin Road completed. Epoxy resin application on Howth Road and Grange Road completed. Small section of epoxy resin to be completed at Warrenhouse Road railway crossing. Consultation ongoing with Irish Rail regarding obtaining a slot to complete the works. Snag works ongoing for the remainder of the project.



## St. Cronan's Ave and Brackenstown Road Protected Cycle Lanes

The contractor was busy completing junction upgrade works at Park Avenue and Valley View junction. Works are ongoing along Brackenstown Road to complete the shared surface in front of the school and church. A new kerb was poured along Glen Ellan Road to deal with the level difference in front of the ESB Substation. Ongoing consultation with the residents, schools and other local stakeholders regarding ongoing and planned works. The project team is liaising with local councillors to ensure works are successfully implemented and to minimise disruption to the public.



## Painting Programme at Bring Centres



**Bottle Banks** The program of painting and graffiti removal on bottle banks has continued throughout July, August and September and is now coming to an end for this year however we will continue with our Maintenance, Anti-Graffiti and Renewal of Signage program. Before/After picture Rush South Beach. The whole site was revamped to include new Textile banks. This site also includes an Audio Device, Can Bank and good signage.



## Age Friendly - Give it a Go

We supported the Community Department in Newbridge House as part of their Age Friendly Give it a Go Day, Active Travel were there with our Cycling Without Age Trishaw to give spins around the park, the Trishaw went down very well, covering over 12km in the 90mins. This was a great opportunity to promote the service



# Environmental Awareness Updates

As part of DCAW22 our Environmental Awareness and Climate Action Team organised a Mini Climate Action Festival in Millennium Park Blanchardstown, which was the flagship Fingal event for the week. The event showcased sustainable fashion, composting and community gardening, sustainable household choices, active travel, and a fun carbon calculator. The Fingal Instruments Project had music playing throughout the day and 20 instruments were given away to the delight of recipients. The Rediscovery centre provided bike repairs all day and had a very busy time keeping up with the demand! The day went exceptionally well and was attended by the Mayor, local councillors and TD's. It is estimated that 800-1000 people attended the event.

Several community groups, families and individuals around Fingal participated in the Dublin Community Clean-up 10-18th Sept. This annual event is a joint effort with the Dublin Local Authorities in cooperation with An Taisce and the Canals groups to tackle litter in a coordinated manner over a one-week period.

Kilcoskan N.S the Ward were granted €1,000 from environmental awareness waste prevention fund towards a water refill point in the school which will help to eliminate single-use bottles.



## Dublin Bike Disco!



As part of Culture Night and European Mobility Week on Friday 23rd September in conjunction with Dublin City Council, The OPW and The Dublin Cycling Campaign we closed off traffic to a section of the Park. The Car Free Event was held at 8pm and the crowd were treated to music from The Dublin Cycling Campaign along a car free route.





# The Month in Numbers

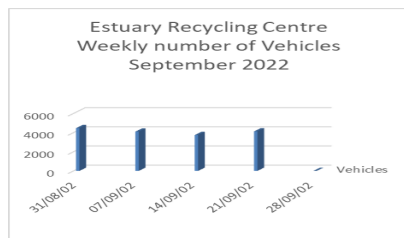
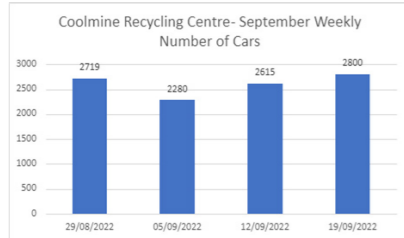
**52**

The number of mixed tenure homes currently under construction at Dun Emer, Lusk, Co. Dublin.



**2,800**

The number of cars received at Coolmine Recycling Centre on week of 19th September, 2022. During the same period, 4,124 cars were received at Estuary Recycling Centre Swords.



**1,000+**

The number of second level students in Fingal who are participating in the the 2022/23 Fingal Student Enterprise Programme. 20 Second level schools will be taking part this year.

students will develop their own actual businesses, researching, resourcing, trading services and products, with the guidance of business mentors.



**€150,000**

Fingal County Council has been awarded €150,000 by the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage under the Shared Island Local Authority Development Funding Scheme for a Feasibility Study.



**80**

80 tonnes of illegally dumped household and bulky waste were removed from a number of locations around Dunsink Lane this month and brought to a permitted waste facility for disposal.



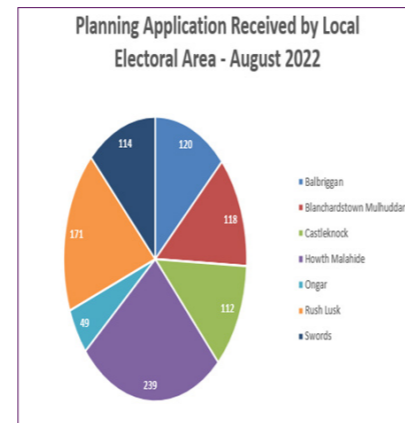
**650**

The number of attendees at the Ukrainian Gathering on Sunday the 4th of September in Swords Castle. This event catered for those staying in Fingal Rest Centres, Hotels and B&Bs and also with host Families right across Fingal.



**831**

A total of 831 planning decisions have been made to the end of August 2022. There have been 690 decisions to grant permission (83%) and 140 refusals of permission (17%). There have been 57 grants of permissions in respect of single house construction, 418 grants of permission for domestic extensions, 174 commercial/retail grants of permission and 16 grants of permission in respect of housing developments.



**108**

108 hires were put in place from 1st September 2022 to 29th September 2022, engaging 27 suppliers.

Below pictured is the fully Electric Woodchipper purchased for Operations Department.



**18.99 tonnes**

The total weight of textiles collected throughout Fingal in August 2022.



Lady Barbalade Quartet perform at the IIMS, Balbriggan to celebrate Culture Night on September 23

## A Round Up from Fingal



Dublin's first Bike Disco was held as part of Culture Night and European Mobility Week on Friday 23rd September in Phoenix Park



David Gillick inspiring the future athletes of Fingal at the MarathonKids 2022 Launch



The Mayor of Fingal Cllr Howard Mahony welcomes EU Commissioner for Cohesion and Reform Elisa Ferreira on a visit to Swords Castle in September



The launch of the Fingal Festival of History

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# OUR MISSION

To be a vibrant, outward looking,  
well run Council that  
shows leadership and  
embraces diversity  
and opportunity

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