



# 7

## Community and Culture

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## 7.1 Context

Galway's people and culture are a central part of the city's identity and one of its greatest strengths. The city has a rich cultural and linguistic heritage and a vibrant creative scene that provides for a distinctive living environment for residents and a welcoming and inspiring environment for visitors. It supports a diverse range of community and cultural activities, and owing to the strategic role of the city many also serve the wider region. Community and cultural infrastructure is integral to health, wellbeing, quality of life and a vital part of a socially cohesive, vibrant and resilient community. This infrastructure is also critical for maintaining and enhancing the attractiveness of the city as a location to invest, deliver quality employment opportunities and to attract and retain an appropriately skilled workforce to live and work in the city. Further investment in community infrastructure is required to ensure the principles of a '15-minute city' apply in regard to community and cultural facilities.

The Council recognises the importance that availability and access to such infrastructure brings to quality of life as experienced in the city and the difference it can make to people's lives. In particular it is acknowledged that in order to build sustainable neighbourhoods there is a need for them to be supported by a range of community facilities that are accessible and sufficiently flexible to adapt and accommodate to the changing needs in society. The Development Plan supports this approach by setting out clear policies and objectives to ensure the alignment of social and community facilities with both existing and new communities. The development of community and cultural infrastructure, services and facilities is supported by national and regional planning policy through the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy (RSES). The NPF recognises that location and place are key contributors that influence quality of life. The RSES identifies quality of life and an inclusive region as one of its five growth ambitions. Other policy objectives in the RSES focus on creating healthy communities, quality of life, social inclusion, promotion of the Irish Language and the provision of community facilities and services, age-friendly, childcare and education.

The Local Community and Economic Plan (LECP) is a partnership approach to provide for a social and economic vision for the city. It builds on links between the land use policies in the Development Plan and economic and local community development and together the two plans provide a strategic framework for integrating the economic and community needs of the city. The current Galway City Local Economic and Community Plan was prepared for the period 2015-2021 and is currently under review to plan for the next time period.



**Figure 7.1 High Level Goals of LECP**

The Council is committed to working in collaboration with key stakeholders to facilitate delivery of high quality community and cultural infrastructure that contributes to social inclusion, prosperity and quality of life to meet the needs of a growing city and broader MASP catchment. The Council will, in particular support sustainable initiatives that prioritise the co-location of community facilities and infrastructure that allow for shared use for a variety of purposes and provide for ease of access for all.

## Policy 7.1 General Policies

1. Support and facilitate the sustainable development of community, social and cultural infrastructure in collaboration with key stakeholders that affords inclusive opportunities for everyone to shape their own lives, enables communities to realise their full potential and that contributes to a high quality of life and wellbeing for all who live work and visit the city.
2. Support and facilitate key infrastructure and actions that encourages expanded development of the city's culture, arts and creative industries and strengthens the linguistic heritage.
3. Facilitate a balanced and equitable provision of community social and culture services and facilities in collaboration with key stakeholders in alignment with the core/settlement strategy through policies, zoning objectives and specific designations.
4. Work in partnership with the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) to achieve the aims of Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) to ensure that Galway City is an equal and inclusive city.
5. Promote and facilitate in conjunction with key stakeholders the co-location of community services and infrastructure to allow for shared use for a variety of purposes including health, education, social and local enterprise and community activities.
6. Encourage design flexibility in buildings of culture, arts and community use, so that the buildings can be adapted in ways, which allow for a diversity of different uses and include for accessibility for all, including people with disabilities.
7. Explore innovative models of delivery, ownership and management of community facilities and infrastructure.
8. Support the refurbishment of community and cultural venues to improve the energy efficiency performance of these buildings to reduce the carbon footprint of the cultural and community activity that takes place within them.

## 7.2 Creative City

Culture and creativity are a fundamental part of Galway's identity both nationally and internationally. The city has a strong cultural tradition and vibrant arts scene with a well-established arts community which contributes to the vitality of the city and forms a significant component of the city's tourism offering. Arts and creativity also contribute to the creative economy, a rapidly growing sector in the city and which also has a positive impact on education, health and wellbeing. The strength of Galway's arts and cultural scene has evolved over time reflecting the rich cultural heritage and creative exuberance in the city powered by a community driven by innovation and loyal patronage. Designations such as UNESCO City of Film and European Capital of Culture 2020 are recognition of the strength of cultural and creative activity in the city.

The Council recognises the intrinsic role of culture and creativity in the city and the value it adds to life and experience. The benefits too can contribute to the cohesion of communities through the potential opportunities it offers for participatory activities which enhances community engagement and social inclusion. It is the ambition of the Council to build on these cultural assets as expressed in the cultural strategy *Everybody Matters, A Cultural Sustainability Strategy for Galway 2016 -2025*. This strategy contains seven strategic aims which are to be achieved through a series of 3 year implementation plans. In general its aims are to improve access and engagement, develop cultural programs, build learning, address the deficit in cultural infrastructure, integrate culture with health

and wellbeing and improve inclusive citizen and artist participation. This is further supplemented by the Council's arts plan namely, *New Directions Galway City Council's Strategic Plan for the Arts 2021-2026*. In this plan the Council has made a commitment to support the ongoing development of cultural infrastructure and opportunities and to support participation for everyone in the cultural and creative life of the city.

The Development Plan is key in supporting the further development and expansion of arts and cultural facilities to meet the evolving needs of the sector and to provide quality infrastructure to support the targeted population growth for the city as provided for in the RSES/NPF. In this regard a number of significant projects are currently identified for advancement. These include for investment in the repurposing of Lenaboy Castle for use as a dedicated creative and cultural hub. Projects also include the refurbishment of the Manse at Nun's Island Theatre as a creativity hub and meeting place for independent artists, the expansion of the Galway City Museum and Comerford House with the support of Fáilte Ireland, as part of the development of the Atlantic Museum Galway, and the development of a cultural facility at Merchant's Row. In conjunction with these projects the potential to deliver new area based arts and cultural infrastructure to meet the needs of the city's growing population and changing communities is being examined for the wider city. The creation of micro cultural and creative spaces disbursed across the city is essential to enable greater engagement in cultural and creative activity amongst more marginalised audiences and communities which is a fundamental ambition of the Council. To reflect and expand on the unique influence of culture and the impact it has on defining the character of the city the Development Plan will require major new quarters in the city to integrate infrastructure and opportunities for arts and cultural activities into the development of strategic regeneration sites.

As part of the investment in public realm in the city, outdoor public and amenity spaces will be designed and built with flexible capacity to adapt and allow for public performance and engagement with the arts. This aligns with national policy as recommended in the Government's Arts and Culture Recovery Taskforce (2020). In addition the Council will work to develop accessible micro cultural spaces in public and community buildings and spaces in the city, including the suburbs in order to embed cultural appreciation in everyday activity and will also encourage public art to be incorporated into all large developments.



Festivals and events form an important part of the arts and cultural life and calendar of the city. Galway is home to festivals of national and international importance including the Galway International Arts Festival, Cúirt International Festival of Literature, The Galway Film Fleadh and the Baboró International Arts Festival for Children among others. The city also has the capacity to host events of varying scales from the large scale Volvo Ocean Race Festival in 2009 and 2012 and the annual Continental Christmas Market to small scale street performances. These represent a significant economic cultural asset to the city and add to its attractiveness to residents and visitors. The Council also supports the Green your Festival initiative which aims to reduce the environmental impact of festivals and events.

The city’s successful bid to be designated as a European Capital of Culture for 2020 builds on previous successes, such as the UNESCO City of Film designation, the Urbanism Great Town award, the FDI Micro-City of the Year award in 2014, the European Green Leaf Award 2017, European Region of Gastronomy 2018. A legacy planning process is currently underway to evaluate the impact of Galway 2020 and to inform a legacy framework which will be published in December 2021 and demonstrate the lasting cultural, social and economic benefits delivered from hosting the European Capital of Culture.

The Per Cent for Art Scheme provides for an allocation from the overall costs of publically funded capital, infrastructural and building development to be used in commissioning works of public art. The Galway City Arts Office will continue to facilitate implementation of the scheme on an ongoing basis, as an important source of funding that can enabling artists to imagine and create new and ambitious work across all art forms and art practice areas.

### Policy 7.2 Creative City

1. Promote Galway as a city of for culture and arts excellence, a hub for the creative and cultural industries and support Everybody Matters A Cultural Sustainability Strategy Framework for Galway 2016-2025.
2. Support and facilitate the aims of the New Directions: Galway City Council Arts Plan 2021-2026 and Action Plan 2021-2024
3. Facilitate and encourage the provision of new and improved arts and culture facilities in the city and in district and neighbourhood centres and where identified in New Directions: Galway City Council Arts Plan 2021-2026.
4. Implement the actions of the Galway City Council Heritage Plan 2016-2021 and subsequent plans.
5. Participate in the ‘Per cent for Art’ Scheme where the Council’s capital and infrastructure projects are supported by the scheme to deliver public art and the associated community engagement in conjunction with the Galway City Arts Office.
6. Facilitate the delivery of public art by ensuring large-scale developments incorporate and deliver works of public art that facilitate interpretation of place and community.
7. Enable expansion of accessible arts and culture infrastructure by requiring such facilities to be integrated into planned development on designated Regeneration and Opportunity Sites.
8. Ensure that future culture and arts facilities are located, designed and laid out to be accessible by walking, cycling and public transport, in particular the sustainable networks and associated proposals included for in the Galway Transport Strategy.

9. Support the delivery of strategic arts and cultural infrastructure in the city including the expansion of the City Museum; a new arts performance and exhibition space; a municipal gallery; a new city public library; a creative and cultural hub for children and young people and other key infrastructure as identified in Everybody Matters A Cultural Sustainability Strategy Framework for Galway 2016-2025 and New Directions: Galway City Council Arts Plan 2021-2026.
10. Support the use of public outdoor spaces for public performance, festivals, events and engagement with the arts and culture activities in accordance with Galway City Public Realm Strategy 2019 and accompanying manuals.
11. Support a creative hub for multidisciplinary artists that can provide space for a range of activities.
12. Co-ordinate with other service providers in the provision of culture, arts and community facilities and where appropriate support the temporary use of vacant buildings/sites for arts and cultural purposes.

## 7.3 Inclusive City

The Development Plan recognises that quality of life and wellbeing are inextricably linked to the places and environments that people live in. In this regard the Plan can play an important role in creating a socially inclusive and healthy communities. A strategic goal of the Development Plan is *'to make Galway an equal and inclusive city, particularly through facilitating all forms of social inclusion in the built environment, including in the public realm, housing, and community facilities and in the ability to access services, amenities, employment opportunities and public transportation'*.

Social inclusion seeks to ensure that everyone regardless of their background, experiences and circumstances can gain access to the services and facilities they need to achieve their own potential in life. It seeks to create an inclusive and fair society, combating inequality, social exclusion and poverty. The City Council, through the LECP and other initiatives will take a positive and collaborative role in working with communities to improve social inclusion and the health and wellbeing in the city. One of the high level goals for the LECP is to 'ensure Galway City is an equal and inclusive city region'. This includes promoting social inclusion by reducing poverty and alleviating disadvantage, supporting the full integration and equality of all and recognising and supporting the value that diversity brings to the city. Galway City Council will continue to support and facilitate social inclusion policies and activities across the entire range of local authority activities through the Council's Social Inclusion Unit and by working with relevant stakeholders.

The social needs of the community can be recognised and addressed in the planning of the built environment and the public realm in order to create living and integrated communities. The policies of the Development Plan on housing, community and cultural facilities, childcare, employment opportunities, public realm and accessibility can encourage social inclusion and build sustainable communities. The Council seeks to prevent undue segregation through application of the Housing Strategy 2023-29. It encourages a variety of house types and sizes throughout the city to cater for all including families, single person households and those with specialist housing needs such as members of the Traveller Community, older people, people with disabilities and people who are homeless.

### People with disabilities

Galway City Council is committed to working with people with disabilities and their representative groups to facilitate their access to housing, transport and the built environment. The Council is a signatory to the Barcelona Declaration which promotes universal access in the public realm, public buildings and services and encourages participation of people with disabilities in the social, economic and cultural life of the city.

Galway City Council would support the installation of Changing Places facilities (specialised toilet facilities) in the City and particularly in recreational and amenity spaces. In addition, Galway City Council supports and encourages the provision of these facilities in any new building developments where the public have access in large numbers, such as, educational establishments, cultural buildings, health facilities and sport and leisure facilities.

Ireland ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (UNCRPD) in 2018. This places an obligation on the Irish state to ensure people with disabilities have equal civil and political, social and economic rights across all sectors. Having regard to obligations under the UNCRPD the Council will work with relevant stakeholders to support the implementation of the UNCRPD at local level. The Council will continue to support the development of a high quality, inclusive, accessible and affordable housing, transport, built environment and public realm through the implementation of disability legislation, the building regulations, Universal Design Guidelines and the Galway City Public Realm Strategy.

### Older people

Ireland's population is ageing and nationally it is projected that almost one in four people will be aged over 65 by 2040. Government policy aims to support older people to live independently in their own homes and communities for as long as possible. The NPF emphasises the need for local plans to accommodate the needs and opportunities for an aging population particularly with regard to housing, transport and leisure. In line with this the Council is committed to policies that encourage healthy independent living. This includes for the building of life time adaptable neighbourhoods and communities that support older people to remain healthy, active and connected to their communities. This will be achieved through implementation of appropriate housing policies and through directly providing for appropriate housing options within social housing schemes. This also includes making the built environment attractive, safe and accessible and the provision of accessible community services and facilities appropriate to the needs older people.

Galway City Council is a member of Age Friendly Ireland and is a partner authority in the delivery of the Healthy Age Friendly Homes Programme. In this regard the Council will advise on design and encourage innovative in housing which facilitates life-time adaptability and accessibility to meet the varying needs of occupants over their lifetimes.

### Children and young people

The Council recognises that the health and wellbeing of young people is disproportionately influenced by the environment that they live in and recognises the importance of ensuring opportunities for physical activity, play, walking and cycling. The NPF notes that the high youth population in Ireland will be sustained for a period, gradually decreasing as a proportion of the population by 2040 but is significant enough to require sustained provision of appropriate amenity and facilities. The Council, in conjunction with other stakeholders is committed to addressing these needs and to continue supporting and enhancing the delivery of key facilities such as childcare, schools and access to formal and informal recreational amenities for children and young people of all abilities.

Galway City Council continue to support the Child Friendly City initiative and will engage with children and young people and their representative groups including Galway City Comhairle na nÓg. The Council will also have regard to the CYPSE Galway Children and Young People's Plan 2021-2023.

## Diversity

Galway is a multi-cultural city, as evidenced by 2016 census figures which indicates that 25.8% of Galway City’s population were born outside of Ireland, significantly higher than the State at 17.3%. This diversity is reflected in the character and distinctiveness of the city, the participation in the city economy and the arts and cultural offering. The Council through the LECP, arts and culture and inclusive strategies supports and celebrates diversity and aims to encourage integration, greater access, engagement and participation from all communities.

## Health and wellbeing

Health, wellbeing and quality of life is influenced by the built environment. Planning, through policies and land use objectives contributes to physical health and mental wellbeing. This is particularly through providing opportunities for recreation and amenity, active transport and opportunities for social interaction and support for employment and essential community services. Galway City is a member of the National Healthy Cities and Counties of Ireland Network which supports local authorities to implement actions to improve health and wellbeing at a local level. The Council will continue to support the Galway’s membership of the network and the implementation of Healthy Ireland and the Healthy Galway City Strategy 2019-21, an LCDC initiative.

The Development Plan is committed to supporting the development of healthy and active communities, where there are opportunities for the whole community to be healthy and active at all life stages. The policies in the Plan give support for a range of measures that will contribute to healthy communities including those that protect and enhance the environment, promote the availability and accessibility of community facilities and sustainable mobility infrastructure and policy support to facilitate the provision of health care facilities to enable access to health care.



Figure 7.2: Elements supporting quality of life Source: NPF



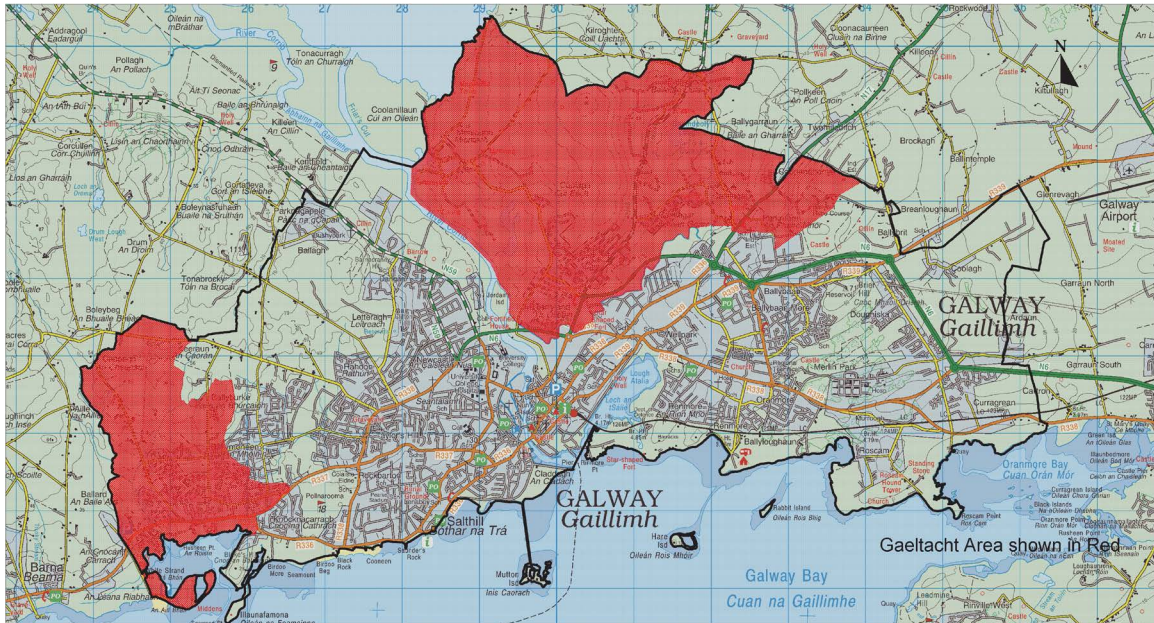
### Policy 7.3 Inclusive City

1. Proactively promote all forms of social inclusion, where feasible in land use planning particularly in the built environment and public realm, housing, community facilities, employment opportunities, transport and accessibility.
2. Proactively promote the various aims of the Council to give effect to the Barcelona Declaration and support universal design principles to make Galway a more accessible and disability friendly city.
3. Support the objectives of the Social Inclusion Office in promoting a socially inclusive society in the city.
4. Ensure meaningful public participation, engagement and knowledge sharing in the planning process and in relation to other strategic policy and projects within the city.
5. Promote the concept of 'life-time adaptability' and access for all in the built environment.
6. Facilitate the implementation of the Housing Strategy, in particular with regard to reducing undue segregation and in specialist housing provision.
7. Co-operate with the Access for All Network and other organisations representing people with disabilities to provide equal access for all citizens particularly in the area of housing, transport, built environment and the public realm within the city.
8. Support the participation of the city in the National Healthy Cities and Counties of Ireland Network and the implementation of the Healthy Galway City Strategy 2019-2021.
9. Support the Galway City & County Age Friendly programme
10. Support the development of an accessible and safe resource centre for the LGBT+ community.

## 7.4 Bilingual City

The Irish language is an integral part of the culture, heritage and identity of the city. Almost half of the city has Gaeltacht status and the 2016 census indicates that 41% of the population indicate that they speak Irish. The city Gaeltacht include communities in Cnoc na Cathrach, Mionlach and An Caisleán Gearr. The Galway Gaeltacht (Connemara Gaeltacht) is the largest Gaeltacht Area in the country and accounts for 50.8% of the total Gaeltacht population. The city is a designated Gaeltacht Service Town under the Gaeltacht Act 2012 recognising the significant role it plays in supporting the Gaeltacht community through delivery of public services and leisure, social and commercial amenities. As part of the city's designation as a Gaeltacht Service Town, an Irish language plan, *Plean Teanga Chathair na Gaillimhe 2020-2026* has been approved at Ministerial level.

The Irish Language is integral part of city life in Galway and organisations such as Taibhdhearc na Gaillimhe, NUIG, Aras na Gaeilge, Gaillimh le Gaeilge and Árus na nGael, Radió na Gaeltachta and TG4, play a lead role in the cultural promotion of the language in the city as Ireland's first bilingual city, designated in 2016. There are two language planning areas in city, East Galway City (Oirthear Chathair na Galillimhe) and west area at Knocknacarra, part of the Bearna – Cnoc na Cathrach language planning area. Language plans prepared for these areas aim to support the use of the everyday use of the Irish language through measures to promote and strengthen its use, education and social, business and public settings.



**Figure 7.3: Map of Gaeltacht Areas in Galway City**

The Council recognises that the Irish language is a cultural heritage asset and will continue to support initiatives to strengthen the bilingual status of the city. The Plan promotes and protect the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Gaeltacht and supports the implementation of the language plans in the city and continues to promote the integration of the use of Irish through the naming of new roads, residential place names and signage on shop fronts and commercial development.

#### Policy 7.4 Bilingual City

1. Protect and promote the distinctive cultural and linguistic heritage of the city and continue to support Galway's status as a Bilingual City and recognise the importance of the Irish language as a cultural, community and economic resource.
2. Promote the use of the Irish language in the naming of new residential developments, public roads and parks and encourage the use of Irish/ bilingual signage in the commercial and public realm.
3. Support and facilitate the development of infrastructure, which promotes the cultural and linguistic heritage of the city, where appropriate.
4. Support the implementation of the Plean Tenga Chathair na Gaillimhe 2020-2026 and the designation of the city as a Gaeltacht Service Town.



## 7.5 Community Facilities

The provision of high quality social and community infrastructure for all ages and abilities is a key element in building sustainable and inclusive communities. There is a tangible link between access to community facilities and individual wellbeing and participation in society.

Social and community facilities and activities can include a broad range of infrastructure and services including those related to libraries, facilities for education, community activity, health, religion, arts and cultural. Facilities can also be linked to life-cycles, such as those for children, older people and people with special needs. Community facilities provide a hub for local communities to meet and interact through sports, culture, arts and educational and social events. The presence of a wide range of high quality community services, community and cultural facilities makes the city attractive to people who live, work and visit the city and can act as a catalyst for investment.

The location of local community facilities close to where people live supports the '15-minute city' concept where residents have easy access to their essential needs at distances of no more than 15 minutes by walking, cycling or public transport. The Development Plan supports the provision of community facilities at scales relative to meet the needs of the local community and that are accessible in particular by sustainable transport modes. It is considered that community and cultural services that have a wide catchment should be located on existing or proposed public transport routes and be accessible by walking and cycling.

Over the lifetime of this plan, resources will be required to ensure investment into existing community and cultural infrastructure to retrofit these facilities to improve their energy ratings in order to minimise the carbon footprint of the community and cultural activity taking place in these venues and facilities.

In order to inform the requirements for community facilities in the city, the Council will undertake an audit of community facilities. The purpose of the audit will be to identify current gaps, demand, and capacity and identify areas where broader use can be made of community resources including opportunities for multi-purpose use. The audit will also have an aim to highlight where appropriate investment is recommended, review opportunities for funding, give shared knowledge to other relevant providers and give guidance on future policy and investment direction. The preparation of this audit while subject to available resources and cooperation with other agencies involved with the delivery of community services will be prioritised to identify opportunities and challenges in community infrastructure across the city.

The provision of community, social and cultural facilities and services at a local level builds sustainable residential neighbourhoods and accords with national guidelines and regeneration policy including the NPF, RSES and Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DECLG 2009).

### Policy 7.5 Community Facilities

1. Facilitate a balanced and equitable provision of diverse community services and facilities in collaboration with key stakeholders in alignment with the core/settlement strategy through policies, zoning objectives and specific designations
2. Support the location and concentration of local community facilities and services in accordance with the aim to build sustainable, compact neighbourhoods in line with the '15-minute city' concept so that these can be easily accessible by walking and cycling. Where larger scaled facilities and services are provided these should be aligned with existing /proposed public transport links.
3. Ensure that all facilities designed for community use are suitable for use by people of all ages and abilities in accordance with the Building for Everyone - Universal Design Guidance.
4. Encourage and facilitate the provision of community facilities and local services of a nature and scale appropriate to serve the needs of the local community in tandem with the development of residential areas.
5. Maintain existing burial grounds and make provision for new cemeteries and associated services such as a crematorium to serve the existing and future targeted population of the city.

### Education

Access to education and training opportunities is a key enabler to deliver the support for personal and economic prosperity and societal gain. The Council acknowledges the importance of the education and the need to provide educational facilities that are suitable for a range of ages and abilities and that are accessible to their respective communities. The provision of a range of education and training facilities is essential to the delivery of sustainable communities, promoting social inclusion and making a high standard of education and employment accessible to all. The expansion of and investment in education and training facilities will be required to be aligned with population growth targets.

The location of local education facilities close to where people live supports the '15-minute city' concept where all where residents have easy access to their essential needs at distances of no more than 15 minutes by walking, cycling or public transport. The current imbalance in the location of the provision of education facilities in Galway is a major challenge in achieving the '15-minute city'

Galway City is a major centre for education with regional and national influence. The city has three third level institutions, the National University of Ireland, Galway (NUI Galway) Galway Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT) and Galway Technology Institute (GTI). These are a significant assets to the city in terms of employment, education provision and the contribution they make to research, innovation and the knowledge economy. The Galway Roscommon Education and Training Board (GRETB) delivers a range of further education and training (FET) initiatives providing opportunities to acquire new skills to support career transition and progression. There is student population of approximately 26,000 in the city which contributes to the city's vibrancy and innovation. The Regional Skills Forum West is actively progressing greater collaboration between skills development organisations and business groupings in the City so that the skillsets are in place amongst our labour force to meet future skillset needs of employers.

The city is also home to 33 primary schools and 12 secondary level schools, a number of private colleges and language schools. With regard to future school provision, the Council will adhere to the recommendations outlined in *The Provision of Schools and the Planning System, A Code of Practice for Planning Authorities, DECLG (2008)* and *Local Area Plan Guidelines for Planning Authorities DECLG (2013)* and Technical Guidance Documents on school site identification and suitability assessment, published by the Department of Education (DES). The Council will also support the DES in the identification of school sites, the protection of existing school sites and expansion, where feasible. The Council will also support urban-design schools, a model of carbon-neutral urban schools, as per DES Guidelines, including measures to facilitate reduced requirements for onsite parking and set-down and to support access to off-site public amenities and facilities. In order to encourage sustainable travel, maximise the sharing of facilities and ensure the development of sustainable residential neighbourhoods, the Council will encourage the location of schools adjacent to residential areas, public transport routes and community, cultural and recreational facilities. The provision of education, childcare and other community services will be an integral part of a new neighbourhood development and included for in Local Area Plans for new settlement areas such as Ardaun.

### Policy 7.6 Education

1. Ensure that sufficient land is reserved for the establishment, improvement or expansion of education facilities within the city in accordance with the settlement strategy, targeted population and in collaboration with the Department of Education and Skills (DES).
2. Support the ongoing development and provision of third level education, further education and lifelong learning in the city.
3. Facilitate the upgrade and expansion of existing education facilities and the provision of new education facilities as required, including to:
  - Support the future improvement and sustainable expansion of NUI Galway;
  - Support the development of GMIT and the Connacht Ulster Alliance (CUA) approved designation as a Technological University
  - Support the role of the GTI in the delivery of education;
  - Support the role of the GRETB in the delivery of Further Education and Training in the city.
4. Ensure that the design and layout of all educational establishments incorporate facilities for sustainable transport measures and public transport.
5. Ensure that safe and easy access for people with disabilities is incorporated in the design of all education developments.
6. Support the further development and diversification of third level education institutions in the city, including the promotion of knowledge based industry linked research and innovation hubs and facilities.
7. Encourage the multi-use of school facilities for other community uses outside of school hours to maximise community benefit and use of resources.

### Early Years and Childcare Services

Childcare facilities are critical community services and access to affordable and high-quality childcare is an essential requirement for an equitable society and achieving a sustainable community. Access to childcare enables participation of parents and guardians in the workforce and supports the social and educational development of children. The availability of childcare is also a significant determinant in enabling access to education and training opportunities.

In all new housing areas over 75 units, the provision of one childcare facility with a minimum of 20 childcare spaces is required, in line with the Ministerial Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Childcare Facilities (DECLG 2001) and to create sustainable residential neighbourhoods. Exceptions to this will only be allowed, where there are substantiated reasons not to provide such a facility, for example if there are adequate childcare facilities in adjoining developments or the immediate area. The onus will be on the developer to substantiate such exceptional cases and will require the opinion and advice from the Galway Childcare Committee and their knowledge of supply and demand for such services. The Council will be open to consider alternative arrangements where the overall objectives of providing childcare facilities within new housing areas can be otherwise achieved, for example, the provision of one purpose-built facility with more than minimum capacity shared between housing developments. In addition to the above, childcare facilities will be considered in residential areas through conversion of existing dwellings, where they do not have an undue negative effect on the residential environment. However, a residential accommodation content may be required to be retained in accordance with the provisions outlined under Chapter 11. In order to safeguard residential amenities, the Council may limit the scale of development. In major industrial estates, business and technology parks and any other developments that generate major employment opportunities, the Council will encourage the provision of on-site childcare facilities as part of these developments. In large-scale retail, leisure or tourism developments, in particular, shopping centres, the provision of a drop-in childcare facility for shoppers will be encouraged. The Plan recognises the contribution that good quality, well-located facilities can have on making neighbourhoods sustainable and achieving the ambitions of the '15-minute city' concept.

### Policy 7.7 Childcare

1. Facilitate the development of childcare facilities, including afterschool services, at a number of suitable locations, such as, within residential areas, places of employment, city centre, neighbourhood and district centres, schools, in the vicinity of educational and community establishments and adjacent to public transport nodes in consultation with the Galway Childcare Committee.
2. Contribute to the provision of childcare facilities by requiring that such facilities be provided in conjunction with residential developments over 75 dwelling units. An exception can only be considered where it can be clearly established and professionally supported that adequate childcare facilities already exist to service the area and where acceptable alternative arrangements to support childcare, play and or other child specific facilities are deemed acceptable.

### Healthcare Facilities

Healthcare facilities include a range of services from local GP surgeries to primary care centres, hospitals, nursing homes and social and community care facilities. Galway is a centre for regional health care services for the Western Region. There are four hospital sites within the city including University Hospital Galway (UHG) and Merlin Park University Hospital (MPUH), part of the Saolta Hospital Group which provide a secondary, regional and supra regional services. UHG is a designated supra regional centre for cancer and cardiac services and is a teaching hospital partnered with NUI Galway. The city also supports a number of other healthcare providers including the Bon Secours Hospital, the Galway Clinic, the Galway Hospice and a number of nursing homes. The healthcare sector is a significant employer in the city and a significant asset for the community.

In response to a changing demographic profile and health needs of the population including longer life expectancy, a growing and ageing population and a higher prevalence of chronic conditions the health system is in the process of transitioning away from a hospital-centric model to community based care model. The Sláintecare Strategy is reorienting the way health services are delivered through the promotion of primary care

which aims to deliver multidisciplinary care at a single point of access in a community setting or primary care centre. The continued support for this sector is recognised as is the support for the trend towards increased specialisations and also for appropriate expansions of all health and hospital institutions. Primary care, community and specialist medical services can be accommodated within district, neighbourhood and local centres and be directed to the city centre area. The Development Plan supports the development and the expansion of all healthcare facilities and the accommodation of Primary Health Care Centres in areas where they can be easily accessed by communities and can enhance the level of local service provision.

### Policy 7.8 Healthcare Facilities

1. Promote the delivery and enhancement of health care facilities in the city having regard to the designated role of Galway as a Regional City under the NPF/RSES.
2. Support the development and expansion of existing healthcare infrastructure by the HSE, statutory and voluntary agencies and private healthcare providers to support the provision of healthcare, including community based care, mental health and social care services as appropriate and in accordance with the local need and the regional role of the city.
3. Ensure healthcare facilities are delivered in tandem, and at an appropriate scale, with new residential development and in locations that are easily accessed by walking, cycling and public transport.
4. Support the delivery of an enhanced regional healthcare service, including for a new Emergency Department at University Hospital Galway (UHG) and expanded hospital services at Merlin Park University Hospital (MPUH) that will serve the Metropolitan Area and the wider regional catchment.

## 7.6 Institutional Lands

Institutional lands in the city are characterised as generally large tracts of land and associated buildings accommodating uses such as schools, colleges, residential, religious and healthcare institutions. These lands vary in size, layout and function and add to the vibrancy of the city. Many institutional lands display extensive open grounds and mature landscaped areas, which are important components of the strategic green network in the city and are accessible to the public. Some institutional lands have buildings and features of architectural, cultural and historical importance which form part of the city's cultural heritage and identity.

Previous City Development Plans recognised that some of these lands would become surplus to institutional requirements and in such cases residential use or uses compatible with that of adjoining zones if considered more appropriate, were permissible. While some institutional lands, which become surplus to requirements will in the future be appropriate locations for residential and other development, there are institutional lands, which due to location and/or character should be retained for institutional or community uses for the long term benefit of the city. In these cases specific development objectives have been included in Chapter 11. In situations where remaining institutional lands, become surplus to institutional requirements the Council may permit an alternative use for all or part of the land. However this case must be defined and substantiated in the context of the institutional function. It will not be considered that lands are surplus if the institution has a sustaining and secure future. Where exceptions are permitted, the proposed use will be compatible with residential zoning (or that of adjoining zones if considered more appropriate) and the policies and objectives of the plan. Development of these lands will normally be required to retain buildings of character and some of the original open character. Public access should be promoted where traditionally enjoyed or where there is a significant amenity associated with lands.

Some institutional buildings of merit are included in the Record of Protected Structures (RPS), which are of major significance to the character of an area and may by virtue of scale or layout prove difficult to convert to residential use. In these cases consideration may be given to conversion to cultural, community or office uses where this would not involve significant changes to the character of such structures and would not be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

### Policy 7.9 Institutional Lands

1. Facilitate and promote the development of institutional land within the city.
2. Retain institutional lands and only allow consideration for change in use where it is demonstrated that certain institutional lands are surplus to requirements, the Council will consider residential use or uses compatible with that of adjoining zones or specifically require that the lands be retained for alternative institutional uses. Where residential development is permitted a reserve of a minimum of 20% of the total site area for communal open space will be required.
3. Promote the retention of public access to institutional lands where this has been traditionally enjoyed or where there is a significant amenity associated with the lands.
4. Promote the retention of public access to these lands where this has been traditionally enjoyed or where there is a significant amenity associated with the lands.





## 7.7 Specific Objectives

### Specific Objectives

1. Support the delivery of actions and objectives of the Local Economic and Community Plan in partnership with the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) and in conjunction with key stakeholders.
2. Facilitate the on-going development of community facilities in neighbourhood areas and emerging new communities such as at Ardaun.
3. Facilitate the upgrading of existing community facilities in terms of energy efficiency in order to reduce the carbon footprint of the activities taking place therein.
4. Undertake a Social and Community Infrastructure Audit in conjunction with the LECP/LCDC and relevant stakeholders to establish a baseline of services in the city and to ensure adequate community facilities are provided to serve the existing and future targeted population of the city.
5. Support proposals to repurpose Lenaboy Castle as a creative and cultural hub.
6. Develop a new City public library in conjunction with Galway County Council and national funding.
7. Progress the redevelopment of Galway City Museum as a transformative project to meet the vision of the Atlantic Museum Galway.
8. Support the provision of a new arts performance and exhibition space and a municipal gallery in the city.
9. Support proposals for the development of a destination tourism and recreational attraction at the Leisureland and Salthill park sites with the potential to provide modern, purpose built recreation, civic and cultural facilities to serve the city and region.
10. Implement actions from strategies and plans that support the development of culture and heritage in the city including: Cultural Strategy, Arts Strategy and Action Plan, Heritage Plan, Tourism Strategy and City Museum Strategic Plan.
11. Establish and develop new cemetery sites to serve the city, which can accommodate associated services such as a crematorium to serve the existing and future targeted population of the city.
12. Work with relevant stakeholders and service providers to investigate the delivery of community facilities to serve the community of Ballybane including:
  - A Family Resource Centre in conjunction with TUSLA;
  - A community crèche and early years education service;
  - Outdoor and indoor amenities for all age groups;
  - A Primary and secondary school in conjunction with the Department of Education and Skills (DES)
13. Support the development of a permanent site for a post primary school in the East of the city.
14. Support the development of a permanent site for a primary school in the West of the city.