

Examining public
service complaints
in Ireland

Independent, impartial and free



The Role of the Ombudsman

Ger Deering, Ombudsman



Galway County PPN, 19 November 2024

What do we do?

Investigate complaints from people unfairly treated by a provider of a public service



Independent of Government



Impartial



Free to use

Who can we investigate complaints about ?



Government
Departments/Offices



Local
Authorities



Health &
Social Care



Nursing
Homes



Education



Regulatory
Bodies



Direct
Provision



Other
Sectors

Who can we NOT take complaints about ?



Gardai



Defence forces



Immigration
/ Naturalisation



Pensions



Financial
Services



Children



Prisons



Employment or
consumer issues



Press



Utilities

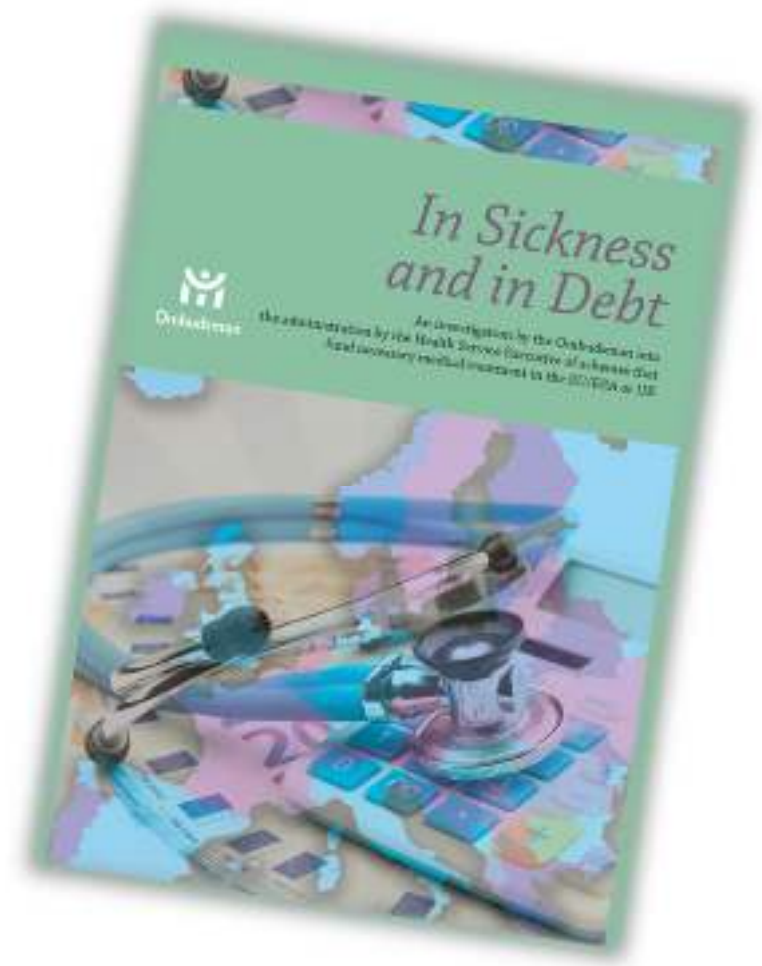
The Ombudsman can investigate your complaint if:

- You are unhappy with a public body's response to your complaint/appeal**
- You contact us within 12 months (Discretion)**

From Galway:

2023	247
2022	221
2023	
Galway City Council	58
Galway County Council	47
Dept. of Social Protection	37
University Hospital Galway	16
HSE	15
Others	74

Investigation into Treatment Abroad Schemes



Ombudsman Monthly Complaint Clinic



Augustine House

St. Augustine Street

Galway, H91 Y7XH

Fourth Tuesday of every month

(Next one: 26 November)



How to complain to us:



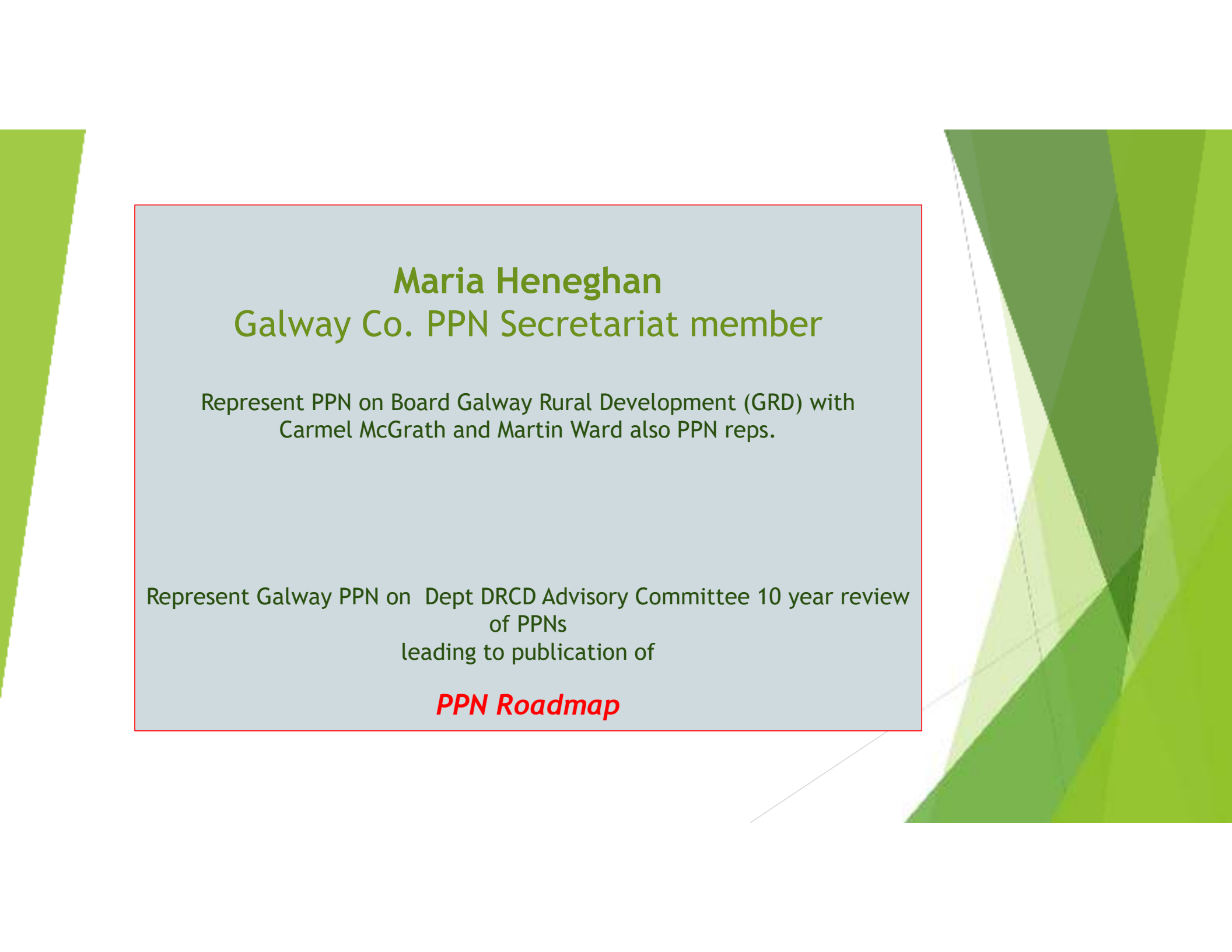
www.ombudsman.ie



6 Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2



For advice: 01 639 5600



Maria Heneghan

Galway Co. PPN Secretariat member

Represent PPN on Board Galway Rural Development (GRD) with Carmel McGrath and Martin Ward also PPN reps.

Represent Galway PPN on Dept DRCD Advisory Committee 10 year review of PPNs
leading to publication of

PPN Roadmap

Dept Rural & Community Development

Commissioned a review of PPN following its 10 years Existence

Aim of the Review was

- to implement changes to PPN structures
- to be more effective in fulfilling the overall objectives set out for PPNs in 2014
- **Enhance Community (citizen) Engagement** with Local Government and reflect these concerns at policy level

HOW were the PPNs reviewed ??

Step 1. 2021 DRCD commissioned MAZARS to do a root and branch review of the PPN and produce a report

Step 2 An advisory committee was put in place to review the MAZAR'S report and set progress with a **Roadmap** for the future of PPNs

Step 3. CROWE consultants were engaged to refine the outcomes of MAZARS and the Advisory Committee outcome and produce the final document ----
Published Roadmap

Roadmap Addresses 6 Areas of PPNs

1. Governance and accountability

2. Community and engagement

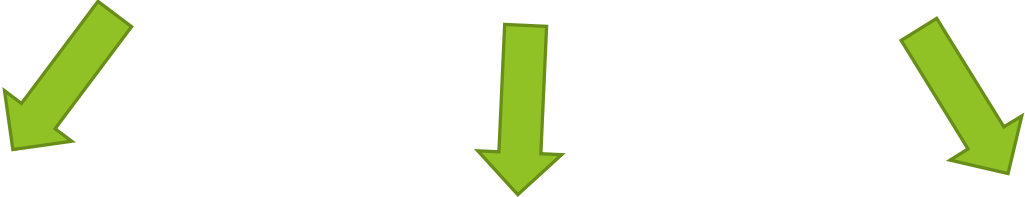
3. Coordination and participation

4. Training, delivery and supports

5. Staffing and skills

6. Additional actions

1. Governance and Accountability



Pace of actions is **Slow** in addressing issues and implement change concerning community engagement

Prioritise actions that will have the greatest impact & ensure independence

National advisory committee and handbook to be reviewed aim to provide a Single source and contact point for guidance, tools, supports

2. Community and engagement

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graph TD; A[2. Community and engagement] --> B[Lack of visibility, understanding and awareness of PPNs. Serious need to improve communication]; A --> C[PPN should be enabled to establish and communicate their impact on policy. Clarity is needed on who are the stakeholders/ community members?]; A --> D[Training needed for secretariat in order to support communities];
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Lack of visibility, understanding and awareness of PPNs. Serious need to improve communication

PPN should be enabled to establish and communicate their **impact on policy**. Clarity is needed on who are the stakeholders/ community members?

Training needed for secretariat in order to support communities

3. Coordination and participation



Need for a National Structure. The present National Association Group (NAG) to be reviewed in 2024



3 colleges/ groupings to remain represented on secretariat (Voluntary, Social inclusion and Environment)

4. Training delivery and Supports



Provide consistent induction and training to ensure all stakeholders have the same understanding of PPN



Scoping exercises needed to explore how PPNs can address community needs and provide effective advocacy and representation for communities



Clarify expectations of PPNs and provide necessary support to address issues of National importance

5. Staffing and skills



A need for consistency in practise is essential

6. Additional actions



More funding and
more staff



Multi annual
funding
essential



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

Community Support Schemes 2025

Working together to maintain County Galway as a uniquely attractive place in which to live, work, invest and visit.

AIMS

- ✓ To encourage community and voluntary groups to take an active part in the development of their local community.
- ✓ To fund projects which are of benefit to the wider community, and by doing so, improve local economic, community, and cultural development.
- ✓ To promote local economic benefits, by encouraging all applicants to ***“Shop Local”*** as collectively this can make a big difference.
- ✓ To promote the PPN as the main structural link between communities and the local authority by requiring all applicants to be members of the PPN.

Economic Development Support Scheme

Tourism Events and Festivals – max €3,000

- To promote a diverse range of tourism events and festivals (arts, culture, food, activity-based, outdoor).
- Successful events/festivals will be promoted as part of a Calendar of Events.
- Priority to events with high quality programming and ability to attract visitors – unique, innovative, creative, potential.

Economic Development Initiatives – max €3,000

- Projects/Works promoting economic activity or business opportunities
- Upgrade of Festive Lighting, Farmers Markets, Community Shops, Shop Local Campaigns
- Priority for sustainable improvements, e.g., works/equipment versus hire/rental

Taste of Oranmore/Clarinbridge



Inishbofin Arts Festival



Connemara Mountain Walking Festival



Ballinasloe Something for Everyone Weekend



Community Development Support Scheme

Community Amenities – max €3,000

- To enhance outdoor community amenities and green spaces.
- Freely available - playgrounds, parks, community gardens, community walkways, etc.
- NB: accessibility - contact me to do Walkability Audit (087 1044 820)

Tidy Towns Activities in Public Spaces – max €3,000

- Equipment/Works/Projects by Groups entering the National Competition
- Issues raised in Judging Reports, issues identified locally, Plans, Maps
- Priority for sustainable improvements, e.g., Plans to underline planting

Local Enhancement Programme 2025 – LCDC - €213,601 (meeting spaces, equipment)

Planting at Clifden Car Park



Street Planting in Ballygar



Outdoor Chess Table in Leenane Park



Polytunnel at Mountbellew Men's Shed



Cultural Development Support Scheme

Arts Act Grants – max €2,500

- Funding towards arts activities and projects.
- Priority is promoting interest, knowledge, and practice of the arts – literature, theatre, visual arts, music, drama, film, community arts projects, etc.

Heritage Grants – max €1,500

- Funding towards heritage activities and projects
- Priority is promoting awareness, knowledge and practice in heritage activity – events, surveys, training, plans, workshops, recordings, etc

Irish Language Promotional Activities Grant – max €1,000

- Funding towards Irish Language events and projects
- Priority is projects increasing use, knowledge, positive attitude towards Irish language – events, workshops, classes, Seachtain na Gaeilge events



Portumna Arts Group – Take a walk in my shoes



Connemara Sea Week Project



Corrib Lacemakers Exhibition
Aras Eanna



Oughterard Courthouse Arts Programme
Group Exhibition

Online Application Process

- ❑ Name of your Group = your Supplier Set-Up Form / Bank Statement
- ❑ Recommend you use a generic e-mail for your Group
- ❑ Start your application early – can save in stages.
- ❑ Make sure you 'submit' and 'validate' before closing date

Submit compulsory documentation:

- Bank/Credit Union Statement
 - Public Liability Insurance (community playgrounds – insert a note)
 - 1 quotation for each expenditure item
 - Other items required for a Support Scheme, e.g. Festival Programme
- 

Please contact us as early as possible for telephone support or one-to-one assistance with the online system or other queries:

Economic Development:

tourism@galwaycoco.ie

Community Development:

communitysupportscheme@galwaycoco.ie

Arts Grants:

artsoffice@galwaycoco.ie

Heritage Grants:

heritage@galwaycoco.ie

Irish Language Grants: (not online)

gaeilge@cocogaillimh.ie

Key take-away points from today

- GOING LIVE EARLY DECEMBER
- START THE ONLINE APPLICATION PROCESS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE – DO NOT LEAVE IT UNTIL THE LAST DAY/MINUTE!
- CLOSING DATE FOR COMMUNITY SUPPORT SCHEMES = 24TH JANUARY 2025 AT 4 P.M.
- APPROVALS AT FEBRUARY PLENARY MEETING
- OFFERS TO SUCCESSFUL GROUPS
- FEEDBACK TO UNSUCCESSFUL GROUPS



THANK YOU!