

# Irish Examiner

## Earth tones

Our soil has a life of its own

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Eoghan Dalton: Bring in the beavers!

## Urban jungle

Pocket forests bring back green

Outdoors Page 13

## Mo the merrier

Reds halt City charge as Salah tops Haaland

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## Barrs end 29-year wait for hurling glory



Ben Cunningham, the standout performer for St Finbarr's scoring 0-9, celebrates his side's 2-14 to 1-7 win over Blackrock, giving them their first Cork senior hurling title in nearly 30 years. SEE: News, Page 3 and Monday Sport, Pages 2-4

Picture: Eoin Noonan/Sportsfile

# Government ready to sign eviction ban

Ciará Phelan and Noel Baker

A ban on evictions will go before Cabinet as early as tomorrow if Housing Minister Darragh O'Brien gets the go-ahead from Coalition leaders, the *Irish Examiner* has learned.

The Government leaders are expected to decide tonight about the ban which would likely be introduced in December and run until the end of March.

Senior Government sources also say Taoiseach Micheál Martin, Tánaiste Leo Varadkar, and Green party leader Eamon Ryan will hammer out changes to

### ■ Simon homelessness report says ban is not enough to tackle crisis

the controversial concrete levy at their meeting.

Mr Martin confirmed yesterday that he expects Mr O'Brien to bring proposals to Cabinet soon and signalled the energy crisis could see it introduced.

"There are legal parameters within which one has to operate but we're now going through a major energy crisis which is causing its own significant challenges," he said.

"It's an unprecedented crisis in its scale particularly in

terms of the price rises and the impact on people."

It comes as the latest Locked Out report from the Simon Communities shows there are now effectively no properties for people to rent on the housing assistance payment (HAP) meaning those trying to exit homelessness or avoid emergency accommodation have little chance of finding a home.

The report, which analyses the number of available properties around the country, found that last

month, there were just 392 properties available to rent at any price within the 16 areas surveyed.

However, there were no properties at all available within a standard HAP rate and just 35 within discretionary HAP rates.

Under HAP, councils make a monthly payment to a landlord on a tenant's behalf and the tenant pays a weekly contribution towards the rent to the council. But the HAP tenants must find their own accommodation in the private rental market.

The latest statistics from Dublin Simon show it has seen a spike in the number of elderly people and those with

jobs seeking help — as well as an increase in the number of families sleeping in garda stations.

Wayne Stanley, head of policy with the Simon Communities, said: "It is as dire as it has ever been." He said the lack of properties will mean more people becoming homeless or remaining homeless for longer.

Last night, a Cabinet source said an eviction ban is something that needs to be acted on quickly and a decision has to be made because it requires primary legislation.

"I would be surprised if the ban wasn't before Cabinet on Tuesday and if it's not, it will

have to be next week.

"It's the kind of issue that you can't leave hanging there for weeks on end, that has been subject to speculation for a number of weeks and comments by people in Government.

"It's not the kind of thing you can keep dangling, a decision has to be made."

Another senior source said: "Work has been on-going simultaneously while discussing it with the Attorney General. If the leaders give the ban the green light then it could be ready for Cabinet on Tuesday — that is the hope."

The party leaders are also to make changes to the

controversial 10% concrete levy before the Finance Bill is brought to Cabinet tomorrow.

A Cabinet source said leaders will discuss narrowing the scope of the levy in terms of the nature of products it applies to as well as reducing the 10% rate and deferring it past next April when it is due to take effect.

They said: "Changes to all three aspects are being considered or a combination of some of those elements is probably where it will land ultimately."

Meanwhile, a Green Party junior minister has confirmed that the Government is considering plans to charge

people seeking refuge in Ireland a "nominal" fee for their accommodation.

Joe O'Brien said the plans are contained in a draft paper and said the fee would be paid by some people in direct provision and some Ukrainians who are in full-time employment.

However, the Taoiseach said yesterday: "We're not contemplating charging Ukrainians."

Mr O'Brien admitted there is pressure on accommodation for those seeking refuge and said some modular housing will be coming on stream later this month.

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Opinion: 8

## Five-month wait on complex menopause treatments

Ciará Phelan  
Political Correspondent

Critical understaffing has left women waiting more than five months to get initial contact from one of the State's menopause clinics with concerns raised of a postcode lottery system.

Women who have complex issues or may have had treatment for diseases such as cancer are referred to the specialist clinics through their GPs.

The service at the National Maternity Hospital (NMH) only physically sees women between 3pm and 6pm every Tuesday.

It has also taken the decision to only see patients from five counties: Dublin, Kildare, Wicklow, Wexford, and Kilkenny, due to demand.

The Rotunda is due to open its clinic tomorrow to mark Menopause Awareness Week, but thereafter it will open for just one day per week and treat women from the catchment area initially.

Health Minister Stephen Donnelly has claimed that the Coombe's clinic is up and running, but the hospital has confirmed to the *Irish Examiner* that it has yet to open.

The minister previously announced funding to open six specialist clinics across the country. However, clinics in Cork and Galway



Deirdre Lundy said that staffing issues are delaying the rollout.

have yet to open while the service in Nenagh, Co Tipperary, is only treating local women, a specialist doctor has claimed.

Deirdre Lundy, clinical lead at the NMH menopause clinic said "critical understaffing" is causing delays to the opening of clinics elsewhere.

She said it took six months for a nurse with the required expertise to be released to the NMH clinic, because the health service could not find a replacement.

Mr Donnelly has denied that staffing is an issue and said clinics in Cork and Galway will open before the end of the year.

Between November 2021

and August 2022, the NMH clinic has physically seen 250 women and up to 15 new patients every week.

Dr Lundy said: "What happens if you live in Athlone and you are on your knees and you're 25 and somebody gave you radiotherapy for bowel cancer and now your ovaries have shriveled up, and you've flushes and sweats, brain fog, mood issues, and no one can help you?"

"Half of the letters I'm getting are from people whose counties are out of my patch."

Social Democrats co-leader Catherine Murphy said: "The postcode lottery system raises serious red flags in terms of equality of treatment."

She said it is not the fault of the staff running the clinics and has called on Mr Donnelly to "get this service fully up and running, because it can't be there in theory."

Dr Lundy said the NMH clinic has three staff with some working part-time, and also holds a phone clinic on Wednesdays, but this is to follow up with patients that are in the system.

She revealed that she spends more time responding and giving advice to GPs who have referred patients rather than treating women, and often works unpaid to get through administrative work.

## 'Logistical headache' over Taoiseach office rotation

Ciará Phelan  
Political Correspondent

Government officials are facing a "logistical headache" over the rotation of the role of Taoiseach from Micheál Martin to Leo Varadkar on December 15.

That is the same date as the start of the final European Council meeting of this year in Brussels. However, both Mr Martin and Mr Varadkar are required to be in Ireland on that day to resign their positions to allow the planned rotation to happen.

Mr Martin is due to offer his resignation to President Michael D Higgins on December 15, and the Dáil would need to hold a vote to elect Mr Varadkar as Taoiseach who would then go to Phoenix Park to receive his seal of office.

However, given the number of steps in this process, it would be logistically difficult to do in time to allow Mr Varadkar to attend the EU Council meeting in the afternoon.

The *Irish Examiner* understands Government officials are now struggling to figure out which leader can attend the EU meeting and it is causing a "logistical headache".

A senior Government source said there are a number of options that have to be considered but was adamant that Mr Martin would not resign as Taoiseach earlier.

Another option is postponing the rotation by a week. However, this would require the Dáil term to be extended into Christmas week to allow for the rotation and Cabinet reshuffle.

Several backbench Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael TDs said they would be against such a move, with one senior figure saying: "The two leaders would want to sort it out."

Senior Government sources said they are aware of the "awkward" situation and are trying to work out what can be done.

The rules are that a government leader has to attend the European Council and a deputy leader can not go instead.

Another EU country can represent Ireland at the meeting but "this is not the preferred option", said a senior source, who added that there may be important decisions made at the meeting to help with the energy crisis.

One source said: "A practical solution needs to be found and officials are trying to work this out but ideally, the leader of the day, Micheál Martin should be the one to attend."

Another said: "In practical terms, one of them has to go to the European Council meeting so it will be worked out."

The source added that the matter will not be sorted until after this week's EU Council meeting, with Mr Martin due to travel to Brussels on Thursday.



## Two rescued from floods after day of torrential rain

The Coastguard was called in to rescue two people from a flooded house in Cork city last night following a day of torrential rain led to flooding across the city. Meanwhile, crews from Cork

City Council had to pump water from the streets in Blackpool.

A number of roads were closed in the city, including the N40 South Ring Road ramp in Douglas. News: 5

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# FORUM

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With the number of Ukrainians here set to top 72,000 and homelessness figures surpassing 11,000, the accommodation crisis is set to get worse before it gets better, writes **Ciara Phelan**



- TOP 10 EARNERS**
1. Quality Hotel, Youghal, Cork — €12.5m
  2. Citywest, Dublin — €10.8m
  3. Tallaght Cross hotel, Dublin — €8.5m
  4. Eviston hotel, Killarney, Kerry — €5.7m
  5. Radisson Blu Hotel, Limerick — €5m
  6. Trabolgan Holiday Centre, Cork — €4.4m
  7. Bunratty Castle Hotel, Clare — €4.2m
  8. Ashbourne Court Hotel, Co Meath — €3.8m
  9. McGettigan Hotel, Letterkenny, Donegal — €3.7m
  10. Ballybunion golf hotel, Clare — €3.5m



# A broken system

**N**O STATE could have been prepared for the almost instant influx of Ukrainians following the Russian invasion, but the scale of the accommodation crisis facing the Government should serve as a sobering wake-up call to the reality of a broken housing system.

So far this year, more than €617m has been spent on accommodation and services provided to all refugees that have arrived here.

Spending continues as the days roll on and thousands more Ukrainians arrive, escaping a widening conflict and a harsh winter.

The Department of Integration, which is overseeing Ireland's response to supporting Ukrainians, has said next year's bill could top €1bn.

It is an unprecedented situation, politicians will say, but it is also unprecedented spending of the money of taxpayers, most of whom would much prefer the billions of euro be spent on building homes and not pumping cash into a temporary system propped up by hotels across

the country. Nine months after Russia invaded Ukraine, the Government has done very little to avoid placing into hotels the traumatised women and children who have left sons and husbands behind to fight.

Less than a month after Putin's troops began shelling Ukraine, 9,000 Ukrainians had arrived in Ireland.

The State offered a céad míle fáilte to those desperate to get to safety, but there has been a serious failure to plan for the medium to long term for what we now know will be 72,000 Ukrainians by the end of the year.

The first set of modular homes has been delayed until early 2023 and the second site is not due to come on stream until February or March.

It is forgivable that the vacant homes call set up initially when Ukrainians started arriving here was a messy and slow process.

However, just nine months on, the Government is relaunching the process which was dogged by confusion and poor communication for months.

As of November 15, it has been

reported to the department that 5,313 Ukrainians have been matched to 2,009 pledged properties, despite initial offers of housing exceeding 20,000.

There is no denying that the snail's pace at which the vacant homes call-out was operated hindered the success of moving Ukrainians out of hotels and into communities.

A county-by-county breakdown of where Ukrainians are staying highlights a wide disparity in the numbers being accommodated in different areas of the country.

Naturally, there will be more hotels, holiday homes, and B&Bs in tourist hotspots such as Kerry, Clare, Cork, Galway, and Donegal, but the doubling of population in some areas within weeks is having significant impacts on services.

Social Protection Minister Heather Humphreys is due to bring a proposal to a Cabinet committee on Ukraine in mid-December which will see a €50m fund being spread out to counties that have taken in a large proportion of refugees, through applications by local authorities.

**Irish Examiner**

See the full county by county list of how much hotels are paid to house Ukrainians in our interactive map graphic at [irishexaminer.com](http://irishexaminer.com)

The funding can be used for playgrounds and public transport. However, there are more specific challenges as a result of large

numbers of people being placed in hotels in certain areas. There is a knock-on effect on schooling, childcare, and jobs as well as emotional and psychological support, especially for children who have experienced unthinkable trauma in the violence accompanying war and the disorientating separation from their homes, familiar surroundings, and loved ones.

Behavioural specialists have outlined the destructive impact that living in hotels can have on child development. Delayed speech and an inability to learn to crawl or walk due to a lack of space are just two of the serious consequences.

Let's not forget that this is the same sorry situation that thousands of Irish children living in emergency accommodation and their parents are dealing with as homelessness figures continue to rise.

Figures released yesterday show the scale of a crisis that might be hidden but has not gone away. The number of people in emergency accommodation in Ireland surpassed 11,000 last month, the highest

number ever recorded.

The monthly homeless report from the Department of Housing shows there were 7,917 adults and 1,601 families accessing emergency accommodation in the month, including 3,480 children, many of them in hotels.

The figures represent an increase of 3.85% (422 people) in one month and a 29% increase (2,567 people) since this time last year.

The statistics again shine an uncomfortable light on failed housing policies going back years, with a severe shortage of social housing, a lack of affordable accommodation, and waiting lists of up to 14 years for some people, as well as a lucrative rental market.

The whole system is creaking and is likely to get far worse before it gets better.

**Special report continues >>>**

# State contracts for 34 Kerry hotels alone as tourist areas take majority of Ukrainians

**H**OTELS, B&Bs, apartments, and holiday homes in tourist hotspots are accommodating the majority of Ukrainians, with 34 hotels in Kerry alone awarded contracts by the State.

Deals agreed with B&Bs and hotels range from €20,000 up to €12.5m as the Government struggles to deal with the tens of thousands of Ukrainians who have fled the war.

Old convents and student accommodation in Cork and Dublin are also the subject of contracts with the Government.

The *Irish Examiner* has obtained data showing the deals the State made with hotels between April and September this year, at a time when millions of Ukrainians were fleeing the war in their country.

Deals made in the final quarter of 2022 will be released in January.

The figures show that in the third quarter there was a significant increase in the number of family-run B&Bs that offered their premises to support Ukrainians.

The housing crisis which existed prior to the war is a contributing factor to the challenge of housing Ukrainians. There is also a disparity in numbers being accommodated in various areas across the country.

Coastal areas such as Kerry, Donegal, Clare, Cork, and Galway have a significant number of hotels and B&Bs in use by the State as concerns grow for the availability of rooms for refugees ahead of the tourism season next year.

The price agreed between a hotel and the State in documentation provided by the Department of Integration outlines the amount awarded, on condition the provider upholds their part of the contract.

■ In Kerry, Dannymann Company Ltd received a contract worth €5.7m for the Eviston Hotel in Killarney.

■ Crimmins Hotels & Leisure Limited agreed a payment for the Innisfallen Hotel worth €2.4m. It was also paid €1,250,640 for the Three Lakes Hotel.

■ The Earl of Desmond Hotel outside Tralee agreed payment of €2.1m and Hotel Killarney signed a deal worth €1.7m.

■ Banna Holiday Villas Ltd signed a contract worth €1.4m for holiday homes at Banna Beach Resort.

■ TD Michael Healy Rae is offering accommodation to Ukrainians

at Rosemount Bed and Breakfast in Kerry and the cost agreed with the State is €21,840.

■ In Co Clare, Bunratty Shopping Village Ltd is in receipt of a deal worth €4.2m for Bunratty Castle Hotel.

■ Sunset Breeze Limited, which owns Ballybunion Golf Hotel, was awarded €3.5m and Wild Way Hotels Limited, which owns the Burren Atlantic Hotel and Homes, received €1.7m.

■ Three hotels in Clare received deals worth €1.5m.

■ The second-biggest deal in Cork, after the €12.5m contract for the Quality Hotel in Youghal, was worth €4.4m for Trabolgan holiday centre.

■ TV presenter and wedding organiser Peter 'Franc' Kelly who in 2020 purchased an old convent, also has a contract to accommodate Ukrainians in the building in Rosscarbery. Documents show the contract for Weddings by Franc Limited at €622,440.

■ A nursing home in Co Galway, Brampton Care, signed a deal worth €1.7m to house Ukrainians, the largest contract awarded in the county.

■ In Donegal, the largest contracts have been awarded to McGettigan Hotel in Letterkenny at an estimated price of €3.7m.

■ Grand Central Hotel in Bundoran received €2.4m and Nesbitt Arms Hotel received €1.1m from the State.

Concern is growing over capacity to shelter Ukrainians if some hotels decide to return to normal business for the tourism period next year.

The Government has re-launched a campaign asking the public to offer up vacant homes and buildings for use by refugees.

Around 5,500 refugees are staying in rooms or houses pledged by private individuals so far.

The Government is hoping to target 20,000 holiday homes across the country to help with the crisis.

The recognition payment for those providing a property or a room is to double to €800 a month in December.

A Government source has said they will depend on hotels to help with the accommodation crisis in the medium term until enough modular homes come on stream, which is expected early in 2023.

A Government source said the number of contracts required with hotels and B&Bs lays bare the pressures on securing suitable housing for refugees

coming here and the challenges facing the State in the future.

Speaking at an Oireachtas committee in recent days, Integration Minister Roderic O'Gorman said there has been a "heavy reliance" on hotels and "when we lose an accommodation provider, it is significant" both for the department in having to find alternative accommodation and for those people who are moved having settled in an area.

Mr O'Gorman said it is hoped the bed-only offer of accommodation will encourage moves to "independent accommodation, reducing also the reliance on the tourism sector for accommodation".

However, TDs have expressed concern about the phasing-in of a bed-only policy, questioning where those stuck in hotels will be able to cook meals if they cannot find alternative accommodation.

Speaking to the *Irish Examiner* in Paris yesterday, Environment Minister Eamon Ryan said the Government is "testing every option and looking for every eventuality" to secure more space.

He said given that there is no sign of the war ending soon, the Government has to consider the immediate emergency response and look to see how that can be changed to make it more sustainable.

■ The figures provided are for deals agreed between the State and providers for the period April to September 2022. The documentation does not state the length of the contracts.

Details of deals signed off in the final quarter of 2022 will be published next January.

The Department of Integration is obliged to publish a list of contracts formally signed off each quarter that have been awarded under a special EU derogation that permits the department to enter into contracts in the context of the Ukraine accommodation crisis without going to formal tender.

The values of the contracts shown are estimates; the actual value materialises upon occupancy and actual usage.

Standard contracts have no-fault break clauses available to both parties so again, the figures are indicative rather than actual.

The services which are subject to these contracts are accommodation and ancillary services for refugees arriving in Ireland as a result of the Ukrainian conflict and include catering services, cleaning, laundry facilities, certain consumables, and security services.

Around 17,000 asylum seekers have also arrived in Ireland this year but the department said no similar obligation exists to publish the same information for international protection accommodation.



Peter Kelly's Weddings by Franc company has a contract for €622,000.



Hotel Killarney signed a deal worth €1.7m. Picture: hotelkillarney.ie

## 'Our country is now at war and we really need support and protection'

**F**OR 27-YEAR-OLD Roman Gangan, his life in Ireland since fleeing war-torn Ukraine has been all the more difficult because of one sobering problem: nobody wants his dog.

Along with his wife Tetiana and his large Cane Corso dog Nora, Roman has been stuck in State accommodation since arriving here in July.

Jumping from place to place throughout their time here, they have been unable to settle with an Irish family or rent their own home.

"I could not leave the dog in Ukraine," he said. "This is our friend and she never left us, and we can't leave her either."

Despite trying, no family wanted to bring such a large dog into their home, and now the three remain at a hostel in Co Wicklow — for now.

Many Ukrainians have been moved around multiple times since arriving in Ireland, making it difficult to hold down jobs, make friends

The gratitude among Ukrainians here doesn't mean they do not face struggles to make a better life for themselves, writes **Conor Capplis**



at school, and integrate into the community.

At the hostel in Wicklow, Roman fears for his wife's health in the old and cold building. The shower and toilets are shared and only accessible by going outside.

Roman works as a van courier, saving up for a place of their own they may never get. But even if the housing crisis doesn't price them out, their money isn't enough.

"When I tell them I have a dog, they say: 'Oh no, we don't want you here,'" he said of his dealings with prospective landlords.

"We do not want to sit on the neck of the State. We would agree to any property and make repairs if necessary."

Roman will be one of more than 70,000 Ukrainians in

**"It's not possible to cook for children, especially for a small baby"**

Ireland by the end of the year if Government projections come true. Green Party leader Eamon Ryan has voiced concern over the high numbers, but Integration Minister Roderic O'Gorman has said he is confident his department can cope.

Ireland's accommodation system has been stretched and strained since Russia's renewed invasion of Ukraine prompted a wave of people seeking temporary protection, and amid a burgeoning housing crisis, how are the tens of thousands stuck in hotel accommodation coping?

Oksana Zatsarynska, who lives in a small hotel in Cork City, wants nothing more than a place of her own. Oksana arrived last August from the Russian-oc-

### CLARE



**Auburn Lodge Hotel Limited**  
Auburn Lodge Hotel  
€1,523,340

**The Cliffs of Moher Hotel Limited**  
The Cliffs of Moher Hotel  
€150,150

**Tulipbay Limited**  
Hotel Woodstock  
€354,900

**Kilkee Town Limited**  
Kilkee Bay Hotel  
€1,515,240

**Atlantic Hotel Management Limited**  
Lahinch Lodge  
€329,400

**Windward Management Limited**  
Park Inn Hotel  
€955,500

**AllPro Security Services Ireland Limited**  
Scouting Ireland, Killaloe  
€254,800

**The Hydro Hotel Limited**  
The Hydro Hotel  
€1,530,650

**Bunratty Shopping Village Limited**  
Bunratty Castle Hotel  
€4,256,000

**Wild Way Hotels Limited**  
Burren Atlantic Hotel and Homes  
€1,708,052

**Glenarm Care Limited**  
Fina Hata Lodge  
€191,100

**Mount Callan House & Restaurant Limited**  
Mount Callan House  
€83,600

**Rustic Horizon Limited**  
Shannon Lodge Hotel  
€114,660

**Sunset Lodge Limited**  
Postal address: Sunset Lodge  
€173,760

**Treacys Oakwood Hotel**  
Treacys Oakwood Hotel  
Shannon  
€286,195

### CORK



**Weddings by Franc Limited**  
Convent Garden, Rosscarbery  
€622,440

**Knockrow Trading Limited**  
Munster Arms  
€294,840

**Heronwell Limited**  
Quality Hotel, Youghal,  
€12,510,000

**Mark Kelly**  
The Drimoleague Inn  
€254,800

**CRM Properties Limited**  
The Dutch Tulip  
€451,095

**Trabolgan Holiday Centre Limited**  
Trabolgan Holiday Centre  
€4,471,870

**Ridgestur Limited**  
Bantry Bay Guesthouse  
€408,746

**TSV Accommodation Limited**  
Cork Student Accommodation  
€678,972

**Restrek Limited**  
Grand Hotel, Fermoy  
€349,440

**Purtol Limited**  
Lake House Hotel  
€390,390

**Parklodge Developments Limited**  
Rose Cottage B&B  
€104,580

**Crosshaven Holidays Limited**  
Sherkin House  
€266,805

**The Kingsley Hotel Limited**  
The Kingsley Hotel  
€226,320

**Youghal Catering Limited**  
The Old Imperial Hotel  
€634,270

**Westpond Lodges & Hotel Limited**  
The Westlodge Hotel  
€768,600

**Warren Grove Limited**  
Warren Grove Estate  
€518,700

**Dromboy Limited**  
Washington Street Apartments  
€518,700

### KERRY



**Sunset Breeze Limited**  
Golf Hotel, Ballybunion  
€3,588,630

**Crimmins Hotels & Leisure Limited**  
Innisfallen Hotel  
€2,404,620

**Cherry Tree Guesthouse Limited**  
Cherry Tree Guesthouse  
€180,180

**The Country Haven Limited**  
Country Haven  
€109,800

**Orana Estates Limited**  
Dingle Peninsula Hotel  
€823,500



**Dannymann Company Limited**  
Eviston Hotel, Killarney  
€5,727,590

**The Hotel Killarney**  
The Hotel Killarney  
€1,701,000

**Canulg Limited**  
Ring of Kerry Hotel  
€477,750

**Ms Eileen Sheehan**  
3-4 Fairhill Holiday Homes  
€172,935

**Sive Hostel**  
Sive Hostel Cahersiveen  
€191,100

**Aloha House Limited**  
Aloha House  
€180,180

**Nan Hospitality Limited**  
The Brass Lantern, Kenmare  
€294,840

**Banna Holiday Villas Limited**  
Banna Beach Resort  
€1,490,840

**Earl Desmond Limited**  
The Earl Desmond  
€2,156,825

**Dingle Gate Hostel Limited**  
Dingle Gate Hostel  
€174,720



Oksana and Oleksii Zatsarynska with their children Myroslava (6), Milan (2), and Ratimir (11), war refugees from Ukraine living in Cork. Picture: Larry Cummins

cupied Donetsk region in eastern Ukraine with her husband and three young

children, including a two-year-old toddler. "We get free meals and ac-

commodation, for which we are very grateful," she said, and commended the polite

staff who keep the place very clean. But she lamented the lack

The 'Irish Examiner' has obtained data showing the deals made by the State hotels this year in order to accommodate the thousands of Ukrainians fleeing war in their country, writes Political Correspondent **Ciara Phelan**



# 'We are paying the cost of not having invested in infrastructure'

The abrupt arrival of refugees into communities has sparked concerns, writes **Mick Clifford**



**Ms Pauline Lyne**  
Parkfield House  
€47,600

**Mr Michael Healy-Rae**  
Rosemount Bed and Breakfast  
€21,840

**Hoztel Hospitality Limited**  
Seafrost Inn  
€379,440

**Sean Ógs Bar Limited**  
Sean Ógs  
€283,920

**Ms. Clara Quinn**  
Shennview B&B  
€169,275

**Patrick & Peter Byrne**  
Skelly's Hotel  
€248,880

**Slyvia & John Sexton**  
St. Joseph's  
€280,560

**Mr. Stephen Sheehan**  
The Ring Lyne  
€222,345

**Crimmins Hotels & Leisure Limited**  
Three Lakes Hostel  
€1,250,640

**Towering Leisure Limited**  
Towering Hospitality Properties  
€564,480

**Orana Estates Limited**  
Tralee Park  
€99,600

## LIMERICK



**Clúain Dara Guesthouse**  
Clúain Dara Guesthouse  
€116,640

**Sonass Hostels Kilfinane Limited**  
Ballyhoura Luxury Hostel  
€189,405

**Riovolr Limited**  
Limerick City Hotel  
€222,950

**INua Limerick General Partner Limited**  
Radisson Blu Hotel  
€5,069,000

**Baharatwaj Limited**  
The Lanterns Hotel Tarbet  
€326,700

**Coziq Enterprises Limited**  
Ard Scoil Mhuire  
€724,680

**Jack Keane Management Services Limited**  
Punches Residences  
€397,440

**Sarsfield Bridge Hotel Limited**  
The Pier Hotel  
€1,229,760

**Plassey Trust Company CLG**  
UL Groody Court - Student Accommodation  
€481,950

**Plassey Trust Company CLG**  
UL Troy Village- Student Accommodation  
€65,450

## TIPPERARY



**Windward Management Limited**  
Anner Hotel  
€398,125

**Perrywell Limited**  
Clonacody House, Tipperary  
€217,770

**The Merryman Limited**  
Abbey Court Hotel  
€318,500

**The Merryman Limited**  
Abbey Court Hotel  
Town: Co. Tipperary  
€637,000

**An Teach**  
An Teach  
€264,690

**Windward Management Limited**  
Anner Hotel  
€844,375

**Fethard and District Day Care Centre**  
Fethard and District Day Care Centre  
€68,082

**Hillcrest Guesthouse Limited**  
Hillcrest Guesthouse  
€238,815

**ALLPRO Security Services Ireland Limited**  
Sisters of Mercy - Templemore Convent  
€320,400

**Quest 2 Zest Limited**  
The Swallows - Eco Hostel  
€166,164

## WATERFORD



**Windward Management Limited**  
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**Hazelbrook B&B**  
Hazelbrook B&B  
€267,300

**Windward Management Limited**  
The Fitzwillton Hotel  
€337,750

**T**HE 1913 lock-out got an airing. So did the IRA's border campaign of 1956. History was invoked to show that the local community would live up to the best traditions of working-class resistance when pitted against major power.

On Tuesday at 5.10pm, Malachy Steenson took the microphone to address the gathering of around 200 people on East Wall Road, in Dublin's north inner city. They were there to protest the opening of an accommodation centre in premises formerly occupied by the ESB.

As such, this was the latest flashpoint in what is growing unease about the policy of housing asylum seekers and refugees across the country.

A few minutes before Steenson spoke, a section of the crowd moved out onto the busy road to block traffic, as had been done at the protest on Monday evening.

One difference on Tuesday, however, was that the protest was moved 50m up the road from the ESB centre.

At the earlier protest, chants of "get them out" could be heard and this time the organisers didn't want to see the new residents of the centre directly targeted in this manner.

Steenson is a local activist and former councillor for the Workers' Party of Ireland.

He spoke as a guest at the annual meeting of the far-right Irish Freedom Party earlier this year about the "cultural war" faced by this country, railing against drug dealers and the "NGO class", although he says he is not a member of that party. He casts the issue as one of class.

"The establishment is on the run," he told the gathering.

"They are afraid of their lives of what is happening here."

He cited the 1913 lock-out and the revolutionary period and the IRA's border campaign of 1956 as examples of where working-class people from East Wall rose up and did their duty.

Another speaker, Nigel Murphy from the East Wall Residents Association, pointed to an attempt to establish a direct provision centre in Ballsbridge in 2019 which was stopped by a legal challenge, made easier by access locally to "lawyers and judges".

In fact, that was in 2001, a lifetime away from the current situation.

Every community being affected by the current emergency has cited local circumstances as the reason why they had been unfairly selected for the location of a new facility.

The reality is that the Government appears to be scrambling to find beds anywhere in an unprecedented flow of refugees and asylum seekers into the country.

There has, however, been no such facility located as of yet in salubrious neighbourhoods in the State's cities.

An ESRI report, published on Thursday, showed that there has been a 191% increase in the number of asylum seekers who arrived in this country during the first half of 2022 compared to the same period in 2019, the last full year unaffected by Covid.

Between January and



There was a garda presence in Dublin's East Wall during the week as crowds gathered to protest against the moving of refugees into an old ESB building in the area. Pictures: Leah Farrell/RollingNews.ie

June, the number of international protection applications rose from 2,235 to 6,494. A "confluence of factors" was cited as the reason for the increase.

Since the war in Ukraine began in February, more than 60,000 people fleeing that conflict have arrived here.

There are forecasts that this number could top 70,000 by the end of the year. All of this is being superimposed on a prevailing housing crisis that shows no sign of abating.

Some of the 80 new residents already moved to the ESB facility came from the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Santry, which is not renewing its contract with International Protection Accommodation Service for 400 beds.

More arrived from Athlone, having previously been living in tents on a State property. Around 360 hotels across the country are coming to the end of their current contracts and it is unknown how many

**“The reality is that the Government appears to be scrambling to find beds anywhere**

will renew. The conversion of the East Wall centre from office to accommodation is not an outlier. Anywhere that has the potential to be fashioned into something habitable is being looked at.

On Tuesday, a delegation from Kill in Co Kildare met with Integration Minister Roderic O'Gorman over opposition to the conversion of an equestrian centre in their community to house 350 Ukrainian refugees.

A lack of services in the small community there is cited as the main problem.

In Mayo last week, a council meeting was told plans to build modular housing in Claremorris would create a "shanty town" and would be met by "vigorous opposition".

The concerns being expressed have also given rise



of space and said she hopes to secure larger accommodation to reunite with the rest of her family, who plan to move to Ireland soon.

"The hotel has no classroom and no playground," she said. "It's not possible to cook for children, especially for a small baby." She said her children aren't eating well, with food ordered to the hotel, and her youngest has been sick often amid digestive system issues.

"It is important for us to stay in Cork since our son is studying at MTU [to become a musician] and his abilities give us hope," she said.

Oksana does not speak English, but is making efforts to integrate into the community by building friendships, attending English classes, and singing with Cork's first Ukrainian choir.

Hanna Bieliaieva lives in a hotel in Killarney, Co Kerry, with her two sons. She arrived in Ireland last March alone with her children.

"My parents, brother, and my whole family stayed in

Kharkiv," she said. "They help our army fight for our freedom. From Ukraine, I took only my children, saving them from the horrors of war."

She said she is very grateful to the hotel owners who are "amazing people with open hearts".

Unlike others who are desperate to move into a place of their own, moving for Hanna would be "a lot of stress, especially for the children. I just hope it doesn't happen again". Renting a place of her own would be "almost impossible", she said.

"We are happy here now. My kids go to the best school, they have wonderful teachers, and they became friends with their class-mates. I have a job in Killarney."

## East Wall

While Ukrainians unanimously exude a great level of appreciation for Ireland and its people for taking them in, not all Irish have been so welcoming. This week, a series of protests erupted in

Dublin's East Wall in the north inner city over the housing of refugees at an old ESB building in the area.

Locals were frustrated at the lack of consultation before a decision to use the building. Up to 380 men, women, and children who arrived in Ireland seeking international protection are being housed in the building.

For Roman, he understood the frustration of protesters and that it was a normal reaction amid a housing crisis. However, he stressed they must know Ukrainians did not come here of their own free will.

"We are very grateful to the Irish for their hospitality, you have a wonderful country, [but] we came because of the war," he said.

"I know Irish history well and I think they should understand Ukrainians. The Irish also fought for their independence for a long time."

Hanna is "concerned" about the protests and said although she is "forever

grateful" to Irish people, she stressed that those from other countries also need protection and support.

"I read about the anti-refugee protest in Dublin," she said. "I understand the feelings of the locals and their anxiety. I agree that it is very difficult to accept so many visitors in their motherland. "Sorry, I'm sorry, but our country is now at war and we really need support and protection. I sincerely and tirelessly thank you for that. We are safe and have the opportunity to live with dignity."

Hanna Bieliaieva and her sons Kolya (8) and Yurs (6) with a horse and jaunting car in Killarney, Co Kerry. Picture: Don MacDonaghe





## Christmas gift guide

See inside

PLUS 25 tips for a green Christmas - Weekend Pages 8-9

## World Cup 2022

### Former champions Argentina and Germany desperate to avoid early exit

Weekend Sport Pages 2-9

Keano going at it while RTÉ's new panel steps out of the shadows Larry Ryan, Page 28



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# Hotels' €337m deal to house refugees

## Additional €280m State spend on services for asylum seekers

Ciará Phelan  
Political Correspondent

Two hotel groups have signed contracts worth up to €12.5m each for accommodating Ukrainians fleeing war.

A breakdown of the contracts awarded by the State reveals deals worth €337m with 270 hotels and B&Bs across the country between April and September of this year.

A spokesman from the Department of Integration said the actual figure is far higher because of deals awarded in the last quarter of 2022, but said those details will not be released until January 2023.

Some of the biggest deals signed so far include:  
■ €12.5m: Quality Hotel Youghal, Cork  
■ €12.5m: Windward Management Limited, with payments to a number of hotels they own, including €8.5m to Tallaght Cross Hotel, €1.2m to Anner Hotel in Tipperary, and €955,500 to Park Inn hotel, Clare;  
■ €10.8m: Citywest Hotel and

accommodation for asylum seekers but the Department of Integration said no obligation exists to publish these contract details, despite almost 17,000 people seeking international protection arriving here so far this year.

Between April and June this year, 92 contracts were awarded to hotels totaling almost €100m. Between July and September, an additional 172 contracts were signed with hotels, apartment blocks, student accommodation, and B&Bs totaling almost €90m.

The values of the contracts provided are estimates and the actual amounts paid to providers depends on occupancy and usage, according to a department spokesman.

The contracts include catering services, cleaning, laundry facilities, food and water, and security services. The spokesman said the department cannot comment on award criteria due to matters of commercial sensitivity but added that contracts are awarded as quickly as possible, usually within a couple of weeks.

This week, the Government admitted some providers are still waiting for payments due to a backlog but said additional staff had been moved within his department to process payments as soon as possible.

The list of contracts lays bare the pressure on tourist hotspots across the country to provide accommodation for those fleeing the war.

It is understood contracts for 360 of the 500 hotels in contracts with the State were up for renewal next month and the department is expecting the majority of them to extend their deals.

Green Party leader Eamon Ryan said he is concerned about the availability of accommodation in the weeks ahead.

In Ukraine, much of the country is still without electricity, heat, and water two days after devastating Russian missile attacks against the country's civilian infrastructure.

The UN high commissioner for human rights, Volker Türk, said Russian strikes on critical infrastructure had killed at least 77 people since October.

"Millions are being plunged into extreme hardship and appalling conditions of life by these strikes," said Mr Türk.

"Taken as a whole, this raises serious problems under international humanitarian law, which requires a concrete and direct military advantage for each object attacked."

The Big Read: 13-15  
World: 22



Toy tester Lucy Hoban, aged 6, from Galway, with 'Late Late Toy Show' host Ryan Tubridy.

Picture: Andres Poveda

## 'Oz' Toy Show a tornado of fun

Denise O'Donoghue

Consider the grey of Kansas firmly left behind. Viewers of last night's *Late Late Toy Show* were treated to a technicolor extravaganza as Ryan Tubridy and more than 200 children travelled over the rainbow and down the yellow brick road.

"Welcome to somewhere over the rainbow, but more importantly, welcome back to a full audience. We haven't had a full audience in over two years," Tubridy said to a whooping crowd. "This is what happens when a pandemic ends."

With *The Wizard of Oz* as the theme, host Tubridy, who unsurprisingly arrived as his doppelganger the Scarecrow, was delighted to bring a good old-fashioned all-singing, all-dancing Toy Show to our screens.

Liverpool FC goalkeeper and Cork native Caoimhín Kelleher was the first star guest. The penalty shootout star couldn't save a penalty from blindfolded (and garb-smacked) Liverpool fan Cealan, who earned himself a trip to Anfield in the process.

The excitement we have come to expect from the Toy Show of recent years was sustained into the wee hours as Tubridy and his trusty toy testers tore through the emerald-green set as a tornado of fun.

The subtle change of focus to the children of Ireland rather than the toys — and the emphasis on Irish toys and retailers — reflected the cost-of-living crisis, and the child stars shone brightly on the night, including rapper MC Bucky from Cork, toy tester Lucy from Galway, and performers from Spotlight Stage School.

The Toy Show Appeal also returned for its third year, with viewers donating during the show. Donations can be made at [rte.ie/toyshowappeal](http://rte.ie/toyshowappeal) or via Revolut.

# Irish Twitter executive in court to save job

Aodhan O Faolain

An Irish-based senior executive with Twitter has secured a temporary High Court injunction preventing the social networking giant from terminating her employment. The order was secured by Twitter's global vice president for public policy Sinead McSweeney.

She claims that, by not responding to a generic and vague email sent to all Twitter employees by its new owner, Elon Musk, she has been treated as if she is no longer employed by the

social media company. She said that she discovered on November 18 that she had been locked out of Twitter's IT system and got an email to her personal account acknowledging her "voluntary resignation".

The company informed her that she had accepted an exit package, but Ms McSweeney insists she did not resign. She has been locked out of Twitter's Dublin office and its internal IT systems, including her company email account.

The court heard that

Twitter's lawyers acknowledged in a communication to her that she had no intention to resign, confirmed that her commitment to her work "had never been questioned," and said that her access to the IT systems would be restored.

Ms McSweeney says that while communication was welcome, she is concerned about her job because of the "mixed messages" she has been getting from both Mr Musk himself and his senior US-based associates since the company was taken over.

Ms McSweeney says that, despite the communication from the company, she remains locked out of both the IT systems and Twitter's Dublin office.

She was also unable to attend a scheduled work meeting, as she was unable to access the Dublin building, leaving her embarrassed, humiliated, and upset, the court heard.

She now fears that the company has "resigned me", contrary to the terms of her employment. Mr Musk, she claims, has been running the company

"in an unorthodox manner" and has been rehiring and firing "with no apparent logic" in a manner she claims is unlawful.

At the High Court, Mr Justice Brian O'Moore granted Ms McSweeney an interim injunction preventing Twitter International Unlimited Company from terminating her contract of employment.

She further secured an order restraining Twitter from communicating to any third party that her employment with the company has been in any way altered

since November 15. The orders are to remain in place until further order of the court.

Ms McSweeney said that while she had no difficulty "putting my shoulder to the wheel" during a hectic period for Twitter, since Mr Musk's takeover her workload has significantly increased to over 75 hours a week because many people had been summarily dismissed.

Ms McSweeney, a UCC law graduate, is a widow and the mother of a teenage son.

News: 12

# Mother wants meeting over baby's organ incineration

Ann Murphy and Conor Capplins

The mother of one of the 18 babies whose organs were incinerated without their permission has said those affected must be given a chance to look those responsible "in the eyes" to explain how their lives were crushed.

Katie Quilligan was speaking after the publication of a long-delayed investigation into how the babies' organs were sent abroad for incineration from Cork University Maternity Hospital. The review found post-mortem staff made the erroneous decision in March and April 2020, under severe pressure to find refrigerator capacity for organs amid warnings of the oncoming pandemic.

The 124-page report, which was due over a year

ago, acknowledged the families were let down by the way in which the organs were disposed of. However, Ms Quilligan said the report findings and an apology from Cork University Maternity Hospital are insufficient, as she wants a face-to-face meeting with Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly and those who signed off on sending the organs of her son James for incineration.

"It's all well and good them saying by paper, email, and in the Dail they are sorry, but we need to look these people in the eyes that have crushed our lives." The remains of Leona Bermingham's son Lee were also incinerated without her permission. She was "absolutely shocked" after discovering yesterday that her son's remains were not, as previously stated, sent to

Antwerp, Belgium, but rather to Denmark.

"I'm disgusted really at how it has been dealt with. All this time and they still don't have the decency to pick up the phone and communicate with us exactly where our child's brain is."

She said the families are devastated reading the report and for her, "an apology at this stage means absolutely nothing".

The report stated staff decided to incinerate her son's remains due to "severe pressure on the post-mortem room team in unprecedented circumstances in preparation for the pandemic".

"I don't think after two and a half years that's a good enough explanation. We've heard Covid as an excuse time after time, it's just not good enough," she said.

News: 4

# Guilty plea over Hourihane killing

Fiona Magennis

A man has pleaded guilty to the manslaughter of a homeless man who died from injuries sustained in an assault at a tented village in Cork City three years ago.

Christopher O'Sullivan was arraigned before the Central Criminal Court yesterday where he pleaded guilty to the unlawful killing of Timothy Hourihane, 53, on October 13, 2019, at Mardyke Walk.

Mr O'Sullivan was originally charged with murder and was due to stand trial in Cork on January 30. The 40-year-old, of no



Timothy Hourihane: Killed at Mardyke Walk, Cork City.

fixed abode, replied "guilty" when the charge of unlawful killing was put to him by the registrar at the brief hearing.

Siobhan Lankford SC, for the DPP, told the Central Criminal Court that the plea to manslaughter was acceptable to the State.

Ms Lankford asked that the matter be put in for sentence on January 30 in Cork to facilitate the family of the deceased who are from the city.

Defence barrister Roisin Lacey SC requested a governor's report on the accused. Mr Justice Paul McDermott directed the preparation of the report and made an order for O'Sullivan to be produced on January 30 for sentence.

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