

# Voters and candidates will battle with boundary changes for next election

- Galway East in running to return to a four-seater

By Slobhán Holliman

VOTERS in Galway are likely facing constituency changes if the next General Election takes place as scheduled in early 2025 as the surge in population will require an increase in the number of Dáil seats.

While changes are expected to be made to Galway West, Galway East and Roscommon-Galway, it's Galway East that is likely to gain a TD and go from a three-seater to a four-seater constituency.

The Census 2022 preliminary population data was published last week and shows a significant rise in population to 5,123,536 people, the highest since 1841. The Constitution requires one TD for every 20,000 to 30,000 people and at least 11 extra TDs will need to be accommodated, and the Commission may lean towards going higher.

In 2016 the population for Galway East was 89,548. This has increased by just under 7,500 to 97,016, with the number of people per TD averaging at 32,339 - higher than the 30,000 allowed under the Constitution.

The last boundary commission made changes to all three Galway constituencies in 2016. While the seat number remained the same, thousands of voters from the North East of the Galway East constituency were moved into Roscommon-Galway. Moving these back to where they were would have a knock-on effect on Roscommon-Galway and Sligo-Leitrim.

The Commission may consider that the least disruptive



**SINN Féin's Louis O'Hara will be a very strong contender to take a seat in Galway East at the next General Election.**

PHOTO: RAY RYAN

way of increasing Galway East's voter numbers is by transferring voters from parts of Galway West such as Claregalway, part of Oranmore and small parts of Galway East where towns were divided, such as Dunmore.

The latest census figures put the population per TD in Galway West at 30,919 - so it could remain a five-seater by reducing its population. Roscommon-Galway has 30,730 per TD and again could remain a three-seater with a reduction in its population.

Galway East was a real battleground in 2020 and many candidates and parties were surprised at the huge support garnered by first-time candidate Louis O'Hara, who secured a whopping 7,100 first preference votes for Sinn Féin.

This put him second to Independent Sean Canney, who



**VOTING papers from 2020 - more candidates are likely to be chasing more seats in Galway East if a General Election is held in 2024.**

PHOTO: RAY RYAN

had 7,800 first preference votes. The party has continued to gain support locally and nationally and O'Hara will be a very strong contender to take a seat at the next election.

While the sitting TDs in Galway East all retained their seats - IND Sean Canney, FF Anne Rabbitte and FG Ciaran Cannon - they will all be eager to see how the Constituency Commission decides to carve up this region over the coming year.

Both Fianna Fail and Fine Gael will be under pressure to secure a second seat and are likely to run multiple candidates to bolster transfers.

Galway East TD Sean Canney, who topped the poll in 2020, told *The Tuam Herald* that while everything is "idle speculation" at present, a four-seater would create extra pressure for independent candidates, with the main parties looking to increase their representation.

The Constituency Commission, which is independent of government, will be expected to have its recommendations ready by next summer.



**THE plaque remembering the late Canon JJ Cribbin is blessed by Fr Frank Conlisk.**

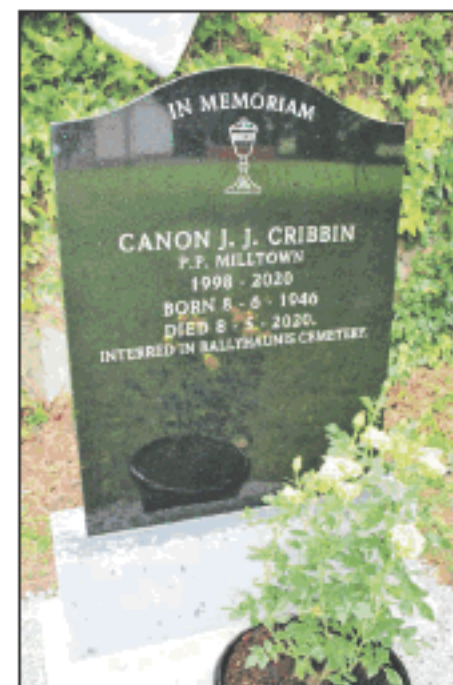
## Milltown remembers Fr JJ

A MEMORIAL mass was held and a plaque was unveiled recently to remember the late Canon JJ Cribbin, who served as parish priest to Milltown-Ballyglass from 1998 until his passing in May 2020.

A native of Ballyhaunis, Fr Cribbin was much loved by his parishioners and his passing in the midst of the pandemic caused great sorrow.

Due to the restrictions in place at the time, it was not possible to celebrate his life appropriately. However, with the easing of the restrictions, it was decided to erect a plaque in his honour on the church grounds.

Led by Fr Frank Conlisk, many of Fr JJ's relations and friends were in attendance at the memorial and Fr JJ would have been impressed by the



community spirit displayed as the congregation united in showing what can be achieved by working together.

The choir added considerably to the occasion in the church - and at the unveiling

- as did the traditional music in the shade of the sycamore tree. Trojan work by an army of volunteers ensured that every detail was taken care of.

Thanks were extended to Fr Frank, Canon John D Flannery and Fr Seamus Flannery for their participation in the Mass and to Fr Joe O'Brien, former classmate and great friend of JJ's, who was chief celebrant.

After the unveiling, the formalities were concluded by Cliona, a niece of JJ's, who thanked Milltown community for the memorial dedicated to her dear uncle.

Refreshments were later provided in Mullarkey's. Thanks were expressed by those attending to Mullarkeys, Finns, Ryans and Sheridans and many other individuals for the food provided.



**Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe**  
**Galway County Council**

### FÉILTE BHÉAL ÁTHA GHÁRTHA & DHÚN MÓR 2022

Ceadúnais Teagmhais Speisialta (Corr-Thrádál) a bhforáiltear dóibh sna Fodhlithe Corr-thrádála, 1998 agus a rinneadh faoin Acht Corr-Thrádála, 1995.

Teastaíonn Ceadúnais Teagmhais Speisialta aonair (Corr-thrádál) d'fhonn bheith ag trádáil ag Féile Bhéal Átha Ghártha (an 1 Lúnasa) agus ag Féile Dhún Mór (an 4 Lúnasa) 2022.

Is féidir tuilleadh eolais agus foirmeacha iarratais a fháil ar láithreán gréasáin na Comhairle, [www.galway.ie](http://www.galway.ie) nó ar an teileafón ar (091) 509225, ar ríomhphost ag [facilities@galwaycoco.ie](mailto:facilities@galwaycoco.ie) agus ag an Deasc Seirbhíse do Chustaiméirí, Áras an Chontae, Cnoc na Radharc, Gaillimh le linn gnáthuaireanta oifige.

Dé hAoine an 15 Iúil 2022 an dáta deiridh a nglacfar le hiarratais. Ní eiseofar ceadúnais ar an lá.

### BALLYGAR & DUNMORE FESTIVALS 2022

Special Event Licences (Casual Trading) provided in the Casual Trading Bye Laws 1998 and made under the Casual Trading Act 1995.

Individual Special Event Licences (Casual Trading) are required in order to trade at the Ballygar (1st August), Dunmore (4th August) 2022.

Further information and application forms are available on the Council's Website [www.galway.ie](http://www.galway.ie) or by phone at (091) 509225, email [facilities@galwaycoco.ie](mailto:facilities@galwaycoco.ie) and also at the Customer Services Desk at Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill, Galway, during normal office hours.

Closing date for applications is Friday 15th July 2022. Licences will not be issued on the day.

Tá míle fáilte roimh chomhfhreagras agus ghnó i nGaillimh: [gaelge@cocogaillimh.ie](mailto:gaelge@cocogaillimh.ie) [www.gaillimh.ie](http://www.gaillimh.ie)

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J. Brann, Rúnaí Contae