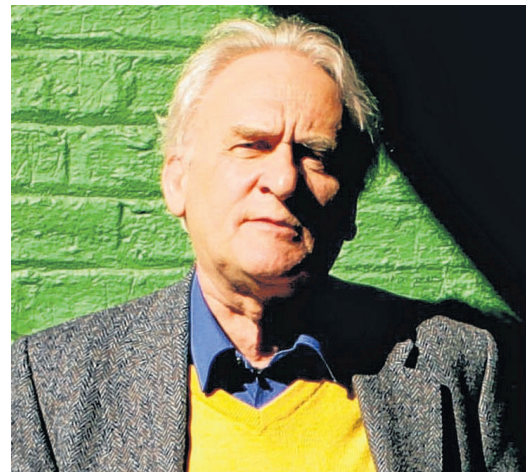


SIMPLY
THE BEST
LIMERICK
HAMMER CORKMalachy Clerkin
Sports Monday

“A decade on from marriage equality – a boy saw us holding hands and said to our faces: ‘If***ing hate gay people’”

Una Mullally
OpinionPAUL DURCAN
ONE OF THE
GREAT
MAVERICKS
OF POETRYGerard Smyth
Page 2Average
monthly
rent exceeds
€2,000 for
first timeRents climbing faster than at any point
over past 20 years, Daft.ie survey findsGovernment interventions may have
exacerbated problem, says report authorCONOR POPE
Consumer Affairs Correspondent

Rents are now climbing faster than at any point over the past 20 years with the national monthly average between January and March surpassing €2,000 for the first time, new figures suggest.

According to the Daft.ie quarterly rental report, the cost of renting increased by an average of 3.4 per cent in the first three months of 2025 with the increases taking the monthly average open-market rent to €2,053.

That compares to a low of just €765 in 2011 and represents a 48 per cent jump since just before the outbreak of Covid-19 in early 2020.

In Dublin, the increase was 2.4 per cent in the first quar-

48%

Rents have risen 48% since
just before the outbreak of
Covid-19 in early 2020

ter, the largest rise since 2022 as the pipeline of new rental properties dried up.

The author of the report, economist and Trinity College professor Ronan Lyons, once again noted a supply crunch across the rental sector as the root cause of the price spike. He suggested that government interventions in recent years that were aimed at easing the housing crisis may have, in fact, exacerbated the scale of the problem.

There were just more than 2,300 homes available to rent nationally on May 1st, down 14 per cent year-on-year and the third lowest total for May in 20 years, the report suggests. The figure also represents close to half the 2015-2019 average for availability of homes to rent.

Mr Lyons said the sustained increases in rents in the open market “are being driven by an acute and worsening shortage of rental housing”.

He added that changes made to rent controls in 2021 “dramatically reduced the ability of Ireland’s rental sector to

attract the capital needed for new supply, the ultimate remedy for the shortage”.

He stressed that the “opportunity exists for the Government to reform those controls and facilitate the emergence of a new pipeline of rental homes. Nonetheless, further supports will be needed to encourage new rental supply outside of the greater Dublin area”.

After a period of subdued pressure on rents in Dublin, due to a large volume of new supply coming on to the market, inflation in the capital is converging with rates elsewhere.

The year-on-year increase up to the end of March in Dublin was put at 5.8 per cent with the average in the rest of the country said to be 8.6 per cent.

In Cork and Galway cities, rents were up 13.6 per cent and 12.6 per cent respectively while the rate of increase in Waterford was 9.9 per cent year-on-year. Limerick was where the largest increases were recorded, climbing by more than 20 per cent year-on-year.

Outside the major cities, rents in Leinster and Connaught-Ulster were up just over 5 per cent on an annual basis, while rents in Munster were 11.5 per cent higher.

Mr Lyons also noted a dramatic rise in interest rates in recent years, which he said had impacted the supply of second-hand homes and caused existing homeowners to fix for the medium term. He said that situation would “pass” but only slowly.

“The ultimate solution remains unchanged from that which was needed a decade ago,” he continued.

“A lot more homes need to be built.”

However, he said the entire housing system “seems reliant on Government funding and subsidies, an unfortunate circumstance at the best of times but of greater concern given wider economic uncertainties”.

➔ New home starts this year at lowest level since 2016: page 2



Man arrested on suspicion of Gaine murder

CONOR LALLY
and BARRY ROCHE

Gardaí were last night questioning a man on suspicion of the murder of Mike Gaine, who vanished from his Co Kerry farm in March.

The arrest came after the investigation progressed rapidly over the weekend following the discovery of human remains in slurry spread across Mr Gaine’s farm just outside Kenmare.

The arrested man, who is in his 50s and knew Mr Gaine (56), had been spoken to by gardaí informally as part of the initial missing person’s inquiry and again after the case was up-

graded to a homicide investigation last month. The man had permitted gardaí to visit his accommodation and examine it, negating the need for a search warrant at that time.

In a statement yesterday, gardaí said the male was being detained under the provisions of section four of the Criminal Justice Act 1984. It added that members of the force were continuing to “carry out searches and technical examinations” around Mr Gaine’s farmyard and nearby fields.

The suspect’s arrest was the first time anyone has been detained by gardaí since the investigation began. The statement

confirming his arrest was also the first time gardaí referred to the matter as potential murder.

However, Garda sources described the investigation as “complex” and “painstaking”. While the discovery of remains and the arrest of a suspect in murder cases often results in criminal charges very quickly, sources said the process might take some time in this case.

Gardaí in Kerry, who are being assisted by the National Bureau of Criminal Investigation, have 24 hours to question the suspect before he must be either charged or released.

Gardaí suspect Mr Gaine, a popular sheep farmer well

known locally, was murdered during a personal dispute by a man known to him.

Though detectives must wait for the results of DNA testing on the remains discovered last Friday, they believe they are those of Mr Gaine. Detectives suspect his body was dismembered and dumped in his slurry tank. More remains were discovered during searches yesterday.

Gardaí are working on the theory Mr Gaine was murdered on March 21st – the day he was last seen buying phone credit in Kenmare.

While the slurry tank was searched and drained in the

days after Mr Gaine vanished, when the inquiry was still a missing person’s case, nothing of evidential value was found. It was unclear if the remains were in the tank from the time of the killing or if they were placed there later, perhaps after it was drained.

The body parts were discovered by chance last Friday when people working the land took slurry from the tank.

The alarm was raised immediately and gardaí locked down the farmyard, fields, slurry tank and other machinery as part of a large crime scene.

Gardaí placed human remains in plastic evidence bags

➔ Gardaí searching the land at Michael Gaine’s farm in Kenmare, Co Kerry, yesterday. PHOTOGRAPH: DOMINICK WALSH/EYE FOCUS

yesterday, when a hearse was also seen leaving.

A postmortem was due to take place at University Hospital Kerry, Tralee, though it was not immediately clear if a cause of death would be established due to the condition of the remains.

➔ Mass-goers shocked by news of grim discovery: page 3

Biden diagnosed with
‘aggressive’ prostate cancer

Former US president Joe Biden has been diagnosed with an “aggressive form” of prostate cancer that has spread to the bone, his office said in a statement last night.

Mr Biden (82) was diagnosed on Friday after having experienced urinary symptoms, and he and his family are reviewing treatment options with doctors, the statement said.

“While this represents a more aggressive form of the disease, the cancer appears to be hormone-sensitive, which allows for effective management,” his office said.

Prostate cancers are given a score called a Gleason score that measures, on a scale of one to 10, how the cancerous cells compare with normal cells. Mr Biden’s office said his score was nine, suggesting his cancer is among the most aggressive.

Mr Biden’s term as president

ended on January 20th, when Donald Trump was sworn in.

He had beaten an incumbent Mr Trump in the 2020 presidential election and initially sought a rematch with him last year.

However, he dropped out of the race last July after a halting



➔ Joe Biden: was diagnosed on Friday, his office said in a statement

debate performance against Republican candidate Mr Trump prompted panic among his fellow Democrats. He endorsed his vice-president, Kamala Harris, to succeed him.

Mr Trump, who is just three years younger than Mr Biden, subsequently defeated Ms Har-

ris in November’s election.

Mr Biden has dealt with cancer before. Prior to starting his presidency, he had several non-melanoma skin cancers surgically removed, and he had a cancerous lesion removed from his chest in February 2023.

His physical health and mental acuity drew intense media scrutiny even before the debate. At the time of his election, Mr Biden was the oldest person to win the presidency. Mr Trump (78) broke that record when he defeated Ms Harris last year.

In the US, prostate cancer is the most common cancer and the second leading cause of cancer death among men, according to the American Cancer Society. – Guardian/agencies

➔ Maureen Dowd: page 6

Weather

Showers will develop in the afternoon, with possible thunder. Highs of 15-22 degrees

THE IRISH TIMES
24-28 Tara Street, Dublin 2.
D02 CX89
Telephone: (01) 9203900
Online: irishtimes.com
The recommended retail price of THE IRISH TIMES in the Republic of Ireland is €2.60
Subscriptions: Tel: (01) 9203901
Email: subscribe@irishtimes.com



9 771393 351918 21
Vol.No. 52287. Monday, May 19, 2025

Home
News

RTÉ pay: The Department of Arts under Catherine Martin backed increasing the €250,000 pay rate for the head of RTÉ. Page 2

Sentencing: A pattern of abusive behaviour in relationships is to be treated as an aggravating factor when it comes to sentencing. Page 3

World
News

Mideast: Ceasefire talks between Israel and Hamas continued as Israeli warplanes and artillery launched a fresh wave of strikes across Gaza. Page 6

Business
Today

Offshore energy: Ireland is losing investment in clean energy because offshore projects are ‘too slow’, a business group claims. Page 12

SMEs: Debt levels among SMEs jumped last year, according to a Department of Finance survey. Page 12

Sports
Monday

Gaelic football: Mayo manager Kevin McStay had ‘no complaint’ after his side suffered a shock home defeat to Cavan in their All-Ireland series opener

Soccer: Arsenal sealed second place in the Premier League for a third successive season after beating Newcastle

30 BREATHTAKING YEARS
ONE WORLDWIDE PHENOMENON

Riverdance
THE NEW GENERATION 30

Composer
BILL WHELAN

Producer
MOYA DOHERTY

Musician
JOHN MCCOLGAN

GAITY THEATRE

5 JUNE - 7 SEPTEMBER

RIVERDANCE.COM TICKETMASTER.IE

GAITY THEATRE BOX OFFICE

TICKETS FROM €26.50*

€75.50, €59.50, €48.50, €37.50, €26.50

GROUPS Discount for 10 or more.

VIP EXPERIENCE: €126.50

*All prices include a restoration fee. Additional charges may apply.
Internet Bookings are subject to a 12.5% service charge per ticket (Max €6.90).