

AFTER 100 YEARS,
WHAT LIES AHEAD
FOR FIANNA Fáil?

NEWS



AND THE
NGONG
GOES TO

PROPERTY



ANTHONY DALY
GIVES BANNER
THE EDGE

SPORT

Irish Examiner

WEEKEND
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LOVEBIRDS:
A pair of
northern
gannets
perform a
delicate
courtship
display on
the cliffs of
Ireland's Eye,
where they
have returned
for the
summer to
breed.
Picture:
Fran Veale



Lewis Baker makes his mark

WEEKEND



Far from a dying art

WEEKEND

Electricity prices set to increase

Sean Murray

More than a million households have been warned to brace for energy hikes in the months to come, after PrePay Power announced that its bills will increase from next month.

The company said that its electricity bills will increase by 8.8% for average users, while gas will rise 10.6% on estimated annual bills from June 1.

An average customer will see a rise of almost €168 for electricity and €170 for gas, it said.

Pinning the blame on wholesale energy costs driven by instability in the global energy markets, the

PrePay Power announces 8.8% hike starting from next month

company said it absorbed these increases "for as long as possible".

"This is our first price increase in three and a half years," managing director Eric Mullane said.

"However, wholesale energy costs have continued to rise sharply, and it is simply not possible to hold out indefinitely."

Price comparison site Bonkers.ie said the decision from Prepay Power will affect around 180,000 electricity customers and

60,000 gas customers.

Its head of communications Darragh Cassidy said the news was not surprising.

"Last autumn, most of the energy suppliers hiked their electricity prices by between 10% and 15% as a result of continued high wholesale electricity costs and an increase in grid and network charges," he said.

"However, Prepay Power, its sister company Yuno Energy, and Electric Ireland all announced a

'price freeze' for the winter months."

Mr Cassidy said that this could not last and that the price hikes announced could have been even higher.

"As a result of this, I'd also expect Electric Ireland, which has close to 1.1m customers, to announce a similar hike in its electricity prices over the coming days or weeks," he said.

Earlier this week, figures emerged which showed that Irish households are in arrears on their energy bills to the tune of almost €200m in total.

According to figures

from the Commission for Regulation of Utilities, the number of households behind on their electricity bills in February was 316,838, while 179,439 were in arrears on their gas bills.

The news of yet more hikes to come is expected to ramp pressure up on the Government to implement measures to protect households, with the worst impacts of the crisis in the Middle East potentially still on the horizon.

In proposals to come before the Dáil next week, Labour has called for a "mini-budget" to include a €100 grocery support via child

benefit, a windfall tax on energy profits to pay for energy credits, and the piloting of free transport trials to reduce fuel use.

"These measures would transfer profits from the big energy companies, Big Tech, the banks, and burger barons, to the pockets of PAYE workers and the self-employed, who are struggling to make ends meet in the teeth of what has all the hallmarks of a permacrisis," its finance spokesperson, Ged Nash, said.

Sharp rise in criminal gang activity in prisons

Cormac O'Keefe

Security Correspondent

Prison officers are grappling with a sharp rise in the number of criminal gangs operating in jails, many of them driving a booming trade in drugs, weapons, and phone smuggling.

This internal gangland threat is accompanied by rising levels of violence in a prison system that is buckling under an escalating overcrowding crisis.

Speaking at the Prison Officers Association (POA) annual conference in Kilkenny, prison boss Caron McCaffrey said they had identified 34 known criminal groups in prisons in 2025, an 80% rise on the 19 recorded in 2024.

The Irish Prison Service (IPS) director general said these 34 gangs comprised 172 prisoners, a 25% increase on the previous year.

However, she stressed that the 174 prisoners still only represents 3% of the prison population.

Mountjoy Prison has the most gangs to manage, with 16 criminal factions, including the Kinahan cartel, the Hutch crime group, and the Blanchardstown crime gang.



Caron McCaffrey: Keeping drugs out a 'game of cat and mouse'.

Addressing the conference, POA acting president Peter Redmond said: "Drugs, phones, and weapons in our prisons are now on an alarming scale, controlled by organised crime gangs in custody, who are making significant profits for their endeavours."

"There is so much contraband in our prisons, that prisoners are brazenly stockpiling contraband everywhere and anywhere they can, for future sale and use."

He said there were almost 400 identified drone drops in 2025, burning through overhead nets and smuggling in drugs, phones, weapons, and even

tools to open up vents and light fittings to hide contraband in cells.

IPS figures show a 28% rise in drug detections, from 1,035 in 2024 to 1,325 in 2025.

Ms McCaffrey said keeping drugs out is "a game of cat and mouse" and once they shut off one avenue, gangs find another.

However, she said they had introduced metal mesh netting in Wheatfield Prison, resulting in a 73% decrease in drone incidents.

She said it had also been installed in Mountjoy and Cloverhill and was "hugely successful".

The POA has called for the netting to be installed at all closed prisons.

Ms McCaffrey said that it had been "incredibly costly" at €7m, but it would be extended to Castlereagh Prison.

Addressing the conference later, justice minister Jim O'Callaghan said he would be having discussions with Gardaí and the IPS regarding the possible extradition of Daniel Kinahan from the UAE. He said: "I can assure you that when high-security prisoners need to be accommodated in the prison service that there is a very stringent security system in place, and that will be discussed between myself, An Garda Síochána, and the Prison Service."

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Kerry distillery bidder complains about process

Emer Walsh

A prospective international buyer of the building that housed the former Killarney Brewing and Distilling (KBD) Company has lodged formal complaints against the Cork branch of estate agent Cushman & Wakefield and company receivers PwC over conduct during the sales process of the Kerry property.

Tony McKeever, chief executive of the South African investment and brand development firm, The Renewal Group, is understood to have made a final offer of €5.85m for the 5,760sq m premises at Kilahee, Fossa, which housed KBD before it entered liquidation last year.

Mr McKeever has written to the Property Services Regulatory Authority (PRSA) listing several complaints against Cushman & Wakefield over the sales process, including a failure to ensure a transparent and fair sales process, failure to achieve the best price reasonably obtainable, and a lack of proper communication.

The CEO has also lodged complaints against receivers

at PwC to Chartered Accountants Ireland, citing concerns about professional standards, ethical obligations, and alleged oversight failures by the professional services firm.

Michael O'Regan, one of the receivers at PwC, said in an email to Mr McKeever that they are "satisfied with the sales process and the outcome of same", adding that there was "no basis whatsoever" for his complaints against PwC or Cushman & Wakefield.

Another bidder for the landmark property was local pub owner and cattle exporter, Mark Hallisey. The Kerry native, who owns the Golden Nugget bar and restaurant in Fossa, bid €5.7m for the property, but was told last week that his offer was unsuccessful.

Mr Hallisey said he was repeatedly told by his solicitor that he was the highest bidder, despite The Renewal Group's bid of €5.85m. He added that he was told by one of the sales agents that they would be going for a lower bidder who had full cash funds.

Rapist: 'What about when she's 18?'

A paedophile rapist was warned by a garda before his convictions to stay away from one of his teenage victims, but the 63-year-old asked: "What happens when she is 18?"

The sports coach from

Kerry was found guilty of raping one girl three times, orally raping her nine times, and sexually assaulting her nine times, and sexually assaulting the second victim nine times.

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Insider's guide to Nice

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