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Castlebar Lake Attracts Hundreds of Perverts

(Continued from front page)

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Over the past two years, the carpark at Lough Lannagh has become a magnet for men looking for such encounters, and their actions are making the area a no-go area for ordinary visitors and walkers.

Many of our readers have contacted the Mayo Echo in recent times to complain about the activities of these perverts, and following an in-depth investigation, it can be revealed that the situation is much more worrying than anyone imagined.

Initially, the practice of cruising by men was confined to night-time, and the area it was taking place was usually quiet enough during these hours. However, over the past six months the practice has now spread to the daytime, when children are around, and many more members of the public are around. The perverts are approaching unaccompanied men and teenage boys who are walking, fishing, or visiting the local graves. Numerous complaints have been made to local Gardai in relation to unsolicited approaches for sex. Complaints have also been made about men having sex in public places, around the Lough Lannagh area. Walkers have come across men in various stages of undress, in different positions.

The Mayo Echo has been carrying out an investigation of the situation at Lough Lannagh over quite some time following complaints from our readers. The first

thing to strike any observer is just how busy the area is. Many people visit the area to eat their lunch, read the newspaper, go for a stroll, feed the ducks, or just have a daytime snooze in their car. In fact, it should be stressed that the majority of people who visit Lough Lannagh are doing so for completely innocent reasons.

However, as you spend more time in the area, you begin to notice that there is a hidden world. Over the course of the past week, up to fifty men visited the area looking for other gay men, every day. Tuesdays and Wednesdays are the busiest, when upwards of one seventy men will visit the area, right throughout the day. The vast majority will arrive by car, although an increasing number are arriving by foot, leaving their vehicles elsewhere in the town.

Most of the men do not know their partner before they meet up, and do not stay in touch after the encounter. The men follow the same sort of procedure to meet other men. They arrive by car or on foot, and walk about the immediate area. They say hello in a casual nature to other passing men, and if the other men engage them in conversation, they make their way to a remote spot and the sexual activity begins. They may also leave the area in one of their cars, although many refuse to do so as this can prove much more dangerous than staying in the locality. Most of the men make their way to one of three spots in the hedge-growth around the area.



Above: The view from the children's playground. The red arrow points out where the men gather for their perverted sexual activity, behind the hedge alongside the river.

The most popular spot is up in a corner alongside the river. Any sounds are drowned out by the noise of the river. The ground at these spots is strewn with discarded condoms and tissues. Worryingly, at the busier spot, there are pages from young boys' magazines strewn in the area. There is a well-worn branch where the men hold onto whilst engaging in their business. The most worrying aspect of the whole situation is that this spot overlooks a children's playground, and the noise of children playing can clearly be heard from just 50 metres away, whilst these men take part in their perversion. Unbeknown to parents who are minding their children playing on the swings or the slide, drooling perverts are getting off whilst watching their children.

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