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NEWTOWN HERITAGE
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LANGTON AWARD
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Tuesday 7th July 2020 First Floor, The Boulevard, Quinsborough Road, Bray. A98 R6D7. Tel: 01 - 2869111 E-mail: wicklowned@localtimes.ie www.wicklowtimes.net

LIGHTS! CAMERA! ACTION!

Wicklow is set to be cemented as Ireland's film capital as Greystones Media Campus Limited has submitted a planning application for a new state-of-the-art film/TV studio and media campus on an 18-hectare IDA Ireland site at Killincarrig in Greystones, which has been lying idle for over 30 years.

The proposed facility will seek to build upon the existing Dublin-Wicklow film and screen cluster, the leading economic cluster of its type in the country. It will also work to consolidate Wicklow's position as the traditional heart of television and film production in Ireland.

The planning application proposes 14 studios, offices and ancillary production buildings in a landscaped setting - more than doubling the available stage capacity available to film, TV and

media crews in Ireland. Subject to planning, and once fully operational, the 18-hectare site is the first step in a process which hopes to deliver up to 1,200 new jobs in the film, media and broadcasting sectors. The development could also in turn lead to, in the region of up to 300 full-time positions in other sectors of the Irish economy through knock-on impacts. A further 580 jobs could be created during the construction phase.

Welcoming the news,

the new Cathaoirleach of Greystones Municipal District, Cllr Derek Mitchell, said "This is very welcome as there are few jobs in Greystones and we can't all commute. The site has been waiting for 35 years to find a use. I hope this comes about. There are to be four entrances, 722 car spaces and 276 bike spaces. The area fronting Mill Road is to be for higher quality buildings not more than three stories high."

Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Pat Kennedy, said



Pictured are Lena Lawlor, Rudy Montejo (Manager of Open Door Day Centre), Peter Lawlor, Suzanne Cox (Open Door Development Officer) and Roxy the dog at Peter's home in Kilmacanogue celebrating his fundraising achievement of raising over €20,000 for Open Door. See story on page 4



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"This will copper fasten Wicklow's reputation as the home of film and TV production in Ireland. We have so many talented film professionals living in Wicklow while we have a superb range of locations and pride ourselves on being Ireland's most film friendly county".

Cllr Tom Fortune, speaking to *Wicklow Times*, welcomed the news as the result of the efforts of numerous town councils and Municipal District Councils who had fought "tooth and nail" over the last three decades to get the site developed. He said that Wicklow would now have a 'film cluster' that could make it the "film centre of the country".

"This is fantastic news for Greystones Municipal District. It has been a long time coming. This site has been discussed around the

district council table for over 30 years and at last something is landing. A lot of local councillors both past and present are delighted. A massive thanks to everyone who made this happen. It is important now that this project is facilitated to completion."

Jennifer Whitmore TD and Cllr Jodie Neary said the news is "hugely encouraging". Speaking on the development Deputy Whitmore said "I have raised the potential of this site with the Council and various high-tech stakeholders since I became involved in politics. While the finer details of the planning permission still need to be teased out, I'm glad that after all this time there seems to be some interest in developing the IDA site. We are so lucky to have a vital piece of IDA

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Alannah Donoghue with Rachael and Fiona Tracey enjoying the recent sunshine in Knockananna

Public asked to continue to 'share the sunshine' for Wicklow Hospice

Together for Hospice, the National Hospice Movement, would like to thank the public for their support and generosity on the 30th anniversary of Hospice Sunflower Days. The virtual fundraising drive was well supported nationwide but raised on average 85% less than the traditional annual event.

The public are being invited to continue to 'share the sunshine', with www.togetherforhospice.ie open for donations, big or small, which will go directly to your chosen local hospice.

Hospice Sunflower Days aims to raise much needed funds for hospices and specialist palliative home care services across the country enabling them to continue to provide person centred, holistic and loving care to patients and

their loved ones.

Funds raised through the campaign are used to directly support hospices and specialist palliative home care services allowing them to purchase new equipment, support front-line posts, upgrade current facilities and continue to provide their vital service.

Sinead Tarmey, Wicklow Hospice commented, "We would like to take this opportunity to thank the public for all their support on our 30th

annual Hospice Sunflower Days. Hospice Sunflower Days is our flagship national on street collection during the year and the cancellation of our on-street collection was a major loss for Wicklow Hospice. We are calling on the public to continue to support us via www.togetherforhospice.ie and make a real difference to their local hospice. It is vital that people know that every cent raised locally, stays locally".

To share the sunshine, please visit www.togetherforhospice.ie to make a donation to your local hospice service. Alternatively, you can make a donation by texting 'SUN' to 50300 to donate €4 to support local hospice groups across Ireland. Texts cost €4. Hospice Sunflower Days will receive a minimum of €3.60. Service Provider: LIKECHARITY. Helpline: 076 680 5278.

Brockagh Resource Centre now open

The Centre is now open and will operate during Monday to Friday 9-5pm opening at the weekend for different group bookings.

"We look forward to welcoming all our friends, clients, groups and volunteers back to the centre. As a community centre, every precaution to prevent the spread of Covid 19 when reopening will be implemented.

"Some of these include, but not limited to: Single Entry and Exit System, collection outside the back door of children from classes, hand sanitisation, check in reception. Your safety is our priority and we can assure you that all recommended social distancing protocols will be in place.

"Our Sustainable Community Gardening Course will run the last two classes on the 6th and 13th July. Please email or phone if you have any suggestion on what you would like to see happening in the centre or any ideas for upcoming classes.

"We are at present putting our Autumn Brochure together which will be available in the lobby and at www.brockaghresourcecentre/events, www.facebook.com/brockaghresourcecentre. Please contact facilitators of the different activities for information on their opening days. Check out the regular classes and activities we offer on www.brockaghresourcecentre.ie/events."

Glendalough Country Market & Car Boot Sales

Traders and customers will be welcomed back

for the next Glendalough Country Market & Car Boot Sale on 12th July Sun, open from 10am to 4pm. Bargains on practically anything from household items to garden additions, and even vintage or antique treasures. Encouraging local and non-local producers of plants, vegetables, crafts etc., Vans must be booked in. Important Notice - because of the new social distancing trader spaces are more limited, as a result when you book payment must be made to secure place as a trader, this applies to outdoor and indoor spaces. Contact the Brockagh Centre on 0404-45600, email brockaghearboot@gmail.com for bookings.

The Road to Roundwood

The Road to Roundwood 5K Run & Walk will take place on Saturday July 25th, at Vartry Reservoir. Funds raised will go towards supporting a refugee family fleeing conflict to relocate to Co. Wicklow. Individuals or groups of up to six friends and family will be going every 10 mins from 6am to 10pm. Suggested entry fee is €20 per adult, €30 per family. To register, text Lorraie on 089 457 6602 with names, ages, and desired slot. Donate at www.roadtoroundwood.ie

Thank you from Avoca Recycling Centre

"Avoca Recycling Centre wishes to thank all the people who donate their unwanted clothes to us throughout the year.

"We also wish to thank Wicklow County Council who facilitate the clothes collection. Many local charities benefit from the funds raised from the clothes bank including Rathdrum Cancer Support, Wicklow Hospice, Avoca Senior Citizens and Avoca National School who are raising funds for a new playing pitch.

"We sincerely thank the general public and ask that you continue to bring along your unwanted clothes in support of the Avoca clothes bank. All charities who benefit from this are very grateful to Myles and his staff for all their hard work."

Newcastle Tidy Towns resume weekly clean-ups

Newcastle Tidy Towns have resumed their weekly clean-ups around the village. Join them on Monday evenings at 7:30pm in the Castle Inn car park. Although the tidy towns competition isn't taking place this year they still want to keep the village as tidy as possible. Don't forget to bring your own gloves!

Online sports quiz

Wicklow sports buffs are invited to take part in a challenge to be crowned Ireland's Biggest Sports Fan in an online quiz with questions set by the best-known names in Irish sport including soccer legend Paul McGrath, golfer Padraig Harrington and horse-trainer Joseph O'Brien.

The sporting heroes are amongst a number of top stars who have designed questions for the Ultimate Sports Quiz in aid of humanitarian aid agency, GOAL. The online quiz will be hosted by author and GOAL Ambassador, Paul Howard, better known as Ross O'Carroll-Kelly and the winner will be crowned Ireland's Biggest Sports Fan.

People are invited to test their sporting knowledge and register for the virtual quiz which will raise funds for GOAL's COVID-19 response in 14

countries around the world. The quiz takes place on Thursday 9th July at 6:30pm. The entrance fee is €10 with all proceeds going towards GOAL's efforts to help the most vulnerable communities.

The format for the night is simple. Each quiz round will be designed by a different sports star, with scores registered on a live leader board. The winner will be crowned Ireland's Biggest Sports Fan and the top three will each receive a Fitbit Charge 4.

Quiz host Paul Howard said: "This quiz is an excellent opportunity for Wicklow sports buffs to test their knowledge while we await the return of live sport. And who better to set the questions than our sporting heroes who know their sport better than most, and who have made such a huge contribution on the sporting field. Participants can register at www.goalglobal.org/sports-quiz/



Pictured are Ersen Yetis, Molly McNulty and Ella McNulty helping to launch the Tour De County fundraising campaign in support of CMRF Crumlin and the Temple Street Foundation. Clock up miracle miles on your bike this July and August and raise much-needed funds for sick children in CHI at Crumlin and Temple Street. Visit www.templestreet.ie or www.cmrf.org to find out more and get involved.

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Contacts:
Shay Fitzmaurice, Managing Editor - shay@localtimes.ie
Ian Colgan, News Editor - ian@localtimes.ie
General enquiries - info@localtimes.ie

'COALITION MUST MEET THE CHALLENGES AHEAD'

"The new FF-FG-Green Government has two Cabinet Ministers from Co. Wicklow. I congratulate them both. This is an opportunity for Stephen Donnelly and Simon Harris as well as Steven Matthews, the other Government T.D. to deliver on promises they made before and since the election," declared Independent councillor and former TD, Joe Behan last week.

"The health and housing crises are becoming greater with each passing day. The early comments from the Ministers for Health and Housing were worryingly vague and non-committal about issues such as housing supply and waiting lists.

"In fact, Minister Donnelly indicated that 20% of hospital bed capacity will be left idle for the foreseeable future in case of a Covid resurgence. This will inevitably lead to longer waiting lists for operations such as knee and hip surgeries as well as countless other procedures and will particularly hurt many older people from our county. This is the time to begin planning for a new acute hospital on the east coast of

Ireland, based in County Wicklow. Existing hospitals serving our people cannot cope with the number of patients in its catchment area and the Minister should show some vision by supporting the location of a new hospital on the east coast.

"Minister Harris was rightly praised for his handling of Covid-19. He now has an opportunity to shape the provision of Third and Fourth Level education for the future. I suggest he begin by elevating the status of Bray Institute of Further Education to a Third Level Institute with all the resources it needs to continue and expand its excellent provision to post Leaving Cert students from Co. Wicklow and beyond. The Minister



Cllr Joe Behan

should also expand the provision of Third Level courses at other potential Higher Education Institutes across the county.

"I suspect that in setting up a new Dept of Higher Education, that this Government might have an agenda to introduce third level tuition

fees and I call on Minister Harris to specifically state that this will not happen.

"Generally, I believe that this Government, with its huge majority, will attempt to impose a new austerity plan on the people in the next few years. I am particularly concerned that there will be massive increases in property tax in the future to pay the Covid bills and it would be helpful if the three Government TDs assured us that there are no plans to raise this tax in the years ahead.

"Many other issues will arise over the next few years and I believe it is essential that we hold this Coalition Government to account every single day of their term of office."



Jack and Garda Kevin Fitzgerald are pictured at the Wicklow stage of the Rescue Organisation Ireland's fundraising charity walk from Dublin, through Kildare, Laois, Carlow, Kilkenny, Wexford and Wicklow. Funds raised will go to Alone and Pieta House. See idonate.ie

Office workers in Wicklow among least equipped for working from home

Wicklow is among the top five counties where office workers are least equipped to work from home, according to a recent survey carried out by Censuswide on behalf of Open Sky, the digital transformation specialist for government organisations and large private enterprises.

The survey found that almost a quarter (22%) of Irish office workers don't have the necessary tools (including laptop, sufficient internet speeds and secure connection to work systems) to effectively work from home. The counties that are best equipped with the necessary tools for remote working are Monaghan, Roscommon, Tipperary, Wexford and Sligo. In terms of the age group that were keenest to work from home during the current coronavirus outbreak, the 35-44 category came out on top (93%). The over 55s were the least keen to do so (57%). Furthermore, the survey revealed that more than half (54%) of citizens would prefer to do non-emergency appointments with a doctor online rather than in-person. Some 28% said this was to avoid infections. The most popular reason was to save time.

CAB search businesses and residences

The Criminal Assets Bureau (CAB) conducted a search operation last Tuesday, 30th June, as part of an ongoing intelligence led operation targeting foreign nationals (believed to be Chinese) involved in the laundering of the proceeds of crime, accumulated by Irish-based organised crime groups.

The operation took place in the Dublin Metropolitan Region and the Wicklow Division. A total of 13 sites were searched which comprised of five business premises and eight residential addresses resulting in the seizure of funds totalling €1,035,093.

Cash totalling €733,499 was seized. A further



€301,594 funds were frozen in Irish bank accounts. In addition 4 cars were seized along with other high value items.

Seven people were arrested for money laundering offences contrary to Section 7 of the Criminal Justice Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Act, 2010 and are currently detained at Garda Stations across the Dublin Metropolitan Region.

The operation was conducted by the Criminal Assets Bureau, supported by the Emergency Response Unit (ERU) and Regional Armed Support Units, and assisted by the Garda National Immigration Bureau (GNIB), the Garda National Economic Crime Bureau (GNECB), Garda National Protective Services Bureau (GNPSB) and local District Detective Units.

This operation marks a significant development in the Criminal Assets Bureau's ongoing investigation into a criminal network involved in the laundering of funds for a number of national and international organised crime groups.



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Pictured at the launch of Newtownmountkennedy's new heritage map, are (back left); Deirdre Burns, Heritage Officer, Wicklow County Council, (back right) Anna Kalinina, Secretary, Newtownmountkennedy & District Tidy Towns, (Middle row from Left): Grace Garde, Wicklow Heritage in Schools Rep, Ann Glynn, Designer; (Front row from Left): Heather Kavanagh, School project participant, Siobhan O'Hanlon, Chairperson, Newtownmountkennedy & District Tidy Towns, Kate Kavanagh, School project participant, and Therese Hicks, Newtownmountkennedy & District Tidy Towns.

New heritage map for Newtown

Newtownmountkennedy & District Tidy Towns recently launched the Newtownmountkennedy Map & Heritage Guide. Easily portable and full of interesting information about the history and folklore of Newtown and the surrounding area, it can be picked up now free of charge at the Post Office and Eugene's Grocery Store.

The heritage map is the result of a collaborative project made possible by funding from Creative Ireland and The Heritage Council's Heritage in Schools Scheme initiated by the Newtownmountkennedy Primary School. It was 1 of only 10 projects to be selected out of 70 nationwide.

Two local 5th class students researched the topics for two months in 2018. They read old stories with help from their teachers and the Newtownmountkennedy & District Tidy Towns, using the School Folklore Collection of Dúchas.

The design/layout and publication of the map was done by local designer Ann Glynn. Further historical detail was researched by Peter McCormick and Therese Hicks. Newtownmountkennedy and District Tidy Towns funded the design/layout and the first print run has been funded by Wicklow County Council in June 2020.

Newtown Tidy Towns encourage everyone in the community to pick one up, send one to their loved ones abroad as a gift. The map is a great learning resource for those interested in the history and folklore of the Newtown area.

Peter raises €20,000 for Open Door Day Centre

Peter Lawlor from Kilmacanogue has raised an amazing €20,000 for Open Door Day Centre in Bray, the activity centre for adults with physical and sensory disabilities. Since May, Peter has been doing regular walks and increasing his distance, raising vital funds for Open Door where he attends.

Peter, 48, has been a regular attendee at Open Door since 1991, going twice a week to enjoy the activities. Peter, who suffers from the complex genetic disorder Prader-Willi Syndrome (PWS), credits the physiotherapy at Open Door with helping with his physical health.

PWS affects people in different ways, and in Peter's case it has meant his muscles are weak, resulting in poor balance. This is what has made his achievement so impressive. He suffers from back problems and has had to have a kneecap replaced.

Speaking about his fundraising endeavor, Peter says "I am cocooning at home since the outbreak of COVID-19 in Ireland and my parents are

encouraging me to walk in order to maintain and improve muscle tone and balance and to prevent muscle wastage. I miss my friends and my outings so I decided to do something new. My family is amazed at my improvement through my daily walking and I decided that I would like to set up a fundraiser for Open Door to help fund the activities when the Centre re-opens. I am going to do 6,000 steps per day. This is a huge commitment for me and will take a lot of effort. I hope that you will sponsor me or donate to Open Door to let me know that you are behind me all the way."

Starting out by just walking very short distances, Peter is now



Rudy Montejó, Manager of Open Door Day Centre, with Peter Lawlor

walking an incredible fundraising page at 6,000 steps per day, and is iDonate.ie will remain no longer using his walk-open until the end of ing frame to do it. His August.

Agreement reached in long-running fishermen dispute

The long-running issue of lack of access to Greystones harbour for three local fishermen was resolved last week.

In a positive outcome for the fishermen, it has been agreed that they will now be allowed to land at the South end of the North Pier, bring their lorry to the end of the Pier to unload their boats, and tie up their boats at the North end of the North Pier.

The situation had been going on for over a decade, and flared up last year with protesting at Greystones Harbour in response to a section of the harbour being sealed off, preventing the fishermen from doing their work.

When work on the new harbour began in 2008, the local fishing boats were deprived of access to their moorings, but they say they were promised that berths would again be provided to them once the new harbour opened.

However, the subsequent harbour by-laws drafted by Wicklow County Council officials effectively excluded fishing boats by preventing them landing any catch and imposing high fees.

The fishermen had been forced to berth as far away as Dun Laoghaire, motor to their traditional fishing grounds off Bray Head and Greystones to fish, then return to south Dublin to land the catch, which they may then have to drive



Cllr Tom Fortune has welcomed the positive outcome for the fishermen

The Harbour Master's spokesperson said at the time that the north pier was not blocked to keep the fishermen out, but was closed to everyone for health and safety reasons because the entrance to it is across a building site where the harbour apartments are being built.

Independent councillor Tom Fortune, who last year as Cathaoirleach of Greystones Municipal District had fought on the side of the fishermen, last week welcomed the positive outcome.

Speaking to Wicklow Times, he said "I'm delighted for the fishermen, this agreement has come from the accumulation of 13 years of hard work, and trying to make a case. It was one of the key issues I had hoped to resolve during my term as Cathaoirleach.

"Over the past 12 months there have been many meetings with everyone concerned, and in the last meeting before the lockdown the points were finally agreed. Over the last few weeks there had been further talks and in a meeting between the fishermen and SISK a few days ago it was finally resolved. It hasn't been an easy process, it's been nasty at times, but I'm pleased now that it's done and dusted. This is great outcome hard fought for."

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Bronwyn Crummy and Erin Byrne were delighted to be back at training with the Arklow Rocks camogie team last week.

€62,000 to improve facilities and amenities in communities

Nearly €62,000 in funding has been allocated to enhance facilities in urban and rural communities across Wicklow.

Minister Harris said "the Community Enhancement Programme (CEP) provides vital support to community groups in order to help them improve their facilities.

"It supports small-scale funding for projects which range from purchasing lawnmowers and IT equipment to minor renovations to buildings. Ultimately the Programme responds to local needs and therefore it also provides some funding towards larger projects where needed.

"We depend hugely on these community groups Wicklow and I hope that this funding will help them to continue the important work that they carry out within our society. I urge communities throughout Wicklow to familiarise themselves with the CEP and to apply for funding if they feel that it can be of local benefit.

"The CEP is administered by Local Community Development Committees in Wicklow. Details on how to apply will be available from each LCDC shortly," Minister Harris concluded.



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LIGHTS! CAMERA! ACTION!

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infrastructure but sadly it has been left underdeveloped for too long.

"This large tract of land has the potential to develop local jobs and industries, stimulating the local economies of not just Greystones but Kilcoole and Newcastle as well. Now with a potential new media campus, we could see more jobs in industries which are currently underdeveloped in Wicklow including in technology and the creative sector. I know the Council have worked very hard over the last number of years to attract this type of industry into the county.

"Observing the size of this project, it's easy to see the potential impact it will have on local job creation and it's something currently lacking across Wicklow. Very few IDA trips have been taken here in comparison to other counties, instead we are dealing with a growing commuter population working and spending their money outside of Wicklow."

Also speaking on the news, Cllr Neary said "creating more local jobs is essential not only as a way to develop local economies but also to reduce road congestion and bring about greater work life balance for people in the area. I myself am aware of the long commuting times and how that can affect family life as well as social cohesion as we spend more time commuting and less time enjoying the local area.

"While we need to look at the document in finer detail, I will ensure that any concerns or issues constituents have are represented throughout the planning permission process and that communication with the local community is provided at all times. We need to ensure that this project can benefit the community to its fullest potential and that we do not miss out on any opportunities for people in the area."

John Brady TD said "This land has lain undeveloped now for many years. The proposed development of 14 new studios along with offices and production facilities is a gamechanger for the TV and Film Industry and is an important opportunity to position Wicklow again firmly as the number one hub for the industry.

Deputy Brady concluded "Wicklow currently has two large film studios, Ardmore and Ashford Studios, we have a highly skilled crew that work in

Wicklow Film Commission. "The Commission is committed to supporting local, national and international filmmakers. The benefits of this support are evident when County Wicklow is showcased around the world and the local economy thrives during the film making process. Not only will this development bring jobs to the screen industry, it will provide fantastic opportunities for the development of the as yet, largely untapped screen tourism sector."

Creation hub at Wicklow County Campus. This will consist of a range of private and co-working spaces for the creative media sector. The Hub will help to support and grow start-ups and more established businesses in the sector and will act as a landing space for foreign direct investment."

When asked about what the new film studios might mean for Wicklow's film industry going forward, Ashford Studios MD Shelley Hargadon told *Wicklow Times* "We're obviously invested

GMC said "The Greystones Media Campus has the potential to be an exciting new chapter in the story of the Irish film industry and will lead to a wealth of new opportunities in the sector and across Wicklow. It's been clear for some time that, while Wicklow is the only county in Ireland to have two large-scale studios, the existing infrastructure needs to be supported and expanded if Irish productions are to compete internationally. In addition, the increasing



the industry. Wicklow County Council is also currently in the process of developing an enterprise hub at Wicklow County Campus in Rathnew, specifically for the content creation sector. This will offer a host of business development supports that will further strengthen the wonderful production companies and start-ups in Wicklow. The development of a third film studio is a massive opportunity for Wicklow to again become the national TV and Film hub, something Wicklow has a proud tradition of being, given the National Film Studios, Ardmore Studios which was set up here in Wicklow in 1958."

According to Linda Healy of the County

Welcoming the announcement, Cllr Gerry Walsh, Chairman of the Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) for Economic Development and Enterprise Support, said that "This is a positive development for the Council. As Chair of the SPC, I and elected members and officials had been engaging with the IDA to secure an investor for this site, one that would add value, generate employment and stimulate the local economy.

"We have an excellent track record in media production. Wicklow County Council has been very proactive over the years, when it comes to developing and nurturing the sector. We are in the process of developing a Content

in the future of the Wicklow Film Industry but are not involved in the recent application made by Greystones Media Hub. Our focus is on the significant current expansion of Ashford Studios."

Under the Greystones-Delgany and Kilcoole Local Area Plan 2013-2019, the Killincarrig site had previously been prioritised for "the development of high-density people-based employment". The proposed Greystones Media Campus will address this priority by contributing to the economic development of Co. Wicklow through the delivery of high-quality new job opportunities.

Announcing the agreement, a spokesperson for

demand for content from global companies such as Netflix, Amazon and Disney mean that the proposal for this new facility is extremely timely.

"Greystones is an ideal location for this exciting new project, with good access to the M11/N11 Dublin-Wexford route, the M50 and to Dublin Airport. Greystones also gives access to a large and comprehensive range of screen location sites, both urban and rural. We are delighted to be in a position to submit this planning application and progress on this exciting new development for the Irish film sector and help ensure high-quality TV and film productions continue to be made in Ireland."



Top and above: artists' digital impression of the proposed Greystones Media Campus.

NO LAUGHING MATTER

Concerns have been raised about a rise in the use of Nitrous Oxide, better known as 'laughing gas' or 'Whippets', as a recreational drug in communities around Co. Wicklow.

Nitrous Oxide is a colourless gas found in pressurised metal canisters commonly used in the medical field and commercial industry (for example whipping cream) which means that it is legal and very easy to get your hands on.

Deputy John Brady has urged new Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly, to immediately start an awareness programme on the dangers of using nitrous oxide as an inhalant. Deputy Brady

said "The misuse of Nitrous Oxide which are commonly known as silver bullets has become a widespread problem since the outbreak of Covid-19. There has been a spike in the number of discarded canisters of nitrous oxide in parks and public areas across Wicklow.

"In May a fifteen-year-old youth from Tallaght sadly died at Our Lady's Children's Hospital in Crumlin from what his parents believe was as a result of the side effects of taking the lethal drug. The Government must do more to warn people of the dangers of taking nitrous oxide. A national campaign warning of the dangers of the drug needs to be launched before more lives are lost."

Speaking on the matter, Sinn Féin councillor in the Bray Municipal District Dermot 'Daisy' O'Brien, said "As Covid-19 restrictions ease and people return to socialis-



Cllr Dermot O'Brien

ing we are receiving numerous reports of extensive use of this substance. I have been told that you can get a dispenser online for under 40 and similarly a pack of 50 whippets canisters for 50. My concern is that people are so excited about moving out of Covid restrictions that laughing gas has become an easy option for people looking for a short term high.

"Many of us are aware of the occasions where someone inhales helium from a balloon to change their voice for a short period of time. Laughing gas is often consumed in the same way but with very different effects. This is not just another 'good fun' outlet for people who are socialising."

Speaking on the issue Cllr Grace McManus said "When we see a spike in any recreational drug use, it is important that we zoom in and look at the specific harms of the substance, raise awareness of these harms and manage the fallout. It is also important to zoom out and look at why we are seeing such an increase in the first place.

"Covid-19 has had a profound effect on our well-being. There is disconnection, financial pressures, fears about the future, things that we know can have negative impacts on our mental



Dermot Hickey, Etta Scully, Paul Whelan, and Mark Redmond, members of Wicklow Fire Service, are pictured taking part in Rescue Organisation Ireland's fundraising charity walk from Dublin through Kildare, Laois, Carlow, Kilkenny, Wexford and Wicklow, to raise funds for Alone and Peta House. See idonate.ie

health. This fact is not inherently bad news; it's what we do now that counts. Fostering well-being through supporting community groups, spaces, projects, ensuring mental health supports are available, funding sports clubs etc are protective factors, and act as an antidote to the wounds of covid-19.

"I think taking this overall health perspective on the issue of laughing gas is vitally important to reduce the harm, in tandem with promoting specific awareness about the



Cllr Grace McManus

dangers of the substance itself."

Cllr O'Brien added

"Nitrous Oxide slows down your brain and body's responses. It can cause feelings of euphoria, relaxation and fits of giggles while also creating hallucinations, severe headaches and dizziness. People have reported intense feelings of paranoia and not being able to think straight. When people perceive a substance to be harmless there is a danger that they develop an attitude towards it which ignores any risks. Misuse of any substance is risky, mixing one drug with another

drug is extra risky such as alcohol and laughing gas. We want people to understand what the risks are and to be aware that heavy use of Nitrous Oxide can cause nerve damage and increased risk of falling unconscious or suffocating. This is not a new drug but the increase in its popularity requires our attention. We believe that there should be a directive to place a health warning on these products about their non-medical or industrial use."



John Brady TD



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Pictured are Conor, Jill, Kate, and Damien Breen from Bray celebrating Jill's birthday. Their photo was taken as part of the 'Mark Your Day' photography project. Pic: Deryck Tormey

€80,000 allocated to 50 community groups during Covid emergency

Almost €80,000 was distributed by Wicklow County Council to 50 groups who have been supporting their communities across the county during the COVID-19 emergency.

Each county in the country received a grant from the Department of Rural and Community Development to assist Community and Voluntary groups involved in the delivery of COVID-19 community response efforts.

Amongst those sharing the grant in Wicklow are: 9 groups providing meals to those in need; 8 sporting organisations aiding; 9 groups supplying face masks for frontline staff; 5 groups offering technology support; 4 groups providing PPE (Personal Protective Equipment).

The other groups involved provide a mix of assistance such as transport, financial advice, etc.

Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council, Mr Frank Curran, thanked the Department of Rural and Community Development for the financial assistance which allowed the Council to recognise the great work being done by thousands of volunteers throughout the county.

Abortion rate in Wicklow up by almost 40 percent

Since the abolition of the Right to Life from the Constitution in the abortion referendum removing the 8th Amendment, the Wicklow abortion rate has increased by almost 40% between 2016 and 2019.

The first report laid before Dáil Éireann by the newly appointed Minister for Health, Fianna Fáil TD Stephen Donnelly was the first Annual Abortion Report (Annual Report on the Health (Regulation of Termination of Pregnancy) Act 2018) detailing abortions carried out in the State from the 1st January 2019 to 31st December 2019, to number 6,666 abortions.

During a Dáil debate in January 2018 on the proposed introduction of abortion to Ireland the then Minister for Health

Simon Harris identified 85 women as travelling from county Wicklow to Britain for abortions. The 2019 Report states that 138 women gave county Wicklow addresses when having abortions, indicating an increase of 38.41% in the number of Wicklow abortions. The British Department of Health and Social Care reported that a further 8 women from county Wicklow had abortions in Britain in 2019.

The British Health Department reported that in 2018, 2,879 Irish women gave Irish

addresses when having abortions in England. The 2019 Report identifies 6,666 abortions as taking place in this State. This represents a national increase of almost 57%. The British Department of Health and Social Care reported a further 375 abortions by Irish mothers bringing a total to 7,041 abortions. This represents 10.5% of Irish pregnancies now ending in abortion.

Of the Wicklow constituency's national representatives, John Brady TD of Sinn Féin; Jennifer

Whitmore TD of the Social Democrats; Minister Simon Harris TD of Fine Gael; and Minister Stephen Donnelly TD of Fianna Fáil supported the introduction of abortion in the referendum. Green Party TD Steven Matthews also supported the introduction of abortion. Former Wicklow TD, now Senator Pat Casey of Fianna Fáil opposed the abortion referendum, lost his Dáil seat in the February general election and was subsequently elected to Seanad Éireann.

Wicklow records 1.5% rise in electrical waste recycling in 2019

Wicklow people recorded their highest total of electrical waste recycling per head of population in 2019, a yearly rise of 1.5%, a new report has revealed.

A new annual high of 8.93 kg of waste electrical items per person was collected by WEEE Ireland on behalf of its members in the county in 2019, according to the organisation's annual report.

Wicklow people recycled a total of 1,271,438 kg of electrical waste for free at local authority centres, WEEE Ireland collection days and participating retailers in 2019.

WEEE Ireland was the second-best performing recycling scheme in Europe in 2019, with 38,594 tonnes of waste electrical items and the equivalent of over 44 million used AA portable batteries collected, its annual report has revealed.

A new national record of 10.89 kg of e-waste was recycled per head of population last year by WEEE Ireland, on behalf of over 1,114 members and partners - a rise of 6.2% on 2018.

And the scheme was one of the few in Europe to meet a landmark EU environmental Directive target to recover the equivalent of 65% of the average weight of all new electrical equipment placed on the market by its members over the three preceding years.

However, its CEO claims that the country could struggle to meet the 65% benchmark figure this year if an expected glut of waste electrical items is not diverted from landfill.

"Households throughout the country have used the lockdown to carry out extended spring cleaning, and it is vital that these end of life electrical items do not end up in landfill, or worse illegally dumped, destroying the progress that we have made as a nation," said WEEE Ireland CEO Leo Donovan.

"Now that people are free to travel within their counties, we are urging consumers to avoid an e-waste crisis by recycling for free at their local authority recycling centres and participating retailers which have now reopened.

"2019 was a major target year when we successfully demonstrated that a structure was in place to effectively manage e-waste from households. However, 2020 brings a different challenge.

"We are facing a battle to stay on target against an

increase in electrical and electronic products sold over the past three years and the impact of the Covid-19 lockdown on recycling."

The equivalent of 227,000 tonnes of CO2 emissions were avoided by diverting e-waste from landfill through the scheme last year - the equivalent of the annual carbon consumption of 4,543 hectares of trees.

Over 19 million pieces of e-waste were recovered in 2019 including 3.2 million lamps and lightbulbs, 334,000 large household appliances, 194,000 TVs and monitors and 122,000 fridges.

The country's largest electrical and battery recycling scheme also exceeded the EU's 45% target for waste portable batteries in 2019 by 2%.

"56% of e-waste collected in 2019 came from our retailer collection points, rising for the fifth year in a row, with 27% being recovered at local authority sites," said Mr Donovan.

"Our special events such as free public collections, and in the workplace and education settings accounted for 17% of the total, showing that when prompted, the public will deliver - with almost every county in Ireland showing an increase on their annual recycling figures."



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WHEN TO TALK TO YOUR SOLICITOR



There are times when legal advice is crucial and it is knowing the important times to call on your solicitor that will make a difficult or stressful situation, a much easier one to manage.

Solicitors in Ireland have a very wide range of different functions. A solicitor may give legal advice about non-contentious matters, such as buying a house or flat or drafting a will. A solicitor may act as your agent or representative in commercial transactions. Your solicitor may also give you legal advice and represent you in relation to a dispute or disagreement that you have with another party, for example, a family dispute or a dispute with your employer or your neighbour.

A solicitor may give you legal advice about taking or defending a case, if you have been involved in an accident, for example, a road traffic accident or an accident at work.

If you are involved in a court case, your solicitor will manage the case and represent you when dealing with the other party. For example, your solicitor will send letters to the other side on your behalf. Your solicitor will file all of the necessary court documents and contact the witnesses for the case.

If it is necessary to

involve a barrister in the case, your solicitor will "brief" the barrister by sending him/her all of the necessary documents and information. Your solicitor may also actually represent you in court, although in the High Court and the Supreme Court, a barrister will usually be engaged.

Unlike barristers, solicitors are allowed to join together to form partnerships or companies and they are allowed to advertise their services.

The Law Society sets down rules and regulations about how solicitors may conduct their business. There is a Disciplinary Tribunal, which can investigate any allegations of misconduct

made against a solicitor. In the past, it was not possible to make a complaint about a solicitor or barrister in Ireland involved in a family law cases due to the 'in camera' rule. (The in camera rule prevented anyone other than those directly involved in the family law case being present in Court. In addition, the 'in camera' rule prevented the publication of any matters discussed there, including the outcome of the case). However, in July 2005 an amendment was made to Section 40 of the Court and Civil Liabilities Act 2004 and complaints about solicitors and barristers in family law cases are now admissible.



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Solicitors are professionally trained to provide clients with skilled legal advice and representation on all legal matters. The work of solicitors varies as widely as the community they serve. However, the work of a solicitor may fall broadly into one or more of the following categories:

Advising private clients - covering various aspects of their personal and business lives and including such matters as marital problems, consumer complaints, disputes with neighbours, planning inquiries etc.

Business - the business world of trade and

commerce, companies, contracts, and banking. Solicitors advise business clients on the numerous and detailed provisions of company, partnership, arbitration, insolvency, drafting, environmental, commercial, consumer, intellectual property and e-commerce law.

Litigation - initiating or defending proceedings in the courts or by reference to arbitration or settling such claims or disputes 'out of court'.

Conveyancing - the buying and selling of property and the arranging of loans, the preparation of title deeds, leases and countless other legal

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WHEN TO TALK TO YOUR SOLICITOR



Augustus Cullen

The offices of Augustus Cullen offices have now reopened, and they are adhering to all issued recommendations and guidelines for the safety of their clients and staff.

"We continue to be fully operational and accessible via the normal lines of communication.

"We continue to adhere to all issued recommendations and guidelines for the safety of our clients and staff. We remain fully operational and accessible via the normal lines of communication.

"As movement restrictions have eased, we can also now facilitate face to face meetings where necessary, ensuring all appropriate social distancing, hygiene and public health measures are in place.

"During recent months, we have all faced a range of challenges; our team of experts are available to support you, and to assist you with any legal issues that have arisen for you during this time and into the future."

documents. Some solicitors are expert in the buying and leasing of commercial properties such as factories, shops and hotels.

Wills, Probate & Administration of Estates - advising on and preparing wills; planning for tax where appropriate, the administration and distribution of funds passing on death, whether by will or otherwise, or contained in a trust, and the settlement of tax liabilities. Everyone should make a Will and regularly review and update their Will. A solicitor's

help may also be needed in the case where individuals have passed away without making a

ficiaries and others. **Personal Injury Law** -while the introduction of the Injuries Board has simplified this contentious area

pursuing valid claims for injuries suffered.

Debt Collection - unfortunately an area of Law with a significant increase in the volume of work in the past number of years. Private and corporate client's will need the assistance of a solicitor in all courts from the District Court to the High Court in efforts to obtain judgements for money due and in applying to enforce those judgments once obtained. They will also require the service of a solicitor if they find themselves in financial difficulty.

Employment Law - This is an area of Law that requires extensive knowledge and skill to successfully represent clients, who are either employees or employers in Employment Tribunals and in the various courts to include the High Court and provide advice on all areas

of Employment law.

Property Law - A solicitor's advice is essential in all property transactions from buying and selling property and land to leasing lands and commercial properties and transferring between family members. .

Mediation - As an alternative to litigation, mediation is an extremely effective means of resolving disputes. It involves both parties to the dispute coming together with the aid of a trained mediator and with the aim of them reaching their

own solutions to the issues they have. It can be a very speedy, cost effective, lasting and beneficial process. In that regard it is very versatile as it can be applied to all types of disputes and all kinds of different people and companies.



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CHILD CARE

Early Childhood Ireland welcomes the smooth reopening of Wicklow's childcare sector

The smooth reopening of the early years sector has been a testament to childcare providers and their strong relationships with parents. That's according to Early Childhood Ireland, the leading organisation in the early years sector, whose members reopened their doors last Monday for the first time since March.

Many crèches reopened last week, with many of them operating at 50 per cent capacity. A further 2,800 centres are expected to reopen in September around the country, if it is financially viable for them to do so. New health and safety measures introduced in response to the threat of great to see families arriving, waving at each other as they waited for their allocated handover



short-term, to navigate the transition and additional cleaning duties. She said: "We brought the staff back in last week and, by Friday, we almost felt back to normal, apart from the handwashing and social distancing. We're a close-knit team and everyone is happy to be back."

Speaking about families arriving on the first day of re-opening, Ms.

McGovern said: "I think this morning, it was the parents who were the emotional ones, for different reasons but, for many, they've been working from home and we know what a huge pressure it can be to balance everything with little kids at home. At least now there's a sense of getting back to some normality."

"I was on the floor this morning, assisting and

observing how things were running. It felt great to see everyone back, especially the younger age groups, two or three year olds, delighted to see their teachers again and coming back into the classrooms without any hesitation. It's a testament to the staff how smoothly it has all gone."

Commenting on the re-opening today, Teresa Heeney, Chief Executive

of Early Childhood Ireland, said: "The Government funding package which offered staffing, operational and capital supports has been critical to ensuring that childcare providers across Ireland can reopen safely and sustainably."

"We believe the public health information and the comprehensive resources published by the Department of Children

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Covid-19 will see crèches operating in pods to keep groups separated, parents making handovers outside the crèche buildings, and an increased emphasis on outdoor play wherever possible.

Elaine McQuillan from StartBright Early Learning Centres in Dublin said staff are well prepared for the day-to-day changes.

"A couple of our centres had already introduced greater outdoor play before Covid-19 so most of the staff had already undergone mentoring and upskilling, and we've invested in extra all-weather gear for staff and children so we can keep it up whatever the weather," she said.

"We've been working closely with the team to ready the building and staff for reopening, so when we opened our doors this morning it was

times. There was clearly a lot of excitement to get back, the kids were delighted to see each other. It all went smoothly, even for those couple of kids who would usually be unsettled when their parents say goodbye."

Ms. McQuillan said her team is looking ahead to inducting new children in the coming months.

"Everyone who is back with us today has been with us before. We have good relationships with the parents and have been in contact with them throughout the break. For those new families who will be starting with us in the coming months, it's all a lot more unknown and we want to ensure that parents and children are supported through it all," she said.

Karen McGovern from Mother Hubbards in Dublin and Meath has taken on extra staff,



CHILD CARE

have contributed to providers having the confidence and the ability to reopen safely after lockdown. This, in turn, has reassured parents.

"That said, it is vital that the Department of Children continues to monitor the reopening phase to ensure that the new methods introduced are sufficient to protect children and staff. The Department will also need to scrutinise the numbers of children returning, any consequent funding shortfall, and the subsequent impact on sustainability.

This will be vital to safeguard the full return of childcare services which operate in conjunction with the traditional school year from the end of August, and beyond."

Early Childhood Ireland welcomed the news that the position of Minister for Children has been sustained and congratulated incoming Minister Roderic O'Gorman on his appointment.

Ms. Heeney said: "The Minister and his Cabinet colleagues will need to ensure that the childcare sector remains a priority,

as has been highlighted in the agreed Programme for Government through the intention to establish a national agency.

"The Government's support and cooperation over the last few months has been vital to reopening - and an important acknowledgement of the vulnerability of our sector. We look forward to a continued strong working relationship with the Department and will ensure that our members' experiences inform policy on all issues related to the sector."

Ashvale Creche

Ashvale Creche say they are delighted to be re-opening their doors. "We are aware that this is a stressful time for parents as they prepare to send their children back into our care. We are taking every precaution to ensure children safety both physically and mentally.

"We have 3 spacious outdoor areas that the children can enjoy on a daily basis. Our children love getting outdoor and dirty. The outdoor areas allow them room to engage with each other and provides wonderful play opportunities. We are aware that children need to reconnect with their friends, and we are delighted to provide a safe space for this to happen in. In Ashvale creche our priority is the children's well-being. Our staffing team work hard to provide this on a daily basis. If you are interested in an ECCE place for September, please contact us at care@ashvalecreche.ie."



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6th class pupils from Barnacleagh National School in Thomastown got together for the first time since March for their final goodbye on what would have been their graduation day from primary school

Mitchell elected new Greystones Cathaoirleach

Independent councillor Tom Fortune's term as Cathaoirleach of Greystones Municipal District came to a close last week, as he passed the Cathaoirleach's chain to Cllr Derek Mitchell (FG).

Cllr Mitchell said that he was "Honoured and delighted" to be elected the new Cathaoirleach. He said "My aims for the year are to: Aid the recovery of jobs and business in the area; Continue progress on: Delgany/Blacklion cycleway and road; path to Kilcoole Station; Continue progress on DART frequency & Park n' Ride increase, Providing N11 buslanes; Get Electric Vehicle charging points installed; Get Benefits and jobs from the Codling Windfarm off our coast by establishing a connection to it; Complete the Harbour Project; and Limit the rezoning growth in new Development Plan until the present massive growth has been absorbed and facilities provided."

Stepping down, Cllr Fortune said that this had been a "different year" to be Cathaoirleach, and he passed condolences to all families who have lost loved ones to Covid-19, and wish all those suffering from it with a speedy recovery.

He went on to say "Covid-19 is demanding that we reflect on how we live our lives and carry out our daily routines. We are now three months into the actions we needed to take. It has dominated everything and made our normal way of life redundant, we are now focused on the new normal."

"While it is frightening in many ways, it has also given us an opportunity. Thanks to all the

frontline workers across all services for the great work they have done in very difficult circumstances. I also want to record my appreciation to WCC on all the great work they have done, also to all the volunteers across our county. The past 100 days have been extremely busy and we have learned and got comfortable with a new way of communicating and holding meetings. Thanks to Michael, Myra, Kay, Ruairi and all the staff for their support and co-operation during the past year."

Reflecting on the highlights and achievements throughout the last year, he named numerous road improvement works, new footpaths, bus stop improvement works, drainage improvement works, the installation of three drinking water fountains at strategic points in Greystones, and a beach access mat and new ramp being installed on the South Beach in Greystones.

"We were awarded the Blue Flag on the South Beach which is a great achievement. Greystones tidy towns were awarded a silver medal in the national tidy towns awards. A big thanks to the tidy town's groups in Greystones, Kilcoole, Delgany and Newcastle for the great work they do on behalf of their communities."

"It was disappointing that we were not able to hold the people of the year awards. The awards are a very important community event, they honour people who have contributed in different ways to our community."

"We supported a number of activities over the past year: Christmas Lights, Kilcoole Music Festival, Greystones Town Maps, Battle Of The Bands Competition, Twinning, Tidy Towns in Greystones, Kilcoole, Delgany and Newcastle, Greystones 20/20. A big thank you to the hard-working committee of 2020 who have worked hard on future suggested plans for Greystones, also for website offering information to the local businesses in these difficult times. Covid-19 cancelled our St Patrick's Day parade in the week leading up to it. Due to Covid we sent out grants such as tidy estates and others by post."

"We honoured the achievements of Commodore Michael Malone flag officer commander of the Irish Navy. A local man and former student at St David's secondary school, we invited the head boy and head girl to the presentation ceremony. We held a gala concert in Greystones Rugby club with the Newtownmountkennedy male voice choir and male voice choir from Holyhead."

"There are some things that can be done better. There should be increased delegation of powers to the district council including budgets. The original theory of the district council system should be fully implemented. There is a gap in the area of communication and respect towards the public representative and this should be resolved immediately. Finally I would like to thank my fellow councillors and to thank them for their co-operation and assistance to me during the past year."



New Cathaoirleach of Greystones Derek Mitchell with outgoing Cathaoirleach Tom Fortune

Brady appointed spokesperson on Foreign Affairs and Defence

Sinn Féin TD John Brady has been appointed Sinn Féin's frontbench spokesperson on Foreign Affairs and Defence.

Deputy Brady outlined a number of areas of concern, where he would be applying particular focus.

"At a time when the country is beginning to emerge from restrictions imposed in order to battle the Covid-19 pandemic, we begin the task of addressing the economic impact which this has had; I will be demanding that this government starts to up its game in relation to the Next Generation EU package of €750 Billion; a fund of which Ireland is set to receive only a fraction of one percent."

"There is an absolute failure to take into account the scale of challenges that Ireland continues to address. Not least of which is Brexit. We are currently hurtling down the road towards the Brexit deadline at the end of the year. Whilst negotiations continue between the EU and the British government, it is critical that we ensure the avoidance of an internal border on the island of Ireland. One of the key priorities will be to ensure that the Irish Protocol and the Good Friday Agreement are defended."

"Sinn Féin has committed to holding a referendum in order to ensure that the principle of neutrality is enshrined in the Irish Constitution. I intend to do everything that I can, to prevent the government from further eroding Irish neutrality."

"The record of the Irish Army in the service of the

United Nations is second to none. The Irish military has become synonymous with peace keeping missions throughout the World. It is the responsibility of the minister for Foreign Affairs and Defence to ensure that our troops have resources to carry out this valuable work. The disgraceful disregard for our armed forces has to end; I will ensure that neither the minister, nor government, will be unable to hide from their responsibilities towards our military personnel."

"At a time when Ireland enjoys the position of membership of the UN Security Council we must use this position to enhance our relationship and commitments to the UN. We must work to actively promote UN reform and capacity-building in order to create a revitalised UN which is capable of fulfilling the promise of the Charter and Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and of upholding international law."

"I intend to work with stakeholders and lobby for an increased role for Ireland in addressing poverty and hunger through both Irish Aid, and our influence within the international community. We cannot separate our concern with international Security from the conditions that produce the very crisis that create the security concerns that beset the world."



John Brady TD

"Decades of economic mismanagement have fuelled the tragic export of our youth from these shores. Sinn Féin is committed to giving a voice to the Irish Diaspora. We have argued, and will continue to argue and campaign on behalf of the diaspora."

"Currently, the citizens of Palestine are living in fear of the consequences of the threat of the impending Israeli annexation in the West Bank. Ireland must recognise the state of Palestine. It must use its influence in the UN and in the wider international community to argue for sanctions against Israel in the same manner that it would so against the naked aggression of any other state which sought to overwhelm a smaller neighbour through the use of force."

In closing Brady reiterated his commitment to hold the Minister and

Government to account in the Dáil, but wryly added that he would also be "watching the performances of Fianna Fáil's Stephen Donnelly and Fine Gael's Simon Harris closely to ensure that Wicklow was not left behind in the government's plans as was the case under the outgoing government arrangement of supply and demand under the two parties."

Speaking as she announced Sinn Féin's new frontbench team last Thursday, Sinn Féin President Mary Lou McDonald TD said: "New government Ministers will have to be on their toes and on top of their briefs because they will be matched by a very energetic, very determined Sinn Féin leading the opposition."

"We will hold the government to account, bring forward solutions and continue championing the change that so many people want. I am very proud of our new frontbench team and the fact that we have strong representation from rural Ireland, as well as our cities. Sinn Féin will provide constructive and critical opposition to this government."

"An effective opposition can achieve change by engaging constructively to bring forward solutions and force the government to act. The strong and competent team that I lead is committed to doing this at every opportunity."

Wicklow District Hospital will not close, HSE confirms

The HSE has confirmed that the 20 beds due to reopen in Wicklow District Hospital will remain open into the future and not close in a post Covid situation.

Speaking after receiving confirmation from the HSE, Deputy John Brady said "I'm delighted that there is now a commitment that the 20 recently refurbished beds in the closed Wicklow District Hospital will remain open into the future. The HSE have confirmed that the now closed Hospital will be used for Frail Older People from mid and South Wicklow leaving Acute Care settings."

"I had been informed initially by the HSE that the reopening of the 20 beds was for Covid related activity and there were concerns

that the beds would close again in a post Covid situation."

"This confirmation about the long-term use of the hospital shows that the political decision to close Wicklow District Hospital 10 years ago was wrong and short-sighted."

"It's good that the HSE are also looking at using the hospital for respite and long-term care support in the form of a day care centre for the elderly of Wicklow. This is a support that was previously on site but had also closed."

"The confirmation that the

reopening of Wicklow District Hospital is not a short-term initiative is really important for the people of Wicklow. It will also play a critical role in freeing up acute care beds in other Hospitals."

"I will continue to work with the HSE on the reopening of the 20 beds in Wicklow District Hospital also the day care services. It's important that adequate funding is in place to ensure the day care service can resume as quickly as possible and I call on the Minister for Health to make sure the necessary funds are in place."

Greystones woman receives Langton Award for Community Service

Dr Margaret Kennedy from Greystones has received the Langton Award for Community Service from the Archbishop of Canterbury for services to victims and survivors of Church-related sexual abuse through founding MACSAS.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Reverend Justin Welby, recently announced this year's recipients of Lambeth Awards for outstanding contributions to the Church and wider society.

In total 32 awards were this year given to people from across the Church and beyond in fields including evangelism, the Religious life, safeguarding, ecumenism, theology and interfaith relations.

The recipients include

people from New Zealand, Kenya and the USA, as well as a number of others in the UK and Ireland. The awards are usually presented at a ceremony at Lambeth Palace, which this year has had to be cancelled due to Covid-19.

Dr Kennedy founded Minister And Clergy Sexual Abuse Survivors (MACSAS), an organisation run by survivors for survivors, amongst whom she is almost legendary. Margaret set up MACSAS in the late

1990s following requests from survivors with whom Margaret had worked through Christian Survivors of Sexual Abuse (CSSA), which she had also founded in 1989.

MACSAS continues to fight for changes in safeguarding practice and improved responses to survivors of Church-related abuse across all Christian denominations. MACSAS has played a hugely significant role in the Church of

England's journey to offer a professional and compassionate safeguarding service. MACSAS offers individual advocacy and support to victims of abuse, a helpline staffed by trained volunteers, and advice and assistance to survivors.

MACSAS volunteers support the Church of England in other ways, including cofacilitating the Survivors' Reference Panel and sitting on the National Safeguarding Panel as survivor representatives.

Margaret's contribution to society goes well beyond her work with MACSAS. She campaigns not only against clergy sexual abuse but also against disability inequality and abuse, inadequate housing provision for disabled people and inadequacies in the Irish Health and Safety Executive, in spite of the fact that she has a very

rare neuro-muscular degenerative disease (which she shares with her identical twin sister Ann), is in constant pain and uses a wheelchair. A former nurse and social worker, she prides herself on her ability to stir things up, so that when she received her PhD she was also presented with a symbolic wooden spoon. As she herself says, "I'm still stirring things up from my wheelchair."

Dr Kennedy said, "I am absolutely delighted to receive this award and I do so knowing my work is totally led by those who suffered long and without support from Church or State. As a survivor of abuse and clergy sexual abuse myself, I was determined NOT to be silent or silenced. I felt compelled to encourage, nurture, and facilitate our 'voice(s)' to be heard. To speak out, to make Justice when no-one else would. MACSAS began and took a key role to enable change to take place, and still does. I know this award goes to all of us and indicates 'hearing' by the Church of England and Archbishop of Canterbury; Marcus Welby. Thank You."

"My congratulations goes to Phil Johnston and Jo Kind of present day MACSAS, who also receive a Lambeth Palace award today; for all the hard work they've done

to carry forward my mission and 'Justice-Making' vision."

Margaret is disabled and supposedly 'retired' but continues to fight for Disability Rights, equality and services in the Republic of Ireland where she now resides. She could be seen pre-Covid on many occasions outside the gates of Dail Eireann protesting about how disabled people are treated in Ireland.

Dr Kennedy says "Despite all I did for over 30 years in the field of disability and abuse I find abuse of disabled people an on-going pernicious issue in Ireland. It's disheartening to know disabled people must struggle for every service, every piece of needed equipment (including Wheelchairs) as if they are whingers and manipulators. Nothing is provided graciously to improve our lives. I hope in receiving the Langton Award I might raise further the plight of all disabled people in Ireland. The poor services, lack of services is not just a political priorities issue, it is an attack on disabled, a disrespect of us, an inequality no-one wants to see. We are not equal in Irish Society. We are seen as expendable and 'low hanging fruit'. It is clear I will die fighting injustice and calling for Justice. I will never cease this mission."



Dr Margaret Kennedy with the Right Reverend and Right Honourable John Santamu, Archbishop of York in 2014

Tiny kitten is rescued from ditch near busy road

ISPCA Chief Inspector Conor Dowling responded to a call from a concerned member of the public about a cat heard crying in a ditch near Ballyremon Commons, near Kilmacanogue recently.



Inspector Dowling investigated the call made to the ISPCA's National Animal Helpline and located the little kitten shivering in a hedge.

Chief Inspector Dowling said: "Although the road was noisy with traffic, I heard a faint cry for help and discovered a very scared and soaked little tabby kitten. I had to act quickly in case she attempted to run".

The kitten, now named Star, was taken to a foster home for some much needed food and a warm, dry bed.

Conor added: "It is unclear how the kitten came to be in such a perilous position, so close to the busy road. There are not a lot of houses in the vicinity and, enquiries suggest that none of the locals have kittens. Star was no more than seven weeks old and far too young to be wandering on her own. Huge thanks to the member of the public who heard her cry for help and called us".

Although Star experienced a traumatic start in his/her young life, she is safe now in ISPCA care.

Once a little older, the ISPCA will be appealing for a new loving home if they have been unable to locate an owner.

All cats and kittens adopted from the ISPCA are fully vaccinated, treated for parasites, neutered/spayed (when of age), cat-flap and litter-trained. They also offer six weeks free pet insurance.

"We ask for an adoption donation of €75 to help us cover some of our veterinary costs. If you would like to support ISPCA Inspectors investigating allegations of cruelty, neglect or abuse to animals and to help towards their rescue and rehabilitation, please if you can, make a kind donation to support our work. Please donate now."



Enjoying the recently opened playground in Roundwood are Ballinastoe cousins Shay Reid and Sam Fitzmaurice.

Jigsaw secures new Bray premises

Jigsaw, a network of programmes across Ireland designed to make sure every young person has somewhere to turn to and someone to talk to, has finally secured an appropriate premises in Bray.

Jigsaw supports young people based on best international practice and is aligned with A Vision for Change.

Minister Simon Harris said: "This is a fantastic and vital resource for young people in North Wicklow. I have visited Jigsaw projects in other locations and I each time I have been blown away by their success and the level of youth buy-in."

"Jigsaw will shortly begin recruitment and induction of the staff team required to support their new Wicklow service. Alongside the clinical, in-session work with young people, Jigsaw teams locally will work closely with schools, community groups, sports clubs and other local services to increase understanding about youth mental health, and where support is available to young people."

"This comes at a crucial time given the challenges students and their families have faced over the last few months due to the lockdown. Mental health services such as those provided by Jigsaw are now needed more than ever."



COMHAIRLE CHONTAE CHILL MHANTÁIN
WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

NOTICE OF CONSIDERATION OF SETTING A LOCAL ADJUSTMENT FACTOR

The Finance (Local Property Tax) Act 2012 (as amended), makes specific provision that elected members of a local authority may pass a formal resolution to vary the basic rate of the Local Property Tax for their administrative area by a percentage known as the local adjustment factor. At the meeting set by Wicklow County Council to consider this matter, the members may set a local adjustment factor within the range of +/- 15% of the basic rate, or, may decide, not to adjust the basic rate.

Wicklow County Council will meet on 21st September 2020 to consider the setting of a local adjustment factor.

Wicklow County Council welcomes written submissions from the public on this matter specifically covering the potential effects of varying the basic rate of the Local Property Tax on businesses, individuals and on local authority services.

Submissions must be received by 12 noon on 21st August 2020 and be sent to:

LPT Consultation, c/o Finance Department,
Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Wicklow Town
Or
lptconsult@wicklowcoco.ie

Frank Curran
Chief Executive
Wicklow County Council

8th July 2020

The Travelling Swimbursys' Malin 2 Mizen swim



Members of the Travelling Swimbursys at Greystones Harbour

A Group of likeminded swimmers and friends from County Wicklow (Travelling Swimbursys), will be taking on the impressive challenge of swimming virtually as the crow flies, from Malin to Mizen head, in aid of Pieta House, The Gavin Glynn Foundation, Cystic Fibrosis Ireland and Wicklow Cancer Support Group.

The two points are 466 km (290 mi) apart. The team will cumulatively swim the distance throughout the month of July, swimming out of Wicklow harbour. It will take 13 Swimbursys over 30 days to swim.

The idea came about as a consequence of Covid19 restrictions to sport (swimming) and the absence of competition. As a result a group of friends and swimmers wanted to do something that was safe and adhered to all Covid-19 HSE recommendations, impactful and challenging to support charities.

The swimmers taking part are all friends and members of the 'Travelling Swimbursys Open water swimmers group. They are all local Wicklow people from all walks of life, with a common interest in open water swimming.

"We're taking part in this challenge for charity, which allows us to support a cause that is close to our hearts. Family members and friends have been affected by a disease or illness, so we wanted to raise money for charities that not only have meaning to us, but support our cause and know that we're doing our bit to help.

"Charities are always in need of more money, so our charity challenge fundraising will hopefully benefit them and make a difference. Our chosen charities will be happy to explain exactly how your money will help by showing you how it will be spent and who will benefit from it."

To donate, see www.idonate.ie/travellingswimbursyvirtualswim. Every donor will be entered into a raffle to win exciting prizes, BBQ, Vouchers, Spot Prizes.

Holidays for Heroes: Fundraising campaign seeks to reward healthcare workers

Holidays for Heroes is a fundraising initiative to show appreciation for the doctors, nurses, all hospital staff, Garda, firemen, postal workers, GPS and their teams, lab teams, and all who have worked tirelessly, and selflessly, during this unprecedented Global pandemic. The fundraising initiative has been started by a group of individuals who want to send these 'heroes' on a short holiday.

The fundraising initiative has partnered with the following properties, who have generously reduced their rates to make this possible: The Slieve Russell, Cavan; The GlenEagles Group, Killarney; The Wicklow Heather Lodge, Glendalough; and Trooperstown wood lodge, Glendalough. A GoFundMe campaign has so far raised over €1,700 (gofundme.com/f/holidays-for-healthcare-heroes).

One of the organizers of the fundraising campaign, Paul Slevin, says "I have been working with a small group of independently minded people who are focused on achieving a worthwhile goal: to give the people of Ireland an opportunity to show their gratitude to the front-line workers of our Healthcare System, who have daily put their lives on the line, and continue to do so, many paying the ultimate price for our sake!

"The aim is to give them a short break/holiday in a beautiful Irish Country House Hotel, where they can simply take their own time to relax, revive and start a restoration process, or take advantage of a menu of treats, that we have created, to include, Yoga, Spin and Hit classes, mindfulness, cookery classes, paint and prosecco classes, or a pint for the lads! creative writing classes, and some outdoor walking and hiking in the beautiful Irish countryside!

"It is our intention to host the first Holidays for Heroes event in late July with further events taking place on a weekly basis as our funds will allow. We want our heroes to leave with a feeling of being revived and with a deep sense of accomplishment, that something important and even magical happened. Part of this will be that you had a lot of fun and laughter. And we takeaway: New friendships & experience; New

habits - from the daily walk, healthy but normal eating, reading writing, reflecting; New invigorating plan for the year ahead.

"All our activities have been designed with the W.H.O./ Government, social distancing. There will be On-site 20/30-minute testing kits, Screening/self-declaration of health, and Temperature testing on arrival."

The Holidays for Heroes teams consists of experienced hiker Paul Slevin, fitness and lifestyle expert and former European 400m Indoor Champion David Gillick, teacher and storyteller Brian Downes, event organizer Trifina Baudu, health coach ad yoga instructor Janet Shook, event management student Michelle Walker, counselor and psychotherapist Linda Breathnach, communications expert Johnny Lyons, and owner o Spin and Go Fitness Dylan Murphy.

Aughrim 10k Challenge raises vital funds for Irish Kidney Association

Inspired by the plight of a local 42 year old mother who has kidney failure, the community of Aughrim rallied together to support a 10km June Challenge in aid of the Irish Kidney Association. Leading the charge was local Londis shopkeeper Caoimhe Byrne, who worked as an Intensive Care & Trauma Nurse when living in the United States and who saw first-hand the process of organ donation.

Caoimhe was delighted that the local Aughrim Athletics Club & Community Games and the twenty staff at her family shop enthusiastically got behind the Aughrim 10km June Challenge. The shop staff promoted organ donor awareness while at work by wearing Irish Kidney Association t-shirts and distributing donor cards during the month of June. Caoimhe and her parents, who she works alongside in the family business, vouched a 10 donation to the IKA for each member of staff who did the 10km run. With donations still coming in, the event has raised in excess of €1000 (TBC) for the Irish Kidney Association.

While adult members of Aughrim Athletics Club and Community Games were encouraged to run or walk the 10km distance any time before the end of June, there was also an opportunity for children to get involved by walking or running a 2.5km distance to support fellow junior club member Jane Sutcliffe (age 6), the daughter of the dialysis mother Julie. Julie together with three of her siblings and her father have Polycystic Kidney Disease. One of her sisters, Susan, underwent a kidney transplant last summer just a few months before Julie started her twice weekly journeys to Dublin to receive her dialysis treatment at Tallaght Hospital.

Speaking about the



Ray D'arcy and Julie Sutcliffe (nee Mulligan) native of Castlereagh, now living in Aughrim, with her children Andy & Jane and sister Susan Mulligan, at last year's Run for a Life at Corkagh Park in Dublin.

Challenge organiser Caoimhe Byrne said, "We received huge support for this event through participation in the running event as well as through donations. It is wonderful that our staff and the community came behind it so enthusiastically. The Sutcliffe family are well thought of in the community and this is evident from the level of support and good wishes we received for the fundraiser. By walking or running while observing social distance for a good cause, this Challenge offered all those taking part, children and adults, a positive step towards emotional and physical wellbeing. Having worked as a nurse in the United States in Intensive

Care and Trauma I have seen first-hand how lives can be saved through organ donation while grieving families can take consolation from the legacy of their deceased loved one who can save the lives of many people in organ failure. We hope that through this fundraiser we have demonstrated solidarity in support of the Sutcliffe family while raising awareness about the plight of people with organ failure and the importance of organ donation for transplantation while raising vital funds for the Irish Kidney Association."

Jane Sutcliffe (6) recorded in a video to explain that her mother Julie was a dialysis patient and that organ

donation is very important and this generated a lot of interest on social media. Event organiser Caoimhe Byrne came together with her sister Monica and some members of the athletics club committee who completed the 10 km challenge and recorded another video encouraging people to take part in the Aughrim 10km June Challenge which was also shared on social media.

Donations for the Aughrim 10km June Challenge can be made on Facebook @byrnes-londis and @aughrim-nacurra-communitygames.

Organ Donor Cards can be obtained by phoning the Irish Kidney Association on 01 6205306 or Free text the word DONOR to 50050. You can also visit the website www.ika.ie/get-a-donor-card or download a free 'digital organ donor card' APP to your phone.

The public can also support the work of the Irish Kidney Association and can FreeText KIDNEY to 50300 to donate €4. Texts cost €4, Irish Kidney Association will receive a minimum of €3.60. Service Provider: LIKECHARITY. Helpline: 076 6805278. They can also donate through the Irish Kidney Association's website <https://ika.ie/make-a-contribution/>



Majella O'Shea, Tara Lyons, Fiona Duffy, Rachael McGrane, Aine Lally and organiser Caoimhe Byrne at the Aughrim 10km June Challenge in aid of the Irish Kidney Association.

'Imperative that Arklow wind farm project develops Arklow Port'

Social Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore recently organised an onsite visit to SSE Renewable's proposed new Operations and Management centre, where activities for the development of Arklow's Wind Bank Park will be coordinated. The company is proposing to invest €1.2bn to develop the offshore wind project and recently announced that Arklow Harbour will be home to its Operations and Management activities. Local Councillor Pier Leonard also came along to meet the organisers and raise issues affecting Arklow Harbour.

On her visit to the new site Deputy Whitmore said "It is very much welcomed that SSE Renewables has decided to base their future operations and maintenance site in Arklow Harbour for Ireland's first wind farm. Not only is this decision an acknowledgement of Wicklow's potential as a regional leader for marine planning but also of the potential of Arklow as a key player in marine activity.

"I took up the invitation to visit the proposed site as I believe at this critical stage of development all opportunities for Arklow must be grasped firmly with both hands. I wanted to see for myself how we could maximise on much needed job creation and business development for the area as this project goes ahead. As I toured the new site at Arklow Harbour I discussed with SSE representatives, in detail how and where jobs will be created and maintained in Arklow and surrounds, even beyond the completion of the wind farm project.

"Arklow is expected to benefit with approximately 80 full-time jobs from the offshore wind project. I hope to see many more jobs created in association with the project. For this to happen it is imperative that this project develops Arklow Port which is currently underutilised. Potentially, the new facility could attract local firms to contribute to SSE's supply chain, specialists in ship repairs and site surveying, fuel supply, hospitality, logistics and stevedoring. SSE Renewables informed me that they will have a public consultation on the onshore grid application and will be in touch with more details soon. This will be a good opportunity for the local community to have their say.

"During the tour of the site I also discussed the potential for energy initiatives for Arklow and surrounding towns and villages. This could be one of the many community benefits associated with the project, which is obliged to coordinate a 'community fund'. How

this 'fund' is managed will determine to what extent the local community can benefit further from this development. They have informed me that a consultation process will be underway with the relevant Department on how this fund should be managed to maximise the benefit to local communities. I look forward to this process and will engage closely with communities who could benefit.

"I also proposed to SSE Renewables the potential for educational programmes arising from this development such as the establishment of education programmes including apprenticeships to be provided for people in the local area. This could be done in as part of the Community Fund to be established and in coordination with local schools and third level education facilities.

Also present was Cllr. Pier Leonard (IND) who said "I would like to thank Deputy Whitmore and SSE for the opportunity to meet with them to discuss their up and coming plans. SSE will

bring much needed employment opportunities to Arklow & Co. Wicklow as a whole. I look forward to helping them engage closely with all stakeholders going forward especially our local fishermen and maritime users."

Deputy Whitmore also said: "Opportunities for Arklow and its residents from this large-scale development, was at the forefront of my discussions with SSE Renewables during the tour of their new site. The possibilities are endless, but we need to make sure that we seize on those opportunities and that SSE Renewables and all stakeholders continue to have conversations around how this project could positively impact on business development in the area. I want to make sure that every opportunity is exploited for immediate and long-term benefit of Arklow's economy and its residents. If Arklow benefits, so too does Wicklow and that needs to be at the forefront of decision making going forward."



Pictured in Arklow are Barry Kilcline, SSE Renewables, Cllr Pier Leonard and Deputy Jennifer Whitmore.



Members of the Arklow Emergency Services taking part in Rescue Organisation Ireland's fundraising charity walk from Dublin, through Kildare, Laois, Carlow, Kilkenny, Wexford and Wicklow. Funds raised will go to Alone and Pieta House. See idonate.ie

Council launch Tracks & Trails 2020

A new Tracks & Trails video commissioned by Wicklow County Council and presented by travel writer Pól O Conghaile will be launched on Tuesday July 7th. It features Bray Head, the Belmont Way and the Sugarloaf Way.

Led by Wicklow County Council in conjunction with Wicklow Uplands Council, the three trails form part of the ambitious plan to create a series of interconnected trails from Bray to Woodenbridge. The envisaged 60km route connects with public transport services allowing for independent travel and also to the renowned upland trails of The Wicklow Way and St Kevin's Way.

The video, which follows a walk beginning at the foot of Bray Head ending at the Great Sugarloaf, will be launched at a special virtual event, available for online viewing on Facebook Premier, on Tuesday, July 7th, at 12.30pm on the Visit Wicklow.

Presented by Pól O Conghaile, the 10 minute show features a magnificent trail which now links and extends a number of other well-known trails into a long and challenging walk. This new Tracks & Trails follows a route across a varied terrain including rugged mountain climbs, flat and quiet forest paths, rich farmland and country roads.

The trail, which can be completed in a day, for the experienced walker, or broken into shorter walks, reveals what is best in Wicklow landscapes from breathtaking sea vistas to magnificent rural views stretching across fields, mountains and skylscapes.

This show, presented by Wicklow native and dedicated walker Pól, also reveals underexplored paths, new access routes and until now, inaccessible trails in his home county. Pól begins the walk early in the morning on Bray Promenade, climbs up over Bray Head - a much quieter route than neighbouring paths - quite quickly ascending into an almost rural setting with wide views across five counties.

He continues down along quiet, well-marked ways into Belmont Demesne. Belmont Demesne has recently been opened to the public who can connect their walk from Bray Head along a new access route onto the Little Sugarloaf. Enjoying an exhilarating turn with Fat Bikes Adventures, based in Belmont Demesne, Pól then continues past Arthur's Barn, on foot to the Little Sugarloaf accessing it along a newly laid path which brings walkers around the side of the mountain.

Chatting to some other walkers en route, Pól then descends along quiet roads to Kilmacangou and onwards along the old Viking trail which skirts the side of the Great Sugarloaf where he completes his walk. Walkers familiar with the Little Sugarloaf and Bray Head will delight in this lovely, new, marked trail which adds a further new route to Co. Wicklow's ever-growing network of walks.

Speaking in advance of the Launch of the new trails, Brian Dunne, Coordinator of Wicklow

Uplands Council shared: "The addition of these three trails to County Wicklow, offers a wonderful setting for locals and visitors to experience the area's spectacular landscape and iconic natural features such as Bray Head and the Sugar Loaf peaks. Their development has been made possible through close cooperation with all stakeholders and brings the Council's overall vision of creating a new, long distance upland trail from Bray to Woodenbridge ever closer to becoming a reality".

Open spaces, a safe environment, off the beaten tracks and offering unique experiences are all what we can showcase in County Wicklow through this video. In the longer term it will introduce these lesser known newer and accessible trails, to a much wider audience, highlighting parts of Wicklow to an eager hiking and walking family through the medium of the Tracks & Trails video format.

Walkers familiar with the Little Sugarloaf and Bray Head will delight in this lovely, new, marked trail which adds a further new route to County Wicklow's ever growing network of walks, which now link Bray Head, to The Wicklow Way to Glendalough, Tinahely and all the way to Blessington and the new Greenway there.

Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Pat Kennedy, is delighted that the Council commissioned Tracks & Trails to film in the county: "It is great to see Wicklow welcoming locals and domestic visitors back to enjoy our wonderful range of outdoor activities amidst our breathtaking scenery. We have plenty of space in Wicklow for people to enjoy being outdoors among our mountains, lakes and forest, while maintaining social distancing and staying safe".

Cllr Anne Ferris, Cathaoirleach of Bray Municipal District, said: "With the focus ever increasingly on our mental health, hiking is in so many ways good for us. Wicklow is close, it is accessible with good bus and rail links and there are hundreds of unspoilt varied routes here."

Fred Verdier from Visit Wicklow, who is a passionate trail runner and hiker, believes Wicklow and the trails that traverse the county offers every level of hiker a wealth of choice. "Within minutes of being on the trail like the one featured here, it is just you and the big open sky", he said.

He added: "There are so many trails in County Wicklow with wonderful choices of places to stop and eat or stay over" Tracks & Trails has always been passionate about and associated with producing videos of the most beautiful trails in Ireland. Tracks & Trails are delighted to once again work with Wicklow County Council Co. Wicklow who have been an innovator in attracting walkers."

John Sherwin, Executive Producer, stated: "This summer when we are all urged to stay safe and holiday in Ireland we believe this new video following a really beautiful walk is coming at just the right time to encourage people from all over Ireland to come back to Visit Wicklow. The show will be available to view Tracks & Trails or Visit Wicklow from 1pm on 7th July."



Councillor Pat Fitzgerald getting his post-lockdown haircut at Pat's Barbers in Arklow, which re-opened last week. Waiting for his turn in the background is Cathaoirleach, Sylvester Bourke.

'Spend local to sustain our communities'

Speaking from his constituency office in Wicklow last week, Sinn Féin TD John Brady praised the efforts of local communities in creating the conditions that have allowed for the reopening of the local economy.

He said "During the lockdown local businesses played their part in helping with our wellbeing, by keeping us supplied with vital goods. Words cannot praise them enough for their efforts. Now we have an opportunity to help ourselves by helping them.

"We are entering a crucial period, one from which many local businesses may struggle to survive. I want to appeal to the general public to support our local businesses.

"The retail sector is the largest job provider in the country. This is closely followed by the tourism and hospitality sector. Consumers in Ireland spend approx. €5 billion annually. Over two thirds of this leaves the country. Shopping online contributes zero to the local economy.

"Because every euro which we spend locally finds its way back into the local economy, through local goods, services and wages, industry experts maintain that for every €100 spent locally, the true value to the local economy will actually be €500.

"Unfortunately, some businesses in Wicklow have taken the difficult decision not to reopen and close the business permanently. This is a blow to the vibrancy of our towns, it also impacts on local jobs and the economy.

"I welcome the shop local campaigns that have been rolled out across the county by Wicklow County Council and the work that has gone into them by the Municipal Districts. By helping local business, we are helping local communities. We will be helping to provide badly needed employment for our families, friends and neighbours."

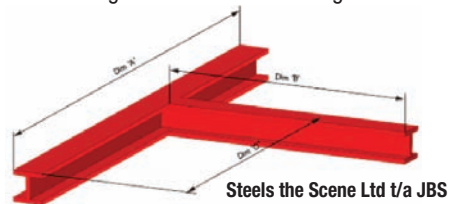
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Arklow is back in business - new plans announced to revive the town centre

Wicklow County Council, Arklow Chamber of Commerce, Arklow Town Team and An Garda Síochána are working in partnership with local stakeholders to help restart the local economy.

A wide range of potential solutions are being considered to help support the Arklow District businesses as COVID-19 restrictions begin to ease.

Arklow Chamber of Commerce has already launched a successful community-based initiative, raising positive awareness of the many business sectors in Arklow and the surrounding areas.

The "Back Soon #Love Arklow" video is a compilation of local businesses exhibiting enterprise and community spirit at its very best.

Changes to traffic routes, parking and pedestrian facilities may be introduced on a pilot basis to support local business in reopening through the potential for increased footfall in the

town. Any such measures will be temporary in nature for the summer months and will be notified in advance.

Plans are also afoot for the following: A register of all businesses in the district; Design and develop a new website specifically to promote Arklow Town and its Environs; A new "Local is Best" branding campaign; A new organic Farmers Market to be held in the town; River Tourism - Harbour to Headwaters project. The project focuses on the river catchment area in the district.

All businesses in the district will shortly receive a pack highlighting the supports available to them through the various Government initiatives. They will also be

invited to submit suggestions on any new measures that could be implemented in the short-term to assist in reopening our towns and thereby our shops and businesses.

In this context, to assist local businesses in expediting the required consent for use of public spaces for seating and tables to maintain social distancing requirements, Wicklow County Council has introduced a fast-track licence application procedure. All fees will be waived as a temporary measure for the summer months.

Applications for licences under Section 254 of the Planning Acts can be submitted online. Please contact plan-dev@wicklowcoco.ie to apply. Please note that liquor licensing laws and

local bye laws prohibit the consumption of alcohol on-street and it cannot be served to patrons of licensed premises for consumption outside.

Wicklow County Council can also provide standard temporary ground markings in order to help businesses implement queuing measures to encourage social distancing. Please contact us on arklowmd@wicklowcoco.ie if you wish to avail of same.

Wicklow County Council, Arklow Town Team and Arklow Chamber of Commerce are fully committed to supporting the local business community in getting back up and running. We ask that you consider local businesses first and support us in reopening the Arklow District.

Newtownmountkennedy Sustainable Energy Community needs your input

Newtown Sustainable Energy Community (NewtownSEC) are currently conducting a survey on Energy Consumption and are seeking input from the public.

"We would like to ask all inhabitants of Newtownmountkennedy to consider filling in this short survey (6 questions) to help us make Newtownmountkennedy a more energy efficient place. NewtownSEC is a voluntary community group of local people set up to help people explore ways to improve energy efficiency and comfort in their homes and save money. We are also involved with raising awareness about actions that can be taken locally on climate change."

Take the survey at www.surveymonkey.com/r/VT9DQ7Z

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BIFE looking forward to working with new Higher Education Minister

"Bray Institute are delighted to hear of the appointment of Simon Harris TD to the role of Minister of Higher Education, Innovation and Science. We wish him well in this new and exciting post and look forward to working closely with him in our efforts to bring full-time higher education to Wicklow" says Gabriel Allen, Deputy Principal. "Simon has been a great supporter of Bray Institute and was on our Board of Management for a number of years".

For the past thirty years Bray Institute of Further Education has been a centre of excellence in the field of Further and Higher Education. At present the Institute has over one thousand full-time students studying at Degree, Diploma and Certificate level and over one thousand learners on part-time courses.

The Institute has a national profile attracting learners from all over Ireland and abroad.

It is located on Novara Avenue, on a six-acre site, only 150 metres from the town centre. The campus is also within walking distance of the Dart Station and consistently innovative and flexible in its approach. BIFE is in the ideal posi-

tion to expand the provision of higher level courses to the people of County Wicklow.

Projects currently planned by BIFE under their vision document "BIFE the 2020 Vision and Beyond" are:

- To develop a new Media Centre for Film and TV consisting of TV studios, editing facilities and performance areas. This Media Centre will also include studios for sound, music and their various performing arts studios such as Dance and Theatre. It will feed into their already dynamic Film, TV and Music facilities and will support the future growth of the Irish Film, TV and Music Industry in the area. In this regard Bife were delighted with news of



Minister for Higher Education, Simon Harris TD

the planned Media Studios in Greystones and plan to build a dynamic partnership with the new venture.

- To develop an Animal Hospital & Health School on the

grounds of BIFE, catering for the Health Sciences such as Nursing, Food Science, Social Sciences and Animal Science

- To develop sports facilities to include a new sports centre and an Astro turf all-weather pitch with both Gaelic and Soccer dimensions to cater for BIFE's Sports Department, one of the fastest growing departments in the Institute, facilities which would also cater for the local sporting and community needs.

Applications for September 2020 Courses are now open. Apply on-line at www.bife.ie or call the Institute any day during office hours on 01-2829668 for further information between 9am and 1pm.



Members of Wicklow Fire Brigade taking part in Rescue Organisation Ireland's fundraising charity walk from Dublin, through Kildare, Laois, Carlow, Kilkenny, Wexford and Wicklow. Funds raised will go to Alone and Pieta House. See idonate.ie

Irish Water to review need for Water Conservation Order

Following recent heavy rainfall and improving river and ground water conditions Irish Water is reviewing the need for the Water Conservation Order, more commonly known as the hosepipe ban.

The National Water Conservation Order was put in place on 9 June and was expected to remain in place until 21 July. It was issued in a bid to safeguard water supplies for essential purposes, in particular water needed for sanitation purposes during the COVID-19 crisis.

Met Eireann confirmed that May 2020 was the driest since 1850 and continued dry weather was forecast. When the Water Conservation Order was issued, 27 of Irish Water's 900 drinking water schemes, were in drought with another 50 at risk of going into drought. Thereafter the situation deteriorated rapidly with the number of schemes in drought or at risk of drought peaking at 98.

Thankfully from a water supply perspective, over the past weeks there has been above average rainfall in many areas of the country. This has resulted in the recovery of some of the water supplies that were in drought or at risk of drought. Currently only 22 schemes remain in drought and a further 63 are at

risk. While the overall numbers are trending downwards, the situation is not uniform across the country. Since the Conservation Order was issued, the Rathdrum water treatment plant is no longer in drought. However, it is now classified as at risk of drought. The schemes supplied by the Bardarrig and Kirikee water treatment plants remain at risk of drought.

Irish Water is continuing to monitor these water sources as their recovery is fragile and subject to change. Early next week, Irish Water will again meet with Met Eireann, the OPW, the EPA and other key stakeholders to discuss the impact of the recent rainfall with consideration to lifting or partially lifting the Water Conservation Order.

Commenting on the evolving situation John O'Donoghue, Regional Operations Manager, said, "While some areas of the country have had significant rainfall it has not been equally distributed in all of the areas that are most in need. It is still essential that members of the public in Wicklow continue to conserve water and form good household habits at this time. Any non-essential use of water should be discouraged, whether we are in a drought or not. We would like to thank the people of Wicklow for their efforts in conserving water in their homes and gardens over the past number of weeks and our large water users who have worked proactively with us to use water more efficiently in their businesses."

PLANNING • PLANNING • PLANNING • PLANNING

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

DC Design (0402 94680) on behalf of Tony Dillon seeks full Retention Permission for as constructed substructure base to side of existing dwelling to accommodate extension and permission to complete extension to the side of existing dwelling and permission to upgrade existing percolation area to comply with current EPA requirements and associated works at Briarfield Farm, Cappagh, Aughrim, Co. Wicklow. The planning application may be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy at the offices of Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Wicklow during its public opening hours and a submission or observation in relation to the application may be made to the authority in writing on payment of the prescribed fee within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the application.

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

DC Design (0402 94680) on behalf of Larry Byrne seeks full Retention Permission for as constructed domestic gym 2. Permission for extension to the side of existing dwelling 3. Permission to upgrade existing septic tank and percolation area with an effluent disposal system to comply with current EPA requirements and associated works at Moyné, Tinahely, Co. Wicklow. The planning application may be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy at the offices of Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Wicklow during its public opening hours and a submission or observation in relation to the application may be made to the authority in writing on payment of the prescribed fee within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the application.

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

We, the Vartry Angling Club, intend to apply for Planning Permission for Retention of green coloured palisade style entrance gates and fencing at the entrance to the Old Ashtown Reservoir (from the L5100) Ashtown Lane, Wicklow Town, Co Wicklow. The planning application may be inspected, or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy, at the offices of the planning authority during its public opening hours. A submission or observation in relation to the application may be made in writing to the planning authority on payment of the prescribed fee, €20, within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the application, and such submissions or observations will be considered by the planning authority in making a decision on the application. The planning authority may grant permission subject to or without conditions, or may refuse to grant permission.

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

Significant Information / Revised Plans
I hereby give notice of the submission of significant further information to Wicklow County Council in relation to planning application ref no.: 19/1038 for Yuri Shpartua who is applying for permission at 208 Boghall Cottages, Bray for a new 3.3 metre vehicle entrance. Significant further information / revised plans have been furnished to the planning authority in respect of the proposed development and are available for inspection or purchase at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy at the offices of Wicklow County Council during its public opening hours. A submission or observation in relation to the further information or revised plans may be made in writing to the planning authority within the period of 2 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the revised notices. A submission or observation must be accompanied by the prescribed fee except in the case of a person or body who has already made a submission or observation.

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

Alphaplan Design (Tel: 086 2461269, Email: eugene@alphaplandesign.com) Seeks planning permission for change of house type on site no. 95 (previously approved as part of planning ref. no. 18/50) and associated works at 95 Waverley Drive, Rathnew, Co. Wicklow for Broomhall Estates Ltd. The planning application may be inspected, or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy, at the offices of the planning authority during its public opening hours and a submission or observation in relation to the application may be made to the authority in writing on payment of the prescribed fee within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the application.

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

Alphaplan Design (Tel: 086 2461269, Email: eugene@alphaplandesign.com) Seeks planning permission for a dwelling, waste water treatment system to EPA standards, revised entrance and associated works at Grange North, Newcastle, Co. Wicklow for L. Kavanagh. The planning application may be inspected, or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy, at the offices of the planning authority during its public opening hours and a submission or observation in relation to the application may be made to the authority in writing on payment of the prescribed fee within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the application.

ALZPALS needed

ALZPALS is a befriending service of Wicklow Dementia Support. Volunteers are matched with a person for weekly visits. Volunteers are now needed! If you have a few hours a week and can help please contact WDS.

Details from 089 4286928 or info@WicklowDementiaSupport.org. Closing date for enquiries is Friday, 10th July.

Gospel: Mark 13.33-37

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Be on your guard, stay awake because you never know when the time will come. It is like a man travelling abroad he has gone from home and left his servants in charge, each with his own task: and he has told the doorkeeper to stay awake. So, stay awake, because you do not know when the master of the house is coming, evening, midnight, cockcrow, dawn. If he comes unexpectedly, he must not find you asleep. And what I say to you I say to all. Stay awake!'. C.J.

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