



ARKLOW WIND PARK
page 3



ENERGY AVING KITS
page 4



A MEDAL FROM RUSSIA
page 12

SOUTH EDITION DELIVERED TO HOMES & BUSINESSES IN: RATHNEW, WICKLOW, GLENEALY, BRITTAS BAY, AVOCA, WOODENBRIDGE, ARKLOW, SHILLELAGH, TINAHLY, REDCROSS, BALLINACLAGH, AUGHIRM, RATHDRUM, DONARD, DUNLAVIN, CARNEW, COOLATTIN, BALTINGLASS, BLESSINGTON.

Tuesday 20th October 2020 First Floor, The Boulevard, Quinsborough Road, Bray. A98 R6D7. Tel: 01 - 2869111 E-mail: wicklowed@localtimes.ie www.wicklowtimes.net

HOSPICE IS FINALLY READY

Our Lady's Hospice & Care Services (OLH&CS) has announced that it will open Wicklow Hospice on October 30th, with patients arriving from the start of November. The new facility in Magheramore provides specialist palliative care services for the county through its 15 in-patient public beds and its Community Palliative Care team who will care for patients and their families, across the county, excluding from West Wicklow, which comes under St. Brigid's Hospice in Kildare.

The Hospice's opening is the culmination of almost 10 years of work and campaigning from the Wicklow Hospice Foundation. The 3.5-acre site donated by the Columban Sisters was developed by Wicklow Hospice Foundation, which has been supported in its work by the local community. Although the completion of the building was marked in January, with the intention of opening to patients in April, the Covid-19

pandemic delayed the final works, fit-out and delivery of specialised equipment.

Speaking to *Wicklow Times*, Chief Executive Officer of OLH&CS, Audrey Houlihan said it's expected that the facility will be three-quarters full when it opens, and will be at full capacity by the end of the year.

Ms Houlihan paid tribute to the "huge legacy" of the Wicklow Hospice Foundation and its fundraising efforts

which raised over €5 million. Support is still needed to cover the bank loan of €2.75 million required to finish the building work. In the future, fundraising will pay for enhancements such as specialist equipment, complementary therapies and the volunteer gardening programme.

Speaking last week, Ms Houlihan said "We are truly delighted to be opening in Wicklow this month. This is a major achievement by the



Pictured are Lucia, Veronica, and Edel Carty from Annacurra. The sisters made a donation to Our Lady's Hospice & Care Services from the funds they raised from a virtual hike as part of the Women's Mini Marathon.



An Roinn Cosanta
Department of Defence

ARMY RIFLE RANGES

WARNING

If you are walking in the countryside do not walk onto any of the Military Firing Ranges as you could be in

GREAT DANGER

at all times from unexploded shells and other dangerous ammunition

RED FLAGS indicate LIVE FIRING

Watch out for the warning signs

AND TAKE CARE!

RAONTA RAIDHFILÍ AN AIRM

FOLÁIREAMH

Má bhíonn tú ag siúl faoin tuath, ná siúl isteach i gceann ar bith de na Raonta Lámhaigh Míleata mar d'fhéadfá a bheith i

nDEARG-BHAOL

i gcónaí de bharr sliogáin neamhphléasctha agus armlón contúirteach eile

Is ionann BRATACHA DEARGA

agus BEO-LÁMHACH

Bí ag faire do na comharthaí foláirimh

AGUS BÍ AR d'AIRDEALL!

people of Wicklow and we are honoured to bring more than 140 years' experience delivering palliative care to the county. At a turbulent time for so many communities around the world, we are confident that Wicklow Hospice will transform the quality of life for patients and families and meet the changing care needs of current and future generations.

"The final preparations are underway and our new Community Palliative Care Team moves in on Friday 30th October. While their day-to-day work in visiting patients in their homes continues as normal, they now have the added benefit of being able to recommend coming in as an in-patient to let the team work with them to manage their symptoms during a short stay or for end-of-life care.

"The in-patient unit will welcome its first patients during the week of 9th November and will grow to meet needs and referrals from hospitals and GPs across Wicklow. By the time we are fully up and running by year-end, we will have just over 40 staff across a wide range of clinical and non-clinical roles. We are proud to work in this beautiful new facility and look forward to growing our team here.

"In the medium term, our vision is to expand the current community service, which runs five days a week. During 2021, we hope to be able to visit patients in their homes seven days a week. In addition, depending on the healthcare environment, we hope to provide a respite service for those in our care.

Continued on page 7

CONTACT US NOW
FOR A FREE NO
OBLIGATION
QUOTATION



Our New Virtual Google
360° Showroom.

K&K Windows LTD

WINDOWS • DOORS • CONSERVATORIES
RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL



K&K Windows Ltd, Craanford, Gorey, Co. Wexford, Ireland

visit us online
WWW.KKWINDOWS.IE



FreePhone: 1800 250 260

Phone: 053 9383526

Post Code: Y25 N2T7

Email: info@kkwindows.ie

NO MIDDLE MAN, WE SELL, MANUFACTURE AND INSTALL



Cathaoirleach of Greystones Municipal District, Cllr Derek Mitchell, is pictured wishing luck to Greystones sailor Pamela Lee and her co-skipper Cat Hunt who last week set off on an attempt to set the first record for an all female, double handed circumnavigation of Ireland. They are hoping to inspire girls in Ireland and the UK to take up offshore sailing on equal terms. "This is a tough challenge, working 2 hours on and 2 off all that time," said Cllr Mitchell. "I wish them well. The French built Figaro yacht is very fast and built for shorthanded sailing with 1 or 2 persons. It has been working up for a week from Greystones Harbour in preparation."

LocalLink Bus 183 Laragh

The bus service leaves Glendalough each day on Mon-Sat 8.15, 13.30, 15.30, 18.40, 21.10, 23.00, also on Sun at 10.30, 15.15 and 19.00 (this bus stops in Laragh, Annamoe, Roundwood, Ashford, Rathnew and Wicklow (Primary Health Ctr, Lidl, Train stn., council offices and Wicklow Goal). LoCall: 1890 42 41 41. Phone lines are open from 9:00am to 4:30pm, Monday to Friday.

Brockagh Resource Centre

Clothes Bank: Don't forget we have a clothes bank at the back of the building, proceeds are in aid of the centre.

Playground: The playground for Laragh and Glendalough area is situated at the centre. Please don't bring your dogs into the play area and bring any rubbish home with you. Check out the regular classes and activities on www.brockaghresourcecentre.ie/events, drop into the centre for a timetable or phone 0404 45600. If you want to make a booking for an indoor space or outdoor event in our spacious car park, with easy access to the Wicklow Way Trail or Glendalough, email brockaghresourcecentre@gmail.com for a quote. Brockagh Resource Centre is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our workers and customers.

Stanford Cancer Thriving & Surviving Programme

Purple House will be running the Stanford Cancer Thriving & Surviving Programme starting Tuesday 3rd November (2pm-4.30pm) for 6 Weeks Online. This is a self management programme for Cancer survivors with the aim of improving your quality of life to better manage your daily health. The Programme is a six-week self management programme which consists of 2.5 hours per session. The Programme was developed by Stanford University and will be facilitated in Purple House by one of their professional counsellors and a volunteer who has personal experience of Cancer. The topics on the course include: Techniques to deal with problems such as frustration, fatigue, pain & isolation & poor sleep; Living with uncertainty; Exercises for maintaining & improving strength, flexibility & endurance; Making decisions about treatment and complementary therapies; Communicating effectively with family, friends, & health professionals; Nutrition & healthy eating. Places filling up fast, Contact 012866966 or email info@purplehouse.ie to book a place.

Childline breakfast

ISPC Childline is calling on communities, clubs, crèches, businesses and others in Wicklow to enjoy breakfast together this month – in line with public health guidance – and help raise vital funds to make sure every child in Ireland has somewhere they can turn this winter and beyond.

To register your breakfast today, or find out more, contact the ISPC Childline fundraising team on 1850 50 40 50 or breakfast@ispc.ie.

Tree planting for Darkness Into Light

Wicklow Darkness into Light Committee members met on the grounds of Coláiste Chill Mhantáin last week to plant a tree in memory of those in the local community who have been lost to suicide.

The event is part of a month long awareness campaign organised by Pieta house to highlight the services they provide to those who are engaging in self-harm, have suicidal ideation or have been bereaved by suicide.

Sean Olohan from Wicklow Lions Club said "Thanks to Coillte who provided a cherry blossom

tree to plant and to Paul Tobin in the woodwork department who created the display sign."

The Wicklow DIL committee consists of members of the local Lions Club along with members of the teaching team in CCM. The 2019 Wicklow DIL walk raised €35,000.

This year's Darkness Into Light annual walk had to be cancelled due to



Covid-19. Since the event began, vital funds have been raised which have enabled Pieta House to keep their doors and 24/7 helpline open for people in crisis, free of charge. In Co. Wicklow, thousands

of people participate each year. The Co. Wicklow walks have taken place in Wicklow Town, Bray, and Tinahely, and last year the first Darkness Into Light walk in Blessington also took place.

Heritage walks across Wicklow

Wicklow Uplands Council in partnership with Wicklow Local Sports Partnership, have announced a guided heritage walk titled 'A Journey to 1870's Lacken' which is to be held on October 24th at 10am.

The first in a series of free, planned Heritage Walks across County Wicklow. Led by local guide Alfie Zeller, the event links with the recently restored Mass Paths, and passes numerous examples of abandoned settlements and historical sites, each with their own intriguing tale to tell.

Climbing up to the ridgeline between Lugnagun and Sorrel Hill, the panoramic views that take in the Wicklow Mountains National Park and the

Blessington Lakes, provide a vista stunning setting for the occasion. Covid 19 measures such as social distancing, will be stringently implemented to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for all involved. As per the current Level 3 restrictions, this event is only open to residents of County Wicklow.

In line with the Covid 19 measures on outdoor gatherings, the organisers need to carefully manage the number of attendees, so if you would like to attend, you MUST confirm your interest and also receive a confirmation to secure your place.

Places will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis with booking closing at 5pm on the 22nd of October. Please correspond by email: bdunne@wicklowuplands.ie or phone: 01- 2818406.

BRAY ACMEblinds Vevay Rd, Bray



- Free Fitting
- Free Measuring
- Free In Home Advice & Design Service
- No Obligation Quote

12 Month Guarantee on ALL Blinds

Tel: 286 5057 Fax: 201 4335 www.acmeblinds.com
email: bray@acmeblinds.com

Kilcoole/Newtownmountkennedy ETNS



Now Enrolling

Junior Infants, Senior Infants & 1st Class for 2021/2022



Please call: 087 393 4610 or email: ntmketns@gmail.com
www.newtownmountkennedyetns.ie



Pictured are the Student Enterprise Programme 2020 Junior Category winners Hugh Donohue and Conor McConnell from Colasite Craobh Abhann, Kilcoole, with Vibeke Delahunt, Local Enterprise Office. See more, page 17

WICKLOW Times

is published by Wicklow Times,
First Floor, The Boulevard, Quinsborough Road, Bray. A98 R6D7. Tel: 01-2869111

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

Feedback sought from Wicklow residents on Arklow Bank Wind Park Phase 2

Wicklow residents are being encouraged to have their say on the Arklow Bank Wind Park Phase 2, as public consultation on the project gets underway this week.

Located 6km to 13km off the coast to the East of Arklow and creating 80 full-time jobs, the wind park is being developed by SSE Renewables and will be Ireland's first large-scale offshore wind farm with an export capacity of 520MW.

Arklow Bank Wind Park Phase 2 will comprise up to 76 offshore wind turbines, and will have the potential to power almost 450,000 homes annually, reducing Ireland's annual carbon emissions by over half a million tonnes of CO₂.

A total of 80 new local full-time jobs will be created to support the operation of the wind farm. They will be sustained over the lifespan of the project, and will be based out of a new Operations and Maintenance Facility to be developed by SSE Renewables at Arklow Harbour's South Dock.

SSE Renewables is expected to invest between €1 billion and €2 billion developing Arklow Bank Wind Park. It will be located in shallow waters at the Arklow Bank sandbank, with the

foreshore lease covering an area approximately 27km long and 2.5km wide.

Details of the project are being shared online with the public via www.sserenewables.com/arklowbank and by a number of self-guided exhibitions in Wicklow Town and Arklow. From this week, members of the public can attend self-guided public information exhibitions at locations including Bridgewater Shopping Centre in Arklow and Wicklow's Municipal Town Hall.

On 4 November, SSE Renewables will host an online community forum that will include an introduction to the project team and a briefing on the project. Members of the public are also invited to complete a feedback form that can be submitted online or via post.

The public consultation will remain open until November 11, 2020.

For further information contact Community Engagement Manager Deborah Coleman at 087 1457603 or Deborah.coleman2@sse.com



Progress on new water treatments for Arklow and Avoca

Progress is being made in providing water treatment plants for both Arklow and Avoca.

Irish Water has confirmed in Wicklow, land has been acquired and planning permission has been granted for the new treatment plant in Arklow.

Works for the new Arklow Wastewater Treatment Plant will begin next year subject to Ministerial Consent.

It is expected that works will take at least three years to complete.

Plans to construct the Avoca Wastewater Treatment Plant are also progressing.

When these works are complete this will bring to an end the historic discharge of raw sewage into the Avoca River.

Together, these modern wastewater treatment plants will be able to treat wastewater for 37,100 people allowing for economic and social growth in

the area, as well as safeguarding our water for the future.

Minister Stephen Donnelly said: "Having a water treatment plant for Arklow is absolutely vital for the town's ability to grow and prosper."

"It has been sorely needed for a number of years as it has really held back the town's ability to grow."

"However, it has faced a series of frustrating delays which is why it is such welcome news to have official confirmation of real progress being made."

"Similarly, preventing the dumping of raw sewage into the Avoca River is an absolute priority as it is simply not acceptable our rivers are allowed to be destroyed by pollution."

"Bringing adequate waste water services to the county has been a major priority for me."

"I will be giving both projects my complete backing and making sure they have every support they need so they are delivered as quickly as possible."

Call for Nursing Home public inquiry welcomed

Sinn Féin TD John Brady has welcomed the decision of the Oireachtas Special Committee on Covid-19 Response on to call for a public inquiry into the startling number of deaths which took place in nursing homes throughout the state due to coronavirus pandemic.

Deputy Brady said: "I have called for a public inquiry into Covid related deaths in nursing home facilities on a number of occasions at this stage. Including a call made during my appearance at the Oireachtas Special Committee on Covid-19 Response meeting in September, where I specifically called for an inquiry into the deaths of 12 former residents of St Brigid's Nursing Home in Crookslin, which is on the border between Dublin and West Wicklow."

"In June it was revealed there were 31 deaths at six different nursing homes across County Wicklow. Those included the deaths of 24 people in Bray, with 10 in just one nursing home in the town, and seven people in the rest of the county. Combined with the deaths of Crookslin residents who had been transferred to a facility in Tymon North in Tallaght, that is a total of 43 deaths."

"At the time the current Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly stated that nursing homes in Wicklow 'were left screaming for help'. Since then, I have made attempts to contact the minister on this issue, which he refuses to even acknowledge, leaving me 'screaming for a reply'."

"I call upon the minister to act now, to expedite a public inquiry, to ensure that there are no more unnecessary deaths in our nursing homes. We need to make sure that the lessons of the first surge have been learnt. Unfortunately, there have already been at least six new outbreaks of Covid-19 in nursing homes so far this month according to National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHE). Some of these outbreaks have run to several dozen infections. The Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr Tony Holohan has already expressed his concern around the number of cases in nursing homes in his letter to



John Brady TD

Government last Sunday."

Brady continued: "The first confirmed case of Covid-19 in a nursing home in Ireland was on March 13. By the 23rd March, ten days later, a decision was taken to move residents from the Crookslin facility to Tymon North. Twelve of these residents died, and a further thirty-four members of staff would test positive. A court order was secured by HIQA to close another Nursing Home in the County, the only one to

be closed due to Covid. HIQA informed me that this was a result of the identification of 'clear threat to life and limb' in the facility. Despite attempts by HIQA to enforce compliance, this was not possible. HIQA cited the fact that necessary changes did not take place, that the capacity to make the changes was not there, due to a lack of leadership, a lack of governance and a lack of understanding of what was required."

Brady concluded "HIQA also gave a report to the Dáil Covid -19 Committee that showed almost 60% of outbreaks in nursing homes inspected were more severe than they should have been due to weak governance and management. Half were not following proper infection prevention and control measures, and not even one of the 44 homes inspected were fully compliant with regulations. This can never be allowed to happen again."

Join us – help and donate

Buy a friendship bracelet in your local store and help animals in need!

2.00* each
1.23 charity donation

Now also available in children's size

2.50* each
1.63 charity donation

Maxi Zoo will pass on your donation to:



Homes for Unwanted Greyhounds

Local animal welfare projects

* Please note there are only a limited number of bracelets available. All profits go directly to the charity HUG.

Maxi Zoo Bray, Unit 5 Bray Retail Park, Southern Cross Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow

maxizoo.ie

MAXI ZOO



Wicklow County Library staff David Forde and Gerlanda Maniglia examining the new Home Energy Saving Kits

Home energy-saving kits launched by Wicklow Library Service

Wicklow County Council Library Service has launched Home Energy Saving Kits and these will be available to borrow free of charge from local libraries.

Now that the cold autumn and winter months are here, householders will be thinking of cutting heating bills and saving energy.

The kit comes in a case and contains the following items to help people assess the energy efficiency of their home: A fridge/freezer thermometer to give guidance on the correct temperature for your appliance; A temperature and humidity meter to determine the temperature levels throughout the home; A radiator key to bleed radiators and ensure optimum efficiency; A thermal leak detector which will measure the temperature of your walls, floors, windows, ceilings plus identify draughts and air leaks; A plug-in energy monitor which will let people know how much energy their home appliances use as well as calculate running costs.

Speaking at the launch of the kit, Director of Services at Wicklow County Council, Michael Nicholson, said: "Wicklow County Council is pleased to be involved with this very worthwhile and timely initiative. These home energy kits will give an insight into how much energy is being used in the home. They will help people become energy aware and give practical advice on how to reduce their energy use, their carbon footprint and most importantly their household bills."

The kits are available for loan to current library members from each of Wicklow County Council's thirteen libraries. Contact your library for further information or email library@wicklowcoco.ie. Library details are on www.wicklow.ie.

€200,000 funding for Wicklow towns and villages

Almost €200,000 has been allocated to Wicklow in the third round of Government funding towards Covid-19 adaptations in towns and villages. The projects funded aim to make it easier for people to navigate their communities, while staying safe and socially distant.

The funding is being delivered under the Accelerated Measure of the Town and Village Renewal Scheme and is facilitated through the Government's July Stimulus Package.

€82,300.00 was allocated to towns or villages with population of 10,000 or fewer. This includes: €40,000 for Broadband Connection Points equipment for 5 BCP's across Co. Wicklow; €18,000 for outdoor seating and other improvements to make Kilcoole more accessible; €24,300 for age friendly improvements to Rathdrum Village.

€115,550.00 was allocated to projects in towns with a population of more than 10,000.

Arklow received €35,550 for enhancement of public spaces through a biodiversity scheme. Wicklow Town received €40,000.00 for the purchase and installation of portable street awnings. Greystones received €40,000.00 for the repair and upgrade of gravel paths at Burnaby Park.

Welcoming the funding, Green Party TD Steven Matthews said "This is the third round of this type of funding for towns and villages in County Wicklow. It allows the local authorities to

implement measures that will encourage people to shop and socialise, while adhering to public health guidelines.

"I particularly welcome the inclusion of funding for broadband connection points. We have seen in recent months how the move to working remotely can be achieved, but adequate broadband is a vital starting point.

"Street awnings will be well received by shoppers and help with navigating our Irish weather, and any age friendly measures are to be welcomed. As we adapt to our new way of living, we must support our communities, both the local economy and the social structure. Funding these projects helps us achieve both these aims."

Minister Simon Harris said "I am delighted that my colleague, Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD, has announced the expansion of the Town and Village Renewal Scheme. This scheme has always been a vital source of funding to help revitalise towns and villages in County Wicklow, however it is more important than ever in the context of COVID-19.

"The funding announced today will assist our towns and villages

to implement immediate measures that will encourage people into towns and villages to shop and socialise, while adhering to public health guidelines. It is important we generate economic activity while keeping the people of Wicklow safe. The aim is to allow for social distancing and to make towns and villages more welcoming.

"Applications under the Standard Measure of the Town & Village Renewal Scheme, which will support the medium-term recovery of rural towns and villages from the impacts of COVID-19 are currently being assessed. The successful projects will be announced when that process is complete."

Minister Stephen Donnelly said: "In County Wicklow our rural towns and villages are the lifeblood of the local economy which is why grants like these are so important.

"They are aimed at improving the infrastructure for rural areas and encouraging people to meet, socialise and shop locally.

"The Town and Village Renewal Scheme has invested significantly in towns and villages over the last number of years but it has never been more needed than now.

"Our local economy has had to undergo immense stress as we try to deal with the challenges of COVID-19. That's why grants like these along with the ongoing support of local people to support local businesses are so important. I would encourage people to consider supporting a local business when they are doing their shopping or thinking of buying gifts because our local businesses need our support now more than ever."

Commenting on this welcome announcement, the Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Pat Kennedy, said: "Our rural towns and villages have always played a huge role in supporting businesses and communities by providing spaces for people to meet, socialise and shop locally. This is particularly important as we address the challenges that COVID-19 has brought."

Mr Frank Curran, Chief Executive, Wicklow County Council, also welcomed this latest round of grants under the scheme adding that the results of the previous rounds of funding are already seen in towns and villages throughout the county as the Council, together with local communities, are rethinking the use of public spaces.

€29.9m in HSE resources to be made available to Wicklow over five years

Medicines for Ireland (MFI), the Irish pharmaceutical trade association and the supplier of the majority of medicines in Ireland, have launched 'Reductions in the Cost of Medicines', a report outlining how the Government can achieve a national saving of up to €1 billion over the next five years by switching to generic and biosimilar medicines. This would equate to €29.9 million worth of savings in Wicklow alone, which could be redirected towards additional HSE resources in the county.

Commenting on the report which was shared with Oireachtas members, Chair of Medicines for Ireland, David Delaney said: "It is well recognised by the HSE and the Department of Health that the increased use of generic medicines has delivered €1.6 billion in savings to the Irish health system since 2013. On a pro-rata basis this equates to €47.8 million saved in Wicklow over the same time. These savings have been delivered by the members of MFI who supply the majority of medicines to the HSE and to patients directly.

"Covid-19 has placed added pressure on an already over-stretched health system. The policy proposals set out in this report outline the opportunity for Government to free up significant HSE resources by avoiding an annual spend of hundreds of millions of euro on high cost patented medicines. Over the last decade, the increased use of generic medicines in Ireland has helped dramatically reduce the cost of everyday health care. These reductions have helped families across the county access a greater range of medicines due to generic competition. While this has resulted in the

era of the big brand being dealt a blow, an increased use of generic and biosimilar medicines will help protect public finances and the HSE budget, with the possibility of redirecting savings into other much needed HSE resources."

The report, sets out how the a saving of €29.9 million in Wicklow over five years could allow for an additional 179 nurses or an extra 105 nursing home beds in the county. With a cost reduction of €47.8 million since 2013, this equates to an approximate €1,243 saving for each of the 38,495 families registered as living in the area according to the latest CSO.

Mr Delaney added: "In the last 12 months the average reimbursed price of generic medicines was six times less expensive when compared with non-generic medicines, illustrating the very significant savings that can be availed of at both national and local level. Significantly, an increase in biosimilar medicines usage will lead to an increase in savings, greater patient access and better security of supply - thereby freeing money up for the funding of frontline services such as hospital beds as well as

provide for much needed specialist staff.

"Failure to address the high cost of medicines, with more sustainable generic or biosimilar options, will ensure that funding constraints remain a millstone around the neck of an already over-stretched healthcare system. The current penetration rate for biosimilars medicine in Ireland is below 50 per cent while the average across other EU countries is in the range of 80 - 90 per cent, demonstrating the immense opportunity for further savings in this area.

"Medicines for Ireland (MFI) members are at the forefront of national efforts to ensure that patients continue to access medicines despite the multitude of challenges that the Covid-19 pandemic introduced to the global medicine supply chain.

"This report is a result of a detailed analysis carried out by MFI to support its work and help stakeholders across Ireland optimally modernise public policy to ensure there is a sustainable supply of medicine to patients in Ireland. The result of all this equates to increased patient access to cost effective everyday medicines."

Benville Robinson
SOLICITORS

Riverview House
Seapoint Road,
Bray, Co. Wicklow

Tel: 01 276 1330 Fax: 01 276 1336
Web: www.benvillrobinson.ie
E-mail: info@benvillrobinson.ie

Personal Injury Lawyers*

Medical Negligence* Catastrophic Injuries*
Workplace Accidents* Road Traffic Accidents*
Trips and Falls*

For professional, confidential and expert legal advice regarding
Personal Injuries suffered, please do not hesitate to contact
Brian Robinson or Clare-Ann Temple.

Benville Robinson
SOLICITORS

Rory P. Benville B.C.L.
Brian Robinson B.B.L.S., L.L.M.
Eilish Bradshaw B.A., L.L.B., L.L.M.
Clare-Ann Temple L.L.B.

*In contentious business, a solicitor may not calculate fees or other charges as a percentage or proportion of any award or settlement

FOR WORLD LEADING EXCELLENCE AND LOCAL JOBS **WE'RE READY**

We set the standard in offshore wind energy. Today, we're ready to deliver the next stage of Arklow Bank Wind Park, for Wicklow, and for Ireland.

sserenewables.com/arklowbank



For a better
world of energy



Pictured are Shona Byrne and James Doyle who received the Transition Year Academic Award at the Colaiste Bhríde Carnew Transition Year Class of 2019/20 Awards.

Council shortlisted for seven Local Government Awards

Chambers Ireland have revealed the shortlist for the Excellence in Local Government Awards 2020. In its 17th year, the Awards features a total of 86 projects from Local Authorities shortlisted in 16 categories. The Excellence in Local Government Awards are held annually in conjunction with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

Congratulating the Local Authorities shortlisted, Mr. Darragh O'Brien T.D., Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage stated, "My Department is delighted to support the Chambers Ireland Excellence in Local Government Awards again this year. The projects that the local authorities have undertaken have helped maintain a sense of community, establish connections among our citizens and provide essential supports to the public at a crucial time. I wish to congratulate everyone for their hard work, commitment and resilience throughout the year, which is evident in all the applications submitted."

The vital role played by local government in our communities has been very much to the fore in the past year, especially as the country responded to the COVID-19 emergency. "It is imperative that the effort, commitment, innovation and agility of local authorities and their staff continues to be acknowledged through these formal awards. The projects that the local authorities have undertaken have helped maintain a sense of community, establish connections among our citizens and provide essential supports to the public at a crucial time. I wish to congratulate everyone for their hard work, commitment and resilience throughout the year, which is evident in all the applications submitted."

Here is your say - Arklow town public survey results are in!

Concerns about a lack of retail/social options and traffic congestion in the Main Street area of Arklow, along with cleanliness and appearance of the town, are priorities for both residents and visitors, according to the result of a public survey.

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 Public Survey on how best to reopen Arklow was carried out and the results are now in. The survey was conducted to gauge interested parties views on how best to support the local economy in the context of applying for stimulus funding to reopen Co. Wicklow's town centres.

Such initiatives may include measures to enhance social distancing such as widening of footpaths, pedestrianisation of streets through to supporting business by increasing footfall through enhancing the streetscape, removing parking spaces and making our streets more amenable to trade.

The findings of the study will help future decision making on improvements to the town centre when funding becomes available.

The results are a valuable resource for all those who have an input into the future shaping and decision making in our town and will greatly assist in making Arklow a vibrant and welcoming town for future generations.

A number of major initiatives are taking place in Arklow and again the survey will assist policy makers in making the town a better place to live, work and play.

Wicklow County Council has recently received funding to carry out a traffic and transportation study for Arklow. Consultants will shortly be appointed to consider a transport plan for the town which deals with mobility and traffic congestion issues which were again instanced in the response to the survey.

Other initiatives on the infrastructure side which will increase footfall and business activity in the town include URDF funding of some €1.645 million allocated for Arklow's Historic Town Core with work due to commence on the Parade Ground early in the new year.

The Courthouse building has been refurbished and will shortly offer business units and office space for new and expanding businesses in the area. All in all, this will be a transformative project for the streetscape and public realm in the heart of the town offering an attractive space for people to spend time, socialise and enjoy what Arklow has to offer.

Plans are also in place to refurbish the entrance to St. Mary's Park. The park benches and flower beds will also be upgraded.

Arklow Town Team will also continue with the Flower Basket Scheme in 2021 which continues to bring colour and vibrancy to the town centre.

Funding has also recently been secured for the installation of a sustainable irrigation system for winter and summer pollinator friendly planters on 19 Arches Bridge, the gateway to Arklow.

Tidy Towns group in conjunction with Arklow Municipal District staff continue to do great work in maintaining and improving the urban landscape of the town.

Arklow Municipal District will also have its public spaces enhanced following recent funding of €35,550 secured under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme to implement a Biodiversity Plan for the District.

"Wicklow County Council stated, "We would like to thank everyone who took the time to input into the survey. Congratulations also to Patricia Jenkinson who won the prize of one month's free parking for taking part."

Bray scores well in anti-litter survey

Bray has been given top marks in the latest Irish Business Against Litter (IBAL) survey with the town being assessed as the being 'Clean to European Norms'.

An Taisce, who carry out the survey, commented that Bray "Main Street, Bray Civic Centre and Bray Promenade were all very much deserving of the top litter grade - not only were they very good with regard to litter but they were all very well presented and maintained".

Cathaoirleach of Bray Municipal District, Cllr Anne Ferris, said: "We are pleased that Bray has again performed well in the litter survey. This is a testament to the hard work and dedication of the Council's crews who are out seven days a week."

The seafront and promenade scored highly, and the report stated this site was exceptional in terms of both presentation and litter.

It added that the Bandstand was looking freshly painted and the surrounding paving was in excellent condition saying: "The area is well served by regular litter bins (extra on the beach during the summer)."

The An Taisce judges commented: "Bray retains the clean status from its last survey two years ago. A big development since 2018 is the major construction of Bray Town Centre on the Main Street. This had formerly been the site of 'Quinsboro Road Car Park' which had regularly been a heavily littered site."

Bray Municipal District work with established community groups such as the Tidy Towns and Bray Coastcare and the contribution these groups make to the town must be acknowledged.

Marrakesh

Marrakesh Ltd is a family run business specialising in Construction and Demolition Waste Management & Recycling, Site Clearance and Supply of Material from 4" down to Blinding, Recycled Screened Topsoil, Sand, Gravel etc.

EPA LICENCED FACILITY • ALL TRUCKS CARRY WASTE PERMITS

Recycled:

- Screened Topsoil
- Screened no 2 soil
- 4" Down Crushed Concrete
- 4" Clean Crushed Concrete
- 3" Down Crushed Concrete
- 3" Clean Crushed Concrete
- Crushed Concrete Fines
- Crushed Tarmac Fines
- No 2 Stone

Also available:

- Granite • Pebble • Sand

We also accept for recycling: • Clay • Stone • Concrete • Tarmac • Sand

We can organise SITE CLEARANCES - no job too big or small

Tel: 01 286 8119 Mobile: 087 664 1866
www.marrakeshltd.com

Council acquires Rathdrum site for community & enterprise centre

Wicklow County Council announced that it has acquired the old St. Joseph's site in Rathdrum from the HSE. The development of the site will be at the core of the latest proposals for the regeneration of Rathdrum.

The site is centrally located beside St Saviour's Church, adjacent to the Memorial Park and carpark, with children's playground and adult gym nearby.

An application is currently being prepared seeking funding through the Rural Regeneration Development Fund for the development of a multi-use Community and Enterprise Centre at the site, increased connectivity through improved road and pedestrian access and enhancements to public realm.

The proposed development will help to stimulate further growth in social, community and economic activities in the wider Rathdrum area.

Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Pat Kennedy, thanked the Chief Executive, Frank Curran; Michael Nicholson, Director of Services; the Rathdrum Playground Committee and all involved in progressing the acquisition of this site.

He said: "This is the culmination of a decade of work on behalf of the local community. We developed the playground in 2011, the outdoor gym in 2013. I am delighted to see that we are moving on to the next phase, with the appointment of a local architect, Pdraig Smith Partnership, to develop the vision statement and the plans for the community centre and O'Connor Sutton Cronin to develop the roads and traffic aspects of the proposal".



Cllr Pat Kennedy

Mr Frank Curran, Chief Executive, added: "We are hoping to secure Rural Regeneration Development Funding to advance this project, it is important to have an

almost shovel ready project for submission. We are fortunate to have the support of the Rathdrum Development Association and other organisations that have been active in the development of Rathdrum. That community spirit led Rathdrum to success in last year's Enterprising Towns competition. We will be engaging with the wider community and stakeholder groups, within the next month as plans advance".

The application for funding will be submitted by Tuesday 1st of December, with an announcement on successful applications expected in the first quarter of 2021.



Pictured at the site of the new proposed Community and Enterprise Centre in Rathdrum are members of the Rathdrum Playground Committee and Senior members of Wicklow County Council; Susan Nicols, Colm Lavery, Karen Kelly, Denis Carter, Michael Nicholson, Seamus O'Toole, Daphne Cullen, Marie Mullen, Cathaoirleach Pat Kennedy, Olivia Mullen, CEO Frank Curran, and Liam Kelly

HOSPICE IS FINALLY READY

Continued from page 1

"We rely heavily on the support of the public and our fundraising has been critically impacted by Covid-19. We receive a lot of support from communities at events big and small but this year people have been unable to get together and we are really seeing the impact of this now. We estimate that fundraising this year will be down over 35% by year-end and we urge the people of Wicklow to get behind this project once more.

"As with other healthcare providers nationwide, we are in the unfortunate position of having to restrict visiting at present.

Visiting will be aligned to the phases of the government roadmap and details of agreed visiting and other relevant arrangements will be confirmed by the clinical team. We are grateful for the support and understanding of patients and their families as we strive to protect them, our staff and the wider community.

"Virtual visits have become popular and we are happy to work with patients and their families to help them set up phone and video calling. We encourage patients to bring in items from home and we know that messages, photos, cards and pictures from children really brighten up their day.

"Volunteers play a vital role across our services. Our gardening volunteers have been active for some time, planning how to make the most of this special site. In the new year we will look to develop our volunteer programme and advise those who are interested in getting involved to keep an eye on social media and online."

The organisation continues to explore ways to meet growing demand and future needs by finding ways to integrate, improve and expand its services. In 2021, OLH&CS will refurbish Blackrock Hospice at a cost of around €4 million.

FOR SETTING STANDARDS AND LOCAL BENEFITS WE'RE READY

Arklow Bank Wind Park Phase 2

Public consultation open until 11 November 2020

Our investment in Arklow Bank Wind Park can kickstart our green recovery and support local jobs, the economy and the environment.

We want to know what you think.

To see more and give feedback visit srenewables.com/arklowbank

Or, visit our exhibitions:

- Bridgewater Shopping Centre, Arklow
- Arklow Library
- Town Hall, Wicklow Town

Exhibitions are unmanned due to Covid-19 restrictions and are subject to changes. Opening times match venue's hours. See srenewables.com/arklowbank for updates.



sse
Renewables

For a better
world of energy

'Budget 2021 is good news for Wicklow'

Last week's budget announcement detailed the biggest and most progressive investment in the history of the state and is good news for Wicklow, said Green Party TD Steven Matthews.

He said that it was evident from many of the expenditure decisions that this budget had "green influence all over it".

"Significant green wins were contained in this budget," said Deputy Matthews. "There has been a shift towards a green and circular economy, while ensuring a just transition for all. While no budget can ever fully realise the expectations of all, this record spend of €17bn for 2021 shows that the Greens in government demonstrate a significant shift in the political landscape and in how we prioritise our spending."

Detailing some of the increased budget spends that will benefit the people of Wicklow, Deputy Matthews said, "These measures show an increased spend across the core areas of health, education and housing but also Green Party influenced measures to address climate change, housing, transport and vulnerable communities."

Budget measure that will benefit the people of Wicklow include:

- Strong social protection provisions including increase in qualified child allowance, fuel allowance and living alone allowance. Also the Carbon tax will tax pollution but not as a revenue generating exercise, the funds will go towards retrofitting housing stock and social protection measures as well as agricultural schemes to sequester carbon and increase biodiversity.

Investment in childcare, €225m to improve direct provision before system change, €70m funding towards youth work.

- Largest ever investment in housing of €3.3bn, providing 9,500 social housing, 400 cost rental, €290m allocated to retrofitting older homes, homelessness funding increased to €218m.

- Increase in frontline gardai, 620 new recruits, 500 garda staff.
- €1m per day allocated for walking and cycling improvements, an additional €1bn for public transport projects.

- Teacher pupil ratio in Wicklow's classroom will be reduced to 1:25 and 600 new teachers come on stream nationally.
- Hospitality VAT rate to be reduced to 9%, helping Wicklow's tourism and recreation economy.

- €180m investment in the arts, which will assist Wicklow's vibrant artistic community
- Pandemic payment recipients will receive Christmas bonus.

Deputy Matthews concluded, "It is clear that this is a Green recovery budget; it provides for Covid and Brexit contingencies while providing massive capital investment and catering for our vulnerable."

Major new reskilling and retraining package

Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science Simon Harris has announced a major new reskilling and retraining package and extension of Apprenticeship scheme in addition to further financial assistance for full-time students.

The package includes:

- A €50 million fund to provide financial assistance to full time third level students in recognition of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on this group.
- €120 million to reskill and upskill people affected by the pandemic.
- Supporting a green recovery by rolling out a new retrofitting training scheme and a new climate action upskilling scheme.

- 50,000 further education and training places in 2020/2021.
- Extension of the Apprenticeship Incentivisation Scheme.

- Nearly €30 million will be invested in research to support researchers, build capacity, support COVID-19 research, and strengthen north-south research links.
- Enhanced SUSI grant supports for post-grads and increased support for the PATH access initiative to increase participation in Higher Education from the most economically disadvantaged students.

- A review of SUSI to guide the

future strategic direction of the scheme.

- Funding will be provided to sustain additional places in higher education and further increase Springboard places.
- Infrastructure investments to expand student places, upgrade existing infrastructure, modernise apprenticeship provision and progress the digital agenda.
- €15 million is being provided for minor capital works and equipment for higher education institutions.

Minister Harris said: "COVID-19 has brought unprecedented challenges for the economy and for people across the country. My department will help people who have lost their job get back on their feet."

"Budget 2021 will see a total investment of €118.5 million to upskill and reskill people who have been affected by the impacts of the current pandemic and train in the skills of the future, particularly the climate agenda. The investment will be aimed at those that require it the

most, whether that is to assist with seeking employment or to upskill in their current jobs.

"For students, this year has been like no other. The majority of college will be online for this semester and we will provide financial assistance through a €50 million fund.

"Detailed work will be undertaken on how this once-off fund will operate for submission to Government prior to commencement.

"We will also carry out a review of student supports in line with the Programme for Government commitment but as a first step, will reform post graduate supports.

"Investment in education, research, and science will help to support a more sustainable, resilient and fair recovery across Ireland."

Minister Harris concluded: "I will later this year launch an Apprenticeship Action Plan but in the meantime, we will extend the incentive for businesses to take on apprentices."

€4 billion for health and social care services

Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly TD said "Budget 2021 saw an extra €4 billion added to the health budget, the largest budget increase in the history of the state. This money signals how determined we in government are to fund an expansion of, and improvements in, our health and social care services.

"Budget 2021 provides for the continuation of the extraordinary public health measures and health and social care service supports and capacity introduced in 2020. But this Budget will not just be about the response to COVID-19, it is also about building positive permanent change into our health service."

"While the pandemic highlighted major challenges in our health service, it has also highlighted the many strengths within the service. In Budget 2021 my objective is to address these challenges head on and to build upon the strengths. The investments being made today will mean that when this pandemic ends, Ireland will have a better, more resilient healthcare system - one which has the capacity required to meet the changing needs of the population, and one which has permanently embedded reform."

"This Budget will deliver funding for 2,600 beds and about 16,000 staff for our health service over Budget 2020 levels. It will provide

permanent funding for the capacity and staff introduced in 2020 and planned under the HSE Winter Plan. It will move care from hospitals to communities, closer to home. It will ensure that more people have access to primary care and that more older people will have medical cards. It will ensure that funding is in place for new medicines and technologies. It is providing unprecedented funding

for key national strategies that will improve maternity and gynaecology services, cancer services, our trauma network, palliative care, dementia services and women's health."

The Minister added: "Hundreds of thousands of people were on waiting lists before COVID-19 hit. Since the beginning of the pandemic this has worsened as much elective, or planned, care paused earlier this year.

The impact of this pandemic on levels of unmet need is difficult to quantify, but it is a huge concern for me as Health Minister. Therefore, I have established an Access to Care Fund of €210 million and will be allocating a budget of €130 million to the National Treatment Purchase Fund (NTPF). It will empower our GPs and provide access to more than 130,000 additional diagnostic tests."

Stephen Donnelly TD Minister for Health

Budget 2021 is delivering a permanent increase in the capacity of our health services right across the system.

As your Minister for Health I have sought major investments in hospital capacity, in beds and doctors, in nurses and health care staff that will have a real impact on the lives of people in Wicklow.

- An additional 1,146 hospital beds
- An increase in permanent ICU beds from 255 to 321 by the end of 2021
- 1,250 community beds in 2021 including 600 new rehabilitation beds
- 5 million additional homecare hours
- Increasing spending to over €1 billion on mental health
- Hiring 16,000 extra staff across the health sector
- €100 million on disability
- Funding for the Stáintecare Public Only Consultant contract
- Acceleration of the National Cancer Strategy
- Acceleration of the National Maternity Strategy
- €5 million for the development of community based dementia services
- €50 million for new medicines
- €25 million for Healthy Ireland and the National Drugs Strategy
- Approx 100,000 additional inpatient and daycare procedures



Constituency Office, Vevay Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow. A98 T2H3. ☎ (01) 201 7300

© Stephen Donnelly@oireachtas.ie

DonnellyforWicklow DonnellyStephen

FIANNA Fáil
THE REPUBLICAN PARTY



Steven Matthews TD

WWW.GREENPARTY.IE

BUDGET WINS TO BENEFIT WICKLOW

- Smaller class sizes, more teachers, enhanced 3rd level grants
- €3.5 billion for Transport
- €1m per day for pedestrian & cycling infrastructure
- Redistribution of carbon tax for energy upgrades, to farmers and to poorer homes
- €100m for Disability sector
- €38m for mental health
- €95.5m for Heritage and Biodiversity
- €3.3 billion for Housing inc affordable and social
- €70m for Youth Services
- €180m for the Arts



#greenrecovery

Constituent queries to:

Facebook Steven Matthews Green Party

Twitter @stevensgreen1

Email: Steven.matthews@oireachtas.ie

MINISTER SIMON HARRIS

Hi there,

Budget 2021 is a Budget like no other in a year like no other.

Covid-19 has disrupted all of our lives and this Budget aims to offer support and protection in this uncertain and challenging time.

I hope you are all keeping well and safe and continue to look after each other. If you require any further information or assistance, I would be happy to hear from you by phone or by email.

Please be assured of my pride in how this county has responded to Covid-19 and my absolute determination that we will come out the other side together and stronger.



MINISTER SIMON HARRIS TD

Budget at a Glance:

- €55 billion extra for spending on the impact of Covid;
- €3.7 billion extra for day-to-day spending;
- €1.6 billion extra for spending on schools, hospitals, roads and other projects in the National Development Plan;
- €3.4 billion for a Brexit-Covid Recovery Fund for 2021.
- €2 billion for Covid health measures including PPE and Testing & Tracing, continuing with expanded hospital capacity, and temporary assistance scheme for nursing homes;
- €400,000 billion for Covid education measures including PPE and school transport, cutting the parent teacher ratio at primary level to 24:1, more than 1,000 special education teachers
- Launching the Covid Restrictions Support Scheme (CRSS) for businesses which have closed temporarily or have significantly reduced turnover due to public health restrictions;
- Extending the Employment Wage Subsidy Scheme for the whole of 2021;
- Cutting the VAT rate for hospitality and tourism from 13.5 to 9% from November 1st;
- Extending the commercial rates waiver to the end of 2020;
- A Christmas Bonus of 100% will be paid PUP and jobseekers recipients who have been on these payments for four months or more;
- Self-employed workers will be able to earn up to €480 a month gross without affecting their PUP payment;
- Investment in Hot Meals programme;
- €50m of financial assistance for full time third level students for the impact of the Covid pandemic;
- Pension Qualifying age to remain at 66 years;
- €5 increase in Living Alone Allowance, increase in Qualified Child Allowance and Fuel Allowance weekly welfare payments;
- Carers Support Grant increased by €150 to €1,850;
- Increasing the ceiling of the second USC rate band to €20,687;
- Earned Income Credit increased by €150 to €1,650 (equalised with PAYE tax credit);
- Additional 15,000 HAP tenancies and 800 RAS tenancies;
- Extension of Help-To-Buy for an additional year;
- Additional €100 million for Brexit preparedness, total €350 million in Department estimates plus funding available from Recovery Fund as required;
- Extension of the tax debt warehousing scheme for employers and self-employed.

Investing now for the future well-being of our country

- Spending on new capital projects like schools, hospitals and roads will grow by €1.6 billion in 2021 (a 19% increase) to over €10.1 billion;
- €500 million extra investment for building projects in Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government (23%) including for social and affordable housing;
- Multi-annual capital funding of €300 million for Shared Island Initiative million to be provided over five years;
- Carbon tax revenue to fund retrofitting, biodiversity measures and alleviate fuel poverty.

Protecting our students and future proofing our economy:

- €50m of financial assistance for full time third level students for the impact of the Covid pandemic;
- Making it easier to access Susi grants and increasing the size of the payment for post-graduate students;
- €120m for Skills including an extended apprentice scheme, giving cash payments for businesses, 50,000 further education and training places and an extended

Apprenticeship Incentivisation Scheme.

- €30 million investment in research to build capacity, support Covid research and strengthen north-south research links;
- Funding to sustain additional places in Higher Education and provide 1,500 additional Springboard places.

FINE GAEL



**Contact me for advice, support or assistance on any matter
Bray Office: 01 2813727 Email: simon.harris@oireachtas.ie**



Failte Ireland welcomed Government support for the Tourism and Hospitality sector in Budget 2021. Paul Kelly, CEO, Failte Ireland, is pictured with Minister Catherine Martin, Department of Tourism, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media. (Pic: Julien Behel)

'Government fails children and stretched families'

Jennifer Whitmore TD, Social Democrats spokesperson for children, has called out the Government for not grasping the opportunity in Budget 2021 to move to a public model of childcare provision. She also said that the Budget has overlooked the children and stretched families who have borne the brunt of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Deputy Whitmore said: "Our childcare system fell apart on its first major test in the early stages of Covid-19. The privatised, under-resourced model which successive governments have created was never fit for purpose. For most families with children, it was the equivalent of another mortgage and a huge part of the unsustainable cost of living.

"The systemic weaknesses were shown up in the pandemic, including very poor wages, lack of sick pay, poor progression routes and poor profitability for the providers. It became clearer that it is a broken system that doesn't work for children, for parents or for early educators.

"All of us relied on our childcare system to restart the economy, to enable people to get back to work. The government put band-aids on it and cobbled together something that got barely got us through temporarily. But all the crucial issues of affordability and proper pay were left untouched.

"The government badly failed in Budget 2021 to seize the opportunity to re-imagine our childcare system. This was a once in a generation opportunity the government should have taken to rebuild a system that worked for children, for families, for employers and for the workers in the childcare system.

"Budget 2021 was the opportunity to move to a publicly funded, high quality childcare system - as much of Europe already has in place. The failure of the Government to grasp the opportunity means that our chance of having proper public services

once the pandemic is past is rapidly diminishing.

"Our sacrifices throughout this year must count for something. We deserve better. Our children deserve better. If the children of today are going to be paying back the borrowing needed to see us through Covid-19, the least we can do is to ensure that they benefit now from the debt we will be asking them to pay back in the future."

She went on to say: "A total of €17.75 billion allocated in this budget will be the largest ever in a budget, yet key sectors have been largely overlooked by this record spend which will make it harder for children, young people and families to navigate the current pandemic.

"The Department of Children saw only a 6% increase in its budget compared to 2020 figures. No extra funding was given to address chronic underinvestment in the sector, meaning issues of quality of childcare and the crisis of low pay in the sector will remain.

"It beggars belief that the Government should choose to turn a blind eye to this incredibly important sector. Childcare provision during Covid-19 was the cornerstone of the economy as it enabled parents to return to work.

"An increase would have also helped turn around Ireland's record at the bottom of the class in terms of investment, which currently stands at 0.1pc of GDP, the lowest of any developed country. It is also a missed opportunity to move towards a new model of childcare which is responsive to the needs of fami-

lies, workers and children.

"The additional funding of €110m for the Department is welcome, however, and I am happy to see funding facilitating the work of Tusla as well as supporting those in direct provision. I also welcome the additional €5m for youth services.

"However, much more will be needed to help young people navigate the current crisis and address the effects it has had on this cohort. It has not been given the attention it deserves to date which I will work for on the Oireachtas Committee for Children.

"Some anti-poverty initiatives will also get additional funding, including an increase in the school meals programme which I called for in my recent Dáil motion on Child Poverty. This expansion will reach an additional 35,000 school children.

"Fuel poverty is also a focus in the budget, with the Fuel Allowance increasing by €3.50. However, I am concerned that this increase will be absorbed by any increases in the cost of living over time.

"Budget 2021 was also an opportunity to support parents as they cope with the Covid-19 crisis and to address the early years of a child's life. I had called for an extension to Parents' Leave in our Social Democrats Budget proposal and I am happy to see that paid leave has been increased by three weeks. However, the child poverty measures announced today do not go far enough, particularly the €2 increase for under 12 years," concluded Deputy Whitmore.

'Budget has let down workers, families and small business owners'

Sinn Féin TD John Brady has said that the government has badly let down hundreds of thousands of workers, families and small business owners in Budget 2021.

Deputy Brady said "Sinn Féin would have done things differently. We would have given certainty to workers, families and small businesses that they can get through this crisis. We would have delivered affordable housing on a scale not seen before. We would have built up greater capacity in our health service. And critically we would have started the work to rebuild our country in a better, fairer, stronger way.

"Today was the day for action but what did we get - no relief for people who saw their PUP payment cut, no relief for renters, no right to a pension at 65, more new money for developers and landlords than for genuinely affordable housing, nothing delivered for families paying the highest childcare costs in Europe, not enough to help small businesses survive, increasing costs for people across rural Ireland with carbon taxes and motor taxes and little ambition to get to

grips with the crisis in our health service.

"Our very first priority would be those who are struggling and just clinging on having lost jobs and incomes. Those who need PUP payments restored. Those locked out of homeownership in the middle of a pandemic. Those renters who just need a break. They should have reversed the cut to the PUP payment for those who have lost their jobs as increased restrictions are reintroduced. But they didn't. They should have reversed the cut to the temporary wage scheme. But they didn't. This means we have businesses closing unnecessarily, this means families slipping into further debt and in some cases at risk of losing the roof over their head.

"The Government should have grasped this unique opportunity to have the largest house building programme in the state's history - stimulating the economy, addressing the affordable housing short-

age, giving people real hope in these difficult times that they can secure a home for their family. The new Government had completely failed its first and most important test on housing. Minister Darragh O'Brien has failed to secure the level of capital investment required to tackle the social and affordable housing crisis. This is more of the same failed housing policy of the last Government. More new money will go to private landlords and private developers than will go to genuinely affordable homes for working people.

"They should have prioritised young people disproportionately impacted by unemployment and the housing crisis robbed of all the opportunities other generations took for granted.

"The failure to guarantee your right to a pension at 65 in the middle of a pandemic where older people are most vulnerable and where youth unemployment is so high simply

makes no sense.

"As for rural communities, the approach seems to be to kick them when they are down. Carbon taxes and VRT changes will come as a blow to people who have no option but to drive and who have no money to change to an electric vehicle.

"I welcome the increase in funding to re-open disability services and I commend all those families and providers who worked so hard to bring this about. That they were left for so long and had to fight so hard is an indictment of this and successive governments. Much more needs to be done but this is a first step."

Deputy Brady concluded "This was a time for change. The risk is not that we do too much, the risk is that we do too little, too late. Our focus is on supporting people to get through this crisis and that on the far side of it we rebuild the country in a better, fairer, stronger way."

'Supports for businesses welcome but huge uncertainty remains'

Social Democrats Cllr Jodie Neary has responded to Budget 2021 saying "while the Budget recognised the twin challenges for business including Brexit and COVID 19, it has failed to address the overall level of uncertainty in the sector and the more immediate financial challenges facing many local businesses in Greystones District and across Wicklow.

Speaking about the Budget, Cllr Neary says "Budget 2021 certainly had its eye on the business sector providing various supports such as the extension of the commercial rates holiday, reduction of VAT to 9% in the hospitality sector, a new CRSS programme providing up to €5,000 per week in the event of closure and the continuation of PUP and the EWSS.

"But for many local businesses such as hairdressers, butchers or pubs, Budget 2021 did not address the more immediate financial challenges business owners face from one day to the next. Many of the businesses I spoke to in Greystones District said overheads such as rent, mortgages and utility bills still present daily financial challenges which this Budget did little to alleviate. A much respected and loved restaurant in

Greystones closed down in recent months which was regretful for the local community but also for those who put so much work and effort into the business.

"The Government needs to be conscious of the fact that counties moving in and out of various levels of COVID 19 restrictions, brings with it additional uncertainty for businesses which needs to be pre-empted. A business that deals mainly in perishable goods can get caught out by sudden restrictions forcing them to needlessly lose out on their stock. Other business are permanently cautious over buying stock and in Wicklow, which saw a move from Level 2 to Level 3, supply chains get disrupted.

"Not only do businesses need supports for these immediate financial challenges during COVID 19, the sector as a whole can only survive if we invest in our workers. They need adequate sick leave as well as better income protections at this most uncertain time which the Social Democrats has called for in response to Budget 2021.

"Investing in local businesses and in our workers gives towns and villages such as Greystones, Kilcoole and Newcastle, a fighting chance to emerge intact from this pandemic," concluded Cllr Neary.

Celebrate Halloween without Bonfires

Wicklow County Council is calling on communities and residents of Wicklow to celebrate Halloween safely this year without risk to life and our environment and the fear some activities can generate to others in our community. Halloween has its origin in our Celtic culture and while now celebrated internationally, is something we can all take pride in as an Irish tradition. That tradition does not require destructive bonfires and the use of fireworks.

Wicklow County Council would like to remind people that the burning of waste is not permitted. Bonfires release toxic carcinogenic materials into our air and leave toxic ash, waste residues and long term scarring of the land.

The Council is calling on householders and businesses to be vigilant and ensure none of their property ends up being used on a bonfire. Householders, individuals and businesses are liable for the waste and if identified giving waste for the purpose of making a bonfire will be liable to prosecution.

Wicklow County will not carry out clean ups after illegal bonfires and will not be responsible for the cost of any cleanup where one takes place.

With incidence of Covid-19 is rising in

County Wicklow at present, the Council is asking people to remember that gathering in numbers will breach current restrictions to control the spread of Covid 19. In outdoor settings, only up to 6 people from a maximum of 2 households can meet while maintaining strict physical distancing. This year more than ever we need to rethink how we celebrate Halloween.

In recent decades Halloween has been the busiest night of the year by far for all our emergency services. Firefighters have to deal with fires that get out of control putting buildings and people at risk, often having to deal with hostile crowds in the process.

Our hospital emergency departments experience a spike in injuries and medical emergencies at this

time also. Covid-19 has stretched our medical services to the utmost and they have responded with courage. They don't need a typical Halloween experience this year.

Anti-social behaviour puts a lot of demand on the Gardaí. Such The anti-social behavior is also a very frightening experience for many residents particularly the older and more vulnerable. The social isolation that has resulted from lockdown and limiting contact with friends and family has made 2020 tough for many of these people. We can all help by ensuring that Halloween this year is a less stressful experience.

Fireworks cause fear particularly to dogs and cats with their sensitive hearing. If you don't want to cause stress to your own and neighbours pet

then don't do fireworks and bangers. Pet owners are advised to keep their pet indoors in the quietest space they can provide. Fireworks in the weeks leading up Halloween extend this misery for pets.

This Halloween lets all celebrate in family. Celebrate the arrival of darker evenings and spooks ghouls and have some fun.

Let's avoid doing harm to our environment and let's avoid the risk of spreading Covid-19. Let's give our emergency services a well-deserved break this Halloween. They have been champions, looking out for us since March.

Wicklow County Council hopes you enjoy Halloween, but please respect your environment and neighbours.



Dawn Byrne of Knockananna GAA Club presents a cheque for €20,000 to Tanya Daly from Whiterock, Tinahealy, who won the Club Lotto jackpot at O'Keefe's, Knockananna

Over 1700 young people unemployed

The National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI) which represents groups working with over 380,000 young people nationwide - has expressed disappointment at the measures contained in the Budget to deal with the high levels of youth unemployment. In County Wicklow there are 1,203 people under the age of 25 in receipt of the Pandemic Unemployment Payment (PUP), and a further 583 young people aged 25-29 on the PUP.

Reacting to the budget James Doorley, NYCI Deputy Director said: "Ministers Donohue and McGrath both noted and accepted the impact of the pandemic on the job prospects of young people and the high levels of youth unemployment in their budget speeches. But the actual measures contained in the Budget to deal with the challenge was disappointing, given the scale and scope of the problem.

"We have 36.5% youth unemployment, the number of young people under 25 on the PUP stands at 55,000 and there is a further cohort of almost 29,000 on the live register (up 6,000 since March 2020).

"We welcome the extra 10,000 places in education and training and an expansion of the apprenticeship incentivisation scheme on top of existing measures. We also note the announcement of a further €10m in activation measures by the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection.

"However, with 83,000 young people out of work, these measures in our view are insufficient."

Local hoteliers welcome budget measures

Hotels and guesthouses in Wicklow have welcomed the range of measures and supports announced in Budget 2021 by Ministers Paschal Donohoe and Michael McGrath.

Irish Hotels Federation (IHF) Wicklow branch chair, Gerard O'Brien welcomed in particular the extension of employment supports to the end of 2021 and the rates waiver scheme along with the reduction in the tourism VAT rate, which he said would help aid the recovery of the industry. He said the new Covid Restriction Support Scheme, the Tourism Business Support Scheme and funds for tourism product development, are welcome recognition of the challenges being faced by businesses.

Mr O'Brien commented: "The extension of employment supports until the end of December 2021 is very welcome. However, we are disappointed that the rates of the EWSS scheme were not increased. This does not recognise the challenges facing tourism and hospitality businesses in retaining key staff during the difficult winter/spring months and against the backdrop of additional restrictions.

"We also welcome the reduction in the tourism VAT to 9%, which is the right tourism VAT rate. It is an important measure that will stimulate demand and aid the recovery of the tourism and hospitality industry. After the last recession, tourism created the most jobs nationally - 90,000 new jobs - and there is no doubt that the 9% VAT rate contributed significantly to this

increased employment. Pre-Covid, our industry supported almost 270,000 livelihoods, including 13,900 jobs, and generated €135m in revenue here in Wicklow. This accounts for one in ten jobs across the country, 70% of which were outside of Dublin. Reducing the Tourism VAT will help sustain jobs and communities across Ireland.

Mr O'Brien added: "As well as providing a stimulus in the Irish economy, the reduction will improve our competitiveness as an international tourism destination. However, it should be a permanent measure, at a minimum of five years. Contracts with tour operators for example, which can account for over 30% of many hotels' business, are agreed two years in advance. Before today, VAT on Irish Hotels was the second highest in Europe and higher than 30 European Countries. The UK - our nearest largest market and one of our biggest competitors - for example, currently has a VAT rate of 5% so today's reduction is an important boost to our competitiveness.

"We cautiously welcome the extension of the local authority rates waiver period to 31st December 2020 and we look forward to engaging further with Government if, as expected, Covid restrictions are still in place at the end of the year. While every help is welcome, the time-period should coincide with business interruption

due to Covid-19 and for a minimum of 12 months. After that, payment of local authority rates should be based on reduced levels of activity due to the crisis and until the industry has recovered. Businesses cannot be expected to pay rates on historical turnover figures that do not reflect the significantly lower levels of business that hoteliers are experiencing.

"We welcome the recognition of the enormous hardship that these businesses face, including those in the tourism sector and we look forward to seeing the full details." Additionally, she welcomed the €55 million allocated for a Tourism Business Support Scheme as well as the €5 million for tourism product development, highlighting the strong success of products including the Wild Atlantic Way in increasing domestic and overseas visitor numbers in recent years.

"While welcoming the range of measures and supports, the Mr O'Brien said that additional liquidity measures are still required to help fund hotels during the coming months as a result of the cash flow lost out due to Covid-19 restrictions. "We will continue to seek an extension of the moratorium on bank term loans from 6 months to 12 months. Government must continue to support us on finding the way forward on this as we feel it is a missed opportunity."

HAPPY HALLOWEEN FROM WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

IMPORTANT NOTICE ILLEGAL



BURNING/BONFIRES
BE AWARE AND BEWARE!!!



HOUSEHOLDERS, BUSINESSES OR INDIVIDUALS WHO
GIVE THEIR WASTE TO ANYONE FOR BONFIRE PURPOSES,
PARTICULARLY AT HALLOWEEN, WILL BE LIABLE
FOR PROSECUTION.

PLEASE NOTE: WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL WILL NOT
CARRY OUT CLEAN UPS AFTER ILLEGAL BONFIRES
AND WILL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE COST OF ANY
CLEAN UPS AFTER ILLEGAL BONFIRES.

PLEASE ADHERE TO ALL COVID 19 RESTRICTIONS AND KEEP SAFE





Newly crowned Champion David Reynolds at speed in his 1800cc Stryker. Pic: Michael Chester

Baltinglass man takes 2020 Mondello Title!

David Reynolds from Baltinglass clinched the 2020 Irish Stryker sportscar championship at Mondello Park the weekend before last.

Having set the pace in the class for most of the season, the G2 Karting supported driver only had to turn up for the final race meeting, but was keen to challenge for more wins.

Luck was not on his side however, as he suffered a rare engine failure in qualifying and a replacement unit also gave trouble later in the day. Even a dominant performance by multiple champion Michael Cullen in both races, was not enough to deny a delighted Reynolds his maiden title though.

David said "Irish Strykers Champion. What a privilege it is to be able to say that. I have so many people to thank for their help and support, especially after this disastrous weekend. After having a blown engine in quali, I thought my season was done. 70 minutes later all the lads had helped to get the spare in and I cannot thank everyone enough. If that doesn't prove that Strykers isn't one of the best classes in Ireland I don't know what does! Huge thanks to the all the lads in the class, all the event organisers for getting us out this year, marshals and crews, Mondello Park and to Leo Nulty and the media for the fantastic coverage and support all year. Bring on the title defence next year!"

11 producers from County Wicklow win at Blas na hÉireann

In a year like no other, Blas na hÉireann announced the winners for 2020, with 11 winners from County Wicklow. With the annual pilgrimage to Dingle stalled, this year's winners tuned in from every corner of the country for a virtual celebration of the very best in Irish food.

The team at Blas na hÉireann have been working tirelessly since March to ensure that Blas 2020 went ahead, maintaining their commitment to celebrating the very best in Irish food and drink. Chairperson Artie Clifford feels that now, more than ever, it is essential to shine a light and give that all important boost to the talented producers dotted around the island.

The bronze, silver and gold winners from Wicklow across a range of different categories are Ballyhubcock Farm, Dun Luain Foods Ltd., T/A Wilsons of West

Wicklow, Jamshack, Miena's, Rhoda Cocoa, Ridgeway Wagyu, The Butler's Pantry, The Chocolate Garden of Ireland, The Happy Pear, Wicklow Farmhouse Cheese Ltd. and Wicklow Way Wines, with Rhoda Cocoa winning best in county.

Now in their 13th year, the Blas na hÉireann awards are the all-island food awards that recognise the very best Irish food and drink products, and the passionate people behind them. The biggest blind tasting of produce in the country, the criteria on which the product is judged as well as the

judging system itself, which was developed by Blas na hÉireann with the Food Science Dept of UCC and the University of Copenhagen, is now recognised as an industry gold standard worldwide.

Speaking after the announcements Artie mentioned, "The founding mission of Blas - establishing quality benchmarks for Irish produce on a level playing field - was strictly adhered to and measurably applied again this year despite the challenges we have all faced. We thank all our judges for their rigour and commitment, and as always

we thank all our wonderful participants, producers and sponsors. While we missed our annual gathering in Dingle, we will join together to cheer on our colleagues and friends that were successful in this year's awards and hope that it won't be long before we can gather in Dingle once again."

Products from every county in Ireland were entered into this year's competition to win Gold, Silver or Bronze Blas na hÉireann awards in over 140 food and drink categories, as well as key awards like Supreme Champion and Best Artisan Producer.

A Russian medal for Ted's 99th birthday

Wicklow resident Ted Veal celebrated his ninety-ninth year on the planet on 9th October, with a medal from Moscow struck to commemorate The Great Victory - a tank battle that took place seven decades ago.

By Peter McNiff

"All I did was give a talk to some schoolchildren in Drogheda," Ted told friends at his home in Wicklow town.

Ted's presentation at St Oliver's Community College in Drogheda was of his war time experience during the Italian campaign in 1943. His story caught the attention of curators Dina Kurbanova and Sergei Menshakov of the Russian section of the Military War Museum based in Collon, County Meath. As a gesture of appreciation, they presented him with a bottle of cognac and a medal struck by the Russian State Museum in Prohorovka commemorating a famous tank battle between Soviets and Germans seventy years ago.

Ted was thrilled to add the gong to campaign medals he was awarded for his service in World War II.

"Russia was part of the Allied campaign against Germany, so we were all in the war together. Something people don't realise, the Russians lost close to 27 million people in that war."

Flight Sergeant Ted Veal served in WW2 as a RAF radio officer and machine gunner and was the sole survivor of an American built Baltimore bomber whose



Flight Lieutenant Ted Veal in 1944



The Russian medal given to Ted

engines failed over Italy. The pilot, who ordered everyone to bail out, was killed along with two other crew members. Ted, sitting at the tail gun managed to escape as the aircraft plunged into the side of a mountain.

"It was night. We were over the Abruzzi," Ted remembers. "I pulled the cord, my parachute opened, and landed on my backside. It was my first parachute jump."

For that, the parachute manufacturer signed him up for the Caterpillar Club, an exclusive association for airmen

whose parachute saved their lives.

With the help of the Italian underground he was taken to a hiding place and given food and water. There were other allied troops hiding in the district, including a Russian soldier. A fortnight later, Ted was repatriated along with everyone else when the Australian army arrived. Back with his RAF squadron, he was promoted to Pilot Officer. Assigned to the airlift of soldiers from Berlin and North Africa, he went up in rank again, to Flight Lieutenant.

After the war, he was a salesman for Heinz before going to Zimbabwe (Northern Rhodesia) as a miner and became a mine engineer. He married an Irish Nurse, Deirdre Wilkinson and they retired to Wicklow where, for a time, he worked as a mine engineer at Avoca's gold mine.

During his nineties, after two hip replacements, Ted has taken joy rides in a small aircraft, a hot air balloon, and the big dipper in Co Meath. He had a racehorse named after him and is a founder member of the Kilmartin Arts in Wicklow where he has a large coterie of friends. "Now I'm looking forward to making a century," Ted says. "And maybe a couple of years after that."

Peter McNiff is the author of Ted Veal's biography: *Ted Veal's War and Peace.*



Ted Veal pictured last year with Val Price, daughter of pilot Peter Hill who died in the plane crash Ted survived. In June 2019, she made contact with Ted and travelled from England to visit him just months before her own death. Photo by Peter McNiff



Pictured are Tara and Miriam Hogan at the opening of the new Aldi store in Rathnew last week

Five acres of land transferred to Council for housing

Sinn Féin TD John Brady has welcomed the progress that has been made by the Department of Defence in transferring five acres of land at Rockbrae House in Bray to Wicklow County Council for housing purposes.

Speaking after receiving an update from the Minister for Defence Simon Coveney, Deputy Brady said "I'm delighted that the process of bringing five acres of former lands in the control of the Defence Forces in Bray into the control of Wicklow County Council is at an advanced stage. The Minister has informed me that the lands at Rockbrae House are currently being disposed by way of transfer to Wicklow County Council and that officials from his Department are currently liaising with the Chief State's Solicitor's Office on the necessary legal preparatory matters.

"I think this is a fantastic site in Bray and it has huge potential if developed properly. The site has unfortunately fallen into disuse by the Defence Forces, this followed a major restructuring of the Reserve Defence Forces who had primarily used it.

"In 2018 I met the then Minister for Defence Paul Kehoe and put forward a proposal of using the disused Rockbrae House site of 5 acres for housing purposes. At the time the Minister gave a commitment to have the officials in his Department carry out a report and consult with all the stakeholders. In 2019 the Minister

reverted to me saying that Officials from his Department had met with representatives of Wicklow County Council to discuss the future of Rockbrae House and the lands and they were awaiting an updated position from the council.

"I have consistently held the view that the lands at Rockbrae House were underused and held so much potential. I'm delighted that serious progress has now been made in advancing the issue and utilising the 5-acre site. In the Bray Municipal District Local Area Plan the site is zoned Residential. I believe that once the transfer to Wicklow County Council is complete a conversation needs to be had about what type of development would be

best for the site. I think that it provides us a rare opportunity to develop a social and affordable housing scheme and also provide badly needed community facilities. I also feel that consultation with the residents of Charnwood and the Church Road at an early stage is vital."

Cllr Dermot O'Brien said "This is a unique opportunity to develop this site in a way that complements the existing area while at the same time responding to the need for social and affordable housing in a sustainable and dynamic way. The sooner we open up the conversations about this the better."

Cllr Grace McManus said "While we are eye to eye with an acute housing crisis, as we are now, it is

essential that we utilise every resource available to address the presenting housing needs of our community. We know that there are many young people, families and individuals who have no choice but to await a proper strategy for public housing, a mix of social and affordable, and I think this land provides us a unique opportunity to answer that need. I look forward to hearing the views of all within the community on how we can utilise our assets to rise to this challenge in a way that is mindful and considerate of the neighbours of this land too."

Deputy Brady concluded "I look forward to a swift transfer of the site and will continue to proactively engage with all the stakeholders."



Cllr Grace McManus, John Brady TD, and Cllr Dermot 'Daisy' O'Brien at Rockbrae House

'Bill to bury mother and baby home records must be opposed'

Aontú leader Peadar Tóibín TD has announced his intention to oppose the Commissions of Investigation Mother and Baby Homes Bill which has been introduced by Children's Minister Roderic O'Gorman.

Deputy Tóibín said: "The contents of this Bill are very concerning. If enacted it will mean that records unearthed by the Mother and Baby Homes Commission of Investigation will be returned to Tusla and held under lock and key for thirty years. This is unacceptable, we in Aontú have spoken to former residents in recent days and they've expressed concern that they will not be able to access even the transcripts of their own testimonies to the commission, or their own medical records or documents.

"It is a sad reality that in thirty years' time many of the former residents/survivors may be dead. We've all heard the stories of people who have spent years trying to find their birth mother. People currently involved in the tracing or searching process are acutely aware that as the clock ticks their chances of reunion are fading. Minister O'Gorman's Bill will throw more red tape and hurdles in the faces of people who are desperate in their search, having been failed by this State for so long."

Drivers 70 years of age and over invited to renew driving licence by post

Minister for Transport, Eamon Ryan T.D., has announced that as a result of Covid-19, those 70 years of age and over will be contacted directly by the National Driver Licence Service (NDLS) and invited to renew their licence or permit by post.

The process of contacting drivers 70 years and over will begin this week and will initially target renewals due in October 2020.

Commenting on the move Minister Ryan said, "At present, only those aged 70 and over who renew their licence on a yearly basis are invited to renew it by post. As a temporary measure, given the situation with Covid19, the RSA, through its licensing service the NDLS, will expand the postal renewal option, to those over 70 who renew their licence every three years. This measure will reduce the need for this vulnerable group to attend in person at an NDLS centre."

The NDLS service, which is managed by the RSA, will be sending out application packs to those eligible to apply by post this coming week. The pack will include a partially completed application form that the customer must complete. If a medical report form is required, this must be included along with the completed application form in the pre-addressed envelope provided (postage stamp required) and posted back to the NDLS.

There is no fee required as customers 70 years of age and over are exempt from paying the cost of a driving licence or permit renewal.

If someone does receive an application pack in the post and

plans on renewing this way, but may have already booked an appointment at an NDLS centre, you must cancel this appointment by logging on to www.ndls.ie. The NDLS would appreciate if customers cancelled this appointment in order to facilitate other applicants.

Those 70 and over are reminded that unless they have a specific medical condition (listed on the application form), they do not need to provide a medical report when applying to renew their licence.

This temporary exemption was introduced to remove pressure on the health system at a time of crisis and is in place until 31 December 2020.

Wicklow communities saving the world!

Sometimes the world's problems seem overwhelming and we wonder what can we, living in our little community in Co Wicklow do to help? The truth is we are doing a lot more than we realise and every action that we take to improve our community and the lives of those that live in it, has a global impact.

The Sustainable Development Goals, or SDGs, were adopted by all the United Nations Member States in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect our planet, and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity by the year 2030.

There are 17 Global Goals that are backed up by 169 specific targets that address many of the challenges the world and its people face. You can find out about all the goals and their subsequent targets at www.sdg-forall.ie/what-are-the-global-goals. The SDGs are like a blue-print for a better future for all of us.

Co Wicklow PPN invited community groups to an information session delivered by the Saolta Programme online on Wednesday 14th October. The session introduced participants to the SDGs and highlighted how community actions have a direct impact on achieving

the global goals.

Helen Howes, Resource Worker for Co Wicklow PPN said "Thanks to Wicklow County Council we are now unique in that we have a tool available to map these actions to the goals. Co Wicklow PPN has long been a champion of the Sustainable Development Goals.

"We were delighted to have Development Perspectives, through the Saolta Programme explain them in a way that clearly links the smallest actions in our communities to achieving the global targets.

"We were also delighted to have Jim Callery, Environmental Officer with Wicklow County Council, showcase the new mapping tool that allows communities to input their actions and match them to the goals. We believe this is the mapping tool is unique and are very proud that Wicklow is leading the way on this."

The interactive map can be accessed at: experience.arcgis.com/experience/1b772459f820411d8d2948e7bca65df8/

Groups can add their actions to the map by using the online submission form using the username, wicklow-goals and the password, submitgoals. The form is available at: survey123.arcgis.com/share/3a5901805cfb4dc795a72b012a272a2d.



Coming to Whale Theatre in November, This screening of Bolshoi Ballet - Romeo & Juliet, will be a socially distanced performance which adheres to Covid-19 guidelines. Music Sergei Prokofiev. Cast: Ekaterina Krysanova (Juliet), Vladislav Lantratov (Romeo), Igor Tsvirko (Mercutio), Dmitry Dorokhov (Benvolio), Vitaly Biktimirov (Tybalt), and the Bolshoi Corps de ballet

Despite their families being merciless enemies, Romeo and Juliet are deeply in love. The rivalry between the Capulets and Montagues will cost Romeo his best friend's life, causing him to seek revenge...

The star-crossed lovers' tragic fate inspired Prokofiev to create a remarkable cinematic score, from the delicate theme of Juliet to the ominous Dance of the Knights. Bolshoi stars Ekaterina Krysanova and Vladislav Lantratov wholly embody the two eternal lovers in Alexei Ratmansk's stunning evocation of love at first sight.

Music by Sergei Prokofiev. Choreography by Alexei Ratmansk. Libretto Sergei Prokofiev, Sergei Radlov and Adrian Piotrovski (after William Shakespeare)

50 Faces of Halloween Pop-Up Shop haunts Greystones

As if 2020 hasn't been scary enough already, Halloween is just around the corner and local artist Mary-Kate Hardy is taking the humble face mask to a whole new level!

Taking up residence in Greystones in Theatre Lane's new "Pop-Up Shop" (beside Bear Paw Deli), Mary-Kate will be selling her very own frighteningly good works of art, featuring a devilish selection of her own horror-themed looks completed during lockdown.

Opening on Thursday 22nd October, Mary-Kate's '50 Faces of Halloween' will feature images of her own face transformed into those of creatures and characters from popular media, celebrities, and other abstract looks. An initiative of Ross McParland, Theatre Lane's new Pop-Up Shop is a unique opportunity for local artists like Mary-Kate to display and sell their bespoke creations, so keep your eyes peeled to see what pops up once this boutique spook-salon has been fully exorcised.

Having graduated from the National College of Art and Design with a BA in Fine Art Media, Mary-Kate went on to start a



creative consultancy service called Fenestrations which provided clients with hand-painted windows, murals and signage as well as props and personalised window displays. Hardy is also a self-taught special effects makeup artist and body painter and like many others, she found a new passion during the Covid lockdown.

Hardy began to play around with creating new makeup and special effects looks and since then she has created over 70 incredible looks. As her passion for makeup has grown, so too has her following.

Hardy now has over 50,000 followers on TikTok with video views in the millions. In her own words "This exhibition of looks created over lockdown demonstrates that in times of limitation, creativity flourishes."



Young Greystones poet wins international award

Eleven-year-old Kate O'Brien from Bellevue Park in Greystones was one of the winners in the world's largest and most prestigious prize for young poets - The Foyle Young Poets of the Year Award. Run by The Poetry Society since 1998.

With entries from over 15,000 young people this year across from the UK and worldwide, it is the largest competition of its kind and its importance is widely attested.

One hundred winners (85 commended poets and 15 overall winners) were selected by a team of high-profile judges, and received their awards at a virtual annual prize-giving event on October 15th.

Kate, along with the other winners, will now have their poems published in an online anthology, which is read by tens of thousands of people around the world. Many former winners have gone on to publish work with major publishing houses such as Faber & Faber and Carcanet. Last week Kate heard from the organisers that she was in the top 100 from over 15,000 entries:

"Dear Kate, We are delighted to let you know that you have been selected by the judges as one of our 85 commended Foyle Young Poets of the Year 2020 for your poem 'Before'. You were selected from over 15,000 entries by young poets from across the world, which is a hugely impressive achievement. Congratulations! ..."

The winners and their poems were announced officially on The Poetry Society website on Thursday 15 October."

Kate's beautiful poem 'Before' resonated with the judges:

Before

Before the dew on the grass
Before the car drove past
Before lights turned on
Before you went out and saw the sun
Before you brushed your teeth
Before you had something to eat
Before you woke and got out of bed
I placed a kiss upon your head



Kate O'Brien

It was first published by The Poetry Society this month.

Since 1998, the Award has been finding, celebrating and supporting the very best young poets from around the world. It is firmly established as the leading competition for young poets aged between 11 and 17 years old. Young writers from a record-breaking 118 countries entered the competition from as far afield as Afghanistan, Ecuador, Mozambique, North Korea and the Seychelles, and every corner of the UK. From these poems, this year's judges Keith Jarrett and Maura Dooley selected 100 winners, made up of 15 top poets and 85 commended poets.

Rhythms - An exhibition by ReVerve at Signal Arts Centre

Rhythms - An Exhibition By ReVerve can be seen at the Signal Arts Centre from Monday, 4th January to Sunday, 17th January 2021.

Rhythms is a response to an idea by a group of nine visual artists based in Meath and surrounding area. This body of work by ReVerve was made through a mutual and energising process of investigation, exploration, constructive discussion and a sharing of processes and ideas over the last two years.

Works reflect each artist's own practice in interpretations and narrative, while at the same time there is a collaborative thread running through the show.

Techniques and materials displayed show a diversity reflecting the membership of ReVerve. Rhythmic stitching, photography, painting, printing, charcoal, soft and hard sculptures and installation works are present in thoughtful and investigative ways.



DRUG FREE HEALING

FOR

(F.D.A. APPROVED)

AIR OR GAS EMBOLISM
DELAYED RADIATION INJURY (SOFT TISSUE AND BONY NECROSIS)
REFRACTORY OSTEOMYELITIS (INFECTED BONE)
SKIN GRAFTS AND FLAPS (COMPROMISED)
THERMAL BURNS
CRUSH INJURY, COMPARTMENT SYNDROME,
AND OTHER ACUTE TRAUMATIC ISCHEMIAS.
ENHANCEMENT OF HEALING IN SELECTED PROBLEM
WOUNDS (DIABETIC WOUNDS)
EXCEPTIONAL BLOOD LOSS (ANEMIA)
INTRACRANIAL ABSCESS, ACTINOMYCOSIS
NECROTIZING SOFT TISSUE INFECTIONS
DECOMPRESSION SICKNESS
CLOSTRIDAL MYOSITIS AND MYONECROSIS, (GAS GANGRENE)
IN ADDITION, THE UK MS SOCIETY RECOMMENDS ITS USE
AS AN ADJUNCT TREATMENT FOR MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

WITH HYPERBARIC OXYGEN THERAPY

HYPERBARIC OXYGEN THERAPY (HBOT) IS A TREATMENT OF THE ENTIRE BODY WITH 100-PERCENT OXYGEN AT GREATER THAN NORMAL ATMOSPHERIC PRESSURES.

While not new, HBOT has only lately begun to gain recognition for treatment of chronic degenerative health problems. Wherever blood flow and oxygen delivery to vital organs is reduced, function and healing can potentially be aided with HBOT. For further information contact us on the numbers below or check out www.hyperbaricireland.com



National Hyperbaric Centre, 53-54 Great Strand Street, D1.
P: (01) 873 3044, Fax: (01) 873 3969
Emergency: 087 972 9366
Email: hyperinfo@eircom.net www.hyperbaricireland.com



Half a million people find reading, writing and simple maths difficult. A new campaign will show them how to do something about it.

Details of a public information campaign called 'Take the first step' were launched last week by the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA). The purpose of the campaign is to encourage adults who have difficulty with reading, writing, maths or technology to contact the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) to get the help they need. Supported by Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI), SOLAS (the Further Education and Training Authority) and NALA, the opportunity is free and open to all, with participants able to choose what, where and when they want to learn.

Pictured at the launch were Irish authors Sinead Moriarty and Catherine Dunne, Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Simon Harris TD, and student Olive Phelan

Wicklow graduates unveil new style of midi music controller and launch a kickstarter campaign

Joyst (Joyst Instruments Ltd), a University College Dublin (UCD) spin-out company established earlier this year, has unveiled the Joyst JV-1, a new style of MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface) controller and announced the launch of the company's Kickstarter campaign.

The Joyst JV-1 has emerged from a Master of Engineering thesis project carried out by Philip Snell, who is from Rathdrum, under the supervision of Dr Paul Cuffe at the UCD School of Electrical and Electronic Engineering.

Joyst was co-founded by Philip and fellow UCD Master of Engineering graduates, William Langrell, who is from Kiltegan, and Edward Byrne, who is from Hacketstown, along with Dr Cuffe, to commercialise the JV-1 MIDI controller.

The Joyst JV-1 MIDI controller provides an array of gamer-style thumb joysticks to give more expressive possibilities for electronic musicians. Notes are played by striking the joysticks, if one is then rotated, this pitchbends that note up or down. Using joysticks in this role is a very new approach for a MIDI controller, which significantly increases a musician's ability to play with subtle intonation and expressive flourishes.



Pictured is Philip Snell, from Rathdrum, CEO and co-founder Joyst. (Photo credit: Marko Raden, Raden Films).

The ambitious goal of the project was to create a new MIDI controller that would allow a musician to bend each note, finely control velocity, inject vibrato, and articulate precise aftertouch effects. Maximising ease of playability was also a key project goal, which led to the JV-1 adopting the note layout of a chromatic accordion. In this handy arrangement, every type of chord has a consistent fingering shape, regardless of its root note. Scales are always the same pattern wherever you start. This minimises the need for rote memorisation.

Philip Snell, CEO and co-founder, Joyst, said, "From day one, the vision for the JV-1 has been simple, electronic music with no creative compromises. Why can't a MIDI controller let you bend notes like an electric guitar? Even on the earliest prototype, we could see the power of joysticks in this role. They allow the player to inject subtlety and fine intonation into their playing, with a tactile and responsive feel. The buttons and pads you find on traditional MIDI controllers are just too one-dimensional, sterile and overly digital. Joysticks restores what was lost, a full range of motion, a responsive springiness, organic bends, fresh sounds. Electronic music in full colour."

Through its Kickstarter campaign launched last week, Joyst has set a minimum funding target of €12,500 to be raised by the close of the campaign on 5 November. Backers will be rewarded with various reward tiers if the project is funded. Discounts are on offer for the earliest backers, who can secure a JV-1 for just €199, a significant discount on its RRP of €349. William Langrell, COO and co-founder, Joyst said, "We've been through several good rounds of prototyping now so we are now ready to present JV-1 to the world through our Kickstarter campaign. We are super excited about the JV-1 so we are asking people to back this project today to help us meet, and hopefully even exceed, our Kickstarter target and get the JV-1 into the hands of talented musicians around the world."

Joyst has been established with the support of NovaUCD, the Centre for New Ventures and Entrepreneurs at UCD and earlier this year Joyst completed the NovaUCD Student Enterprise Competition.

This intensive 4-week mentoring programme is run by NovaUCD as a framework to support undergraduate and postgraduate students who want to work together to develop and grow start-up companies. Its aim is to assist the participating students in refining their start-up ideas through a series of structured workshops, including taught content from industry experts, interactive workshops, regular pitching sessions and mentoring. Joyst will also be taking part in this year's UCD VentureLaunch Accelerator Programme, run by NovaUCD, which commences later this month.

Tender process begins for building work at four schools

The tendering process for four Wicklow schools is about to start. The National Development Finance Agency (NDFA), is supporting the Department of Education and Skills by delivering an element of the Department's school building programme on its behalf.

The NDFA have confirmed they will shortly be releasing a Prior Information Notice (PIN) to the market with a view to stimulating interest in advance of starting the tender process for the appointment of contractors for that programme.

This is separate to the tendering process- a Prior Information Notice is typically issued approximately four weeks in advance of the tendering process commencing.

The programme, entitled the Devolved Schools Building Programme 2, will comprise of 20 individual

school building projects ranging from new builds to extensions/refurbishment projects for works at both primary and post primary level.

These projects will be delivered as three distinct project bundles: Project Nore, Project Boyne and Project Dargle.

A framework of project management and design team consultants has already been appointed for the programme and the process to appoint teams to specific project bundles is now underway.

In Wicklow Coláiste Chraobh Abhann, C.B.S

Secondary School Arklow, St. Kevin's Community School, Dunlavin and Avondale Community College, Rathdrum have all been included in the project.

St. Kevin's, which was built with a capacity for 500 students but now has over 600, has been waiting for an extension since 2014.

It is set to get a nine room extension which will include two science rooms and two special needs units.

Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly said: "It's fantastic to see progress being made for

these schools who are in dire need of additional capacity. Schools like St Kevin's have had to wait far too long for this building work to get underway. "I know having worked with the parents at schools like Coláiste Chraobh Abhann just how much they are in need of an extension to meet the ever growing demand for places.

"I'm delighted we are finally seeing some movement but I will be working to make sure these projects are delivered in a timely fashion because they are all desperately needed."

KWETB schools participate in ETBI Bliain na Gaeilge

Mícheál Ó Muircheartaigh, Bláthnaid Ní Chofaigh, Bláthnaid Treacy and ETB past-pupil Séamus Ó Scailáin recently launched Education and Training Boards Ireland's Bliain na Gaeilge 2020/21 last week across 245 ETB post-primary Schools, 23 of which are located across Wicklow and Kildare.

The theme of the yearlong festival to celebrate Irish language is 'Ag tabhairt na Gaeilge linn' - 'Bringing Irish with us'. Speaking about the initiative, Minister of State for Gaeltacht Affairs and Sport, Jack Chambers TD said: "It is wonderful that over 100,000 students will be celebrating our language and our Irish culture during the school year 2020/21. Irish is very important for us as a community and as a nation." In a video address to ETB students the Minister added: "The future of the language is depending on young people like you, participating in initiatives like this and promoting Irish within your own communities."

Speaking at the launch, ETBI General Secretary Paddy Lavelle commented: "It is important that our students recognise that their journey with Irish does not stop in school. In fact, it is just the beginning: our relationship with Irish and our Irish culture is a life-long journey as inspired by our ETBI Bliain na Gaeilge ambassadors. Mícheál Ó Muircheartaigh, Bláthnaid Ní Chofaigh, Séamus Ó Scailáin and Bláthnaid Treacy all exemplify how Irish language and culture can shape and benefit all aspects of our lives including our work life, social life and sporting life etc."

Creativity and inclusion will be

at the centre of the programme, from song-writing to rapping, filmmaking to radio production, storytelling to sports commentary, for the entire school-community to engage with. ETBI Bliain na Gaeilge is not just for students who are fluent in Irish- it will be a celebration of Irish language and culture for all students. Those who have little or even no Irish will be encouraged to get involved and collaborate with each other. Paddy Lavelle added: "You may only have a cúpla focal, but you may also be an extraordinary radio programme producer or artist so get involved! While we cannot ignore the reality of COVID, ETBI Bliain na Gaeilge offers ETB schools the opportunity to engage in a very flexible way, with students actively encouraged to lead and drive the programme in their school"

Gean Gilger, Educational Policy and Development Officer in ETBI and coordinator of the ETBI Bliain na Gaeilge programme, is delighted that the initiative can go ahead despite the challenges of the pandemic: "This programme has been in the planning stages for a number of months with the hope that opportunities would arise to physically bring our schools together. In order to ensure health and safety in our schools, the programme has been remodelled and we are very

happy that it can proceed in a very safe, yet accessible manner"

The programme launches today, 13 October 2020 and will run for the duration of the school year with a new competition/initiative featured every month and prizes awarded. In the interest of fairness, Irish-medium schools will not be pitted against English-medium schools. Each monthly competition will award a prize (including €500) for the best entry from an English-medium and an Irish-medium school.

Commenting on the initiative, Séamus Ó Scailáin, RTE RnaG and TG4 and past pupil of an ETB school said: "I am delighted to be one of this year's ETBI Bliain na Gaeilge ambassadors. I attended an ETB school, Coláiste Cholmille, Inver, Co. Galway, a school that encouraged me to pursue a profession through Irish, a profession that has opened up so many opportunities and brought me to when I am today as a successful broadcaster. It is a privilege to support the students of this generation to develop and nurture an interest in the Irish language".

The initiative is generously sponsored by Foras Na Gaeilge along with Conradh na Gaeilge, ASTI, TG4, TUI, Instructional Leadership Programme, ETBI TAKE 1 Programme and the 16 Education & Training Boards across the country.

Wicklow's student entrepreneurs begin online road to national success

Student entrepreneurs across Wicklow have begun their journey in this year's Student Enterprise Programme, with eyes on next year's National Final. This Local Enterprise Office (LEO) run programme will be delivered differently given the current restrictions across the country, and the Final, which will take place on Friday 14th May 2021, will be a virtual one.

This is 18th year of Ireland's largest secondary school entrepreneurship programme and has seen over 200,000 students take part since it began. The Final usually takes place in Croke Park but in 2021, as with the 2020 Final earlier this year, the event will take place online in line with current guidelines.

The students, who will compete across three categories, Junior, Intermediate and Senior, will see judging take place virtually via electronic submissions. Each student enterprise is challenged with creating, setting up and running their own business, which must show sales of their service or product.

The programme will also include two additional categories that students can enter. These are the "Most Creative Business Idea" video competition for the senior category and the "My Entrepreneurial Journey" category for the Junior and Intermediate categories.

The schools from Wicklow taking part this year are: Avondale Community College, CBS Arklow, Colaiste Bhríde, Colaiste Chill Mhantáin, Colaiste Chraobh Abhann, Dominican College, East Glendalough School, Gaelcholáiste Na Mara, Scoil Chonglais Post Primary School, Glenart College, Loreto Secondary, St Gerard's College, St

Kevin's Community College, St Killian's Community School, St Mary's College, Temple Carrig School, Greystones Community College, St David's Holy Faith Secondary.

Over 1200 students from 19 secondary schools in Wicklow took part in last year's Programme. The enterprise education initiative, funded by the Government of Ireland through Enterprise Ireland and delivered by the 31 Local Enterprise Offices in local authorities throughout the country, saw over 25,000 students from over 500 secondary schools across the country take part last year.

Due to Covid restrictions the final in Wicklow last year was a virtual one and took place just after the schools closed. As a result the LEO was only recently in a position to present the trophies to the winners when the schools re-opened. The LEO Head of Enterprise, Vibeke Delahunt and Business Advisor Annette Rowsome were delighted to present the trophies to the winning teams.

Ms Delahunt said: "We would like to congratulate the winners of the competition last year, but also wish to recognize all the students that participated. This is a very important programme to the Local Enterprise

Office as it develops entrepreneurial skills in our young people and we very much look forward to having many of them as clients in the future when they start their own business".

The winners in the senior category were Maurice Tobin and Cian O'Tuama from Colaiste Bhríde Carnew. The winner in the Intermediate Category was Dale Kearney of Avondale Community College. The winners of the junior category were Hugh Donohue and Conor McConnell from Colasiste Craobh Abhann, Kilcoole. The runners up in the senior category were Sophie Nuzum and Nicole Yau of St Mary's College Arklow and were Jeremiah Scott and Sean Lundy of Colaiste Craobh Abhann.

Looking forward to this year's programme, Ms Rowsome said: These are unprecedented times for our students and this year's competition is giving them the opportunity to create businesses that can make an impact in the current real-world scenario. We are encouraging students to come up with business ideas that are adapted to the existing enterprise challenges and that are sustainable in today's economic climate. With this in mind the programme has changed and even though the way it is

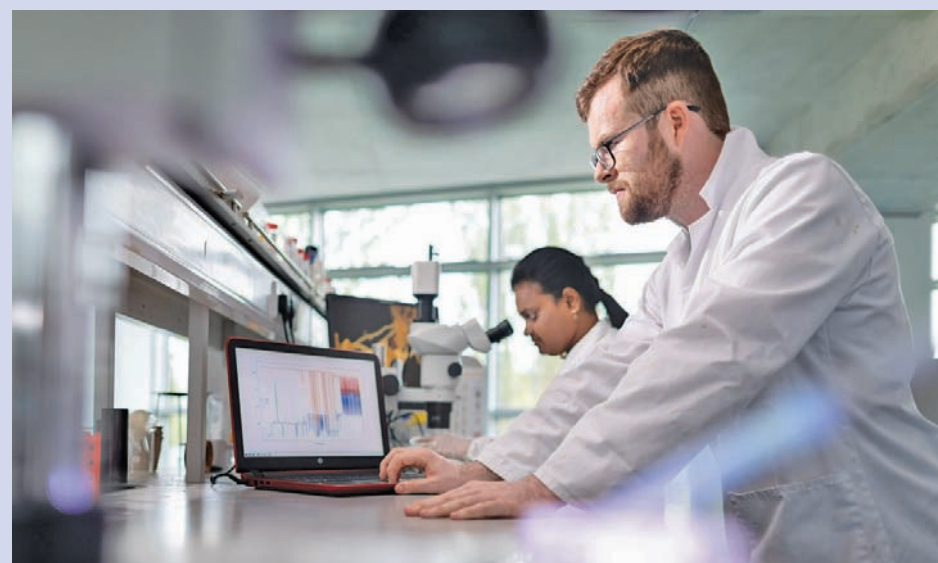
being delivered (which is mainly online), is different, the students will still be able to work together in their school setting to develop their businesses. This will be our most challenging year to date in the Student Enterprise Programme's history, but it will be exciting to see what new world businesses our students bring to the table."

The 2020 Student Enterprise Programme National Final winners in the senior category were Handy Hose Holders from CBS Thurles in Tipperary for their practical milking parlour hose solution that has since been picked up by Glanbia. The Intermediate category was won by Aim It Board from Loreto College in Dublin while Sofatop from Ballybay Community College in Monaghan took the Junior category award.

Since the Student Enterprise Programme began in 2003, over 200,000 students have taken part, learning key skills on how to create a business idea, start a business and grow a business. The Student Enterprise Programme also has new range of online resources for 2020 / 2021 at www.StudentEnterprise.ie, which will feature regular blogs and houses a full range of Student Enterprise resources for students and teachers.



Winners of the Student Enterprise Programme Maurice Tobin and Cian O'Tuama, pictured with Annette Rowsome (Local Enterprise Office Business Advisor) and Hannah Flew (Student Enterprise Co-Ordinator at the Colaiste Bhríde, Carnew Transition Year Awards)



IT Carlow to receive funding for researchers

Institute of Technology Carlow has welcomed the announcement by the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Simon Harris TD of €644,504 in funding to support its researchers and research students whose work has been seriously disrupted by the pandemic.

Welcoming the announcement, Dr. David Dowling, who is chair of the Covid response team for research at Institute of Technology Carlow, commented, "I am delighted to see Ireland's research, development and innovation sector protected at this challenging time and thank Minister Harris for this support. The research work undertaken at Institute of Technology Carlow, and at other third-level institutes around the country, plays an important role in international research and I would like to pay tribute to our research community who have worked hard over recent months to support national and international responses to the challenges of Covid-19."

Dr. Brian Jackson, Head of Postgraduate

Studies, Institute of Technology Carlow said, "The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated many things, not least that research and innovation is needed now more than ever. The pandemic has impacted on third-level research, with many worthy projects being forced to pause indefinitely and this funding will help to protect both people and projects at a critical moment for Ireland's national research system".

The funding was secured by the Minister as part of the €168 million package for further and higher education in light of the pandemic. Within this fund, €47 million will be provided to the higher education institutions by the Higher Education Authority to support researchers whose work has been affected by COVID-19.

In their utilisation of this funding, the institutions will prioritise the researchers and research students in greatest need, for example, those researchers who are coming to the end of their projects before the end of 2020. They will also continue to pursue all other avenues for project completion, for example in the form of budget re-allocations, and will engage with relevant funders to agree the extension of appropriate activities.

Students invited to take part in online writing competition

ActionAid Ireland is asking young people in Wicklow aged 14 to 17 to submit a five-minute speech for its newly relaunched ActionTalks competition.

The competition, now in its seventh year, has had been relaunched as an entirely digital competition to make it accessible to as many students as possible during the coronavirus pandemic. Entries will be taken online and finalists will be asked to present their speech to a panel of esteemed judges during a Zoom event in February. The first prize will be a €500 One4All voucher for the winning student and a €100 voucher for their teacher.

Young people will be asked to choose one of three topics relating to international development and the global coronavirus pandemic, and write a five-minute or 600 word speech. This year's topics are:

• The coronavirus pandemic is an opportunity to imagine a more equal and sustainable world, but we must act now.

• With a shocking increase in violence against women and girls, the coronavirus pandemic has shown us that the struggle for gender equality is far from over.

• The coronavirus pandemic has reminded us of the importance of global solidarity and international aid.

"The coronavirus pandemic has effected each and every one of us and we are developing new ways of

working across programmes. We are delighted to relaunch the ActionTalks competition as a completely digital event and to continue engaging young people in Wicklow. We have also created learning resources to help teachers to get the most out of the competition." Siobhan McGee, CEO, ActionAid Ireland.

While students in Ireland have had to face lockdown and miss out on school for six months, many students across the world will never get to return following the pandemic. ActionAid surveyed 130 teachers from 14 countries who work in communities where livelihoods have been lost during the pandemic and where girls are being hardest hit by school closures.

Around three in five teachers surveyed say a higher drop-out rate for girls (59%) and poorer children (62%) will be a long-term impact of the pandemic.

Nearly half are concerned about increases in early pregnancy (41%) and early marriage (45%) due to the Covid-19 crisis. Over a third (35%) are worried about rising hunger.

Teachers say some of the biggest issues preventing girls from returning to school are parents unable to afford the cost (62%), unpaid care

work (59%), child labour (51%) and early marriage (52%).

In addition, ActionAid research has also found that global lockdowns and coronavirus restrictions have led to a shocking increase in gender-based violence worldwide.

ActionAid provides long term support to the poorest and most marginalised women and children in developing countries, so they can overcome the obstacles holding them back. Its Women's Rights programme, funded by Irish Aid (Department of Foreign Affairs), works to eliminate violence against women and girls by engaging with women and girls, as well as men and boys. Throughout 2020 the programme has also been supporting communities in Nepal, Kenya and Ethiopia to stay safe during the coronavirus pandemic. Irish Aid programmes are funded by Irish citizens and are part of Ireland's important global role.

ActionAid is hoping entrants will come up with innovative, well-researched, and creative speeches, using their own unique perspective from growing up in a pandemic.

To enter, students can ask their teacher for details or visit <https://actionaid.ie/speech-writing-competition/> for more information.



Margaret Roche is pictured at her newly opened café, the Little Acorn, in Baltinglass

Network Ireland Wicklow on a high as three members scoop national awards

2020 has undoubtedly being a challenging year for businesses and communities across Wicklow, Ireland and the World.

Network Ireland Wicklow have had their own obstacles to overcome with all monthly events moving online and their much anticipated awards ceremony too moving to an online platform at the 11th hour due to COVID19 restrictions.

"It's all being worth it" says Dawn Leane, President of Network Ireland Wicklow branch. "I will certainly never forget this year, but as President, my main focus was to ensure that we were here to support our members, the business-woman of Wicklow in every way possible so that we could all move forward together".

The national Network Ireland awards took place earlier this month, online, from The Powerscourt Hotel. Network Ireland Wicklow members achieved highly commended awards in three categories;

Business Innovation Category - Deborah Sudding - The Ultrasound Suite; Emerging New Business Category - Deborah Brock - Nua Fertility; Online Business Transformation - Sinead McKeever - Little Lingua Languages.

"We are so proud of these ladies and what they have achieved this year with their businesses. I would also like to take the opportunity to congratulate our National Network Ireland President and fellow Wicklow member, Louisa Meehan for putting on a fantastic awards event and #PowerWithin celebration."

Network Ireland Wicklow have another event taking place online, on the 22nd of October centred around making better strategic and financial decisions for your business. This talk will be delivered by the very well-known and respected Susan Hayes Culleton, also known as The Positive Economist. To book, visit Network Ireland Wicklow on Eventbrite. Tickets for non-members are €15 + booking fee.

ALLSHADES BLINDS

• Roller • Vertical • Wood Venetian
• Pleated • Velux • Roman

Tel: 087 2201600

FACTORY: Unit 10, Block 1, Broomhall
Business Park, Rathnew. Tel: 0404 20344

If you need to reach
NEW CUSTOMERS, call us:

01 286 9111

Bray social entrepreneur honoured for his work in response to covid-19

A Bray-based social entrepreneur - Hugh Brennan - was among eight social entrepreneurs honoured for their innovative and visionary response to the covid-19 pandemic at a special online event hosted last Wednesday by Social Entrepreneurs Ireland (SEI) - the SEI Gathering 2020.

Mr Brennan is the co-founder of Ó Cualann Cohousing Alliance, a voluntary housing co-operative that builds affordable houses in fully integrated and sustainable communities across Ireland. The demand for affordable housing has increased since the onset of Covid-19. Ó Cualann has responded by scaling up. While construction work had to be paused during lockdown, work has recommenced on 39 homes in Ballymun, Dublin 11 with a further 1,800 in the pipeline across the country.

Commenting, Mr Brennan said: "Social enterprise is changing the world by degrees and I was delighted to share the Ó Cualann story at the SEI Gathering. The support from Social Entrepreneurs Ireland has been the most important support that we have received to date. It is enabling us to build our own internal capacity which in turn gives confidence to Local Authorities and others to work with us, which means that we can replicate and scale the Ó Cualann model all over Ireland."

At the SEI Gathering event CEO of Social Entrepreneurs Ireland, Darren Ryan highlighted that social entrepreneurs have played a key role in responding to the covid-19 crisis and will be needed more than ever as we rebuild our society.

According to Mr Ryan:

"The pandemic has shone a light on the communities that remain most vulnerable and isolated at this time and reminded us about what matters most. It has also shown that individuals around Ireland are willing and ready to step up and act."

"Social entrepreneurs are society's problem solvers. They are ordinary people who develop new, innovative ideas to address the social challenges we face and work tirelessly to put them into action. We have already seen examples of this in recent months, as people around the country have developed innovative ways to care for people,

combat isolation, and keep our society going through the crisis. We will need a lot more of this as we respond to the evolving situation and continue to tackle the existing social issues. Social Entrepreneurs Ireland is proud to be supporting more social entrepreneurs than ever before in 2020, and we are committed to growing our support and impact in the coming years."

Since its foundation in 2004, SEI has supported 374 social entrepreneurs across the country. This year, SEI saw a record number of 245 applications to its programmes. Ó Cualann Cohousing

Alliance is currently one of SEI's Scale Partners.

Commenting, Chief Executive of DCC plc, Donal Murphy said: "Over the past 10 years of proudly working closely with Social Entrepreneurs Ireland, DCC plc has seen first-hand the incredible power of supporting people with ideas to change Ireland. This year has brought unprecedented challenges for the world, but we take heart that there are so many social entrepreneurs out there who are willing to roll up their sleeves and face these issues head on with courage and ingenuity. We are delighted to play our part in supporting them."



Hugh Brennan, co-founder of Ó Cualann Housing, pictured on the screen, with Darren Ryan, CEO of Social Entrepreneurs Ireland

LOCAL BUSINESS

Reach the **MOST** people for the **LEAST** money with Wicklow Times

For details of our amazing deals please call 01 286 9111



Advice for owners of dogs and cats during fireworks season

Veterinary Ireland is advising pet owners on measures to keep their pets safe this Halloween. As their hearing is much more sensitive than us humans, most pets are scared by sudden, loud noises, as well as flashes of light and so the weeks leading up to Halloween can be a very distressing time.

Up to 80% of pet owners report that their pet is afraid of fireworks. Most pets display mild symptoms of fear or anxiety initially but if improperly managed they tend to get worse.

Some of these animals may suffer from noise phobias - their reaction to certain noises are sudden, extreme and excessive. This can be very distressing for pets as well as their owners and can result in harm to the pet - for example, dogs may panic and run blindly. Halloween is a common time of year for pets to go missing or to be injured on the roads.

Some signs of anxiety to look out for in pets:

Dogs: Shivering or shaking; Destructive behaviour - e.g. chewing/scratching; Soiling

the house; Panting excessively; Licking lips; Pacing; Attempting to run away.

Cats: Cowering or hiding; House soiling; Refusing to eat; Attempting to run away.

Veterinary Ireland is issuing the following advice to pet owners this October:

Ideally, try and ensure that someone remains with your pet when fireworks may be heard, and especially on the night of Halloween.

Provide a den or a hiding place where your pet can feel safe. Make your pet a comfortable bed here, with old sweatshirts and other clothing to give your pet a sense of your reassuring presence. A crate with some blankets over it is ideal for a dog. A cat may prefer to

hide in a high up location such as the top of a wardrobe.

Keep your pet inside with the doors and windows closed and your favourite radio station switched on in the room. Provide an extra litter tray for cats.

Make sure to exercise your dog early in the day and give your pet something to do in the evening (such as chewing a frozen food-stuffed dog toy).

Ensure that all pets are wearing identification tags and have microchip identification - just in case your pet runs away from the sound of fireworks, the chances of being reunited significantly increase with identification.

Ignore fearful behaviour such as pant-

ing, shaking or whining. If owners give such animals extra attention in an attempt to "comfort" them, the pet may perceive this as a reward for displaying this type of behaviour and it can make matters worse over time.

Do not punish your pet for anxious behaviour such as scratching at doors or house soiling. This can also tend to exacerbate anxiety and make matters worse.

There are plug in diffusers, sprays and collars containing pheromones, as well as other products available from your vet, all of which can help to relieve anxiety in pets.

In severe cases visit your vet who may be able to prescribe medication to help in the short term. In the long term, some pet owners may need to ask their vet or a qualified behaviourist about noise desensitisation to prevent worsening of the problem.

Please do not share any of your Halloween sweets or treats with your pet - chocolate can actually be dangerous for pets, especially dogs, and can make them sick and/or choke.

Pet costumes - not all pets like or appreciate dressing up, so ensure that your pet is happy with whatever costume you might wish to dress it up in. Also ensure that the costume is made for your pet and is for the right size and species, or it might be painful and restrictive to wear



John Guilfoyle and Sinead McKeever at the Network Ireland National Conference and Businesswoman of the Year Awards virtual event which was held in Powerscourt Hotel, Enniskerry recently.

Oxfam Bray seeks volunteers

Oxfam Ireland has launched an all island call for enthusiastic people of all ages to join its team of dedicated shop volunteers.

During the Covid-19 lockdown earlier this year, Oxfam shops closed their doors for the first time in over 60 years. Now, due to the phenomenal support of donors and customers there is a growing need for volunteers to help with their global mission to beat poverty.

If you feel you can help by volunteering, drop into Oxfam Bray at 8 Quinsboro Road, call on 01 286 4173 or email the team at bray@oxfam.org.

CLASSIFIEDS

WASTE MANAGEMENT ACT 1996

(Nypro Healthcare)

(Corke Abbey, Bray)

We are required to accept at (Corke Abbey, Bray), free of charge, for the purpose of recovery, packaging waste of the following categories (Plastic and cardboard).

The products or packaging in question need not necessarily have been purchased from (Nypro).

• PLANNING • PLANNING •

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

Steven Gough seeks (a) retention permission for the change of use of former garage to residential use; (b) permission for extensions to the side, front and rear of the former garage to provide for a single storey, 2no. bedroom detached residential unit in the side garden of the existing dwelling; (c) widening of the existing vehicular entrance to serve the existing dwelling; (d) 2no. new velux windows to the side of the existing dwelling and (e) connections to mains and all associated site works at 64 Garden Village Avenue, Kilpedder, Co. Wicklow, A63 HH93.

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

Alphaplan Design (Tel: 086 2461269, Email: eugene@alphaplansdesign.com) Seeks planning permission for a studio cabin for use as a study and homework room, and associated works at Milltown lane, Rathnew, Co. Wicklow for G. A. Mason. 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

John Mulvey intends to apply for Planning Permission for the Retention of two separate single storey extensions to rear of property, one on the eastern boundary (18 sq. m.) with a pitched roof and one on the western boundary (13 sq. m.) with a flat roof, and also retention of a skylight on the roof to the rear of the existing house (south), a revised front (north) elevation including new double doors and Planning Permission for demolition of existing boundary wall to shed along western boundary and relocation of wall within boundary line of property, and to reinstate the property to a single dwelling unit, together with associated siteworks at 2, Avoca Avenue, Bray 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 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.

THE MIRACULOUS PRAYER

Dear Heart of Jesus in the past I have asked for many favours. This time I ask you this very special one. (Mention request) Take it, dear Heart of Jesus and place it within your broken Heart where your Father sees it. Then, in his merciful eyes it will become your favour not mine. St Anthony and St Jude, helper of the hopeless, aid me in my distress. Amen. Say this prayer for three days. Promise publication and favour will be granted. Never known to fail

P.D.

Gospel: Luke 21:5-11

When some were talking about the Temple, remarking how it was adorned with fine stonework and votive offerings, Jesus said, 'All these things you are staring at now - the time will come when not a single stone will be left on another, everything will be destroyed.' And they put to him this question: 'Master,' they said 'when will this happen, then and what sign will there be that this is about to take place?'. 'Take care not to be deceived,' he said 'because many will come using my name and saying, 'I am he' and 'The time is near at hand'. Refuse to join them. And when you hear of wars and revolutions, do not be frightened, for this is something that must happen but the end is not so soon.' Then he said to them, 'Nation will fight against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be great earthquakes and plagues and famines here and there, there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven.'

C.J.

CLASSIFIED ADS & PLANNING / APPOINTMENTS

CALL: 01 2869111 EMAIL: jennie@localtimes.ie
PLEASE NOTE DEADLINE FOR CLASSIFIED ADS
AND APPOINTMENTS IS 12 NOON FRIDAY





Flanagan Kerins

FURNITURE FOR LIFE

Up to
€150
allowed for
your replaced
suite

**THE GREAT
SOFA SALE
CONTINUES**



County Wicklow
is doing so well in
its battle with Covid.
Let's not slacken, we
are in this together
and together we
can beat it
Peter & Damian

Free Delivery
Free Assembly
Free Recycling of
Replaced Beds/
Mattresses

Thanks For Supporting Irish Business, Irish Manufacturers and for Shopping Local.

Bray Retail Park, Southern Cross, Co Wicklow
(exit 7 N11). Tel: 01 281 3338

www.flanagankerins.ie