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NO PLACE LIKE HOME
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YOUTH LEADERSHIP
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Tuesday 10th November 2020 First Floor, The Boulevard, Quinsborough Road, Bray. A98 R6D7. Tel: 01 - 2869111 E-mail: wicklowed@localtimes.ie www.wicklowtimes.net

WINDFARM VISUAL EFFECT 'ADVERSE'

NO BENEFIT TO BRAY OR GREYSTONES

Concerns have been raised about the visual impact from the proposed Dublin Array Wind Farm which is to extend from Dun Laoghaire to Greystones. Cathaoirleach of Greystones Municipal District, Cllr Derek Mitchell, fears that it will have an adverse effect on views from Greystones, Bray Head, and the Bray to Greystones Cliff Walk.

Councillor Mitchell said "The huge Dublin Array turbines are to be close to shore, 9km from the coast and will produce about 600MW."

RWE renewables are seeking public feedback until 20th November and Cllr Mitchell is urging people to view the plan and photomontages on dublinarray.com and have their say. Cllr Mitchell added, "This is close to the proposed Codling Windfarm which is less prominent, as it is further

offshore, even though it generates twice as much power thus saving more carbon. The photomontages should be changed to include all windfarms off the coast as the combined visual effect is described as 'adverse' and 'significant' from Greystones. There is also no economic benefit for Greystones.

"We need to save carbon but the development of a large windfarm with a smaller visual effect, well out to sea, should take priority over a small one

with a larger visual effect. There should be a limit to the visual effect permitted in our towns and attractive coasts. The present consent system does not properly assess this. I have lobbied to get proper visual assessments included. It is also necessary for Greystones, the nearest coastal area to the Codling to benefit and the new process must include that."

Dublin Array offshore wind farm is located on the Kish and Bray Banks, approximately 10km from



Pictured is Sgt Andrew Byrne with his dog Minnie, at his home in Tinahely, ahead of his online conferring ceremony where he was awarded a Bachelor of Arts in Leadership, Management, and Defence Studies from IT Carlow. Photo by Mary Browne. See story on page 12

the coastline of Dublin and counties Wicklow and Dublin. These are naturally occurring sandbanks which the east coast commercial shipping routes avoid due to the shallowness of the water thereby presenting a location for potential development. RWE Renewables say that proximity to Dublin, which is the major electricity demand centre, means that the project can be a significant source of renewable electricity for the city and the surrounding region. Peter Lefroy, Dublin Array Project Director, said "We have not yet submitted a planning application for Dublin Array. We hope the information on the portal provides a platform for us to have a meaningful exchange of information with local communities and understand any issues or concerns people have." A Foreshore Lease appli-

cation to construct the project was submitted to the Department of Planning, Housing and Local Government in 2006 and updated information was subsequently submitted in 2009, 2012 and 2013. RWE Renewables state that "It is expected that we will be submitting a fresh application to construct and operate the Dublin Array Offshore Wind Farm in 2021. The new legislation has identified An Bord Pleanála as the decision-making authority and therefore we will submit our application to them." RWE Renewables say they have been undertaking a number of onshore and offshore environmental surveys and assessments. They claim onshore assessments will enable the site selection and design process of the onshore elements of the wind farm to avoid or minimise environmental impacts.

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Pictured are members of Rathnew GAA Club Olly Quinn, Ronan Merrigan, Niall Dignam and Conor Dignam. The club has recently boosted with the news that it has won €10,000 in the 2020 Kellogs GAA Cul Camps.

Enniskerry Meals on Wheels

Volunteer drivers are needed for the Enniskerry Meals on Wheels Service. Drivers are needed who can give up to two or three hours twice a month to help facilitate this vital service. If you are interested you should call Maoliosa 086 8322466 for further information. The Meals on Wheels service operates in Enniskerry and Kilmacanogie and delivers hot meals to older people every Tuesday and Thursday.

Forty Days of Lockdown Competition

A group of 40 local businesses in Arklow have come together to fill up hampers with gifts. This huge Christmas competition sees two hampers up for grabs with 20 gifts in each. For more information of the gifts up for grabs, and for instructions on how to enter, see the competition post on the Arklow Town Taxis Facebook page.

Laragh Christmas Tree Lights

The Christmas lights around the village of Laragh will be going ahead over the coming weeks. The main outdoor event can not go ahead due to public health advice and the safety of our community.

Organisers say "This year we have been unable to hold any fundraising events so we are asking for any support to help us keep improving our lights. There is a GoFundMe page if anybody is in a position to donate for lighting improvements. Follow the gofundme.com link on our Facebook page to donate at www.facebook.com/laragh.christmaslights.

"We are very lucky to have had amazing support from all our local businesses since we started putting up our lights however this year we will not be asking for support from them in what has been a very challenging time for all businesses. Instead we ask you all to shop local in these coming months."

Community Call Helpline

Wicklow County Council's Covid-19 Community Call Helpline's hours have been extended to operate between 8am and 8pm, seven days a week. The helpline is for collection and delivery of food and other items, for people suffering from social isolation, for Garda related issues, and other medical/health needs. The number is 1800 868 399, and the email address is CovidSupport@wicklowcoco.ie. If you are unable to call or email please text 087 245 6874.

Libraries go 'online only'

During Level 5 restrictions, Wicklow County Council's library services can only be availed of online. However, there are a wide range of services that are still available to the public, for example: e-books, downloadable audio books, online newspapers, e-magazines and online language learning. A PIN can be obtained from library staff by phoning or emailing your local library, or Library HQ. Book home delivery service is available during level 5, to all areas in county Wicklow aimed at people living alone or cocooning. Details of your local library are on www.wicklow.ie/living/services/libraries.

Virtual Christmas Fair

Bray Methodist Church is hosting a virtual Christmas Fair to raise funds for internal building works.

They will be holding this virtual Christmas Fair on Saturday 21st November on Zoom from 10:30am-1pm. Interested attendees can find further information on Facebook @BrayMethodist; Instagram @BrayMethodistChurch or email BrayMethodistEvents@gmail.com.

Wicklow Town Chamber Awards are going virtual for 2020

Wicklow Town & District Chamber of Commerce are pleased to announce that their business awards this year are going virtual.

The Chamber wants you to join in celebrating the positive achievements within the community, despite the very difficult climate created for us all by COVID-19.

"Our traditional awards will resume in 2021. This year provides the chamber with a unique opportunity to celebrate the many significant achievements of our business community during this very challenging year.

"Partnering with members of our community, the Chamber is introducing a reimagined virtual experience to continue the tradition of supporting our members, showcasing leadership, and celebrating business excellence. Voting is very simple. You the public, get to decide who the worthy winner in each of the following category is. Just chose your Leading Business and let us know why you are nominating them.

"All you have to do is submit your nomination by going to www.wicklowchamber.ie."

BUSINESS AWARDS CATEGORY 2020

- Best New Business
- Best Retailer
- Best Small to Medium Business
- Best Business Adaptation due to Coronavirus
- Best Eating Establishment, Pub/Hospitality
- Best Online Presence
- Best Customer Service
- Special Recognition to Frontline Work/Employee

"The deadline for nomination is 5pm on Monday 30th November 2020. We would like to thank our Sponsors AIB Bank, Bank of Ireland, Burke Oil, Herbst Software, Wicklow Enterprise Centre, Wicklow County Council and Wicklow Hire & Sale. It is now more important than ever for local businesses to stand out and highlight the strength of their products and services and the Business Awards gives you the platform to showcase your business.

Wicklow Welcomes group starts Christmas Appeal

The Wicklow Welcomes group is asking people if they would like to donate a Christmas gift (in the way of a gift voucher) to neighbours living in Direct Provision in the Grand Hotel in Wicklow and in Rathmore Holiday Village in Ashford and to the Syrian families that have been re-homed elsewhere in County Wicklow.

"This year in order to protect all involved we are limiting the collection to vouchers from Wicklow Chamber of Commerce who have kindly worked with us to get this online system up and running. This will ensure that everyone donating and receiving donations can stay safe and abide by the current restrictions. The vouchers will also support local business in Wicklow town who have been so welcoming to our new neighbours.

"Vouchers can be purchased at www.wicklowtown.ie/vouchers. Please check the box to say that it's a donation for Wicklow Welcomes and select 'collect from Wicklow Chamber Office' so Wicklow Welcomes can arrange collection and distribution and you won't be charged postage."

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'Utterly unacceptable' - Greystones schools are still waiting for answers

The ongoing issue of the new school building being left idle in Charlesland, Greystones, was described as "utterly unacceptable" last week by Minister Simon Harris. The issue was also raised in the Dáil last week by Green Party TD Steven Matthews and Social Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore, who were left frustrated after questioning Minister for Education Norma Foley.

The new building, built by Western Building Systems, is to accommodate Greystones Community National School (GCNS) and new school, Greystones Community College (GCC), however pupils were not allowed to move into it in September as planned and it has still not been opened.

Minister Harris said the lack of information for parents, students, teachers and other staff is causing worry, anxiety and raising many significant questions. Speaking to the *Wicklow Times*, Minister Harris said, "I feel the local community is being treated with disrespect. Students, parents and teachers have shown massive patience in waiting for their new school. I was proud and excited to see this huge investment in a brand-new school for the children of our town."

"The lack of information from the Department of Education as to why the school cannot yet move into its new home and the lack of detail about any issues arising or a timeline for resolving them is not a sustainable or acceptable situation. I will not stand for my constituents being treated in such a shoddy way by bureaucracy."

"Clearly answers and information are needed so we can all plan a way forward. I have raised this matter on a number of occasions with the Department of Education and I have now sought and secured a meeting with the Head of the Department's Building Unit for this week to try and seek answers and information for our community."

"I will, of course, keep the people of Greystones updated and most particularly the students of the school, their parents and teachers. I will work with anyone and everyone to try and make progress."

Greystones Community National School has had to remain in its temporary accommodation in Greystones Rugby Club, where it's been for the last five

years, while Greystones Community College, a new school with 64 first-year students, has found temporary accommodation in Greystones Tennis Club.

Responding to the Wicklow TDs in the Dáil last week, Minister for Education Norma Foley said that a licence agreement is in place which allows GCC to remain in interim accommodation in Greystones Lawn Tennis Club until the end of December.

"The Tennis Club is willing to consider extending beyond that if so required," Minister Foley said. "In the meantime, my Department continues to work on exploring options for further interim specialist accommodation for the school. Department officials have been in discussion with Greystones Rugby Club and the club has agreed to allow for further temporary accommodation on its site to meet additional needs for either of the schools should this be required."

"The Department will progress this as necessary over the coming weeks in consultation with the schools and the ETB. There has been ongoing communication between my Department and the contractor. Certain information was provided by the contractor at the end of September. In October, the Department informed the contractor that further information was required. That was provided at the end of October and is currently being adjudicated on."

"The Department is taking the appropriate steps to ensure it is completely satisfied that the building is fit for handover prior to accepting it. The Department is engaging with the contractor in this regard under the appropriate terms of the public works contract."

Following the Dáil session, Deputy Matthews said "It is totally unacceptable for students at any level to have to put up with this inappropriate accommodation but both the Tennis Club and Rugby



Minister Simon Harris

Club should be acknowledged for assisting the schools. There is a brand-new national school building that sits empty due to ongoing issues that need to be resolved between the Department of Education and the building contractor.

"This building had been due to temporarily house both schools this year and until the Community School had its own building at Charlesland which also has no timeframe for completion. I have written a series of letters and parliamentary questions to the Department of Education since the summer and the schools have been offered little or no assurances since then. Both management and parents from the two schools have written to me on a regular basis as they have been unable to get any timeline for progress and feel frustrated and let down by the Department."

"I have asked that senior officials in the Department of Education meet with the building contractor immediately to provide a timeline and solutions to opening this school to give students a proper place to continue their education as soon as possible."

"I asked a series of questions to Minister Foley and found her responses to be quite vague and frustrating. Schools across Ireland have faced unprecedented uncertainty since March and the lack of assurances offered to the students, parents and staff of these schools is

not fair. At the heart of this we have students and staff who are putting up with totally unacceptable accommodation. The current position is not sustainable and has serious impact on the students, teachers and parents and knock on effects in terms of planning, subject choices and educational development," concluded Deputy Matthews.

Also speaking afterwards, Deputy Whitmore said "I asked very specific questions about the new school building which the Minister refused to answer. I also raised the fact that schools are not able to plan ahead without knowing when the school will open up to them, and their enrolment numbers are being aggressively curbed due to a lack of uncertainty regarding their future accommodation."

"This is simply not good enough coming from the Department. There has been no effort to date to communicate with the school communities about progress on the opening date of the new school build."

"The Minister also outlined inaccuracies in relation to Western Buildings correspondence recently sent to local representative, however it is my belief that regardless of these so-called inaccuracies, the Department needs to make a decision as to when to open up the building so that GCNS and GCC can work towards finding a solution to their short and medium-term accommodation needs."

"We have been getting the same information for months and months now and it is completely unacceptable. It is really frustrating that as former chair of GCNS, to see how hard both schools have fought to get a new school in the first place, then lobbying and fight for temporary accommodation only to be refused entry into a brand-new school left idle around the corner," concluded Deputy Whitmore.



Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly with Mary Flanagan, Director of Nursing, Quality and Clinical Services, OLH&CS, at the Wicklow Hospice which opened its doors to the staff last Friday. See story on page 5.

Discussion ongoing with landowner over site acquisition for new Greystones school

The Department of Education is still in talks with the landowner of a site in Charlesland, Greystones, as it seeks to acquire the site for a new school building for Greystones Community College, the Minister of Education Norma Foley said.

Answering questions in The Dail last week, the Minister said "The building project to deliver a permanent new 1,000 pupil school for Greystones Community College is planned for the designated post-primary site at Charlesland. My Department is committed to delivering this site for the new post-primary school for the Greystones and Kilcoole area of County Wicklow and work is ongoing to achieve that as soon as possible."

"Discussions are ongoing with the landowner

with a view to acquiring the site. Any site acquisition process may be lengthy and there may be complex issues which need to be addressed during negotiations, technical assessments or conveyancing. At all times, my Department must strive to obtain best value for the Exchequer while seeking to complete the acquisition as quickly and efficiently as possible."

"The project to deliver permanent accommodation for the school is to be delivered under my Department's design and build programme. As soon as there is sufficient certainty in respect of completion of the site acquisition, the architectural planning and design stage will be completed and, following grant of planning permission, the project will be expedited to tender and construction stages."

Wicklow has second lowest Covid-19 incidence rate

The Level 5 lockdown measures seem to be working in Co. Wicklow, which has experienced the second-lowest 14-day incidence rate in the country since the move to Level 5, second only to Leitrim.

There has been 149 Covid-19 cases in Wicklow during this period, according to the Health Protection Surveillance Centre.

Co. Wicklow's incidence rate since the introduction of the Level 5 measures has been 104.6 per 100,000 people. Leitrim's is the lowest, at just 68.7. Nine counties, meanwhile, saw an increase in cases during the 14-day period. The incident rate national average during the 14-day period was 212.7 cases per 100,000 people. Counties Cavan and Meath recorded the highest incidence rates, at over 300.

There has now been a total of 1,310 total confirmed Covid cases in Wicklow since the beginning of the pandemic.

Over the 14 days from October 20th to November 2nd, there were 23 Covid cases in Bray West, and 20 cases in Bray East; 45 cases in the Greystones Local Electoral Area (LEA); 29 cases in the Wicklow LEA; 24 cases in the Arklow LEA; and 20 cases in the Baltinglass LEA.

Minister for Health Stephen

Donnelly has welcomed the substantial drop in Covid incidence rates across nearly all of the County over the past two weeks. He noted there had been significant drops in the 14-day rate in all regions except for Wicklow LEA which saw a slight increase.

The latest figures as of November 2nd show the rates in Greystones dropped from 243.1 to 171 while Bray West dropped from 146.7 to 125. Bray East saw an even bigger drop from 157.6 to 116.5 while Arklow saw their numbers plummet from 168 to 91.7.

Baltinglass experienced the biggest drop in the county from 160.5 to 76.4. The only disappointment was the small rise in Wicklow from 92.1 to 102.5. Minister Donnelly said: "It's really encouraging to see the drop in incidence rates across nearly all of the county."

"At the moment we are seeing rates falling in 23 of the 26 counties while the R0 rate has been calculated at 0.7 and 0.9 when last week it was 1.

"Similarly, the average number of close contacts has fallen from 6 to around 3 and the testing positivity rate has fallen to 4.7%."

Minister Donnelly also revealed the HSE's capacity to carry out tests has greatly increased. He said: "I'm delighted to be able to share that as of this week the HSE can now do up to 140,000 a week. They deserve great credit for this. In parallel, demand for testing is down by at least 40% in the past week."

"At the same time the HSE continues to recruit contact tracers and community swabbers. However, testing and tracing alone will not suppress this pandemic."

"The fact there has been a small rise in Wicklow shows we still need to work hard to actively suppress the virus."

"To protect our health services, ensure education and childcare continue, protect jobs and move the country to lower levels of the framework, we must continue to work together".



A gardening project has been launched aimed at primary school children, which recognises the rise in popularity of growing fruit and vegetables that has occurred amongst the younger generation as a result of the Covid-19 lockdown. Schools can sign up now to receive free grow packs including compost, seeds to grow their own school garden, along with curriculum-linked interactive educational resources for the project which will run from January to June 2021. See page 14 for details

Olympic Federation of Ireland welcomes Government's €85m support for Sport

The Olympic Federation of Ireland today welcomed the Government's confirmation of an €85m funding package which will provide much needed support for a wide variety of Olympic sports, many of which have been severely impacted by Covid 19.

The Sport Ireland funding is particularly important in ensuring that the structures which support athlete development at club and regional level are not irreparably damaged by the exceptionally difficult current conditions. The funding will also provide some stability to protect performance programmes for those elite athletes currently preparing for the Olympic and Paralympic Games in Tokyo next year.

Welcoming the announcement Olympic Federation of Ireland CEO, Peter Sherrard said, "I thank Minister Catherine Martin and Minister Jack Chambers for providing this funding package which means a huge amount to a large number of our member sports. It is vitally important in sustaining them through this current crisis so that the progress of recent years is not lost. Thanks to this emergency support, many of our members will be able to protect structures from which they will be able to re-build when we emerge from this crisis in communities all over Ireland."



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Additional CLAR funding for Wicklow

The upgrading of carparks at Knockanna and Asknagap is to benefit from the latest round of CLAR grants. Some 30,000 has been granted to each community for the work. CLAR provides funding for small-scale projects in designated rural areas that have experienced significant levels of population decline.

The 2020 programme focused on supporting CLAR communities to deal with the impact of COVID-19 in these challenging times, with a particular emphasis on safety improvements at carparking facilities to meet the public health requirements arising from the pandemic.

Welcoming the funding allocation, for Wicklow, the Cathaoirleach of Wicklow county Council, Cllr Pat Kennedy, said it was particularly important at this time that we provide people living in the CLAR areas with the infrastructure that will help them to stay in touch with each other, within the parameters of the public health guidelines at any given time.

Council Chief executive, Mr Frank Curran, thanked Minister

for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD and her officials for this latest allocation of funding to improve the quality of life for the many people living in rural communities in Wicklow.

Announcing this year's allocations, Minister Humphreys said: "The projects recently announced under CLAR 2020 will help to improve safety around schools and community facilities and will help people to socialize in a safe and socially-distanced manner."

Welcoming the funding, Minister Simon Harris said "60,000 has been allotted to two community facilities in Wicklow, Asknagap Community Hall and Knockanna

Community Hall. This funding is towards the upgrade of their carparks. The funding announced for projects by my colleague Minister Heather Humphreys is to provide safety measures and development of community recreation areas. The Covid-19 pandemic has increased demand for outdoor community facilities and this in rural areas as well as our towns and villages".

CLAR provides funding for small-scale projects in designated rural areas that have experienced significant levels of population decline.

The programme is one element of the Department of Rural and Community Development's Rural Development Investment Programme, which provides a

package of co-ordinated and complementary supports for rural areas.

The 2020 CLAR programme places a particular focus on supporting CLAR communities to deal with the impact of COVID-19 and meeting the needs of communities in these challenging times.

Under the funding announced last week, almost 3 million will be provided to projects in 84 communities to provide and improve safety infrastructure such as footpaths, public lighting, pedestrian crossings, speed safety signs and car parking facilities, and to help adapt the environs around schools and community facilities to meet the public health requirements arising from COVID-19.

Funding to help local Wicklow sports groups with Covid-19 recovery

Funding for local sports groups in Wicklow will help the sector offset losses incurred and address other challenges posed by Covid-19, Minister Simon Harris TD has said.

Minister Harris said "I am delighted that an unprecedented funding package of 85 million has been put in place for the Irish sport sector, which will help local groups in Wicklow in what has been a difficult year with much activity stalled due to Covid-19.

"The funding being allocated by Sport Ireland will address the existential threat to National Governing Bodies and their club networks, and local sports organisations in Wicklow.

"Through the Local Sports Partnership Small Grant Scheme, 19 clubs in Wicklow will be allocated funding of €22,300.

"This scheme provides an additional mechanism to support community groups & clubs who may not be affiliated to a national organisation or but provide a vital local service. The primary aim of the grants is to cover the costs associated with implementing Covid-19 hygiene and social distancing protocols.

"A further €18,500 is being allocated to the local sports partnership in Wicklow for sports innovation projects. This funding aims specifically to promote and develop new programmes and projects that can advance sport and physical activity in the post-Covid-19 public health era.

"This Government is committed to the Irish sports sector and earlier this year announced funding of €70 million to protect the national sports system in Ireland.

"Over €64 million of funding has been allocated to National Governing Bodies, Local Sports Partnerships and other funded bodies across four key schemes.

"An Emergency Fund to the value of €5.8 million has been ring-fenced to offset losses incurred by sports organisations during the current Level 5 restrictions and the remaining period of 2020.

"Sport Ireland was in a position to meet

the requests of National Governing Bodies for their club networks to the tune of €9.7 million, and an additional €5 million will also be invested in the GAA, IRFU and FAI club networks.

"In addition to the Covid-19 fund outlined above, the Government has allocated an additional €15 million to GAA, Camogie Association and Ladies Gaelic Football Association specifically for the running of the Inter-County Championships. There is also dedicated funding for disability and older adult sport.

"This has been an extremely challenging year for the sport sector but support is available, and I wish to thank the Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport & Media, Catherine Martin TD and Minister of State for Sport and Gaeltacht Affairs, Jack Chambers TD for their continued commitment to this area," Minister Simon Harris TD concluded.

The successful club recipients in Wicklow are: An Tochar GAA, Arklow Celtic FC, Arklow Rock Parnell Hurling and Camogie Club, Arklow Sea Scout Group, Avoca GAA Club, Avondale Camogie Club, Baltinglass Town AFC (Soccer Club), Bray Rowing Club, Eire Og Greystones CLG, Enniskerry GAA, Greystones Sea Scouts, Kiltegan GAA, Nomads Badminton Club, St Benedict Inbhear Mor AC, Tinahely LGFA, Valleymount GAA, Western Gaels GAA Hurling Club, Wicklow Pony Club, Wicklow Rovers AFC.

Welcoming the total funding of almost €41,000 for the County, the Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Pat Kennedy, said "the Council recognised the vital contribution that sport has made to public health throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and while this was a difficult time for sports clubs and individuals, sport has continued to

respond and react to the evolving situation through innovative ways in keeping people active and engaged."

Director of services, Michael Nicholson, added that this funding will provide some relief for sports clubs in the county and recognises the wider economic and social impact of sport, especially during these challenging times."

Green Party TD Steven Matthews said "The announcement by Minister Catherine Martin this week was extremely welcome. I was particularly delighted to see that 19 clubs from across Wicklow were awarded funding. The funding being allocated today by Sport Ireland will allow sports organisations to in part off-set significant losses incurred in recent months and hopefully add some more certainty to planning for 2021. Clubs across Wicklow have shown themselves to be incredibly resilient throughout the Covid-19 restrictions with more people being active than ever before.

"I am contacted on a daily basis by members of clubs across Wicklow including managers, parents and volunteers to discuss the hugely damaging impact that the pandemic has had on their club. This hit particularly hard under level 5 restrictions which reduced their activity even further. These clubs rely so much on volunteer work and fundraising that simply hasn't been possible under lockdown measures.

"Although the funding announced by Sport Ireland won't completely negate the impact that the pandemic has had, it's very welcome to see this initiative to help secure the futures of clubs across Wicklow. It is vital that sports organisations are ready to return to activity as soon as public health circumstances allow. I hope that if the current restrictions are to be successful and the restrictions can be eased, we can see a return to sport in Wicklow as soon as possible which will have huge benefits for people, particularly who have seen their social circles limited so much this year."

MINISTER WELCOMES STAFF TO WICKLOW HOSPICE AND ANNOUNCES ADDITIONAL €620,000 FUNDING

Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly T.D. met with staff at the new Wicklow Hospice facility in Magheramore last Friday in advance of welcoming the first patients to the facility this week and announced an additional €620,000 for Wicklow Hospice.

Operated by Our Lady's Hospice & Care Services (OLH&CS), the Hospice is the first in the county to provide specialist palliative care services for patients, and their families.

Wicklow Hospice provides 15 in-patient public beds and a new base for the Specialist Community Palliative Care team. Its opening marks the culmination of ten years work by the community. Developed on a site donated by the Columban Sisters, the building's completion was marked in January, with the intention of opening to patients in April, but the Covid-19 pandemic delayed the final works, fit-out and delivery of specialised equipment.

Welcoming the staff to their new base in Magheramore, Minister Stephen Donnelly praised the work done by local

volunteers in getting the Hospice open. Minister Donnelly said: "Seeing the Hospice preparing to accept their first patients is a really important day. It's a day the people of Wicklow have been waiting a long time to see and have worked incredibly hard to make happen. I have been a strong supporter of this project from the beginning because I know just how badly it is needed for the county."

"I'm really delighted to meet with the staff today as they prepare for the arrival of the first in-patients to this fantastic facility. I know this Hospice will be a vital support for families all over Wicklow at a time when they really need it. It will be a great resource for the community for many years to come."

"I have been a strong supporter of this project

from the beginning because I know just how badly it is needed for the county. I'm really delighted to meet with the staff as they prepare for the arrival of the first in-patients to this fantastic facility. It's hard to find the words to express the respect and admiration I have for the work they do."

Chief Executive Officer of OLH&CS, Audrey Houlihan said: "We are truly delighted to be opening to patients this month. We bring more than 140 years' experience delivering palliative care to the county and are confident that Wicklow Hospice will transform quality of life for patients and families and meet the changing care needs of current and future generations."

"When we are fully up and running, we will have just over 40 staff

across a wide range of clinical and non-clinical roles. 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."

"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."

"Virtual visits are increasingly popular, and we are happy to work with patients and their families to help them set up phone and video calling."



Shona Guinan, Our Lady's Hospice Healthcare Assistant, with Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly



Pictured is husband and wife Tom and Miriam McGrath, from the Wicklow Hospice Foundation, at the Wicklow Hospice last Friday. Pic: Michael Kelly



NETWORKS

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On Sunday 15th November Philip Byrne will host a fun, participatory workshop using six word stories to ask "What Happened Next"? This will be livestreamed as part of Mermaid Arts Centre's Yarn Storytelling Festival presented by the Mermaid Arts Centre. The cost for this online Zoom workshop is €5 and it takes place at 2pm. See more on page 16.

IFA seeks change in reference years for sheep welfare scheme

IFA National Sheep Chairman Sean Dennehy has called on the Department of Agriculture to change the reference years of the Sheep Welfare Scheme for the CAP transition period.

He said, "The reference years do not reflect the current flock numbers of many sheep farmers within the scheme who have developed their enterprise since the reference period and need to be changed."

The IFA Sheep Chairman also urged the Department to allow new entrants into the scheme. He said the Department of Agriculture originally allocated €25m a year to this scheme. However, only €17m has been earmarked for 2021, reflecting the current levels of participation.

Sean Dennehy said, "We need to do all we can to encourage generational renewal on sheep farms in Ireland, changing the reference years and allowing new entrants are important first steps to maximise participation in the scheme and ensuring all funding allocated to support the sector finds its way onto sheep farms".



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2021 Tidy Towns Competition will proceed

The Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD, has given a firm commitment that the TidyTowns competition will proceed in 2021.

The TidyTowns competition has been in existence since 1958 and has become an integral part of our culture over the intervening years. The competition continues to grow in popularity and in 2019 a record 924 entries were received.

Unfortunately, like many other events, the competition did not proceed in 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Speaking about the cancellation of the competition, Minister Humphreys said: "The decision to cancel the competition this year was taken in line with public health advice and in collaboration with the competition sponsor SuperValu. This decision was made in April during the first period of severe restrictions when essentially the advice to everybody was to stay at home."

"Many of our TidyTowns volunteers and adjudicators were very limited in what they could do earlier in the year. As we have moved through different stages of living alongside the pandemic, the TidyTowns volunteers have demonstrated that they can continue to do some of their activities while still following all of the necessary public health precautions."

The Department of Rural and Community Development is in regular contact with the close to 1,000 TidyTowns groups around the country, through social media and through the monthly TidyTowns newsletter. It is clear that some wonderful projects and community-wide initiatives have been delivered in recent months. Many of the TidyTowns Groups have also been instrumental in assisting with the community response to COVID-19.

Looking ahead to next year, the Minister said: "As we look forward to next year, I want to assure all of the TidyTowns groups and their volunteers, that there will be a SuperValu TidyTowns competition in 2021. We may need to alter and adapt our approach to delivering the competition next year, given the on-

going constraints posed by COVID, but we can retain the ethos of the competition that has stood the test of time so well.

"My Department is currently considering the format the competition could take next year, having regard to restrictions on gatherings at each of the five levels of the Government's Plan for Living with Covid-19, and the paramount need to protect the health and wellbeing of volunteers and adjudicators."

"The details of any changes in the competition will be shared with TidyTowns groups well in advance. I also want to assure them, that my Department, our sponsor SuperValu and the Government is absolutely committed to the competition and we look forward to encouraging more and more towns and villages to join us in future years".



Bray Tidy Towns volunteers at a clean-up in the Albert Walk in Bray earlier this year

Wicklow heritage is part of award-winning Irish community archive network

Wicklow's heritage has played a part in an award-winning Irish community archive network. The Irish Community Archive Network (iCAN) has won the 'Networks of Archives' title in the 2020 Community Archives and Heritage Group (CAHG) national awards which took place via a virtual ceremony.

Established by the National Museum of Ireland's Education Department in 2008, the iCAN initiative works to encourage and support a network of communities in collecting, preserving, and making accessible their local history and heritage online.

Wicklow is one of three local authorities working in partnership with iCAN, along with Clare and Galway County Councils. Local Authority Heritage Officers have played a critical role in the development of the iCAN partnership model and provide community groups with professional support at local level.

"We have been members of iCAN since 2014 and indeed we were the first county site in the network", said Deirdre Burns, Heritage Officer with Wicklow County Council.

She added: "In response to the high level of interest from groups in

Wicklow we were delighted to develop a multi-platform website earlier this year that hosts the County Wicklow Heritage site and five additional community run sites. These are: Medieval Bray Project; Donard History and Heritage; Glens of Lead; Delgany Heritage Village and Glendalough Heritage Forum".

With much of Ireland's material and intangible cultural heritage in the care and ownership of its citizens and diaspora, iCAN is empowering local communities to document their own history, heritage and culture on digital platforms.

They are proving to be extremely popular locally, nationally and globally, with visits to the network's archive websites growing year on year. Since 2011, iCAN has generated 6 million-page views from all over the world, with 1.5 million of these in the last 12 months.

For local historians, genealogists, emigrants, and teachers, the archives provide rich local information, or "people's history", that would otherwise not be documented or readily accessible, particularly for communities overseas, whether its photographs, oral histories, videos or biographical about notable local figures.

In County Wicklow the network is co-ordinated by the Heritage Officer of Wicklow County Council as an action of the County Wicklow Heritage Plan in association with Wicklow Archives and Wicklow libraries service.

A steering group comprising the National Museum of Ireland, the Local Authority Heritage Officer Network, The Heritage Council, Creative Ireland and iCAN community representatives is guiding the continued growth of the national network, and there are ambitions to support the development of at least 130 digital archives across Ireland by 2024. To visit the Wicklow network of websites visit www.wicklowheritage.org For more information on iCAN visit www.ouririshheritage.org.

Irish Rail reverses decision on DART timetable change

TDs from Greystones have welcomed Irish Rail's decision to reinstate the vital 7:54am DART from Greystones. The service was recently replaced by an Intercity to Bray at 7:48am which meant all of the commuters from Wexford to Greystones were being forced onto the same train.

Irish Rail had made the changes to allow for works on the line but have now reversed their decision.

Minister Simon Harris said "I contacted the CEO of Irish Rail on foot of concerns from Greystones Commuters about the sudden cancellation of the 7.54am service. This is a busy service used by many students to commute to school.

"Irish Rail had cancelled the service for a few weeks to facilitate operations works in the line, however Irish Rail have now taken on board my concerns and have confirmed to me that the 7.54am service is being reintroduced from Wednesday November 4th."

The CEO of Irish Rail sent the following advice to Minister Harris: "I would like to advise you that our Operations Team have been working to establish if we could safely enhance our service from Greystones within our current restricted signalling operations, and I am pleased to confirm that from tomorrow - Wednesday 4th November the 07.54 service from Greystones will be reintroduced, which will greatly assist in addressing the capacity issues experienced in recent days."

Jennifer Whitmore TD said she had contacted Irish Rail after parents raised the issue with her regarding their children's ability to get into school and back home again when using the Dart service.

"It came to my attention that the 7:54 dart service from Greystones was not running and that this was impacting on children trying to get to school in the mornings. I contacted Irish Rail to enquire as to the reasons why this service was dropped and if changes could be made to facilitate the school run in the mornings and afternoons," said Deputy Whitmore.

"Irish Rail informed me that due to COVID 19 rail capacity was reduced by 25% which meant a reduction in the number of dart services available, however the reason why this particular service was dropped was due to rail works being carried out for the next three weeks on signalling works.

"I felt that these works should not impact on the morning service and relayed to them what parents were telling me, that their children were forced to take a packed commuter train out of Greystones which they felt counteracted Irish Rail's own attempts to allow for social distancing in light of COVID 19. I also highlighted the fact that recent changes in the timetable also meant children were left stranded for more than an hour after school, while waiting for a service to take them back home.

"Irish Rail then informed me that they were going to reinstate the 7:54 service from Greystones. I welcome this move which was done in a very responsive and rapid manner and I want to thank them for their prompt response to parents' concerns. There are however, a number of issues I continue to address with Irish Rail including the need for an additional afternoon service to cater to children returning home," concluded Deputy Whitmore.

Minister Stephen Donnelly said: "My office received a number of complaints from commuters who were rightly upset that they were being forced onto an Intercity service. The 7:54am service is probably the busiest one of the day as it is used by both workers heading to Dublin and schoolchildren going to Bray.

"Under the current Level 5 restrictions the guidelines are that public transport should operate at 25 per cent capacity which is impossible if you are reducing peak time services.

"I'm delighted Irish Rail have made the sensible decision to reinstate the 7.54am service. They have said it will be back in operation later this week".

Disruptions to rail services are expected till Sunday 15th November to facilitate the City Centre Resignalling Commissioning works. Irish Rail say services to and through Connolly Station will be suspended at weekends while there will also be some weekday service alterations to DART and commuter routes.

The Minister added "I would remind anyone using public transport that face coverings must be worn. I know it's not possible for everybody but if possible try to walk or cycle to your destination".

No St. Patrick's Day Parade for Greystones

Greystones Municipal District Council has taken the decision not to arrange a St. Patrick's Day parade in the town in 2021.

The decision was taken for a number of reasons; Concerns about Covid-19 and the uncertainty of what the situation will be in March; budgetary issues; and the unavailability of the District Council administrator and staff to organise the parade.

Cllr Derek Mitchell, Cathaoirleach of Greystones Municipal District, has said that going forward a committee of traders or voluntary committee will be needed to oversee the organisation and running of the annual parade. Cllr Mitchell has suggested that Greystones emulate other towns around the county which delegate the organisation of their St. Patrick's Day parades to the business community. In Greystones it has been the Local Authority handling the organisation.

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'Happy to Chat' initiative launches on Bray Seafront

Bray Municipal District wants people to take time out to chat on the town's famous Promenade.

Signs have been placed at four locations along Bray Promenade indicating 'Happy to Chat' benches. The idea is to help tackle loneliness and isolation in the community by breaking down invisible walls between strangers.

Simply stopping to say hello to someone at the 'Chat Bench could mean much to vulnerable and lonely people in the town.

Cathaoirleach of Bray Municipal District, Cllr Anne Ferris, said: "I welcome this initiative as loneliness can affect everyone especially during this pandemic. This initiative aims to break down social barriers and help forge new connections in our communities."

Co-operative Housing Ireland launches 'No Place like Home' in Wicklow

Co-operative Housing Ireland has launched its 'No Place like Home' in Wicklow to highlight the importance of home during Covid-19. The campaign focuses on the lived experiences of its Members during the pandemic and what having a secure home means to them.

One such member is Winifred Kelly from Rathnew who moved into her new home earlier this year before the outbreak of Covid-19.

Speaking about the move she says, "I feel very lucky to have moved into a new home. I work with the Simon Community and sometimes work at home due to Covid-19. In Simon, we have our fingers on the pulse of a lot of social issues presented by the pandemic. Having a good space to work in at home has made such an impact on my routine and outlook in life".

Winifred continues, "It's been a difficult year but moving into my new home has been incredibly positive for me. The space is stunning. I have

rented for years and I don't think I have ever had a place this nice. I love the communal garden and I can open the double doors when there's fine weather and enjoy it even more. The community here look out for each other in whatever way we can."

Discussing No Place like Home, Chairperson of Co-operative Housing Ireland (CHI) Pearse O'Shiel said, "Home has become more important than ever during this pandemic. It's where we live, but also where we work and where we seek refuge from the virus."

O'Shiel continues, "Covid-19 has highlighted the necessity for a safe, secure and affordable home which Co-operative Housing Ireland offers. We want

everyone to have this security. The Budget 2021 announcement had a number of key elements that will help to progress this: firstly a commitment to 12,750 new social homes and increased capital funding, secondly, €65m for retrofitting public and social homes, and thirdly, for the first time ever, a budget category specifically for affordable housing of €110m. We're awaiting details, but this could be the good news story for people excluded from social housing and who cannot afford to buy or access the private rented sector."

2019 was a landmark year for CHI, with the organisation delivering 371 new homes throughout the country, 50%

more than the previous year, furthering its mission to become a vibrant national organisation with a footprint across the country.

Co-operative Housing Ireland achieved significant progress in terms of diversification of funding last year, having secured finance from a domestic pillar bank [Bank of Ireland] to the value of €17.083m which contributed significantly to funding the largest single development delivery of any Approved Housing Body in 2019.

Concluding, Kieron Brennan, CEO of Co-operative Housing Ireland said, "We're delighted to say we are on track for similar growth in 2020, despite the pandemic."

ALONE launches Gratitude Campaign thanking older people, staff and supporters

ALONE, the organisation that supports older people to age at home, have teamed up with Bonfire Dublin and JC Decaux to launch their Gratitude Campaign, thanking older people, volunteers, supporters and staff for their assistance and support since the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic in Ireland.

The Gratitude Campaign aims to show people that ALONE is an organisation which facilitates a variety of outcomes for older people, including an improved quality of life, community activation and implementation of national strategies.

The Gratitude Campaign features images of older people who have all been supported through an array of different services from ALONE alongside images of volunteers, staff and donors. All participants in the campaign have a genuine connection to ALONE; some are tenants, some have received practical supports and others have benefitted from social connections through ALONE's Befriending services. The Gratitude Campaign has also been supported by Bonfire Advertising and JCDecaux, who

designed the multi-media campaign and provided advertising space free of charge.

ALONE CEO, Seán Moynihan, stated, "Our organisation has been working consistently to provide support and assistance to vulnerable older people since the beginning of the crisis. The arrival of COVID-19 has encouraged our identification as a National organisation that can provide all services on a community level across the nation, and we would like to extend our sincere thanks to each and every one of our older people, staff members, volunteers and donors and for making this a possibility. We are so grateful to Bonfire and JC Decaux for their support on the Gratitude Campaign and for helping us raise awareness, so that we can continue our work with older

people in need amid the COVID-19 crisis."

He continued, "We want to express our gratitude to volunteers, staff and donors who have given so much time and support to ALONE in order to enable us to respond to the needs of older people through this difficult time, and whose commitment and energy will allow us to continue this support over the winter months. We want to extend thanks and recognition to all of our partner organisations who have helped us at this time while also expressing gratitude and thanks to all frontline and medical responders."

ALONE is encouraging older people who need advice to call ALONE on, 0818 222 024 from 8am-8pm, seven days a week. The helpline, which is running in collaboration with the Department of Health, the HSE and Local Authorities, is available to all older people including those who have not used ALONE's services previously.



Winifred Kelly from Rathnew moved into her new home earlier this year before the outbreak of Covid-19.

'We're all in this together, except some aren't'

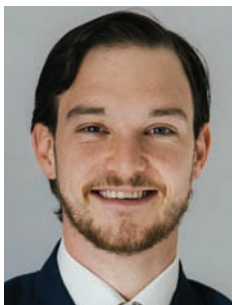
Aontú Representative for Wicklow, Ciaran Hogan, has echoed the comments of his Party Leader Peadar Tóibín TD who submitted a new Bill to the Dáil that if passed would cut the salary of TDs and Senators by 25% during Level 4 and Level 5 restrictions when premises such as Pubs, Cafes and Restaurants are closed due to Covid Restrictions.

"We believe that politicians cannot represent properly if they cannot relate. It's clear that the government do not know what is like for families right around the country. Making decisions for so many people and being immune to the consequences of those decisions does not make for good governance. If politicians don't share in the cost of those decisions, they are blind to the real experience of so many people," said Peadar Toibin while announcing this new bill.

"If elected to office, I

would be returning, or reinvesting to the community at least one third of the current TDs salary of 90,000," added Ciaran Hogan.

"I would argue that a permanent salary reduction of government officials is long overdue even before Covid hit. The average salary in Ireland for a full time worker is just about half that at €48,946 according to The Irish Times. How can we justify the political elite being disconnected from the common person? We need the government decision makers to be



Ciaran Hogan, Aontú

motivated by love of the country and not in it for the money.

"In New Zealand back in April the government ministers took a voluntary

20% pay cut for 6 months stating 'This was always just going to be an acknowledgement of the hit that many New Zealanders will be taking at the moment'. We must commend such great leadership and hold our own government to the same standard."

"It is time that the body politic in Ireland led by example. The words 'We are all in this together' are thrown around like confetti. It's time for TDs to put their money where their mouth is and back the Aontú Bill," Peadar Toibin stated.

Delgany Community Council seeks views of locals about Convent site development

Delgany Community Council will be making a submission to An Bord Pleanála regarding the proposed strategic housing development on the Carmelite Convent site and is seeking the views of local residents.

Delgany Community Council say that they have had no communication to date from the developers and are not aware of any consultation with local residents. The planning application has been made by Drumakilla Ltd.

Delgany Community Council say that there are some aspects of the development that give cause for concern as well as positive elements. They are encouraging local people to make their own submissions also.

The proposed development is for 232 residential units consisting of 96 houses and 136 apartments (in 2 four-storey apartment blocks). There will be 24 social housing units included in the development.

The proposal also includes a Community/cultural facility in the old church (in accordance with the wishes of the Carmelite Community) and a crèche, three new entrances on Bellevue Hill (each leading to 4 houses), and a main entrance to be retained and a new entrance opposite Thorndale.

Delgany Community Council have pointed out that the proposed density of the development is far higher than what's recommended in Delgany's Local Area Plan, which allows for approximately 138 housing units on the site.

Delgany Community Council say that they are particularly interested in hearing from planners, engineers, architects and others who are living locally and want to get the very best from this development for Delgany.

The Carmelite Order made it a condition of the sale that the Carmelite Monastery, which is a protected structure, be reserved for community use. The Order occupied the site for 160 years.

The 96 houses will consist of 32 two-bed, 44 three-bed, and 20 four-bed. The houses would be provided in the following composition: 4 detached, 36 semidetached and 56 terraced. 88 houses are 2 storey and 8 houses are bungalows.

The development would also consist of "Provision of a new

vehicular entrance from Bellevue Hill Road to the west of the site and new vehicular access from Convent Road to the east; Provision of pedestrian and cycle connections from the site to north, south east and south west; Change of use of Gate Lodge to management office; Change of use of Protected Structure (consisting of a Church and villa) to community/cultural facility and crèche (551 sqm); Provision of extension to rear of the Protected Structure for creche use (73 sqm); Demolition of modern extension to Protected Structure, demolition of bungalow and demolition of out-buildings (total 1,896 sqm).

The development also includes site clearance, landscaped private, communal and public open space, removal of walls, new boundary treatments, 420 parking spaces, ESB substation/switchroom, lighting, play areas, c364 cycle spaces, site drainage works and all ancillary site development works above and below ground.



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 recently 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 and student Olive Phelan

'Post Office Network critical for local businesses during and after Covid-19'

Postmasters have called for clarity on the future of hundreds of Post Offices - and what action Government will take to support the Network.

Speaking at the Irish Postmasters' Union AGM last weekend (by virtual meeting), General Secretary Ned O'Hara said an 'inject and spend' approach to the economy was central to Budget 2021.

He said Post Offices provide a core asset of national infrastructure through which to support local businesses and economies during and after the COVID-19 pandemic - and Government must take action to secure this.

A report commissioned by business advisors Grant Thornton, published in September, warned of the need for action to be taken within months as the Network faces 'unrestrained closures' in 2021.

The analysis recommended that an annual Public Service Obligation (PSO) of €17million be introduced for the Network which would represent a good investment for the State as Post Offices provide a multi-fold economic return, far in excess of the PSO level.

Mr O'Hara said that the IPU had submitted the report and was awaiting a response. "The IPU has confirmation of an upcoming meeting with Communications Minister Eamon Ryan. At this meeting Postmasters will be seeking full clarity on development and implementation of a Post Office PSO."

The IPU welcomed a Dáil Private Members Bill during October supporting more services through the Network but said these, while positive, would not be enough to prevent a very significant number of closures in 2021.

"Grant Thornton has recommended a PSO as the only mechanism significant enough to address the level of challenges faced," Mr. O'Hara said.

PSO models have already been introduced for Post Office Networks in the UK, France, Spain, Belgium, Italy, Finland and Poland with the approval of the European Commission.

The report said that Post Office Network remains a highly valuable asset contributing far more to the economy than what a PSO would cost: 1.3 million people use the Post Office every week, distributing 4.6 billion annually in social welfare; Post Offices provide significant spin off

activity for local businesses and services for those who are financially or socially excluded; Based on a model used in the UK, an estimated annual social value of the Irish Post Office Network is €334-776 million.

The IPU said that COVID-19 has added to the challenges faced, as members reported a 25% reduction in transactions in August 2020 compared to 2019. In a positive development, the IPU welcomed the recent reinstatement of all welfare payments to the option of weekly, which comes into effect this month.

Addressing delegates IPU President Sean Martin called on Government 'not to abandon the Post Office Network'.

"Now more than ever we see the value of local. With banks restructuring and branches closing and Credit Unions amalgamating, what would our communities look like if they also lost their Post Office.

"During COVID-19 our 899 remaining local Post Offices have played a vital part in ensuring all citizens - and particularly the most vulnerable, financially excluded and elderly - have continued to receive payments and services.

"This activity contributes to local business, as money handed out locally is spent locally. Much of the money transferred directly to recipients bank accounts is spent in out of town international retail multiples and up to 20% is spent outside the State.

"The IPU is calling on the Taoiseach, the Tánaiste and Ministers Eamon Ryan and Hildegard Naughton, who are the key decision makers, to implement Grant Thornton report recommendations. The Post Office Network wants to be, and can be, part of national measures to reinvigorate local economies as we emerge from this terrible pandemic."

Independent research carried out by RED C in February found that: 91% said their Post Office provided a valuable service to the local community, 86% support the Government providing financial support to keep their Post Office open and 86% want more State services available at their Post Office.

Post Offices are run by Postmasters who are independent providers of the network under contract to An Post. There are currently 899 Postmaster and 45 An Post operated Post Offices in the country.



Leo the Lion preparing for Diabetes Awareness Day on November 14th, organised locally by Wicklow and District Lions Club

Wicklow and District Lions Club mark World Diabetes Day

Wicklow Lions are joining with 44,000 Lions Clubs throughout the world to mark World Diabetes Day on Saturday 14th November.

Lions Clubs in Ireland are organising a variety of projects and events aimed at raising awareness of Type 2 Diabetes and promoting healthy lifestyles.

The projects range from the production of an informative Bookmark, to the distribution of apples to primary school children as a symbol of healthy living, to local and national social media and public relation campaigns.

In response to the growing incidence of Diabetes worldwide, the 1.4 million members of Lions Clubs International have adopted Diabetes as a signature project.

While several types of Diabetes exist, the Lions Signature Project aims to specifically address the risk of Type 2 Diabetes. Eating healthily, increasing the level of physical activity and maintaining a healthy weight, all play a role in preventing or delaying the onset of Type 2 Diabetes.

Sean Olohan Lions Club President in Wicklow highlighted the importance of this initiative. "Diabetes is the 8th leading cause of death in the

world and it is estimated that worldwide more than 460 million people have Diabetes, and this number is growing," he said.

Diabetes Ireland and Diabetes UK (NI) estimates that there are 340,000 individuals with Diabetes in Ireland of which approximately 80% have Type 2 Diabetes.

Lions Clubs International has set itself a target of one million completed risk assessments by World Diabetes Day on November 14th. Lions Clubs Ireland has risen to the challenge and is encouraging local communities to take the on-line Risk Assessment Test at Diabetes Ireland (www.diabetes.ie/are-you-at-risk-free-diabetes-test/).

District Diabetes Team chairperson Ann Ellis stated that "it is impossible to predict the level of COVID-19 restrictions that will apply in early 2021 and therefore plans to roll out the project will need to be flexible".

Lions members in Wicklow are confident that the project can reate awareness of Type 2 Diabetes and greatly reduce the impact of the condition on individual health and that of our children and grandchildren.

For further information contact any member of Wicklow and District Lions Club.

Free parking in Greystones for Christmas

There will once again be two hours free on-street parking on Saturdays before Christmas in Greystones from 21st November to 19th December

There will also be free parking during the week between 9am and 10am, with a 15-minute grace period. During the times when free parking is available, the usual parking regulations will still apply, which means means no parking allowed in loading bays or disabled parking spaces, no parking on double yellow or single yellow lanes.

On street parking is free from 9am to 10am each day in the tow, and free Saturday and Sunday parking applies all year round in Greystones car parks; South Beach Car Park, Greystones Park and Ride, Trafalgar Road Car Park, and La Touche Road Car Park.

Whitmore calls on Minister to commit to future services at Lucena for children and teens

Social Democrats TD and Party Spokesperson for Children Jennifer Whitmore has called on the Minister for Health to commit to the continuation of services at Wicklow's Lucena Clinic Services, after its parent organisation, St. John of Gods, recently announced they were to end services and transfer them to the HSE within 12 months.

Lucena Clinic Services is the Child and Adolescent Mental Health service of St. John of Gods Community Services. The Lucena Clinic services are delivered via five clinics in Bray, Wicklow Town, Rathgar, Dun Laoghaire and Tallaght, which also services West Wicklow. The Wicklow Town team also provide a service in Arklow and is, according to Deputy Whitmore, "a vitally important mental health service for children and teens across the whole of County Wicklow.

"Many residents in Wicklow depend on this service and many more may be in need of mental health services in the future. People from all over the county must continue to have access to this service into the future regardless of any transfer

of ownership or management.

"Since St. John of God's decision, I have made several representations to the HSE seeking a commitment to the future services of this Lucena clinics for Wicklow and have sent questions in relation to future funding of the service after Budget 2021. The HSE has replied to say it is committed to the future provision of these services but failed to establish the involvement of a third party in future.

"I am concerned that in the event of a handover by the HSE to a third party, that services could be curtailed to places like Arklow and Wicklow or in Bray, and so I am seeking further commitment from the Minister for Health that regardless of any future changes to management, that the cur-



Jennifer Whitmore TD

rent level of mental health provision provided by the Lucena clinics is retained if not, increased to continue serving children and teens with mental health needs in Wicklow.

"It is important that in any future transfer of the services to a third party that services will not be negatively impacted or reduced in capacity as a result and that the appropriate funding is main-

tained to provide this most important services. Lack of funding from the HSE was the initial reason for this move but it should not be the reason for any possible cutbacks in the future.

"Children and teens from across Wicklow cannot afford for any decrease in capacity in future. Current access must be retained if not increased and I am seeking clarity as to whether there was any provision for funding of the service within Budget 2021.

"As we have seen during the current pandemic, mental health is under strain, so too are mental health services and so it is even more crucial that funding is secured for Lucena as well as for other services to address the increased demand for services" concluded Deputy Whitmore.

Construction causes road safety concerns at Greystones Primary schools

Social Democrats Cllr Jodie Neary has highlighted an ongoing concern among parents regarding road safety traffic outside schools as Greystones experiences a boom in housing construction.

"This concern was raised with me after several parents contacted me about trucks parking on the curb outside St. Laurence's school in Delgany. Not only is this illegal but it is very dangerous particularly during school drop off and collection times and should not be happening. Due to the fact that many truck drivers are subcontracted and are in a rush to deliver construction material on time, Developers of surrounding housing developments are not directly responsible which makes it difficult to enforce safer driving.

"I raised this matter at the last Council meeting and was told that this has been an ongoing issue on Chapel Road which is not of a standard to cope with this level of traffic. It is also the case that the Council are very tight on resources but they are progressing plans to upgrade the road. Ultimately it is primarily a matter for the Gardaí as a road safety issue.

"On foot of this response, I approached local Gardaí who confirmed to me that the Divisional Roads Policing Unit will pay attention to this area and the illegal parking on the footpaths.

"This will hopefully lead to an increase in the presence of Gardaí around the school and help to alleviate road safety concerns parents and the school community may have.

"However, I'm also receiving reports from parents about road safety outside other schools where construction is ongoing including by St. Brigid's near where there is another housing development site. Also, in Killincarrig where children cross to get to the school to Delgany also close to a new housing development.

"I have contacted the Council on this matter and will engage with them to see what can be done. If the Council are not in a position to act then it may be another matter for the Gardaí however, I hope to engage with Developers in the area to see how a more long-term solution can be put in place" concluded Cllr Jodie Neary.



Cllr Neary outside St Laurences Primary School

WINTER MOTORING



The harsh winter weather is almost upon us so it's time to get prepared. It is highly important to make sure your vehicle is properly equipped to deal with the harsh weather.

We get our homes ready for the unpredictable winter conditions - getting the fuel in and so on - but few realise that the same rules apply to their cars. Luckily, a few simple steps, accompanied by a quick trip to a qualified garage, can make a world of difference to you and your car.

For those of us in locations characterised by

heavy snow and dangerous winter roads - which can often include much of Wicklow - your first line of protection should be a set of high quality tyres. Good deep thread tyres work by ridding themselves of snow and slush as they roll, ensuring as much direct contact between the tyre and the road as possible. Having a new set of deep thread

tyres properly installed on your car will go a great distance toward helping you grip the road and keep control when conditions get rough.

When it's particularly cold, make sure your battery is fresh and strong. Cars need extra amps to get started in icy weather, and a weak battery that's been neglected all summer could come back to haunt you when you least expect it (say, for instance, late at night in the middle of a blizzard). By having your battery and charging system checked out by a professional, you might just save yourself one cold, lonely night. If in doubt, replace the battery - especially if it is over four years old. They always fail when it's the most unsuitable time.

Did you know your car can overheat in the winter? It's true, but potential trouble can be easily avoided by having your car's vital fluids checked and replaced. More specifically, take a close look at your anti-freeze and oil, and if you can't remember the last time you had a service, now would be a good time. Keep your car's engine running smoothly by making sure that it has a fresh supply of the fluids it needs.



And don't forget washer solvent. Anyone who's ever driven on a heavily sanded or salted road knows how quickly a car's windshield can be coated. Keep it clean and clear with a fresh supply of washer fluid. And while you're at it, make sure your windshield wipers are new and up to the task of sweeping away all that heavy snow, salt and dirt.

Last, but certainly not least, break out the bucket and sponge and give your car a thorough cleaning. A good wash and wax goes a long way towards repelling some of the salt and dirt that can easily corrode your car's exterior. And please, for your car's sake, do what you

can to keep it clean. And yes, if your car could speak, it would say the same thing.

It's always worth throwing a few items into the boot for the winter - a rope, a torch, an emergency triangle, checking the spare tyre and tool box. Lastly, the great safety item of our age is the mobile phone - make sure it's charged up before you leave - and it's worth checking your AA (or equivalent) memberships - they can be a great asset in winter. Now is a great time to get your car fully serviced - so it can work reliably all winter when a breakdown is not just a nuisance but also a safety hazard.



Motorists urged to begin winter car preparations

AA Ireland is urging motorists to ensure their car is winter ready - including checking the condition of their lights, tyres and battery as temperatures continue to dip and the nights get longer.

While weather conditions in recent weeks have been relatively calm and mild, a continued drop in temperatures along with the potential for further storms over the coming months, the AA is urging motorists to carry out a basic car maintenance check, including a check of tyres and their battery. Colder temperatures, in particular, can expose issues with older or weaker car batteries and lead to problems starting the car after it has been idle overnight or for a significant period.

"Many of us across the country continue to work from home meaning that the typical morning commute may look very different this year. However, we are still seeing large numbers of cars on main routes across the country along with over 300 breakdowns per day being reported to our breakdown assistance service. While people may not be commuting to work as often currently, parents are still trying to get kids to school and many people are trying to assist older relatives or neighbours during the COVID outbreak, meaning many of us continue to need access to our car," Conor Faughnan, AA Director of Consumer Affairs stated.

"To date, the weather this autumn has been quite mild but the dip in temperatures in recent days has made our breakdown service busier as many of the issues we normally see during the winter period, such as weak batteries, are now starting to crop up again."

With many people having used their car less this year than in previous years, the AA is also encouraging people to ensure their service history is up to date and in particular to ensure their tyres are in satisfactory condition for

the winter months. The legally required minimum tyre tread in Ireland is 1.6mm, however due to the risk of ice and snow during winter the AA recommends replacing tyres once they reach 2mm.

The motoring organisation also urged motorists to be extra vigilant when driving during the months ahead as poor weather conditions and reduced daylight can lead to a reduction in visibility. The AA put significant emphasis on how these conditions can make cyclists or pedestrians difficult to see and urged motorists to use their lights where required and to allow extra distance when passing a vulnerable road user.

"Between March and June of this year we saw a significant reduction in traffic volumes as a result of COVID-19 alongside a significant increase in the number of people cycling and walking or running either as a hobby or as a means of commuting. However, despite the drop in traffic levels we have not seen an equivalent drop in road deaths, which have in fact increased on last year," Faughnan added. "To date over 110 people have died on our roads, compared to 104 at this time 12 months ago, with the winter months often proving to be the most dangerous time on our roads, especially for vulnerable road users. Motorists must do their part to protect all road users, and that starts with ensuring your lights and windscreen wipers are in working order to ensure you can see while driving, but also includes reducing your speed and being on the lookout for cyclists and pedestrians."

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The winning entry from Chloe Hughes from Coláiste Chraobh Abhann (left), and (right) the winning entry from Brooke Mullen from Loreto Bray

Wicklow students win top prizes in Texaco Art competition

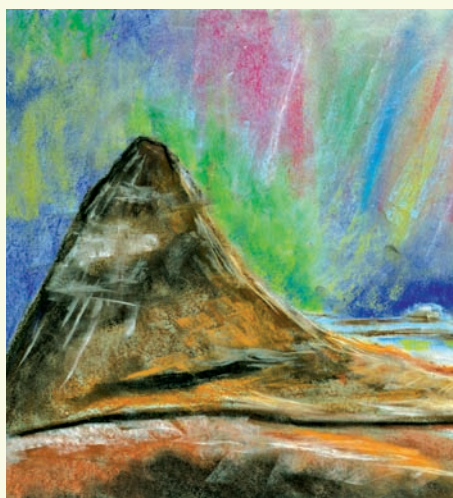
Four Wicklow students have won top prizes in this year's 66th Texaco Children's Art Competition.

All were winners of Special Merit Awards for artworks that Final Adjudicator, Professor Declan McGonagle said: "were imaginative and displayed high levels of skill".

They were Emily Roe (age 17), a pupil at Temple Carrig School, Greystones; Brooke Mullen (15) from Loreto Bray Secondary School; Chloe Hughes (15) from Coláiste Chraobh Abhann, Kilcoole and Ella Kelly (7) from SS Michael and Peter Junior School, Arklow.

With the onset of Covid-19, the Competition had to be extended over a longer period this year with delays to the final adjudication process and the announcement of winners.

As a result, activities normally undertaken during April and May - traditionally, the introduction of winners to the media and the formal presentation of prizes - had to be set aside as a consequence of which prizes will be delivered by hand without the possibility of an awards ceremony.



The winning entry from Ella Kelly from SS Michael and Peter Junior School, Arklow

Hundreds of virtual events taking place for Science Week 2020

Science Foundation Ireland (SFI), is getting ready for Science Week a national celebration of science with hundreds of virtual events taking place nationwide. Running from 8-15 November, Science Week are bringing numerous virtual events to homes across Wicklow, giving the public the opportunity to ask questions, explore the science behind our everyday lives, and consider the future we want and the role science can play in helping us create our shared future.

This year marks the 25th anniversary celebrations of Science Week, with events for all ages taking place, whether it is exploring the wonder of space from Arranmore island or an interactive family friendly Science Day in Ballyhoura. The people of Wicklow are being asked to get involved in the conversation and virtual events taking place. Full details of all events are available on scienceweek.ie.

This year the theme for Science Week is Choosing our Future, focusing on how science can improve our lives for today and in the future. For Science Week 2020, SFI want to start a conversation on how science can positively impact our collective futures and help us shape the Ireland we want to live in, you can share your views at www.science-week.ie.

SFI are encouraging the public to take part in Science Week 2020, join in one of the many available virtual events, share their views, and think about what they want the future to look like.

A sample of the Science Week events taking place are: **Build Your Own Rube Goldberg Machine** teaches the simple science behind machinery and use anything you can find at home a new, crazy and silly machine of your own. **Build your own machine** from Wednesday 11 November from 6.45-7.15pm; **Science Week Virtual Family Day**, a day of engaging online events for all the family from a live quiz, interactive workshops and entertaining presentations. SFI will be hosting the Family Day on Saturday, 14 November 2020, 12 -

7pm; **The Mirror Trap** a short, immersive scientific experience about psychology and quantum physics described as 'weird' and 'trippy' by past attendees. Taking place on Saturday, 14 November 2020, 7 - 7.45pm; **Gulp**, presented by science broadcaster Jonathan McCrea (Newstalk/RTE) and chef Ivan Varian (Dalkey Food Company), explores the science and culture of food. The event takes place on Tuesday, 10 November 2020, 8 - 9.30pm; **BIAS: Inequality in Women's Healthcare and Research** will engage public perceptions about women's health, such as historical views on women's health, gender bias in medicine, and women's medical issues including endometriosis, contraception, and mental health in pregnancy. The online event will take place on Friday, 13 November 2020, 11am - 1pm; **Pick Your Brain!** Live quiz with Phil Smyth will have the questions and bad jokes, but will you have the answers? This 60-minute quiz will have a wide range of topics and tests for grown-ups. Friday, 13 November 2020, 8 - 9pm.

Irish troops graduate at IT Carlow virtual conferring

Distance and time proved to be no barrier to Irish Defence Forces personnel as they graduated at a virtual conferring ceremony from Institute of Technology Carlow last week.

The institute overcame the challenges posed by the global pandemic to the annual conferring ceremonies by the creation of a virtual platform to enable graduates, their friends and families to participate in their graduation online. Defence Forces military officers and enlisted personnel currently serving overseas in Syria and Lebanon who have, in prior years, missed out on the ceremonies were able to graduate alongside their colleagues and celebrate their achievements.

Speaking via video from Syria, graduate Sgt. Liam King who is serving with UNDOF, spoke of his educational experience. "I am delighted to join today's virtual ceremony. Having completed the Bachelor of Arts in Logistics, the course instilled an awareness of the issues that are vital to operate logistical accounts and maintain

unit equipment within the Defence Forces. I am confident in my ability to plan and organise military operations in an overseas assignment. I wish to extend my thanks to the lecturers and staff of Institute of Technology Carlow and the Military Administration School", he said.

Institute of Technology Carlow and the Defence Forces commenced their partnership over eight years ago and, since this time, more than 1,400 military personnel have graduated with higher education awards, up to and including masters degrees. This year, 158 of their colleagues join them as alumni of Institute of Technology Carlow. The growing number of post-graduate higher degree awards highlights the ongoing evolution of the partnership into areas such as research and development.

Last week's ceremony

included addresses by: the chair of IT Carlow's governing body, Mr John Moore; the president of Institute of Technology Carlow, Dr Patricia Mulcahy; the chief of staff of the Defence Forces, Vice-Admiral Mark Mellett; and retired UNIFIL force commander, Major General Michael Beary.

Speaking ahead of the virtual ceremony, Chief of Staff of the Defence Forces Vice Admiral Mark Mellett DSM commented, "Well done to all graduands today as they receive rightful congratulations for their hard work and dedication, particularly the Level 6 graduands who today receive validation of their intense training as potential NCOs. As well as commencing their leadership career with this training, their military educational journey has also begun. All the qualifications bestowed today by our

partners at Institute of Technology Carlow will make Óglaigh na hÉireann a better, more aware, more prepared and professional organisation. The critical thinking skills all assist in better risk mitigation at home and overseas and serve not just the individual graduate, but also the soldiers, sailors and aircrew under their command."

The President of Institute of Technology Carlow, Dr. Patricia Mulcahy, said, "Institute of Technology Carlow is a values-led organisation committed to facilitating individuals to transform their lives and society through education. The success of our partnership with the Irish Defence Forces is testament to the imagination, vision and creative spirit that is the lifeblood of both organisations. My warmest congratulations to all our new graduates from the Defence Forces".



Sgt Andrew Byrne, who is based at the Curragh Camp, Co. Kildare, is pictured at his home in Tinahely before his virtual Conferring Ceremony where he was awarded a Bachelor of Arts in Leadership, Management and Defence Studies (Logistics) from IT Carlow. Pic: Mary Browne

ISME expresses concern to Wicklow TDs over Level 5 measures

Irish SME Association (ISME) last week wrote to all five TDs in Wicklow to express grave concern at the latest national 'lockdown'. According to ISME, there are more effective, evidence-based, successful ways to respond to Covid-19, other than an arbitrary national lockdown.

The organisation is calling on all TDs in Wicklow to use their position in Dáil Éireann to ensure that that Government responds in a more effective, strategic and sympathetic manner to the pandemic.

The organisation represents in excess of 10,000 businesses across Ireland, equating to over 256 businesses across each Dáil constituency.

Neil McDonnell, CEO of ISME said: "Because it was important to afford the public health effort time to respond to the pandemic, ISME has been very reluctant to engage in criticism. However, it is no longer a sustainable position for us to remain silent and we can no longer tolerate a situation where the State's only response to Covid-19 is to repeatedly furlough tens of thousands of workers."

In the letter, ISME set out a number of concerns associated with Level 5 lockdown, including:

1) Retail and Grooming Businesses and Staff - "ISME is particularly concerned to see 'non-essential' retail and personal grooming forced to close once more, although the HSE's epidemiological data demonstrated that these sectors were responsible for only 0.3% of the

cases of Covid-19 transmission. Behaviours across other elements of society have caused a resurgence of Covid-19 in Ireland; not the retail and grooming sectors, which have been arbitrarily penalised."

2) Public Health Response - "The lockdown is a natural public health response to rapidly increasing infection rates, but it is not the appropriate solution to the pandemic. In those countries that have successfully tackled Covid-19, lockdown is used to create breathing space for public health services, while control measures are put in place. This successful model has not been replicated in Ireland. The period following our spring lockdown has been wasted and a robust testing, tracing, isolation and control (TTIC) system has not been implemented."

3) Testing Regime - "NPHER appears exclusively wedded to PCR testing as the methodology of testing. While PCR is regarded as the gold-standard of Covid-19 testing, it is expensive and slow. Other countries have introduced significantly less costly testing methods with much faster results such as antigen testing, albeit with lower levels

(still in excess of 90%) of accuracy. Despite our National Virus Reference Laboratory at UCD strongly advocating for the retention of PCR testing as our main testing methodology, they announced the inability of staff to test over two consecutive recent weekends. This is simply unacceptable in the midst of a national crisis, when people are having their livelihoods swept from under them."

Neil McDonnell concluded: "Ireland is running with lockdown as the only shot in its gun. This approach is a recipe for failure, and it will cause untold misery, ill-health, and recession throughout society. NPHER is composed of some 30+ public servants; highly qualified, well-meaning, devoted and intelligent, but completely unaware of the ruin resulting from successive lockdowns. This lockdown is the last chance for NPHER and the HSE to put in place a robust plan for living with Covid-19. If this is not done by the end of this lockdown in December, the Government must take action, reduce and reconstitute NPHER, and ensure it has access to expert, peer-reviewed, external advisors."

A statistical yearbook for Wicklow

The Central Statistics Office published the 20th issue of the annual Statistical Yearbook of Ireland to mark World Statistics Day and European Statistics Day on 20th October. The Yearbook presents a comprehensive picture of Ireland, based on statistics published by the Central Statistics Office throughout the year.

Featuring a county by county breakdown, it presents a comprehensive picture of Wicklow based on statistics published by the Central Statistics Office throughout the year (up to 2nd October).

The three most common occupational groups in Co. Wicklow are: Sales and

Retail assistants (2,849); Other administrative occupations (1,958); and Care workers and home carers (1,785).

The median weekly earnings in Co. Wicklow is €600, which is above the national average of €592. Broken down by gender, both men and women saw their weekly earnings go up over the period from 2016 to 2018; from €796 to €847 for men, and from €600 to €635 for women.

There were 1,769 births, 1,013 marriages, and 905 deaths.

In terms of people living alone in private households, there are 4,711 men and 5,208 women.

There are 491 women and 267 men aged 65+ in nursing homes in Co. Wicklow. The yearbook also includes Covid data up to October 2nd: 966 cases and 41 deaths.



Éamonn Sweeney, Niwel Tsumbu & Darragh O'Kelly present Young Conall of Howth / Conal Óg ó Bhinn Éadair, on Friday 13th November at 8pm. This livestreamed event costs €12/10 and is part of the Mermaid Arts Centre's Yarn Storytelling Festival. See details on page 16.

Loveridge Digital achieves business All-Star Accreditation for second year in a row

Loveridge Digital have been accredited with the coveted All-Ireland Business All-Star accreditation, an independently verified standard mark for indigenous businesses which is based on rigorous selection criteria.

Loveridge Digital was originally founded to fill a gap in the market for consumers who wanted access to a studio that could deliver projects at a reasonable price and with the same quality of a high-end studio.

The company is growing rapidly working in over thirty-eight countries, helping over 1700 brands, including the likes of Red Bull, Microsoft, and Disney to transform their media, content, websites, and digital marketing.

BIFE graduate Josh Loveridge, Managing Director of Loveridge Digital says, "Loveridge Digital continues to go from strength to strength, and we look forward to continuing to develop and unlock the true potential of Loveridge Digital and continue to focus on being a prestigious consumer centric company".

"This is not only an award for us as a company, but it is also a benchmark of the opportunities provided to us by our vast roster of clients, and for that, we are forever grateful! Without the support from our clientele none of this would have been possible".

"At Loveridge Digital we are an extremely consumer centric company, focusing on trust, professionalism and unbelievable standards when it comes to the quality of our work. Over the last year we have become an international leader in our field and will continue to innovate and provide a seamless experience for our clients in the area of Video Production, Website Development, Digital Marketing & much more."

The accreditation is overseen by the prestigious All-Ireland Business Foundation, whose adjudication panel is chaired by Dr Briga Hynes of the Kemmy Business School at the University of Limerick and Kieran Ring, CEO of the Global Institute of Logistics.

Dr Hynes said the accreditation, which is now held by over 250 firms, is needed by the thousands of small and medium businesses which operate to their own standards, but have nothing to measure them by.

"We evaluate a company's background, trustworthiness and performance, and we

speak to customers, employees and vendors," she said. We also anonymously approach the company as a customer and report back on the experience. The business goes through at least two interviews and is scored on every part of the process against set metrics."

The All-Ireland Business Foundation is responsible for overseeing the All-Ireland

Business Summit and All-Star accreditation, ongoing All-Star accreditation, Thought Leader accreditation and promoting peer dialogue among members.

The process to select the next group of Business All-Star accredited companies has begun and further information is available at businessallstars.ie



Josh Loveridge, Managing Director of Loveridge Digital



Incredible Edibles, a healthy eating and growing project for primary school children was launched by Agri Aware last week, aims to educate the next generation on how to sow, grow and cook Irish fruit and vegetables in their very own school garden. Register your class today for the Incredible Edibles 2021 programme by visiting www.incredibleedibles.ie. This project runs from January to June, but packs are limited so make sure to sign up early to secure a free growing pack for your school!

Bord Bia looks to Wicklow for future food and drink industry leaders

Bord Bia has launched its 2021 postgraduate programme with up to 80 fully-funded places on offer at its Talent Academy, which include a fully funded masters at UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School, a tax-free bursary (€25,000 - €30,000) and a guaranteed work placement through the agency's domestic and global network.

The Bord Bia Talent Academy was established to help identify and develop future executive talent for Ireland's food and drink industry, as it looks to grow and diversify into new markets. Export market diversification has been ranked by the industry as its second-biggest focus, as companies actively seek to expand into new markets in response to Brexit.

The Bord Bia Talent Academy offers five individual programmes through corporate and academic partnerships in areas of sales, marketing, sustainability, consumer insights, innovation, supply chain and procurement. Applications are currently being sought from Wicklow graduates for the Marketing Fellowship and International Graduate Programmes run in partnership with UCD Smurfit School. The Marketing Fellowship is intended for graduates with a few years' work experience, while the International Graduate Programme is open to new graduates with limited or no experience.

According to Michael Murphy, Organisation & Industry Talent Director, Bord Bia, the potential opportunities for graduates in the industry are immense. "Last year Ireland's food, drink and horticulture exports reached a record 13 billion, delivering 67% growth in a decade. Bord Bia is actively seeking to recruit and retain top class talent for this dynamic and growing sector, with the Talent Academy acting as an incubator for individuals seeking to supercharge their careers. Over 80% of the alumni of the Marketing Fellowship, for example, are retained in relevant food industry roles upon graduating from the 18-month programme, reflecting the demand and opportunities that exist for employment at home and abroad."

The Talent Academy programmes, some of which have been running for over 10 years, attract a wide range of graduates across many disciplines from Wicklow and around the country. "While our Marketing Fellowship is for graduates with a few years' experience, overall, the range of pro-

grammes on offer ensures - and welcomes - participants with wide and diverse backgrounds, from hospitality to healthcare, event management to economics, agriculture to finance," he added.

Successful applicants for the forthcoming programmes will be placed into one of Bord Bia's 15 international locations - from Singapore to Spain, Nigeria to the Nordics - or with food and drink industry companies both domestically and internationally, depending on the specific programme. Mars, McDonalds, Nestlé, Tesco and Unilever are some of the international companies that offer placements, along with many leading and emerging Irish companies.

"Fellows on the Marketing and International Graduate programmes will combine this dynamic, hands-on experience, with a fully-funded master's qualification from UCD Smurfit School, with access to some of the world's best food industry educators from business schools including Harvard, IMD, NYU Stern and UCD Smurfit School," said Mr Murphy.

"This combination of academic learning and on-the-job international experience provides an invaluable opportunity for anyone ambitious to be part of the next generation of Ireland's food and drink industry leaders. From an industry perspective, Bord Bia's Talent Academy assures the future talent for the industry as well as providing practical on the ground support to companies now. Since 2009, more than 950 export development assignments have been undertaken by participants in the various programmes, supporting Irish food and drinks businesses to grow and develop in key international markets, with an estimated exports/sales value of over 378 million.

"At Bord Bia, we know the right people in the right places make all the difference. That's why we strongly encourage anyone with a passion for Irish food and drink and who is seeking a dynamic opportunity to apply - no matter your academic background or where you are in your career."

Applications are now open and can be made at www.bordbia.ie/about/talent-academy/. The closing date for applications for the Marketing Fellowship is 27th November 2020 and programmes commences in mid-spring 2021. The closing date for the International Graduate Programme is 29th January 2021 and programmes commences in mid-summer 2021.

School gardening project launched as pandemic popularises the outdoor classroom

A gardening project has been launched aimed at primary school children, which recognises the rise in popularity of growing fruit and vegetables that has occurred amongst the younger generation as a result of the Covid-19 lockdown.

Incredible Edibles, a healthy eating and growing project for primary school children was launched by Agri Aware last week. It aims to educate the next generation on how to sow, grow and cook Irish fruit and vegetables in their very own school garden.

Schools can sign up now to receive free grow packs including compost, seeds to grow their own school garden, along with curriculum-linked interactive educational resources for the project which will run from January to June 2021.

The project aims to cover all aspects of learning where your food comes from and the importance of

the food pyramid for a healthy, balanced diet.

Incredible Edibles, which is now in its 13th year, has never been more relevant to today's school children, many of whom have gained an interest in gardening and the outdoors due to the Covid-19 lockdown and restrictions.

As 2021 has been deemed The International Year of Fruits and Vegetables 2021, by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, it is also key that Ireland's school children recognise the importance of consuming seven plus portions of fruit and vegetables a day from a young age.

Despite school closures in March 2020, over 1,000 schools and 25,000 students successfully took part in last year's project. Teachers showed great commitment to the project by sending their students videos of their school vegetable and herb plants progress, as well as students cooking and eating their 7-a-day from home.

Register your class today for the Incredible Edibles 2021 programme by visiting www.incredibleedibles.ie. This project runs from January to June, but packs are limited so make sure to sign up early to secure a free growing pack for your school!

Take part in Christmas Jumper Day to support sick children in CHI at Crumlin

National Christmas Jumper Day is back this year on Friday 11th December 2020 and Irish rugby legend Rob Kearney has once again lent his support to Children's Health Foundation Crumlin (formerly CMRF Crumlin) to help raise vital funds for CHI at Crumlin and the National Children's Research Centre (NCRC). It launches across Ireland from November, and aims to raise vital funds to support some of Ireland's sickest children.

Rob, who is a Children's Health Foundation Crumlin Ambassador, is encouraging people all over Co. Wicklow to sign up to take part in this year's National Christmas Jumper Day and make it the biggest yet.

National Christmas Jumper Day, supporting sick children in CHI at Crumlin, is the perfect way to safely mark the start of the festive season and celebrate the spirit of Christmas together. It is so simple and easy to do, it doesn't matter where you are - everybody can join in. All you need to do is to put on your most Christmas-y of Christmas jumpers - or make your own - and let the fun begin. You'll find some great suggestions for activities in the National Christmas Jumper Day Goodie Pack and online at christmasjumperday.cmrf.org.

Denise Fitzgerald, Chief Executive of Children's Health Foundation says, "Christmas is coming and so is one of the most enjoyable and powerful days of the year. National Christmas Jumper Day is your chance to put on your favourite Christmas

jumpers and do something really extraordinary for some of Ireland's sickest children."

She says, "Every minute of every day, sick children are being cared for by the expert teams in CHI at Crumlin and, more than ever, we need to raise vital funds to support their urgent and life-saving work. That's why this Christmas, we are asking you to get involved and don your festive jumpers in

support of sick children in Crumlin and help raise vital funds. There are so many ways to get involved, from holding a Christmas Jumper Day in your school or club or virtually with friends. The funds raised will be put to work where they are needed most in CHI at Crumlin and to support groundbreaking research in the NCRC.

Remember Christmas starts when you put on the jumper! Please, join the fun and help us give every sick child every chance."

Rob Kearney said, "Hopefully I can encourage as many of you as possible to raise vital funds for sick children. Childhood illness takes too many precious moments of laughter, play and happiness. Christmas should

be a special time for them no matter where they are. I'm calling on everyone across Ireland to join me, and host a Christmas Jumper Day, so that we can create some magical memories for sick children this Christmas."

Children's Health Foundation Crumlin is encouraging people taking part in National Christmas Jumper Day to share photos on social media and to tag @cmrf_crumlin using the hashtags #ChristmasJumperDay and #WhateverItTakes.

National Christmas Jumper Day packs will be sent out to anyone signing up to take part. Visit christmasjumperday.cmrf.org or email Sinead Nolan on christmasjumperday@cmrf.org to get involved and get your National Christmas Jumper Day pack.



Rob Kearney

'I see myself as the Minister for Talent'

Minister for Further and Higher Education Sion Harris said that he sees himself as 'The Minister for Talent'. Delivering the keynote speech at the recent IUA Future of Ireland webinar series, under the theme 'The Pivotal Role of Universities for Future Skills and Innovation', Minister Harris said "How we develop the talent of our people will determine if we can punch above our numbers and prosper at home and internationally. The exciting thing as a Minister, as a new Department and as higher education institutions is the privileged opportunity we have been given to shape that future.

"The establishment of the Department is the first step on what I see as our collective journey to set a new agenda for further and higher education, one that considers it a vital national resource socially and economically.

Historically, Ireland put its faith in the principle that investing in our people would unlock social and economic progress.

"That principle is enshrined in our new Department - a lodestar as we chart a new course in a new context. The need to consider the changing context - internationally, economically, technologically & societally - was well set out by the Taoiseach last year but since then all has changed utterly again.

"This has been a year like no other. It has tested us all in different ways and no one is unaffected, but there is no doubt some people are more affected. The stark spotlight Covid-19 has shone on disadvantage and inequality should remain ever in our focus, especially all of us here today.

"The higher education sector has also been tested and not found wanting. Not only were you able to

maintain teaching and learning in radically challenging circumstances but you also demonstrated the flexibility to meet urgent needs, including the additional university places required. I want to thank you for your leadership and for your continued close engagement with my Department on priorities, most recently in implementing the package of student assistance announced in the Budget and which I know the IUA welcomed.

"I commend your achievements in a time of crisis for our country. However, even if the horrific Covid-19 crisis is one no one would ever wish it is one we shouldn't waste. The dynamism demonstrated by higher education is a lesson we must not unlearn.

"Our society and the world of work are changing rapidly, and if anything this will be accelerated by the pandemic. Universities will have an important role in equipping us to manage this change. This will entail agility and innovation in how universities operate.

"I see this in your recent work on micro credentials



Minister Simon Harris

and the delivery of certified qualifications in short courses in flexible formats. This is exactly the kind of initiative we need to increase Irish university capacity to extract and adapt high-demand modules from existing programmes, and develop tailored courses, to suit the needs of enterprise and lifelong learning.

"For me, the overall lesson of the pandemic is that our ambition must go far beyond our country going back to 'normal' but rather to see a chance to transform it. This will be our mutual mission. I and my department are determined to be the driver of a vibrant sector which produces individuals who are

equipped with the skills that they need to progress in the way that they want to, and in a way that meets the needs of our evolving economy and contributes to an inclusive society.

"The higher and further education sectors are critical sources of knowledge creation, innovation, skills and human capital development.

"There is opportunity to deepen collaboration between the two sectors so that they work hand in glove with one another - but also with the industry and enterprise sectors."

Through the new Department, we have the structures to bring about a transformation in Ireland's response to evidence-informed skills forecasting and truly inclusive policy development. A key contribution will be a strategic policy framework which builds a national consensus on outcomes and provides a framework within which a range of different institutions play a complementary role in providing educational opportunities and the different types and levels of qualifications which we will need for the future.



Ariadne Bazigou from East Glendalough School, winner and outright winner of the Wicklow Rotary Youth Leadership Development Competition trophy with Andy Bolger (left), President, Rotary Club of Wicklow and Craig Petrie, School Principal.

Rotary continues charitable work in Wicklow despite Covid-19

The Rotary Club of Wicklow has continued to support a number of voluntary and charitable projects despite the Covid-19 pandemic. Last week the club provided funding for the RNLI to make face masks. Money raised by the RNLI for this project will help RNLI fund the Wicklow station.

The club has also supported other projects including the Samaritans and are now discussing a support programme for other organisations whose own fund raising projects have been seriously curtailed due to Covid.

In keeping with Rotary's policy to encourage youth programmes in Wicklow and surrounding area, club president Andy Bolger presented the Youth Leadership Development awards to the winning students in four schools also last week.

The awards for the 2019-20 competition were to be presented to the winning students at a special awards ceremony last April but Covid-19 intervened. "Instead, we have decided to post the awards to the winning stu-

dents as Covid-19 restrictions will now remain until December," said Andy Bolger. "However, we decided to award the Youth Leadership trophy to Ariadne Bazigou - the outright winner - in person, observing social distancing guidelines."

He said fourteen students made it to the Rotary shortlist including final interviews. "The judges were really impressed with the knowledge the students displayed and how well informed they were on subjects such as climate change, politics - national and international - social issues and community topics

The overall award went to Ariadne Bazigou, East Glendalough School but there were magnificent performances from Emma Kristiansen, Dominican College, Ashley Byrne, Avondale Community College, Rathdrum and Keith O'Mahony, Coláiste Chill Mhantain."

Andy Bolger praised the school competition coordinators Maureen Beary, Dominican College, Mary O'Callaghan, East Glendalough School, Michael Costello, Avondale Community College and Ann Chambers, Coláiste Chill Mhantain.

Funding for campus upgrades and infrastructure

Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Simon Harris TD, has confirmed that an additional €15 million is to be given to higher education institutions for capital works and equipment, bringing the minor works capital allocation for this academic year to its highest point in a decade. The funding includes €661,000 for IT Carlow and €683,000 for Waterford IT.

Minister Harris said: "I am very pleased to announce a significant additional capital grant for the higher education sector. The semester has been mainly online as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic but we are looking to the new year and how we can give our students and staff the best chance of being back on campus as much as is safely possible.

"This additional funding will help our colleges invest in additional works to help protect students and staff as we continue to fight this pandemic. It will also support institutions in upgrading their campuses and equipment for the long term.

"I want to thank the higher education institutions and students for all they have done. The beginning to their academic year has been difficult to say the least but I hope this additional funding will help

with planning and delivering a more positive experience in 2021 and beyond."

Today's announcement is in addition to the allocation of €25 million announced earlier this year, and brings the total Devolved Capital Grant for the 2020-21 academic year to €40 million, a significant increase from the €10 million annually provided in recent years.

The additional funding will support higher education institutions to invest in campus upgrades, as well as further developing the infrastructure necessary to support blended and online learning.

The funding is expected to advance development of high-end skills in the technological sector, as well as facilitating building improvements to support access for all, health and safety works, ICT and equipment renewal, and

energy-related upgrades.

The funding forms part of ongoing capital investment in the higher education sector under Project Ireland 2040.

The 2021 allocation for infrastructure development in the higher and further education sectors (excluding research) is €224.4 million - representing an increase of 53% on the €147 million allocated for 2020.

This flexible funding provided through the Devolved Capital Grant complements other large-scale capital investments in the sector that will help expand availability of student places and transform campus infrastructure over the coming years.

Funding will be provided by the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science through the Higher Education Authority (HEA).

Wicklow winner at Creative Tech Fest

Adam Anoar from the Ballywaltrim School Completion Programme in Wicklow was honoured for his creativity in STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths) at the 2020 ESB Creative Tech Fest.

Adam took home the 'ESB Energy for Generations Award' for his project which involved using materials he found around his home to build a STEAM racer. A combination of inventive woodworking, metalwork and STEAM skills led to the creation of a sleek racer model.

Over 1,000 young people, aged between 10 and 18, from youth clubs, schools and gaelscoileanna across Ireland, took part in the first-ever virtual ESB Creative Tech Fest, the annual bilingual event celebrates the innovation, creativity and collaboration of young people who participate in TechSpace programmes nationwide across STEAM, digital creativity and computer science projects.

TechSpace is a creative technology education programme that is managed by social enterprise Camara Ireland and delivered in the informal and formal education sectors. It encourages young people to unlock their passions and potential through the creative use of technology.

The awards, hosted by TG4 presenter Micheál Ó Ciaraidh, were broadcast live from Carlow Arts Centre. There were 17 winners honoured in categories across creative computer science, digital creativity and STEAM.

In addition to the awards, an innovative Virtual Reality exhibition showcased all the project work, and there was entertainment with performances from young Irish bands and inspiring TechTalks from TikTok stars Chris is Ainm Dom and Cairde.



Adam Anoar's winning STEAM racer project



'The Three Amigos' - tea towel design by Kelly Hood

Arty gifts for animal lovers

Everyone's getting closer to nature these days, with parks and countryside providing welcome respite and a daily walk!

Artist Kelly Hood is famed (and framed) for her super realistic monochrome paintings of the cutest farmyard animals and authentic countryside scenes.



'Moo Selfie on Bray Promenade' original painting on canvas

Comical cows on canvas and a liberal sprinkling of sheep with attitude and doe-eyed donkeys feature in her work, as well as a little pinch of pig who cheekily slipped in under the wire!

With Christmas approaching, and the drive to support locally-made gifts from our artists and makers, Kelly Hood has branched out with a new collection of printed gift items for Christmas.

Reproductions of some of Kelly's classic works, including 'The Three Amigos', 'Peek a Moo' and 'Blood Brothers', now appear on handy mugs, tea-towels, cushions and greeting cards. Printed gifts start from 12 and unique greeting cards are €5. Kelly Hood's website showcases an extensive collection of her original work, inspired by the natural world, on both canvas and natural wood, where the grain adds a subtle organic tone.

Framed and mounted limited-edition giclee prints are also available of her most popular works, priced from €55.

Originally from the Dingle peninsula and now living in Wicklow, Kelly Hood is a graduate of Limerick School of Art and Design.

Her charming contemporary work can be viewed and bought online at www.kellyhood.ie and she is represented in galleries countrywide. Commissions for original paintings are also accepted.

Yarn Storytelling Festival moves online

The Yarn Storytelling Festival, presented by Mermaid Arts Centre, has moved online this year due to Covid-19 Level 5 lockdown measures. The festival kicked off last week on Halloween and continues this week.

Portraits & Poetry Exhibition

During lockdown in spring/early summer Mermaid Arts Centre invited children from all over County Wicklow to submit pictures of and poems about their grandparents that they couldn't get to see during this difficult period. As the pandemic continued, Paul Timoney, Mermaid's Storyteller in Residence for 2020 (kindly supported by the Arts Council), facilitated a series of creativity workshops both in Mermaid Arts Centre and online with children in schools, encouraging them to express their feelings about special people or things they greatly missed or are still missing. All of these works are on display in Mermaid's gallery but as that is closed currently to visitors, they have moved the entire exhibition online to their website.

Bray 50 years ago

Brian White from Bray Cualann Historical Society will present Bray 50 Years Ago via a Zoom webinar on Tuesday 10th November and Wicklow Libraries in Blessington are hosting tales with Liz Weir on Thursday 12th November.

Livestreaming

On Friday 13th November Mermaid will livestream Eamonn Cagney presenting Young Connall of Howth, along with Niwel Tsumbu and Darragh O'Kelly. On 14th November John Spillane will livestream his songs and stories straight into people's living rooms. On Sunday 15th Philip Byrne will host a fun, participatory workshop using six word stories to ask "What Happened Next"?

Jack Lynch

Dublin storytelling master Jack Lynch will livestream The Green Hill Opened: A Punnet of Irish Folktales on Saturday 21 November and on Sunday 22nd November Candlelit Tales and Fonsheen transport us away with their Storytelling and Soundbath Zoom performance.

Final weekend

The final weekend of YARN is jam packed with three great storytelling events - On Friday 27th November Senem Mohan Donaten takes us on a storytelling journey east with her Tales from the Orient. On Saturday Cork storyteller Paddy O'Brien offers his tales for the whole family entitled Ghosts, Geese and Global Warming and wrapping up the festival on Sunday 29th November we travel virtually across the water to Scotland where Kenyan born Scottish teller Mara Menzies has some storytelling magic in store.

All event details are on www.mermaidartscentre.ie

Could you be Ireland's Young Filmmaker of the Year 2021?

The call for entries for Ireland's Young Filmmaker of the Year 2021, Ireland's festival celebrating young filmmakers from Ireland and overseas is now open!

Fresh Film is an advocate for young filmmakers year-round and encourages young people to make films by hosting the annual Fresh International Film Festival which incorporates Ireland's Young Filmmaker of the Year Awards.

Fresh International Film Festival 2021 takes place March 22- 28, 2021 and is open to young people from 7-18 years of age.

2021 will be its 25th year encouraging young people from Ireland and overseas, aged 7 to 18 years, to create, exhibit and share films. The Fresh International Film Festival provides an opportunity for young filmmakers to see their work on the big screen and to compete for the title of Ireland's Young Filmmaker of the Year and to win €1000 towards their next film. All submissions are also

considered for a range of Specialist Awards including the Radharc Trust Award for documentaries, the Cartoon Salon Animation Award, the RTÉ 60 Second Award, the Film in the Irish Language award and the RTÉ Factual Award, in addition to the Audience awards.

The Festival has Junior (7-12 years), Senior (12-18 years) and International categories for individual and group projects. Young filmmakers can enter as independents, as part of their school or in a group. Films must be original and can be up to 15 minutes duration for Seniors or 10 minutes duration for Juniors. Senior films will be screened at one of the Regional Heats, which take place early March. The Senior and Junior finalists' films will be screened during Fresh

International Film Festival from March 22-28, 2021 and the awards will be announced at the final screenings.

Speaking about the final call for entries, Festival Director and Founder Jayne Foley said, "It's been a hard year, hasn't it? Ways of living and long held assumptions about how we live have been thrown up in the air and we are still waiting to see where everything will land. Art, as you saw over the last number of months, has taken on a new importance. We've watched hours of shows and performances across multiple devices because we haven't been able to get to live performances or join together in a communal setting like the cinema to watch a pre-created production like a film. We've missed a physical sense of community but moved closer together in

the digital realm. Where do these changes leave you, camera and tripod in hand, actors in tow? Well, you'll need to start early to make your film this year. You'll need to script and plan what you are going to shoot in advance. If you are going to shoot on location, make sure you get any permissions that might be needed. Prepare, to succeed. All I can ask you is to be your brilliant selves and really go for it this year. Don't let an upended year affect what you want to achieve in your film. Be ambitious and make something amazing. We expect it. This year, we insist on it..."

Closing date for entries is Friday, January 22, 2021. The full festival programme will be available shortly. Further details and application forms can be found at www.freshfilmfestival.com



The call for entries for Ireland's Young Filmmaker of the Year competition is now open. Fresh International Film Festival celebrates young filmmakers from Ireland and overseas and incorporates Ireland's Young Filmmaker of the Year Awards. The festival takes place between March 22nd-28th, 2021, and is open to young people from 7-18 years of age. For more info and to apply visit freshfilmfestival.com.

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Local business marketing coach.ie accepted another award for their work in developing Marketing Strategies for the SME sector. MarketingCoach.ie won the "Micro Business Award" for Best Business Support 2020 in the October award ceremony. This year has been a year of expansion for business owner Muireann Fitzmaurice (pictured) who's based in Greystones.

'Trading online voucher can help save Christmas for Wicklow's shops'

Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly has appealed to local businesses to apply for the Trading Online Voucher Scheme. The scheme could help to save Christmas for many small businesses and enable them to survive Covid-19, he said.

The Minister said the scheme could also help local businesses to develop their own click and collect system. The click and collect model of online shopping allows shoppers to collect an order at a time that is convenient for them without having to wait in for a delivery while also avoiding additional delivery costs.

When businesses are trading normally it's known to drive footfall into premises which helps boost sales. Research has also shown that close to half of all people collecting an online order will make an additional purchase once they are in store.

The scheme run by the Wicklow LEO is fully funded and is accepting new applications. The Trading Online Voucher offers financial assistance in the form of a 90% grant of up to €2,500, along with training and advice to help businesses to drive online sales.

In addition, businesses who previously received support under the scheme can now apply for a second voucher, where upgrades are required - such as adding a click and collect service to a website.

Details of the Trading Online Voucher Scheme, as well as other supports for businesses, are available from the Local Enterprise Office website: www.localenterprise.ie

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Wicklow businesses encouraged to apply for Design & Crafts Council's Irish Business Design Challenge

Design & Crafts Council Ireland (DCCI) has launched the Irish Business Design Challenge and businesses from Wicklow are encouraged to apply. IBDC has been launched in partnership with the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation, the Local Enterprise Offices and Enterprise Ireland and offers an overall prize fund of €50,000.

The Deadline for applications/ entries for the IBDC competition has now been extended to Friday November 13th with micro, small and medium Irish businesses (MSMEs) across all sectors encouraged to apply.

The DCCI want to hear from local businesses, who are invited to share the challenges they are experiencing as a result of COVID-19 and the solutions they have designed to resolve and adapt to the current environment.

The aim of the challenge is to recognise the resilience and innovation of MSMEs in a year which has proven to be challenging for businesses as a result of Covid-19. The competition will profile a selection of businesses over a number of weeks, during which an expert panel of judges and members of the public will have the chance to vote for their 'hero business'. Dearbail

McDonald, Author and Broadcaster will chair the expert judging panel.

The Irish Business Design Challenge is open to three categories of business including micro (1 - 10 employees), small (11 - 50 employees) and medium sized (51 - 250 employees). There is an overall prize fund in excess of €50,000, with a €15,000 first prize for the winner of each category and €2,000 for the runner-up in each category.

Announcing the launch of the competition, CEO DCCI, Rosemary Steen said, "I am delighted to launch the Irish Business Design Challenge alongside Enterprise Ireland and the Local Enterprise Offices. Small businesses are of central importance to Ireland's economy and we want to celebrate those businesses that have overcome so much over the past few months due to Covid-19."

Commenting on the launch of the Irish Business Design Challenge, Paul McKeown, Executive Director at Enterprise Ireland said, "This year has proven to be a difficult year for Irish business but for many it has consequently become an opportunity to develop and reinvent. Businesses of all sizes have been taking steps to design new products or services, shift their business model and/or develop new systems of management while also adapting to the new trading environment. We are keen to hear from SMEs about their new approaches to operation and I am encouraging all those who are interested to apply today."

Commenting on the competition, Oisín Geoghegan, Chair of the Network of Local Enterprise Offices said,

"In the Local Enterprise Offices we are in the privileged position to work with some of the most innovative small businesses from across the country, and due to Covid-19 many have had to redesign their existing products, or pivot to new ones linked to their supply chain. The Irish Business Design Challenge is a fantastic way to recognise these businesses and highlight some of the innovative and brilliant design that is out there across the country."

The Irish Business Design Challenge is open for entries and applications will be accepted until the extended deadline of November 13th. For further information on the Irish Business Design Challenge or to apply for the competition please visit www.ibdc.awardstage.com



Eleven businesses in Wicklow have been included in an initiative that encourages people to reduce the amount of goods that they discard every year. RepairMyStuff.ie is an online directory of over 800 authorised repair professionals across Ireland who can repair everything from watches to washing machines, mowers to mobile phones. The directory aims to make the whole process of repair and reuse easier by connecting consumers with repair businesses.

Brockagh Resource Centre

Clothes Bank

Don't forget The Brockagh Centre has a clothes bank at the back of the building, and that proceeds are in aid of the centre.

Playground

The playground for the 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.

You can contact the centre by phone 0404 45600 Mon-Fri 9am-5pm, email at brockaghresourcecentre@gmail.com or visit www.brockaghresourcecentre.ie. Brockagh Resource Centre is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our workers and customers.

Luggala access

There will be no access to Luggala Estate until 1st December, in line with Covid-19 Level 5 regulations. Access will be reviewed at that date and will depend on whether new Government guidelines have been issued.

Prayer for a special request

Oh! Dear Mother of God. Our Lady of Conception Aparecida! Oh! Saint Rita of Cassia and Saint Jude worker of miracles and helper of impossible causes pray for me. Saint Expedite, Saint of urgent causes. Saint Edwige the Saint of the needy, you know how desperate I feel, please ask Jesus to help me (mention request) May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be adored and glorified for ever. Pray 1 Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be..... Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

A.C.

• PLANNING • PLANNING •

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

Alphaplan Design (Tel: 086 2461269, Email: eugene@alphaplandesign.com) Seeks planning permission for 5 dwellings with associated works including proposed new main sewer to connect this development to the existing Ballycoogue waste water treatment plant, and connection to watermain at Ballykillageer, Ballycoogue, Co. Wicklow for M. Healy. 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

I Tommy Whittle seek planning permission for a change of house type to that granted permission Reg Ref 13/8945 at No.8 Rocky Road, Wicklow Town, Co. Wicklow. The development consists of a revised house type, detached garage along with all associated site development works. 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

Peter Vahey seeks Planning permission for the construction of 1 No. detached 2 storey dwelling to the side of Existing Property referred to as Herbert Place. The development shall comprise of 206 sq. metre over Ground & First Floor with pitched roof over all with associated Roof Lights and Photovoltaic Tiles. Connection to existing Foul & Surface water drainage. Vehicular access via existing driveway all to comply with SUDs Sustainable Drainage Systems and all associated site works. Site area comprising of approximately 950 sq. metres at Herbert Place, Herbert Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow. Eircode: A98VK82. 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

John Mulvey intends to apply for Planning Permission for the retention of double patio doors to front of house, retention of a rooflight on the roof to the rear of the existing house, retention of a single storey extension with pitched roof to rear of property (18 sq.m.), retention of shed along the western boundary (13 sq. m.) along with Planning Permission for demolition of existing shed wall along the western boundary and reconstruct the wall within the boundary line of the property, and all associated site works at No. 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.

D.M.; A.C.; M.D.; C.D.

Gospel: Matthew 19:23-30

Jesus said to his disciples, 'I tell you solemnly, it will be hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. Yes, I tell you again, it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.' When the disciples heard this, they were astonished. 'Who can be saved then?' they said. Jesus gazed at them. 'For men' he told them 'this is impossible, for God everything is possible'. Then Peter spoke. 'What about us?' he said to him. 'We have left everything and followed you. what are we to have then?'. Jesus said to him, 'I tell you solemnly, when all is made new and the Son of Man sits on his throne of glory, you will yourselves sit on twelve thrones to judge the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses, brothers, sisters, father, mother, children or land for the sake of my name will be repaid a hundred times over, and also inherit eternal life.

'Many who are first will be last, and the last, first'

C.J.

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Finance Example: AYGO X-Clusiv. On the Road Price† €17,605. Finance Contribution €500*. Deposit €6,157.80. Finance Amount €10,947.20. 36 monthly payments of €128.85**. Term of 37 months. GMFV(Optional Final Payment) €6,974.10. Total Cost of Credit €792.48. Fixed APR 2.9%**.
On the Road Price includes delivery & related charges. Models are shown for illustrative purposes only. GMFV payable if you renew or retain the vehicle at the end of the agreement. Further charges may apply subject to kilometre limits/condition of vehicle.
Lower VRT (Vehicle Registration Tax) excludes Camry, RAV4 and Highlander. **Lending criteria, terms and conditions apply. Finance by way of PCP agreement provided by Toyota Financial Services Ireland DAC. Finance example is based on a fixed rate APR and is inclusive of a documentation fee and purchase fee of €63.49 each. A deposit of between 0% and 36% of the finance amount may be required and a maximum term of 49 months applies. Rate quoted is correct as at 23.10.20 and is subject to change. Rate of 2.9% available on AYGO X-Clusiv, 4.9% available on all other AYGO models, RAV4 and Camry, 3.9% APR available on Toyota C-HR, Corolla Hatchback, Saloon, and Yaris Hybrid and Yaris Petrol models purchased between 29.10.2020 and 31.01.2021

