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Tuesday 22nd June 2021 First Floor, The Boulevard, Quinsborough Road, Bray. A98 R6D7. Tel: 01 - 2869111 E-mail: wicklowed@localtimes.ie www.wicklowtimes.net

SECRET SUPERDUMP

Councillors are up in arms after belatedly learning of plans to create the largest landfill in the State in Wicklow. An application has been submitted to An Bord Pleanala to backfill Ballinclare Quarry in South Wicklow.

A 'Strategic Infrastructure Application' has been made to An Bord Pleanala by Kilsaran Concrete Unlimited, which takes the decision out of councillors' hands. The proposal would see over 6 million tonnes of inert waste brought to the quarry (700,000 tonnes per year), with 300 movements of Heavy Goods Vehicles per day (150 in and 150 out), which equates to a truck passing every two minutes.

When questioned by Cllr Joe Behan at last week's meeting of Wicklow County Council, the Council's Chief Executive Frank Curran did not rule out that materials from the Whitestown dump in West Wicklow would be transported to the quarry. "There's been no decisions whatsoever made in relation to Whitestown," said Chief Executive Curran. "That is still going through the process as set out in the court order. I am not ruling anything out."

The proposed route will take the trucks onto the L1157, a small rural road, and the M11. It's estimated that it will take up to 8 or 9 years to fill the quarry but permission is being sought for 20 years to allow for slower periods. Councillors are particularly angered that Council Officials did not inform them of the plans



Teacher Ms Ni Laocha with Alpacas Barry and Tom during a visit by K2Alpacas to Newtownmountkennedy Primary School last week. Pic: Michael Kelly

sooner. The deadline for public submissions was 15th June and the deadline for the Council's CEO report is 28th June. Councillors have called a special meeting for this Monday, 21st June, to discuss the matter.

The quarry is located approximately 2.5km to the north west of a small settlement at Kilbride, and 2.5km south of the Gleanealy, straddling both the Arklow and Wicklow Municipal Districts.

The quarry was in operation since the 1960s, but quarry activity was suspended in 2016 following the discovery of naturally occurring asbestos in the rock.

The latest application was lodged with ABP on 20th May and the case is due to be decided in October. The application seeks permission for the "development and oper-

ation of an inert landfill facility to backfill the existing quarry to original ground level; progressive restoration of the backfilled quarry to long-term grassland/scrub habitat; establishment and operation of a construction and demolition waste recovery facility; and installation and operation of a soil washing plant". The application is subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment. Wicklow County Council is to receive €367,000 in development levies for the works.

Reacting to the plans, Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly said: "The question I would ask is how does this proposed landfill benefit the local community? I don't see how it does. In fact, a project of this scale and size will have a major impact on the community. The nearby

residents and landowners should have been consulted well in advance but for some reason, that hasn't happened."

"If this plan goes ahead there will be advance but for some reason, that hasn't happened."

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From beardy to baldy for the daffodil nurses

Bray resident, Tony Whelan, is "shaving it all off" to raise funds for the Irish Cancer Society's Night Nursing Service. The "Daffodil Nurses" who provide this service give the families of terminally ill cancer patients a lifeline of respite while they care for their loved ones at home. The Irish Cancer Society provides this invaluable service free of charge for up to 10 nights, and it means a lot to Tony.

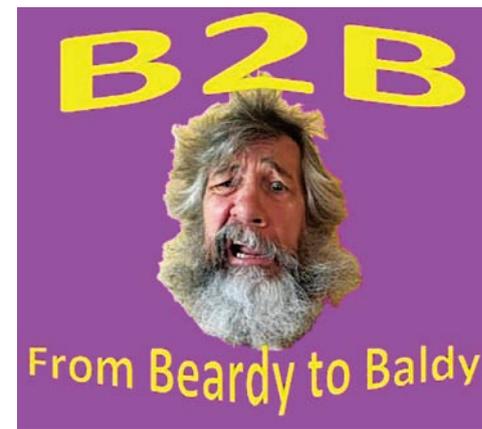
"My partner, Anne Marie Ryan, a proud Bray woman, was terminally ill and very close to end of life" explained Tony. "We were fortunate to be able to have her at home while we cared for her, with the support of the Wicklow Palliative Care Team, who were an incredible resource for us. Needless to say, however, the nights were particularly difficult, as you want to be alert and available for your loved one at all hours, should they need you. That's where the Irish Cancer Society's Night Nursing Service came into play. At the request of the Palliative Care Team, ICS provided a Daffodil Nurse to help me take care of Anne Marie, and ensure she was in no pain and was as comfortable as possible through the night. When the end came, the nurse came back to our house that evening, and helped me prepare Anne Marie for her final journey. I can never thank the Daffodil Nurses and the Irish Cancer Society enough," concluded Tony.

To raise funds for this vital service, Tony has spent the last 9 months growing ... his hair! Not content with the mandatory abstinence from haircuts during the pandemic, Tony hasn't shaved since early October. As the accompanying photo shows, 9 months is a lot of hair!

On Saturday afternoon, 26th June, the day before his 56th birthday, Tony will get his entire head - face and crown - shaved by the willing expert barbers in Squires Barbers, Main Street, Bray. Tony never had a beard before this marathon growth period, and is now a little nervous about being bald for the first time in his life.

"Growing a beard was a little weird for me, as I've never had any facial hair before, other than a few days' stubble growth from time to time", Tony says.

"But it was a gradual thing, and I guess I got used to it as it slowly grew thicker. But being



bald is a little more worrying - again, I've never done that before either, having my head completely shaved. And it obviously

won't be a gradual transition like growing a beard - this will be an immediate, and I hope not overly traumatic, transformation in a single sitting in Squires. Not only will I have to get used to having a bald head, but I'm guessing I'll be two-tone for a while, given the June sunshine we're getting!".

Tony has set up a JustGiving page, which anyone who wants to support this cause can find at justgiving.com/fundraising/beardy2baldy. He's also spreading the word of his fund-raising drive via Social Media, so keep an eye out for the #BeardyToBaldy hashtag, and check out facebook.com/anthony.whelan.982 in advance of The Big Shave Day on 26th June - Tony Whelan gets it all shaved off, in Squires Barbers, Main Street, Bray.

Lions Aid for India healthcare

Bray Lions Club is among Lions Clubs throughout Ireland who have responded to the crisis facing the Indian healthcare system by raising \$66,100 as part of a major campaign organised by the Lions Clubs International Foundation.

Lions Clubs International has responded by providing funds, which are enabling Lions Clubs throughout India to purchase and distribute critical medical equipment and supplies for local hospitals and clinics. This has been determined to be the greatest need, as community healthcare systems are being overrun.

Lions in Ireland have a long history of providing support when a major disaster strikes. The recent upsurge of Covid 19 case in India and an increasing death rate, threatened to overwhelm the Health System.

The Ambassador of India to Ireland, HE Sandeep Kumar, is pictured below with Des Ryan, District Governor of the Irish Lions. Ambassador Kumar expressed his personal appreciation for the support and generosity to the people of Ireland, in supporting India during its current Covid -19 crisis.



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Pictured at their very first Schools Sports Day were Junior Infants from St. Laurence O'Toole National School in Roundwood Lily O'Toole, Aoibhe Gaffney, Keela Jackson Turner and Beau Rave.

Council working to re-open Cliff Walk

Wicklow County Council is liaising with landowners along the Bray to Greystones Cliff Walk route to obtain permission to construct a new path to facilitate a safe re-opening of the path.

The cliff walk was recently impacted by a landslide which rendered it unsafe, and it remains partially closed.

Currently it is safe to walk from Bray along the Cliff Walk as far as Windgates steps. From there walkers can take the alternative Bray Head Looped Trail, which can be quite challenging or return on the Cliff Walk back to Bray.

The Greystones side of the Cliff Walk is extremely dangerous and is closed in certain spots. The Council continues to assess and has put in place measures for the short-term protection of the public and are actively pursuing an alternative route for the sections of the walk which are currently closed due to erosion.

"The patience and co-operation of the public is appreciated during this partial closure," the Council stated.

Brockagh Resource Centre

"The Brockagh Resource Centre would like to congratulate Bray Wheelers for the successful running of the Christy McManus & Ronnie Coates Memorial Race 2021 last Saturday.

"The Brockagh Resource Centre were delighted to host the first monthly Car Boot sale since March of 2020. We would like to thank all of the Traders and visitors for making this event such a great success. Everyone is looking forward to our next Car Boot Sale, scheduled for the 11th of July.

"Your Opinion Matters! Our new manager Gráinne Fennell is calling on the local community to submit their ideas for outdoor events this summer in

the Centre! Gráinne would especially love to hear from the young members of the Community. Please submit your ideas to brockaghoffice@gmail.com. "If you wish to make an event or room booking call (0404) 45600 or email brockaghresourcecentre@gmail.com. Check out up to date information on our website at www.brockaghresourcecentre.ie or check us out on FB and Twitter."

Mind your dog!

Whether you and your four-legged friend are out for a stroll in the busy Valley of Glendalough, hiking up one of the National Park's many mountains or wandering through one of Co. Wicklow's beautiful NPWS Nature Reserves, by keeping your dog on a lead, you are helping to protect wildlife. The National Park can also be a dangerous place for your dog! Dogs often go missing, with some being injured or killed after falling over cliff edges. And finally, please always clean up after your dog. As most of the National Park is remote and has no bins, be prepared to carry your full dog poo bags home with you!

Community Enhancement Programme (CEP) 2021

Applications are available for small-scale capital projects under the Community Enhancement Programme (CEP). Applications are invited for projects that will enhance community facilities for individuals and communities.

Applications are invited from voluntary groups and not-for-profit organisations. Projects must comply with Co. Wicklow's Local Economic and Community Plan.

Small grants will be available for: Repairs and renovations; Costs associated with re-opening of a facility post COVID-19; Sustainability of a facility, including costs such as utility bills.

Grants are available up to €1,000 for small projects and over €1,000 for larger projects. Projects must demonstrate that they address disadvantage and comply with LECP. Applications are available at www.wicklow.ie or email to cep@wicklowcoco.ie. Closing date is Friday, 2nd July 2021.

Car parking

Car Parks at Brittas Bay North, Brittas Bay South and Glendalough are open. Car parking is also available at Luggala (Pier Gates) daily from 9am to 6pm with no charge and at Laragh. A temporary car parking facility, by arrangement with a local landowner is now also available at Magheramore for the summer months. All users of amenities are asked to be conscious of parking facilities available and requested not to park on roads that may cause an obstruction or safety issue to other pedestrians, local residents and road users. Please be mindful of access requirements for Emergency Services in all locations.

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SECRET SUPERDUMP



"This will have a major impact on the community" - Minister Stephen Donnelly

Continued from page 1

between 1500 and 1600 truck movements a week on a small stretch of road that was not built to cope with such heavy traffic. It means in effect there will be a truck using the road every two minutes and this could continue for close to ten years. Serious consideration needs to be given by An Bord Pleanála to the negative impact this landfill is going to have on the local community "

Minister Simon Harris said: "I think it is beyond unacceptable the way residents and public representatives have been treated in relation to this proposed landfill site. There has been a complete lack of engagement and consultation. This



"This is beyond unacceptable" - Minister Simon Harris

plan is bad for our county, bad for our local environment, bad for traffic congestion on already congested roads. I know from speaking to my Arklow colleague Cllr Sylvester Bourke that the councillors were unanimous in demanding further information. I will be closely monitoring this and working with all public representatives across the political spectrum and the community for a much better outcome."

Sinn Féin TD John Brady has called for full transparency around the planning application: "Wicklow County Council and the Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications Eamon Ryan must state if there is a plan to use the landfill

to move 1.4 million tonnes of contaminated soil from the illegal dump in Whitestown, West Wicklow," he said.

"The application, if granted, will allow the backfill of the existing quarry with over 6,165,000 tonnes of imported inert waste, making it by far the largest facility of its kind in the State. I have serious concerns about the application. This application was recently presented to the elected members of Wicklow and seems to have taken everyone by surprise. The decision of whether or not this proposal is granted permission will be undertaken by ABP and not our local public representatives in



"I have serious concerns" - John Brady TD

Wicklow, the application is causing grave concern in the local community.

"It is essential that there is full transparency around the application also. Recently I asked Minister Ryan about the status of the illegal Whitestown dump in West Wicklow and the plans to clean up the 1.4 million tonnes of illegally dumped material there. The Minister responded by saying the issue was subject to proceedings before the High Court and it would not be appropriate to make a statement on the issue.

"In 2017 Wicklow County Council was ordered to remove everything from the site of the largest illegal dump discovered in the State which was Whitestown. They were given three years to have the site cleaned up. In 2019 the Court of Appeal upheld an order giving Wicklow County Council three years to clean up the illegal dump. To date the site hasn't been remediated and the case is before the courts again soon. I asked the Minister to outline the plan to clean-up Whitestown dump and he stated that it was the responsibility of Wicklow County Council. To date however Wicklow have presented no plans."

Green Party TD Steven Matthews told *Wicklow Times* "In my submission to An Bord Pleanála I will



"This would generate numerous environmental concerns" - Steven Matthews TD

be requesting the Board to consider if this development complies with our objectives for a circular economy. The Green Party is legislating to increase the reuse and recovery of waste material and this week launched the Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy which commits to a more ambitious, transformative approach to production and consumption.

"The quantities of construction and demolition waste being dumped in the proposed development will see extreme intensification of use which generates numerous environmental concerns. An Bord Pleanála will need to carefully consider this application as will the Environmental Protection Agency which has responsibility for licensing and regulation of the site. Historically, regulation and operation of quarries across this country has been the 'Wild West' of planning enforcement and in Wicklow we know all too well of the issues around quarries and illegal dumping. This application needs close scrutiny and consistent monitoring of any permitted use."

Speaking to *Wicklow Times* last week, Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council Pat Kennedy said "I'm disappointed that as Cathaoirleach and an elected member of Arklow Municipal District I knew nothing about this. Arklow councillors knew nothing about this. Cathaoirleach



"It's not fair, it's not acceptable, and something must be done!" - Cathaoirleach Pat Kennedy

of Arklow Sylvester Bourke didn't even know about it. This is the largest landfill in the Republic. There'll be 1,680 lorries passing by per week, which means a public road will effectively be privatised to facilitate them. People won't be able to walk on the road and nobody will be able to get planning permission. There'll be 11 pull-in bays of 45 metres each, which adds up to a quarter of the length of the road. It's not fair, it's not acceptable, and something must be done. If this does go ahead, I want to see a Community Benefit scheme with locals getting €1.90 per tonne, similar to the Ballynagran community fund."

Cllr Kennedy said that councillors from the Arklow and Wicklow Municipal Districts would meet over the weekend in advance of this week's meeting to discuss it further.

"I believe we have a problem here," Cllr Bourke said at last week's meeting. "Some of these proposals about truck movements and traffic are scary. It's an unbelievable intensification of a road that isn't fit for this purpose."

Cllr Bourke asked that if it goes ahead then the tonnage should be halved and the number of truck movements reduced in accordance.

Cllr Miriam Murphy said "This is the best-kept secret I have seen in the Council for a long time."

"It will be a burden on residential properties no matter the route," said Cllr John Snell. I share concerns that we were only made aware of this very late in the day and I don't think that's acceptable."

Cllr Shay Cullen said "The biggest issue is the road network and the amount of trucks. The proposal talks about having a 6-meter wide road suitable for the lorries. That's not achievable for most of the proposed road. 11 Pull-in bays (45m each) along the road are proposed - that's not appropriate. There should be a one-way system to minimise the impact on residents in the area. There's far too much impact on one stretch of road and that has to be dealt with. I'm also concerned about the water in the quarry and its disposal, considering the asbestos in the rock. I do think we should insist on a community scheme for people living in the area."

Speaking after last week's meeting, Sinn Féin councillor Dermot 'Daisy' O'Brien expressed his concerns about the process: "For me the alarm bells ring when an item of

this unprecedented scope and scale appears on the Agenda of a meeting in Wicklow County Council out of nowhere with a pre-existing thumbs up from Council officials. There appeared to be an expectation of the same from elected members but what transpired was a series of comments from across the chamber expressing shock, surprise, frustration, and deep concern about this project and indeed the process. Huge credit must be given to the locals in the area who had a very short amount of time to engage with their elected reps and express their own concerns. Zero proactive consultation with those who will be most impacted by this project sends all of the wrong messages about the integrity of this proposal.

"The council and the Minister must be open and fully transparent and state categorically if the plan is to move the 1.4 million tonnes of contaminated soil from the illegal dump at Whitestown to the Landfill facility at Ballinclare if approved. If this is the case it is critically important that the council and the Minister for Environment are open and transparent as it seriously changes the situation and adds more concerns to the application. Trying to covertly move the contaminated waste from the illegal dump in Whitestown to Ballinclare will not be accepted or tolerated. All plans regarding the remediation of the Whitestown dump

myself and meet the people. To say I'm shocked and horrified would be an understatement. The Chief Executive must have known about this application or some time, reports have been prepared by WCC Staff, we went through a Development Plan and talked about strategic developments and we didn't get a signal that this was coming down the tracks. If I was a member of the Municipal District where this is based I would be very angry about how I'm being treated."



"To say I'm shocked and horrified would be an understatement" - Cllr Joe Behan

must be made available to the public representatives in Wicklow immediately."

Cllr Paul O'Brien said, "As the councillor who probably lives closest to this location, I totally reject this plan. It doesn't take into the consideration the local school, 10mins away, which encourages its pupils to walk to school. This is a community that hasn't had running water since February and now we're going to force this on them?"

Cllr Joe Behan said "I went down there yesterday to have a look for



Audrey Whelan of Victorian Tea Times in Arklow celebrating Bloomsday last Wednesday

responding to councillors' concerns, Chief Executive Frank Curran

said "This has operated as a quarry since the 1960s. It stopped trading because of the asbestos issue. That limit of 150 lorries a day was already there. The regional road has since been resurfaced as well. There is a full environmental impact assessment submitted with the plan, which has been reviewed by our planners. There is a full appropriate assessment. There will be a full EPA waste licence that will have to be granted before anything happens on site. It does have the advantage, also, of filling in a hollow in the landscape. There is also the issue of the construction industry, which

needs infrastructure to dispose of waste. Rather than having many facilities around the county in small areas, this is one large area and there's a benefit to that. There were no public meetings due to Covid, but there were leaflet drops and other forms of public engagement. The procedure is that it comes directly to the full council and the planners, but we couldn't do it last month because the planners needed time to do the reports, etc."

Wicklow Times contacted Kilsaran but nobody was available to comment.

The new superdump and the Whitestown connection

One of the most alarming aspects to the proposed Kilsaran Superdump is that many local representatives and Dail Deputies fear that Wicklow County Council may have done a secret deal with Kilsaran to move over one million tonnes of illegal waste in Whitestown, in West Wicklow, to the proposed Sumerdump.

The High Court found that Wicklow County Council had been one of the illegal dumpers at the Whitestown site and as the "last man standing" was directed by the Court to remediate the dump and to bear the full cost..

The Council's first attempt at remediation, costing over €4.5 million, was deemed as unsatisfactory by the Court and the Council was directed to devise a plan to fully remediate the site by removing all of the waste.

They were given a period of 6 years to complete the process but nothing has happened in the past 4-5 years and the Court has demanded that Wicklow County Council appear before it on the 29th July with detailed plans on how they intend to remove and treat the waste and at what facility they intend to deposit it.

The fear now is that the final resting place for the Whitestown waste will be the new Superdump. The Chief Executive of the Council, Frank Curran, when questioned by Councillor Joe Behan as to whether Whitestown waste would be dumped there, refused to give assurances.

Last month a criminal complaint was made against Wicklow County Council at Bray Garda Station over its illegal dumping at Whitestown. *Wicklow Times* understands that this complaint is currently being investigated. This enquiry is separate to another Garda enquiry into Wicklow County Council which is being directed by Harcourt Garda Station.



Fine Gael Minister Simon Harris TD's constituency office has moved to a new location at 5A Quinsborough Road in Bray.

Minister Harris said: "With the reopening of the economy now underway I look forward to being able to meet people again in person in my constituency office. My Bray constituency office has now moved to a new premises at 5A Quinsborough Road.

"The office is now open and can be contacted by phone or email. In person appointments will resume at a future date in line with public health advice. If I can be of any assistance with any issue whether local or national please do not hesitate to contact me". Minister Simon Harris constituency office can be contacted at 012813727 or simon.harris@oireachtas.ie.

Permanent drain for Greystones South Beach arch

Irish Rail has made a commitment to put in place a permanent drain under the train archway at Greystones South Beach.

Welcoming the news, Social Democrats councillor Jodie Neary said "Last year I approached Irish Rail after flooding continued to appear after rainfall. This was impeding access to the beach for dog walkers, swimmers and families using the area. With the promotion of an outdoor summer, access will be crucial for locals. Unfortunately, despite commitments to fix the flooding by removing sand, flooding as only continued and the problem has not gone away.

"I approached Irish Rail with video evidence of significant amount of flooding occurring under the archway after rainfall which I said was unsustainable when it came to access to the South Beach and I asked if a more permanent solution could be put in place. Irish Rail confirmed that due to high easterly winds and tides, rain had blocked up the underpass again. I was delighted to get confirmation that the Regional Manager of Irish Rail has committed to a permanent drain under the bridge post bird nesting season this September. This should clear flooding issues for good. "In the meantime, they will be clearing the sand from under the archway to help reduce retention of water."

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Councillors welcome Library Development Plan

Councillors last week welcomed and formally adopted the Wicklow County Council Library Development for 2021-2025. In a presentation at last week's meeting of Wicklow County Council, County Librarian Brendan Martin explained that the plan targets the Library Service's remaining priority projects for the county - Aughrim Library and Ballywaltrim Library in Bray.

A new library for Aughrim has been included in Wicklow's new County Development Plan. It will be 180-200sqm and the cost will be €1.2 million, which includes construction, professional fees, shelving, IT, furniture and stock.

The plan for Ballywaltrim Library on the Boghall Road, Mr Martin explained, is to make it the main library for Bray.

An application has been sent to the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) for grant aid towards a 650 meter extension. This would make it a library of over 800sqm in total, over two floors. There will be space for over 50 students, and it would become Co. Wicklow's third 'My Own Library', which facilities the use of the library outside of opening hours.

The expected cost of this development is €3.3m (including possible grant aid of €1.5m).

The Library Development Plan, Mr Martin said, aims to: Commit to foster self-directed learning; promote each of Wicklow's libraries

as cultural spaces; develop services in line with technological developments; deliver co-ordinated services based on cooperation and partnership; ensure that Wicklow's libraries play a key role in sustainability - both in the library buildings and in being providers of information to the public.

Formally proposing the Plan's adoption, Cllr Anne Ferris said 'I welcome the proposal to make the Ballywaltrim Library bigger and better. This will make a huge difference. My Open library is an invaluable resource. I'm over the moon about this. That we are national leaders in some many areas is a great credit to WCC and Brendan Martin and his team.'

Cllr Joe Behan added; "Ballywaltrim library has been a magnificent success and it has a huge membership. I don't think we can underestimate the role Brendan Martin has played in all this. His predecessors set a great standard for the library service and Brendan has shown dedication, and taken it to the next level."

Achievements of Wicklow Library Service, 1997 - 2019

* In 1999 Wicklow is the first county outside of Dublin to abolish library registration fees.

* Since 1997, 11 of Wicklow's 13 libraries have been either built anew, relocated or had significant internal refurbishments.

* Membership across Wicklow's libraries increased by 106% (16,000 to 33,000) between 1998 and 2019, compared to a 7% increase nationally.

* Items borrowed from Wicklow libraries increased by 77% between 1998 and 2019 (318,000 to 562,000) compared to 26% increase nationally.

Kiltegan primary pupils are 'Farm Safe' champions

Scoil Naomh Brid in Talbotstown, Kiltegan, have been crowned the Agri Aware Farm Safe Schools National Champions supported by FBD. Minister at the Department of Agriculture with responsibility for Farm Safety, Martin Heydon, presented the students and their principal Lisa Jackson with their €2000 prize from the FBD Trust.

The school has 76 pupils and completed the programme across all classes. Farmers in the area did videos on key topics and the children put on dramas and role plays all themed on safety. The children's reviews on the programme highlighted the impact it had had on them and the level of learning they had accomplished. They even wrote about the changes they have made in their own lives and how their attitudes have changed on farm safety within the logbook.

The Agri Aware Farm Safe Schools programme ran in over 500 schools across Ireland in an attempt to improve farm safety nationally. Despite Farming accounting for only 6% of national workplaces, it accounts for almost half of workplace deaths. 21 children have died on Irish farms over the last 10 years.

In order to become accredited Farm Safe Schools, teachers must cover three topics in each programme module (two topics for infant's classes) and show evidence of learnings achieved for each. Teachers can create a web page, a logbook or blog page to showcase their classes' hard work on raising farm safety aware-

ness. They are also encouraged to share their progress via social media, using the hashtag #FarmSafeSchools.

Minister Martin Heydon said: "Well done to Agriaware, along with Agrikids, FBD and the IFA on the Farm Safe Schools pilot which has been a tremendous success. Changing the culture towards farm safety in Ireland is a huge challenge for us, and I believe children have a significant role to play by stimulating that conversation at home and calling out bad practise when they see it.

"Great credit is due to the pupils and their teachers for the enthusiasm and energy they all put into

their projects. I look forward to this becoming an annual project that helps us to drive down the unacceptably high level of farm fatalities and serious incidents."

The entry from the small West Wicklow school beat off competition from nearly 500 schools across the whole country. And watch out Dr Dre, they even wrote a Farm Safe Rap.

Ms Jackson said: "The Agri Aware Farm Safe Schools programme made learning real. We are a small rural school so all of the children had support from their families.

"The kids from farms who felt they already knew about farm safety learned a huge amount from the programme.

"Parents, teachers and children of all ages came together to bring Farm Safe Schools to life. At the start we wanted to be a Superstar school, so to win is just so special for everyone."

The staff at Talbotstown NS even had some real-life learning from the Farm Safe Schools Programme according to Ms Jackson.

"One of our special needs assistants was on a weekend camping trip and she saw a loose horse in the field they were in.

"They didn't panic as they just remembered the Farm Safe Schools programme and looked at the horse's ears. They were forward so she knew the horse was relaxed!"

Alan Jagoe Chairman of Agri Aware said:

"The quality of submissions and the evidence of learning we have witnessed over the past three months is a testament to the commitment and importance teachers have placed on this programme.

"We thank every one of them for not only introducing these modules into their classrooms also working to create a safer future on Irish farms by empowering tomorrow's farmers today.

"On behalf of Agri Aware, I would like to thank FBD Trust for its support of this dedicated farm safety programme," said Mr Jagoe.

Alma Jordan, Agrikids & IFA Farm Safety Officer said: "The children in Talbotstown encompassed all we had envisioned when putting this programme together. The children reached out to their local community and included neighbours and family in the farm safety conversation.

"They were creative in their modules by incorporating art, drama and music and, most importantly, they have made changes to their own behaviours and attitudes on the back of doing the programme.

"To all the children who have taken part, you have inspired us, motivated us and allowed us to believe in the idea that our farms can become a safer workplace for all."



Students and staff of Scoil Naomh Brid, Talbotstown, accept their €2000 prize from the FBD Trust as Agri Aware Farm Safe Schools Champions. Making the presentation are David Bermingham, Lisa Jackson, Principal, Minister Martin Heydon, Anne Jennings, IFA, Alma Jordan Farm Safe Schools Co-Ordinator and Eilish Greene Agri Aware.

Sunbeam House Services has De-Congregated all its Residential Settings

Sunbeam House Services (SHS) is very pleased to confirm that the de-congregation of all its residential settings has now been completed. With the enormous efforts of clients, families and staff, this planned move out of congregated residential settings to community-based homes has been achieved almost three years ahead of schedule; despite the challenges presented by Covid in the past 12 months.

Joe Lynch CEO of SHS said today, “De-congregation is hugely important, as it creates a homely environment where clients can receive more focused staff support in their daily lives based in their local communities. It also facilitates our clients through the provision of increased space, less crowded living arrangements, more choice for people and better community integration resulting in better lives for everyone involved.”

Hillview

Decongregation was a priority in one of Sunbeams larger facilities and some clients chose to move to 'Hillview' in Rathdrum, where they are engaged in activities and interests that are stimulating and interesting. One of the clients is active in online courses in advocacy, and he has completed an online course in pyrography (wood burning) and this is now part of his daily routine. Another client is a big fan of the West Wicklow Festival and all it has to offer in terms of music. He joins this group online for their many concerts.

The 'Hillview' garden was developed to suit the interests of the residents living there and now potatoes are grown, as well as garlic, cabbage and some fruit trees. Raised beds were made and salad plants sown.

Rosewood

'Rosewood' in Bray opened in January 2021 and is a very

similar story to 'Hillview'. The clients living here are in the heart of Bray town. They have found a new life in a new and welcoming community. Despite the many restrictions, these two clients settled in very quickly and began their new life with additional activities and new experiences. Sunbeam House Service's staff played a key role in this transition and they linked the two clients in with Bray Lakers where they made new friends and look forward to new lives in the community.

Dawn Leane, Chairperson of SHS said, “Life has changed a great deal for both the people in Hillview and Rosewood and all those who in recent years have moved out of congregated residential settings. The new community environment has become a meaningful and important part of their lives. They treasure a service, which is individual to them, one that is tailored to meet their needs and to achieve their goals”.

Ocean House

In October 2020, 'Ocean House' opened in Bray, in what was one of Sunbeam's original day services, following a redesign and upgrade to make it suitable for residential use. Ocean House is now an attractive, warm and comfortable home comprising of three bedrooms, sitting room, kitchen and dining room, with a conservatory

leading on to a spacious garden to the rear. The clients were involved in every step of the change process, having chosen their own bedrooms as well as the furniture and soft furnishings.

One of the clients, Donna, told us, “It's great to be living in Bray now. I know it so well from being in different day services over the years, but I never thought I'd get to live here. To be so close to the middle of the town and my favourite shops is great. I have started going out for a walk and a cup of tea on the seafront most days - it is only a few minutes from the house and it's great to be so close to the sea. I can't wait until we are all safe from Covid, and I can invite all my friends and family over to see my new home”.

Maranatha

When Maranatha in Shankill became vacant in November 2020, SHS undertook extensive renovations, including painting, new flooring, removing some walls, installing fire insulation and a new bathroom and improved insulation. Four clients, with all their present care staff, have relocated from another centre, Parkview, to their new home. The refurbishment has meant that Sunbeam has designed a home to meet their client's short and longer term care needs. The clients were actively involved in this



Clients in Hillview preparing their vegetable garden

redesign project, to include choosing the paint colours and flooring.

Joe Lynch, CEO, also confirmed that 'over the coming months, we will begin upgrades on a number of other locations' These upgrades will include redecorating to a higher standard and upgrades to meet fire regulations - all part of our ongoing drive to provide modern, community based, client centred facilities for all those who use our services'.

Joe Lynch added “Housing is considered to be a key non-medical determinant of health and future health outcomes for people with a disability according to a 2020 study carried out by researchers from Trinity College Dublin on behalf of the national Disability Authority. The study found that '... access to quality, stable housing directly impacts on health outcomes and its absence increases pressure on health systems.”



Stephen Rafter home baking in Rosewood



Donna Fusco of Ocean House enjoying Summer in her garden



David McCluskey loving his new sunroom in Ocean House



Martin Byrne from Hillview enjoying a day out at Festina Lente



Council adopts Sports & Recreation Plan

Wicklow County Council last week adopted the Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership Strategic Plan, which aims to enhance participation and increase access to sports facilities around the county.

A presentation on the Plan was given by Aisling Hubbard, Wicklow Sports Partnership Co-ordinator.

The plan was created on the back of a consultation process which consisted of a series of public, individual and focus group meetings, and a resident participation survey and club survey.

The feedback from this process was that Wicklow needs: Affordable, geographically convenient sports facilities and better promotion of such; additional resources for 'minority' sports; large multi-use facilities in strategic locations especially where populations are increasing; small community-based sports hubs; enhanced use of the outdoors and access to existing facilities such as school grounds and harbours; a physical activity network to share facilities;

volunteer supports - attracting, retaining and training; diverse physical activity opportunities; more support for people with disabilities, older people and to help integrate new members in the community.

The consultation also revealed the existence of perceptions of an 'imbalance' in opportunities for sports and physical activities between West and East Wicklow and North and South Wicklow.

The Sports & Recreation Plan sets out the County's Operating Principles: Collaboration, Co-ordination, Creativity and Innovation, Leveraging, Long-term and self sustaining initiatives, and Research.

"Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership will directly provide some sports and physical activities but increasingly we will support others to develop, promote, and

realise their appropriate programmes," the plan states.

"While we will support existing effective sports and physical activities, we must also be clever and imaginative in our approach, especially if we are to appeal to those in the margins."

Wicklow Sports Partnership will engage with the Municipal Districts regarding local sports and physical activities facilities. The Plan will also seek to increase the use of Wicklow's maritime amenities and increase collaboration and access to existing sports facilities, school sports facilities, and sports facilities from neighbouring counties.

Councillors welcomed the plan and also took the opportunity to raise some matters of concern. Cllr Gail Dunne emphasized the need for more sports pitches in the Wicklow

Town area to accommodate the increased population over the last number of years, while Cllr Mary Kavanagh said the town was also in need of a community sports hall to accommodate smaller indoor sport such as badminton. Cllr Jodie Neary pressed the need for sufficient funding for proper maintenance of sports facilities and equipment.

The Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership committee consists of: Service Providers, the KWETB, County Wicklow Partnership, Wicklow County Council, Wicklow Uplands Council, Children and Young People Services Committee, elected representatives, Co Wicklow Older Persons Council, Public Participation Network, the National Governing Body Representative and An Garda Síochána.

'Greystones/Kilcoole Development Plan should not be delayed'

Cathaoirleach of Greystones Municipal District Cllr Derek Mitchell has said that he does not wish to see the Development Plan for the Greystones/Kilcoole area impacted by any delay to the County Development Plan.

"There is a move to delay finalising the County Development Plan because of lack of zoned land in some villages," said Cllr Mitchell.

"The Greystones Plan was out of date in 2019 and will take another two further years to prepare after the County Plan is finalised."

This would mean that the Greystones and Kilcoole Development Plans would be four years out of date.

"They are building everywhere in Greystones and a plan for infrastructure to cope with this is urgently needed. I don't want the Greystones/Kilcoole Plan delayed," said Cllr Mitchell. "The same probably applies in Newtown, Wicklow Town and maybe Bray."

The new planning and Development (Amendment) Bill 2021 will address delays in the planning system as a result of Covid by extending the time period for Local Authorities to prepare their development plans.

At last week's meeting of Wicklow County Council, Chief Executive Frank Curran said that the County Development Plan is currently on display but that the Council would be seeking a one-year extension to adopting it if needed.

Councillors request more public toilets

Councillors from the Bray, Baltinglass, and Wicklow Municipal Districts have asked that Wicklow County Council work to obtain new public toilets for their districts.

As councillors discussed the Chief Executive's Monthly Management Report at last week's meeting of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Joe Behan welcomed the new toilets that have been installed at Greystones South Beach but requested that the same be done in Bray.

"What about Bray?" he asked. "There aren't enough toilets in normal times, never mind these times with more and more people outside."

Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council Frank Curran said he would liaise with Bray Municipal District Council. He said that there is grant funding available and the Council could work on an application.

Cllr Gerry O'Neill pointed out that West Wicklow and Blessington in particular also gets a lot of visi-

The temporary toilet facilities at South Beach car park in Greystones have been provided in order to support outdoor activities for the summer months.

The new units are in addition to the two existing automatic public conveniences at either end of Greystones Blue Flag South Beach and the recently refurbished toilet block at Greystones Harbour.



The new toilets at Greystones South Beach car park



Independent councillors Mags Crean, Mary Kavanagh and Peir Leonard

Councillors encourage public to engage in County Development Plan consultation

The Wicklow County Development Plan is open for public consultation until the 16th August and Independent councillors in Wicklow are urging the public to engage in the process.

The County Development Plan sets out how land is used in Wicklow until 2027. Cllr. Mags Crean remarked that "public engagement is crucial to ensure that land is used in the interests of the common good".

Individuals, community groups or organisations can make a submission in writing or via the County Council online hub.

Cllr. Peir Leonard stated that "Arklow has a high level of community engagement on local development issues, which is great to see but I

encourage people to make a submission on the County Development Plan to ensure that their views are incorporated into future development".

Cllr. Mary Kavanagh referred to the importance of the County Development Plan for environmental protection, stating that "We need to ensure that protection of our environment is central to future development in the County and community submissions can play an important role in making sure that our County Development Plan is committed to guardianship of our natural environment".

Submissions can be made online via the Consultation Portal consult.wicklow.ie or in writing to: County Development Plan Review, Planning Department, Wicklow County Council, Station Road, Wicklow Town.



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Eight Wicklow projects to benefit under Additional Outdoor Infrastructure Fund

Eight Wicklow projects to improve outdoor amenities and walking trails are to receive funding under the Government's Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme.

Minister Simon Harris TD has welcomed the news, saying "The latest round of funding for Wicklow under the Outdoor Recreation scheme comes to a total of €579,000. The Additional Outdoor Infrastructure Fund will enhance outdoor urban space and improving walking and cycling infrastructure. This will assist the safe outdoor re-opening of society as Ireland gradually emerges from current COVID-19 public health restrictions".

The projects that will benefit are as follows:

- Outdoor seating on Arklow Main Street
- Bollards and planting to widen the pedestrian area on Rathdrum Main Street
- Improvements to the Footpaths at the Murrrough
- A 2km cycle track from the Boghall Road to the new Shopping Centre in Bray
- New footpath and pedestrian crossing at Mount Usher Gardens

- Improvements to Blessington Main Square with age friendly seating and planters
- Widening of footpaths in Delgany Village
- New seating at Tomnafinnogue Woods and the Railway Walk at Tinahely

Minister Harris continued, "Ireland has made huge strides over the past number of months in combatting Covid 19. To ensure this progress continues, we need to ensure summer 2021 is a safe summer and an outdoor summer. The funding of these projects will make it easier for Wicklow residents to enjoy our outdoor amenities in the coming months."

Also welcoming the news, Green Party TD Steven Matthews said "This funding is extremely welcome and the type of projects that have received funding put an emphasis on improving the public realm by enhancing walk-

ing infrastructure, increasing public lighting, providing cycling facilities and generally making the towns/ villages more accessible and welcoming for both residents and visitors.

"As we continue to emerge from this pandemic, we are all hoping for a semblance of normality this summer with an emphasis on outdoor activity. Many residents have rightly raised concerns with regards a lack of public seating, inaccessibility for people in wheelchairs or who have buggies and I have had many conversations with Wicklow County Council about how these issues will be tackled. For the 8 projects that have received funding, that answer has been provided but I look forward to working further with the Council on any further areas of concern.

"What is clear from the funding is that the emphasis is being placed on an

outdoor summer and improving our existing facilities to accommodate social distancing and other public health measures until such a time when the country is fully vaccinated. These are the sort of improvements that the Green Party has consistently called for going back several years and hopefully we will all be able to take advantage of the improvements this summer.

"One lesson that I hope we will be able to take from this pandemic is that towns and villages should be designed for people – both residents and visitors, not just for cars. This round of public funding will assist in this regard but I will continue to work both at a national level and with Wicklow County Council to push for initiatives that focus on consistently improving our public realm, concluded Deputy Matthews.



Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council Frank Curran, with Cathaoirleach of Arklow Municipal District Sylvester Bourke and Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council Pat Kennedy at the official opening of the junction safety improvement scheme at Corballis, Rathdrum.

Disney's Disenchanted begins filming in Enniskerry

Enniskerry was effectively closed to the public last week as filming began on the Disney film 'Disenchanted', the sequel to the 2007 movie Enchanted.

Enniskerry was closed during the day from 7am to 10pm, from Monday to Friday. The village was effectively a 'no go' area for visitors, although some essential services remained open. A traffic management system was put in place by Gardai.

The village has undergone a transformation for the shoot, and the set will remain in place as more filming is due to take place from the 6th to the 9th of July, from 5pm to 9pm, and on the 21st and 22nd July, from 7am to 10pm.

Filming will then move to Los Angeles before production wraps in August. Filming for Disenchanted has already been taking place in other nearby locations, including Greystones.

2007's Enchanted saw the princess Giselle banished by an evil queen from her magical land, Andalasia, to the gritty streets of New York, where life doesn't operate on a 'happily ever after' basis. It's here that she falls in love with a divorce lawyer and questions whether her storybook view of romance can survive in the real world. Disenchanted takes places 10 years after Enchanted, and sees Amy Adams reprise her role as princess Giselle, and Patrick Dempsey and James Marsden return to the roles of Robert Phillip and Prince Edward. Idena Menzel also returns as Nancy Tremaine. It sees Giselle question her happiness, inadvertently turning the lives of those in the real world and Andalasia upside down in the process.

It is not Amy Adams' first visit to Enniskerry as part of the 2010 film Leap Year was also filmed there.

Wicklow landmarks to receive €99,000 in funding under the 2021 Community Monuments Fund

Wicklow has been allocated €99,000 in funding under the Community Monuments Fund by the Department of Heritage.

The following historic buildings and structures will receive funding under the scheme: Dunganstown Castle, Arklow Castle, Kilbride Church and Graveyard, and the Wicklow Historical Graves project in Mullinacuffe and Ballymaghroe.

Minister Simon Harris said: "The Community Monuments Fund supports the conservation, maintenance, protection and promotion of local monu-

ments and historic sites.

"The Community Monuments Fund is aimed at enabling ensuring conservation works be carried out on local monuments which are deemed to be significant and in need of urgent support, encouraging access to archaeological monuments and improving their presentation and also building resilience in archaeological monuments to enable them to withstand the effects of climate change.

"I would like to pay tribute to the community groups, custodians and owners for the work they do in preserving and maintaining our Wicklow Heritage," Minister Harris concluded.

Fresh planning application submitted for Newtown Main Street development

Papaver Ltd have submitted a new planning application for a development of 26 dwellings and a retail unit at Killmacullagh on Newtownmountkennedy Main Street.

The site is located along one of the three entry points to the village.

The development would consist of 5 four-bedroom three-storey townhouses comprising 150 sqm each; 4 three-bedroom two storey townhouses comprising 113.05 sqm each; 4 one-bedroom apartments comprising 83.7 sqm each; 3 two-bedroom apartments comprising 98.69 sqm each, and a new retail unit comprising of 371 sqm together with a two-storey car park.

The application was submitted to Wicklow County Council in May and the Council is due to make a decision by 4th July.

Papaver first submitted an application for the development in July of 2020, and then withdrew the application last August. The proposal was then for 24 dwellings and did not include the retail unit.

Another application was made on 20th April of this year, for 26 dwellings and a retail unit. The Council's Planning Department decided that the development did not comply the requirements of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001.

Newtownmountkennedy Town Team have made a submission in which they state they are unsupportive of the development in its current form. They welcome the development of the site for housing but are critical of the proposed development for not being visually appealing and failing to reflect the character of Newtownmountkennedy.

They want to see the development blend in with the



rest of the street, and for the effects of the development in the surrounding homes and businesses to be better considered and planned for. They also want a comprehensive flood risk analysis to be carried out

The Riverview Residential Association have also made a submission objecting to the development on the grounds of: Its height, scale and bulk; privacy concerns with the potential of some balconies to overlook their rear gardens; the adjoining properties and dimensions not shown on site layout plans; lack of details of boundary treatment adjoining their boundary to the site; lack of details of drain on boundary between their property and the site.

Wicklow IFA holds rally in Bray

Members of the Wicklow branch of the Irish Farmers Association and their supporters drove their vehicles through Bray on Friday 11th June as part of a nationwide rally.

They gathered at the Texaco garage in Newtownmountkennedy before driving their tractors and machinery to Bray to deliver letters to the constituency offices of TDs Simon Harris, Stephen Donnelly and John Brady.

The rally was held to highlight the importance of agriculture to the rural economy.

"Our message is to warn against the dangers in the current CAP proposals and the Climate Action Bill," said the IFA.

IFA President Tim Cullinan said the Minister for Agriculture Charlie

McConalogue has to keep the viability of farms at the centre of CAP talks.

"The Minister has correctly identified the danger of making more farmers unviable. The focus between now and the resumption of the talks next month should be on securing the maximum flexibility that will deliver the best deal for Irish farmers," he said.

The negotiations in Brussels adjourned recently without a deal, which the IFA said was the best outcome for now.

"The Minister for Agriculture was right to hold the line. The real

problem here is that the EU is trying to achieve increased environmental ambition, but without increased funding," Mr Cullinan added.

"Under the current proposals, a cohort of family farms in Ireland will suffer a triple whammy due to so-called Eco schemes,

convergence and mandatory redistribution proposals.

"Many of these are our most productive farmers. Our grass-based system is the most carbon efficient in the world, yet the Commission and the Parliament are going to destroy them."



Tractors driving down the Quinsborough Road in Bray

New universal design for learning guidance aims to reduce barriers

The Further Education and Training (FET) sector in Ireland should be aiming to reduce the barriers to learning for all learners in Wicklow and across the entire further education and training sector, rather than mitigating against them. That's according to SOLAS, the Further Education and Training Authority, who has launched new guidance for implementing Universal Design for Learning in FET.

UDL is a set of principles and guidelines that aim to support all learners by using a variety of teaching methods to reduce barriers to learning. This means that inclusive teaching and learning approaches are built-in at design stage so that all learners' needs are addressed where possible. By applying the principles of UDL in FET programmes, accessibility, variability and the flexibility that addresses learners' strengths and needs are built-in, thereby accommodating most learners' preferences, differentiations, and variabilities. SOLAS and Education Training Boards Ireland (ETBI) partnered with AHEAD, who work to create inclusive environments in education and employment for people with disabilities, to develop this guidance. Last week, the guidance was launched by Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Simon Harris TD.

Mr Brownlee is encouraging anyone in Wicklow interested in the further education and training opportunities available to them to get in touch with their local ETB.

Paddy Lavelle, CEO of ETBI, said: "There is a reorientation here where we realise that if we design learning experiences to ensure there are no barriers to participation by all learners, our services will be accessible from the outset."

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Kilbride Court now close to completion

The Kilbride Court housing development in Bray is expected to be finished by the end of the month, Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council Frank Curran has confirmed, and it's expected that tenants will receive their keys in the coming weeks.

Cllr Joe Behan questioned the Chief Executive on the matter at last week's meeting of Wicklow County Council. Families were informed before Christmas that they had been allocated the homes, but the keys have yet to be handed over.

Shortly after work commenced on the development in 2018, the Naas based developer MDY construction encountered financial difficulties. The development was further delayed by two site closures during the pandemic.

Sinn Féin TD John Brady and Councillor Dermot O' Brien have welcomed the news that some of the issues that have led to delays in handing out the keys to the tenants of 42 new houses in Kilbride Court in Bray have now been resolved.

Deputy Brady said "Unfortunately since the commencement of the 42 social units in

Kilbride Court in Bray it has been faced with a number of delays. It had been hoped that the tenants would be in their houses before Easter, the council had notified the 42 new tenants that they were being allocated one of the new units. Unfortunately, there were more unexpected delays encountered on the project. This delay has caused huge anxiety to the families who had hoped to move into their new homes, many of whom had given notice to landlords and had all their belongings boxed up for the move, no clarity was given to them as to when they might actually get to move into their new home."

Cllr Dermot 'Daisy' O'Brien said "Thankfully the latest issues that had arisen in the development have now been addressed, there is still some small amounts of snagging to be done to the units and some final

legal work. It is hoped that the new tenants will finally get to move into their new homes in the coming weeks. It will also allow the area to get back to normality as it's been a building site now for the last 3 years. The development impacted on many residents in the area in estates like Herbert Park, Clover Hill and Kilbride Grove, they have all been patient and more than accommodating and understanding."

Deputy Brady concluded "Hopefully the uncertainty for the 42 new tenants is coming to an end and with the completion of the units it will be another small step in addressing the housing crisis. It will also bring an end to the lengthy saga since the council first moved to CPO the site in 2006. I hope many lessons have been learnt over the last 15 years."

'Blessington Main Street needs age friendly parking'

Social Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore has called for age-friendly parking along Blessington Main Street. The call comes after several other districts in Wicklow have provided age-friendly parking on main streets to increase accessibility.

Deputy Whitmore said "Age-friendly parking is put in place to increase accessibility for those aged 55 or older and who may have a range of mobility issues. They are courtesy spaces with the aim to increase parking availability for older per-

sons close to local amenities. If included in areas where there is a parking fee, this fee is still applicable.

"Wicklow County Council has been very proactive in putting them in place across the county in Arklow, Greystones,

and Bray for example but it's time to see West Wicklow benefit from this initiative. I have written to the Council who confirmed that this is being discussed as well as other age-friendly initiatives and will get in touch with me for an update. In the meantime, I think it's important that Blessington and other towns and villages incorporate this initiative especially where there is a high dependency on cars, to ensure peo-

ple can access their amenities and local services.

"Older people can really benefit from increased accessibility of our towns and as many do not use online platforms for services, they need to be able to get down to the local main street to get their shopping, banking or other needs met. I look forward to hearing from the Council this week about furthering age-friendly initiatives."

Irish Water replacing old watermain in Delgany

Irish Water working in partnership with Wicklow County Council is replacing an aged watermain on Glen Road, Delgany in order to safeguard the water supply and increase water pressure to homes and businesses in the area.

The old watermain burst regularly resulting in supply disruption for customers.

The works involve the replacement of 1 kilometre of old leaking watermain and the installation of new water service connections from the public water main in the road to customers' property boundaries and connecting it to the customers' water supply.

The works started last week and are being delivered by Ward and Burke Construction limited on behalf of Irish Water. Works are expected to be completed within 7 weeks. Areas of work will be limited to short sections to minimise impact on customers.

In order to facilitate the safe delivery of these works a traffic management plan will be in place. Traffic management will include a stop/go system initially and a road closure for approximately five weeks. Details of road closure including diversion routes will be communicated locally.

Irish Water and Wicklow County Council will make every effort to maintain normal supply to all properties throughout the works however some short-term water shut offs may be necessary and the project team will ensure that customers are given a minimum of 48 hours notice prior to any planned

water shut offs.

Speaking about the works, Joe Carroll, Irish Water said, "We understand that this type of work can be inconvenient and working in partnership with Wicklow County Council we will make every effort to minimise any disruption that these necessary works may cause. The delivery of these essential works will help to safeguard the water supply to homes and businesses in Delgany and surrounding areas ensuring a safer more sustainable water supply."

"Irish Water is working at this time, with our Local Authority partners, contractors and others to safeguard the health and well-being of both staff and the public and to ensure the continuity of critical drinking water and wastewater services. Irish Water would like to remind people to follow the HSE COVID-19 advice and ensure frequent handwashing."

"Irish Water is working proactively with our delivery partners and as part of a multi-agency working group to ensure that our construction works are carried out in a controlled and safe manner, in keeping with Government and HSE guidelines to protect workers, their families and the broader community."

"Irish Water and Wicklow County Council regrets any inconvenience caused. Our customer care helpline is open 24/7 on 1850 278 278 and customers can also contact us on Twitter @IWCare with any queries. For updates visit water.ie/water-supply/supply-and-service-update/." These essential works are being delivered in adherence with current HSE and government COVID-19 advice.



Cllr John Snell, Cathaoirleach, Wicklow Municipal District; Cllr Pat Kennedy, Cathaoirleach, Wicklow County Council; Frank Curran, Chief Executive Wicklow County Council; Colm Lavery, Director of Services Transportation, Wicklow County Council; Keith Byrne, Michael Flynn, Brendan Doyle, Transportation Section Wicklow County Council and Brian Gleeson, District Manager, Wicklow Municipal District. Pic: Robert Kelly, Wicklow County Council

New road realignments officially opened

Recently completed road realignments at Laragh/Glendalough (R757/R756) in the townland of Glendalough and at Rathdrum/Ballinaclash (R752/R753) in the townland of Corballis were officially opened by the Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Pat Kennedy, last Tuesday.

Glendalough attracts over 1 million visitors annually and is renowned for its dramatic landscape valley, lakes and 6th century churches, round tower, monastic settlement, graveyard and the high crosses located on site.

The Glendalough Junction is situated on the main access route from the village of Laragh to the national heritage site of Glendalough and it is located on the sightseeing route which travels through the Wicklow Mountains, at the intersection of the R756 and the R757.

The existing 'Y' junction was deemed unsuitable for many traffic movements and the road was realigned to create a T-junction to accommodate larger



Aerial shot of the realigned junction at Glendalough. Pic: Robert Kelly

vehicles including buses and cars that bring tourists to the National Heritage site of Glendalough.

Wicklow County Council said it would like to thank the Department of Transport for providing

funding to facilitate this safety improvement project and also the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and National Parks and Wildlife.

The Rathdrum and Ballinaclash realigned

road will be used especially by supporters attending matches at the GAA grounds in Aghrim. There are a substantial number of vehicles using this road, and in 2019 the annual average daily traffic turning at this junction was 3,309, with 20 per cent of those being HGV's.

Wicklow County Council said it would like to thank the Department of Transport for providing funding for this scheme with special thanks also to the landowner who facilitated this safety improvement project.

The Council stated "The completion of these realignments will improve the visibility and legibility of the junctions, providing safer transport routes on these key pieces of infrastructure."



The realigned junction at Rathdrum/Ballinaclash. Pic: Robert Kelly

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Wicklow Lions Golf Classic returns

The long awaited first golf tournament of the season took place in Blainroe on Friday 11th June in blistering warm sunshine and proved to be the most successful Wicklow Lions Golf Classic yet.

The event was organised by Wicklow & District Lions Club after a break of two years because of Covid restrictions, and the consensus among those who took part was that it was well worth waiting for.

President of Wicklow Lions Club Sean Olohan and golf organiser John Mulqueen thanked the main sponsors SSE Renewables for their much appreciated support and for adding so much colour to the golf course.

Sean thanked all the golfers who travelled far and wide to lend their support to the local Lions Club in Wicklow town. The golf team also thanked the huge support from local businesses and private individuals who donated to Tee Boxes and prizes for the raffle, without their help and support it would not be possible to organise such a successful golf event.

At the outdoor prize giving after a long exciting day Sean also thanked John Mulqueen and all the Lions golf crew for their work in organising such a wonderful day of golf and explained that all proceeds raised will be distributed locally to various charities and community projects.

The Zone Chair of the Lions District Eamon Teehan and his wife Pauline from Dun Laoghaire visited



Sean Olohan and Maurice Corr at the Wicklow & District Lions Club Golf Classic

Blainroe to lend their support and Eamon was very impressed at the success of the day.

In a letter to Sean he said "congratulations and thank you for your hospitality and great to see that true Lionism shines its bright light through your Presidency and all Lions members in Wicklow".

The beautiful trophy in memory of Lions Jim Neilan and Brendan O'Connor was presented by Jim's daughter Maria who is secretary of Wicklow Lions Club.

2021 Wicklow Lions Club Golf Classic Winners

- 1st. REA Forkin Team ; Conor Jameson, Kevin Durkin, Matt Forkin, Frank Curran
- 2nd. Tony McGann Team ; Tony McCann, Gregg Brent, Les Ashley, Duncan Dukes
- 3rd. Tommy Kelly Team ; Pat Stapleton, Aidan Doyle, Ciaran Doyle, Tommy Kelly
- 4th. Brian Nally Team ; Brian Nally, John Waters, Ian McKay, Eileen O'Connell
- 5th. Jim Hurley Team ; Jim Hurley, David Winters, Gerry McGuinness, Colm Nagle
- 6th. John Mahon Team ; John Mahon, Jim Murphy, Bernard Kirk, D M Allen



Brian Nally, Eileen O'Connell, Ian McKay, and John Waters at the Wicklow & District Lions Club Golf Classic at Blainroe Golf Club .



Pictured at their very first Schools Sports Day were Junior Infants from St. Laurence O'Toole National School in Roundwood Quinn Cunningham, Tom Lowe, Hunter Hayes Swaine, Alex Keeley and Cooper Healy.

Swim Ireland and Ireland Active launch joint 'Jump Back In' Campaign

Swim Ireland and Ireland Active last week launched their joint Jump Back In campaign to help give people in Ireland the confidence to return to swimming pools and gyms.

Pre-pandemic research showed that personal exercise and swimming consistently feature among the top three most popular activities for adults in Ireland. When health has never been higher on people's priority, swimming and personal exercise provide a safe way to keep fit and healthy.

Led by expert guidance from Swim Ireland and Ireland Active, staff and facilities have made huge efforts to ensure they have been operating to the highest standards of public health, and a report by HIQA in November 2020 showed that only 0.9% of total reported cases in Ireland at the time came from sports settings, including gyms and fitness facilities.

It is also widely-accepted, including by the HSE and NHS, that COVID-19 cannot survive in chlorinated pool water, making swimming in a swimming pool among the safest activities to take part in.

However, despite these facts, we recognise that the long closure of gyms and swimming pools, alongside the long lockdown, has made people cautious about returning to busy indoor settings like leisure centres.

Sarah Keane, CEO of Swim Ireland, said: "As the National Governing Body of swimming for the island of Ireland, we couldn't be more excited for pools to reopen and for swimmers, young and old, to get back in and begin to rekindle their love of the water once more.

"Whether you are learning to swim, swimming for your health and well-being, or swimming to compete, we are with you. However, we recognise that your usual experience may differ with COVID-19 protocols in place, from changing requirements to pool timetables and session amendments, but we want to assure you that our pools are safe and ready for you to

jump back in."

She added: "Through Jump Back In, we really want all pool users to know that Swim Ireland is here to support you on your journey to jump back in and Getting Ireland Swimming again."

Karl Dunne CEO Ireland Active, the Leisure, Health & Fitness Association of Ireland said: "It has been an incredibly challenging time for our sector and the last 6 months have been particularly hard for our members. They have shown tremendous courage and resilience having to make tough operational decisions while facing no membership income during this period of lockdown. We are pleased to see our members gyms, pools and leisure centres reopen their doors, which will come as a long-awaited relief to these businesses and the communities they proudly serve. These facilities are essential for the health and wellbeing of so many communities and can now begin again to support the physical, wellbeing and social recovery of the nation. Our members cannot wait to welcome everyone back."

A series of four frameworks have been produced for the Aquatic Industry, supporting Facilities and Operators, Swimming Pool Users and Swimming Lesson Providers, in both the public and private sectors to map out a 'Return to Water': Booking your swim; what to do before leaving home; what to do on arrival at the pool; in the water itself.

A framework for Safe Operation of Leisure, Health and Fitness Facilities is also in place to guide operators and their teams as they reopen. Ireland Active members have also undertaken extensive staff training and expenditure to ensure facilities are safe for the public to visit.

For more information on the Jump Back In initiative please log onto www.swimireland.ie/jump-back-in





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Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council Pat Kennedy officially opens the St. Kevin's Way Upgrade from Hollywood to Glendalough with Anne Fitzpatrick, Wicklow County Council Chief Executive Frank Curran, Brian Dunne, Wesley Atkinson and Michael Nicholson

Reach out to an older person in your life to tackle loneliness

ALONE, the organisation which supports older people, is highlighting the dangerous effects of loneliness being felt by older people in lieu of Loneliness Awareness Week. The Loneliness Taskforce have remarked that they wish to raise awareness of Loneliness in June each year as they advance towards their goals. ALONE is similarly campaigning for members of the public to reach out to an older neighbour, friend, relative or someone they don't really know that well in order to #ChangeOneDay.

ALONE encourage members of the public to get involved in this campaign to change one person's day by reaching out to an older person in their lives and encouraging others to do the same. Using the catchy reminder to, 'Call 1 - Nominate 1 - Change 1' - call one older person, nominate a friend to do the same, and change one person's day for the better. This campaign coincides with National Selfie Day on the 21st of June and you can nominate others through posting a selfie on your social media pages.

The organisation are encouraging those who participate to post a creative selfie or photo of themselves either on a phone call, on a FaceTime call with an older person, or a physical, safe visit in-person and post them to social media with the hashtag #ChangeOneDay. Remembering to tag ALONE in posts. Once you have done so, nominate another person to do the same and start the cogs turning in combating the effects of loneliness.

Levels of loneliness have almost doubled in less than a year according to the CSO, increasing from 6.8% in April 2020 to 13.1% in February 2021.

There have been significant and damaging impacts being experienced by groups most at risk, including older people, during this period. ALONE want to

raise awareness of the negative effects that loneliness can have on older people, and are calling on members of the public to make small changes to their day-to-day lives that could help to combat loneliness among older people. Through this campaign, ALONE want to inspire people to think of older people throughout their day and check in or reach out. This could be something as simple as picking up the phone for a chat.

Loneliness has been linked to an increased risk of early death, with some studies highlighting that older people experiencing high levels of loneliness are twice as likely to die within six years compared to those who are not lonely. Studies have linked loneliness and social isolation to higher risks of physical and mental conditions, including heart disease, anxiety, depression, and Alzheimer's disease.

Since the beginning of 2021 to May of this year, ALONE made nearly 82,520 Support and Befriending calls to older people suffering from loneliness and social isolation. Also within this time frame, ALONE have received over 10,000 calls from older people to their National Support Line and in turn, have completed nearly 3,000 support plans for those who had an identified need for additional levels of support. Between 9th March and

31st December in 2020, ALONE supported almost 15,000 older people; of these callers, 31% were aged between 75-90 years and 75% were living alone.

Seán Moynihan, CEO of ALONE said, "Loneliness is a serious issue among older people which is not a new occurrence because of the arrival of COVID-19, really it's only been exacerbated and we know the long-term impacts of loneliness will continue to affect older people long after the pandemic has passed. It is important that we begin implementing recommendations from the Loneliness Taskforce; currently, there are no structures in place for the protection of older people or funding to relieve the increasing effect of loneliness being felt across the Country."

He continued, "We ask that members of the public continue to reach out and check in with older people. Just a few minutes out of your day, to make a phone call or safe visit, could absolutely #ChangeOneDay for an older person, particularly if they are struggling with loneliness. We are encouraging any older person who is experiencing loneliness to get in touch with ALONE. Our staff and volunteers are on-hand to provide ongoing telephone support for older people and make regular phone calls for reassurance and social support."

Contact ALONE if you have concerns about your own wellbeing, or the wellbeing of an older person you know.

Their National Support Line is available seven days a week from 8am - 8pm on 0818 222 024. Further information can be found on www.alone.ie.

Funding available for migrant integration initiatives

Green Party TD Steven Matthews has called on community groups to apply for grant funding that will help initiatives that support the integration of migrants.

Deputy Matthews was speaking following the announcement of the €500,000 fund by his party colleague, Minister Roderic O'Gorman. Community groups/centres can apply for grants between €1,000 and €5,000 to assist them in organising projects that seek to promote the positive integration of our migrant communities.

Discussing the announcement, Deputy Matthews said "I am delighted to support this round of funding coming from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability Integration

and Youth. Wicklow has always welcomed a wide variety of cultures and backgrounds and this new round of funding is about supporting integration while also highlighting and promoting the unique cultural identities in our county. This funding will bolster the great work being done by local communities to welcome new cultures.

"All applications must demonstrate the ability to involve both migrant and host communities in the activities proposed but the way in which this is approached is very flexible and encourages

creative approaches by community groups. Some of the suggested themes include anti-racism initiatives, the promotion of food, arts and culture and community events that support integration, but the parameters are extremely flexible.

"Since its inception in 2017, the Communities Integration Fund has supported over 480 projects with grant funding totalling €2.26m. Some of the initiatives that have been funding in previous years included sports days, intercultural festivals and the estab-

lishment of community network groups but any community group that has an initiative that promotes the positive integration of migrants in our communities is eligible to apply.

"The closing date for receipt of applications is 6 pm on Friday 02 July 2021 and application forms are available on the Department's website. I would encourage all community groups to consider applying and if they need any assistance with their application, I would be more than happy to help, concluded Deputy Matthews.

Mixed use investment opportunity in Bray listed in upcoming auction

A mixed use investment opportunity in a built-up residential area of Bray is among the properties listed for Youbid.ie's next online auction.

Number 7A Ballywaltrim Heights is an end of terrace red brick fronted building, laid out with a single storey retail unit and two apartments.

It will go to auction on June 24th with an Advised Minimum Value (AMV) of €250,000.

The retail unit extends to circa 39 sq mts (650 sq ft) and comprises an open plan shop with a toilet and small storage area and the two apartments are at the rear of the retail unit.

The ground floor unit is a two bedroom apartment which extends to circa 36 sq mts (387 sq ft). The property is tenanted with a monthly rental income of €1,100.

The first floor apartment also has two bedrooms and extends to circa 55 sq mts (592 sq ft). It is also tenanted and the monthly rental income is €1,070. The residential

apartments each comprise an L-shaped kitchen/living area, two bedrooms and a bathroom and are both independently accessed.

Ballywaltrim is located to the south of Bray and a very short distance from the N11/M50 corridor.

Commercial and residential property from a total of 10 counties are listed in the upcoming auction.

Other properties include an end of terrace warehouse in Limerick's Eastway Business Park, which goes to auction with an AMV of €190,000, an original Georgian building in the heart of Limerick city's office district with an AMV of €200,000 and a former pub on Market Street, Listowel, Co Kerry with an AMV of €100,000.

The auction will also feature a number of residential properties of varying sizes listed with AMVs ranging from €70,000 to €175,000.

Youbid.ie's previous live-streamed events have seen 83% of properties listed sold at an average of 14% over reserve prices.



Students and employers to create jobs through accounting apprenticeship

Wicklow students have been encouraged to apply for a national accounting technician apprenticeship programme at Bray Institute of Further Education - which will create jobs in the region as part of 125 positions nationally.

And local employers have been encouraged to sign up for the scheme to avail of a Government annual base grant per-registered apprentice from early 2022.

The Accounting Technicians Ireland Apprenticeship is a funded, work-based learning programme in which locally-placed apprentices earn at least €19,890 a-year.

Applications for the apprenticeship, which will also be based at colleges in Dublin, Cork, Galway, Limerick, Monaghan and Waterford, are now open.

Accounting Technicians Ireland, whose apprenticeship programme has been the source of over

456 jobs, has embraced blended learning.

Their apprenticeship allows students to spend four days a week working, often online with the agreement of the employer since the pandemic, and one day a week studying.

School leavers, Leaving Cert students, career changers and mature learners can all apply for the programme through Accounting Technicians Ireland.

The initiative provides a real alternative for school leavers who prefer practical training to a full-time college programme, or those who embarked on a college course and found it did not suit them.

It is also an attractive option for existing employees and mature learners who want to pursue accounting.

Large firms and smaller works, as well as industry and the public sector, have all embraced the programme.

This is the third year of the National Gallery of Ireland's participation in the programme, and according to Mary Leane, its head of finance, it is a great way to upskill.

"Apprentices are not just gaining a qualification, they are also learning work-based skills which they can continue to build on throughout their career," she said.

"Apprentices are delighted with the oppor-

tunity to earn as they learn while gaining practical experience in the workplace.

"The Accounting Technician Apprenticeship works for both the younger and more mature student.

"There are many reasons why someone may not have completed formal training earlier in their career, and the apprenticeship provides an opportunity to progress into new roles and areas."

According to Gabriela Airini, Head of Apprenticeship at Accounting Technicians Ireland, the Government grant will increase employer participation.

"Accounting Technicians Ireland is pleased our apprenticeship contributes towards job creation and economic recovery.

"Since the programme's foundation in 2017, the Accounting Technician Apprenticeship has been the source of over 456 jobs.

"Graduates are capable of filling all kinds of accounting and finance roles across all sectors of the economy.

"Each year, more employers sign up and we now partner with over 302 employers across 17 sectors."

For more details, see accountingtechniciansireland.ie



Minister Simon Harris last week met with a selected group of UCD academics and was briefed about their Covid-19 related research. His visit included a stop by the National Virus Reference Laboratory (NVRL) where he met a group of UCD Covid research leaders. Pictured is minister Harris with Prof Alistair Nichol, UCD School of Medicine and Chair of Irish Critical Care Clinical Trials Network, and Prof Orla Feely, UCD Vice-President for Research, Innovation and Impact. Pic: Jason Clarke.

Free and subsidised higher education courses available at IT Carlow

Over 10,000 free and subsidised higher education places have been announced under the Springboard+ 2021 and Human Capital Initiative (HCI) Pillar 1 initiatives. The courses are available to people in Wicklow, and will be delivered by institutions across the country.

Springboard+ provides free courses for people who are unemployed, people who have taken time out of work or education to raise their families or care for loved ones, or people who want to upskill. Now in its tenth year, over 75,000 people have benefited from Springboard+ to date.

Institute of Technology Carlow has been awarded Springboard+ funding across 17 exciting, industry-focussed programmes of study, ranging from certificates, diplomas, degrees, higher diplomas, postgraduate certificates and masters from levels 6-9 on the National Framework of Qualifications. In total, 500 places will be made available to prospective learners looking to upskill, change career or return to employment.

The list of Springboard+ courses at IT Carlow are: Master of Science in Data Science; Master of Science in Supply Chain Management; Master of Science in Pharmaceutical Regulatory Affairs; Master of Science in Applied Artificial Intelligence; Master of Science in Cybersecurity, Privacy and Trust; Postgraduate Certificate in Workforce Management; Higher Diploma in Supply Chain Management; Higher Diploma in Business in International Business; Higher Diploma in Science Computing (Systems and Information Technologies Services); Certificate in Web Design; Bachelor of Science in Energy Management (Buildings); Certificate in Biopharmaceutical Operations; Certificate in Purchasing Strategy, Quality Management and Lean Six Sigma; Certificate in Preparation for Working Life; Certificate in Marketing with Social Media Skills; Certificate in Logistics and Supply Chain Management; Certificate in On-Site Wastewater Treatment and Disposal.

Their courses in On-site Wastewater Treatment and Disposal and the Bachelor of Engineering in Buildings (Energy Management)

were designed in direct response to a cross-industry demand for greater sustainability practices.

According to Dr Joseph Collins, Head of Faculty Lifelong Learning at IT Carlow, each programme has been designed in response to the current and future needs of industry and presents a unique opportunity for learners to avail of free or heavily subsidised upskilling or reskilling.

"Workforce practices are changing significantly due to technological advances and the impact of COVID19 appears to have accelerated some of these changes. Our Springboard funded courses are purposely designed to develop the skills and competencies of participants to ensure they have the skills required for the future needs of the regional, national and international economy. Springboard+ reduces the financial barriers to accessing higher education and allows participants and employers access to flexible and industry specific courses", said Dr Collins.

Springboard+ and ICT Skills programmes, which traditionally were only available to those on social welfare, are now also open to those currently in employment, who were previously self-employed and those returning to employment after a pro-

longed period of absence. Programmes are also free for people in employment on NFQ Level 6 programmes. For employed participants on programmes NFQ level 7 - 9, 90% of the course fee is funded by the State, with participants required to contribute just 10% of the fee.

To support learners, and in recognition of changing learner demographics, 90% of Springboard+ courses will be delivered in a flexible format to enable more people to engage in upskilling and reskilling.

Now in its tenth year, over 75,000 people have benefited from the Springboard+ programme to date. The programme is managed by the Higher Education Authority, on behalf of the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science.

Full details of approved Springboard+ programmes are available at www.itcarlow.ie or directly on www.springboardcourses.ie by selecting 'Institute of Technology Carlow programmes. Applications will open on Wednesday 16 June and a helpline for applicants will be available on 059 91 75280. Queries can be emailed to springboard@itcarlow.ie



National Gallery head of finance Mary Leane, left, with Accounting Technicians Ireland apprentice Rosario Rowe. Rosario was a fulltime homemaker looking for a job before discovering the Accounting Technicians Ireland Apprenticeship programme. Pic: Fintan Clarke.

New rental protections announced for students

The Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage Darragh O'Brien TD and the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Simon Harris TD, have announced new student rental protections.

Under the Residential Tenancies (No. 2) Bill 2021 any upfront payment upon the commencement of a tenancy will be restricted to a total value that does not exceed two months' rent i.e. a deposit and one month rent in advance.

This restriction will apply to all tenancies including for students residing in student specific accommodation. A student can make a larger upfront payment if they so wish, by way of an opt-out option, but they cannot be forced to do so.

The Bill also provides that the notice period to be given by students in respect of student specific accommodation will be limited to a maximum 28 days' notice.

Welcoming the provisions Minister O'Brien said, "Cabinet have approved the introduction of a number of rental protections which will benefit students. These measures are just the beginning of a suite of rental protections which I hope to bring forward in the autumn to protect all tenants.

"Having met previously with members of the USI, I know they were particularly concerned about students

being asked to pay up to a year's rent in advance and having to provide lengthy termination notices. The measures Cabinet have approved today will go some way towards alleviating the concerns raised.

"We do need to increase the availability of accommodation for students - this is the most effective way to provide real choice and options. I will continue to liaise with Minister Harris and the USI on this matter," concluded Minister O'Brien.

Minister Harris said: "I want to welcome the measures contained in this Bill. The cost of accommodation can be a significant burden for students and their families.

"Over 40,000 students live in purpose build student accommodation. This measure will help lower the financial barriers by removing a significant upfront expense for students attending college. It will be applicable for the new academic year.

"This is one of a series of initiatives we intend to take in this area but today is an important step."

The rental measures approved by Cabinet also included the extension of the targeted protections which are in place for those negatively impacted by COVID-19, in arrears and at risk of homelessness. Subject to the eligible tenant making the necessary declaration they will be protected by rent increases and evictions until January 12th 2022.

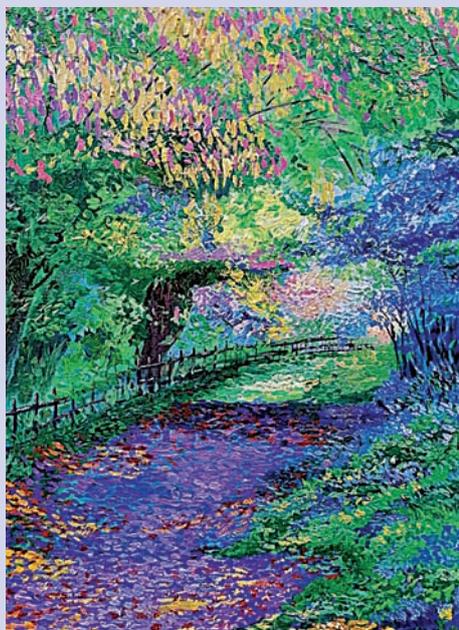


Some of IT Carlow's lifelong learning students



The MermaidArts Centre recently worked with Anna Newell Theatre Adventures for an offsite performance of GROOVE for the pupils and staff of Marino School, Bray. GROOVE is a chilled out 70's inspired happening for audiences of children and young people with complex needs and is full of blissful harmony singing and soothing immersive video. GROOVE is the first production in our Network For Extraordinary Audiences 2021 Season in collaboration with 6 other venues across Ireland and theatremaker Anna Newell. Photo by Neil Harrison.

Coming up at Signal Arts Centre... Fragments by Elena Kotovenko



A solo exhibition by Elena Kotovenko is taking place in the Signal Arts Centre. This exhibition provides an insight into the work of an artist who has various styles and some very strong ideologies, that echo in her work.

A fascination with colour and impressionism results in pointillist-like night city scenes and landscapes. The love of nature makes her explore the use of raw materials and incorporate them into her landscapes. As a keen gardener and lover of flowers she experiments with clay to reproduce life-like 3-dimensional flower canvasses, in deep edged box frames.

As a lover of nature and wildlife she constantly works on reducing waste and re-uses discarded plastic and other small objects into her mixed media pieces. This process led her to the discovery of steampunk movement and experimenting with various media and materials.

All these different styles represent one artistic career, which is constantly evolving and changing, just like the world around us. Step into the experience at the Signal Arts Centre, Bray from 5th July to the 18th July 2021.

A Way to Equilibrium by Derval Freeman

A new body of work by artist Derval Freeman goes on exhibit at Signal Arts Centre running this August the 16th to the 29th.

Titled, 'A Way to Equilibrium' her paintings began as a journey back into abstraction focusing on drawing, colour, shape and composition. Since graduating from Limerick School of Art and Design, Derval's style has evolved over 25 years or more and her exhibition will showcase a significant change in her direction, especially over these past two years.

Her art is an exploration and response to life, nature and the wonders of the universe. She paints in oils and cold wax medium and often begins with the drawing. Her paintings can be described as playful and vibrantly colourful with a thick application, in contrast with washes of bright sweeping colour transparencies.



Wicklow pianist to perform at special online concert

A special online concert on July 1st will feature two of Ireland's most exciting young musicians, Wicklow pianist Fiachra Garvey and violinist Patrick Rafter.

The concert is being hosted by Siamsa Tire, the National Folk Theatre of Ireland in Tralee.

Both musicians have already won international acclaim. Fiachra is a Wicklow man and the founder and artistic director of the West Wicklow Festival. He is also a pianist who has appeared in concerto with the Janáček Philharmonic and the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra and worked with eminent conductors such as John Wilson and Duncan Ward.

Patrick, from Kilkenny, is a passionate violinist who has performed with prestigious orchestras such as the Prague Philharmonia and shared the stage with acclaimed musicians such as Maxim

Vengerov and Shlomo Mintz.

The duo has put together a programme featuring works by Fauré, Franck, and Ysaÿe alongside the world premiere of a new Music Network commission by Irish composer Emma O'Halloran. This piece was composed during the intense days of lockdown, when the composer found herself paying close attention to the minute details of daily life, which moved her to capture that balance between anxiety and serenity in music.

In a year when we've been deprived of live music, all three artists are eager to once more bring their music to the ears of audiences. While we are



violinist Patrick Rafter

still waiting for venues to reopen their doors for live music performances, this concert hopes to be the next best thing - an opportunity for fans of classical and contemporary music to hear some of Ireland's best musicians in soaring form. Tickets cost €10 (plus booking fee) and are available at siamsatire.com/events



Wicklow pianist Fiachra Garvey

Mermaid presents: Twenty Fifty

Tuesday 29, Wednesday 30 June & Thursday 1st July
8pm | €15 | Online Event

An online event presented by Mermaid Arts Centre at the end of this month, this is a live improvised game between an actor and a different invited guest each show, in which they attempt to get to the heart of the question: what would you save from the fire?

The hit show from Fishamble and Irish Theatre Institute's DUETS programme in Dublin Fringe Festival 2020 returns.

This beautifully unfolding high-wire performance is an attempt to create community in the most unlikely of places. Each performance is an unrepeatably experience. Dan Colley and Fionnuala Gyax use old school theatre magic and new technology to cultivate togetherness and shared understanding in a room full of strangers.



People in Wicklow invited to nominate their favourite place in countrywide competition

Greystones one of 8 towns to make it into Top 25 in 2012

As the country begins to reopen once again details of the search for the 'Best Place to Live in Ireland' 2021 have been announced. Whether you live in a town, village, island or city anywhere on the island of Ireland - your home place has a chance to secure the coveted title of 'Best Place to Live in Ireland'.

To be in with a chance to claim the title for your hometown, all you have to do is to write a short submission explaining what makes it so special.

The countrywide competition last took place almost 10 years ago in 2012 in the midst of the financial crisis. On that occasion Greystones was one of eight towns to make it onto the long list of 25 Best Places to Live in Ireland.

However, in the end Westport, Co. Mayo was eventually selected as the overall winner as it met so many of the competition's criteria and displayed a

remarkable community spirit that was evident in its 90-plus voluntary organisations.

The initiative, which was launched by The Irish Times last week, will see each nominated location judged on specific criteria, including community spirit, local services and amenities, diversity, transport links, vibrancy of the local economy, cost of living, safety and of course the unique X factor.

"As the country gets back on its feet after a testing year, we are delighted to embark on the search for the Best Place to Live in Ireland

2021" commented Irish Times journalist and chair of the judging panel Conor Goodman. "Our panel of judges and researchers will scour Ireland for its hidden gems and known paradises, discovering what people around the country love and value most about the places they live in. So we really want to hear from people all over Wicklow as soon as possible to help us identify those special places."

Anyone can enter by writing a short pitch about their place and the judging panel is looking forward to a challenging

summer of deliberation with every stage in the process documented in The Irish Times and on www.irishtimes.com/best-place. The closing date for entries is July 25th and the winner will be announced in September.

Joining Conor Goodman on the judging panel will be Mayo County Architect, Simon Wall, Dr Illona Duffy, Monaghan based GP and public health commentator, RTE Nationwide presenter Zainab Boladalea and Irish Times journalist and author of 'A Secret Map of Ireland' Rosita Boland.

A shed load of positive change

The Irish Men's Sheds Association's (IMSA) report entitled 'The Sheds for Life Impact Report' was launched virtually last Monday 14th June by Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly TD. The research, carried out by Aisling McGrath of Waterford Institute of Technology on behalf of the IMSA and the Irish Research Council, highlights the benefits of Men's Sheds for promoting positive wellbeing among Irish men.

The report details the many positive health and wellbeing outcomes gained from participation in 'Sheds for Life' an initiative delivered directly in the Sheds and in collaboration with men, encouraging them to be active participants taking control over their own health and wellbeing. The study was conducted with 421 men in 22 sheds in Kildare, Waterford, Limerick and Louth. The age of the participants ranged from 27 to 90 years.

The study found that Sheds for Life has been successful in:

- *Engaging men, an at risk cohort in terms of their health and wellbeing, in a health-promoting initiative and significantly enhancing their willingness to seek help with a reach rate of 73%.

- *Significantly improving how Shed members rated their health.

- *Increasing physical activity levels and self-efficacy to be active. Those meeting the physical activity guidelines increasing from 31.2 to 51.5%.

- *Feelings of life satisfaction and life worth also increased significantly and remained sustained.

- *Participants reported increases in their mental wellbeing by an average of 17%. The number of men who reported feeling comfortable having a conversation about their mental health also increased significantly by 20%.

- *Social capital improved significantly with participants reporting increased sense of belonging, close support and trust.

- *There was also a significant improvement in confidence and skills in relation to maintaining a healthier diet.

- *The report noted improvements in knowledge and confidence in relation to performing CPR, suicide prevention, getting online and cancer, oral health & diabetes awareness.

- *Sheds for Life was designed and delivered in collaboration with men and Shed members also reported that it was effective in encouraging more meaningful conversations about health in the Sheds.

There were significant changes in knowledge and confidence in areas relating to: Cancer awareness, Suicide prevention, CPR, Diabetes awareness, Oral health, Digital literacy.

The research also highlights the impact that the loss of the Sheds has had on members' wellbeing during COVID with those describing themselves as lonely at 1.4% prior to shed closures and sky-

rocketing to 39.2% a year later, emphasising the importance of Men's Sheds to combat social isolation among Ireland's men.

Enda Egan, CEO, Irish Men's Sheds Association added, "The researchers implemented Sheds for Life, a programme developed by the Irish Men's Sheds Association. It is a community based ten-week Health Promotion programme in the sheds, focusing on physical activity, healthy eating and mental health and other health and wellbeing components. A year later, the research results show significant increases in engagement with what sometimes can be a hard to reach group of men, increases in their physical activity levels, mental well-being, and understanding of their own health, an increased sense of belonging, improved healthy eating, and improved online skills. They also showed far greater understanding and awareness of cancer, diabetes, heart issues and suicide prevention. We are very encouraged that this targeted intervention produced such long term positive change. We see this as a cost-effective template to roll out across the country."

"Men have long been seen as a difficult to reach cohort of Irish society by health professionals. Men's Sheds provide an area for meaningful work, skill-sharing, social support and camaraderie. A key to the success is that the programmes are delivered in an environment that the men are comfortable in, and on their own terms. It changes the narrative around how 'men do health'. Men may not always talk face to face about these issues, but they do talk shoulder to shoulder. There are 450 men's sheds on the island of Ireland with over 10,000 men visiting a shed every week.

Enda Egan continued, "The health outcomes of this group of men remain generally worse than women with higher mortality for almost all leading causes of death. This gender-specific tailored and targeted approach works on health and wellbeing in a meaningful and effective way, focussing risk factors and prevention through lifestyle changes."

Sheds for Life is delivered in partnership with a host of community organisations that recognise the benefits of promoting health in the informal and familiar environment of the Sheds. The initiative is supported by the HSE and Slaintecare. Those who wish to find out more about joining a Men's Shed can visit www.menssheds.ie



Pictured at the launch of the Best Place to Live 2021 competition were Grace and Sarah-Jane Keane.

ReWild Wicklow group seek more volunteers

Anyone with an expertise in ecology, forestry, mapping, website design and environmental law, is being asked to consider joining the recently formed ReWild Wicklow group.

"The passion and potential for rewilding is so big in Wicklow that we have decided to set up an official organisation to pursue the ambitions of the petition," says Danny Alvey, who founded the Re-Wild Wicklow group with his siblings Enya and Ian Alvey.

"We have already been joined by a number of local conservationists and experts in different fields but we're currently seeking more volunteers to join us."

The group recently handed in a petition of over 11,000 to Minister of State for Heritage, Malcolm Noonan, at Leinster House, calling for the Wicklow Mountains to be rewilded with native woodland and other native habitats to support a return of greater biodiversity.

At the event Danny said "We are absolutely delighted with the support we have got from people all across Wicklow and we're very grateful that the Minister agreed to meet us to hear about the campaign and accept the petition on behalf of his department. Just this month the UN has released a report calling on countries across the world to collectively rewild and restore an area of land the size of China, at least 1 billion hectares. Ireland must have a part to play in this and the Wicklow Mountains are a perfect candidate for a large-scale rewilding project. Our petition shows the people of Wicklow are behind this."

The group has received praise and support from Wicklow TDs Steven Matthews (Green Party), Jennifer Whitmore (SocDems), and John Brady (SF).

"I believe this to be a fantastic, and important initiative. And one which I sincerely hope that the government will grip," said

Deputy Brady. "Global warming represents the single biggest geopolitical issue out there. As the Sinn Féin spokesperson for Foreign Affairs and Defence, I witness on a global scale the impact that environmental issues are having on daily basis, particularly in the global south, where drought, famine, and conflict is growing. Initiatives such as this have enormous potential, and their importance for the future cannot be underestimated."

"From a local perspective, the Wicklow Mountains are a natural resource. They form part of our heritage. The proposed rewilding of the Wicklow Mountains will have a significant impact on biodiversity. And I want to add my absolute support for this project, and my heartfelt thanks for the organisers for their pursuit of this important undertaking."

Jennifer Whitmore TD has helped the group since they started and said: "As Spokesperson for Climate Change and Biodiversity with a background in ecology, this is a huge interest of mine. I have

been working with environmental groups to recognise the potential of putting biodiversity front and centre of climate action. It's great to see a grassroots campaign like this lift off and reflects the real desire by people to see a shift towards a more sustainable and natural environment.

"The public consultation on the Masterplan for Glendalough and the Wicklow Mountains National Park has seen the emergence of a number of exciting ideas to improve the National Park," said another local TD and Minister for Higher Education Simon Harris. "The restoration of biodiversity across County Wicklow has emerged as a key theme in many of the submissions from the public to the Masterplan process. I have called for in my submission to the Masterplan for Glendalough and the Wicklow Mountains National Park for the various public bodies that are stakeholders in the National Park to use every possible opportunity to expand the area to be rewilded and improve biodiversity."

If anyone is interested in joining Re-Wild Wicklow, they can contact them through their Facebook page at facebook.com/rewildwicklow.



Ian Enya and Danny Alvey from ReWild Wicklow with their petition



Staff of Whitewater, which has been named All-Star Wicklow Business of the Year

Whitewater named All-Star Wicklow Business of the Year

The All-Ireland Business Foundation has honoured Whitewater with the accolade of All-Star Wicklow Business of the Year.

Business All-Star accredited companies are defined as; progressive, indigenous Irish businesses which meet the highest standards of verified performance, trust and customer-centricity. Whitewater designs, installs and services water purification solutions to clients across the sectors of Healthcare, data centre, industry, pharmaceutical, and Municipal. Responding to the announcement, Liz Nangle, Managing Director of Whitewater says, "We are delighted to be accredited as All-Star Wicklow Business Of The Year 2021. It is a huge honour and an outstanding achievement that acknowledges the hard work and dedication of the Whitewater Team in providing best in class Water Treatment solutions from design, installation and service to all our customers."

This is an independently verified standard mark for indigenous businesses, based on rigorous selection criteria. 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. R.S. White (Water Treatment), trading as Whitewater was Founded in 1932 by Mr. Ralph Samuel White, is a 4th generation family run business operating in Ireland ,UK and Europe.

Whitewater designs, installs and services water purification solutions to clients across the sectors of Healthcare, data centre, industry, pharmaceutical, and Municipal. Responding to the announcement, Liz Nangle, Managing Director of Whitewater says, "We are delighted to be accredited as All-Star Wicklow Business Of The Year 2021. It is a huge honour and an outstanding achievement that acknowledges the hard work and dedication of the Whitewater Team in providing best in class Water Treatment solutions from design, installation and service to all our customers."

Dr Hynes said the Accreditation, which is now held by over 450 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. 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", she says.

The All-Ireland Business Foundation is a national body which accredits best-in-class Irish businesses as Business All-Stars. The Foundation also oversees the All-Ireland Business Summit while promoting peer dialogue amongst our members on an ongoing basis. The process to select the next group of Business All-Star accredited companies has begun and further information is available at businessallstars.ie

Boots confirmed as the largest pharmacy chain offering Covid vaccinations

Boots Ireland is confirmed as the nation's largest pharmacy chain to be offering COVID-19 vaccinations.

In supporting the HSE's vaccination rollout, COVID-19 vaccines are now available in 81 Boots Ireland pharmacies nationwide. In line with the HSE vaccination schedule, at present, COVID-19 Janssen (Johnson & Johnson) Vaccinations are available in pharmacies for people aged 50+ who have missed out on their vaccine or not been able to get to a vaccination centre.

Customers aged 50+ can book an appointment at Boots via boots.ie/covid-vaccination.

Caoimhe McAuley, MPSI, Director of Pharmacy and Superintendent Pharmacist at Boots Ireland said: "We are delighted to begin the vital work of administering COVID-19 vaccines throughout the Boots Ireland pharmacy network. Our experience in delivering vaccinations has been well established through the provision of the flu, pneumococcal, shingles and travel vaccinations. We look forward to applying this expertise and experience to vaccinating people against COVID-19 as the country continues to fight the pandemic."



Pictured is Caoimhe McAuley, MPSI, Director of Pharmacy and Superintendent Pharmacist at Boots Ireland

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Property employers urged to turn to apprenticeships to fill skills gaps

Estate agents and property services in Wicklow are being urged to turn to apprenticeships to fill skills gaps as their industry grows. That's according to City of Dublin Education and Training Board (CDETB), which has launched an impact report on its Auctioneering and Property Services Apprenticeship.

The apprenticeship provides a two-year, work-based learning programme for people seeking careers in auctioneering, estate agency, property management and property letting.

Last year, 86 apprentices were hired by auctioneering and property services through the CDETB apprenticeship. In the first five months of 2021, up to 70 apprentices have been recruited, signalling much higher demand from the industry than in previous years.

Until 30th June 2021, Wicklow employers can avail of a new government package that offers a €2,000 payment to take on an apprentice, and a further €1,000 in the second apprenticeship year.

Sandra Harvey-Graham, National Programme Manager for the Auctioneering and Property Services Apprenticeship at CDETB, said apprenticeships offer a cost-effective way for Wicklow employers to recruit, as well as a fast-tracked route for employees to gain their PSRA licence.

"By taking on an apprentice, employers cut down on recruitment and training costs and also receive a direct financial incentive," she said. "Furthermore, through our apprenticeship, all four categories of the PSRA licence are fast-tracked: apprentices can gain their full professional licence within only two years, so they can begin adding real value for their employers very quickly."

"Since we launched the Auctioneering and Property Services Apprenticeship in 2018, we have had an overwhelmingly positive reaction from employers. They are strong supporters of the programme because it attracts high-quality participants - the majority of apprentices have previous professional experience and graduate with a distinction. Our employers also feel the apprenticeship model builds loyalty and trust, resulting in a high retention rate when apprentices complete the programme."

CDETB is urging auctioneers and property services looking to grow their business to take on an apprentice this year. Interested companies can find out more at: <https://auctioneeringapprenticeship.ie/employers/>.

The Auctioneering and Property Services Apprenticeship is an 'earn and learn programme', combining on-the-job training with academic study. The two-year programme is coordinated by CDETB and delivered through Ballsbridge College, Cork College of Commerce and Galway Roscommon ETB.

231 apprentices from 17 counties across Ireland are currently in training or have graduated from the programme since it was launched in 2018.



Harry Angel is pictured at the launch of City of Dublin Education and Training Board (CDETB) Impact Report on its Auctioneering and Property Services Apprenticeship.

• PLANNING •

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

Deepdales Montessori seeks permission to update operational conditions described in the original planning permission (Ref: PR06/84) of 2006, including operating hours, operation as a part-time or sessional school and for the addition of a small arrow or flag to be placed in the front garden of the property at 109 Deepdales, Southern Cross Road, 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 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

Permission is sought for additional storey to existing detached garage for use as home gym, home office and storage, together with car port to front at 6 Enniskerry Demesne, Enniskerry, Co Wicklow by Michael and Tracy O'Hara. The planning application may be inspected or purchased for 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. The planning application may be viewed online at www.wicklow.ie under planning online enquiries. A submission or observation in relation to the application may be made on payment of €20 within a period of 5 weeks from the date the application is received by the planning authority.

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

Mary Yang seek Planning permission for the construction of a new two storey 3 bedroom House adjacent to the existing house at No. 23 Wolfe Tone Sq. East 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 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

Ian Wilkie, Chairman, Cottage Home for Little Children, seeks Permission for demolition of conservatory at west side of two storey house and replacement with single storey extension together with ancillary internal alterations and site works including external ramp at Rossbeigh House, 18A Newcourt Road, Co Wicklow, A98 XE70. 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

William Roedy seeks permission for the proposed conservation, repairs and refurbishment at Martello Tower, Royal Marine Park, Bray, Co. Wicklow which is a Protected Structure (RPS ref: WCC B85) under the Planning and Development Act 2000. Work will include the replacement of the existing glazed roof, the replacement of the existing access stair, removal of existing sheds, construction of a garden room and all associated site 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

Planning permission is sought for new vehicular entrance gates, piers, side railings and associated ground works at laneway entrance, Royal Marine Park, Bray for Mary McGarry. 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

Full Planning Permission sought for:
1. Proposed Change of Use from Existing Clinic/Doctors Surgery (363 Msq) to 2 No. Residential Dwellings (363 Msq).
2. All ancillary site works at No. 1 & 2, Carlton Terrace, Novara Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow, A98 ASY3. Signed Robert McDonnell & Kevin O'Brien.
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.

CLASSIFIEDS

Matthew 7:1-5 GOSPEL

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Do not judge, and you will not be judged; because the judgements you give are the judgements you will get, and the amount you measure out is the amount you will be given. Why do you observe the splinter in your brother's eye and never notice the plank in your own? How dare you say to your brother, "Let me take the splinter out of your eye" when all the time there is a plank in your own? Hypocrite! Take the plank out of your own eye first and then you will see clearly enough to take the splinter out of your brother's eye.'

Reflection

Today's Gospel reading presents us with wisdom which is both simple and exceptionally challenging for us. Not judging others is one of the most difficult elements of Christian discipleship. We can start off with good intentions and become judgemental without fully realising it. Jesus calls us to remember that we should forgive others because he first forgave us. In this way when we forgive others, we share this special love which was given to us first by Christ.

C.J.

CLASSIFIED ADS & PLANNING / APPOINTMENTS

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PLEASE NOTE DEADLINE FOR CLASSIFIED ADS AND APPOINTMENTS IS 12 NOON FRIDAY





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