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HISTORIC DAY FOR ARKLOW
Page 3



NEWCASTLE CFR
Page 4



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Page 6

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Tuesday 3rd August 2021 First Floor, The Boulevard, Quinsborough Road, Bray. A98 R6D7. Tel: 01 - 2869111 E-mail: wicklowed@localtimes.ie www.wicklowtimes.net

HOME TAX HIKE BY 6%

Fine Gael councillors rebelled against their party policy, their local election manifesto and went against the advice of their Minister, Simon Harris, by voting to raise the Local Property Tax on homes in Wicklow by 6% for 2022.

They did this despite three new additional streams of money coming into the council. 4,000 new homes built since 2013 which had to date not paid LPT will now do so. The bands of house valuations have been revised bringing more homes into higher tax brackets and the 20% of LPT that used to be sent to other councils will now be retained in County Wicklow. These 'windfall' taxes are reckoned to bring in an additional €5-6 million.

Minister Harris, in a statement to Wicklow Times, had urged councillors to endeavour not to increase tax on homes. Fine Gael pledged in its 2019 Local Election Manifesto that the Party's councillors "will work to ensure that, where possible, the LPT rate levied by the Council is reduced. Upward local Council adjustments will only be approved by FG councillors where it will deliver new specific and additional services".

Fianna Fail, meanwhile, said in its 2019 Local Election manifesto that it would "ensure no overall Local Property Tax increases" but again all its councillors voted for the increase. Labour Party Councillor, Anne Ferris argued strongly for the increase and lectured those councillors that objected to it. The Council returned the LPT to its base rate for 2021 after raising it



Eve Cowdrey and Thomas McDonald on Bray beach for World Drowning Prevention Day. See page 4 for more. Pic: Joe McQuillan.

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by 10% the previous year. The average payment per Wicklow household in 2021 was €324, and Director of Finance Brian Gleeson said the average increase for households following the 6% hike will be €19. Mr Gleeson said that bands are being widened but that the majority of homeowners will face no increase when properties are revalued in November. He also stated that Local Authorities that increase the basic rate of the LPT will retain 100% of the resultant additional income in 2022 for their own use. Council management recommended a 10% increase before the matter was put to councillors to debate, and at the outset of discussions Cllr Vincent Blake (FG) put forward the proposal for a 6% increase, which was seconded by Cllr Pat Fitzgerald (FF). The final vote was 21 to 9 in favour of the 6% hike.

There were counter proposals from Independent Councillors Joe Behan and Rory O'Connor, to decrease the LPT by the maximum 15% and to keep it at the base rate, respectively. The 6% increase was supported by Fine Gael, Fianna Fail, the Social Democrats, Green Party, Labour, and Independent Miriam Murphy, with the other Independents and Sinn Féin against it. Cllr Blake said, "Demands are continuously being put on us councillors to provide projects in the community, to carry out house and footpath repairs, playgrounds, community grants, traffic calming, etc. This 6% increase will mean the vast majority of people won't be paying anything extra. I have a difficulty imposing a 10% increase but I acknowledge there is a need for an increase." In putting forward his proposal for a 15%

decrease, Cllr Behan called the LPT "daylight robbery on the people of

this country". "We as public representatives have to make a

standand remind ourselves that this is a double

Continued on Page 5

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Xena Jordan of Arklow Rowing Club takes to the water during the recent hot weather in Arklow

Letter to the Editor

Car vandalised in Wicklow Town

Dear Editor,

We are in Wicklow Town, we love living here and are very proud to be here and to be getting to share some of the joys of this beautiful place with our family.

That joy was soured this weekend I hope that we can shame whoever did this.

We had my two year old granddaughter to stay while her parents were working (in essential services).

They parked overnight locally when they came to collect her. They were careful not to obstruct anyone's access, and the car was parked legally.

We had a great day together but when they

went to drive away we discovered that their car had been vandalised.

Obscenity had been scraped into the paint work of the door right beside my granddaughter's baby seat and on the roof of the car.

I feel so sad that this wonderful town has been disgraced by some disgusting and unbelievably bad behaviour.

We should shame anyone who ruins the neighbourhood.

It's shocking to think that I feel afraid to host my wonderful family for fear of this sort of criminal behaviour.

(This person wished for their identity to remain unknown)

The Rathmichael Historical Society 2021 Summer Lecture Series

The theme for this year's lecture series is 'The Archaeology of Ireland's Bogs' and will take place nightly on Zoom at 8 p.m. from Monday August 16th to Friday August 20th consisting of the following presentation - Monday August 16th: 'The Archaeology of Raised Bogs' by Dr. Ellen O'Carroll; Tuesday August 17th: 'Interpreting the Physical Features of the Faddan More Psalter by Dr. John Gillis; Wednesday August 18th: The Leo Swan Memorial Lecture: '50 Years on from Leo Swan's Research Flights over the Céide Fields in 1971' by Prof. Séamus Caulfield; Thursday August 19th: 'Commercial Development of Irish Bogs in 19th and 20th Centuries' by Donal Clarke; Friday August 20th: 'The Contribution of Archaeobotany to

Archaeology by Dr. Gina Hannon and Dr. Richard Bradshaw. Fee for non-members €5 per lecture or €25 for the series (to include membership and all lectures up to December 31st 2021).

Aircoach service

The Aircoach route which serves Greystones and Bray will resume in mid-August, a spokesperson from the company told Wicklow Times. Capacity will be in line with what Government guidelines are at the time.

Flock of sheep missing from West Wicklow farm

A farming family in Blessington have issued an appeal for information following the disappearance of 26 of their sheep.

The flock of sheep have gone missing from the Glen Bride area. The sheep are hogget ewes and are branded 'EG', but it looks like 'EC'. They have been missing since June and the family is appealing to hillwalkers and locals to keep an eye out. They may be wandering around an area between the Sally Gap and Wicklow Gap. The sheep have notches in their ears. Anyone with information should call 087 683 1376.

Brockagh Market

The Brockagh Centre's outdoor only Market is back on Sun the 8th of August. The market will be open to the public from 10am to 3pm with free entry (there will be limited parking). Tea, coffee and food snacks will be available to purchase on the day.

The barrier will be locked from 6pm on Saturday evening 9th August until 9am Sunday morning. You can contact the Brockagh Centre by phone on 0404 45600 (Mon-Fri 9am to 2pm) or email brockaghcarboot@gmail.com.

Kilmacanogue Horse Show back on the field

The Kilmacanogue Horse Show Committee is delighted to be able to get back on the field and run its 49th show on Saturday 14th August 2021. The show will be held in its usual location at Enniskerry Horse Farm in Monasterey, Enniskerry by kind permission of Mary and Syl Fenelon Bourke.

The show will go ahead in line with government public guidelines and the committee are working hard to put all the necessary public health measures in place. As a result, this year interested competitors will need to register online as entries cannot be taken on the day of the show.

As numbers are restricted for outdoor events, when entering online each competitor can only register one groom and only the competitors and their groom can enter the showground. Unfortunately due to COVID-19 restrictions, no spectators will be able to attend on the day and competitors are required

to complete a COVID-19 health declaration form before entering the showground.

The committee are however thrilled to be able to run all the regular pony and horse classes that competitors have enjoyed over the years and full details of the 2021 schedule and how to enter can be found on the show website www.kilmacanoguehorseshow.com along with details on how to complete the COVID-19 compliance form.

The aim of the committee has always been to run a community based show and raise funds for local charities. This Committee

would like to thank all local businesses and individuals who provide support and sponsorship to keep the show on the road year after year. They would like to give a particular thanks to Durkan New Homes for being this year's primary sponsor of the show.

No show would be complete without the annual raffle and anyone can buy a ticket online with a chance to win one of the fabulous prizes kindly donated from local businesses. Thanks to Powerscourt Estate, Kilruddy Estate and Glendalough Distillery Gin for providing the raffle prizes and showing

their support to this wonderful community event.

Online entries are open now and close 4th Aug or earlier if maximum event capacity is reached. Check out www.kilmacanoguehorseshow.com for more details. The Kilmacanogue show is a great local institution. It welcomes competitors of all abilities and has a great following amongst the local riding schools and clubs. The show is run by volunteers and all proceeds raised are awarded to local charities in our community. Due to Covid-19, the 2020 show went virtual, allowing the committee to continue to support many charities.

Maxi Zoo's store makeover

Maxi Zoo - Ireland's largest pet retailer, have given their Bray Retail Park store a makeover and are inviting customers to check out the refurbished store from the 6th-8th of August, with lots of perks over the weekend.

The store is gearing up to welcome pet parents and their four legged friends to the new and improved shop. On the 7th of August from 1-3pm customer's can snap a selfie at the pop up photobooth before browsing the newly merchandised store with an improved layout, lighting and product signage making shopping for your pet even easier. Customers are encouraged to bring their four legged friends to the relaunch and pick up a goodie bag to enjoy at home. Plus Maxi Zoo has even thought of the kids and will have a balloon modeler on hand to whip up balloon animals too.

The pet experts have an even bigger product range for customers to choose from, and boast specially trained staff who can advise pet parents on the best products for their pet. As an added bonus, customers will get a €10 voucher to spend on their next visit to the shop (*T&C's apply in store).

Maxi Zoo Bray opened on 22nd April 2010, and was the 7th addition to the Maxi Zoo family with staff that love pets as much as you do. Maxi Zoo Pet advisors are highly trained in animal nutrition and welfare. The shop has a free pet weighing service, free parking and works closely with local charities to help animals in need.

To find details on the store's location visit maxizoo.ie/our-stores/bray/



Pictured (left) Olivia Burke, Rose Hill, Wicklow Town and (right) Karen Joynt, Glenealy presenting a donation of €1,000 to Remi Le Mahieu owner of the ASH Animal Rescue Centre, Rathdangan. Olivia, accompanied by her Foróige Big Brother Big Sister Mentor Karen climbed the ridge of Spinc, Glendalough as part of her involvement in the 'Foróige Leadership for Life Programme'. The programme, run by youth workers at The WAY Project, Wicklow Town empowers young people to become inspiring leaders by taking action to make a positive change in their community.

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Historic day for Arklow

Waste Water Treatment Plant approved by Cabinet

The Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Darragh O'Brien TD, has received Cabinet approval for the construction of a new Waste Water Treatment Plant in Arklow.

Construction on the project, which has an estimated overall cost of €139.3 million, is due to begin in Q1 2022 and be completed by September 2025.

Welcoming the news Fianna Fáil senator Pat Casey said "This has been a priority for me since I entered national politics and I am delighted that a Fianna Fáil Minister has finally brought this project over the line."

"Even with the Covid pandemic and the efforts of some populists to scaremonger, Fianna Fáil in Government have worked in Government to ensure that the Arklow Waste Water Treatment Plant was delivered not talked about. This is a massive environmental investment for Arklow and sees the beginning of a new era of sustainable growth for the town and its people. The Avoca River finally will enter a new clean and green era which will see potential for this maritime town."

This is the final stage in the approval process and follows Irish Water finalising the business case for NewERA Ireland. NewERA Ireland has since reviewed the busi-

ness case and submitted a report to the Department Planning, Housing and Local Government for its approval.

"As the project has an estimate cost of over €100 million, it had to have regard to the updated Public Spending Code. The 30-year wait is almost over for the people of Arklow and I am delighted to have worked closely with Minister O'Brien on this project since he took office last year and I have made it a priority. I am delighted that Cabinet have approved this today and I will continue to work with Irish Water to ensure its delivery."

Minister Simon Harris said: "Today is a very important day for the town of Arklow, its people and business community. This is a very welcome and long awaited development for the town. In all my time in public life, this is something that has been long sought and I'm delighted that it's finally being agreed today, and I'm very proud to be part of a government that has just authorized this massive level of investment. Contracts will be signed in September and con-

struction works will start early in the new year. I would of course keep residents in Arklow very closely up to date in relation to this matter. I also want to thank my colleague, Councillor Sylvester Bourke for all his work on this over many years."

Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly said "This is a historic day for Arklow because the final approval for the Waste Water Plant opens up the way for the transformation of the entire region. This has been a project that I've been working on since I got into politics a decade ago. It's something I promised we would deliver when we got into Government and was determined to see happen. The delivery of the waste water plant has been desperately needed in Arklow for decades."

"The fact it has been given the green light means the town can, at last, make firm plans for the future. With it in place it paves the way for additional housing, economic growth and ensures that the environment is protected. It really is a massive step forward for Arklow and one

that could not come soon enough."

Speaking after the approval was given John Brady TD said "The news that the go-ahead to move forward with the construction of the long awaited Arklow Sewage Treatment Plant is a massive boost for the town. Once constructed the plant will be able to cater for a planned population equivalent of 36,000. The site is at the Old Wallboard Factory, North Quay, Ferrybank."

"This brings an end to 30 years of campaigning and will help to unlock Arklow's full potential once completed. It is really frustrating that it has taken 2 years to get the Minister to sign off on the critical project from when it was given approval by An Bord Pleanála in August 2019."

"The project must now proceed without any further delays. The time frame for the delivery of the long awaited Arklow sewage treatment plant has been pushed back by at least 10 months."

"The construction of the plant will give Arklow a new lease of life as it provides the capacity to expand and



grow as a town. It will also put an end to the outdated and environmentally harmful solution of dumping untreated waste into the River Avoca. It is crucial that the construction of this plant gets underway as soon as possible. The delivery of the sewage treatment plant is a priority for me as I see it as key to unlocking Arklow's potential and I look forward to the commencement of its construction as quickly as possible."

Social Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore said "For a very long time, I've been calling for the urgent need to expedite the Ministerial consent process so that construction could start as soon as possible. I spoke in the Dáil on many occasions,

raising it with the Minister as well as during a Dáil motion."

"This news is a huge relief to all of us, particularly local residents who have been waiting over 30 years for this project. Arklow will be one of the most important large-scale wastewater infrastructure projects in the country with huge potential for Arklow so it's important that this was done right so that there were no additional delays."

"What's important now, is that construction can commence soon and safely, and that Irish Water and the Department of Housing maintain communication with local residents throughout the project's progression. Now, Arklow can look towards a new chapter of a string of positive developments

including the Avoca Mines remedial project and the Flood Relief Scheme and the pilot project for Wicklow's first Decarbonisation Zone. This will be particularly true for the Avoca River and surrounding areas which will benefit hugely from an improved environment and biodiversity in the area. The knock on effects will be felt as tourism increases and brings in new footfall for local businesses."

"It's important that this is done as quickly as possible. In that context, I have been very vocal about the concerns that ministerial consent has still not been provided for the project to go ahead, despite everything else lined up ready to go according to Irish Water. I'm delighted that this wait

is now over."

Michael Tinsley, Portfolio Delivery Manager with Irish Water, said "Eliminating the discharge of untreated wastewater into the River Avoca continues to be a key priority for Irish Water and this project is critical in ending this current practice and safeguarding the wastewater system in Arklow for the future. When completed, the new wastewater treatment plant will have significant benefits for both residents and businesses as well as tourists that visit the area as it will improve the water quality in the River Avoca and enable future economic growth. We will continue to work closely with the local community and will issue further updates as we progress with this vital project".

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Lifeguard Catherine keeping an eye on Bray beach on World Drowning Prevention Day. Pic: Joe McQuillan

Hot weather increases drowning risk

Sunday 25th July was World Drowning Prevention Day. The current hot spell has increased the risk of drowning and Water Safety Ireland is asking the public to practise the following guidelines to stay safe.

- 1) Swim within your depth and stay within your depth. Many people are swimming for the first time this year and have not had swimming classes for more than 15 months.
- 2) Swim at a Lifeguarded waterway, listed at www.watersafety.ie/lifeguards. Otherwise swim in areas that are known locally as safe and where there are ringbuoys present for rescues.
- 3) Make sure that the water's edge is shallow shelving so that you can safely enter and exit.
- 4) The air temperature is warm but open water is cooler – avoid extended stays in the water as your muscles will cool, making swimming more difficult.
- 5) Never use inflatable toys in open water.
- 6) Always supervise children closely and never leave them alone at garden paddling pools.
- 7) Wear a lifejacket when on or near water.
- 8) Do not mix water activities with alcohol.
- 9) If you see someone in difficulty, these simple steps may save a life:
 - A. Shout to the casualty and encourage them to shore. This may orientate them just enough.
 - B. Reach out with a long object such as a branch or a piece of clothing but do not enter the water yourself.
 - C. Throw a ringbuoy or any floating object and call 112 for the coast guard.



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

Newcastle First Responders launch new defibrillator & recruitment drive

The Newcastle Community First Responder group's Committee were delighted to launch their first Public Accessible Defibrillator and a new recruitment drive on Saturday 24th July

The committee hopes to encourage people residing in a 5km radius of Newcastle to join the group, which was founded last year and aims to be operational and responding to 999 calls locally by Christmas.

Community First Responder (CFR) volunteers operate within the community they live or work and respond to incidents within a roughly 5km radius of the village.

"Our aim is to reach a potential life threatening emergency in the first vital minutes before the ambulance crew arrives to take over treatment. Upon receipt of a 999/112 call our Community First Responders are dispatched simultaneously with the National Ambulance Service," they said.

No medical training or experience is required to join as CFR's are all trained to a minimum level of basic life support in CPR and the use of an AED/Defibrillator.

CFR's respond to 999 calls that relate to cardiac arrest, chest pain, heart attack, choking, stroke or collapse in their local area.

The Newcastle group would love to hear from all those in the community who want to give



Newcastle First Responders Aisling Barrett (Treasurer), Irene Jennings (Secretary), and Joshua Dargan Hayes (Chairman) with the new defibrillator at Newcastle Community Centre.

back and learn some life saving skills. Even if residents aren't comfortable responding to emergencies there are plenty of roles available on the administration and finance side of the group in addition to training members of the public in correct

CPR & AED usage and maintenance of the area's defibrillators.

A public information night is being held online mid-August for all those who've expressed an interest so they can find out more information on the group

and ask any questions they may have. Locals can register their interest for the information night on the group's Facebook, 'Newcastle Wicklow Community Responders', or by visiting their website, 'www.newcastlefirstresponders.weebly.com'.

Wicklow County Council launches 2021 Gum Litter Taskforce Campaign

Wicklow County Council has officially launched the National Gum Litter Taskforce Campaign. The campaign looks to build on the success of previous years as the percentage of gum as a proportion of litter has dropped by 64% since the campaign began..

The Gum Litter Taskforce (GLT) is an environmental initiative that was set up to develop and implement an awareness campaign to reduce gum litter. Supported and funded by the chewing gum industry, the GLT initiative has made very real and significant improvements in relation to gum litter awareness and disposal behaviour over the last 14 years since its inception in 2007.

The campaign is looking to build on the positive momentum of previous years' campaigns and is making a strong return for 2021 after being postponed last year due to COVID-19. This year's campaign will be different in that the national and local authority launch events will be done virtually, and the campaign will have a stronger social media presence in order to reach a wider and younger audience.

Research commis-

sioned by the Gum Litter Taskforce and conducted by Kantar Millward Brown during the 2019 campaign highlighted the campaign's continued positive effect on people's behaviour towards gum disposal. In 2019, the results showed that 88% of people said that they always dispose of their gum correctly, which was up from 54% when the campaign first began. This shift in public behaviour has been evident throughout the 13 years that the campaign has been running, as the proportion of gum as a percentage of litter has decreased by 64%.

Paul Kelly, Chairman of the GLT added; "It is great to see the GLT campaign return and continue its success in changing the public's behaviour towards gum litter. Since 2007, we have seen a significant decline in the amount of gum litter present throughout the streets, villages and towns

of Ireland. Alongside the Green Schools, Tidy Towns and Neat Streets programmes, this campaign aims to play a significant role in the overall reduction of litter and contribute to the betterment of the environment. The relaunch of the GLT campaign in its revised format this year, along with our advertising campaign and Bin It! school education programme, can only be successful through continued support from our schools and local communities."

Nicola Forde, Corporate Affairs Manager, Mars Wrigley Ireland said; "Mars Wrigley are pleased to support the return of this positive and vibrant awareness campaign in 2021. It is important that we maintain momentum on our journey to achieving a cleaner, greener Ireland through initiatives like the GLT and build on the success that the campaign has achieved since



it commenced in 2007.

COVID-19 has brought more people outdoors to gather, socialise and enjoy the beauty of their local area. As a result,

both younger and older generations are becoming more aware of the importance of maintaining the surrounding natural environment."

HOME TAX HIKE BY 6%

Continued from Page 1
taxation and where we get the opportunity to reduce the burden we should do so," he said.

"It's replacing what we used to get from central



'There's a need for an increase' - Cllr Vincent Blake

government, except we're now putting our hands into the pockets of the people, and we're not getting any additional money to provide the services we need."

Cllr Tom Fortune (Ind), who seconded Cllr Behan's motion for a 15% decrease, reminded Fine Gael councillors of the Party's policy in its manifesto with regards the LPT and said "I understand the Council executive's responsibilities to the Government Department, but my responsibility is to the public". He said that the LPT is "fundamentally wrong and grossly unfair".

Speaking after the meeting, Cllr Fortune said of the 6% hike: "It's a bad decision".

"This is the most unfair of taxes, it takes no account of the ability to pay, it treats residents on the east coast very unfairly. It is also driven by an inflated property market," he said.

"Someone said to me recently 'my home is worth nothing, it is my home, if I sell it I have nowhere to live, will WCC house me?'."

Cllr Fortune says he was intrigued at the speed at which a press release from the Council announcing the 6% increase was issued, as it was sent out as soon as that item on the agenda was finished.

"It was as if it was just waiting for the button to be pressed. There was a sense for some of us that we were wasting our time as it seemed the decision was made prior to the official meeting," said Cllr Fortune.

"The proposal to raise it by 6% was made just a few minutes into the discussion, and there was no query or question from the executive on it. It was obvious that it had been agreed pre-meeting. There was a rumour 12 days before the meeting that a deal had been done."

ring-fenced for discretionary use by the Elected Members of the five Municipal Districts to support local projects in these areas including footpath repairs, public realm initiatives and supporting local community organisations.

Bray Municipal District will receive €261,000 with the other four Districts - Wicklow, Arklow, Greystones and Baltinglass - each receiving €196,000.

Speaking at the meeting, Labour Party councillor Anne Ferris said she supports the 6% increase and thinks the LPT is a "fair tax", but that people living in very expensive houses would be "getting away lightly" with the 6% hike (people living in houses valued at over €1 million will just pay an increase of €169.80). Cllr Ferris said that the 6% increase is needed to fund works in the Municipal Districts such as footpaths.

"If people don't support the increase," she said, "please don't come cap in hand begging the officials looking for this, that and the other on your shopping list. We all want to provide the services that our constituents want, and we can't do that if we have no money. We can sit here year after year complaining about the whole concept of the LPT, but it is not something our council or any local authority came up with. This is a matter for Government."

Cllr Fortune has called Cllr Ferris's 'cap in hand' remarks "an attack on our democratic right to represent our constituents".

Cllr Fortune continued: "This tax is not additional funding for the Council as the Local Government Fund has been reduced by the amounts collected. The structure of the LPT model disadvantages Wicklow. I and others have asked for this to be sorted since it was introduced but it has not been done."

"The bottom line is that people in general cannot afford this tax. It does not affect the top 10% of the population but does affect the middle 70%. 20% of property tax collected is paid to some other counties; some of these counties are referred to in a recent Sunday newspaper for not collecting levies on

derelict sites in their respective counties. Yet Wicklow is levied to support them. If councillors worked as a unit on this we could solve it, however we will need an independent council to achieve this."

Speaking after the meeting, a number of other Independent councillors described the tax increase as unfair and inequitable. Cllr. Mary Kavanagh said "Local property tax does not take into account ability to pay, there are variances in tax depending on where you live, 20% goes to other counties, poorer people are penalised by having it charged against



'It's fundamentally wrong and grossly unfair' - Cllr Tom Fortune

their house if they can't pay and have to pay a punitive 8% interest on it - nothing is written off. It's an unfair tax".

Adding to this point, Cllr. Mags Crean stated that "there is no link between income and house prices in this country. We have inflated land prices and inflated house prices, which are now being inflated more by the role of investment funds in the housing system. The LPT is built on the back of a dysfunctional housing system".

Cllr. Peir Leonard remarked: "I ran an online poll to which 100% of respondents objected to this double tax. I have to honour the views of those I represent and there are alternative ways to fund local services without going against people's wishes."

Sinn Féin TD John Brady said "Sinn Féin were the only party to vote against the hike and had pushed for the full 15% reduction which is allowed under the legislation. On the same week that the Government appointed one of their cronies to the UN without advertising the job, should we be surprised that they are completely out of touch. It's not surprising that with an attitude of 'sure it's only 13 or 15 grand', that they would see no problem with hiking the tax on the family home in Wicklow by 6%. Not only is this tax deeply unfair and regressive, but it utterly fails to provide local authorities with adequate

or sustainable funding."

Brady concluded "Politics is about choices. Sinn Féin favours the abolition of the LPT as part of a wide-ranging reform of how we finance local government in Ireland. We have published fully-costed and fiscally responsible alternatives such as a real wealth tax on assets over €1 million, a 3% Solidarity Tax on individual incomes over €140,000 and the introduction of €225 million of taxes and levies on the banking sector, which currently pays no tax on its profits which stood at over €2.4 billion in 2018 alone. Meanwhile the government parties of the Green Party, Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael are cheered on and supported by the Labour Party, Social Democrats and a number of Independents in hiking the family home tax and adding insult to injury by describing it as a 'fair tax'."

Sinn Féin councillor Dermot 'Daisy' O'Brien described the Local Property Tax at last week's meeting as "like a glorified pyramid scheme full of vague promises and threats. We have all of this rhetoric about discretionary funds for districts that will benefit the community and yet the truth is that I haven't met one person who could stand up and celebrate the impact of the LPT in their own area. In fact, some people get more in return for their



"LPT is a fair tax" - Cllr Anne Ferris

contribution to their residents association than they've ever gotten from their property tax payment!"

Sinn Féin councillor Grace McManus added "The local property tax does not take into account ability to pay which is deeply unfair. The Oireachtas Housing Committee recently showed that, on average, 43,000 people defer payment every year. This, coupled with the financial hits that Wicklow households have taken over the pandemic shows that there is ample evidence to worry about the impact of the agreed 6% increase on households in the county. Needless to say, I think this week's decision was the wrong one. We should have gone for the maximum decrease of 15%."



Ray and Sandra Duffy with Conor and Jane Doyle celebrating their summer wedding in Bray. Pic: Joe McQuillan

Letter to the Editor

'Financial attack on wicklow's home owners could have been so easily avoided'

Dear Editor,

It is an utter disgrace that Wicklow County Council's failure to tackle social rent arrears has forced councillors to vote through a 6% hike in local property tax, this unfair and unjust additional financial burden on home owners could have easily been avoided if the council had done its job, rather than offering the same lame excuse year after year.

In the year ending 31st December 2017 rent arrears stood at just over €2m, and the response of the Chief Executive in the Statutory Audit Report was "The Housing Directorate rents team are acutely aware of the importance of working and focussing on rent arrears, particularly those in excess of €1,000. Wicklow County Council is committed to a process of engagement with tenants to reduce the outstanding arrears"

In 2018 rent arrears had hardly changed and stood at just under €2m, and the response was "The Housing Directorate rents team are acutely aware of the importance of focussing on rent arrears, particularly those in excess of €1,000. Wicklow County Council is committed to a process of engagement with tenants to reduce

the outstanding arrears"

2019 rent arrears had dropped slightly to €1.85m, and the response was "The Housing Directorate rents team is acutely aware of the importance of focussing on rent arrears, particularly those in excess of €1,000. The Council is committed to a process of engagement with tenants to reduce the outstanding arrears"

SAME CUT AND PASTE response every year, but nothing done year after year after year.

In fact it's got far far worse, in that preliminary figures for the year ending 31st December 2020 indicate rent arrears have ballooned by nearly €1m to over €2.7m

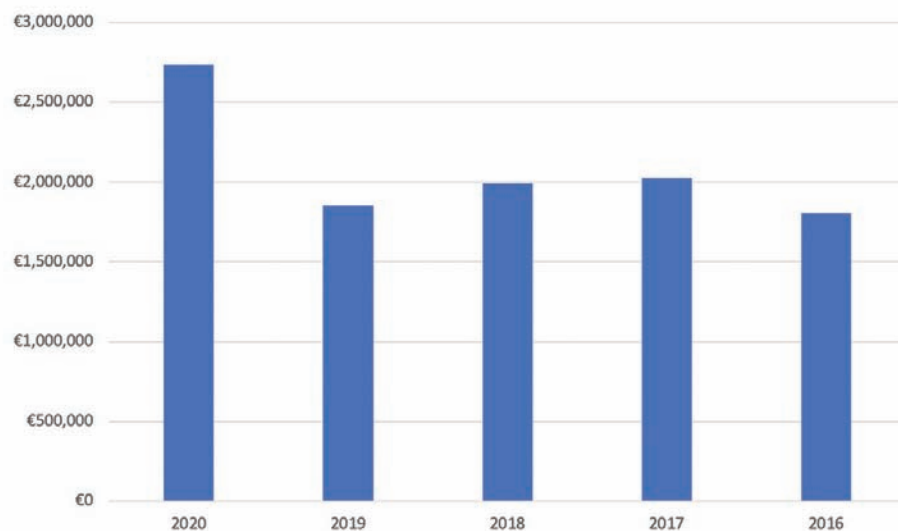
If Wicklow County Council did their job, not only would there have been no need to burden home owners with an extra 6%, they could have cut the LPT and found the €1m the councillors wanted for discretionary spending.

It's time for action not words.

Stephen Kearon PC
Angry LPT payer
Ballinaclesh
Co Wicklow

WCC Rent Arrears

@skearon



'It's daylight robbery' - Cllr Joe Behan

Delgany Greenway Feasibility Study shows project is viable

The Feasibility Study for the proposed Delgany Greenway has now been completed, and shows that it is a viable project.

"We hope that the Delgany and Greystones community will embrace this plan and encourage WCC and the politicians to take it to design stage, which would involve a wider public consultation," say the Delgany Community Council.

The proposed Greenway would link the N11 at Delgany to the coast at Greystones, taking in the more modern estates at Charlesland and Archers Wood along the way. Many of the roads in this area are narrow, and with the increased traffic brought by numerous new developments, they have become too dangerous to walk or cycle on.

"We are also cognisant that electric scooters will have a major role in future personal transport, both the two-wheeled type as often used by younger people, and three or four wheeled mobility scooters for

impaired residents," said Delgany Community Council.

"The proposed Greenway would benefit schoolgoing children, allowing them to cycle to school, as well as adult cycle and scooter commuters, encouraging cycle tourism, leisure/amenity users, and it would promote local businesses to tourists.

"The route is predominantly along the Three Trout Stream. Some areas of the route are already wildlife havens, others are disused but of little amenity value. We support the preservation of existing wildlife, for example bats would be disturbed by bright lighting, but this is not necessary for the Greenway.

"We also support the rewilding and the planting of oak and native woodland along other sections of the route, which would then become accessible for the

general public to enjoy as they travelled the route."

Delgany Community Council see the greenway as a strategic link between Greystones and Delgany that would also help to develop the tourist economies of the local region. They also see the potential for the greenway to link up with a range of existing tourism routes and trails including the Delgany Heritage Trail, the Delgany-Kilcoole Mass Path, Bellvue Wood Nature Reserve (Glen of the Downs), the Greystones Way, Bray to Greystones Cliff Walk, and the proposed East Coast Greenway.

The study notes that both the Wicklow County Development Plan (2016-2022) and the Greystones-Delgany-Kilcoole Local Area Plan (2013-2019) have objectives that would be supported by the development of a green route.

"The Greystones-

Delgany-Kilcoole LAP specifically identifies an indicative green route running along the Three Trout Stream between Barry's Bridge and the coast at Greystones," the study says.

The Feasibility Study was carried out by Fehily Timoney and Company, and was commissioned by Delgany Community Council.

The proposed green route between Delgany and Greystones running along the Three Trout Stream begins at Barry's Bridge on the R762 to Priory Road, to Farrenkelly and then the R761 to Charlesland, then the R774 to the coast. It would be approximately 4km in length. According to the report, "the next step in development of a green route between Delgany and Greystones will be engagement with the Roads and Transport Department of Wicklow County Council."

'Incredulous to describe 20 tons of unaccounted steel as a flaw', says former Arklow skipper

The former owner of the beam trawler m/v Mary Kate WD30, CJ Gaffney, expressed his concern at the lack of understanding by Minister for Agriculture, Food and Marine (DAFM) Charlie McConalogue in relation to the ongoing issue of the beam trawler 'Mary Kate'.

Arklow fisherman Mr Gaffney is seeking compensation for serious safety issues in his trawler which made it unstable and resulted in him losing his livelihood and getting E1 million in debt.

Mr Gaffney met with Minister McConalogue on 16th July but his plea for help was turned down. In a statement to Wicklow Times, the DAFM said "There is no particular provision of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) Regulation that would facilitate an ex-gratia payment to compensate a fishing vessel owner as a consequence of a flaw in his fishing vessel".

Reacting to the statement, the former skipper said "It is incredulous that the Minister would describe 20 tons of unaccounted steel as 'a flaw'. Any structure that has 20 tons of unaccounted steel in it, albeit a skyscraper, a house, or a fishing boat is highly dangerous and presents profoundly serious safety issues, irrespective of the

time frame involved, before the issue manifests itself. Our former beam trawler Mary Kate contained 20 tons of unaccounted steel - this is not a 'flaw'.

"At the time we purchased the vessel in 2007, we adhered to all the requisite rules and regulations applicable both at national level and EU level. The requisite requirements at the time were a stamped Stability Book by a Classification Society and a valid Sailing Certificate issued every two years by the relevant Member State. I have irrefutable, certified, independent professional reports from two eminent naval architects - one being a Professor of Naval Architecture in a well-known Dutch university, which confirm that 20 tons of unaccounted steel must have been present from new build.

"The recent investigation by the Dutch Safety Board has raised serious concerns in relation to stability issues of Dutch built beam

trawlers under 25M and further investigations are needed. The Mary Kate was a Dutch built beam trawler.

"As a family we had an exemplary credit history with local financial institutions and businesses associated with the maritime industry in Munster. Our bank had no problem loaning us money to purchase the Mary Kate WD30. I wholeheartedly refute the Minister's suggestion that the purchase of the Mary Kate was a failed private commercial transaction. The evidence speaks for itself. The Mary Kate's paperwork was inaccurate from the outset. Her Stability Book issued by a German Classification Society was wrong, compounded further with a valid Sailing Certificate issued by the German Ship Safety Division.

"Five generations of seafaring history have perished due to an inaccurate and official stamped German Stability Book. Our livelihoods have been destroyed. We have lost our boat, our fishing license, and our fishing quota, because of an incorrectly stamped Stability Book. I wonder what the Minister would do if he were in our shoes?"



Clogga resident thanks Council for new toilets

From Askintinny originally, Gretta Gleeson has been recovering in Clogga for eight months since suffering a major hip fracture shortly before Christmas... and after being discharged from hospital with Covid 19.

A familiar sight at Clogga car park throughout those eight months, using crutches to walk half a mile, twice a day there, Gretta soon came to see how the many tourists there were badly in need of temporary toilets. Not being one to shirk a challenge she took to pestering the Council with phone calls asking for toilets to be installed there, for an extra rubbish bin and for the badly overgrown verges along the narrow roads to be cut back in the interests of road safety.

Last week the Council installed two toilets and cut back enough overhang to make the roads thereabouts safer to drive. Though still chasing them for the extra rubbish bin she understands that should be coming soon too

Gretta said "whilst Wicklow County Council staff often get a lot of criticism in this case they deserve full praise for listening and delivering to help keep the County looking its best, so it's a big 'Thanks' to the Council, and especially the hard working bin men who keep Clogga clean."

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Councillors call for new maternity hospital to be built on State land

A motion calling for the public ownership and secular governance of the proposed New National Maternity Hospital was passed by a sizable majority by Wicklow County Council at their meeting on July 27th. The motion was tabled by a cross party group of Councillors in response to concerns expressed by community groups Bray and District Council of Trade Unions and North Wicklow for Choice and Equality.

The motion was proposed by Green Party councillor Lourda Scott and was backed by councillors Grace McManus (SF), Mags Crean (Ind), Jodie Neary (SD), Anne Ferris (Lab), and Dermot 'Daisy' O'Brien.

It states that "Wicklow County Council acknowledges the need for a new national maternity hospital (NMH) to provide healthcare in the Greater Dublin Area, including Co. Wicklow. Wicklow County Council notes the lack of legal clarity regarding the ownership and management of the hospital, and also acknowledges the concerns regarding the employment rights for those who will work in the hospital, many of whom live in Wicklow."

"Wicklow County Council agrees to write to the Minister for Health to call for the proposed new publicly-funded NMH to be constructed on land owned by the State; and that, to guarantee its secular ethos, the new facility be fully owned and governed by the State."

The motion was carried 21 to 6. Speaking after the meeting, Cllr Scott said "This motion was brought to us from women in our community that are very worried about the proposed new National Maternity Hospital and the lack of clarity over the ownership of the land where it will be built and who will run it," she said.

"It is crucial that we get this right as it is going to cost the State about €800 million to build and outfit the new Hospital. As it stands it is planned to 'gift' the Hospital to a private entity St Vincents Holdings who will then also run it. So despite the massive financial investment, the State will have no involvement in this private company and the land on which the hospital will be built will remain in church ownership."

"This leads to very real concerns that with the landlord and governing body being Catholic bodies, Catholic Ethos will inform medical decisions. This is simply unacceptable. After years of scan-

dal after scandal regarding women's healthcare, the least we can do is to ensure our National Maternity Hospital remains in public ownership and has a secular ethos. This is critical to ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of current and future generations of Wicklow women."

Sarah Murphy (North Wicklow Together for Yes and Equality) said "It means so much that an overwhelming majority of Councillors of every party and none, stood alongside the women of Wicklow this week to demand a hospital that is fit for purpose and that will provide the full range of available legal services."

"The women of Wicklow deserve nothing less. We hope that Minister for Health, recognises that in his own constituency, we have a chorus of voices demanding nothing less than state ownership to guarantee reproductive healthcare for generations to come. We will not accept ambiguous and opaque agreements where

Canon Law can intercede in the medical decisions of women accessing services. At its simplest, if we pay for it, we should own it."

Cllr Scott concluded: "This discussion has been going on for years and it's time to sort out this mess once and for all. We look forward to hearing a response from Minister Donnelly outlining a clear path forward that is underpinned by legal certainty and not by vague reassurances."

Disagreeing with the motion, Cllr Joe Behan reminded councillors that "42 consultants who work in the National Maternity Hospital Holles Street wrote a letter to the Irish Times at the end of June to express their concern about any possible delay to this project. The letter stated that 'the misinformation that services at the new maternity hospital will be curtailed by any religious ethos is particularly troubling given its inaccuracy'. We're all as concerned as Cllr Scott about women's health and welfare and that of their babies."



Jared Flood takes to the air during the recent hot weather, at Arklow skate park. Pic: Michael Kelly

More good news for Wicklow projects

Bray Area Partnership's IMPACT initiative is one of 45 projects that's been awarded funding in Government's new 'Pathways to Work' strategy.

Minister for Social Protection, Heather Humphreys TD, has announced over €7.5 million in funding to support and improve employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

The funding package is a key element of the Government's Pathways to Work commitments, designed to support people with disabilities to improve their employment skills, advance their education, or start their own business. Bray Area Partnership has been awarded €197,163 to fund the Inclusive Measures Progressing Active Career Targets (IMPACT) Initiative, which is aimed at achieving sustainable routes to employment and career progression for people with disabilities in Bray and North Wicklow.

Following the announcement Minister Simon Harris said: "I am delighted to see the allocation of funding to Bray Area Partnership's IMPACT initiative. Bray Area Partnership have done incredible work with all sectors of the local community to increase equal access to basic services, education, training, and employment for marginalised individuals and groups."

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John Brady TD and Dónal McCormack Chairperson of Blessington Allotments Campaign

Council called on to provide land for allotments

Sinn Féin TD John Brady has commended the work of the Blessington Allotments campaign group and has called on Wicklow County Council to identify and provide Council owned land in all Municipal Districts across the County for Community gardens and allotments.

He made the call following his meeting with members of the Blessington Allotments Group.

Deputy Brady said "It was great today to meet up with members of the Blessington Allotments Group at their new space just outside Blessington. The group currently has the use of a small plot of land there to grow fruit and vegetables after being contacted by the local landowner."

"The area currently available for the group to use is 100 square metres, and it was great to see what has been grown there in the last 2 months since the group have had use of the land."

"It is fantastic to see a local landowner work with the group, however, there is an onus on Wicklow County Council to continue to work with the group to identify council owned land in the Blessington area to accommodate all those who are interested in having an allotment to grow their own fruit and vegetables."

"Wicklow County Council is unfortunately 1 of only 8 local authorities in Ireland that do not provide any allotments or community gardens. There is a growing demand for allotments and community gardens, Wicklow County Council must proactively work to identify sites on Council owned land in every urban area within the county to be used to grow fruit and vegetables by the local community."

OPW Minister visits flood relief scheme and heritage site

Minister of State with responsibility for the Office of Public Works (OPW), Patrick O'Donovan, T.D., last week visited County Wicklow at the invitation of Minister Simon Harris.

At their first stop in Arklow, the two Ministers had the opportunity to meet with OPW engineers and local councillors to familiarise themselves with the proposed flood relief scheme developed there to address the risks of coastal and fluvial flooding in the town.

Speaking after this meeting, Minister O'Donovan said: "The OPW and Wicklow County Council have been working with engineering consultants to assess and develop a scheme for the Avoca River which is viable, cost effective and sustainable. When it is completed, this scheme will protect 637 residential properties and 141 commercial properties, providing protection from the kinds of tidal and river flooding events we have witnessed here repeatedly in the past twenty years."

The proposed scheme will involve the construction of flood defences and an embankment, as well as conveyance improvements in the Avoca River, including deepening of the river channel, the introduction of new debris and gravel traps, public realm improve-



Minister Patrick O'Donovan

ments, and strengthening works to the existing quay walls and Arklow Bridge. It has an estimated total project budget of €28.5m and is currently at planning stage with An Bord Pleanála following the completion of an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and a Natura Impact Assessment (NIS).

The second stop on their

itinerary was the sixth-century 'Monastic City' of Glendalough, which attracts over 700,000 visitors a year. Minister O'Donovan and Minister Harris visited the interpretive centre first before exploring the remains of St Kevin's monastery with its superb round tower, numerous medieval stone churches and decorated crosses.

Having recently launched the "Protect our Past" campaign to raise awareness of the vulnerability and significance of Ireland's national monuments, Minister O'Donovan emphasised their importance to our understanding of the past, our wellbeing and our future legacy: "Our monuments are a source of pride and define our sense of place. We are very lucky indeed to have access to many precious heritage sites all over Ireland and our responsible behaviour in the present can ensure that generations after us will still derive the sense of wonder and joy we feel in such a special setting as this today."

Sinn Fein President visits Open Door and women's refuge

Sinn Féin President Mary Lou McDonald TD was in Wicklow last week where she accompanied local TD John Brady and councillors Dermot O'Brien and Grace McManus in visits to Bray Women's Refuge and the Open Door Day Centre.

Deputy McDonald said that the work done by both organisations is incredibly important to the local community.

Deputy McDonald said: "We are here to listen to experiences of those on the frontlines."

Deputy Brady said "The role of voluntary and community groups can never be overstated, particularly as we continue to emerge from the pandemic."

"Organisations such as Bray Women's Refuge and the Open Door Day Centre do absolutely Trojan work every day of the week."

"Domestic violence is a scourge on our society. Over the course of the Covid crisis, we have seen a

stark increase in the number of women reaching out for help.

"Refuges like the one in Bray provide a lifeline of services for women and children who have suffered abuse in the home. Political leaders must match the dedication of those on the ground by advancing legislation that will make Ireland a safer place for the victims and survivors of abuse."

Praising the work of the Open Door Day Centre, Deputy Brady added: "Those living with disabilities, their carers and their families have had especially tough times during the pandemic, especially as day centres were shut down for long periods. "The services, supports and sense of community that the Open Door Day Centre provides are vital to allow people living with disabilities to lead a full life. "The crisis has demonstrated that the government must urgently deliver better investment and support for the disability sector right across the board. They can no longer be the forgotten people."



Sinn Féin President Mary Lou McDonald, Deputy John Brady, Cllrs Dermot O'Brien and Grace McManus with some of the staff in Open Door

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Love Wicklow, Look for Local



Dining Locally

As we look forward to the resumption of indoor dining, albeit on a limited basis, dining outdoors remains a good option.

Dining outdoors in any part of our beautiful County has never been easier, with restaurants and cafés opening their doors and embracing the spaces outside. Many businesses have provided additional seating, sheltered areas along with light and heat to ensure that we can continue to enjoy our food outdoors even when the weather is less than ideal.

Wicklow County Council is working with the hospitality sector to support outdoor dining, adding to the atmosphere and vibrancy of our towns and villages. A number of measures have been introduced to support attractions, hotels, restaurants, cafés and now pubs (including non-food serving pubs).

Additional outdoor dining spaces have been created in a number of our towns through the re-purposing of parking spaces.

Grants are available for businesses in the hospitality sector. The Outdoor Seating and Accessories for Tourism and Hospitality Business Scheme will remain open until 30th September 2021 and all eligible businesses are encouraged to apply. See www.wicklow.ie/ConsultationHub

Wicklow County Council has also secured over €200,000 in funding from Fáilte Ireland for additional outdoor seating and weatherproofing so that outdoor dining can continue on a year round basis at Market Square, Wicklow and Abbey Lane, Arklow. This will provide a great boost for businesses in these areas in addition to encouraging outdoor dining, it also increases footfall in our towns, bringing back the vibrancy that has been missing during lockdown.

Wicklow Naturally

Wicklow Naturally is the food and beverage producers' network for County Wicklow with close to 100 members. The network's aim is to work together to promote local produce for local consumers, to tell the Wicklow food story, to develop a Food Activity Calendar and to increase food stakeholder networking.

A growing number of cafés, restaurants, hotels and retailers are Wicklow Naturally members.

As part of the Look for Local initiative why not make a special effort to look for the Wicklow Naturally label when shopping. There is a delicious range of produce from eggs and dairy, to jams and chutneys, locally produced honey, rapeseed oil, wines, gin whiskeys and beer.

Wicklow Naturally members are working with local tourism attractions and hospitality providers to offer unique

food experiences. Watch out for distillery and winery tours, cookery classes, foraging, to name but a few experiences on offer.

The Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Shay Cullen said: "We want people to be a part of the Wicklow Food Story. Look in your local shops for food and drink that is produced in County Wicklow. Look at the menus in your favourite local restaurant to choose dishes with a taste of Wicklow. You might be surprised with what you find".



Town Re-opening

As towns and villages across County Wicklow open up following the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions, it is time to highlight some of the actions taken and supports provided to business and the wider community.

Town Re-opening meetings were led by each of the Municipal Districts. An Garda Síochána, the Town Team, Chambers of Commerce and representatives of the business community participated in these meetings resulting in a range of measures to increase safety in public spaces, for people to move around and businesses to operate in. In terms of presentation, each town is putting its best foot forward by providing flower baskets, bunting, music and shop local initiatives.

Wicklow Passport

For most families in Ireland, foreign holidays are not an option, this summer. Wicklow residents are particularly blessed with all that is on offer in the County for "staycationers" or days out with family as "daycationers". Aside from our blue flag beaches Wicklow has our mountains and forests with a range of activities to suit all age groups and all pockets. One of the most successful initiatives introduced recently by Wicklow Tourism is the Wicklow Passport.

The "Camino" style Wicklow Passport encourages visitors to drive, cycle or walk the length and breadth of Wicklow and discover new places

to see and things to do. There are more than 20 stamps to collect, each stamp representing the main towns and villages in Wicklow. Visitors can get their passport stamped at participating businesses in or around the various locations represented on the stamps.

"The Wicklow Passport offers a fantastic way to get visitors to the lesser-known areas in Wicklow" said Frank Curran, Chief Executive, Wicklow County Council adding: "This is a great opportunity for towns and villages to promote what is on offer by way of attractions, retail and hospitality in their area".

Anyone collecting more than 15 stamps can claim the Wicklow Ambassador certificate and will receive a special gift. The Wicklow Passport can be ordered online <http://visitwicklow.ie/passport> or purchased at participating resellers for €2.

Arklow

Arklow Municipal District has worked in conjunction with local stakeholders including Arklow Town Team, Chamber of Commerce and Tidy Towns to make Arklow ready for re-opening. Public spaces will be enhanced with the provision of new planters and benches for the Main Street, with additional bins also to be provided.

A new Shop Local poster has been designed for the approach roads into the town to encourage people to shop local and support their town. It also promotes Free Weekend Parking that is available in Arklow every Saturday and Sunday. Stickers with the Arklow Shop Local Logo have been distributed to the businesses to place in their shop windows.

The Flower Basket Scheme continues for 2021. Arklow Municipal District staff assisted the Arklow Town Team in erecting flower baskets to bring colour and vibrancy to our town centre. Generous sponsorship from local businesses that were able to continue operating during the COVID-19 Level 5 restrictions has funded the Flower Basket Scheme this year. Arklow's 19 Arches Bridge, is also in bloom thanks to a project completed

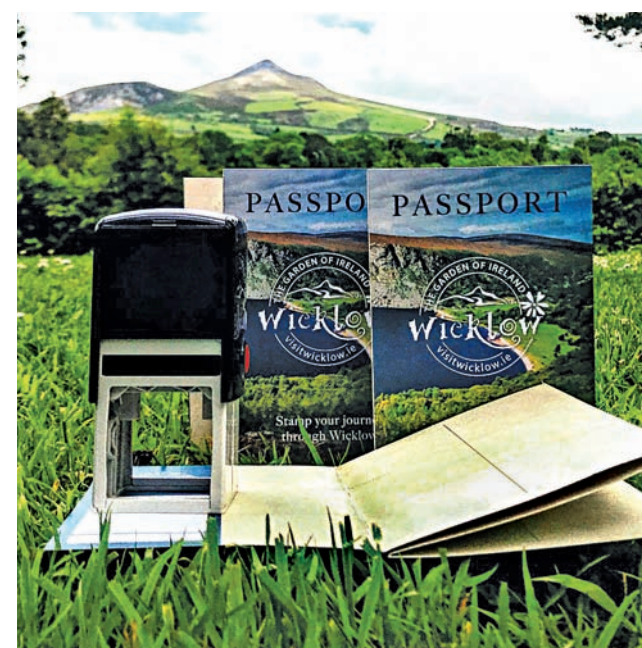
BLESSINGTON IS OPEN FOR BUSINESS FREE MONTHLY DRAW for July, August & September



Image created by Niamh from West Wicklow Youth Project

Join us with our **Support Local Initiative** brought to you by the Baltinglass Municipal District, Wicklow County Council

1. Simply spend €10 in a local shop
2. Take a photo of your receipt
3. Email your photo to blesingtonshoplocal1@gmail.com to be in with a chance to win a €100 voucher each month winner announced on Blessington & District Forum FB page First Monday of each month
4. When sending receipt please do not include any personal information, we will contact winner by return email



by the Town Team. The bridge will be in bloom throughout the summer and winter months with pollinator friendly planters.

A new VisitArklow.ie website and video has been launched to promote Arklow Town and its environs. All local tourism and hospitality businesses were offered a free business listing on the website. Arklow Municipal District has engaged the services of a marketing consultant who has put a social media and content management plan in place to continue this promotion.

Keep an eye out for a new Treasure Trail coming to Arklow soon. The Trail will be an enjoyable way to explore your local area.

Blessington

Blessington Town Team and Blessington District Forum have worked with Baltinglass Municipal District to support town re-opening initiatives. Extra seating, flower boxes, baskets and planters will be erected throughout the town in conjunction with the invaluable support of Blessington Tidy Towns volunteers and local business owners.

Plans are in place to hold a community road show in the town which would bring community groups together with a strong united message of promoting the local community.

Support Local First is a shop local campaign for Blessington, with rewards for shoppers. It is simple to take part:

1. Simply spend €10 in local shop
2. Take a photo of your receipt
3. Email the photo to blessingtonshoplocal1@gmail.com to be in with a chance to win a €100 voucher each month for July, August and September.

Winners will be announced on the Baltinglass Municipal District website and the Blessington & District Forum Facebook page

Also as part of the Support Local campaign "Promote positive mental health and wellbeing" campaign, graphics/poster campaign/logo will be showcased around the town. The graphics will include inspiring words aimed to encourage good positive vibes within the community. The West Wicklow Youth project have kindly given their time and expertise to get involved in this campaign and have designed the eye-catching graphics.

Bray

- Bray.ie introduced dedicated COVID-19 information hubs which continue to connect local businesses with customers, share some practical hints, tips, supports and links to help our town and community bounce back.
- Shop Local First initiative to encourage consumers to spend locally. Read more and watch the 'Bray Bouncing Back... Eat, Shop, Unwind, Repeat' promotional video at www.bray.ie/shoplocalfirst/.
- Bray.ie's new-look website and its comprehensive communications strategy aims to increase engagement with our online audience and ultimately convert them into potential visitors. Why not take a look around the new-look website and enjoy the improved content, navigation and search functionality here: www.bray.ie/bray-ie-gets-a-new-look-website/.
- Bray.ie launched its summer tourism campaign for 2021 on Wednesday, May 26th 2021. The aim of the initiative is to encourage Irish holiday-makers to take their safe summer staycation in Bray to help boost the local economy Read more here: www.bray.ie/summer2021/.

Greystones

Greystones Municipal District engaged with local businesses, particularly those in the hospitality sector, in relation to street furniture and to offer advice and support in relation to managing queues.

The following measures have been implemented in Greystones Municipal District:

1. Planters and bollards have been installed on Church Road to re-allocate public road space to facilitate social distancing and to support local businesses for loss of internal space
2. Provision of footpath stencils to assist with socially distanced queues
3. Additional toilet facilities at Greystones Harbour
4. Temporary toilet block at South Beach car park for summer months
5. Additional litter bins provided in Burnaby Park and south beach area, including special bins for the disposal of pizza boxes
6. 'Drop and Collect' and 'Age Friendly' parking spaces have been provided in the town centre to facilitate parking closer to shops

Wicklow Town

Wicklow Municipal District, Wicklow Town Team and Wicklow and District Chamber of Commerce are working collaboratively on a shop local promotion for Wicklow town. Customers can enter into a draw by sending their



receipts/proof of purchase to Wicklow and District Chamber of Commerce confirming their spend in a local shop. Minimum spend to participate is €10. The competition will run through the months of July and August with two massive hampers of produce from local shops to be won. The more often you shop, the more often you can enter.

Customers and businesses can support the local economy through the use of Wicklow Shop Local Vouchers. When buying presents in Wicklow, consider gifting a Wicklow Shop Local Voucher; these are available from Wicklow Town and District Chamber of Commerce, Bridge Street Books, Connollys Menswear and online www.wicklowtown.ie/vouchers

Many Wicklow businesses are participating in the "We Pay your Parking" - €1 refund scheme. Spend €30 euro in a single transaction and receive a €1 rebate.

Shop Local Signage has been erected at the main entry points to Wicklow town supporting the Shop Local message.

Temporary toilet facilities have been provided by Wicklow Municipal District in Wicklow Harbour in order to support a safer outdoor summer.

The new toilets units will facilitate outdoor activities and leisure in the Harbour area for the summer months and are open from 10am to 5.30pm daily.

Local Enterprise Office Wicklow

A new campaign by the Local Enterprise Offices, which was launched this week, is asking consumers in County Wicklow to look for local when they are shopping for products, services and experiences this Summer. The Look for Local campaign, supported by Enterprise Ireland and the Local Authorities, aims to raise awareness of the benefit of spending in your local area.

Research that was carried out as part of the first Look for Local campaign which was run by Local Enterprise Office Wicklow in November and December 2020 showed that Irish consumers were 83% more likely to look local for products and services in 2021.

This campaign aims to strengthen that sentiment and to educate con-

sumers on the domino effect that local spending has throughout their community. Every €10 spent in County Wicklow on Irish products and services generates more than €40 of benefit to County Wicklow in terms of employment.

The Look for Local campaign will run across the summer on national, local and online / digital media and will promote small businesses across the country and the benefit of spending with them.

Vibeke Delahunt, Head of Enterprise, said; "Since the onset of Covid-19, the Local Enterprise Offices have been working closely with small businesses across the country to help sustain them with financial supports, training, mentoring and consultancy for all areas of their business. Now it's our turn as consumers to Look for Local with the economy reopening.

Every Euro you spend with a local business is an investment in the community around it and the quality of goods, services and experiences on our doorstep is second to none. Not only that but it makes a positive environmental, economic and societal impact. This Summer we are asking everyone to Look for Local and support businesses and jobs in their community."

For more information on the campaign go to www.LocalEnterprise.ie/LookforLocal and agencies, businesses and consumers will also be encouraged to use #LookforLocal on social media to help support the campaign.

Cllr Shay Cullen, Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council explained that "the Look for Local campaign acts as a reminder to people to support their local businesses by making a conscious effort to shop local and dine local. Outdoor dining also helps to create an ambience for visitors to our County and encourages them to try local eateries also"

Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council, Mr Frank Curran, said: "We would encourage everyone to Look for Local where possible. Think Local, Shop Local, Dine Local, Support Local. All of these actions help to save local businesses and protect local jobs".

Remember to keep well and adhere to the public health guidelines on hand hygiene, cough etiquette, social distancing and the wearing of masks. Please visit www.wicklow.ie for more information.





Sinoy Allyboccus, Emma Balmaine; Chief Executive of Saint John of God Hospital, Elaine Lawless, Niamh McGrath, Patricia McCoy; Director of Nursing, Ciara McGrane, Catherine

Saint Joseph's staff celebrate their 'outstanding' dementia care culture

The team of health care workers at Saint Joseph's Shankill, took advantage of the sunny weather to gather to recognise and celebrate being rated as 'Outstanding' in the highly-regarded internationally recognised accreditation from care and culture consultancy, Meaningful Care Matters, for the successful implementation of its person-centred care model 'The Butterfly Approach'.

The model allows Saint Joseph's Shankill to provide dementia-specific person-centred care, focussing on the social, emotional, psychological and physical needs of people at all stages of dementia in a real home environment, where their feelings matter most.

The team are no strangers to celebrations as late last year they were awarded the 2020 Charity Impact award from The Wheel, and they achieved the Volunteer Ireland, Investing in Volunteers Award at the beginning of 2021.

Saint Joseph's Shankill is the largest care home in Ireland solely dedicated to dementia care, and they are living up to their vision to lead the way in delivering outstanding care through innovation, education and community engagement. The team is committed to developing best practices that



Reps from Avoca Lodge team; Emma Balmaine; Chief Executive of Saint John of God Hospital, Ann Neary, Bell Barrio, Patricia McCoy; Director of Nursing, Lucy Cisz

others can replicate, and where families, staff, volunteers and communities are supported, engaged and empowered to ensure people with dementia enjoy the quality of life they deserve.

Newly appointed Director of Nursing, Patricia McCoy, said: "It

has been wonderful to celebrate the achievements of the team today at this staff celebration. It has given me the opportunity to meet everyone, and congratulate them all on the success of attaining this 'Outstanding' grade from Meaningful Care Matters

for The Butterfly Approach. It is obvious everyone here has worked so hard to create this culture of care and make it a way of life. Outstanding is not an act for people here at Saint Joseph's, it is a way of life."

She continued: "I am really excited to join this team and to play my part in the next stage of Saint Joseph's development and continue to create a loving environment where everyone matters and each person is free to be themselves, whether they are a resident, a relative, a volunteer, or a member of staff."

For more information on Meaningful Care Matters and its cultural transformation models, visit <https://meaningfulcarematters.com/>. Alternatively, for more information on Saint Joseph's Shankill, visit <https://sain-josephsshankill.ie/>.



Representing Rathmichael Lodge; Rafael Borja, Emma Balmaine; Chief Executive of Saint John of God Hospital, Radovan Kovac, John Murphy, Patricia McCoy; Director of Nursing, Marivic O'Brien

KWETB's drive to boost employment

Simon Harris, Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science is launching two initiatives being delivered by Kildare and Wicklow Education and Training Board (KWETB) to help meet employer demands in the hospitality, tourism and catering industry in Ireland.

The two training initiatives, developed in partnership with The Talbot Collection and Bretzel Bakery, are funded through 'Skills to Advance', a national initiative providing upskilling opportunities for employees to progress in their careers, and 'Skills to Compete', a traineeship that helps the unemployed and career changers gain the skills needed for the workplace.

They offer a work-based model and successful participants, who should be aged 18+, will have the opportunity for employment within the participating organisations, with the Talbot Collection offering a two-year employment contract and the opportunity for further education and training through an apprenticeship.

Minister Harris, said: "I'm delighted to be lending my support to KWETB and these initiatives. They are an exciting opportunity for anyone looking to develop new skills and further their career."

"The hospitality, tourism, and catering industry is essential to the Irish economy, and unfortunately, it is also a sector that has been so heavily affected by the COVID-19 pandemic."

"With this in mind, I welcome these training programmes, which are the next phase in a drive to boost the hospitality, tourism, and catering workforce, and I look forward to hearing about the success of the future candidates on the programmes."

Eileen Cullen, Training and Innovation Services Manager, from KWETB said: "KWETB is at the forefront educating and training workforces across all sectors, however hospitality and tourism are very close to our hearts. Earlier this year we launched a very successful programme upskilling existing hospitality talent and now this new initiative creates opportunities for those new to industry, offering on-the-job learning and the opportunity for employment upon completion."

"It's been a very difficult year for the industry and we are thrilled to be able to launch these two initiatives today, with the support of Minister Harris, and in partnership with The Talbot Collection and Bretzel



Minister Simon Harris, with Richard Brady, Head Chef at the Talbot Hotel, Stillorgan, and and Mateusz Piwowarczyk, head baker at Bretzel Bakery.

Bakery, which aim to grow a workforce heavily depleted during the pandemic. Anyone interested in applying for this fantastic opportunity can contact us at trainingcourses@kwetb.ie for more info. You never know what the future may hold!"

The Talbot Collection's 'Chef Development Programme', delivered by KWETB, will see 20 successful applicants take part in a 12-week training course in the state-of-the-art training facilities at Marine House, The Murrough, Wicklow Town and Bray Institute of Further Education.

Candidates will be accommodated in the Talbot Hotel, Stillorgan, for the duration of the program and will receive a City and Guilds Level 2 Diploma in Culinary Skills plus will be offered a two-year contract of employment with the Talbot Collection upon completion at one of their six locations across Ireland.

Philip F. Gavin, Group Managing Director of The Talbot Collection commented on the initiative: "We are absolutely delighted to have the opportunity to partner with the KWETB and have Minister Harris launch our Talbot Collection Chef Development Programme. This represents a significant investment for the Collection."

"It is widely accepted that there is a shortage of professional chefs nationwide. Never has it been more important to invest in our future, for the future. We are very excited to offer this unique and fantastic opportunity to cooking enthusiasts in our communities who wish to pursue a prosperous career as a professional chef."

The Bretzel Bakery 'Artisan Bakery Traineeship' will offer 12-16 successful applicants the chance to learn on the job and capture the basics of professional artisan baking through a 24 week training course. The traineeship will take place in Kilcullen, Co Kildare and will see the applicants develop work-based skills in Bretzel's state-of-the-art bakery school.

Mateusz Piwowarczyk, Production Manager for Bretzel Bakery, is a great supporter of the traineeship and said: "I took a job as a baker but it was the influence of a great teacher that made me want to be a gold medal winning Baker. Bretzel Bakery and KWETB could be the teacher that makes the difference for you!"

Both programmes are open to applicants from all over Ireland. For more information on KWETB or to learn about the two training initiatives contact trainingcourses@kwetb.ie.



Pictured at the Talbot Hotel in Stillorgan is Philip F. Galvin, Group Managing Director of The Talbot Collection; Richard Brady, Chef at Talbot Hotel Stillorgan; Mateusz Piwowarczyk, Baker at Bretzel Bakery; Dymphna O'Brien, Managing Director of Bretzel Bakery; Minister Simon Harris; Eileen Cullen, Training and Innovation Services Manager, KWETB; Ray Tedders, BIFE Principal.

Wicklow Rotary Club's new President

Peter Byrne announces Wicklow Rotary Club's 2021-22 Programme

Andy Bolger, outgoing President of the Rotary Club of Wicklow handed over the chain of office to Peter Byrne last week. "Despite the disruption caused by Covid-19, the club reached all its funding targets under Andy's stewardship," said Peter who is the 34th President of Wicklow Rotary.

"It is a great honour to follow in the footsteps of Andy and other presidents since the club was chartered in 1988," he said. "While the club has supported a wide range of worthy international project, we have been especially proud to support local charitable and educational initiatives. In all over €600,000 has been provided to these projects."

He outlined his programme for the coming year. "This year has been challenging due to Covid-19 and it is likely that some events will be curtailed for some time to come," he said.

It is of particular regret that we had to postpone the Nell Healy People of the Year Awards for the second year, but if restrictions continue to be lifted, we plan to get this volunteering flagship project back on the calendar of Rotary events in 2022."

He said the annual Rotary Golf Classic is going ahead on Friday September 10 under the direction of fellow Rotarian, golfer and golf historian Alistair Smith. "Further details on the Golf Classic are available from Alistair (086 255 0855) and funds raised will support local charities and voluntary organisations as well as international charities. We also plan to



New Wicklow Rotary Club President Peter Byrne

organise the annual Remembrance Tree this year which will be situated in the beautifully renovated Fitzwilliam Square.

Details on a number of other projects in areas such as mental health - with Foroige - education and the environment will be announced later in the year."

The Rotary Club of Wicklow is part of Rotary International, a worldwide association whose motto is 'Service above Self'. Club members use their profes-

sional skills and expertise in volunteer work in the community and overseas. "The club welcomes new members," said Peter. "We have a current membership of 40 but it is important to recruit more members to

carry out projects in the community. We hope to return to face-to-face meetings early next year. In this regard I would like to thank all our members and guest speakers who contributed to our Zoom meetings throughout the year."

Peter Byrne was born in

Roundwood in 1946, and is son of Peter Byrne, Champion Horse Ploughman for over 50 years. He started work in 1964 as Insurance Clerk at Insurance Corporation of Ireland before he decided to get into the computer industry in 1967. Unable to find any options for this type of employment in Ireland, Peter emigrated to England and got a position in the operations department of the University of Birmingham.

In 1969 he went to London and got a role as Systems Analyst with Reed International, before he moved back to Ireland in 1972 to work with Glen Abbey as Systems Analyst.

In 1974 he joined Unilever and worked on designing commercial applications for HB Ice Cream in Rathfarnham, and in 1978 he got an opportunity to join Nixdorf Computer as a business support person on their commercial software which ran on mini computer networks. Nixdorf had a manufacturing site at Boghall Road, Bray.

He had a variety of roles at Nixdorf over a 25 year period and is now retired and living in Wicklow Town. He is married to Susie and they have four children and nine grandchildren.

'Serve to change lives'

Outlining his plans for 2021-22, Peter says he'll be adhering to the Rotary motto - 'serve to change lives'.

Regarding the Rotary club's membership, Peter says he wants to evolve the meeting format, with a possible combination of zoom and in-person meetings. He wants to liaise with local organisations such as the Chamber of Commerce and enterprise boards, and use social media to encourage contact from individuals.

Peter says he wants to improve the Rotary club's image through driving awareness of what they do, celebrating and sharing their achievements, and engaging with their Facebook followers.

Important upcoming projects for the Rotary Club in the year ahead include: Working with The Way Project on the Youth Mental Health Programme; Tidy Towns projects; Lend With Care Project; the People of the Year Awards in 2022; Bikes for Africa; Parental accommodation at Crumlin Hospital; Home lighting kits in Kenya, an on going project; The Remembrance Tree; the Rotary Golf Classic. Fundraising during Covid has been very difficult, Peter says, as it has been for all charitable organisations. "We're again seeking support from our friends for the Remembrance tree, Annual Quiz, Golf Classic, Philanthropy, and Sponsorship."



Wicklow Rotary Club President Peter Byrne with outgoing President Andy Bolger

Best wishes Peter

Joe Roberts
Wicklow Press

Best wishes Peter

Brendan Newsome
Wire Ropes Ltd.

All the best Peter

Deane & Theo
Turner Phelan Ltd.

Best wishes Peter

Seamus Parle
Cooney Parle Accountants

All the best Peter

Sam Hartshorn
Ashford Storage

Bray and Brittas shine in coastal litter survey

While the majority of our beaches and harbours are falling short of clean status, Bray and Brittas Bay are both 'Clean to European norms'. That's according to a nationwide litter survey by business group Irish Business Against Litter (IBAL). 40% of 32 coastal areas surveyed were clean, but there was a rise in areas branded 'littered' or 'heavily littered'.

Beaches, harbours, rivers and their immediate environs were monitored by the Environmental Education Unit of An Taisce in June and July. The An Taisce report for Bray stated: "The beach and the immediate hinterland in Bray were excellent with regard to litter. The area is exceptionally well served by anti litter notices and litter bins (some permanent, but many temporary ones) - this, combined with a cleaning regime, is certainly having the desired effect. It was really a credit to the users of the facilities and those responsible for the maintenance. Dog fouling notices were quite graphic, there was a complete lack of dog fouling throughout an extensive survey area. Along the beach itself, there was signage '3 for the Sea, please pick up 3 pieces of plastic each time you visit the beach' - there was no visible plastic to be seen on the beach."

The report for Brittas Bay stated: "The beach was excellent with regard to litter and the overall impression of the beach and associated car parks was of a very well respected and managed environment. The Recycle Bins in South

Car Park were very fresh in appearance and there was no litter in the vicinity of same. A fairly novel feature was the voice recording 'anti-litter' message along the pedestrian pathway from both car parks. Anti-litter notices at both car parks were so worn away that the text was illegible. One way of dealing with the accumulation of cigarette butts at the base of the picnic tables at this, combined with a South Car Parks is so install cigarette butt units at each picnic table - this has been done to great effect in other places. Erosion control signage was clear and legible."

The Cathaoirleach of Bray Municipal District, Cllr Aoife Flynn Kennedy, expressed her delight at the results of the Coastal Litter Survey. Bray Seafront has been deemed to 'Clean to European Norms'.

Cllr Flynn Kennedy stated: "This was testament to the investment by Wicklow County Council into Bray Seafront every year. Great credit must go to the staff of Bray Municipal District who for years has made the seafront the jewel in the crown for Bray."

"The past year has been a difficult time for everyone but the outdoor spaces such as Bray Seafront have been a council priority to ensure that everyone can enjoy this space in a safe and clean environment". Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council, Mr Frank Curran, said: "This acknowledgement of the work and investment by Wicklow County Council is fantastic. We have invested heavily in solar powered litter bins, and new water bottle refill stations. I want to complement the staff in Bray who have been working tirelessly this past year".

"However, at the bottom end of the table, we've seen many areas deteriorate from 'moderately littered' to 'littered'."

"As well as local authorities, credit is due to growing number of Clean Coast volunteer groups, now 1,500-strong, who work so hard to keep our beaches free of litter. Their efforts are clearly bearing fruit," adds Mr Horgan.

The most common forms of litter found by the assessors were cigarette butts, sweet wrappers, disposable masks and plastic bottles, with coffee cups also featuring strongly. Alcohol cans were found in almost half of all sites.

"The majority of these litter item are plastics, whose impact on the marine environment is a recognised source of global concern. Cigarette butts, for example, may appear harmless, but they are in effect a single-use plastic which poses a real danger to our sea life." Research shows a single butt can contaminate up to 200 litres of water.

"We all need to realise that the implications of litter along our coasts go beyond tourism and recreation. It presents an existential threat to our planet."

New Wicklow Town Heritage Trail opening soon

The new Wicklow Town Heritage Trail, which has been in planning for over 2 years will be opening shortly and will be a great addition to the tourist offering of the capital town.

The Heritage Trail, which is funded by the County Wicklow Partnership, has been a core project for the Wicklow Town Team and great work has been carried out by the Wicklow Town Tourism Team and Wicklow Municipal Council in ensuring that the project is close to completion.

The Heritage Trail will feature 24 points of interest, detailing the history of Wicklow Town, from the landing of St. Patrick in 432 to the end of the Civil War in 1922.

There will be 7 story-boards featuring the construction of St. Patrick's church, which commenced in 1839, the story of the Franciscan Abbey, which dates back to the 12th Century, Robert Halpin's achievement in laying the Trans-Atlantic cable, the story of Billy

Byrne and the 1798 Rising, the history of the Black Castle, the attempted landing by St. Patrick at Travelahawk beach and all of the history relating to the Barrow Green including stories of the secret burials that took place there.

There is now a mural in place, painted by local artist Robert Teeling, at the top of Quarantine Hill, featuring a petty criminal in stocks, getting his punishment from the locals for the crime he had committed.

On all of the story-boards, there will be QR codes, which will enable each tourist to view a video with local actors at each site telling the significance of each site.

Currently there are 10,000 brochures being printed, which will be available at key tourist points

throughout the county to promote the new Wicklow Town Heritage Trail.

Sincere Thanks is due to local historian, John Finlay for his expertise in assisting the accuracy and context of all the material featured in the videos and the printed brochures.

There will be a dedicated video channel on the WicklowTown.ie website in addition to all the text in relation to the significance of each of the 24 sites.

It is expected that the video channel will go live in mid-August when all of the other items in relation to the walk have been complete.

Wicklow Town is currently undergoing a real revival, with the development of Fitzwilliam Square and the Market Square. The new Wicklow Town Heritage Trail will now provide the town with a first class tourist attraction.



Audrey Doherty and Jane Moules from Aughrim make a donation of €1,006 to Our Lady's Hospice and Care Services - Wicklow Hospice



COMHAIRLE CONTAE CHILL MHANTÁIN
WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL DRAFT COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2021-2027

Wicklow County Council has prepared a Draft County Development Plan. The Draft Plan comprises a Written Statement, Maps and Appendices and is accompanied by an Environmental Report, a Habitats Directive Appropriate Assessment and a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. The Draft Plan includes proposals to make additions, deletions and amendments to the Record of Protected Structures.

Display of Draft Plan

The public display of the Draft Plan has been extended until **30 August 2021**.

The Draft Plan and associated documents are available to view and download from the consultation portal consult.wicklow.ie.

Printed copies are on display at the following locations from **04 June 2021 to 30 August 2021**:

Wicklow Town	County Buildings, Station Road, Wicklow Town	Tel: 0404 20100
Arklow	Arklow Municipal District Office, Castle Park, Arklow Town	Tel: 0402 42700
Blessington	Blessington Civic Offices, Blessington Business Park, Blessington	Tel: 045 891 222
Bray	Bray Municipal District Office, Civic Offices, Main Street, Bray	Tel: 01 274 4900
Greystones	Greystones Municipal District Office, Mill Road, Greystones	Tel: 01 287 6694

Please check the Council's website or call the numbers listed above for arrangements to access to these buildings as appointments may be necessary having regard to prevailing COVID precautions.

If you have any questions about the Draft Plan or wish to speak to a member of the plan team, contact the Planning Department on 0404 20100 or email forwardplanning@wicklowcoco.ie.

Making a submission

Submissions or observations regarding the Draft Plan, the associated Environmental Reports and the proposed additions / deletions / amendments to the Record of Protected Structures are invited from the public and interested bodies. Children, or groups or associations representing the interests of children, are entitled to make submissions or observations. All written submissions or observations will be duly considered by the Planning Authority and taken into consideration before the making of the plan.

Submissions may be made in one of the following ways:

1. Via the Consultation Portal consult.wicklow.ie.
2. Write to: County Development Plan Review, Planning Department, Wicklow County Council, Station Road, Wicklow Town.

Email submissions will not be accepted.

CLOSING DATE FOR SUBMISSIONS: 5:00pm 30 August 2021.

Late submissions will not be accepted.

Wicklow Local Authorities are committed to Access For All. Please contact Wicklow County Council on 0404-20100 should you have any specific access requirements.

Ardmore Rovers launch new girls section

Ardmore Rovers are starting a new girls section within the club beginning in August. An open training session for U8, U9, and U10's (born 2014, 2013 and 2012) will be held in St Kilians School, Bray, on Saturday August 7, 2021 between 10am to 11am.

If interested in attending please email your name, date of birth and contact number to register@ardmoreroverters.com.

"We are also absolutely delighted to have our full Irish International cap holder, Rachel Jenkins, heading up the new girls section and we are really looking forward to having her back involved with the club," Ardmore Rovers Chairman Ciaran O'Connor says.

"Rachel brings a wealth of footballing experience with her from her days in Ardmore Rovers to winning National Leagues and FAI cups to representing Ireland at International level. It's very exciting times ahead."

Ardmore Rovers was founded in 1979 in Bray and is one of the largest clubs in the county with 575 members playing from its cubs academy right up to Leinster Senior League level.

It is a rapidly growing club, caters for more than 40 teams and is run by over 100 local volunteers.

"I believe it is an exciting opportunity for the development of girls football in Bray and surrounding areas," says Rachel.

"The new section in Ardmore Rovers will very much look the same as the boys set-up, but we now have an exciting opportunity for girls to play and to

compete against other teams.

"I am really looking forward to providing more opportunities and a stronger pathway for girls and girls football."

Rachel Jenkins joined an Ardmore Rovers boys team as nine-year-old year old before making the Wicklow Euro Tab team and then joining Lourdes Celtic's Girls team.

She last played for Ardmore Rovers at u13 level, because at the time girls were not allowed to play with the boys above this age group.

She subsequently moved to the Dublin Ladies League where she won National Titles and was capped at all

International levels up to Senior.

"The girls section be working closely with the boys teams that we already have in place," Ardmore Rovers' Dan Kiely says. "We are looking to provide a clear pathway for the girls with the longer term vision of a ladies team being created in the not too distant future."

"We also want to help provide the girls with competitive fixtures and a robust training program. We can't wait to get started with the training sessions and look forward to seeing the girls in action very soon."



Denise Gaule, and Whitehall Colmcille's Megan Foster at the launch of John West Féile 2021 at Croke Park. Pic: Sportsfile

'No Wicklow player left behind'

John West, sponsors of the GAA's annual Féile na nÓg (football) and Féile na nGael (camogie and hurling) competitions, says it is delighted to honour its pledge that 'no Wicklow child would be left behind' following the cancellation of last year's events.

This year's running of the competition will see it initially take place on a county basis, with the age-grade moving to under-15, ensuring children who missed out in 2020 now get a chance to compete for the opportunity to represent their club and county in Croke Park or Semple Stadium at Halloween.

John West Féile has brought together thousands of young hurlers, camogie players and Gaelic footballers in a celebration of the GAA's community ethos through underage competition. This is the sixth year of John West's sponsorship of what has grown to become one of the biggest underage sporting events in Europe.

The 2021 John West Féile na

nGael hurling and camogie events, which this year celebrate their 50th anniversary, will take place across individual counties on August 21st. The Féile na nÓg football events will take place on August 28th.

Clubs which are successful in their county John West Féile can win the opportunity to play in Croke Park over the Halloween period.

To mark the 50th anniversary of John West Féile na nGael, a special event will be organised in Tipperary in which club representatives from the counties which participated in 1971 will play in a blitz, which will include the opportunity to play in Semple Stadium. This event will take place on the Bank Holiday Monday, October 25.

GAA President, Larry McCarthy, said "As a competition, Féile has been superb at living up to this from its very earliest days. "Restrictions mean that it will have to be run differently. But we will still be able to enjoy the games and the skills and talents of our young players from the hundreds of clubs and communities they proudly represent."

Halverstown2 narrowly lose Adamstown cup final

Halverstown2's exciting T 20 Adamstown Cup run came to an end in Terenure on Sunday 25th July when they lost in the final to a Terenure 4 team who passed the 118 run target set by Halverstown with just 7 balls left. It was a 6 wicket defeat that ended the hopes of the Club winning its first cup for 20 years.

Captain Des Drumm won the toss (yet again!) and elected to bat in the stifling heat. Openers Mark Ronaldson and Abhi Pandey put on a creditable 32 for the first wicket, while Manik Islam top scored with 29. Kilcullen resident Paolo Rosa's 17 and Danny Ruddock's 21 moved the score on but the vital last four overs saw wickets falling and, disappointingly, just 13 runs scored. It was a total that was somewhat tricky to defend; just 15 more runs could have made all the difference.

Terenure's run rate was no better than Halverstown's and after 17 overs they were actually 2 runs behind the Kildare

team's score at that point. However they had wickets in hand and, vitally, young James Hanrahan, who opened the batting, was still at the crease. His 66 not out was a match winner as they passed the target at the end of the 19th over. Danny Ruddock, whose father Alan captained Halverstown the last time they won a cup, took a wicket whilst brother Matt fielded brilliantly and took a catch. 12th man Stuart Hayes, fielding for the injured Ahsan Syed, took the catch of the day whilst Des and Manik took good catches also. Two wickets for Sallins resident Abhi and one for Sahab Uddin were the other wickets taken in a

hard working but tough day in the field.

Cricket Leinster's President, Stella Downes, presented the team with their runner-up medals. Des publicly thanked all the 21 players who had played so well for Halverstown 2 over the course of what was his team's first ever competition and stressed the pride the club had in all their performances, including today.

"However this young Terenure team bowled and fielded really well and James Hanrahan turned in a fine innings in a tense final, which is not easy. It was a sporting and close encounter but we were beaten on the day by a good team". Club President Hubert Beaumont, who was present, encouraged the players to look forward: there will be other days for this promising new Halverstown 2 team!



Halverstown players Kevin Hodson, Des Drumm (capt), Cecil Johnson (vice captain), Paolo Rosa, Danny Ruddock, Manik Islam and Mark Ronaldson stride out to take the field.



COMHAIRLE CONTAE CHILL MHANTÁIN
WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

SECTION 75 - ROADS ACT, 1993 PROVISION FOR TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF PUBLIC ROADS

Wicklow County Council hereby gives notice that it proposes the temporary closure of the following public road in Redcross for the period described;

Main Street, Redcross, Co. Wicklow

From 09:00 Monday 16th August 2021 to 23:59 Monday 16th August 2021

From 14:00 Sunday 22nd August 2021 to 23:59 Monday 23rd August 2021

Alternative Route:-

- Eastbound traffic will be diverted at Avoca onto the R752 via Rathdrum and from there to Rathnew
- Westbound traffic will be diverted at Barndarrig along the R772 to the R772 /L2180 (Beech Road) junction in Arklow and from there to Avoca
- Local diversions will be signposted.

The proposed closure is to allow for the laying of a road covering to facilitate filming.

Any person may lodge an objection in writing to Allyson Minion, Administrative Officer, Transportation and Roads, Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Wicklow no later than 4pm on Thursday 5th August 2021.



Arklow Visual Arts Gallery is finally back open after Senator Pat Casey kindly gave them use of his Main Street office in Arklow until they find a more permanent space. "We are going to be having a pop-up gallery and are so excited to be able to show people's artwork again after so long!", they said. "We welcome more submissions every day but so far we have Sarah Eva Manson, Andrew Manson, Attracta Manson, Ann McKenna, Pauline Merry, and Michelle Harton." Pictured are Andrew Manson and SarahEva Manson outside Senator Casey's Arklow constituency office

Smell the sea, and feel the sky. Let your soul and spirit fly...

Wicklow County Arts Office presents
Summer Songs

August 7th, 8th, 14th, 21st & September 5th

Soak up the sounds, the sunshine and easy breezy summer vibes as local musicians and bands bring back an exciting, eclectic soundtrack for summer in Wicklow.

As part of the Government's Local Live Performance Programming Scheme, Wicklow County Council Arts Office is proud to present their Summer Songs series with local musicians and bands right across the county and an eclectic mix of classical, folk, pop, R&B and rock influences.

Artists include Scullion, Kila, Hothouse Flowers, Mary Coughlan, Perfect Friction, Glimpse, The Gregory Walkers, Sonamus, Cathy Davey, The Booka Club, Wyvern Lingo, Leslie Dowdall & Mark Caplice, Mobile Music Machine and Pillow Queens.

The Local Live Performance Programming Scheme aims to support professional artists and musicians, performers, technicians, crew, lighting and sound engineers and other support staff working in the live culture, creative and music indus-

tries to get back to work again.

The events will be fully compliant with government COVID-19 guidelines.

Tickets are available from Eventbrite on www.summersongswicklow.eventbrite.ie. Each Ticket admits 6 people to a Pod and can not be sold on an individual basis. Up to 200 people will be in attendance as audience members at each event.

The series begins on August 7th and 8th at Burnaby Park in Greystones. On Saturday August 7th Scullion will headline the first show from 2pm to 4.30pm fresh after their latest release The Fruit Smelling Shop which was re-imagined and re-released as part of Bloomsday 2021. The next concert will begin at 6.30pm when Kila returns to the Wicklow stage with their unique and ever-evolving sound. On Sunday August 8th from 3.30pm to 6.30pm fami-

lies will take a trip into the deep dark woods with The Gregory Walkers for a musical adventure combining storytelling and music in a charming performance for the young and young at heart. This will be followed by the Mobile Music Machine, Ireland's leading classical musicians and finally Sonamus presents Music of Ireland - a performance of Irish Music from the last five hundred years.

On Saturday August 14th Summer Songs features Cathy Davey and The Booka Club from 1.30pm to 4.30pm in The People's Park, Bray. The next concert in Bray from 6.30pm to 9pm will feature Wyvern Lingo known for their soulful vocals and harmonies, they blend the pop, RnB and classic rock influences that have inspired them since they formed as young teenagers.

On Saturday August 21st from 4pm to 9pm, Summer Songs features

Hothouse Flowers, Leslie Dowdall & Mark Caplice and Mobile Music Machine from 4pm to 9pm in the Brockagh Centre, Laragh.

Sunday September 5th will bring Mary Coughlan and Leslie Dowdall & Feel the Pinch from 2pm to 4.30pm at North Beach, Arklow and the final concert will be with Pillow Queens from 6.30pm to 9pm at North Beach, Arklow.

At each location, viewing pods will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. Viewing pods will be socially distanced by 2m from each other within the venue. Patrons will be required to maintain a minimum of 2m social distancing and wear a face covering when outside their ticketed pods. All events operate a "leave no trace" policy and each group is provided with a refuse bag so you can take your waste with you at the end of the event.

Coming up at Signal Arts Centre...



Framing the Theatre of Life

Monday 27th September to Sunday 10th October

A new collection of works by international artist Laurence O'Toole, where he teases out his narrative based concepts, into a visual format, a modern 2-dimensional play.

Here he is using his home town of Bray, Co. Wicklow, where he was born and grew up, to be the stage set. Taking images and memories, experiences and old photographs to construct a vignette of thoughts and ideas, all brought together by the changing narrative of his town and county.

Each piece will be accompanied by its own written narrative, not to explain the piece, but to engage and include the viewer in the piece.

He has parcelled these in elaborate painted frames on linen, adding to the theatre set that is this life, where all of life's great plays are inevitably acted out.



Sophia Poeva from Delgany is pictured in the People's Park in Bray helping to launch 'Summer Songs', the summer concert series taking place accross Co. Wicklow this month.

OF A MIND

*A heart-mending story of humankind-ness
4th-15th August*

Mermaid Arts Centre is pleased to present **OF A MIND** by Listen and Breathe, an award-winning company led by Irish dramaturg/producer, Hugh Farrell, and New York-based sound designer, Tyler Kieffer. **OF A MIND** captures the changing spirit of our lives in a guided audio experience designed especially for Bray's iconic promenade.



Born out of a nostalgia for seeing and being seen at Mass on Sunday, yoga class on Wednesday, or the GAA on Saturday, this experience invites audiences to reconnect with nature and find their place in the crowd again.

Meditative, immersive, and informed by the latest in mind-body research, the production dives deep into the mystery of our minds to bring participants on a journey through the collective consciousness.

Guided by a live narrator and a score of local

voices, sounds and music, groups of 50 gather at Bray's Victorian bandstand for this outdoor walking experience using their own smartphone and headphones.

The production takes place over Zoom, bringing a fresh approach to the technology that has kept us connected during lockdown, and using it to create an intimate theatre space in public.

Performances run from August 4-15, Tuesday to Sunday at 7:30pm, with additional matinees at 3pm on Saturday and

Sunday. Tickets are €15/12 and available from July 13 through Mermaid Arts Centre.

Julie Kelleher, Artistic Director of Mermaid Arts Centre, said "it was clear to us in thinking about ways for audiences to connect and be together this summer that the most thrilling possibilities were to present shows outdoors."

"Listen and Breathe came up with a brilliant concept to bring people together on Bray's beautiful seafront, and connect them through a live

experience that is primarily aural but actually activates all the senses. We're really proud to have commissioned this work, and so excited to share it with audiences."

OF A MIND is a live outdoor experience during which audiences move along accessible paths on Bray Seafront. Please be aware the route has an incline. For accessibility questions email info@mermaidarts-centre.ie.

Mermaid Arts Centre's team will be on hand to assist audience members upon arrival.

This production complies with all government mandated safety precautions.

Commissioned by Mermaid Arts Centre and supported by the Arts Council of Ireland and Wicklow County Council.

Booking and more information:

For tickets or more information see mermaidartscentre.ie or email: info@mermaidartscentre.ie or call 01 2724030.

This event is suitable for ages 14+.

Dates: 7:30pm, 4-15

August (weekend

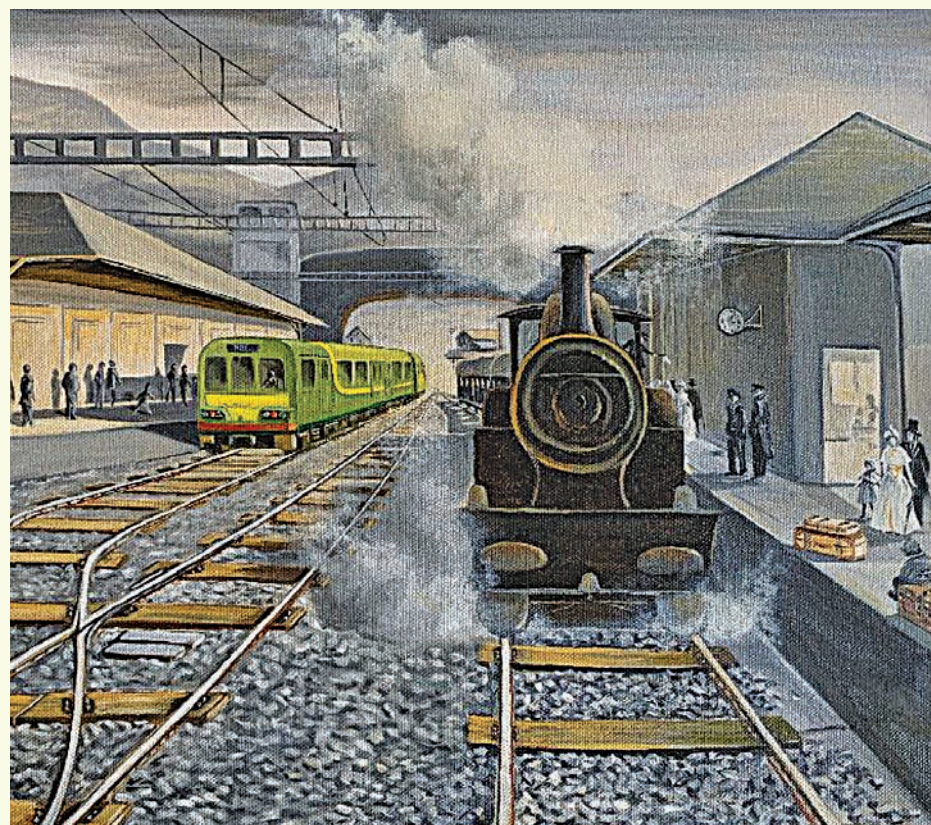
matinees 3pm). Tickets:

€15/12 (preview €10)

Show duration:

Approximately

45 minutes



'Changing Horizons': An Exhibition by Níóirín Dodd and Fergal Flanagan

Signal Arts Centre, Tuesday 26th of October to Sunday 7th November

Fergal Flanagan's paintings consist mainly of rural scenes with the emphasis on land, sea and sky, with some local scenes, painted at different times of the year to compliment the works.

Mostly painted 'en plein air' and completed back in his studio, they capture the beauty of the countryside using a bold colourful palette. His inspiration comes from being outdoors, immersed in the scene he is painting and the joy of capturing the light as it changes throughout the day.

Níóirín Dodd's paintings are a contrasting variety of rural and urban scenes. Her urban scenes reflect the changes taking place in her locality and beyond, with an emphasis on transport and development, while her landscapes reflect woodlands, coastal scenes and the natural environment.

Both artists' paintings are in



Bray announced as one of 20 'Poetry Towns'

New all-island 'Poetry Town' initiative will see free activities in 20 towns

Poetry Ireland has today (29.07.21) announced details of **Poetry Town**, a new initiative, which will see more than a hundred free poetry-related activities take place in 20 towns across the island of Ireland between 10th and 18th September 2021. Bray in Co Wicklow will be among the **Poetry Towns**, with activities for the town being organised by Poetry Ireland in partnership with Wicklow County Council Arts Office.

As part of the initiative, Poetry Ireland, together with its local authority partners, will appoint a Poet Laureate for each participating town. The chosen Poet Laureates, who will either be from the respective local area or have strong connections with it, will be commissioned to write a poem honouring their Poetry Town and its people.

The Poet Laureates for each town will be announced next month.

Each poem will be revealed and presented to the people of the participating towns at a series of flagship online events, one of which will be hosted in each town, which will feature contributions from local poets, artists and musicians.

There will also be a wide variety of additional activities in the Poetry Towns. These will include a series of poetry events involving local poets; poetry workshops; public poetry displays, including 'Poetry Underfoot'; and a range of physical activities called 'Poems that Move You', which will vary from town to town. Local businesses, including cafés and chemists, will also be participating in the activities to celebrate their towns by distributing 'pocket poems' to customers. The full programme for each town will be made available on the Poetry Town website during the last week of August.



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€1.2m fund for SME mentoring and business development

The latest phase of MentorsWork, the award-winning Government initiative providing free mentoring and business development tools for SMEs, has been launched recently by the Small Firms Association (SFA).

Up to 400 new places are now available to SME owner-managers and leadership teams across all industries. Any private sector business with between 5 and 250 employees is eligible to participate in the 12-week programme.

MentorsWork offers one-to-one mentoring from an independent professional mentor, experienced in the business area, as well as masterclasses and peer-to-peer workshops. It includes an online diagnostic tool to provide insights and help business owners and managers identify key skills and development needs. This forms the basis of bespoke mentoring to address business challenges and to plan for growth. There is also access to a self-paced learning portal and online resources in the MentorsWorks business development package which is free to business owners and managers of SMEs.

Skillnet Ireland Chief

Executive Paul Healy says MentorsWork is a flexible and bespoke programme proven to reboot business success.

"Working with the SFA, we want to support business owners and managers to navigate the challenges they are facing and grow their businesses by offering them supports that are targeted at their specific needs. The opportunity to analyse needs, gain expert advice and develop



bespoke business plans through MentorsWork is essential to driving sustainable long-term recovery across the SME sector."

The scheme also supports businesses in developing a six-month Strategic Business Improvement Plan.

This latest phase of the SME support programme

has up to 400 places available to SME owners or senior managers.

Places will be allocated across the summer and early autumn, with priority given to eligible applications that were received by 31st July. Business owners and managers can apply to participate in MentorsWork at mentorswork.ie/

CLASSIFIEDS

Mark 6:34-44 GOSPEL

As Jesus stepped ashore he saw a large crowd; and he took pity on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd, and he set himself to teach them at some length. By now it was getting very late, and his disciples came up to him and said, 'This is a lonely place and it is getting very late. So send them away, and they can go to the farms and villages round about, to buy themselves something to eat.' He replied, 'Give them something to eat yourselves.' They answered, 'Are we to go and spend two hundred denarii on bread for them to eat?' 'How many loaves have you?' he asked. 'Go and see.' And when they had found out the said, 'Five, and two fish.' Then he ordered them to get all the people together in groups on the green grass, and they sat down on the ground in squares of hundreds and fifties. Then he took the five loaves and the two fish, raised his eyes to heaven and said the blessing; then he broke the loaves and handed them to his disciples to distribute among the people. He also shared out the two fish among them all. They all ate as much as they wanted. They collected twelve basketfuls of scraps of bread and pieces of fish. Those who had eaten the loaves numbered five thousand men.

C.J.

THE MIRACULOUS PRAYER

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

M.D.

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GOAL appeals to Wicklow people to join its Connected2 Campaign

GOAL is encouraging Wicklow people to take part in its innovative new public campaign to motivate people to act to achieve a more equal, fairer and sustainable world.

The Connected2 Campaign aims to encourage better awareness and understanding of how people all over the globe are interconnected through Climate Change and Food Systems, and to highlight how events in one part of the world can have an impact, whether positive or negative, on other parts.

The Connected2 campaign comes ahead of the UN Food Systems Summit and the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) due later this year. The high-level conferences will see global leaders discuss how they can work to fight the impacts of food insecurity and climate change, two of the biggest crises facing humanity today.

The UN has warned that more than 811 million people - approximately one in ten of the world's population - are suffering from malnutrition and hunger, 118 million more people than last year. And climate change is resulting in more frequent and intense drought, storms, heat waves, rising sea levels, and melting glaciers wreaking havoc on people's livelihoods and communities.

The Connected2 campaign is being launched with promotional videos showcasing people from around the world telling us how they are connected. People are being encouraged to get involved and to post their own videos and statements on Twitter and Instagram, and to start a conversation about how Climate Change and Food

Systems connected them to other people and places.

According to GOAL Deputy CEO and Director of Public Engagement, Mary Van Lieshout, the aim of Connected2 is to encourage members of the public to take notice of the connections they see between people, geographical areas, and global issues like Climate Change and Food Systems.



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PLANNING

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

I Sinead Leahy intend to apply for permission for a new dwelling, garage, upgrading existing entrance on to lane, wastewater treatment unit, soil polishing filter, new well and associate works at Ballinastoe, Roundwood, 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 Council Buildings, Wicklow Town, during its public opening hours and a submission or observation in relation to the application may be made in writing to the planning authority on payment of the prescribed fee within 5 weeks from submission of application to Planning Authority.

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

We, Chris and Mary Mitchell seek planning permission for the insertion of a new 49m² toilet block within the internal courtyard of the existing building and change of use of the 28m² first floor of the development from Residential to Restaurant for the purposes of staff welfare areas solely related to the Ground Floor operation at the Tap, Kilbride, 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 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the application.



COMHAIRLE CONTAE CHILL MHANTÁIN
WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

Applications are invited from suitably qualified persons to form a panel from which future temporary/permanent positions may be filled.

• PERMANENT CARETAKER (BRAY M.D.)

REF: 27/2021 Salary €691.85 – €753.66 gross per week

• PERMANENT CARETAKER (CLERMONT CAMPUS, RATHNEW)

REF: 28/2021 Salary €691.85 – €753.66 gross per week

• PERMANENT FOREMAN – CRAFT (BRAY M.D.)

REF: 29/2021 Salary €865.47 – €914.56 gross per week

• PERMANENT CRAFTWORKER CARPENTER (BRAY M.D.)

REF: 30/2021 Salary €656.39 – €768.05 gross per week

CLOSING DATE FOR RECEIPT OF COMPLETED APPLICATION FORMS IS 12 NOON ON THURSDAY, 26TH AUGUST, 2021 SHARP.

Application Forms and further details may be obtained from Enterprise & Corporate Services at 0404 20159 or by emailing recruitment@wicklowcoco.ie and on the Wicklow County Council website www.wicklow.ie

Wicklow County Council reserves the right to shortlist candidates in the manner it deems most appropriate.

Wicklow County Council is an Equal Opportunities Employer.

Lorraine Gallagher,
Director of Services,
Enterprise & Corporate Services,
Wicklow County Council,
County Buildings, Wicklow

Phone: 0404 20159 Fax: 0404 20112

Email: recruitment@wicklowcoco.ie

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