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**Tuesday 28th September 2021, First Floor, The Boulevard, Quinsborough Road, Bray. A98 R6D7. Tel: 01 - 2869111 E-mail: wicklowed@localtimes.ie www.wicklowtimes.net**

# PLAYTIME IS OVER?

Tourist activities in County Wicklow such as playgrounds, adventure centres, festivals and Christmas markets fear that their viability will be put in doubt by wildly escalating insurance costs. While ever increasing insurance premiums were a given in outdoor businesses widespread anger greeted the news of the closure of Squirrel's Scramble Tree Adventure Park in Bray last week.

The attraction, run by PascoeLang Ltd, has been forced to close, maybe permanently, as it has been unable to secure insurance at a level it can afford. The business has seen its rates increase by over three times that from last year; from €26,000 to €88,000.

Minister for Insurance Reform Sean Fleming TD has now committed

to meet with the owners of Squirrel's Scramble in person this week in the Department of Finance.

Announcing the closure, Squirrel's Scramble said "We simply cannot get insurance. Our last two insurance providers have high tailed it out of the Irish market. The courts' awards here in Ireland are too high, the

judiciary untouchable, the government inept and inactive."

The company also blamed "the litigious nature of too many people not taking responsibility for their own negligence, looking for a quick payout with no regard to the wider consequences for others".

They added, "Over the past few years many



Charlie Taggart from Greystones was at the launch of the Creating Our Future Roadshow at Greystones Harbour last week. See more on page 5. Pic: Jason Clarke

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businesses in our industry and beyond have been dropping like flies because of the ongoing insurance crisis, now it's our turn on the chopping block and there will be plenty more to follow."

Reacting to the news, Sinn Féin TD John Brady said "First off, the responsibility for the forced closure of the Squirrel's Scramble Tree Adventure Park due to increased insurance costs of well over three times that from last year, lies firmly at the door of this Government. We would do well to remember that we have three government TDs in this county, who are sitting on their hands as small vibrant businesses are being crippled by insurance sharks.

"This is a crippling and unnecessary blow to a small business, to a local community and to the thousands of cus-

tomers who avail of the excellent facilities at the adventure park throughout the year. Understandably the staff and management of Squirrel's Scramble are devastated.

"The crux of the matter is that this is unnecessary and unfair. It represents a failure on the part of the government, compounded by the greed of the insurance industry. Minister Sean Fleming previously promised to get additional competition into the Irish insurance market. It is high time that he acted on his promise.

"The legislation as it currently stands, is simply not fit for purpose. All that is required is a straightforward amendment to the Civil Liability act in order to allow the government to improve the legislation around waivers so there's a knowledge and an understanding that when you sign this, it is

strong, it's solid and it will stand up in court.

"The actual cost of

claims has decreased significantly across the board. Between 2015

and 2019, the cost of public liability claims *Continued on page 3*

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'Star' Team... The Wicklow Rowing Club has attracted the patronage of the Mercedes-Benz organisation in Ireland towards its participation at the World Rowing Coastal Championships which take place in Portugal next month. Pictured at the announcement was Mercedes-Benz Chief Executive, Paddy Finnegan (second left) with team members Marc Nichols, Shay Dunne, Andrew Breen, Chris Dunne and Peter Doyle.

## Wicklow Dementia Support seeking volunteers

Wicklow Dementia Support (WDS) is in urgent need of volunteers for two of its services.

WDS is seeking volunteers for its **Wednesday Activity Group** which takes place in Wicklow Town on Wednesday mornings from 11am to 12.30pm. Volunteers required to support participants take part in activities, share a cuppa and have a chat.

Please contact the Coordinator Maritta Murphy for further details. Email: wedsgroup@wicklowde-

mentiasupport.org Tel: 086 3032189.

WDS is also seeking **volunteer befrienders** for 2 hours per week to provide social contact for a number of people living with memory loss in the Greystones area, like John. "I'm a bit nervous going out on my own and really miss walking by the sea," says John. "It would be wonderful to have a friend to go with once a week."

WDS provides volunteers with training and support. For further information/application form email [info@wicklowdementiasupport.org](mailto:info@wicklowdementiasupport.org) or call AlzPal Coordinator Jackie O'Toole 0894286928.

### Roundwood Beekeepers Association

Roundwood Beekeepers Association are running a FIBKA beginners course starting in October. It is an 8-week course presented by Wille O'Byrne. Anyone interested please email [brian@walshfamily.ie](mailto:brian@walshfamily.ie) name, telephone no., and email address please and thank you.

### Lions Club seeks young ambassador

Bray Lions Club has begun its search for a Young Ambassador who will represent the club in an international competition.

The Lions Young Ambassador programme rewards young people (aged under 19 in June 2022), who are making a contribution to their local community through voluntary work, sporting activity or good citizenship.

The Ambassador selected by Bray Lions Club will participate in a National Final where a Young

Ambassador will be selected to represent Ireland in the European Final. Prizes and bursaries are awarded to winners and Bray Lions Club will sponsor its Young Ambassador's participation at all levels of the competition, should they qualify.

Young people who wish to participate should contact Frank Corr, Bray Lions Club on 086-8274710 or at [fcorr100@gmail.com](mailto:fcorr100@gmail.com)

### Ballinacash Community Association Raffle

The Ballinacash Community Association is running a raffle in order to raise much needed funds. The draw will take place at Phelans Licensed Grocer at 7pm on Sunday October 3rd. Tickets can be purchased online at [idonate.ie/raffle/ballinacash](https://idonate.ie/raffle/ballinacash).

The Ballinacash Community Association said "We would like to sincerely thank our sponsors for the following amazing prizes: 1st - Load of logs from John Byrne; 2nd - €100 voucher from GlobalVillage.ie Powerscourt; 3rd - Celebration Hamper from Fionnuala Cullen & Winnie O'Hanlon; 4th - €50 Voucher from Van Der Wel Aughrim; 5th - Health Care Products from New Vision Healthcare; 6th - Double Duvet Set & Gift Set from Shelly Fitzgerald."

### Arklow Visual Arts volunteer committee

Arklow Visual Arts are opening the doors for expressions of interest and for nominations to fill some committee spaces. These are volunteer positions. If you would like to get more involved with the gallery they would love to hear from you. The deadline for nominations is the close of business on September 30th Thursday, 5:30pm.

The positions of Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Secretary, and Committee Member will be remote positions for the most part and involve some Zoom meetings. "We will work closely with the local community employment scheme and continue to facilitate 4 part-time CE Scheme invigilator employees in the gallery. Please reply to this email with your nominations by close of business on September 30th."

# Huge clean-up effort by people in Wicklow for the Big Beach Clean

After a break in 2020, the Big Beach Clean took place over the weekend between 17th and 19th September and Clean Coasts were overwhelmed with the incredible support and commitment shown by communities across Ireland.

The Big Beach Clean is an annual call to action that takes place in September at the end of the bathing season. Volunteers around Ireland were asked to register their clean up event and take part in a world-wide citizen science project, as part of the International Coastal Cleanup (ICC), operated internationally by Ocean Conservancy.

This year, a record number of over 400 clean-ups were organised by volunteers who removed 42 tonnes of litter across the country. In addition, more volunteers joined clean-ups facilitated by Clean Coasts officers in 8 different locations around Ireland.

In county Wicklow, volunteers organised clean-ups in over 15 different locations, removing 1.4 tonnes of litter. Moreover, Clean Coasts hosted a Big Beach Clean event at Greystones Beach on Saturday 18th September, where 28 dedicated volunteers managed to collect 8 bags which amounted to 34kgs of litter. According to these volunteers, the top 5 Big Beach Clean Offenders were: Cigarette butts, Plastic pieces, Food wrappers, Food containers (plastic), and Wet wipes.

Sinead McCoy, Coastal Communities Manager, said: "After a break in 2020 due to Covid, we were excited to host the Big Beach Clean again, but we didn't know what to expect. This year there was a significant increase in



Volunteers at the Clean Coasts Big Beach Clean event in Greystones, where 43kg of litter was removed in one hour

clean-ups organised, but in a different format: we saw more people registering for clean-ups as individuals or within their household."

Sinead continued: "This year, there was an over 5% decrease in litter found across Ireland. Overall this is an incredible improvement. The work that Irish volunteers do all year round to tackle litter and less waste dropped by more conscious beach users mean that we are heading in the right direction!"

Big Beach Clean volunteers have also taken part in an excellent worldwide citizen science project that will help shape future policies and campaigns to help protect our ocean. The project entails collecting the amount and types of litter on Irish beaches and filling in Clean Coasts' Marine Litter Data Cards. This will help heighten awareness about the issue of marine litter and serve as an indicator of the magnitude of the problem.

Once more, volunteers were asked to join the call to action, no matter how far from the coast, thanks to the involvement of An Taisce National Spring Clean programme. Statistics show that the number one cause of marine litter is litter dropped in towns and cities and getting involved in the Big Beach Clean has been a way for residents of non-coastal counties to help prevent litter entering our waterways tackle the problem at its source.



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# Wicklow has lowest Covid rate in the country

New figures show Wicklow has the lowest incidence rates of COVID in the country.

Welcoming the news, Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly said the latest figures showed the people of Wicklow were continuing to follow the public health guidelines.

According to the recent data, Wicklow has a 14-day incidence rate of just 170.6 and a seven-day rate 68.8.

Those figures are more than a half less than the next lowest county in the country.

The Minister said:

"This week has been a hugely encouraging one not just for Wicklow but the whole country as we have seen a further opening up for our businesses and indoor as well as outdoor activities.

"It means indoor exercise classes, bands, bowling alleys, amusement arcades, chess, bridge, and other indoor activities are returning.

"And all restrictions on outdoor group activities have been removed.



Minister Stephen Donnelly

"The reason that has been able to happen is largely thanks to the immense work being done

by our vaccination programme.

"We are amongst the best in the world and the best in the EU when it comes to vaccine uptake with 90% of people over 16 now double-vaccinated.

"I would like to thank the people of Wicklow for the support they've given the vaccine programme and for doing what they can to protect each other.

"It is by doing this that we will be able to open fully in the next few weeks and get life back to where it should be."



Proud dad Minister Simon Harris with his new baby son Cillian who arrived last Wednesday weighing in at 9 lbs 10 ounces. Mum Caoimhe is doing well. Cillian is a baby brother for big sister Saoirse.

## PLAYTIME IS OVER?

Continued from page 1...

fell 22%, and in 2019, we witnessed the overall claims ratio falling to its lowest level in a decade. If and where insurance companies have faced losses, it has been primarily because of reduced income on their investments, alongside increased commission being paid to brokers."

Brady continued: "Insurance companies must pass on the savings to consumers from the 50% reduction in personal injury awards since the Personal Injuries Guidelines have come into effect. are not forced to close due to the greed of an unaccountable insurance sector.

"This country needs businesses like Squirrel's Scramble to not only aid our recovery from the financial impact of Covid. But for their contribution to the fabric of Irish life throughout the country. The Tánaiste Leo Varadkar has himself described SMEs as the backbone of Ireland's economy. SMEs account for 99.8% of all business in the state providing 70% of employment in the state. Why is this government not doing more to protect this sector, instead of hanging the albatross of excruciating insurance costs around its neck?"

Social Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore raised the closure of Squirrel's Scramble in the Dáil last week saying it is "a sign of a dysfunction in the insurance industry". She called on the Minister to expedite legislation to address liability and personal responsibility within the leisure sector.

"If businesses can't continue to trade while insurance premiums remain too high not only will other companies close, but we will also lose jobs and fail to attract tourists to Wicklow," she said.

Deputy Whitmore will also meet with Minister Fleming this

week along with other public reps and Department officials.

She said, "After the shock closure of Squirrel's Scramble last week, I raised this as an urgent matter in the Dáil.

"Companies like Squirrel Scramble are struggling to stay open due to rising insurance premiums, despite the Government's Action Plan to reduce costs. It's clear there's a dysfunction in the market and more needs to be done to help local businesses.

"I hope the meeting will be an opportunity for the Minister to fully understand the difficulties facing this sector. As we reopen our economy, it's important that the Government does all it can to support local businesses especially in Wicklow where outdoor activities is a key factor in tourism and is often promoted for health and wellbeing," concluded Deputy Whitmore."

Green Party TD Steven Matthews said "Like many other families in Wicklow, we have enjoyed days out and parties at Squirrel's Scramble over the years. It's devastating for the community to see them have to close their business. It is a fantastic tourist attraction but also a regular haunt for many locals. I have been in touch with the owners to offer them support and will be meeting with Minister for State with responsibility for Insurance Reform Sean Fleming in the coming days."

Minister Stephen Donnelly said he asked Minister Fleming if he could meet with the owners as a matter of urgency.

Minister Donnelly said: "I've spoken with Minister Fleming and asked him to meet with the owners of Squirrel's Scramble. He has agreed to do that and see what steps can be taken to try and help protect businesses like theirs.

"I know one thing the owners have said would be extremely helpful would be the legal

strengthening of indemnity forms and to attract more competition into the Irish insurance market.

"Protecting our SME sector from the pressure of rising insurance costs which is in part driven by a claims culture is something this Government is committed to tackling.

"It's appalling that a popular and successful local amenity like Squirrel's Scramble is being forced to close because of factors outside their control. We will look at concrete steps that can be taken to help them and businesses like them to keep their doors open."

Minister Simon Harris said: "I have been contacted by many loyal customers of Squirrel's Scramble, a much-loved family adventure facility at Killruddery House and Gardens in Bray. I had raised with the Minister for Insurance Reform the difficulty Squirrel Scramble have had in securing an affordable insurance premium. I welcome Minister Fleming's commitment to meet with the owners of Squirrel Scramble. I want to assure Wicklow businesses and consumers that I will continue to support measures to reduce the cost of insurance premiums and this challenge is a key priority of government."

Bray's representative for Aontu Ciaran Hogan said "I have had great difficulty finding insurance for a youth sports venture I want to operate, it wasn't until I read of the closure of Squirrel Scramble that I realised how bad the situation had become.

He added, "We cannot rely on international insurers to come in and sort out the market, on something as simple, and a fundamental requirement for any business, group, or activity. We need the state to set up a semi state body that would back personal injury insurance for places like Squirrel Scramble that can't find reasonable insurance elsewhere."

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Home Advantage is the general knowledge quiz hosted by Jennifer Zamparelli (pictured) where 3 Irish families compete to win €5,000. One member of the family goes to the studio to play, while the rest of the family support (or not!) from home. This week local Arklow family the Byrnes (Gillian, Vinnie, Aine 15 & Erin 13) compete. One is in the studio, others at home. Over a series of three frantic brain-teasing rounds, only 1 team gets to the final round and a shot at the jackpot. To see how the Byrne family get on, tune in to RTE ONE this Saturday. Can they make their Home Advantage pay? This episode will broadcast on RTE ONE on 2nd October at 8.30pm.

## New Rathdrum Library to open in November

The new library in Rathdrum will be opened in November, Minister Simon Harris said.

Speaking after receiving an update, Minister Harris said "I recently visited the new Rathdrum Library nearing completion. There is great excitement and anticipation in the community and I can confirm that the opening date will be in mid to late November.

"There had been a delay due to the ESB having to put a new transformer in place to provide power for the new Library and Primary Care Centre. This had pushed back the timetable for the library opening".

Minister Harris continued: "The new Rathdrum Library will be four times bigger than its predecessor, with a much bigger selection of books, individual study spaces and IT access for the entire community. Given the existing library had over 5,000 visits and borrowing over 10,000 items in 2019 I have no doubt it will be busy from day one when it opens in November".



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# 'Marine waters off Wicklow need greater protections'

Social Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore, the Party's spokesperson for Climate Action, spoke in the Dáil on new maritime legislation that seeks to regulate development on our marine waters.

"Ireland has the largest maritime area in the whole of the EU. A huge benefit to us, and also a huge responsibility. How we manage our marine areas will be key to the success not only of our response to climate change and the biodiversity crisis, it will also be key to the success of development like renewable energy.

"Anyone living in Wicklow looking out across the Irish Sea can see the changes on the horizon: from small developments to large scall offshore renewable energy proposals - our relationship with the sea is changing rapidly. Managing this development requires a generational shift

from our historic approach to planning and development which is not currently taking place.

"Off the coast of Wicklow we have a wealth of marine wildlife that inhabit Wicklow's beautiful coastline like seals and porpoises but we also have huge potential to restore lost habitats like mussel seed farms and other nature based solutions. Restoration and development can also work hand in hand as pilot projects around the world have shown. But it takes initiative.

"We also need a substantial amount more of our marine waters under protection. Under the EU Biodiversity Strategy for

2030 member states should collectively legally protect at least 30% of EU land and marine areas. Unfortunately, at present only 2.4% of Irish waters are designated as such (the second lowest in the EU), a shockingly low percentage.

"However, the Government has failed to legislate properly for marine wildlife and its ecosystem. Environmental NGOs have been waiting years for legislation to protect our marine waters through the allocation of Marine Protected Areas. Instead, this week in the Dáil the Government prioritised the progression of legislation for the development of our marine

water without adequate protections for marine wildlife and biodiversity. We need legislation to help facilitate renewable energy development, but we need robust legislation that also protected wildlife at the same time.

"I'm calling on the Government to put in place interim protections for our marine wildlife and biodiversity until standalone legislation is published. I am also calling on the Minister for Climate Action, Eamon Ryan to put in place wildlife protections in the current Bill going through the Dáil to bring it up to standard," concluded Deputy Whitmore.

## Coastwatch project seeks volunteers for eco-audit of coastline

The Coastwatch project is looking for volunteers to carry out an eco-audit of County Wicklow's coastline.

This annual autumn Coastwatch citizen science shore survey runs from mid-September to mid-October with the aim being to carry out a once off snapshot survey of the shoreline taken at low tide.

Coastwatch is looking for both experienced surveyors and newcomers to take part and would wel-

come coastal farmers, schools, swimming, paddle boarding, dive and kayak clubs who might arrange to cover a larger shore area between them.

Deirdre Burns, Wicklow County Council Heritage Officer and regional co-ordinator for the survey, said: "Of Ireland's 7,500 km of coastline, approximately

60 km occurs in county Wicklow. This survey is a wonderful way to spend time getting to know our coastline and helping to document changes that are occurring over time."

The survey can be completed over a single visit at low tide between now and mid-October.

Participants should visit [www.coastwatch.org](http://www.coastwatch.org)

and click on the map. The coastline is marked out in 500m units and surveyors can sign up for one or more units. It is then a matter of filling in the survey questionnaire when you visit your site. Map, survey forms, wildlife posters and information can all be downloaded from the website or drop an e mail to [dburns@wicklowcoco.ie](mailto:dburns@wicklowcoco.ie) for hard copies.

Also available on

request are nitrate kits that can be used to test water quality where there is a watercourse in a survey unit.

The annual Coastwatch survey has been running since 1987, making it Ireland's longest running citizen science initiative. Surveyors can augment their shore audits with photos and videos of species, habitats, landscape, litter, pollution and oddities.

## Construction of Tully Park Phase 2 launched

The construction of Tully Park Phase 2 within the Cherrywood Strategic Development Zone (SDZ) was launched last Wednesday. An Cathaoirleach of Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council Lettie McCarthy, Interim Chief Executive Tom McHugh, Director of Services Anne Devine and Sarah McCullough, Project Manager, were on hand with Niall McElwaine from Clonmel Enterprises on Wednesday 22nd September to mark the launch.

Tully Park Phase 2 is one of the projects that has received funding under the Government's Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) under Project Ireland 2040.

Tully Park when complete will be a high quality and distinctive flagship Park developed to respect the character and setting of Tully Church, a protected structure.

The Park is located centrally in the County's

new emerging town of Cherrywood.

The Park will support the emerging communities of Cherrywood to enable residents, workers and visitors to enjoy a high quality, inclusive environment with good leisure and recreation amenities and connections. It will also form part of the Council's expanding Greenway connections.

Phase 2 of the Park is part-funded under the

URDF which aims to deliver more compact and sustainable development, and the works are being carried out on behalf of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council by Clonmel Enterprises Ltd. It is envisaged that works will be completed in early 2022.

Speaking at the launch, An Cathaoirleach commented:

"I am delighted to be here at Tully Park, which upon completion will be a new flagship park for the new communities of Cherrywood in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown.

It will be a great amenity for all the residents of Cherrywood and the wider areas to walk and cycle to and enjoy with their families over the coming years in a unique and historical setting."



Pictured are Sarah McCullough – Project Manager, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, Anne Devine – Director of Services, DLRCC, Cllr. Lettie McCarthy – An Cathaoirleach, DLRCC, Tom McHugh – Interim Chief Executive, DLRCC, and Niall McElwaine – Clonmel Enterprises



# 'Firefighters will struggle to get to Bray Fire Station for emergency calls'

Bray Sinn Féin is calling for an urgent traffic impact survey to be carried out amid major concerns that retained firefighters will struggle to make it to the fire station in time for emergency call outs.

Speaking on the issue, Cllr Dermot 'Daisy' O'Brien said "With multiple developments along the Boghall road and Southern Cross road at the moment and much more to come, I see a huge challenge for fire fighters coming from any direction to be confident that they will make it to the station on time. If we imagine a call going out first thing in the morning for example and consider a firefighter coming from anywhere in Bray with absolutely no right to skip the traffic, he or she is going to be sitting in gridlock with everyone else counting down the minutes and thinking about the urgency of getting to the station! Consider the officer in charge and other firefighters waiting

at the station and knowing that a truck can't leave until it has a full complement! Meanwhile a life or death situation could be playing out where every minute matters.

"A full-time fire service is the obvious and logical solution to the ongoing challenges with our Fire Service growing and developing in parallel to the growth and development of our town but in the meantime there might be merit in exploring the option of a number of full time positions on a roster that will ensure in particular that during peak traffic times the service will not be compromised."

Cllr Grace McManus added "On top of the health and safety concerns for the wider community of Bray, it's also

not hard to imagine the stress that our firefighters would be under when trying to navigate gridlock traffic in emergencies. We have a responsibility to consider the impact of this scenario on the well-being of our staff, and mitigate the harms as best we can, until the full independent review of the Fire Service that was agreed upon is completed and can be actioned. I believe a traffic impact survey would be a positive step in that direction."

John Brady TD said "North Wicklow has changed dramatically over the last 20 years, the population has increased substantially, there are high rise developments right across Bray now, with plans also in place

for new 8 storey apartments. However, with all these changes across the community, the Fire service has essentially remained the same.

"With all the new developments that are taking place across North Wicklow, it is questionable if any consideration has been given to the impact they will have on the Fire Service. We still await an Independent report on the Fire Service, this is something we will continue to push for, in the meantime there is an urgent need for a traffic impact survey to be carried out to establish the risks posed to the firefighters trying to get to the station once alerted of an emergency and then making their way to the scene."

## Planning permission for GCC to be lodged by end of 2021

Jennifer Whitmore TD has welcomed the Department of Education's confirmation that planning permission is still on track to be lodged before the end of the year for new site for Greystones Community College.

Deputy Whitmore received a response to a Parliamentary Question from the Department confirming the news.

"It's reassuring to know that things are on track for the new school for Greystones Community College to begin," said Deputy Whitmore.

"These processes can take a long time and while it's not possible at this stage to have a timeline, timing is very important.

"It is welcome that the Department has also confirmed they will work closely with the vendor to expedite a planning application for the school.

"The next stage is for the Department to have pre-planning meetings with the Council to maximise the chances of getting their planning application through. Once that work has been carried out, it is expected that an application for Planning Permission will

be lodged by Quarter 4 of this year.

"As always, I will continue to keep a close eye on this development, ensuring that no unnecessary delays are experienced.

"Anyone in the school community knows how long students, teachers and parents have been waiting for a school build for Greystones Community College and how much it is deserved given all that has been done to create a positive school environment.

"I am urging the Department to do what it can to prevent any unnecessary delays," concluded Deputy Whitmore.

## N81 Survey for West Wicklow residents and businesses

Minister Simon Harris TD has launched a survey for West Wicklow residents and businesses regarding the need to upgrade the N81.

Minister Simon Harris said: "I am surveying West Wicklow residents about the necessary improvements to the N81 connecting Baltinglass, Blessington and Tallaght.

This is the main route through West Wicklow and I would like your feedback on the type of improvements necessary along the length of this major national road.

"The upgrading of the N81 is a key priority as it is a major artery for both employment, school commutes and the many visitors who come to West

Wicklow to enjoy its natural amenities and beauty.

"I am seeking feedback from residents and businesses on a wide variety of issues including road safety, school transport, public lighting, shuttle buses to the Luas and segregated safe cyclist and pedestrian facilities.

I also would welcome suggestions on specific proposals to alleviate congestion at a number of bottlenecks along the route.

"I would be grateful if West Wicklow residents and businesses could take a few minutes to complete the survey.

"Details of how you can make a submission are here or please go to my facebook page," Minister Harris concluded.



Pictured in Greystones on Friday were Dr. Ruth Freeman Director of Science Society SFI and Julie Byrne Chair of the Creating Our Future Advisory Forum and Head of Global External Collaboration Programs Nokia Bell Labs. Picture: Jason Clarke

## Creating Our Future Roadshow visits Wicklow

The Creating Our Future Roadshow kicked off on Friday at Greystones Harbour and will run until the 25th of October.

Creating Our Future is a government-led national brainstorm that will involve the people of Ireland in a conversation on the role research can and should play in addressing opportunities, challenges and hopes for the future. Creating Our Future will ensure that the direction of research in Ireland is informed by the people it serves.

Creating Our Future is asking people to submit their ideas about what researchers in Ireland should explore to create a better future through the dedicated online portal [www.creatingourfuture.ie](http://www.creatingourfuture.ie), which is open until the 30th November 2021.

The Roadshow will be pulling up in towns across the country and will encourage members of the public to engage in a conversation with researchers over a cup of coffee, and to submit an idea about an opportunity or challenge in their

lives, community, Ireland or the world; or something they are curious or passionate about and would like researchers to explore.

Encouraging people to visit the roadshow, Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science Simon Harris said: "Over the course of the pandemic, we were reminded starkly of how much of our daily lives depend on the efforts of researchers to secure our economy, wellbeing, and health. As a forward-thinking country, we must ask how research can help meet the opportunities and challenges facing our society over the coming years. Creating our Future opens up this question to all.

"This roadshow will engage people right across our country in this vital campaign. Everyone, everywhere, can have an idea for a better future. I look forward to hearing them."



Pictured was 3 year old Kate Pereira from Greystones at the launch of the Creating Our Future Roadshow..





Wicklow County Council Environmental Enforcement Officer Cory Coughlin with residents in Donard, where a campaign has been launched to stop dog fouling in the area. Pic: Michael Kelly

## Wide range of Wicklow library services now open

All Wicklow libraries are now fully open for borrowing and returning books and other library items.

Other facilities open for public use in libraries includes:

- Study spaces for individual use.
- Public access PCs
- Musical instruments available for borrowing.
- Class visits can resume with pods of six or less with prior arrangement.
- Hublets accessible for individual use in main libraries.
- Printing and photocopying services available for public use.
- Comfortable seats available for use.
- Newspapers and magazines are now available for reading in the library.

It is hoped to facilitate physical Book Clubs, children's story times and other in-house library events after 22nd October. Libraries in County Wicklow expect visitors to the library to wear a face covering.



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# Funding confirmed for Pure

The Department of Environment, Climate and Communications, has announced that it is providing a funding extension to the environmental project Pure (Protecting Uplands and Rural Environments) until the end of 2023.

In announcing the funding, Ossian Smyth, Minister of State with responsibility for Communications and Circular Economy, commented: "I am very pleased to confirm Departmental funding for the Pure Project for a further three-year period. The positive impacts of the Pure Project are self-evident across the Wicklow/Dublin uplands. The statistics also show the benefits of this coordinated response to illegal dumping, via enforcement, deterrence and, most importantly, in the invaluable community projects and activities facilitated by the Project. Aside from the annual €115,000 contribution which my Department will make towards programme costs, we will also work with the Project team to provide sustainable funding for the Pure truck. I wish the Pure Project continued success with their excellent work. This year, my Department has announced a range of national initiatives and supports aimed at combatting illegal dumping and littering. This includes our new €5 million fund for litter infrastructure. Via the Circular Economy Bill, to be published later this year, we will also look to underpin the use of CCTV and consider the range of fines applicable to dumping and littering activities via the Circular Economy Bill later this year."

Pure is the first project of its kind in Ireland incorporating statutory and non-statutory organisations and stakeholders, including, The Department of Environment, Climate, and Communications, Wicklow County Council, South Dublin County Council, Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council, Coillte, National Parks & Wildlife Service, and the Wicklow Uplands Council. This unique partnership project was established to combat illegal



dumping in the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands and was officially launched in September 2006.

Ian Davis, Manager of Pure, commented on the recent announcement: "On behalf of the stakeholders of Pure I would like to thank the Minister and the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications, for their continued support. The success of Pure is based on multi-stakeholder collaboration and cooperation between all of the organisations involved in the project. This funding will enable the project to continue with our initiatives to combat illegal dumping in Wicklow/Dublin Uplands, further increase environmental awareness, and engage with the thousands of Pure Mile Volunteers who are dedicated to cleaning up the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands."

Pure utilises a multi-disciplined approach in combating illegal dumping, incorporating a number of educational initiatives, environment/community projects – The Pure Mile, public awareness campaigns, regional/national media campaigns, enforcement and preventative measures, GPS/GIS database to record all illegal dumping sites, covert CCTV operations, and a dedicated vehicle, The

Pure Truck, which removes illegal dumping from the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands.

The Pure Truck is on the road every day, and since the project was established, Pure has collected over 3,650,000kg (3,650 tonnes) of rubbish from over 13,000 illegal dumping sites in the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands with the project processing over 14,000 reports. If you were to put all the rubbish that Pure has removed from the uplands into standard household rubbish bags, they would fill over 400,000 bags. If you lined up all these bags on the road, they would stretch all the way from Dublin to Dingle. This recent announcement of funding enables Pure to purchase a new truck, as the current vehicle is fifteen years old.

Pure Project is a multi-stakeholder collaborative approach which has proven extremely successful in combating illegal dumping in the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands and over the past four years, Pure has recorded an annual reduction in illegal dumping activity in the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands. This reduction in dumping coincides with the huge increase of Pure Mile groups and areas, with hundreds of miles of roads, mountains, woodlands, valleys, forestries, upland amenities, car

parks, and beaches, currently being adopted.

The Pure Mile Project, an initiative established by Pure in 2009, is an environment, community, heritage initiative, that encourages communities and groups living in rural areas of Wicklow, South Dublin, and Dun-Laoghaire, to adopt a mile of road, or miles of road, in their local area, or in the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands and organise litter picks, clean-ups, anti-dumping campaigns, research information about their local wildflowers, plants, trees, animals, and the built, cultural, and social heritage of an area. There are currently thousands of Pure Mile volunteers, ranging from individuals, family groups, community groups, walking groups, cycling groups, scouts, beavers, businesses, and organisations, who have removed hundreds of tonnes of illegally dumped waste and thousands of bags of litter and rubbish from the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands.

A recent successful court conviction of an illegal dumper caught on covert CCTV in county Wicklow was a joint collaboration involving Pure, Wicklow County Council, Coillte, and the Gardaí, demonstrating the success of the multi-stakeholder approach in tackling illegal dumping in the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands. The individual was fined €4,000 and costs of €550 with a two-year driving disqualification. All of the local authorities involved in Pure are continually investigating illegal dumping incidents and the recent conviction sends out a clear message to all dumpers, illegal dumping will not be tolerated in the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands.

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# Locals seek judicial review for Enniskerry housing development

A group of over 80 people from the Enniskerry area have come together to drive a Judicial Review to overturn An Bord Pleanala's decision to approve the building of 165 dwellings on the Cookstown Road in Enniskerry.

This has been approved using Strategic Housing Development legislation which bypasses local authorities and Local Area Plans.

Speaking about the matter, local councillor Melanie Corrigan said "There is a strong case to be made that this will be successful based on specific legal points as detailed in the letter that has been circulated locally and emailed out to Residents in Enniskerry. The total

cost of taking this action is €60k. If they are successful the majority of the funds will be returned to the contributors and if they were to lose for whatever reason they will not be liable to pay costs of the other side.

"The Enniskerry Alliance needs your help in making a contribution to the legal fund to help protect our village. These contributions can be made online or offline as detailed in the circulated

letter. We are not against development as we realise housing is critically needed but the surrounding infrastructure needs to be in place to support these high density developments, and this is not in place in the planning application that was approved.

"This will have a huge effect on the existing Residents of the Cookstown road, the local schools, and Residents in the Village."

A member of



Cllr Melanie Corrigan

the Alliance said: "Cookstown road is a narrow winding road that

currently cannot take the amount of traffic that is on it. Locals cannot safely walk or cycle on this road and to add another 300 plus cars to it will have serious implications."

For further information or to find out how to contribute, please look at the Save Enniskerry FaceBook or Instagram pages or email SaveEnniskerry@gmail.com and a member of the committee will respond to you.

## Opposition grows against plans for former gym

A number of Wicklow Town residents last week demonstrated their opposition to plans to turn the former gym on the seafront into apartments.

Wicklow County Council refused planning permission in 2018 when an application was submitted to turn the building into four ground-floor apartments. However the decision was appealed to An Bord Pleanala which granted permission for the development.

The site is located close to Wicklow Bay and the Council was concerned that there would be a flood risk. The Council's Planner's Report also raised concerns that the proposed residential development would be contrary to the overall objectives and vision for the area. "The development would undermine the provision of a vibrant harbour area and would

therefore not support the Harbour strategy," the report stated. It also stated that the development, given the single usage proposed, "would be contrary to the Town Centre zoning objective which seeks to ensure there is a mix of commercial, recreational, civic, cultural, leisure, residential uses and urban streets, while delivering a quality of urban environment which will enhance the quality of life of resident, visitor and workers alike."

ABP ruled that the development would not contravene the provisions of the local Development Plan and would be compatible with the existing

pattern of development in the vicinity.

Labour councillor Paul O'Brien is siding with the residents and believes the building should be refurbished for local community groups.

Speaking to *Wicklow Times*, Cllr O'Brien said "I'm appealing to the developer, even at this late stage to reconsider his proposals for the good of the area and more importantly the people of Wicklow. Once these apartments are built, there will be no turning back the clock and we will lose what could be the crowning jewel in the harbour.

"There are so many clubs

and organisations looking for a place to call home and this would be an ideal location for them all, so to lose all of this is just heart breaking. Then to make matters worse, access to the beach around the building will also be lost, which is just not on or very fair to the many patrons of the beach who rely on the steps to gain access to the beach.

"So, I am making one final plea to the developer; please engage with Wicklow County Council and come up with a compromise that will be a win win for all concerned. The people of Wicklow fundraised for this building in the first place and deserve better."



Cllr Paul O'Brien is pictured with local residents, protesting at the former gym.



ABP have approved the building of 165 dwellings on the Cookstown Road in Enniskerry

## Brady calls on Taoiseach to intervene in case of Arklow Fisherman

Sinn Féin TD John Brady has called on the Taoiseach Micheal Martin to intervene between the departments of Transport and Agriculture and Fisheries to sort out which department will resolve the plight of Arklow Fisherman CJ Gaffney.

Deputy Brady said: "CJ Gaffney is an ordinary individual, who purchased a fishing trawler the Mary Kate WD30 in 2007 in good faith. It was deemed fit for purpose by several surveys and passed as seaworthy by the Marine Survey Office.

"It was subsequently found to have serious stability issues, tests showed 20 tonnes of unaccounted steel were in the vessel. The family spent considerable funds trying to rectify the serious issues. The funds ultimately were exhausted, leaving the family without a boat or any finances.

"This issue was found to be a fault with this particular type of vessel across Europe, and indeed many EU states have taken action to protect their own fisheries.

"The European Commission previously informed Mr. Gaffney that while the issue was outside of their remit the Irish government would be able to draw down EU funds from the European Fisheries Fund to compensate Mr Gaffney, given the very unique circumstances of his case.

"The Irish government has failed to do this. And what we have witnessed is a case of 'passing the buck' developing between government departments, as they work to avoid taking responsibility for the matter.

"I have written to the Taoiseach and have asked that he intervene to outline which government depart-



John Brady TD

ment is the competent department to deal with CJ Gaffney's case. The Taoiseach needs to outline what steps that he is prepared to take to ensure that the matter is brought to a satisfactory solution.

"The Taoiseach previously gave the Gaffney family a commitment a decade ago in the Arklow Bay Hotel, that once in power he would get the issue sorted.

"Now is his opportunity to sit down with Ministers Charlie McConalogue, and Eamon Ryan and determine which of them will get this mess sorted to allow the Gaffney family to get on with their lives."





As part of their ongoing aspirations to make the world of horses and horticulture as accessible to as many people as possible - Festina Lente Walled Garden & Equestrian Learning Centre in Bray have built some beautiful tiered-level garden allotments - otherwise known as raised beds - for people who love nature and gardening but find it challenging due to physical disabilities or mobility issues. With the innovative raised beds they will be able to grow their own produce comfortably and realise all of the benefits that Social and Therapeutic Horticulture brings. All raised beds have been designed and built by the volunteers and staff of Festina Lente in an effort to further meet the goal of social inclusion and equal opportunities within local Wicklow community. For further enquiries please email Jill Carey@FestinaLente.ie.

## 'Delgany pedestrian traffic light connection is great news for local families'

Following a long wait, the pedestrian traffic lights on Delgany Wood Avenue were connected last week.

The connection is a result of the efforts from local representatives together with Wicklow County Council to improve safety for walkers crossing at Delgany Wood Avenue.

Speaking in support of the connection of the pedestrian traffic lights, Minister Simon Harris said: "I was delighted to hear that the pedestrian traffic lights on Delgany Wood Avenue have been connected. This is a busy road, used daily by families with young children and it is getting busier as children have returned to school. It is essential that we provide safe areas for members of our community to cross the road. I would like to thank Wicklow County Council and the ESB for their work on providing this pedestrian crossing for the residents of Delgany".

The installation of pedestrian traffic lights will increase road safety in the Delgany area by providing improved safety measures for those crossing with bicycles and buggies and support families who wish to walk to school where possible.

## FAMILY SHOWS THIS OCTOBER AT (mermaid)

For Full Details & Bookings:  
www.mermaidartscentre.ie  
Box Office: 01 272 4030



Fidget Feet Aerial Dance Theatre:

### HATCH

Thurs 14 & Fri 15 October | 7pm

An immersive aerial dance children's show. Age Suitability: 4 - 10 years.



Anna Newell Theatre Adventures:

### SHIMMER

Mon 18 & Sat 23 October | 10am, 12pm & 2pm

A unique, dream-like dance show for babies & their adults. Age Suitability: 3 - 12 months.



Barnstorm Theatre Company:

### ALICE & THE WOLF

Fri 22 October | 7pm

This is a digital fairy tale that's deliciously funny & full of dangerously dark twists. Age Suitability: 9 - 14 years.



### A VERY OLD MAN WITH ENORMOUS WINGS

Wed 27 & Thurs 28 October | 7pm

A beautiful, strange & rich classic piece of magical realism to captivate the entire family. Age Suitability: 8+ years.

# Bray man appointed Managing Director of SSE Renewables

SSE has announced that Stephen Wheeler is to be appointed as Managing Director, SSE Renewables, following Jim Smith's decision to step down from his role and retire in April 2022. Stephen is originally from Bray.

Stephen Wheeler is currently Managing Director of SSE Thermal, where he is focused on decarbonising the company's flexible generation, energy-from-waste and energy storage portfolio, and driving the transition to a net zero future. Stephen was previously Managing Director of SSE Ireland, and prior to this, General Manager (Ireland) of SSE Renewables. He was part of the successful management team that grew the Airtricity renewable energy platform before SSE acquired it in 2008. Before joining Airtricity, he spent over 10 years working with ABB and Siemens internationally, specialising in the development and construction of generation assets. Stephen is a graduate of Electrical Engineering at University College Dublin, with an MBA from the UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School, and a past Chairman of Wind Energy Ireland (WEI).

Stephen will become part of the SSE Group Executive Committee and will report to Board Director Martin Pibworth, Group Energy and Commercial Director. He will take up his role in January 2022.

SSE Renewables has the largest offshore wind pipeline across UK and Ireland at 7GW and in the last 12 months SSE has begun to export SSE Renewables' capabilities in off-



Stephen Wheeler

shore wind development, construction and operation to international markets where it sees growth opportunities. With clear aspirations to reach a run rate of at least 1GW of new assets a year during the second half of this decade, SSE Renewables has a renewable output target of 30TWh a year by 2030, which it expects to exceed.

Stephen Wheeler said: "I am immensely proud that I will be leading SSE Renewables.

We have a fantastic platform to build from with the business currently leading the construction of more offshore wind energy than anybody else in the world, including developing and building the largest offshore wind farm in the world at Dogger Bank. I'm excited to be building on the excellent job that Jim has done in establishing SSE Renewables as a leading player in the sector and I look forward to a smooth transition with the highly talented Renewables team in order to deliver our domestic and international ambitions, and in doing so accelerating into growth and helping reach net zero."

Martin Pibworth said: "These are exciting times for the SSE group and Stephen will bring both international and domestic experience of developing and operating low carbon electricity to help propel the renewables business further still. Jim Smith's contribution to SSE and the wider energy sector has been immense over a number of years. However, in Stephen we have a fully able successor and I look forward to working with him to build on our already enviable pipeline and enter a new era of renewables growth as we seek to build on our position as the UK and Ireland's national energy champion and expand internationally."

# Be a good neighbour and plant a tree

1,500 free Native Irish Wild Cherry tree saplings available for primary schools

The Tree Council of Ireland is calling on primary schools across Wicklow to plant a tree on National Tree Day, Thursday, 7th October. The theme for this year's campaign is "Trees are Good Neighbours" and it aims to encourage primary school children and their families to think more about the important role trees play in supporting the environment and the biodiversity found in and under the tree.

National Tree Day is an opportunity for children, teachers and parents to put down the school books, spend time outdoors and learn to become more environmentally aware.

Trees help to clean our air, help to fight the climate crisis and, if we take time to look under the tree, we can see how they support and protect whole eco-systems, offering shelter, shade, food, resting and nesting spaces as well as a food source for birds and insects.

## Campaign mascot, Sammy Squirrel offers his tips on how you can help!

1. **Plant a tree.** Trees absorb carbon dioxide and release oxygen helping us to tackle climate change. They give shelter and food to birds, animals and insects.
2. **Plant wild flowers in your garden.** These will provide food - i.e. pollen and nectar for bees.
3. **Go for a walk outdoors.** Look out for insects, worms, snails and ladybirds. Collect twigs, leaves and flowers to make a collage when you get home.
4. **Look down!** Take time out to see what lives under the tree. It provides shelter and food for lots of animals and creepy crawlies.
5. **Become the recycling hero for your family.** Help them by showing everyone how to recycle properly.
6. **Get creative and repurpose a bird feeder** out of a carton for your garden, balcony or window sill.
7. **Cut down on food waste.** If you don't eat all your lunch today, check if it will keep until tomorrow.
8. **Walk, scoot or cycle to school.** This will help to reduce your carbon footprint.



There are 1,500 Native Irish Wild Cherry tree saplings available through the campaign website for primary schools to plant on their school grounds, or in a pot in the classroom. More details on the campaign, how to get involved and how, just like a tree, we can be great neighbours to the environment can be found at [www.treeday.ie](http://www.treeday.ie). Videos, lesson plans, poster downloads as well as information on recycling, food waste and nature walks are also available.

Eanna Ní Lamhna, President of the Tree Council of Ireland, commented, "Trees are absolutely essential. As we've spent more time out and about in nature over the last while, we can all

appreciate how much they add to our environment and see just what good neighbours they are. They look after us in so many ways from cleaning our air to enriching our soil and support so much wildlife.

"This SPAR National Tree Day is a great opportunity for us all to stop and think about how we can return the favour and support the trees. We'd be delighted to see as many schools as possible register for their free sapling and keep on pledging to help the environment."

Each year a focus is placed on a different native tree and the chosen tree for this year's National Tree Day is the Wild Cherry or Crann Silíní Fíáin, one of Ireland's most beautiful native trees. With its white

or very pale pink flowers in spring, followed by hanging cherries in the autumn, which can be either sour or sweet depending on the tree, it's a particular favourite with birds. By eating the fruit, birds such as the thrush and blackbird, and mammals like the badger and pine marten help to disperse them country-wide.

To win some perfect pollinators for under your favourite tree, keep an eye on Instagram @SparIreland and see how to claim bulbs to plant in time for spring!

To find out more about this year's National Tree Day and to claim a FREE Native Irish Wild Cherry tree sapling for your school, visit [www.treeday.ie](http://www.treeday.ie).



# bife BRAY INSTITUTE OF FURTHER EDUCATION

*Its time for a fesh start and BIFE is the place to get the new skills you will need*

**A**s Minister for Further and Higher Education, the expansion of Training, Apprenticeships and Further Education opportunities is a top priority for me both locally and nationally.

The Bray Institute of Further Education is the largest college of further education in the South East Region of Ireland. It is very well positioned to become an exemplar of the Further Education and Training College of the future.

It has a superb location just off the M50 and within walking distance of the Dart line. BIFE has been to the fore in developing new exciting PLC courses and with over 2000 students each year its success is well established.

## The benefits of further education and training (FET) include the following:

- Post Leaving Certificate courses can provide a foundation for students in specific sectors before they commit to completing an undergraduate course.
- Recent research has shown that having a foundation in FET helps the chances of getting your degree if you move into Higher Education. We also know that 1 in 5 of the current intake in institutes of technology and technological universities come from FET.
- Many universities, colleges and Institutes of Technology have programmes in place to recognise FET qualifications as a route to entry. If a student completes a PLC programme with good results and meets specific criteria, they have a good chance of securing a place on a third-level course.

The policy of the Government is to develop modern FET Colleges providing state of the art courses in a wide variety of fields.

The BIFE Campus has great potential to be a shining example of such a modern college serving not just the needs of Co. Wicklow but the entire region.

Already, BIFE has developed strong progression routes for its graduates to Higher Education with many memoranda of understanding between BIFE and third level colleges in Ireland.

BIFE currently offers a number of Higher Diplomas in areas such as Graphic Design, Fashion, Performing Arts, Acting, Dance Film, Music Production, Music Performance and Fine Art. These

Higher Diplomas allow BIFE to graduates to complete top-up degrees enhancing their career and employment opportunities.

BIFE has an outstanding Science Department with a very significant range of courses from Pre-University Science, Forensics, Food Science, Animal Science and Pharmaceuticals.

BIFE prides itself on its flexibility and responsiveness to changing needs in society. Currently it is a leading teaching college in pre-nursing and maternity studies. It has a very large Health Care Department with many graduates having progressed to key positions in our Health System.

BIFE is also establishing many links with employers and leading companies. Employer engagement will be a significant role for the FET College of the future.

In the Culinary Arts BIFE is already offering an apprenticeship in commis cheffing. It has developed culinary arts facilities to meet the growing hospitality sector in this region.

As Wicklow has developed its film sector, BIFE has developed a range of Film and Media courses which allow students to progress to degree level.

Across a range of vocational and academic disciplines BIFE has developed an impressive range of courses whether it be Hairdressing or Applied Psychology for example.

Further education and training is for everyone. It provides an opportunity for everyone to engage in learning whilst delivering on the critical skills needs of the economy and the future world of work. It was a lifeline for many during the economic recession, and once again FET will be critical to our post-COVID recovery

As a former member of the Board of BIFE I know only too well the commitment of the staff at BIFE and I urge both school leavers, people returning to education or seeking to change career to examine the opportunities BIFE can offer.



Simon Harris, Minister for Further and Higher Education



Dr. Deirdre Keyes CE KWETB, Cllr Tom Fortune, BIFE Board of Management, Simon Harris Minister of Further & Higher Education, Gabriel Allen Deputy Principal of BIFE, and Ray Tedders, Principal of BIFE.

## BIFE- FET College of the Future

by Andrew Brownlee CEO of SOLAS

**SOLAS, is the State agency tasked with building a world class Further Education and Training (FET) sector to fuel Ireland's future. In July 2020, Minister for Further and Higher education, Simon Harris TD launched a new five year Future FET: Transforming Learning Strategy the Further Education and Training Sector which was developed by SOLAS in consultation with the FET Sector.**

The Strategy identifies three strategic priorities for the sector in the next five years including skills, pathways and inclusion. Key to successful achievement of these priorities will be the evolution of FET facilities and provision into a distinct integrated college of FET that can serve as a beacon of community-based learning excellence which can start to change the hearts and minds of Irish society with regard to school leaving and life-long education options. Key features of the FET College of the Future include:

- The provision of courses which will lead directly to employment and to higher qualifications
- Providing flexible learning opportunities with all year provision on a green campus

- \*Providing accessible and clear progression pathways for learners coming from other types of FET courses at levels 1-4
- Ensuring learners have access to learner support services in a consistent manner, with a universal design approach underpinning learning development and delivery
- Serve as a community resource seen as the obvious 'go to' place to access education and training.

The established route from school to university is not a 'one size fits all' model" according to Andrew Brownlee, CEO of SOLAS. He continued: "There are many students in Wicklow who will find that the best, most promising route to their career of choice is a FET course at Bray Institute of Further



Andrew Brownlee  
CEO of SOLAS

Education. And for those who may not receive the points required to progress to a #chosen university course, FET at BIFE can offer a route to access that course.

Of the opportunities for students of all profiles and from across Ireland, Mr. Brownlee commented: BRAY Institute of Further Education is a well-established college of Further Education in Wicklow and is provides excellent opportunities

for students to progress their education through many different and exciting options. As one of the largest colleges of its type in Ireland and located as it is on a great campus BIFE is a really good example of an FET college that can be developed into a FET College of the Future. We look forward to working with Kildare and Wicklow Education and Training Board and BIFE as we work towards this ambition.

## BIFE a key driver for excellence in educational



Doctor Deirdre Keyes  
Chief Executive of KWETB

Bray Institute of Further Education is KWETB's flagship FET College. As Chief Executive of KWETB I congratulate BIFE on its consistent innovation and determination to meet the future needs of the changing world of education and training. BIFE provides so many opportunities to learners both young and mature. With over 80 full time courses it is a key driver for excellence in education and training and has a national profile.

I congratulate all the team at BIFE who have shown such dedication to developing BIFE as an outstanding college serving so many.

Bray Institute of Further Education continues to be a major source of innovation and a key economic driver in this region.





## BIFE students in their own words



### Kellie Phelin - Animal Care

"After completing the Animal Care & Management at BIFE I progressed on to study Veterinary Nursing at UCD. Going to BIFE for me was a really beneficial and enjoyable year and not only made me confident that I wanted to go down the Veterinary Nursing path, but also prepared me for college and the different approach to teaching and learning that is taken in colleges. The course was a mix of practical classes and lectures which made for a really nice balance, it was great that topics which were covered in the modules were all applicable for my work experience which I did in a vets. I also enjoyed the grooming classes which gave me a lot of experience handling dogs which is a really important aspect of Veterinary Nursing. I hope to finish my four years in UCD to become a qualified Vet Nurse and to specialise in Equine Vet Nursing."

### Cian O Hara - Engineering Pre-University

"I really wasn't sure what I wanted to pursue as a career, but my year studying in BIFE helped me figure out what I wanted to do in the future. I don't think there was one module I didn't enjoy. The teaching was excellent. I finally got my head around concepts in maths that I hadn't previously understood which was a confidence booster. Every Tuesday we had mechanics and electronics in IT Tallaght. This gave us an introduction to the material that we would be covering in third level. I found that this course gave a great indication for what to expect continuing on to college. I'm now doing a mechanical engineering degree at TUD and am really enjoying it. I do encourage anyone who chooses to do Pre-University Engineering to put all their effort into every subject and go beyond the brief to get the most out of the year, especially in Engineering practical where there is so much freedom in the workshop to do what you want."



### Gabriel Ichim- Computer Science

"I am very proud of my Advanced Certificate in Networks & Software Systems and am pleased that I had the opportunity to earn it at Bray Institute of Further Education. The competency and the professionalism of the teachers were nothing less than outstanding. I had completed the Level 5 Information Technology course at this college when I started the program in 2013. On completion of the course I progressed directly into 3rd Year at Institute of Technology Tallaght pursuing a Bachelor of Science in IT Management degree, and working as a Data Analyst for an Irish company. On a daily basis, I must apply various aspects of theory and techniques that I learned during my time at Bray Institute of Further Education. I genuinely endorse Bray Institute of Further Education and everything for which it stands."

### Alison Duff- Business Management

"Choosing the Advanced Management FETAC Level 6 course at the Bray Institute was one of the best decisions I have ever made. I had completed a FETAC Level 5 course in Business and was determined to progress to the next level with the hope of realising a lifelong dream to attend college and obtain my degree. I came across the Institutes prospectus online and was amazed at the choice of courses now available to me. I cannot stress enough how beneficial it has been for me to attend the course in BIFE. Everything that was covered in the classes has been of huge benefit to me here at college and made the transition almost seamless for me. Course content is current, relevant and taught in a very professional manner, in a welcoming and friendly environment." *Alison Duff progressed from BIFE to a degree in Logistics and Supply Chain Management at DIT.*



### Sandra Colgan - Accounting Technician

"As a mature student and mum it was a big decision to return to full-time education after years in industry, but from the start I found the team at BIFE helpful and welcoming. The class sizes are small so you get to know everyone and make new friends. The teachers are really excellent and prepared us well for the ATI exams. Early in the course they gave us some good advice; to get into a study routine, use the library resource and form study groups to help and support each other. I have really enjoyed studying at BIFE and am thrilled with our ATI results - all the hard work paid off and the two years have flown by."

Both ATI and BIFE have excellent higher education links with Institute of Technology Tallaght (ITT), and I have now entered third year of the Accounting & Finance degree course with my BIFE classmates. They say 'education opens doors' and I couldn't recommend BIFE highly enough to school leavers and mature students alike." *Sandra Colgan achieved Joint 1st Place in Ireland in the ATI Year 2 exams in 2016.*

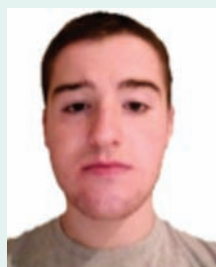
## Exciting Game Development Courses at BIFE

BIFE run two exciting Games design and development courses. The 3D Game Design course (QQI Level 5, 1 year duration) is pitched at an introductory level and is targeted at school leavers and those with minimum experience in game design but who wish to gain a foothold into the industry.

For the more experienced candidate, they also run a Game Development course (QQI Level 6, 1 year duration). You will learn how to model characters and game props in 3D, light and colour them so that they look like the AAA games titles you play at home! You will learn how to sculpt and animate your characters and bring your own sound, design and mechanics into your own games. You will make personal game projects across a range of genres including FPS, Maze, Shoot 'em ups, MMORPG.... They also engage their students with a host of current technologies from 3D printing and Motion Capture to Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR).

If you love playing games, are curious about how they are made and fancy yourself as a Game Designer then BIFE's courses are for you. They help to market their students and their games by teaching about the online world, and building an online profile. Their students progress to Game Design degrees at various institutes throughout the country including DIT, Carlow IT, and Limerick IT. Many have now completed their education to Masters Level and some now have exciting careers in the industry and it all started at BIFE!

### Case Study: Joshua Loveridge "The One We Found" Xbox One, PS4



Joshua Loveridge

Joshua Loveridge joined the 3D Game Design (QQI Level 5) course having just completed his Leaving Certificate in 2016. He then went onto complete our Game Development course the following year. It was at this time that Joshua began to develop his widely acclaimed game "The One We

Found" which has been licensed for both Xbox One and PS4 consoles. It's a new breed of horror. Check it out at [www.theonewefound.com](http://www.theonewefound.com) if you are brave enough. He is currently Managing Director of Loveridge Designs and Loveridge Designs & Development. Joshua is also studying his Master's Degree in the UK



Screenshot from "The One We Found"

## BIFE - A college dedicated to electronic music

The Bray Institute of Further Education has been pushing electronic music and DJ culture since 2002. Starting out with a few 1210s in a prefab, they now have custom built DJ booths, multiple production studios and performance spaces. It is unique in Ireland to find a music college almost completely dedicated to electronic music production. For nearly two decades students have been coached by some of the most influential Irish DJs and producers.

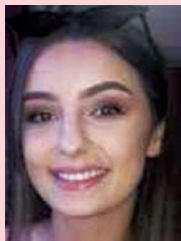
Walking into BIFE college is like walking into any other college until you pass through the doors of the 'Department of Noise'. In here you hear distorted kick drums from 9 in the morning until the college closes every night. You hear the scream of analogue synthesisers, records spinning back, and students whooping to their track selections. The range of technology on offer is impressive - Technics, Pioneer, Serato, Ableton, Pro-Tools. Students are taught how to mix, scratch, produce, record, master and promote their music. In every room the monitors are set to loud, as students banter, share techniques and learn from the tutors.

BIFE has had a singularly impressive selection of tutors, hand selected for their skill, knowledge, love and compassion. Collectively they possess an endless array of musical knowledge and technical expertise, sharing their love of the craft with students. Tutors have included Jon Hussey (Planet Dub), Dave

Splyce (All City Records), Tu-Ki (four year DMC Champion), Barry Dempsey (Virtu Studios), Handsome Paddy (XFM), Sunil Sharpe (Earwiggle). This year saw the inclusion of Matthew Flanagan (DeFeKT) and Doug Cooney (Real Sound). Coordinating it all is Ken Harte (Grizzle/AudioLemon).

Over the years BIFE has had some standout students such as DeFeKT, Sarah Lennox, Lee Kelly, Quinton Campbell, Orla Feeney, Coleman Buckley, Jan Boland, Mode\_1, Dermot Bateman, Nathan Jones and many more. All of them releasing, producing, promoting and DJing.

We'll leave the last words with Georgia Murphy aka Ôneyra who says, "I owe it all to the tutors at BIFE for providing and guiding me with their knowledge to push me to where I am today. I look forward to making my mark on the scene in years to come".



### Fia Murphy - Nursing & Midwifery

"I completed the Pre-Nursing and Midwifery QQI level 5 in BIFE in 2018. I applied to two Universities in Scotland and got offered a place in both. I then received a third round offer to study Children's and General Nursing Integrated in UCD. I went with what I felt was right and chose to stay at home to study. I am loving every moment of my time in UCD and I am very excited to start placement in January. The Pre-Nursing and Midwifery course benefitted me significantly and gave me a greater insight into Nursing and what to expect. The knowledge and experience I gained from my time in BIFE has come to be extremely useful during my labs and lectures and I am that little bit more ahead of students that have come straight from secondary school."

"I undoubtedly would not have achieved what I have if I didn't work hard and was given the support and commitment from all the staff there. I enjoyed every minute of my year in BIFE and am indebted to the staff for their efforts in supporting me and helping me achieve my distinctions. I certainly wouldn't be where I am today if it wasn't for all their help throughout the year. I would highly recommend BIFE to anyone who is thinking of pursuing a career in nursing."

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## College Choice - The BIFE Route

Over recent years many new avenues have opened up to students in pursuit of their dream career. According to Gabriel Allen, deputy principal Bray Institute (BIFE), a Further Education offers a learner, who may not have achieved the CAO points that they require, the opportunity to gain advanced entry onto honours degree programmes, both in Ireland and abroad.

The comprehensive range of courses available at BIFE provides an excellent opportunity to anyone who wants to advance their qualifications, enhance their employment potential or progress their career he added. Over recent years our graduates have achieved honours degrees in graphic design, fashion design, TV & Film (moving image), Acting, Dance, Fine Arts, Psychology, Applied Health & Social Care and Music production. Allen explained, these courses are at Higher National Diploma level and on completion, many of last year's graduating students proceeded to the final year of an honours Degree Programme in Ireland or Britain.

BIFE students can gain advanced entry onto higher education courses. For example, BIFE run an Accounting Technician course. On completion of this two-year course students can proceed to the 3rd year of the Bachelor of Business in Accounting & Finance course (TU911) in TU Dublin. Students can also progress into the 3rd year of the Bachelor of Science in Culinary Arts (TU742) on completion of their Level 6 course in BIFE at TU Dublin.

Work Experience is a vital part



Gabriel Allen Deputy Principal of BIFE

of the BIFE courses and now all students in the College have the opportunity to complete a 3-week work placement abroad in countries such as Spain, Portugal, Poland, Italy, Finland, Malta or Czechia under the Erasmus+ Programme which is sponsored by the European Union. This is a terrific opportunity for our students, not only to gain valuable work experience in a European country, but also to experience a different culture and to broaden their horizons.

BIFE constantly update and

introduce new programmes in response to demand, needs and workplace opportunities. This year they have introduced the following new courses:

- Equine Studies,
- Barista, Pastry & Baking,
- Traditional Irish & Folk Music Performance,
- Brewing & Distilling Technology,
- Applied Ecology & Biodiversity Studies
- Emergency Care Studies.

Bray Institute will be holding their last **Open Afternoon of the year on Wednesday 29th September from 4pm to 6pm**. Potential students, parents and career guidance teachers will have the opportunity to speak to the staff who, with their educational knowledge and specialist industry experience, can guide you in the right direction. You can also view the facilities and see for yourself the opportunities that are available at BIFE.

**Applications for September 2021 are still open. So get down to the Open Day. Alternatively, you could call the Institute any day during office hours on 01-2829668 or log on to [www.bife.ie](http://www.bife.ie) to discuss your needs.**

## BIFE providing valuable internationally recognised programmes

*Ray Tedders, Principal of Bray Institute of Further Education*

For thirty-five years BIFE has offered quality Further Education courses. There is now a new exciting vision for the future of BIFE. With the establishment of the new government department, of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science headed up by Minister Simon Harris, there is a new energy and focus on Further and Higher Education.

As Principal, I and my colleagues and partners are working to develop a new modern campus which will bring to this region an exemplary Institute of Further Education and Training.

Thanks to the hard work of many people, BIFE is the pre-eminent college of Further Education in the region, offering a huge variety of programmes, leading to Degree, Diploma and Certificate awards.

New developments in the way we work, strongly emphasises the need for investment in education and training. Under these plans BIFE will have new buildings and

state of the art facilities so that we can provide courses for the 21st century, meeting future needs.

This is an exciting time in further education and offers great opportunities for our college.

This region that BIFE serves has seen a huge increase in population. Investment is needed to provide educational resources for this increasing population.

Key industries that our resources address include our Film sector and Tourism and Hospitality Sectors. BIFE is the leading provider of FET courses in these sectors in the region providing valuable internationally recognised programmes in



Ray Tedders, Principal of BIFE

these sectors. We already have state of the art facilities in Film and in the Culinary Arts

Likewise, BIFE is the leader in providing courses in the Sciences, Pharmaceuticals, Food sciences, Health Care, Performing Arts, Information Technology and Business.



BIFE staff and students visiting IT Tallaght. (BIFE have a formal 'Access to Higher Education' agreement with IT Tallaght and a number of other IT's).



Bethany Deans with Erasmus+ students William Molloy, Kian Wallace, Ken Hanrahan, Anthony Duffy and Ryan Cromwell who completed a two-week study programme in Finland as part of the Erasmus+ Programme.



Pictured are some of Bife's Tourism and Bar/Restaurant students Gary O Connell, Conron Truel, Liarosa Scally, Jacqueline Atkins and Jade Forde with Deputy Principal Gabriel Allen enjoying the views over Malaga from the Alcazaba. The students were on a three-week internship in Malaga, under the Erasmus+ Programme as part of their Tourism and Bar/Restaurant courses



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### ART & DESIGN

Art Portfolio Preparation Course  
Art, Craft & Design  
Art Practice / Fine Art HNC  
Architectural Design & Technology  
Graphic Design HND  
Fashion & Textiles HNC  
Garden Design  
Furniture Design & Manu. Level 5  
Furniture Design & Cabinet M. Level 6  
Jewellery Making & design

### MUSIC & COMPUTER GAMING

3D Game Design  
Games Development  
Music Production HND  
Music Performance HND  
**NEW** Traditional Irish & Folk Music Performance  
Sound Engineering  
DJ Techniques & Music Production

### SPORT

Sports, Exercise & Fitness Instruction  
Personal Trainer, Strength & Conditioning  
Football Coaching & Fitness studies  
Sports Injury & Soft Tissue Massage Therapy

### SOCIAL STUDIES & APPLIED PSYCHOLOGY

Social Studies & Community Care  
Applied Health & Social Care HND  
Applied Psychology

### BODY THERAPIES & HOLISTIC HEALTH

Beauty & Body Therapy  
Nail Technician & Salon Administration  
Hairdressing Junior Stylist  
Hairdressing Senior Stylist  
Barbering  
Fashion Theatre and Media Make-Up  
Holistic & Wellbeing Studies

### SCIENCE, ENGINEERING & COMPUTING

Animal Care & Management  
Animal Care  
Canine Husbandry  
Animal Science Advanced  
**NEW** Equine Studies  
Science - Pre University  
Dietetics, Nutrition & Food Science  
**NEW** Brewing & Distilling Techniques  
**NEW** Forensics - Applied Science  
**NEW** Applied Ecology & Biodiversity Studies  
Engineering Pre-University  
Computer Software Development  
Computer Science Level 5  
Computer Networks & Cyber Security Level 6

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Business Management - Advanced Cert  
Accounting Technician  
Business Tourism & Event Management  
Legal Administration  
IT & Office Administration  
Medical Administration  
Security Studies

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Adult Leaving Certificate

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Pharmacy Assistant  
**NEW** Pharmacy Technician  
Emergency Care Services

### ACTING & DANCE

Acting for Theatre & Film  
Acting-Advanced for Stage & Screen  
Dance Technique, Performance & Chor. ND  
Dance Technique, Performance & Chor. HND

### FILM

TV & Film Production  
TV & Film (Moving Image) HND

### TOURISM & HOSPITALITY

Tourism, Reception & Event Management  
Restaurant & Bar Management  
Professional Cookery  
**NEW** Professional Cookery Advanced  
Barista, Pastry & Baking



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# Walkers gather to support peace and reconciliation

Minister for European Affairs, Thomas Byrne T.D. launched the 5th Annual Glencree Peace Walk and lead over 70 Peace Walkers in a 'Walk For Peace' across the Wicklow mountains on Sunday 19th September. The 9km peace walk started from the Glencree Centre and those participating included families, members of the diplomatic corps, supporters and staff of Glencree.

Commenting on the Glencree Peace Walk, Minister Byrne said: "In its 47 years, Glencree has earned a high value reputation for bringing people and communities impacted by political conflict and violence together to talk, listen, seek to understand each other and help build relationships. Glencree is an important resource for the Government, diplomatic community and all those working to find solutions to sustainable peace and inclusive societies in Ireland, within Northern Ireland, between Ireland and the UK, and at EU and international levels. I am delighted to support their work and peace walk fundraising event."

Now in its fifth year, the annual Glencree Peace Walk

coincides with UN International Peace Day which calls for 24-hours of non-violence and ceasefire. After the restrictions imposed as a result of Covid-19 last year which led to a remote walk, the return to an onsite walk was welcomed across the Glencree community.

Glencree Chair, Barbara Walshe said: "The annual peace walk is our only public fundraising event each year and is an important support to our peace and reconciliation work with women who have experienced political violence, victims and survivors of the conflict in Northern Ireland, minority ethnic and faith communities, and our most recent work with the next generation of leaders.

"Glencree will soon launch our strategic plan for the next 5 years which will guide our ability to adapt and respond to the changing circumstances and challenges of peace in Ireland, within Northern Ireland and beyond, and set the foundations for becoming a centre of excellence in peacebuilding.

"Glencree stands for the possibility that peace and reconciliation are achievable when we act on what really matters to us. The peace walk provides the wider public with the opportunity to champion peace with us and help us raise funds for our vital peace work."

Established in 1974 in response to the conflict in Northern Ireland, Glencree

played a key role in the peace process bringing together those in conflict for confidential dialogue and building relationships across divides. Today, Glencree works with victims/survivors in Northern Ireland; women from marginalised communities who experience political conflict/violence; migrants, refugees and members of ethnic and faith minority communities; students and young adults north and south of the border; and policy-makers, politicians, diplomats and civil society leaders who work to find solutions to sustainable peace. They also continue to share learnings in conflict and post-conflict societies internationally with a current focus on Haiti.

## Be a SuPAWhero this October

Autism Assistance Dogs Ireland has launched the 50 Miles in October Challenge as part of an ambitious fundraising campaign to raise €500,000 to re-open the waiting list in 2022.

Be A SuPAWhero will run from October 1st to 31st and funds raised will go towards training a further 25 autism assistance dogs. This will allow Autism Assistance Dogs Ireland (AADI) to reopen their waiting list in 2022 and offer more children the life changing support of an autism assistance dog.

In 2021, AADI reopened their waiting list and allocated 30 assistance dogs in under 2 MINUTES to 30 very grateful families. Sadly, the AADI waiting list is now closed but the Be A SuPAWhero campaign aims to end the wait for more families who need sup-

port in 2022.

The public and business community can support Be A SuPAWhero by registering to take part in the 50 Miles in October Challenge. For the month of October, AADI is asking you to commit to walking 50 miles in your own time. You can participate as an individual or as a team with your friends, family or colleagues. Registration is now open and every participant receives a free AADI t-shirt and fundraising pack.

Every family's story is different. Every child with autism is different, every autism

assistance dog changes the world for a child with autism.

Joseph Ryan, aged 9, lives with Autism, his AADI Autism Assistance Dog, and his family in Arklow. Autumn is to Joseph so much more than an assistance dog. She is his best friend and companion in good and bad times. She brings a smile to his face. Autumn has transformed Joseph's life by keeping him safe when they are out and about. Autumn wears a jacket, and is attached to Joseph using a short lead and belt. Once Autumn has her jacket on she knows her job is to keep Joseph safe.

Dorota, Joseph's Mom said "We were on the waiting list for 6 years and life before Autumn joined our family was hard. Going for walks close to roads or main streets was pretty much close to impossible. Joseph is a flight risk, he has no awareness of danger. If he saw something that got his attention he would cover his ears and run away without looking around. Going shopping was very stressful for all of us. Joseph would have anxiety attacks if we changed the route around the supermarket. We always had to stick to the same aisles or else Joseph would get very upset, screaming and crying."

Fast forward 6 months and Autumn has transformed the family's life. Joseph is safe walking with Autumn. He doesn't even think of running away. He is relaxed and calm, enjoying strolls with his best friend. Joseph is proud of Autumn, his dog, his friend.

Dorota, Joseph's Mom said, "Going shopping is so much easier with Autumn, even waiting in the queue is not a problem for Joseph anymore. I think it's safe to say that we as a family have become more relaxed and calm since Autumn joined us."

"When we are in the shopping centre or supermarket children look at Joseph, but not because he is behaving differently or having a meltdown. No, they look at him because he is the lucky boy who can bring his dog shopping with him. That gives our little man a massive amount of confidence and boosts his self esteem. Being a mom to a little boy with autism, I cannot stress enough how important autism assistance dogs are to those little people. They are life changers."

With your support AADI can help more families like Joseph and Autumn. Register to take part in the 50 Miles in October and help train more SuPAWheros for 2022 and end the wait for more families.



Limerick All Ireland hurling champion Aaron Gillane and Irish Hockey International Olympian and World Cup Silver medallist Roisin Upton met with children at Gaelscoil Chaladh an Treoigh, Castleroy Limerick. Pupils wore their favourite jersey as they got ready to take part in GOAL Jersey Day this year.

## Get your kit on for Goal Jersey Day

Humanitarian aid agency GOAL is appealing to people all over Co. Wicklow to show their true colours by getting on their kit for GOAL Jersey Day, which takes place on Friday, 8th October. To sign up to GOAL Jersey Day, please visit [jerseyday.org](http://jerseyday.org).

School students, employees and members of organisations across the country are being encouraged to don their favourite County, Club, Country or Provincial team jersey to raise vital funds to help GOAL's lifesaving work with vulnerable communities all over the world.

With COVID-19 still resulting in thousands of people working from home, GOAL Jersey Day is the perfect excuse for workmates to get connected with colleagues by putting on their favourite jersey - and their Zoom camera at the same time! Those without jerseys can change their zoom backgrounds to their favourite team colours. Children in classrooms are encouraged to lift spirits and swap their school uniform for their favourite jerseys on 8 October.

Funds raised from GOAL Jersey Day will go towards the agency's life changing work in emergency response, health, nutrition, and livelihoods in 14 countries. Last year alone GOAL reached more than 14.3 million people with support in Africa, the Middle East and Latin America.

This year, your support is needed more than ever. Just a few weeks ago, 1.2 million people (including 540,000 children) woke up to the devastation of a 7.2 magnitude earthquake in Haiti. GOAL teams are racing against the clock to respond to the devastation.

COVID-19 continues to pose a huge threat to the countries where GOAL works, many of which have weak and limited healthcare systems, poor resources and scarcity of clean, safe water. GOAL continues to respond to the pandemic in their 14 programme countries, providing access to clean water and sanitation, lifesaving messaging and support to strained healthcare services.

GOAL Jersey Day takes place on Friday, 8 October 2021, in partnership with Folens. To sign up to GOAL Jersey Day, please visit [jerseyday.org](http://jerseyday.org).



Joseph and Dorota Ryan from Arklow with Joseph's autism assistance dog Autumn.



## Enrolment into First Year for 2022/23

Our Admissions Policy & Annual Admissions Notice are available on [www.loretobray.com](http://www.loretobray.com)

From October 1st 2021, applications will be accepted for entry to 1st year in Sept 2022.

For full details including our Admissions policy, Admissions notice and FAQs, please go to Admissions on [www.loretobray.com](http://www.loretobray.com)

Tel: (01) 2867481

Email: [info@loretobray.com](mailto:info@loretobray.com)





1, The Woods, Rathdrum, will be auctioned on 29th September with a guide price of €275,000

## Vacant residential and commercial properties to be auctioned this week

A number of vacant residential and commercial properties in Co. Wicklow will be auctioned this week on 29th and 30th September.

The properties will be auctioned by BidX1, the digital property investment platform. In total, 130 vacant properties across the country will be auctioned.

The company, which was established in Ireland but has since expanded into multiple European markets, has released details of the upcoming sale, which could see more than €60 million worth of Irish property changing hands across the two days.

Seven properties in Co. Wicklow will be auctioned on 29th September: Apartment 15, The Printworks, Bray (guide price €195,000); 35 Pierview, Wicklow Town (guide price €185,000); 2, The Links, Abbeylands, Arklow (guide price €310,000); 1, The Woods, Rathdrum (guide price

€275,000); 30 Derrybawn, Aughrim (€250,000); 23, Woodlands Drive, Arklow (guide price €195,000); 6 Viewmount, Rathdrum (guide price €185,000).

Four properties in Co. Wicklow will be auctioned on 30th September: 21 Deepdales on the Southern Cross in Bray (Guide price €450,000); Lands at Gap Road, Blessington (guide price €145,000); Former Costcutters, Woodlands Rise, Lamberton, Arklow (guide price €130,000); Two sites at Coomie Lane, Arklow (guide price €30,000).

Jonathan Fenn, Head of Property at BidX1, commented, "September is always a very busy time for us, but the initial asking prices in this catalogue alone total €63 million.

"The proportion of vacant residential property, particularly family homes, will be a welcome boost to a supply-starved market.

"We offer a number of different sale methods, but our digital auctions remain one of the most popular. It's a very efficient and transparent method of selling, with huge momentum building up to the day itself.

"A very wide range of properties will be offered, from family homes in sought-after Dublin suburbs to coastal land with stunning views over Tremone Bay in Donegal, and even a former church.

"You don't need to be taking part to watch all the action; everything will be shown live on our website, including real-time bidding."

64 per cent of the residential properties being offered by BidX1 are houses. In total, more than 280 across the country will be offered at the auction, and more than 130 of those are currently vacant.

All 26 counties are represented in the catalogue, while 88 properties in Dublin will be offered. Almost half of those are vacant houses, with an average guide price of €295,000.

Earlier this month, BidX1 was announced as one Ireland's Best Managed Companies as part of an awards programme led by Deloitte and Bank of Ireland, which seeks to recognise excellence in private businesses across Ireland.

The Irish firm, which specialises in online property transactions, pioneered the first online auctions in Ireland in 2015 and has since brought the model further afield, offering property investments in Spain, South Africa, Cyprus and the UK on the platform.



Lands at Gap Road, Blessington (guide price €145,000) will be auctioned on 30th September

# Property price barometer shows Wicklow house prices increasing

IPAV's latest Residential Property Price Barometer charting house prices achieved for three and four bedroom semi-detached homes and two-bedroom apartments in the first half of 2021 shows an acceleration in house price increases over the previous six months and it is particularly prevalent in the country.

Overall IPAV's study has found double digit growth for 3-bedroom homes in Waterford and Limerick. And close behind are Tipperary, Meath, Louth and Cavan with nine plus per cent growth, followed in the eight plus per cent range by County Dublin, Carlow, Dublin 15, Dublin 7 and Kildare.

In Wicklow prices increased by a lesser amount, three bedroom homes increased by 3.33pc; 4-bedrooms by 3.80pc and 2-bedroom apartments by 3.71pc.

Some of the area specific increases are accounted for by new blended working opportunities where people don't have to operate from formal office settings on a full-time basis, according to IPAV's Chief Executive Pat Davitt.

"While that is an influential factor, the main driver of increasing prices is the lack of supply of homes to meet current and pent-up demand. And that is why predictions by economists and others of house price drops during the pandemic have not materialised, forecasts IPAV called into question at the time," he said.

Mr Davitt said his organisation welcomes the Government's new Housing for All plan with a commitment to invest €4 billion per year to build 300,000 homes over the next nine years.

"While the nuts and bolts of how precisely the plan is going to achieve that target remains to be seen, it is in the interest of society as a whole that the plan works because continuing house price increases at the level we are currently seeing would not be sustainable over the longer term but will not abate either until more stock comes on stream to meet supply.

"As things stand currently those on average wages have difficulty in securing a mortgage at a time when rental levels are outstripping mortgage repayments,

substantially so in many areas of the country."

He said it is for this reason IPAV has called on the Minister for Finance in a recent Budget submission to attempt to prevail upon the Central Bank to try and ensure that those earning €60,000 or less could borrow up to 4.5 times income, as opposed to the current 3.5 times income under the Central Bank mortgage rules.

He said the extension of the Government's Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan scheme from Local Authorities was welcome but it needs to be extended further to enable all purchasers to take advantage of the 4.5 times income under that scheme, not just first-time buyers.

Mr Davitt said the price of a home is critical to the future financial security and wealth of our younger population.

"While still ahead of the euro area norm we currently have historically low interest rates. The recent introduction of 20 and 30-year fixed interest rate mortgages is a first for Ireland and enables purchasers to have security knowing exactly what their future financial outlay will be.

"This is a major contrast with the past where interest rates were frequently subject to increases, sometimes significant increases."

The IPAV Residential Property Price Barometer charts house prices achieved by auctioneers, as opposed to asking prices. Mr Davitt said while that difference is always relevant it is particularly so now given the intensity of activity where, it would appear, asking and achieved prices are diverging, often to a considerable degree.

He thanked members of IPAV for their contribution to the study which he said provides "real market evidence as opposed to speculation on prices."

## Substantial Carnew bar, lounge and apartments on the market

A bar and lounge which stands out as the most prominent property in Carnew is being brought to market by joint agents REA Grimes and John P Younge.

The Lodge has a large function room, generous beer garden and four self-contained apartment/flats overhead, and comes to market with a guide price of €450,000.

The internal retail areas extend to 280 sq mts, (circa 3,000 sq ft) while the external beer garden and outer yard, combined, are twice as big, at 570 sq mts (c. 6,000 sq ft).

The total town centre site is just under a third of acre and the extensive plot to the rear, combined with several stone-built outbuildings, provides significant potential for redevelopment.



velopment.

As the tallest building on the Main Street, the Lodge has a Vodafone mast on the roof which provides a current rent of €8,000 per annum and has

a number of years to run on the current arrangement.

The property is located in a prominent position on Carnew's Main Street opposite the Mill Street

junction in the heart of the trading centre of the town.

There is a full, valid, publican licence attached to The Lodge. The premises is currently vacant and has been closed for much of the pandemic.

Viewing is highly recommended to appreciate this fine example of a typical rural pub servicing a local community.

For more details or to arrange a viewing, contact Paul Grimes at REA Grimes on paul.grimes@reagrimes.ie or 087 2258678 or John Younge on 087 2775771 or jpyounge@eircom.net.





# Listen to Your Mind

September is World Alzheimer Month and the Wicklow Times, in partnership with the HSE's Dementia: Understand Together campaign, is featuring a series of articles on living with dementia. This week, we focus on dementia and how protecting yourself from hearing loss could reduce your risk of developing it.

*By Prof. Suzanne Timmons, Consultant Geriatrician & Clinical Lead, HSE's National Dementia Office*

September is World Alzheimer Month and the Wicklow Times, in partnership with the HSE's Dementia: Understand Together campaign, is featuring a series of articles on living with dementia. This week, we focus on dementia and how protecting yourself from hearing loss could reduce your risk of developing it.

Many of us worry about developing dementia in later years. Not smoking, or quitting smoking, is crucial in reducing our risk. Taking steps to avoid high blood pressure and diabetes, and regular physical exercise are essential. A healthy diet, such as the Mediterranean diet with its emphasis on fresh fruit and vegetables, and oily fish like salmon and mackerel, is key. Keeping within the low-risk weekly alcohol guidelines of less than 11 standard drinks for women and 17 standard drinks for men, is important too. But there is one other way to reduce our dementia risk – by protecting our hearing.

Hearing loss can cause difficulty in understanding words, especially if



*Prof. Suzanne Timmons, Consultant Geriatrician & Clinical Lead, HSE's National Dementia Office*

there's background noise or a group talking. Over time, even conversation can be challenging, hugely impacting our lives. However, hearing loss can also increase dementia risk, by up to five times if the

person has severe hearing loss.

## Brain Workout

Some researchers think that this may relate to increased work for the brain in having to figure out muffled sounds and words. Others think it relates more to not hearing information properly, as hearing new information and remembering it later is an important brain workout.

We know that keeping socially active and learning new things keeps the brain exercised, so it makes sense that withdrawing from these activities due to hearing loss could increase dementia risk. Accordingly, wearing a hearing aid, if prescribed, can reduce that risk.

As a person's brain becomes impaired, it can be harder to remember to wear or to turn on a hearing aid, or how to use it, and they may need support. Chime has useful information about hearing loss and hearing aids at [www.chime.ie](http://www.chime.ie).

## Three Actions

Here are three ways to protect your hearing:

1. Avoid excessive noise exposure and, if not possible, wear good quality ear protection
2. Have your hearing checked immediately if concerned
3. Use a hearing aid if you need one

Hearing loss is the most common factor that we can change when it comes to dementia, even ahead of smoking and high blood pressure. Worth keeping a listening ear!

For information about dementia, visit [www.understandtogether.ie](http://www.understandtogether.ie) or contact The Alzheimer Society of Ireland Helpline for support on Freephone 1800 341 341 (Monday to Friday 10am to 5pm, Saturday 10am to 4pm). For information about HSE audiology services, visit [www2.hse.ie/services/audiology](http://www2.hse.ie/services/audiology)



## Social Enterprise Grant Scheme now open for applications

**Wicklow County Council has launched the Social Enterprise Grant Scheme to support social enterprises in the county.**

A social enterprise is defined as one whose objective is to achieve a social, societal or environmental impact, rather than maximising profit for its owners or shareholders. It pursues its objectives by trading on an ongoing basis through the provision of goods or services and by reinvesting surpluses into achieving social objectives.

This scheme is being rolled out by Wicklow Local Community Development Committee (WLCDC). Wicklow has been allocated €28,515.90.

Grants can be applied for small capital projects in the range of €2,500 to €5,000. Eligible projects include capital costs incurred by social enterprises for the purchase of equipment or repairs and refurbishment of existing facilities. Ongoing operational costs

or programme costs are not eligible.

The scheme is now open and will close for applications at 5pm the Wednesday 6th of October. The guidelines and application form are available on [www.wicklow.ie](http://www.wicklow.ie) or by ringing 0404 20208.

Applicants will be assessed and shortlisted by Wicklow Local Community Development Committee. This list will be sent to the Minister for Rural and Community Development who must approve each project before funding is awarded.

Wicklow LCDC will inform successful applicants in November and final drawdown will be at the end of February. All applications must be completed in full, include three quotes and a copy of the organisation's Article of Association.

Launching the scheme recently Minister Heather Humphreys said a €1m fund was being allocated nationally from the Dormant Accounts Fund Social Enterprise Capital Grants Scheme 2021



*Catherine Balfe, regional winner and finalist in Right at Home's Carer of the Year Awards*

## Catherine Balfe announced as Wicklow finalist in Carer of the Year Awards

Catherine Balfe from Wicklow has been announced as a regional winner and finalist in Right at Home's Carer of the Year Awards. Providers of home care and assistance for seniors and adults, Right at Home's Carer of the Year Awards recognise and acknowledge the work and commitment of Care Staff who play an instrumental role in their communities, enabling individuals to continue to live independent lives in the comfort of their own homes.

Nominations for Carer of the Year were submitted by clients, client's families, co-workers, managers, and supervisors.

Catherine now progresses to the final round of judging over the coming weeks and joins six finalists from across Ireland who will attend a special awards ceremony in November where Right at Home's national Carer of the Year 2021 will be announced.

Speaking about the awards, Niamh Holland, Area Manager, Right at Home Wicklow and South Dublin said, "We first introduced our Carer of the Year awards in 2020 to further recognise

those who go above and beyond for the people they care for. We are extremely proud of each individual's hard work and dedication, especially given the difficult circumstances brought by Covid-19. For many clients, they were the only people they met for a number of months and although a sad and difficult reality of Covid-19, it was a huge comfort to clients to know they had the support of their Carer."

Niamh continued, "We are delighted to announce Catherine as our regional winner for Carer of the Year and it is truly deserved. Catherine's passion and

commitment has blown me away and we are extremely proud to have Catherine as part of our team. No ask is too much for Catherine as she continually ensures no stone is left unturned to meet the needs of her clients. During the height of the pandemic, Catherine went above and beyond for those she cared for. It was a difficult time for many, especially the elderly and those vulnerable and Catherine was often the only person they met during this period. We wish Catherine the very best of luck at the national final."

Speaking about her award, Catherine said, "I am honoured to receive

this award and to progress to the final in November. I am lucky to work with a fantastic team and we love what we do. It is such a rewarding career and we meet some amazing people along the way. We really do appreciate the recognition and I look forward to representing Wicklow in November."

The national winner of Right at Home's 'Carer of the Year' will be announced at an awards ceremony in Dublin this November.

Right at Home has six offices across Ireland including Dublin, Wicklow, Kildare, Galway, Mayo/Roscommon and Cork.

## Harris visits Bray Youthreach to discuss new permanent home at Colaiste Raithin

**Minister for Further Education Minister Simon Harris recently visited Bray Youthreach to discuss their plans for the future and their new home at the old Colaiste Raithin building.**

Minister Harris said "As Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation, and Science, I have had the opportunity to visit Youthreach providers from around the country and I am always impressed by the dedication and commitment that staff and advocates provide to their learners."

"I am delighted that North Wicklow Youthreach will be moving to a new home in the refurbished former Colaiste Raithin building. My Department has appointed a design team for the

redevelopment and modernisation of the Colaiste Raithin building.

"The refurbished Colaiste Raithin facility will cater for 50 learners per year and provides education, training and work experience programme for early school leavers aged between 15 and 20.

"Youthreach provides a caring and supported environment in which young people have the opportunity to gain qualifications, develop their social and personal skills and progress positively into further education and training or employment."

Minister Harris continued "I believe Youthreach represents the best that FET has to offer. Meeting the learners today perfectly demonstrates that there is no one path to learning and training."

"Educational achievement does not have to begin and end with your Leaving Certificate results. The skills and training that you receive Youthreach can provide you with your individual pathway that can provide you with an opportunity to progress within FET, progress to higher education, or indeed bring you to employment in a sector that you care about. There are many possibilities that are available to each and every-one."





## At the Courthouse Arts Centre:

*Mairead Hickey (violin) & Anais Gaudemard (harp)*  
*Saturday 9th October 8.30pm, €16/€14*

The Courthouse Arts Centre welcomes this captivating new duo on their Irish tour with Music Network.

Like coffee and cake, fish and chips or Fred and Ginger, some pairings just can't be topped. The exquisite combination of violin and harp is most definitely a match made in heaven, and no more so than in this new collaboration between Irish violinist Mairead Hickey and French harpist Anais Gaudemard.

Celebrated for her expression, soaring tone and fearless virtuosity, Mairead Hickey's natural ability to communicate sincerely and with beauty and integrity has entranced audiences worldwide. Anais Gaudemard is recognised as a musician of exceptional talent whose mastery of her instrument alongside an ability to deliver extraordinarily expressive performances has won her widespread acclaim.

Featuring a beautiful selection of music by Bach, Saint-Saens, Massenet, Viardot, Spohr (the inventor of the violin chin rest) and a brand new Music Network commission, their programme will delight and enthral music lovers.

# Coming up at Mermaid Arts Centre...

## THISISPOPBABY presents: Conversations After Sex

*Friday 1st & Saturday 2nd October, 8pm €20,  
Age Suitability: 16+*

"You remind me of someone though. I mean you're not like him. Not physically like him. Nowhere near. But there's something there. Your voice or how you hold yourself. Your hands."

In a series of unexpected and unguarded conversations after anonymous sexual encounters, a woman discovers men with the same deep need to communicate and connect in the lonely, atomised city. Ten years after Trade (Best New Play, Irish Times Theatre Awards 2011), multi award-winning writer Mark O'Halloran, director Tom Creed and THISISPOPBABY reunite for this funny, tender and brutally honest new play.



## Dances For Inside and Outside

*Tuesday 5th October 8pm, €15  
Duration: 45 minutes*

Join a thrilling and fast moving dance explosion of 8 stunning dancers from Ireland, France, Poland and Ethiopia, unleashed in a live performance to celebrate life, athleticism and joy.

A cycle of dances for our times, created by John Scott and the determined dancers of Irish Modern Dance Theatre, Dances for Inside and Outside is a coming together of vastly different, virtuosic dancers, searching for safe space and trying to be together. They are celebrating life and searching for joy, despite the limitations imposed by Covid-19. Dances for Inside and Outside was made using social distancing and the limits of bodies being together in a space as a movement inspiration. The work embodies what we have all been through and what our reality is now.

There is a vital physicality and necessity in how the dancers interact together, mixing joy and fear and trying to be safe. Dances for Inside and Outside premiered online in 2020 and was subsequently shown at Philadelphia Dance Projects.



## Fidget Feet Aerial Dance Theatre Presents: Hatch

*Thursday 14th & Friday 15th October | 7pm  
€10 / €35 family of four | Duration: 50 minutes*

An immersive aerial dance children's show for young audiences and their families. Meet Bláithín - "she loves caterpillars, moths and butterflies". Follow her on her adventurous journey with Uncle Rusty to find Pearl, the most extraordinary butterfly with the most exquisite colorful wings.

Learn all about two little caterpillars and their journey to fly as butterflies and moths. Hatch is full of Fidget Feet's unique blend of live music, comedy, theatre, contemporary dance and aerial dance. Hatch also weaves Irish language and dancing into this wonderful story. This show creates a new world for young audiences, which is interactive and sensory friendly. It is beautifully crafted and exquisitely delivered, full of unexpected and colourful wonders, which invites children to understand the transformational cycles of life, to explore, interact and discover new things and facts about the world of caterpillars, moths and butterflies!



# Greystones Film Club presents: Stray

*Whale Theatre, Thursday 7th October @ 8pm  
Tickets €10 at [www.whaletheatre.ie](http://www.whaletheatre.ie) or call the booking office on 01 2010550*

The award-winning documentary *Stray* explores what it means to live as a being without status or security, following three strays as they embark on inconspicuous journeys through Turkish society - where there's a No Kill, No Capture law towards all stray animals.

Zeytin, fiercely independent, embarks on adventures through the city at night; Nazar, nurturing and protective, easily befriends the humans around her; while Kartal, a shy puppy living on the outskirts of a construction site, finds companions in the security guards who care for her. The strays' disparate lives intersect when they each form intimate bonds with a group of young Syrians with whom they share the streets. Director Elizabeth Lo's fascinating film is not only a critical observation of human civilization through the unfamiliar gaze of dogs and a sensory voyage into new ways of seeing but an ode to man's best friend. Who will endure just about anything to share the love.





# Walking from Bray to Greystones for the children of Haiti

Project ESPWA is an Irish charity established in 2011 by a group of volunteers in response to the earthquake that struck the Island of Haiti in 2010.

This year, Haiti was hit by yet another devastating quake. Once again, the island is in dire need of even the most basic of supplies and families find themselves homeless and vulnerable for the second time in a decade.

On Saturday 2nd October Project ESPWA are asking you to join them on a sponsored walk to raise funds for the children of Haiti. Walking from Bray to Greystones, it kicks off at 11.00am from Butler

& Barry on Bray seafront, volunteers will be outside to direct walkers on the day, maintaining social distancing at all times. There's no need to register in advance, simply pop on a comfortable pair of shoes, a warm top (better safe than sorry!) and join at any time from 11.00am onwards. You can walk the full round trip, just one way or stay at home and donate to the appeal - the choice is yours.

To keep things simple,

Project ESPWA are asking all walkers to donate securely via their website, 4haiti.ie - any amount that you can afford will be most welcome.

If you're unable to join the walk but would like to help the appeal, again please go to 4haiti.ie and donate anything you can.

Organisers said "ESPWA is the creole word for 'Hope', a theme we make central to our vision for the future. We work directly with the

overburdened Haitian orphanage system to create safe, secure environments for the children in their care. We also maintain a regular supply line of relief aid shipped directly from Ireland - everything from hospital beds to wheelchairs, construction supplies to clothing and first aid.

"We are a non-denominational, non-governmental and non-political organisation, relying exclusively on public fundraising. Find out more at 4haiti.ie.

## Knitting communities back together

*Through Intergenerational Connection with the Big Knit*

Age Action and innocent drinks today launched the 2021/22 Big Knit, calling on knitters and crocheters to knit their communities back together by creating little hats with family and friends, of all ages, to raise funds for Age Action by Summer 2022.

innocent drinks Ireland is asking knitters and crocheters across Ireland to knit 100,000 little woolly hats in a fundraising effort for Age Action. For every hat received by innocent, 30c is donated to Age Action, Ireland's leading advocacy organisation for older people, advocating for equality and human rights for all of us as we age.

Caroline O'Connell, Head of Fundraising at Age Action, said: "Age Action is delighted to be a part of the Big Knit again this year and grateful to innocent and all our knitters for their support. Following 18-months of COVID-19 restrictions, the Big Knit is a

great opportunity to reconnect with family and friends of all ages in your community. We want to challenge the negative stereotypes about ageing and older people which became more prevalent during the pandemic. Intergenerational connection is key to reframing how we act, feel, and think about older people and ageing, which is why we are encouraging people of all ages to make an effort to get together for the Big Knit. Put simply, as well as raising funds for Age Action, you can also help knit your community back together by getting together to knit little hats with older or younger family

members or friends."

James Kavanagh said: "I've been knitting for The Big Knit for a decade now, I've always loved the campaign. It's such a great way to bring people together and raise funds for something that truly matters."

Over the past ten years the Irish public knitted more than half a million hats and helped raise over €200,000 for Age Action's advocacy and programme work.

From November 2022, the nation's little hats will appear on innocent smoothie bottles (250ml) across the country. For each bottle sold wearing a little hat, innocent drinks will donate 30 cents to Age Action.

Hats can be sent to The Big Knit 2021, innocent drinks, Fruit Towers, 2 Ballsbridge Park, Dublin 4.



James Kavanagh, his mum Margaret and his Godson Luan Adams knitting tiny wollen hats for this year's Big Knit. Pic: Mark Stedman



Michael O'Neill, Tom O'Dowd, and Brian Higgins of the Astron Engineering team who took part in the recent Wicklow Rotary Club Golf Classic at Blainroe Golf Club

## Local communities invited to apply for post-Covid support

Wicklow communities and local groups are being invited to apply for grants which can help them 'Recover Better' as the country emerges from the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Community Foundation for Ireland has re-opened its Covid-19 Recovery Fund in response to research which shows that voluntary, community and charitable groups in Wicklow and across the country are struggling to meet demand for lifeline supports and services.

According to the Charities Regulator, 74% of charities reported a severe impact on their organisation's income for 2020. The Wheel, the national association of community and voluntary organisations, charities and social enterprises, has published that 82% of charities are very concerned about whether they will have sufficient funds to provide their services in 2021.

The Community Foundation, which is providing the support from private donations, says its aim is to ensure communities in Wicklow recover better than the pre-pandemic status quo. To achieve this ambitious goal there are two areas which have been identified as needing immediate support:

- \* Community Recovery and Resilience: Overcoming Isolation
- \* Sector Recovery and Resilience: Building Capacity

A total of €580,000 is being made available.

**Overcoming Isolation**

Isolation and the impact on health and wellbeing is affecting people of all ages. Through this funding we will support social prescribing initiatives in outdoor spaces and online. This will encourage peer support, a sense of community and improved mental wellbeing. Communities and organisations working with them have especially highlighted the need to develop outdoor opportunities for those they work with, as they grapple with living with Covid-19.

Grants of up to €3,000 will be available for grassroots and community development organisations for projects that encourage communities to overcome the isolation of the last year and a half. The key outcome of your project should be building a sense of community that encourages socialising, peer support and improved wellbeing.

**Building Capacity**

In order to recover stronger from the uncertainty of the pandemic, space to think, plan and strategize is crucial. Furthermore, with the uncertainty and even greater marginalisation created by the pandemic, research and advocacy is essential for creating a more



Denise Charlton of The Community Foundation for Ireland

equal and resilient society. This open grant round aims to build capacity, strength and resilience within the sector to build a more equal and empowered society.

Grants of up to €20,000 are available to organisations that have been deeply affected by the pandemic.

**Applying**

Communities and groups in Wicklow are being advised that applications are now open and can be made through [www.communityfoundation.ie](http://www.communityfoundation.ie)

Announcing the re-opening of the Covid-19 Fund, Denise Charlton of The Community Foundation for Ireland said: "Over the past 18-months we have seen the very best in people, as Wicklow communities came together to over-come an un-precedented challenge. Our donors have been to the fore in offering support with our grant-making this year alone set to exceed €20 million. However, it is also true that lifeline services and supports in communities have been deeply scarred while the recovery is also presenting new challenges. Our approach is a partnership one working hand in hand with those on the ground, listening to their emerging needs and responding to them.

"As the recovery unfolds we remain committed to working with advocates, community volunteers and workers, our donors as well as Government to ensure that together we can truly Recover Better."





Shane Sinnott, Barry Murphy and Neill Merrigan of Trinity Motors are pictured with Wicklow Rotary President Peter Byrne at the Wicklow Rotary Club Golf Classic in Blainroe Golf Club

## Local businesses received funding of €725,000 through Online Retail Scheme

Businesses in Wicklow received funding of €725,000 from the Online Retail Scheme to date through grants of between €10,000 and €25,000.

The Online Retail Scheme was first launched in 2018 to aid retailers in increasing their customer base and extending their offering to include an online platform. The Covid-19 Online Retail Scheme was set up in response to the pandemic and the urgent need for retailers to increase their online capability. To date, the Scheme has provided funding of over €19 million to more than 500 businesses across the country.

Minister Simon Harris said, "Businesses across Wicklow have benefited from the Online Retail Scheme since its inception in 2018, but it's been of particular help to retailers over the past 18 months as it allowed them to continue trading while their doors were shut.

"Businesses that had never traded online previously had to completely pivot their businesses when the country went into lockdown last year

and were able to do so with the help of funding from the Scheme.

"I'm delighted to say today that Wicklow businesses have received €725,000 in funding through the Scheme. For many of these retailers, the ability to trade online was the most significant factor in keeping their businesses open and pro-

tecting local jobs.

"The three rounds of the Online Retail Scheme to date are currently being reviewed and Tánaiste Leo Varadkar recently signalled his intention to open a further round of applications for funding later this year.

"In addition to the Online Retail Scheme, the Trading Online Voucher Scheme, administered by

Local Enterprise Offices, offers vouchers of up to €2,500 to help businesses develop their online trading capabilities.

"I would encourage any business in Wicklow that has not already applied for the voucher to contact their Local Enterprise Office to find out more about the application process," Minister Harris concluded.

## CLASSIFIEDS

### Luke 10:1-12 GOSPEL

The Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them out ahead of him, in pairs, to all the towns and places he himself was to visit. He said to them, 'The harvest is rich but the labourers are few, so ask the Lord of the harvest to send labourers to his harvest. Start off now, but remember I am sending you out like lambs among wolves. Carry no purse, no haversack, no sandals. Salute no one on the road. Whatever house you go into, let your first words be, 'Peace to this house!' And if a man of peace lives there, your peace will go and rest on him; if not, it will come back to you. Stay in the same house, taking what food and drink they have to offer, for the labourer deserves his wages; do not move from house to house. Whenever you go into a town where they make you welcome, eat what is set before you. Cure those in it who are sick, and say, 'The kingdom of God is very near to you.' But whenever you enter a town and they do not make you welcome, go out into its streets and say, 'We wipe off the very dust of your town that clings to our feet, and leave it with you. Yet be sure of this: the kingdom of God is very near.' I tell you, on that day it will not go as hard with Sodom as with that town.

C.J.

## NLN is Arklow's hidden gem

National Learning Network is located in two Victorian buildings on a quiet side road in Arklow. Unless you had reason to stroll up Brigg's Lane, in Ferrybank, you would never know they were there.

But it's not just the buildings - built by the Methodist community in the 1890's as a Sunday school and church - that are special. It's what goes on inside the buildings today that is unique.

Based there are two HSE funded training programmes run by National Learning Network.

The first is called **Link** and is for people who have had a mental health setback and now wish to re-engage in their community, get out of the house to learn new skills or want to put a daily structure in their lives.

One of the students on the programme said that when she came to Link she had no confidence or hope, but with the help of the course she found her old self and learned how to manage her stress and anxiety.

She is now planning to go on with her education and get the qualification she needs to become a care worker.

The other programme is called **Access**. This is for people who have suffered a disability or have a learning difficulty and who want to improve their lives by getting a qualification or a job. People of all ages, from 18 to 66, can join these programmes and start their adult education journey or work at getting a job.

It's not just locals who can join these free programmes in these beautiful, protected buildings. NLN runs a free bus to collect students from most towns in South Wicklow.

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### 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. J.M.

# LOCAL BUSINESS

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

**For details of our amazing deals please call 01 286 9111**





# Clever Stuff, Beautifully Dressed - The Hybrid Mercedes 250 CLA Coupe

Mercedes are getting seriously into Hybrid technology, and not just adding an electric motor and batteries - but considering the unit as a whole, and how it can be optimised.

By Martin McCarthy

The latest Mercedes hybrid offering is the 250 CLA e and it has been designed from the beginning as a Hybrid car - being one of a family of new Hybrid's coming from Stuttgart to Ireland this year.

So, for example, the petrol engine starter motor is gone - replaced by using a drive off the electric motor and the hybrid battery pack to

get the 1.3 petrol turbo engine fired up. Simple, clever - and saving weight, space and complexity.

This type of thinking is everywhere under the bonnet of this car.

The CLA 250e Coupe (which comes as a four door) totally integrates with your mobile phone so when the snow starts to fall in Roundwood on a winter's evening, you

can instruct the car, via your phone, to start warming up the cabin for a set time, maybe half an hour before your get up, next morning.

This will ensure the windscreen is clear - and that the car is safe and comfortable to drive.

The model brought into Ireland is a Plug in Hybrid - so it can do up to 50 miles (80km) on electric. There is the potential for huge fuel

savings - but fuel economy is almost totally dictated by the habits you adopt. If you can plug it in most evenings, it should be able to do a normal commute and back in electric mode - while availing of Nite Rate power. If you don't use Plug In at all, the fuel consumption is likely end up around 35 mpg, benefiting from some brainy regenerative recharging. For example, when travelling down a hill, the car can figure out what excess power that can be converted into electricity to top up the battery.

This technical tour de force is not cheap - listing at €47,430 but you are paying for immense fuel economy, tremen-

dous performance (0-100kph in 6.6 seconds), a magnificent, luxurious interior coupled to state of the art IT system with advanced collision avoidance systems and other safety aids.

The dashboard detailing would be worthy of a gallery in the Louvre - it is so beautifully done. You are reminded of Apple founder Steve Job's obsession with German car design, as the best - and the basis for the style and feel of his computers and phones. What good taste he had!



## Public Information Talk: Breast Cancer & Lymphoedema Prevention

For Breast Cancer Awareness Month this October, Purple House Cancer Support Centre are hosting a free Online talk on 'Breast Cancer & Lymphoedema Prevention' on Thursday 7th October from 12.30pm -13.30pm. All welcome.

The talk will be hosted by Siobhan O' Reilly Bracken MSCP MPA MSc. Siobhan is the Director of The O' Reilly Physiotherapy Centre, for Lymphoedema, Cancer Rehab and Sports [www.theoreillycentre.ie](http://www.theoreillycentre.ie).

Siobhan is a physiotherapist and breast cancer survivor who is dedicated to cancer rehab. She sees patients for in-person and Telehealth consultations and has developed The O' Reilly Learning Academy to teach her physiotherapy colleagues how to do the same so survivors have access to early cancer rehab no matter where they are located. Siobhan is also a member of The GAP Initiative a global group of breast cancer researchers and clinicians from the US, Canada, Denmark, The Bahamas, Iraq and Ireland who are working together to improve early access for survivors all around the world.

To register for the talk, please visit [www.purplehouse.ie](http://www.purplehouse.ie)

**WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL**

We, Connor Keppel and Blathin DePaor intend to apply for permission for development at 49 Glenheron Park, Greystones, Co. Wicklow, A63HK24. The development will consist of the conversion of the existing attic space to a new storage space, along with 3 no. rooflights to the front of the house, new stairs & all associated site works.

The planning application may be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy at the offices of Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Wicklow during its public opening hours and a submission or observation in relation to the application may be made to the authority in writing on payment of the prescribed fee within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the application.



We provide a high standard of care to people in their own homes throughout the community. We are currently recruiting

### PERMANENT PART-TIME CARERS

to work in all of County Wicklow and South County Dublin  
€13.75 per hour for Qualified Staff.  
Experience is desirable but is not essential as we will provide training.

Email cv to [carework@bluebirdcare.ie](mailto:carework@bluebirdcare.ie) or ring 0404 31177 and ask for Vikki.

## RECRUITMENT

**Join the team at BOGGAN MOTORS**



Our Gorey Branch have a current vacancy for a **PARTS MANAGER**

### EXPERIENCE ESSENTIAL

The Successful Candidate will:

- Formulate a plan to increase Retail Sales work in line with distributor targets
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