

# LOCAL Wicklow Times

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Tuesday 5th October 2021 First Floor, The Boulevard, Quinsborough Road, Bray. A98 R6D7. Tel: 01 - 2869111 E-mail: [wicklowed@localtimes.ie](mailto:wicklowed@localtimes.ie) [www.wicklowtimes.net](http://www.wicklowtimes.net)

# 'LIGHTS WILL GO OUT'

## WAR OF WORDS OVER WICKLOW'S DATA CENTRES

Data centres came in for severe criticism last week when Social Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore introduced a Dáil motion to call for a moratorium of any further development of Data Centres.

However, Fianna Fáil Party spokesperson on Finance and Public Expenditure, Senator Pat Casey responded and lashed out at local TDs Jennifer Whitmore and John Brady and defended Echelon Data Centre and SSE who jointly formed a green tech infrastructure for the proposed Data Centre in Arklow.

"I was shocked to hear Deputy Whitmore's proposal for an immediate moratorium on all Data Centre Development, when for the last number of years, the people of Arklow and South Wicklow have been working on the development of a state-of-the-art Green Tech era for the

region," said Senator Casey. "Deputy Whitmore did not mention Wicklow's need for balanced development once in her speech proposing a moratorium.

"This moratorium if passed would be devastating for the transformative plans for a green high-tech era for South Wicklow and Arklow in



Tracy Ward from Laragh enjoying the run across Bray Head as part of EcoTrail 2021. Pic: Michael Kelly

particular. The investment portfolio being brought to Arklow is the greatest investment in jobs in South Wicklow in generations. To see Wicklow TDs attempt to stop this much wanted and needed development for Arklow and South Wicklow is totally wrong.

"Deputies Whitmore and Brady have obviously no idea of the need for these high-tech jobs in Arklow. A massive public and positive response from the people of Arklow and the region was achieved when Echelon proposed this development for Arklow. There is a huge welcome for Echelon's commitment to the region and for two of our TDs to seek to sabotage this for political gain is outrageous.

"It is essential in the rebuilding of our economy that green tech is

seen as a key driver of development in attracting international investors. It was with that in mind that I introduced the Management of Echelon to SSE to formulate a strategic partnership. I am delighted that this work has produced a fantastic result for the green tech industry in Ireland with the Arklow Data Centres being a net contributor to our energy requirements.

"Irish-owned data centre owner and operator, Echelon Data Centres and green energy developer SSE Renewables have announced an agreement to develop a joint 220kV substation at the Avoca River Business Park. The new infrastructure will facilitate the development of Ireland's first large-scale offshore wind farm, off the coast of Co. Wicklow with an

export capacity of 100MW data centre. 520MW, and Echelon's DUB20 (Arklow) marks the first time in

Ireland that an offshore wind farm and a data *Continued on page 5*

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Sara Llamas Moya from Blessington, pictured participating in the AXA Community Bike Ride event where one lucky member out of eight competition winners went home with a new bike. The eight winners, who entered the competition by participating in an AXA Community Bike Ride between August 1st and September 8th, completed a 25km cycle along the Old Railway Trail Greenway in Westeath with Paralympic Gold Medalist Eve McCrystal. Pic: Diarmuid Greene.

## New course in Baltinglass: Manage Your Money

A new course on how to manage your money is being run by Baltinglass Adult Basic Education Service, starting on 13th October.

This course will help you to: Plan a budget; Prepare a weekly spending plan; Identify ways of saving money; Distinguish tax and social welfare deductions on a payslip; Identify various social welfare entitlements; Know your rights as a consumer and how to exercise them; Find out which agencies to contact if in financial difficulties.

It will take place on Wednesday evenings, 6pm to 8pm, small class size. If you are interested, contact Annette/Maeve on 059-6482642 or 086-8462771. Email abebaltinglass@kwetb.ie.

Please note: Covid restrictions will all be in place for your safety and well-being on all the courses

## Dunlavin Strings

All 7-17 year olds from the Dunlavin area are welcome to take part in violin lessons. Classes are grouped by age and ability. Classes take place after school on Wednesdays at Scoil Nicholas Naofa. Instruments can be rented. Contact Tod Doyle on 086 0450375 or email toddoyle@kwetb.ie.

## Tree Grants.

Wicklow County Council are now offering tree grants for 2021 to Community Groups, Schools and Residents Associations etc.... the maximum grant payable may be up to 75% of the cost and is payable when the work is completed. Maximum grant available is €500.

Reckonable expenditure would include the cost of the trees, ties and stakes but does not include the cost of labour for the planting. The grant is for the planting of trees not shrubs or flowers. Grants will only be given for species that encourage biodiversity and /or are native. Fruit trees may be an option or native hedgerow species that will encourage wildlife. For more information you can contact the

Environmental Awareness Officer (eao@wicklow-coco.ie or 1890 222276). The application form is attached. The closing date is October 8th.

## Wicklow Racing News

The Philip Rothwell run continues and it was the previously disappointing McAlpine who delivered this time in the Adare Manor Opportunity Handicap Hurdle (Division 1) at Listowel. Paddy O'Hanlon the seven-year-old up early on before making headway three out and taking it up, surviving a last-flight error to score by a length and a quarter.

## Brockagh Market

Brockagh Market is on Sunday 10th October. It will be open to the public from 10am to 3pm with free entry (limited parking). Tea, coffee and food snacks are available to purchase on the day. This will be an outdoor market.

The barrier will be locked from 6pm Saturday evening 9th October until 9am Sunday morning. You can contact by phone 0404 45600 (Wed-Fri 9am to 2pm) or email brockaghearboot@gmail.com.

Social distancing and masks must be worn when using the toilet facilities in accordance with government guidelines.

## National Women's Enterprise Day

National Women's Enterprise Day is on Thursday, 7th October 9am to 5.15 pm. There will be Seminars, fantastic guest speakers, advice clinics, spotlight sessions and more taking place online free of charge. You can attend it all or drop in and out. This year's theme is Build the Future. Full line-up details and registration from [www.nwed.ie](http://www.nwed.ie).

## Climate News Podcast

A group of environmentally concerned Irish citizens are launching an educational, ecological podcast called The Climate Alarm Clock. This podcast will be released on the 7th of October ahead of the 2021 United Nations Conference of the Parties (COP26) in Glasgow which runs from the 31st of October until the 12th of November 2021.

This podcast covers wide-ranging, topical environmental news stories, including stories on the biodiversity crisis, waste, transport, agriculture, the climate emergency, Irish policies, data centres, housing, the arts, education and much more.

This new, environmental podcast is an 8-part series where episodes will be uploaded every Thursday. The advocacy podcast will include top climate headlines, interviews with experts about climate-related issues, policy and science explainers to simplify climate information, short sustainable business features and a countdown to COP26.

The podcast can be listened to on Spotify, Apple Podcasts, Player FM, Google Podcasts and Amazon Audible. More information about the podcast can be found on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube and Twitter.

# Feed your appetite with Wicklow Naturally's October Feast

Wicklow Naturally's October Feast is a month-long celebration of Wicklow's food and drinks story, including farming, foraging, brewing, distilling, and much more. October is traditionally the end of the harvest, so it is the perfect month to showcase Wicklow Naturally's members' unique selection of food and drink.

Wicklow Naturally's Chairperson, Pamela Walsh, said, "We aim to build on last year's success, with the 2021 event bursting with flavour with over 30 in-person and virtual events. We have created engaging, inclusive, and memorable events so that attendees can enjoy all that our excellent members have to offer.

"Throughout October, we'll celebrate Wicklow's thriving food & drink scene by showcasing our members' range of products, diverse experiences and numerous interactive events.

"Feed your appetite and fill your calendar with these delicious events... From hands-on masterclasses, learning about our farm-family sustainable stories, taking some of the country's best distillery, beer, wine tasting tours, to cooking demonstrations, meeting the producer and heading out on guided foraging and mushroom hunts.

"We'll highlight the many hospitality and retail members' who carry Wicklow Naturally's products, as well as how they've partnered to use each other's food in very innovative



Pictured at the launch of the October Feast is Chair of Wicklow Naturally and Co-founder of Wicklow Way Wines, Pamela Walsh.

ways. The network will also hold food waste, food poverty and environmental awareness initiatives."

Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Shay Cullen, said, "Combining the rich experience of in-person safe events and the reach and convenience of virtual events on offer, it's the ideal format for the

October Feast 2021 programme as it gives the attendees equally rewarding experiences. So why not explore, discover and get involved in the many events planned across County Wicklow this October by heading over to <https://wicklownaturally.ie/events/>."

October Feast is about telling the story of Wicklow Naturally's

members, promoting sustainability messages, letting people know what they do and showcasing the beautiful food and drink products from County Wicklow.

October Feast is supported by Wicklow County Council, County Wicklow Partnership, Wicklow Enterprise Office and Fáilte Ireland.

## Dargle Bridge Club return to Face to Face bridge



Dargle Bridge Club returned to play face to face bridge at their venue, Open Door Daycare Centre on the Vevay Road in Bray, on Wednesday 22nd September.

The club adheres to all Covid recommendations advised by their Governing body (the Contract Bridge Association of Ireland) and a few extra.

Everyone coming to play bridge must be fully vaccinated and wear a mask if moving around, and they will all have their temperature taken when entering.

"Our first two nights back we only played for two hours to allow everyone to settle back in and feel comfortable playing bridge. The President Michael Mullen welcomed everyone back and said how delighted he was to see so many back playing. Michael asked everyone to remember a long-time member Breda Connelly who passed away in July 2020 and to also remember all who have lost loved ones in the last 18 months."

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# 'Not You. Not Me. But Us!'

**Independent councillor Joe Behan is calling for a 'Covid Cash Payment' for every person in the country, in recognition of sacrifices made throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.**

In a statement, Cllr Behan said "We are watching with baited breath as the Government agonises over how to acknowledge the contribution of one group of workers, frontline workers, for their excellent service during the ongoing pandemic.

"I fully agree that frontline workers performed over and above the call of duty and this should be recognised by the Government.

"However, I would go much further. I believe that every single person from the youngest to the oldest has made sacrifices throughout the past 20 months and this sacrifice deserves to be recognised as well.

"Whether it was the older person forced to live without the essential reassurance of human company, the child who

was denied a year and a half of normal schooling, the Leaving Cert student who missed out on the normal State Exams, the couple who had to cancel or drastically reduce their wedding plans, the mother giving birth without the presence of her partner, or worst of all the family who were denied the opportunity to be present when their loved one passed away; everyone made sacrifices during this dreadful time.

"I therefore propose that the sacrifice everyone made should be recognised and I believe the fairest and most practical way to do this is to make a Covid cash payment to every person in the country from the youngest to the oldest.

"I fully realise that no money could compensate a person for the loss of so much during Covid but a

financial gesture such as this would at least allow a person to pay bills, plan a special Christmas, take a short break, decorate the house, save towards a deposit for a house, pay college fees or just keep it for a rainy day.

"US President Joe Biden has recently paid the latest Covid payment of \$1400 to all Americans, young and old, with the exception of very high earners. This was the third payment lodged into the people's bank accounts and I believe we should do the same.

"I propose that the money would be raised on the international money markets by launching a Covid Bond. This bond would have a very long repayment term, up to 50 years, with little to be paid for the first ten. Interest rates,

although increasing marginally, are still extremely low and this bond would be a very attractive option for international financiers given our current international credit rating. Most of the money given to the people would eventually find its way back into the state coffers anyway, through VAT receipts and it would provide a stimulus to the entire economy.

"So, I say to the Government, forget about your hints, nods and winks about bank holidays, gift tokens, tax credits, etc. for certain people and nothing for the rest.

"Instead, for once, acknowledge everyone in the country and the sacrifices we have all made over the past 20 months and make this gesture now."

## Energia granted Foreshore Licences

**Energia Group has been granted foreshore licences by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, to carry out surveys for their proposed new offshore wind farms in the Celtic Sea and the south Irish Sea.**

The proposed wind farms are to be located at a minimum of 10km and up to 25km out to sea. These locations seek to maximise the potential for offshore wind off the coasts of Ireland, to urgently address the climate crisis, through the use of cost-effective and proven technology that has been installed around the world in water depths up to 60m.

Over the next 18-24 months, Energia will undertake a number of studies off Co. Waterford (for the North Celtic Sea project), and off Co. Wexford and south County Wicklow (for the South Irish Sea project).

Each of the projects will involve multi-billion euro investments by Energia as part of the company's Positive Energy Programme for Ireland.

Information from these studies will help to establish a number of key project details, including the proposed location of the offshore turbines. These details will be presented in an open and transparent way through a series of public consultations, as well as ultimately in a statutory consultation to support planning applica-

tions that Energia expects to submit in 2023.

The first public consultation on the proposed North Celtic Sea project started on 22nd September and will remain open until 29th October. A virtual consultation room has been created on the project website and includes survey area maps, indicative photo illustrations, a project timeline, and other information on the project including engagement with local and fishing communities. A public webinar and information clinics have been scheduled in October, with further information available on the project website.

The first public consultation on the proposed South Irish Sea project will open in the coming weeks.

Welcoming the granting of the Foreshore Licences, Eoin McPartland Offshore Renewables Manager at Energia said, "The awarding of these licences represents a very significant milestone in the development of both our North Celtic Sea and South Irish Sea projects. These projects now join a small number of offshore projects to have been awarded foreshore licences and that can realistically contribute to the achievement of Ireland's 2030 targets.

"Having applied for these foreshore licences in 2019, it's great to now be in a position to progress to the next stage of survey work on both projects. As a responsible business with extensive experience of building large scale renewable projects in Ireland, we know the importance of remaining in regular contact with local and fishing communities, including through our series of planned public consultations.

"With these projects, Energia is supporting Ireland's climate action target to reduce carbon emissions by half by 2030 and become a carbon-neutral country by 2050. Energia's wind energy projects will make a very positive contribution by generating clean electricity for homes and businesses throughout Ireland and we are committed to ensuring all areas of the local economy can thrive in parallel with these developments."

A website with information has been set up for each project: northcelticseawind.ie for the North Celtic Sea project. southirishseawind.ie for the South

Irish Sea project.

The surveys, for which licences have now been granted, are similar to those that have already taken place for a small number of other projects around the coast of Ireland to identify potentially suitable areas for offshore renewable energy generation.

The surveys will provide information on the ecology of the sea area and detailed imagery and conditions of the seabed. This will involve 2 (and occasionally 3) vessels in the area at any one time. The survey and vessels will comply with all environmental legislation and controls.

No structures will be erected onshore as part of the surveys and there will be no negative impacts on the marine or coastal environment.

Energia's offshore wind energy projects are in line with the aims of the Government of Ireland's Climate Action Plan and Programme for Government, for greater volumes of renewable energy to create sustainability of energy supply from green and renewable sources, and to reduce the impact of climate change on our environment.



Igor Gonzalez from Greystones enjoying taking part in EcoTrail 2021, which started and finished at Bray Seafront.



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Rita Fitzpatrick with her daughter Sam Donohoe and granddaughter Hazel Donohoe showing off their tattoos.

## Happy Birthday Tat-too!

*Three generations mark Granny's 85th with a tattoo for suicide prevention*

Rita Fitzpatrick of Delgany celebrated her 85th birthday last week by becoming the first tattoo recipient in the annual Tattoo-Drive for Irish mental-health promoters, JC Foundation.



The grandmother was joined by daughter, Sam Donohoe (52), and granddaughter Hazel Donohoe (16), who each had a simple love-heart tattoo applied, the design selected for this year's fundraiser.

The official Tattoo-Drive took place on Saturday 2nd October at The Ink Factory Wellington Quay and at 19 Parliament Street, in Dublin's Temple Bar.

On the day, a volunteer team of fifteen tattoo artists tattooed the love-heart design, in return for a €50.00 donation to the foundation. The campaign is aiming to fund 365 free therapy sessions for young adults.

"In the last year, mental health suffering touched many individuals and families," Rita Fitzpatrick said of her novel birthday celebration.

"I am delighted to help publicise the great work of The Ink Factory and JC Foundation, and to congratulate them on doing something very practical and caring to help troubled young people."

Campaign organiser, Rob Connolly, says the heart tattoo was selected as a powerful symbol of love and the empathy felt for those suffering, directly or indirectly, with mental-health issues.

"Every cent raised on the day will go towards the foundation's mission of delivering free therapy sessions for those young people most in need, who couldn't otherwise afford help."

JC Foundation was established in recent years in response to the tragic loss of John Connolly, the founder of The Ink Factory, by suicide.

John was aged 33 when he died, and his brother and former colleagues dedicate their fundraising efforts to his memory.

Foundation partner PIERCED will also be donating a percentage of piercing charges on the day, from their outlets in Camden Street, the Jervis Street Shopping Centre and The Square Town Centre in Tallaght.

The Ink Factory and PIERCED have already raised over €60,000 with previous tattoo-drives. The Foundation is establishing online resources and social media channels to share mental-health tips and coping mechanisms, and encouraging those suffering to seek help.

The Foundation website (jcfoundation.ie) has online applications for the 365 therapy sessions, available to 18 to 25-year-olds who cannot afford professional help themselves.

## Greystones councillors call for Delgany junction to be kept open

Cllr Derek Mitchell (FG) has renewed his call for the Delgany junction on the N11 (Junction 10) to be kept open. Current proposals by Arup, who are overseeing the N11 Upgrade Scheme, would see the junction closed.

At last Tuesday's meeting of Greystones Municipal District council, Councillors agreed to Cllr Mitchell's motion to write to Transport Ireland to ensure that the N11 Junction 10, Delgany, stays open at least in the North direction. Cllr Mitchell's motion also called for the inclusion of a road from Newtown to Willow Grove and to get the National Transport Authority to prioritise Public Transport.

Cllr Mitchell said "Every other town in Wicklow has two or three exits to the N11. Arup's plan for Greystones/Delgany to have one exit will not work," Cllr Mitchell said. "Closing J10 will produce significant problems. The four large towns in East Wicklow have two or three N11 junctions each. Arup's plan to keep only one junction for Delgany/Greystones will not work. The town has the least number of jobs of any town in Leinster, thus the most commuters, so it is blindingly obvious

that it needs the same number of exits as much smaller towns get. Adequate safety and movement can be obtained by keeping the North on and off ramps but replacing the four local access points with a local overbridge.

"Closing the junction will force much more traffic onto local roads and onto the R761 over Windgates and the Bray Southern Cross Road all of which are overcrowded. At least 1,500 homes are being built in the area to add to the problem.

"It is also surprising that the plan leaves the South East Rail line empty, having the least service of any line in the Greater Dublin Area, My 2018 plan proposed three peak-hour services of right carriages, at limited cost, but is not included."

Cllr Mitchell has outlined a number of alternatives that he says would achieve adequate safety and movement while keeping the junction open.

These include building a local access overbridge, which Cllr Mitchell says would "provide nearly as good access, be much safer and be better for busses, cyclists and pedestrians."

Cllr Mitchell is also proposing a service road from Junction 12 to Kilpedder.

"A service road is needed from J12 to Kilpedder to allow buses, cyclists and local traffic to connect. Planning permission exists for a Data Centre on the West side which has a two-way parallel road, though one-way on each side would be adequate. Regional busses must have a stopping place on each side," said Cllr Mitchell.

A short link road from J12 to the Kilcoole Road is included in the Newtownmountkennedy Plan to take truck traffic to Kilcoole Industrial Estates and tourist traffic to Druids Glen. "These plague the unsuitable rural roads and the village at present. This link should be supported."

## NTA called on to prioritise bus infrastructure on new N11 route

Social Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore has called on the NTA to prioritise funding for bus infrastructure ahead of any development of the proposed new N11 'red corridor' route.

Deputy Whitmore said "there are concerns that as the new proposed red corridor route progresses, that funding for the active travel element and bus infrastructure will fall to the wayside if funding is not prioritised and ringfenced now.

"For too long now, the needs of cars have been prioritised over public transport and funding for buses or active travel measures so it's important

that we get that assurance now, even before the N11 proposed route is signed off. This is the only way to have buy in from communities who live along the N11.

"They need certainty that when upgrades are carried out to the N11, and certain exists are closed, that there will be a bus to take them straight into work, that will reduce their commute times and get them home

in time to collect children from childcare for dinner.

"But to do this, we need the bus lanes and active travel measures to be constructed first before the main road upgrades. This way, people can start to take up alternative more environmentally friendly measures of getting into work or when taking other trips.

"I have written to the NTA seeking a commitment to funding for the

bus routes along the N11 and assurances that construction of this aspect of the N11 upgrade will be completed first.

"I will also be calling on the Minister for Transport Eamon Ryan to commit to the Green Party's promises of prioritising funding for active travel measures to take more cars off the road," concluded Deputy Whitmore.

## Mixed report for Council from local government watchdog

**A report by the independent watchdog of local government has examined the performance of Wicklow County Council in 2020 across eleven areas. The annual report, by the National Oversight and Audit Commission (NOAC), found the Council delivered mixed results in a range of areas including housing, the environment and financial management.**

Some of the key findings in the report include:

**Housing:** Wicklow County Council owned 4,786 social housing dwellings at end of 2020, and 230 of these were vacant. Wicklow County recorded the largest increase in stock nationally at year end in 2020, compared to 2019, with 5.33%.

45% of the adults in emergency accommodation in Wicklow at the end of 2020 were long-term homeless.

**Environment:** 10% of Wicklow was deemed to be unpolluted or litter free; 70% slightly polluted; 19% moderately polluted; and 2% significantly polluted.

**Planning:** 53 Council planning decisions were the subject of an appeal to An Bord Pleanála and in 35 of these cases ABP confirmed the Council's decision. 179 planning cases referred to or initiated by WCC between 1st January 2020 and 31st December 2020 were investigated; 171 of these were closed during 2020 and 38 of these were dismissed as trivial, minor or without foundation or were closed because statute barred or an exempted development. Five were resolved to the Council's satisfaction through

negotiations. 56 were closed due to enforcement proceedings.

As of the end of 2020, there were 554 planning cases being investigated.

**Roads:** The level of motor tax transactions, which were dealt with online, was 88.7%.

**Corporate:** The percentage of paid working days lost to sickness absence through medically certified leave in 2020 was 2.29%.

**Finance:** The level of rent collection for 2020 was 80%.

Commenting on the publication of the report, Chair of NOAC Performance Indicator Working Group, Philomena Poole, said: "Public health restrictions and the increased challenges local authorities faced in providing essential services, along with the reduction in income, has impacted performance under various indicator headings.

"However, re-letting time and cost has again increased and although COVID-19 has impacted this area, NOAC notes that there has been a steady rise in re-letting costs since 2014, with only a small decrease shown in 2019 compared to the prior year."

NOAC uses 42 indicators across eleven areas to measure local authority performance. The data is submitted by the local authorities and other State and regulatory bodies.

NOAC would like to thank local authority staff, the LGMA, and all organisations who provided or reviewed data for NOAC's 2020 Annual Report.



COMHAIRLE CONTAE CHILL MHANTÁIN  
WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

### REMINDER – OIL FIRED HEATING SYSTEMS

Wicklow County Council advises homeowners, businesses and fuel suppliers to ensure that Oil Fired Heating Systems are checked for leaks before and after each refill and serviced annually before the onset of winter. Property owners are requested to ensure that the fuel supply pipe between the oil tank and boiler is inspected as part of annual servicing of the oil boiler and pressure tested every 5 years. The costs of servicing will be borne by the property owner.

There is a legal obligation to report accidental spillages or leakage of polluting matter to the Council.

Oil leaks from heating systems can cause significant damage to property, risk to health and environmental pollution whereby substantial financial costs may be incurred by the property owners in cleaning and remediating the contaminated properties.

Thank you for your co-operation and protecting our environment.



# 'LIGHTS WILL GO OUT'

Continued from page 1...

centre have agreed to develop grid infrastructure. Upon completion, the proposed offshore wind farm and data centre will both directly connect to the Irish national grid via the new shared substation.

"This is a landmark project for Arklow, for Green Tech and for Ireland. The immediate challenge is to power our technology sector with renewable energy and this partnership between Echelon and SSE makes the Arklow site a world leader in green tech."

Social Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore who introduced a Dáil Motion last week calling for a moratorium on the rapid development of data centres in Ireland said the motion came at a time when over 70 data centres are in operation and national concerns about security of our energy supply and warnings of an impending energy crisis.

The SocDems Spokesperson for Energy, Deputy Whitmore said "data centres are extremely power-hungry projects using up the same amount of energy as a large town or the whole of County Wicklow. If this rapid development continues, people in Wicklow are at risk of experiencing rolling blackouts and energy price hikes because data centres will be consuming more energy than the whole of County Wicklow if it is not managed properly. Eirgrid has already issued warnings of possible black outs after two amber alerts were issued the other week in the Dublin area, and Wicklow won't be immune.

"That's why I felt it necessary to call for a moratorium, just as an interim measure until the public can be sure that the Government knows what it's doing, has carried out a risk impact analysis on energy security and a strategy on the development of the data centre sector in Ireland.

"It's urgent that the Government does something because we are heading into a winter of rising ener-

gy prices which will negatively affect working families across Wicklow and vulnerable groups of people. We have a duty to pose the question to Government whether data centres are worth it for us. Fuel poverty could increase dramatically over the next few months. Is the message from Government that big industry is more important than the security of ordinary people?

"It was very disappointing to see the Government vote this down, particularly the Green Party who have made previous commitments on the sustainable development of data centres."

Sinn Féin TD John Brady said "We are in the midst of an energy crisis. Amber alerts are now a common feature; electricity outages are increasingly common, and the Government is saying that avoiding blackouts cannot be guaranteed. There are campaigns for individuals to conserve electricity and switch off light bulbs. At the same time, this Government is bending over backwards to facilitate the entry of energy-sapping data centres into the market.

"By 2027, data centres will Hoover up 31 per cent of Ireland's electricity, across Europe the rate is on average 2%. They will require twelve and a half terra watts of electricity above what's already being provided - that's enough to power twenty-four million homes.

"The threat now posed to the electricity system will not just have negative consequences for households and businesses; it will also have a massively damaging effect on Ireland's international reputation and attracting foreign direct investment.

"Data centres are putting immense pressure on the grid at huge cost to the taxpayer. We will spend €9 billion on the grid to allow Amazon, Microsoft and their peers to set up data centres here.

"Both EirGrid and the Commission of Regulation of

Utilities have warned that rolling blackouts are possible if action is not taken on the unprecedented growth of electricity demand from data centres. As we now have about 70 of them which includes permission for Echelon to develop at Avoca River Park in Arklow, it is time for a pause on the granting of additional Data Centres.

"I believe pausing the further granting of planning permissions for Data centres is an essential interim measure to ensure that we meet climate targets and develop a sustainable policy on the location of data centres. It is crucial that we do this. We owe it to future generations, and to our young people who are out protesting every week. We are lacking a clear strategy from the Government as to how the development of Data centres and the additional demands on the national grid will be managed into the future."

Greystones councillor Derek Mitchell makes an interesting point about where data centres should be located. He says "The amount of Data centres in Ireland is putting a strain on electricity supplies and renewable targets. There is talk of restricting new Data Centres though these bring big economic benefits to the country. Areas which have large windfarms should get priority for electricity for Data Centres in order to provide an economic benefit to compensate for disruption and encourage acceptance. Windfarms are often controversial, because of the visual affect and this will help gain acceptance. The Codling windfarm, off the coast from Greystones to Newcastle, is scheduled to be the largest in Ireland. That area, including the proposed Data Centre in Newtown, should get priority access to electricity for Data Centres in order to provide an economic benefit. Up to now most Data Centres have been built in Co. Dublin which has virtually no wind or solar generation."



Age Friendly Programme Manager Richella Wood, with Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council Shay Cullen. Environmental Officer Jim Callery, Acting Director of Services Máire Halvey, and Horticultural advisor Tracey Synnott, planting a tree at Council Buildings to mark International Older persons Day.

## Magnolia tree planted to mark International Older Persons Day

A tree was planted by Wicklow County Council at County Buildings on Station Road in Wicklow Town on Friday October 1st to mark International Older Persons Day and as a mark of respect to all loved ones lost in the pandemic.

Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Shay Cullen, planted the magnolia tree at the entrance to County Buildings saying: "Covid has touched all of society but in particular older people have been adversely affected. A number of older people died as a result of the pandemic, and we hope to remember them each time we pass this tree."

Acting Director of Services, Máire Halvey, recognised the contribution all older people give to society in terms of knowledge, expertise and in particular with volunteering. She said that as older people had to cocoon through the first lockdown and could not see family or friends, they paid a very high price during the pandemic.

County Wicklow Age Friendly Manager, Richella Wood, thanked Tracey Synnott and Jim Callery for their assistance with the tree planting and in securing a beautiful magnolia which would stand as testament and tribute to those who have lost their lives from Covid.

The ceremony was one of a number nationally with local authorities taking part in the initiative.

## Impact of pandemic set to continue for local drinks and hospitality sector

**New Drinks Industry Group of Ireland (DIGI) analysis warns of two-tier recovery in 2022, with hospitality facing major post-Covid challenges. In counties Wicklow, Louth, Meath, and Kildare, DIGI estimates almost 6,000 fewer jobs including 1,850 among 15-24 year olds. 26,100 people are employed in the drinks and hospitality industry in the Mid-East.**

This is despite the broader economy's ongoing recovery as the country approaches full vaccination.

In Q4 2019, the last quarter unaffected by the pandemic, in the Mid-East region, which includes Wicklow, 7.6% or 26,100 of the adult population were employed in drinks and hospitality jobs (in Wicklow alone, 5.8%). However, DIGI predicts almost 6,000 fewer jobs in the Mid-East in 2022 compared to Q4 2019, including 1,850 among 15-24 year olds. 26,100 people are employed in the drinks and hospitality industry in the Mid-East.

The situation is similar in other regions. DIGI predicts 3,730 fewer in the West; and 3,690 fewer in the South-East.

Some population groups are more vulnerable to this contraction than others. In Q4 2019, women comprised the majority, 54%, of those employed in drinks and hospitality, compared to 46% in total employment; in the Mid-East region, 52.5% of all drinks and hospitality employees were female. The sector is also relatively young: in Q4 2019, 31.8% were between 15 and 24 years of age, compared to 11.2% in total employment.

DIGI's estimates are based on analysis of the latest industry employment report, Structure and Performance of National and Regional Employment in the Hospitality Sector of Restaurants, Hotels and Public Houses, researched and authored by DCU economist Anthony Foley. Foley's report shows that the accommodation and food service sector, which includes most drinks and hospitality businesses, employed almost 180,000 people in the last quarter of 2019.

However, DIGI predicts that the likely substitution of some staycation demand with overseas sun holidays, some element of consumer reluctance, and the overall weaker national and international demand for travel and tourism-which in Ireland heavily involves drinks and hospitality businesses-means some pubs, restaurants, and hotels will not return to their pre-pandemic employment levels in 2022.

In response, DIGI has called for the Government to reduce Ireland's excise tax rate, which is the second highest overall in Europe, by 7.5% in October's Budget.

"Ireland's high rate of excise, which represents a significant cost, is forcing drinks and hospitality businesses to make growth-limiting sacrifices," said Liam Reid, Chair of DIGI and Corporate Relations Director at Diageo Ireland. At such a precarious time for the industry, every euro matters. Money taken by the Government in excise tax is money that could be spent by pubs, hotels, and restaurants on recovery and investment."

DIGI believes that it should be the Government and industry's 'collective goal' to return to the Q4 2019 total of 180,000 drinks and hospitality jobs 'as quickly as possible' in 2022.

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Comedian and radio presenter, PJ Gallagher gets ready to embark on an epic 17km 'Hill to Hill' challenge to launch the #UpTheHill2021 campaign for the Jack and Jill Children's Foundation.

Live on air, the Radio Nova breakfast presenter will cycle his own Penny Farthing from the Summit Inn, Howth, to Hill 16 in Croke Park to raise awareness for the campaign and inspire the public to see what they can do to help raise funds for Jack & Jill throughout October.

Jack & Jill provide in-home nursing care and respite support for children up to the age of 6, with a range of neurodevelopmental issues including brain injury, genetic diagnosis and severe cerebral palsy. Many of the children we care for have undiagnosed conditions. They also provide end of life care for children under the age of 6, regardless of diagnosis.

Pictured at the launch is PJ Gallagher with Harvey White (2) from and his mother Edel.

The White family are among the 99 families across Dublin currently under the care of Jack & Jill. Listeners to Radio Nova will be able to register their own Up the Hill challenge or donate via [www.jackandjill.ie](http://www.jackandjill.ie) and there is also a text donation line available; donors can text WECARE to 50300 for €4 and Jack & Jill will receive a minimum of €3.60 (provider: LikeCharity helpline 0766 805278). Picture Andres Poveda

# Irish Water find solution to Barndarrig water supply issues

Irish Water has decided to connect Barndarrig to the Redcross Water Supply Zone to resolve all water quality issues for the residents of Barndarrig. The community has been living under a 'Do Not Consume' notice since early February.

Irish Water is progressing through the preliminary design phase of the project and is aiming to commence works on site later this year. The works are scheduled for completion in early 2022.

Welcoming the news, Social Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore said "After seeking an update from Irish Water on the on-going water supply issue for Barndarrig residents, I was thrilled to get confirmation that Irish Water will connect the area to a more stable supply of water at Redcross. This will resolve all current and future water quality issues but will also give security of supply for the town as it grows.

"This will require some work however, due to commence in November and will take between two and four months. I am hopeful there will be minimum disruption for residents as works take place and I will remain in contact with Irish Water throughout the process.

"This should come as a such a relief to Barndarrig residents who have been dealing with the frustration of a Do Not Consume notice during the height of the pandemic, and struggling under so much uncertainty as a result.



Jennifer Whitmore TD in Barndarrig

This should bring some closure to this ongoing issue and hopefully bring back some normality as a result.

"In the meantime, I will be seeking further details as to the project and keep the residents updated," concluded Whitmore.

The Do Not Consume Notice was issued on 9 February 2021 to

protect 213 customers following elevated levels of nitrite in the water supply. The water is not safe for consumption or the preparation of foods, but is safe for hygiene, washing of utensils and use in washing machines and dishwashers.

An alternative water supply was put in place to support

impacted customers and 5L bottles of water were made available at the car park opposite Barndarrig church.

The Nitrite monitor remains in place at Barndarrig Water Treatment Plant and no nitrite exceedances have been detected since the Do Not Consume notice was lifted.

# Major burst to Newtown water main repaired

Irish Water and Wicklow County Council crews successfully completed repairs following a significant burst to a 200mm water main on the Woodstock road area in Newtownmountkennedy last week.

The burst main impacted customers in Newtown, Kilcoole and surrounding areas last Tuesday, however, crews were able to maintain supply to some areas through reconfiguring the network.

Irish Water said that the repairs were complex due to the location of the burst and the presence of other services over the watermain which had to be carefully excavated.

Speaking about the burst, Peter Thornton, Irish Water said: "Dedicated crews successfully carried out the repairs as quickly and efficiently as possible to minimise disruption to the area and restore water for all customers.

"The repairs were complex due to the location of the burst and the presence of other services. We understand the inconvenience unplanned outages can have on customers and we appreciate your patience as we worked to return the water supply to homes and businesses as quickly and as safely as possible."



# As new Fuel Season begins, data shows over 9,500 Wicklow households received payments last winter

A total of 9,584 households across Wicklow received fuel allowance payments through the National Fuel Scheme last winter and will automatically receive payments again this year, beginning last week, as long as their eligibility remains the same.

Minister for Social Protection, Heather Humphreys TD, announced the start of the National Fuel Scheme for the 2021/2022 Season last week.

The Fuel Allowance, which is a means-assessed payment, will be paid for 28 weeks to an estimated 370,000 households across the country.

Minister Simon Harris said: "I know that for the

9,584 households across Wicklow that received the Fuel Allowance payment last year, this Scheme is key to supporting them meet their energy costs. Recipients are paid a weekly rate of €28, with an option also to receive two lump sum payments of €392 each.

"The scheme plays a vital role in ensuring that families across Wicklow have the security in

knowing they will be able to pay their heating bills over the winter months. I know it will be especially important to people this year in the context of rising fuel costs globally, and I am encouraging my colleagues in Government to factor this into the upcoming Budget.

"All those who received the Fuel Allowance last year will

be automatically be paid again this year, as long as their entitlement remains. I would really urge anyone who is in need of this scheme and has not applied previously to submit an application immediately. The Fuel Allowance application form is available through local Intreo Centres, Post Offices or on the Department's website," Minister Harris concluded.

Launching the 2021/2022 Fuel Season, Minister Humphreys said, "In recognition of the Scheme's importance to so many families, I increased the weekly rate of payment by €3.50 in my first Budget as Social Protection Minister. "I am conscious that heating costs are a concern for many and that households have seen their bills increase and return to 2019 levels. I want to assure people that I am aware of these concerns and they will be an important factor for me as I continue the Budget 2022 negotiations, along with my Government colleagues."

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# Rents jump 11.6%

The quarterly rent index by the Residential Tenancies Board (RTB) published last week shows that rents have risen on average by 7% across the state this year. The average rent is now €1,352, with average rents in Wicklow now at €1436.44.

To put this in perspective, that's €17,237.28 per year on average to rent in Wicklow.

The report is compiled in conjunction with the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI), and is the most authoritative report of its kind on the Irish rental market.

CSO figures for 2019 indicate that the median household income for renters is €38,558 which means that 45% of the household's disposable income is going on rent.

Commenting on the report, Sinn Féin TD John Brady said: "The RTB rent quarterly rent index for Q2 of 2021 indicates that rents have risen by 7% annually. The average rent is now €1,352 a month. Rents in Wicklow have breached the 4% rent cap that was in place and have risen by an alarming 11.6%.

"The figures show that rents are rising the fastest in Leitrim, with the county experiencing 17.3% year-on-year growth. Laois, Sligo, Wicklow, Mayo, Offaly, Kilkenny,

Longford and Clare all showed increases of more than 10% during the same timeframe.

"These figures are under the earlier rental rules and are not subject to the revised cap linking rents to inflation. However, rents in rent pressure zones showed rises of over 4%, which indicated that there was widespread noncompliance with the 4% cap.

"Why would this be any different under the new rules. Inflation was at over 3% last month and many economists believe this will continue to rise.

"The government has no plan to tackle runaway rents. That much is clear from reading the new housing plan and listening to the Minister for Housing.

"The delivery of the long-promised cost rental legislation is slow and even then, most of these rents will not be genuinely affordable. Ordinary people cannot afford to rent nor can they afford to buy. They remain stuck. This is

not a normal way to live and it cannot continue.

"Sinn Féin has a plan for renters and a plan to deliver genuinely affordable homes. We would ban rent increases for three years and introduce a refundable tax credit worth one month's rent for private rented sector tenants."

Padraig McGoldrick, Interim Director of the RTB, commented on the latest Rent Index findings: "In Q2 2021, the Irish economy began to emerge from lockdown with a phased reopening, and people began to readjust to their living and working situations. The Q2 2021 Rent Index provides an important insight into how the rental sector is adapting to these changes. From the initial early pandemic slowdown and reduction in rent levels, rents nationally have rebounded quickly, mainly driven by activity outside of Dublin. In particular, rents are continuing to increase more rapidly along the commuter belt and more

slowly in Dublin and other urban areas indicating that the pandemic has seen an immediate impact of people moving from urban areas, particularly Dublin. This may reflect an emerging trend around long-term working and lifestyle choices.

"Nevertheless, there is a lot of uncertainty around the emerging trends. It must be noted that the period since the onset of the pandemic has seen the introduction and subsequent easing of restrictions in line with the public health measures. This is likely to have had an effect on the trends throughout 2020 and 2021 which may not be permanent. In addition, the latest rent levels have not been impacted by recent rent control measures restricting increases in rents to rises in inflation measured by the Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices (HICP). The RTB will continue to monitor the trends to inform policy and support emerging needs in the sector."

## House prices rise 4.7% in the past three months

The price of the average second-hand three-bed semi in County Wicklow has risen by 4.7% to €331,000 in the last three months, according to a national survey by Real Estate Alliance.

Homes in the county are reaching sale agreed in four weeks, the Q3 REA Average House Price Index shows.

Average prices in Bray rose 4.1% this period to €385,000, with time to sell remaining at three weeks. North East Wicklow prices rose 6.1% to €350,000.

During this period, prices in Wicklow Town also saw a 6.1% increase to €350,000, with the average time to reach sale agreed currently at four weeks.

"Vendors are slow to place their houses on the market as they cannot find a suitable house to move to," said Karl Tracey of REA Forkin, Bray.

"A high number of landlords are selling their Buy To Let residential properties as they now are seeing values back at the same levels they purchased at 2005-2007.

"High tax on rental income is also driving these investment property sales."

Average prices in Blessington rose 4.6% to €340,000, with time to sell remaining at four weeks. Baltinglass prices rose 2.2% to €230,000, and time to sell in the area remained unchanged at six weeks.

"Mid-west Wicklow continues to generate strong interest as a secondary location for the former commuter, who is now based at home for part of the working week, while demand is remaining strong for any type of property within north-west Wicklow area," said Simon Murphy of REA Murphy Baltinglass and Blessington.

"Shortage of house supply is

forcing single buyers to consider and purchase apartments as an alternative choice, and recent sales of rented houses by owner-occupiers, willing to deal with tenants after purchase, is a new departure and is indicative of the shortage of supply.

"We are seeing marginal increase in the third quarter on the back of strong increases earlier in the year, and demand is expected to remain strong while an under-supply will be a feature of the market for the remainder of 2021 at least."

The latest Daft.ie report has shown that Wicklow house prices in the third quarter of 2021 were 11% higher than a year previously, compared to a rise of 3% seen a year ago.

Responding to the Daft.ie Q3 House Price Report, IPAV, the Institute of Professional Auctioneers & Valuers, said the drop in supply of new homes on the market was striking if unsurprising given the impact of the pandemic.

Pat Davitt, IPAV's Chief Executive said: "Given the tightness of supply and the very strong demand it is likely that prices achieved for homes in many areas may in fact be exceeding asking prices, the latter which the Daft.ie report captures.

"Our own study of actual prices achieved by auctioneers in the first six months of 2021 over the latter six months of 2020 found an acceleration in house price increases and particularly so in the country," he said.

"The main driver of increasing

prices is the lack of supply of homes to meet current and pent-up demand," he said.

However he said agents around the country are now reporting more second hand properties coming to the market.

"It is to be hoped that this extra stock will see a steadying of prices as we head to the final quarter of the year and prices may not rise as much as they did in the first six months."

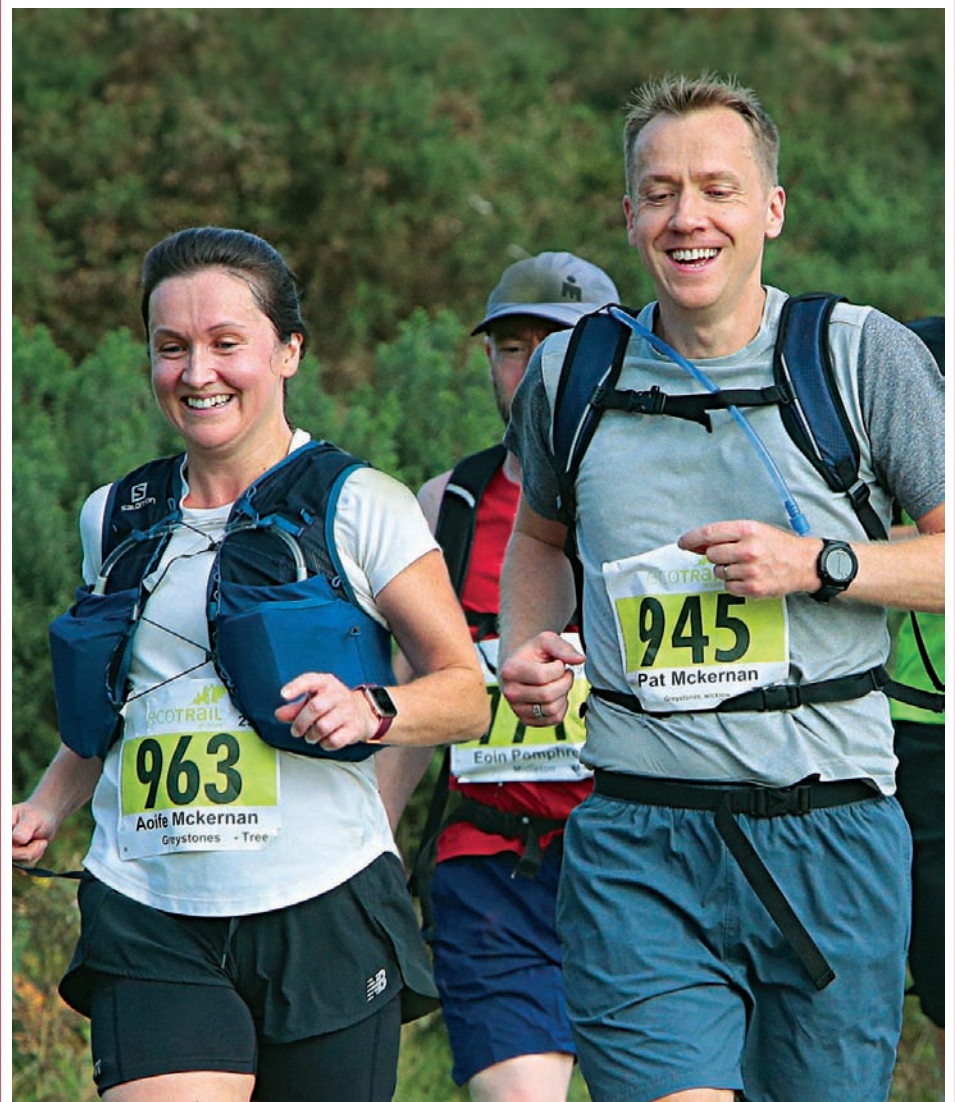
Mr Davitt said it is in the interest of society as a whole that the Government's Housing for All plan with a commitment to invest €4 billion per year to build 300,000 homes over the next nine years works.

"The latter part of the year will be telling in how buyer behaviours respond to the opening up of the economy. We may well see a tapering back of the move to the country that was so evident over the last year."

He said increasing the supply of new homes is absolutely critical and next month's Budget must introduce measures that will bring down the cost of building homes.

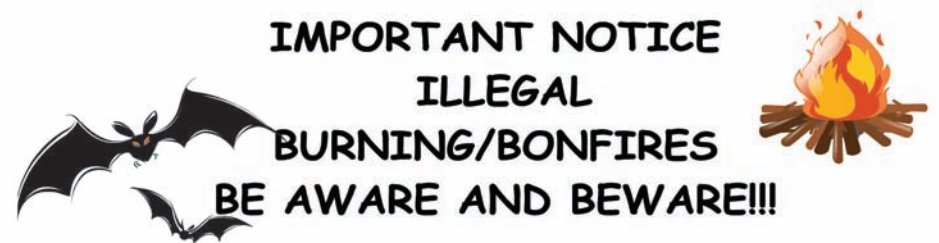
IPAV has called for a reduction in the VAT rate on new housing from 13.5pc to 5 per cent for owner-occupiers saying forcing new house buyers to borrow to pay an upfront VAT bill to Government and to pay interest charges on that borrowed money over the lifetime of the mortgage does not make sense.

The organisation has also called for measures to bring vacant properties and business premises into the housing stock.



Aoife and Pat McKernan from Greystones are pictured making their way over Bray Head during EcoTrail 2021. The race started and finished at Bray Seafront on September 25th. Participants took in some of Wicklow's most scenic locations including Bray Head Killruddery Gardens, The Great Sugarloaf, Powerscourt Waterfall, The Wicklow Way, Lough Tay viewing point and Piers Gate, and all the way to Roundwood and the Vartry Reservoir.

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# Carraig Eden wins at National Housing Awards

Carraig Eden which provides transitional, supported accommodation to those at risk of homelessness in Greystones has won two Irish Council for Social Housing (ICSH) awards.

The ICSH Biennial Community Housing Awards showcase the innovative and sustainable social housing projects that approved housing bodies members and local authority partners continue to deliver for communities across the country. Local charity Ark Housing, meanwhile, was shortlisted for an ICSH housing award.

The first award is all about collaboration and this began all the way back in 2016 when Tiglin came to Wicklow County Council for help when the Carraig Eden site was put up for sale and which could have potentially resulted in putting the 30 residents at risk of homelessness.

Wicklow County Council collaborated with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and funding was secured to purchase and upgrade the dilapidated building into high quality, modern, independent living accommodation, while at the same time providing them with support from the Tiglin community through the shared living facilities and access to the support team.

Carraig Eden also won the first ever Public Choice Award. This award gives an opportunity for members of the public to stand-up and applaud the project that puts a broad smile on their face, that's awe-inspiring or that makes them feel hopeful about the communities we're building for a more sustainable future.

Mr Curran further acknowledged the involvement of John O'Keefe Architect and Cleary Doyle, the construction team, involved in the project.

Minister Donnelly said: "Carraig Eden is a shining example of how the State can work with housing groups to change lives. I've worked closely with the superb team at Tiglin to safeguard the future for Carraig Eden because the work being done there is absolutely vital."

"I'm delighted the staff and the team behind making it such a success are getting the recognition they deserve. Everyone involved should be extremely proud of the work they have done in building what is a first-class facility."

A Carraig Eden resident Danny described how Carraig Eden had helped him.

He said: "Carraig Eden provided me with a place where people knew what recovery was and how to sustain it. It has helped me put a value on my life."

President Michael D. Higgins said Carraig Eden was "a place where people who have had their participation in life disrupted - discover a new space and become full of hope and joy".

Gillian Power, Senior Executive Engineer, Wicklow County Council said "This award is all about collaboration and Wicklow County Council couldn't have asked for a better partner in Tiglin. They are an amazing organisation who bring hope and support to people who have temporarily lost their way in life."

Chair of Ark Housing & Cathaoirleach of Bray

Municipal District, Cllr. Aoife Flynn Kennedy, stated "It was a huge achievement for Ark Housing to be shortlisted for an ICSH Award. As a small charity and approved housing body to be shortlisted among some of the biggest operators in the country, both local authorities and charities, we are very humbled."

Cllr Flynn Kennedy outlined the charity's background. Ark Housing has been working silently since 2007 to provide accommodation for homeless families and individuals in Bray and North Wicklow. Currently providing 27 permanent homes for 10 individuals and 17 families, including 40 children. Homes are located in Bray, Greystones, Newtown and Rathnew.

The charity is funded through grants to purchase homes, fundraising and income derived from their charity shop at Bray Recycle Centre supports ongoing tenancy sustainment, property maintenance and has also funded the purchase of accommodation.

Cllr. Flynn Kennedy states "We are a community charity, reacting to a real need. Ark Housing is about real action. Without the support of the community and our volunteers, we would be unable to do this important work. With them we can continue to provide more homes and have a positive impact on people's lives."



Pictured are Bray Camera Club members celebrating their 50th anniversary - Back row, left to right: David MacKenzie, Graham Gough, Douglas Barry, Malcolm McCamley, Pat Killilea. Middle row, left to right: Norman Davies, Pat Judge, Donal Enright, Una Armstrong, Gerry Kelly, Frank McGowan, Aongus Collins. Front row, left to right: John McGowan, Philip Ryan, Sallie O'Sullivan, Brenda Keogh, Anne Marie Byrne, Brian White, Philip White.

Photo by Joe McQuillan

## Bray Camera Club celebrates 50 great years

The first meeting of Bray Camera Club was held 50 years ago this year. On Saturday 25th September, club members, friends and invited guests marked the 50th Anniversary at the exact location of this meeting, on the steps of An Lár House on the Lower Dargle Road in Bray.

This photo call, which included Mr Brian White of the Bray Historical Society, one of the club's founding members, was followed by a celebratory picnic in the People's Park with toasts past members and the club's future.

Since its lowly beginnings the camera club has had 50 uninterrupted years of meetings in various locations in Bray with the most recent pre-pandemic meetings taking place on Monday evenings in the Mermaid Arts Centre.

Since the pandemic, the club has successfully continued its activities with online meetings featuring weekly challenges, photo presentations, guest speakers, competitions, mirthful debate, analysis of photo techniques and sharing of knowledge. They also hold annual exhibitions, the next of which is due to take place in January and February 2022.

"Whether you use a phone camera or a high-end digital SLR, Bray Camera Club welcomes everyone over 18 years of age with an interest in photography. Until such a time as meetings can be reconvened in the Mermaid Arts Centre, the club will continue to meet online on Monday evenings. If you wish to sample some meetings with a view to joining or you would like more information about the club, please email [info@braycameraclub.ie](mailto:info@braycameraclub.ie)."

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Members of Tiglin and Wicklow County Council celebrate at Bray Golf Club. Pictured are Jonathan Dineen, Daaniel Roche, Michael Nicholson, Lourda Scott, CE of Wicklow County Council Frank Curran, Wicklow County Council Shay Cullen, Tiglin CEO Phil Thompson, John O'Keefe, Jackie Carroll, Helena Fallon, Tiglin Chair Aubrey McCarthy, Theresa O'Brien, and Gillian Power



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A well-known Wicklow producer is set to hit television screens across the country after being chosen to star in Aldi's new multi-platform advertising campaign. John Pringle is one of four Irish producers who have been selected as the face of Aldi's new "Everyday Irish, Everyday Amazing" nationwide campaign. John Pringle is one of our proud sheep farmers based in the idyllic surroundings of the Wicklow hills. As the third generation to farm this land, John, and his family pride themselves in rearing Quality Irish Lambs. The farm implements practices which are kind to the environment.

## Four Wicklow stories selected for landmark GAA grassroots book

Four stories about County Wicklow have been selected to appear in a fascinating new book on the GAA – written by people at the heart of the association nationwide.

'Grassroots: Stories From The Heart Of The GAA', is a treasure trove of GAA memories, tales and incidents spanning over 150 years.

"The book generated an incredible response from every county in Ireland, as well as from the Irish abroad," said author, journalist and Bray man PJ Cunningham, who collaborated with Croke Park on the publication.

"I have included stories not only since the GAA's foundation in 1884, but from before, through to the Civil War and up to modern times.

"The collection is, in essence, the first time that this rich oral tradition of sideline and on-field stories have been put together and published in this form.

"It provides snapshots into the history of the GAA, recounted by the people at the heart of the action, whether those stories are happy or sad, dramatic or ordinary."

Volume one has just been published and such was the response from the GAA community that work has already begun on a second collection.

The first edition includes stories from the rich history of Wicklow GAA. Brendan Tumelty was a great Wicklow player who emigrated to the Big Apple in

the late fifties where he was a prominent member of the NYPD.

He was also a star in a very star-studded New York Gaelic football team of the sixties. He played one final match to end a sterling career against the globe-trotting Aussie 'Galahs' team.

This squad was laden with Mr Universe figures who used their power to overwhelm opponents on the pitch. The legendary John 'Kerry' O'Donnell beseeched 6'5" Tumelty to do something about their dominance at half-time – and the ensuing row led to one of the most celebrated rounds of fisticuffs on the famed Gaelic Park turf.

How the Wicklow man decked their talisman Ron Barassi is still talked about – even in Australia. Indeed, when an Aussie TV company made a 'This is your Life' programme for Ron some years later, secretly they flew Brendan out to be part of the occasion.

They pair became firm friends and both dined out on the dust up in the Bronx when they visited each other up until Brendan's death seven years ago.

Bray native Jackie Napier recalls one of his county's greatest ever triumphs when they won the All Ireland Junior hurling final against Hertfordshire after three games laden with controversy.

Jackie also supplied an insightful vignette on how loose lips nearly caused a strike as Wicklow overcame their differences and won the All-Ireland junior football final.

There is also a story from the pen of the late Jim Brophy on how a club man cast himself in the role of spy to try to get information on another team and ended up almost being thrown in jail.

Other contributors include former Irish soccer international Niall Quinn, Meath legends Sean Boylan and Bernard Flynn, Tony O'Hehir, son of the legendary Michael, former Galway hurling captain Joe Connolly, ex-Armagh player and manager Joe Kernan and RTÉ hurling analyst and former Offaly star, Michael Duignan.

"The folklore and stories that built up around our games are part of the reason that the organisation occupies such a special place in Irish society," said GAA President, Larry McCarthy.

"The GAA has always been about more than just games, it is part of what we are."

Grassroots: Stories From The Heart Of The GAA (Volume 1), priced at €19.99, is available now in all good bookshops.

If you have a GAA anecdote or story you would like to share for Volume 2, contact PJ Cunningham at 086-8217631 or at: pj@gaastories.ie.



PJ Cunningham

## Wicklow features in new 'Old Ireland in Colour' book

Old Ireland in Colour 2 is the eagerly anticipated sequel to John Breslin and Sarah-Anne Buckley's 2020 illustrated bestseller, which became the Irish publishing phenomenon of the year, winning the An Post Irish Book Award for Best Irish-Published Book and proving to be the most valuable single title in the Irish market.

The book featured in every national newspaper, on The Late Late Show, on Ryan Tubridy's radio show - it even made the homepage of CNN.

Now, Breslin and Buckley have delved even deeper into Ireland's historical archives to uncover captivating photographic gems to bring to life using their unique blend of cutting-edge technology, historical research and expert colourisation.

One of those photos is 'One Man and His Dog', a photo taken at the Dargle Bridge near Enniskerry in 1905.

Old Ireland in Colour 2 further celebrates the rich history of Ireland and the Irish people, from all walks of life, with all thirty-two counties represented across the full-colour title.

The book is divided into six sections under the broad headings of Politics and Revolution, Children and School, Working Life, Sport and Leisure, Ireland and the World, and Urban and Rural Scenes. With over 150 superb images, once again accompanied by insightful captions, the book is the perfect portrait of life in Ireland throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

From the chaos of the revolutionary period to the simple beauty of the islands, from the iconic to the domestic, there is something new and



ONE MAN AND HIS DOG c.1905, Wicklow Hills, Co. Wicklow. The ivy-covered Dargle Bridge near Enniskerry. Notes on Travel by Underwood and Underwood recorded 'the beauty of this deep, wooded glen is famous through all parts of Ireland. The stream that comes racing and tumbling through all parts of Ireland. The stream that comes racing and tumbling and dancing along under the bridge is hurrying to carry to the sea ... the rainfall from the Wicklow mountains.' Source: Library of Congress

inspiring to be gleaned from every single page.

John Breslin is a Professor at NUI Galway, where he has taught engineering, computer science and entrepreneurship over a

twenty-year period. He has written over 200 publications and co-authored two books. Sarah-Anne Buckley is a lecturer in History at NUI Galway and President of the Women's

History Association of Ireland. She has published two monographs, four edited volumes and numerous articles. She is co-founder of the Irish Centre for the Histories of Labour and Class.



PRAYERS AT DOWNING STREET, 14 July 1921, London. A republican prayer vigil at Downing Street on the day Éamon de Valera and David Lloyd George met to discuss paths to peace in Ireland. It was the first of four meetings between the pair in July 1921. The Irish Times reported that as the meeting progressed, a 'large crowd of Irish sympathisers knelt in the rain at Whitehall, at the end of Downing Street, recited the rosary, and sang several hymns. Before the prayers started, they sang "Ireland a Nation".' The article goes on to state that the singing and prayers did not cease. The politicisation of prayer was a powerful tactic during the Irish revolution, with mass vigils often being organised by Cumann na mBan and taking place at prisons, military barracks and public spaces. Source: National Library of Ireland



# Progress from Changing Places departmental working group

Draft building regulations which will support a public consultation on the issue of Changing Places toilets will be published by the end of the year. This was confirmed by Minister Darragh O'Brien in response to a parliamentary question from Green Party TD Steven Matthews. The progress follows six in depth meetings of the Changing Places working group in recent months and a series of subcommittee meetings.

A changing places toilet offers larger supported facilities that address the needs of people for whom current accessible sanitary accommodation is inadequate. These facilities enable people with complex care needs to take part in everyday activities such as travel, shopping, family days out

or attending a sporting event.

Discussing the news, Deputy Matthews said: "This is an issue I first brought up in the Dáil late last year following a series of meetings with a local group of carers and supporters who are pushing for these facilities for people who need them.

At the time, I welcomed the urgent action taken by my party colleague, Minister Malcolm Noonan in setting up a departmental working group that includes a wide variety of organisations including the HSE, the Office of Public Works and Changing Places Ireland, the charity behind the campaign at a national level. These groups are working in a collaborative way to amend existing building regulations. As is often the case, the legislation in this area is complex and the working group includes representatives from the construction and legal sectors to work through any legal hurdles.

"After 6 meetings so far this year, the working group is making positive progress and a report and draft amendments to the existing legislation are in progress which will offer the basis for a public consultation by the end of the year. I look forward to continuing to work with Changing Places and the Minister on this issue because at the heart of it, this work is about

improving the lives of carers and those who require these facilities and offering basic dignity that will provide publicly accessible toilets that meet their needs.

"On a local level, I provided this update to and look forward to meeting again with the local branch of the organisation representing families/ individuals that need these facilities. I also look forward to continuing my engagement with the Sub Committee on Changing Places that is part of Wicklow County Council's Inclusion and Disability Committee. Getting these new regulations across the line and put in practice is a slow process but fundamentally important and worthwhile.

"Ultimately, I am working towards ensuring that the legislation is amended at a national level so that it won't be down to local councilors or politicians to advocate for changing places to be included in public building plans, it will be a basic minimum requirement," concluded Deputy Matthews.



Deputy Matthews in the Changing Places toilet in Wicklow Town's new Library



Leah Laing saying goodbye to Dublin Bus driver Desi O'Toole who has retired after 47 years

## Hail to the bus driver

*Desi O'Toole retires after 47 years*

Sunday 26th September saw people line the streets in Greystones and a Gardaí and Fire service escort as beloved Dublin Bus driver Desi O'Toole made his last trip on the 84 from Newcastle to Bray.

Desi has retired after 47 years helping the people of North Wicklow to reach their destinations. During that time Desi also gave even more service to the local community through his charity work, raising hundreds of thousands of euro for worthy causes, and he plans to continue this charity work in the next phase of his life.

His special skill was in dealing with the many elderly people on his route, who Desi always treated with great care, courtesy and friendliness.

Former Greystones Mayor and councillor Kathleen Kelleher said the escort was a fitting tribute: "Desi will be much missed by all in Greystones. We wish him many more active years in his retirement. I was very fortunate to have been able to wave goodbye to Des on his last journey. His escort as it passed St. Kevin's NS was very impressive!!"

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# Bray makes Top 20 in Best Place to Live competition

Bray has been praised for making it into the Best 20 Places to Live in Ireland 2021, as Waterford City was announced as the overall winner.

Although Waterford was the unanimous choice of the judging panel it had to beat off stiff competition from four other shortlisted locations: Clonakilty, Co Cork, Galway city, the village of Glaslough in Co Monaghan and Killarney, Co Kerry.

Among the things which impressed the judges about Waterford were its beautiful buildings, its liveability, its pedestrian friendly public space, its weather, and its easy access to the Comeragh Mountains and the Copper Coast.

The Irish Times Best Place to Live in Ireland contest, began in June. In total 470 locations were nominated by more than 2,400 people from all 32 counties for the title of 'Best Place to

Live in Ireland 2021'.

The Chair of the judging panel Conor Goodman congratulated Bray on its fine showing in the competition. "Given the level of entries and the extremely high standard of those entries, making it into the Best 20 Places to Live in Ireland really is a wonderful achievement which I'm sure everyone in Bray is rightly proud of.

"We were delighted with the level of interest in the competition and would like to thank everyone who nominated a place or who engaged with us on it."

Each one of the nominated places - whether a city, town, village or suburb - was assessed on a range of criteria including: affordability; natural amenities; buildings;

housing; community initiatives and spirit; presence of clubs, societies and activities; good local services; diversity; a welcome for outsiders; transport links; employment opportunities; digital links for distance working; and safety and security.

While the number of nominations was a factor in the selection of the top locations, the quality of the place itself was the chief consideration.

One of the judges, architect Simon Wall described Waterford's Viking Triangle as a wonderful friendly public realm with walkable, liveable and happy communities.

"Waterford is an unassuming city, with a sense of its own independence.

It appears not to compare itself with other Irish cities. What it has achieved over the past two decades is simply outstanding."

In the midst of a housing crisis, affordable accommodation was a key consideration. Waterford has an average house price of around €200,000 and a stock of competitively priced homes for sale. Housing here is accessible - or relatively accessible - to people on a variety of incomes.

This is the second Irish Times Best Place to Live in Ireland contest. The first was in 2012, when Westport, Co Mayo, won the title. For information about 'Best Places to Live 2021' go to [www.irishtimes.com/best-place](http://www.irishtimes.com/best-place)

## Pupils presented with prizes in Codling Wind Park Art Competition

Over 100 creative entries were received for Codling Wind Park's first renewable energy-focused art competition, which was launched in June to coincide with Global Wind Day.

The competition aimed to encourage children to learn, understand and ask questions about climate change and the important role renewable energy has to play in addressing it.

Details were sent to all primary schools within the Greystones and Wicklow municipal districts, with the competition open to children in all classes. There were two categories: Juniors - junior infants to second class; and Seniors - third to sixth class.

The standard of entries was extremely high, as Liz Dillon, Community Liaison Officer of the Codling Wind Park project, explained. "We were so impressed by the incredible artwork submitted, highlighting the creativity and talent we have in our schools. We were literally blown away by the quality of the entries!"

"Never has there been a more important time for our younger generation to learn about the consequences of climate change and the positive impact renewables will have. With Ireland being one of the windiest countries in Europe, we are sitting on a gold mine of renewable energy, which when harnessed, will ensure our children have a healthier and safer future."

**The winners of the junior competition were:**

- 1st: Abbey from St Patrick's NS Greystones
- 2nd: Vanessa from Greystones Community National School
- 3rd: Sophie from St Patrick's NS Greystones

**The winners of the senior competition were:**

- 1st: Robyn from Gaelscoil na gCloch Liath
- 2nd: Eamonn from Gaelscoil na gCloch Liath
- 3rd: Millie from Gaelscoil na gCloch Liath

The prize for first place was a



The winners of the Codling Wind Park Art Competition pictured in Greystones with Liz Dillon, Community Liaison Officer for the project. From left: Vanessa, Millie, Sophie, Robyn, Eamonn, Abbey and Liz Dillon.

€100 voucher for either Art and Hobby Greystones or Hopkins Toymaster in Wicklow Town, with second and third places receiving a €50 and a €30 voucher respectively.

In addition to the individual prizes, every school that entered the competition was entered into a draw for a special School Prize of an iPad or a €500 voucher for assisted IT equipment for the school. Greystones Community

National School was the lucky winner of this prize and will be taking delivery of a new iPad.

Codling Wind Park said it would like to thank everyone who took part in the competition, as well as Lisa-Anne Crookes of Wind Energy Ireland, who had the challenging task of judging the entries and selecting the winners.

To find out more about the Codling Wind Park project please visit [www.codlingwindpark.ie](http://www.codlingwindpark.ie).



Hannah Brooks making her way back during the Wicklow EcoTrail 2021. The race started and finished at Bray Seafront on September 25th. Participants took in some of Wicklow's most scenic locations including Bray Head Killruddery Gardens, The Great Sugarloaf, Powerscourt Waterfall, The Wicklow Way, Lough Tay viewing point and Piers Gate, and all the way to Roundwood and the Vartry Reservoir.

## Help find missing Sandwich

A Wicklow family are desperately appealing to the public to help them find their sorely missed little dog, Sandwich.

A €500 reward is being offered for information that leads them to Sandwich, a 10 year old female Terrier Jack Russell cross missing from the Ballinakill area in Rathdrum.

"We think she got out underneath a gate in her home in the Ballinakill area of Rathdrum. She is not a dog that has run away before," said her owners.

"We have reports that she was seen running on Rathdrum Bridge, near the back gate to Hidden Valley late afternoon, on Wednesday the 18th August. We have received other reports of her out on the Glenealy Road near Churchmount Farm, near the Garda Station in Rathdrum and closer to Avondale too. There was also a report of a man, thought to be in his 60s, in a silver car, maybe a Toyota Starlet, stopping to pick up a small white dog running on the road leading to Avondale House. We



Sandwich is 10 years old with a white body and a long tail. She has a black and tan head. Her ears are upright and do not flop. She adores her ball and playing fetch for hours. She loves her belly rubs. She sometimes has a little limp. She answers to Sandwich and Damo. She is spayed and her details are all up to date.

have appealed for him to come forward but we have had no response yet. We hope this jogs someone's memory.

"We also received a message about the Laragh Road saying a conversation was overheard that a small animal was hit 2 weeks later but, there was no trace or reports of any animals being found. We have searched and investigated this extensively and thoroughly. None of these sightings have been confirmed. Sandwich seems to have simply vanished. There was also confusion about a small dog, similar to Sandwich near the Graveyard, but he is resident in the area.

"We have had over 20,000 shares on the 'Help find Sandwich' Facebook group in a few weeks but absolutely no concrete information. Our plea has been shared far and wide in the UK but we are finding it so hard to get local information as to her whereabouts. Someone has to know where Sandwich is and what happened that day, Wednesday the 18th August."

Sandwich has been raised since she was a tiny puppy by her human Damien O'Loinsigh (Lynch). For the past 10 years they have been with each other day in, day out. Sandwich would often go to work with Damien they were full-time Carers for Damien's older brother, Ronan, over the past few years, before Ronan sadly passed away in December 2020. It was Sandwich who brought Damien so much comfort at such a terribly difficult time. They are each other's constant companions. He is lost without her and not knowing where she went, or where she is, has caused him much anxiety and heartache.

"We are asking people to check in with your neighbours who maybe might feel they are minding her. We ask that people check your sheds or out-houses incase she sought refuge. We are begging for information on where this much loved and sorely missed little girl is.

"We are so inexplicably grateful to those who have helped so far. We held a search in local woods two weeks ago and a chorus of young children out for a Saturday morning walk were calling her through the valley. It was so heartwarming. We need Sandwich home now though. We need you to ask next door and up the road...have you seen Sandwich?"

If you have any information about Sandwich, contact Damien on 087 9317194, or you can message Tara, Rachel or Fiona on the Help find Sandwich Facebook group. You can email [wingsofwicklow@gmail.com](mailto:wingsofwicklow@gmail.com) or you can write to 'Help find Sandwich, c/o Wellbeing with Wings, Main St, Wicklow Town, A67 KT97'.



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Deirdre Ryan, Director of Origin Green and Sustainable Assurance with Bord Bia, and Tara McCarthy, CEO of Bord Bia, pictured prior to the awards ceremony

## Wicklow firm awarded Gold Standard for Sustainability

Wicklow firm Janet's Country Fayre has been awarded Origin Green Gold Membership following extensive auditing across a range of sustainability initiatives, at a ceremony held by Bord Bia and Origin Green.

Origin Green introduced Gold Membership in 2020, recognising members who are performing at a high level or excelling in their sustainability performance. The new scheme has driven Irish businesses to further increase their focus on sustainability issues.

To attain Origin Green Gold Membership a company must demonstrate exceptional annual performance in areas such as raw material sourcing; water and energy efficiency; waste reduction; packaging; and social sustainability. This year's Origin Green Gold Members excelled most in the areas of energy, packaging and community engagement.

Deirdre Ryan, Director of Origin Green and Sustainable Assurance with Bord Bia, commented: "It gives me great pleasure to announce that one business from county Wicklow has achieved Gold Member status this year. This achievement reflects that hard work of their team. As we look to address the urgency of climate change and the need for sustainable development, it is excellent to see companies like this, showing leadership."

At the event, Origin Green launched their Progress Update Report 2021, which demonstrated progress on a range of sustainability actions.

The Progress Update Report presents an overview of the latest developments within the Origin Green programme and highlights the significant and ongoing efforts of its members to impact positively on greener ways of farming and the adoption of more sustainable food production methods.

Key highlights from the 2021 Progress Update Report include:

- Sustainable beef and lamb assurance scheme (SBLAS) members recorded a 6.3% average reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> per unit of beef
- Sustainable dairy assurance scheme (SDAS) members recorded

a 6% average reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> per unit of milk

- A subset of 400 SDAS members have decreased their average carbon footprint over three consecutive cycles of audits by 18%
- Manufacturing members of the programme have set a total of 2,779 sustainability targets and established 13,600 sustainability initiatives since the programme launched nine years ago

- In retail and foodservice, Origin Green's 10 verified members represent circa 75% of the Irish retail market and have set a total of 165 sustainability targets across the areas of sustainable sourcing, operations, health and nutrition and social sustainability.
- The scale and scope of the Origin Green programme continues to produce important results, with 290,000 carbon footprints calculated to date at farm level and over 53,000 farm audits carried out remotely since last year due to Covid-19. To date this year, over 21,000 farmer feedback reports have been distributed to SBLAS and SDAS members to inform them of their farm's specific carbon footprint, and provide targeted and practical guidance to farmers on how to manage their inputs in a more environmentally efficient way.

Speaking at the event, Tara McCarthy CEO of Bord Bia, said: "Bord Bia is delighted to share the important results and industry leading achievements outlined in the Origin Green Progress Update Report 2021, as proof and progress continue to be trademarks of our world-class, national sustainability programme. This evidence of environmental improvements compiled from our members, and verified by international auditors Mabbett, highlights that the programme's vast scale across the Irish food and drink industry are what makes Origin Green unique and effective."

"Our recent Global Sustainability Survey of over

11,000 consumers and 125 trade buyers across 13 key markets demonstrated, not only the increasing importance of sustainability, but also the growing importance of evidence and data to back up sustainability. Our members are responding to this, by setting and achieving meaningful sustainability goals in their businesses. Origin Green will continue to evolve and adapt to best support our members to drive positive and lasting change across the supply chain."

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Charlie McConalogue said that sustainability is at the centre of Food Vision 2030, the new ten-year strategy for the Irish agri-food sector. "The commitments in the strategy are substantial, and have the potential to be transformative. Food Vision 2030 charts a way forward for all of us in the agri-food sector to deliver on its key ambition - for Ireland to become 'A World Leader in Sustainable Food Systems'. The requirement to deliver continuous improvement and proof of environmental sustainability comes from a powerful combination of changing societal and consumer demands; and the requirements of major trade customers for Irish food and drink. Of direct relevance is the strategy's goal to strengthen and invest in Origin Green and other sustainability supports to reflect the higher level of ambition for the agri-food sector."

"I believe that this strategy sets the agri-food sector on a new and challenging pathway, but one which also comes with great opportunity."

Since its inception in 2012, Origin Green has grown to collaborate with 55,000 farms and over 300 leading Irish food and drink companies to prove and improve their sustainability practices to meet the evolving needs of global customers and consumers.

## 'Marine environment in peril due to court ruling'

BirdWatch Ireland are deeply concerned by the immediate negative impacts that will result from the lifting of the ban on large trawlers (>18m) inside Ireland's inshore waters, also known as the 6 nautical mile zone.

Fintan Kelly, Policy Officer with BirdWatch Ireland, said "It is of serious concern that 2019 sprat catches increased significantly relative to 2016-2018, to 13,000 t (worth approximately €3.5 million). Anecdotal evidence from inshore fishermen and anglers around the coast suggest that landings in 2020 may again be an increase on 2019 levels putting significant pressure on the marine environment".

BirdWatch Ireland say "According to the scientific advice 'when the precautionary approach is applied, catches should be no more than 2,800 t in each of the years 2020 and 2021'. This advised catch limit is much lower than the average catch of 7,000 t reported for Irish vessels between 2017 - 2019 or the 13,000t caught in 2019. We now fear that overfishing of sprat will again occur this winter because of this ruling."

"European sprat is critically important species, linking plankton and top predators including seabirds and marine mammals. Overfishing sprat is therefore a significant risk to the health of commercial fish stocks which poses socio-economic implications for the fishing industry. This is especially relevant when considering that three out of the five herring stocks that Irish fisher's exploit have collapsed and have zero catch advice for 2021."

"The ongoing overfishing of sprat by large pelagic trawlers also poses a direct risk to the sustainability of commercial fish stocks through the capture of juvenile fish species like herring as bycatch in the sprat fishery. We do not believe that the current measures in place are sufficient to protect juvenile fish stocks and their

nursery grounds from the indiscriminate activity of large pelagic trawlers.

"Sprat is also an important prey item for other marine species such as seabirds and cetaceans. BirdWatch Ireland's research shows that sprat is an important prey species for 12 out of the 23 regularly occurring breeding seabirds in Irish waters. Many of these species are Amber-listed birds of conservation concern in Ireland. The Irish Common Gull population as an example has decreased by -25% over the long-term."

"Overfishing sprat is also a threat to the Whale species that pass through Irish waters during the summer months and which rely heavily on Sprat. The diet of Fin Whales in Irish waters is comprised of 50% young sprat and herring. Humpback whales are even more reliant on sprat and herring in Irish waters as these fish make up 70% of their diet. The ongoing overfishing of sprat also poses a serious risk to the sustainability of commercial fish stocks directly through the bycatch of juvenile fish species like herring and indirectly through the important role of sprat as a prey species."

Kelly continued "It is therefore critically important both from an environmental and a socio-economic perspective that Minister McConalogue takes urgent action to reinstate the ban on large trawlers in Ireland's six nautical mile zone. In this context we again call on the Minister to make good on the governments promise to ban large trawlers from Irelands inshore waters."

## Five national youth organisations launch Youth Climate Justice Challenge

A consortium of five youth organisations, led by ECO-UNESCO, Ireland's environmental education and youth organisation is launching the second #YouthClimateJusticeChallenge, with partners Gaisce The President Award, The No Name Club, Irish Girls Guides & Young Irish Film Makers.

The Youth Climate Justice Challenge is aimed at encouraging and empowering young people to take on local action projects on Climate Justice and will include: a series of workshops, a week of Youth Action on Climate Justice, the development of resource materials and a Youth Climate Survey to garner young people's opinions more broadly on climate justice and environmental issues including barriers and opportunities for young people's engagement. The project will also be hosting an event for COP26.

In 2020, 22,780 people were impacted by the Youth Climate Justice Challenge and over 380 people joined the week of action.

"Taking part in the Climate Justice Challenge has really opened our eyes to environmental issues that occur daily in our society. It made us realise that our planet is special, and we must do everything we possibly can to keep it safe" - Girls Brigades participant 2020.

National Director of ECO-UNESCO, Elaine Nevin, said: "We are delighted to be once again leading the Youth Climate Justice Challenge. This is the second year of the project and this year we are working in collaboration with our partners;



Irish Girl Guides, No Name Club, Gaisce and Young Irish Filmmakers. Climate change is one of our most pressing environmental issues and we know that the effects of climate change are not felt equally by all. At ECO-UNESCO we educate, inspire, and empower young people to take action on environmental and sustainability issues of concern to them; this project helps raise awareness of climate justice in young people, provides them with the skills and supports they need to take action and with opportunities to liaise with policy makers."

CEO of No Name Club, Stephen Plunkett, said: "It's been a great experience for all involved as No Name Club worked in partnership with ECO-UNESCO developing a better and brighter future while learning lessons from the

past. Everyone has had a really great time and we are all very excited as we gear up to go again with this year's project."

CEO of Irish Girl Guides, Claire Barkey said: "We are delighted to be part of this consortium again, giving our members opportunities to voice their opinions on such a worthy topic and one that many of our members are very passionate about! We look forward to seeing the fantastic projects that come as a result of this Climate Justice programme and we thank DCEDIY for their funding to enable this piece of work."

Gaisce - The President's Award CEO, Yvonne McKenna said: "Climate justice, and the quest for equitable stewardship of the world's resources is not only an urgent conversation for all of us, but one that needs more attention than

ever. Gaisce is delighted to be playing our part in supporting the Youth Climate Justice Challenge led by ECO-UNESCO."

"The Youth Climate Justice Challenge will enable young people to actively get involved, develop their knowledge and skills, and take action while also completing a challenge area of their Gaisce Award."

"This partnership is aligned with our Gaisce Glas initiative which encourages Gaisce participants to make a difference in their communities as well as wider society as engaged and informed global citizens."

"Gaisce - The President's Award is proud to deliver the Youth Climate Justice Challenge alongside partners ECO-UNESCO, the Irish Girl Guides, Young Irish Filmmakers and the No Name Club."



# Two Wicklow schools taking part in Super Troopers programme

**St. Andrew's National School in Bray and Kiltegan National School are taking part in Laya Healthcare's Super Troopers programme.**

Laya healthcare has released the findings of a national research study examining the overall health and wellbeing of children aged 9 - 12 in Ireland.

The study explores the status of the physical, nutritional, and mental health of children and 'teenagers' and aims to highlight the areas where parents and families are most in need of support and information.

The results were revealed as Laya healthcare launched Laya Super Troopers TV, the newest element in the established Super Troopers health homework programme. The 28-part series aims to provide families and children with fun activities and advice on how to promote a healthier lifestyle for all the family.

The series, which features stars such as Johnny Sexton, Anna

Geary and Karl Henry alongside well-known personalities, sportspeople and health and wellness experts, focuses on nutrition, physical activity, and mental wellbeing. Hosted by child presenters MJ Kearin (12), Daniel Shields (14) and Juliet McKenna (12), the Laya Super Troopers TV episodes are available to everyone and feature an array of fun activities, advice, and lots of challenges for children, parents and teachers to do themselves.

Endorsed by Healthy Ireland, the Laya Super Troopers programme has benefited more than one million children since its launch six years ago and 600 schools will take part in the programme this academic year. As Ireland's first health homework initiative Laya Super Troopers encourages children and families

to integrate achievable yet impactful activities into their daily lives.

The results of the nationally representative study reveal the reality of the mental health and wellbeing of the children of the nation. Of the parents surveyed, 68% claim that their child experiences anxiety and can go through periods of low mood, with 4% describing their child as very anxious and in need of reinforcement.

This situation for families has been further compounded by COVID-19 as 40% of parents report that pandemic has had a negative impact on their child's mental health and 57% of parents claim that their child gets upset more easily now than they did before its onset.

The importance of physical exercise and the positive impact it has on their child's mental health is widely recognised by parents, with 87% saying that their child is noticeably happier after taking part in physical activity.

Despite this, the study findings reveal that more than half (58%) of children aged between 9 - 12 are not getting the recommended one hour of daily physical activity. This represents a steep decline in activity levels amongst children of the same age group from 2018 when 51% of children were getting more than an hour of activity per day.

The parents surveyed recognised that nutrition and diet remains an area with an unmet need for parents in terms of support and information, as 47% of parents claim that their children have access to too many unhealthy food options, and one third of parents saying that they would like to teach their children to cook but do not have the tools or information to know where to begin.

Families all across the country can get involved by going to [layasupertroopers.ie](http://layasupertroopers.ie) to access the free Laya Super Troopers TV series or to register their schools.



Winners of this year's Young Environmentalist Awards, Loreto Bray students Aoife Blount, Erica Brierton, and Katrina Smyth, are pictured launching the next awards. They are encouraging others to follow in their footsteps and apply. For more information or to apply, go to [www.YEA.ie](http://www.YEA.ie). Pic: Leon Farrell

## Students sought for An Post's new Brain Busters schools programme

**Students spanning Primary (5th and 6th class) and Secondary (up to Junior Cert) schools are invited to enter the inaugural, national An Post Brain Busters programme announced by Dr Niamh Shaw, award winning communicator, writer and explorer of space activities.**

Students must successfully complete a series of numeracy and literacy challenges to secure the opportunity to represent their school at the An Post Brain Busters National Final in April 2022.

An Post Brain Busters takes a new, 'gamification' approach to literacy and numeracy, inspired by the format and excitement of 'Escape Room' challenges. The concept, tasks and materials have been developed by teachers in collaboration with mathematician Dr Finn MacLeod, scientist Niamh Shaw and author Oisín McGann.

Speaking about the programme Niamh Shaw said, "An Post Brain Busters is designed to encourage curiosity and gives school

goers the opportunity to put their problem-solving skills to the test. As children return to the classroom after so much disruption, collaborative, enjoyable activities which develop interest and instil pride in numeracy and literacy are key to the development of their academic interests and of Ireland's impressive STEAM talent pipeline."

The An Post Brain Busters national final will see 20 teams of three students compete for the title of Primary and Post-Primary champions. The event will immerse students in an intriguing, unfolding, interactive story in which they participate as key characters testing their literacy and numeracy skills against the clock. Being crowned the An Post Brain Busters champions means winning a prize of €1000 for your school along with a weekend break for the teacher of the top team!

Full details of the An Post Brain Busters Challenge are available at [anpost.com/Brain-busters](http://anpost.com/Brain-busters)

## IT Carlow ranked in five top performing universities in Ireland

**Institute of Technology Carlow has been ranked in the five top performing universities in Ireland, according to an international ranking of higher education institutions.**



U-Multirank is the largest and most inclusive global university ranking, highlighting the diversity in higher education around the world. Now in its eighth edition, it compares university performance across teaching and learning, research, knowledge transfer, international orientation and regional engagement.

Institute of Technology Carlow's is ranked in the top five alongside Dublin City University and Trinity College Dublin.

In its 2021 edition, Institute of Technology Carlow received nine top A grades from U-Multirank - up four from last year. The A grades were awarded for: Bachelor graduation

rate; graduating on time (bachelors); interdisciplinary publications; co-publications with industrial partners; publications cited in patents; international academic staff; bachelor graduates working in the region; master graduates working in the region. Institute of Technology Carlow also received an A grade for the gender balance indicator.

President of Institute of Technology Carlow, Dr Patricia Mulcahy welcomed the report's findings.

"This is a significant international vote of confidence for Institute of Technology Carlow and a great endorsement of the incredible work undertaken across our campuses - from the

introduction of new programmes of study to our international research and publications, from facilities to gender equality and graduation rates. It is heartening, for this institute and for the region, as we enter a new era and take our next steps towards university designation in 2022", said Dr Mulcahy.

Commenting on the rankings released today, Vice President for Academic Affairs David Denieffe commented, "Today's rankings are a great affirmation of our hard work over the last few years."

"We are grateful to our dedicated students, faculty, staff and collaborative partners who have helped to bring us to this point."

## Adult Education at Greystones Community College

**Free Adult Education Courses at Greystones Community College will soon commence.**

Applications are still accepted for the following courses, to begin in late September 2021:

1. Get connected using ICT
2. Study skills support/Family learning
3. English as an additional language
4. Art/Drawing/Ceramics

If you are interested in partaking in an Adult Basic Education course at Greystones Community College, please contact [gcc@kwetb.ie](mailto:gcc@kwetb.ie).

Greystones Community College has a vision to not only provide an excellent education for our students but to also offer additional education and training courses to our wider school community as we develop as a leading educational provider.

In this regard, the school is delighted to team up with Bray Adult Learning Centre to offer exciting free adult education courses at Greystones Community College.

These courses are for those who wish to return to education, brush up on basic skills such as reading, writing, maths and IT or up-skill or re-skill for work.

The courses will enable participants to gain confidence and work towards a recognised certificate as well as developing the language skills needed to live, work and study in Ireland (ESOL). Attendance at these courses is part-time and is usually 2 hours a week for 6-8 weeks.

Classes will take place in Greystones Community College in the mornings/afternoons. All classes are free-of-charge. Participants are allowed to work at their own pace in small groups to develop skills and confidence. One to one support is also provided.



## 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)





### Classical Music at The Courthouse Arts Centre Saturday 9th October 8.30pm

Due to unforeseen circumstances Anais Gaudemard has had to withdraw from her tour with Mairead Hickey. Music Network has announced that they have arranged for French harpist Agnes Clement to replace her. Multiple prize winner and principal harpist of La Monnaie Symphony Orchestra since 2013, Agnes has recorded two critically acclaimed solo harp albums and performed across the world.



## Framing the Theatre of Life

By Laurence O'Toole, Signal Arts Centre,  
running from now until October 10th

### 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.

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

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

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

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

# Coming up at Mermaid Arts Centre...

## What Happens Mind Over Matter or Matter Over Mind

Friday 8 October - 6 November  
11am - 4pm Monday - Saturday  
Admission Free

Mermaid is delighted to present the debut solo exhibition of work by emerging artist Daniel Kennedy.

Kennedy (b.1990) lives and works in Glashule, working primarily in the medium of acrylic on canvas. Throughout Daniel's work he explores the human condition, searching for and portraying the complexity of the human experience.

Daniel is drawn over and over to the human face and its boundless expressions, returning again and again to the features, where with expressive skill and immense sensitivity he explores multifaceted notions of the self, intuitively displaying gentle and subtle narratives of autonomy, pain, loss, joy, happiness and gratification.



## The Bright Side (Cert: 16)

Monday 11 October | 8pm |  
€9/7 | Duration: 99 minutes

Kate, a jaded stand-up comedian enjoys relative success on the local circuit. Every night she runs through her cynical, self-deprecating set, concluding with backstage beers and gambling with her equally jaded male colleagues.

But when an unexpected cancer diagnosis requires her to undergo treatment, Kate encounters a diverse group of women, all at different stages of treatment and recovery.



## Anna Newell Theatre Adventures Presents: Shimmer

Monday 18 & Saturday 23  
October | 10:30am, 12pm &  
2pm | €10 (Includes Baby &  
Parent/Guardian)

Full of silver, light and wonder, Shimmer is a unique, dream-like dance show for audiences of babies and their adults.

Shimmer invites its audiences into an immersive reflective space created by Katie Davenport animated by a twinkling original score by David Goodall, gentle choreography by Hayley Earlam that responds to its individual tiny audience members and stunning wraparound video art by Conan McIvor.

Age Suitability: 3-12 Months. Duration: 25 Mins



## Barnstorm Theatre Company Presents Alice & The Wolf

Friday 22 October | 7pm

Alice spends virtually all her time in Wolf Wood. You know, the world's deepest, darkest online game. Why not? Her dad isn't around, her mother's gone to Canada to meet a lumberjack and her best friend's dumped her for a YouTube star.

But what happens when the people you meet online come looking for you in real life? Who can you trust, and who is the Big Bad Wolf? This re-telling of the Little Red Riding Hood story is a digital fairy tale that's deliciously funny and full of dangerously dark twists.

Age Suitability: 9+ Years. Duration: 65 Mins





# 'Our young people are in a mental health crisis'

Blessington counsellor and psychotherapist Mandy Downes says we may be at a crisis point for young people in terms of their mental health. Mandy, a former teacher, says that the family unit is critically important and should be the first port of call for our children.

Covid has exacerbated the situation, Mandy tells *Wicklow Times*, as screen time has more than tripled for some students due to classes going online.

Mandy has been inundated by parents and carers looking for support and advice for their children, teenagers and in many cases their adult children, from 18yrs plus.

"I had one call last month from a parent with real concerns about the mental health of her 26yr old adult child. Parents are frightened," say Mandy.

"For years the focus has been on the physical wellbeing of our children and teenagers; their diet, how to lower their sugar and fat intake, how to camouflage fruit and vegetables so they eat enough to reach the five-a-day target as recommended by the World Health Organisation (WHO)," says Mandy. "Exercise is another thing, making sure they do lots of sports. The internet is full of information, advice, guidelines and visuals about how our child should look and appear on the outside. We are all familiar with the social media images where the perfect body, perfect hair, the perfect life is rolled out at nauseating levels, helping to create self-doubt, self-loathing, low self-esteem among our young people.

"We need to ask the question, how are our children on the inside? Are we existing in a world of external control, where outside validation is of far greater importance than genuine happiness and mental wellbeing? I receive numer-

ous calls from parents/carers genuinely worried and asking for help for their children, telling me that their child is lonely, anxious, a worrier, has no friends, is being bullied, over eating, not eating, self-harming, stressed over school work, friends, exams the list goes on and on. When I ask the question what they do for fun, I am without exception told, they are in their room on their phones, ipads, tablets or computers. To which I ask, are they having fun, can you hear them laughing? It is usually at this point the parent/carer gets upset, the line goes quiet. This is the point when I am told, 'they never laugh anymore; they moan, they grunt, they eye-roll, they shout, they ignore but never laugh'.

"Parents and carers are genuinely worried, fearful for the future of their children. Children and teenagers are spending hours every day on devices, and while this is nothing new, as the adults in the room we are not controlling it at safe levels. Who hasn't bought their children paint sets or play-dough and set out very clear rules about when, where and how long they can use it, yet the rules for devices goes out the door the first sign of a struggle or tantrum? Current guidance from the WHO suggests no screen time at all for under twos, no more than one hour a day of screen time for ages 2-5, one and a half hours for 5-8-year-olds and two hours a day for older children and teenagers.

"The adverse effects on our children and teenagers of over-exposure to screens is widely

publicised yet it continues to be ignored, sometimes ignoring the guidelines is easier, picking your battles.

"We are all well aware of the battle that ensues when trying to remove a device from a child or disconnecting the internet from teenagers. So, what do we do? If only I could answer that to the satisfaction of every parent/carer and their little darlings and hormonal teenagers, wouldn't life be great. But what I do know from talking to parents/carers, children, teenagers and young adults is that anxiety, stress, isolation and loneliness is a real part of their life and they are struggling to cope with it.

"We know children crave attention. We know parents and carers are less in control of their children as they might like to be, phones and other devices in some cases are replacing quality family time while underage drinking, drug use, underage sexual activity, bullying and being bullied, self-harming are all on the rise. So, what can we do?

"While there is no one answer, communication, observation, compassion and firm but fair boundaries will go a long way in supporting children, teenagers and the family as a whole. Taking time to sit down with children and listening to them to understand what they are saying, what they are going through is paramount for the development of happy, healthy children. The family dinner with everyone at the table at the same time talking to each other is a dying tradition. When we do manage to get some

or all of the family together most people would say that at least one person has their phone at the table, at best it is partial attention. Watching how they interact, treat and speak to and about others, their siblings, peers, adults, will give us an insight into how they are feeling and thinking about themselves; Children need to be told that they are loved, that they matter. A loving, caring environment creates an environment of trust, when children feel safe, they do better, they feel better, they think better.

"Children do a lot better in an environment where firm but fair rules/agreements/boundaries are in place.

"Quality family time is essential and boundary setting is paramount if we the adults are to nurture, guide and educate our children to become healthy, happy, kind, responsible human beings. This needs to start in the home and from birth. Fifteen minutes a day of quality interaction with your child can improve their mental and emotional health. One of the most common things children tell me in my counselling room is that 'no one ever listens/ed to me'.

"Children do better when they feel safe and know someone cares about them. Boundaries, house rules/agreements whatever words you want to use; this is not the role of teachers, youth leaders, the communities, the guards, etc. Their role is a supporting one, to build on family values. We need now, more than ever, to get it right before it is too late. Our young people are in crisis."



LauraLynn nurses Jennifer Lopez from Rathnew and Caroline Corrigan from Dunlavin joined Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly to celebrate the service's 10th birthday and expansion into Cork

## Harris thanks West Wicklow commuters for feedback on N81

Minister Simon Harris TD has thanked West Wicklow residents for their responses to his campaign on the upgrade of the N81.

Minister Harris said: "I would like to thank all the residents and commuters who have completed my survey on the N81. I have received a wide variety of observations and requests, from junction safety improvements to how public transport provision can be improved.

"The N81 has the capacity to be a new type of national route, one that combines motorist safety with sustainable transport supporting public transport, cycling and safe pedestrian facilities and crossings in our towns and villages."

Minister Harris continued "The survey is still open for submissions and responses and I would very much welcome your feedback. The upgrade of the N81 in West Wicklow is a key priority for me. Details of how you can make a submission are here or please go to my facebook page."

## "Would you like to be one of the first to trial and give feedback on Cosmetics?"



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Oriflame is a Swedish Cosmetics and Personal Care company committed to creating high performance products that are inspired by nature and proven by science.

## Call for Acquired Brain Injury Case Management resource in all counties

*'Greater community management of Brain Injury would reduce admission to nursing homes'*

An allocation of €510,000 to resource a Case Management service for Acquired Brain Injury in all counties - has been called for in Budget 2022.

This would involve recruiting an additional 7.5 Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) regional Case Managers to work with people and families helping them to better navigate a rehabilitation pathway from hospital to home.

Acquired Brain Injury Ireland (ABII) said the work of a dedicated Case Manager reduces the burden of care on families, helps to maximise the person's independence and reduces unnecessary and expensive stays in nursing homes and hospitals.

A cost analysis in the North East on the country,

which is one of few regions with a dedicated Case Manager for ABI, found annual savings of €3.5m to the health system due to less admission and greater discharge.

Acquired Brain Injury Ireland CEO Barbara O'Connell said: "There are massive gaps in rehabilitation services for people with an ABI. One vital service to help transition from hospital to home, is the oversight and coordination of a dedicated Case Manager.

"In our Pre-budget Submission 2022 we are seeking an annual investment of €510,000 to provide a basic brain injury Case Management service in all areas. This supports the HSE's Implementation Plan for Neuro-rehabilitation Strategy 2019-2021, which is committed to in the current Programme for Government," she said.



# National Women's Enterprise Day open for Wicklow entrepreneurs

Female entrepreneurs and budding businesswomen from across Co. Wicklow are being encouraged to look to the future and register for this year's National Women's Enterprise Day (NWED) after the line up for the event was announced. The Local Enterprise Office (LEO) initiative, now in its 15th year, will be hosted by broadcaster Aine Kerr. This national event went online in 2020 due to restrictions and will take place fully online again this year.



Deborah Brock, CEO and co-founder of Nua Fertility Ltd

The free event, titled "Build the Future", takes place online on Thursday 7th October and will feature some of Ireland's best known female entrepreneurs including the likes of Aimee Connolly of Sculpted by Aimee, Rachel Doyle of The Arboretum and Sharon Keegan of Peachy Lean, who was recently supported on Dragon's Den UK.

This year, Co. Wicklow's Ambassador for NWED, known as our 'Leading Light' is Deborah Brock, CEO and co-founder of Nua Fertility Ltd., a pioneering Irish fertility health company. Headquartered in Delgany, Nua Fertility has developed premium fertility supplements, with a microbiome focus, that are designed to support the nutritional needs of men and women when trying to conceive.

The day's programme will cover topics on how to build the future of a business such as, how to get started, internationalisation, finding new markets, trading effectively online, sustainability and innovation. This will be coupled with breakout rooms for networking and a host of

one-to-one advice clinics for any business issues.

New figures released by the Local Enterprise Offices, who are funded by the Government of Ireland and supported by Enterprise Ireland and the Local Authorities, have shown that the number of women engaging in entrepreneurship and business supports continues to rise. In 2020 over 47,000 women engaged in training and upskilling with their Local Enterprise Office. This was a huge jump on

2019 as 23,466 female entrepreneurs took part in training that year.

Vibeke Delahunt, Head of Enterprise at the Local Enterprise Office Wicklow said; "National Women's Enterprise Day has always been a day of celebration of the very best in female entrepreneurship and highlighting the strength of that community."

"This year is no different, but we are very much looking forward to see how we can help female entrepreneurs in Co. Wicklow sustain and develop their businesses and ideas going into the future."

"Everyone who registers and attends on the day will not only spend it with a fantastic community of female entrepreneurs and experts from around the country, but they will learn how to build their business or business idea for the future."

Other participants on the day include Gerry Duffy who will be conducting an energizing session, Jenny Melia and Sheelagh Daly from Enterprise Ireland

on Internationalisation and New Markets, Entrepreneurs Academy's Noel Davidson on creating connections, Designer Aoife McNamara on starting a business and a host of others covering all sorts of topics from finance to

trading online.

Those looking to attend National Women's Enterprise Day can find more information and register for free at [www.nwed.ie](http://www.nwed.ie) and join the conversation online using the hashtag #NWED.

## CLASSIFIEDS

### 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.

E.M.

### THE MIRACULOUS PRAYER

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

M.J.

## PLANNING

### WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

Justin Foley seeks planning permission for the construction of (1) a 33sqm extension to side of existing house, with a 10sqm mezzanine level, to be used as a playroom, with a veranda to front of house and (2) a pergola to rear of house, at 15 Druids Avenue, Druids Glen Golf Resort, Woodstock, Newtownmountkennedy, Co. Wicklow. The planning application may be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy at the offices of Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Wicklow during its public opening hours and a submission or observation in relation to the application may be made to the authority in writing on payment of the prescribed fee within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the application

## Luke 11:5-13 GOSPEL

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Suppose one of you has a friend and goes to him in the middle of the night to say, 'My friend, lend me three loaves, because a friend of mine on his travels has just arrived at my house and I have nothing to offer him'; and the man answers from inside the house, 'Do not bother me. The door is bolted now, and my children and I are in bed; I cannot get up and give it you.' I tell you, if the man does not get up and give it him for friendship's sake, persistence will be enough to make him get up and give his friend all he wants. 'So, I say to you: Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For the one who asks always receives; the one who searches always finds; the one who knocks will always have the door opened to him. What father among you would hand his son a stone when he asked for bread? Or hand him a snake instead of a fish? Or hand him a scorpion if he asked for an egg? If you then, who are evil, know how to give your children what is good, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!'

C.J.

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# Wicklow families challenged to tackle e-waste hoarding

Families in Wicklow are being challenged to find and recycle five end-of-life electrical items in a bid to improve our recycling performance, after consumption soared in the last year.

The country's largest e-waste recycling scheme, WEEE Ireland, is urging Wicklow residents to become e-detectives for the month of October and follow electrical leads around their homes to identify devices that are beyond repair.

Smartphones are set to be high on the hitlist – EU data shows they are the most unused and hoarded electrical items lying around Irish homes.

The 'Follow Your Lead' campaign aims to increase the supply of waste electrical recycling to local authority sites and retailer collection points to meet Ireland's rising recycling targets.

A surge in lockdown spring cleaning saw 1,255 tonnes of electrical waste collected in Wicklow by the country's largest recycling scheme in 2020, despite Covid-19 and travel restrictions.

8.8kg of e-waste was recycled per person in county Wicklow last year – falling short of both the 2019 collection rate of 8.9kg, and the 2020 national average – 10.9kg per person.

To encourage recycling in the county, WEEE Ireland are urging families to utilise the free recycling facilities available in Arklow Recycling Centre, Avoca Recycling Centre, Bray Recycling Centre, Rampare Recycling Centre in Baltinglass, and The Murrrough Recycling Centre, Wicklow Town.

Irish homes contain an average of 15 to 20 electrical items which are broken or unused, according to WEEE Ireland.

And new EU data indicates that each person is responsible for an average of 5kg of hoarded electrical waste – meaning 15-20kg of old and broken appliances are waiting to be recycled from most households.

"When you add it up, 5kg equates to a kettle, a laptop that won't power up, a smartphone beyond repair, an unplayable small gaming device and that kitchen blender in the back of the cupboard that hasn't worked for years," said WEEE Ireland CEO, Leo Donovan.

"To mark international e-waste day in October, we are challenging families to

find at least five items and free up these valuable resources for use again in manufacturing, saving on the environmental impacts of raw material extraction.

"Being more resource efficient with e-waste though recycling is a simple yet sustainable way to support a more circular economy in Ireland.

"We are asking people in Wicklow to follow the leads and plugs to these defunct devices sitting in cupboards, attics, sheds, under beds and stairs, because the components and resources contained within this equipment could be put to better use.

"By turning this into a family challenge, everyone can have some fun while taking positive environmental action."

As a nation, we are consuming more electrical goods than ever before.

Almost 60 million household electrical appliances, tech devices and lighting equipment were placed on the Irish market in 2020, with annual consumption rising from 15kg

a head in 2016 to 21kg a head last year.

"As we consume and buy more electrical appliances and devices, the recycling targets we must meet also increases to meet annual EU WEEE Directive targets, as it equates to the percentage of goods sold," added Mr Donovan.

"For all of 2021, we need to collect 65% by weight of what goes on the market.

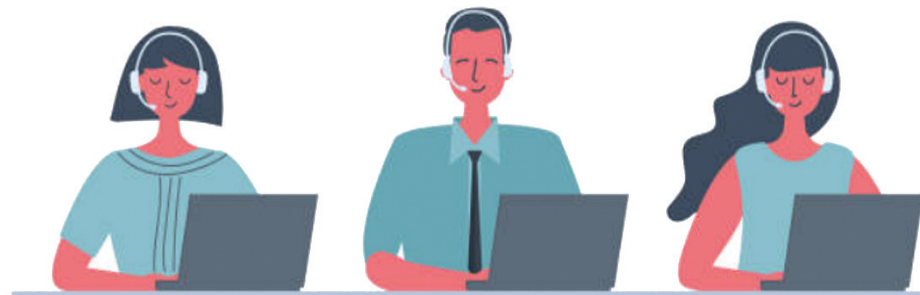
"If more people recycle their hoarded devices and appliances through the authorised WEEE systems we will be in a much better position to meet those targets and recover this distinct urban mine of materials rather than sending it to waste in landfill."

WEEE and waste batteries contain a large variety of materials, ranging from base and precious metals to plastics, as well as critical raw materials (CRMs).

See weeeireland.ie for a map of free recycling drop-off points for WEEE beyond repair or reuse.



Electrical detectives Lily Hughes, Rían O'Reilly, Ruby Collins, and WEEE Ireland CEO, Leo Donovan, are following leads to discover and recycle end-of-life items. WEEE Ireland's Follow Your Lead campaign is challenging families all over Ireland to find and recycle five end-of-life electrical items in a bid to address a sharp rise in consumption over the past year.



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