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TRANSPORT PLAN
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IBAL RESULTS
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Tuesday 13th September 2022 First Floor, The Boulevard, Quinsborough Road, Bray. A98 R6D7. Tel: 01 - 2869111 E-mail: wicklowed@localtimes.ie www.wicklowtimes.net

'BLOODSUCKERS & GOUGERS'

"The recent savage increases in the price of gas, electricity, petrol and diesel are already causing extreme hardship and anxiety for the people of Wicklow and Ireland. We are now being warned of worse to come," says Independent councillor Joe Behan.

"Having emerged from the trauma caused by Covid, we are being told that we will have to pay multiples of what we used to pay for these essentials, but the Government will not guarantee to protect us fully from these increases. Furthermore, we are being softened up to expect power cuts, further price increases and hardship like we have not experienced for many years leading to

some people, especially older people, being forced to choose between food and heat during the long and bitter winter ahead.

"However, there are winners in this energy crisis as well. Two huge winners are the big energy companies and the Government elected to serve the people of this country. These two are currently sucking the lifeblood from the people of Ireland and

something needs to be done about it. Despite the fact that the energy companies are making enormous profits from the rise in the price of gas, the Government cannot say if it will levy an immediate tax on the windfall profits being gouged from the Irish people. We heard just last week that the parent company of one of the main energy suppliers saw an increase of 44% in its pre-tax profits in



Wicklow County Council Cathaoirleach Tommy Annesley (FF), Senator Pat Casey (FF), Cathaoirleach of Bray Municipal District Erika Doyle (Green Party), An Taoiseach Micheal Martin, Green Party TD Steven Matthews, and WCC CEO Brian Gleeson are pictured at the official opening of the Ard Na Greinne housing development in Bray on Friday. Pic: Michael Kelly

the last year while its Chief Executive was rewarded with a 47% pay rise (£5 million) for his valiant efforts on behalf of the company's shareholders by producing a profit of £1bn for the first six months of this year. This news came at a time when the company announced a 40% approx increase in gas and electricity charges.

"We hear comments from Ministers that such a levy would be difficult to impose and is very complicated etc., etc.. and so it appears to be impossible to secure the financial position of the citizens by taking back some of the enormous profits energy companies are making during this energy crisis.

"It is even more maddening to read of the huge profits the Government itself is making on the back of the huge price increases

being forced on the taxpayers of this country. This is because the VAT rate being charged on energy is calculated on the full increased price of fuel and energy bills generally. This means that the higher the price of fuel the higher the VAT added to the bill and the more the ordinary person has to pay out. We heard, to great fanfare, recently that Government tax receipts are up by more than £10 billion in the year to the end of August. This is partly because the taxpayers are being gouged by higher overall energy and energy tax costs.

"It is now essential that the Government acts in the interests of its citizens by imposing a cap on further energy price rises, a backdated and future levy on windfall profits of energy companies and immediate cash assis-

tance to every domestic and small business energy customer to help

with the enormous fuel bills currently being levied on them.

Anything less would be a complete failure
Continued on Page 6

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Andre and Lucas Caminiti with Grace Whelan and pet Ruby at the Wicklow SPCA Dog Show in Sharpeshill, Rathdrum.

Support meetings return for bereaved parents following summer break

September does and feels like the start of a new year. Summer clothes are packed away, holidays have been taken, long evenings shorten and schoolbags reappear.

For many, it is a new beginning - a new school term, the start of college, a new career to embark upon. But September can be a difficult month for bereaved parents. Many milestones are achieved over the month, many milestones their beloved child will never get to mark.

Anam Cara, the only organisation of its kind in Ireland with services available to all bereaved parents, will resume their face to face

meetings following a short break over the summer months.

Service Manager for Anam Cara, Sharon Vard comments "while family and friends might be good at marking the major milestones - anniversaries, birthdays, Christmas - it's important to understand that less obvious occasions can also be hugely triggering. She continues "we launched Anam Cara back in 2008 in recognition of the need for a safe space for those bereaved,

somewhere to let the mask drop, where others might understand what friends and family cannot.

On Monday 19th September, Anam Cara will hold their Wicklow meeting in The Parkview Hotel, Newtownmountkennedy at 7:15pm. All bereaved parents from the Wicklow area are welcome, regardless of the age their child died or circumstances of their death. There is no need to register, just arrive on the evening at 7:15pm. For more information on the support services offer by Anam Cara, please call 085 2888 888, email info@anamcara.ie or see www.anamcara.ie

Mental health support for secondary school teens and first-time college students

Turn2Me, a national mental health charity has launched two support groups, on Wednesdays and Thursdays at 6pm, for teenagers starting or going back to secondary school, and for young people going to college for the first time.

Turn2Me's 'Back to school' support group for secondary school students will run on Wednesdays at 6pm. If the thought of school makes you stressed, anxious, feeling a little worried, this support group is for you. Suzanne Ennis, Clinical Manager at Turn2Me, said, "We will help you find ways to manage that sick feeling and learn the tools you need to get through it. Here, you can be honest and be yourself without any fear of being judged. Groups are 100% anonymous and confidential, you'll be able to speak to similar people in the chat function who understand you and what you're going through. Register now on Turn2Me."

Turn2Me's 'Preparing for college' support group

for college students will run on Thursdays at 6pm.

"Waiting on CAO results, repeat exam results, and preparing for the next academic year is upon us," Suzanne Ennis said. "For so many, it's unfamiliar and nerve-wrecking. Starting college means a new timetable, new campus, new classmates, new cities, and new homes for some - a lot of unknowns. Being apprehensive, anxious, worried, or stressed is normal. This support group will be attended by like-minded students, experiencing the same challenges and obstacles, let's navigate them together! This support group will give young people the tools and support to help them with the transition. Register now on Turn2Me.ie."

Wicklow Choir for People with Parkinsons

Are you living with Parkinsons? A fun singing group for People with Parkinsons, family, carers and friends meets every Monday morning in Ashford Community and Heritage Centre from 11.30-1pm. Classes start again on Monday 12 September 2022 after our annual summer break.

Led by Musical Director, Dara MacMahon, the group sings popular songs with movement that can help relieve symptoms and strengthen voices. You don't have to be a good singer - every voice counts and absolutely no singing experience is required! Our doors are always open to new members, who will find new friends, lots of chat and great support. If you are interested in finding out more, please call Dara MacMahon on 086-8146926. Or just come along any Monday morning!

Climate change webinar

The Labour Party area representative from Greystones Municipal Area, Anne Waithira Burke has organised a webinar on climate change on Wednesday the 14th of September at 7.00pm on the Wicklow Labour Facebook page live.

The speakers are Ivana Batik, Labour Party Leader, John Gibbons a campaigning environmental Journalist, and Keith Scanlon, a local climate activist.

The webinar will be chaired by Councillor Paul O'Brien from Wicklow. The Labour Party believes that Ireland needs a new deal on climate, which requires investing in climate action now, setting out clear and ambitious carbon budgets and climate proofing everything we do as a nation.

Greystones People of the Year Awards

The Greystones People of the Year Awards Dinner takes place on 29th September in

Greystones Golf Club, starting at 8pm. Come along and share the excitement of this year's winners. Celebrate those who have helped the local community and Greystones Municipal District. Tickets, €35, available from Kay Coughlan, Greystones Municipal District Secretary. 01.2876694, greystonesmd@wicklowcoco.ie.

Emergency location signs

A number of emergency location signs have been placed along the Wicklow Coast. These signs will better aid in an emergency especially when the caller is unfamiliar with the area and is dialing 999/112. The Coast Guard control centre know the location of each sign. This will aid in the quick response of the Emergency Services.

Arklow Cancer Support Women's Group

Arklow Cancer Support's very popular Women's Group is returning on Thursday 15th September at 7:30pm. All new members are welcome to this introduction evening. You do not have to be a registered client to attend this group. For further information please contact the Arklow Cancer Support office on 0402-23590 or 085-1100066.



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Secondary School, Vevay Rd., Bray.

OPEN EVENING

Tuesday September 20th at 7pm

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Applications for admission for 2023/24 is October 3rd.

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'Hide-and-Seek' at the East Coast Nature Reserve

Birdwatch Ireland will be running what promises to be a fantastic family 'hide-and-seek' event at the BirdWatch Ireland East Coast Nature Reserve in Newcastle.

Taking place from 11:00 to 13:00 on Sunday 18th September, this lighthearted children's event will be an invitation to watch birds and to take part in nature craft activities.

Participants will be encouraged to follow a hand-drawn map of the reserve to locate points of interest and to discover the reserve and its wildlife.

After that, participants will make a sunflower seed apple feeder and a paper bird kite to take home.

The event is free of charge and open to all, but children must be accompanied by a responsible adult.

If you wish to take part, please meet at the main entrance to the nature reserve on Sea Road, Newcastle at 11am. Outdoor clothes are advisable.

For more information, please email the reserve warden, Andrew Lynch. Kindly funded by the Heritage Office of Wicklow County Council.

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WICKLOW
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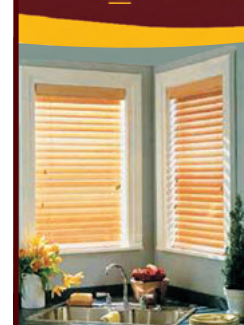
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Warnings over Bird Flu in Wicklow

Fears for Kilcoole's Little Tern population

The public are being advised to be cautious following a case of Avian Flu in the county. Speaking at last week's meeting of Wicklow County Council, Wicklow Municipal District councillor Mary Kavanagh (Ind) said "I have been told by the National Parks and wildlife Service (NPWS) that there is a very serious case of avian flu in the county".

The highly pathogenic flu avian influenza HPAI (H5N1), known as 'Bird Flu', is currently circulating in wild birds, especially in breeding sea birds.

Over the last two weeks in particular large numbers of dead Gannets have been detected at breeding colonies off the Irish coast, and have been washing up ashore.

The public is being advised to exercise extreme caution if visiting seabird colonies - to keep a safe distance to avoid disturbing breeding seabirds and to avoid contact with dead or injured seabirds.

People are being asked to notify the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine to make them aware of any suspected cases of avian influenza via its Avian Check App, or call the Avian Influenza Hotline on 01 6072512 (or 01 4928026 outside normal office hours).

BirdWatch Ireland stat-

ed "We are witnessing the potential decimation of seabird populations on a scale that has not been seen before in our lifetimes. We are as a result gravely concerned for seabird colonies in Ireland. HPAI has the potential to spread rapidly in breeding seabird colonies, as seabirds gather in high numbers and in close proximity to lay eggs and rear chicks on Irish cliffs, headlands and islands.

"Ireland's seabirds are of international importance. Rockabill Island off the coast of Skerries in north Co. Dublin holds up to 80% of Europe's breeding Roseate Terns; the Kilcoole, Co. Wicklow Little Tern colony holds 40% of Ireland's Little Tern population; Manx Shearwater occurs on just a handful of colonies; and sites such as Great Saltee hold internationally important breeding seabird populations, including Gannet, which has been impacted

particularly severely.

"Twenty-three of Ireland's twenty-four breeding seabirds are already Red- or Amber-Listed Birds of Conservation Concern with Puffin and Kittiwake globally threatened."

Dr. Stephen Newton, Senior Seabird Conservation Officer with BirdWatch Ireland, said, "Ireland is internationally important within Europe for a lot of seabirds. We hold the biggest European colonies of some species.

"The Roseate Tern on Rockabill would be one, where we have up to 80 per cent of the European population on one little island."

"It's frightening," Dr. Newton continued. "There are three or four species where virtually the whole of the Irish, or sometimes the whole of the European, population nest at just one or two sites. Our big fear is that these could be wiped out completely."

BirdWatch Ireland,

with the agreement of NPWS, has ceased research and monitoring activities at seabird colonies, where their staff and volunteers would be in very close proximity to wild birds, except in exceptional circumstances. This will help reduce disturbance and minimise the risk of spreading the disease.

"Our seabirds are the life and soul of the coastline in the summer. The Irish Government has a responsibility to protect them as much as possible from this deadly disease. HPAI originated in intensively managed poultry flocks and then infected wild birds.

"Putting in place measures which may help to minimise the spread in Ireland is essential to prevent further biodiversity loss, but also to protect poultry flocks which could be re-infected from the disease circulating in the wild bird population."



An Taoiseach Micheal Martin with Cian O'Neill at the official opening of the Ard Na Greinne housing development in Bray on Friday. Pic: Michael Kelly

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Blessington celebrates arrival of new pool

The Community Pool for West Wicklow campaign group and Swim Ireland last Monday announced the arrival of the Pop-Up Pool in Blessington. The twelve metres by 3.4 metres swimming pool will be located at St Kevin's Community Hall in Blessington until the end of December 2022.



Frances McCann, Denise O'Shea, Aisling Hubbard and Oisín Foley at the launch of the pop-up pool in Blessington

The pool, funded by E20,000 from Wicklow County Council, is approximately 1.2 metres deep and the water can be heated to a toasty 30 degrees making it ideal for teaching both children and adults how to swim during the winter months.

The Pop-Up Pool will be based in Blessington from September to the end of December.

Since its opening on 5th September, the pool has been well used and is proving popular with those swimming for the first time and those returning to

swimming after many years.

The pool is equipped with a ramp and hoist making it accessible for many members of the community.

The Community Pool for West Wicklow group have been campaigning for the development of a swimming pool and sports complex in West Wicklow since July 2018. The Baltinglass Municipal District is the only Municipal District in Wicklow without a public or private swimming pool. This lack of local swim-

ming facilities has severely impacted the ability of members of the West Wicklow community to access swimming pools and prevented many from ever having the opportunity to learn how to swim.

Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Tommy Annesley, stated that the ability to swim was essential for as many people as possible, which became obvious during the recent good weather when so many took to the water, often for the first time in ages and he encouraged everyone in

the Blessington area to avail of the new pop-up pool.

The Cathaoirleach of Baltinglass Municipal District Council, Cllr John Mullen, expressed his delight that the dream of a swimming pool in the west had become a reality and that the temporary pool will support the area's desire for a permanent facility. He thanked the local swimming pool committee who he said had worked to secure a pool for West Wicklow for some time and also thanked his fellow councillors and the community for continuing support for a permanent facility in the area.

Chief Executive of the Council, Mr Brian Gleeson, added his congratulations to everyone involved in the project and thanked the staff in the Municipal District for all their assistance in making the pool a reality.

He thanked in particular the Councillors for their support and their agreement to support this project financially, especially with so many competing demands to consider.

Swim Ireland CEO Sarah Keane commented "We are delighted to be working with the Community Pool for West Wicklow campaign group to bring the Pop-Up Pool to Blessington. The Pop-Up Pool is a first step on the journey for this local community and is an ideal way to show the demand for such a facility. We hope that the local community will reap the benefits of having access to the pool over the next four months and look forward to welcoming people of all ages and abilities to experience the pool and take advantage of the opportunities available."

The opportunities that the pool will provide include school swimming lessons, aquafit classes, autism friendly swim classes and adult swimming lessons. There have also already been inquiries from the local Scout Troop to do a training course to help them earn their lifesaving badge and interest from sports clubs to include aquafit classes in their team training programmes.

"Swimming is the most inclusive sport, anyone can take part regardless of their age, gender, physical or mental abilities. Unfortunately, in West Wicklow our community does not have access to a local swimming pool and people must travel outside of Wicklow to Naas, Tallaght, Athy or Carlow to go swimming. The Pop-Up Pool will give people



Sarah Keane (Swim Ireland), Marion McNally, Jane Nolan, Minister Jack Chambers, Sue Rossiter, Deirdre McCormack and David McKay at the launch of the pop-up pool in Blessington.

in our community the opportunity to learn how to swim, exercise and stay active this winter. We hope that this will bring our community a step closer to the development of a permanent swimming pool and sports complex here in West Wicklow."

Deirdre McCormack, Chairperson, Community Pool for West Wicklow, commented "The popularity of the Pop-Up Pool during its time in West Wicklow will demonstrate the real need for the development of a permanent swimming pool and sports complex in West Wicklow. This is something that Community Pool for West Wicklow will continue to campaign and work towards with the support of local representatives, Wicklow County Council and Swim Ireland."

Minister Simon Harris said "Today is a significant milestone in the campaign to deliver a swimming pool for West Wicklow. The Pop-Up Pool in Blessington will help ascertain the demand for a permanent municipal pool for West Wicklow and I am sure given the support the community has given the campaign for a pool that this will be very popular. The Wicklow County Plan now includes an objective to deliver a municipal pool in West Wicklow and I look forward to working with Swim Ireland, Wicklow County Council, the Pool Committee, and wider community to deliver on my long-standing commitment for a municipal swimming pool for West Wicklow."

Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly added "Having the pop-up in Blessington is a fantastic amenity for the town to have. I would like to congratulate the dedicated team of local volunteers who have helped make the Pop-Up Pool happen. Having the pool in place will give a glimpse of what it will be like to have

a permanent facility in west Wicklow which we are all pushing hard to make happen."

Deputy Jennifer Whitmore said "This is an exciting and important event for the West Wicklow community which will have huge benefits for local schools, families, businesses, community groups, sports clubs and anyone in the area who has an interest in learning how to swim or staying active. I am sure that the pool will be put to great use by the local community while it is here and will prove invaluable in the Pool for West Wicklow committee's continued campaign for the development of a permanent swimming pool and sports complex on this side of the county. I would like to congratulate the Pool for West Wicklow committee, Swim Ireland and Wicklow County Council for their hard work and coordinated efforts to bring the Pop-Up Pool to Blessington. I believe that this project brings us one step closer to the development of the

much-needed permanent swimming pool and sports facility and will help to fill the recreational gap in West Wicklow."

Also in attendance, Deputy Steven Matthews said "Huge credit needs to go to the Pool for West Wicklow Campaign Team who have put enormous effort into getting to this point. I have been working with them for a number of years and this is a huge milestone in their campaign. We know the vital importance of teaching water safety and swimming and this pool will give many children the opportunity to learn these skills in their home area, rather than having to travel long distances. The campaign team have my ongoing support and I look forward to working with them until we reach the point of having a permanent pool facility."

Sinn Féin TD John Brady said "It is absolutely brilliant to see the opening of the Pop-Up Pool in Blessington take place. It comes about following months of collaboration between Swim Ireland and

the Pool for West Wicklow Campaign. As a long-time supporter for a pool in West Wicklow I was delighted to support the planning application for the pop-up pool, so to now see the pool finally open is a credit to all those that have worked so hard to make it happen. It is also an important milestone in the campaign for a permanent pool in West Wicklow. The West is the only part of Wicklow without a pool and the pop-up pool now provides the public an opportunity to access one in their own community without having to travel to County Kildare or elsewhere. It is also an important opportunity to collect data showing community usage of the pop-up pool which can be used in future funding applications for a permanent swimming pool. I believe that this is a massive step forward in the campaign for a permanent pool in West Wicklow and I will continue to campaign for this along with the Pool for West Wicklow group and others."




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Matthews launches ambitious transport plan for Wicklow

Proposal includes plans for new stop south of Greystones and re-opening of Newcastle station

Green Party TD for Wicklow Steven Matthews has launched his ambitious transport plan for Wicklow Town to Bray that would benefit thousands of north and south Wicklow residents.

Speaking about the plan Deputy Matthews said, "It's time for urgency, delivery and joined up thinking for public transport and active travel, cycling and walking for Bray to Greystones to Kilcoole to Newtown to Newcastle, Rathnew and Wicklow. I have an ambitious proposal, funding is available, and

I am pushing acceleration in the construction of better transport and greater options for thousands of residents along this route."

The plan proposes an electric train service to Wicklow Town with stops at Kilcoole, Newcastle and a new station at Greystones South. There will be connected cycling and

walking routes from each location to the electric train service. There will also be a coastal trail which avoids the sensitive ecological areas for recreation for residents and visitors linking the coastal towns and public transport stops. The plan also allows for connectivity between Kilcoole and Newtownmountkennedy

and for a dedicated link from Rathnew to Wicklow Railway Station.

Deputy Matthews has worked with the Department of Transport to secure the funding for the coastal trail proposed between Greystones and Wicklow Town to proceed to Environmental Impact Assessment, detailed design and planning stage. There are ecologically sensitive Natura sites on the coastal route especially between Kilcoole and Newcastle which may need to be avoided.

The route between Greystones and Kilcoole is the easiest to complete and could proceed relatively quickly on an existing coastal path and link to the active travel link to Kilcoole.

"Minister Eamon Ryan recently called on the local authorities to think bigger and act faster on delivery of active travel and launched the 'Pathfinder' proposal. My proposal perfectly fits this call for vision, ambition, and delivery of inte-

grated transport options for Wicklow residents," said Deputy Matthews.

"I am working with the Department of Transport, the National Transport Authority, Transport Infrastructure Ireland and Wicklow County Council to deliver the various aspects of this integrated travel plan over the next two years which will be a gamechanger for transport in the area.

"The transport plan is divided into three interconnected objectives consisting of Active Travel links to public transport, an Electrified rail service including extra railway stations and a Coastal

amenity trail. "This will require co-ordination and cooperation between different transport agencies but having continuously engaged with all the stakeholders I am confident it will have support and necessary funding.

"This will deliver a transport system to reduce car dependency, reduce emissions and offer Wicklow residents the public and active transport options they need but that have been neglected and ignored for many years."

The active travel routes in the plan will provide clear and safe access for commuters, students and recreational and community access to North Wicklow and Dublin area via an improved frequency electrified rail service to Wicklow Town with extra stops. The routes include cycle paths from

Kilcoole village to Kilcoole Railway stop; from Newcastle village to Newcastle railway stop; and a cycling and walking route from Charlesland to a new South Greystones Railway Stop. The electrified rail service between Greystones and Wicklow Town is to be served by a battery electric train (Battery Electrical Multiple Unit BEMU, due in service 2025).



Steven Matthews TD



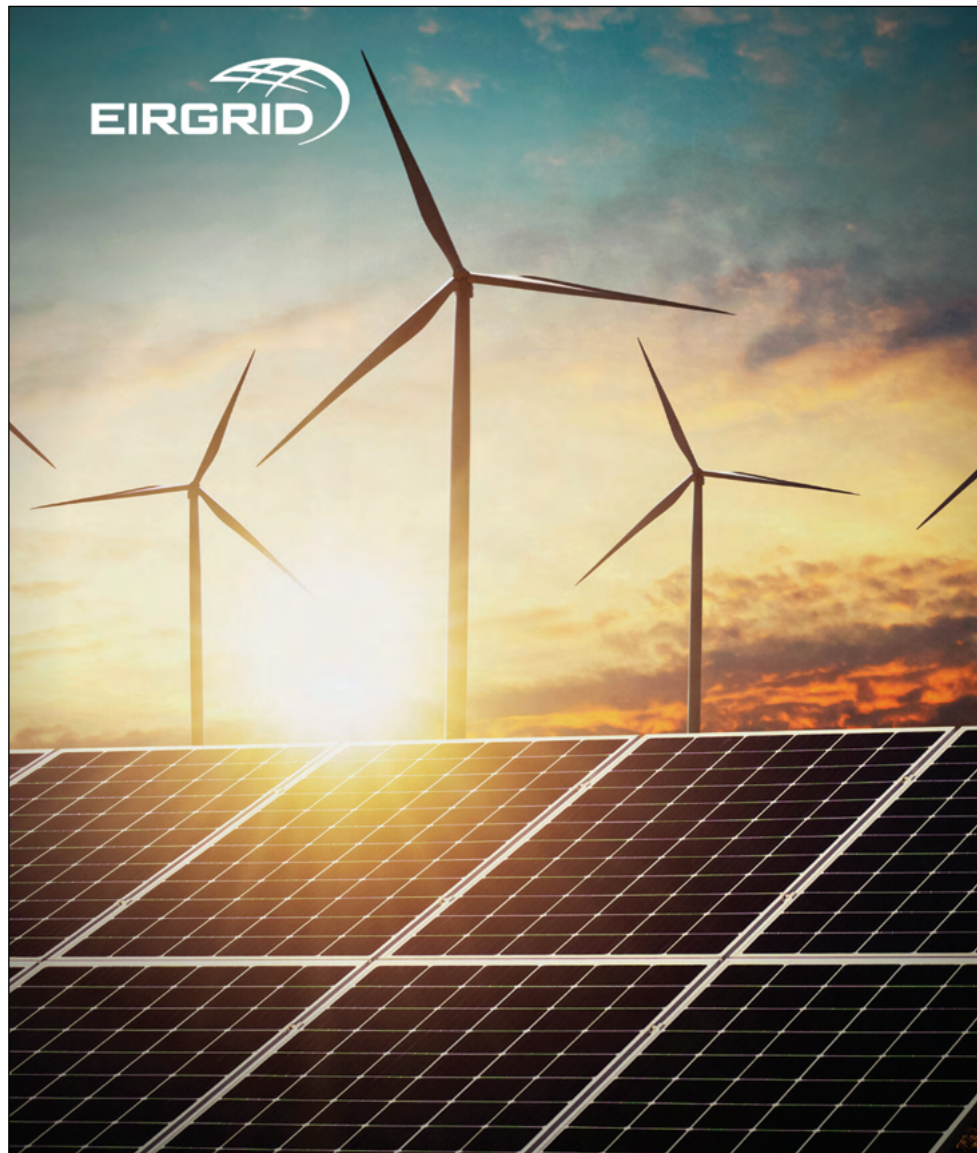
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Arklow

22 September 2022

6.30pm-8pm
East Glendalough School
Wicklow Town

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'BLOODSUCKERS & GOUGERS'

Continued from Page 1

by a Government elected to act in the interests of the people it is sworn to serve."

Also speaking on the matter last week, Fine Gael councillor Derek Mitchell said "Many EU countries have introduced measures, months ago, to cut down on energy use this Winter as a result of the war in Ukraine. The Irish Government urgently need to cut energy use as electricity and gas will



Cllr Joe Behan

be short in peak periods.

"The current proposals concentrate on drastically cutting use by major

employers. These are Ireland's major exporters which our prosperity depends on and many have continuous processes which cannot be easily stopped and restarted.

"There is a need for other users to cut down especially when there is a potential shortage and high prices. Thermostats need to be turned down and people wear warmer clothes and a Government scheme is needed to encourage this. Also the time of a short-



Cllr Derek Mitchell

age, possibly from 5 to 7 pm, needs to be identified and voluntary turning off heating and appliances encouraged in that time."

'Action needed on Wicklow's shambolic school bus debacle'

Sinn Féin TD John Brady has again called on the Minister for Education Norma Foley to act immediately to address the "shambles" that is school bus transport shortage in Wicklow.

The Minister didn't appear before the Transport Committee in the Dail last week, with school students stranded across Wicklow and the

State as a whole.

"Despite being offered a series of five dates to appear before the Committee to address the crisis, the Minister has to date not appeared," said Deputy Brady.

"Having previously called upon the Minister to appear before the Committee, I want to again express my anger and frustration at the manner in which our school children and their families have been treated by this government. I have been contacted by families from across Wicklow who find themselves in a horrible situation where their children have been denied access to school transport, primarily as a result of the shambolic mismanagement by the government and the Minister of Education in particular.

"In some instances, all that is required is a level of commitment by local management to address the situation. Bus Eireann needs to seek additional capacity, and the government needs to act. We have a situation at Ballyconnell National School (NS), where there

are 25 children who have been refused a place on the school bus on the route between Tullow and Shilleagh. Even though they all fulfil the eligible criteria for school transport.

"There are currently two buses on this route, a 52 seater, and a 24 seater. The obvious, and painfully apparent solution would be to replace the 24 seater, with a 52 seater. Instead, we are left with over two dozen children whose education is being needlessly interrupted.

"Another family who I spoke to in the last few days told me that they had applied for a ticket for their children last Spring. Following which they anticipated that their application would follow the usual course and that they would receive a formal payment request in the July / August period. However, in the meantime, the Minister took the initiative to reopen the Portal on free school travel during summer - which would have meant that families had to apply before the end of July, which in the instance that was raised with me Bus

Eireann failed to inform families about.

"Some families only became aware of this last week. It has been alleged to me that Bus Eireann may have had difficulties sending emails to families with email accounts with certain providers. Although this family missed the deadline, they were informed by Bus Eireann that their application would be processed. And although there were free places on the Bus in question, they were subsequently refused. I am informed that there are 25 children who have been refused places on this route alone. Somebody in government needs to step up to the plate here. Our school children's education suffered enough during Covid.

"This shambolic approach cannot be allowed to continue. The very least that we need to see is some response from the other Minister with responsibilities in the Education sector from County Wicklow, Simon Harris. We need action immediately," Deputy Brady concluded.

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Classes begin September 26th at 7.30 p.m. and end at 9.30pm unless otherwise stated. Please note that where classes can only be formed where numbers warrant it. Full Terms and Conditions Are Published on the Website. Please go to BIFE.IE for full course details or to view the brochure



Barbara Galvin and Luke Kelly at the Wicklow SPCA Dog Show in Sharpeshill, Rathdrum.

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EirGrid to host Energy Citizens Roadshow events in Wicklow

EirGrid, the operator and developer of the national electricity grid is set to host two energy citizens roadshows in Wicklow this month.

The free events will provide information on how EirGrid plans to future-proof the electricity grid in the county, and will invite people to engage with the guest panel, including SEAI and ESB Networks, in discussions on Ireland's energy future, and what this will mean for the region.

The roadshows take place on September 21 at Arklow Bay Hotel, Arklow and East Glendalough School, Wicklow Town on September 22 next.

There will be information stands

showcasing the latest details on home energy efficiency upgrades, retrofitting grants and information about community micro-generation schemes.

Ireland's national sustainable energy authority, SEAI will provide information and advice to attendees. SEAI works with householders, businesses and communities to create a cleaner energy future. SEAI offer a range of grants and funding supports across home, business and community. ESB Networks will be

on hand to outline its micro-genera-

tion scheme which may be of interest to many communities.

Speaking ahead of the roadshows, Sinead Dooley, Head of Public Engagement with EirGrid said, "These events are a chance for communities and businesses across Wicklow to come along and hear how the region will play an integral role in the future of the electricity grid, while also finding out more about the supports that are available at a local level."

"We understand people's concerns regarding energy consumption



and the need for savings, that is why we are also pleased to have exhibitors from a range of organisations and community energy groups. We look forward to hearing from industry leaders, inputs from community representatives, and to share knowledge in working towards

achieving our energy goals," added Dooley.

EirGrid is responsible for a safe, secure and reliable supply of electricity: now, and in the future and manages the grid so that everyone has power when and where they need it.

The grid takes electricity from where it is generated and delivers it to the distribution network, operated by ESB, which powers every home, business, school, hospital, factory and farm on the island.

To register for one of the events, visit eirgrid.ie/roadshows

Bray is clean but Brittas Bay slips in IBAL coastal litter survey

The annual nationwide survey by business group Irish Business Against Litter (IBAL) of beaches and harbours has shown Bray seafront to be again 'Clean to European Norms', while Brittas Bay slipped to 'moderately littered'.

Overall, litter levels are on the rise, with only 8 of 33 areas surveyed receiving the 'Clean' designation. Alongside its impact on tourism and recreation, IBAL is warn-

ing that coastal litter has grave implications for the future of our planet.

The An Taisce report for Bray stated: "Bray scored very well in 2021 and things were no differ-

ent in 2022. The extensive beach area, promenade, associated grass area (with playgrounds, PE Equipment etc.) and pedestrian & cycle paths were all excellent with

regards to litter. Large infrastructural works continue to enhance the area e.g. paving around the band-stand looked fantastic and was the surrounding area was further

adorned with abundant colourful planting. The area is very well served by litter bins, both permanent and temporary ones. Considering the vastness of the area and the volume of people using the facilities, there were minimal opportunities for separating waste."

The An Taisce report for Brittas Bay stated: "There was a virtual absence of litter on the long stretch of beach at Brittas Bay. Minor cigarette butts at the base of the picnic tables at South Beach car park could easily be addressed with the provision of cigarette butt units. A large skip at North Beach Car Park appeared to be the cause of litter rather

than the solution - it would appear that the contents of same had been 'picked' from the skip and dropped on the ground close by. The replacement of the skips with an abundance of 'covered' litter bins at both the North Beach and South Beach Car Park will hopefully address this issue. Life-belts, coastal erosion signage, Blue Flag notices and recycle bins were in good condition. Audio recording relating to dogs on beaches was activated by a sensor at the entrance to the beach from both car parks."

Beaches, harbours, rivers and their immediate environs were monitored by An Taisce in June and July. While

Tramore was again clean, many popular beaches slipped to 'moderately littered' status, among them Lahinch, Brittas Bay, Curracloe, Portmarnock, Strandhill and Clogherhead. Bundoran was again 'littered'. By contrast, Salthill improved significantly.

"Unfortunately the improvement observed at our beaches last year seems to have reversed this time round," commented IBAL's Conor Horgan. "We had hoped that the decline in Covid-related litter might bring an improvement in overall cleanliness, added to the fact that many who staycated last year would have travelled abroad this summer. Our most popular beaches are not heavily littered, but they're not as clean as they should be."

Covid-related litter on the decline ... but not coffee cups

Unsurprisingly there was a fall-off in Covid masks and gloves found,

but also in alcohol-related litter which was linked to lockdown. Coffee cups remained a significant litter item, however, present in half of the areas surveyed. The most common forms of litter found by the assessors were cigarette butts, sweet wrappers and plastic bottles.

"Every day it seems we hear more of the dire consequences which marine litter, much of it plastic, holds for our planet," adds Mr Horgan. "We need to impress on people that simple individual actions such as discarding a coffee cup - or even a cigarette butt - have implications which stretch beyond the local environment."

With 10 million tonnes of plastic ending up in our oceans each year, it is estimated that there will be more plastic than fish in our oceans within 30 years. Research shows a single cigarette butt can contaminate up to 200 litres of water.



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Brittas Bay's status has slipped to 'moderately littered'

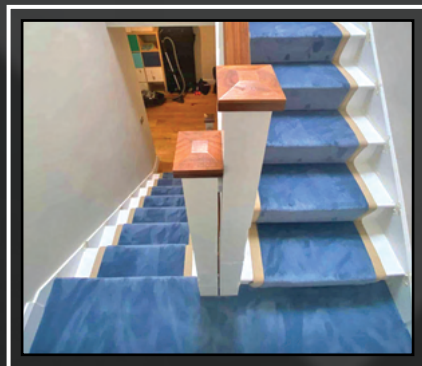
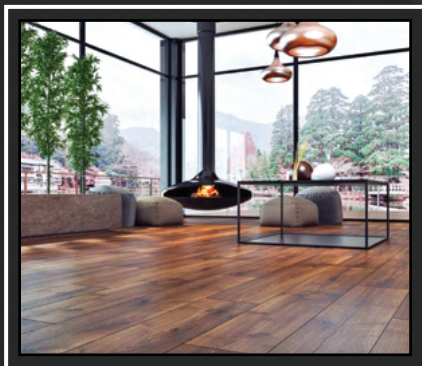


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Danny Nolan's 80th birthday party was held in Greystones Golf Club on Saturday 3rd September. Pictured is Danny with his daughter Emma, son Gavin, his wife Marie, son Daniel and daughter Tara. Photo: John McGowan

Council confirms funding to extend footpath and lighting to Shillelagh FC Ballard Park grounds

There was good news for Shillelagh recently as Wicklow County Council confirmed funding to extend the footpath to Shillelagh FC Ballard Park grounds and install lighting.

Green Party TD Deputy Steven Matthews said, "Early this year I was contacted by Shillelagh Football Club who asked if I could help to get a safe walking route to their grounds from the town centre.

"I went to meet the club and walked the route from the town centre to the football ground. The last couple of 100 metres along the roadway was lethal. Cars and trucks were speeding by and we had to jump into the roadside verge many times. There is no way I would be happy with anyone walking the short distance from the town to the

grounds unless there was a footpath and adequate lighting. This is a growing club and I wanted the young players and their supporters to be able to get to training and matches safely.

"Having walked the route and taken a rough measurement of the footpath (400m) and lighting requirement I contacted Wicklow County Council and the Department of Transport to seek funding to carry out this simple and small but very important piece of work.

"I am delighted to receive confirmation

today that the funding has now been provided for this pedestrian safety improvement and I will continue to work closely with Wicklow County Council to ensure the work is carried out as soon as possible.

"I have offered to meet again soon with Shillelagh FC to assist with a Sports Capital allocation grant to help this growing club and to assist with improving the access entrance gate to the club.

"This is another small but important piece of pedestrian safety improvements that I am working on across the county, so that residents can walk or cycle safely and to reduce car dependence and the pressure on parents to drive their children to sporting and recreational activities."

LEADER projects for Wicklow

Wicklow stands to benefit from a huge range of project thanks to the latest Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) approved recently by the EU.

Ireland's CAP Strategic Plan for the period 2023 to 2027 will deliver a package of almost €10bn to Rural Ireland.

LEADER is a key part of the CAP plan and a new LEADER programme can now be developed over the coming months.

LEADER is a rural development programme co-funded by the EU which operates a locally led, bottom-up approach to meeting the needs of rural communities and businesses. The LEADER programme supports private enterprises and community groups in rural areas.

Funding is currently delivered by 29 Local Action Groups (LAGs) in 28 sub-regional areas. These groups are partnerships of public and private entities from a defined geographical area. LAGs are responsible for local projects in accordance with the Local Development Strategies which they themselves develop.

In County Wicklow, the Local Action Group is the County Wicklow Local Community



Cllr Pat Kennedy, Chair of Wicklow LCDC

Development Committee (LCDC). The LEADER programme in Wicklow is currently operated for the LCDC by County Wicklow Partnership.

Cllr Pat Kennedy, Chair of County Wicklow LCDC, expressed his delight that the new CAP plan has been approved, which paves the way for a new LEADER programme from 2023. "This is the news we have been waiting on for some time and I am delighted that LEADER will continue from 2023. LEADER in

Wicklow has delivered millions of euros over past programmes and I look forward to continuing the great work for the next six years."

The Cathpaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Tommy Annesley, thanked Minister McConalogue for securing CAP approval which will deliver €10bn in supports across a range of schemes. He added that the County has been transformed under previous LEADER programmes and to hear that the programme is going to continue for at least six more years is great news.

Council Chief Executive, Mr Brian Gleeson thanked Minister McConalogue and Minister Humphreys for securing the overall funding and specifically for the new LEADER programme. He added that LEADER funding of €180m for the next six years will deliver a huge range of projects across the county saying this level of funding was evidence of the governments continued support for the LEADER programme.

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Generations of Jazz in Greystones

Whale Theatre, Friday 23rd September, 7pm (doors 6.30pm)

This intergenerational celebration of jazz music will feature some of Ireland's most celebrated jazz masters, alongside a new generation of emerging young jazz musicians.

Spanning some of the many distinct jazz styles, and showcase a range of different instruments, this diverse evening will create a real Jazz Club vibe, deep in the belly of the beautifully intimate Whale Theatre. This event is supported by Wicklow Arts Office and funded by the Local Live Performance Programming Scheme provided by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport, and Media.

Free Admission (booking essential)

www.whaletheatre.ie or call the booking office on 01 2010550 to book.

Wicklow Arts Office announces programme for Culture Night

Eleven locations across County Wicklow will see activities take place as part of the annual Culture Night (Oíche Chultúir) on Friday, 23rd September.

Culture Night is a national moment, celebrating culture, creativity and the arts. It seeks to actively promote the rich and varied culture treasured and nurtured in people's lives, today and every day, across Ireland.

Delivered nationwide in cities, towns, villages and rural locations all activities are made available to the public free of charge.

This year, Wicklow Arts Office have collaborated, supported, and funded a range of events and activities across the county for Culture Night, thanks to the continued support of the Arts Council, Creative Ireland and the Local Live Performance Programming Scheme provided by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media and Creative Ireland.

With 11 locations across County Wicklow, the programme includes a diverse range of experiences purposefully created and selected to surprise and delight all ages.

Arklow Music and Arts present Arklow Culture Crawl featuring local musicians, bands, artists, poets, and actors on a guided tour of the town's cultural and historic sites.

In Baltinglass, Aisling Ennis (harp) and soprano Catherine Redding (singer) will present 'Songs to the Moon,' a recital of evocative and charming selections by Fauré, Debussy, Bellini and Strauss, with two more performances yet to be announced.

West Wicklow Chamber Music Festival presents a feast of party-fuelled rhythmic virtuosity with Bangers & Crash Duo, Caitríona Frost and Paddy Nolan, who are two of Ireland's most accomplished percussionists. Later in the evening the Yurodny Ensemble treat us to an energising musical melting pot of new interpretations of traditional music from around the world. It promises to be a magical musical evening in the stunning setting of The Avon, on the shores of the Blessington Lakes.

Mermaid Arts Centre is hosting three events for Culture Night including: Abacus, a contemporary dance performance of nine women and 18 buckets choreographed by Laura Murphy, taking place on the Bray seafront; singer Susan O'Neill in concert at the Mermaid and extended opening hours for the Blacker Than Any Blindness exhibition by

artist Michael Durand.

Music in Calary have invited award-winning Wicklow classical musicians Annette Cleary (cello), John Feeley (guitar), and David O'Doherty (violin) to perform in the 19th Century Calary Church.

Dunlavin's Market Square, will play host to a unique evening of gastronomy with an Interactive a Cookery Demonstration by Catherine Fulvio, followed by performances by four of Ireland's finest musicians, Niamh Kavanagh (singer), Lynda O'Connor (violin), Gerald Peregrine (cello), and Brian Connor (Piano). This family friendly evening is rounded off by a by local singer-songwriter, Amy Barrett, in concert.

The Whale Theatre showcases an intergenerational celebration of jazz music featuring some of Ireland's most celebrated jazz masters alongside a new generation of emerging young jazz musicians.

Bray Jazz Festival will stage a double-bill of live music at the 18th Century St. Saviour's Church in the heart of Rathdrum village, presenting live performances by bands led

by Bray-born jazz singer Aoife Doyle, and by Arklow-based Irish jazz guitar legend, Nigel Mooney.

The Courthouse Arts Centre is bringing a multi-dimensional experience of sound and vision to Tinahely with presents live music with on stage by Mark Caplice, Layzee Gold and Sam Ali; while visual artist, Liing Heaney will animate the townscape buildings with projections from her film exploring Tomnafinnoge Woods.

Finally, Wicklow Arts Office in collaboration with Wicklow Library Services have curated an exciting programme of fun-filled activities and workshops for children and adults at Baltinglass, Carnew, Dunlavin, Rathdrum and Wicklow Town Libraries including:

- Baltinglass Library - Felt making and painting workshops in Baltinglass Library;
- Carnew Library - A children's An interactive workshop exploring 3D printed replicas and real dinosaurs fossils for children, followed by a poetry open mic session with Lorcan Brennan at Carnew Library;
- Dunlavin Library - tradi-

tional craft workshops such as candle making and willow weaving at Dunlavin Library;

- Rathdrum Library - Geli Printmaking and Mosaic Making with Whitedoodle Art and Mosaic Making in Rathdrum Library;

- Wicklow Library - And a Podcasting Workshop with Createschool and Make your own personalised Ex-libris/Bookplate workshop for adults in Wicklow Library.

Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Tommy Annesley, said he was delighted to see 11 locations represented in this year's Culture Night programme while Deputy Chief Executive, Michael Nicholson, stated: "It's great to see Wicklow artists, organisations, venues and citizens coming together and participating in this annual all-island celebration of culture, creativity, and the arts."

For more information and booking visit www.culturenight.ie/wicklow.

For further information, contact Sile Stewart, Art Services Coordinator, Wicklow County Arts Office, at 0404 20100 extn. 4910 or email ssstew-art@wicklowcoco.ie

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Bray children's author releases new book in Harp Maiden series

"Harp Maiden: Ladder of Charms" is the third and final instalment in the "Harp Maiden" series (for children age 9+). Written by Bray author Jackie Burke, it will be available from 22nd September.

The ogress is dead, but Evie's troubles are far from over. Now she must stop the demon lord Volok from resurrecting his wife, the dreaded Queen Madruga. But tragedy strikes at home, and disasters rock the entire town as Evie struggles to finish the six steps of the Ladder of Charms. She must persevere - no matter what the cost - and tap into the powerful magic that will allow her to destroy the demons forever.

As burning questions haunt her, Evie worries that the new magic will turn her into someone or something she doesn't want to be. Will her friends abandon her if she reveals her darkest secrets? And what and where are the five talismans that Volok wants so badly? Struggling to find all the answers she seeks, Evie feels torn apart by her secrets. Her quest is drawing to a dangerous close, but not before her father shares a startling secret of his own. In the end, Evie must choose her own path, whatever others may think,

but it's a choice she finds increasingly difficult to make.

Jackie Burke grew up with her sister and three brothers in Dublin. An avid reader and writer since her early school days, she only recently began writing children's stories, having dreamed of doing so for quite some time.

Harp Maiden: Ladder of Charms is the third book in Jackie's second series for children, following the hugely popular Secrets of Grindlewood series.

The magical, mystery tale of the Harp Maiden was inspired by Jackie's

other great love, music.

She is also greatly inspired by her love of nature, gardens, forests, wildlife and of course magic! Reading, hill walking, music and baking are just a few of her other many interests and hobbies.

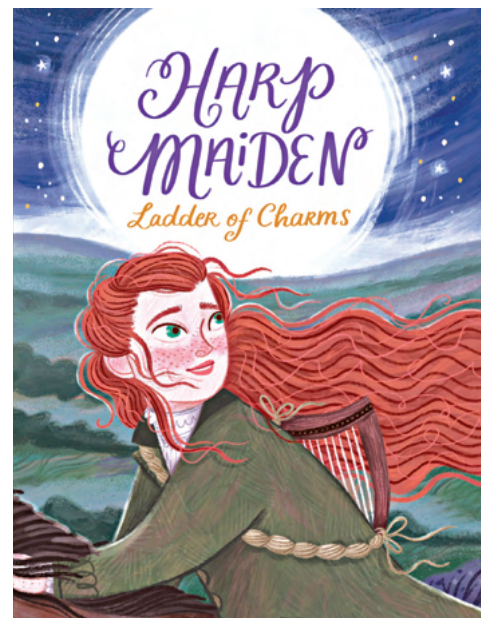
Jackie divides her time between writing and giving

creative writing workshops to children in schools and libraries around the country. She lives with her husband in Bray.

Harp Maiden - Ladder of Charms - Book 3, is priced at €9.99 and is available in paperback and as an ebook.



Jackie Burke



Culture Night at Mermaid Arts Centre

Friday 23rd September

Late Night Gallery: Michael Durand Blacker
Than Any Blindness

10am - 10:30pm



This solo exhibition of new work by artist Michael Durand employs elements of the natural world as a means to engage and communicate a personal - and universal - experience of a fundamental part of human existence.

Blacker Than Any Blindness takes an allegorical approach to reflect on grief and loss all too familiar com-

panions, here envisaged in stark imagery presented through moving image and large-scale photographic work. Through layering images and introducing ambient sound, the work is a meditation on the disorientation and turmoil of loss.

Michael Durand is a graduate of the Institute of Art Design and Technology, and works primarily in photography. His images have been exhibited in solo and group exhibitions in national and international spaces including Gallery of Photography (Dublin), the National Portrait Gallery (London) and City Hall Saint Johns (Newfoundland). He has produced commissioned works for the EU Council of Ministers' Brussels, the European Central Bank Frankfurt, Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council and Waterford Healing Arts Trust, among others.

Michael's work has often been published as limited-edition books and catalogues. His artwork is held in private and public collections in Ireland, Europe, and America including The National Photographic Archive Ireland, Central Bank of Ireland, Musée Nice France, St. John's Municipal Collection Newfoundland and MoMA New York (artist book archive). Michael has over fifteen years' experience lecturing in the photographic field between NCAD, IADT, DIT, WIT and Griffith College.

Abacus: Free Culture Night Event

Performances will take place on Bray seafront by the bandstand. 6pm, 7pm & 8pm.

Duration: 25mins approx

Abacus is a contemporary dance performance, by Laura Murphy Dance, for 9 women and 18 buckets. The performers take the buckets through a series of sequences that echo the experience of work. They lift and swing, twirl and clash the buckets. They work overtime in overdrive, dancing to the beat of the conveyor belt, and turning work into a spectator sport. Abacus examines our relationship with work and routine, the rhythms we experience in daily life. It looks at the antithesis of conformity and freedom, of togetherness and individualism. The themes are universal yet the origins of the work are based on dairy farming in Ireland - the rhythms of milking cows two times per day; the sometimes mundane and sometimes relaxing rhythm of the milking parlour; the rhythms we adhere to daily because of what life demands.

The image of the aluminium 'farm/milk bucket' is Irish - it is found in farming co-op stores around the country - yet it is universal in its appearance. Abacus gives a nod to our agricultural heritage in a contemporary setting. It acknowledges the industrial nature of our world - the clashing and banging of aluminium,



and the humanity and femininity required to 'keep the ball rolling'.

In Irish culture women are actively working in physical jobs; they have a female response and sensibility to physical labour. This is relatively new for our society and it is important to be celebrated as part of our contemporary culture. The large scale, all female cast in Abacus ranges from women in their twenties to those in their fifties. The uniquely female cast shows off Irish Culture in an oblique and contemporary fashion.

PERFORMERS: Justine Cooper, Marion Cronin, Siobhán Ní Dhuinnín, Magda Hylak, Lucia Kickham, Emily Kilkenny-Roddy, Isabella Oberlander, Sarah Ryan, Catherine Young.



Susan O'Neill

Free Event, booking essential through Box Office on 01 272 4030. Duration: 1 Hour. Due to popular demand there is a limit of 2 tickets per booking.

Having wowed huge festival stages over the past few years as guest to various performers, Susan has simultaneously been honing her craft as a solo performer.

A songwriter of hidden depths, with a timeless voice that is equal parts balm and blowtorch, she is audacity personified, a free spirit; a real performer. As of now she is Ireland's best kept secret, however with the success of 'In The Game' her 2021 collaboration album with Mick Flannery that is starting to change. Susan's EP comes out September 14th, she will perform across North America, Europe and the UK this summer.

"We respectfully ask if you or a member of your booking party will not be attending this event, please contact our Box Office on 01-2724030 so that we can reallocate your ticket."

Please note Box Office Opening Hours are 11am to 4pm Monday to Saturday and until 8pm on performance nights.



Chaos Factory Presents: Hotel Happiness

Theatre performance at Mermaid Arts Centre, Saturday 24th September, 8pm

Welcome to Hotel Happiness. An escape from reality. A retreat from yourself. A place to be whoever you want to be for 24 hours only. A time to switch off, let go, fantasize, forget. Free of interruptions and restrictions. With one rule only, you must come completely alone.

Two women, Nina and Celeste, find themselves each in their own private customised room. But what happens when their two worlds collide?

Chaos Factory is an experimental Dublin based theatre company led by Rachel Bergin, Venetia Bowe and Fionnuala Gyax.

The company was born out of a mutual interest and passion for work that is innovative, radical and physically led. We wanted to work collaboratively to devise ambitious contemporary work which pushed the boundaries of conventional narrative framework and theatrical form.

"Our work is physically led, keeping the body at the centre of our exploration. We are dedicated to creating ambitious, multidisciplinary theatre that examines contemporary society. We experiment with theatrical form to find original ways of presenting material, creating theatre that is playful, strange and beautiful."

Created by Rachel Bergin, Venetia Bowe & Fionnuala Gyax. Creative Producer Rachel Bergin. Performed by Venetia Bowe & Fionnuala Gyax. Directed by Luke Casserly. Sound Design Denis Clohessy. Lighting Design Dara Hoban

Commissioned by Project Arts Centre, Supported by Mermaid Arts Centre, Dublin City Council and Fishamble's New Play Clinic. Development supported by The Arts Council of Ireland.

€18 Full Price. €16 Concession Price Age Suitability: 16+. Duration: 60 minutes

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Why I should wait until next year to go to college

As details of third-level offers have finally arrived, points have remained in line with last year's record-breaking high due to grade inflation. First round offers for UCD show points increases for many of their entry routes. With CAO points for many courses remaining very high, many students have been left feeling frustrated and bewildered.

So what are the options now? Rather than taking their CAO second or third choices, students should consider taking the year out, defer their place in College and "Stay Local", doing a further education course in their area of interest and then applying next year through the CAO system. The result of this would be as follows according to Gabriel Allen, Deputy Principal of Bray Institute of Further Education:

1. The leaving certificate results will probably fall back to levels of previous years (10% less) giving this year's leaving certificate students an advantage.

2. CAO points required for courses should, in the same way, drop back to 2019 (Pre-Covid) norms.

3. By doing a PLC course in their area of interest, students will be more University-Ready for their course, and will be au fait with the assessment system in use in universities.

4. There is a major lack of accommodation for students this year and, as a result, is very expensive. Next year, the accommodation situation should improve with the government promising the development of more student accommodation.

5. Fuel costs are sky-high. Next year should bring an improvement in the cost of fuel.

6. By doing a PLC level six course offers students the opportunity to apply for advanced entry to the second year of an honours degree course in a number of Institutes of Technologies.

Allen added, "The huge range of courses available at BIFE offers learners fabulous opportunities, not only for those looking for additional skills or hoping to go directly into employment, but also for those who might want to defer their place at University or IT for the year so as to complete a further education course, whether it be related to their University choice or one of the fabulous niche courses on offer at Bray Institute such as Music Production, 3D Game Design, DJ Techniques, TV, Science Pre-University, Brewing & Distilling, Equine Studies, Furniture Design, Animal Care, Dance, Acting and much more."

Over the past few years, graduates of BIFE have achieved honours degrees across a wide range of programmes, opening up a myriad of career opportunities from graphic

design to performing arts to psychology.

This year BIFE will offer Higher National Diplomas in the following:

- Fine Art - Art Practice
 - Acting
 - Dance
- TV & Film (Moving Image)
 - Fashion Design
 - Music Production
 - Music Performance
 - Graphic Design

As Gabriel Allen explained, "These eight courses will allow graduating students to proceed to the final year of an honours Degree Programme in Ireland or Britain if that is their ultimate ambition."

Bray Institute will offer a number of new courses in September 2022:

- Special Needs Assistant (Primary & Post-Primary)
- Professional Make-Up & Hairdressing
- Security & Pre-Garda
- Applied Ecology & Biodiversity Studies
- Occupational Therapy Assistant
- Equine Studies,
- Barista, Pastry & Baking,
- Brewing & Distilling Technology.



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

All of the above courses will offer progression routes to higher education.

Allen assured that there are also many opportunities for mature students to study and progress at BIFE. "All courses have valuable certification and

offer progression routes to Higher Education, yet you don't need CAO points to study at Bray Institute."

To discover more about the courses available at BIFE, prospective students are invited to attend their 'Open Afternoon' on

Wednesday 14th and 21st & 28th September from 4pm to 5pm.

Applications for September 2022 Courses are now open. Apply on-line at www.bife.ie or call the Institute any day during office hours on 01-2829668 for further information.

Library service takes delivery of special reader scan pens

Wicklow County Council Library Service has announced that C-Pens - which are an aid to anyone with literacy challenges - are now available for borrowing from all branches.

The C-Pen Reader scans and reads text aloud with a natural sounding speaking voice and the user can choose an Irish or English accent.

Anyone with dyslexia, aphasia, vision problems and difficulties with pronunciation will find that the pen promotes independent reading and understanding.

The pen is also a game changer for anyone learning English, Spanish or French.

The built-in dictionary puts the power of Collins English Dictionary and the Oxford Spanish and French Dictionaries in the user's hands. Simply pass the tip of the pen over a word and it instantly displays the definition and reads it aloud.

Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Tommy Annesley, said: "This is a welcome and important resource which will encourage independent reading and also increase access to information. Being able to see and hear words read aloud will improve reading and spelling and bolster self-esteem which is crucial to the support of struggling readers."

There is no need for Wi-fi and each pen comes with a carrycase, a cable to charge and a quick start guide in the box. The user may use their own ear-phones or speakers if they wish.

Commenting on the announcement, Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council, Mr Brian Gleeson, said: "Our libraries continue to work at providing inclusive access to a range of literacy supports. I am delighted that C-Pens have been added to our other assistive resources. They will be a great help to people living with reading challenges, as well as students learning French, English or Spanish."

Library members can borrow a C-Pen on an adult library card for a period of 10 days. Just inquire at your local branch.



Gradam Scléip, Gael Linn

Gael Linn launch Educational Schemes Diary

With the commencement of the new academic year, Gael Linn has launch their 2022-23 programme of events.

This will give primary, secondary, and third-level students the opportunity to participate in events such as debates and public speaking, school variety and talent shows, and traditional Irish music and song, with thanks to funding from Foras na Gaeilge.

All information and entry forms for Gael Linn events for schools are available on our website, www.bit.ly/Sceimeanna2023.

This is also a significant year for our organisation as Gael Linn turns 70 in 2023. We look forward to you joining us for a year-long programme of celebrations to mark this event.



Congratulations to Josh Furlong who represented Cumann na mBunscol Chill Mhantain and Scoil Naomh Iosaf Baltinglass in the INTO Mini 7s in Croke Park at the All-Ireland final. Josh was the winner of the trials in Blessington and Ballinakill, which won him the prize. "I will treasure the memories of the day forever," said Josh. "I played for Galway in the number 8 jersey. To enter the pitch while 82,500 people watched you play was a dream come true. It was also great to play with other boys from all over Ireland. I would like to thank Scoil Naomh Iosaf Baltinglass, Wicklow GAA, INTO and Cumann na mBunscol for making this dream come true."

Four Arklow students to compete at Worldskills Ireland competition

Four students from Arklow will travel to the RDS, Dublin this week from 13th - 15th September, to participate in the prestigious Worldskills Ireland competition, competing against over 180 other young people from across the country in a range of skills-based trades including automation, robotics, constructions skills and culinary arts.

The four Arklow students competing at Worldskills Ireland are Michael Martin, competing in Cabinetmaking; Neil Dodd, competing in Plastering; and Mervyn Castles and Jack Hennessy competing in Sheetmetal.

Having fought off tough competition to secure a place in the prestigious national finals, the four skilled young students and apprentices will compete in front of over 15,000 visitors at WorldSkills Ireland - the country's largest experi-

ential skills, apprenticeships, and careers event.

Needed now more than ever, Worldskills Ireland 2022 is an event designed to promote skills, apprenticeship careers and opportunities for young people. The event allows students, parents, teach-

ers, and guidance counsellors to navigate the options available following secondary education. Free to attend, registration for the event is now open - worldskillsireland.ie.

Ray English, WorldSkills Ireland Chair/Technical Delegate comments: Skills drive the future and Worldskills Ireland 2022 will be a true showcase of the 'best in class' across many different disciplines, offering young people a wealth of options as they move from secondary education and look to their future in the world of employment.

"Our competitions equip apprentices and learners with the lifelong, world-class skills that will drive up training standards to the highest level to help boost Ireland's productivity and competitiveness."

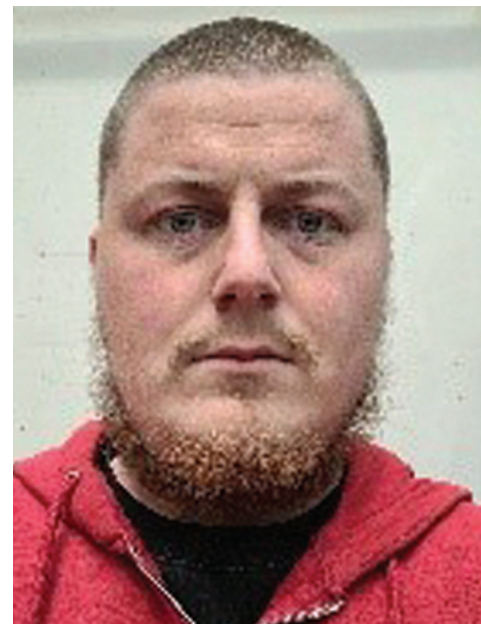
A three-day celebration preparing the talent of today for the careers of the future, the event



Jack Hennessy (third on the left) at Worldskills 2019



Michael Martin (left) competing in Cabinetmaking and Mervyn Castles, competing in Sheetmetal



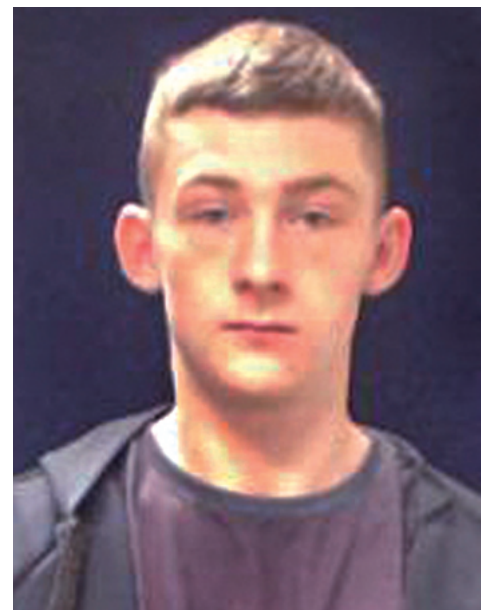
will showcase the multiplicity of skills training and apprenticeships on offer nationwide.

Alongside the competitions, there will be demonstrations, try out areas, inspiring real-live talks from industry experts, an opportunity to meet employers who are ready to recruit and the chance to view innovative digital tech skills that are the backbone of jobs of the future.

Supported by industry partners and Education Partners including, The Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS), The Higher Education Authority (HEA), SOLAS and NAO, Worldskills Ireland is set to inspire

the next generation of skilled young people to follow their passions, interests and talents, the event will change both parents and students' perceptions about apprenticeships as career options, presenting a whole new raft of choices to sit alongside the traditional options.

For further information on Worldskills Ireland, please see www.worldskillsireland.ie or follow Worldskills Ireland on social media. Opening hours are from 10:00 - 17:00 and group time slots will be allocated from 10:00 - 12:00 or from 13:00 - 15:00. Pre-booking is advised as some times are already sold out. Attendance is free.



Neil Dodd, competing in Plastering

Think Before You Flush workshops starting in Roundwood

To mark the new school year, the Think Before You Flush campaign is offering free environmental workshops for classrooms in Roundwood. Think Before You Flush is a public awareness campaign operated by Clean Coasts in partnership with Irish Water.

Think Before You Flush addresses the issue of flushing unsuitable items down the toilet and highlights the consequences of doing so, such as blockages in our wastewater network and treatment plants, surface water overflows and sewage related litter on our beaches and in our oceans, damaging our marine environment. Many toiletries, such as wet wipes, cotton pads and dental floss, are part of the 'Dirty Dozen', which are the top 12 items that are incorrectly flushed down the toilet in Ireland. Other items include hair; paper towels; medicine; tampons; food items; contact lenses; condoms; cigarette butts; and cotton bud sticks.

The Think Before You Flush campaign is rolling out an education and awareness campaign in Roundwood to highlight the need for locals and visitors to maintain proper flushing and pouring behaviour in the area. Nationally in 2021, Irish Water responded to approximately 10,000 customer



Wipes and sanitary products being removed by large screens at Irish Water Wastewater treatment plant

notified blockages (approximately 200 every week) and removed 162 tonnes of wipes and other items from the screens at wastewater treatment plants every month - that's close to 2,000 tonnes/year.

School pupils in Roundwood represent the future of the area's flushing and pouring behaviour. Through discussions about the environment and the importance of our wastewater management systems, the Think Before You Flush campaign hopes to inspire the next generation to care for our natural environment

through good flushing and pouring practices.

Speaking about the campaign, Sinead McCoy, Coastal Communities Manager, Clean Coasts said: "Our message is simple yet powerful and one that everyone can engage with: only flush the 3 P's - pee, paper and poo - down the loo and everything else goes in the bin."

Speaking about the workshops being undertaken in Roundwood Tom Cuddy, Irish Water said: "Our operational staff in Roundwood have started to experience a significant

strain on the wastewater infrastructure due to large volumes of fats, oils and greases, wipes and associated sanitary waste being disposed of incorrectly into our network. This is resulting in significant operational difficulties for our staff and treatment plants. "As part of this education and awareness campaign, we are asking everyone living and visiting Roundwood to be very conscious of the impact their flushing and pouring behaviour can have on their local wastewater networks and treatment plants and would ask that they dispose of FOGs and other products such as wipes and sanitary waste correctly."

If you would like to enquire about booking a workshop for your class or learn more about the campaign, head over to www.thinkbeforeyouflush.org or send on your request to tbyf@eeu.antaicee.org. You can also request information posters for your schools, business, or community.



COMHAIRLE CONTAE CHILL MHANTÁIN
WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

VALUE YOUR VOTE!!!

Are you registered to Vote? Have you recently turned 18 and want to register to Vote?

If you're not registered to Vote and have recently turned 18 or you're over 18 years old and have never registered before, you can apply to be included in the Register by completing an RFA form which you can download from www.checktheregister.ie or by contacting the Franchise Department on 0404 20161

Have you recently moved into County Wicklow? Returned home to Ireland? Or changed address?

If you've moved from another County into County Wicklow or moved house within the County and want to change or update your details? You can do so by filling out an RFA3 Change of address form available on www.checktheregister.ie or by calling 0404 20161 and requesting a form to issue to you by post.

If you've been living abroad and returned home to Ireland and want to register to Vote you can contact the Franchise Department on 0404 20161 and request a registration form or download an RFA form on www.checktheregister.ie.

Have you obtained Irish Citizenship?

If you have recently obtained Irish Citizenship you can now register to vote and if you are already registered to vote but have become an Irish Citizen we can update your voting rights so that you can now vote in all voting events ie: Presidential Election, Referendums etc. You need to send a copy of your Naturalisation Certificate along with an application form to Franchise Department, Wicklow County Council, Station Road, Wicklow Town, Co. Wicklow.

Are you elderly at home and physically unable to get to a polling station to Vote?

If you are physically unable to get to the polling station due to mobility of physical illness issues then you can contact the Franchise Department on 0404 20161 and we can post an application form out to you that will allow you to vote from the comfort of your home or you can download it from www.checktheregister.ie.





Pictured at the launch of the Wind Turbine Technician Programme from Green Skillnet at Raheenleagh Wind Farm near Arklow were Wind Turbine Technicians Eduardo Rivero and Shirley Costelloe, Minister Simon Harris, and Skillnet Ireland Chief Executive Paul Healy.

With energy prices increasing, the need to move to domestically generated sustainable energy is becoming ever more apparent. The programme will provide a vital pipeline of workers with the green energy skills needed to meet Ireland's 2030 targets for CO2 emissions reduction and renewable energy provision. The programme is aimed at people with electrical, mechanical or engineering backgrounds and once complete the trainee will be certified with Wind Turbine Technicians. The course is delivered in two stages, the first phase being in-person technical training followed by an industry placement. The Green Tech Skillnet, the facilitator of the programme, works to support companies such as ESB, GE, EDF and Energia to name but a very few, in order to ensure that this industry has the skills and talent required to meet our climate action targets. Pic: Michael Chester

'Housing for All has delivered for Wicklow over last 12 months'

One year on from its introduction, the Government has marked the first 12 months of the Government's ambitious Housing for All plan, citing the progress made in delivering housing for Wicklow.

Marking the anniversary, the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Darragh O'Brien TD, said: "When we launched Housing for All our aim was that everyone should have access to a home to purchase or rent at an affordable price, built to a high standard and in the right place. We backed that with a guaranteed over €4 billion a year in housing investment and a series of actions to deliver 300,000 new homes by 2030, including 90,000 social homes and 54,000 affordable homes. While there's a lot of work still to do, we can see already, after the first 12 months that the plan is working in Wicklow and across the country."

Among the measures and impacts in Wicklow arising from Housing for All are:

- 1,068 new homes built in Wicklow in the 12 months to end of June 2022 (a 14.6% increase on the previous 12 months)
- Commencement Notices for 1,119 homes were received in Wicklow in the 12 months to the end of July 2022
- Planning permissions for 1,871 homes in Wicklow to the end of Q1 2022 (a 54.5% increase on the previous 12 months)
- Approval for seven new posts in Wicklow County Council for local authority housing delivery
- Introduction of exemption from planning permission requirements for converting vacant Wicklow pubs into homes. The existing exemptions to converting vacant commercial premises into homes in Wicklow have been extended.

Between 2018 and 2021, 24 residential units were provided in county Wicklow through 14 notifications of exempted developments.

- In 2021 the Government provided €88.86m in total housing funding to Wicklow County Council for housing, an increase of 5% on 2020.
- In 2021, 311 new social homes were delivered.
- There was a 15% reduction in the number of households on the social housing waiting list in Wicklow at the end of 2021 compared to the first annual assessment conducted in September 2016.

Other key measures delivered through Housing for All that benefit the people of Wicklow include:

- A new expanded Local authority Home Loan
- Launch of the First Home Scheme
- Significant funding made available by Government to assist local authority affordable housing delivery, for purchase and rent, through the Affordable Housing Fund
- A revised cap on any rent increase and legislation on tenancies of unlimited duration
- Homes ring-fenced for individual buyers through planning changes, with 559 homes ring-fenced in Wicklow between May 2021 and mid-May 2022
- Introduction of a Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant (through Croí Cónaithe (Towns) Fund) to incentivise the refurbishment of vacant homes in Wicklow



Minister Darragh O'Brien

- Fair Deal Scheme reforms and Town Centre First policy to reduce vacancy
- New National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability
- Reformed planning process for large-scale developments in Wicklow and elsewhere - greater certainty, clarity and public participation
- Tax to activate vacant land zoned for housing, commencing in 2024.
- Measures to increase construction sector capacity in Wicklow, including greater investment to increase the availability of apprenticeships and training, international recruitment initiatives and the new 'Future Building' initiative to spearhead activation and recruitment for the sector
- A number of significant measures to accelerate research and innovation in the sector, including Enterprise Ireland's new Built to Innovate Fund, a €5m investment for the establishment of a new Construction Technology Centre,

and the turning the sod on a new Modern Methods of Construction Demonstration Park.

- A new design manual and streamlined processes for the procurement of social housing for Wicklow County Council

Commenting on the role of local authorities in delivering housing in Wicklow, the Minister of State for Planning and Local Government, Peter Burke TD, said:

"Wicklow County Council is playing a central role in delivering housing in the county. Over the past 12 months the Government has provided resources and funding to the council to help it deliver for people in Wicklow. I've recently issued guidelines to Wicklow County Council on the making of their county development plan to ensure it takes into account projected housing need so that sufficient new homes can be built in key areas of housing demand. We have also streamlined the processes for the procurement of social housing."

The Minister of State for Heritage and Electoral Reform, Malcolm Noonan TD, commented on progress made in putting sustainability at the heart of housing:

"Compact growth has to be at the heart of housing provision and planning. Higher population densities will have upshots such as minimal transport demand and shorter travel distances. Since Housing for All was launched, we have made progress in developing legislation to introduce Land Value Sharing and a new concept, Urban Development Zones. These are key reforms in land management and planning, which will result in compact growth and curbs on land speculation."

Commercial vacancy rate decreased to 12.1% in June

The commercial vacancy rate in Wicklow stood at 12.1% in June 2022, according to the latest GeoDirectory Commercial Buildings Report, issued last week. This represents a decrease of 0.2 percentage points (pp) compared to June 2021.

The GeoDirectory Commercial Buildings Report examined the commercial vacancy rates among a sample of 80 towns across the country in June 2022. Of the towns in Wicklow analysed, Arklow had the highest commercial vacancy rate at 14.8%, while Greystones had the lowest at 7.7%.

The report found that Ballybofey, Co. Donegal, remained the town with the highest commercial vacancy rate in Ireland at 30.2%, registering an increase of 0.9pp between Q2 2021 and Q2 2022.

The Midlands towns of Edgeworthstown, Co. Longford and Edenderry, Co. Offaly, recorded the second and third highest commercial vacancy rates in the country at 26.3% and 25.2% respectively, followed by Kiltrush, Co. Clare (25.1%) and Sligo Town (24.1%).

In the twelve months to June 2022, Carrigaline, Co. Cork moved from the third lowest to the lowest commercial vacancy rate in the country, decreasing from 8.8% Q2 2021 to 6.8% in Q2 2022. Greystones, Co. Wicklow (7.7%) and Gorey, Co. Wexford (8.2%) had the second and third lowest vacancy rates respectively.

Commercial Address Points by Sector.

The report, prepared by EY, found that the national commercial vacancy rate stood at 13.9% in June 2022, a marginal increase of 0.25 percentage points (pp) when compared to the same period in 2021. The national commercial vacancy rate is the highest

level recorded by GeoDirectory since it began reporting on the rates in 2013.

Commercial vacancy rates increased in 15 out of 26 counties in the twelve months to June 2022, with a total of 29,241 vacant commercial units recorded across Ireland.

The highest commercial vacancy rates in June 2022 were found in the west and north-west of Ireland, continuing a trend observed in previous GeoDirectory Commercial Buildings Reports. At 19.4%, Sligo was the county with the highest commercial vacancy rate, followed by Galway and Donegal (both at 17.2%), and Leitrim and Mayo (both 16.9%).

The county with the lowest commercial vacancy rate was Meath at 9.9%, followed by Wexford at 10.6% and Kerry at 11.7%.

Notably, Dublin recorded an increase of 0.5 pp in the year to Q2 2022, with the commercial vacancy rate in the capital rising to 12.6%. For the second year in succession, Laois recorded the highest increase at 2.2pp, increasing the commercial vacancy rate in the county to 15.2%.

Province-wide, the commercial vacancy rate in Connacht increased by 0.1pp to 17.3% in the year to Q2 2022, while the commercial vacancy rate in Ulster increased by 0.3pp to 15.4%.

There were 181,683 occupied commercial address points in Q2 2022, representing a decline of 1,225 on the

corresponding figure in Q2 2021. Of these, 86.7% were allocated a NACE* code. The number of NACE code-classified commercial units declined by 2,520 between Q2 2021 and Q2 2022 with most of this decline found in the Retail and Wholesale sector, with 800 fewer units. The broader sector of Services, which encompasses a range of economic activities, recorded a decline of 952 units.

The analysis also found that the Accommodation and Food Services sector accounted for 14.3% of all commercial address points in Ireland in June 2022. In total, 22,597 commercial units were classified as operating in this sector. Kerry, at 24.3%, was the county with the highest proportion of Accommodation and Food Services units relative to the overall commercial stock in the county.

Commenting on the findings of the report, Dara Keogh, Chief Executive of GeoDirectory said "The latest GeoDirectory Commercial Buildings Report highlights a marginal but continued rise in commercial vacancy rates across Ireland. At 13.9%, the national commercial vacancy rate in Q2 2022 was the highest recorded by GeoDirectory since we started compiling these reports in 2013. The past two and a half years have proved to be difficult for businesses to navigate, thanks to the impact of Covid-19 restrictions followed by rising inflation and energy costs."

'No need for referendum on right to housing'

Changing the Constitution will reduce the rights of property owners and create uncertainty which will reduce house construction, Cllr Derek Mitchell said.

"The State has adequate powers, including Compulsory Purchase, to sort the housing shortage which is primarily caused by a doubling of the population in 40 years and a large influx of refugees and Ukrainians," said Cllr Mitchell.

"Many other EU states have a housing shortage even though their population is decreasing. The solution is to build more houses for sale, for rent and also Social housing."

"A Constitutional right to housing will not solve that, probably it will hinder it as it will create uncertainty as to the rights of property owners thus reducing investment and increase funding costs."

"This referendum will be controversial and if passed will likely discourage building by reducing the rights of those who have funded and built it. I have made a submission to the Government Commission on this."



Cllr Derek Mitchell

Forestry to be planted beside Tiglin's Brittas Bay rehab centre

Since 2010, Brittas Bay has been home to Tiglin's residential rehabilitation centre for women recovering from drug and alcohol addiction. Now, along with the open air and idyllic coastline, these women will benefit from the afforestation of half an acre of the surrounding land with a variety of broadleaf tree species.

Ireland was once the most forested country in Europe and, following centuries of decline,

recent years have seen a resurgence in tree planting, thanks to an increased awareness of

the importance of forests for biodiversity and tackling climate change. With half an acre of available

land, covered mostly by grass and bracken, it was an easy decision for Tiglin to apply for an afforestation grant from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. Afforestation is distinct from reforestation: reforestation plants new trees in a forest where the number of trees is shrinking, whereas afforestation is the planting of new forests where there currently are no trees. This afforestation project is taking place on a particularly special piece of land, as the trees will share their new home with women in recovery.

The women's centre in Brittas Bay is a safe haven for women who have had addiction



Tiglin's Brittas Bay centre

issues, and who are coming from what are often troubled and chaotic lives. As they focus on healing, growing, and gaining new life skills, it is fitting that these vulnerable women will be the ones to care for this forest in its earliest stages. The new woodland will provide an opportunity for the women to learn about and enjoy the benefits of forestry. As the trees mature into a forest, they will also help to prevent

soil erosion, absorb CO2 from the air, and preserve and increase habitats for wildlife. At the same time, as the women progress through Tiglin's recovery program, their journey will equip them with a resilience against life's erosions, helping them to form and maintain habits and skills for life after the program. There is a beautiful symbiosis between the women in recovery benefiting from the restorative power of trees, and the

trees that will benefit from the nurturing input of these women. As the women heal, so does the land.

As well as providing wrap-around supports for those recovering from addiction, Tiglin is also a leading organisation in tackling homelessness in Wicklow, Dublin and Kildare. The aim of this project is to plant 10,000 trees on the unused land (a mixture of 40% oak, 20% birch, 20% hazel, and 20% other broadleaf

species). This is a poignant number for Tiglin, as figures released by the Department for Housing earlier this year revealed that 10,000 people are now homeless in Ireland.

By choosing to use their land in this sustainable and innovative way, Tiglin is branching into caring for Ireland's land as well as her people. As the women in recovery prepare for a new beginning, a forest is reborn in the field next door.



See change launch 10th annual Green Ribbon campaign

See Change, the national programme dedicated to ending the stigma and the discrimination that often surrounds mental health, officially launched its 10th Annual Green Ribbon campaign with an event at Smock Alley Theatre in Dublin recently.

"In 2019 I developed anorexia, aged 36. At that time, I could not find anyone else like me living with this mental illness. Shame and self-stigma became part of my thoughts. Because of the lack of any relatable narrative, I found myself feeling alone and different," says Eoin Kernan, See Change Ambassador.

The idea behind the campaign, which is running throughout the month of September, is to get as many people as possible to help end the stigma and discrimination surrounding mental health. In the past, people often did not talk about any issues they were having, preferring instead to 'bottle' them up inside, for fear that others might think they were different.

The public are invited to wear a Green Ribbon (details of how to get one are listed below) to show others that you are willing to talk about mental health and to discuss the problems that people face every day in a more normal way. See Change is reminding everyone that you don't have to be an expert to start a conversation.

The theme for the campaign this year is 'shame' - the key message being that there is no shame in having a mental health difficulty.



Barbara Brennan, See Change Programmes Leader, is pictured with Lord Mayor of Dublin Caroline Conroy and Mary Butler TD, Minister of State for Mental Health and Older People, at the launch of See Change's 10th annual Green Ribbon campaign event in Smock Alley Theatre.

Speaking about the importance of the Green Ribbon campaign, Barbara Brennan, said "I am very proud of the work that my team at See Change is doing to help normalise conversations about mental health. The Green Ribbon campaign is key to creating a culture where people can openly have conversations about mental health without fear of being shamed or rejected."

Speakers at the official Dublin launch event included Caroline Conroy, Lord Mayor of Dublin, Mary Butler, Minister for Mental Health and Older

People, Shine CEO, Nicola Byrne, Dr Malie Coyne, Clinical Psychologist and Author, Guadalupe Cano, Director of Fundación Mundo Bipolar (Spain), as well as Bernadette Crawford, a See Change Ambassador who will speak of their own journey with mental health difficulties and will be hosted by See Change Programmes Leader Barbara Brennan.

More official See Change events will take place for free across the country during the month of September, which you can register to attend via Eventbrite. People can

pick up a free Green Ribbon at participating Boots Pharmacy, AIB Bank branches, Iarnród Eireann stations, andeir stores.

Nicola Byrne, CEO of Shine said "By prompting a national conversation about mental health and encouraging people to educate themselves about mental illnesses, we hope that through our See Change Green Ribbon campaign, we will help to eradicate the stigma and shame that many people living with a mental health difficulty experience today."

Former Pres student doing 32 half marathons in 32 days for charities

Presentation College Bray past pupil Michael Burton is taking on 32 half iron man marathons in 32 counties over 32 days to raise funds for mental health charity Jigsaw (after his own struggles with mental health), Movember and the Irish Cancer Society.

Michael started on 31st August in Donegal, and according to his schedule is due to complete a half marathon in Sligo on 13th September, after completing marathons in Derry, Tyrone, Antrim, Down, Louth, Armagh, Monaghan, Cavan, Leitrim, Roscommon, Galway and Mayo. Michael is due to run in Wicklow on 1st October.

You can follow Michael's progress on his Instagram page (michaelniallburton) where he is posting all of his videos. You can find his fundraising page at https://www.idonate.ie/fundraiser/11424134_michaelburton-s-page.html.

"I have decided to take on this challenge to raise awareness for mental health in young people and men," says Michael. "Mental health is something that is close to my heart as I have had my struggles in the past but through finding the love of sport again and the support of my friend and family I have come out the other side."

"I also wanted to raise money for The

Irish Cancer Society as my grandfather passed away from cancer a number of years ago.

My goal is to raise €32,000 for this event, €1,000 euro for every county. All of the money

raised from this event will be split evenly between the three charities."





Raymond and Meabh Hurley at the Avondale Forest ParkRun

Community groups and clubs in Wicklow asked to 'Fill the Wheel & Map the Goals'

Ireland's first annual Sustainable Development Goals week is taking place from 20th to 26th September as part of the wider European Sustainable Development Week.

The Sustainable Development Goals, or SDGs, were adopted by all the United Nations Member States in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect our planet, and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity by the year 2030.

Sometimes the world's problems seem overwhelming, and we wonder what can we living in our little community in Co Wicklow do to help. The truth is we are doing a lot more than we realise, a lot is being done by other groups around us and every action that we take to improve our community and the lives of those that live in it has an impact on delivering the goals.

The focus in Wicklow for SDG week is to identify and recognise work



programmes and activities by the diverse range of community actors that deliver actions, campaigns and projects which help to reach targets for the SDGs. Many organisations will have a primary focus on one of the goals such as working to tackle poverty, delivering quality education, gender equality, decent work, or climate action. For most your work or cause will touch on several goals. The goals go beyond the common perception of an environmental focus and address all three pillars for sustainability which include social advancement, economic development as well as environmental development. Our wellbeing requires a focus on all

three sustainability pillars.

Grainne Quinn, Co Wicklow PPN said "The SDGs are often thought to be primarily about the environment. However, The SDGs relate to all the world's social, economic, and environmental challenges. It doesn't matter what activity or

action a group, club, school, or business does, once it's improving the lives and opportunities for people in anyway it will link to one of more of the SDGs"

Jim Callery, Environmental Awareness Officer with Wicklow County Council said "Here in Co. Wicklow we have created a map to share information on who is taking action that delivers on the SDGs. It's an opportunity for groups to tell others about their work and also to learn what's happen-

ing in your local area and across the county. To mark SDG week, Wicklow County Council and Co Wicklow PPN are asking communities to think about the work they do and which of the 17 SDGs it links to in our campaign to Fill the Wheel & Map the Goals".

Wicklow County Council has developed the SDG mapping tool so that groups can easily record their activities and let others know what they are doing. This enables us to paint a great picture of how Co Wicklow communities are doing their bit to meet the SDG targets. It will empower the Public Participation Network to tell the story of members' works and demonstrate how everyone in County Wicklow can engage with the goals in their lives. The interactive map can be accessed on the Wicklow County Council website: www.wicklow.ie

Look out for the 'Fill the Wheel & Map the Goals' Campaign on the WCC and PPN Social Media Channels and in your local library or for more information contact Grainne on 086 048 7434 or email: info@countywicklow-ppn.ie

RECRUITMENT



Foráige, the National Youth Development Organisation has over 50 new and exciting opportunities for enthusiastic youth workers to join our dynamic team.

The positions are suitable to individuals who want to develop their professional careers in youth work in roles that are both flexible and rewarding. These projects are part of a network of Youth Diversion Projects; funded by the Department of Justice and by the European Social Fund and Dormant Accounts, in conjunction with An Garda Síochána under the new Youth Justice Strategy 2021 - 2027.

YDPs engage young people in a range of needs led interventions, such as personal and social development programmes, skills building activities, education, training and employment support and social enterprise initiatives, all based on their unique circumstances

Contracts are full time and permanent and posts are available in Dublin, Wicklow, Laois, Offaly, Longford, Monaghan, Cavan, Tipperary, Cork and Limerick. Other posts in other locations may become available during this recruitment campaign. For more information on Foráige visit www.foroige.ie.

There are five types of posts available:

- Youth Justice Worker
- Youth Justice Worker - Early Intervention (8 - 11 year olds)
- Youth Justice Worker - Harder to Reach Young People
- Youth Justice Worker - Family Support
- Senior Youth Officer

Benefits of working for Foráige

Salary Scale: Competitive annual incremental salary scale with starting point between €34,500 - €40,349 based on experience. A higher scale will apply to the Senior Youth Officer Posts.

Annual Leave: 29 days annual leave plus Good Friday

Pension: Contributory pension benefits.

Training & Development: Comprehensive induction programme including structured 9 day Foráige Induction Programme. Ongoing CPD.

Study Leave: Up to 5 days paid Study Leave per year of course.

Organisation culture: Support & Supervision policy and practises that supports your professional development. EAP: 24/7 Employee Assistance

Career Break: Up to 2 years Career Break after 3 years service.

Unpaid Leave: Up to 6 months Unpaid Leave Break after 1 year service

Flexible Work: Flexible work practices that support work life balance.

Maternity and Paternity Benefit: Top up Maternity and Paternity Benefit pay.

Candidate Requirements

- Third level qualification
- Commitment to the purpose of Foráige and to work within the values, policies and procedures of the organisation.
- Flexibility in relation to hours of work to meet the needs of the work. Work during unsocial hours will be required.

Applications

Applications must be made through our online Application Form:

foroige.formstack.com/forms/ypd_job_application_form_2022

All information is available on: <https://www.foroige.ie/work-us/current-vacancies>

Closing date for applications is Thursday, 22nd September. Interviews are due to take place on the 29th/30th September.

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

I Rupert Barry seek planning permission for Restyling and Change of Use of Garage and Plantroom (as previously approved Reg. Ref. 20/232) to facilitate gym at ground floor and office/study in existing first floor space with two number velux Cabrio roof windows on north side and associated site works at 4 Convent Road, Delgany, Co. Wicklow A67 WA43.

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



WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

Zoe Heynes and Teresa Doyle seek change of use planning at Unit 5 Main Street, Rathnew, Co. Wicklow from a betting shop to a beauty salon. 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.

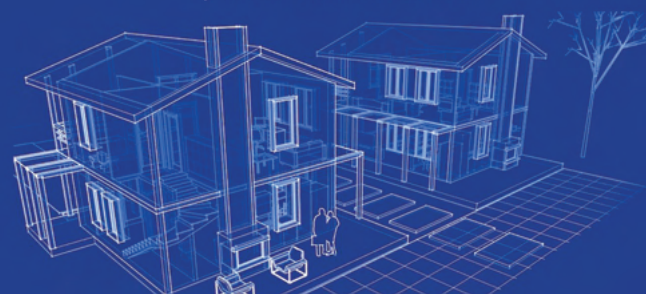
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Blue Economy businesses to benefit from funding

Businesses in Wicklow's coastal communities are being encouraged to apply for the Brexit Blue Economy Enterprise Development Scheme, with funding of up to €200,000 available per capital project.



The aim of the Scheme is to stimulate growth in rural coastal communities post-Brexit, with funding available to businesses operating within 10 kilometres of the coastline and involved in the blue economy.

The blue economy covers a wide range of economic activities within coastal communities such as seafood, coastal tourism, boat building and maintenance, marine recreation, and renewable energy initiatives.

The Scheme, the largest of its kind ever, is open to three streams of projects: Capital Investment, Business Mentoring & Capacity Development, and Upskilling & Training.

A €25 million budget is available in 2022 and 2023, funded under the EU Brexit Adjustment

Reserve. The Scheme is an initiative of the Government of Ireland and is being administered by Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM).

Paul Downes, regional officer at BIM, said the Scheme, which opened in June of this year, has already received many promising and innovative proposals.

"We're delighted with the quality of the applications that have come in to date, covering a wide breadth of blue economy businesses from seafood companies to charter boat businesses, marine engineering companies to coastal tourism enterprises.

"We're eager to encourage more businesses, particularly for the capital investment stream, to submit an application for funding. Brexit has

brought challenges to coastal communities and this unique funding opportunity has the ability to deliver real benefits to those communities and to individual businesses that are part of the blue economy. These investments will enable innovation, diversification, value-adding, and will support business growth and increased employment."

The Scheme is being delivered through Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs) which uniquely focus local development funding specifically for areas and communities within 10 kilometres of the sea around the entire coast.

Capital project initiatives proposed by applicants must be located within 10km of the coastline and must be within one of the following blue economy sectors: Small Non-Commercial Harbour/Pier Activities; Boat Building and Repair; Coastal Tourism; Marine Leisure and Sport; Seafood; Renewable Energy Initiatives supporting the Blue Economy. The applicant must be a micro or small enterprise and projects must be completed by 30th September 2023. The other two streams for funding are Business Mentoring & Capacity Development, and Upskilling & Training.

Full details about the Brexit Blue Economy Enterprise Development Scheme, including how to apply can be found here.



Paul Smith, Caroline Cullimore, Vibeke Delahunt, Cathetine Fulvio, John Powderly and Brian Carty at the launch of the 'Farm to Fork Trails' which was held at Ballyknocken Cookery School, Glenealy.

€100,000 bursary fund for Wicklow SMEs

Three Ireland has launched its annual Grants for Small Businesses programme which comprises of a €100,000 bursary, with applications now open to SMEs in Wicklow.

The grant programme, funded by Three Ireland and managed by the small business network and support provider, Enterprise Nation, seeks to fund 10 small businesses across Ireland and award them a portion of a €100,000 bursary. The bursary will be made up of cash, plus advice, support and connectivity solutions from Three Ireland's expert business advisers.

The closing date for applications for this year's Grants for Small Businesses is 2nd October.

Pure Zees Limited from Wicklow was one of the ten successful SMEs that won the business grant in 2021.

Padraig Sheerin, judge for

Three Ireland's Grants for Small Businesses and Head of SME, Three Ireland, said: "At Three, we've seen first-hand what the grant programme can do and the feedback we've had from last year's winners has been extremely positive. They have made incredible strides and I'm so happy Three has been there to support them in the next stages of their journey."

To mark the launch of the programme, Three has published new research which reveals that over two thirds (69%) of SMEs do not believe they are supported enough as a business to grow further. The sentiment survey of over 300 small and medium sized companies in Ireland was

undertaken by Behaviour and Attitudes.

With the cost of living steadily rising, the support SMEs require for day-to-day costs is evident - with 29% of businesses surveyed stating that cost of living support would be the most beneficial business support for growth. The research also outlined that government grants or funding for business (24%) and tax incentives (24%) were the next most beneficial support for business growth. These findings further underscore the necessity of offerings such as Three Ireland's Grants for Small Businesses and highlight how the challenges for small businesses vary significantly from larger corporations.

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. M.O'R

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