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Tuesday 20th September 2022 First Floor, The Boulevard, Quinsborough Road, Bray. A98 R6D7. Tel: 01 - 2869111 E-mail: wicklowed@localtimes.ie www.wicklowtimes.net

'NO' TO VULTURE FUNDS

Wicklow's new County Development Plan (CDP) 2022-2028 seeks to prevent the purchasing of apartments by vulture funds. The proposal was put forward by Independent councillor Joe Behan and was voted into the Plan, against the recommendation from the Council's Chief Executive and the advice of the Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR).

The amendment makes it an objective of the plan to prohibit the sale of all residential developments (houses, duplexes and apartments) to institutional investors. Approved Housing Bodies are to be exempt.

Speaking last week about his proposal, Cllr Behan said "This is a recognition by members of this Council that young people in this

county are being competed with for new housing units and new apartments in many cases by property investment funds. This is the only way we, as the local representatives of those young people, can do something about helping them. These multi-million funds are able to come in and snap up entire developments and not allow young people the oppor-

tunity to buy them."

Cllr Behan then proceeded to read out the list of bodies who made submissions objecting to the proposal during the consultation phase, which included a number of property development companies.

"They're seriously concerned about the fact we might be able to protect young, first-time buyers in our county,"



Ario Khilid, Conor Lumsden, Helena Andrade, Wendy Narin, Eibhlin Lumsden and Brian O'Reilly celebrating Harvest Day at Brittas Bay National School. Pic: Michael Kelly

Cllr Behan continued. "These are profit-making entities who are seriously concerned we are going to do something to level the playing pitch for our young people in this county. It's beyond disgraceful, in my opinion, that both the OPR and the Chief Executive are using the property developers' submissions and arguments to reinforce their positions as to why we shouldn't do this. I for one believe that the OPR and the executive of this council are there to serve the public and the public's need at this time in this county is the opportunity to buy their own home, even a starter home such as an apartment.

"Let it go back to the regulator and let it go back to the Minister if they have a problem with this and we will challenge it when the

time comes. We have a chance here now to make a stand."

The OPR's submission recommended removing the amendment. It stated "The proposed policy objective has no statutory national or regional policy framework support and it would create internal inconsistencies in the development plan resulting in an unsound basis for decision making by your authority in its statutory development management function.

"Legal advice should be sought in relation to the vires (powers) of the planning authority to include such an amendment as the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage has already published specific guidance on this issue that planning authorities are obliged to have regard to. However, in

any event, your authority is recommended not to make the

Development Plan with this amendment." Speaking in support

of the amendment, Cllr Tom Fortune (Ind) said *Continued on page 7*

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Zuzanna Silon, Olivia Olszewska and Mia Skiba at the Colour Club in Ballyraine Campus, Arklow

Newcastle Duathlon & Duck Derby

The Newcastle Duathlon Community Day and Duck Derby will take place on Saturday 24th September at Newcastle GAA pitch. All are welcome to participate in the fun duathlon. Run 3.5km, cycle 20km, and run 3.5km. Registration is at 10am and the race starts at 12pm. The Duck Derby and BBQ takes place at The Castle Inn from 3pm with cash prizes to be won (1st €250, 2nd €150 and 3rd €50). There is also a Golden Duck Prize of €50. Ducks cost €5 each. It will be followed by a DJ and dancing.

Dye testing of streams in Greystones

Wicklow County Council is currently carrying out dye testing on a number of streams in the Greystones area. Dye tracing is used to provide information about underground connections, groundwater velocities, flow directions etc. During this operation some streams may turn luminous green. The dye used is non-toxic and harmless.

Arklow Cancer Support Bereavement Talk

Arklow Cancer Support invite you to a talk on grief and bereavement and its impact following the loss of a loved one to cancer.

"This talk will be held on Wednesday September 21st at our Centre on 8 St Mary's Road at 7:30pm with a view to setting up a bereavement group by Psychotherapist Denis O Connor who is highly skilled in Grief Counselling. You do not have to be a member of Arklow Cancer Support to attend this talk. For further information please contact our office on 0402-23590."

Coffee Morning for Wicklow Hospice and Rathdrum Cancer Support

Avon Motors are holding a coffee morning on Friday 23rd of Sept from 10am to 12.30pm in aid of Wicklow Hospice and Rathdrum cancer support. Come along have a chat and a cuppa with treats. All are welcome.

Luisne Celebrates Culture Night

Luisne Centre for Wellbeing in Bray is celebrating Culture Night with an evening of spiritual insights and awakening through sound, movement and meditation. The event will take place on Friday 23rd September from 5.45pm to 9pm at Luisne, Egan Centre, Dargle Road, Bray. Participation is free of charge.

The people of Bray and surrounding areas are invited to experience a Lavender Sound Bath- a unique combination of aromatherapy and sound. Visitors will see how they can use movement and dance as a medium of self-discovery. They can learn about posture alignment and breath control with Tai Chi to improve the flow of energy through the body before winding down with a session of Zen or Mindfulness Meditation. Luisne resident tutors will be present to answer questions and chat over tea or coffee. Further information from Sr. Miriam at 086 0517575 or Frank Corr at 086 8274710.

Hannah Sayers exhibition in Greystones

Come and see the new collection 'An Giorria' by Bray-based artist Hannah Sayers of Sayers Studio. This exciting new semi abstract series of paintings depicts the Irish folk story of how the Hare came to live on earth. The exhibition takes place from 1st-8th October in Greystones Library.

Greystones Active Retirement AGM

The Greystones Active Retirement AGM takes place in Kilian House Family Centre, Greystones, on Thursday 29th September at 12 noon. All members and intending members are very welcome to this important meeting.

The Old Dublin Society

Thomas Burke will present his lecture 'Sarah Cecilia Harrison, Dublin's First Female Councillor' to The Old Dublin Society at 6pm on Wednesday September 28th in the Conference Room of Dublin City Library & Archive, 144 Pearse Street, Dublin 2. All are welcome - admission is free and no-booking required.

Independence Day for Ukraine celebrated in Wicklow Town

Ukrainian people now living in Wicklow and surrounding areas celebrated their national Independence Day recently at the Ukraine Hub in Wicklow town.

The room was awash with the blue and yellow colours of the Ukrainian flag and most of those in attendance were dressed in their native costumes especially the many children.

This was a very special occasion for Ukrainian people who have escaped the horrific war in their country to be together as families and friends.

"They have found peace and tranquility thanks to the people of Ireland and in particular the people of Wicklow who have pledged houses and taken in these desperate families to their own homes," said Sean Olohan of Wicklow Lions Club.

There was wonderful Ukrainian food in abundance with Ukrainian music and dancing from the children which created a wonderful atmosphere.



Wicklow Lions members with Rotary President Martina Robinson at the Ukraine Independence Day celebrations in Wicklow Town

sphere.

Wicklow Lions Club and Wicklow Rotary who have been supporting the families for the past six months were represented by Martina Robinson and

Sean Olohan along with Lions club Secretary Ethna Neiland.

Sean has also composed two new songs for the people of Ukraine which he performed on

the day with the help of wonderful Ukrainian singers. The music brought an even more important togetherness on a wonderful historic day in Wicklow.



Morlin O'Brien with Annie and Pheobe at the Wicklow SPCA Dog Show in Sharpes Hill, Rathdrum

Invitation

The simple words of Jesus are being shared in

Ballinacash Community Centre
A67 HY24

on Tuesday evenings, 8:00 – 8:45 pm.

Kilaner Community Centre
on Sunday evenings, 6:00 – 6:45pm

An invitation is extended to the wider community.

Any enquiries, please contact Kathryn and Danielle on 087 9524 800.

WICKLOW
Times

is published by Wicklow Times, First Floor The Boulevard, Quinsborough Road, Bray. Tel: 01-2869111

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Reports of dead birds all along the Wicklow coast

Reports of dead birds along the Wicklow coastline have been increasing over the last two weeks, and the Council has now committed to plan for an approach to manage the collection and disposal of them.

The plan is being developed in partnership with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

The Council has advised that anyone who comes across a dead or dying bird to contact both Wicklow County Council and the Department of Agriculture through their app. Wicklow County Council will then arrange for collection while the Department will log the data to keep an eye on the number of dead or dying birds that are being found.

Deputy Jennifer Whitmore, Social Democrats Party Spokesperson for Climate Action and Biodiversity, wrote to the Minister for Agriculture and the Minister for Heritage seeking a national coordinated response to the issue.

On Friday the Department of Agriculture announced the introduction of regulations requiring flock keepers to apply particular bio-security measures for poultry and other captive birds as a precautionary measure against Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI). The measures came into effect on 19th September.

Deputy Whitmore said, "Every day I am receiving reports from people in my constituency who have come across dead and dying birds. It is clear that there has been a notable increase in the number of Avian Flu in the bird population.

"I have had reports from people seeing dead or sick birds all over the Wicklow coast including Greystones, Kilcoole, Bray, the Murrough and Arklow. It is so distressing for people

to see the birds suffer and it is a public health issue given how infectious it is and how quickly it can spread to pets. It's critical that people know not to approach the birds but also that there is safe collection and disposal of them.

"As we have seen in the UK, this disease can have a disastrous impact on our wild bird populations and farmed avian population, so it is important that the government responds urgently. I will continue to raise this with the relevant Ministers and in my work in the Dail."

Speaking on the commitment by Wicklow County Council, Deputy Whitmore said "with so many public reports of dead and dying birds in Wicklow and along the East Coast, it's important that the relevant authorities are proactive and I very much welcome Wicklow County Council's moves to put in place a system to manage the situation in a safe, measured and collaborative way.

"I have spoken with Wicklow County Council and they have confirmed that the Environment Section and the Health and Safety Officer are preparing protocols and will be arranging training of appropriate staff for the safe collection and disposal of any birds found on public lands.

"However, the Council is only collecting and disposing of dead birds found in public spaces only, not for example, in people's back gardens, etc. Furthermore, the Council is waiting on the Department of Agriculture for further information regarding pro-

ocols which will inform them of how to respond going forward. I welcome this initiative and hope to see it rolled out effectively across the county as continue to address the issue of Avian Flu.

"Wicklow County Council has been very proactive in dealing with this outbreak. However, it does need to be a nationally coordinated response. Individual Councils should not be left to deal with this critical issue on their own."

The Department of Agriculture released a statement on Friday saying "Avian Influenza (AI), commonly known as bird flu, is a notifiable animal disease and is a highly contagious viral disease affecting the respiratory, digestive and/or nervous system of many species of birds. It can also pose a threat to people and other animals in certain circumstances, but these types of infections are rare. Properly cooked poultry meat and eggs do not pose any food safety risk.

"With an increasing number of cases of wild bird infection seen along the coast, all keepers of poultry and captive birds should implement stringent biosecurity measures to mitigate the risk of the disease spreading to poultry and captive birds. Poultry farmers and people who keep game birds or pets should be familiar with the signs of avian influenza, and should closely monitor their birds for signs of disease and report any suspicions to their local Regional Veterinary Office."



Volunteers at the Avondale Forest ParkRun. Pic: Michael Kelly

Members of the public are also encouraged to take the following safety precautions: 1.) Do not touch sick or dead wild birds; 2.) Report sightings of sick or dead wild birds. People can report any sightings of sick or dead wild birds to the local Regional Veterinary Office or contact the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine at 01 492 8026; 3.) Keep pets away from wild birds

Dr June Fanning, Deputy Chief Veterinary Officer at the Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine, explains the risks: "Avian Influenza is highly infectious to birds. Anyone travelling from an area known or suspected to be affected with avian influenza or where wild birds have been found dead should not come into contact with poultry or captive birds without prior cleaning and disinfection of clothing and footwear. It is vital that poultry owners and keep-

ers of captive birds maintain the highest standards of biosecurity to protect their birds. Strict biosecurity remains the number one preventative measure to introduction of avian influenza into poultry and captive bird flocks. Further information is available on the Department website at www.gov.ie/birdflu."

Dr Keith Ian Quintyne, Consultant in Public Health Medicine, Health Protection, HSE Public Health Area A outlines the human health issues: "In the last few weeks there have been a series of confirmed cases of Bird Flu in wild sea birds at a number of locations along the coast, with recent reports in Louth. We are continuing to work with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine to monitor the cases. It is really important that we do all we can to protect people following the detection of Avian Influenza in the region.

We know that people are understandably concerned for the welfare of wild birds, however it is important that you do not touch potentially infected sick or dead wild birds, and if you find a dead wild bird, follow the guidance. To date, no human cases of infection have been reported in Ireland or the EU. Even though the risk to human health is very low, human cases are reported periodically from China, and the UK has recently identified a single human case of avian influenza. Where human disease has occurred, it has tended to be mild. However, elderly people and vulnerable patients living with immunosuppression could be at greater risk of developing more severe disease."

At the time of going to press there have been almost 60 wild birds with Avian Influenza A (H5N1) detected nationally along the coast.

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'Plan to charge public to use recycling centres is a retrograde move'

Independent councillors Joe Behan, Mary Kavanagh, Peir Leonard and Tom Fortune will bring a Section 140 motion to Wicklow County Council at the October meeting directing the Council's Chief Executive Brian Gleeson to halt plans to introduce charges at recycling centres around Co. Wicklow.



Cllr Joe Behan



Cllr Mary Kavanagh



Cllr Peir Leonard



Cllr Tom Fortune

The Section 140 gives elected councillors the power to require of the Chief Executive "any particular act, matter or thing specifically mentioned in the resolution and which in the local authority can lawfully do or effect in the performance of the executive functions of the Local Authority".

The Section 140 motion states that "Under the powers granted to elected members by virtue of Section 140 of the Local Government Act [...] We, the elected members of Wicklow County Council, hereby direct the Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council to continue to provide recycling services at Council Recycling Centres free of charge and to desist from including any such charge in the Wicklow County Council Budget 2023 and subsequent budgets."

Elected Sinn Féin representatives have also criticised the proposals by Wicklow County Council to start charging customers to use Recycling

Centres across Wicklow.

Sinn Féin TD John Brady said "Plans by Wicklow County Council to start charging members of the public to use the recycling centres in Wicklow is a retrograde move that will negatively impact people financially for doing the right thing by recycling. It will also result in less people using the centres and more recyclable materials ending up in landfill or being dumped illegally."

"The new charge is essentially an environmental stealth tax being introduced in the midst of a cost-of-living crisis. When the Property Tax was introduced people were told it would be used to pay for and improve civic amenities, however that lie has now well and truly been exposed for what it is. This unjust environmental stealth tax must be opposed."

According to Cllr Dermot 'Daisy' O'Brien there is a serious risk of breaking the principle of the UN Sustainable Development Goals which



John Brady TD with councillors Grace McManus and Dermot 'Daisy' O'Brien

suggests that we should 'leave no one behind'. "Our recycling centres are thriving. People from all walks of life are using this free service for recycling. The staff are great, the service is great and people are playing their part as we strive to create a more sustainable world. The introduction of charges would represent a shift in the culture of how we do recycling at the local level," he said.

"This proposal is essentially saying that the costs of investment in the maintenance and upgrade of this facility should be borne by the people. It is our role as public representatives to consider the impact of decisions like this and to engage with people who should have a say."

Cllr Grace McManus

added "I believe that a proposal like this needs to go through a formal poverty proofing procedure before any decision is made. How will this impact people at different income levels? Will this create an inequality gap between those who can access the service and those who cannot? Will this be a cash or card only payment, and who does that affect? These are concerns that need to be addressed, particularly in the current cost of living crisis where people are already telling us about their hardships. We cannot, and should not, add to their struggle."

The planned charge at Wicklow's recycling centres will be €3 and would come into effect in 2023. The Council is undertaking a review of recycling

centres around the county and is proposing increased investment which would include upgrades to the existing facilities as well as the establishment of a facility in Blessington.

Significant financial investment is required to enable the Council's five-year investment plan for the centres to be carried out.

The total investment being proposed is €3 million, which will be divided among Bray (€1m), Arklow (€800,000), Blessington (€500,000), Wicklow (€500,000), Avoca (€100,000) and Rampore (€100,000).

Proposed upgrades include a new roof and upgrades for Bray recycling centre; refurbishment and roof repairs at

the Murrough recycling centre; roof repairs and refurbishment in Arklow recycling centre, and incorporating energy efficiency measures in all of the centres.

The capital cost will be partly funded through available grant schemes and the Council's own resources, however an 'ongoing income scheme' will also be required which will mean a charge of €3 per visit.

A charge of €3 per household would yield approximately €1 million per annum which would be ringfenced for improvements to the recycling/waste management services. Electrical waste and glass would remain free, but additional charges would apply for bulky and hazardous waste.

Waters of Life project meeting held in Avonmore

Jennifer Whitmore TD attended a Waters of Life event in Avonmore to discuss what environmental improvements can be made to the Avonmore catchment area over the coming years.

The public meeting was organised by the Local Authority Waters Programme (LAWPRO).

The group collaborates with the relevant local authority, public body, and water stakeholder to

find a solution where water issues are found.

Speaking on the event, Deputy Whitmore,

Climate Spokesperson for the Social Democrats, said "As a founding member of the East Wicklow Rivers Trust it was great to see so many people turn out on to this public meeting, on such an important issue such as the quality of our waters in Wicklow. The Avonmore catchment area

is an incredibly important one for the local community and also our local biodiversity. It's vital that it's protected, and I welcome the work being carried out as part of the Waters of Life project."

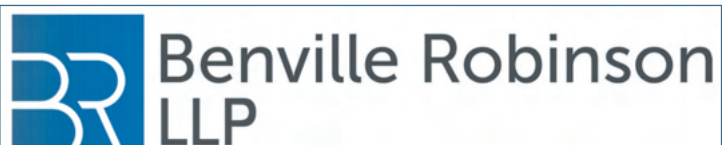
"The Blue Dot rivers in Avonmore have both fallen to good status and are considered to be at risk of

not meeting their objective under the River Basin Management Plan. Waters of Life project is supporting works to improve the Blue Dot Catchments Programme to restore the area for the benefit of local biodiversity, tourism and local communities dependent on the water source.

"Through my work with the East Wicklow Rivers trust it's clear that more actions are needed to protect pristine waters. Many of these waters are small, upland streams. Attending this public meeting was a priority for me to offer support for these projects that will have a huge benefit on

the area and it's important that locals are made aware of these initiatives.

"I will continue to support the Waters of Life project as well as other projects seeking to restore and protect our vitally important natural water sources in Wicklow," concluded Deputy Whitmore.



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Deputy Whitmore with Cormac, Project Team Lead Anne Goggin and Donal O'Keefe, all from the Waters of Life Project

Council adopts Development Plan

Councillors last week voted to pass the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028, the final stage of a six-stage process which began in late 2019 with the first public consultation phase. All of the 31 councillors present voted in favour of adopting the Plan.

The plan sets out the overall strategy for proper planning and sustainable development of County Wicklow, guiding future development. The plan will replace the previous 2016-2022 Plan. The Plan will come into effect within the next six weeks unless a Draft Ministerial Direction is received in relation to aspects of the plan. In this case, it puts on hold any matters raised in any such direction but only for those matters. The rest of the adopted County Development Plan will still come into effect.

CLlr Shay Cullen officially proposed the Plan for adoption and CLlr Aoife Flynn Kennedy seconded the proposal.

Director of Services at Wicklow County Council Breege Kilkenny said "this is an important day for all - the elected members, the Chief Executive and the Council officials, but most importantly the people of County Wicklow. The County Development Plan is one of the most important policy documents elected members will make during their tenure and is one of the key features of the planning system. It is the main public statement of planning policy of our county, setting out the land use, the amenities and objectives and policies of County Wicklow.

"It will cover the six-year period between 2022 and 2028. All planning applications are assessed

against the standards and the objectives contained in the County Development Plan. So, today marks the culmination of three years of work."

Speakig after last week's 10-hour meeting to finalise the plan, Independent Greystones councillor Stephen Stokes said "This is a carefully considered development plan that has been shaped over several years. I believe that on the whole it is a balanced plan that takes into account many important areas including development, heritage, the environment and more. Of course there were a range of opinions offered, which delivered a healthy plan."



Elsie Hurley at the ParkRun in Avondale Forest Park

Go-Ahead fined for poor bus service'

The National Transport Authority has confirmed that it has fined Go Ahead Ireland just over €526,000 for a nine-month period for its poor bus services including the North Wicklow Bus Routes 45a, 184 and 185.

A Parliamentary Question from Fingal Labour Party TD Duncan Smith requested the information from the NTA.

Speaking on the issue Bray West Labour Party Representative Ian McGahon said "Commuters in Bray, Enniskerry, Kilmacanogue, Greystones and Newtownmountkennedy

have been deeply frustrated at the extremely poor service since Go-Ahead took over the 45a, 184 and 185 routes four years ago.

"The National Transport Authority confirmed to my colleague Duncan Smith TD that from July 2021 to March 2022 they have fined Go Ahead Ireland just over

€526,000 for buses not operated. This news is very welcome in terms of holding Go Ahead Ireland to a standard and making them accountable for numerous bus 'no shows'.

"This €526,000 fine while welcome doesn't adequately address the deep anger and despair felt in Bray, Enniskerry and Kilmacanogue

though. In the last four years Go-Ahead's service has left young people and elderly stranded for hours, workers late for work, schoolchildren late for school, deeply frustrated families having to order late night taxis.

"Commuters in North Wicklow deserve a reliable service. The National Transport

Authority must take full responsibility for this issue and the Go-Ahead Ireland contract should not be renewed beyond 2023 when it expires.

"Myself and my colleague Deputy Duncan Smith have made numerous representations to Go-Ahead Ireland and National Transport Authority about the poor 45a, 184, 185 service and Deputy Smith will also be rais-

ing this in Dail Eireann once more."

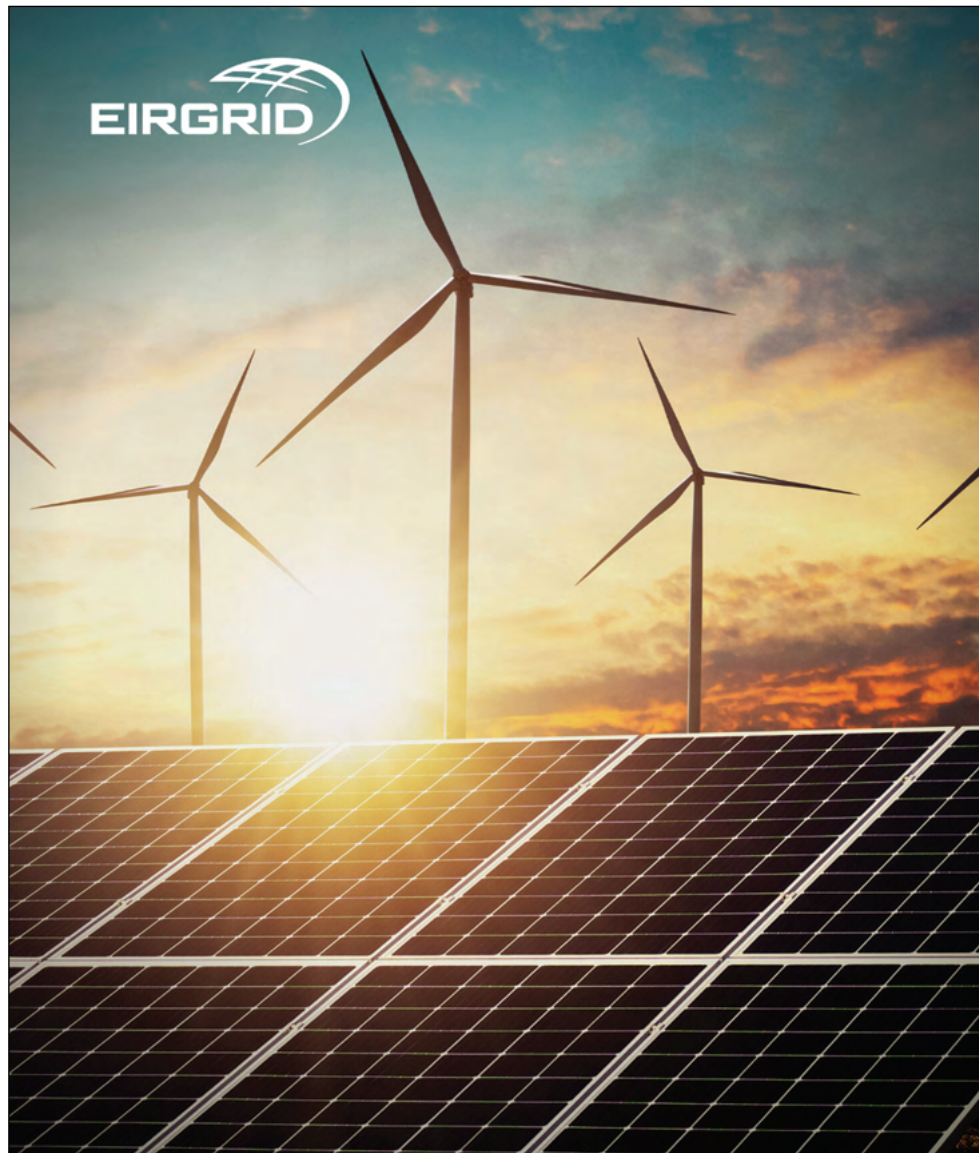
In correspondence with Deputy Smith, the NTA stated "Public transport operators are experiencing significant challenges in recruiting qualified staff following the economic and social constraints connected to the COVID-19 pandemic. The public transport industry has been particularly hard-hit as operators attempt to return to pre-pandemic levels of activity as well as deliver intended service improvements such as the BusConnects

Network Redesign and Connecting Ireland programmes. These issues are further exacerbated when existing staff must also be absent at short notice while following HSE guidelines after contracting COVID-19 or developing other illnesses.

"The impact of these absences is felt the most on low-frequency services (hourly or less frequent), where the time between services is extended with little opportunity for advance warning. The Authority and the operators have

been working to try to ensure that such cancellations are minimised, that - where possible - consecutive services are not withdrawn, and that first and last daily services on a route operate. It should be noted that the Authority and the operators are making every attempt to introduce more drivers so that all services can run as scheduled.

"The operators have recently ran recruitment campaigns and more drivers will be available once their required training is complete."



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22 September 2022

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Ida and Cohen enjoying the games and entertainment in Burnaby Park, Greystones, for the recent Multicultural Day

Tusla launches urgent foster care recruitment appeal

Fostering celebration event to take place in Greystones

Tusla - Child and Family Agency has launched a Fostering Recruitment Campaign. The aim of the campaign is to recruit new foster carers to meet the growing demand for placements, as a result of the ongoing humanitarian crisis, and the impact of Covid-19 in communities across Ireland.

The local fostering team are running a Fostering celebration event at **Shoreline Sports Park, Charlesland, Greystones**, for foster carers and their children. It will take place on **Thursday 22nd September from 2pm-5pm.**

Ireland is a world leader in foster care, and across Ireland 3,991 foster carers currently open their homes to 5,248 children.

In 2021, 219 new foster carers joined Tusla, and 592 children entered foster care for the first time. However, this figure falls far short of the current need for foster care placements.

Speaking about the campaign, Patricia

Finlay, Regional Chief Officer, Dublin Mid Leinster and National Lead for Fostering, Tusla said: "Every year, hundreds of children and young people come into care, which means the need for new foster families continues to increase.

"This year more than ever, due to the current humanitarian crisis and the impact of Covid-19 on our communities, Tusla urgently requires more carers.

"There are many types of foster care such as, short-term, long-term, emergency placements, respite fostering, and other supports for young people who need them. This means there is a choice of ways to foster, so you'll

be able to find something that suits your skills, life stage and family dynamic best."

Tusla foster carers provide a safe, secure and stable home environment for the most vulnerable in our society.

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Applications encouraged for Children and Young People's Assembly on biodiversity loss

Cllr Stephen Stokes has encouraged applications to the Children and Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss.

Biodiversity describes all the different kinds of animals, plants and microorganisms that live on Earth. It is also vital for making sure humans have what they need to live and grow such as clean air, food, medicine, and water etc.

Cllr Stokes stated: "In many parts of the world, including

Ireland, we are experiencing significant loss of natural habitats, environments and wildlife."

This new Assembly will aim to address these concerns. Cllr Stephen Stokes added: "A citizens assembly is taking place with adults to look at biodiversity. However it is vital to have

a dynamic forum that brings our young people together. Their insight into biodiversity is vital-ly important."

It is expected that Ireland will hold its first Children and Young People's Assembly on Biodiversity Loss in October 2022. Designed with children and young people, the Assembly will bring together 35 randomly selected members aged 7-17 from across Ireland.

The Assembly will seek to

create, discuss and explore recommendations on how to protect and restore biodiversity in Ireland.

Cllr Stokes concluded: "The planet belongs to everyone and our young members of society deserve to be heard on biodiversity. We must work to ensure our environment has a rich biodiversity."

Application forms and additional information can be found at: cyp-biodiversity.ie

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Ease in rural build restrictions for family carers and local healthcare workers

The qualifying criteria for allowing people to build one-off rural houses is to be widened under Wicklow's new County Development Plan 2022-2028, making it easier for local applicants, family carers and local healthcare workers to build homes.

New amendments inserted into the Development Plan, which was adopted last week, ease the restrictions for 'local applicants who provide care services to family members and those working in healthcare provision locally', and also for 'local applicants who are intrinsically linked to their local area and, while not exclusively involved in agricultural or rural employment, have access to an affordable local site'.

Proposing the new amendments, Cllr Joe Behan (Ind) said "We are trying to widen access for genuine people who are intrinsically connected to the local, rural area who need an affordable site, and who have the possibility of getting it. In the context of COVID, one of the things we all did was to clap for carers, we said that we appreciated the work that the carers did, particularly during the COVID pandemic. So, it was in that context that we made the decision to put that amendment in."

Cllr Shay Cullen added "If somebody clearly lives in a rural area for a minimum of 10 years they should qualify under the guidelines we are putting in place."

This is about the public having confidence in the plan that we are making for the public. That is what this is about."

Cllr Pat Kennedy also voiced his strong support for the amendments. "It is a scandal to think that people who are born and raised in a rural area, and who can provide the necessary documentation, cannot get planning permission to build a home."

Cllr John Mullen agreed that currently the Council's rural housing strategy "does not listen to the people of rural Wicklow. People wishing to live in rural Wicklow want to make a life there to keep rural Wicklow alive. It is a tradition, a landscape, it is a living place. The people of rural Wicklow need to be listened to."

Cllr Edward Timmins expressed his frustrations that the National Planning Framework has been thwarting rural planning applications based on what he sees as inaccurate classifications: "West and South Wicklow are rural areas, there is no big sizeable town from Blessington to Arklow. It is rural, and yet it is deemed to be under 'urban pressure'. It is nuts, it is frustrating. We are struggling to help people in rural Wicklow who we know deserve planning permission."

The amendments were voted into the plan by 26 votes to 5. Those against it expressed concerns about the cumulative effect of multiple one-off rural houses and also the 'loose' wording of the amendments.

The Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR), in its submission to the Draft Plan, said that "the inclusion of these references in this amendment are very loosely defined and would be likely to further ease the measures of the plan to properly manage the very significant levels of pressure for development of the Wicklow countryside."

It went on to say that it would have the effect of "undermining the rural living and development strategy of the Council in relation to reinforcing the vitality and future of rural villages", and cumulatively undermining the reversal of rural decline in small towns and villages.

Chief Executive of the Council Brian Gleeson, in his report on the Draft Plan, was also against the amendments.

"Local applicants who are intrin-



Susan Howe and Elliemai Heffernan celebrating Harvest Day at Brittas Bay National School

sically linked to a local area and can show a social or economic need for a new house in that rural area are already accommodated by the policy set out in the draft plan," he said.

"Affordability' is not a criterion for rural houses provided for by the National Planning Framework nor Ministerial guidelines and should not be reference in this policy. With

regard to the second category proposed, this is unacceptably vague and could cover a wide range of persons with no intrinsic need for a new house in a rural area, when the health care services they provide may well be possible to provide while living in a local settlement (e.g. doctor, pharmacist etc).

"With regard to caring for family members, it is considered that the

policy set out in the draft plan may already accommodate such persons, assuming they can show a strong social or economic need for a new rural house.

"Finally, it should be borne in mind that the draft plan already provides scope for additional categories of persons not already included in the list, if a strong social need can be shown."

'NO' TO VULTURE FUNDS

Continued from Page 1

"Our responsibility is to the people of this county and the young people of the county. Affordable housing is a massive issue and it's disgusting to see some of the submissions

that have come in from bodies with a vested interest."

Cllr Peir Leonard (Ind) called the amendemnt "brave and essential".

Chair of the Housing Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) Cllr John

Snell (Ind) said "I believe that if this is passed today, the OPR and the minister will step in. But let them do that if that is their role and function, let them step in. We are sending out a signal here today to the people of this county

and beyond that we are fully behind them and are supporting them in getting on the property ladder."

Expressing concerns about the amendment, Cllr John Mullen (FF) said "I think this is cutting off our nose to spite our face. I do think national policy should be influenced by what the spirit of that motion is, and I do think local authorities should be empowered themselves to buy huge elements of these apartment buildings to ensure on an affordable basis that we have affordable houses. The way you have affordable houses is to build more houses. I don't see how this motion helps that."

Likewise, Cllr Gerry Walsh (FF) said "The crux of our housing problem is supply. There is a need for apartments in certain areas. People need to rent. We also have the situation of inward migration for employment purposes, people coming here to work."

"I would be concerned about the impact that proposals such as this would have on parts of our county."

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Celebrating 100 years of hillwalking

It was just after the War of Independence when the Countrywide Hillwalkers Association was founded in 1922. Now, after 100 years, over 80 hillwalkers gathered in the Wicklow Heather restaurant in Laragh last Tuesday to celebrate the anniversary.



President of the Countrywide Hillwalkers Association (CHA) Frank Hayes and Louise Nolan

President Frank Hayes told the gathering that he was "amazed that somebody would even think of starting a walking club just after the War of Independence, World War 1 and the Spanish Flu pandemic!"

The club was the brainchild of James Doyle and the first meeting was held at his home at number 4, Cavendish Row, opposite the Gate theatre. The club's first President was Fred Eason of Eason's books and he held that post until his death in 1964, aged 99, with over forty years' service. Frank Hayes remembers that Fred was always referred to as 'Mr Eason' and that as a strong supporter of the Temperance Society, he forbade alcohol at their gatherings. He went so far as to avoid premises that served alcohol.

In those early days, Frank said, "There was no special clothing for hiking and members just wore 'sensible shoes'. They regularly embarked on very long walks, up to 17 miles and remember very few had a car. So members would use trains and charabancs to get to the mountains."

On the night, the longest serving member of the group, Ivy Cassidy, cut a special



President of the Countrywide Hillwalkers Association (CHA) Frank Hayes, oldest member Carmel Heaney, Hazel Numan and longest serving member Ivy Cassidy celebrating 100 years of the CHA

cake with a Wicklow theme which boasted a mountain lake, a river and lots of rocks.

Members were also presented with souvenir centenary badges. The Association has also produced a centenary book

with photos of rambles going back to the twenties.

Denis Poynton, who, along with his wife, Cherry, has been a member for 20 years, said that hillwalking is "A great opportunity to make new

friends in a terrific social atmosphere out in the open air. We enjoy the environment and, especially, finding new places for walking."

The group is very conscious of the upkeep and care of Wicklow's moun-

tain and contributes to both the Dublin and Wicklow Mountain Rescue Team and Mountain Meitheal Ireland. New members are always welcome and can contact the group via their website cha.ie.

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Local writers selected for the Irish Writers Centre's national mentoring programme

Three Wicklow-based writers have been selected by the Irish Writers Centre to receive a mentorship under the National Mentoring Programme.



David McGrath

Following a national callout where over 300 applications were received, 37 writers from across Ireland were selected to receive a mentorship. David McGrath, Patrick Fitzgerald and Paul Lenehan were the successful Wicklow applicants.

Funded by Wicklow Arts Office and the Arts Council, David, Patrick, and Paul will receive this potentially life-changing opportunity free-of-charge. The mentorships are also an investment in the long-term literary reputation of the region.

The hope for the National Mentoring Programme is that the chosen writers will go on to write great works of literature to match or best that of the quality of their mentors. This form of peer-to-peer teaching is increasingly popular in literature, formalizing the process whereby masters pass on their craft to students.

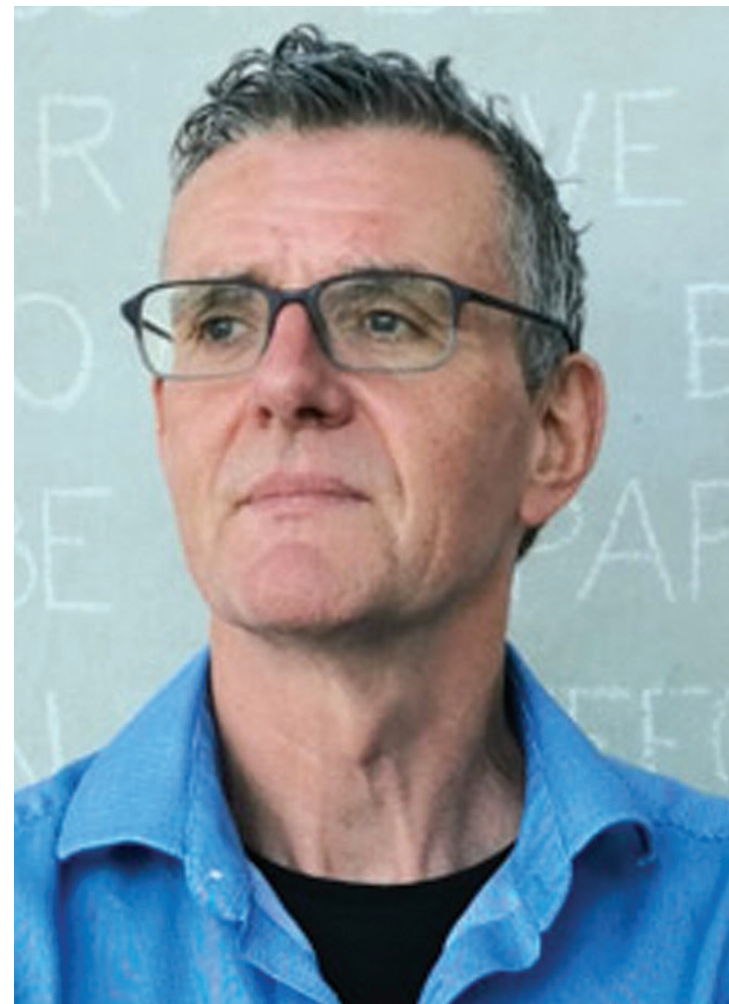
David McGrath is from the Baltinglass area and will have a story published in the New Writers Issue of The Stinging Fly

in November. It's a story set in a pub in rural Ireland. David won the Bare Fiction Prize with a story titled The Donkey Christ of Ballybalt which was set in a similar context.

Patrick Fitzgerald's short stories have appeared in The Dublin Review, Banshee and The Penny Dreadful and he is currently working on a novel. Originally from Ballymoney in Co Wexford, Patrick is a graduate of the School of English at Trinity College.

Paul Lenehan lives in the Arklow area and his short story 'The Pines' was shortlisted for the RT.../Francis MacManus Award in 2021 while his story 'December Swimmers' was shortlisted for Short Story of the Year at the Irish Book Awards. Paul also writes flash fiction and is working on a collection of 100 stories each of 100 words.

Running since 2017, the mentorship programme now has numerous published authors among its alumni, includ-



Paul Lenehan

ing Doireann Ní Ghríofa, Nidhi Zak/Aria Eipe, Fiona Scarlett and Victoria Kennefick. Previous recipients of the mentorship have described the experience as having been invaluable.

Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council,

CLlr Tommy Annesley, said he was pleased that the Council was supporting three local writers to receive professional literary mentoring over the next eight months from acclaimed Irish writers of their choice.

Chief Executive of

Wicklow County Council, Mr Brian Gleeson, stated that he was happy to see Wicklow Arts Office support a vibrant and diverse community of writers of all types and talents to develop their craft, capacity and confidence to thrive.

Wicklow Tidy Towns' Sustainable Energy Community shortlisted for SEAI award

Wicklow Tidy Towns' Sustainable Energy Community (SEC) has been shortlisted as a finalist in the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) Energy Awards 2022 for the award in the Inspirational Energy Community category.

They are among the cohort of energy-conscious businesses and communities that have been selected for their dedication to an energy-efficient way of working. The annual awards recognise and reward excellence in sustainable energy in business, communities, research, buildings, renewables and the public sector. A total of 33 applicants across 10 categories have been shortlisted. Winners will be announced at the national awards ceremony in October, this will return in person for the first time in three years following online ceremonies during Covid.

The successful finalists were chosen for their innovative sustainable energy solutions, inspiring energy action among colleagues and peers and their dedication to the climate action movement.

Wicklow Tidy Towns SEC was set up in 2019 and is focussed on improving energy efficiency and reducing their carbon footprint. In June they hosted



The Energy Awareness Day in De La Salle Pastoral Centre

an Energy Awareness Day in the De La Salle Pastoral Centre where 18 electric vehicles were displayed, plus several trade suppliers of renewable and energy-efficient technologies. A one-stop shop answered questions on the new retrofit grants. Representatives for two proposed offshore Wind Banks also explained their projects. 400 people attended. The success has given volunteers new motivation

for the future. Their vision is to play their role in tackling climate change ambitiously.

Congratulating the entrants and finalists, Fergus Sharkey, Head of Business Supports and Transport with SEAI said: "It's the 19th year of the Energy Awards and each year the SEAI team, and our external VIP Judges, continue to be blown away by the quality of entries, and the grassroots climate

action underway in all pockets of our society.

"We received 107 entries from businesses, communities, and organisations across the country who are leading the movement, reshaping our communities and businesses, and encouraging every one of us through their action. With the urgent need to accelerate climate action in the context of energy supply constraints and rising costs, their work is more important now than ever and we hope they can provide an example to others."

This year's categories include Energy Team or Manager of the Year, Excellence in Energy Research and Innovation, Inspirational Energy Community, Energy in Buildings, Public Sector, Large Business, Small and Medium Business, Innovative Deployment of Renewable Energy, Transport and Residential Energy Upgrades.

For more information on the SEAI Energy Awards see www.seai.ie/energyawards



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Taoiseach praises Council as he opens new Bray homes

Wicklow County Council was highly praised for its housing policies by An Taoiseach, Micheal Martin when he officially opened 31 new social houses at Ard Na Greinne estate in Bray on Friday 9th September.

He stated: "Wicklow County Council is an exemplar in its innovative approach to the delivery of homes, using modern methods and collaborating closely with partners to build a solid pipeline and support early delivery."

Mr Martin also said a number of Affordable Purchase Schemes are now coming on stream and he was delighted that earlier in the week Wicklow County Council approved the

first Local Authority Affordable housing development in the county on Greenhill Road in Wicklow town. It's expected that these 36 homes will be ready early in the New Year. The Taoiseach added:

"I am confident that by working together and delivering more developments like this one, we will realise the ambition of Housing for All and deliver a sustainable housing system into the future, remembering all the time that developments such as this one are about more than just bricks and mortar; they are about providing sustainable communities and good quality homes, allowing people to live independently, confidently and safely in secure surroundings."

He wished all the families and individuals in Ard na Greine the very best for the future, saying: "I hope you enjoy a long and happy time in the heart of this community."

The Taoiseach also commended ABM Design & Build, the developers of Ard na Greine, for their work in constructing these high-quality family homes.

The Ard Na Greinne development is made up of 10 three-bed and 21 two-bed houses. All the houses are highly energy efficient, achieving a BER of A2 using high efficiency air to water heat pumps, resulting in low cost in use. The provision of these homes is among many schemes being developed under



Linda Healy, new resident Orla Flood, Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council Tommy Annesley, and Cllr Melania Corrigan at the opening of the Ard na Greinne housing development in Bray



Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Tommy Annesley, with An Taoiseach Micheal Martin at the opening of 31 new social houses at Ard Na Greinne estate

the Council's Building and Supply Programme.

Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Tommy Annesley, noted that the new houses were built as part of the Council's Rapid Delivery programme, to deliver high quality homes, within reduced delivery timescales and at a competitive cost. The development utilised an infill site within an established community which was sensitively designed to reflect the layout and materials of the surrounding communities.

He pointed out that the development is in close proximity to existing services and has an enhanced open space with a seven aside football pitch and new community garden. There is increased public safety through the public safety through the passive surveillance of new homes over the public open space and new pedestrian paths around the development.

Wicklow County Council Chief Executive, Mr Brian Gleeson, said the 31-unit development at Ard Na Greinne was part of an overall social housing delivery programme that will see Wicklow not only achieve its 2022 targets, but in keeping with the urgency required, achieve most or all of the 2023 targets.

He highlighted the fact that Wicklow County Council will deliver in excess of 600 new houses in 2022, through a variety of methods, in Bray, Greystones, Arklow, Rathdrum, Newtown and Wicklow Town. This successful Housing Delivery Programme was achieved through utilising an innovative approach, available resources and partnership.

The scheme in Ard na Greine was successfully completed by ABM in 17 months despite a Covid shutdown, utilising the Design and Build approach, a more efficient form of contract management which was a successfully implemented policy change for Wicklow County Council.

This will see over 200 units delivered by Wicklow County Council in Arklow and Wicklow Town (opened recently), Rathdrum, Baltinglass, Rathnew, Carnew and Newtown, since 2019.

The Chief Executive noted that the development at the Southern Cross, Bray, of 208 social houses will be completed in 2022.

This, he said, was a large development constructed and delivered by the private sector which is being purchased by Cooperative Housing Ireland.

Mr Gleeson outlined the importance of partnership between Wicklow County Council, Approved Housing Bodies and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage to deliver Wicklow's ambitious Housing For All 2022-2026 programme.

Wicklow sees second strongest price growth, IPAV study reveals

The latest residential property barometer from IPAV (Institute of Professional Auctioneers & Valuers) covering the first half of 2022 shows an overall price increase of 6.36 per cent on the previous six months, roughly the same level of increase recorded in the first half of 2021.

The report also reveals widely different rates of price increases across the country.

It found that the national average rate of house price increases was 6.36pc to €315,061 in the six months to the end of June 2022. That rate of increase is only slightly ahead of the 6pc increase shown in the previous six months.

Of the 41 markets surveyed about half recorded price increases which were less than the national average. In contrast a few markets did record double digit price increases in the half year, and they included some where buyers took advantage of very low prices relative to the national average. So, they had an upward influence on the national average.

In the four-bedroom semi-detached house sector the national average price increased 6.08pc but more than half or 23 markets saw increases below that level.

Only two markets saw double-digit price growth in this house type category. These were Roscommon - up 10.42pc to €198,750 which is still the second lowest price in the country. Wicklow scored the second strongest price growth 10.28pc to €472,000 which is the highest price level for this house type outside Dublin.



Fr Steven E. Boes pictured visiting Carrig Eden in Greystones with Canon David Mungavin, Rachel Harper, Phil Thompson, Aubrey McCarthy, and Jay Bobinac.

New affordable housing scheme in Wicklow Town

Wicklow County Council has voted unanimously to proceed with an affordable housing scheme in Wicklow Town despite some councillors voicing concerns over how the units will be allocated

The scheme is the first of its kind in the county for almost fifteen years and will see 36 affordable houses (12 two-bed and 24 three-bed) constructed for affordable dwelling purchase arrangements at Greenhill Road, Wicklow Town.

Under the scheme, a minimum of 30% of the houses will be reserved for local applicants from Co. Wicklow. This is the maximum percentage permitted by the legislation, the Council's Director of Housing Joe Lane explained. He said that the scheme could be improved and amended in other ways in the future but nothing could be done about the 30% figure.

The houses are to be given to applicants on a 'first come first served' basis, electronically, which several councillors expressed reservations about. Director Lane said that this method is also specified in the Act. An amendment put forward by Cllr Joe Behan (Ind) aimed to change it to a 'lottery' system, but this was put to a vote and defeated.

Cllr Behan was also critical of other aspects of the scheme, calling it a 'sticking plaster' solution to the housing crisis.

"The people who are fortunate enough to get these houses will still owe the council money for part of the equity," he said. "It's a shared ownership scheme rather than an affordable housing scheme. It is not going to bring down the price of houses for peo-

ple who don't qualify for social housing. It in fact could well have the capacity of increasing house prices. What will bring down house prices is supply of social and affordable housing built by the council and private housing built by developers. This is a sticking plaster. If we pass this scheme today we are agreeing that a maximum of ten of these houses can definitely go to Wicklow people, but the rest can go to people from Dublin or elsewhere. So we need to be very, very careful. We are ruined in this county by people coming from Dublin to buy our houses."

He went on to say that "I don't think the 'first come first served' system is fair because it immediately puts people who are not IT savvy at a serious disadvantage. I'm not going to hold the thing up today, I'm not going to say we should stop this. But we better be clear on what we are voting for. We are voting for a situation where only ten houses will go to Wicklow people. We can't guarantee the rest."

Cllr Tom Fortune (Ind) also noted the 'weaknesses' of the scheme but said he was willing to vote for this small scheme of 36 units. "If it was a lot more units I'd be more hesitant to support it," he said.

"This first come first served basis is a serious issue. I think it's grossly unfair," he added. "I would equate it to when tickets go on sale for a popular concert and the tick-

ets are sold out within ten seconds. I see this happening and the danger with it is that people who have a real genuine need may not be able to be as sharp as that. I think the scheme is being rushed.

"Affordable housing is urgently needed right across the county. It's certainly needed right across north Wicklow. The situation in north Wicklow is an absolute disgrace. But there needs to be more consideration put into this first come first served basis."

Chair of the Housing Strategic Policy Committee, Cllr John Snell (Ind), expressed his support for the scheme: "We have waited a long, long time for something like this," he said. "We are inundated with people trying to get a foot on the property ladder within our own county, it is a golden opportunity to be supported."

Cllr Paul O'Brien (Lab) said "We badly need affordable housing for too many hard-working people. They have not been able to get a mortgage or are not on a housing list as they earn too much so they're falling through the cracks. Looking at the property market at the moment with 3 and 4-bedroom homes going at over half a million, I think it is disgraceful, so I want to support this. If we wait for a perfect system we will be waiting for a long time. We cannot do anything about the 30%, what we can do is to send out a clear and a strong message from the council that we providing affordable housing to people that need it."



Patricia Butler, owner of Dower House & Gardens, Ashford, raised €1,600 for the Wicklow Hospice by opening her gardens to the public. Pictured is her grandson Hubert Cogan with volunteer Joseph Doyle from Our Lady's Hospice & Care Services.

'Recommendation on vacant homes tax could help transform town centres'

Last week saw the publication of the report of the Commission on Tax and Welfare, one of the key recommendations of which is a new charge on vacant properties. The report also recommends the replacement of commercial rates with a Site Value Tax.

According to The Green Party, this measure would help to bring life back to our towns and cities by spurring new development on under-used urban land.

Wicklow TD and Green Party Spokesperson on Planning Steven Matthews published a bill on vacancy earlier this year which seeks to bring approximately 50,000 vacant homes back into use.

Speaking on the publication of the report, Deputy Matthews stated "We have a housing crisis and these recommendations would encourage the reuse of vacant and derelict buildings to provide much needed homes. Across our towns and cities there are many thousands of buildings that are suitable for conversion and refurbishment for homes for families and

individuals. Bringing life back to town centres is key a Green Party policy. This is good for local business and for the viability of public transport and other public services."

The Commission's Report recommends a number of progressive changes to our tax and welfare system to secure our public finances, promote the decarbonisation and modernisation of our economy and protect the most vulnerable in our society into the future.

One of the most important recommendations is the establishment of a new 'working-age assistance payment', to provide greater support to low and middle-income workers who are currently struggling with increases in the cost of living. The report also recommends the phasing out of fossil fuel tax subsidies and a continuation of the Government's planned increases to the carbon tax.

A key recommendation to support businesses is to improve access to Research and Development tax credits and reliefs for small businesses and new, innovative start-ups.

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A Wicklow mother's plea for help

'Alex is a beautiful little boy who deserves the help, support and services that will enable him to live a meaningful life'

Rathnew mother Cliona Dunne has penned an open letter pleading for help and expressing how the system has failed her sick child.

Alex is the third child of Cliona and Dave Dunne, and was born just seven weeks before the first Covid lockdown in 2020. Cliona describes this as a "most wonderful time", with their son Ryan and daughter Ella loving their new baby brother.

"The five of us were in our little family bubble. I had so many thoughts of the future, Ella teaching Alex to play football, Ryan being so proud walking Alex into their school on his first day at preschool," Cliona writes.

Cliona, a teacher, went back to work in September 2020, when Alex was nearly eight months old. Because of Covid he had had no development checks. Cliona rang her GP to say she was concerned that Alex wasn't rolling around or sitting up, and was told not to worry.

"It wasn't until a friend's friend, who is a nurse, said that she thought that it seemed like Alex had low muscle tone, that we began 'Alex's journey'."

After seeing a number of consultants between November 2020 and December 2021, Cliona and Dave were eventually told that Alex would need an MRI. Then, one Saturday morning, Alex had a seizure while sitting in his highchair, and Cliona and Dave rushed him to Tallaght for an ECG, which came back as abnormal.

"Alex then started losing skills, like clapping his hands. He was also struggling to eat certain foods. So, an MRI was booked in

for March. Two days later I got a phone call to say that the scan showed significant brain damage. My world collapsed in that minute."

Alex was diagnosed with PVL (Periventricular Leukomalacia). The consultant felt that it might be associated with a genetic disorder.

"Dave and I got our blood taken in May 2022. Because of Covid I went alone and sat in the doctor's office with Alex on my knee to be told that Alex had two genetic deletions and his life would be very uncertain. I was told in a ten-minute appointment that Alex might never walk, talk, or have any type of 'normal' life. I didn't know what his life expectancy was. I still don't. Alex is the only known child in the world to have these two deletions."

Cliona and Dave struggled to balance work with looking after their other children and Ryan with his complex needs.

"Dave and I have no family support, so everything is on us. We have a childminder who comes to the house to mind Alex. We pay her to mind the kids five days a week. We haven't had a holiday or break in six years. We



Cliona and Dave Dunne with their son Alex

haven't had an unbroken night's sleep in months and have no idea, if we ever will. We have tried our best to adapt our house for Alex. We took out a credit union loan, to put down a patio and artificial grass in our back garden. This is so Alex can crawl and sit out in the air, and I can push his buggy directly out from my kitchen to be part of the other kids' play time together. We will be paying this back for years to come. But I was determined to have Alex as much as part of our family this Summer, with privacy and dignity in our home."

Cliona and Dave encountered a number of struggles and obstacles on top of this. A special high-chair took seven months to arrive, so could only be used for a few weeks before Alex had outgrown it. Likewise, splints for Alex's feet took so long to arrive he barely got any use out of them.

"My little boy who

would never walk can now crawl and push himself into a standing position, but his feet aren't shaped properly, and he stands up on his toes. He has achieved all this with no help. Imagine what he could do with therapy? Alex has not received any physiotherapy since Christmas. He is trying to stand on his toes, which he could break at any minute. They've discussed breaking and re-setting his feet. There is currently no physiotherapist in Co. Wicklow. There is a window of opportunity for Alex to potentially walk and develop language skills. His life, our lives will be harder than necessary if Alex doesn't receive help now. I won't accept this for my child. I won't accept this for my family."

Alex also needs a new buggy, which Cliona and Dave have been told not to expect until 2023, while they are still awaiting the results of blood

tests that were done in May.

"The reason I am writing this is to plea and beg for help for our family to mind and care for Alex. Alex is non-verbal, has sensory processing disorder, and autism. He has very significant physical and mental disabilities. These are all facts, but one of the most important facts is that Alex is a beautiful little boy who deserves the help, support and services that will enable him to live a meaningful life. I have asked for some type of support to give me a few hours respite each week. My social worker told me that the waiting list for a once off six week block of three hours a week is months/years off me getting any support. Alex doesn't sleep. He is now waking his older siblings. We are awake for hours every night. How can anyone survive on no sleep? There is night time care available and I need

it desperately if I'm to function as a mum, an employee, a human being.

"I was told last month to apply for a grant to build/adapt our home for

Alex's long-term needs. We have accepted, with a lot of tears for him and us, that Alex will always need additional support and live with us forever. Dave and I work full time (we have no option financially but to work) and we would only receive a grant of approximately 2000 euro. It was suggested I fundraise for it, an interesting concept. How can I fundraise in excess of €200,000 whilst working full time, with three kids and our little Alex requiring round the clock care?

"When is enough, enough? I can't go on with no help but like any Mum I will. I need help now and Alex deserves it! I need anyone who has any sense of justice, kindness and love to help my best little man, Alex."



Cliona and Dave with their children Ella, Ryan and Alex

18th year of the Two Marys

The Two Marys' Memorial Golf Classic has now become one of the largest participating charity golfing events in Leinster.



Pictured are (back row from left to right); Philip Nolan, Paddy Nolan, Fionnuala Nolan, Jason Bradshaw and Martin Nolan, and (front row from left to right); Eadaoin Kinsella, Eileen Horan (Greystones Cancer Support) Liz Nolan and Eileen Morris (Greystones Cancer Support).

This event was set up by family and friends due to the tragic death of the 'Two Marys', namely, Mary Nolan and her daughter, Mary Bradshaw in 2003. They both suffered from Cancer and died within one Week of each other.

With a two-year absence due to Covid, a record entry of 50 teams topped off an outstanding day at the 18th annual golf charity event, known as the Two Marys, which took place in Delgany Golf Club on Friday 1st July 2022.

The format of the competition for this year was two shotgun starts with a four-person scramble team event and the day proved to be an outstanding success with 200 people representing 50 teams taking part.

The winning team were Tom Bradshaw, Mark Behan, Sean O'Toole and Peadar O'Toole.

The total amount raised on the day was €8,130 with the proceeds going to Greystones and District Cancer Support. The Two Marys has now raised over €88,000 for Greystones Cancer Support since starting the event.

"We would like to thank all our Sponsors, especially, Greystones Nursing Home and Delgany Golf Club for their generosity and support.

"The support from our Sponsors enables the event to take place and raise much needed funds for this very worthwhile local charity."



Blue Dolphins Special Olympics athletes joined up with members of Wicklow Sailing Club for three days in September where they enjoyed sailing in a dinghy in Wicklow Harbour and trips out on a rib. They enjoyed it hugely and it was a great success.

Exciting courses at Bray Institute of Further Education

Over recent years many new avenues have opened up to students in pursuit of their dream career.

According to Gabriel Allen, Deputy Principal at Bray Institute of Further Education (BIFE), "Further Education offers a learner, who may not have achieved the CAO points they wanted, the opportunity to gain advanced entry onto honours degree programmes, both in Ireland and abroad. It is also a very supportive route for the mature student.

"Work Experience is an important part of all our courses. All BIFE students have the opportunity to participate in our Erasmus+ programme where they can complete their work experience in European countries such as Spain, Portugal, Finland, Poland, Italy, Germany, Malta and the Czech Republic."

He added, "The comprehensive range of courses available at BIFE provides an excellent opportunity to anyone who wants to advance their qualifications enhance their employment potential or progress their career."

Working as a Chef

BIFE provides many courses in this area for those who are looking to start or develop a career in hospitality to experienced chefs who wish to gain a higher qualification. We will also be running our new "Confectionary, Pastry, Baking and Barista" course again this year.

An Acting or Dance Degree Programme for you?

The emphasis of these courses is on performance in live theatre and in front of camera. Learners explore their creative talents developing original concepts and ideas and performing to live audiences every term with performances taking place in local venues, Black Box Theatre and at Mermaid Arts Centre. Learners will also create a TV Soap as part of their studies. The Higher National Diploma provides a clear pathway

following to a top-up year at University leading to a B.A Hons in Dance or Acting.

Work as a Brewing & Distilling Technician

This new course provides the scientific and technical background into the process of brewing and distilling in a micro-brewery and produce their own brew throughout the year. Additionally, this course enables entry into a first year of a degree course in food science or a science related field within higher education. A part-time module in this area is also available this year.

Do you want to be a DJ?

This is a course for you if you have a passion for DJ Culture and Music Technology, dance music and club culture. If you are mixing, mastering or stepping a beat - you will fit in. If you want to know about this music, if you want to know about this technology, if you want to be able to move people through music, this could be the course for you.

Working with Horses

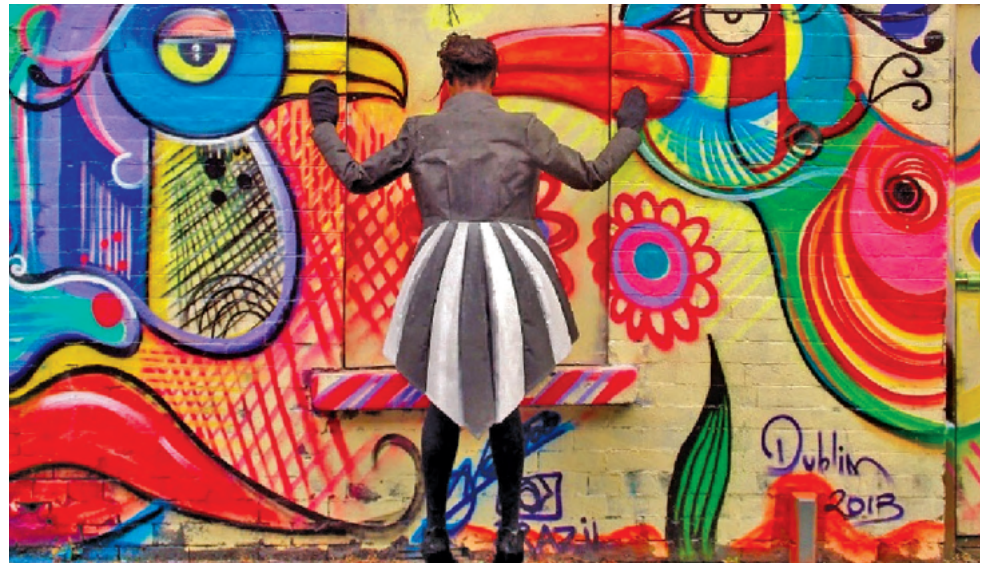
The focus of our Equine Studies Course is to develop the skills to work in the equine industry. This course is run in conjunction with Brennanstown Riding School. Content includes work experience, stable and yard routine, equine nutrition, equine anatomy and physiology. Horse Riding Instruction will be a key element of the course.

Working with Small Animals

Our Animal Care courses will allow learners to develop the knowledge and skills to competently handle a range of animals in a work environment and pursue a career in the animal care industry. Work Experience is an integral part of the courses providing practical, hands-on experience. All courses link to higher education progression.

Would you like to work in a Pharmacy?

Working in a busy atmosphere like the pharmacy retail sector is a



rewarding and important job. There is a big demand from Pharmacies for skilled counter staff. If learners are considering pharmacy retail as a career option, Bray Institute have a number of courses to help them achieve their goals

Working as a Healthcare Assistant

If Learners are interested in working in the Care Industry, BIFE provides the recognised qualification necessary for working as a Health Care Assistant in a variety of settings, including hospitals; day and residential care palliative care and the home. The course equips the carer with the knowledge and skills necessary to work in this rewarding role as a member of the care team. It is suitable for those wishing to embark on

care in caring and those already working in the sector who wish to gain a recognised qualification.

A Career working in Health Spa might well suit you

Luxury hotels, cruise ships and many complementary health centres are seeking qualified staff to work in their Health Spas. With the renewed emphasis on Wellness, therapies such as Swedish Massage, Indian Head Massage, Reflexology and Aromatherapy are in big demand. Bray Institute Learners can study these therapies at Bray Institute in the mornings and gain a valuable ITEC Diploma, which is the internationally recognised standard. BIFE graduates have had outstanding success in making careers in this field of complementary therapies.

A Career in Architecture?

This course prepares learners for entry to degree courses in Architecture. The Principles of Design & Construction are explored through design projects and model making. The end-of-year portfolio created can be used for entry to various third-level courses.

New Courses at BIFE

BIFE is introducing the following new courses this September:

- Special Needs Assistant (Primary & Post-Primary)

- Professional Make-Up & Hairdressing
- Tourism with Airline Studies
- Security & Pre-Garda
- Confectionary, Barista, Pastry & Baking,
- Brewing & Distilling Technology
- Emergency Care Studies

"There are also many opportunities for mature students who want to break into the world of paid employment. All courses have valuable accreditation and offer progression routes to higher education," said Allen.

Places are still available on these courses but do hurry as they are filling fast. You can call the Institute during office hours on 01-2829668 or log on to www.bife.ie and apply online.

'Think Talent' with launch of support programmes from Skillnet Ireland

Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Simon Harris joined Skillnet Ireland last week to launch their 'Think Talent' campaign.

The campaign encourages companies to explore how talent development can deliver their business goals and to engage with the 3,000 business support programmes available as part of Skillnet Ireland's Autumn schedule.

Launching the programme, Minister Harris said, "I am delighted to support the launch of Skillnet Ireland's 'Think Talent' campaign. Talent development is vital in driving business success and Skillnet Ireland has an excellent track record in partnering with businesses to understand their skills needs. This campaign and the wide range of upskilling pro-

grammes available this Autumn will help a record number of businesses to ensure they have the right talent in place now and into the future."

Speaking at the launch Paul Healy, Chief Executive of Skillnet Ireland, said "As businesses face significant challenges to remain competitive, it's never been more critical to 'think talent'. Our nationwide campaign is calling on businesses of all sizes to consider how the right skills can help them thrive. Whether it is boosting innovation, tackling digitalisation or building sustainability skills, our Skillnet Business Networks and other dedicated talent

initiatives will help businesses on that journey."

Skillnet Ireland partners with industry bodies and businesses to create high-impact talent solutions that are responsive to business needs on the ground. The 'Think Talent' campaign highlights the wide range of supports available from Skillnet Ireland in areas including digitalisation, climate action, leadership development and workforce innovation.

More than 3,000 programmes are available to businesses this Autumn including many accredited programmes in artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, energy management, supply chain and logistics, fintech, organic farming, retail, aviation, robotics, animation, design and advanced manufacturing.

72 Skillnet Business Networks operate nationwide providing subsidised talent development programmes to businesses of all sizes, from sole traders to the larger employers. Companies are encouraged to engage with the Skillnet Business Networks operating in their sector or region. For more information on the 'Think Talent' campaign and the business supports available from Skillnet Ireland, visit <https://www.skillnetireland.ie/think-talent/>.

A full list of all the Skillnet Business Networks is available at <https://www.skillnetireland.ie/our-networks/>



Pictured L-R are Chief Executive of Skillnet Ireland Paul Healy, Skillnet Ireland Director of Policy and Communications Tracey Donnery and Minister Simon Harris.



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.



The youth theatre that's Making Waves in Greystones

Founded in 2018, Making Waves Youth Theatre is a non-profit, inclusive community theatre group for teenagers, generously sponsored by Ross McParland of the Whale Theatre and supported by Tiglin. Founded in 2018 by Ciarán Coogan and Aileen Walton, its aim is to provide young people from Greystones and environs with a fun and supportive creative space in which to learn about and make great theatre through workshops, productions and attending other theatrical productions. Making Waves is a registered charity.



Now, Making Waves Youth Theatre is extending its membership to new members aged 12-20 years - launching a new Junior Theatre Group and extending its Senior Theatre Group - and are welcoming new members throughout the month of September.

First of all, Making Waves are launching a new Junior Theatre Group for 12-13 year olds, which will meet on Sundays at 1-2pm at Coolnagreina, Trafalgar Road, Greystones. If you're interested in becoming part of an exciting and dynamic creative group, learning new skills and flexing your dramatic

muscles, please email Joanne O'Shea at youththeatre.greystones@gmail.com for more details.

"Our other great news is that we're extending Making Waves Senior Theatre Group membership to young people aged 14-20 years! Two Senior groups meet on Sundays at 2.30-4.30pm or on Mondays at 7-9pm, also at Coolnagreina. If you'd like to register your interest in participating in workshops, or to sign up now to join one of these exciting theatre groups, please email Joanne O'Shea at youththeatre.greystones@gmail.com.



Whether you're interested in acting or in one of the many important elements that go into a great theatre production - sound, lighting, set design, costumes, props, make-up, etc. - Making Waves will have a place for you."

2022-2023 Membership enrolment is open until Friday, 30 September.

The group is facilitated

by Ciarán Coogan (actor / playwright / theatre director) and Aoife Connelly (drama teacher / theatre director), and supported by Aileen Walton (theatre director), Katie Lacey Curtis and Archer Bradshaw (former members and Youth Leaders). The administrator is Joanne O'Shea, a solicitor and community volunteer.

Making Waves' previous productions at the Whale Theatre include Juliet of Verona, a new version of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet, and Lost in Transit, both by Ciarán Coogan; Shakespeare's The Tempest, adapted by Aileen Walton; and First Takes, an evening of scenes and sketches.

Father and son duo embark on an epic Irish musical journey together

In a brand-new series of *Sli na mBeaglaoich* starting on *tg4*, father and son duo Breannan and Cormac O Beaglaoich will once again take on an epic Irish musical journey together in their beloved campervan, *Beauty*. This time around, they will travel along a stunning route through Cork all the way to Wicklow, immersing themselves in the rich musical and cultural tapestry of the South and Southeast of Ireland.



Father and son duo Breannan and Cormac O Beaglaoich

In the fourth and final episode, which will air on 16th October, they will explore Wicklow.

They travel across from Passage East and arrive in Arthurstown in Co. Wexford before travelling on to meet the infamous harmonica playing Murphy brothers John and Pip in Carrick-on-Bannow. From there, they travel towards Wexford town to meet old friend Stephen James Smith who chats about his life there since he moved from Dublin, before he recites one of his poems about the area.

At Kilmore Quay, harpists Shelly O'Grady and Una Walsh play stunning few tunes in a local fishing supplies shop while sheltering from the rain outside. An interesting visit to the home of Paddy Berry provides some insight into the history of the ancient language of Yola and Paddy joins his brother Phil to sing a local song. Breannan and Cormac pay a visit to Eganis of Parkridge which is just over the border into Wicklow and listen to some music from Paddy and Larry Egan with Ciaran Somers and Dave Sheridan.

A kayaking excursion on Blessington Lake with Brian McGloinn gives us a glimpse of the stunning Wicklow Mountains and lakes before its time to relax and reflect on the journey in the *Bosca Beatha* - an outdoor sauna based in Glenmalur Valley. Their final visit of the series is to the home of Mary Maxwell in the Glen of Imal where they learn about the mumming tradition of the Eastern Counties, before watching a set dance and some more great music.

Throughout the series, they take on a route through four of Ireland's most stunning coastal counties, in search of great stories, tunes, songs and of course, meeting with some incredible characters along the way.

Setting off from their home in Kerry towards West Cork in episode one, travelling all the way towards East Cork in episode two, then onto Waterford for episode three, and finishing in Wexford and Wicklow for episode four, their journey will take in some of the most beautiful, quirky, and historically interesting sites along this stunning coastal route which takes in two of our major Gaeltacht areas in search of great stories, tunes, songs and of course, meeting with some incredible characters along the way.

Sli na mBeaglaoich will be broadcast on Sunday nights at 9.30pm, beginning on 25th September 2022.

Are you a creative thinker who wants to tackle food waste, fast fashion, and climate change?

Do you want to be part of a group of like-minded individuals tackling social or environmental challenges in Ireland? Maybe you've had a brainwave that could really solve a social problem such as Food Waste, Fast Fashion, Climate Change, Education, Housing or Mental Health but you're unsure what to do next?

If so, now is your chance - but you have to act quickly as the deadline is fast approaching for the upcoming 'Champion Changemakers' Weekends, hosted by the Community Enterprise Association Ireland. Visit the CEAI website before midnight on September 21st 2022 to get involved as a participant, sponsor or a volunteer - all that's required is a passion for positive change!

Entitled Champion Changemakers, the ambition is to find solutions which will directly impact the lives of people in local communities around Ireland and promote the role of social enterprise in local communities. Individuals will not need to have any experience of business or social enterprise, just a passion to make a real difference in their own communities and beyond. Ideas will be judged under one of the following three categories: Environment and Climate Action; Economic Inequality; Human Wellbeing.

Examples of successful social enterprises already in Ireland addressing issues such as food poverty, social housing or environmental matters include Thriftify, Food Cloud, Reuzi, Clar ICH and Too Good To Go.

To enter, visit Community Enterprise Association Ireland's website by midnight on September 21st, to find out where your local weekend is being hosted and details on how to sign-up. Anybody interested will be given the opportunity to work with local experienced mentors including: Conor Lynch, Digital Business Designer and Entrepreneur; Bernard Kenny, Chairperson at Core Ireland; Gary O'Meara, CEO of Meath Enterprise and Entrepreneur; Yemi Adenuga, Meath County Councillor; Keith Finglas, Chief Success Officer at Waypoint.

These mentors will help you to develop your idea and prepare you to pitch it to the panel of experts in Meath

Enterprise on the weekend of September 23rd 2022. These experts include: Gary O'Meara, CEO of Meath Enterprise and Entrepreneur; Conor Cogan, Owner of Bearded Man; John Cunningham, Managing Director of Epicom Food.

Finalists will be identified from each region and those shortlisted will participate in the national event on October 20th 2022. The overall winning individual or group will receive a prize bursary with an estimated value of €10,000 which will set them on their founder journey towards the establishment of a sustainable, successful and impact driven social enterprise. The bursary features a range of key services and supports including legal advice, financial services, mentoring, training and learning supports.

Meath Enterprise, located in Navan, Meath, is inviting applicants from Wicklow along with the entire Leinster region and the midlands.

Champion Changemakers will contribute to Ireland's progress in overcoming challenges facing communities nationwide including youth unemployment, poverty, social injustice and the climate crisis, which will in turn help mobilise efforts to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Agenda by 2030.

Gary O'Meara, Chair of CEAI, CEO of Meath Enterprise said: "The development of socially conscious and commercially focused not-for-profit enterprises has the potential to revolutionise how we tackle societal and environmental challenges in a more inclusive and sustainable way and Meath Enterprise is excited to work with CEAI to support the ideas and ambitions of social innovators and entrepreneurs so that they can develop financially viable and impactful social enterprises and become 'Champion Changemakers' in their communities and regions."

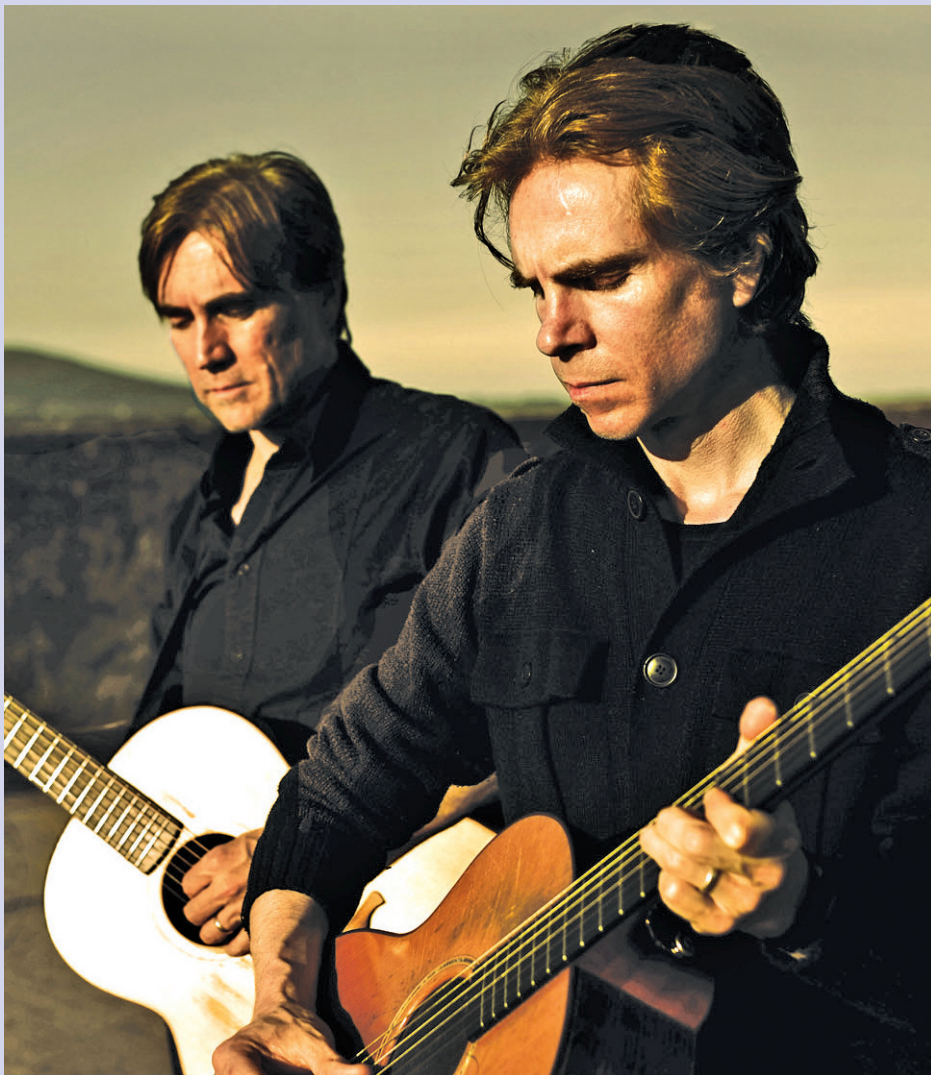


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The 4 Of Us

Whale Theatre, Friday 30th September
& Saturday 1st October

Blending contemporary roots with rock, the award-winning band was formed by brothers Brendan and Declan Murphy from the border town of Newry.

Unable to tour during lockdown, thousands have enjoyed logging on to FB Live to see them perform tunes from 2016's career highlight SUGAR ISLAND right back to their 1989 debut SONGS FOR THE TEMPTED, which first put them on the pop map with MARY, as well as their latest lockdown inspired radio hit WAITING GAME.

The regular rehearsing required for each live-streamed show has helped keep the brothers match fit, as Brendan explains: "Considering that we've been off the road for a year and a half now, I actually think that we've got better, and while performing online is great, there's nothing like the thrill of playing live on stage."

8pm (doors 7pm) SOLD OUT. Register details for returns at www.whaletheatre.ie or call the booking office on 01 2010550 to book.

Culture Night at The Courthouse

September 23rd, 7:30 pm. Doors open 7pm. Free

Culture Night, Friday September 23rd brings to The Courthouse Arts Centre in Tinahely a multi-dimensional experience of sound and vision with music on stage from performers Mark Caplice, Layzee Gold and Sam Ali; while visual artist, Liing Heaney will animate the townscape buildings with projections from her CGI film making, exploring Tomnafinnoge Woods in a digital space.

As we emerge from cycles of lockdown, embracing again our social and cultural identities, giving voice to these emerging music and visual artists encapsulates the feeling of Culture Night 2022 at The Courthouse.

These young musicians were chosen for their unique energy in a live performance setting; combining with Liing Heaney's visual art to emphasise the multi-dimensional nature of The Courthouse Arts Centre space.

The artists will start their performances from 7.30pm and, time allowing, perform ensemble for a finale.

Line up

Layzee Gold, comprising Philip and Jamie Nolan are an innovative, indie-pop group emerging from Tinahely. Making their way on to the Irish Music scene with multiple Spotify Editorial playlist placements in

2020 and a headline show in the Academy 2.

Sam Ali is an artist with music of gravity, lyrics of sincerity, of complex and far-ranging themes from the uncertainty of life, and a voice that captures a genuine and powerful emotion that everyone can relate to.

Mark Caplice is a multi award-winning songwriter/artist/producer from Baltinglass, County Wicklow. Having spent many years writing and producing songs for other artists, one of his latest is the beautiful rendition of Jim Croce's 'Time in a Bottle' with Irish artist Megan O'Neill, for popular Netflix series Firefly Lane. He was also co-writer of 'Clothes Between' with Grigory Leps which won Song of the Year and a Golden Gramophone in Russia in 2021.

Arts Office announces new additions for Culture Night

With just a few days to go until Culture Night on Friday, 23rd September, Wicklow County Arts Office is excited to announce six new additions to the Wicklow programme.

Celebrating culture, creativity and the arts, Culture Night is an all-island annual event which promotes the rich and varied culture we treasure and seek to nurture. All activities and events as part of the programme are free of charge.

Wicklow County Arts Office has created a special programme for Baltinglass to mark the launch of Creative Places Baltinglass, an Arts Council initiative which seeks to build upon existing cultural strengths to create a new momentum.

In Fatima Hall, the programme line-up features a 'Bodhran Buzz' family workshop where participants are taught how to hold the bodhran, and the stick, and master the basics of getting the first few beats. This will be followed by a classical recital titled 'Songs to the Moon' with harpist Aisling Ennis, soprano Catherine Redding and Robert Barrett.

The evening will be rounded off by trad sensations Killa showcasing their unique brand of trad fusion.

Baltinglass Library will host a range of activities perfect for creative minds including a Felt Making Workshop with Tamzen Lundy and two Painting Workshops with local artist Maura O'Halloran.

Joining the Wicklow programme are Bray Choral Society and Purple House Choir who will provide interactive performances in Bray that are especially

designed for newcomers so everyone can come along, join in and have some fun.

Bray Literary Festival will present 'Reviving Forgotten Women'. This celebration in music and poetry will take place in Bray Library with performances by poet and songwriter Catherine Ann Cullen and songwriter and multi-instrumentalist Imogen Gunner who will reflect on the women of 100 years ago and their continuing influences on our lives today.

Signal Arts Centre invites people to celebrate the arts through the ages. Beginning at 2pm with workshops, dress up and storytelling for children, the evening programme will feature poetry recitals, classical guitar, and an exhibition of works by Gaby Browett.

Though the Whale Theatre's Generations of Jazz and Culture Night at Killrudey House may be booked out, there's still plenty in store across Wicklow County including:

• **Dunlavin Market Square:** performance by Mobile Music Machine, an interactive cookery demo with celebrity chef Catherine Fulvio and local singer and musician Amy Barrett in concert

• **Blessington:** Bangers & Crash Duo and Yurodny Ensemble presented by West Wicklow Chamber Music Festival at The Avon.

• **Bray Sea Front:** Performances by Abacus, Susan O'Neill in concert, and extended opening hours

for the Blacker Than Any Blindness exhibition by artist Michael Durand presented by Mermaid Arts Centre.

• **Calary Church:** A Night of Music featuring award-winning Wicklow classical musicians

• **Rathdrum:** Jazz at St. Saviour's presented by Bray Jazz Festival

• **Tinahely Courthouse Arts Centre:** Dimensional, a multi-dimensional experience of sound and vision

• **Wicklow Libraries:** a jam-packed programme of activities and workshops for children and adults at Carnew, Dunlavin, Rathdrum, and Wicklow Town Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Tommy Annesley, said he was delighted to see this year's.

Wicklow Culture Night programme expand further to feature over 32 events, representing local arts, creativity and citizens. Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council, Mr Brian Gleeson, stated that he was pleased to have 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 and Sport which has enabled the Wicklow Arts Office to produce such a varied programme across County Wicklow.

For more information and to book, visit www.culturenight.ie/wicklow.

Ashford singer releases charity song for Ukraine Crisis Appeal

Ashford singer-songwriter Shay Anthony Lea has released a song on Bandcamp, 'Bohdana's Prayer' (or Song for Ukraine) with all proceeds going to the Irish Red Cross Ukraine Crisis Appeal.

The song was launched last week, and is accompanied by a video with enthralling hand-drawn animation. Bohdana is a traditional girl's name in Ukraine and translates as 'gift of God'.

"I was quite upset by the events that were unfolding day by day in Ukraine before and after Christmas 2021. I was so shocked when the conflict began on 24th February 2022 and was moved to write 'Bohdana's Prayer' to somehow express my deep sadness at these events," says Shay.

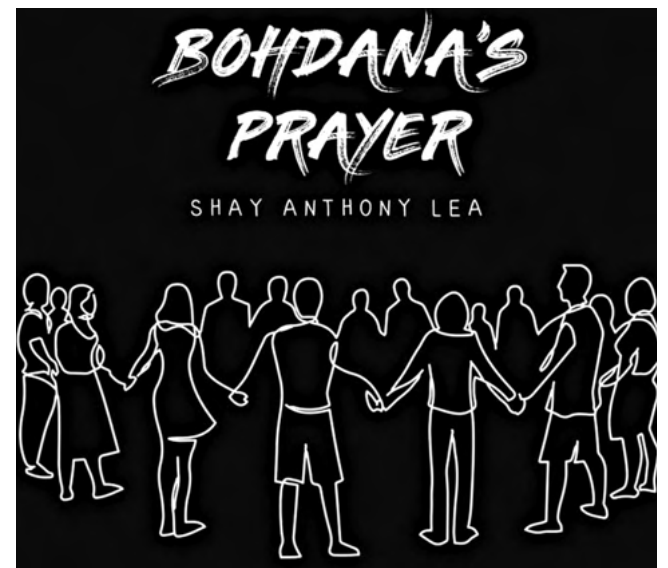
"Bohdana is a young girl who is sheltering in a makeshift bunker with her mother, sister and grandparents. Her father is not with them, we can guess why. The bombs continue to fall around them, and the song mirrors her upset, her fears and total shock and confusion at what is going on in her country. Her prayer is for an end to fighting and a longing for peace. The words cause us to empathise with her and with her we too hope for a return to normality, to her country and her home. We share her heartbreak for all the people who have suffered, including her own family. The song translates the global, universal struggle against conflict and suffering into the personal. At

the song's end we are drawn to join with the many voices, and especially the joined hands, affirming their right to peace and to freedom."

The Irish Red Cross said they would like to thank Shay for composing "this beautiful and thought-provoking song, the proceeds of which are very kindly being donated to the IRC Ukraine Crisis Appeal.

'Bohdana's Prayer' wonderfully captures the mindset of a child caught up in the current crisis and we are so grateful to Shay for his generosity and for helping to remind us of the terrible impact conflicts of this kind can have."

To listen to the song, go to <https://shayanthonylea.bandcamp.com>



Tommy Fleming at the Holy Redeemer

Much loved singer-songwriter Tommy Fleming has just released the latest single from his album "All These Years". 'Open Sky' is a thoughtful guitar led number based around the feelings love brings on. Tommy released the single due to the positive response he has received whilst singing it live.

Tommy is about to embark on a nationwide tour this autumn, which includes a concert at the Holy Redeemer Church in Bray on 25th November. Fresh back from his summer break and looking forward to reaching new

horizons, Tommy's intimate Christmas and Church tour is coming to a venue near you starting in October.

Let Tommy take you into his world with songs from his vast repertoire, spanning thirty plus years.

Prepare to be entertained by the popular world-renowned Voice of Ireland during this spell-binding journey of your favourite traditional Irish airs, modern classics and musical theatre.

Tommy Fleming sings

from his soul - He breathes raw emotion into each and every song, be it his own arrangement, a classic cover or a dynamic duet. Fluent and flawless, his unique voice has touched the hearts of many, right across the globe.

For over three decades, Tommy has shared his gift of singing and has enjoyed sharing the stage with other icons of the music industry such as Elaine Paige, Kenny Rogers, Christy Hennessy, Phil Coulter, De Dannan, Mark Vincent and Vince Gill and many more.

Unique, honest, emotive, powerful, an instrument of passion, dynamic are some of the terms which have been used to describe his voice - a voice that has reached out through a myriad of genres, sometimes difficult to classify, but there is no doubt whatsoever that whether it is his infamous arrangement of 'Danny Boy' or his latest releases of "Fiddlers Green" or "Sweet Sixteen", Tommy Fleming delivers each song with a polished yet discreet finesse that casts magic over a spellbound audience.

Fluent and flawless, his unique voice has touched the hearts of many - Tommy's live show is an experience not to be missed.

To buy tickets go to www.tommyfleming.com



Tommy Fleming



SongTales presents TREEHOUSE

Whale Theatre, Thursday 22nd September, 6.30pm (doors 6pm). Tickets €10 or €35 for Family of 4 and available at www.whaletheatre.ie or call the booking office on 01 2010550 to book.

Are you ready to unleash the magic of music? Join family favourites Ceol Connected in the treetops where a toe-tapping, tale-telling, hip-shaking hooley awaits!

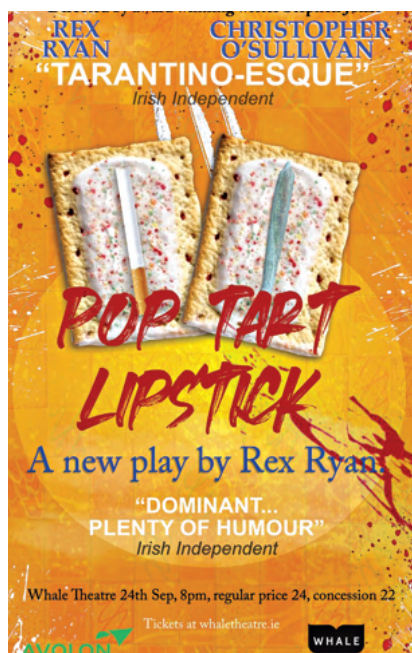
With mesmerising music and songs by some of Ireland's finest musicians and singers, you can look forward to a wonderfully interactive show that will have audiences of all ages hooked. Ceol Connected are no strangers to Greystones - they have enthralled family audiences at Whale Theatre with touring productions including A Winter Wish, Return of Spring, and The Quiet Tree.

Now it's time to venture to the treetops in this unmissable show. Featuring musicians Thomas Johnston (whistles and vocals), Áine McGeeney (fiddle and vocals), Seán O'Meara (guitar and vocals), Stephen Markham (keys and sound design) and Colm Phelan (bodhrán and percussion). This event also includes launch of the brand new 'SongTales presents TREEHOUSE' album!

Suitable for children ages 3+. Approx Duration: 45 minutes

Pop Tart Lipstick

Whale Theatre, Saturday 24th September, 8pm (doors 7pm).



Pop Tart Lipstick is a new play written by Rex Ryan and directed by Stephen Jones.

Harris has been released from Mount Joy Prison. John has recently secured his first real job as a bus driver and is pursuing a new way of life. Harris has an escape plan, some lipstick, a stash of stolen drugs and a ticket to Walt Disney World he can't use...The two men reunite on this one fateful night where they must make the biggest decision of their lives... and eat some Pop Tarts.

Approx Duration: 70 mins (no interval)

Tickets are €24/€22 and are available at www.whaletheatre.ie or call the booking office on 01 2010550 to book.



Pictured are Members of the Comhaltas Bhre Under 12s Grúpa Ceoil who came second in the Wicklow Fleadh in May earlier this year. Join Comhaltas Bhre this September to begin (or continue) your traditional Irish Music Journey! Small in-person group classes are available in tin whistle, concertina, uilleann pipes, harp, flute, fiddle, bodhrán and banjo (subject to numbers) and begin on 29th September in Greystones. Children must be at least 7 years old to begin tin whistle or concertina classes with Comhaltas while older children and young people may prefer to begin with one of our other instruments such as concertina, bodhrán flute or pipes, particularly if they have already begun to play music or have any of these instruments at home. Comhaltas Bhre does not have instruments available to borrow, but highly recommend Wicklow Libraries Instrument Loan programme. To find out more information and to register your wish to begin classes, go to www.bcce.ie

Wicklow walkers invited to join walking festival

Follow me up to Carlow may be an old marching tune associated with times past, but the title is very apt today as it is the call being issued to Wicklow walkers by Carlow Tourism to walkers of all standards as it announces details of the Carlow Autumn Walking Festival 2022.



Ashlea Cox enjoys a hike on the Blackstairs Mountains at the launch of the Carlow Autumn Walking Festival

With a selection of 17 stunning landscapes walks to choose from, including The Blackstairs Mountains, Mount Leinster, Altamont Gardens, the Kilbrannish Forest Trails and the Barrow Valley between St Mullins and Graiuenamanagh.

All walks are led by knowledgeable local guides from Tullow Mountaineering Club, Blackstairs Ramblers and local walking enthusiasts and are of varying duration from 1.5hrs to 7 hrs. Launching the festival, Chairman of Carlow Tourism Michael Walsh said: "Walking has become a very popular pastime over the past two years, and we expect to see an increase in the number of people visiting us this year. We look forward to welcoming returning walkers and many new visitors to Carlow for our annual walking festival."

Carlow is a gem in terms of spectacular scenery with the walking festival offering visitors the opportunity to walk through some of these

"What better way to start a weekend in early autumn than to take a walk with a title as inviting as 'The Magic, Myth and Moonlight under the

Stars'. This first walk of the weekend, which commences at 6.30pm on the Friday, 30 September, is a great way for people to switch off for the weekend, step out of their comfort zones and try something out of the ordinary. Putting on your boots after sunset can make for a great adventure and no better place than on the Blackstairs Mountains which takes on a whole new atmosphere in darkness. Walkers will enjoy spectacular views of the lowlands of Carlow."



Bob Monahan, Blackstairs Ramblers Club, Geraldine Dunne, Tullow Mountaineering Club, Brian O'Donovan, Chairman of Carlow County Council, Ashlea Cox, Eileen O'Rourke, CEO of Carlow Tourism and Joe Codd, Tullow Mountaineering Club

Stars'. This first walk of the weekend, which commences at 6.30pm on the Friday, 30 September, is a great way for people to switch off for the weekend, step out of their comfort zones and try something out of the ordinary. Putting on your boots after sunset can make for a great adventure and no better place than on the Blackstairs Mountains which takes on a whole new atmosphere in darkness. Walkers will enjoy spectacular views of the lowlands of Carlow."

"We hope the variety we have included has something for everyone, be it the walk with well-known biologist and RTÉ personality Éanna Ní Lamhna, who leads a walk around John's Hill discovering the habitats and flora and fauna of this special area on Saturday, 1 October, the photographic walk in Kilbrannish Forest North Recreation Area led by Richard Smyth LIPF, or the outdoor mindfulness meditation walk in Altamont Gardens led by mindfulness expert Jack Byrne, who will provide down-to-earth and practical tips to reconnect for improved mental and physical health and psychological well-being."

Concluding Michael Walsh noted "By introducing our county to walkers of all ages and abilities, we hope we are playing our part in encouraging more people to enjoy the splendour of the great outdoors whilst reaping the health benefits associated with walking."

For further information on the walks, starting points and rules of partici-

pation and to book into the walks, log onto www.carlowtourism.com/walkingfestival or phone 059-9130411. Details of

special accommodation packages are available at www.carlowtourism.com/specialoffers

The Carlow Autumn

Walking Festival has been supported by Carlow County Council under the Festival and Events Scheme.

RECRUITMENT



Foróige, 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 Foróige 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 Foróige

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 Foróige 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 Foróige 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/ydp_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.

PLANNING

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

Anthony Whelan & Niamh McMahon seek permission for the conversion of existing attic space to new storage space (non-habitable status), 4 no. rooflights to front of house, 1 no. rooflight to rear of house, internal alterations and all associated site works at 9 Glenheron Park, Greystones, Co. Wicklow, A63 W923. 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

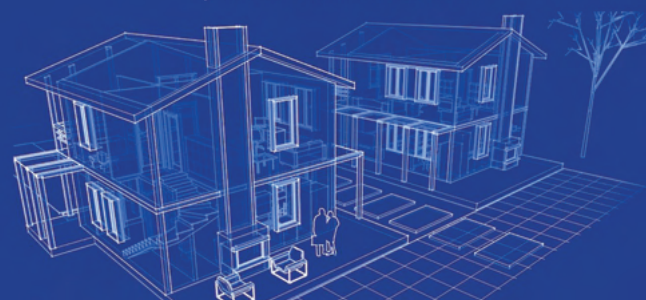
I, Scott Halterman, intend to apply for retention permission for development at Crannog, Ballynacarrig, Britas Bay, A67 F594. The development will consist of retention order of existing extension to side of house. The planning application may be inspected, or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy, at the offices of the planning authority during its public opening hours. A submission or observation in relation to the application may be made in writing to the planning authority on payment of the prescribed fee, €20, within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the planning application, and such submissions or observations will be considered by the planning authority in making a decision on the application. The planning authority may grant permission subject to or without conditions, or may refuse to grant permission.

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

We David and Eva Rice are seeking planning permission to build our family home, a single storey cottage type dwelling with associated Domestic Waste Water Treatment System, at Dunran Hill, Newtownmountkennedy, Co. Wicklow. The planning application may be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy at the offices of Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Wicklow Town 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.

ATTENTION Architects, Planners & Builders

Reach the widest readership for your planning notices in County Wicklow with Wicklow Times
Call 01 286 9111 or email paoline@localtimes.ie



Wicklow's National Women's Enterprise Day event is launched

Irish women entrepreneurs' self belief continues to grow

Nina Carberry, Kate Dempsey & Tara Lane are just some of the names lined up for this year's event in the Keadeen Hotel, Newbridge, Co. Kildare

Research has shown that Irish women's belief in their ability to run a successful business is continuing to grow as this year's National Women's Enterprise Day (NWED) was launched. The initiative of the Local Enterprise Offices, now in its 16th year, will take place on Thursday, 13th October with the aim of encouraging female entrepreneurship and supporting women in business across the country.



Vibeke Delahunt, Head of Enterprise at LEO Wicklow

The research, part of the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) for 2021, showed that 49% of women surveyed believed they had the necessary skills and knowledge to start a business. This was up from 39% in 2018. The report also highlighted that Ireland has the third highest rate for early-stage women entrepreneurs across European countries, with over 1,400 women starting a new business in Ireland every month.

Early-stage women entrepreneurs in Ireland are mainly focused on the customer services sector with 64% of those surveyed working in that area. The report showed a significant growth in export customers for these businesses, with 26% of customers of these early-stage startups based abroad, up from 15% in 2019 highlighting how they have diversified their markets during Covid.

The theme of this year's National Women's Enterprise Day is "Our Future, Our Way" which will be reflected in the 16 physical events taking place across the country, supported by Enterprise Ireland and the Local Authorities.

This year the joint Kildare & Wicklow LEO event is being hosted in Co. Kildare in the stunning Keadeen Hotel, Newbridge. The event starts at mid-day on Thursday 13th October where we will be joined by MC Susan Keogh, Nina Carberry (Guest Speaker, entrepreneur, retired jockey and TV personality), LEO Wicklow's Leading Light entrepreneur Kate Dempsey (Aqualicense Limited) and LEO Kildare's Leading Light Tara Lane (Centrepiece Rosettes). Lunch will be served and the event will conclude at 4pm. Tickets are priced at €25 and can be bought online at <https://bit.ly/3Dl1amF>

Vibeke Delahunt, Head of Enterprise at LEO Wicklow, said: "National Women's Enterprise Day has become a flagship event for women entrepreneurs and businesswomen every year. While the past two years saw successful online celebrations, it really is special to be back with sixteen in person events across the country, and some amazing speakers and inspirational businesswomen. If you have that itch to start a business, or maybe you are already running a business, then this is the event for you. It can help you grow your network, find out what supports are available and learn from those who have gone before. No matter where you are in the country there is an event on your doorstep so get registered and be a part of Ireland's biggest celebration of women in business!"

Carol Gibbons, Divisional Manager, Regions and Local Enterprise with Enterprise Ireland said: "Enterprise Ireland is delighted to support National Women's Enterprise Day, particularly as we are seeing



Prof Tim McDonnell, consultant respiratory physician and Chair COPD Support Ireland, Deputy Jennifer Whitmore, and Sarah O'Connor, CEO of Asthma Society of Ireland, pictured at the launch of the 'Love Your Lungs' campaign to mark World Lung Day

Love Your Lungs campaign launched

Ahead of World Lung Day on Sunday September 25, the Irish Lung Health Alliance, a coalition of charities working to promote healthy lungs, has urged members of the public to take five steps to 'Love Your Lungs'.

Dr Marcus Butler, Consultant Respiratory Physician at the Irish Lung Health Alliance, says "We know from most recent statistics from the Central Statistics Office that the deaths of approximately a quarter of the 33,000 people who died last year were due to lung-related disease. But the good news is that there are steps that each of us can take to minimise our risk of lung problems in the future."

"Firstly, get vaccinated. There are a range of vaccines/boosters to protect against lung disease. These include the 'flu vaccine, the pneumonia vaccine and the COVID-19 vaccine."

"Secondly, try to quit smoking. It's far from easy but smokers can double their chances of success by making a quit plan and reaching out to your local smoking cessation

clinic or calling the HSE Quit team on Freephone 1800 201 203. Prescription medication and over-the-counter nicotine replacements can further boost success rates in quitting for good."

"Thirdly, avoid poor-quality air. Whether its fumes from traffic, smoking, heating or cleaning materials, or airborne allergens from pets, plants, dust mites and dampness/mould, you can do something about it. Why not think of car-sharing, using protection measures when cleaning, banning pets from your bedroom, and having good ventilation in indoor spaces if risky fumes and dusts could be present?"

"Fourthly, you are what you eat. A diet rich in fruit, vegetables, whole grains, nuts and fish, alongside foods with low-salt, low-fat dairy and healthy polyunsaturated

and monounsaturated fats, will reduce the prospect of ill-health including lung disease.

"Finally, shake those hips. Regular physical exercise reduces the risk of chronic conditions. Of course, lung disease makes people breathless much more quickly, but tolerable or mildly uncomfortable breathlessness is really healthy for even badly-diseased lungs. It improves outcomes, including heart outcomes, in people compared with those leading more sedentary lifestyles."

"The key is to take frequent breaks during exercise to catch your breath, then go again. Talk to your GP, nurse or physiotherapist about what level of activity is right for you. Buddy up with a friend - there's strength, and motivation, in numbers."

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are open to all aspiring female entrepreneurs, existing female business owners and anyone who wants to learn more about entrepreneurship and the topics being discussed on the day.

For more information on the events in each area and how to register go to www.nwed.ie

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