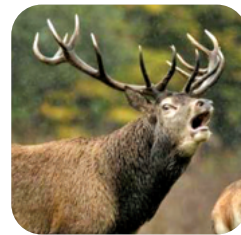


# LOCAL Wicklow Times

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Tuesday 11th October 2022 First Floor, The Boulevard, Quinsborough Road, Bray. A98 R6D7. Tel: 01 - 2869111 E-mail: wicklowed@localtimes.ie www.wicklowtimes.net

## THE WATER - IT'S SAFE TO DRINK?

**Irish Water last week moved to confirm water in North and East Wicklow is safe to drink as public representatives and customers raised a storm of protest over a month-long supply of foul-smelling drinking water.**

In a statement Irish Water said it "can confirm that specialist results received following ongoing testing of the Raw North and East Wicklow areas has indicated the presence of low levels of a naturally occurring substance called MIB (Methylisoborneol). While MIB can result in some people detecting an earthy, musty smell and taste from their drinking water, it is not harmful to human health. MIB

is a naturally occurring organic substance produced by algae found in lakes, rivers, streams and reservoirs. It can be smelled at very low concentrations. Seasonal increases in naturally occurring algae or bacteria in water sources can cause a rise in MIB above the taste and odour threshold for some people. It is impossible to predict the onset of an incidence of MIB, or how long it will last. However, it will likely be

resolved in the short term as the current rain spell continues and the weather cools.

"We will continue to keep this water supply under close review and will continue monitor for levels of MIB in the water. Water produced at our treatment plants is tested daily in conjunction with extensive monitoring in the distribution network and is safe to drink."

Speaking about the detection of MIB in the



*The Greystones Eire Og players celebrating after they beat Tinahely in the U14 A Football final in Avondale. Pic: Michael Kelly*

drinking water, Tom Cuddy, Head of Asset Operations with Irish Water said "Our primary focus is the protection of public health and we would like to reassure customers that the water coming from the drinking water plants serving Wicklow is safe to drink. We understand the concerns raised by some customers in relation to the smell or taste of their drinking water. While the smell and taste can be unpleasant for some customers, MIB is not toxic or harmful and the water remains safe to drink. As a precaution, we have increased testing on these supplies and are keeping the situation under close review."

Sinn Féin TD John Brady speaking out about the poor quality of drinking water that members of the public in Wicklow have been forced to put up with over the last number of weeks said

"The worst affected areas are in the north Wicklow area between Bray & Kilcoole".

Brady has contacted Irish Water in relation to what he described as the mouldy and earthy tasting water in the area, despite previous assurances from Irish Water that remedial action was being taken to improve the water quality.

Deputy Brady said: "I have again contacted Irish Water in relation to the absolutely unacceptable situation regarding the water supply in North Wicklow. The poor quality of the water needs to be addressed immediately. While Irish water have attempted to attribute the state of the supply to a mechanical failure at the water treatment plant last month, they previously stated that the quality of the water supply would improve. We need to see action taken.

"Constituents from across north Wicklow have been in touch with

me in relation to this issue. The water supply is contaminated by foul

odours, and mould and earthy taste to the water.

*Continued on page 3*

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## Oifig Fiontair Áitiúil

### Local Enterprise Office

**Check out Your Local Enterprise Office Wicklow for the 2022 Autumn/Winter Training Schedule for small businesses & the self-employed in Co. Wicklow**

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- Would you like to know how to increase your sales and lead from your social media channels and website. Sign up for the following short course - **Maximising Sales from Your Website & Social Media Channels**. Online on 13th October, 2022.
- National Women's Enterprise Day**. On Thursday, 13th October 2022 Kildare and Wicklow LEO's are welcoming female entrepreneurs to The Keadeen Hotel, Newbridge, Co. Kildare. This half-day event boasts an exciting line up of speakers and an ideal opportunity for cross-county business networking. Book online.

**For further details or to book GO TO:**  
[www.localenterprise.ie/Wicklow/Training-Events/Online-Bookings](http://www.localenterprise.ie/Wicklow/Training-Events/Online-Bookings)

Local Enterprise Office Wicklow, Wicklow County Campus, Rathnew, Co. Wicklow  
Phone: 0404 30800  
Email: [enterprise@leo.wicklowcoco.ie](mailto:enterprise@leo.wicklowcoco.ie)



# Community sowing day a great success



Newtown Tidy Towns Volunteers at their Community Sowing Day

Twenty local volunteers joined the Community Sowing Day organised by Newtownmountkennedy Tidy Towns on Saturday 1st October across the town. Three wildflower patches were sowed in Wicklow Hills, Season Park and the Newtown GAA Club.

"Today is part of a wider plan to create a wildflower corridor in Newtown," said the Tidy Towns Vice-Chair and organiser of this event, Danny Alvey.

"We want to contribute to the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan and create food and shelter for bees and pollinators in Newtown whilst also making an attractive focal point in every estate that everyone can be proud of."

Volunteers from the local GAA club were also present to lend a hand as part of their recently launched Healthy GAA Clubs initiative. As well as 'Managed for Wildlife' signs that were erected on each patch, the local Newtown and Newcastle Mens Shed are also creating special bespoke signs for each estate taking part. Tidy Towns hope to sow more estates that are part of the shared plan during October.



Sam Bishop and Grace Kavanagh at the sowing day

## Table Quiz for Laragh Christmas lights

The table quiz to fundraise for the Laragh Christmas Tree lights will be held in Lynhams of Laragh on Friday October 21st at 8pm with a raffle on the night. Table of four people at €40. Any enquiries contact Collette on 086 607 3700.

## Soup and sandwiches

The Soup & Sandwiches lunch is resuming in the Swann Hall at St. Patrick's Church, Greystones, on Tuesday 18th October from 12:30pm to 2pm. Everyone is welcome to attend. Come along for the chat as well as the food. Suggested donation €5 for charity.

## Blessing of the Graves

The Blessing of the Graves in Redford Park Cemetery, Greystones, takes place on Sunday 13th November at 3pm. All welcome.

## Hot Spot Music Club

Guitarist Declan Sinnott and singer Victoria Keating will play the Hot Spot Music Club in Greystones on 9th December. This is the rescheduled date, following the postponement of the 30th September gig. Christy Moore said of the duo, "This is really beautiful. As always the guitar playing is just perfect. The arrangement and production, the timing and editing are superb. On top of all that, the singing is just gorgeous. I sincerely hope this gets the attention it deserves."

Doors open 8pm. Show begins at 9pm. Admission €18/€21. Full details from 087 2917519 or www.the-hotspot.ie.



Margaret Synnott and Dawn and April McKenna of Newtown GAA at the sowing day

# Junior Tidy Towns group launched in Newtownmountkennedy



Jen Quinn and Paul Kavanagh of Tidy Towns with Barry Coad of Coillte and Ms Kieran with her Third Class from Newtownmountkennedy Primary School

On Wednesday 28th September, Newtownmountkennedy Tidy Towns launched their 'Junior Tidy Towns' initiative with the Third Class of Newtown Primary School.

With litter pickers and hi-viz vests, supplied by local sponsor Coillte, the enthusiastic children posed for pictures and went on their first litter pick through the town. This initiative was organised by Jen Quinn, secretary of the Tidy Towns, and Aishling Gillick, the School Liaison Officer. It aims to encourage students of the local primary school

to think about litter, their community and the environment and get them involved directly in litter picking and planting around the town.



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## Behind the Beach

The next event in the 'Behind the Beach' nature awareness programme at Brittas Bay will take place at 2pm on Thursday, 13th October.

Participants are asked to meet at the South Beach Car Park for the walk and talk will be led by project ecologist Alan Lauder. It will focus on the targeted actions for biodiversity conservation that the Council has initiated with support from the National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS) and the Local Biodiversity Action Plan Fund to protect the dunes and make this coastal habitat more climate resilient. It offers an opportunity to learn more about the conservation objectives for this Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the role of grazing, mowing, surveying and monitoring. This is the fourth event in the public biodiversity awareness programme with remaining events scheduled for Wednesday, 26th October (Dynamic Dunes work-

shop) and Saturday, 5th November (Sea Buckthorn management day).

To register an interest in these events or to join the mailing list please send an email to [wicklowheritage@wicklowcoco.ie](mailto:wicklowheritage@wicklowcoco.ie). Read more under latest news on [www.wicklow.ie](http://www.wicklow.ie)

WICKLOW  
LOCAL Times

is published by Wicklow Times,  
First Floor, The Boulevard, Quinsborough Road, Bray. A98 R6D7. Tel: 01-2869111

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# Attempt to halt recycling charges deemed 'void and unenforceable'

A Section 140 motion put forward by Independent councillors Joe Behan, Mary Kavanagh, Peir Leonard and Tom Fortune, directing the Chief Executive of the Council Brian Gleeson not to introduce any charge for the use of Wicklow's recycling centres, has been deemed by the Council's law agent to not be enforceable.

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 the local authority can lawfully do or effect in the performance of the executive functions of the Local Authority."

Legal advice from the Council's law agent however stated that this particular instance represented an exemption to the Section 140 powers, and that to proceed with it would be "legally unsound and invalid". A resolution passed under the proposed motion would be "void and unenforceable", the advice stated.

Cllr Behan stated that he "respectfully but strongly disagrees" with the legal advice. He said he wished to proceed with the vote and the outcome was eight for, 18 abstaining, and six not present.

Mr Gleeson stated that "no final decision" had been made regarding

the introduction of recycling charges, and that the matter would be looked at during the Budget 2023 discussions.

He acknowledged that many councillors have voiced opposition to the introduction of charges and that withdrawing or postponing the charges for 2023 was still an option on the table.

"If councillors, after they have all the information as regards the implications of the charges, they are not still not in favour of bringing it in as part of Budget 2023, I will respect that decision as part of the budget deliberations," said Mr Gleeson.

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.

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 Rampare (€100,000).

Proposed upgrades include a new roof and upgrades for Bray recycling centre; refurbishment and roof repairs at the Murrrough 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' would also be required and a charge of €3 per visit has been floated.

Mr Gleeson reiterated however that no decision had yet been made regarding the introduction of the charges, the amount, or the date from which they would be introduced.

# Closure of Ashford Park comes out of the blue

Ashford Park and Playground was closed over the weekend of 1st-2nd October, shocking the local community.

Parents arrived at the park to find the park closed and a 'Private' sign on the gates.

Councillors Mary Kavanagh and Joe Behan raised the issue at the Monday October 3rd meeting of Wicklow County Council, however it was decided to postpone discussions until more information was at hand.

"This is a vital piece of community infrastructure in an area that has experienced huge population

growth," said Cllr Kavanagh. "It is the kind of place that can't be done without. We need to ensure that we get to the bottom of this ASAP. Apart from being a park, it is a memorial park with memorial benches, it is beautifully laid out and a lot of funding went into it. I don't mind waiting to discuss it but I want to drive home the point that it's very important this is dealt with ASAP."

Social Democrats TD

Jennifer Whitmore has called on Wicklow County Council to urgently engage with all relevant stakeholders to ensure that Ashford Park and playground remains open to the public.

"The community is very upset to see the closure and that no information was given ahead of the decision," said Deputy Whitmore.

"People are very upset to see the closure of the park with a Private sign on the gates. This really came out of the blue for everyone in the area. This is a favourite playground

for many families across the county, and an important local resource.

"It was built after much campaigning and fundraising by the local community and it would be a huge pity to see this vital facility closed off to a community that worked so hard to get it up and running.

"I am calling on Wicklow County Council to intervene at this stage and work with the landowners to come up with a solution that will see the park open up again as soon as possible."

# THE WATER - IT'S SAFE TO DRINK?

Continued from page 1

"While Irish Water have stated that the water is safe to drink, I believe that they should make public the data that has led them to this conclusion in the interest of public safety and transparency. "This situation has been going on for several weeks and needs to be addressed immediately. The current situation is unacceptable. And Irish Water needs to inform residents when they can expect a sufficient quality of water supply restored."

Also demanding more information, Social Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore has called on Irish Water to release details of their testing regime for North Wicklow in the Vartry water supply. Deputy Whitmore has also called on the Minister for Housing, responsible for Irish

Water, to address the situation.

Speaking on the matter, Deputy Whitmore said, "At this point it's important that people can regain trust in their water supply and Irish Water's handling of the bad taste and smell that has been coming out of people's taps across North Wicklow. With so many reports coming into me about the lingering taste and smell in households, I felt it was important that Irish Water release details of its water supply testing regime from the Vartry water supply."

Last Tuesday the members of Bray Municipal Council passed the following motion which has been forwarded to Irish Water, HSE & Wicklow County Council Water Services: "The Members wish to express their concerns regarding the condition of the

drinking water supply to the North Bray area and the impact the quality of same is having on its residents".

They have also requested that Wicklow County Council's Water Services Department and the HSE undertake immediate testing of the water.

However The HSE declined to get involved saying "Irish Water is responsible for providing public water services and ensuring drinking water quality meets the standards in the Drinking Water Regulations. The EPA is the drinking water quality regulator for public water supplies, responsible for enforcing the Drinking Water Regulations. The HSE Environmental Health Service is therefore not in a position to assist in carrying out the testing requested."



Jayden O'Neill and Katie Lang at Dargle Valley Pharmacy in Bray celebrating its one-year anniversary at the Egan Centre



COMHAIRLE CONTAE CHILL MHANTÁIN  
WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

## PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000 (AS AMENDED) WICKLOW COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2022-2028

Notice is hereby given under Section 12 (12) of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended) that Wicklow County Council made a new County Development Plan on Monday 12th September 2022. This plan replaces the Wicklow County Development Plan 2016-2022. This plan will have effect from Sunday 23rd October 2022.

The new County Development Plan will be available for inspection at the following locations from Monday 24th October 2022:

- The Council's website [www.wicklow.ie](http://www.wicklow.ie) (available to view and download)
- Planning Department, Wicklow County Council, Station Road, Wicklow Town

Hard copies will be available to purchase at a later date.

This plan is accompanied by a statement ('Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Statement') summarising:

- (a) how environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan,
- (b) how
  - (i) the environmental report prepared pursuant to Article 13C of the Planning & Development (SEA) Regulations 2004, as amended, and
  - (ii) submissions and observations made to the planning authority in response to a notice under Section 12(1) or (7) of the Acthave been taken into account during the preparation of the plan,
- (c) the reasons for choosing the plan, as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with, and
- (d) the measures decided upon to monitor, in accordance with article 13J of the Planning & Development (SEA) Regulations 2004, as amended, the significant environmental effects of implementation of the plan.

The plan is also accompanied by an Appropriate Assessment Natura Impact Report, pursuant to Article 6 (3) of the EU Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, associated AA Determination and a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.

### Wicklow Record of Protected Structures

As part of the making of the new County Development Plan, the Record of Protected Structures has been amended, including the making of additions, deletions and amendments to existing entries. The record is included in Appendix 4 of the published County Development Plan. The owners and occupiers of relevant structures shall receive a separate written notification including the particulars as per Section 12 (13) of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended).

Wicklow County Council is committed to Access For All.  
Please contact the Planning Department should you have any specific access requirements.



# Plans for three Park & Ride facilities

The National Transport Authority (NTA) are proposing three Park & Ride facilities on the N11/M11, councillors were told at last week's meeting of Wicklow County Council. The three sites are to be located at Junction 11 at Kilpedder (600 spaces), Junction 6 at Fassaroe (400 spaces), and Junction 16 at Ashford-Rathnew (200 spaces). Planning permission could be sought as early as December 2022.

Going forward the NTA confirmed that the Park & Ride services will need to integrate with the leap card. It is also planned to have around 25% of the

car parking spaces have fast charging electric ports.

The NTA also advised that they want to have three car parks to reduce

car use, as early as possible, rather than have one giant car park in Bray.

The NTA hasn't yet decided whether the Park & Ride facility or the bus

will be free of charge: "Some of that will depend on the procurement mechanisms," representatives from the NTA told councillors, "and whether we go out and get someone to operate the bus service and the park and ride or we go out and get someone to operate the park and ride and then have the bus service servicing those park and rides. But we fully understand that it does have to represent value for money for the user and it does have to be attractive for them to use."

Councillors broadly welcomed the plans but said its success would hinge on a reliable bus service.

Cllr Derek Mitchell welcomed the plans, saying "We need to cut down on the traffic on the N11. The Wicklow rail line south of Greystones does-

n't work effectively. It could be made better but it's not policy to do so. The express bus service which will obviously take a while to get up and running is very important to how this will work, because the journey time from Wicklow is very high. Therefore people take their cars. For instance the journey time of the Aircoach from Greystones to Dublin Airport is virtually the same time as the Aircoach from Belfast to Dublin Airport. It used to be a lot quicker when it went along Sandymount Strand. So the journey time is absolutely vital to make these bus services work and get people out of their cars. It's a great pity we didn't know a few weeks ago about this, when we were rezoning various sites in the County

Development Plan for various purposes and this could have been incorporated into it at the time."

Cllr Melanie Corrigan said "At the moment there is chaos in north Wicklow with the buses. That will have to be improved - I can't stress that enough - for this to work."

Cllr Stephen Stokes stated "This is amazing news. However I asked a number of questions of the Park & Ride Office, and had encouraging answers. The NTA confirmed that the extension of the Luas from Brides Glen is also on the cards."

As a regular commuter on the 84X, Cllr Stokes urged that the new Park & Ride public transport be available much more widely than the 84X.

Cllr Stokes stated: "The 84X is a good service, but it is very constrained with

the times. It will be important to have wide ranging times, with well lit and safe car parks especially for female commuters."

Cllr Stokes also remarked that a good regular service is vital. He noted: "The Park & Ride facilities in Cambridge, England are incredible. They are not just used for work commuting, but also tourism and leisure. I recommended something similar for North Wicklow. In fairness the NTA acknowledged that the service needs to be reliable and about every 15-20 minutes. Initially it will be bus focused. I did also stress that we should not let Go Ahead anywhere near this as they are a disaster. But operators such as Dublin Bus, Wexford Bus, or Finnegan Bray would be fine. The good news is that local feeder buses can

also feed into the new Park & Ride facilities."

Cllr Stephen Stokes added: "This is an awesome opportunity to reduce car emissions. The NTA believe this could 10,500 tonnes of emissions across 13 sites in total. I commend the NTA for this forward thinking approach as it could make many lives better."

Cllr Stokes concluded: "My main note of caution to the NTA would be to plan early for it being over subscribed. I did suggest that they look at some of the parking facilities in Manchester, where they have free two tiered car parks beside some of their tram services. That said it is very encouraging news and I look forward to working with the NTA Park & Ride Office. This is a potential win-win for commuters."



Terry Canavan presents Greystones Eire Og captain Maise Grey with the U14 A Football Championship trophy after Eire Og beat Tinahely 3-5 to 2-6 in Avondale.

## Greystones street cleaning machine unused due to staff shortage

The lack of outdoor council staff to cope with the rapid growth of Greystones was discussed at the October Municipal District Meeting.

As a result of the staff shortage a Street Cleaning machine has remained in the depot, unused for several years, because there are no staff to drive it.

Cllr Derek Mitchell says that this is despite council management saying there are now more drivers.

"It's ludicrous," said Cllr Mitchell. "Staff numbers in Greystones are less than half of every other area - all of which have a similar population."

"Lots of maintenance work is not being done

and there is a lack of engineering staff to cope with facilities needed to cope with the thousands of people coming to live in the town. The Census shows Greystones increased from 18% to 20% of the County's population but funding remained stuck at 12%."

Census 2022 also shows the population of Greystones-Delgany is currently 405 short of the 2028 target of 21,727. At least 1,000 houses are being built now and Cllr Mitchell estimates that Greystones will overshoot its 2028 target by at least 2,000 people in 2023.

Cllr Mitchell said Greystones' share of the County budget has remained at 12% for at least the last five years.

"It is by far the lowest spend of any area and it is not increasing with the population. An increase in population needs an increase in resources." The lack of Outdoor Staff is the reason why Greystones Tidy Towns has had such difficulties in spite of a huge effort by them. This rapid growth also needs many projects provided by the Council and not enough is being done to provide roads, footpaths, arts & community facilities. "I will not be voting for the Council Budget unless something is done to improve this."

## MEP Grace O'Sullivan visits Wicklow

### 'Irish engagement with Europe is more important than ever'

Former Greenpeace Activist and Green MEP Grace O'Sullivan shared her work in the European Parliament on a recent visit to Co. Wicklow.

MEP O'Sullivan noted that when she was first elected to the European Parliament in 2019, Brexit was the main challenge she foresaw ahead of the European Union.

"Little did we know what was to come," she told local constituents at a meeting in Delgany. "A pandemic, a war in Europe and an ever worsening climate crisis have added to the concerns of constituents here in Wicklow."

O'Sullivan is now over halfway through her term as an MEP is aiming to reach all corners of the Ireland South constituency with her work, now that COVID restrictions have been lifted.

In late September the MEP visited the towns of Greystones, Delgany, Kilcoole, Newcastle, Newtown Mount Kennedy and Blessington.

Grace entered political life for the first time in 2014, when she was approached to run for the European Parliament for the Green Party, then with no TDs and just a handful of Councillors elected across the country. She had previously worked for 20 years with Greenpeace International, spending 10 of those years onboard numerous ships furthering environmental



MEP Grace O'Sullivan meeting with Marie McCooley of Greystones Tidy Towns in Burnaby Park

causes. Her most well-known encounter was during a protest against nuclear testing in the South Pacific, when her ship, the Rainbow Warrior, was bombed by the French Secret Service.

While her run in 2014 for Europe was unsuccessful, she would eventually be elected to Seanad Eireann in 2016, sitting with the Civil Engagement Group, including Senators Frances Black, Alice May Higgins and Lynn Ruane, among others. A 2019 run for Europe, on

the back of the 'Green Wave' and school climate strikes, would see her elected as part of the Greens group.

O'Sullivan's previous visit to Wicklow was in the midst of this election campaign, and due to the impact of COVID, a long-awaited return has only come about now.

"Of course, I've been engaging with members of the public all across the constituency," O'Sullivan notes, "but there really is no comparison to meeting with people on the ground, hearing

about their work in the community, and sharing the work of the European Parliament, which can often seem so far away from people's daily lives."

Elected in the fourth seat of five in 2019, O'Sullivan credits some of her election success to both young people and students who may not have even been of voting age. Because of this, she says, she wants to prioritise engagement with these groups, and so she visited both St. David's Holy Faith Secondary School and Temple Carrig School in Greystones during her visit.

As well as sharing the work that she has been leading on in the European Parliament,

O'Sullivan states that a crucial part of this trip is hearing stories on the ground of how people are doing, what projects they are carrying out in their communities and when possible, when she can help.

"It has too often been the case that politicians disappear to Brussels and are not heard from until they are campaigning again 5 years later. That means they can sometimes become out of touch, and that's not the type of politics I want to be practicing she said.

Grace was joined on her visit by Cllr. Lourda Scott, who facilitated many of the meetings with local community groups. Grace has now returned to Brussels for her Committee work, but plans to return to other towns and villages in Wicklow in the near future.

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# Local landowners fined for burning vegetation

Two people in County Wicklow have been fined for burning vegetation out of season. The case involved the burning of living vegetation during the closed season - an offence under Section 40 of the Wildlife Acts 1976-2018.

The case was brought before Naas District Court, Co. Kildare on Monday 3rd October 2022. Mr. Kenneth Balfe and Mrs. Pamela Balfe, landowners at Gap Road, Lacken, both pleaded guilty to the offence and the Judge imposed fines of €1,000 on both defendants.

A National Parks and Wildlife Service Ranger outlined the evidence to the court, stating that on 17th April 2021, he responded to reports from concerned members of the public that scrub and trees were being burned at Lacken.

The Ranger travelled to the area where he could see smoke and flames beginning to arise from Gorse bushes. The Ranger talked with the landowners who admitted starting the fire, but denied any wrongdoing.

Judge Desmond Zaidan said that "it was unbelievable that as landowners the defendants would think that burning living



Burnt Hawthorn and Gorse near Lacken, Co. Wfollow following an illegal fire, 17th April 2021

vegetation was appropriate and that they wouldn't know of the restrictions". He went on to fine them €1,000 each.

The National Parks and Wildlife Service has successfully closed 25 prosecutions to date in 2022, and is currently progressing a further 44.

Social Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore welcomed the suc-

cessful prosecutions, saying: "I have raised the issue of burning vegetation and wildfires in the D-til on many occasions, urging the Minister to act with legislation and with the necessary resources to actually prosecute people who break the law.

"These wildfires impact having on air pollution, are devastating to wildlife and pollute our

water sources. They're also a huge risk to our fire fighters and emergency services that must respond to a call out of a wildfire. Each time this happens, their safety is at risk.

"It is unacceptable that burning should occur outside the lawful season, and that this behaviour leads to unnecessary damaging wildfires. However, successive governments have been slow to enforce existing legislation and to catch those who carry out these acts.

"I hope enforcement has the impact of reducing wildfires in the first place and that we will see the benefits in the quality of our air, repopulation of wildlife numbers in areas impacted as well as better quality of our rivers and streams as a result of better vegetation management. I look forward to seeing the future impact of the successful prosecutions."

## Struck in a rut: Motorists urged to be vigilant during deer breeding season

It's autumn and in our forests and across our mountains, tensions are rising as the rutting or deer breeding season gets under way, the time of the year when male deer are driven by an urge to reproduce.

From late September until early November the clash of antlers will be heard as males show off their virility to potential mates and, like gladiators entering an arena, they parade around showing off their armoury of antlers.

While the rut is an

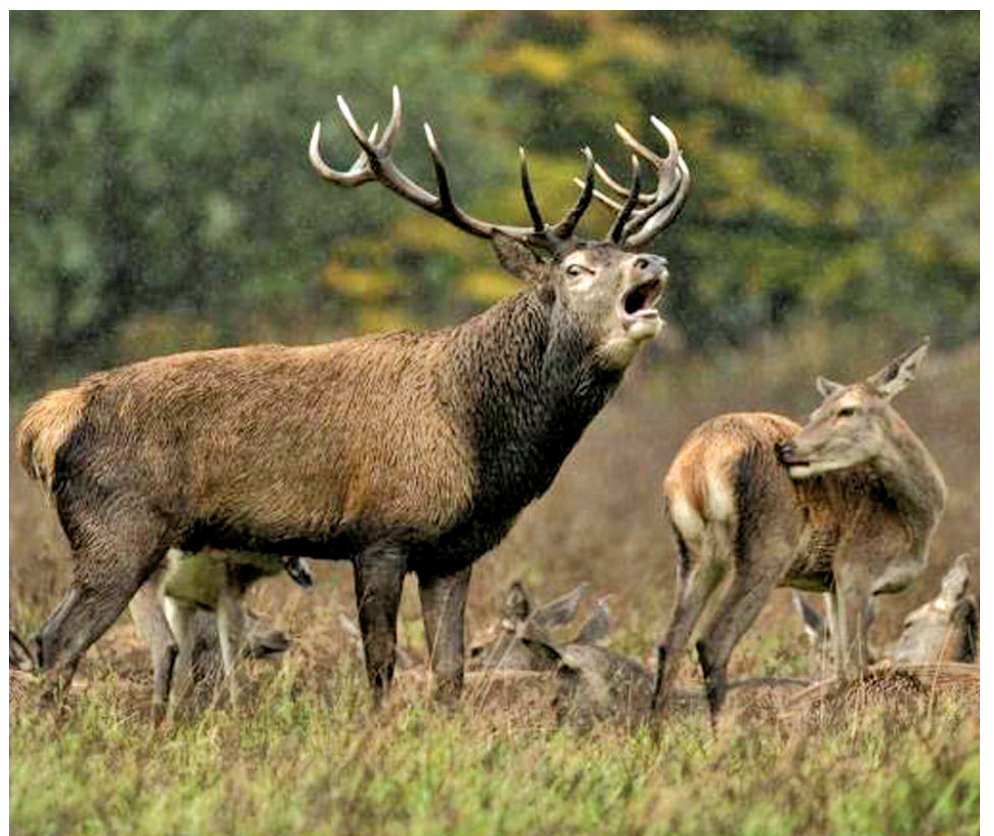
amazing experience to witness it is also a time when there is an increased incident of road traffic accidents involving deer as male deer go in search of females and younger males are ousted by dominant males forcing deer to cross public roads and motorways.

The Irish Deer Commission are calling on motorists to be vigilant at dawn and dusk, when deer are most active, particularly in high risk areas

such as woodlands and mountains. What should drivers do in high risk areas? Reduce speed where they see a warning sign and stay alert. Prepare to stop, never swerve as you could hit another obstacle or oncoming vehicle. When you see a deer "dip your headlights" as the full beam may cause the deer to freeze. If a deer has crossed in front of your vehicle, be aware that others may follow. Do not

approach an injured deer.

If you are involved in a road traffic accident involving a deer or come across a deer that has been involved in a road traffic accident, immediately contact the local Gardai. The Irish Deer Commission operate a humane deer dispatch scheme with 135 trained volunteers assisting agencies and charities who deal with an increasing number of deer vehicle collisions nationally.



A Co. Kerry Red Stag during the rut - photo by Peter O'Toole

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# Calls for an urgent solution to transport issues

TDs Jennifer Whitmore and John Brady spoke in The Dail last week about the ongoing problems with the 184, 185 and 45a bus routes operated by Go-Ahead Ireland servicing the areas of Kilmacanogue, Greystones, Newtownmountkennedy, Kilpedder, Enniskerry and Bray.

The National Transport Authority (NTA) will meet later this month to review the Go-Ahead Ireland contract. The contract, which is scheduled to run until October 2023, can be extended to October 2024, however Deputy Brady is calling for the contract to be immediately revoked.

Deputy Whitmore pressed the need for an "urgent solution" to the chronic problems.

Deputy Whitmore said "the problem with cancellations, delays or buses driving past people at bus stops, has been plaguing residents in North Wicklow for some time. Go-Ahead receive state funding to run these public transport routes across Wicklow. For people using the 184 to Newtownmountkennedy or the 185 to Enniskerry and the 45a to Bray, these bus services are the only public transport option available and are used for commuting and school runs, a significant lifeline for people going about their day-to-day business.

"My constituency office has been inundated with very angry and upset people reporting late or



Jennifer Whitmore TD

cancelled buses along these routes. Many have even witnessed half empty buses passing right by them as they stand at the bus stop. I've had parents on to me that they have had to miss a day of work because they had to drive their kids into school and collect them when no buses showed up. We are two months into the new school year and it seems the situation is only getting worse.

"People with disabilities, the elderly and vulnerable are particularly disadvantaged when a bus is cancelled. Where night time buses have been can-

celled, female passengers have felt unsafe as they are left stranded in darkly lit stations.

"Go-Ahead have stated time and time again that they are dealing with staff recruitment issues due to covid and retention as a result of the post-pandemic economy. However, it is not the responsibility of passengers to deal with staff recruitment, retention or staff absences. It is the responsibility of the operator, in this case Go-Ahead, the National Transport Agency and the Minister's Department to intervene when the situation gets out of hand. It's all very well having fines in place, but this doesn't make up for someone missing work, school or left stranded in the middle of the night with no way of getting home. Fines mean nothing for someone who has waited 18 months for a hospital appointment and can't go because the bus didn't show up without any pre-emptive warning. These fines don't help those people.

"I have called on the Minister to intervene at this juncture before the situation gets worse.



John Brady TD and his Sinn Féin colleagues protesting outside the Department Of Transport last week.

People are losing confidence in our public transport system when there was already very little to go around in the first place. And for this reason, they are starting to get back into their cars which we can see on our public roads, busier than they were before the pandemic.

"The Social Democrats, in our Alternative Budget launched two weeks ago, insisted on a capacity review being carried out

by the Transport Department on bus operators such as Go Ahead. I believe, now is the time to carry out this capacity review to ensure people are getting value for money in state investments in these companies, and to assess whether these routes need to be re-tendered. The Minister must urgently intervene. The people of Wicklow deserve a public transport service they can rely on."

Also speaking in The Dail last week, Sinn Féin TD John Brady called for an immediate revocation of the Go-Ahead Ireland contract.

"Yesterday, myself and a number of my colleagues in Sinn Féin from constituencies affected by the poor service provided by Go-Ahead protested outside the offices of the Department of Transport in Dublin to demand that Minister for Transport Eamon Ryan take immediate action over the failures on the Go-Ahead Ireland routes in Wicklow," said Deputy Brady.

Deputy Brady reiterated his anger at the record of "unmitigated disaster" on the three Wicklow routes in Wicklow.

"A bus service needs to be accessible, affordable, and reliable. The Go-Ahead bus service meets none of these criteria. We have people across north Wicklow who rely on this service, being left abandoned by the side of the road, as services were cancelled without notice, or were running so late that they were forced to miss or arrive late for work, school, or hospital appointments.

"The whole experience of the Go-Ahead Ireland bus service in Wicklow has been an absolute disaster. A disaster that has been brought about by the policies of this, and the previous Government

who want to see state services privatised.

"The routes in question in Wicklow were previously provided by Dublin Bus. But because of the privatisation policies of the government, these were offered to Dublin Bus.

"The responsibility now lies with Minister Eamon Ryan to sort this out. The contract needs to immediately be taken off Go-Ahead Ireland and given back to Dublin Bus to allow them to resume the same level of service as before. The Minister cannot allow the current situation where we have people who rely on the bus service being forced to miss work, school, and hospital appointments, because a private company is unable, or unwilling to put in place the resources to provide the service that is needed."

In correspondence with Labour TD Duncán 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 opera-

the NTA in early September that "The wider Go-Ahead group was the subject of a cyber-security alert. The impact of this on IT systems has resulted in major difficulties in communicating rosters to drivers across the Go-Ahead group internationally, including Ireland. This has resulted in a large number of additional service cancellations in recent days across the Go-Ahead Ireland network, over and above those associated with driver shortages."

Go-Ahead is being fined E640,000 for the second quarter of 2022 due to late or cancelled bus, which is twice the amount it was fined for the whole of 2021.

Bray West Labour Party representative Ian McGahon said "This is a staggeringly huge jump and shows the absolutely appalling shambles of a service from Go Ahead Ireland on the 45a, 184, 185 routes along with other routes. Go-Ahead's service in the outer Dublin region over the last four years has been appalling but has recently gotten so bad that commuters are beginning to abandon using their service altogether."

Mr McGahon has written to all five Wicklow TDs and all of the members of the Oireachtas Committee on Transport calling for intervention on the matter.

"The travelling public are incredibly angry at this extremely poor bus service. Schoolchildren and workers have been reporting warnings for being continuously late. Parents are reporting having to fork out taxis. The NTA might fine Go Ahead Ireland huge amounts but who compensates the travelling public for these huge inconveniences."



Ian McGahon

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

"Operators are forecasting significant improvements in reliability in the coming months, dependent on successful recruitment and retention of critical staff, in particular drivers."

An international cyber attack on Go-Ahead, has been the cause of a large number of cancelled busses in Co. Wicklow in recent weeks, it's been revealed.

In a letter to Labour TD Duncán Smith, responding to a Parliamentary Question, the National Transport Authority said that Go-Ahead Ireland notified

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# ‘A further devastating blow to those who depend on the CIS’

Sinn Fein TD John Brady has reacted with concern at recent developments which he sees as a further undercutting of support for the Citizens Information Service (CIS) across the country.

“The Minister for Social Protection Heather Humphries has effectively taken a decision to get rid of the volunteer members of the CIS, who will no longer be allowed to provide information to the public, following the decision by the Citizen Information Board to exclude Volunteer Information Providers from the terms of reference of the CIB.

“Following on from the closure of the CIS service in Wicklow Town, this represents a further devastating blow to those who depend on the CIS to assist them, particularly the vulnerable and the elderly.

“The Volunteer Information Providers members of the CIS, who have for decades helped provide an enormous service to our communities are to be prevented from continuing to provide a frontline service to those in need of their services.

“What we are talking about here is individuals, people from our communities, possessed of a wealth of experience,

who sought out and received the necessary training to enable them to provide valuable information and advice needed by those in need across our communities.

“In a world where bureaucracies no longer seem to have the capacity or the inclination to take the time to listen to ordinary people, these individuals made it their business to take the time to listen, to care, to provide empathy. And to advocate on behalf of the members of our communities.

“These skilled, trained, and experienced staff, who volunteered their time to their communities are now to be restricted to filling in forms. This is a ridiculous development.

“The loss of the Volunteer Information Providers is compounded by the closure of the CIS office in Wicklow Town. This is a huge loss to the Town and the surrounding area, and the many, many members of the community which availed of its services. It is a particular blow to the vulnerable and elderly, who relied on

the CIS to advise, and to advocate on their behalf.

“We can only deduct that the Government wants state services to go the way of the Banks and work towards minimising their interaction with members of the public. Very often people in need of these services had to be helped to identify the core of the problem through gentle probing before a solution could be developed to address their needs. This is now to be a thing of the past.

“It will be the vulnerable and the elderly who will bear the brunt of this move. I have written to the Minister to ask why Volunteer Information Providers have been excluded from the terms of reference of the Citizen Information Board (CIB), the governing body which manages the CIS for the government.

“This move is another blow for rural Ireland, for ordinary people not just here in Wicklow but across the state. The government appears intent on not just stripping away the very fabric of our commu-



Paul Burns of Dargle Valley Pharmacy celebrates the pharmacy's one-year anniversary at the Egan Centre with some of his customers

nities but replacing them with faceless terminals which can only be accessed by phone or online.

“The government

must be made to realise that that fabric and the needs of our communities matter more than a balance sheet. I call on the Minister to use her

role as the head of the department in charge of the CIB to seek to get this development overturned and let the Volunteer Information

Providers resume that role that they have performed for their communities for decades. I also call on the Minister to immediate-

ly take steps to reopen the CIS office in Wicklow Town to allow it continue to advise and advocate for the community.”

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# Bray firefighters' memorial vandalised

*Brady slams act as 'attack on the entire community'*

The memorial erected to honour the memory of Bray firefighters Brian Murray and Mark O'Shaughnessy was vandalised last week.

The memorial, located at the entrance to Father Colohan Terrace at the top of the town opposite Bray Town Hall, was erected in memory of the two firefighters who died in the line of duty in 2007, battling a fire in Little Bray.

The act of vandalism occurred just days after a ceremony was held to mark the 15th anniversary of their deaths.

Sinn Féin TD John Brady said he was "absolutely appalled".

"Unfortunately, this is not the first time the memorial has been vandalised, this time it comes only a few days after their 15th anniversary when firefighters and family members laid flowers at the memorial," he said.

"This is highly disrespectful and insensitive to the two heroes that paid the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty and to their families. It's also an attack on the entire community who think so highly of Brian and Mark.

"Following previous acts of vandalism my colleagues Cllr Dermot O'Brien and Cllr Grace McManus succeeded in getting the council to erect public lighting at the memorial to act as a deterrent. However, the lighting hasn't been switched on yet, despite it being installed a number of months ago. The council must immediately get the lighting connected, the installation of CCTV must also be examined, this is something that I don't think anybody thought would ever be needed.

"I appeal to anyone that has any information on who vandalised the memorial to please go to the Gardaí or they can contact me."

The monument was designed by local artist Ciaran Patterson and was erected in 2013.



The vandalised firefighters memorial



Doreen and Paul Burns celebrating the first anniversary of the opening of Dargle Valley Pharmacy at the Egan Centre in Bray.

## 'Dr. Ryan park needs improvement'



Cllr Derek Mitchell

**Dr Ryan Park, located between Delgany and Greystones, needs a big makeover to make it more attractive, Cllr Derek Mitchell has said.**

"There is broken glass around the woods. The park needs to be made more visible with lights, and the gorse and scrub need to be cut back, large trees must be maintained, bins need to be installed. The site should be very attractive with views of the Great and Little Sugar Loaf, Bray Head, the town and the sea.

"I put down a motion to improve it at a meeting of Greystones Municipal District but was told due to outdoor and engineering staff shortages nothing can be done at present. This emphasises the need for a fairer share of the Council Budget - if there is higher population density more parks will be needed."

# 'Worryingly low' number of fines for parking in cycle lanes

**Green Party TD Steven Matthews has expressed his frustration in relation to the number of Fixed Charge Notices (fines) that have been issued in the last three years in relation to parking in cycle lanes.**

Only an average of ten fines were issued weekly. These figures were released to Deputy Matthews following his engagement with senior representatives from An Garda Síochána at the Oireachtas Committee on Transport.

Other figures released related to

the number of cyclists struck by a vehicle and the number of cyclists admitted to hospital due to injuries from a collision/accident.

Deputy Matthews has requested Wicklow specific figures but as of yet they have not been released to him.

Deputy Matthews said: "Unfortunately, while these statistics are hugely disappointing, both as a cyclist and as a public representative, they aren't entirely surprising. The issue of parking in cycling lanes around Co. Wicklow is something that I have been raising long before I became a TD. The figures I have obtained from 2020 onwards represent a national level and show that we are looking at 10 fines per week nationally

for parking in a cycle lane so far this year. I think it is fair to say that if you tried, you could find that many offences on any main street in any given day so the fact that so few fines are being issued is incredibly frustrating.

"The fact that we have had more cyclists hospitalised due to incidents involving other vehicles than we have had fines issued for parking in cycle lanes is a clear indication that we not only have a

behavioural issue but also an enforcement one. I will be raising this very concerning statistics with the Guards at a local level but its clear that this failure to address what can potentially be a very serious road infringement goes way behind an individual station.

"I am seeking an urgent shift in emphasis from An Garda Síochána in their enforcement of cycling lanes and any other mea-

sures that offer greater protection to cyclists on our roads.

"I am more than happy to work at a local and national level in support of this, but any rhetoric or road safety campaign needs to be matched with action in terms of consistently issuing fines for anybody blocking a cycle lane, even briefly. The excuse of 'I'll only be a minute' can't cut it anymore," concluded Deputy Matthews.

## Festina Lente seeking move to Kilpedder

**Social Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore paid a visit to Bray's Equestrian Centre Festina Lente recently to see first hand the hugely important role they play in the community, particularly for those with physical and intellectual challenges.**

Currently housed in Bray, Festina Lente have outgrown their current facility and hope to secure enough fundraising to build a new Centre in Belfield, Kilpedder.

Visiting the centre in Bray, Deputy Whitmore said "I really enjoyed visiting Festina Lente to see their current facility, hear about their plans and see first hand the amazing work they've carried out to date.

"This includes using horses to create opportunities in learning for those with intellectual and physical challenges. Over 450 people a week use this service and provide further education and learning programmes to an additional 200 people each week.

"They are starting on their new journey towards expanding this venture and have secured a site in Belfield in Kilpedder. They are now commencing their fundraising campaign to fund the development of a National Education Centre to deal with the huge demand for all their programmes. This new facility will reduce waiting lists and provide much needed care and training for those who need. It will be a huge county resource drawing people in from across the country.

"I will be supporting Festina Lente's plans to develop a National Education Centre in Kilpedder and will work with them to assist them to realise their vision."



Deputy Whitmore at Festina Lente with Training and Day Services Manager Sabrina Tierney



# House prices rise by 1.2% in the past three months

**The price of the average second-hand three-bed semi in County Wicklow has increased by 1.2% to €364,000 in the last three months, according to the latest national survey by Real Estate Alliance.**

Across the county, time taken to sell rose by two weeks to an average of five, the Q3 REA Average House Price Index shows. Wicklow agents are reporting that 56% of purchasers this quarter were first time buyers, with 33% of buyers coming from outside of the county.

Additionally, agents across the county are reporting that BER A-rated homes are commanding a 13% premium over their C-rated equivalents.

Average prices in Bray this period were unchanged at €425,000, with time to sell rising by one week to an average of four. North East Wicklow prices were up by 5.9% to €395,000, with time to sell sitting at four weeks.

During this period, prices in Wicklow town were unchanged at €395,000, with time to sell up by two weeks to five weeks average this quarter.

"We have noticed that housing stock levels in the second-hand market are back to 75-85% of levels seen pre-Covid," said Matt Forkin of REA Forkin, Wicklow.

"This increase in supply has slowed down both the pace of the market as well as the time it takes bring the property from on-the-market to sale agreed.

"There is a significant level of ex-rental stock in the market, with landlords exiting the residential investment market.

"A number of new home developments right across

County Wicklow have made up a lot of the supply, especially the first-time buyer market."

Average prices in Blessington were unchanged at €360,000 this quarter, with time to sell remaining at four weeks. Baltinglass prices also saw no change this quarter, and currently sit at €245,000, with time to sell in the area remaining at six weeks.

"The quantity of viewings for mainstream three-bed homes has held firm since Q2, but we have seen an increasing willingness to step away from bidding wars," said Simon Murphy of REA Murphy Baltinglass and Blessington.

Nationally, the rate of house price inflation has

halved in the past three months as rising costs cause home buyers to be more cautious, the index shows. The actual selling price of a three-bed roomed semi-detached house across the country rose by 1.4% over the past three months to €290,630 representing an annual increase of 10%.

This is a marked slowdown on the 2.9% quarterly increase recorded in the preceding three months, signalling a cooling of the frenetic demand in the marketplace.

And the index found that A rated homes are commanding a 12% premium over their C rated equivalents - a figure that rises to 16% in the capital as running costs become more important to home buyers.

The REA Average House Price Survey con-

centrates on the actual sale price of Ireland's typical stock home, the three-bed semi, giving an accurate picture of the second-hand property market in towns and cities countrywide.

Time taken to reach sale agreed rose to five weeks from four as REA agents nationwide reported a less frenzied approach to viewing and buying.

While the actual average selling price of three bedroomed homes in Dublin city is about to breach the €500,000 mark, the 0.8% quarterly rise to €497,500 is half that experienced in the previous three months.

58% of all purchasers in the past quarter were first-time buyers according to REA, a figure which rose to 76% in Dublin as people with mortgage approval look to get on the housing ladder.



Steven Matthews TD

## New Vacant Homes Tax welcomed

**Deputy Steven Matthews, Green Party TD for Wicklow, says that the introduction of the new Vacant Homes Tax will be crucial to addressing the housing crisis and increasing the number of properties available to buy and rent.**

The Vacant Homes Tax was announced as part of Budget 2023 and will target homes that are occupied for less than 30 days in a 12-month period. The new tax will apply an extra charge to a vacant home of three times the property's LPT liability on top of its existing LPT charge and is designed as an activation incentive for an empty house rather than a revenue generator.

Speaking following the announcement of the Vacant Homes Tax, Deputy

Matthews said: "I have been pushing for the introduction of a Vacant Homes Tax since I was first elected to the Dail. The announcement of a new Vacant Property Tax in Budget 2023 is a welcome start towards reducing the number of vacant and derelict properties across the country. Crucially, the tax will be administered by Revenue and this will help to ensure the proper enforcement and collection of levies.

"As Chair of the Oireachtas Committee

on Housing, Local Government and Heritage, I have been working to introduce measures that will increase the supply of affordable housing and return vacant and derelict properties to use. Last May I launched the Urban Regeneration Report which recommended the introduction of a Vacant Homes Tax with reasonable exemptions. Additionally, the Commission on Taxation and Welfare's report published shortly before the budget advised that a property tax surcharge should be applied to vacant properties.

"While the Vacant Homes Tax announced in Budget 2023 is very welcome, it needs to be charged at a higher rate to act as an incentive to return vacant

properties to use. The length of time that a property can remain unoccupied should also be considered and reduced in line with the practices of other European countries with vacant property taxes. I will continue to work with the Minister for Housing to address these concerns and increase the effectiveness of this tax in future.

"Tackling the blight of vacancy and dereliction in our towns and villages across the country is a core policy of the Green Party. Among other measures, we have successfully introduced planning exemptions and the Croi Conaithe scheme which provides grants up to €50,000 to turn vacant or derelict buildings back into homes. If anyone has questions in relation to this issue, I would encourage them to get in touch with me directly and I will offer any support I can," Deputy Matthews concluded.

## Housing body has 36 new social and cost rental homes in construction in Wicklow

**Housing body Respond has 36 new social and cost rental homes in construction in Wicklow, it announced last week. The organisation delivered 56 new social and affordable homes across the county last year.**

Respond now owns and manages 160 homes across Wicklow, supporting more than 194 service users in social housing developments and cost rental schemes, family homeless services, early childhood care and education, and supports for elderly people and refugees.

The announcement was made as Respond's Annual Report 2021 was launched last week by Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage Darragh O'Brien TD, detailing the real impact the organisation has had in local communities across the country.

Respond was directly responsible for providing 16.4% of all new social and cost rental homes built by Approved Housing Bodies across Ireland last year, including Ireland's first purpose-built cost rental scheme at Woodside, Enniskerry Road.

Respond Spokesperson Niamh Randall said: "Our Annual Report is a snapshot of the great work carried out by our teams on the ground supporting those who need it most

in our communities. Central to this support is providing families with access to stable, long-term homes where they can put down roots as part of a local community. Despite the challenge of construction cost inflation, we have 1,422 new social and cost rental homes under construction across the country. We are committed to continuing to help alleviate the massive need nationwide for social housing and supporting the Government's Housing for All strategy.

"Respond's current building programme has a value of more than €1bn. However, the current models for delivering social and cost rental homes are proving increasingly challenging in light of construction cost inflation, which has seen significant increases in the last 12 months, along with the recent increases in interest rates. We are working with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage on a welcome review of the structure and operation of Capital Advanced Leasing Facility

(CALF) funding scheme. The CALF scheme enables Approved Housing Bodies like Respond to deliver social homes. In addition, we welcome commitments to make changes to the Cost Rental Equity Loan Scheme as part of Budget 2023i.

Darragh O'Brien TD, Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, added: "I would like to commend Respond's work in supporting families across the country, both in terms of delivering new homes and the wider community support services it offers. The Government's Housing for All strategy is

focused on increasing the housing supply, in addition to providing a range of affordable purchase and rental measures. Respond's work is critical in helping us towards achieving these goals."

In addition to its role as an Approved Housing Body delivering housing developments and cost rental schemes, Respond provides several additional services to communities nationwide, including family homeless services, Early Learning and School Aged Care services, and services for older people, families and refugees.

## Property prices rise by €4,000 in Q3

**Property prices in Wicklow have bucked the national trend by rising during the quarter, according to the latest MyHome.ie Property Report.**

The report for Q3 2022 shows that the median asking price for a property in the county is now €389,000. This means prices have risen by €39,000 compared with this time last year.

Asking prices for a 3-bed semi-detached house in the county stayed steady over the quarter at €385,000. This means that prices in the segment rose by €25,000 compared to this time last year.

Meanwhile, the asking price for a 4-bed semi-detached house in Wicklow fell by €2,500 over the quarter to €475,000. This price is flat compared to this time last year.

There were 636 properties for sale in Wicklow at the end of Q3 2022 - an increase of 33% over the quarter.

The average time for a property to go sale agreed in the county and the city after being placed up for sale now stands at just over two and a half months.



Jess Doolan, Cllr Shay Cullen, Lorraine Timmons, and Carole Anne Vermeulen are pictured at the Honey Festival in Ashford.



# Treat your tastebuds at Wicklow Naturally's October Feast

Wicklow Naturally's October Feast is a month-long celebration of Wicklow's food and drinks story, including farming, foraging, brewing, distilling, and much more.



Ollie Nolan of Ollies Farm gives a talk on keeping bees at the launch of the October Feast in Powerscourt Distillery.

The popular festival celebrates Wicklow's thriving food and drinks scene. Throughout the month of October, Wicklow Naturally members are showcasing their range of products, diverse experiences and numerous interactive events.

October Feast was launched on Saturday, October 1st at Powerscourt Distillery during their Harvest Festival.

At the launch Wicklow Naturally's Chairperson, Pamela Walsh, said, "Wicklow has an abundance of world-class local food and drink producers and this October Feast is bursting with flavour with over 40+ events. We have developed an unforgettable, engaging, inclusive, memo-



At the launch of Wicklow Naturally's October Feast were John Cashman, Santina Kennedy, Paul Smith, CEO of Wicklow County Council Brian Gleeson, Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council Tommy Annesley, Pamela Walsh and Cllr Rory O'Connor

orable events programme for festival-goers to enjoy."

Treat your tastebuds and set your sights on these amazing events. From hands-on masterclasses, learning about our farm-family sustain-

able stories, taking some of the country's best distillery, beer, and wine tasting tours, to cooking demonstrations, meeting the maker and heading out on guided foraging and mushroom hunts.

You can also enjoy

a taste of Wicklow Naturally as eatery members throughout the county showcase the finest Wicklow produce in their seasonal menus.

The network will also hold food waste, food poverty and environmen-

tal awareness initiatives.

Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Tommy Annesley, said, "Wicklow County Council is delighted to be supporting October Feast. The Wicklow Naturally team and its members

have the perfect mix of experiences in 2022, so why not explore, discover and get involved in the many events planned across County Wicklow this October by heading over to <https://wicklow-naturally.ie/events/>."

## Canadian Chamber of Commerce executives visit Wicklow



Gerry Ginty, Powerscourt Distillery (right), welcomes executives from the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, Lauren Lamond, Tourism Ireland (left); and Marlene Burke, Failte Ireland (second right).

Twelve senior executives from the Canadian Chamber of Commerce visited Wicklow and Ireland last week. Their visit was organised by Tourism Ireland in Toronto, in partnership with Indus Travels (group tour operator) and Aer Lingus, as well as Tourism NI and Failte Ireland.

The aim of the visit was for the executives to get to know Ireland and the many things to see and do here - equipping them to then lead 'once-in-a-lifetime' vacations here, boosting group travel to the island of Ireland from Canada in 2023.

The group's action-packed itinerary showcased our history and heritage, as well as the many reasons for Canadian groups to visit in the off-peak season. It included the Powerscourt Estate and Powerscourt Distillery, Glendalough and a scone-making lesson at Ballyknocken Cookery School.

Sandra Moffatt, Tourism Ireland's Manager Canada, said "We are delighted to partner with Indus and Aer Lingus to showcase some of our iconic and 'bucket list' experiences to this influential group of travel leaders from the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. With year-round flights to Dublin from Toronto, we are excited to be welcoming back visitors in every season and encouraging group travel is a priority for Tourism Ireland. Our aim is that these influential guests will return home more enthused and excited about Wicklow and Ireland than ever - and continue to help us to grown Canadian visitor numbers in 2023."

## First Official Good Food Ireland Tour arrives in Wicklow

Good Food Ireland is now bringing international visitors to Ireland on certified farm to fork food cultural tours. The first official Tour, a group of visitors from the United States, arrived last week in Wicklow where they stayed and dined at BrookLodge & Macreddin Village. Chef Proprietor Evan Doyle crafted a carefully curated Tasting Menu that showcased wild and local organic food from nearby farms and surroundings.

The Good Food Ireland Tour is a 9-Day Culinary and Cultural Experience that takes visitors on a tour of the Irish Coast, viewing dramatic sceneries, meeting with local people and most importantly allowing them to get to know Ireland through the lens of food and drink.

Leveraging a proven track record in pioneering the development of Irish food tourism for almost 20 years, Good Food Ireland uses its depth of knowledge and unparalleled access to food and drink providers to curate in partnership, Good Food Ireland Tours from

some 300 businesses certified within the Good Food Ireland Collection.

Margaret Jeffares, Founder & Managing Director, Good Food Ireland, said "I am delighted to bring our first Good Food Ireland Tour into Wicklow. BrookLodge & Macreddin Village epitomises the Good Food Ireland philosophy. It is an incredible food destination and a perfect stop for our visitors first night in Ireland".

Farming and fishing have shaped Ireland's way of life. The land gives its milk, cheese and meat a unique taste and flavour. For thou-

sands of years the natural, clean water around the island's 7,500km coastline has provided exceptionally good seafood.

Good Food Ireland endorses businesses for their commitment to local food supporting Irish farmers, food producers and fishermen. With over 300 businesses within its collection from hotels to restaurants to pubs, café and producers reflects Ireland's landscape and seascape as well as the cultural traditions in a way that enlivens a holiday experience. For more information visit [www.goodfoodireland.ie](http://www.goodfoodireland.ie)



The Good Food tour group at BrookLodge



# Wicklow Sailing Club hosts Topper Traveller



Sunday 25th September was a big day for Wicklow Sailing Club as it hosted a Topper Traveller with 54 boats from all over Ireland competing.

It was a fantastic opportunity for WSC to showcase its facilities and the harbour.

It was a hugely successful event and there was immense praise from all travelling sailors for Wicklow Sailing Club and its hospitality.

WSC's Commodore Kyran O'Grady presented prizes to all winning sailors. The award for Best Local Sailor was given to Emily Carrington.

WSC stated "Thanks to all our amazing volunteers who made this event possible".



Wicklow sailors Stephen Bell, Rionach Fleming, Louise Flood, Eleanor Kenny, and Emily Carrington

## Hospice Marathon cancelled due to packed calendar

The Wicklow Hospice marathon and half marathon due to be held on October 15th in aid of Our Lady's Hospice & Care Services Wicklow Hospice has been cancelled.

Eleanor Flew, Director of Fundraising and Communications with Our Lady's Hospice & Care Services said, "Due to the return of so many events following the easing of public health restrictions, the running calendar has become very busy this October, so we have taken the difficult decision to cancel the running event due to take place this month.

"While we are disappointed, we are excited to get planning for the Wicklow Hospice Half Marathon and 10km Race, due to take place on Saturday 25th February 2023. We were overwhelmed by the support of these events earlier this year, and we are looking forward to planning next year's event," she added.

Those who registered for the October 15th Half and Full Marathons will be contacted directly by MyRunResults with refund details and will have the option to move their registration to the February Half Marathon event.

## Katie Taylor Bursary opens for applications

Wicklow County Council and Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership have now opened the application process for the Third level Katie Taylor bursary award for 2022.

The Katie Taylor Bursary is a third level award to support students who excel at sport to complete their college education.

The award of €1,500 per year of college, to a maximum of four years is open to college students now entering first year of third level. Students are not required to study a sports related course but will need to demonstrate their involvement and commitment to sport.

Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Tommy Annesley, said the support a bursary of €6,000 over the course of a college education can give to students, especially in the current financial climate.

Mr Brian Gleeson, Chief Executive, Wicklow County Council, encouraged students to apply for the bursary and commended the high-quality athletes that have been past recipients of the award. Further guidelines and the application form can be downloaded from the Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership website at [www.wicklow-sp.ie](http://www.wicklow-sp.ie). Closing date for applications is Friday 28th of October 2022.

### Third Level Katie Taylor Bursary

Applications Close  
October 28th

Sports Scholarship  
€1,500 per year

For further details:  
Phone: 0404 20100  
E-mail: [Wicklowisp@wicklowcoco.ie](mailto:Wicklowisp@wicklowcoco.ie)

Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership



Siofra O'Farrell and Ciara O'Farrell jump for joy after Greystones beat Tinahely in the U14 A Football Final in Avondale.

## 'Serious Support' schools programme

Lidl Ireland has announced the 2022 launch of its Serious Support Schools Programme, designed to increase participation of young girls at secondary school stage in ladies Gaelic football.

The retailer is seeking nominations from Irish shoppers across the country that will give their chosen school the opportunity to benefit from the programme, which will commence after the Halloween mid-term break.

Supported by the LGFA and delivered by Youth Sport Trust and their specially trained athlete mentors through workshops and training sessions, the programme is designed to educate girls about the positive mental and physical health benefits of playing ladies Gaelic football. The programme also aims to increase participation and reduce drop-out rates for teenagers in the sport. Twenty-six schools across Ireland will have the opportunity to benefit from the programme along with receiving a new set of jerseys for their school team.

The athlete mentors, all of whom are current or former inter county ladies Gaelic football players, are committed to using sport to transform the lives of young people. The mentors will introduce students to the programme's values of Respect, Trust, Responsibility and Recognition, which are key to the success of the athletes themselves. The full team of athlete mentors who will deliver the programme will be confirmed along with the 26 schools chosen to participate in November. Supporting the launch of the 2022-23 programme are Lidl brand ambassadors and secondary school teachers, Carla Rowe of Dublin and Tipperary's Aishling Moloney. They are supported by a range of mentors nationwide including Ann Marie



Wicklow athlete mentor Ann Marie Doran

Doran in Wicklow.

To enter, shoppers can simply complete the nomination form found at [www.lidl.ie/seriousupport](http://www.lidl.ie/seriousupport) and enter their 10-digit unique Lidl receipt code from either a paper or Lidl Plus digital receipt. Entries close on Sunday, 23rd October.



# Wicklow woman becomes inaugural McKenna Scholar



Inaugural McKenna Scholar Elaine Brennan with Minister for Further and Higher Education Simon Harris and LauraLynn founder Jane McKenna.

## Minister Harris joins LauraLynn to appoint Elaine Brennan

Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Simon Harris, joined LauraLynn, Ireland's Children's Hospice, as Wicklow native Elaine Brennan, was awarded the McKenna Scholarship.

Minister Harris welcomed the establishment of The McKenna Scholarship fund by LauraLynn to further research and expand the knowledgebase of Children's Palliative Care in Ireland.

Ms Brennan will be the inaugural McKenna Scholar, she has spent many years working as a Principal Social Worker in Enable Ireland. Having completed a Master's degree in Loss and Bereavement at the Irish Hospice foundation in 2019, she feels passionate about creating opportunities for parents to express the emotional and social impact of their child's diagnosis both on themselves and their family.

Ms Brennan's chosen area of study for the scholarship is "To explore whether early discussions on the experience of loss and anticipatory grief supports parents to engage in future care planning for their child."

The McKenna Scholarship is in honour of Jane and Brendan McKenna, who founded LauraLynn following the tragic death of their two daughters Laura and Lynn.

Research is an integral part of LauraLynn's Model of Care and is identified as a strategic priority within LauraLynn's ambitious Strategic Plan. This scholarship is the first of its kind for the charity and is aimed at supporting emerging researchers in the field of children's palliative care and expanding the knowledge base in children's palliative care, marking a major development in LauraLynn's research strategy.

Speaking at the appointment of the McKenna Scholar, Minister Harris said "This scholarship is a really exciting initiative from LauraLynn and offers a great opportunity for the inaugural scholar, Elaine Brennan, to carry out her research in the area of loss and anticipatory grief. The commitment to invest in research and the charity's priority to expand the knowledge base in the area of children's palliative care is important work in ensuring that we continue to learn and grow the understanding of children's palliative care in this country."

"LauraLynn have identified research as a key as a strategic priority within LauraLynn's ambitious Strategic Plan. I am delighted to be able to support their first scholarship for research and I look forward to this supporting emerging researchers and expanding the knowledge base in children's palliative care in the years ahead. I want to commend everyone at LauraLynn for the excellent work they do and thank them for the honour of presenting Elaine with her scholarship."

LauraLynn, CEO, Kerry McLaverty, added "This appointment marks a huge step forward in LauraLynn's research strategy and it is a really exciting as we appoint Elaine Brennan as our inaugural McKenna Scholar. Research into children's palliative care is still a relatively new area and we are very proud to be enabling and encouraging the expansion of knowledge in this field. On behalf of everyone at

LauraLynn, I'd like to wish Elaine every success as she begins her studies."

The McKenna Scholar will receive funding for undertaking a postgraduate degree (MD or PhD) in the area of children's palliative care. Funding will include an annual stipend of €18,500, a contribution to fees of €6,000 per annum, and €2,000 per year to fund research-related expenses.

Jane McKenna, mum of Laura and Lynn and founder of LauraLynn Children's Hospice commented "Brendan and I are so honoured and privileged to have a scholarship launched in our name. It is incredible to think that LauraLynn will be at the forefront of further research in the area of children's palliative care. We are so incredibly proud of our girl's legacy and the appointment of the first McKenna Scholar is a great step forward for the future of children's palliative care in Ireland. Brendan and I would like to wish Elaine all the very best of luck as she undertakes her studies."

Elaine Brennan, the inaugural McKenna Scholar, added: "I am so excited and honoured to be the first McKenna Scholar. I feel passionately about enabling and supporting parents to express the emotional and social impact of their child's diagnosis on them and their family. I am so grateful to LauraLynn for this opportunity and look forward to undertaking the academic challenge of completing a Doctorate."

## Wicklow schools urged to sign up for Ireland's largest enterprise programme

Schools across Wicklow are being encouraged to sign up for this year's Student Enterprise Programme. An initiative of the Local Enterprise Offices, the country's largest enterprise programme for second level students begins its 21st year and over 300,000 students have taken part since it began.

Every year around 25,000 students take part from almost 500 schools all across the country, competing in the Junior, Intermediate and Senior categories. Participants learn how to create and run their own business, picking up key skills along the way such as ideation, marketing, finance and sales and it's open to all secondary schools. Recent ambassadors for the programme have included Derval O'Rourke, Josh Van Der Flier and Limerick All-Ireland winner Sean Finn.

The programme is run through the network of Local Enterprise Offices, supported by Enterprise Ireland and the local authorities, with local coordinators in every area to support teachers and students through the year of the programme, which helps foster entrepreneurship in students and gives them key skills they can bring with them into later life. The programme is open to all secondary school students from 1st year through to 6th year.

Wicklow has had great success over the years with the Student Enterprise Programme. Last year, in the Senior Category of the competition students Hannah Traynor, Isabella Ledesma, Clara Roldan, and Clara Dunne from Dominican College with their enterprise Wood on Fire represented the County at the 2022 National Final. In the Junior Category, students Quinlan Byrne, John Turley, and Sebastien Anton with their business CCA Junior Ornaments from Coláiste Chraobh Abhann represented Wicklow.

Vibeke Delahunt, Head of Enterprise at Local Enterprise Office, Wicklow says "The Student Enterprise Programme is one of our flagship training initiatives and it is key to fostering a culture of entrepreneurship for the future. We are excited at the prospect of being able to return to a full delivery of in person workshops and County Final in the new year and look forward to engaging with Students and Teachers over the course of the next few months".

Last year the winners were Barrelida from Meath in the Senior Category with their business recycling poly drums from the farm for use as meal troughs and calf teat feeders. In the Intermediate category the winner was Earrings by Aoibheann from Dublin who created a range of jewellery for people who may be sensitive or allergic to traditional jewellery metals. The Junior category was won by Sew Stylish from Kilkenny who again recycled materials to create multifunctional scrunchies for hair that could also hold personal items such as keys and lip gloss. Since the Student Enterprise Programme began in 2003, over 300,000 students have taken part, learning key skills on how to create a business idea, start a business and grow a business. The Student Enterprise Programme also has a new range of online resources for 2022/2023 at [www.StudentEnterprise.ie](http://www.StudentEnterprise.ie), which will feature regular blogs and houses a full range of Student Enterprise resources for students and teachers.

## Young Whistlers complete referee training course

Cumann na mBunscol Chill Mhantáin held a Young Whistlers referee course for Gaelic football in the North East of the county on Wednesday September 28th in Kilcoole Primary School. There was a great turnout, with eleven different school represented on the day. The participants were made up of mature, responsible 6th class boys and girls who share a passion for Gaelic football and are interested in learning more about refereeing.



This year's Young Whistlers course participants

The coaching session was led by North East GDA (Games Development Administrator) Garrett Doyle, who engaged the group in discussion about the basic rules of the game and how best to communicate those rules to players, coaches and spectators alike. There was a high level of genuine interest from participants, as evident from the very pertinent questions asked. It is hearten-

ing to see the next generation of young whistlers begin their refereeing journey, as without referees, we have no game! Cumann na mBunscol Chill Mhantain stated, "Thank you to all the 6th class boys and girls who volunteered and we look forward to seeing you refereeing your local Gaelic football games in the future!"

The Course participants were: Ezra Doyle-Matthews (St Cronans,

Bray), George Donnelly (St Cronans, Bray), Ruairi O'Brien (Kilcoole PS), Ronan O'Brien (Kilcoole PS), Ornagh McDermott (Kilcoole PS), Saoirse Byrne (Moneystown NS), Jack Magee (Moneystown NS), Cillian Mac an Aircinnigh (Scoil Chualainn), Kate MacNamara (Greystones CNS), Tom Malone (Greystones CNS), Jack Campbell (Roundwood NS), Niamh Carpenter

(Roundwood NS), Jack Gavin (Newtown PS), Clara Kirwan (Newtown PS), Jasper Kitson (Réalt na Mara, Brittas Bay), April Donohoe, (Réalt na Mara), Niamh Holohan (St Brigids, Greystones), Sal Maxwell (St Brigids, Greystones), Sean Minto (Kilmacanogue NS), Eva Morgan (Kilmacanogue NS), Kate McGillicuddy (Greystones ET) and Arlo Thompson (Greystones ET).



# KWETB shows commitment to diversity and inclusion at ETBI annual conference



Pictured at the Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI) education conference in Mount Wolseley, Carlow, was Briana Fitzsimons, teacher at Kildare and Wicklow ETB.

Delegates from Kildare and Wicklow ETB attended the annual ETBI education conference in Carlow last week. This year's conference 'An Open Door to Excellence: Why Diversity Matters' focused on equality, diversity and inclusion across the sector.

The two-day conference brought together over 200 delegates to find solutions to make the ETB sector more inclusive and diverse and heard from ETB staff, learners and public figures from non-traditional backgrounds.

Staff of Kildare and Wicklow ETB also featured on the conference line up, with Dr Deidre Keyes, Chief Executive of Kildare and Wicklow ETB, taking part in a panel discussion on 'Living our Ethos as Leaders' and Briana Fitzsimons, teacher at Kildare and Wicklow ETB taking part in a panel discussion on ETB learner and staff perspectives on diversity and inclusion.

The line-up for the conference also featured contributions from:

• Lemn Sissay OBE is a poet playwright, memoirist

performer and broadcaster.

• Dr Shirley Davis, a seasoned HR, and Diversity & Inclusion global thought leader, a senior executive, a certified leadership coach, and a former Chief Diversity & Inclusion Officer for several major Fortune 100 companies.

• Joanne Hession, Founder & CEO of LIFT Ireland (Leading Ireland's Future Together).

Simon Harris TD, Minister for Further and Higher Education, Innovation and Science opened the conference on Wednesday 28th September while Norma Foley TD, Minister for Education gave the official Ministerial conference address on Thursday 29th.

Results from a survey of the ETB workforce by the Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI), the

were presented at the conference. The survey found that most staff and management are white, Irish, heterosexual, Catholic, and neurotypical with no physical disability while ETB learners are increasingly diverse.

Findings from the survey also indicated that over 90 per cent of ETB staff rate the promotion of EDI as 'extremely important'. The inaugural ETBI Diversity Survey is the first time that data on diversity in terms of ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability and religion amongst the ETB workforce has been collected. The survey also assessed the equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) practices in ETBs across the country.

Paddy Lavelle, General Secretary of ETBI, said: "If we are to make real



Pictured at the Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI) education conference were Dr Seamus Conboy, Director of Schools at ETBI and Dr Deirdre Keyes, Chief Executive of Kildare and Wicklow ETB.

progress in promoting diversity in the ETB sector and having staff teams that reflect and represent wider Irish society, it's important that we look at ourselves and develop our understanding of where we are, and how far we have to go. This survey is an important first step on this journey.

"Education and Training Boards want to provide inclusive education and

training and it's heartening to see that so many ETB staff in Kildare and Wicklow ETB and ETBs across the country value equality, diversity and inclusion but we recognise that there is more to be done. Ireland is now a diverse country, and our ETB learners reflect that diversity, but our staff - like much of the education, public and civil service

sectors is not. We know that people working in education can be incredibly influential and be role models for the people with whom they work. We need to recognise the importance of diversity for those involved in education, training, and youth work. It is exemplified in targeting resources on those who need them and prioritising a culture of inclusion."

## Greystones student reaches Everest base camp in fundraising hike

Tomas O'Connell, a fifteen-year-old student in transition year in St David's in Greystones, last Thursday reached Everest base camp after a ten day hike through Nepal.

He is using the experience to raise sponsorship funds for his chosen charity - the RNLI - and has raised more than €1,500 to date. He is hiking with an Irish expedition team led by James McManus of Earth's Edge.

Tomas says he is fundraising for the RNLI because of his connection with Kilmore Quay Lifeboat in Wexford, where his great grandfather Jimmy Kehoe, was a station mechanic and was awarded a 'Thanks

of the Institution' for his part in a dangerous rescue off the Saltee Islands in 1957.

Tomas and the team arrived by plane in Lukla on 29th September and began the long hike to Everest base camp, 5,354m above sea level.

Tomas trained in the Wicklow Mountains in preparation.

Tomas says he and his grandad James Kehoe "have seen first hand the great work that the Kilmore Quay lifeboat crew do. As a charity, the RNLI depends on our donations so it can go on saving lives and keeping us safe."

So far Tomas has raised almost €2,000 from his fundraising hike.



Tomas O'Connell at Everest base camp

## Skillnet launch Ireland's first micro-credential programmes for climate action

Skillnet Ireland in partnership with the University of Limerick (UL) are launching the first enterprise-led micro-credential programmes dedicated to climate action in Ireland.

The stackable micro-credentials developed by Skillnet Ireland's Climate Ready Academy will enable participants to develop a tailored sustainable charter for their organisation, across the areas of energy, transport, sustainability, waste and circularity, and achieve a Level 7 Certificate in Energy Management Practice and Waste or Certificate in Circular Economy Management in Practice with University of Limerick.

Micro-credentials are small, accredited courses designed to meet the demands of learners, enterprise and organisations.

The programmes launched on Friday are the 'Energy Leaders' and the 'Waste and Circular Economy Leaders' programmes which are designed to incentivise and support employees in developing practical environmental improvements for their businesses.

Discussing the programmes at the launch, Paul Healy, Chief Executive, Skillnet Ireland, said: "The climate action leadership programmes launched today play a pivotal role in developing the talent needed by industry and in meeting the targets of the Government's Climate Action Plan.

"These new micro-credentials offer participants the opportunity to achieve a level 7 Certificate. This expertise will be used by leaders in practical ways to make their businesses more sustainable and climate ready. We look forward to working with industry and academic institutions as we develop more programmes through our Climate Ready Academy," added Healy.

University of Limerick President Prof. Kerstin Mey said: "This is a great example of how we collaborate with industry through Skillnet Ireland and the Climate Ready Academy to deliver a new form of learning which is based on the micro-credential earned through the participation in each individual programme. The stackable micro-credentials will enable participants to apply practical skills for climate action within their business and obtain a Level 7 Certificate awarded by our University."

Earlier this year, Skillnet Ireland published research on 'Talent for the Green Economy' in partnership with the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI).



Ken Stockil, CEO Central Solutions, Prof Kerstin Mey, President UL, Senator Roisin Garvey, Paul Healy, CEO Skillnet Ireland and Brian Leddin TD. Photo by Alan Place

The report found specific skills gaps in the which are holding back businesses when it comes to developing and implementing sustainability strategies. The new programmes are one of Skillnet Ireland's new initiatives designed for removing these identified barriers.

Ken Stockil, Director of Climate Ready Academy, said: "This new suite of Climate Action Micro credentials will play a critical role in helping organisations transition to a more sustainable future. They will benefit individuals in building recognised third level qualifications in areas such as Energy Management, Circularity and broader Sustainability and will benefit businesses by offering them a powerful mechanism to upskill employees and develop tangible actions to tackle climate change within their business."

Commenting at the launch, Senator Roisin Garvey said: "I am delighted to be here at the launch of the new Climate Ready Leaders Programmes with Skillnet Ireland and UL. What we need now is clear green action and I believe that this programme has a huge part to play in leading companies to taking the action that we need now."



# Junk Ensemble present: Dances Like a Bomb

*Mermaid Arts Centre, Thursday 20th October,  
8pm, €18/€16. Duration: 1 hour*

**Dances Like a Bomb is the latest work by multi-award-winning dance innovators Junk Ensemble, performed by acclaimed actor Mikel Murfi and leading Irish dance artist Finola Cronin (formerly of Pina Bausch's Tanz Theater Wuppertal).**

Celebrating the strength and beauty of mature bodies and challenging the cult of youth, the performers are heroic, vulnerable, comedic, acerbic, and completely themselves. They care fiercely for each other and defend their independence. As they hold each other up and push each other down, the universality of ageing and the éperformanceí of age is unpacked, alongside the limits of love and care.

Blending visceral imagery, dance, text and music, *Dances Like a Bomb* is a reclaiming of the ageing body.

Writing in the Irish Times, Michael Seaver said "The superb performers Finola Cronin and Mikel Murfi are wise, not just in years but in performances, their seen-it-all experience onstage ensuring that they can deliver whimsy with a few home truths."



Actor Mikel Murfi and dance artist Finola Cronin



Ceara Conway

## Ceara Conway presents Caoin Music

*Mermaid Arts Centre, Friday 21st October, 8pm. €20/€18*

**Ceara Conway performs a collection of sean-nós and world music songs exploring love, loss and longing in traditional song ñ with Kevin Murphy (cello), Ultan O'Brien (viola, fiddle) and Anna Mullarkey (piano, electronics).**

Known for her unique use of traditional song and lament in contemporary art, for this performance vocalist/artist Ceara Conway collaborates with musicians Kevin Murphy (cello) and Ultan O'Brien (viola, fiddle) of Slow Moving Clouds, and Anna Mullarkey (piano, electronics) to bring you a collection of sean-nos and world music songs that explore the beautiful sounds and sentiments of love, loss and longing, found in traditional praise songs, lullabies with core emphasis on the

traditional Irish écaoineadhí, lament.

Ceara Conway has gained recognition for her singing in traditional repertoires across cultures from Irish traditional sean-nos, to Portuguese, Arabic and African song and Georgian Chant.

The essence of her music is its unique hybridity, a merging of her love and respect for tradition coupled with her interest in new styles, genres and contemporary music. Performers: Ceara Conway ñ vocals Kevin Murphy - cello Ultan

O'Brien - violin, viola Anna Mullarkey - piano, electronics. This Caoin tour is produced by glór following the commissioned premiere at glór in April 2022, kindly supported by The Arts Council. glór celebrates its 21st birthday this autumn.

CAOIN the album is commissioned by Creative Ireland Galway County Council.

Songlines Magazine said "Conway provides heartfelt interpretations throughout, adroitly pitched vocals matched by delicate, poetically evocative accompaniments. Sung entirely in Irish, CAOIN pitches Ceara Conway at the forefront of a new generation of sean-nos singers."

## Keep on strumming in Bray

**Pat Byrne is the founder of The Harbour Ukuleles who play in The Harbour Bar Bray and boast a regular twenty-five uke players gathering and singing upstairs on Tuesday's. He is starting a new Beginners and Improvers ukulele course starting on Tuesday 18th October upstairs in The Harbour Bar Bray at 7pm.**

From 7pm to 7.30 it will be for complete beginners and from 7.30 to 8pm it will be for improvers and also those who want to learn the Harbour Ukuleles repertoire with a view to joining the group.

The Harbour Ukuleles actually have over one hundred strummers on their members list to call on to play for charity, at events throughout the county. Most recently played at the Garda and Civil Defence / Purple House charity fundraiser, giving a free concert at The Bandstand Bray before rushing up to Glencree Peace and Reconciliation Centre to perform at their BBQ fundraiser.

Pat also teaches ukulele and guitar in Cabinteely Community College and is also the promoter in Ireland for the world famous The Ukulele Orchestra of Great Britain who are now fifty years on the road and have filled concerts like Sydney Opera House, Royal Albert Hall, Carnegie Hall New York to name but a few, whom David Bowie described as 'Wonderfully Clever'. Pat expects to bring them to Ireland next year for a concert in The National Concert Hall. To be added to the list for the course and for cost and further information Email; harbourukuleles@gmail.com

## Mary Coughlan

**Mary Coughlan's music career has been a roller coaster, one hell of a ride, and this Live & Kicking concert will reflect that, featuring all the songs that are close to Mary's heart and life.**

Mary Coughlan is unique in blending the whisky-blurred, smoke-seared, husky notes and laconic wit of Billie Holiday and Peggy Lee and the line of deep, down and dirty blues singers back to Memphis Minnie and Bessie Smith with the sardonic, bitter-sweet defiance and despair of the Piaf And Mary Coughlan delivers it all in a delicious and unapologetic Irish drawl, sceptical, rueful, mournful and melting, ardent for love, all in one voice which wraps itself around Cole Porter and Jerome Kern, Elvis Presley and Joy Division.

Mary is our greatest female singer because over twenty-five years and ten albums she's made the most grown-up, uncompromising, wholly personal and utterly universal music on either side of the Atlantic about what goes on between men and women. She has taken the classic standards of jazz balladry and the recent gems of rock and Irish song-writing, shaken them and offered them up anew. She sings in the voice of the wrong and wronged woman and she makes us think what it is men make of women and what women have to do to make do. She has just one other forebear in the pretty pallid parade of female pop artists, just one other woman whose bruised, haunted voice could find and enjoy the inconsolable longing and loss in a three minute pop song: Dusty Springfield.

*Approx Duration: 2 hours (including interval). This event is SOLD OUT - Register for waiting list at [www.whaletheatre.ie](http://www.whaletheatre.ie) or call the booking office on 01 2010550 to book.*

*Whale Theatre, Saturday 22nd  
October, 8pm (doors 7pm)*



Mary Coughlan

## Eoghan O'Sullivan: Songs From The Bright Side

*Whale Theatre, Friday 21st October, 8pm (doors 7pm)*

**Whether singing his own crafted folk-pop songs or those of the songwriters who inspire him, Eoghan brings joy, humour and passion to every performance. He's returning from his adopted home in Switzerland to the town where he grew up for this once-off concert to celebrate family, friendship and community.**

For more than two decades he has entertained crowds around Europe and beyond: from Paris to Oslo, Berlin to Boston, he earned his stripes as a travelling troubadour. Even before that, he was a regular at the international busking festival in Youghal, where he was the overall winner in 1997.

As family life and his career in communications led him to settle down in Switzerland, following a music-filled stint in Amsterdam, he has continued to perform regularly around the Geneva region, in pubs, clubs and at festivals. One recent highlight was playing support to Luka Bloom when he visited Geneva.

Eoghan started composing his own material in his mid-20s, inspired by his travels and learning from his already extensive live experience. Always seeking a catchy chorus or a smart turn-of-phrase, he strives to write songs that can take their place alongside those covers he has been singing since he was a



Eoghan O'Sullivan

teenager and still loves to sing. With influences that take in The Beatles, Cat Stevens, Neil Finn, Damien Rice and Christy Moore (and the many songwriters whose work he has interpreted), Eoghan wraps stories from everyday life up in memorable melodies. He has even found success writing in French, with his song *Moi Aussi* now taught in classrooms around the

French-speaking area of Switzerland. A song about inclusion, it was commissioned by a Swiss foundation of the same name that raises awareness about Down syndrome.

The proceeds from ticket sales for this event, after venue costs, will go to Jigsaw's Wicklow Hub, which offers mental health advice and support to young people in the area.



# Wicklow GAA stories feature in second 'Grassroots' book



*Grassroots: The Second Half, priced at €19.99, is available now nationwide and from: [www.ballpointpress.ie](http://www.ballpointpress.ie).*

Six contributions with strong Wicklow connections are part of a compelling new GAA book written by those at the heart of the sport. *Grassroots: The Second Half* is a gold mine of GAA tales spanning over 150 years and follows the publication of a successful first volume last year.

"The GAA and I were astounded by the response to the first edition," said book editor PJ Cunningham, who's from Bray and collaborated with Croke Park on both publications.

"This collection is slightly different to the first in that as well as having the usual stories from the deep roots of rural society, there are also numerous stories where people from other sports and walks of life talk of their GAA experiences," he said.

Former Irish rugby international Ollie Campbell, ex-snooker world champion Ken Doherty, and Vienna-based opera singer Tom Birch, all explain how they became big fans of Gaelic games.

"Virtually no subject escapes in the 400 pages, with tales of a parish priest's curse, referees officiating with watches which didn't work to players taking éleaksí on the field of play," said Cunningham.

"All human life is in there whether it is going to and from matches or in one case, the story where a Kilkenny fan got locked into a well-known Dublin pub while his team won the All Ireland hurling final a mile away in Croke Park."

Stories span and reflect the Wicklow GAA kaleidoscope with the late Eamonn Moules story of how he had to

rely on a dollop of common sense when his watch stopped while he was refereeing a big local match.

The Garden County may be one of only two counties not to register a provincial senior title but for Vallemount man Michael O'Brien, there was compensation in knowing that his roots were immersed in a club that would forever be the éAll-Ireland Scenery champion."

Bray native Jack Napier proudly recalls his part in electing two Wicklow GAA presidents and one of those, Aodh "Broin n" writing about his own playing days - gave credence to the term 'Bray Wanderer' in a GAA sense when traveling to play illegally in Cork.

Wicklow resident Ciaran Byrne pens an amusing account of his wife's love of another county's fortunes while the late, great Peter Keogh's piece recalls how a man from the Banner got his beloved Kiltegan up and running as a GAA force.

GAA President Larry McCarthy said the book highlighted the value of the folklore and stories built up around our games. "What these two Grassroots books do is ensure they become available to a wider audience as most, if not all, of these stories are being published for the first time," he said.



PJ Cunningham

## How To Get The Menopause and Enjoy It!

*Anne Gildea at The Courthouse Arts Centre, Friday 14th October*

Anne Gildea is waxing her moustache, slathering on the Oestrogen and boiling with excitement about bring her hilarious new show on the road. Join her on this fabulous, informative, wet-your-pants excursion through one of life's last great mysteries - *The Menopause!*

What is it? Why does it happen? How come some women sail through it and it turns others into off-the-scale nutjobs? Is there anything you can do about it? Why is it named after men? And why oh why is so little known about this inevitable phase of lady-life?

Anne answers all these questions and more as she rips through every angle and embraces Menopause's greatest gift; THE SUPERPOWER OF NOT GIVING A S%@TE! Join Anne for this unique and hilarious show, it's a classic in the making!

Audience comments: "I haven't laughed so much for so long." "Outrageously & wonderfully funny. She gets a conversation going instead of all the shushing everyone goes on with." "Seriously funny and hilariously clever." "Go See It!"

Anne Gildea is a comedienne and writer, known of her unique brand of humour. A founder and member of the popular comedy-musical trio The Nualas, this ne show is her most ambitious project to date.



## The Dr. Linley Hamilton Quintet

*Whale Theatre, Thursday 20th October, 8pm (doors 7pm)*

Dr. Linley Hamilton's musical career grows and grows each year. He has been to Moscow for the Garden Jazz Festival, London for the Jazz Festival, he has headlined the Cork Jazz Festival and played a big part in the Limerick Jazz Festival. He was half way to Yokohama for the Promenade Jazz Festival when his quintet had to turn back due to the Typhoon.

He has had two wonderfully successful albums released in the last four years, both achieving international recognition. His music is constantly being played on radio stations in Europe, Australia, The USA, Canada and South America.

Dr. Linley Hamilton now makes his Greystones debut for a major concert in the fabulous Whale Theatre venue. He will be accompanied by his stellar Quintet. As well as a great selection of tracks from his numerous albums, he is likely

to play some new and original music from his forth coming album due out in April 2023. Dubbed "Ireland's Favourite Musician" Linley is one of Ireland's biggest supporters on the jazz scene. Through his weekly BBC Radio Ulster show Jazz World he gives airplay to a huge amount of Irish and Irish based jazz artists. You will see his name pop up on the credits of a never ending list of Irish albums over the last ten years and you will catch him supporting many young



and up-and-coming artists in their live performances. All this without even mentioning that he is a Doctor of Music at the Ulster

University, Derry. If you want to be entertained by wonderful music performed wonderfully then get your ticket early!

*Duration: 2 hours approx. (including interval). Tickets €20 See [www.whaletheatre.ie](http://www.whaletheatre.ie) or call the booking office on 01 2010550 to book.*

## Sunday Soiree with the Great American Songbook

*Hot Spot Music Club, Greystones, October 16th*

The Hot Spot is proud to present an afternoon of romantic music on Sunday October 16th 4pm, with some of the greatest songs ever written - about love, love found, love lost and love sometimes found again.

You will hear songs from all the greats - Cole Porter, George Gershwin, Michel Legrand, Harold Arlen, Jimmy van Heusen, Richard Rodgers, Antonio Carlos Jobin, and words from the greatest lyricists - Alan and Marilyn Bergman, Ira Gershwin, Johnny Mercer, and many many more, performed by some of the best musicians and singers in the country. Hear old favourites from Sinatra, Nat King Cole, Ella Fitzgerald, in new modern interpretations based on arrangements by singers Diana Krall, Laura

Fygy, Annie Lennox, and by musicians Bill Evans, Chris Botti, and others.

The 'Hot Spot Collective' star singers are supported by a hand-picked group of musicians, all brilliant soloists and many leaders of their own bands.

This is a one off opportunity to be up close in an intimate setting with

some of the most beautiful songs ever written. You will leave with your feet tapping and your heart filled with hope and joy, humming along to these classic melodies. Come along, have a classic cocktail, relax, and enjoy.

*No cover charge. Donations welcome*





Paul Carter and Phylis Curley at the recent Avon Motors Coffee Morning in aid of the Wicklow Hospice and Rathdrum Cancer Support Group

# Don your favourite kit for GOAL Jersey Day

Humanitarian aid agency GOAL is appealing to people all over Ireland to show their true colours by getting on their kit for GOAL Jersey Day, which takes place on Friday, 14th October in partnership with Folens. To sign up to GOAL Jersey Day, please visit [jerseyday.org](http://jerseyday.org).

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

GOAL's Director of Fundraising & Communications, Eamon Sharkey, said: "GOAL Jersey Day is one of Ireland's longest running fundraisers, and has been in existence for more than three decades. Now more than ever GOAL needs the

continued support of the Irish people who have never been found wanting in supporting the world's most vulnerable communities. Schools and companies look forward to GOAL Jersey Day every year and it is a day when people can come together, have fun, and give to communities in need at the same time."

Funds raised from GOAL Jersey Day will go towards the agency's life changing work in emergency response, health, nutrition, and livelihoods in 15 countries. Last year alone, GOAL reached more than

18.5 million people with lifechanging support in Africa, the Middle East, Latin America, and more recently in Ukraine, with humanitarian aid being delivered to people impacted by the ongoing conflict.

"This year the support of the people of Ireland is more crucial than ever as global crises continue to have an impact on the world's poorest countries," said Eamon Sharkey. "The combined impact of Covid-19, Climate Change and Conflict is having a devastating effect on global food security. This is especially acute in East



Africa, where 23 million people are experiencing crisis levels of hunger. GOAL is responding, delivering water, food and medical aid, but we need your support this Jersey Day."

GOAL Jersey Day takes place on Friday, 14 October 2022, in partner-

ship with Folens. As well as showing solidarity and support for some of the world's most vulnerable communities, primary and secondary schools that register will be entered for a draw to win a €1,000 prize from Folens. To sign up for GOAL Jersey Day, please visit [jerseyday.org](http://jerseyday.org).

## Almost 30,000 people in Wicklow using the toilet as a bin

*Clean Coasts and Irish Water urge the public to 'Think Before You Flush' in a bid to safeguard our environment*

Irish Water and Clean Coasts are urging the public to continue to 'Think Before You Flush' as a recent survey has revealed that almost 30,000 people living in Wicklow continue to regularly flush wipes and other sanitary items down the toilet.

Worryingly those aged under 35 are twice as likely to dispose of 'flushable' wipes down the toilet, compared to those aged over 35. No wipes whether marked 'flushable' or not should be flushed down the toilet. With sea swimming and the use of our beaches increasingly popular all year-round, it's a timely reminder that our flushing behaviour has a direct impact on the environment and that making small changes can help prevent sanitary waste ending up on Ireland's sandy beaches, rocky shores and secluded bays.

A new campaign



Broadcaster Blathnaid Treacy along with Donal Heaney, Irish Water and Sinead McCoy, Clean Coasts

video targeting under 35 years olds aims to connect with this audience in way that encourages real behavioural change.

Speaking about the survey results Donal Heaney, Irish Water said: "In 2018, our research informed us that 36% of people living in Ireland were regularly flushing the wrong things down the toilet. Irish Water have been working in partnership with Clean Coasts on the 'Think Before You Flush' campaign and during this time, we have made significant progress, as this figure has now reduced to 21%. Whilst this represents a 42% improvement in people's flushing behaviour, it still represents almost a million people nationally using the toilet as a bin: that's almost 30,000 people living in Wicklow. The impacts of flushing the wrong things down the toilet are clear to see, as we are still removing thousands of sewer blockages from our network every month and continue to see this waste ending up on our beaches. Our message is simple: only the 3 Ps, pee, poo and paper should be flushed down the toilet."

resents a 42% improvement in people's flushing behaviour, it still represents almost a million people nationally using the toilet as a bin: that's almost 30,000 people living in Wicklow. The impacts of flushing the wrong things down the toilet are clear to see, as we are still removing thousands of sewer blockages from our network every month and continue to see this waste ending up on our beaches. Our message is simple: only the 3 Ps, pee, poo and paper should be flushed down the toilet."

### THE MIRACULOUS PRAYER

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



### WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

I, Elsa Augustenborg, intend to apply for planning permission for development at this site 42 Raheen Park, Bray, Co. Wicklow, A98 C3K2.

The development will consist of an insulation retrofit, enlargement of the front and rear dormer windows which adds 16 sqm floor space, new windows balustrade and doors to front and rear elevations and alterations to existing fenestration, plus a redesign of a section of the side structure roof to provide for 36 sqm of habitable attic accommodation consisting of 1 ensuite bedroom. All the above together with all associated ancillary site works and facilities.

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. The planning application may be viewed online at [www.wicklow.ie](http://www.wicklow.ie) under planning outline enquiries.

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 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

Planning permission is sought by Packaging Laundry Ltd for removal of existing single-storey joinery workshop building and adjacent yard, and for construction in its place of new nine meter high single-storey storage/processing building, on site at former home of Wicklow Timber and Joinery Ltd, Wurtzburg Avenue, Boghall Road, Bray, Co Wicklow (Eircode A98WD37). This site is immediately adjacent and adjoining the existing home of the applicant company, Packaging Laundry Ltd, at Unit C, Oldcourt Business Park, Wurtzburg Avenue, Boghall Road, Bray, Co Wicklow, (Eircode A98P6N3), and the application includes retention of an external cylindrical water storage tank, and minor items of external plant. Other minor associated works will include the provision of markings for car parking, markings for a turning circle, and markings for loading areas, and gates to the external storage areas. Signage, too, is included as illustrated.

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

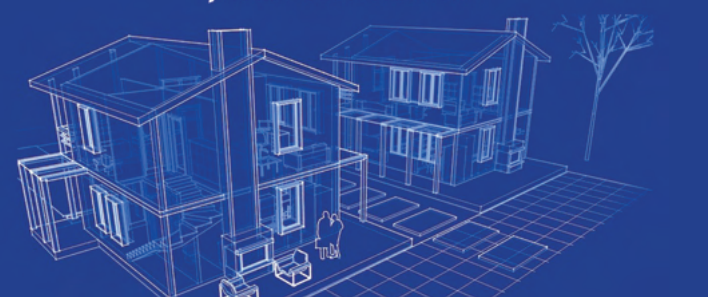
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# Make sure you cast your vote

Wicklow Chamber Launches the 2022 Wicklow Business Awards & Dinner Dance

The Wicklow Town & District Chamber Dinner Dance & Business Awards will return on Friday, 18th November 2022 in The Great Eastern Pavillion at the stunning Tinakilly Country House Hotel.

Nominations are now officially open - get your entries in by voting online at WicklowChamber.ie, by emailing susana@wicklowchamber.ie or by texting your nominated business to 086 089 7702 before 5pm on Friday 31st October 2022. Voting is very simple. Just chose your Leading Business and let us know why you are nominating them.

This year, there are nine award categories, and you get to decide who wins:

- **Best Retailer** - Sponsored by Wicklow County Council
- **Best Eating** - Establishment/Hospitality /Pub - Sponsored by Wicklow Hire & Sales
- **Best Start Up Business**



**2022 Wicklow Chamber Business Awards**  
**November 18th 2022**

- Sponsored by AIB
- **Best Professional Service Business** - Sponsored by Kings Hair & Beauty
- **Best Digital Presence Award** - Sponsored by Wicklow Town & District Chamber
- **Best Sustainability,**

- Governance & Environmental Award** - Sponsored by Codling Wind Park
- **Honouring Entrepreneurship & Innovation Award** - Sponsored by Herbst Software
- **Honouring Excellence**

in the Community Awards - Sponsored by Burke Oil  
• **Special Recognition Award** - Sponsored by Wicklow Enterprise Park

Chamber President Matt Forkin said "It is now more important than ever for local businesses to stand out and highlight the strength of their products and services and the Business Awards gives you the platform to showcase your business".

The focus of the evening will be on celebration of local achievement, fun, sumptuous food and great music. Tickets are now on sale - please book early to avoid disappointment by contacting the Chamber Office on (0404) 66433.



Bray First Responders Marc Windsor and Owen Carroll at Dargle Valley Pharmacy for the celebration of its one-year anniversary at the Egan Centre in Bray

## Christmas Shoebox Appeal

The 2022 Team Hope Christmas Shoebox Appeal is aiming to deliver as many gift-filled shoeboxes as possible to children, for whom poverty is their every-day reality, and make smiles happen. And they need your help.

Team Hope is calling on parents, children, teachers, families and communities in Wicklow to build-a-box at home or online to help them reach their goal of 200,000 shoeboxes this year - remember, that's smiles on 200,000 children's faces in 13 countries across Africa and Eastern Europe.

It has never been easier to build a shoebox. All you have to do is find an empty shoebox, wrap it in Christmas paper and fill it with gifts for a boy or girl aged between 2 and 14, give online or attach a €4 donation and bring it to a local drop off point before the deadline of Tuesday November 8th or you can build-a-box online by donating at [www.teamhope.ie](http://www.teamhope.ie). One of Team Hope's local partners will build a box on your behalf on-the-ground and make sure it goes where it's needed most.

When considering the best items to gift, think of the 4W's: **Wear** - Gloves, Hat, Scarf, Socks, Top, Underwear; **Wash** - Comb, Soap, Sponge, Toothbrush & Toothpaste, Washcloth; **Write** - Colouring Pencils, Notepad, Writing accessories; **Wow** - Think of items like musical instruments, puzzles, a ball, a skipping rope, a soft toy or a toy car. Team Hope Shoebox Week runs this year from October 31st to November 6th and to get involved you'll find plenty of inspiration on gifts to include, or not, in your shoebox, how to donate and where to drop off your shoebox at [www.teamhope.ie](http://www.teamhope.ie).

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