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Tuesday 17th January 2023 First Floor, The Boulevard, Quinsborough Road, Bray. A98 R6D7. Tel: 01 - 2869111 E-mail: wicklowed@localtimes.ie www.wicklowtimes.net

'WE'RE SITTING ON A TIME BOMB'

Wicklow Fire Service is currently reviewing a detailed report prepared by the fire safety consultant of the Grand Hotel in Wicklow Town. The 30-bedroom hotel, now operating as a direct provision centre, is currently accommodating close to 300 people, giving rise to serious fire safety concerns.

The fire report on the current accommodation arrangements was requested following an inspection of the hotel carried out by Wicklow Fire Service in November 2022. A suspension of standing orders was raised by Wicklow Municipal District councillors Paul O'Brien and Gail Dunne at last week's County Council meeting, to discuss what they called the 'diabolical and dangerous'

living conditions for the current occupants of the hotel. "I'm reluctantly bringing this to the chamber today, because I accept that Wicklow County Council have no influence over this really, but I'm here because I've run out of road and I'm frustrated by the minister and his officials," said Cllr O'Brien. "A lot of people have been in touch about the overcrowding in the Grand Hotel direct provision

centre. We are supposed to be the land of a thousand welcomes, but I never thought underneath that there would be terms and conditions applied to that and some of the conditions that these people are allegedly living in are absolutely diabolical and there are also concerns about health issues. "What I'm requesting here today is that the members back me up on a letter to go to the Minister and his officials,



Grace Cullen, Ava Smith McGarry and Aisling Doyle from Colaiste Chraobh Abhann, Kilcoole, at the BT Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition in the RDS last week, with their project which investigated sustainable forest fire prevention. See more, page 13.

not to stoke hate and division, but to work in a constructive and positive manner, because what's happening is not right. The government is overseeing a failed policy and in my opinion have lost control of the situation." Cllr Gail Dunne added, "Over the last few months a lot of people in Wicklow Town have seen the situation in the Grand Hotel getting worse. To see people basically boxed in together is terrible. There are rumours of 180 people in one room in bunk beds and God forbid if there is a fire it'll be something like Grenfell Tower in London because there's no way they would be able to get out. We're worried about allowing people to live like that. We don't think it's fair. But we're so disappointed with the fact that we've raised this at a number of different stages, in different places, and we've

been ignored. "God forbid what will happen if there's a fire down there - I don't think anybody in this room wants anything like that on their record and I certainly don't anyway. The living accommodation in the Grand Hotel is not right and something has to be done about it."

Cllr Dermot 'Daisy' O'Brien said "There's an 83-page national standards document in how we do this stuff. That's a term of reference. There are 39 standards in it. There are over 300 indicators about how someone runs a service like this and who runs a service provider who is making plenty of profit. There are 23 items of legislation that are referenced in that 83-page document. Standard number one in that document says, 'The service provider performs its functions as outlined in relevant legislation,

regulations, national policies and standards to protect residents living in the

accommodation centre in a manner that promotes their welfare and

respects their dignity'. On Standard number one

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Donnybrook | 56A, 77A via Barrow St | 18 via Ballsbridge | C1, C2, C3, C4 via Sandymount

Luas: Beechwood stop (Green Line) is a 15min walk from the college

Dart: Lansdowne Road stop, 5min from the college

Walking: Ballsbridge College is a 20min walk from Grafton Street

T: +353 1 668 4806 E: info@ballsbridge.cdetb.ie

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Seamus Connolly, Rory Benville, Gerarda Benville and Annette Connolly at the 100 Lights candlelight walk in Glenmalur. The 3km looped walk on 8th January was held to commemorate part of the area's 19th century mining history. According to folklore, the mining families who lived at Baravore would walk to Mass on Christmas mornings to Grenmane and Ballinastone, and that their '100 lights' could be seen as they crossed the ford over the Avonbeg.

Holy Rosary Soup and Sandwiches

Holy Rosary Soup and Sandwiches will be held on Wednesday, 25th January 2023 in Kilian House Family Centre, Greystones, from 12.15 to 2pm. Everyone is welcome to come along and enjoy good home-made food followed by tea or coffee. The suggested donation is €5. All proceeds are given to local charities.

Road closures

Coillte has been requested by Wicklow County Council to remove hazardous branches and overhanging trees along three sections of public road. These essential works will commence on Monday, 16th January and run (week-days only) until Friday 3rd February as follows:

- R752 at the Meetings of the Waters. Road closure 7am-7pm, Monday 16th January-Friday 20th January.
- R752 at Woodenbridge. Road closure 7am-7pm, Monday 23rd January-Friday 27th January.
- R747 at Woodenbridge. Road closed from

7am Monday, 30th January to 6pm Friday, 3rd February 2023 inclusive (24hrs).

The works will be undertaken at Ballinamona between the junctions with the L6184 (at Woodenbridge) and the L6183 (at Ballymorris). Traffic management and alternative access routes will be in place and Coillte respectfully requests the public to please follow on-road signage and apologise for any inconvenience caused by these necessary works.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

As your longtime anti-abortion candidate, I got a great boost when the USA made abortion illegal a short time ago. From many years of radio and television the Irish are very fond of America. I hope and pray that we Irish will follow suit. I don't want a Nobel Prize like the woman from Ukraine got a few years ago. She spoke out against the killing of innocent children. I just ask you to give me your No.1 vote in the next Election.

The environment is my second concern. As my family is native to Kilcoole for more generations than the records show I am entitled and have the obligation to do all I can to protect and preserve its beauty. The 1999 Regional Plan did that for me. That 1999 Regional Plan took precedence over whatever plans Wicklow had in the pipeline. Since 1999 Wicklow County Council has defied the Regional Plan and the 2000 planning laws that covered it. Although I did all I could to stop the destruction of my village of Kilcoole and its hinterland, the Council's planning section has given permission for, as I see it, destruction that makes the area unrecognisable. I have reminded the Planning Section in the Council that they are breaking the law which the 1999 plan made Kilcoole and Newtownmountkennedy a Green Belt to this day in 2023.

I asked the Garda Commissioner to come in and take the burden off my shoulders as it is affecting my health not being able to get a proper night's sleep for more than 20 years. I don't remember the reply - I think I was asked to prove the corruption. That was what I was asking of him!

At the present time, for some reason I don't understand, St. Catherine's Special School, established about 50 years ago, want to move to the Convent Grounds in Kilcoole. Because of the further destruction of my village I objected.

Charlie Keddy.

IMPACT project to continue

A local employment service for people with disabilities has been found to have had a very positive impact in the local community according to a research report just published.

The IMPACT Initiative is a service that supports people with a disability in Bray and North Wicklow to achieve sustainable employment, become self-employed or progress in their careers. It was set up in 2022 by a consortium of local organisations, led by Bray Area Partnership, as part of the Measure to Support People with Disabilities, with funding from the Dormant Accounts Fund.

The independent evaluation of IMPACT's first ten months of operation found that the project successfully supported many people with a disability to progress towards employment and added to and enhanced service provision for people with disabilities in the Bray and North Wicklow area. Feedback from clients and organisations IMPACT worked collaboratively with was overwhelmingly positive.

IMPACT's person-centred approach was particularly appreciated by clients who said that staff listened to them and were very approachable. As one client said: "They really do listen to you and do what they can to support you to find and get your dream job - they believe in you." Another said: "They see you and not your disability".

The report recommended that IMPACT be considered as a long-term service and Bray Area Partnership say they are delighted to announce that funding has been provided to continue IMPACT until the end of December 2023.

You can find out more about IMPACT and read the report at www.brayareapartnership.ie - or contact the team on 01 963 3342, email orlbutler@brayareapartnership.ie.

Wicklow Rotary Club information evening

Wicklow Rotary are hosting an information evening on Monday 23rd January at 6 pm in the Bridge Tavern, Wicklow Town with a view to providing particulars of the organisation of the Club, its activities and guidance on membership.

The Rotary Club has been active in Wicklow since 1988 providing support for local charities together with partaking in national and international aid programs. Youth Leadership, Bicycles for Africa, Wicklow Way Project, Refugee relief are among the areas of Club engagement. Many people in Wicklow town will be aware of the Remembrance Christmas Tree located at the Halpin monument, which is erected annually by Rotary and, in 2022, was dedicated to raising finances for the Wicklow Cancer Support group. The club has been to the forefront in the locality for providing assistance for the settlement of Ukrainian refugees and has set up Wicklow Ukraine Support to assist Ukrainians arriving to Wicklow since March last year. The group has provided help and advice with funding, accommodation, schools, health services, jobs and community support for Ukrainians now living in Wicklow who are escaping the war.

Club President, Martina Fox, and members look forward to welcoming you to this informal, fun, 1 hour information event, refreshments will be served.

Further information may be obtained from Wicklow Rotary PRO, Theo at Theojphelan@gmail.com

Wicklow Federation 67th Drama Festival

20th-22nd January Glenealy Village Hall, Curtain up 7:30pm sharp

Friday 20th

St Patrick's Dramatic Society: "Mere Mortals" - One Act Play by David Ives
Lucia Drama Group: "The Free Gaff" - Sketch by Maeve Edwards
Delgany Dramatic Society: "The Bear" (after Chekov) - One Act Play by Brian Friel
St Patrick's Dramatic Society: "Sure Thing" - Sketch by David Ives

Saturday 21st

Ashford ICA: "Museum Pieces" - One Act Play by Joan Greening
Fuinneoghe Drama Group: "Turning Over A New Leaf" - Sketch by Roy Beatty
Square One Theatre Group: "Last Tango in Little Grimley" - One Act Play by David Tristram
Lusk ICA: "A Charming Affair" - Sketch by Robert Scott

Sunday 22nd

Balally Players: "Purple Squirrel" - One Act Play by Seán T Daly
Delgany D.S: "Anatomy Of A Duel" - Sketch by Peter Robbie
Delgany ICA: "A Dog's Life" - One Act Play by Pam Valentine

Adjudicator Michael McCabe.
Tickets €10 at the door or contact 087 9833935



Regina Myler, Yvonne Fleming, Emer Kinsella and Ann Fleming at the Arklow Town Team Little Christmas ladies lunch in the Woodenbridge Hotel.

WICKLOW
LOCAL Times

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'WE'RE SITTING ON A TIME BOMB'

Continued from page 1

they've failed as far as I'm concerned."

Cllr Shay Cullen said: "We're sitting on a time bomb and that's not an exaggeration of the situation here, where we have so many people congregated into one small building. It's just nonsensical, the position that we find ourselves in. And as has been quite rightly said, as public representatives, nobody is willing to engage with us. I'm asking the CEO to organise a meeting through Wicklow County Council with the minister or whatever relevant officials will come and meet us as six municipal councillors and, indeed, the staff of Wicklow County Council, as a matter of urgency."

Cllr Mary Kavanagh said, "I spent the 28th and 29th of December contacting IPAS and going backwards

and forwards with them because they suggested that I should contact the minister. I contacted the Minister's office twice before and received nothing more than an acknowledgement. There's overcrowding, a lack of toilets, lack of showers, a leaking roof...Somebody has to be responsible."

Speaking at last week's meeting of Wicklow County Council, Chief Executive Brian Gleeson said, "Without pre-empting the outcome of the fire review, I can confirm that the certification for the fire alarm system, emergency and exit lighting and fire extinguishers have all been provided to the Fire Service. In addition, the hotel has indicated that it carries out monthly fire evacuation drills and the Chief Fire Officer has advised that the timing and arrangements of such drills should ensure maximum participations by residents."

'Lack of transparency' on modular homes

Cllr Edward Timmins (FG) stated that he is deeply dissatisfied at Wicklow County Council's lack of transparency in identifying sites for modular homes.

Last week councillors were informed that the Office of Public Works (OPW) had requested a list of suitable sites for modular homes to house Ukrainian refugees. Five sites were identified, four in the Baltinglass Municipal District and one in East Wicklow.

"It appears the only criteria used was that the land should not already be zoned for housing," said Cllr Timmins.

When Cllr Timmins questioned Wicklow County Council regarding other possible sites, he was informed that all the others were zoned for housing. He has now become aware that the council owns other lands around the county that are not zoned for housing. He has questioned the council about this and so far they have remained 'tight-lipped' according to Cllr Timmins.

Cllr Timmins has now made a formal request to the council seeking a detailed list of all the council lands in Wicklow and their zoning status.

"The people of Wicklow are acutely aware of the difficulties and challenges faced by refugees from Ukraine and elsewhere," he said.

"The people have been very generous in extending the hand of friendship. However, the approach adopted to date by the council has the potential to damage this."

A Suspension of Standing Orders was raised by Cllr Gerry O'Neill at last week's meeting of Wicklow County Council to discuss the matter.

"The whole plan here is to use public land to build these, but I think we need to be more informed," said Cllr O'Neill. "At the moment the OPW are looking at these sites in west Wicklow and if they are deemed suitable, it's only then that the local people will be notified. That's far too late. There were zonings for the provision of a fire station and open space and a community centre, so I think we have to be very, very careful here."

Addressing the matter, Chief Executive Brian Gleeson said, "A list of possible sites were submitted to the department for consideration last April. This was the same as every local authority, every public body was asked to do that in response to correspon-

dence from the Minister of Housing & Local Government. Sites selected were based on technical criteria as well as key requirements. The government has appointed the OPW as the contracting authority with responsibility for managing the construction and installation of modular units on a range of state owned properties around the country.

"Two sites remain under active consideration on the list, to date the OPW has only requested access to carry out survey for Baltinglass. Some initial environmental surveys were done in December and we expect a full site investigation to be done this month. We also expect a request shortly for site access for the Dunlavin land."

"The site in Baltinglass is the only one surveyed at the moment. It's under consideration. No decision has been made as of yet as to whether that's going to go ahead. That will be decided based on the results of the actual investigation. However, if the site is deemed suitable, the OPW will revert to the Local Authority in relation to proceeding with the developmental

works. The Department of children will arrange for presentations to the relevant council members in the district as part of our communications process around the emergency accommodation programme and they will arrange a community information meeting and a leaflet drop in the relevant area. We are expecting a request for a site survey for Dunlavin at some stage this month."

Cllr John Mullen (FF) said, "I do think that in all this we have to remember the context of what we're talking about here. We are talking about the biggest refugee crisis since the Second World War. We need to reflect on that. I think we need to realise the response of the Irish people and of the people of Wicklow has been magnificent. If I was Ukrainian and I had to put my wife and child on a train not knowing where they would end up, I would hope they would end up in Wicklow, because I know the welcome they would get from the communities here. We might have issues to do with process and zonings, but the welcome to the Ukrainian refugees fleeing should never be underestimated or forgotten about."

Wicklow Fire Service will continue to engage with the owner of the premises on this matter and on conclusion of it we will inform councillors and International Protection Accommodation Services (IPAS). "The only input Wicklow County Council can have in relation to this is in relation to fire regulations - nothing else. Matters in relation to facilities, conditions, health issues - that's a matter for IPAS. So I've absolutely no problem writing to IPAS, writing to the minister, seeking a meeting in that regard."

"We're very much aware that there is a huge crisis in relation to not only the numbers coming in from Ukraine, but also other countries. There has been a huge increase and it's not just in Wicklow. Every country in the country is being pushed to the limit in relation to providing emergency accommodation."

"The Grand Hotel has 30 bedrooms, but now that it's been categorised as emergency accommodation that kind of changes the picture in relation to that. It's no longer being looked at as a hotel premises, it's an emergency accommodation premises now. So there's a bit of a difference there. The chief fire officer is in consultation, back and forward, with the fire safety consultant of the hotel on the matter."



Molly Callery and Abby Healy of Wicklow RFC celebrate after winning the Leinster Rugby Girls U18.5 Cup final against the Southeast Lions of Wexford in Carlow. Wicklow won by a score of 36 to 17. Pic: Sportsfile

Your local health services

If you are unwell, consider all your options

	Self care Colds, sore throats, hangovers	Take care of minor ailments at home with a first aid kit and a well-stocked medicine cabinet
	Pharmacy Headaches, tummy aches, coughs	Ask your local pharmacist for advice on common minor illnesses
	GP Surgery Feeling ill, back pains, ear aches	Make an appointment with your GP if you're feeling unwell and it is not an emergency
	Local Injury Unit Minor injuries, broken bones, burns	St. Columcille's Injury Unit, Loughlinstown. Age 14+ 8am-6pm, 7 days (01) 211 5048 or similar services from private insurers
	Out-of-Hours GP GP service outside normal clinic hours	Caredoc 0818 300 365 or (059) 913 8100 (South Wicklow) KDOC (045) 848 701 (West Wicklow) EDOC (01) 223 4500 (North Wicklow)
	ED or 999/112 Visit an emergency department or call 999 or 112 if someone is seriously ill or injured and their life is at risk	

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BIFE - FET College of the Future

Minister for Further & Higher Education Simon Harris TD recently announced that BIFE has been chosen as the location of the FET College of the Future for the South East region. It is one of 10 such colleges which will be developed nationally.

This will mean that a state-of-the-art education and training campus, costing tens of millions of euros will be created, which will also deliver apprenticeship programmes and establish a proposed National Centre of Excellence in Film & TV. The college also envisages moving to a joint degree model which would enable students to move seamlessly between further and higher education.

BIFE has been going from strength to strength over the last decade and is now one of the largest colleges of further education in the country. They offer over 80 different courses in many different subject areas. They have signed agreements with all of the Universities in the South-east region allowing their students to progress seamlessly to higher education on completion of their course in BIFE. Their graduates also have the opportunity to gain advanced entry onto higher education degree courses and in some instances complete an honours degree with one extra year of study in Higher Education Institutes.

Work Placement is a vital part of BIFE courses and now all students in the College have the opportunity

to complete a 3-week or a 3-month work placement abroad in countries such as Spain, Portugal, Poland, Italy, Finland, Malta or the Czech Republic under the Erasmus+ Programme which is sponsored by the European Union. "This is a terrific opportunity for our students" according to Deputy Principal Gabriel Allen, "not only to gain valuable work experience in a European country, but also to experience a different culture and to broaden their horizons". BIFE hope to add several new countries to their Erasmus+ portfolio with partners in Athens, Istanbul, Berlin & Austria coming on board in the future.

Bray Institute will be holding its Grand Annual Open Day again this year on Friday 20th January from 10am to 3pm. Potential students, parents, and career guidance teachers will have the opportunity to speak to the staff and students who, with their educational knowledge and specialist industry experience, can guide you in the right direction. Workshops, demonstrations, presentations and career lectures will run throughout the day, and visitors can speak to students and get their views on the courses.

Applications for September 2023 Courses are now open. Apply online at www.bife.ie or call the Institute any day during office hours on 01-2829668 for further information.

Andrew Brownlee, CEO of SOLAS, said: "This announcement marks an important step forward for learners and communities in the Wicklow area, but also is an important milestone in the evolution of FET facilities and provision nationwide".

Chief Executive of Kildare and Wicklow ETB Dr Deirdre Keyes said: "This is an important day for the people of Wicklow and for the integration of our services onto one campus. Bray Institute of Further Education (BIFE) has a long tradition of innovation and delivering for the people in the region. We look forward to the development of the new campus into Wicklow's College of the Future".

Ray Tedders, Principal of BIFE, thanked Minister Simon Harris, the Board of BIFE and the Staff who had all contributed to this historic day.

It is hoped that building of the new FET College of the Future at BIFE should begin in 2024.



Tom Fortune (Chair of BIFE BOM), Shay Fitzmaurice (BIFE BOM), Gabriel Allen (Deputy Principal), Gráinne McLoughlin (BIFE BOM), Ray Tedders (Principal), Louise Fortune (Deputy Principal), Tracy O'Brien (BIFE BOM), Helen O'Mahony (BIFE BOM), Ross Lee (Deputy Principal), Rory Banville (BIFE BOM), David O'Gorman (BIFE BOM) at the recent announcement of BIFE - FET College of the Future.

Electric bike scheme to be launched in Bray

Bolt, the European mobility champion, will launch two new shared electric bike schemes in Bray and Wexford Town in Spring 2023.

There are 200 electric bikes earmarked for the year-long pilots with up to 100 in each town. Bray will form the first Irish location where the Bolt app provides both taxis and eBikes, a multimodal offering that has proved highly valuable across European cities.

Since launching shared mobility schemes in the summer of 2022 in Sligo and Kilkenny, over 105,000 km have been travelled on Bolt's eBikes. With surveyed users opt-

ing for this sustainable mode of transport over cars, Bolt schemes have saved 14,800 km of car trips in Ireland to date, approximately 1,545 kg of CO2.

Cathaoirleach of Bray Municipal District Green Party Councillor Erika Doyle has welcomed the news, saying "I'm thrilled to see this scheme arrive in Bray. Electric bikes open up cycling to people who may otherwise have difficulty managing a pushbike. They're also fun

to use and super convenient. Once you have the app installed you can find your newest bike, scan the QR code to unlock it and off you go.

"I'm hopeful that these bikes will be used for short hop journeys in the town that would otherwise require the use of a car. Not only will that reduce traffic congestion but it will also reduce emissions. It's also a great tourist offering and a good way to see the sights of Bray with a little assistance to get up those hills.

Some excellent related news is that the cycle lane on Bray Main Street will be protected by soft bollards. These may also be considered for other cycle lanes around the town.

With a number of cycle schemes planned for the area, such as linking the stunning seafront and harbour area with neighbouring Dun Laoghaire Rathdown and a cycle link planned with Greystones, Bray is the perfect location for a shared electric bike scheme."

Bolt has previously earmarked up to €5m in its bid to roll out electric bike operations across Irish cities and towns with up to 2000 bikes available to deploy immediately as required.

The Government recently committed to promoting e-mobility solutions in cities and towns and will be relying on such schemes to provide essential alternatives for commuters as Demand Management solutions are considered in the coming year.

Cathaoirleach of Bray Municipal District, Cllr Erika Doyle, said, Bolt Operations Manager for Rentals in Ireland, John Buckley, said, "We're very excited to take Bolt to the East Coast, and we're working closely with Wicklow and Wexford County Councils to roll out the service as soon as possible. Bolt's shared electric bike offerings in both Sligo and Kilkenny

are proving extremely popular and our user surveys show our eBikes are reducing the reliance on private cars and supporting the National Climate Action Plan. One user has clocked up over 400 rides alone and we expect to see similar levels of utilisation on the East Coast!"

Bolt is in talks with several other councils keen to accelerate their active travel services in line with the National Development Plan and the Climate Action Plan. Bolt is keen to add electric scooters to its operations when legislation is in place later in 2023.

Electric bikes and electric scooters cover a fuller range of travel options across most European cities and could help significantly move Irish transport users away from private car use.



Cllr Doyle on her non-electric bike



The new electric bikes that will soon be in use in Bray

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Time 6.45 pm to 8.45 pm. Fee €130
- **Furniture Making and Woodwork** for Beginners another very popular course where you will explore hand tools and their uses as well as investigating many woodwork techniques. To avoid disappointment, you should enrol early.
Time 7.30 pm to 9.30 pm. Fee €150
- **Pilates (Early Evening Class)** This class is suitable for everyone. It develops and enhances stamina, posture, alignment and core strength.
Places are limited so please book. Fee €100
Time 7.30 to 8.30 pm.
Pilates Later Class. Time 8.30 to 9.30 pm. Fee €100
- **Tai Chi** - Often described as meditation in motion. This is a gentle exercise class good for balance and flexibility
Time 7.00 to 8.30 pm. Fee: €130
- **Yoga for Beginners** -Consisting of breathing exercises concentration exercises slow gentle movement and relaxation.
Time 7.00 to 8.30 pm. Fee €100
- **Bridge Improvers** - This is ideally suited for those who undertook the beginners class in term 1 or those who have a good basic knowledge of Bridge.
Time 7.30 to 9.30 pm. Fee €130
- **First Aid** - Cardiac First Responder This course is run by the Order of Malta and students can obtain a Certificate from the Order of Malta and the Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council on successful completion.
Time 7.30 to 9.30 pm. Fee €130
- **French - Beginners** - A useful introduction for interested in the country and language those planning a visit to France
Time 6.45 - 8.15 pm. Fee €100
- **French - Improvers** - for those who have completed the beginners course or those with some basic French language skills.
Time 8.15- 9.45 pm. Fee €100
- **Italian - Beginners** - A chance to learn the basics of this important language.
Time 6.45 - 8.10 pm. Fee €100
- **Italian - Improvers** - This class is perfect for students who completed the Italian beginners class or those with some prior knowledge of the language.
Time 8.15 - 9.45 pm. Fee €100
- **Spanish - Beginners** - An introduction to the Spanish language for complete beginners. Perfect for planning a trip to Spain or South America.
Time 6.40 -8.10 pm. Fee €100
- **Spanish - Improvers** - For those who have completed the beginner's course or may have some basic Spanish language skills.
Time 8.15 -9.45 pm. Fee €100
- **Digital Photography** - This course is taught by a professional practising photographer and aims to introduce participants to the underlying principles of camera technique and visual composition. Students will need to have access to a single lens reflex camera (Digital)
Time 7.30 - 9.30 pm. Fee€130
- **Conversational Irish (Beginners)** -Covering the fundamentals required for achieving a good basis in conversational Irish the course is ideal for adult learners even those with little or no knowledge of the Irish language.
Time 6.45 - 8.10 pm. Fee €130
- **Conversational Irish (Improvers)** - for those with some knowledge of the Irish language or who have completed the beginners course last term. This course is ideal for those who took the Conversational Irish course in the Autumn term and want to build on their knowledge and conversational skills.
Time 8.15pm - 9.45 pm. Fee €130

Further details on courses are available on www.bife.ie/morning-and-evening-courses/evening-classes

Classes begin January 30th at 7.30 p.m. (some may commence earlier see website listing) and end at 9.30pm unless otherwise stated. Please note that classes can only be formed where numbers warrant it. If classes do not form full refunds will be issued promptly.. Full Terms and Conditions are published on the Website.

Please go to **BIFE.IE** for full course details

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Hannah, Shane, Belle and Coley Morley at the recent Streets of Wicklow 5k run in aid of the 'Field of Dreams' fundraising campaign, seeking to create a running trail on The Murrough for Inbhear Dee Athletics Club.

'Clean' Wicklow loses top 10 spot in litter survey

The final litter survey of 2022 by business group Irish Business Against Litter shows Wicklow deemed 'clean' in 15th spot in the ranking of 40 towns and cities nationwide - down from 7th position in mid-2022. Three quarters of Ireland's cities and towns were deemed 'clean' in 2022, compared to just over half in the previous year. Naas was again top of the rankings.

An Taisce conducted the survey on behalf of IBAL. Its report for Wicklow stated: "With so many top ranking sites within Wicklow town, there are a few which deserve special mention - the large expanse of parkland at BlackCastle was not only excellent with regard to litter but a lovely space which has been very well presented and maintained; Abbey Street / Main Street was looking very well, further enhanced by ornamental trees / large planter boxes; the 'managed Murrough Recycle Facility was spotless, a credit to the staff working there. The one blot on the landscaped was Murrough Industrial Estate - it wasn't just littered but subject to dumping of larger items."

Cleanliness levels nationwide improved by 6% in 2022, with Naas pipping Kilkenny and Maynooth in the rankings. For the third year in succession, Waterford



IBAL praised the area of Blackcastle

was the cleanest city, a virtuous circle: clean streets beget clean streets, inspiring a pride and consciousness of the environment among people."

"The results reflect a pattern of improvement since the peak of the Covid pandemic, when litter levels soared, especially in cities," said IBAL's Conor Horgan. "In particular we are seeing local authorities concentrate their efforts on ridding areas of heavily littered sites. We have no reason to believe this improvement will not be sustained. Cleanliness is

was the cleanest city, a virtuous circle: clean streets beget clean streets, inspiring a pride and consciousness of the environment among people."

Plastic bottle and cans continue to be a major source of litter, second only to sweet wrappers and present in one in three of the 500-plus sites surveyed. IBAL believes the findings bolster the case for a deposit return scheme, which is due to be introduced this year, and which will see consumers pay a deposit which they can reclaim on returning their containers to a retailer or

other collection point. "Based on this data the scheme is sorely needed and stands to rid our streets of a significant amount of litter. The same applies to the proposed coffee cup levy," commented Conor Horgan. While there was a fall in the prevalence of coffee cups, they were still found in 25% of sites surveyed.

The survey showed cigarette butts remain a persistent form of litter. "We welcome the announcement that cigarette manufacturers will now be contributing to the cost of clean-up,

but we really need to see preventative measures such as widespread butt disposal facilities alongside innovative packaging which can store butts," said Conor Horgan.

The Mayor of Naas Municipal District, Cllr Evie Sammon, will be presented at noon today with the inaugural Dr Tom Cavanagh Memorial Trophy, in honour of IBAL's founder and Chairman, who passed away in September. 2022 marked the 20th anniversary of the IBAL Anti-Litter League.

Progress made in addressing issues at Newcastle's Breaches

Minister Simon Harris has announced that significant progress has been made in addressing the issues around the Breaches in Newcastle.

Minister Harris said, "I am glad to confirm that a budget has been allocated for immediate works to resolve the issues surrounding the Breaches. I have worked closely with local stakeholders, Wicklow County Council and the National Parks and Wildlife Service over many months in order to ensure that this important matter finally receives the attention it deserves. Some of these works in order to clear different areas have in fact already been completed, however further works are still required.

"These further works and requirements to resolve any remaining issues will be addressed in a site survey which is currently ongoing."

Minister Harris continued "I am particularly delighted to be able to announce that a maintenance budget has also been put in place to address the Breaches. This budget will serve to ensure that any seasonal complications will be continuously addressed, and that preparations be put in place ahead of any such issues arising.

"It is vitally important that we

take an active role in maintaining and protecting Wicklow's stunning environment and I very much welcome the fact that a proactive system is now being put in place. I also want to recognise the huge amount of work that many local residents have done to get this project over the line. The Breaches have been a very important issue for many people around Newcastle for a long time, and I am glad to see the efforts of local residents finally rewarded," Minister Harris concluded.





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Join your Library this January

A Warm Wicklow Welcome awaits at your local library



WICKLOW
ENDLESS OPPORTUNITIES

Libraries around County Wicklow are putting an increased focus on making sure their libraries are warm and welcoming spaces for the winter months. The library service also wants to spread the word about why a library card should take pride of place in your card collection!

For the months of January, February and March, Wicklow County Council Library Service has scheduled a range of additional events and activities for adults in most of Wicklow's libraries. There's Painting & Printing, Weaving, Creative Writing, Author visits, Chair Yoga and Nutrition Talks – bound to be some activity to whet appetites for getting out and about and meeting new people.

Numerous regular activities already take place in Wicklow County Council's libraries – these include Book Clubs, board games, Knitting & Crochet, Creative Writing Music appreciation, Art History Talks, exhibitions, Seed library as well as free Wi-Fi and computer access.

"My Open Library" (MOL) is now available in both Arklow and Wicklow libraries. This enables the public to use both libraries from 8am-10pm all year round. This service allows the public to have all the usual benefits of the library outside of normal staffed hours,

including borrowing items, studying, using public PCs and printers, holding meetings in the community room, enjoying an art exhibition or just relaxing and reading books, magazines or newspapers.

This spring will also see The Irish Heart Foundation's Mobile Health Unit travelling to and parking at 8 of our libraries with trained nurses providing FREE blood pressure checks, and comprehensive lifestyle advice on heart health.

Borrow eBooks and eAudiobooks free from the library using the BorrowBox app, read the latest magazines with our Libby app and keep abreast of newspapers from all over the world with our Pressreader app – these are just a flavour of the online resources available with a library card.

Please visit our website at www.wicklow.ie/Living/Services/Libraries to get further information on Wicklow County Council Library Service's activities and services.

Winter Warmer events at Wicklow County Libraries

Arklow Events

Geli plate printmaking with Susie Fortune

Tuesday 24th January, 10 - 11.30am

Mixed media and painted papers collage workshop with Susie Fortune

Tuesday 31st January, 10 - 11.30am

Claire Keegan and Kathleen Murray in Conversation

Saturday 28th January, 3pm



Ballywaltrim Events

Geli plate printmaking with Susie Fortune

Wednesday 18th January, 6.30pm - 8pm

Author Visit - Andrea Mara

Saturday 21st January, 3pm

Willow Weaving

Monday 30th January, 3pm

Beginners Water Colour Painting

Wednesday 15th February, 6.30pm - 8pm

Weaving Workshop

Monday February 20th, 3pm



Wicklow Events

Genealogy Advisory Service

Thursday 12th January, 6.30pm - 8.30pm

Make your own tote bag- Indian block printing Workshop

Thursday 19th January, 11 - 12.30pm

The Freedom of the Roads: Early Motoring in County Wicklow by Brian White (Historian)

Thursday 26th January, 7pm.

Chair Yoga with Louise

Starting Monday 16th January for 6 weeks

Mixed Media Collage Workshop

Feb 9th, 11am - 12pm

Michael Fortune

Saturday 28th January, 1.30pm - 3pm

Local Wicklow Author Sam Blake talks about her writing.

Tuesday 21st February, 6pm - 7pm



Baltinglass Events

Chair Yoga for the over 55s

Wednesdays 25th January, 1st Feb & 8th February, 11am



Dunlavin Events

Beginners Water Colour Painting

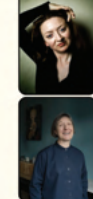
Thursday 2nd March, 11am - 12.30pm



Carnew Events

Authors Claire Keegan and Kathleen Murray in conversation

Friday 20th January, 7pm - 8.15pm



Rathdrum Events

Michael Fortune - Saint Brigid's Workshop

Saturday 28th January 10.30am - 12pm



Blessington Events

Chair Yoga for the over 55s

Tuesday mornings, starting 24 Jan for 6 weeks at 10am



Geli Print Making

Thursday 26th January 11am - 12.30pm

Weaving Workshop

Monday 30th January, 3pm



Greystones Events

Geli plate printmaking with Susie Fortune

Thursday February 2nd, 11am - 12.30pm

Beginners Water Colour Painting

Thursday February 23rd, 11.00-12.30

Susan Campbell Art History Talks

Thursdays, 9th, 16th and 23rd February 12.15pm - 1pm

Eat Well to Age Well: Nutrition for the over 50s

Friday, January 27th, 11am



Irish Heart Foundation Mobile Health Unit will be visiting libraries in Wicklow during January and February.

- Ballywaltrim on Monday 23rd January
- Wicklow on Friday 27th January
- Arklow on Wednesday 1st February
- Tinahely on Thursday 2nd February
- Enniskerry on Friday 3rd February
- Rathdrum on Tuesday 21st February
- Dunlavin on Wednesday 22nd February
- Carnew on Thursday 23rd February

Opening Hours

Arklow*, Blessington, Bray, Greystones & *Wicklow Town

Monday, Wednesday, Friday & Saturday

- 10am - 5pm

Tuesdays & Thursdays

- 10am - 8.30pm

***My Open Library Hours**

- 8am - 10pm Monday - Sunday



Opening Hours

Aughrim

Tuesday 3pm-5pm Wednesday 3-5pm + 6.30-8.30pm
Friday 11am-1pm + 3pm-5pm
& Saturday 2pm-4pm

Ballywaltrim

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Saturday 10am - 5pm
Wednesday 10am - 8.30pm

Baltinglass

Tuesday 1.30pm-5pm + 6pm-8pm Wednesday 10-1pm + 2-5pm
Friday 10am-1pm + 2pm-5pm
& Saturday 10am-1.30pm

Carnew

Monday/Friday 2pm - 4.30pm + 6.30pm - 8.30pm
Tuesday/Thursday 11am - 1pm + 2pm - 4.30pm

Dunlavin

Tuesday 5pm-8pm Wednesday 10-1pm + 2-5pm
Friday 10am-1pm + 2pm-5pm
& Saturday 10am-1pm



Opening Hours

Enniskerry

Tuesday 10am-12.30pm + 1.30pm-4.30pm
Wednesday 2-4.30pm + 6pm-8pm
Friday 10am-12.30pm + 1.30pm-4.30pm
& Saturday 10am-12.30pm

Rathdrum

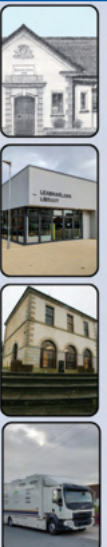
Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 10am - 1pm + 2pm - 5pm
Wednesday 2-5pm + 6pm - 8.30pm
Saturday 10am - 1pm

Tinahely

Tuesday 1.30pm - 5pm + 6pm-8pm
Wednesday & Thursday 10.30am-1.30pm + 2.30pm-5pm
Saturday 10.30am-1.30pm

Mobile Library

Timetables for all routes available on:
<https://www.wicklow.ie/Living/Services/Libraries/Library-Branches>



Council's Archives and Local Studies Services launch schools resources

Wicklow County Council Archives and Local Studies services have launched two sets of resources for secondary school teachers and students. These practical and comprehensive resources are designed for both Junior and Senior Cycle levels.

The local studies resource focuses on the junior cycle history Class Based Assessment or CBA while the archives resource supports the Leaving Certificate history Research Study Report, or RSR as it is known.

Both packs consist of guides to the collections of the Wicklow Archives and Local Studies services, guides to the CBA and RSR, as well as digital resources including worksheets, and Powerpoint presentations.

All resources can be found on Wicklow.ie and on the community archives website Our Wicklow Heritage, which is a collaboration between the heritage, archives and library services of Wicklow County Council and the

National Museum of Ireland.

The project was supported by the Heritage Council under their new Heritage Stewardship grant scheme and designed by Yellowstone.

The Archives and Local Studies services are located in Wicklow Library in Wicklow town. They offer a rich resource for researchers of wide and varying interests - students, teachers, local and family historians, academic researchers and those interested in the story of County Wicklow, the history and development of the county, of local communities, and the authorities who served them.

Painting a vivid picture of life in our districts, the archives and local studies services play a key role in collecting, preserving, sharing and celebrating Wicklow's Heritage through records collections, maps, photographs,



CEO of Wicklow County Council Brian Gleeson, Catherine Wright, Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council Tommy Annesley, Gerlanda Maniglia from Wicklow Library, and County Librarian Brendan Martin at the launch of the two sets of resources for secondary school teachers and students



Dara Horan and John Maddock of Wicklow Educate Together Secondary School with Gerlanda Maniglia at the launch of the resources for secondary school teachers and students

newspapers and local history publications.

By developing these schools resources, the archivist and local studies librarian recognise that it is crucial to make their collections as accessible as possible to students. They focus on the special projects of the Junior and Senior cycle curriculums and were developed in close consultation with history teachers.

Cllr Tommy Annesley, Cathaoirleach, Wicklow County Council, said: "We are very proud of our Wicklow County Council Archives and Local

Studies collections and I welcome this opportunity to promote these valuable cultural and educational resources to the teachers and students of County Wicklow. Indeed we have been informed by the National Archives that we have one of the most extensive local authority collections in the country.

Engaging a younger audience in the study of local history will ensure this legacy continues. A highly globalised world and time of rapid change can be a very challenging environment for young people. I believe that his-

tory gives young people grounding, helps them understand what came before them, their place in the world and in their community - a sense of place and a sense of identity. Indeed, our younger historians provide us with a new perspective - we can learn so much from them too."

Mr Brian Gleeson, Chief Executive, stated: "Our new National Library Strategy encourages us to work with local communities and partners to collect, explore, preserve and celebrate cultural memory, and to offer a range of cultural

experiences. I am confident that this educational pack will inspire our historians of tomorrow. The teaching and study of history is alive and well in County Wicklow and I think the new resources offered by the archives and local studies services will serve this learning well into the future."

This is the first in a series of outreach activities planned for the coming year. Others will include school visits and workshops and the welcoming of school groups to Wicklow Library & Archives.

'The Freedom of the Roads': a talk in Wicklow Library with historian Brian White

The 1903 Motor Car Act allowed County Councils to register motor cars and motor bikes and to issue applicants with a driving licence. By 1915 there were only 106 cars and 103 motor cycles registered in County Wicklow.

At this time, motor car drivers had to purchase petrol in cans and one particular Bray resident imported a steam car that could achieve a distance of 150 miles on one fill. The hilly terrain of the County provided unique and challenging circuits and, between 1950 and 1957, hill climb rallies around The Wicklow Town Circuit were regularly organised by the Motor

Cycle Union and the Automobile Association.

In his talk titled "The Freedom of the Roads", historian Brian White will be displaying old photographs to explore early motoring in County Wicklow. Some questions that will be answered include:

- Who was the first person to register a car in County Wicklow

- Who was the first woman to own a car in County Wicklow.

- Which County Wicklow Car owner had a car buried under Hill 16 in Croke Park, Dublin.

A selection of old motoring artefacts will be on display during the talk.

The talk will take place at Wicklow Library, in the Exhibition Space on the third floor on Thursday January 26th at 7pm. Contact Wicklow Library on 040467025 or email Wicklowlocalstudies@wicklowcoco.ie to book your place.

Update on Wicklow barn owl project

The Wicklow Barn Owl project initiated last year as part of efforts to raise awareness of this bird of conservation concern and to enlist the help of the wider public in Wicklow to collate sightings has been a great success.

Thanks to funding from The Heritage Council and Wicklow County Council through the County Heritage Plan fund, the project was able to engage a field officer in 2022 to visit sites of both historic and new sightings, make contact with landowners and interested individuals and follow up on queries from the public. Members of the Wicklow branch of Birdwatch Ireland also assisted greatly with surveying and promotion. Local National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) staff supplied and installed artificial nesting boxes as part of the project. This is a considerable contribution given that the specially designed boxes can weigh from 10-20 kgs depending on their location (indoors or outdoors) and require specialist climbing expertise to install. In 2022 over 25 boxes were installed, with more due for installation in the coming weeks.

Cllr Lourda Scott, Chair of Wicklow County Council's Climate & Biodiversity SPC, welcomed the project stating: "The provision of Barn Owl Nesting boxes greatly benefits the breeding potential for this threatened species, compensating for a lack of other suitable breeding sites in the countryside such as mature trees and abandoned farm buildings. Nesting boxes also provide the focus for planned monitoring efforts in 2023 and I especially welcome the citizen science element which allows members of the public to contribute directly to scientific data gathering." Cllr Tommy Annesley, Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, welcomed the success of this project stating: "At the start of 2022 there were only 2-3 records of Barn Owls in county Wicklow, but thanks largely to the 'eyes on the ground' of the public we now have



Cllr Lourda Scott

over 40 reported sightings which is a fantastic result."

Mr Brian Gleeson, Chief Executive, commended all involved stating that the project is a great example of partnership between the council, statutory bodies and interested individuals to achieve conservation gains for wildlife in Wicklow.

As part of the project a Wicklow Barn Owl calendar for 2023 has been produced and is full of photographs and fun facts and contact details for the Wicklow Barn Owl group. Drop an email to wicklowbarnowl@wicklowcoco.ie with your postal address to request your free copy. Contact Wicklow Barn Owl group on Facebook, email wicklowbarnowl-group@gmail.com or telephone 087 2339280.



Pat Sheridan checking the water at the recent Vintage Car Rally at The Beehive.

Winter wave of respiratory viruses to continue into March

HSE Community Healthcare East is appealing to people in Wicklow to get their COVID-19 and flu vaccinations, and to avoid socialising if they are showing signs of cold and flu.

This appeal comes as the latest HSE data, released last Thursday, indicates that high levels of COVID-19, influenza and RSV infections are likely to continue into March 2023.

This is having a considerable negative impact on our health service which is experiencing unprecedented levels of pressure. Social activity and attending work while unwell will increase the risk of outbreaks in the community and in healthcare settings.

There are a number of ways you can protect yourself and others if you are feeling unwell with a respiratory illness. Colm Devine, Chief Pharmacist, Community Healthcare East, recommends visiting your local pharmacy in the first instance: "Local Pharmacists are qualified healthcare professionals and experts in over-the-counter and prescription medicines. They can also provide advice on most illnesses and discuss whether they think you need to see a GP or out of hours service. For patients already taking medicines, it is always a good idea to

keep an up-to-date list of all the medicines you take so you can share with other healthcare professionals if unwell. It is important to remember that an antibiotic is often not indicated for treatment and has no effect on viral illnesses such as colds and flu."

The risk of becoming seriously unwell from COVID-19, flu or RSV is higher for people with underlying respiratory illnesses. It is important that this cohort of people take extra precautions to protect themselves from infection. Patricia Davis, Candidate Advanced Nurse Practitioner (cANP) in Respiratory Integrated Care for South Wicklow, offers the following advice for people who have Asthma or COPD: "It's imperative that you make sure you are taking your preventer inhalers correctly and regularly as prescribed by your physician. Make sure you are also following your Action Plan if you are experiencing a flare up of your symptoms. The Asthma Society of Ireland and COPD Support Ireland websites have more information on how

you can keep well this winter. Both organisations also have free advice lines that you can ring for support."

One of the best ways for everyone to increase their protection against respiratory illnesses is to make sure their flu and COVID-19 vaccinations are up to date. Dr Carmel Mullaney, Consultant in Public Health Medicine and recently appointed Interim Area Director of Public Health HSE Area C, comments: "It's not too late for people to get their flu vaccine or their COVID-19 booster. Vaccination is an effective, safe way to protect you and people around you from flu or COVID-19, and both vaccinations can be given at the same time. The bivalent vaccines that are currently being offered in HSE Community Vaccination Centres offer good protection against all circulating COVID-19 variants."

COVID-19 Vaccinations

The COVID-19 second booster vaccination programme has recently been expanded to include all those aged 18-49 years. The Community

Vaccination Centre in the Shoreline Leisure Centre, Greystones is currently open six days a week (Monday-Saturday) from 11am to 5.15pm. A special clinic for children aged 5-11 years to receive their first COVID-19 vaccination is taking place at the Centre between 3pm to 4pm on Saturday 14th January and Saturday 21st January. Over 20 participating pharmacies across Wicklow are also offering COVID-19 vaccinations.

To book your COVID-19 vaccination:

- Book an appointment at an HSE Vaccination Centre online
 - Visit a walk-in booster clinic at an HSE Vaccination Centre
 - Book an appointment at a participating pharmacy
- If you are unsure whether you are due a COVID-19 second booster dose, you can check your vaccine status by contacting HSELive on 1800 700 700.

Flu Vaccinations

The criteria for free flu vaccination includes, but is not limited to, healthcare workers, those who are pregnant, those who have, or are caring for someone with, an underlying health condition, anyone over the age of 65 and children aged 2-17 years old. If you don't qualify for a free flu vaccination you can pay to receive a flu vaccination from your GP or pharmacy.

To book your flu vaccination:

- Find a local pharmacy giving flu vaccinations
- Ask your GP if they are offering flu vaccinations

Healthcare workers and those over the age of 65 can also receive their free flu vaccination at the Shoreline Communication Vaccination Centre, Greystones.



New Integrated Care Team for older persons welcomed

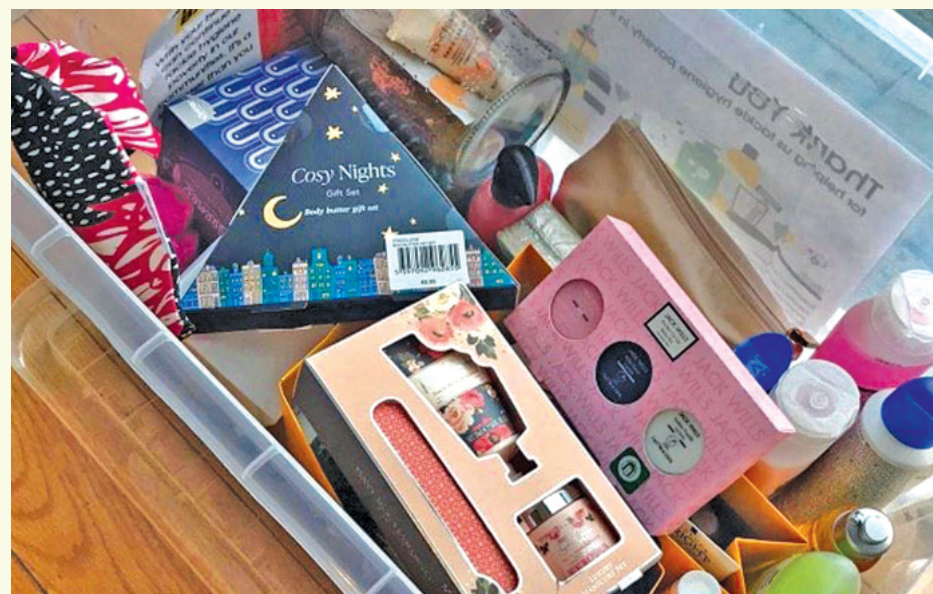
Minister Simon Harris TD has welcomed the opening of an Integrated Care Team for Older Persons in Cherry Orchard Hospital.

In December, Minister Mary Butler officially opened the Dublin South, Kildare, and West Wicklow (DSKWV) Community Healthcare Blackthorn Integrated Care for Older Persons team. This team will cover and provide care services for older people across West Wicklow.

Minister Harris said, "I welcome Minister Butler and the HSE's efforts in the establishment of the new Integrated Care Team for Older Persons. This team will help to pave the way towards a bright future for the

provision of quality care for older persons."

"The Blackthorn ICPOP team by its integrated design receives referrals from across the acute, community and voluntary sector. Self-referrals from patients known to the service are also accepted. Referrals can be sent from clinical and non-clinical persons. This open approach allows older persons access specialist services as close to home as possible and can directly link them in with the most appropriate to their needs," concluded Minister Harris.



A box of donations for the Hygiene Bank

Whitmore's office a drop-off point for hygiene bank donations

Soia Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore is reminding people in Greystones that her Constituency Office (Hillside Road, Greystones), is a designated drop off point for donations to The Hygiene Bank Ireland.

"So many of us received toiletry gift sets over the festive period that maybe, we won't get around to using and if you are wondering what to do with them, my office is a designated drop off point for The Hygiene Bank Ireland," said Deputy Whitmore. "They would be delighted to take them off your hands. Since November my constituency office on Hillside Road in Greystones has been delighted to be involved with The Hygiene Bank Ireland as a drop off point for unwanted hygiene and sanitary products. These products, through the network of the Hygiene Bank, then get redistributed to people in our community who need them."

"The Hygiene Bank Ireland is an initiative I can really support. Hygiene poverty is a hidden form of poverty in Ireland affecting nearly 50% of the popula-

tion, and yet no one seems to know about it. Now with the cost of living crisis, hygiene poverty is even more prevalent. The Hygiene Bank is a grass roots, community initiative that is growing rapidly as demand for their services increase. They collect new, unused, in-date personal care and household cleaning essentials.

"If you are thinking of donating, everything is useful and the chances are, if it's something you need then there are others that need it too. It doesn't need to be an unwanted gift set either, The Hygiene Bank Ireland accept everything from shampoo, toothpaste, hygiene products, deodorant to laundry detergent to kids products."

"If you have anything you'd like to donate you can bring them to my constituency office anytime Monday to Thursday from 9:30am to 1pm."

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Sinn Fein calls for action on homelessness and housing

Sinn Fein TD John Brady has reacted with anger at the release of figures that indicate that homeless figures across the state have hit another record high of 11,542, an increase of almost 26.8% on this time last year. The fact that this figure emerges during a ban on evictions which is scheduled to expire in twelve weeks suggests that the situation is set to worsen considerably in the time ahead, Deputy Brady warned, unless immediate action is taken by the government.

Deputy Brady said: "This government has dramatically failed to address the homeless crisis across the state. The new homeless figures for November set a new record for homelessness and a new low for the Government. In the first week of January the Government set another record for the most ever people lying on hospital trolleys. On Tuesday 3rd January 931 people were left lying on trolleys in hospitals across the State.

"It's incomprehensible that in January 2023 the state is experiencing record numbers of homeless people, at a time when the government is running a surplus of over E5 billion. There are 11,542 people homeless in the state. Thousands more workers and families are hanging on by their fingertips as mortgage costs and rents go through the roof.

"We have thousands of more students whose lives have been reduced to sleeping in cars, being subjected to gross overcrowding and overcharging. Or spending hours a day which they should be dedicating to study travelling by bus or by train to third level institutions. And who are forced to plan to emigrate upon graduation as they see no future for



John Brady TD

themselves in Ireland.

"Enough is enough. The time is long since past since we have the patience to listen to mealy mouthed excuses by the government, as they wheel out what amounts to a redundant housing plan.

"There is a homeless and housing crisis. The solution is to build houses. The role of the government is to build the required houses. The private sector cannot and will not accommodate the need. But the government has proven incapable of doing so.

"Sinn Fein introduced a housing

motion to the Dail before Christmas which would have declared a housing emergency. The government argues that there is not a housing emergency. I would ask Minister Darragh O'Brien, Taoiseach Leo Varadkar, and the three government TDs here in Wicklow to explain to the 11,542 homeless individuals, the tens of thousands of workers and families being put in penury through rent and mortgage costs, and the thousands of students forced to commute to their educational Institutions, almost too fatigued to learn, how there is no emergency. Explain how they could possibly believe that their housing plan is working.

"We need a government that can address this crisis, that can deliver a housing plan, that is committed to meeting the needs of families and workers, not a landlord class."

Sinn Fein councillors Grace McManus and Dermot 'Daisy' O'Brien have brought forward proposals to deal with the potential increase of homelessness and housing distress in the coming months.

At the December meeting of Bray Municipal District the Councillors debated two motions. The first called for a review of staffing levels

in Wicklow County Council in order to ensure adequate resourcing of homeless and housing teams and continued quality of service. The second called for the Council to explore the potential and possibility of providing a trauma informed HAP place finder and housing support in Bray.

Speaking after the motions, Cllr Grace McManus stated "These motions arose out of the findings of a Housing paper Sinn Fein wrote



Cllr Grace McManus



Cllr Dermot 'Daisy' O'Brien

recently. Organisations working within this sector warned of increasing levels of homelessness. We have also explored the nature of housing distress from our own experience, and have identified key areas where support is needed.

"Our intention was to raise these issues with other Bray councillors and our Council officials in order to work collaboratively to respond. We have a genuine and serious concern that there will be an even more significant pressure on our homeless team in April, when the ban on Notices to Quit is lifted. The time to plan is now, to ensure those who are and will be at risk of homelessness will be able to access support, in a way that does not also put excessive pressure on County Council employees. We have an obligation to be proactive and to do this work now.

"We also recognise that there is severe stress within the HAP system at the moment, as payment limits are not adequate to access the rental market in the town. There is support needed in terms of accessing discretionary rates, making applications, knowing tenant rights, making complaints etc that could make a positive impact.

"That is why our second motion made the call for this additional HAP and Housing support for the town. The solution to the Housing emergency is more social and affordable homes. In the meantime, there are many more things we can and should do to honour the stories we are hearing and respond to the level of suffering because of housing in Bray. We will be pursuing these as we believe we have an obligation to grapple with these issues and propose potential solutions that could make a real difference."

Cllr Dermot 'Daisy' O'Brien stated "We are accountable to the people who elect us, and to the people who contact us daily in their moments of deep struggle as they navigate the housing crisis. Our proposals came from months of data collection and analysis, and we believe if acted on would have a significant positive impact for people.

"A trauma informed approach is something that NGO's and organisations in our town are already implementing. Trauma informed practice means that service providers understand how trauma impacts behaviour, and are trained to respond in a way that does not re-trigger or re-traumatise the individual.

"When we talk about housing and homelessness, there are layers of trauma involved. We must recognise that people who come to us for support may be carrying trauma, but we also must recognise that homelessness and the housing emergency is also causing trauma in itself.

"These motions are about keeping these issues on the agenda, and putting time and energy into finding real solutions. If we don't, I believe this generation and the next will suffer the consequences and will judge us accordingly."

Tiglin's big sleepout to help the homeless



Tiglin Chair Aubrey McCarthy and CEO Phil Thompson

On Friday, the 13th of January, Tiglin, in collaboration with Salesforce, organised its annual sleepout to help the homeless.

For most, Christmas brings immense joy and is linked with warm and happy memories. But, for some, the memories are ones they desire to forget, marking the Christmas season a time filled with a feeling of being left out and isolated from what looks like a party nobody invited them to.

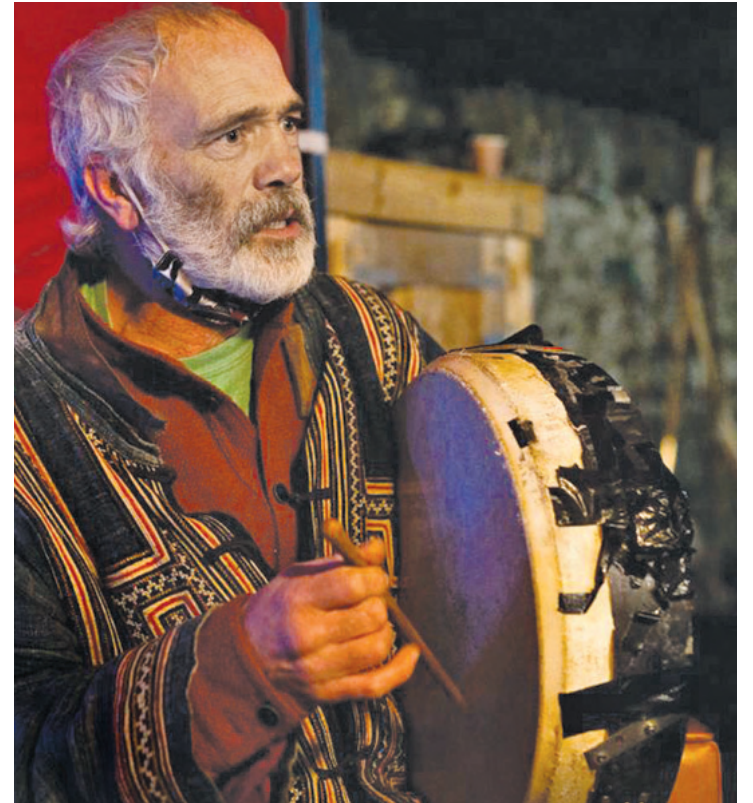
Life on the streets is always challenging. But, at Christmas, it's like someone has turned up the volume on how hard and lonely it is. Tiglin has offered pathways to exit homelessness since 2008, and its service has proven to be a turning point for many people who have experienced the precariousness of homelessness. Tiglin is a Wicklow-based not-for-profit working with those suffering from addiction and homelessness. The charity operates seven centres and provides services such as residential rehab, housing, education, frontline work with the homeless and much more.

In 2022, Tiglin served over 19,800 hot meals to those living on the streets of Dublin while also housing, rehabilitat-

ing and supporting 191 people at any time. An example of those in Tiglin's care is Troy, now 20, who came to the attention of Tiglin while living under a doorway bridge. He now has his own apartment and is studying Digital Marketing. Troy participated in this year's sleepout because he wanted to "send the lift back down".

The sleepout took place at Tiglin's Social Enterprise Cafe - The Rise at the Cove in Greystones. The event included live music and interviews. Those attending had the opportunity to sleep in their sleeping bag, while The Rise Cafe provided hot drinks and desserts. Phil Thompson, the CEO, encouraged as many as possible to take part.

Reflecting on Christmas, Tiglin's Chairman Aubrey McCarthy said: "This year, we decided that Tiglin often has many initiatives running at Christmas to raise funds and awareness of the difficulties that homeless people face. Instead of adding to this, we decided to send the message



Bodhran playing at Tiglin's Big Sleepout

and remind everyone that homelessness is still a problem in January, and Tiglin continues reaching out and offering support when the Christmas lights have been plugged out."

McCarthy continued, "Throughout 2022, our frontline services sup-

ported 211 clients who were given various support plans. Without initiatives like this sleepout, we would be unable to continue reaching this far.

"Funds raised for this sleepout are vital; they are life-changing and mean that we can contin-

ue to offer wrap-around support. What makes this initiative unique is that Salesforce will match all funds raised. If you donate 50 euros, Salesforce will match it by giving 50 euros, turning it into 100 euros."

To donate, visit www.tiglin.ie.

Wicklow students flock to 59th Young Scientist Exhibition

Over 1,100 school students travel to Dublin's RDS last week for the 59th BT Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition (BTYSTE). The prestigious event, which showcases research and innovation in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM), was in person this year for the first time since 2020, following two virtual exhibitions.



Rosie Armstrong and Keelin Campbell Rawson from Dominican College at the BT Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition.

Wicklow students from Greystones Community College, Dominical College, St. David's, Colaiste Chraobh Abhann, SEK International School and St Mary's College were among those taking part, with nine projects in total.

St. Mary's students looked at whether the Covid lockdowns resulted in increased rates of juvenile sports injuries and what has the psychological impact been; lightning speed plant growth; and the creation of retirement villages to impact the housing crisis.

St. David's projects included an investigation into the feasibility/application of lock patterns on modern encryption; a comparative analysis of beach litter in Wicklow, its environmental effects, and potential solutions for a more sustainable future.

Dominican College students looked into the chemical processes of



Jack Walsh, teacher Zoe Devlin and Oisín O'Brien from Greystones Community College at the BT Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition in the RDS.

photosynthesis. Colaiste Chraobh Abhann students investigated sustainable forest fire prevention. Greystones Community College students asked 'Do Alpha particles behave as waves?', while SEK International School's project was Intelli-pantry.

Visiting the exhibition, Social Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore said "As a scientist myself it was a real pleasure to spend time with young people from across Wicklow who have a passion for science. They were investigating so many different topics, from the behaviour of Alpha Particles to

Sustainable Forest Fire Prevention.

"The breath and dept of knowledge on show at all nine stalls from Wicklow students was so impressive. I was very proud to be there to meet these students as their local TD, and I did point out to them that having started in marine science myself, who knows if one of them might be back at the BT Young Scientist as a TD themselves one day!

"As well as all the hard work put in by the students, the number of exhibitions from Wicklow show the dedication from teachers in our schools all over the county. Teachers at Greystones Community College, Dominical College, St. David's, Colaiste Chraobh Abhann, SEK International School and St Mary's have put in the work to help their students get to experience the BT Young Scientist and grow their passion for

Science. They should all be proud of their work and how well their students represented their school communities and the county at the Exhibition."

In the Primary Science Fair, St. Saviour's National School in Rathdrum asked 'Why does friction matter?'. They investigated how the presence or absence of friction impacts on our daily lives. Then, using this knowledge to explore what practical applications this could have when designing or choosing products to buy.

President Michael D. Higgins officially opened the 2023 exhibition at a special ceremony for the students, teachers, and exhibition partners. He said, "What a great time it is to be a young scientist ñ challenging, yes, but so potentially fulfilling to know that the choices you make will have effects

that are important, not just for your own time but for the very possibility of life in its diverse forms, on our vulnerable planet. May I suggest to all of you that as a young scientist, you will be at your best, achieve the greatest fulfilment for yourself and others, when you locate your contribution within a commitment to be concerned and contributing global citizens."

Organised by BT Ireland, the exhibition has become one of the leading school STEM exhibitions in Europe, attracting over 100,000 student participants since the first event in 1965.

At the heart of the exhibition are the 550 projects from 212 schools which span the categories of Technology; Biological and Ecological Sciences; Social and Behavioural Sciences; and Chemical, Physical and Mathematical Sciences.



Teacher Joanne English with Emma Seckington, Fifi Bentley and Isobel Ramirez from St. Mary's College, Arklow, at the BT Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition



Alannah and Amy Lynch from St. David's at the BT Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition

Codling stakeholder meeting held in Glenview

Codling Wind Park launching second round of public consultation

Codling Wind Park representatives last week met with a range of local and community stakeholders to give an update on the project. The meeting at the Glenview Hotel in the Glen of the Downs, is part of the launch of the second round of public consultation events for the project. The meeting was attended by Oireachtas members, members of Wicklow County Council, KWETB, local businesses and representative groups.



Deirdre Keyes, Chief Executive of the KWETB, speaking at the Codling Windpark stakeholder meeting in the Glenview Hotel

The meeting heard that Ireland's largest Phase One offshore wind project, Codling Wind Park, which will be located off the County Wicklow coast, will require almost 30% fewer wind turbines than originally proposed. Notwithstanding this significant reduction in wind turbines, the development will still generate enough renewable electricity to meet over 20% of Ireland's 2030 offshore wind targets.

While the initial estimate for the number of turbines required had been put at a maximum of 140, the project team says advances in wind turbine technology, combined with a more detailed understanding of the wind farm site, means a maximum of 100 turbines - almost a third less - will now be required.

It has also been confirmed, by EirGrid, that Poolbeg in Ringsend will be the location of the project's electricity grid connection with 1,450MW - enough electricity to power

up to 1.2 million Irish homes - confirmed as the maximum amount of electricity it will generate. The project had previously indicated that it hoped to generate between 900MW and 1,500MW.

Codling Wind Park is a 50/50 joint venture between Fred. Olsen Seawind and EDF Renewables and will be located approximately 13 to 22 kilometres off the Co. Wicklow coast between Greystones and Wicklow Town.

New details about the project were announced ahead of the second round of public consultation, which is taking place from the 11th of January to the 8th of February. The consultation will include a number of face-to-face exhibitions in Wicklow and Poolbeg, together with an online virtual exhibition and a series of dedicated information clinics.

The consultation process will provide further details on various onshore and off-

shore environmental, technical and feasibility surveys being carried out as part of the project. Feedback gathered from the public as part of this consultation process will feed into the ongoing development of the project, and updated proposals will be presented at a third phase of public consultation later this year.

Co-Project Director Scott Sutherland said everyone at Codling Wind Park was looking forward to the consultation and the opportunity to engage with, and hear from, local communities and other stakeholders.

"We have made significant progress since our first phase of public consultation in March 2021 and we are looking forward to updating people, in Wicklow and Poolbeg in particular, and receiving their thoughts and feedback on a range of topics, including the design of the project, the Environmental Impact Assessment we are

working on, the best way we can deliver benefits to local communities through the Community Benefit Fund over the next 20 years and how best we can continue to engage with the fishing and sailing communities."

Codling Wind Park was recently awarded a Maritime Area Consent (MAC) by the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications. Together with the grid connection agreement it has received from EirGrid, this enables the project to participate in the first Offshore Renewable Electricity Scheme (ORESS) auction in the coming months. If successful, the project will then submit a planning application to An Bord Pleanála later this year.

Mr Sutherland said this first auction will be a seminal moment for Ireland's offshore wind industry.

"We are excited not only to deliver one of the largest energy infrastructure investments ever seen in Ireland, but to also help the country realise its enormous potential and become a world leader in offshore wind. Our total focus now is on progressing the Codling Wind Park project through the ORESS auction and into planning. The awarding of a MAC and the confirmation of our grid location and capacity were key steps in that process.

"On its own, Codling Wind Park can help Ireland deliver over 20% of the country's 7GW renewable energy target by 2030. This demonstrates the importance of this project - and the other Phase 1 projects -



Cllr Gerry Walsh, Garrett Farrell and Senator Pat Casey at the Codling Wind Park stakeholder meeting in the Glenview Hotel

in supporting the country's future energy security and in helping Ireland achieve its target of generating 80% of its electricity from renewable energy by 2030," he said.

When developed, Codling Wind Park will be Ireland's largest offshore wind farm. The project is expected to create over 1,000 jobs in the construction phase and 75 new, long-term jobs associated with its proposed Operations and Maintenance Base at Wicklow Port.

Subject to all necessary permits and consents being received, Codling Wind Park could begin construction in 2026, and is expected to take two to three years to complete.

Speaking after attending the meeting last week, Fine Gael councillor Derek Mitchell said, "I am concerned that three wind-farms are planned to meet off Greystones giving a wall of turbines, taller than Bray Head, covering most of the sea horizon. This is far more than any other place. I want to see a gap left between windfarms so

each appears separate reducing the visual impact.

"Recently a windfarm extension off Brighton, UK, had to reduce its size because of excessive visual impact even though the impact is less than what is planned off Greystones. I have also asked them to

open an Interpretive Centre, explanation boards in Kilcoole and Newcastle and provide trade through the harbour including subsidised trips to see construction."

These requests have yet to be agreed to, says Cllr Mitchell.

There will be consultation in Greystones Sailing Club on the 24th January and Kilcoole Community centre on 18th January. To find out more about Codling Wind Park and the public consultation process visit www.codlingwind-park.ie.

Wicklow communities hosting offshore wind projects will benefit

The coastal and marine communities of Arklow, Bray, Wicklow Town and Greystones are in line to benefit significantly from offshore renewable electricity projects, says Green Party TD for Wicklow Deputy Steven Matthews.

Under a new framework published by the Minister Eamon Ryan TD, generators of offshore wind will be required to make substantial annual contributions to community benefit funds.

A key feature of the new framework, known as the 'Community Benefit Fund Rulebook for Generators and Fund Administrators', is that generators must start making contributions from the early stages of the offshore wind project, i.e., prior to commencing operation. This means that coastal and marine communities could start to benefit from as early as 2025 and could look forward to receiving benefits for up to 25 years in total.

The community benefit fund process has been collaboratively developed following extensive consultation with communities and industry. This has been supported throughout by the participation of the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI), which will be providing a critical role in the monitoring and compliance of the funds.

Deputy Matthews said, "Towns like Bray, Greystones, Arklow and Wicklow will play a vital role in the development of renewable electricity in Ireland and help us meet our commitments under the Climate Plan. There are many benefits to the development of off shore wind; as well as the generation of jobs and knock on effects to the local economies, the community benefit fund will directly benefit the communities in Co. Wicklow that will be central to realising our renewable energy ambitions.



Deputy Steven Matthews

Even better, is that the decision making on the allocation of the funds, lies with the community itself. There is a rulebook that provides details on how each fund must be established and ensure that must be properly representative of the local community, including fishers, seafood culture, tourism, the wider blue economy, and maritime heritage.

"I have had many meetings with representatives of offshore wind representatives, the Department of Trade and Enterprise and the council to discuss the employment opportunities that this growing industry will bring.

"Never has it been more vital that we use our vast offshore wind resource to create renewable energy and ensure the security of our own energy supply. The development of our offshore wind energy capacity will eventually eradicate our dependence on imported fossil fuels and bring an unprecedented reduction in CO2 emissions for a climate neutral future."



The Codling Windpark panel of speakers at the stakeholder meeting in the Glenview Hotel; MC Pat Sammon, Lis Royle, Scott Sutherland, Thomas Gellert and Denise Horan.

Music Network Trad at The Courthouse

Courthouse Arts Centre, Tinahely, Saturday 11th February, 8pm-10pm, €18/€16.

Music Network's Spring 2023 Season begins in February with a newly curated line-up featuring musicians who have been integral to the success of many leading Irish traditional and folk groups.

The Whileaways' Noriana Kennedy will be joined by Téada's Oisín Mac Diarmada on fiddle and Mirella Murray, accordionist with Cherish the Ladies. Donogh Hennessy, one of the founding members of Lúnasa, will further enhance the harmonic textures and bring his trademark rhythmic drive to complement the melodic explorations of this vibrant trio. With sublime songs, energetic tunes and captivating arrangements - this will be a musical cocktail to savour.

Noriana Kennedy

RTÉ Radio 1 Folk Awards multi-nominee Noriana Kennedy is a founding member of critically acclaimed trio The Whileaways. She has recorded four albums with the group whose engaging lyrics and melodies have seen them garner legions of fans both in Ireland and abroad. Alongside revered Galway singers Noelie McDonnell and Nicola Joyce, Noriana's trio is known for its beguiling tapestry of harmonies and beautifully crafted original songs.

Former lead singer with phenomenal Irish traditional band Solas, Noriana possesses an engaging and unique songbook that crosses oceans from Waterford to America, Scotland and a thousand heart-worn places in between. With a voice that The Irish Times described as "a knockout: translucent and tenacious in equal measure", she has earned a prominent place in Ireland's rich roots and

folk music scene.

Noriana performs compelling and stunning versions of old-time songs, folk ballads and original compositions, creating a sound that is truly her own. Her debut album *Ebb n Flow* was noted for its "exquisite phrasing" (The Irish Times) and since then she has honed her considerable artistic skills with The Whileaways, prompting Irish Music Magazine to describe their music as "profound and insightful, tightly woven, experimental, fresh and energetic".

Oisín Mac Diarmada

Oisín Mac Diarmada is an All-Ireland winning fiddle player, and founder of the internationally renowned group Téada. He has been described by The Irish Echo's Earle Hitchner as "one of the most gifted and creative traditional fiddlers playing today".

A graduate in Music Education from Trinity College Dublin and Royal Irish Academy of Music, Oisín began playing fiddle in Clare at a young age, over time developing a deep interest in the playing style of the Sligo region having moved there at the age of 11. He formed Téada in 2001, with whom he has recorded a number of successful albums on the Gael Linn & Green Linnet labels. Highlights on the concert stage have included appearing at specialist music festivals such as Masters of Tradition in West Cork, accompanying Irish

President Mary McAleese on a State visit to Romania and a guest solo appearance with the Southern Georgia Symphony Orchestra in the USA.

Oisín has toured frequently in recent years with noted singer & accordion-player Séamus Begley and also with his wife Samantha Harvey (piano & dance). He was appointed Director of SCT (Scrúdu Ceol Tíre), the Traditional Irish Music Examination System administered by Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann, in 2012 and has recently co-authored *Fiddlers of Sligo* Tunebook along with fellow-Sligo musician Daithí Gormley.

Mirella Murray

Long-standing member of Grammy-nominated and Emmy award-winning band Cherish the Ladies, Mirella Murray is an All-Ireland winning accordion player and has long been recognised as one of Ireland's leading traditional musicians.

Mirella grew up in Claddaghduff on the north west coast of Connemara, and music was a fundamental part of her upbringing. Encouraged by her father John Joe, a notable sean nós dancer, and accordion teacher Mary Finn, she blossomed with enormous support from champion of the arts and long-time director of Clifden Arts Festival, Brendan Flynn. Collaborations with superb musicians such as fiddlers Liz Kane and Tola Custy saw her tour



Trad musicians Oisín Mac Diarmada, Mirella Murray, Donogh Hennessy and Noriana Kennedy

throughout Ireland, Europe and the USA. Her album *Three Sunsets* with Tola Custy received rave reviews and was voted in the top five albums of 2002 by The Irish Times. The duo was nominated for Best Newcomers by Irish Music Magazine in 2003.

As well as being a member of Cherish the Ladies for nineteen years, Mirella has toured the world with an array of wonderful musicians including Laoise Kelly, Mary Shannon, Collette O'Leary, Michelle O'Brien, Carl Hession & Rhythm of the Dance, John Joe Kelly and Jarlath McTernan.

Donogh Hennessy

Founding member of Irish super-group Lúnasa, Donogh Hennessy is an award-winning guitarist and composer. He was born in Dublin and is now based in Dingle in West Kerry. As a member of Lúnasa, described by the Irish Voice as "the hottest Irish acoustic band on the planet", Donogh played a key role in crafting the band's complex arrangements and shaping their unique sound which pushed the boundaries of traditional music and energised audiences the world over.

Donogh has also performed and recorded with many other eminent Irish artists over the years such as Lumiere, Sharon Shannon, Seamus Begley, Pauline Scanlon, John Spillane, Damien Mullane and The Sibs Orchestra. In addition to performing live and touring, Donogh is a full-time recording engineer in his own recording studio in Dingle where he produces, records and performs with a constant array of outstanding musicians. He has recorded music for film and theatre and has written two music books including *Lúnasa The Music* (1996 - 2001).

Swedish Landscapes: an exhibition by Jaro Waldeck

Signal Arts Centre, Monday, 23rd January to Sunday 5th February

During the lockdown of 2020, as human activity came to a standstill, nature has had a chance to catch its breath, to heal and regenerate itself.

The photographer Jaro Waldeck had spent several months isolating in the Swedish midlands, and on most days for several hours she would explore the landscapes at different times of day and night. What she came across was nature reclaiming its space, and showing us its power.

This collection of photographs represents the stillness the world came to, and the beauty we had quieted our minds enough to pay attention, contemplate and appreciate. The meditative properties of these compositions restore one's inner balance.

Jaro Waldeck is a cinematographer and photographer working in Ireland and abroad for over 15 years. She trained with world renowned artists at Columbia College Chicago and FAMU Prague. As an explorer of the human condition through her lens and camera, she is also a keen observer of natural and artificial light, and seeks to imprint its properties into the viewers' memories.



Applications open for 2023 Arts Act funding

Wicklow County Council Arts Office invites applications for 2023 Arts Act Funding, designed to support artists, arts festivals, arts participation and art form development across Wicklow.

Open from Monday 9th January 2023, this scheme forms part of a wider set of actions initiated and developed by Wicklow County Council directed at supporting quality practice and public participation in the arts in the county. The deadline to apply is Monday 27th February 2023 at 4pm.

This year Wicklow Arts Office will be accepting applications for the Artist Award Scheme, Artist & Community Collaboration Award Scheme and Arts Festival Award Scheme. Applications are welcome from all art forms including film, music, visual arts, theatre, dance, literature, architecture, animation, performance, circus, traditional arts, music and drama.

The Artist Award Scheme has supported professional artists to develop and realise a particular body of work or undertake professional development. Open to artists at all stages of their careers that reside in or are native to County Wicklow, professional artists working in any art form, discipline or genre are eligible to apply.

Artist Ali Clarke, a recipient of the Artist Award last year, said that the Scheme "has played a central role in my recent career and allowed me to invest in developing art in rural areas, decentralising the creation and dissemination of my work."

The Artist & Community Collaboration Award Scheme is designed to support artist and community collaboration in any discipline or genre of the arts to co-create a high-quality project or programme which will support both the artist's and the community's creative development. In 2022

Casey Hallahan, Managing Director Mr Sands Youth Theatre, took on an ambitious film project, devised by the young members in collaboration with the artists. Casey stated that it thanks in no small part to the Award we were able to continue make fantastic original work."

Aoife Demel, YARN Storytelling Festival Curator, explained that the funding enabled them to bring "the art form of storytelling out of Bray and to audiences across County Wicklow for the first time. Connections were forged with local storytelling groups and artists, which will hopefully lead to further exciting creative projects."

Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Tommy Annesley, said: "the purpose of these awards is to enhance an aspect of an artist's work, support an artist and community collaboration, or strengthen the development of Arts festival in County Wicklow for example."

Minister Simon Harris said "I want to encourage anyone who may be eligible to apply as soon as possible. Wicklow has a deep connection with the arts, and I am always glad to see any measures put in place to support the people who create, organise, and perform. This funding aims at assisting some of the most important aspects of our society which can at times be under-appreciated. I welcome Wicklow County Council's commitment to enable and enhance the work of artists and communities around Wicklow and look forward to being able to further support this important industry."

All applications must be submitted through Submittable, an online submission management platform. Downloadable guidelines relating to each scheme and further information can be found on www.wicklow.ie. Questions relating to the application process can be directed to wao@wicklowcoco.ie. The closing date for applications is Monday 27th February 2023 at 4pm.

Loreto Abbey Dalkey Present: Seussical The Musical

Mermaid Arts Centre. 19th - 21st January.
8pm. €21 Full Price

Loreto Abbey Dalkey Transition Year students present 'Seussical', a fantastically fun musical for all the family based on the works of Dr. Seuss.

Join The Cat in the Hat and JoJo the Who as they work with Horton the Elephant to try to save Whoville! presented by arrangement with Music Theatre International.

Seussical is a fantastical, musical extravaganza! Tony winners, Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty have brought to life all of our favourite Dr. Seuss characters. Presented by arrangement with Music Theatre International, this musical transports us from the Jungle of Nool to

the Circus McGurkus to the invisible world of the Whos.

The Cat in the Hat tells the story of Horton, an elephant who discovers a speck of dust which contains the Whos. Horton not only must protect the Whos from a world of dangers, but he must guard an abandoned egg, left by the irresponsible Mayzie La Bird. Ultimately, the powers of friendship, loyalty, family and community are challenged and emerge triumphant. Seussical is fun for the whole family!



Cinema at Mermaid: Emily

Monday 30th January, 8pm. Cert: 15A

€9 Full Price / €7 Concession Price. English with Open Captions (English subtitles). Duration: 130 mins



Actor turned writer-director, Frances O'Connor's directorial debut is a reimagined biopic of passionate introvert Emily Brontë.

Uninterested in being involved in respectable society or becoming a teacher like her older sister Charlotte, Emily prefers to live in her imagined stories, writing poetry and wandering the moors with her rebellious older brother Branwell. But her contentment is shaken with the arrival of new parish assistant Mr Weightman, as they turn each other's worlds upside-down, embarking on a passionate and forbidden affair. Emma Mackey bringing Brontë vibrantly to life, Emily is a biopic that manages to feel true while taking entertaining creative liberties exploring the authors source and inspiration for the passionate and dark literary classic Wuthering Heights.

Emily is directed by Frances O'Connor and stars Emma Mackey.

Awards: Winner-Best Director, Frances O'Connor, Stockholm International Film Festival 2022

Chaos by Laura Lomas

Whale Theatre, Sunday 22nd January 2023 @ 4pm (doors 3.30pm). Tickets €10 and available at www.whaletheatre.ie or call the booking office on 01 2010550 to book.

'If the world is chaos, then it means there no order, and if there's no order, then it basically means that 'anything is possible' - a symphony of dislocated and interconnected scenes. A series of characters search for meaning in a complicated and unstable world. Bouncing through physics, the cosmos, love and violence, they find order in the disorder of each other.

Approx Duration: 45 mins



Greystones Orchestra 30th Anniversary Concert

Mermaid Arts Centre, Saturday 4th February, 8pm. €21 full price/€17 Concession

Join The Greystones Orchestra to celebrate over 30 years of fun, friendship and making music. They will present an evening that includes Schubert and Mozart with the wonderful Jessica Harris on Oboe.

In 1989 a small group of musicians came together and founded the Greystones Orchestra, the aim being simply to enjoy playing together, performing for the community and to encourage musicians of all backgrounds and levels in the local and wider community. This is still their aim and they now boast a multi-cultural orchestra with players from far and wide, all with one common language - music!

Over the years their versatility has seen the orchestra perform an eclectic mix of symphonies, concertos, and excerpts from operas, overtures, ballet suites and arrangements from many popular musicals and movie music. Their Musical Director and Conductor is Jonathan Browner.



Karen and Eamonn Bermingham at the 4 02 exhibition in Arklow Library

Joseph Leighton Trio at The Courthouse Arts Centre

Sunday, 5th February, 8pm-10pm. Tickets €16/€14. Doors 7:30pm.

Guitarist Joseph Leighton has been hailed as one of Ireland's brightest new jazz talents. Starting out as a teenage rock prodigy in his hometown of Derry, he became interested in jazz and began to focus a lot of his playing and studies on that.

Over the next few years his teachers would also include guitar icons Jesse van Ruller, Mike Walker and Peter Bernstein, following awards from Moving On Music, PRSF and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland. He also

visited Canada to attend the Banff Centre's Workshop in Jazz and Creative Music under the direction of Vijay Iyer in 2016. Joseph has toured as a sideman to many exciting countries in the world including

Vietnam, Singapore, Lebanon and Jamaica (where half of his ancestry belongs to). Joseph has performed with many of the biggest names nationally in Jazz including a quartet featuring UK Saxophone leg-

end, Julian Siegal.

Joseph will be joined by Wexford jazz drummer Kevin Lawlor and German double bass player Florian Kockott for a performance of jazz standards and some original music.



Joseph Leighton



Greystones Film Club presents: The Cry of Granuaile

Whale Theatre, Thursday 26th January 2023 @ 8pm (doors 7pm). Tickets €12 and available at www.whaletheatre.ie or call the booking office on 01 2010550 to book.

Filmed in lush 16mm, the celebrated character actor Dale Dickey plays the grieving American filmmaker in *The Cry Of Granuaile* (Ireland/PG/82mins), touring the West of Ireland with her Irish assistant (Judith Roddy) as she researches the 16th century pirate queen Grace O'Malley, but soon, the past and the present, myth and history, dreams and reality, begin to merge.

This genre-defying blend of psychodrama and fantasy comes from Dónal Foreman, the director of the award-winning *The Image You Missed*.

Approx Duration: 82 minutes

The Lost Brothers

With Special Guest Peter Doran
Whale Theatre, Saturday 28th January

"What I love about *The Lost Brothers* is how their songs often seem quite placid on the surface. Then one realizes just how depth-charged they truly are." - Paul Muldoon

Regarded as one of the finest musical duos to come out of these shores, Oisín Leech and Mark McCausland, from Meath and Tyrone, have been making music together since 2007.

Their sound is inspired by a range of influences that include the writings of Patrick Kavanagh, the music of Billie Holiday, and the paintings of Jack B Yeats. The Guardian described their most recent album, *'After The Fire After The Rain'*, as 'sublime' while The Irish Times stated that the album was 'deeply soulful' including it in their albums of the year.

BBC 6 Music celebrated the album with luminaries like Iggy Pop and Steve Lamacq playing the songs on the airwaves and awarding it 'Album Of The Day' upon its release. The album was also shortlisted for

the Northern Ireland Music Prize and and 'Album Of The Week' at RTE Radio 1. In 2021 the band headlined Union Chapel London and sold-out the Vicar St. in Dublin as part of the ongoing tour.

Over the years the band have toured and shared stages with the likes of Richard Hawley, Billy Bragg, Martha Wainwright and M Ward. They've performed internationally from Glastonbury to South By Southwest.

Note: This event is currently SOLD OUT. Please join the waiting list and in the event of ticket releases or returns Whale Theatre will contact patrons starting from the top of the list. Adding your name to the waiting list does not guarantee tickets.



The Lost Brothers



NT Live: The Crucible

Whale Theatre, Friday 27th January 2023 @ 7pm (doors 6.30pm). Tickets €17.50 and available at www.whaletheatre.ie or call the booking office on 01 2010550

A witch hunt is beginning. Raised to be seen but not heard, a group of young women in Salem suddenly find their words have an almighty power. As a climate of fear, vendetta, and accusation spreads through the community, no one is safe from trial. Lyndsey Turner (*Hamlet*) directs this contemporary new staging, designed by Tony Award-winner Es Devlin (*The Lehman Trilogy*).

Written by Arthur Miller

Directed by Lyndsey Turner

Captured live from the National Theatre in London.

Ford Mustang Mach-E the electric choice for Cork Mayor

Few companies did more for Irish industrial development than Ford Motor Company. In 1917 Henry Ford, whose grandfather had emigrated from Co. Cork to Dearborn Michigan, opened a monster, state of the art, tractor plant in Cork City.

By Martin McCarthy

The family association with Ireland continued through the generations as Henry's grandson, Henry Ford II, married into Irish American royalty when he walked up the aisle in St. Patrick's Cathedral, New York in 1942 with Anne McDonnell, whose family had left

Longford in the 1880s. Henry Ford II - and the corporation - showed immense loyalty to Ireland and Cork in keeping the Sierra line in operation until 1984 in

way beyond its economic viability. This in part thanks to superb work by Paddy Hayes the last MD and his team at the factory.

Hence it is great that Ford's association with Cork and Ireland is still strong as the stunning electric battery Mustang Mach E is wowing customers in Europe and the USA, and in now being used by the Mayor of Cork City.

The Lord Mayor of Cork, Cllr. Deirdre Forde, was last week presented with the 2023 Lord Mayoral car, a fully electric Ford Mustang Mach-E Extended Range AWD, by Pádraig Duane of Henry Ford & Son Ltd.

The Mustang Mach-E fully electric SUV has a range in excess of 600km and will be charged on site in City Hall. Driving the Mustang Mach-E leads to an approx. 50% cut in running costs compared to driving a petrol or diesel engine in a similar-sized vehicle.

Lord Mayor of Cork, Cllr. Deirdre Forde said: "I want to express my gratitude to Pádraig and the team at Henry Ford & Son Ltd for continuing the tradition of supplying the official Lord Mayoral car. This



The Lord Mayor of Cork, Cllr. Deirdre Forde, was last week presented with the 2023 Lord Mayoral car, a fully electric Ford Mustang Mach-E Extended Range AWD, by Pádraig Duane of Henry Ford & Son Ltd.

is the second year that the Lord Mayor's car is fully electric, something I believe is vital in highlighting the Council's commitment to climate action and making the city a more environmentally sustainable city."

Mach-E drivers in Ireland, through Ford's BlueOvaló Charge Network, have access to around 3,000 charge points on the island of Ireland and over 300,000 public charging stations across Europe. The charging network

includes access to high power chargers such as the fast-charging stations from IONITY.

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Bray Area Partnership
Bray Area Partnership is recruiting for two positions:

Sláintecare. Healthy Communities
Community Food and Nutrition Worker

The primary job function is to engage collaboratively with statutory and community organisations to improve health and wellbeing in the greater Bray area, focusing on identified targeted communities, by addressing poor diet and food poverty conditions. **Closing date for applications is 5pm on Friday 27th January.**

Employment Facilitator IMPACT Initiative

The main job function is to support people with disabilities to achieve sustainable employment, become self-employed or progress in their careers, and to engage with employers. **Closing date for applications is 5pm on Friday 10th February.**

See www.brayareapartnership.ie for details and full job descriptions.

This project was approved by Government with support from the Dormant Accounts Fund.

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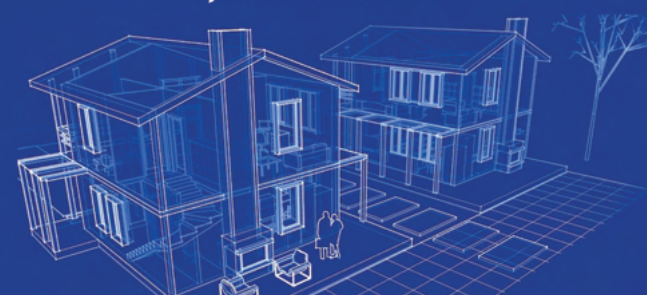
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WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

Seoirse McGrath seeks permission to erect a circular slurry storage tank and associated works at Moneylane, Arklow, Co Wicklow; National Grid Ref. 722100, 672000. 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. 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 five weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the Authority of the application.

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Fish oils - nature's super drug

The supplement industry is rife with clever advertising and marketing ploys looking to deprive you of your hard-earned cash in return for magic lotions and potions full of lofty promises but generally without the same magnitude of reward.

By Michael Preston, The Transformation Coach

If it seems too good to be true, it often is!

With supplements, the clue is in the name - they supplement something; in this case, it is your day-to-day diet. If you are already getting adequate amounts through your daily food intake, you may not need them. People with a lack of nutritious food may benefit from a daily multivitamin. Most of us could benefit from sufficient vitamin D in Ireland, especially in those darker and dreary Winter months.

Another supplement that repeatedly raises its head, with a wide range of benefits for many demographics, is Omega-3 fish oils, particularly their EPA (Eicosapentaenoic acid)

and DHA (Docosahexaenoic acid) content. Eating oily fish multiple times over the week may



mean you do not need to consider supplementation; however, if you fall outside of this camp, you may be missing a trick.

Omega-3 fish oils are nutraceutical in that they are food sources or parts of food that provide

medical or health benefits, including the prevention and treatment of disease. They are essential for good health and are often under-consumed. Both EPA and DHA contribute to providing the main benefits. I mention EPA and DHA content because some supplements out there utilise an ALA (Alpha-linolenic acid) content instead, which can indeed be converted to EPA and DHA. However, only a tiny amount can be synthesised in the body, making it inferior to EPA and DHA if taken in identical amounts.

Some of the vast range of benefits of fish oils include:

- They are antihypertensive in such they can help in the lowering of blood pressure.
- Omega-3s are linked to better heart health, such as a lowered risk of stroke.
- They have anti-inflammatory properties.
- They are linked to improved mood.
- Help facilitate weight loss.

• They are linked to lower rates of stress.

• It can assist in reducing the decline of muscle mass in the elderly.

However, please be advised that these improvements need to go hand in hand with a focus on activity and nutrition.

While I'd encourage eating more fish, supplementing is also a simple and effective way to increase your Omega-3 intake, especially if you follow a fish-free diet. If you would like more information on the benefits and dosage protocols, please feel free to reach out to me on the channels mentioned below.

Micheál Penston is the Head Transformation Coach and Nutritionist at FM Fitness & Nutrition based in Arklow. They specialise in helping busy people create the healthiest versions of themselves by educating and empowering them around all areas of their lifestyle: fitness, nutrition, recovery, and behaviours.



Ciara Dunne of Wicklow RFC in action during the Leinster Rugby Girls U18.5 Cup final against the Southeast Lions of Wexford in Carlow. Wicklow won by a score of 36 to 17. Pic: Sportsfile

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