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Tuesday 14th March 2023 First Floor, The Boulevard, Quinsborough Road, Bray. A98 R6D7. Tel: 01 - 2869111 E-mail: wicklowed@localtimes.ie www.wicklowtimes.net

## WICKLOW SCHOOLS 'ON HOLD'

The Department of Education has come under fire following its decision to put the new build of Greystones Community College on hold. The Greystones school is one of 58 around the country that's been shelved due to capital financial pressures in the Department, it was revealed last week. Also on hold is the Gael Scoil Inbhear Mor in Arklow and possibly Scoil Bríd in Carnew.

Greystones Community College, which opened in 2020, has been accommodated at three temporary sites - Greystones Tennis Club, Greystones Rugby Club and Eire Og GAA Club. There's a high and growing demand for school places in the Greystones area, however the school is not in a position to increase its enrollment numbers

until new accommodation is developed. Sinn Féin TD John Brady expressed serious concerns, saying "It is very alarming that after receiving planning permission in April 2022 for the new 1,000 pupil school building in Charlesland, the Department has now informed Greystones Community College that tendering for work on developing

the new school is on hold due to capital financial pressures.

"It was hoped that the tender for the new school would go out last December, unfortunately that didn't materialise, instead the school got the devastating news that progressing the new school build of a new 10,808 sqm school building, including 37 general



9 year old Néo Smith enjoying the snow in Annamoe last Friday with best friend, Duggee. The two enjoyed a magical day of sledding and building snowmen. A chest harness makes pulling Néo through the snow childplay for Duggee! Photo by Alda Smith

classrooms, 20 specialist classrooms, a PE hall, a special education unit, six hard play courts and other staff and student facilities is now on hold.

"This simply isn't acceptable; there are major educational pressures in Greystones and across Wicklow and the decision to put on hold 58 school building projects including Greystones Community College will have a devastating impact on the provision of education across Wicklow.

"The Department of Education has said that the Department's Planning and Building Unit is currently assessing its work programme and priorities for 2023 in the context of overall requirements and available funding and that their most immediate priorities are to cater for September 2023 requirements. They also

say are engaging with the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform in relation to capital funding pressures in order to continue to be able to adequately support the operation of the school system with rollout of school building projects to tender and construction in 2023 and minimise project delays to the greatest extent possible. Currently there are 58 school building projects, this includes Greystones Community College on hold due to capital funding pressures.

"The Minister must explain immediately how she believes that this delay won't have a negative impact on school places in the Greystones area, this is something that we unfortunately see every year and why this new school build is so criti-

cal. The Department must explain how long it is anticipated that the

school building will be on hold for and what this means for

Greystones Community College.

*Continued on page 3*

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Mali Preston with Alexandra Keane and her older sister Sophie Keane, and Isobel Donlon, all from Enniskerry, pictured at the tree planting event at Powerscourt Estate for International Women's Day, as part of the national 100 Million Trees Project. See more, page 11

## Greystones gearing up to go green

The annual St. Patrick's Day celebrations in Greystones are just around the corner and the town is buzzing with excitement to "Go Green" both in colour and sustainable environmentally friendly ideas. This year's celebrations are expected to be bigger and better than ever before, especially post-covid.

The Parade will begin at 11am on St Patrick's Day at the South Beach car park, before it makes its way along Greystones Main Street finishing at the old cinema.

The parade will include marching bands, and a variety of local groups and organizations. Furthermore, we have commissioned a German brass band who are traveling over from Germany called "Schoppeblaser" along with the Tallaght Youth Band and Crumlin Community Band to match their energy.

Our heroes in uniform, members of the Reserve Defense Forces, Wicklow Mountain Rescue, Greystones Fire Service, and Greystones and Wicklow

Coast Guards, will lead the parade this year. They are proudly joined by Wicklow UN Veterans Association.

Local Boxers Kaci Rock and Tadhg O'Donnell are leading the way as Grand Marshals of this year's Greystones St Patrick's Day parade. Tadhg is a European Gold Medalist having won the Junior 66kg title in Italy last October, while Kaci is a European bronze medallist and a five-time National Champion. Leading the way in a vintage car which is part of a local club "Vintage Tractor", people who love vintage cars.

"We're thrilled to be hosting the St. Patrick's Day celebrations after Covid," Cllr Gerry Welsh

said. "It's a wonderful opportunity for Greystones residents to come together and celebrate our rich cultural heritage. We've got a fantastic lineup of events planned, and we're excited to welcome visitors from near and far to join in on the fun."

Information on road closures and diversions, bus rerouting, and park and ride bus facilities will be available on [www.greystones.ie](http://www.greystones.ie). Visitors are encouraged to walk into town supporting the "Go Green" theme as there will be limited parking available due to road closures.

If you still want to donate to the event, please email [events@greystones.ie](mailto:events@greystones.ie).

be travelling with the group to take part in this once in a lifetime experience. The journey will take us across woodlands, farmlands and rustic hamlets, whilst following tracks and paths lined by granite stones walls."

He advised that there are still have a couple of places left for this 7-day trip. If you are interested on raising much needed funds and joining the group, please contact Jamie on 01 4045378.

On Monday 20th March, Anam Cara will hold their Wicklow meeting in The Parkview Hotel, Newtownmountkennedy at 7:15pm. All bereaved parents are welcome, regardless of the age of the child or circumstances of death. For further information, Anam Cara can be contacted on 085 2888888 or by email [info@anamcara.ie](mailto:info@anamcara.ie).

## Bereavement support meeting & Camino walk

Anam Cara, a national organisation supporting bereaved parents, hold fourteen face to face meetings across the country each and every month. There will be a big Spanish welcome this May when supporters of Anam Cara take on a section of the Camino de Santiago. On the 21st May, the group will depart Dublin for warmer climates and walk the spectacular Sarria to Santiago leg of this world famous route. Grants & Fundraising Manager of Anam Cara, Jamie Conway said "I am thrilled to

# Wicklow Lions hold Grand Final quiz night

Over 200 people attended the Wicklow Lions Club's Final Quiz in Wicklow Golf Club. Once again for the second week in a row the Golf Club was totally full to capacity. "Special thanks to the management and staff in the club as well as Ernie's who supplied the extra chairs required for the big crowd," Wicklow Lions Club said.

The all Ireland Lions District Governor Gerald Cashman also travelled from Wexford to give his support along with past Zone Chair Eamonn Teehan plus Dun Laoghaire president Eamonn Sampson who came along to witness the success of the longest running quiz in the world.

41 tables filled the wonderful surroundings and the proceeds from all the recent quiz nights were divided among 17 local charities, organisations and schools, which were; St Coen's School, Ashford ICA, Colaiste Chill Mhantain School, Wicklow Scouts, Nun's Cross School, I Am Alex, Dominican College Wicklow School, RNLI, St Patrick's National School, Blue Dolphins, Wicklow Town Team, Move4Parkinson's, Wicklow ICA, Educate Together School, Holy Rosary School, First Responders Wicklow, and Ashford Beekeepers.

Each charity received a cheque on the night presented by Lions President Maurice Corr and Eamonn Sampson. The divided proceeds are also topped up by the



Con and Seamus Keddy at the Wicklow Lions Club Grand Final Table Quiz in Wicklow Golf Club.

Lions Club for every charity.

Every euro raised from the final quiz as well as the raffle will be presented to the Turkey/Syria Earthquake Appeal. "Special thanks to the many people who donated separately," Wicklow Lions Club said.

President Maurice

thanked everyone who supported the very successful Quiz Nights. Team leader Una Breslin thanked Ethna Neiland and Sean Olohan and team for the huge support over the past few months. There were presentations made to Una as well as Ethna.

The committee Lilly

Sorcha and Karla of the recently formed Leo Lions in DCW also took part in the quiz and presented the visiting dignitaries and their partners with a special red rose which were extremely well received.

Local quizzers are already saying 'roll on next quiz season!'



Sean Olohan, Eamonn Sampson (Dun Laoghaire Lions Club), Wicklow Lions Club President Maurice Corr, Gerald Cashman (Lions Club District Governor) and Eamon Teehan (Dun Laoghaire Lions Club) at the Wicklow Lions Club Grand Final Table Quiz in Wicklow Golf Club.

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## Knock Pilgrimage

There will be a pilgrimage to Knock on Sunday 16th April 2023. Leaving Rathdrum square at 7.30am, via Moneystown, Roundwood Church at 8am. Cost is €80 pp including breakfast, dinner and bus all money to be paid by 10th April. To Book Contact Susan O'Neill at 087 627 3032.

## Scoil Chaoimhin Naofa Quiz Night

Come along to the Quiz Night in Lynhams Hotel on March 10th at 8pm. Tickets available from the Parents Association Members or at the door on the night. Raffles and prizes with a table of 4 people (€40). Danny 086 194 2546 or Amy 087 973 8269.

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# 'A TSUNAMI OF EVICTIONS'

Wicklow's Sinn Féin representatives have strongly criticised the Government's decision to end the eviction ban from the end of this month, a decision which the coalition concedes will lead to an increase in homelessness across the state.

When the eviction ban was introduced last year, 2,700 notices to quit were paused. There are now fears that the decision by the government to lift the ban will lead to an avalanche of evictions.

John Brady TD said "If ever there was any doubt before that this Government is a cohort of landlords governing in their own self-interest, the cruel and inhumane decision by the Government to remove the ban on eviction has removed all doubt. This government has abandoned renters.

"If you are a renter in Wicklow, you are already paying some of the most expensive rents in the state outside of Dublin. A report from Daft.ie published last month revealed a year on year 13.3% increase in rents in Wicklow, where the average monthly rental cost is now at €1,847.

"The Minister has cited legal advice as part of the Government's rationale for adding to a homeless crisis of their making. I am calling on him to publish this advice, and I am calling on all of the other Wicklow TDs to support me in this call.

"The removal of the eviction ban leaves the state open to a tsunami of evictions over the summer months. There are families and individuals who have been reduced to a state of terror, and trepidation by this heartless decision.

"There are currently 11,754 people classified as homeless across the state. 3,431 of whom are children. But as harrowing as these statistics are, they hide the real human pain that lies behind the figures.

"Day after day, I witness families and individuals, grown men and women at the end of their tether, in tears in my office as we struggle against a system that is stacked against them to try to help them.

"There are three government TDs in Wicklow. I would like to see those very same members of the government here in Wicklow, to step out from behind the barrage of excuses offered by the Government, and to take the time sit across a table from a

grown adult in tears, in the throes of hopelessness, with nowhere left to turn, facing a future of homelessness, and see how far their empty arguments take them.

"Recently, I met with a young mother, who has been forced through circumstances to live out of her car, while still trying to provide the best she can for her child. There is simply no accommodation out there, even for those who have done everything humanly possible to source shelter.

"All the state could offer this single parent family was to provide them with what is termed a self-accommodating letter which places an onus on this woman to travel the length and

breadth of Wicklow, Dublin, and Wexford with a child in tow, to hotels and guesthouses in search of accommodation, with a letter saying that the state will cover a cost of €70 a night for two weeks.

"The housing crisis is the single biggest social issue in the state at this moment in time. It is condemning thousands and thousands of families to a life of penury as they attempt to meet the eye-watering rental costs. Others are enduring the catastrophe of homelessness. And yet this government refuses to acknowledge that there is a crisis. The government needs to immediately reinstate the eviction ban until the end of this year, to provide breathing space to bring in emergency measures to address the crisis, by accelerating and increasing the supply of social and affordable homes.

Wicklow's Sinn Féin councillors have also criticised the move. Cllr Dermot 'Daisy' O'Brien said, "This isn't really about landlords for me, this is about the Govt making a decision that essentially says we are sending you back out onto the tightrope, we are removing the safety net AND we know exactly what's going to happen!

"In Bray we still don't have the extra funds to bring boarded up homes back into use, we still have little or no private rental and even less

HAP properties, we still have deficits in staffing numbers and we have some people who've been in emergency accommodation for over a year!

"For me this decision is an attack on the most vulnerable and when I say that I mean particularly children, because for every child that ends up homeless because of Govt policy and its failure to adequately support local authorities we have to take a long look at who is in power across all seats of democracy in this country. Every endorsement and defence of this Govt is a literal defence of this policy which means that you accept the collateral damage of children who will experience the trauma of homelessness in the most important developmental stages of their lives and when they are at their most vulnerable. I can't imagine how any TD, Councillor or political activist could stand over that and still believe in the social contract."

Cllr Grace McManus said "This is absolutely the wrong policy decision. Policies don't happen in a vacuum, and the decision to end this ban now, because of potential unintended consequences, simply means that the government did not have other policies in place to mitigate that potential harm.

"Yet, we know the harm that the ending of the ban will cause. It's in front of our eyes, and it's terrifying. What am I to say to the young mothers and fathers next month, who will come to me for support? Women and men who are living in fear of the letter box every week, waiting for the inevitable notice telling them to leave, when there is nowhere for them to go?

At this stage, I am completely exhausted and disillusioned. There is only so long we can continue to wave the emergency flag until you realise the action needed isn't coming. I can only imagine how those suffering housing distress must feel right now. A fundamental change in government has never been needed more."



Maura Devereux celebrates her 100th birthday in Delgany Golf Club, with her sister Peggie, daughter Brigitte and nieces Helen and Judith.

## WICKLOW SCHOOLS 'ON HOLD'

Continued from page 1...

"There is a crisis in education right across Wicklow with schools such as North Wicklow Educate Together, Blessington Community College, Wicklow Educate Together National School and Colaiste Bhride all waiting on the Department to move forward critical plans for the schools.

"The Minister must also state if any other school building project in Wicklow is on their list of 58 school building projects that are on hold. Unfortunately, what we see again from this Minister is a complete failure to plan, and this failure is going to again impact on the provision of education in Wicklow. The three Government TDs in Wicklow which include two senior Ministers must immediately intervene and get this critical school project back on track."

Reacting to the news, Social Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore said "The Minister for Education confirmed to me last June that the tender for the permanent school building for Greystones Community College was to go out last year and construction would be underway by now. This was very welcome news at the time. However, recent information from the Department states that funding for Greystones Community College has been pulled and there is no

indication of when it will be provided.

"This news is completely unacceptable. It will make it very difficult for the school to meet the growing needs of the community, and will put huge stresses on an already pressurised area. Where exactly does the Minister think these students are going to go to school?

"I have raised the need for a building for Greystones Community College on numerous occasions with the Minister. I have also written a letter requesting an urgent meeting with the Minister about the current situation, which was refused.

"This news of the delay and lack of clarity is continuing to impact on the schools' ability to plan ahead. It is also having a major impact on the wellbeing of students and their families who are without a school place because of the lack of accommodation.

"Uncertainty is not only impacting on the schools, but the whole area as people are uncertain as to the future capacity of schools and where to send their children in years to come. In the absence of being able to plan ahead this will have a major impact on the community. This community-wide issue needs urgent attention from the Department of Education. I will continue to raise this issue with the Department and to work with parent and the school community on this critically important issue."

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# Farmers call for joint effort in fight for dog control

A deputation from the Wicklow Cheviot Sheep Owners Association gave a presentation at last week's meeting of Wicklow County Council, calling for a joined-up approach to tackle the issue of dogs running amok and attacking and worrying sheep, a particular cause for concern at this time of the year during lambing season.

155,209 breeding ewes in Wicklow are about to lamb this Spring, and approximately 233,000 lambs are born in Wicklow every year, making Wicklow the fifth largest county in Ireland in terms of sheep numbers. The sheep breeding industry supports a large number of farming families in Wicklow and generates in the region of €23-25 million a year. Because of the landscape in Wicklow, many farming livelihoods depend on sheep farming and it underpins many rural communities through marts, local co-ops and veterinary practices.

Very few sheep farmers across Wicklow have avoided incidents of their sheep being attacked or killed by dogs.

In their presentation at last week's meeting, Vice Chairman of the Wicklow Cheviot Sheep Owners Association Peter Behan, and hill sheep farmer Pat Dunne, showed a number of photos of the gruesome aftermath of some of the more high-profile dog attacks on sheep around the country in recent months; the 30 sheep that were attacked in

Cadamstown, Co. Kildare, on Friday 27th January (10 killed, 19 ravaged, 87 traumatised); the 70 sheep that were lost in an attack near Lorrha, Co. Tipperary over the Christmas period (70 dead, 20 injured, five missing); the lambs that were attacked outside Moneygall, on the Offaly-Tipp border, in December (50 killed - almost half the flock).

Peter and Pat drove home the point that the initial attack and kills are only the first part of the devastation, with the financial losses as a result and the trauma it causes to the rest of the flock being the unseen damage done. Following the Moneygall case, for example, the surviving lambs were too traumatised to come to the trough to be fed, with vets predicting that they could yet die from shock. All sheep had to be brought in off the farm, resulting in a loss of €10,000 and creating additional costs in extra bedding and feed. If a sheep avoids physical injury during an attack, the trauma is still so severe that it can cause them to abort.

All of this havoc can be

caused by one dog in just a few minutes, yet according to the Wicklow Cheviot Sheep Owners Association, legislation is not robust enough to effectively deal with the issue. "The law is against the sheep farmers," they said, "as it is on us to take dog owners to court and many farmers don't want to go down this route."

The Association is asking for the Minister for Agriculture to deliver what farm organisations have been asking for: a national database for all dogs in the country for microchipping and licensing; extra dog wardens working flexible hours to ensure a presence of dog wardens over the weekends. "Dog Wardens need to be visible, they need to be seen enforcing the law."

The Wicklow Cheviot Sheep Owners asked the Council to write to the relevant Ministers (Charlie McConalogue and Heather Humphreys) to implement these measures.

Supporting these calls, Cllr Pat Kennedy added that "The NPWS now have a policy where dogs



Pictured at the launch of the dog control awareness campaign were Peter Behan (Vice Chairman of the Wicklow Cheviot Sheep Owners Association), Selena Mackenzie (Chair of the Wicklow Irish Farmers Association Sheep Sheep Committee), Mark Redmond (sheep farmer), Brendan Conway (ISPCA dog warden), Noel Hayes (ISPCA dog warden) Aaron Byrne (County Wicklow Partnership), Ruth Daunt (Wicklow County Council Veterinary Inspector), Jackie Carroll (WC), Tom Byrne (Wicklow IFA Chair), Brian Dunne (Wicklow Uplands Council) and Kiara Kavanagh (WCC).

must be on leads on the hills and the open countryside on their land, while Coillte have an open access policy. Maybe Coillte could add on and develop their open access policy to include that dogs should be on leashes when they are out in the rural countryside."

Cllr Shay Cullen requested that the Council also ask the Department of

Agriculture to review and properly define the term 'effective control' in the legislation which is meant to prevent dogs from getting near sheep.

"I've seen first-hand the devastation of sheep kills and the effect that this can have on families and communities," said Cllr Cullen. "We talk about financial implications of dog kills or sheep kills,

but there's also the emotional effect that it has on people and families and farmers in general. It's hard to describe without actually seeing it first-hand and it's a huge problem we have, there's no getting away from it.

"We are talking about County Wicklow, but it's a national problem and it's something that's going to have to change. We all

know that Wicklow is a recreational county. We've walks all over the county. But the reality is some people that use our recreational facilities and our walkways around the county are lacking respect for where they are and they're lacking respect for the farmers and they think it's just a playground with no consequences, and we've seen very clearly the

consequences that dogs have on sheep in this county.

"I agree with sending letters to the Minister, but I want to go a step further. We have a problem with the legislation in my view, because the legislation as it currently stands says dogs should be under 'effective control'. In my view, that is far, far too loose."

## Wicklow Deer Management Project final report published

Wicklow Uplands Council last Thursday published the final report emanating from the conclusion of the Wicklow Deer Management Project. The collaborative project, which operated from 2018 to 2022, was funded through the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, and managed jointly by Wicklow Uplands Council and the Wicklow Deer Management Partnership.

While estimates of the size of the deer population in Wicklow vary

considerably, it is accepted that the county has the highest deer pop-

ulation density in the country. This high population density can result

in a range of adverse impacts including damage to conservation habitats and biodiversity; economic losses to farmland & forestry; and animal welfare concerns due to the spread of disease and the increasing reports of road traffic collisions.

The principal aim of the Wicklow Deer Management Project was the establishment of a number of Deer Management Units (DMUs) across the county - A DMU being defined as an area of land where landowners, hunters and other interested parties come together to manage deer in a sustainable and agreed manner in an effort to reduce adverse impacts. The report outlines that five DMUs were initiated, two in west Wicklow, one in east Wicklow and two in the south of the county.

Project Manager, Pat Mellon, said "the collection of accurate cull

data was critical to understanding the level of deer management activity in the DMUs and monitor their progress. In that regard, the open sharing of information between landowner and hunter is vital for the delivery of any sustainable deer management programme."

He continued, "sustainable deer management requires a professional approach including an increased emphasis on the culling of female deer to better manage the breeding population."

The report also details a number of initiatives carried out under the auspices of the project including field tests which recorded potential grassland yield losses due to grazing impact and a TB testing pilot which identified the presence of TB in deer in an area of West Wicklow.

Coordinator of Wicklow Uplands Council, Brian Dunne, added "The project tested a successful framework for bringing together the various parties required to form an effective DMU. There is now a need for a longer-term, well-resourced and collaborative sustainable deer management programme in Wicklow."



Wild deer in Co. Wicklow. Photo by Chris Bolton.

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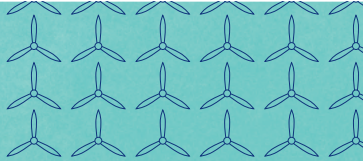
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1st and 2nd Year students from NWETSS with their giant placard and President Michael D. Higgins paper-mache head, pictured before setting off for Leinster House. Photo by Joe McQuillan.

## NWETSS students campaign for climate action

On Friday 3rd March, a group of 1st and 2nd Year students from North Wicklow Educate Together Secondary School (NWETSS) travelled to Dublin to raise awareness of climate change issues.

The students are part of the Students Climate Action Network (SCAN), which aims to draw attention to issues associated with climate change and to campaign for the Government to take systemic action.

The NWETSS students made the journey to outside Leinster House where they displayed their eye-catching placard. They also created a large Papier-mâché head of President Michael D. Higgins. The students say that the President's belief that people should take action to address the issues of the climate crisis, aligns with their own demand - that the Government must rethink business and farming to reduce carbon emissions and protect biodiversity.

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# Newtown Wildflower Walk launched by Tidy Towns

On Saturday 4th March, the Newtownmountkennedy Tidy Towns launched a new Wildflower Walk around the town.

The 5km looped walk passes a corridor of planted and natural wildflower areas sowed and managed by the Tidy Towns and local resident committees. A map of the walk was created by vice-chairperson Danny Alvey and designed by Ann Glynn who also lives in Newtown. Signs showing this map have been erected all around the town and an interactive, online version of the map is also available on Google Maps at [shorturl.at/vGPRY](https://shorturl.at/vGPRY). Beautiful timber signs, personalised to each estate, were made by the Newcastle and Newtown Men's Shed and D V Signs of Bray and can be seen all along the route.

Speaking at the launch, vice-chairperson Danny Alvey said: "Thank you to everyone who helped bring this idea to life, it was a real cross-community effort! Thank you to everyone in the Tidy Towns, Newtown GAA, local resident committees and local community who helped sow the patches last October. Thank you to the Newcastle and Newtown Men's Shed and DV Signs of Bray for the lovely timber signs. Thank you also to Deirdre Burns in the Heritage Office of Wicklow County Council for the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan signs and her general advice, and thank you also to the Council for funding this project through their Community Awards Scheme.



Members of the Newtownmountkennedy & Newcastle Men's Shed made timber signposts for the new walk

"Biodiversity in Ireland is in a state of grave decline, particularly our critically important pollinator species. One third of our bee species are threatened with extinction from Ireland because we have drastically reduced the amount of food and safe nesting sites in our landscapes. Our wildflower corridor across the town is a simple way to support these pollinators at a local level and draw everyone's attention this issue. It's also been a great community initiative bringing all of the different estates and local groups together and come summer it will add great colour throughout the town. We hope its well received by local people and visitors to the town alike and everyone is inspired to get out and walk the route and think more about wildflowers and how important they are for our bees!"



Map and signpost for the new walk



Members of Newtownmountkennedy Tidy towns and ReWild Wicklow launching the new wildflower walk



# Reduction in turbine numbers for Arklow Bank Wind Park Phase 2

SSE Renewables, Ireland's leading renewable energy owner and operator has confirmed that that between 36 and a maximum of 60 turbines will be required to be deployed at Arklow Bank Wind Park Phase 2, compared with previous iterations of up to 200 and a more recent figure of up to 62.

The developer is also ready to power up local communities across Wicklow and North Wexford as public consultation on the next stage of the project gets underway. The company will share the most up to date plans for the wind farm's offshore infrastructure which is the only outstanding consent required to deliver the project.

The consultation will take place from Monday, 13th March until the 7th April 2023. Over a four-week period, the team at SSE Renewables are encouraging members of the public in County Wicklow and North Wexford to have their say on the proposals.

John O'Sullivan, Project Manager for the Arklow Bank Wind Park with SSE Renewables, said: "We have been engaging with stakeholders across Wicklow, Arklow and Courtown since 2018 and have built meaningful relationships which have been invaluable to us throughout the development phase of the project.

"SSE Renewables has always aimed to be as accessible as possible at all stages through regular meetings both virtually and in person, and we appreciate all the feedback from the communities in the vicinity of the proposed project. This will enable us to refine our plans, ahead of a planning application to An Bord Pleanála.

"Arklow Bank Wind Park Phase 2 is a critical piece of infrastructure for the east coast and will be fundamental in supporting Ireland to meet its climate action target of 5GW of offshore wind by 2030."

Public consultation meetings for the Arklow Bank Wind Park Phase 2 will take place on the following dates:

• **Thursday, 16th March** at the Arklow Bay Hotel in Arklow, Co. Wicklow from 5pm - 8pm

• **Tuesday, 21st March** at Wicklow Sailing Club in Wicklow Town, Co. Wicklow from 5pm - 8pm

• **Wednesday, 29th March** at Courtown Sailing Club, in Courtown, Co. Wexford from 5pm - 8pm

The project team from SSE Renewables will be on hand at the events to provide information and updates, to answer questions and to take feedback from the public.

An online information session will also be held on **Wednesday, 5 April at 7:30pm** and a virtual online exhibition will be available for the duration of the consultation, via the project website [sserenewables.com/arklowbankphase2](https://sserenewables.com/arklowbankphase2)

SSE Renewables has been developing Arklow Bank Wind Park Phase 2 since 2018. Phase 1 of the Wind Park at Arklow Bank, which is

owned and operated by GE Energy, was constructed in 2003/04. Phase 1 is the first and only operational offshore wind farm in Ireland and it consists of seven wind turbines with a capacity of 25.2 MW.

Following the transfer of Arklow Bank Wind Park Phase 2 to the Maritime Area Planning (MAP) process in March 2022, the project was revised to increase the power generation output from the site from 520MW up to 800MW. This will allow the project to significantly contribute to Ireland's climate action target of 5GW by 2030, and to Ireland's national and local economy.

Having already successfully secured planning permission for two of the three project components, Arklow Bank Wind Park Phase 2 is expected to deliver first power in 2028 and enter full commercial operation in 2029.

The project will be capable of powering almost 850,000 homes each year, and offsetting around 830 million kilos of harmful carbon emissions annually and will bring with it a multi-million Euro Community Benefit Fund.

For more information about Arklow Bank Wind Park Phase 2 and to offer feedback visit [sserenewables.com/arklowbankphase2](https://sserenewables.com/arklowbankphase2)



Beatrice Offshore Wind Farm in Scotland

# IT'S TIME TO POWER UP ARKLOW

Your views will help shape our plans for the next generation of Arklow Bank Wind Park. Join our in-person and virtual events to take part in our public consultation.

**WE POWER CHANGE**

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TO HAVE  
YOUR SAY

or visit [sserenewables.com/ArklowBankPhase2](https://sserenewables.com/ArklowBankPhase2)

**Public Consultation Dates**

**Thursday 16 March, 5-8pm**  
Arklow Bay Conference & Leisure Hotel, Sea Road, Arklow, Y14 DX02

**Tuesday 21 March, 5-8pm**  
Wicklow Sailing Club, South Quay, Wicklow, A67 WV82

**Wednesday 29 March, 5-8pm**  
Courtown Sailing Club, South Beach, Courtown, Y25 X9D0

**Wednesday 5 April, 7.30pm**  
Online webinar – [sserenewables.com/ArklowBankPhase2](https://sserenewables.com/ArklowBankPhase2)





Dawn Leane, Joanne Costello, Niamh Comber and Jean Evans are pictured at the recent Network Ireland Wicklow 'Being Effective' event in the Bridge Tavern in Wicklow Town.

# The Beehive announces closure

**Landmark Wicklow pub and restaurant The Beehive announced last week that it has closed down, citing spiralling energy costs and cost increases from suppliers.**

Making the announcement via Facebook, the owners stated: "We are sorry to say that we have had to close The Beehive. Mainly due to the costs increases from our suppliers. Some of these costs are just impossible to pass onto you the customer. We want to thank all of our customers and our regulars. We would like to say a special thanks to our amazing team in here. They have been great to us and the customers. We want to wish the next person to take over the pub the best."

Located at Coolbeg Cross, near Brittas Bay off the old N11 Southbound, The Beehive has long been an ideal stop for hungry travellers passing through Wicklow, and a favourite among locals.

The Beehive came under the ownership of Pat Doyle several years ago and again changed hands last year. It began to suffer a decline in business following the opening of the new M11 motorway in 2015, which saw it bypassed.



The Beehive

## New Skillnet programme to help address rising business costs

**The Certificate in Strategic and Operational Management was launched last week by Carlow Kilkenny Skillnet, Waterford Chamber Skillnet, and Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT) Mobility & Supply Chain Skillnet in collaboration with South East Technological University (SETU).**

The initiative will focus on several topics, including strategic management of operations, project management, leadership for improved performance, cost efficiency, energy sustainability, logistical competence, and supply chain management.

This programme is a response to the rising cost challenges faced by companies in the South East region and in particular within manufacturing, engineering and supply chain businesses.

It will aid in identifying the cost increases and facilitate devising strategies to manage and diminish them, with a focus on enhancing supply chain efficiency, transportation methods, sustainability, and streamlining processes.

In today's business climate, where costs are rising in all areas, companies need to become more efficient, especially in areas such as digitalisation and sustainability, to not just survive but thrive.

The programme will be delivered by experienced SETU lecturers who work in industry as National Programme Managers, Supply Chain Management specialists as well as leaders and lecturers in organisational change.

Aoife O'Sullivan, Head of Network Development and Innovation, Skillnet Ireland

said: "Skillnet Ireland is committed to supporting the advancement of sustainable small and medium businesses and developing leadership capabilities to tackle challenges such as digitalisation and climate change. We're proud of the three Skillnet Business Networks working in partnership with SETU, who have put in tremendous efforts to develop a programme that meets the demands of the industry. This programme is a great example of industry and academia showcasing the power of collaboration by working together to ensure businesses are well-prepared for the constantly evolving field of strategic and operational management."

Ashling Ward, Network Manager, Carlow Kilkenny Skillnet said: "The creation of this new programme shows the power of networking and engagement in the South East between three different Skillnet Business Networks, South East Technological University and industry partners. We are now launching our first cohort of this fully funded programme in April as a direct response to the growing concerns of our member companies to the rising business costs and the pressure on companies to deal with them. This programme will allow learners the opportunity to engage with indus-

try experts and learn best practice."

Tommie Ryan, Network Manager, Waterford Chamber Skillnet said: "We are thrilled to announce the launch of the new Level 8 Certificate in Leadership and Operational Management at SETU in partnership with Skillnet Ireland, Carlow Kilkenny Skillnet and CILT Mobility & Supply Chain Skillnet. This collaborative effort underscores Waterford Chamber Skillnet's commitment to providing quality training and talent development opportunities for professionals in the South East region, and we look forward to empowering individuals and organisations alike with the tools they need to succeed in today's rapidly evolving business landscape."

James Kearney, Network Manager, CILT Mobility & Supply Chain Skillnet said: "Feedback on programmes for CILT Mobility & Supply Chain Skillnet has frequently sought bitesize development opportunities for management skills. The provision of a Certificate in Leadership & Operational Management creates great opportunities for skills development that add value to our network members."

The Certificate in Strategic and Operational Management will commence in April.



Pictured at the launch of the Certificate in Strategic and Operational Management were James Kearney, Network Manager, CILT Mobility & Supply Chain Skillnet; Ashling Ward, Network Manager, Carlow Kilkenny Skillnet; Tommie Ryan, Network Manager, Waterford Chamber Skillnet

## 'Government can and must intervene to cut energy costs'

**Sinn Féin TD John Brady has said that the government can and must intervene to cut energy costs and the time to do so is now. He was speaking ahead of a Sinn Féin motion on the issue.**

Deputy Brady said: "The government can and must intervene to cut energy costs and the time to do that is now. Households continue to pay sky-high energy bills - with electricity and gas bills more than double what they were two years ago.

"The government made a conscious decision last month not to provide any meaningful support for households with their energy costs until October. This was wrong. Households consume as much if not more electricity in the months of April, May and June as they do in October, November and December.

"Yet they will receive no support with these sky-high bills at a time when Saint Vincent de Paul reports that numbers unable to heat their homes more than doubled in 2022.

"It is reprehensible that energy companies are refusing to pass on significant savings made from wholesale electricity price reductions on to households. As workers and families continue to suffer, the government facilitated these massive profits with Minister Paschal Donohoe opposing windfall taxes and Minister Eamon Ryan opposing reform of the wholesale electricity market for months.

"They also made a decision not to reduce and cap electricity prices, despite government's all across Europe - in Germany, France, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, and elsewhere - doing just that.

"The government is yet to implement taxes on energy companies' windfall profits and still cannot clarify if the windfall profits enjoyed by energy companies for all of 2022 will be capped. This is a sensible measure, adopted across Europe, which I and my colleagues in Sinn Féin called for in September. The government can and must act to cut energy costs now."

## 40 new homes associated with notifications to convert vacant commercial premises in Co. Wicklow since 2018

**The Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Darragh O'Brien, TD, recently published figures showing that since 2018 Wicklow County Council has received 21 notifications (of intention to build) for a total of 40 homes from those planning to convert vacant commercial premises into homes.**

These figures relate to the conversion of vacant pubs. He extended the Regulations to the end of 2025, as committed to under the Government's 'Housing for All' plan and 'Town Centre First' policy. In 2022, Wicklow County Council received notifications of 7 exempted developments aimed at providing 16 homes. Nationally, 260 notifications indicated intent to provide 665 homes.

Commenting on the

figures, Minister O'Brien said: "Extra homes in Wicklow are being provided due to these regulations that make it easier to convert certain vacant commercial premises, including vacant spaces over ground-floor premises, into housing. Crucially, these regulations also encourage town centre renewal, a Government priority. That is why I extended these exemptions until the end of 2025 last year."

The figures have been published as the second phase of the department's national ad campaign to raise awareness of the Government's vacant property supports begins. The campaign's second phase highlights these planning permission exemptions and the Repair and Leasing Scheme. Minister O'Brien added: "This Government is determined to eradicate the blight of vacancy and dereliction that afflicts many of our towns. We have many schemes and supports out there to help people convert a derelict building or premises into a home. We are running a national campaign to alert the public to these supports and I hope to see many more conversions of such properties in Wicklow in the year ahead."



# Newtown prepares for 1798 Festival of Remembrance

Newtownmountkennedy Tidy Towns and members of the Newtownmountkennedy 1798 Committee last week launched a festival of remembrance for the 225th anniversary of the Battle of Newtownmountkennedy and the events leading up to and following the United Irishmen Rebellion of 1798, the largest rebellion in Irish history.



Bridget Murphy and Deirdre Mernagh at the launch of the Newtown 1798 Remembrance Festival

The launch took place in the Parkview Hotel last Thursday evening and the festival will take place around Newtownmountkennedy and environs from May 26th to 28th, when a series of events will take place.

These include a lecture series delivered in the Community Centre, a music and culture night featuring local musicians and Comhaltas.

An across faiths ecumenical service within St Catherine's 7th Century ruined Church in Kiladreenan and a major battle re-enactment by Wexford Pike Committee along main street Newtownmountkennedy will also be taking place.

Prof. Ruan O' Donnell spoke at the launch last week as well as members of the Newtownmountkennedy 1798 Committee.

"This is a very important historical event in Ireland's commemoration of this period of international revolution," they said

## Cairn seek permission to delete Community Centre in Archer Wood

Cairn Homes are just finishing the 426 home Archers Wood at Priory Road in Delgany. The Planning permission provides a 325 sq m Community Centre building. Cairn have now applied for permission not to build it and to replace it with much cheaper Outdoor Gym equipment. Cllr Derek Mitchell is objecting to this application as he says that community facilities are badly needed.

"Most facilities are in the East of Greystones whereas most recent development is in the West," said Mr Mitchell. "In justifying Cairn's proposal they list 8 Community Facilities as being adequate. None are in Delgany. 2 are in Kilcoole some distance away, most of the rest are close to the coast, most would be driven to as they are too far to walk. None are in Eden Gate or the 2 Glenharron Estates all of which are close to Archers Wood.

"The Charlesland Community Centre is a good example and is used extensively for dancing, art, music training much of it for children. Other uses could be bridge, social, education, Scouts and much more.

"The density of Archers Wood

development is high and it includes many apartments. This Community Centre was used to justify the high density and should not be subsequently omitted."

Cllr Stephen Stokes has also expressed concern about the planning application by Cairn Homes, to omit a two-storey residential amenity building in Archer's Wood. He also believes that the time is right to require developers to build infrastructure as part of an area masterplan.

Cllr Stokes stated: "In the original planning permission, Cairn Homes agreed to build an amenity building. Now they are trying to slip out of this. Many developers are being asked to put in minimal facilities in County Wicklow. Some

would say the bare minimum. We need to correct this."

Cllr Stephen Stokes has written to Cairn Homes urging them to reconsider the new plan to omit the two-story amenity building. In addition he has lodged an official objection with Wicklow County Council Planning Department.

Cllr Stephen Stokes is advocating for a fresh approach to the infrastructure shortage in Charlesland, Delgany, Greystones, Kilcoole, Killadreenan, Newcastle and across the country. He stated: "We should require housing developers to be a part of the solution."

The new plan can be viewed on [eplanning.ie/WicklowCC](http://eplanning.ie/WicklowCC), using application number 23131. The submission deadline is 20th March.



Newtownmountkennedy will host a 1798 Festival of Remembrance in May. Pictured at the launch in the Parkview Hotel last Thursday was Charlie Keddy with actors in period costume.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR: JUSTICE DELAYED IS JUSTICE DENIED

Dear Editor,

Who cares. By Emily O'Reilly. I care. On 23rd January 2023 I listened very carefully to an attorney general speaking at length at the Requiem Mass for John Murray. He said John as a judge had gone to great lengths to make the law within the law fair; also that the ordinary citizen like you and I could see it to be fair.

Six days later the Mail on Sunday set my mind back a few years. I was reminded of the challenge I had in Court against Wicklow County Council to a Local Area Plan that would in my opinion destroy Kilcoole, a rural village with the best agricultural land in the country with its array of flora and fauna. My challenge was delayed for years and years, now I know why. Emily O'Reilly when she was Ombudsman and investigating the illegal nursing home charges asked the then Minister for Health, Mary Harney for help but got none. I asked Wicklow County Council for documentation and got none. The Regional 1999 Plan took precedence over the Kilcoole Local Area Plan. The Regional Plan was statutory and that was that. The High Court tried to pull the wool over my eyes by giving me an example of a case taken by somebody in Meath as Meath was covered by the same law. I didn't swallow it, and it was not mentioned again. I would like an investigation into what happened in the High Court. Sitting in the Wicklow County Council corner was the man I paid €1,500 to look at my case. This had nothing to do with the large amount I gave the solicitors to take my case but didn't. Still waiting for my cheque to be returned, I took the case myself. As I read the Mail on Sunday

a few times to see the delaying tactics and the making sure the cases by the families of the nursing home patients who were wrongly charged payment would not see the light of day. My case was treated the same way.

In the High Court I gave the judge a tracing of the map covering the area I sought to protect. Straight away he left the courtroom, and when he came back he ruled against me. I had to appeal - with more delays and difficulties for me - to the Supreme Court. It refused to hear the case. As in the nursing home cases I was not allowed to open a 'barrel of worms'. Because the appeal was never heard the case is still live.

Vicky Phelan didn't give up and neither will I.

It would be nice if someone within the law would come to my aid. I hear over and over again that the law is the law. The one-time Fine Gael Health Minister James Reilly in The Dail said the State agencies should implement the law as it is rather than as they wish it to be.

In 2005 while my case was sitting, Mary Harney in The Dail said we are a society ruled by law - no one and no organisation can dispense with or alter a law. When I object to the ongoing destruction within the green belt of Kilcoole made so by the 1999 Regional Plan, I am told the law is changed. How come? The tracing of the map I gave to the judge was showing the boundary of Rathdown Lower where development was allowed and Kilcoole where development was not allowed.

Sincerely,  
Charlie Keddy

## Greystones represented in Holyhead for St. David's Day

Kathleen Kelleher recently travelled from Greystones to Holyhead for their St. David's Day Celebrations on 1st March.



Kathleen Kelleher in Holyhead, Wales, celebrating St. David's Day.

St. David is the Patron Saint of Wales and his Feast Day is 1st March. St. David's Day is not a public holiday in Wales, so school children mark the celebrations and the primary schools and the secondary schools parade through the town.

While there, Kathleen was able to make some forward planning for the two towns' Twinning Partnership, meeting with their rugby club and a secondary school. "Both are interested in forming a link with our own Greystones groups," she said.

"Our Holyhead Twinning Partners will travel to us for St. Patrick's Day Parade. They will bring with them a recently commissioned red dragon called Cadwaladr who will breathe the smoke as he progresses through Greystones.



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neamhphléasctha agus armlón  
contúirteach eile  
**Is ionann BRATACHA DEARGA**  
**agus BEO-LÁMHACH**  
Bí ag faire do na comharthaí foláirimh  
**AGUS BÍ AR d'AIRDEALL!**



# Cocaine Bear showcases the beauty of Wicklow

Stunning locations in County Wicklow such as Powerscourt Waterfall and Avoca Mines are featured in the new movie 'Cocaine Bear' which has just gone on general release.

The movie is based on a true story and the title delivers what it promises - a black bear consumes a large amount of cocaine

that was dropped from a drug smuggler's airplane in the rural areas of Georgia in the 1980s, and goes on a rampage.

Powerscourt Waterfall and Avoca Mines were chosen as locations to represent the Georgian wilderness where the real-

life incident took place.

Powerscourt Waterfall is Ireland's highest waterfall, and its stunning beauty makes it a popular location for film shoots.

Meanwhile, the Avoca Mines is an abandoned copper and lead mine located in the Wicklow Mountains that provided the perfect backdrop for the movie's gritty and rugged scenes.

Clermont House at Wicklow County Campus in Rathnew was also used as a location for key indoor scenes.

Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council, Emer O'Gorman, said: "This successful production is just the latest example of the value of the ongoing supports offered to the film industry in the County through the work of Screen Wicklow and the actions of the County Wicklow Screen Sector Development Strategy."

Cllr Tommy Annesley, Cathaoirleach, Wicklow County Council added: "The versatility of our beautiful County as a film location shines through in this film. It is shaping up to be yet another addition

to the list of iconic films shot in County Wicklow and will no doubt encourage visitors to come and see the sights for themselves."

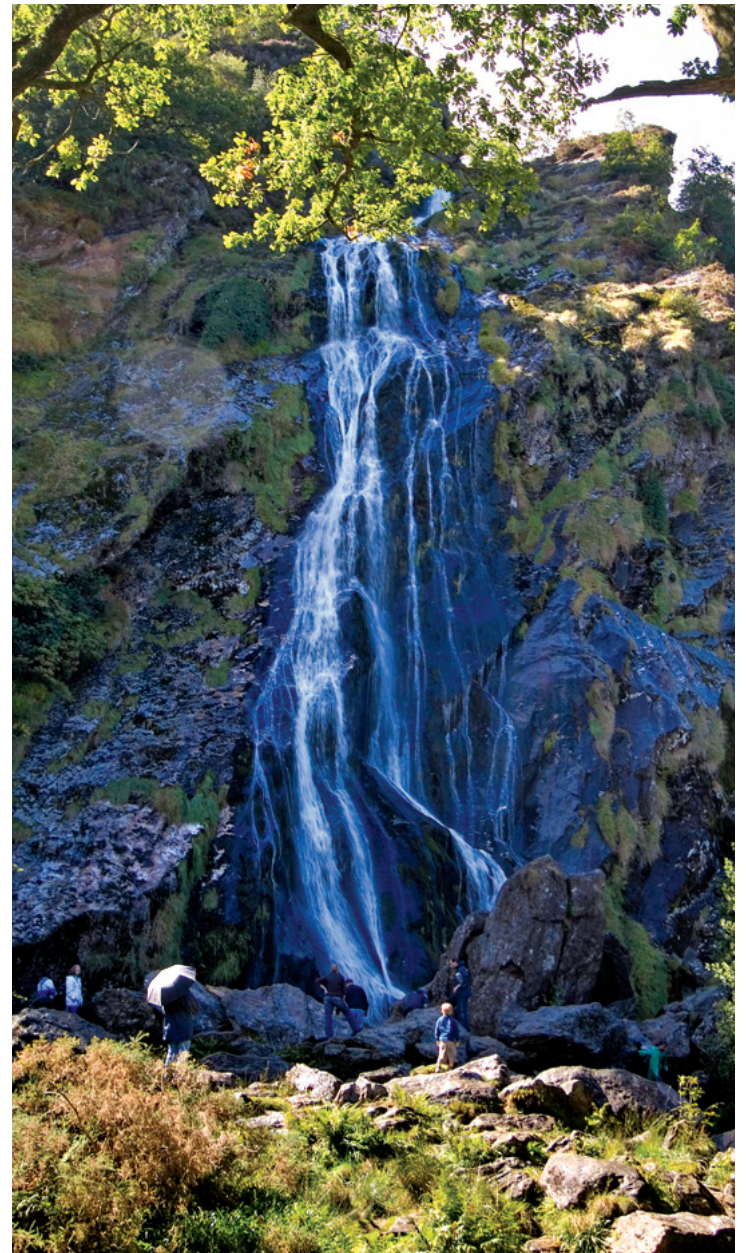
Wicklow has earned the name of iHollywood of Europe due to its popularity as a filming location along with the county being the base for two major studios.

Some of the most famous movies shot in Wicklow include blockbusters such as Braveheart, Excalibur or P.S. I Love You and more recently Disney's Disenchanted and the Netflix Series Vikings: Valhalla. More details can be found online at <https://www.wicklow.ie/Business/Film/Shot-in-Wicklow>

The county's stunning landscapes and historic buildings have made it a favourite location for filmmakers looking to capture a sense of otherworldliness or historical authenticity. Moreover, the Wicklow Mountains National Park, which covers most of the county, has also attracted a number of nature documentaries and adventure films.



Clermont House, Rathnew



Powerscourt Waterfall

## US trade mission aims to boost investment in film industry

**Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media Catherine Martin TD - together with Screen Ireland, Tourism Ireland, the I.D.A., Enterprise Ireland and the Department of Foreign Affairs led a trade mission in Los Angeles to promote the Irish screen industry and Ireland's cultural power ahead of the Academy Awards which took place on Sunday.**

This year marked a record-breaking 14 nominations for Irish stories and talent across the Awards, including the history-making nomination for Irish language film *An Cailín Ciúin*.

The trade mission - a key part of the Government's St Patrick's Day programme - aimed to build on the recent critical success for the Irish screen industry and the recognition of Irish talent on the world's stage. Minister Martin will seek to strengthen working relationships between the Irish screen sector and some of the world's largest film studios and production companies, as well as strengthening Ireland's reputation as a global tourist destination.

Last week saw a number of meetings taking place with US studios and production companies including Sony and Disney, which included representatives from Marvel, Searchlight and Lucas Film. These meetings updated key industry partners on the continued

growth and evolution of the sector in Ireland; discuss opportunities for increased collaboration; explore new opportunities for production as well as sectors in the industry, such as post-production and Visual Effects (VFX); and reinforce the strong and ongoing Government support for the industry and Irish artists, contributing to the Global Ireland 2025 aim to double Ireland's global cultural footprint.

Following the remarkable success of *An Cailín Ciúin* which became the first ever Irish language film nominated for an Academy Award, the Minister presented a special award to the film at the Oscar Wilde event on Thursday. This was hosted by the US-Ireland Alliance and promotes Irish film and culture in Los Angeles by honouring Irish and Irish-American screen talent.

Minister Martin also visited Winston House, a recent recipient of Culture Ireland funding. Culture Ireland, which is part

of the Minister's Department, is responsible for promoting Irish arts internationally and provides grants to artists to tour globally.

Speaking last week about the trade mission, Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media Catherine Martin TD said: "The eyes of Hollywood and the world are on Ireland this Oscars weekend and this presents an important opportunity to showcase Ireland's culture and creative talent to a global audience. This weekend is also important for Ireland and Irish people around the world. Some 14 Oscar nominations is incredible for a country the size of Ireland and I know the nominations are a source of national pride for young and old. It highlights the country's contribution to the arts and culture, provides opportunities to further promote Ireland as a tourism destination, and will inspire future generations of Irish creative talent and filmmakers."

"The Irish screen industry has seen unprecedented success over the past decade, across live-action TV production, animation production and Visual Effects, the result of sustained investment and a clear strategic focus on the development of the sector."

"Irish artists and arts have long been held in high regard in the US and, through Culture Ireland, my department supports artists to travel to present their work to American audiences and millions of diaspora annually. I look forward to visiting Winston House in LA which has received financial support for the participation of a selection of current and emerging Irish artists at their new Irish Friends Festival this month."

"I will also be promoting Ireland as a world-class tourist destination with the help of Tourism Ireland and will be taking part in meetings with representatives of various sporting bodies, along with St. Patrick's Day events in San Diego and Los Angeles during the visit."

Désirée Finnegan, Chief Executive, Screen Ireland, said: "The global reputation of the Irish

screen industry has continued to grow over the last number of years, with Irish projects achieving incredible critical and commercial success. This trade mission aims to further strengthen relationships with our US partners and build towards future industry growth and success."

"Our pride in the recent acclaim for Irish talent across acting, Irish-language film, VFX and craft continues to emphasise our belief in the talent and artistry of the Irish creative screen industries, and how this sector continues to innovate and break new ground at home and abroad. We hope the industry's success, and record-breaking number of Academy Award nominations, will inspire and pave the way for the next generation of Irish filmmakers to be ambitious in telling the cultural stories that matter to them."

### Film

The Irish screen industry is riding a powerful wave of growth and success, marked this year by the monumental international success for Irish talent across the Academy Awards with a record-breaking 14 nominations,

and a surge of new voices and emerging talent.

The ground-breaking success of *An Cailín Ciúin*, funded by Screen Ireland in partnership with TG4 and the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, broke domestic box-office records and garnered international critical acclaim.

Ireland is internationally renowned as a global hub for animation and, more recently, post-production and VFX have become leading areas of expertise in the Irish screen industry, with high-profile work on some of the biggest films and television series in the world, such as Marvel Studios' *Wakanda Forever*.

The Irish screen industry provides a tangible economic benefit to our country, through jobs, skills development, regional development and production spend on local goods and services. Production spend in the Irish economy hit a record high in 2021, an exceptional year due to the increased level of activity taking place following the Covid-related production shutdowns.

### Tourism

This year's trade mis-

sion celebrated these successes while emphasising the business and strategic opportunities these cultural milestones represent. A key example is 'The Banshees of Inisherin', a film boasting a wealth of Irish talent on screen and behind the camera as well as showcasing the landscapes and settings of Achill and the Aran Islands.

Tourism Ireland will continue to leverage its behind-the-scenes promotional film, using footage shot during the filming - capitalising on the positive exposure for Ireland, bringing the beautiful scenery of the Wild Atlantic Way to the attention of people in Ireland's main markets and inspiring them to come and visit.

The promotional film underlines the potential for Irish storytelling in collaboration with international partners. Recent large-scale productions based in Ireland have ranged from Disney's *Disenchanted*, which transformed the village of Enniskerry during production, to this year's viral hit *Cocaine Bear*, shot on location in the Wicklow countryside which was recreated as a US National Park.

All projects were in receipt of Section 481 funding, and utilised Irish crews, in addition to spending on local goods and services.

In 2019, the island of Ireland attracted 1.7 million tourists from the United States, approximately 10% of all American visitors to Europe. The US was Ireland's most important source of overseas tourism revenue and the second-largest source of tourists in 2019. American tourists spent €1.6 billion on the island of Ireland in 2019, up +71% since 2014 - an average spend of €916 per US tourist.

Tourism Ireland is undertaking an extensive and targeted programme of promotional activity in the United States again this year. This includes the new 'Fill Your Heart with Ireland' campaign, which will be launching early next month on multiple channels.

Minister Martin opened a Tourism Ireland office in Ireland House, San Francisco, in 2022. The expansion of Tourism Ireland's presence in the US will continue to develop tourism to Ireland from the western region of the US over the coming years.



# Arklow celebrates International Women's Day with Turkey and Syria earthquake appeal

International Women's Day was celebrated with a lunchtime event hosted by the Arklow Town Team on Thursday 9th March which raised funds for the Turkey and Syria earthquake appeal.

The event took place in the Arklow Bay Hotel with a theme this year of 'Embrace Equity'. International Women's Day takes place on the 8th March each year and Arklow Town Team was keen to mark the annual event while at the same time raising funds for the earthquake appeal.

Cllr Miriam Murphy of Arklow Town Team said: "International Women's Day highlights the need for equity - equity isn't just a nice-to-have, it's a must-have. A focus on gender equity needs to be part of every society's DNA. We are delighted to hold this event again and hope that our fundraising efforts on the day will go some way to help those in need

in Turkey and Syria."

Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council Emer O'Gorman in her address praised the work of the Town Team, recognising its positive impact on the local community.

Saying it was an honour and a privilege to be part of the event, she relayed her own personal experience on how her career developed and encouraged the Transition Year students in attendance to find their own path to achieving their goals.

Participants enjoyed a lunch in the Arklow Bay Hotel and also heard contributions from Rachel Tyrrell, Innovation Award Winner in the LIFT Ireland Leadership Awards and Zeliha Redmond who is co-ordinating an earthquake

donation appeal in collaboration with the Turkish Embassy.

Arklow Town Team would like to thank Arklow Chamber of Commerce for sponsoring the table for the Transition Year students in attendance.

Arklow Town Team is made up of volunteers from community, business and the local authority and would like to thank all who have donated generous prizes for the fundraiser which included hampers, vouchers, crystalware, event tickets and others prizes.

The Town Team thanked all who attended and supported the raffle which raised a total of €941 for the Turkish and Syrian Earthquake appeal.

## O'Sullivan calls for women to put their 'Hands Up' in upcoming elections

Ireland still has a low number of female TDs and Councillors, despite some increases in recent years. In the run-up to International Women's Day last week, MEP for Wicklow Grace O'Sullivan called on the women of Ireland to consider putting their 'hands up' and taking a step forward to represent their local communities in the upcoming local, European and general elections.

A relative newcomer to politics, O'Sullivan first put herself forward for election in the 2014 European election. While her first run was unsuccessful, she would later be elected to Seanad Éireann in 2016, before finally being elected to the European Parliament in 2019 on her second attempt. O'Sullivan says that she had never planned or thought of herself as a politician, having dedicated her work until then to more 'activist and environmental' causes, as well as raising her three daughters.

"When I first received a call from Green Party Leader Eamon Ryan in late 2013 asking me to run, I almost laughed down the phone at him," O'Sullivan said. "It

took a few more phone calls for me to finally take that step forward, and I've been quite lucky since then to have a relatively successful political career. If I hadn't received that push then, from within the Green Party and from my family and friends, I wouldn't be standing here today, and some of the legislation I have led on would not be enacted in the way that it has," the MEP continued.

O'Sullivan notes that just 13 of 32 councillors in the county of Wicklow elected in 2019 were women. While a slight increase in this figure has come with the co-option of female councillors throughout the council term, it is still far below where a representative democracy should be. While gender quotas for general elections have been introduced, and will rise to 40% of candidates being from either gender from this year, no such obligation exists for council elections, where many politicians are first elected.

O'Sullivan believes there are still many deterrents present which prevent women from running and being elected to office, including social expectations of motherhood and caregiving, and the gender specific and often sexualised online abuse sent to public representatives.



Bray Credit Union staff pictured last week celebrating International Women's Day

## Bray Credit Union now offering mortgages up to €400,000

Bray Credit Union is delighted to announce they have increased their mortgage offer to €400,000. Mortgages are now available for principle private residence only with no arrangement fees.

Head of Lending Martin Patchell said, "We are delighted to offer mortgages up to €400,000, we offer a full suite of financial services, while maintaining a personal service to our members face to face, online or by phone."

Bray Credit Union is a financial co-operative providing a full-service Current Account Mastercard Debit Card, personal lending up to €75,000, People Insurance, Member Benefit Insurance Programme and full digital banking & mobile app. In operation since 1964, with over 25,000 members, Bray Credit Union is offering every day banking with a personal touch and digital capabilities to meet the convenience needs of many consumers.

As the banks continue to reduce their presence in County Wicklow, Bray Credit Union has not abandoned those, of all ages, that prefer the face-to-face customer experience, whether it's a simple transac-

tion or a complex query.

Credit Unions are the cornerstone of their communities and have won for the 8th year in a row 'Customer Service CXI Award Winner' Ireland, Customer Experience Report. Bray Credit Union continues to invest in local initiatives which includes 'The Pat Woods Scholarship,' Sports Kit Funding and local County Wicklow community initiatives.

You can join Bray Credit Union from the comfort of your home at <https://www.braycu.ie/Join-Us>. Membership is open to all ages living or working from Kiltarnan to Ashford inclusive and includes Enniskerry, the Sallygap, Roundwood and Glendalough.

If you're interested in learning more about Bray Credit Union mortgages and other financial products, please go to [www.braycu.ie](http://www.braycu.ie).

# Women plant hope with a mini native Irish forest



Dr Noreen Slazenger (left) with Evelyn Cusack, Sarah Slazenger, Managing Director of Powerscourt Estate, Izzy Slazenger and Ruth Andrews, CEO of the Irish Tour Operators Association (right) planting trees on the Powerscourt estate for International Women's Day.

Powerscourt Estate had a group of women gather to mark International Women's Day by planting a mini native Irish forest on the Estate to support the national tree planting initiative - "100 million Trees Project". The planting of the mini forest on the Estate, comprising 1,500 native Irish trees finished on International Women's Day, Wednesday the 8th of March.

The 100 million Trees project is a national community-driven initiative developed by brothers, Richard and David Mulcahy, which aims to see the planting of 100 million native Irish trees across the island of Ireland throughout the next decade to reverse the environmental damage caused by the reduction of forests worldwide.

As part of Powerscourt Estates overall sustainability strategy a commitment has been made to plant at least two hundred (200) native Irish trees on the Estate every year over the next ten years.

Powerscourt Estate was originally purchased for the use of hydroelectric power at Powerscourt Waterfall. Over the last few years some of the sustainability initiatives which have been implemented on the Estate include an integrated energy management system, a waste reduction plan and biodiversity initiatives such as wildflower meadows, a tree planting programme, and a bee sanctuary at the walled gardens. The long-term overarching mission at Powerscourt Estate is for the Estate to be recognised on a global stage for its sustainability ini-

tiatives, and to be Net Zero by 2025.

Speaking at the mini forest planting at Powerscourt Estate, Sarah Slazenger Managing Director of Powerscourt Estate said: "We are delighted to support the 100 Million Trees Project as we see it as a great initiative which provides a practical means for communities across the country to take action on both the biodiversity and climate crises, by coming together getting their hands in the earth and planting a tree. It is also a fun way for people to do something tangible to address the challenges, with the added benefit of getting out into nature and connecting with their community. We see ourselves as custodians of Powerscourt for future generations and our aim is leave it in a better state for them. Working with nature and our sustainability strategy are vital for the future of Powerscourt."

The 100 Million Trees project hopes to gain further support from farmers, businesses, schools, public services, and communities who may be able to locate and provide sites for the planting projects.



# Education and Training Boards celebrate 10 years



Fionn Whelan from Gaelscoil na Lochanna in Blessington, and Julie Gardiner from St. David's National School in Kildare, launching ETB Week

*Education and Training Boards have had "transformative effect" on Irish education system*

Since Education and Training Boards (ETBs) were established, they have revolutionised Ireland's education system. That's according to Paddy Lavelle, Chief Executive of Education and Training Boards Ireland, who was speaking at the end of February as Education and Training Boards (ETBs) marked their tenth anniversary.

"ETBs in Ireland were set up ten years ago, from the amalgamation of VECs and the migration of FÁS training services across the country, and since then they have modernised the education system- providing learning opportunities to people of all ages, and at all stages of their learning journey.

"ETBs currently serve over 360,000 learners, have over 32,000 staff members and over 1,000 learner locations. The ETB structure has strengthened locally managed education provision and ensures that we can deliver education to people in all corners of the country. Over the past year alone, we have invested over €2.2 billion in providing primary, post primary, and further education as well as youth services in all corners of Ireland."

To mark the 10-year milestone, a

national 'ETB Week' coordinated by ETBI, ran from 27th February - 3rd March. The week-long celebration of ETB heroes and learners in the 16 Education and Training Boards showcased the services ETBs provide in local communities throughout Ireland.

Mr. Lavelle said: "Our learners are at the heart of everything we do, and it's great to have past learners involved in the celebrations - like Ray Kennedy, Tólu Makay and Máire Treasa Ní Dhubhghaill - who have all gone on to be extremely successful in their own right. It really shows the calibre of learners across our schools and centres.

"We are delighted to celebrate the success of all ETBs this week, and recognise all the exemplary work they are doing to support people on their education journey."

## Wicklow teens awarded €2,000 to solve social challenges

Students from two Co Wicklow schools have been awarded funding totalling €2,000 to advance their ideas for ways of bringing about positive change in their communities, through their participation in the Young Social Innovators' (YSI) Social Innovation Den in conjunction with Community Foundation Ireland.

The high point of the YSI Den is a series of Dragon's Den-style pitching sessions at which the teenagers recently presented their ideas to a panel of representatives, including from Dublin City Council, Community Foundation Ireland and EirGrid, to enable them to access Social Impact Fund support to advance their projects.

Teenagers from Colaiste Bhride, Carnew, secured €1,000 for their Technology Addiction, Make it Fiction! project aimed at highlighting a link between technology addiction and inactivity. The team presented their idea for developing an app that would allow young people to 'earn' technology time based on activity levels. The app would link to their other devices, such as a FitBit or smartphone and record activity, be it physical exercise or reading a book. They were awarded funding to create the app and they will also receive mentoring in app development.

Students from Youthreach, Wicklow town, secured €1,000 for their Carry on Caring project aimed at promoting fairness and inclusion for people living in a local direct provision centre. The team presented their idea for provid-

ing dance classes and sports activities for children living in the centre based on the responses to a questionnaire they provided to the residents. They were awarded funding to provide these activities and workshops.

Roger Warnock, CEO of Young Social Innovators, said: "The innovative ideas awarded Social Impact Fund support through our Social Innovation Den this year show how strongly engaged our young people are when it comes to the pressing and relevant issues impacting on people and society today. We are delighted to help advance these inspirational youth-led projects further through the provision of direct support. To date, the YSI Social Innovation Den has provided over €150,000 in grant funding to support youth-led ideas for social change throughout Ireland. We are grateful to Community Foundation Ireland for supporting our Den events this year via the Social Impact Fund, which is dedicated to advancing young people's ideas for positive change."

Denise Charlton, chief executive of Community Foundation Ireland, said "Young people are leaders in addressing many of the challenges facing communities across Ireland. On mental health, biodiversity, equality and climate change, they are successfully setting the agenda. We are proud to partner with Young Social Innovators and the young voices which drive our shared mission of equality for all in thriving communities. In these challenging times, the work being undertaken is more important than ever."

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The students of Colaiste Bhride, Carnew, who were awarded €1,000 in Social Impact Fund support for their Technology Addiction project through the Young Social Innovators' Social Innovation Den in conjunction with Community Foundation Ireland. Left to right: Joe Stephenson, Rosealice Byrne, Ellie Dolan and Siofra Byrne



The students from Youthreach, Wicklow town who were awarded €1,000 in Social Impact Fund support for their Carry on Caring project through the Young Social Innovators' Social Innovation Den in conjunction with Community Foundation Ireland. Left to right: John Robinson, Ellen Francis Snell, Ella Tindale, Megan O'Brien, Ella McDonald, Alex Meehan Murray, AnneMarie Moorhouse and Neda Nedat



# BIFE welcomes Emer Walsh as new Dance Coordinator

Bray Institute of Further Education are delighted to welcome Emer Walsh onto their teaching staff. She will be coordinating the "Dance Technique, Performance and Choreography Higher National Diploma Course" at BIFE.



Emer Walsh

Emer Walsh is one of Europe's top female choreographers. Well known in the dance community for her distinctive style, Emer has built a successful career as a Choreographer and Teacher. She graduated from University College Dublin with an Honours Law degree, before honing her craft in New York and LA and pursuing her dance career in London.

Emer began as a working dancer, touring the world, before quickly progressing on to Choreography roles, working with primetime TV shows and award-winning Artists alike.

She is a reputable teacher, who loves to teach dancers from all walks of life. Her professional classes focus on musicality, technique and expression through commercial styles of dance. She is also well versed in teaching young people and beginners as well as group and private workshops.

Creative, capable and organised, Emer can help you deliver the highest standard of performance, whatever your creative needs may be.

She has worked across TV, Film, Theatre and corporate sectors and among others, her credits include; The X Factor; The Voice; The Voice Kids; The Black Eyed Peas; Kelly Rowland; Tinie Tempah; David Guetta to mention a few.

Emer will host an Open Commercial Taster Class in Dance at BIFE on 18th April from 5pm to 6pm. If you are interested in attending this class please contact BIFE at 01-2829668 to book your place.

The Full-time Higher National Diploma Course in Dance at BIFE starts again next September and provides graduating students with the opportunity to progress to the final year of an honours Degree Level 8 Programme in Dance.

*Applications for September 2023 Courses are now open. Apply online at [www.bife.ie](http://www.bife.ie) or call the Institute any day during office hours on 01-2829668 for further information.*

## St. Andrew's NS participate in 'Our City' Junior Achievement Programme

3rd class students from St. Andrews National School were delighted when they got the opportunity to participate in the Junior Achievement programme "Our City".

This programme is sponsored by Core and was facilitated by local business volunteer Graham Daly. Graham who is a past pupil of St. Cronin's in Bray was delighted to have an opportunity to volunteer with students in his home town of Bray.

Over five modules, the 3rd class students were

introduced to a city as a place where a lot of people live, work, play, and go to school. Through the interactive materials Graham worked with the group to map out and build a city, plan their own restaurant business, create an advertising campaign, and examine why banks are important. In addition, volunteers are

encouraged to share with the students what their job involves too.

Volunteer Graham Daly said, "The programme was a brilliant experience, the teacher Mrs. Friel was a huge help and the kids were fantastic! It was great to see how quickly they were able to catch onto what we were discussing in each session."

Teacher Ellen Friel said, "The children really enjoyed their JAI programme experience. It was great for them to participate in activities that opened their eyes to the way town and city planning works, the impact of advertising and how banks work. I would recommend the experience to other schools".



3rd class students from St. Andrews National School were delighted when they got the opportunity to participate in the Junior Achievement programme "Our City".



Katherina Murphy from Gorey, Co Wexford and Shelley Menton from Arklow at the Accounting Technicians Ireland graduation ceremony at the Talbot Hotel, Stillorgan.

## Emergency works for North Wicklow Educate Together Secondary School

Fine Gael Minister Simon Harris has welcomed the Department of Education's decision to approve Emergency Works Funding for the North Wicklow Educate Together Secondary School.

Minister Harris said, "I am glad to see that the Department of Education has made the right call and approved the Emergency Works Funding for the North Wicklow Educate Together Secondary School (NWETSS). These will cover a range of mechanical and electrical works, to repair and refurbish aspects of the school and bring them back up to a high standard. I have long worked with NWETSS and am keen to support the school however possible. I, along with the staff and students of the NWETSS know that there is still much work to be done in pursuing further support from the Department of Education for NWETSS, and will continue to work towards this as a representative for Wicklow."

# SELL US THIS PEN



You don't have to be an unscrupulous Wall Street Broker to be good at sales. Wicklow Times, County Wicklow's largest circulation free paper, are looking for Sales Executives who can work with businesses and organisations in the community to find the best advertising solutions to allow them to grow their brand and customer base. Experience is helpful but not essential. If you think this might be you, and you like the idea of a good salary, commission and bonuses, email [shay@localtimes.ie](mailto:shay@localtimes.ie) or call Shay on 086 286911.



# Successful fundraising night for Lauren Quinn Keogh

On Saturday night, 25th February The Parkview Hotel in Newtownmountkennedy hosted a fundraiser for a phenomenal local lady, Lauren Quinn Keogh. Nearly 200 people attended the event while Lauren herself was able to join in live to watch the night unfold.

The night was full of emotion. There was laughter, tears, dancing, an abundance of prizes, more laughter and more tears. The room was bursting with love and hope for Lauren. Lauren's daughter Gracie, her brother Colin and her Mum Fidelma attended on the night.

Organisers said, "A huge thank you is owe to The Parkview, especially Helen and Samantha. They supported the event in every way that they could. The service, the food and the staff helped make the night a huge success. A special thank too needs to go to the performers on the night."

The crowd was welcomed by Megan O'Leary who played Harp to welcome everyone. There was a very emotional performance from Ciara McVeigh who wowed us with her skills on the dance floor. Four ballroom dancers put on a wonderful display, these included Lily Moore and Ralfs Matusevics.

The night was kicked off with a heartfelt and emotional message from Lauren herself.

"The silence in the room for her video was overwhelming. To see her on the screen showing the dignity, courage and bravery that she has had us all in tears," said organisers. "The love in the room was palpable. As Lauren tuned in from home she was surprised with a video message from Tommy



Izzy Sail and Gracie Keogh with Lorraine Duffy

Tiernan! Tommy wished her well while commenting on her taste in comedians. Lauren was blown away with him sending her well wishes and deservedly so.

"Our MCs on the night were the wonderful Ronan Mc Veigh and Stefan O'Brien. From the moment the doors opened Ronan and Stefan brought the night to life. They oversaw our raffle and auction. The raffle took nearly two and a half hours to give out all the donations received for Lauren! A true testament to how many people wanted to help on the night and give something back to Lauren for all she has

done within our community over the years. Ronan and Stefan are an incredible duo. They ensured there was a balance all through the night. From the sadness in the room to the bursts of laughter, it was a night that won't be forgotten any time soon.

"We also want to sincerely thank the sponsors on the night. Their generosity ensured that even more funds could go to help Lauren while she battles her diagnosis. Augustus Cullen Law, La Locandina, The Cat's Pyjamas, Abwood, SKC Providers, The Parkview Hotel, Greystones Language School, Ray of Sunshine, Sebrina Morrissey Consulting Ltd, Alken Brothers Wine Merchants, Rocket Pyro Technics, Mary Carpenter & Trisha Vickers."

Lauren was able to watch the event via video link from the comfort of her home. Lauren said "I am totally overwhelmed by the event and the effort that went into organising it. I knew I couldn't go but being able to watch it on live stream made it one of the best nights I've had in a long time. My friend Kim Woodroffe stayed at home with me and we set up the laptop, got a few snacks and watched it nice and cosy in the sitting room. I could write a full page article myself on how the event made me feel. To say thank you seems so small but I'm feeling all the love and support in abundance. I send all my love to everyone who came, sponsored tables, bought raffle tickets & sponsored prizes."

Lauren's two soul sisters, Izabela Lacek and Claire Fitzgerald also have to be thanked. They pulled the whole night together in a short space of time. They help Fidelma, Colin and Gracie daily in supporting and caring for Lauren.

Organisers concluded: "It was a massive undertaking and to say it was a success in an understatement. So far €16,000 has been raised. It is impossible to thank everyone who contributed for fear of missing someone. The aim was to raise funds and show Lauren some love. We did that and did it well."

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Izabela and Claire with Ronan and Stefan, the MCs



Bethan, Tara and Ashleigh Crawford

## Wicklow Sailing Club hosts fundraiser for RNLI

Wicklow Sailing Club recently welcomed member Charlie Kavanagh to the club to chat about his adventures onboard his boat Stravaiger.

In 2021, Charlie undertook an epic journey, sailing solo from Sweden via Norway, the North Sea and Scotland and home to Ireland, a huge voyage of 1300 miles. Charlie shared his story to a packed clubhouse of fellow sailors and friends.

Talking through his route and stops along the way, it made for an fascinating insight into sailing solo and how one mans determination to make it home can conquer all.

The evening raised a wonderful €420 which was donated to the RNLI who were there on the night.

Wicklow Sailing Club said, "Thank you to the RNLI who donated a hamper for the raffle and a huge thank you to local businesses Bridge Street Books and The Sports Room who very generously donated vouchers for the raffle."



Peter Shearer (WSC President), Jimmy Balbontin (Wicklow RNLI Fundraising Branch) and Charlie Kavanagh at the RNLI fundraiser



Georgina Creane and Lunda Keyes at the recent Wicklow Hospice 10k Half Marathon in Avondale Forest Park.



# Dr. Ciarán Kissane appointed Director of Film Classification

The Minister for Justice, Simon Harris TD, has announced the appointment of Dr. Ciarán Kissane as the new Director of Film Classification in the Irish Film Classification Office (IFCO).

Dr. Kissane's appointment follows an open competition run by the Public Appointments Service.

Announcing the appointment Minister Harris said: "I am delighted to announce the appointment of Dr. Ciarán Kissane, who will bring a wealth of professional experience to this important role. The important work undertaken by the IFCO ensures that the public, and parents in particular, have a modern and dependable system of classification to enable them to make informed viewing choices for themselves and importantly for those minors for whom they are responsible."

Speaking about his new



Dr. Ciarán Kissane

role, Dr. Kissane said: "I am delighted to be appointed as Director of Film Classification in the Irish Film Classification Office in its centenary year. I look forward to continuing the long standing and important work of the IFCO over the next 5 years."

The Irish Film Class-

ification Office was established in 1923 by the Censorship of Films Act 1923.

The IFCO's role was further expanded under the Video Recordings Act 1989. The IFCO is one of the oldest agencies in the State; however it has embraced change, transparency and modernisation in recent years and will continue to evolve with Irish society.

In 2022, the IFCO received 979 cinema submissions for classification (consisting of 438 films, 8 short films and 533 trailers) and 1532 video/DVD submissions, including 20 video games rated as 18 by the Pan-European Game Information system (PEGI).



Participants of the Drama Facilitation Training Course gather to celebrate their Graduation in Wynns Hotel, Dublin. The QQI Level 6 training is run by Youth Theatre Ireland (YTI) with support from the Creative Ireland Programme. Pictured is Conor McGowan from Wicklow with, from left, Dave Kelly, YTI National Training Coordinator, Barry Morgan, YTI Special Projects Officer, and Eoghan Doyle, YTI Director. Key speakers at the event were Calvin Magee and Niamh McAlister who both graduated with Distinction. The course teaches a host of transferable skills and facilitation methodologies used in youth theatre in addition to skills you can use to kick-start and plan a creative project with young people whilst exploring fresh ways of building basic drama skills with a group. For more on upcoming Youth Theatre Ireland training opportunities, visit [YouthTheatre.ie](http://YouthTheatre.ie) Photo by Mark Stedman

## Arklow filmmaker crowdfunding for new project

*Local business offers full day's sales to help*

'Seven Moments in Time' is a new film project by Arklow based filmmaker Dave Thomas. He is currently crowdfunding to shoot the film in Arklow and County Wicklow this year.

Arklow based company Donut Ireland Express have just announced their unique support for this film. They will donate one day's sales towards the film.

"I am astonished and thrilled by this amazing announcement. It definitely took me by surprise", explains Dave. "No other business has made such a generous

offer and it is certainly one I was not expecting. The big day will be Wednesday 29th March. All sales from this day will go towards my film."

The film is titled 'Seven Moments in Time' and will star well known actor from stage and screen Pat Nolan. To date, the screenplay has been Officially Selected

as a Best Short Screenplay by the Oxford Screenplay Awards and the Barcelona Indie Awards, it was presented with the 'Jury Special Award' at the Close Film Festival, awarded 'Finalist' at the Waterford International Film Festival, and 'Official Selection Finalist' at the Melbourne CineVerse Film Festival in Australia.

"My film tells a heart-warming story over seven moments in time when an older man and a teenager clash over a public park bench. The story is filled with drama, comedy and even a rap song."

"This is a wonderful opportunity to showcase County Wicklow and Arklow to a national and international audience."

Everyone that donated has the option to place their name in the film's rolling credits. I will be using as many local people as possible for the cast and crew. I am currently looking at a

variety of suitable locations in Arklow and around Wicklow," says Dave.

The film has also garnered support from the Unique Café and Patisserie in Arklow,

Woodenbridge Hotel and Spa, and TJ O'Mahony Builders Merchants.

To support the film you can donate at the GoFundMe link at [www.davethomasfilms.net](http://www.davethomasfilms.net)

and you can also enjoy delicious donuts, coffee, and crepes, at Donut Express Ireland on Wednesday 29th March in support of the film. See [gofund.me/93f42f8b](http://gofund.me/93f42f8b)

## Remembering Ronnie with Phelim Drew



Phelim Drew

*Mermaid Arts Centre,  
Saturday 18th March,  
8pm. €21*

Phelim Drew, celebrated actor and son of The Dubliners' Ronnie Drew, brings his fabulous music show to Mermaid Arts Centre.

The show is an intimate journey through Dubliners songs, other tunes close to Ronnie's heart and his own memories of growing up in a home surrounded by music.

In the 14 years since Ronnie passed away, Phelim has come to enjoy listening back over his musical legacy and the wealth of material has reawakened not only a sense of pride but also appreciation. Putting his own twist on the collection made famous by one of Ireland's most beloved raconteurs, this promises to be a very special night indeed.

"Growing up, I was always struck by the electricity generated by a concert given by The Dubliners ... That energy and excitement coupled with the unbridled joy of the audience made for a night's entertainment that felt more like a party in full swing, where the host and guests were in perfect harmony."

# SHOW THEM THE MONEY



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# Wicklow ScreenDance Laboratory Festival 2023 is here!

From 3rd - 7th April Wicklow ScreenDance Laboratory (WSL) will be offering a live in-person and virtual programme. This Irish festival focuses on the Art of Dance through training, performance, screenings, discussion, and craft.

Offering unique opportunities for communities of artists, participants, audiences and curious bystanders, WSL features both local and international artists in a five-day exploration into the art of movement through live performances and film. The films screened in the festival focus on movement of all types, whether it be nature, machinery, or the human form.

Continuing its focus on the legendary choreographer Martha Graham, WSL 2023 offers the opportunity for dancers to study her pioneering

repertoire with former Martha Graham second company members, Jean-Baptiste Ferreira and Rafael Molina in a three-day dance intensive presented in partnership with Dance Ireland from April 3rd to April 5th.

On Thursday 6 April, a full day workshop with Screendance experts Marisa Hayes and Franck Boulègue titled, 'So You Want to Make a Dance Film?' will explore the art of merging cinematography and choreography.

In addition to these training workshops, a series of live performances, live-streamed screenings,

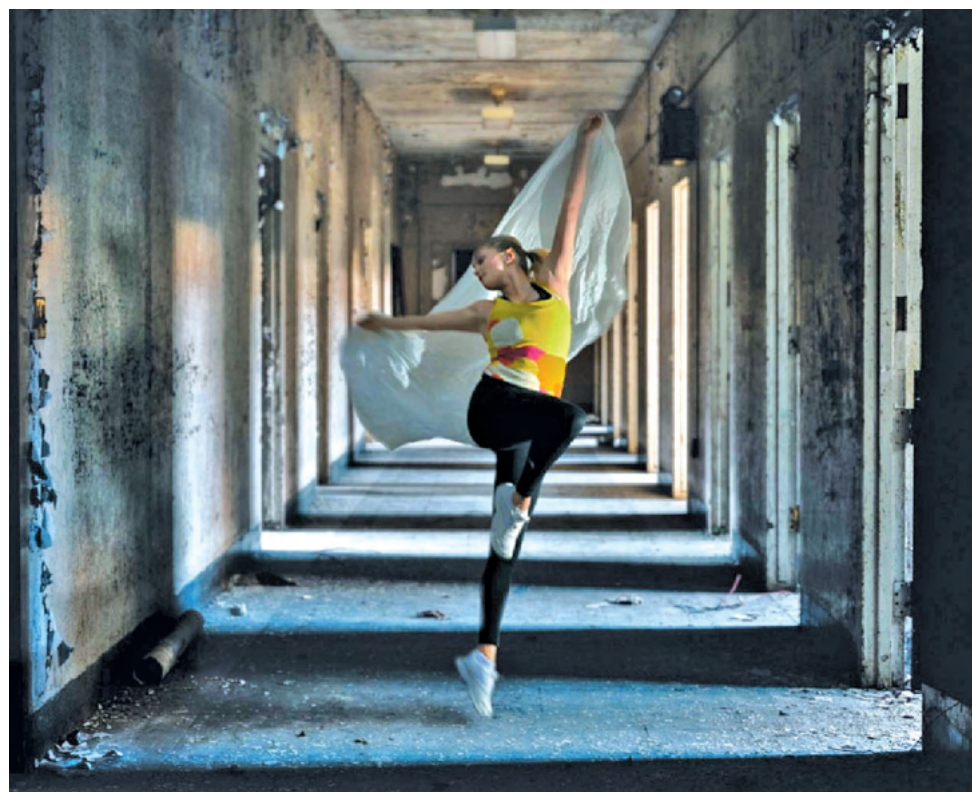
and collaborative conversations with both up-and-coming and established artists will take place throughout the week.

Outside the Festival week: At ICFE on 24 February, Marisa & Franck lend their talents to a private Screendance workshop, hosted by Inchicore College and WSL, for Dance and Technical Theatre students.

WSL said, "We are very excited to debut our fully-curated live dance show in the Wicklow Screendance Festival! The festival main event takes place in the

Mermaid Theatre and features Irish-based dance artists and choreographers, with special performances of Graham extracts by Jean-Baptiste and Rafael. Join us at our Festival Launch, 10 March at 6pm in the Betelnut Café, located in the Mermaid Arts Centre in Bray for a taste of all things Screendance!"

Located in Bray, WSL is the only screendance festival in the East of the country, and one of just two film festivals in Ireland that focus exclusively on dance. WSL is designed to incorporate disciplines of dance and



film under laboratory conditions, and to develop this model within the growing field of dance activity in Ireland, and abroad. Wicklow Screendance Laboratory of collaboration, it

strives to connect established and emerging artists and encourage conversations among the public and practitioners alike. Fostering a spirit

embraces local arts and community initiatives as well as the educational sector, inviting submissions from and showing the work of dance students, school-goers and

community arts projects. As part of our ongoing mission, we encourage inclusion and offer outreach to rural youth, disadvantaged people, and marginalised groups

## The Heights

Whale Theatre, Thursday 16th March @ 8pm (doors 7pm) Tickets €12/€10. See [www.whaletheatre.ie](http://www.whaletheatre.ie) or call the booking office on 01 2010550

This is a Mr. Sands Youth Theatre Bray production, as part of National Theatre Connections 2023. This is a play about stories.

Lillie is a teenager who lives on the Heights Estate. A place where nothing ever happens, except in Lillie's head. Lillie's not like most people, definitely not. For starters, she never goes out, but sits in her bedroom window on the sixth floor of her tower block, watching the world and the people in it go by - though sometimes some of those same people enter her world. As she sits, she makes up stories. Some of these stories are sad, some are happy, some are funny, some are just wonderful, and some are just terrible.

This story is about Dara, who she watches from her window. It is about their brother Jimmy, and their gang. It's about a gun they find. It is about Bizzy, who never puts her book down. It is about Fran and Ann, who she can see arguing in the building opposite. It is about Jacob, who no one ever truly knows.

But they're just stories.

Aren't they?

This production is presented by Mr Sands Youth Theatre, Bray's local Youth Theatre with an open door policy. They are always welcoming new members! Approx Duration: 1hr 10mins (no interval)

Please note: This production uses strong language and has scenes depicting violence.



## Six Nations 2023 - Live on the Big Screen

Whale Theatre, Saturday 18th March @ 2pm - Tickets €20. See [www.whaletheatre.ie](http://www.whaletheatre.ie) or call the booking office on 01 2010550

On the final day of the 2023 Six Nations, Whale Theatre invites you to join them for a very special afternoon of top-class rugby, electric atmosphere, finger-licking nourishment and a healthy dose of refreshment to settle the nerves!

"Screened live on our massive cinema screen, and in booming surround sound, there's no better place to watch Ireland take on England in the final game of this year's Six Nations. We will also be showing the France v Wales match (kick-off 2.45pm) before Ireland v England (kick-off 5pm), so why not make a day of it!

"Tickets include a delicious gourmet finger food buffet served by the The Bear Paw Deli in between the 2 matches (4pm-5pm approx). There will also be a full bar available, as well as delicious cheeseboards, freshly-popped popcorn and a range of other snacks.

"Please note: Tickets are strictly limited to ensure a comfortable viewing experience. Seats will be allocated on a first-come-first-served basis, so we recommend arriving early."



Paul Harrington, accompanied by Graham Murphy, makes his Whale Theatre debut on Sunday 19th March performing a selection of songs from the popular radio series "The Lyric's The Thing". This will be a wonderful evening exploring the stories behind some of the most popular songs in music history. Sunday 19th March @ 6pm (doors 5pm) - Tickets €28. See [www.whaletheatre.ie](http://www.whaletheatre.ie) or call the booking office on 01 2010550



# 'Puzzles of Life'

Ukrainian artist Olga Melnykova's first solo exhibition in Ireland

Opens March 23rd, The Dean Art Studios, Dublin 02

The Dean Art Studios is happy to launch new solo show of Olga Melnykova on 23rd of March. Olga is Ukrainian artist, who came to Ireland after fleeing the war back in February, 2022. She is currently living in Blessington.

Olga is working in mix techniques in her own style, creating so called "art puzzles" - separate pieces that represent one big thing if put together but also as separate object when put apart. Non surprisingly that her first solo show in Ireland is named "Puzzles of Life" - as this would represent every Ukrainian, every person fleeing the war or refugee, whose lives are broken and who are still trying to put all their life puzzles back together, or better yet, create something new.

With the exhibition the author wants to show that even in new circumstances the life can be full of colors, new perspectives and interesting opportunities, as long as you stay strong and motivated.

The event is a tribute to thousands of Ukrainians who are currently residing in Ireland trying to build their lives from scratch and to all people, who had to flee the war hoping for a better future for their children.

Olga is popular contemporary artist, having had her solo exhibi-

tions in Kyiv, Ukraine, participating in charity projects and creative collaborations. Her works are represented in private collections in France, Italy, Monaco and USA.

The exhibition is supported by SCOOP Foundation and Association of Ukrainians in Ireland (AURI) and proudly supported by the Dean Art Studios.

Puzzle's of Life will open on 23rd March at 6pm and runs until March 30th in the Dean Art Studios, 4 Chatham Row.



Olga Melnykova



## If You Go Down to the Woods

Whale Theatre, Sunday 26th March at 11.30am (doors 11am) & 2pm (doors 1.30pm) - Tickets €14 each or €50 for Family of 4. See [www.whaletheatre.ie](http://www.whaletheatre.ie) or call the booking office on 01 2010550



Come down to the woods with the WhistleBlast Quartet for a woodland adventure featuring some familiar characters and well-loved pieces of classical music. A sell out in the Quartet's NCH Family Series!

Red Riding Hood, Hansel and Gretel and Peter and the Wolf will all appear; but watch out for the Trolls from the Hall of the Mountain King!

See how music brings images and stories alive, with lots of opportunity for participation and interaction in this engaging concert for all the family.

Featuring: Mary Curran (French Horn); Conor Linehan (Piano); Ken Edge (Saxes & Clarinets); Oonagh Keogh (Violin).

Suitable for 4-12 year olds and their families. See [www.whistleblastquartet.com](http://www.whistleblastquartet.com) for more information. Duration: 50 Minutes approx



Spanish film Alcarra will be screened in the Mermaid Arts Centre on Monday 20th March, 8pm (E7). For over eighty years the Sole family has farmed in Alcarra, a small village in Spain's Catalonia region. But as they prepare to spend the summer picking this year's crop of peaches, they find themselves facing eviction and an uncertain future. Carla Simon's follow-up to her stunning debut Summer 1993 won the top prize at the 2022 Berlin Film Festival. Cast: Jordan Pujol Dolcet, Anna Otin, Xenia Roset, Albert Bosch. Duration: 120 mins

## Hand of Hope

A poem by Thomas Macmahon, for those who have come to Ireland seeking sanctuary

When skies are cloudy with dimming light On rocky shores take my hand I will lift you high when waters rise And calm the seas and brighten skies

I am your friend...  
To guide you through the brambles of life Heal your wounds and give you vision  
Stiffen your sail on starry nights

I will hug you when you see no hope  
Lend an ear when you are all alone  
Kiss you as the dawn breaks  
And anchor you to a sandy, sunny shore

# CAN YOU LISTEN AS WELL AS YOU TALK ?



Advertising Sales isn't all hard sell and hustle, hustle, hustle\*. Wicklow Times, County Wicklow's largest circulation free paper, is looking for people who are good communicators to become Sales Executives. People who will work with businesses and organisations in the community to find the best advertising solutions to allow them to grow their brand and customer base. Experience is helpful but not essential. If you think this might be you, and you like the idea of a good salary, commission and bonuses, email [shay@localtimes.ie](mailto:shay@localtimes.ie) or call Shay on 086 286911.

\*Okay, maybe there's a little hustle, but nothing you can't handle.





Claire, Aoife, and Brian Devereux with Grace Holmes celebrating Maura Devereux's 100th birthday in Delgany Golf Club.

## Over €3.5m for Wicklow Community Groups

Green Party TD Steven Matthews has welcomed the announcement of over €3.5 million for Wicklow Section 38/39 Community Groups that operate with the support of the Department of Health. This support was announced under the Government's Inflation Fund which is designed to support these groups with cost increases in running their operation.

Discussing the funding, Deputy Matthews said: "I am fortunate to be in a position where I get to meet with community Section 38/39 groups across Wicklow on a regular basis to discuss their vital role in the community. Unfortunately, one of the frequent things raised with me as a huge concern is the cost of energy and the impact it is having on these groups in how they can operate.

"The funding announced under the Inflation Fund is hugely welcome and has been targeted at groups that operate health and living supports for people including vital services such as Wicklow Meals on Wheels, Purple House Cancer Support and the Bray Community Addiction Team amongst other vital support groups across Wicklow.

"Voluntary organisations play absolutely vital roles in providing frontline services to the most vulnerable in our society: people with disabilities, older people, those suffering from addiction, mental health problems and life-limiting illnesses.

"The work that these groups do is extraordinary, and it is hugely positive to see this targeted funding announced at a time that so many of them vitally need intervention to help cover their day-to-day running costs. I will be writing to each of the recipients of this found of funding in the coming days to offer my support to ensure there are no teething issues in terms of drawing down this funding and to provide any further assistance that I can," concluded Deputy Matthews.

## Arklow CIC welcomes Bhekinkosi Dube as front of house volunteer

Arklow Citizens Information Centre (CIC) is delighted to welcome Bhekinkosi Dube as a volunteer who provides invaluable support at front of house.

Bheki is originally from Zimbabwe and now lives in Arklow. Development Manager, Martina Cronin, states "we are pleased to have Bheki on our Arklow CIC team and we welcome volunteers from all different nationalities which reflects the multi cultural society in which we now live".

Bheki is interested in helping in his local community and gives his time once a week as a volunteer where he provides a friendly and helpful service to all of our clients. "I enjoy volunteering in Arklow CIC as I have met lots of new people and CIC offers comprehensive training which is an added bonus".

He feels his voluntary work enables him to give back and to assist him to integrate. Since he arrived in Ireland, Bheki says he is very pleased with the "warm welcome" he has received and he enjoys living in Arklow particularly walking along the river and climbing the mountains nearby. Although the climate is very different, what

appeals to Bheki is the variety of the weather - raining one minute and sunny the next!

Bheki was formerly a financial analyst who now brings his extensive administration skills to his role at front of house in Arklow CIC. He is particularly interested in computer programming and any technical issues are now resolved by Bheki in the office.

Bheki would like to make Ireland his new home, put roots down in Arklow and continue to help those in his local community who need assistance with their problems. "Coming to Ireland has made such a difference to my life and my motto has always been we make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give."

Arklow CIC provides a free and confidential infor-



Bhekinkosi Dube

mation, advice and advocacy service on topics such as Social Welfare, Employment Rights, Housing, Health Matters, Immigration, Consumer Issues and many more.

Appointments are also

available and can be arranged by telephoning the office. Our service is available to everyone at [www.citizensinformation.ie](http://www.citizensinformation.ie) or you can call our national phone service on 0818 07 4000.



### WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

Alex Gandara seeks planning permission for: Attic Conversion including new roof lights to front and rear roof slopes along with new window in existing gable wall at 97 Archers Wood Avenue, Delgany, Co. Wicklow, A63YC59.

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

### WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

Ray & Catherine Finn seek Planning Permission for a new detached two-bedroom two storey house with pitched roof, entrance porch, new vehicular and pedestrian access and all associated works to west of existing house at 17 Rathclaren, Killarney Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow, A98 K6C3.

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

### WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

I, Patrick Kinsella, of Knockanree Upper, Avoca, Co. Wicklow, intend to apply to Wicklow County Council for Planning Permission for:

(A) Construction of a new home office and garage / storage area, (B) All associated site works, all at above address. This 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, Co. Wicklow during its public opening hours. A submission or observation in relation to this application may be made in writing to the Planning Authority on payment of the prescribed fee within the period of five weeks, beginning on the date of receipt of the application by the Authority.

### WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

Woodcock Design seeks permission on behalf of Zoe and Graham Mahon-Fox for a proposed renovation of their house including first floor alterations and retrofit including a new dormer in the existing front roof, new velux, part removal of the existing roof, increasing height of selected walls and introduction of a front gable with new roof, also external insulation with smooth render finish, existing windows replaced and new window configuration and canopy to the rear, at Millview, 28 Burnaby Park, Greystones, Co. Wicklow. The planning application may be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy at the offices of Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Wicklow during its public opening hours and a submission or observation in relation to the application may be made to the authority in writing on payment of the prescribed fee within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the application.

### WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

I SIMON QUINN seeks Permission for 'PROPOSED TWO SEPARATE SINGLE STOREY EXTENSIONS TO REAR OF DWELLING, ELEVATIONAL CHANGES TO WINDOW OPENINGS, AND CONVERSION & CLADDING OF EXISTING STABLES TO HOME GYM.' At "BLUE ROCK", KILLOUGH LOWER, KILMACANOGUE, WICKLOW. The planning application may be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy at the offices of Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Wicklow during its public opening hours and a submission or observation in relation to the application may be made to the authority in writing on payment of the prescribed fee within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the application.

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# Local businesses warned about security during St. Patrick's weekend celebrations

The celebrations of St. Patrick's Day weekend won't stop criminals from targeting businesses as attempted security breaches can increase by up to 30% over bank holidays, with St. Patrick's Day being no exception, according to security specialists Netwatch.

This year to date Netwatch has seen a 16% increase in attempted security breaches and anticipates this figure to almost double during the St. Patrick's Day weekend.

Industries where materials and assets on-site are of high value will be of particular interest to criminals and Netwatch is urging these businesses to be aware of the potential

risks to their premises when closed.

Netwatch says that it has noticed a reoccurring peak in loitering from large groups of youths, attempted premises breach and vandalism during bank holidays.

St. Patrick's Day celebrations are a time of extra high alert for the Netwatch Intervention Specialists as an influx of crowds gather for the

celebrations.

Unsurprisingly, the evening hours of St. Patrick's Day weekend are of particular concern for businesses. The most common timings for attempted intrusion on Netwatch clients' sites are the hours between 6pm and midnight, with over half of incidents taking place during this time.

"Each year St. Patrick's

Day weekend sees a significant rise of criminal activity across our customers' sites in Ireland as businesses close for a long weekend. Based on last year's increase in attempted breaches on our clients' sites, we urge businesses to be on high alert this St. Patrick's Day weekend," said Colin Hayes, Managing Director at Netwatch Ireland and UK.

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Fiona and Anna Thornton are pictured at the recent Network Ireland Wicklow branch's event, 'Being Effective', in the Bridge Tavern, Wicklow Town.

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