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Tuesday 21st March 2023 First Floor, The Boulevard, Quinsborough Road, Bray. A98 R6D7. Tel: 01 - 2869111 E-mail: wicklowed@localtimes.ie www.wicklowtimes.net

ZERO CAPACITY FOR HOMELESS

Sinn Fein TD John Brady has received confirmation from Wicklow County Council that there is zero capacity for homeless accommodation in Wicklow. This news comes as the Government plans to end the eviction ban. Meanwhile, recent data released by the Residential Tenancies Board shows that 123 eviction notices were served in Co. Wicklow in Q3 of 2022 - figures which Deputy Brady has called "truly shocking and seriously worrying".

Sinn Fein's motion to extend the eviction ban and act on immediate solutions to end the housing crisis will be debated in the Dail this Tuesday, 21st March, and will be voted on this Wednesday.

Deputy Brady said: "Wicklow County Council have confirmed to me that there is zero

capacity for homeless accommodation in Wicklow. It is shocking that the government is going ahead with ending the eviction ban, which will see families across Wicklow with nowhere to leave in just a few weeks.

"The government has made the wrong decision on the eviction ban

and this will have a devastating impact on people in Wicklow now facing homelessness at the end of the month. There simply isn't any capacity in local homeless services and people won't have anywhere to go.

"Government TDs in Wicklow, Stephen Donnelly, Simon Harris, and Stephen Matthews



Back Street Girls pictured at the Colaiste Chraobh Abhann Showstoppers talent show.
Pic: Michael Kelly

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must tell people in Wicklow facing homelessness, as a result of their government's decision to end the eviction ban, where they are supposed to live.

"It is blatantly clear that the government has no plan to deal with eviction notices served locally here. The reality is there are families, single people and pensioners right across Wicklow who will have nowhere to go.

"It is unacceptable that we have heard nothing from the government TDs about what support those people will receive, despite the urgent need. That is why the government must extend the ban on evictions.

"All TDs in Wicklow must back Sinn Fein's motion to extend the eviction ban. The housing crisis is devastating the lives of people across Wicklow who are

trapped paying sky-high rents, in overcrowded accommodation or putting their lives on hold until they can have a home to call their own. Sinn Féin in government would stand up for people affected by the housing crisis to deliver genuinely affordable homes in Wicklow."

Reacting to the figures from the Residential Tenancies Board, Deputy Brady said, "From July to September last year, 123 eviction notices in Wicklow were served by landlords on their tenants.

"The latest RTB figures show that the homeless risk from April 1st, when the government's ban on evictions ends, is much worse than expected. Notices issued from July to September would have, in many cases, fallen due from

February during the ban period. A huge number of these notices will

now fall due in April. This will mean more people than ever before

will have to leave their homes.

Continued on page 3

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Congratulations to Paul McKinley (Wicklow Times' very own graphic designer) and Kirsten Dottermusch, who tied the knot in the Clontarf Castle Hotel on Sunday 12th March.

Spring afternoon tea with East Wicklow Branch of MS Ireland

Join the East Wicklow Branch of MS Ireland for Spring afternoon tea on Sunday 26th March, followed by the branch's AGM. It will take place from 2pm - 5pm in the Parkview Hotel, Newtownmountkennedy. RSVP to Patrice by 23rd March - patricebradycarton@gmail.com. There will be a raffle with amazing prizes and an awards presentation for branch person of the year and branch carer of the year.

The Old Dublin Society

On Wednesday March 22nd Rosemary Raughter will present 'The Cowan/Harrison Family of Fitzwilliam Square: a unionist household in pre-Independence Ireland' at 6 pm in The Conference Room, Dublin City Library & Archive, 144 Pearse Street, Dublin 2. All are welcome - admission is free and no booking is required.

Bray Coastcare's clean up with Bray's Beavers

On Saturday 4th March Chairperson and Founder of Bray Coastcare was invited by the leaders of the Beavers (5th Wicklow Sea Scouts) who are aged 6yo to 8yo to give an environmental awareness talk and quiz down at Bray Harbour followed up by a clean up of Bray Harbour and Bray Seafront.

Seamus Connor spoke about; who Bray Coastcare Group are, what they do and why they do what they do. He also spoke to the Beavers about the '3

R's' (Recycle, Reuse and Reduce Waste) what they mean and why they are important.

"Over 30 Beavers turned up on the day and did a fantastic job of cleaning up Bray Harbour and Bray Beach. I will be dropping down educational prizes to the Beavers who won prizes in the environmental quiz next week. It was a lovely opportunity for Bray Coastcare and I to raise environmental awareness and teach the beavers about the theme of 'Our environment, our responsibility' and the Beavers enjoyed their volunteering with one young girl asking me "Are we finished now?" I told her yes thinking she was tired or bored of the days activities until she piped up "Ahhhh no! I want to do more! Do we have to finish now? On behalf of Bray Coastcare Group but also the town of Bray I would like to congratulate all the beavers who took part and thank them. Well done to everyone involved!"

Holy Rosary Soup and Sandwiches

The next lunch of soup and sandwiches will be held on Wednesday, 29th March in Kilian House Family Centre in Greystones from 12.15 to 2pm. Everyone is very welcome to come along for good home-made food and an enjoyable chat. The suggested donation is E5. All proceeds are given to local charities.

Delgany Thursday Group

The next outing will be on Thursday 13th April to Russborough House, Blessington (ie. 2nd Thursday of the month this time to avoid Easter Week). Leaving Christ Church, Delgany, at 1.30 pm sharp. €30.00 per person to include coach transport & guided house tour. Due to the increased cost of the coach transport - any refreshments will be at participants own expense, and a minimum of 20 participants are needed for outings to proceed. If the number of 20 is not reached, those who have pre-booked will be notified.

To book, contact Peter (086 830 7644), Violet (087 756 0153) or John (086 356 6527).

Local History Exhibition at Wicklow Library

Wicklow County Council Library Service has teamed up with Coláiste Chill Mhantáin to curate 'The Past in My Place', an exhibition of 2nd year history students CBA displays. The aim of the exhibition is to showcase the rich history of the county while, at the same time, highlight the diverse heritage of the students. The exhibition contains over 40 displays from the Wicklow district and as far afield as Lithuania and South Africa. The Exhibition can be viewed on the 3rd floor of Wicklow Library, Wicklow Town from March 29th until April 17th.

National Tree Week in County Wicklow

Wicklow County Council and communities across Wicklow are celebrating National Tree Week.

National Tree Week 2023 runs from the 19th-26th March and provides many opportunities to learn about trees and tree protection, to get involved in tree-related activities, and to celebrate the role of trees in nature and culture.

The Tree Council of Ireland and Coillte organise National Tree Week but community groups, schools, and local authorities around the country - including Wicklow - will hold and participate in a wide array of different events, ranging from private and public tree planting events to woodland walks, nature trails, workshops, tree talks, tree-hugging, tree climbing, broadcasts, launches, poetry readings, tree stories and exhibitions.

Anybody who is organising or wants to participate in an event can access the Programme of Events at <https://www.treecouncil.ie/list-of-events>.

A central event is the nationwide distribution of 30,000 native tree saplings such as oak, birch and rowan, donated by Coillte and planted by community members.

Wicklow County Council will distribute 800 of these saplings to more than 50 different groups.

Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Tommy Annesley, welcomed the collaboration with the Tree Council of Ireland saying: "It is great to see many volunteers helping to plant trees all across our county to mark National Tree Week. Wicklow County Council is committed, through implementation of its tree policy, to increasing tree cover in our county."

Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council, Emer O'Gorman, commented that "Wicklow has

an amazing tree heritage and I am delighted that Anja Murray has agreed to join our celebration of National Tree Week to talk about our trees and their role in creating rich habitats and landscapes throughout the county of Wicklow."

Broadcaster and ecologist, Anja Murray will give a talk in Wicklow library entitled 'Our Generous Trees' on Tuesday, 21st March 7pm. Anja is well known for her contributions to Eco Eye and has just published a new book, 'Wild Embrace'. Bookings for the talk can be completed at www.eventbrite.com/e/irelands-generous-trees-tickets-577520498357.

The theme for National Tree week 2023 is 'Biodiversity begins with Trees' and a key objective is to raise awareness around the vital functions performed by trees, as fundamental elements of the ecosystems that sustain us.

Trees can be imagined

as the lungs of the earth while forests play an essential role in the sequestration of carbon, the regulation of our climate and in ensuring ecological diversity and resilience. Trees also provide food and shelter for birds, bees and many other insects, which in turn carry out essential pollination services and assist with forest regeneration. In addition, trees are also a source of food for people and we utilise wood products in a multitude of ways. Our forests, and the trees in our gardens, hedgerows and public green spaces need to be protected and carefully managed for the future.

Wicklow County Council has developed its own Tree Management Policy which lays out specific protocols for the monitoring and maintenance of trees under the Council's care, and for the planting and removal of trees. Check out www.wicklow.ie or (short link) bit.ly/3JIE8uJ.



George Tracey, Hilary Fitzgerald, Wayne Kavanagh, Rozel Fitzgerald and Paul Brown pictured at the Wicklow Mental Health Awareness evening at the Parish Centre, Wicklow Town.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

It was with incredulity that I witnessed a team of council workmen on Bray seafront erecting signs 'warning of dangerous currents and forbidding swimming'. This is a sight that I never thought I'd see on Bray seafront, which at the harbour end has become such a haven for sea swimmers. These signs are likely a response to a tragic drowning last year, some rescues and near misses. Some years ago, the local authority did a great job bolstering and protecting the promenade with stones and the erection of a large groin going out into the sea opposite Sealife. Could I suggest that the council extend this groin by another 100 meters or so to create a small safe swimming lagoon between it and the harbour wall. This area could be a lovely safe area for children and adults to swim, safe from the threat of currents and riptides.

Yours sincerely
Gerard O'Reilly, Bray.

CLLR RORY O'CONNOR

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'More powers removed'

Independent councillor Joe Behan has raised concerns about the proposed structural changes to Wicklow's Joint Policing Committee (JPC) which he says is another example of councillors' powers being diminished.

Councillors have been informed that the JPC is to be replaced by a new structure called The Local Community Safety Partnership in the second half of 2024.

The new structure, being implemented by the Department of Justice, has already been piloted by Waterford City & County Council, which described it as a "new government initiative which will bring together statutory services, the voluntary and community sector, local councillors and community members to work together to identify and tackle community safety issues locally." It said the new structure "will give the community a stronger voice in identifying and tackling the issues that individuals, families, young people, business owners and all members of the community face."

Representatives of the community will make up over half of the members of the new structure.

Fianna Fail councillor and former Garda Gerry Walsh, the current Chair of the JPC, explained that the new model would consist of "a new approach to replace the JPC with more resources and a more diverse range of representation from the communities".



Cllr Joe Behan

Cllr Behan is not happy about the incoming changes, however, pointing out that "the powers to nominate a Chairperson and a certain number of councillors onto the JPC is being taken away from councillors - another power removed by a central Government. I don't think that we should just accept it as a fait accompli, if it will not happen until the latter part of 2024. We

should try to hold on to the Local Authority leadership of that body, whatever it is called in the future.

"In Co. Wicklow we lost 100 Gardai between 2009 and 2022. The last chief superintendent was based in Wexford and the new one is based in Wexford. So we are being run by another county, yet again another area of our responsibility is being run by somebody else.

"So I am not happy with regards to our democratic input into the polices. I want to register that fact and suggest that we get a presentation at a future meeting about what the new structure is to entail and where we can have influence so that we retain the leadership of it."

Cllr Paul O'Brien said, "I recognise the loss of the powers. And what I want to recognize also is the work being done for our community over the last number of years by Gardai. They may be down 100 but the guards in situ have risen to the challenge, especially in the time of COVID. So, I think that the message needs to go out loud and clear from the chamber that we support the guards but the problem is that our powers are being diluted but it is not the fault of the guards."



Riaín Shannon performing at Colaiste Chraobh Abhann's Showstoppers Talent Show in Kilcoole.

ZERO CAPACITY FOR HOMELESS

Continued from Page 1

"Homeless services will not be able to cope. The consequence will be thousands of people forced to stay with family and friends, a rise in rough sleeping, and the prospect of families with children being referred to Garda stations for a safe place to sleep. The government does not grasp the severity of the situation.

"From July to September last year, 4,741 eviction notices across the State were served. These numbers are a direct consequence of government failure. For years they have over relied on the private rental sector to meet social and affordable housing need.

"For six years, single property landlords have been leaving the market. Despite this, the government has abjectly failed to deliver a sufficient volume of social and affordable housing, or to purchase private rental accommodation with tenants in situ. The consequence is the number of singles, couples, families with children and pensions facing the harsh reality of

homelessness in a matter of weeks."

Jennifer Whitmore TD has also called on government to reverse the decision to lift the eviction ban.

The Social Democrats TD said, "The decision by government to lift the eviction ban is nonsensical. We were told by government that its purpose was to provide breathing room while supply issues were addressed. Government have failed to meet that goal. Now, in the face of some of the lowest supply and highest prices ever Wicklow renters are being left with no security of housing.

"These renters range from families to individuals; from students to retirees; people with complex medical needs to those who need to live here for work. Everyone is affected by this government's lack of action on housing. The ban must be extended, and government must come up with real alternatives to their current housing policy which is failing to help the most in need.

"Every week since January I have had between 10 and 15

new constituents approaching my office looking for help on housing. Private renters are being evicted because their tenancy is not protected when the home is sold. HAP recipients cannot find anywhere to rent and are facing pulling their children out of school to move to another town or county. People who have been renting for more than a decade from the same landlord are now faced with eviction notices. They are going to be entering a market with significantly less supply and rents that have surpassed all records in Ireland.

"We have had 12 years of Fine Gael and Fine Fail running the show and we have gotten to a point where TDs like me across the country have people on a weekly basis in their offices or clinics petrified because they don't know where they will be living soon. My main question to government is; what are we supposed to tell them? Where are these people supposed to go? And did they even consider this when they took the decision to lift the eviction ban?"

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Wicklow TDs attend Fair Seas briefing in Leinster House

Fair Seas says it remains hopeful that new legislation to protect and restore Ireland's seas and marine biodiversity will progress before the Dail's summer recess. The Marine Protected Areas Bill 2023 is currently at the pre-legislative stage with the text of the bill still to be finalised.

The coalition of Ireland's leading environmental non-governmental organisations and networks held a briefing for TDs and Senators in the Oireachtas Audio-Visual room. Fair Seas' experts delivered a presentation on Ireland's Marine Protected Areas (MPA) journey to date. MPAs are parts of our seas and coasts legally protected from activities that damage the habitats, wildlife and natural processes that occur there.

Ireland has committed to protecting 30% of its seas by 2030 and the legislation aims to provide a statutory basis for the identification, designation, and management of MPAs in Ireland's maritime area.

Representatives from Fair Seas appeared before the Joint Committee on Housing, Local Government and Heritage in February as part of the

pre-legislative scrutiny of the Marine Protected Areas Bill 2023. The committee has taken the network's concerns on board and has now published its report containing 45 recommendations to improve the bill.

Aoife O'Mahony, Fair Seas Campaign Manager said, "Our briefing event at Leinster House was another opportunity for us to highlight the importance of the upcoming Marine Protected Areas legislation. It was reassuring to hear that the Government intends to progress the bill as soon as possible. We have before us a unique and exciting opportunity to not only progress towards our 30 x 30 targets, but for Ireland to become a world leader in how we protect, restore and value our seas. It's vital that all stakeholders are listened to and play a part in this process. TDs and Senators have an

important role to play in ensuring that the final legislation passed is as strong and as effective as possible."

Green Party TD, Deputy Steven Matthews, Chair of the Joint Committee on Housing, Local Government and Heritage, facilitated the event and addressed the briefing.

Deputy Matthews said, "I was delighted to host Fair Seas at Dail Eireann for an information session with TDs and Senators on progress on Marine Protected Areas. Fair Seas assisted the Joint Oireachtas Committee in the scrutiny of the General Scheme of the MPA legislation and their recommendations and those of other maritime interests were included in the committee report. It is vital to the health of our marine area that we move swiftly to create a network of MPAs



Pictured outside Leinster House are Dr Donal Griffin, Marine Policy Officer; Aoife O'Mahony, Campaign Manager; Deputy Jennifer Whitmore; Sinéad Loughran, Marine Policy Officer; Deputy Steven Matthews. Pic: Conor Ó Mearáin

and provide clear guidance, monitoring and management plans for protection and restoration. Our sea area is huge, it supports jobs and is the future of energy production but it has been neglected for far too long.

We can no longer delay action on the nature and climate crisis and I see no reason that would prevent this legislation from being enacted before the summer recess."

Social Democrats TD, Deputy Jennifer

Whitmore added, "I was really pleased to see Fair Seas presenting in Leinster House. It's an important organisation and important issue to raise, particularly at this time as we focus on biodiversity, climate change and renewable

energy. As a Marine Biologist, I know how critical it is to take marine biodiversity and nature into account when making political decisions. For far too long, we have ignored the ecological needs of our seas but this needs to

change, urgently. It was particularly positive to see good representation from all parties at the event. I look forward to working with Fair Seas and all stakeholders as we strive to deliver for Ireland's seas."

Communities urged to have say on offshore renewable energy plan

Communities across Wicklow are being encouraged to have their say on a new draft national offshore renewable energy development plan aimed at meeting our future energy demands - and ensuring we put the right offshore technologies in the right places in our seas.

An eight-week public consultation is now underway, giving people in every county a voice on proposals to harness the immense wind, wave, and tidal energy potential of our seas. The second Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan, (ORED II), is one piece of the jigsaw in delivering on Ireland's Climate Action Plan - which aims to have up to 80% of the country's electricity sourced from renewables by 2030.

The ORED II is a new national spatial strategy for our offshore renewable energy future. It will set out a framework for where we will put offshore wind, wave and tidal technologies in the future.

This work will support the move away from a developer-led model towards a more plan-led model for offshore renewable energy development in Ireland, where the State will play a much greater role in identifying optimal locations in our seas for offshore renewable energy development.

Through the ORED II, all relevant maritime stakeholders and citizens, particularly those in coastal communities, will be able to have their say in where we put offshore renewable technologies in the future as part of the Enduring Regime.

Submissions can be made at www.Gov.ie/OffshoreEnergyPlan until April 20 and are being gathered to ensure the plan fairly reflects the views of those most affected by the development of offshore renewable energy.

Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications, Eamon Ryan, said that Ireland's coastline offers huge, clean and sustainable sources of offshore renewable energy.

"To harness this energy for the benefit of all, we need to ensure we put the right offshore technologies in the right places," he said. "I encourage all, particularly those in coastal and island communities, to participate in the consultation events. The maritime area is a shared space and we want to hear from all those with an interest in our seas."

At the heart of the draft ORED II is an ambition to meet the country's future energy demands, transform our economy, achieve net-zero carbon emissions and protect our environment. It has been developed in collaboration with the environmental sector, fisheries, academics, industry and the Government.

Views are particularly welcome from local tourism, fishing, leisure and sports organisations or anyone with an interest in Ireland's maritime resources. Following the conclusion of the public consultation process and consideration of all submissions, the draft ORED II will be finalised and published this summer.

Have your say by filling out the online survey before April 20 at: Gov.ie/OffshoreEnergyPlan.

Rialtas na hÉireann Government of Ireland



Minister Eamon Ryan, Martina Hennessy, Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications, and Tanaiste Micheal Martin at an ORED II Consultation Workshop in Cork. Picture: Clare Keogh

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Former councillor Christopher Fox, Seamus Nolan (Wicklow GAA County Board Delegate), Senator Pat Casey and former TD Andrew Doyle are pictured at the Laragh GAA football dinner dance in Lynham's of Laragh.



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Hacketstown man to take part in World Transplant Games

Tony Gartland, a liver transplant recipient from Hacketstown will participate as part of the 14-strong Transplant Team Ireland, (including bone marrow, liver and kidney transplant recipients) at the World Transplant Games in Perth next month. Enjoying the successful longevity of his transplant which he underwent 30 years ago, Tony was the first man to undergo a liver transplant in Ireland at St. Vincent's University Hospital in 1993.

This follows a four-year hiatus for the biennial World Transplant Games, as the previous event planned for 2021 had to be cancelled due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. The Irish squad gathered at the ALSAA Sports Complex, Dublin airport on Sunday, 12th March and were joined by family, friends and other members of the Transplant Team Ireland programme, to receive their official team kit. The guest speaker at the event organised by the Irish Kidney Association was former Olympic triathlete Gavin Noble, the Olympic Federation of Ireland's Chef de Mission for the Paris 2024 Olympic Games and 2023 European Games.

Ranging in age from

36 right up to 75, the current Transplant Team Ireland panel of 10 inspirational men and 4 women travelling to Perth have all received organ transplants including 2 liver, 2 bone marrow, and 10 kidney. They will be among over 1,200 participants from over 50 countries, all embracing their gift of life and honoring their donors in this celebration of life through sport.

In his talk to Transplant Team Ireland, Gavin Noble shared some of the wisdom he gained from the lead up to, and participation in, the 2012 Olympic Games in London and how he is now invested into helping other athletes be the best that they can be. He said, "Each and every one of you on the Transplant Team are

an inspiration as you are living your best life, honouring your donors and representing your country in sport. Sport brings people together as does organ donation".

The Irish Kidney Association is responsible for managing and supporting Transplant Team Ireland's involvement at the Games and its National Advocacy and Projects Manager Colin White is the Team Manager. Speaking at the team gathering, he said, "It's great to see the return of the World Transplant Games bringing the transplant community back together after the global pandemic. The World Transplant Games is about more than just sport, it is about camaraderie and the shared message that organ donation works.



The Transplant Team Ireland travelling to Perth for the World Transplant Games with family and supporters at ALSAA Sports Complex

It's about honouring organ donors and their families and being a role model for others who are newly diagnosed with organ failure. With a mix of seasoned campaigners and new team members, this year's squad will carry on the team's long legacy of supporting each other and every performance by every competitor. Our two competitors over the age of 70 are a fantastic example to us all in that sport can,

and should, be a life-long habit. Each competitor is an ambassador in their own right and, collectively, the team sends out a wonderfully uplifting message about how life can be post-transplant."

Competition at the Games is by age category and Transplant Team Ireland will have representatives in the following eleven sports: Cycling; Darts; Golf; Lawn Bowls; Petanque;

Road Race; Swimming; Table Tennis; Ten Pin Bowling; Tennis; and Triathlon.

Each of the athletes is funding their participation in the Games (Games registration, flights, accommodation, and meals) through fundraising in the name of the Irish Kidney Association/Transplant Team Ireland, and using their own funds. The team is proud to wear the Team Kit which, this

year, has been sponsored by the Health Services Staffs Credit Union (HSSCU). Its Chief Executive Sean Hosford, said, "HSSCU are very proud to be involved with the Transplant Team Ireland and provide support. It's an organisation that is doing brilliant work. Supporting our members and the wider community is an integral part of how HSSCU operates. On a personal level and as a family that

have benefited from organ donation, I'm very aware of the life-changing benefits afforded transplant recipients by such a wonderful gesture. Everyone involved wishes each of the athletes competing the very best at the games. It's an honour to be involved in a small way with an Irish team competing internationally. We look forward to following the team closely once the games get started."

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The hallway is warm and inviting with the living room just off which has a feature fireplace with open fire and overlooking the lovely front garden. Towards the end of the hallway there is access to a dining room with feature fireplace and access to the rear garden. The office is located just off the dining room with dual aspect windows and high ceilings with Velux window. To the end of the hallway the open-plan area, flooded with natural light, features the living/dining and kitchen area which offers access to the delightful award-winning rear garden

as well as the garage. The guest wc completes the description of the ground floor. Upstairs a side window allows more natural light to flood the stairwell and landing. There are three generous bedrooms (master ensuite), and a Stira ladder affords easy access to the large partially floored attic. The family bathroom completes the accommodation.

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Greystones Family Resource Centre

Although the Greystones Family Resource Centre serves the communities of Greystones, Delgany, Newtown Mount Kennedy, Kilcoole and Newcastle, the FRC has its own community too. It celebrated a vibrant and heart warming International Womens' Day on 8th March. Guest speaker Dr Mags Crean spoke about women's empowerment in the context of equity for all.

The success of the event lay in the variety of the women who attended, and one brave man! TY students from Templecarrig Secondary School discussed with women of older generations the role of women as the main carer in most households, and questioning will this ever change. Women from the Syrian, Ukranian and Irish communities all came together to share and learn from eachother. Many brought home baked food for a shared brunch. This is the essence of what the Greystones FRC is about, the bringing together of people, breaking down of barriers and stereotypes using a community development approach.

Greystones FRC is one of 121 Family Resource Centres under a National Framework and is Ireland's largest family support programme. Since coming under the Tusla umbrella in 2015, this expanded the catchment area to include Kilcoole, Newtown Mount Kennedy, Newcastle and Delgany. The three staff, two of which are part time makes it one of the smallest FRCs in the country.

Staff are based in their two premises in Burnaby Court and the Charlesland centre. The work of the FRC is needs led and the current theme of needs presenting are requests for low cost therapeutic services, parenting supports to manage anxiety experienced by children, training for parents in 'non-violent resistance' (NVR), the Rainbows bereavement and loss programme for children, individual support and a listening ear. Many issues come to the door such as domestic abuse, homelessness, mental health issues, addiction issues and the need for connection.

There is also a variety of other activities such as the Granny's group who will soon be undertaking First Aid training to support them in the care of their own grand children, over 50s pilates, the meeting of the famous Tigernutters social group which provides opportunities to stay connected in a social setting to over 65s, English language classes and a Ukranian Support Project with Bray Area Partnership, pregnancy and wellness workshops, and the plan to have a Pokemon youth group starting soon.

The underlying values of the work are always inclusion, equality and social justice. The FRC will support local issues where relevant and seeks to promote positive messaging of inclusion of all people in the community, inclusive of new communities. This is particularly relevant now with the arrival of many people seeking refuge in Ireland.

The Greystones FRC is governed by a Voluntary Board of Management which is made up mostly of local people who bring a broad range of experience and skills sets to the table. This is critical to the success of a Family Resource Centre and ensures that it remains embedded in local community. This also supports the organisation to achieve compliance with all relevant legislation and as it has charity status, compliance with the Charities Governance Code.

The value of Family Resource Centres in Ireland cannot be underestimated and the limited resources in terms of staff and premises still unfortunately curb the potential of the Greystones FRC. The organisation celebrated 20 years of existence in Greystones last year and premises has always been an issue that has limited the growth of the service. The hubs in the Burnaby and Charlesland are made possible with the support of Wicklow County Council and Tusla Child and Family Agency.

With the rapid increase in development in the Greystones MD area, it is vital that the resources that the Greystones FRC brings are increased in line with exploding population growth. There are many plans and exciting ideas in store for the next 20 years at the FRC which can only be made possible by recognition at government level of the value of this resource in local communities.

To enquire about supports available or if you are interested in volunteering with GFRC you can email ask@greystonesfrc.ie phone 01 2557528 / 01 2874587 For more information see www.greystonesfrc.ie Facebook: Greystones Family Resource Centre



Pictured are Jennifer Kerrigan (admin and finance), Lynne O'Connor (coordinator), Rebecca Lowbridge (development worker).



Pictured at the 20 year 'Tigernutters' celebration are Hayat Alsleman, Rebecca Lowbridge, Lama Al Kadah, Lynne O'Connor, children are Mohammad Al Kadah and Ziad Al Kadah.



Pictured at the International Women's Day Brunch are Templecarrig Students from TY, Sophie Harden O'Connor, Tasiana Griffin English, Chloe Keane and Leah Fallon.



Pictured are members of the 'Tigernutter's Social group'.





Jordi Butterworth from Carysfort National School, Arklow, dressed as 'Where's Wally' recently for World Book Day.

Campaign of vandalism against Greystones town maps

Two separate incidents of vandalism directed at the display of Greystones town maps have taken place in recent weeks.

The first incident occurred on the evening of Friday, 3rd March, when several hundred town maps in Greystones Railway Station were thrown around, both inside and outside the station. The second incident happened on Saturday, 11th March, when hundreds of town maps were taken from the tourism stand, in Greystones Railway Station. Some were later spotted in a nearby bin.

Reacting to the incidents, local councillor Stephen Stokes said: "My Mother, Bernadette Stokes, has been stocking the maps for 10 years. Her volunteer service is appreciated. On March 3rd, Bernadette received a call that the maps had been flung around Greystones Railway Station like confetti. So a few of us went down to clean up the mess. We were supported by a tremendous group of young women who pitched in. Of course it is discouraging for volunteers to see their hard work undone. However the first time it happened, you stick down to a bit of mischievousness.

"With the second attack against Greystones tourism, it feels more like a sustained campaign. The perpetrator, or perpetrators, lack a sense of community spirit."

The matter has now been referred to An Garda Síochána and Irish Rail, with a request for CCTV to be reviewed. Anyone with information on these inci-



Cllr Stokes with the Greystones Town Map

dents, or any anti-social behaviour in general, can contact Greystones Garda Station on 01-6665800. Cllr Stokes is calling on any person who conducts anti-social behaviour acts to stop and consider their impact. He further added: "People should focus their energy on meaningful efforts to uplift the community. While I would be the first to say that we need more infrastructure, there are still plenty of ways to have fun in a positive way."

The original Greystones Town Map was initiated by Greystones Chamber of Commerce. In 2009, it was passed to Ross Print, in conjunction with Greystones Town Council, Tourism &

Twinning sub-committee, which consisted of Stephen Stokes (Chairperson), Ciaran Hayden and James O'Sullivan. In the early years the print run was 25,000 maps. However due to popular demand, more maps have been printed with each reprint. The most recent print run was for 60,000 Greystones maps. Cllr Stokes stated: "With a section of the Cliff Walk still closed, the Greystones Town Maps are even more crucial for our local tourism efforts. The ads help to advise people of local shopping and dining options. The Greystones Town Maps have been a roaring success. Over 250,000 have been distributed since 2009."

Bray named as one of the most underrated places in the world to visit by Time Out Magazine

Bray has been named in Time Out magazine, which is renowned for its travel commentary, as one of the most underrated places in the world. The County Wicklow seaside town actually came in as the thirteenth most underrated place in the world.

Sinn Féin TD John Brady said: "I think that it is fabulous news that Time Out magazine has included Bray in its list of the top twenty most underrated places in the world to visit. And it's not just Time Out magazine that gets what a special place Bray is. In 2021, The Irish Times named Bray as one of the top twenty places to live in Ireland.

"First off, Bray is a wonderful place to raise a family. With great schools, and a rich community spirit. We are also a short commute from Dublin, which means a lot when you have Children who wish to attend third level education there.

"It is also a place of extraordinary beauty. Situated on the seaside, Bray offers the opportunity for some great walks, along Bray promenade, the Bray Head Cliff walk, and Kilruddery House and Gardens.

"If you fancy a bit more

adventure or amusement, Squirrel Scramble Tree Adventure Park is the place to go, and we also have the Mermaid Arts Centre. There are award winning pubs and restaurants, community events such as the weekend long

St Patrick's Day Festival, and our very own Summer Festivals, which include the Bray Air Display, the Bray Jazz Festival, and the Comedy Festival, just to touch on a few.

"It shouldn't have to be said, but we have our

very own Olympic Gold Medal winner, and current world champion, the legendary Katie Taylor. Along with a host of successful and accessible sporting facilities and clubs for families and individuals to enjoy."



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19 Wicklow heritage buildings receive funding for repairs

Wicklow County Council has welcomed the recent announcement of €101,000 funding for built heritage in County Wicklow through the Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS) 2023.

The BHIS is one of two built heritage funding schemes run by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and administered by local authorities.

A total allocation of €101,000 has been provisionally approved for 19 projects in Wicklow under the BHIS following initial assessment and shortlisting by Wicklow County Council. Projects to be funded include a mix of privately and publicly owned buildings, churches, houses, historic landscape features and monuments.

Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Tommy Annesley, said: "This is very positive news for county Wicklow and will greatly assist the efforts of homeowners and communities in look-

ing after their historic buildings which contribute greatly to the attractiveness of our towns, villages and countryside."

Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council, Emer O'Gorman, commented: "This grant funding will boost the local economy, supporting the employment of a range of conservation contractors and tradespersons to undertake labour intensive and skilled works which in turn will help make these buildings more climate resilient into the future."

Steven Matthews TD said: "This is great news for Wicklow. The many historic heritage buildings and landmarks which we are lucky enough to have in Wicklow play an

incredibly important role in maintaining a link to the rich and proud history of the county. Moreover, they provide an invaluable sense of vibrancy to both our rural and urban landscapes. I have no doubt that this funding will provide welcome assistance to the owners and operators of these priceless amenities."

The Successful applicants to the scheme are: Dawn Cottage, Ashford (Repair of roof and walls); Clermont House Rathnew (External Joint repair); St. Matthew's decoration); St Saviour's Church, Rathdrum (External repair); Valley-mount House, Blessington (Roof repair); Coolattin House, Shillelagh (Roof repair); Lansdowne House, Bray (Roof repair); Clone

House, Aughrim (Roof repair); St John's Church, Tinahely (Roof repair); Arklow School (Lime rendering); Altidore Castle, Kilpedder (Landscape restoration); Lawnview, Enniskerry (Roof repair); 4&5 Royal Marine Terrace, Bray (Fountain repair); 2 Florence Road, Bray (Plasterwork repair); 2 Sloan Terrace, Bray (Chimney repair); St. Livinius Church, Wicklow Town (Joinery repair); 2 Killincarrick Road, Greystones (Shop-front repair); The Corner House, Newtown (Repair of boundary wall); Sam McAllister Monument, Baltinglass (Cleaning).

Minister Simon Harris said: "I want to thank Minister Malcolm Noonan for putting in the work needed to secure this funding. This money will go towards supporting the owners and custodians of our historic and protected structures to maintain and safeguard them for future generations to come. Wicklow's heritage is well renowned across the country and internationally. It is something I am very conscious of and is one aspect of what makes our county so great."

Allocations under the Department's other built heritage scheme, the Historic Structures Fund (HSF), are due to be announced in the coming weeks.



Clermont House in Rathnew is to receive €10,000 for external repairs

Need medical assistance? Know your local options!

With hospital Emergency Department's predicting a busy Saint Patrick's Day Bank Holiday weekend, HSE Community Healthcare East are reminding Wicklow residents that there are various healthcare options available in your local community.

Martina Queally, Chief Officer of HSE Community Healthcare East comments:

"It's common to feel unwell at this time of year with flus and colds. If someone is seriously ill or injured and their life is at risk, of course they should call 999 or attend an Emergency Department. However, for everyday issues there are many available options in the community to consider including your local GP or out-of-hours GP service, pharmacy and Injury Unit. Availing of these options can help reduce hospital overcrowding and can also mean that you receive medical assistance faster and closer to home."

Colm Devine, Chief 1 Pharmacist, HSE Community Healthcare East, recommends visiting your local pharmacy in the first instance: "Local Pharmacists are qualified healthcare professionals and experts in over-the-counter and prescription medicines. They can also provide advice on most illnesses and discuss whether they think you need to see a GP or out of hours service. For patients already tak-

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

Martina Queally continues: "Out-of-Hours GP services are also available to anyone who is looking for assessment or assistance from a GP outside of normal clinic hours. County Wicklow GP out-of-hours services are provided by Caredoc, Kdoc and Edoc. It's a good idea to find out which of these organisations serves your locality, and keep their number handy should you need it."

An injury doesn't always need a trip to the Emergency Department. The Injury Unit in St. Columcille's Hospital in Loughlinstown, or similar services from private insurers, also serve the Wicklow area and can treat broken bones, dislocations, sprains and strains as well as wounds, scalds and minor burns.



The Bray Autism Friendly Town signs for the 'Quiet Zone' that appeared in the Bray St. Patrick's Day Parade this year. The Quiet Zone is a collaboration between the Bray Autism Friendly Town committee and the Bray St Patrick's Day Parade. Pictured is Una Curran, autism class teacher at North Wicklow Educate Together Secondary School (NWETSS), who is on the committee, with students NWETSS students James Mullen and Wayne Nelson.

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Damien Wildes and Pamela Lee in Greystones Sailing Club

Ocean adventurers meet in Greystones Sailing Club

On Friday 10th March, a crowd of over sixty Greystones locals gathered to listen to a talk between Pamela Lee, Offshore Sailor and Damien Wildes, of the organisation Flowstate Swimming.

Pamela is a professional offshore sailor who holds World Records for sailing around Ireland, has participated in and won some of the world's toughest ocean races (including winning last year's SSE RENEWABLES Around Ireland Race), and has accumulated extensive offshore miles, including crossing the Atlantic nine times.

She is nominated for Irish Sailor of the Year selected to be part of the squad preparing to take on the 100% Female Jules

Verne Trophy in 2025.

Flow State Swimming provides information and training for Open Water Swimmers, was created by Damien Wildes, who among other adventures, was the first person to prone-paddleboard across the Irish Sea in June 2022. The talk, titled 'Adjusting the Sails', was the third the 'Water and Me' series, organised by Flow State Swimming, with previous guests including Open Water Swimmer Ger Devin and Surfer, Eoin Visions. The talk

was planned to coincide with International Women's Day, just two days before and also with the announcement that Lee has recently been awarded the French 'Cap Pour Elles' grant for her female offshore-racing project. Over the course of the evening, Wildes interviewed Lee, in a relaxed conversation style, about her story, the determination and grit required to succeed in a male dominated field and also her advocacy for the further inclusion of women within the sport.

Pamela Lee wins 'Cap Pour Elles' selection for the Transat Jacques Varbre Normandy, Le Havre

Pamela Lee, from Greystones has won the 'Cap Pour Elles' selection for this Autumn's two-handed transatlantic race, the Transat Jacques Varbre, from Le Havre to Martinique in the Caribbean. Cap pour Elles is an initiative designed as an opportunity to support up and coming female talent, giving the best chance to compete in this famous Transatlantic race.

It follows a selection system for a pair of women (Pamela Lee and Tiphaine Ragueneau) who will participate in their first transatlantic race in Class40 racing yacht, during the race in Autumn 2023. As skipper, Lee's project proposal was selected from a competitive group of international application and will now receive the grant of €40,000, free race entry as well as sporting and communications support.

Their selection was announced earlier this month on International Women's Day, as they took their first steps to getting themselves and their boat into the best possible shape to be ready at the start of the famous Route du Café on October 29th in Le Havre.

After Julia and Jeanne Courtois benefited from the Cap pour Elles scheme for the last race in 2021, completing a solid Transat Jacques Vabre Normandie Le Havre, now it is the turn of Lee and Ragueneau who won the 2023 selection ahead of nine other pairs of young women.

Following the call for application 10 files were received, two from American sailors, one from South Africa proof that the scheme has garnered interest well beyond France.

For Lee, 34, from Greystones, and Ragueneau, the news of their selection came yesterday.

"I knew we were on the

short list and I had prepared a small bottle of champagne just in case. But I couldn't reach Tiphaine who was at work..." says Lee, 34, who has moved to Lorient, France as she pursues her professional ocean racing career, aiming to have her own Class40 programme soon.

"I saw calls from Pam on my mobile but I was operating on a difficult cat and I couldn't pick up!" recalls Ragueneau, who is 30 and is a vet working both in the town and country in the French Finistère region. Once the cat was calmed down the duo shared the good news aboard Polka Dot a Lombard Class40 design which won the 2018 Route du Rhum, drinking a champagne toast together.

"Our season had already started when the Transat Jacques Vabre Cap pour Elles call for projects came out. We have an agreement with the owner of the boat that we can start training," explains Lee, who has many thousands of ocean miles as delivery crew including nine Transatlantic deliveries, most recently on Multi50 and Class40 yachts but has never competed in a major professional offshore racing event (as required by the selection regulations).

Her French counterpart has mainly competed in inshore match-racing

"At first, I imagined doing Figaro 3 this season, but when Pam contacted

me to sail with her in Class40 last year, it didn't take long for me to make up my mind. With this Coffee Route, I feel like I'm stepping up a level straight off."

Launched in January, Cap pour Elles 2023 saw five applications stand out after a first round of votes. The top three then met for a final analysis via a grid of criteria established by the jury, made up in particular of Gildas Gautier and Antoine Robin, co-directors of the Transat Jacques Vabre Normandie Le Havre, Christine Courtois, head of diversity at the Federation Française de Voile and Francis Le Goff who is the race director.

The public was invited to vote on social networks but their choice only counted for one point out of the 10 in total and in fact did not influence the final decision.

"What particularly appealed to Pamela and Tiphaine is that their project is international and already well advanced. And it is clearly not a one off shot," explains Anne Combier. "These girls are organized, see far, they are very complementary and really involved in the inclusion of women in ocean racing. A beautiful partnership!"

Well known on the pontons as Team Manager, Anne Combier will be responsible as a "mentor", supporting the pair throughout the year "We won't help chase sponsors

for them because a hungry crew looking and working for themselves is more appealing but beyond that we will give them the tools and the processes, both for the management of the project and its legal and administrative aspects. I don't have too many doubts about the outcome," adds Combier who manages Vendée Globe Yannick Bestaven's IMOCA Maître CoQ programme.

Christine Courtois of the FFV, Vice-President in charge of gender diversity, confirms: "The French Sailing Federation can only be delighted to see that the Transat Jacques Vabre Normandie Le Havre is committed to the issue of gender diversity and makes the call for projects "Cap pour Elles". Sailing is one of the rare disciplines where women and men compete together. Nevertheless, today too few women dare to embark on an offshore racing project. The fact of being accompanied and supported by Anne Combier in their preparation, of benefiting from a financial boost, represents a major asset. "Cap pour Elles" represents a real chance for women to live a great human and sporting adventure, to highlight their talent and to realize their dream by racing across the Atlantic."

With 40,000 euros allocated by Cap pour Elles, the duo's budget is not yet complete but the grant is a

step in the right direction and offers substantial credibility to sponsors. "We are looking for 250,000 euros in total, we have serious leads but no title partner yet. We also know that if we increase our involvement and cut back on salaries, we can start with a little less," analyzes Tiphaine.

"The idea is to have time to train well and learn the package because our boat is quite competitive compared to the last generations" adds Lee in her

excellent French.

Cap Pour Elles ensures the two sailors will benefit from a specific training program set up by the Normandy Sailing League in Le Havre. Benjamin Thomas supervises along with Cédric Château (himself a top-level racer in Class40) who will take care of the training.

Sam Davies, a godmother

The organization also wanted the Cap pour Elles

duo to be supported by a talented sailor and that role is fulfilled by British sailor Sam Davies, skipper of Initiatives Cœur, who will be their nautical godmother. Davies enthuses, "I am very enthusiastic to accept the role with Cap pour Elles. I started my offshore racing career when Tracy Edwards offered me an incredible opportunity in her crew on the Jules Verne Trophy and I had the chance to sail alongside my "role models" on this round of

the world and learn a lot. I want to do what others did for me when I started and help women get started in offshore racing and improve the mix. I can't wait to meet Pamela and Tiphaine and see how I can bring my experience to help them prepare for their transat best."

The start date is Sunday October 29th when the guns will sound but with this support it is certain the duo will give a great account of themselves on the race to Martinique.



Skipper Pamela Lee and Co Skipper Tiphaine Ragueneau

Aislinn Nugent named Wicklow's Sport Volunteer of the Year

Aislinn Nugent of Valkeymount LGFA has been chosen as the County Wicklow Volunteer of the Year in Sports winner.

The Volunteers in Sport Awards celebrate the contributions of the band of volunteers across the country who give their time to Irish sport and physical activity every year.

The awards will be presented at an event in the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Blanchardstown, County Dublin, on Wednesday, March 22nd. The event

will see volunteers from all 32 counties honoured for their dedication to volunteering across a variety of different sports.

The winner of the award for County Wicklow is Aislinn Nugent of Valkeymount LGFA. Aislinn has transformed the club in the last 20 years from having no sporting outlet for

females to now a thriving club for women and girls alike. Her inclusive attitude has been a driving force behind the success of the club.

Throughout the Covid pandemic, Aislinn was working with many of the elderly in the local community as she noticed a lot of them had no contact with the community or any social outlet. Combining this with their need for exercise Aislinn set up 'Chair Yoga' as well as giving them the opportunity to walk in a safe environment in the grounds of the club.

In more recent years, Aislinn has set up a five-step youth mental health campaign called 'One Good Club' which has given the club guidance on how to respond to the needs of its members. Aislinn's selfless attitude and willingness to help others shines through in everything that she does.

Throughout December and January members of the public, sports clubs and governing bodies were invited by the

Federation of Irish Sport in partnership with the National Network of 29 Local Sports Partnerships to nominate an individual whose contribution to sport and physical activity in Ireland has made a real difference to their community, club or county.

Aislinn was congratulated on her win by the Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Tommy Annesley, who praised her for all her selfless community vol-

unteering, especially during the Covid pandemic. Chief Executive of the Council, Emer O'Gorman also congratulated Aislinn and added that it was well deserved recognition for her many years of volunteering in sport and in the community.

Commenting on the awards, Minister of State for Sport and Physical Education, Thomas Byrne TD said: "The volunteers being recognised today deserve enormous credit. Their work, often unseen

and undertaken without any fuss or fanfare, makes sport a reality for hundreds if not thousands of people in their communities.

"In particular, the work of volunteers enables young people to play the sport that they love, to meet their friends and form lasting friendships. In so many ways, volunteers are the lifeblood of sport in this country, and I am privileged to have this opportunity to publicly acknowledge their vital contribution to Irish

sport."

Speaking about the importance of the awards, CEO of the Federation of Irish Sport, Mary O'Connor said: "In every county throughout the country, clubs and sporting organisations facilitate multi-generational opportunities for people to be involved in sport and physical activity. The work and goodwill of sport volunteers across the country cannot be taken for granted.

"Every week in Ireland

more than 450,000 volunteers bring sport and physical activity to life for our communities and it's time we afford their hard work the recognition it deserves. It is therefore important that we showcase the size and scale of this contribution by bringing such volunteers together today at the Volunteers in Sport Awards with attendees from every county in the country to shine a spotlight on the positive work they do for sport



Aoife Keddy, Jade Byrne, Kate Wilson, Chloe Lowry and Ciara Kelly at the Wicklow Camogie Awards night in the Arklow Bay Hotel.



Aislinn receiving her award

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New CCTV system activated in Blessington



Blessington

A new community-based CCTV system has been activated in Blessington. It is hoped this will act as a deterrent to anti-social behaviour and criminal activity.

It has been welcomed by Blessington & District Forum, An Garda Síochána, Baltinglass Municipal District and the Blessington Town Team. In 2017 Blessington & District Forum set up a sub-committee to deliver this project. It consisted of Michael Sargent, Jason Mulhall, John Horan, and Detective Sergeant Dermot Treacy of Blessington Garda Station.

From 2019 the project was taken forward by Wicklow County Council. The Department of Justice and Equality approved the maximum grant of €40,000 towards the installation of the CCTV system with the balance coming from Wicklow County Council to fund the project. Educom was awarded the contract to install the CCTV cameras which are now placed around the town at a number of strategic locations.

Cathaoirleach of the Municipal District, Cllr John Mullen, said: "I am delighted that we have brought this project to fruition. It is a number of years since Blessington & District Forum proposed this and with grants from the County Council and Department of Justice we now have the cameras up and running.

This will create a safer environment for all our citizens as they go about their business".

A number of community groups in the town have welcomed the installation of the cameras and it is anticipated that the new system will act as a deterrent to those in society who choose to see fit to break the law.

Speaking on behalf of Blessington & District Forum, Chairperson Carmel Cashin welcomed the completion of the project stating: "The new system has been installed with a view to increasing public safety and to deter illegal or anti-social behaviour. I join with the Gardai in welcoming the activation of the system".

Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council, Emer O'Gorman, said the new CCTV system was an important addition to the town and would reassure local people and visitors that they would be safe and secure in Blessington while it is also an important aid to the Gardai in fighting crime and anti-social behaviour.

In welcoming the establishment of Blessington CCTV system, John Horan, Blessington Town Team Chairperson, acknowledged the contribution of former Baltinglass District Administrator Garvan Hickey who worked on the project initially, and also Liam Cullen, the current Administrator, who worked on bringing the project to completion.

Arklow volunteers commended for work on Community Centre



Deputy Whitmore outside the Community Centre

Social Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore recently spent the afternoon with volunteers in Arklow working to open the Arklow Community Centre, which is due to open at the end of April of this year.

Deputy Whitmore has congratulated volunteers from Arklow who have donated their time so generously to help deliver a much needed community resource.

Speaking after her visit the Social Democrat TD said: "I was in Arklow this afternoon and had a wonderful visit to see the trojan work being carried out at the premises on RiverWalk for Arklow Community Centre.

"This project is completely volunteer led and it was lovely to meet Anne,

PJ, Kathleen, Marion and Des and hear about the work they have done and their plans for the centre once it's open. They hope to host women's groups, men's groups, special interest groups and much, much more when they open the doors to the community at the end of April.

"This project is a brilliant example of a community working together to create a space for everyone to enjoy. It has only been possible because of the generosity of local businesses and individuals



Deputy Whitmore with the Community Centre volunteers

in the town who have donated money, time and services.

"Well done to everyone

involved. I look forward to visiting Arklow Community Centre again when it is open. I will also continue to offer the project all the support I can in my role as the TD for Wicklow."

ue to offer the project all the support I can in my role as the TD for Wicklow."

Green light for Greystones station bus bay repairs

The bus bay outside Greystones Railway Station is set to be repaired. The matter was raised by Cllr Stephen Stokes at the monthly meeting of Greystones Municipal District.

Cllr Stokes stated: "Some of the blocks are banjaxed. From a road safety point of view they need urgent attention. However due to the high volume of traffic the work will need to be done at night."

The issue is affecting both bus stops outside Greystones Railway Station. However Cllr Stephen Stokes believes that the southbound bus stop is particularly bad.

Cllr Stokes added: "I am thankful for the commitment from the Council Team to action the necessary repairs. It's not a simple job. Whatever improvements are made, they need to be able to sustain the weight of heavy traffic, including buses."

Cllr Stokes also highlighted the crossing outside the Burnaby Pub, which is being considered for improvement. He cited the importance of road safety, but also highlighted the visual impact. Cllr Stokes noted: "First and foremost, is road safety. If someone is cycling south, they could easily come a cropper on the wonky blocks. But also if a visitor comes out of Greystones Railway Station, one of the first things they will see is the road in need of some TLC. It's not a great visual impression at the moment."

Work is expected to be completed soon. Cllr Stokes thanked the District Engineer and Outdoor Team for their hard work. He concluded: "There are a lot of repairs to do in the area. But the Council Team always do a superb job. I will continue to press for improvements in Charlesland, Delgany, Greystones, Kilcoole, Killadreenan and Newcastle."



Cllr Stokes outside Greystones train station

Case made for development levies to replace withdrawn NTA funding

Councillor Melanie Corrigan at a recent Bray Municipal District meeting thanked Wicklow County Council for making the case for development levies to be used to replace the NTA funding that was withdrawn from the Enniskerry Village Renewal Scheme allocation.

Cllr Corrigan said, "This is a very important scheme for the people of Enniskerry and needs to be progressed for the safety, and enjoyment of Residents, visitors and the Business community."

Cllr Corrigan received confirmation that at a Senior Management meeting of 28th February last, the allocation to progress the Enniskerry Town and Village renewal scheme was approved by The Elected members back in June 2021 following the public consultation process.

"This allocation will allow the progression of the scheme in the



Cllr Melanie Corrigan

absence of NTA funding. The Council will keep in touch with the NTA team should the opportunity arise for funding from NTA sources.

"Tenders are being

prepared for the works and a conservation engineers inspection of the monument is expected in the week beginning 6th March. Minor elements of the scheme can continue till June with the Town and Village Renewal funding."

Whilst happy with this news Cllr Corrigan said she will still keep pushing for other schemes that were dropped in particular the Scalp Walk Feasibility study and the Southern cross VRU Improvements Scheme not to be forgotten and that funding be sought again if available from the NTA or other sources.

Large turnout for Greystones Town Team 2023 AGM

The Greystones Town Team held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) at the beginning of March at The Whale Theatre, where the steering committee, council representatives and members of the public gathered to look back at the highlights of 2022 and to discuss and plan for the upcoming year.



Yvonne O'Neill and Cllr Gerry Walsh at the Greystones Town Team AGM in the Whale Theatre.

During the AGM, outgoing Chairman Dermot Dwyer presented the successes over the past year, which included:

1. St. Patrick's Day 2022 at Rise At The Cove - collaboration with Tiglin
2. Fundraiser for Ukraine over €12k raised (record number of shop front businesses and online businesses came together to answer the call to help with the Ukrainian crisis)
3. GTT featured in a chapter about the importance of local volunteer organisations, published in a community book "The Upside of Lockdown", launched in Spring 2022.
4. Works for the Train Station Project commence.
5. The Volunteer Expo in Temple Carrig with 33 local volunteer groups in attendance
6. International Yoga and Wellness Day.
7. Multicultural Day.
8. Wicklow Stories Film Festival in The Whale Theatre.
9. Ladies Night - festive celebration in aid of Bray Women's Refuge Centre.
10. Christmas Lights with a record attendance

Acknowledging the work and effort that had been invested by the wider GTT, the outgoing Chairman thanked all for their efforts during his tenure and reiterated that the Town Team format created a framework allowing all residents to

offer their own voluntary services and meaningful participation in their community.

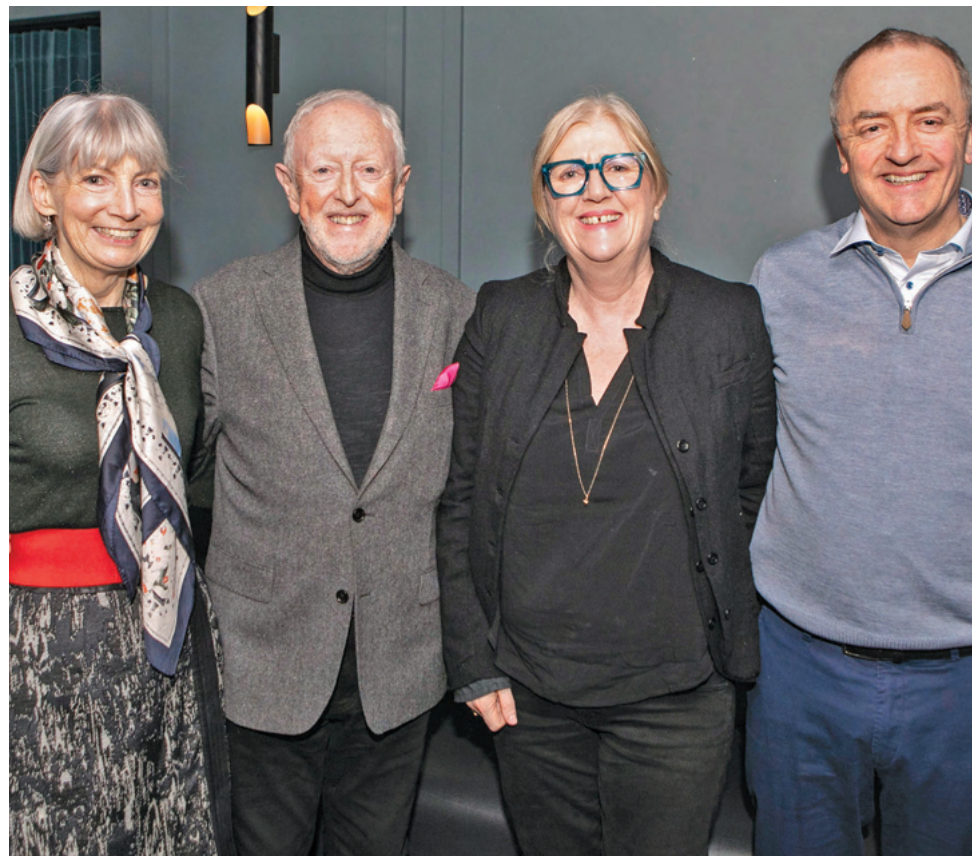
In his initial address incoming Chair Tom O'Mahony thanked Dermot for all of his efforts over the past number of years and reit-

erated that the achievements over the past few years was in no small part down to the commitment and leadership provided by Dermot.

Outlining his vision for the coming year, the incoming Chairman highlighted the work

done to date and ambitious plans on how the team plan to build on these successes.

For more information about the Greystones Town Team or the initiatives discussed at the AGM, please contact events@greystones.ie



Helen Dwyer, Dermot Dwyer, Niamh O'Mahony and Tom O'Mahony at the Greystones Town Team AGM in Whale Theatre.

€100,000 in drainage spending for 2023

Bray Municipal District has announced its plan to allocate approximately €100,000 for drainage spending in 2023. The funding will be used to carry out vital drainage works in several areas including Cookstown Road, Calary Lane, Loreto Avenue, and Waterfall Road.

In addition to the €100,000 allocated per district, Bray Municipal District intends to submit a business case to Wicklow County Council for an extra €280,000 to fund drainage works on Quill Road, Church Hill, and Glencormick.

Cllr Rory O'Connor expressed his satisfaction with the announcement, saying: "I am delighted to see this funding allocated to the Bray Municipal District for drainage works. These works are essential for reducing the risk of flooding in the area and improving the local infrastructure. I would like to welcome the announcement and look forward to seeing the benefits of these works for our local communities."

The proposed works include flood relief measures, road drainage improvements, and culvert repairs, all aimed at reducing the risk of flooding and improving road safety. The works are scheduled to take place in 2023, subject to funding approval.



Ros Keddy, Anna O'Toole, Kate Kavanagh and Eamon Dunne at the recent launch of the Newtownmountkennedy 1798 Remembrance Festival in the Parkview Hotel. The festival will take place over the weekend of May 26th-28th.

Your local health services

If you are unwell, consider all your options

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

Cúram Sláinte Pobail Thoir
Cúil Mhúntáin | Baile Átha Cliath Thoir
Baile Átha Cliath Thoir Thoir

Community Healthcare East
Wicklow | Dublin South | Dublin South East

Public Health - Area C
(Carlow, Kilkenny, South Tipperary, Wexford, Waterford, East Wicklow, Glen Loughlin & Dublin South East)

Grúpa Ospidéal Oirthear na hÉireann

15 Wicklow students receive Trinity Entrance Exhibition Awards

Fifteen students from Co Wicklow received prestigious Entrance Exhibition Awards from Trinity College Dublin earlier this month.



Oscar Mullen, East Glendalough School

A total of 677 first-year students from Ireland and overseas received awards, which were delivered in person for the first time since 2019.

Entrance Exhibition Awards go to the students accepted into the first year of a full-time undergraduate degree programme who achieve the highest points among Trinity entrants from their secondary school, above a minimum of 500 CAO points (or equivalent).

Many former awardees have gone on to make a significant contribution to the economic, cultural, and political life of Ireland and beyond. Past Exhibitioners include Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar.

The students come from 460 different schools, from 31 counties on the island of Ireland and 31 countries overseas.

Provost of Trinity, Dr Linda Doyle, said: "The recipients of the Entrance Exhibition Awards are now in the first year of their studies in Trinity, but they had to contend with the uncertainties and disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic as they prepared for their Leaving Cert examinations.

"I hope the resilience they developed during that difficult period will always stand to them and I hope they are now making the most of the Trinity experience. I also want to take this opportunity to acknowledge and affirm the hugely important role played by parents, guardians, teachers and all school staff in preparing students as they embark on the next stage of their education journey."

Changes made to the awards scheme in 2018 meant that students who achieve the highest points among Trinity entrants from their secondary school with a minimum of 500 points in the Leaving Certificate (or



Trinity's Provost Linda Doyle addressing students and their former principals in the Public Theatre

its equivalent EU/EEA second level final examinations) are eligible for an Entrance Exhibition Award. This includes bonus points for Mathematics.

Previously, any students receiving 560 or more points (excluding bonus points) were awarded Entrance Exhibition Awards, which meant that up to 20 students from any one school could qualify.

The Entrance Exhibition Awards were awarded to 433 students from Leinster, 99 from Munster, 58 from Ulster and 47 from Connacht.

Awards also went to students from the following countries: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany (2), Greece, Hungary (2), Iceland (2), Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Netherlands, Norway, Poland (2), Portugal, Qatar, Romania,

Reunion, Singapore, Slovenia, Spain (2), Sweden (2), Switzerland, USA and UK (excluding NI) (5). Awardees receive a certificate and a €150 book token

The successful students are: ANYA WILSON, St

Mary's College, Arklow; JAMES-OSAHON MC GRANE-ERO, Woodbrook College; LUKAS JAKOB, Presentation College; TIMOTHY FRANCIS, JOSEPH WILKINSON, MATTHEW HARBOURNE, DYLAN SHEEHAN & AMYWARD, St Gerard's School; MARIAM IBRAHIM SHOUKRY HENEIN, Loreto Secondary School; CIANAN POWER, St David's Holy Faith Secondary School; KATE FENNEL, MARTHA ROE & ALICE POPPY SOMERVILLE, Temple Carrig School; EVIN FLEMING, Scoil Chonglais Post Primary School; RADOSLAW DULNY, Blessington Community College; NAOMH MOULES, Colaiste Bhríde, Carnew; ELLEN BERNEY, St Kevin's Community College, Dunlavin; EABHA O CEIDIGH HAYES & RUTH DEHANTSCHUTTER, Colaiste Raithin; REBECCA WHITE KILLICK, Colaiste Chroabh Abhann; MARIA MELANIE DOYLE, Gaelcholaiste na Mara; OSCAR MULLEN, East Glendalough School

Risk of children not having books in time for new school year

As the Department of Education guidelines for the new Free School Books Scheme are finalised, ahead of being issued to primary schools at the end of March, Bookselling Ireland warns that the direction currently being taken by the Department ignores both the serious concerns and the recommendations of key stakeholders, and poses a significant risk that children will not have school books in time for the next school year.

According to Bookselling Ireland, a committee of Irish members of the Booksellers Association of the UK and Ireland, if left unaddressed by Minister Foley and her Department, these concerns - which have been communicated regularly since the announcement of the scheme as part of Budget 2023 - risk jeopardising the smooth

delivery of this important policy initiative, placing unnecessary extra burdens on school staff, posing significant difficulties to the school book supply chain, taking money out of Irish towns and communities, and risking the closure of up to one in ten of Irish bookshops, most likely in rural areas. Bookselling Ireland have put forward

a set of recommendations to avoid these outcomes.

It has been made clear to Bookselling Ireland that it will be the responsibility of teachers and schools to deliver the scheme along the guidelines issued by the Department. Given the questions regarding the working assumptions made by the Department and the lack of substantive response by the Department to feedback from experts in the school book supply chain, there should now be serious concern regarding the risks to the delivery of the scheme.

A key working assumption in developing the guidelines for the new scheme, frequently quoted by Minister Foley and senior officials

at the Department of Education, is that the 96% of schools already operate a book rental scheme. This figure does not match the experience of booksellers, school book suppliers, school book publishers, or primary school principals. It is not clear to these key stakeholders that any existing schemes are scalable to the change proposed. In addition, while Department of Education officials have stated that schools will not be short of funds, it is not clear to Bookselling Ireland or the other major school book industry stakeholders that the proposed level of funding is close to adequate.

The new scheme will be rendered commercially unsustainable

if serious consideration is not given in the guidelines to early publishing of book lists, early ordering of books, and the maintenance of cash flow through the supply chain, Bookselling Ireland says. Delays in orders being received by bookshops will mean that educational publishers delay in ordering necessary reprints of in-demand titles, and delays in payments made by schools to bookshops will mean that educational publishers will not be able to pay for those reprints. To assist in overcoming this major issue, Bookselling Ireland recommends an alternative delivery mechanism in the form of a voucher scheme such as that used in Italy. This suggested alter-

native is also favoured by the Irish Primary Principals' Network (IPPN), and the Irish Educational Publishers Association (IEPA). Schools would provide vouchers to parents which would then be redeemed in bookshops, who in turn would submit the vouchers for payment.

Bookselling Ireland warns that this now appears increasingly unlikely. Bookselling Ireland is urging Minister Foley and the officials at the Department of Education to reconsider the feedback from school book industry professionals so that primary school children and their teachers can enjoy the undoubted benefits this policy should bring.

St Mary's Arklow girls take over the Dáil for a day

Social Democrats TD for Wicklow Jennifer Whitmore hosted 90 girls from St. Mary's College Arklow on Tuesday 7th March in the Dáil. Ninety girls from Transition Year along with their teachers were ushered around the houses of the Oireachtas in three different groups as well as getting to witness the Social Democrat TD on the plinth addressing the media on the provision of disability services for children.

Speaking after the tour Deputy Whitmore said: "It was wonderful to see so many young women around the corridors of Leinster House and really inspiring to hear the questions that they had posed in relation to the operation of the Dáil and what a typical day looks like for a TD."

The visit took place the day before International Women's day tomorrow, and one of the girls commented on how few pictures of women in politics there were along the corridors. The tour of Leinster house included a visit to the Dáil Chamber and the Seanad. The group was welcomed by Leas-Cathaoirleach of the Seanad. Deputy Whitmore then got a chance to meet the girls on the steps of Leinster House where they asked some interesting questions and about politics and a typical day in the life of a Wicklow TD.

"Politics needs to be for everyone and it's something that young people should feel empowered to engage with. For too long politics has been out of reach of young people, especially young girls and it's encouraging to see the interest of the students of St. Mary's College Arklow," said Deputy Whitmore.



Deputy Whitmore pictured with Transition Year students from St. Mary's College

Government accelerating rollout of free solar panels for Wicklow schools

Green TD Steven Matthews has received confirmation that the Government is accelerating the roll-out of a scheme to provide free solar panels to schools, after raising the issue in the Dail with Taoiseach Leo Varadkar.

The scheme will allocate funding for schools to install up to 6KW of solar panels and will be announced shortly by Ministers Eamon Ryan and Norma Foley following the completion of a nationwide assessment of demand. Welcoming this update, Deputy Matthews said: "I am delighted that schools in Wicklow will soon get clarity on how the roll-out of free solar panels will operate. This is a very practical measure that the Green Party introduced in Budget 2023 to assist schools with rising energy costs. I am very keen to see

this initiative rolled out as soon as possible. I have been assured that the announcement will make it clear to all schools how to apply, the timelines for completion of any works and how the funding will be allocated.

"Schools are at the centre of our communities, and it makes absolute sense that schools will be at the forefront of Ireland's solar rollout. The transition to renewable energy sources will allow schools to reduce their energy bills and take action on climate change.

"In recent months, I



Steven Matthews TD

have had the opportunity to visit many schools across Wicklow and one of the main things that is raised with me is the need to speed up the rollout of solar panels for schools.

I will engage closely with Ministers Eamon Ryan and Norma Foley to ensure that as many Wicklow schools as possible are prioritised for funding but ultimately all schools in Wicklow will see this work carried out in the coming years.

"The rapid installation of solar panels on schools and other buildings is crucial to achieving our climate objectives in the energy sector, if any school principals have any questions on the rollout or any other matter, I would encourage them to get in touch with me," Deputy Matthews concluded



Naoise Lacey, Myanmar Plunkett and Molly Smith preparing for Showcase 2023 which will be held in BIFE

Greystones Community College laments hold up of new school build

The Department of Education have informed the Board of Management at Greystones Community College that the permanent build for the school is currently 'on hold' due to 'capital financial pressures'. Greystones Community College is one of the 58 schools nationally affected by the Department of Education's recent announcement.

Speaking on receipt of the news, School Principal Ruairí Farrell said "There is no doubt that this is disappointing news for our whole school community to receive. Greystones Community College has gained the confidence of the local community as a school that is built on high academic standards and also fosters a culture of care and respect in relationships that

exist in the school. The students and parents have been promised and assured by our public representatives and the Department of Education that our school will have a permanent school building by September 2024 but that now appears unlikely given this recent news".

The school was established in 2020 in order to cater for increased demand for

school places in the Greystones area. Greystones Community College which was selected by parents as their preferred model of education following a public consultation process brought multid denominational education at post primary level to Greystones and operates under the patronage of Kildare and Wicklow Education and Training Board.

Cllr. Lourda Scott, Chairperson of the Board of Management of Greystones Community College believes it is now necessary that the school authorities are fully updated on the timelines and reasons associated with this delay and that we all work collectively to ensure the

school building gets back on track to ensure adequate school places in Greystones at post primary level.

"Our school was established to cater for the increased demand from parents for school places in Greystones. Given the ongoing delays, the Board of Management will be left with no other option that to put a cap on numbers and reduce the schools intake considerably. For admission to the Greystones Community College in 2023, the school received well over 400 applications for 144 places available," said Cllr. Lourda Scott.

"I know there will be anxiety and

concern in the community if the available spaces at the school are further reduced for 2024.

"The Department of Education needs to explain the reasons behind this decision and outline clearly how long this project will be on hold" she added.

Principal Ruairí Farrell concluded "Notwithstanding this temporary delay, our priority at Greystones Community College remains on ensuring the highest standards of excellence in teaching and learning and in supporting each student in our care to reach their full potential. We will continue to leave no stone unturned in this regard".

Wicklow student a winner in Rotary Youth Leadership Competition



Wicklow Educate Together Secondary School student Hannah Laura O'Callaghan receiving her Rotary Youth Leadership Development Award from Captain Sean Fitzgerald, District Governor of Rotary Ireland, and Patrick O'Riordan, Head of Public Affairs with the European Parliament in Ireland.

Wicklow student Hannah O'Callaghan was one of just 24 teenagers from all over the island of Ireland to be presented with a Rotary Youth Leadership Development certificate at the European Parliament's offices in Dublin recently.

The competition, which is one of Rotary Ireland's longest running youth projects, rewards young people with clear leadership potential based on their extra-curricular activities. It is run in conjunction with the European Parliament Liaison Office in Dublin and Euroscola in Strasbourg.

Hannah, who is a student at Wicklow Educate Together Secondary School, received her certificate from Rotary Ireland District Governor Captain Sean Fitzgerald and Patrick O'Riordan, Head of Public Affairs at the European Parliament's office in Ireland.

After being disrupted by covid for the last two years, this year saw a welcome return to the regular itinerary which involves visits to Belfast, Dublin, and Strasbourg. During the six day all expenses paid trip the competition winners visited Belfast City Hall and Stormont where they

met and chatted with politicians from various parties.

Then it was onto Europe House in Dublin where they were presented with their certificates before a trip to Dail Eireann where they met the Minister for Education Norma Foley and several TDs.

They then flew to Frankfurt for a two day visit to Strasbourg. After being formally welcomed by the President of the European Parliament, Robert Metsola the students took part in an interactive workshop which allowed them to discuss and vote on amendments to an EU proposal on climate action targets. The students also enjoyed a walking tour of Strasbourg, met students from a host of other countries before enjoying some retail therapy!

Hannah, who is in her second term as Student Council President of her school is also Secretary General of the Wickmun Model United Nations and part of the European Youth

Parliament of Ireland. She said she would highly recommend the competition to young people in her area.

"The highlight of the week was the friendships I've made on this trip. Whether from Ireland, or other countries, it has been an incredible experience to communicate and bond with people from all around the EU. There were so many cultures, beliefs and backgrounds, and it was fascinating to learn about each and every new person I spoke to."

Captain Sean Fitzgerald, District Governor of Rotary Ireland said the knowledge and enthusiasm of the students was hugely impressive.

"I have to compliment Hannah and all of this year's winners for their willingness to engage and the extremely high standard of their contributions throughout the week. It was wonderful to have a full complement of students back on the trip this year

and it was clear to us that while they arrived as strangers, they left as friends having enjoyed a wonderful journey. I would urge as many young people as possible from every part of the island to take part in next year's competition."

Patrick O'Riordan from the European Parliament said: "This exceptional group of young men and women was one of the most engaging and well-informed that we've ever had the pleasure of welcoming to Europe House and I look forward to seeing them contributing to public life in Ireland and Europe in the years to come and returning as MEPs or Ministers!"

The Rotary Youth Leadership Development Competition is open to 16 and 17-year-olds who are living on the island of Ireland. For more information go to Rotary Youth Leadership Development Competition - Rotary in Ireland (rotary-ri.org)

Four designs from Wicklow make it to final of Junk Kouture

Wednesday 8th and Thursday 9th March saw the next generation of Irish up-and-coming eco-conscious creators, innovators, and fashion designers at the 2023 Regional Finals of Junk Kouture, the world's largest sustainable fashion competition for youth.

1,200 haute-couture designs made from 100% recycled materials by post-primary students entered the 13th year of the creative programme in Ireland. From this, 300 designs were short-listed and aired on Junk

Kouture's YouTube and TikTok channel for the 2023 Regional Finals.

During the showcase, eighty was the magic number, as eighty creations crafted by young designers aged 13-18 years from across the

North, South, East, South-East and West of Ireland were chosen to represent their region at the Dublin City Final taking place this May.

Taking to one of Ireland's most prestigious stages, Wicklow's four finalist team will face stiff competition from over 70 other entries from across the country in this year's Dublin City Final. Blessington Community College two designs will compete with Scoil Chonglais, as well as Glenart College in a bid to secure a space at the inaugural World Final of Junk Kouture where Irish finalists will compete with their fellow creative peers from Paris, Milan, NYC, London and Abu Dhabi.

The four designs from Wicklow heading to the Dublin City Final are:

- **Truth is Transparent** by Simone Cabalum from Blessington Community College created from plastic, ziplocs and receipts.

- **Tied Emotions** by Emma Doyle and Maia Fagan from Scoil Chonglais created from over 3,000 rejected cable ties, chicken wire, cans and curtain hooks.

- **The Muse** by Asia O'Riordan and Erris Lindsay from Blessington Community College created from beads, bingo cards, wool, sticks of willow, old denim & fabrics.

- **Flight of Freedom** by Jessica Doyle, Niamh Fitzgerald and Erin Finn from Glenart College created from students scrapbooks, silver beads, old jewellery and feathers.

Junk Kouture is Powered by RTE. The Regional Finals can be watched back on Junk Kouture's YouTube channel and details of the Dublin City Final this May including date, venue and tickets will be announced in the coming weeks. Eurospar and DHL are the official partners.

Stay up to speed with all things Junk Kouture 2023 on www.junkkouture.com and on Instagram and TikTok @junkkouture.

Junk Kouture is a creative program for youth that promotes the importance of sustainability. Highlighting the fact that what we view as 'junk' can be recycled in useful and impactful ways, it challenges young people to create beautiful and interesting fashion outfits out of materials that are normally thrown away.



The Muse by Asia O'Riordan and Erris Lindsay from Blessington Community College created from beads, bingo cards, wool, sticks of willow, old denim & fabrics.



Flight of Freedom by Jessica Doyle, Niamh Fitzgerald and Erin Finn from Glenart College created from students scrapbooks, silver beads, old jewellery and feathers.



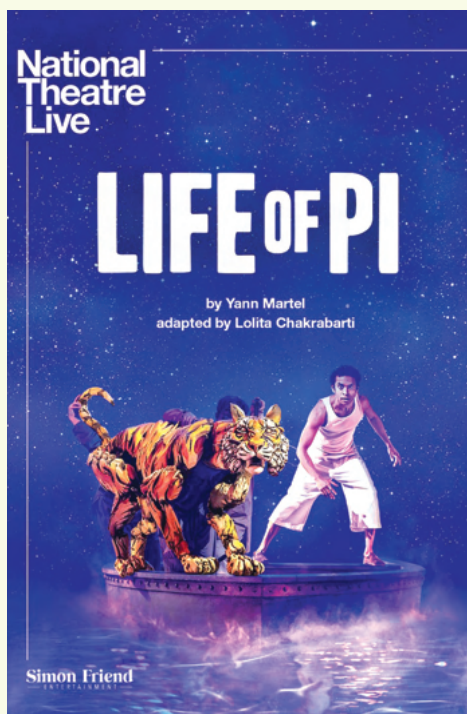
Truth is Transparent by Simone Cabalum from Blessington Community College created from plastic, ziplocs and receipts.



Tied Emotions by Emma Doyle and Maia Fagan from Scoil Chonglais created from over 3,000 rejected cable ties, chicken wire, cans and curtain hooks.

NT Live: The Life of Pi

Whale Theatre, Thursday 30th March, 7pm (doors 6.30pm). Tickets €17.50 and available at www.whaletheatre.ie or call the booking office on 01 2010550 to book.



Life of Pi by Yann Martel, adapted by Lolita Chakrabarti and directed by Max Webster.

Puppetry, magic and storytelling combine in a unique, Olivier Award-winning stage adaptation of the best-selling novel.

After a cargo ship sinks in the middle of the vast Pacific Ocean, a 16-year-old boy named Pi is stranded on a lifeboat with four other survivors - a hyena, a zebra, an orangutan and a Royal Bengal tiger. Time is against them, nature is harsh, who will survive?

Filmed live in London's West End and featuring state-of-the-art visuals, the epic journey of endurance and hope is brought to life in a breath-taking new way for cinema screens.

Running Time: approx 180 mins.

BBFC & IFCO Certificate: 12A



Cara Kavanagh meets Mr Big Ciaran Dunne during Roundwood Variety Group's recent panto, Jack & the Beanstalk, in the Brockagh Centre.

Best Man at Whale Theatre

Friday 31st March 2023 at 8pm (doors 7pm) - Tickets €15 available at www.whaletheatre.ie or call the booking office on 01 2010550



Cathal is 30, flirty, and having a breakdown at his best friend's wedding.

Best Man is a new comedy theatre performance from 'A Few Words Theatre'. Written by Dublin based comedians Mikey Fleming and Colman Hayes.

It tells the story of Cathal, a man in his 30's who's spent the last 2 years watching all of his friends settle down, get married and have kids. Every. Single. One.

And here he is, the best man, about to give his speech. Only he appears to have lost it! And he continues to 'lose it', completely unravelling in front of all his friends and family. And you get to be there to watch it all unfold.

Best Man debuted last October in the Smock Alley Theatre to a completely sold out run and rave reviews.

Duration: 50 Minutes approx.



Marja van Kampen, Trish Robinson, and Olivia O'Keefe at the 'Meanderings of a Colourful Mind' exhibition in Wicklow Library, a collaborative exhibition by artists Marja van Kampen, Olivia O'Keefe and Martina Furlong.

Tom Waits tribute returns to the Hot Spot Music Club



Tom Waits fans will be delighted to see the return of Bone Machine to The Hot Spot in Greystones on Saturday March 25th.

Bone Machine are a band of internationally renowned touring and recording musicians that perform a rebrand, melancholic, and punk jazz set of Tom Waits songs. Whether or not the songs of Tom Waits play a central role in your music collection, you simply have to experience this show live to feel the heaven-opening maelstrom of beauty scarcely captured by a live band.

From Martha to Downtown Train, Bone Machine bring the heart, atmosphere and sweat to performances brimming with a ramshackle sophistication and honesty as well as the renowned Waitsian monologues full of the funny anecdotes for which Mr Waits is universally celebrated. From bourbon soaked ballads to evocative Godliness and anarchic elegance, there has never been a show that has captured the golden thread of what makes Waits such a legend until now!

Doors 8pm | Show 9pm.
Tickets www.thehotspot.ie

Emma Doran - Mad Isn't It

In her biggest solo show to date, comedian Emma Doran reflects on what just happened.

One minute she was an 18 year old stumbling off the Waltzers in Courtown and now she's hurtling through her late 30s with a 19 year old daughter and 2 other kids. 'Mad Isn't It' is a stand up show from Emma Doran with some of your favourite characters from her social media.

Whale Theatre, Friday 24th and Saturday 25th March at 8pm (doors 7pm) - SOLD OUT, register for returns at www.whaletheatre.ie or call the booking office on 01 2010550



Emma Doran



Clothes Peg, by Lorraine Whelan

Signal Arts Society Members' Exhibition

Signal Arts Centre is pleased to present the 23rd Annual Exhibition of works by members of the Signal Arts Society. This exhibition is a showcase for members of the Signal Arts Society and, being a group show, includes a diverse range of content, a varied selection of mediums and always something to delight even the most discerning of palettes.

In 2001 the Signal Arts Society Exhibition was created as a way to enable artists to become members of the Centre and facilitate access to resources at a reduced rate.

For more information on the facilities and discounts available to members of the Signal Arts Society go to www.signalarts-centre.ie and click on the Society's tab. Alternatively the Society may be contacted through Signal Arts Centre.

Opening Reception: Friday 7th April 2023, 7pm - 9pm



Out in the Sun, by Santa Silina

Audi Q4 etron - future proofed - but at a price

The new Audi Q4 Etron 40 is a fully battery electric SUV which has all the gizmos and IT of the next generation car, but still does a lot of the things that we loved in the petrol and diesel Audis.

By Martin McCarthy

The Q4 Etron looks great, internally and externally - with every detail beautifully finished to an exemplar degree.

It is far more handsome car than its first cousin, the VW ID4 built on the same platform. In every field, there are early adopters, who are willing to pay the premium to have the latest and best.

The iPhone being a particularly relevant example as the firm's founder, Steve Jobs, obsessed about German auto design - especially in the cockpit. The slow gradual opening and closing motion of the cigarette lighter compartment, and its texture and surface finish were benchmarks for his own designers in Palo Alto to instil in the early iPhones some of the Flip-Up variety.

The point being, the Q4 Etron is not just a battery powered version of the previous Q4 - but a substantially improved, beautified and electrified version.

The model I tested was the 40 S Line, with an 82Kwh battery delivering

200bhp and providing WWTP range of 520km. The 40 S is almost the top of the Q4 Range which starts at €47,900 for the slower, shorter range, lower speed 35 Advance model. The 40 S-Line retails at €64,130 with a few interesting optional extras - most notably the panoramic sunroof and tinted rear windows for €1610 and €810 respectively.

The drive is to the rear wheels only - giving a nice tight turning circle as there is no drivetrain up front.

The batteries are all on the floor and this provides a very good boot space - 520 litres before you start folding down the rear seats.

The instrumentation graphics are amazing especially the navigation displays. The discreet panel of non-digital controls is useful for operating the radio and temperature controls. These are especially useful for folks who are just using the car occasionally (renters etc.) and just won't read the operating

manual.

The WWLT range figures of all electric cars must be treated with care. Cold weather, above 100kph + cruising and sprightly driving will all degrade the actual range to closer to 400km. But that still is a healthy figure from Wicklow to almost anywhere on the island of Ireland.

So to me the big question is would the bigger diesel powered Q5 35 TDI 163HP S-tronic make more sense? It costs the same. It all boils down to what the owner's requirements are, noting that delivery times on many cars remain an issue with waiting times of six months or more not being unusual for some models.

Of the battery electric cars, the Q4 Etron 40 is one of the very best options on the Irish market today and is sure to drag a certain (well heeled) cadre away from diesel and petrol.



Audi Q4 etron

West Wicklow Historical Society one-day conference in honour of Donal McDonnell

The WWHS's forthcoming one-day conference is its most prominent event of 2023 and early bird registration is open until 27 March. There are separate rates for current members and non-members, but becoming a member is easy online.

The conference features five lectures and two Q&A sessions. The topics range in time from the Neolithic to the twentieth century. The lecturers are Alan Hawkes, Richard (Bosco) Lennon, Emma Lyons, Margaret Murphy, and Liam Kenny with Eamonn Sinnott. The opening address is by another historian, Monsignor John McEvoy.

The conference honours Donal McDonnell, one of the Society's best known members and a former officer, who died on 12 June 2022. For over forty years he was associated with the WWHS and he came to be synonymous with the Society. Donal had a rich knowledge of local history that included diverse facts about places, people and traditions.

When & where: Saturday 22 April 2023, 9.45am-5.30pm in Scoil Naoimh Iúsaf, Kiltegan Road, Baltinglass, W91 EF95 (parking in the school grounds).

How to book: Register online at WWHS.ie where full details of the programme are available. Alternatively, contact Paul Gorry, 84 Ardglass, Baltinglass, W91 RH59.

Early Bird Registration Fee (until 27th March)

Current WWHS members €25 per person

Non-members €40 per person

After 27th March

Current WWHS members €30 per person

Non-members €45 per person

BirdWatch Ireland March - May Events : Indoor and Outdoor

BirdWatch Ireland have a full programme of indoor and outdoor events right through to May. Indoor talks will be held in their new location in Ashford Heritage Centre.

Tue 14 March: Indoor Talk - Why do Birds Sing? - a Birdsong Workshop with Joe Lennon, 7.30pm

Sat 25 March: Outing to Rogerstown Estuary. Meet at Turvey Nature Reserve Car Park, Turvey Avenue, 10am

Tue 11 April: Indoor Talk - Garden Ponds: a haven for Biodiversity by Aoife O'Rourke,

7.30pm.

Sat 22 April: Outing to Kilcoole with Jason Monaghan from the NPWS to look for breeding waders and to hear about recent conservation work. Meet in Kilcoole Train Station carpark at 10.30am

Tue 9 May: Indoor Talk: Bats in Wicklow by Enda Mullen, 7.30pm

Sun 14 May: National Dawn Chorus Day Walk - venue to be decided. 5am



WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

I, Laurence Kavanagh wish to apply to Wicklow County Council for permission for a change of house type/design from that previously granted under planning reference no. 20/648 at Grange North, Newcastle, 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, Neil O'Toole intend to apply for permission for development at this site; 12 Castle Villas, Killincarrig, Greystones, Co. Wicklow A63PF98. The development will consist of a new dwelling to rear of existing dwelling at 12 Castle Villas comprising dwelling, mains services connections and associated site works. The planning application may be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy, at the offices of the planning authority during its public opening hours. The planning application may be viewed online at www.wicklow.ie, under planning online enquiries. A submission or observation in relation to the application may be made in writing to the planning authority on payment of the prescribed fee, €20, within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the application, and such submissions or observations will be considered by the planning authority in making a decision on the application. The planning authority may grant permission subject to or without conditions, or may refuse to grant permission.

CLASSIFIEDS

THE MIRACULOUS PRAYER

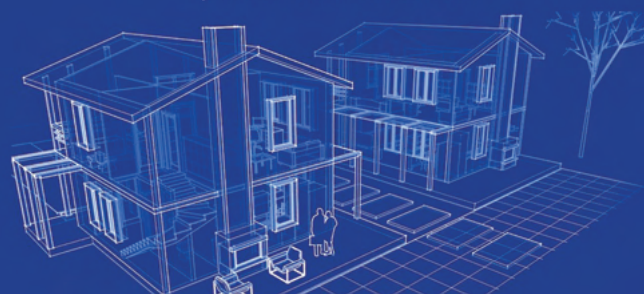
Dear Heart of Jesus in the past I have asked for many favours. This time I ask you this very special one. (Mention request) Take it, dear Heart of Jesus and place it within your broken Heart where your Father sees it. Then, in his merciful eyes it will become your favour not mine. St Anthony and St Jude,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



Arklow Library staff David Wilcoxson, Colin Heslin, Brian Kelly, Kathy Scott and Anne Kane dressed up for World Book Day recently.

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Wicklow woman is creating a dementia inclusive generation

Wicklow native Izzie Kinsella, National Activities Coordinator of the Alzheimer Society of Ireland (The ASI), celebrated the success of The ASI's 'Creating a Dementia Inclusive Generation' Transition Year Programme at Our Lady's Hospice (OLH), Harold's Cross Dublin on March 7th in the Lead-Up to Brain Awareness Week.



Izzie Kinsella, Charlie McGinley, and Catherine O'Leary, The Alzheimer Society of Ireland Community Engagement Team

The event featured speakers such as Minister of State for Mental Health and Older People Mary Butler TD, Director of The Dementia Services Information and Development Centre (DSIDC), Matthew Gibb, and past programme participants. An innovative post-primary school programme, 'Creating a Dementia Inclusive Generation', aims to educate young people about Dementia and the impact it has, not only on the person living with Dementia but also its impact on the extended family and the Carers. We provide students and teachers with the necessary tools to run this programme, which is free of cost. Over 2,400 students in 50 schools (including Colaiste Chill Mhantain in Wicklow town) across 17 counties have engaged with the programme since its launch in 2022.

Kinsella said: "The ASI are very excited to celebrate the success of this innovative programme. We can sense the energy and enthusiasm from students, teachers, and those in our communities about the programme. Young people are eager to learn more about dementia."

"With a growing number of people diagnosed with Dementia each year and one in three young people being affected by

this disease, it is more important than ever that we teach today's youth how to cope when someone they know and love is diagnosed with Dementia. We're thrilled with the response we have received so far; and I'd like to encourage any schools in the Wicklow area to sign up to this programme. If you would like to be part of creating a dementia inclusive generation and are interested in this

programme, we ask you to contact us at communityengagement@alzheimier.ie."

The Transition Year programme was created with the Dementia Services Information and Development Centre (DSIDC) at St James' Hospital Dublin. The project is an official Challenge Partner with An Gaisce The President's Award, which includes the added opportunity for Gaisce participants to fulfil

challenge area requirements. Arthur Cox kindly sponsored the programme.

This E-learning programme contains five modules of self-directed learning. These include: Growing Older, The Brain, Brain Health, What is Dementia? and Perceptions of Dementia - all of which aim to help and facilitate knowledge, discussion, awareness and caring for those with Dementia and older people in general.

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