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WICKLOW CHAMBER
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Tuesday 28th March 2023 First Floor, The Boulevard, Quinsborough Road, Bray. A98 R6D7. Tel: 01 - 2869111 E-mail: wicklowed@localtimes.ie www.wicklowtimes.net

NO WAY UP THE MOUNTAIN NOW

A popular County Wicklow walking trail to and from Lugnaquilla, Leinster's highest mountain, has now been closed to the public following an alleged physical assault on the landowner by a hiker bringing dogs onto the trail.

When landowner Pat Dunne requested two males with three dogs to honour the 'No Dogs Allowed' signs at the entrance to the mountain trail on his farm it's alleged that he was pushed to the ground and held there while the perpetrator's accomplice proceeded to bring the dogs onto land with livestock and where dogs are prohibited. As a result this popular route is now closed to all recreational walkers.

The well-known Zig-Zags walking track, located entirely on private lands, provided access from the base of Carrawaystick Waterfall towards Lugnaquilla. The Zig-Zags was an 'Agreed Access Route', facilitated through a formal Permissive Access Agreement between the landowner Pat Dunne and County Wicklow Partnership. First developed in 2007, Mr Dunne was one of the first landowners in

the country to permit an agreed access route across his lands. However, following the incident with a hiker on the 19th March, Pat and the Dunne family have taken the difficult decision to close public access with immediate effect.

Speaking about the closure Mr Dunne said "I want it known that for the last 16 years we have permitted open access to Lugnaquilla via the Zig Zags. The



Mia Butler Liston at the St. Patrick's GAA Patron 500 launch. The new fundraising project is aiming to provide additional pitches at the club's facility at Dunbar, which currently just has one pitch. The club has been granted planning permission for a flood-lit pitch on a 29-acre site at Greenhill Road, as well as a clubhouse and dressing rooms, but must raise €350,000.



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track and open mountain lands immediately above are private property. The only request in return for open access to our land was that NO DOGS were brought onto the mountain due to the disturbance they can cause to livestock. It is not an unreasonable request as we have had many instances of sheep being mauled by dogs on the mountain."

He continued "However, over the years we have had many instances of verbal abuse with people as they ignored signage asking that dogs were not brought onto our lands. In one case this even resulted in a threat that our house "would be burnt down".

Pat said 'The final straw came on Sunday 19th March at 11.10am when after repeatedly asking a man and a youth accompanying him to not bring their

three dogs onto the track, he physically assaulted me, knocking me to the ground, before continuing up the mountain with the dogs. It is because of this that we have decided to revoke the permissive access agreement and close the trail to the public with immediate effect."

Commenting on the closure Aaron Byrne, Rural Recreation Officer with County Wicklow Partnership added "County Wicklow Partnership completely support the Dunne family in their decision. The success of The Walks Scheme and access routes are evident all over the country and that's based on cooperation between landowners and recreational users. The actions of this particular individual are completely unacceptable. The closure of the trail will come as a huge blow to

all the recreational users who benefitted from the goodwill of the Dunne

family and enjoyed access to the mountains through their lands."

Robert Dowds, the Chairperson of Keep *Continued on page 3*

Oifig Fiontair Áitiúil
Local Enterprise Office

Check out Your Local Enterprise Office Wicklow for the 2023 Spring/Summer Training Schedule for small businesses & the self-employed in Co. Wicklow

- ❖ **How to Sell Food and Craft Products at Markets & Pop-Ups**
Designed for producers and makers (craft, food, etc.) who want to get out, meet customers, test products and sell!
Online, 19th April, 09:30 to 12:30
- ❖ **Start Your Own Business**
Thinking of starting your own business? This weekly in-person evening programme takes place over 10 weeks and teaches you all you need to know.
In Person, weekly commencing 20th April, 19:00 to 22:00
- ❖ **Effective Marketing for SMEs**
This workshop helps participants learn to tell their unique business story to the right audience as effectively and efficiently as possible.
Online, 26th April, 09:30 - 16:30

For further details or to book GO TO:
www.localenterprise.ie/Wicklow/Training-Events/Online-Bookings

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

Wicklow



Members of Bray Junior Musicals who participated in the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Bray

Charlie Bird Hand of Friendship Walk

Charlie Bird has announced plans to lead a special Hand of Friendship Walk for Samaritans on Sunday 16th April.

The Charlie Bird Hand of Friendship Walk will take place in Avondale Forest Park, Rathdrum.

Members of the public who cannot travel to Wicklow can walk in solidarity with Charlie in any of Coillte's forest walks, or with Samaritans volunteers in Lough Key Forest Park, Co. Roscommon, Farren Forest Park, Co. Cork, and at Ard na Gaoithe, Co. Galway.

For information on the walks, to register or to make donation, visit www.charlieswalkoffriendship.com.



Charlie Bird and his dog Tiger.

Delia's knitwear on the big screen

Have you fallen for the knitwear from the movie *The Banshees of Inisherin*? Well they have certainly caused a media frenzy around the globe and Greystones' very own Delia Barry has become somewhat of a celebrity. She has already been featured in the *New York Times*, *Vogue*, and *The Observer*, to name a few.

Greystones Cancer Support are running a raffle where Delia will knit a custom-made Aran Jumper for one lucky winner! There are 4 designs the winner can choose from and they'll also be able to pick the size they want and colour of the wool.

Delia has long been a supporter of Greystones Cancer Support having lost her sister and husband Paddy to cancer a number of years ago. Delia, who has been an avid knitter since she was a child, joined a knitting group through Greystones Cancer Support and found friendship and comfort from this group. What we didn't realise was that she was already rubbing shoulders in celebrity circles having previously knit for Meryl Streep, Jude Law and she also taught Emily Watson from *Little Women* how to knit for the movie role.

Delia has often donated some of her earnings to Greystones Cancer Support over the years but this year is offering to knit a specially made Aran Jumper in a design and colour of your choosing! The winner

will get to choose one of 4 Aran Jumper designs.

"We are so lucky to have this prize generously offered to us by Delia and are thrilled to be sharing this raffle with all her fans, and fans of the movie of course," said Greystones Cancer Support.

Tickets are being sold at <https://www.idonate.ie/raffle/aranjumper>. Tickets are €10 each or 3 for €25. If you would like to make an additional donation to Greystones Cancer Support please find the donation page here: <https://www.idonate.ie/cause/greystones-cancersupport>



Delia Barry (photographed by Ellius Grace for the *New York Times*)



Colin Farrell and Barry Keoghan, wearing one of Delia's jumpers, in *The Banshees of Inisherin*. Photo: Jonathan Hession



Pictured (L-R) are Daisy Hooper, Joshua Quinn and Jessica Hipwell in the Wicklow Town St. Patrick's Day parade, with their float entitled 'When Ziggy Met the Rocket Man'.

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Wicklow Active Retirement

The Wicklow Active Retirement Association's AGM took place recently. A number of changes took place as Chairperson and Secretary had completed their three years of duty. Pam McDonough, Chairperson, worked tirelessly over those years especially during covid. Pauline Flanagan has taken over on the Chairperson's role and her vice-Chairperson is Marian Nelligan. Irene Maher is the new Honorary Secretary and Ivan Sheane continues as Honorary Treasurer.

The committee members are Fintan Clarke, Rita McAulay, Lillian Conway, Phil Barrett, Una McGowran, Ruth Patterson and Patricia Sheehan. A tour to The Custom House and to EPIC, The Irish Emigration Museum is planned for Wednesday 19th April. The spring holiday is to north Wales from 15th to 19th May.

Wicklow Active Retirement Association meets every Tuesday morning at 10.45 a.m. in the De La Salle Pastoral Centre at St Patrick's Church and new members are always welcome.

Table Quiz for Open Door

Sugarloaf Lions Club will hold a table quiz in Greystones Rugby Club on Thursday 30th of March at 8pm in aid of Open Door. All proceeds will go towards providing activities for adults with physical disabilities. €40 per table of four. All are welcome. Contact Joe Grennan on 086 818 1563 or Mick Lemihaan on 086 812 1860 for further details.

In Conversation with Elis Taves

On Friday, March 31st, at 2pm is the closing exhibition of Water Colour by Elis Taves, a Brazilian fine art photographer based in Co Wicklow. It will take place in Arklow Library. "In Conversation" is a Slideshow presentation followed by Q and A. Bill Murphy, a member of the Bray Camera club, will discuss the current exhibition on display at the venue. Booking is required P: 0402 39977 E: arklowlibrary@wicklowcoco.ie.

Bella Voce Ladies Choir

Bella Voce would like to invite ladies of all voice ranges to an open evening of singing on Thursday 30th March at 8pm in Christ Church, Delgany. An introduction by musical director Frank Kelly will be followed by a sing along with a break for coffee and cake at 9pm. After the break everyone is welcome to stay and join the rehearsal. Bella Voce sing a wide variety of song including Classical, Jazz, Musical and Pop. If you like to sing please come along on the 30th at 8pm and give it a go. Contact Frank Kelly on 0864013711

Quiz Night for Greystones First Responders

The annual fundraising table quiz in aid of Greystones First Responders will take place on Friday 31st March in Greystones Golf Club, from 8pm till late! The cost is €10 per person for a table of 4. There will be spot prizes for the raffle and Bingo! For more information or prize donations email GreystonesCFRGroup@gmail.com.

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‘An egregious political act’

Sinn Fein TD John Brady has expressed his anger at the failure of the three Government TDs from Wicklow to support the Sinn Fein Motion calling for a retention of the Eviction Ban in the last Wednesday night. Just 20 properties are listed as available to rent in the whole of Co. Wicklow on Daft.ie, as 123 households in the county are facing evictions.

Deputy Brady said “This will inevitably unleash a tsunami across the state, and in Wicklow in particular, as according to Wicklow County Council there is zero emergency accommodation left available in the county.

“The decision by the three government TDs, two of whom are government Ministers to vote against the retention of the Eviction Ban, is a decision that will effectively lead to hundreds of not thousands of renters left homeless in the weeks and months ahead.

“It is difficult to comprehend the levels of human misery that lie ahead for those that face eviction from the 1st of April. What will these three TDs say to the single parents, people with long-term illnesses, people with

disabilities, the care-workers, the teachers, the nurses, the people from across the whole spectrum of society who are threatened with eviction.

“Never before have I witnessed such a willing and egregious political act, where a government has wilfully opted to adopt a policy that will inflict such suffering and misery of vulnerable people. And I have witnessed a lot of bad political decisions by these three government parties since I have entered politics.

“Wicklow County Council have said that there is no emergency accommodation available in the county. There is simply nowhere for them to go in county Wicklow. There is still a chance to avoid the impending catastrophe of thousands of renters being evicted.”

Sinn Fein last week introduced a Bill in the Dail to extend the ban on no fault evictions, a replica of that passed by the Dail last October. It would extend the ban to January 31st with a phased ending of protections to renters through to April 2024.

Sinn Fein intends table this Bill for second stage debate and this Tuesday.

Deputy Brady continued, “We have used the Government's own legislation to enable it to be brought forward before the eviction ban is removed at the end of the week. The Bill needs a single amendment, to allow for homeowners who themselves are homeless or at risk of homelessness to access their property. Of course, extending the ban is not in itself enough. Immediate emergency measures are also required.



'Starman' Niall Reid at the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Wicklow Town

NO WAY UP THE MOUNTAIN NOW

Continued from page 1

Ireland Open, said “As an organisation which seeks to protect and extend access to the countryside for responsible recreational users, Keep Ireland Open condemns in the strongest possible terms the alleged unjustified attack on the Glenmalure farmer, Pat Dunne. To ask a person not to bring dogs up a mountainside was abso-

lutely correct, especially at a time when sheep are lambing. Anyone with an ounce of sense or knowledge of the countryside should know that. It is why Keep Ireland Open, along with other organisations which attend meetings of Comhairle na Tuaithe (the Government advisory body on the countryside), have asked that there should be a compulsory module for transition year stu-

dents about responsible behaviour in the countryside.

“Keep Ireland Open has been aware for several years about Mr. Dunne's generosity in terms of giving access to the Zig Zag path in Glenmalure, one of the most important paths in Co. Wicklow. This makes the alleged attack on him very serious for the general public as well in that it restricts access in

Glenmalure and may make other landowners wary of granting access. We hope the Gardaí get to the bottom of what happened and that, if someone is found guilty of an offence, he gets the severest punishment possible.

“Looking to the future we hope for a situation where legislation will protect the rights of walkers and those of landowners as well,” concluded Mr Dowds.

Mr Dunne was recently part of a delegation from the Wicklow Cheviot Sheep Owners Association which made a presentation at the Wicklow County Council meeting on 6th March, outlining the dangers of allowing dogs into areas where there are sheep. The presentation was made at the request of Cllr Pat Kennedy by the Chair and Vice-Chair of the association, Pat Dunne and Peter Behan.

There are 155,209 breeding ewes in Wicklow with 233,000 lambs born every year making the county the fifth largest in Ireland in terms of sheep numbers.

Sheep kills by dogs across the county are multiplying every year and have become a significant issue for all sheep farmers. Dogs kill and ravage sheep, generally attacking faces, throats and stomachs. Many sheep that aren't killed outright have to be put down afterwards by vets or die from shock. Unborn lambs are often lost or have to be aborted. Many sheep die in

the following days or weeks after the ordeal.

Mr. Dunne and Mr. Behan outlined that the law is against sheep farmers as it is put on them to take dog owners to court and many farmers won't want to go

down this route. They asked that the council write to Ministers McConalogue and Humphreys and ask that a national database be put in place for all dogs in the country for microchipping and

licensing and that extra dog wardens working flexible hours be put in place to ensure there are dog wardens working weekends. This was agreed by all members who also agreed to request that Coillte add on and develop their open access policy to include that dogs should be on leashes

when out and about in the countryside.

Speaking after the meeting Cllr. Pat Kennedy said “sheep farming is an undervalued industry in Wicklow generating €23 million. It needs to be taken seriously. If we had a company coming into the county with that turnover we'd be rolling out the red carpet for them.”



COMHAIRLE CONTAE CHILL MHANTÁIN
WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO DOG OWNERS

In the coming weeks Dog Wardens will be calling to the owners of unlicensed dogs at the following locations:-

- | | |
|----------------|----------------------|
| • Bray | • Annamoe |
| • Greystones | • Ashford |
| • Delgany | • Rathnew |
| • Kilmacanogue | • Kilcoole |
| • Enniskerry | • Kilpedder |
| • Roundwood | • Newtownmountkenedy |
| • Laragh | • Newcastle |

Please ensure that your dog is licensed (before they call).

Failure to produce a current Dog Licence may result in the issue of a €100.00 on-the-spot fine.

An Individual Dog Licence (€20 per annum) or a lifetime licence (€140) may be purchased at your local post office or on-line at www.licences.ie

A General Dog Licence (€400) may be purchased from Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Wicklow tel. 0404-20236.

Responsible Dog ownership

Dogs must be kept under effective control at all times.

All dogs must be microchipped and registered. In addition, they must wear a collar engraved with their owner's name & address.

Always poop-scoop after your dog - please keep our footpaths, roads, parks and beaches clean.

Spay or neuter your dog to prevent unwanted puppies.



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- Maintenance of kitchen area and use of the dishwasher and maintaining a clean and safe kitchen in the location.
- Ensure safe work practices are observed and the environment is safe at all times.
- Wash windows and glass panelling
- Reports to: Children/Adult Services Manager

Eligibility Criteria:

- Previous practical experience working in a similar environment is desirable but not essential.
- Passion for providing residents with a safe, clean environment to live in.
- Ability to work independently or as part of a team.
- A professional, caring and empathetic nature.
- Be comfortable working in a sometimes challenging environment.
- Availability to work varied shift patterns, Monday to Friday.
- Flexibility and reliability
- Knowledge of Health & Safety as it relates to the role.
- Strong communication & interpersonal skills.
- An interest in working in an environment with individuals that have Intellectual Disabilities and Autism.

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Salary:

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- Sick Pay Scheme *eligibility criteria
- Paid Maternity & Adoptive Leave *eligibility criteria
- Enhanced Annual Leave
- National Federation Voluntary Bodies Pension Scheme
- VHI Employee Assistance Programme
- Coramarket Salary Protection
- Hospital Saturday Fund
- Christmas Savings Club
- Staff Education Loans & Paid Study Leave
- Bike To Work Scheme
- Excellent training opportunities
- Employee Wellbeing Initiatives
- Refer a Friend Scheme

Council visits Tourism Ireland in New York

Representatives of Wicklow County Council, who were in New York for the St Patrick's Day period, met with senior executives from Tourism Ireland the week before last. They were briefed on Tourism Ireland's promotional programme in the United States for 2023, which is in full swing right now.

This year, Tourism Ireland is rolling out an extensive programme of promotions in the United States, to rebuild overseas tourism to Ireland and to drive the return of revenue from American holidaymakers to pre-pandemic levels.

Tourism Ireland in the United States rolled out an extensive programme of trade, media and consumer activity on St. Patrick's Day to capitalise on Ireland's heightened profile around the St Patrick's Day period.

Alison Metcalfe, Tourism Ireland's Head of North America, said: "We were delighted to meet with the representatives of Wicklow County Council and to have the opportunity to brief them about the extensive promotional programme we are undertaking in

the United States this year. Our new Fill your heart with Ireland campaign will go live at the beginning of April. The campaign is about celebrating the different ways in which Ireland fills the hearts of our visitors and of locals - and inviting potential American holidaymakers to come and experience those for themselves.

"Our St Patrick's Day programme included an extensive and targeted programme of trade, media and consumer activity to help rebuild overseas tourism this year. Our aim is to remind American holidaymakers that Ireland offers the warmest of welcomes and great fun, as well as wonderful scenery and heritage."



Brian Gleeson, Wicklow County Council; Fallon Griffin, Tourism Ireland; Cllr Aoife Flynn Kennedy, Leas Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council; and Paul McDonagh, Tourism Ireland, in the Tourism Ireland office in New York.

Greystones rises to the occasion for St. Patrick's Day

A big welcome was received by the Holyhead Twinning Partnership who travelled to Greystones for St. Patrick's Day.



Pictured are former Greystones Mayor and Councillor, Kathleen Kelleher; Holyhead Councillor, Alan Williams; Deputy Holyhead Mayor, Hywel Williams; United Nations Veteran, Viv Collins; Holyhead Santa, Richard Burnell; Sue Williams.

The Holyhead contingent brought Cadwaladr with them, a 3.5 metre high, smoke breathing red dragon. Cadwaladr, accompanied by the visitors in traditional dress, was one of over 50 parade participants. Greystones came alive during the parade with music, dance, groups, clubs and bands.

Cllr. Stephen Stokes, Deputy Cathaoirleach of Greystones Municipal District said, "I was honoured to accompany Kaci Rock and Tadhg O'Donnell, our Grand Marshals, in the parade. The parade was a showcase of all that Greystones has to offer. The event was a great experience for both children and adults alike."

Also speaking about the fes-

ivities in Greystones, Kathleen Kelleher praised the collaborative effort which made the day possible, as the decision to have a parade was made just six weeks prior.

Kathleen was Chairperson for 15 years of the Greystones Town Council Community Affairs Committee, which organised the Greystones Christmas Lights and St. Patrick's Day Parade.

Speaking after last weekend, she said, "Due to Covid 19, our previous parade was last held in 2019. We had no parade in 2022 and this year's parade was in doubt. Cllr. Gerry Walsh, Cathaoirleach of Greystones Municipal District, did not want our parade to fade away. He put

out a call for a committee to get together and see if the parade could go ahead. The response was overwhelming and a decision was made to re-establish this annual event. That was just six weeks ago.

"Tom O'Mahony and the Greystones Town Team came on board. Niamh O'Mahony brought in the Sugarloaf Lions Club. Wicklow County Council supported the effort. Supporters of various clubs in the town offered their expertise.

Greystones residents responded to the call for stewards and volunteers. The Gardaí offered their experience in managing events, traffic and parking. Businesses donated sponsorship funds, goods and supplies and

decorated their premises.

"Greystones Fire Brigade offered accommodation to Cadwaladr, the Red Dragon from Holyhead. Schools, clubs, groups, usinsses from all over the town participated in the parade. We had drone coverage of the parade from Drone Connect. We also had Austin Prior as MC to announce the groups and live streaming from Noel Dicker. Greystones people and people from far and wide came to watch the parade.

"A heartfelt tribute to all who helped, in any way, to make St. Patrick's Day 2023 in Greystones such a success. Greystones rose to the occasion for Ireland's National Day and was not found wanting."

EcoTrail Wicklow 2023 launched in Paris

EcoTrail Wicklow was launched in Paris on St Patrick's Day during the EcoTrail Paris event.

The popular international trail running festival is back in Wicklow at the end of September with race day scheduled for Saturday, 30th September 2023. Attracting more than 1500 participants, EcoTrail Wicklow is Ireland's premier trail running event with participants coming

from all over the world.

The 2022 event attracted participants of 42 different nationalities with runners coming from all over Europe, the US, South Africa and Singapore. EcoTrail Wicklow has gained the support of Fáilte Ireland with the objective to grow international participation and exposure.

EcoTrail Wicklow is based out of Bray with start and finish of the various races on Bray Seafront. The event offers five different distance options. The 8km and 19km races are ideal for beginners looking for a first trail running experience. The more experienced and ultra runners will enjoy the 30km, 45km or the gruelling 80km races.

The various routes take on some of Wicklow most scenic trails and locations including Bray Head, Killruddery, Little Sugar Loaf, the Big Sugar Loaf, Powerscourt Water-fall, The Wicklow Way, Lough Tay and the Vartry Reservoir.

The sport of Trail Running has enjoyed increasing popularity around the world. The connection with nature and the mostly non-competitive and fun atmosphere has made the sport extremely attractive to road runners as well as hikers looking for a new challenge.

Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council, Emer O'Gorman, said: "Wicklow is a perfect playground for trail running with so many trails to run or just walk on! EcoTrail has proven a to be a tremendous promotional tool to showcase the stunning Wicklow Sceneries to the world."

Cathaoirleach Cllr Tommy Annesley added: "EcoTrail Paris welcomes more than 13,000 runners, and launching EcoTrail Wicklow in Paris is a fantastic opportunity to further promote our destination to the overseas market! France is one of the top visiting countries to Ireland, and the French are very receptive to the fantastic scenic beauty of the Wicklow Mountains and its coastline."

For further info on EcoTrail Wicklow go to <http://wicklow.ecotrail.com>



Fatima Painda, Pierre Bazin from EcoTrail International and Nicola Cleary from EcoTrail Wicklow at the bottom of the Eiffel Tower for bib collection for the 2023 EcoTrail Paris event.

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Timeframe to begin N11/M11 park and ride facilities confirmed

A timeframe has been confirmed by the National Transport Authority (NTA) regarding plans to establish three bus-based Park and Ride sites along the N11/M11 in the area of Fassaroe, Ashford, Rathnew, and Kilpedder, in conjunction with the Wicklow County Council, and the various transport agencies who will operate in the areas, which will be developed by the Park and Ride Development Office (PRDO).

Sinn Féin TD John Brady described the announcement of the timeframe for the development of the Park and Ride facilities as very welcome, as the Park essential to encouraging the maximum use of public transport, and taking traffic off the roads, particularly at the busiest times of the day, preventing log-jams. With the Park and Ride projects currently in design stage, the NTA intend to commence the planning consent process for Fassaroe in Q2 2023, for Ashford/Rathnew in Q3 2023 and for Kilpedder in Q3/Q4 2023. Subject to planning approval, the aim is to deliver Fassaroe in Q4 2024, Ashford/Rathnew in Q1 2025 and Kilpedder in Q2 2025.

Deputy Brady said: "I welcome confirmation from the NTA of the

progress to date in respect of their efforts to support plans to ease traffic congestion along one of the busiest routes in the County. I have been in regular consultation with Minister Eamon Ryan in relation to the development of Park and Ride facilities along the N11 / M11 route in Wicklow and am happy to see that progress has been made in regard to the establishment of a timeframe.

"The PRDO will be responsible for the delivery of the project, working in conjunction with Wicklow County Council, and the various transport agencies operating in the County. Which will involve the establishment of three bus-based Park and Ride sites along the N11/M11 in the vicinities of Fassaroe, Ashford/Rathnew and

Kilpedder. All of the sites in question are currently in design stage, and I have been informed that there is objective of commencing the planning consents process for Fassaroe in the second quarter of 2023, for Ashford/Rathnew this will be the third quarter of 2023 and for Kilpedder the planning process will run towards the end of this year. Subject to planning approval, the aim is to deliver Fassaroe towards the end of 2024, Ashford/Rathnew at the start of 2025 and Kilpedder in the second quarter of 2025.

"This is an important development for commuters in County Wicklow and will greatly assist in making public transport more accessible for people and easing traffic congestion by taking cars off busy roads."



Hip Hop dancers from Studio X in the Bray St. Patrick's Day parade

Concerns raised over childcare availability



Jennifer Whitmore TD

Jennifer Whitmore TD has called on government to make access to childcare for all a priority in the year ahead. The Social Democrats TD recently met with Assumpta O'Neill, manager of the Wicklow County Childcare Committee who outlined the growing needs of Wicklow families to access childcare.

Following the meeting Deputy Whitmore, The Party's spokesperson on Children said: "It is no secret that is getting harder and harder to find childcare places for most families. I have been contacted by a number of parents highlighting the frustrating issues they are experiencing with childcare in County Wicklow.

As a first step, I met today with Wicklow County Childcare committee manager to get clarity on the provision of childcare in Wicklow.

"Not only is the high cost of childcare in the county an issue that has been raised with my office, it's also the lack of availability, particularly for babies and after

school children. This is causing huge distress for families in Wicklow that depend on childcare services. This is especially a problem in the North of the county. And it is being seen all levels of need from ECCE places to after schools for older kids.

"The issue of part-time childcare is another huge issue. It's nearly impossible to find. Some parents end up paying full time but only using the service on a part-time basis which is expensive and inefficient.

Another growing concern for me is the number of creche buildings lying empty. As part of a planning condition on housing developments over 75 units, is the requirement to build a creche. However, many of these are lying empty because childcare providers cannot afford to purchase or pay the rents asked on the market. It makes no sense when demand for flexible and affordable childcare places are rising in Wicklow, yet there are creche buildings lying empty in housing estates.

"I will be raising the concerns of parents here in Wicklow with the Minister in the weeks ahead."

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Bus Éireann delivers the school transport scheme on behalf of the Department of Education.

School Transport 2023/24

New Applicants' Deadline: 28 April

New applications for school transport tickets for the school year 2023/24 are now open.

For eligibility criteria and to apply, see: gov.ie/schooltransport

'New applicants' are:

- Pupils attending junior infants in primary school or first year in post-primary school for the first time in 2023/24
- Pupils with a new home address or attending a new school in 2023/24

New applications after 28 April are deemed late and this may mean a seat is not available. Payment for all applicants must be made between 3 April and 9 June. 2023/24 school year charges:

€50 per student at primary level

€75 per student at post-primary level

€125 cap per family

Full payment, or registration of medical card details, for all who wish to be considered for the allocation of a ticket for the 2023/24 school year must be made by 9 June 2023.

Families are strongly urged to make sure that they register and pay on time on buseireann/schooltransport.

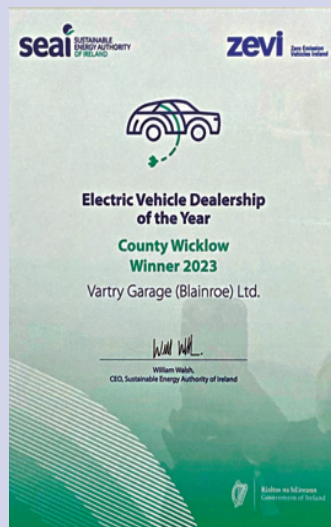


An Roinn Oideachais
Department of Education



Pictured are the sales team at Vartry with the award Tony Breslin, Mick Doyle, Mick Humby & Jason Ryan

Vartry Garage win Electric Dealer of the Year award



Vartry Garage Blainroe, main Kia & Peugeot dealers for Wicklow, have been announced as the 2023 Zevi SEAI Electric Vehicle Dealership of the Year Winner for County Wicklow.

This prestigious award is in recognition for excellence in both the promotion & sales of electric vehicles. To achieve this award dealers must evoke an unwavering standard in promoting sustainable vehicles & a commitment to ensure the customer is also fully informed & aware of the sustainability & cost savings available. To obtain this, all staff are trained to the highest standards.

Located in Blainroe, Vartry Garage is Wicklow longest established & most respected motor dealer with over 50 years' experience in sales & Service.

ReWild Wicklow celebrates National Tree Week

On Saturday 18th March, volunteers of ReWild Wicklow celebrated the start of National Tree Week and the St Patrick's Weekend with a big tree planting in partnership with the Wicklow branch of the Native Woodland Trust at their Coill na Luise reserve in Laragh.

The team of 28 volunteers planted 50m of new native hedgerow along the reserve's southern border, completing a stretch of 150m planted so far this year. This new native hedgerow will one day span almost a mile around the entire reserve, acting as a wildlife highway for local birds and animals.

"While a soaking shower of rain might have presided over the lunchtime picnic, it did nothing to dampen the spirits of the volunteers who pushed on through the afternoon session to plant a total of 250 trees," said co-founder of ReWild Wicklow and Native Woodland Trust staff member Jeremy Casey at the event.

The hedgerow mix in question was 60% thorn species, peppered with standalone trees of birch, hazel and rowan. Planted two feet apart, in three staggered rows, the planting strategy aims to create a wild hedge with plenty of room

for the messy growth that such a hedge desires. To guard against predation from invasive sika deer, as well as other potential predators such as rabbits, a protective fence was erected by hand right the way around the hedgerow.

"After the last fence pole and barbed staple were driven and hammered into place, a real sense of pride and accomplishment could be felt as the fence was closed," said Jeremy. "Our work is not complete however, as we plan to revisit our hedgerow after the tree planting season ends and the tree maintenance season begins, conducting regular work like mulching and cutting back competing vegetation to ensure our young saplings have the best possible start to life as they establish and take root in their new home on Paddock Hill. We are always looking for new volunteers in both ReWild Wicklow and the Wicklow branch of

the Native Woodland Trust to help with this!"

Most of the trees planted in the mix were hawthorn that were sponsored through ReWild Wicklow by local Wicklow people purchasing tree gift certificates at Christmas and this spring. "If anyone in Wicklow is looking for the perfect way to celebrate National Tree Week these certificates are available for purchase all year round," said Danny Alvey, chairperson of ReWild Wicklow. "Many members of the public have purchased these over the past few months to celebrate big occasions of loved ones or indeed in memory of loved ones that have passed away which is a very thoughtful and poignant gift and we are so thrilled to be able to purchase and plant these trees in the Garden County." Full details on volunteering and purchasing tree certificates are available on their website at www.rewildwicklow.ie.



ReWild Wicklow volunteers at the tree planting event at the Coill na Luise reserve in Laragh

Clean up of Greystones' Dr Ryan Park to take place for National Spring Clean

On Saturday, April 15th a National Spring Clean event is being held in the Dr. Ryan Park, Greystones, from 11am to 12.30pm. It is being organised by Cllr. Stephen Stokes in conjunction with An Taisce. It is hoped bring people together from across the area. The meeting point will be at the Dr. Ryan Park northwest entrance, close to the football pitches.

Cllr Stokes stated: "We are really looking forward to this clean up event. Unfortunately the Dr. Ryan Park has had significant litter challenges over the years. However it has great potential to be a more family friendly park. Hopefully this event will be a step in the right direction."

Cllr Stokes has advised that a limited supply of equipment is being provided. However anyone with gloves or pickers should try to bring them. Cllr Stokes stressed that all are wanted. He added: "It's good exercise. Even if you can only come for 30 minutes, it will make a positive impact. We need all of the support we can get for the Dr. Ryan Park."

Wicklow County Council Officials are currently considering ways to improve the Dr. Ryan



Dr Ryan Park, Greystones

Park for the community. Cllr Stokes continued: "I would be keen to see improvements to made to the Dr. Ryan Park, to make it more community focused, while discouraging anti-social behaviour. Crucially we will need a lot of engagement with local residents in the surrounding estates. Many residents have expressed

to me that they would like to see biodiversity enhanced, as part of any future plans. I share this positive vision."

Cllr Stokes also paid tribute to An Taisce for their Spring Clean events nationally. In 2022, An Taisce had 5,640 clean-ups registered throughout the country. Volunteers who participated in the

Spring Clean 2022 collected an estimated 2,600 tonnes of litter. Cllr Stokes has thanked both An Taisce and the Greystones Municipal District Office for their support of the Dr. Ryan Park Spring Clean event. Anyone seeking further information can reach Cllr Stokes at stephenstokes101@gmail.com.

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'Long overdue' rollout of E-Planning system welcomed

Green TD Steven Matthews has welcomed the rollout of the E-Planning system by Wicklow County Council as part of a nationwide rollout. It is hoped that this system will go live in April 2023. This programme aims to modernise the planning application process by bringing it online and doing away with antiquated requirements for submitting planning documents in hard copy.

Deputy Matthews has been a long-time advocate for an E-planning system and has worked to deliver this since his time on Wicklow County Council.

Speaking after the announcement, Deputy Matthews said: "This move is long overdue and will help streamline the planning system which is already under significant pressure. I believe that it is a step is a no brainer to make

the planning process more efficient as we tackle the ongoing housing crisis. As Chair of the Oireachtas Housing Committee, this is a change which I have been pushing for many years having seen first hand how off putting the

complex and trivial existing planning process was. In recent times, I have worked closely with Minister for Housing, Darragh Ó Brien to ensure that this change would be implemented without delay.

"Over the last number of years, I have been working directly with the Department of Housing, Local Government and heritage to expedite the rollout of this system and to work through any hiccups in the process. This nationwide rollout follows a series of trials by Tipperary and Galway County Councils in which a number of issues in the process were identified and resolved. I hope the addressing of these issues will help

streamline the rollout in County Wicklow.

"I hope that this new more efficient application system will make this vital resource more approachable for members of the public to engage with. I hope that this will lead to more sustainable and productive development in towns and villages across Wicklow. I look forward to seeing the positive impact which this move will have across the county. If anyone in Wicklow requires any assistance while engaging with the planning process or any other issue, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me directly," Deputy Matthews concluded.

Free books to be provided in primary schools and special schools in Wicklow

Free books will be provided in all primary schools and special schools in Wicklow, Minister Simon Harris TD has said.

Minister Harris said the initiative will provide not only free schoolbooks, but also workbooks and copybooks easing the financial burdens facing families during back-to-school time.

Minister Harris said: "This scheme will ensure that parents and guardians will not be asked to buy or rent any school books, workbooks or copy books as of Autumn 2023.

"In 2020, Fine Gael in Government announced a new pilot programme which provided free schoolbooks to more than 100 primary schools which were part of the DEIS programme, in both rural and urban areas. I'm delighted to have seen this pilot project expanded to better support families and pupils.

"This ground-breaking, permanent measure

will ease some of the financial burden facing families with the back-to-school costs. Around 558,000 children and young people, their families and their schools around the country will benefit from the initiative.

"The objective of the new scheme is about ensuring every child has the resources required to access education and also easing financial burdens surrounding the back-to-school costs which can be a cause of financial difficulty for many families each year," Minister Harris concluded.

Minister of State for Special Education and Inclusion, Josepha Madigan, said: "The provision of free books to primary schools, particularly special schools, will undoubtedly have a positive impact on the academic, social, and emotional development of children. It can help to promote a love of learning, improve literacy skills, and support the unique needs of children with special educational needs."



Hazel Byrne from Avondale Camogie Club at the St. Patrick's Day parade in Rathdrum.

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Brian Murray and Rosemary Greene with new Wicklow & District Chamber President Stephen Delaney at the 'Meet the Chamber' event held in Wicklow Library last week.

'Council needs to retain more Local Property Tax'

Wicklow County Council needs to retain more Local Property Tax due to the amount of population growth in the county, Cllr Derek Mitchell has said.

"Wicklow Council spends the third lowest amount per person of all Councils. Partly this is because Councils with the fastest expanding population get little extra funds," Cllr Mitchell said last week.

"However there is a complex calculation which effectively has taken the Property Tax from the new homes and paid it to Central Government. This Baseline calculation is being reviewed now."

Cllr Derek Mitchell has made a submission to adjust the calculation so Wicklow gets to keep all the LPT. "Much more funding is needed to support the new residents who are living at high density," he said.

He proposed that more funding emphasis should be placed on population and population increase, also on population density as more dense development needs more parks and sports facilities. Half of Wicklow's population live in Bray and Greystones where new planning permissions are required, by Ministerial Order, to be high density.

He also proposed that extra weight be given to the Council supporting National Policy objectives of Housing Delivery and Climate Action. Wicklow is over its targets for building houses, both private and social. The largest Wind Farms in Ireland are to be built off the coast so the Council should be rewarded for that, he believes.

"I hope the calculations are changed to reflect these points and Wicklow gets proper funding to provide for all the extra people," said Cllr Derek Mitchell.



Cllr Derek Mitchell



Susan Smullen and Sharon O'Brien at the St. Patrick's Day parade in Wicklow Town.

Harris encourages Council to develop Ashford Plan

Minister Simon Harris has encouraged Wicklow County Council to develop and submit an overhaul plan for Ashford's traffic, parking and pedestrian facilities to the National Transport Authority.

Minister Harris said, "Recently, I have been in contact with the National Transport Authority regarding the quality of Ashford's traffic, parking and pedestrian facilities and discussed the clear need for further investment in the town. For too long a reactionary and piecemeal approach has been taken in maintaining our public infrastructure, and I will keep working until this is changed."

A spokesperson for the NTA advised Minister Harris that the NTA's preference is that funding is being provided to deliver against an overall plan, rather than isolated, individual projects and that the NTA would welcome an overall plan for Ashford against which funding of sustainable transport (walking, cycling, public transport) projects, which is the ambit of NTA funding, can be considered.

Minister Harris continued, "I have been in close contact with many people across Ashford on this, and I know how much this investment would be welcomed. I want to encourage Wicklow County Council to evaluate the need for such a plan in Ashford and the establishment of a comprehensive approach to the infrastructure that holds our county together."



Ashford

Whitmore raises need for Brittas Bay Local Link from Arklow to Greystones with Minister Ryan

Social Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore has, for the fifth year in a row, called for a coastal Local Link route to facilitate sustainable access to Wicklow's beaches along our coastline from Arklow to Greystones during the summer months. Last Thursday she raised the issue with Minister for Transport Eamonn Ryan directly at a meeting of the Committee on Climate Action.

Speaking last week Deputy Whitmore said: "Our beaches in Wicklow are fantastic amenities that are visited by locals and tourists in their droves during the summer months. Currently the transport infrastructure is wholly inadequate to cater to the huge number of people flocking to our coasts on the weekends. Every year this leads to huge traffic congestion, a diversion of Garda traffic management resources, roads turning into car parks, and a block in access to emergency services. This is completely unsustainable and can be prevented for the Summer of 2023 if the NTA answer my call.

"If nothing is done to address the lack of transport infrastructure on Wicklow's coastline, the yearly pattern of traffic congestion will continue. This means that locals, once again will be unable to leave their homes and emergency services will not be able to reach people to provide urgent care in the area.

"I am repeating my call for a seasonal Local Link bus route like the one in Wexford to Curracloe in the first instance, to be set up from Arklow to Greystones taking in stops along the route to including Brittas Bay, Magheramore, Wicklow Town, Newcastle, Kilcoole and Greystones. Having raised it with the NTA every year, today I asked the Minister direct-

ly. While he could not tell me why this had not been resolved before now, I am glad to say he committed to looking into this on my behalf.

"This local link route up and down the coast will cater for a massive amount of people who want to visit the area. In recent years a seasonal Local Link from Wexford to Curracloe has been in place to bring locals and tourists to the beach dur-

ing the summer months and the footfall on that beaches isn't nearly as much as the people flocking to Brittas Bay and other beaches nearby.

"Bus drivers normally assigned to school routes could be re-deployed for the summer months on the local link. A local link for the area will address our over-dependency on cars. It just makes sense. People would be able to access

public transport, therefore getting them out of their cars, locals have the peace of using the roads to and from their homes, emergency services would have unimpeded access to provide care. If Wexford can get funding for such a service then questions need to be asked as to why Wicklow cannot get a similar service to that provided in Curracloe," concludes Whitmore.



Brittas Bay

Clune holds talks with councillors in Brussels

Ireland South MEP Deirdre Clune has been discussing the needs of local Irish communities with county and city councillors in Brussels.



MEP Deirdre Clune, Cllr Avril Cronin, and EU Commissioner Mairead McGuinness in Brussels.

West Wicklow Councillor Avril Cronin was part of a delegation that visited the European Parliament recently as guests of MEP Clune.

Regional Development, Brexit, Renewable Energy, Digital Finance and the War in Ukraine were also among the key topics raised during productive talks.

MEP Clune says, "I am delighted to have facilitated this opportunity to address the issues affecting local communities across Ireland and examine how the EU can help. It is vital to bring citizens' concerns and ideas to the attention of different decision-makers at the EU level."

"County and city councillors are often the first point of contact when it comes to people's questions about European policies. They have the knowledge, experience and contacts that make them ideal brokers for EU-related topics in their own areas."

"The big decisions made in Brussels often rely on the work of local representatives to be implemented at regional level. I thank those who attended and EU Commissioner Mairead McGuinness for their participation in positive discussions."

Harris announces new Garda recruitment campaign

1,000 new Garda recruits to enter Templemore in 2023

The Minister for Justice, Simon Harris TD, has announced that a new recruitment campaign for An Garda Síochána opened for applications on Friday, 24th March for three weeks.

This new recruitment campaign will assist in the recruitment of 1,000 new Gardai this year, as provided for in Budget 2023, and will secure a strong pipeline of recruits into the Garda College into the future.

The Minister for Justice said "A career in An Garda Síochána is a challenging but rewarding one. It will change your life and the lives of others - having a personal impact on the community you serve will give you a sense of achievement like nothing else. Being a Garda is a tough job, but is a job worth doing."

"Few institutions in Irish life are as respected as An Garda Síochána. The close connection between Gardai and the communities they serve is the envy of police services around the world."

"Recruiting 1,000 Gardai in 2023 is central to the Government's commitment to build stronger, safer communities, and I know there will be people listening today who will hear this and think that they too can work with us to deliver on that mission."

"Policing is not a career for the faint of heart - it is a career for

those with strong initiative and perseverance, tolerance, composure, a strong moral compass and most importantly respect and compassion for the communities that they serve. To protect and to serve in An Garda Síochána is a worthwhile and valued career, and I would like to encourage anyone who feels up to the job to consider applying."

"Both the Government and Garda Commissioner are committed to increasing diversity within An Garda Síochána and ensuring that all communities see

themselves reflected in our police service."

"The Garda Commissioner has put a welcome focus on equality, diversity and inclusion, as An Garda Síochána seek to embed the principle that human rights are the foundation and the purpose of policing in Ireland. This has included changes to Garda uniform policy, the establishment of the Garda National Diversity Forum, representation from diverse and minority communities in An Garda Síochána, the establishment of a Garda internship programme focused on attracting candidates belonging to a group at greater risk of inequality or social exclusion in Irish society. An Garda Síochána are working to finalise an updated Equality, Diversity and Integration Strategy."

"It is incredibly important that a modern police service reflects the communities that it serves. If An Garda Síochána better reflects the rich diversity of Irish society, they will be better able to understand the different needs and concerns of the communities they serve and in turn make those communities stronger and safer."

"An Garda Síochána is an inclusive organisation to work for, not only regardless of but embracing of your race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and socio-economic



Ellie-Mai Heffernan at the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Rathdrum.

background. Visit publicjobs.ie for more information on how to apply."

There are currently over 200 trainees in the Garda College, derived from the most recent

recruitment campaign launched in 2022 by Minister Helen McEntee. The Garda Commissioner has outlined to the Minister his intention that four further tranches of around 225 recruits

will enter Templemore throughout the rest of 2023, provided for by candidates from the previous campaign and later supplemented by the new recruitment campaign being launched by

Minister Harris.

It is anticipated that the first successful candidates from this new campaign will be ready for interview by the Public Appointments Service (PAS) by July.

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Pure remove 140,000kg of litter and rubbish illegally dumped in the uplands

In 2022 the environmental initiative Pure removed over 700 individual dumping sites, with the collection of over 140,000kg (140 tonnes) of illegally dumped waste from the remote, beautiful, and scenic, Wicklow/Dublin Uplands.



Pure Truck cleaning up the Wicklow National Park

Pure has made huge progress in reducing illegal dumping in the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands. If you compare the amount of dumping collected by Pure in 2022, which was 140 tonnes of waste, to 2008 which was their busiest year, when they removed 440 tonnes, the initiative has seen a 68% reduction in illegal dumping in Wicklow/Dublin Uplands.

Minister of State Ossian Smyth with responsibility for Public Procurement, eGovernment and Circular Economy said, 'Everyone

who spends time in the beautiful Wicklow and Dublin uplands benefits from the work of the Pure Project and the efforts of the volunteers who participate annually in the Pure Mile Initiative. The reduction in illegal dumping in the area is impressive and my department is pleased to support this work.'

The Pure Truck is on the road every day, and since Pure was established in 2006, it has removed over 3,800,000kg (3,800 tonnes) of rubbish from over 14,000 illegal dumping sites in the Wicklow/Dublin

Uplands with the project processing over 15,000 reports/complaints. If you were to put all the rubbish that Pure has removed from the uplands into standard household rubbish bags, they would fill over 400,000 bags. If you lined up all these bags on the road, they would stretch all the way from Dublin to Dingle.

Ian Davis, Pure Manager, commented, 'Illegal dumping is not unique to the Wicklow/Dublin uplands, however, while most regions in Ireland are currently reporting an increase in illegal dumping, Pure are seeing a decrease. We're the first initiative of its kind in Ireland and the success of Pure is based on a multi-stakeholder approach, with a strong emphasis on collaboration and cooperation between all of the organisations involved. However, it is extremely important that we do not become complacent, because if we do, it won't take long before illegal dumping will be on the increase.'

Pure has been recording and mapping every location and incident of illegal dumping in the Wicklow/Dublin since 2007 and they have



Illegal dumping in the Wicklow-Dublin Uplands

built up a base-line-data of all illegal dumping activity in this region, the location of dumping, type of dumping, landowner, and amount of dumping, and for a number of years now they have been recording an annual reduction. The data that Pure collect is valuable information providing indicators into the nature and extent of illegal dumping in

Wicklow/Dublin Uplands, and statistical evidence for all illegal dumping incidents in this region.

Pure utilises a multi-disciplined approach in combating illegal dumping, incorporating a number of educational initiatives, environment/community projects - The Pure Mile, public awareness campaigns, regional/national media campaigns, enforcement and preventative measures, GPS/GIS data-base to record all illegal dumping sites, covert CCTV operations, and a dedicated vehicle - The Pure Truck, that removes all illegal dumping from the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands.

Pure is a partnership approach, incorporating statutory, non-statutory organisations, and members of the public, and for the past six years they have recorded an annual reduction in illegal dumping activity. This reduction in dumping coincides with the huge increase in Pure Mile groups, which is now numbering over 1,000 miles of road, mountains, woodlands, valleys, forests, upland amenities, car parks, currently being adopted in Wicklow, South Dublin, Dun-Laoghaire, uplands.

The Pure Mile is an environmental, community, heritage initiative, that encourages communities and groups living in rural areas of Wicklow, South Dublin, and Dun-Laoghaire, to adopt a mile of road, or miles of road, in their

local area, or in the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands and organise litter picks, clean-ups, anti-dumping campaigns, research information about their local wildflowers, plants, trees, animals, and the built, cultural, and social heritage of an area. Thousands of Pure Mile volunteers, ranging from individuals, family groups, community groups, walking groups, cycling groups, running groups, scouts, beavers, businesses, and organisations, removed hundreds of tonnes of illegally dumped waste and thousands of bags of litter and rubbish from the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands. Pure provide all groups with Pure Mile signage, Pure Mile bags, gloves, litter pickers and

Pure Mile high-vis vests, and they also remove all of the rubbish collected by the groups. In 2022, Pure Mile groups organised clean ups and litter picks of the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands, which resulted in a visible decrease of litter and rubbish in upland areas. These clean-up events carried out by Pure Mile Groups resulted in the removal of over 4,000 bags of litter and rubbish, and it further demonstrates the necessity and importance of The Pure Mile Project, and the need for continued collaboration and engagement to protect the Wicklow/Dublin upland environment.

Pure is the first initiative of its kind in Ireland incorporating statutory

and non-statutory organisations and stakeholders, including, the Department of Environment, Climate, and Communications, Wicklow County Council, South Dublin County Council, Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council, Coillte, National Parks & Wildlife Service, and the Wicklow Uplands Council. This unique partnership initiative was established to combat illegal dumping in the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands and was officially launched in September 2006.

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Dumping in the Wicklow Uplands



The Pure Mile Glencree Walking Group

Wicklow & District Chamber of Commerce welcomes new President

Wicklow Town businessman Stephen Delaney has been elected as the 2023 President of Wicklow & District Chamber of Commerce. Stephen takes over the role from Matt Forkin of REA Forkin. Anna Thornton of DNG Thornton Properties Wicklow is the new Wicklow & District Chamber Vice President.



New Wicklow & District Chamber President Stephen Delaney

The handover took place at the Chamber's recent AGM on 10th March.

Stephen is the founder of the Shoe Box in Wicklow Town, which opened its doors in 2018 and will soon be marking its 5th anniversary. The Shoe Box specialises in ladies and children's footwear and children's clothing, and provides an expert measuring and fitting service.

A native of Brittas Bay, Stephen attended De la Salle College in Wicklow Town. He also serves on the boards of Holy Rosary NS, Colaiste Chill Mhantain and Wicklow & District Credit Union.

Stephen has been a member of the Chamber of Commerce since 2017 having served on numerous Chamber committees and initiatives.

Wicklow & District Chamber stated, "Since joining the chamber, Stephen has seen how the organisation and business as a whole have been negatively impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic over the last number of years which proved to be unpredictable, challenging and often frustrating for all businesses not just in



New Wicklow & District Chamber President Stephen Delaney, with Ronan Short, Vice President Anna Thornton, Matt Forkin, Samantha King and John Smith.

Ireland but indeed globally - and most certainly - locally."

Stephen says "None of us expected what would unfold nor were we prepared for the changes that we have had to make to both our business and personal lives. I would like to say well done to the chamber and all of you here for steering your business through this challenge".

Addressing the Chamber's recent AGM, Stephen said it had been an honour to serve as Vice President under Matt Forkin. He praised Matt's commitment to local commerce. Looking to the year ahead, he spoke of the confidence he has that the

Chamber and its ability to rise to whatever challenges lie ahead. "Working together we can be stronger as a whole and meet both current and future needs to support a thriving future," he said. Quoting Benjamin Franklin, he added: "Out of adversity comes opportunity".

Stephen's tenure as Wicklow & District Chamber President got properly underway last week with back to back 'Meet the Chamber' events on Wednesday morning and Thursday evening. These open information meetings in Wicklow Library were a way for non-Chamber members and new businesses to

learn about the role and work the Chamber does for local businesses and the Wicklow community.

Wicklow Town & District Chamber of Commerce was formed on May 12th, 1948 by the Wicklow Development Association, chaired by State Solicitor A.B. Cullen. On May 28th, the first meeting was held. Its stated aims were to "act and agitate in Wicklow's economic and social interests."

The first AGM of Wicklow Chamber of Commerce in July 1948 elected Yorkshire man and Managing Director of the Dublin & Wicklow Manure Company, Albert Pearson as President.

Every success from
Matt Forkin to Stephen
Delaney, new President
of Wicklow Chamber

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Build it and they will come: Wicklow's libraries are a popular success

The phrase 'Build it and They Will Come' may be attributable to the movie 'Field of Dreams', but it could also be the mantra for Wicklow County Council's network of libraries (13 + mobile).



Arklow Library

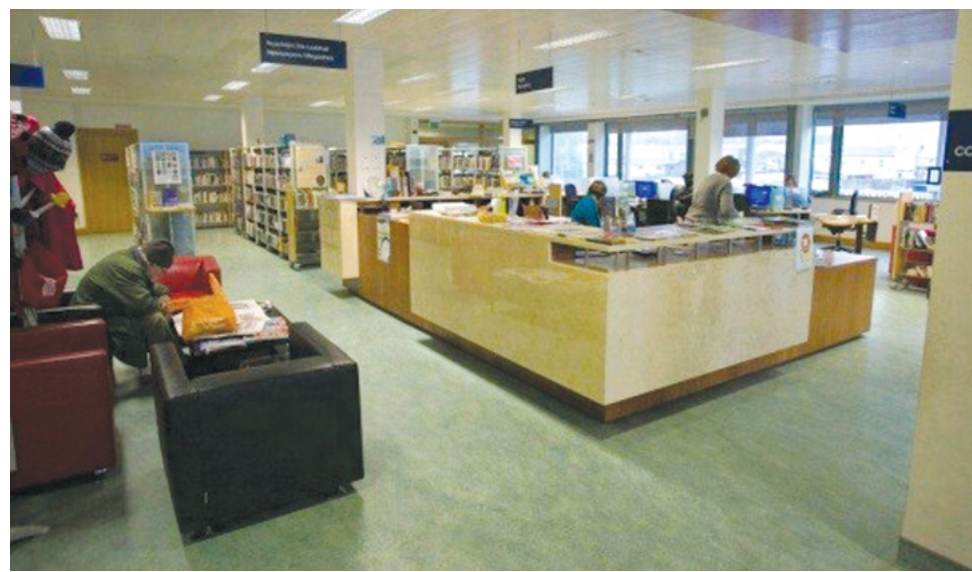
In recent years statistics for items borrowed, library visits and use of online resources have shown Wicklow as being consistently in the Top Three local authorities.

However, the figures for 2022 show Wicklow County Council as being in Number 1 position across all three categories, with each statistic being more than 40 per cent greater than the corresponding national average.

Last year there were 485,000 individual visits

to Wicklow libraries which resulted in 323,000+ loans (which increases to 400,000+ when renewals are included), along with 107,000+ ebooks and downloaded audio books.

Cllr Tommy Annesley, Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, welcomed these figures, saying: "This reflects Wicklow County Council's continuous investment in new public library buildings in recent years.



Blessington Library

New libraries in Arklow, Wicklow and Rathdrum are now reaping the benefits, and are being embraced by the public. Our libraries have kept a pace with change and now also have access to downloadable audio

books, e-books, e-magazines and online newspapers from across the world."

Wicklow County Council Chief Executive, Emer O'Gorman, stated: "Our libraries are a great resource. It is important

that we continue to improve our services through the library capital programme. These statistics are also due to the wide-ranging programme of events and activities in libraries throughout county

Wicklow, and the dedication and enthusiasm of library staff."

Come and see for yourself. For full details of upcoming events, see Wicklow County Council Library Service Facebook page or Instagram.



Greystones Library



Rathdrum Library

Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation releases new 'Glencree in History' video series

The Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation has announced the release of its 'Glencree in History' video series. This specially commissioned series takes viewers on a journey of Glencree through time from the Ice Age right down to today's world-renowned peace centre - Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation.

'Glencree in History' is a five-part video series of interviews with local historian Frank Tracy. Frank delves into the rich history of Glencree, dating back 10,000 years BC to the end of the last Ice Age, and the area's origins as Gleann Criothach 'the shaking bog'. Frank then takes us on a fascinating and meandering journey through the key events from famine times, and war, then the aftermath of World War II, and right up to today. Frank introduces us to the many dramatic and colourful characters who played their part in these stories, right up to more modern times (1974) when Glencree was founded in response to the conflict in Northern Ireland and today as the Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation.

Each day a new chapter was released on Glencree's social media channels, (@GlencreeCentre), and is also be accessible on: <https://glencree.ie/resources/glencree-in-history/>.

The series is be a wonderful resource

for students and anyone who is interested in accessibly traversing 12,000 years of history in Glencree and Wicklow, meeting the area's intriguing historical figures, and coming right up to the present day as the home of peace and reconciliation.

All students and those who are interested to learn more about Wicklow and the Glencree Valley, are invited to join Frank as he leads us through this enthralling series of historical events: 'Glencree in History' is told over 5 chapters, (approximately 10 minutes each):

- Chapter 1: The Glencree Valley
- Chapter 2: The Building of the Glencree Barracks & Military Road
- Chapter 3: The Years of St. Kevin's Reformatory School
- Chapter 4: Post World War II Operation Shamrock
- Chapter 5: The German Military Cemetery at Glencree

'Glencree in History' is available now for all to watch on: <https://glencree.ie/resources/glencree-in-history/>



Stephen and Iris Dunne at the St. Patrick's Day parade in Rathdrum.

Avondale student competes at All Ireland Linguistic Problem Solving Final

Alanna Delamere from Avondale Community College recently competed at the national finals of the All Ireland Linguistics Olympiad (AILO) in Dublin City University (DCU).



Alanna Delamere

Run by ADAPT, the SFI Research Centre for AI-Driven Digital Content Technology, the contest challenges secondary school students to apply logic and reasoning skills to solve complex puzzles in unfamiliar languages.

The 100 national finalists, from 49 schools in 21 counties, have come through preliminary rounds held in schools all over the island in January. More than 3,500 students registered for this year's contest. Competing in individual and team rounds, the finalists are faced with anything from deciphering ancient Norse scripts about Thor to working out unusual counting systems such as Bukiyip where there are two counting systems, depending on what you are counting!

The AILO finals see teenagers solve puzzles that require lateral thinking skills and the ability to think outside the box. Students must analyse the language data they are given to work out the 'rules' of the new language. These transferable skills are critical in preparing young people for a wide range of careers in computing, linguistics and language.

Four winners from today will go on to represent Ireland at the International Linguistics Olympiad held in Bulgaria in July.

Students urged to consider accountancy apprenticeship

Students are being urged to consider an accountancy apprenticeship programme which will create 150 jobs in the private and public sectors nationally this year. Applications have opened for the Accounting Technicians Ireland (ATI) Apprenticeship, in partnership with further education colleges in Cork, Dublin, Galway, Limerick, Meath, Monaghan, Waterford and Wicklow.

The apprenticeship is a funded, two-year, work-based learning education and training programme in which apprentices work, learn and earn at least €22,035 a-year while attending lectures one day a week at a local college.

It provides an alternative for school leavers who prefer practical training to a full-time college programme - or those who started a college course and found it did not suit them.

It is also an option for existing employees and mature learners who want to pursue accounting. The apprenticeship enables employers recruit and upskill staff in a cost-effective manner as training fees are covered by state agency, SOLAS.

Employers can also avail of a grant of €2,000 per-year for each apprentice they employ. Large firms and smaller practices, as well as industry and the public sector, have all embraced the programme.

Dublin-based Tsuikea Cheung, 32, is in the second year of her apprenticeship with fibre broadband wholesalers, Siro at their Carrickmines headquarters.

The Hong-Kong native, who lives in Sandyford said being able to work and learn at the same time has enhanced her career prospects and provided her with the option of becoming a fully qualified



Second and first-year Accounting Technicians Ireland apprentices Tsuikea Cheung (l) and Noelia Zamora with their mentor and Siro finance manager Gillian Noonan. Pic: Fintan Clarke.

accountant.

"Though my background career was in accounting, I needed to update my skills to reflect Irish standards after moving here with my family," said Tsuikea.

"The Accounting Technicians Ireland apprenticeship programme was perfect for me and suits a wide range of people. Leaving Certificate students who are unsure of what to do, employees in the sector who wish to further their careers, or career changers who cannot afford to give up their jobs for full-time education.

"You get two years' work experience, which is so valuable when applying

for jobs, and you earn while you learn. Also, the apprenticeship gives you multiple exemptions if you wish to study to become a fully qualified accountant.

"The knowledge I gain through college can be easily applied into everyday practical work immediately, which makes it easier to understand and remember."

Gillian Noonan, finance manager at Siro and Tsuikea's workplace mentor, said the programme is a win-win for the employer and the apprentice. "The Accounting Technicians Ireland Apprenticeship has been a huge success for Siro," said Gillian.

"The work-based learn-

ing is very much in tune with the evolution of the accountancy environment. At Siro, we are very focused on sustainability and there is related course work on this. Learning and development can be matched through progression within our finance team. And the programme has been such a success for us that Siro has taken on another apprentice."

Gabriela Airini, Head of Education at ATI, said the Apprenticeship enables employers to recruit and upskill staff in a cost-effective manner.

"The Accounting Technician Apprenticeship continues to contribute towards job creation and business growth in Ireland with over 650 jobs created since the programme's foundation in 2017," she said.

"Graduates gain a professional QQI Level 6 Advanced Certificate in Accounting and have acquired practical professional skills needed to fill a range of accounting and finance roles across all sectors. ATI is continuing to work with over 350 apprenticeship employers which have hired Accounting Technician apprentices across 22 sectors."

Leaving Certificate students, school leavers, career changers, and mature learners can apply at accountingtechnicianireland.ie.



Acceline Beeings at Colaiste Chraobh Abhann's 'Showstoppers' Talent Show event

Kildare and Wicklow ETB attend inaugural ETB Excellence Awards

Representatives from Kildare and Wicklow ETB attended the inaugural ETB Excellence Awards recently. The awards were run by Education and Training Boards Ireland as it celebrated 10 years of Education and Training Boards (ETBs) in Ireland.

Three students from Athy College, Anton Budnyev, Maya Kalenbet and Oliwier Merta, were nominated in the ETB Excellence Award for Community. The students engaged in charity events to raise funds for Ukraine and attended meetings with local politicians, community groups and Ukrainian people.

The Wicklow Youthreach Young Social Innovators Group were nominated in the Excellence in Youth Services category, for their work with residents in Blainroe Nursing Home and local direct provisions centres.

The awards were presented at a special ceremony in Croke Park which also marked 'ETB Day'. Hosted by RTE newsreader and former ETB student, Ray Kennedy, the event was attended by representatives from all 16 ETBs across the country.

Some of the awards presented at the ceremony included the ETB Excellence in Education Award, the ETB Excellence Award for Equality, the ETB Excellence in Further Education and Training Award, and the ETB Excellence in Youth Services Award, amongst others.

Congratulating the awardees, Paddy Lavelle, Chief Executive of ETBI said: "It gives me great pride to congratulate all the winners, and indeed runners-up on

their success in the inaugural ETB Excellence Awards. We received over 500 entries from ETBs across the country to the Awards detailing the great people and initiatives that are ongoing in all corners of Ireland.

"The standard across all categories was extremely competitive, meaning we had a very difficult job in narrowing the entries down and select our winners. The work of all ETBs - not those just officially recognised at the awards - deserves to be commended. Their commitment and passion for education, for learning and for their communities play a vital role in ensuring that there are broad and varied options for people to engage with education and training across the country, no matter what stage of their learning journey they are at.

"This year is a milestone year for ETBs as we celebrate 10 years since their formation in Ireland. Over the past decade, ETBs have delivered learning and education opportunities for everyone - including primary and post primary schools, further education and training and youth services. ETBs have revolutionised Ireland's education system, and I hope that we can continue to deliver innovative, diverse and flexible learning pathways over the next ten years, and beyond."



Pictured at the inaugural ETB Excellence awards ceremony were Olivia Daly, a teacher in Athy College and Maya Kalenbet, a student from Athy College, who was nominated in the ETB Excellence Award for Community Category.

Council staff receive Long Service awards

Wicklow County Council recently held an awards night to honour 137 employees who between them have over 4,000 years of local authority service.

On the night long service awards were presented by the Wicklow County Council Chief Executive, Emer O'Gorman, and the Leas Cathaoirleach, Cllr Aoife Flynn Kennedy, to staff who had 25, 40 and 50 years' service working with Wicklow County Council or other Local Authorities.

The awards event was an opportunity for the Council to recognise and pay tribute to long-serving members of staff, indoor and outdoor, across the many functional areas and the five Municipal Districts of Wicklow County Council including the libraries and the fire service.

Overall 137 staff were honoured, including: 83 25-year awards, 53 40-

year awards and one very special 50-year award.

Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council, Emer O'Gorman, congratulated those receiving awards saying: "Wicklow County Council's most valuable asset is its staff. Down through the years, you have all worked hard to deliver services efficiently and effectively to the public. On average, any Local Authority provides more than 200 services over a broad and varied range of activities. In Wicklow, you have always ensured excellent service delivery and the best possible customer service. I thank each and every one of you for your contribution to Wicklow County Council, and by extension, your contribution to County Wicklow."

Leas Cathaoirleach Cllr Aoife Flynn Kennedy said: "I would like to thank you all on behalf of myself and all the other Councillors for your assistance and co-operation with us on a daily basis and know that we hold you in very high esteem. Each one of you plays their part in delivering quality services every day to the people of County Wicklow. Some services are delivered directly to the public, others are delivered in the background but you all make a difference to the lives of our constituents."

The award presented to each individual was a framed print of different scenes from County Wicklow taken by talented local photographer Trevor Quinn.



Michael Nicholson, Greystones Town Manager; Cllr Aoife Flynn Kennedy, Leas Cathaoirleach, Wicklow County Council; Patricia O'Gorman, John O'Gorman, Emer O'Gorman, Chief Executive, Wicklow County Council; Myra Porter, Tawnia Kearns, Greystones District Administrator; and Ruairi O'Hanlon, Greystones District Engineer



Anne Shannon, Margaret Birch, Wicklow County Librarian Brendan Martin, Marie Hennessy and Fiona Scannell



Joyce and Tom Murphy



Pat Carty and Joyce Murray



Cllr Aoife Flynn Kennedy, Emer O'Gorman (Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council), Lorraine Gallagher and Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council Tommy Annesley.

Records found on site of Donnybrook Magdalene Laundry prompt new book

A new collection of essays on Donnybrook Magdalene Laundry disproves several key findings of the McAleese Report, say its authors. A Dublin Magdalene Laundry: Donnybrook and Church-State Power in Ireland tells the story of the Magdalene Laundry run by the Sisters of Charity in the heart of Dublin 4 from 1833 to 1992.

In 2018 Dr Mark Coen, a law lecturer at University College Dublin, found extensive financial ledgers and correspondence relating to Donnybrook Magdalene Laundry on the old laundry premises. The Sisters of Charity sold the laundry in 1992 as a going commercial concern, and there are now plans for the site to be converted to luxury apartments. Coen's discovery in 2018 was the beginning of several years of work with fellow academics Professor Katherine O'Donnell (UCD) and Dr Maeve O'Rourke (University of Galway), and other researchers, which has resulted not only in a book but also in the National Museum of Ireland's preservation of material from the site.

The McAleese Report, published in 2013, stated that Ireland's Magdalene Laundries operated 'on a subsistence or close to break-even basis rather than on a commercial or highly profitable basis.' According to the McAleese Report, financial records for the Donnybrook Magdalene Laundry 'did not survive'. However, the records found by Coen and analysed in the new book show otherwise.

A chapter in the book by accounting experts, Professor Martin Quinn of Queen's University Belfast and Dr Brid Murphy of Dublin City



Dr Noeline Blackwell speaking at the launch.

University, finds that the Donnybrook Laundry 'generated a good financial surplus annually'. This was made possible in large part due to the unpaid labour which girls and women were forced to undertake. The available records from the years 1962 to 1987 show a customer base of over 900 accounts, including Áras an Uachtaráin, Raidió Teilifís Éireann, CIE, University College Dublin, the National Maternity Hospital at Holles Street, St Vincent's private and public hospitals, Captain America's, the embassies of several countries and numerous expensive schools, clubs and hotels.

The book states that one-third to one-half of the Laundry's 'surplus on trade' was transferred

each month to Sisters of Charity headquarters. In 1981, the surplus on trade was £105,972. That year's 'Contribution to RSC' of £48,000 could have bought a four-bedroom Georgian house in salubrious Blackrock, Co Dublin.

Launching the book on 7 March, Noeline Blackwell of Dublin Rape Crisis Centre noted that in the twentieth century Church and State were obsessed with 'respectability', but treated certain groups with 'very little respect'. Dr Blackwell also questioned the religious congregations' refusal to contribute financially to the State's Magdalene 'restorative justice' scheme.

She observed that Catholic teaching on absolution requires not

only an admission of wrongdoing but also 'a firm purpose of amendment'.

Dr Mark Coen, speaking at the launch, noted that the Religious Sisters of Charity generated £63 million in property sales between 1999 and 2009 but have made no financial contribution to the State's compensation of Magdalene survivors.

The launch was attended by approximately 150 people including survivors of institutional abuse and members of the Oireachtas. The book's editors called for the Government to introduce emergency legislation to make it a criminal offence to destroy or alter institutional records and to place a duty on persons and organisations who hold such records to safeguard and preserve them. Speaking in the Dáil on Wednesday 8 March, Marian Harkin TD commended the editors of the book and called for such legislation to be passed by the Oireachtas without delay.

The editors also called for the State to publicly accept and acknowledge that - as the book proves - the McAleese Report contains several erroneous findings relating to the Magdalene laundries, particularly in relation to their profitability, the length of stay of women within them and the treatment the women received.



Dr Mark Coen, Professor Katherine O'Donnell and Dr Maeve O'Rourke at the launch of the new book A Dublin Magdalene Laundry: Donnybrook and Church-State Power in Ireland



Lexi Doyle as Wednesday Adams at the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Wicklow Town

New book explores history of the Irish Defence Forces

A new book from Eoin Kinsella explores the history of the Irish Defence Forces from 1922-2022.

Tracing its history to the foundation of the Irish Volunteers in 1913, the Irish Defence Forces has evolved beyond recognition from the force that emerged in tandem with the new state in 1922. Plunged immediately into the chaos of a bitter civil war, the path towards a professional Defence Forces during the 1920s and 1930s was rarely smooth, with progression

hampered by internal dissent, political neglect and limited financial investment. The island of Ireland possesses a geopolitical and

strategic importance that belies its size, and the difficulty of creating and maintaining a force capable of defending Irish neutrality was brought home during the Emergency (1939-45). Those years saw the greatest mobilization of manpower in the history of the state, an achievement quickly forgotten as the Defence Forces were allowed to return to the doldrums in the late 1940s.

Revitalization came following Ireland's accession to the United Nations in 1955, as the

Defence Forces emerged as a core component in the UN's peacekeeping efforts and a vital element of Ireland's international relations. At home, the Defence Forces' duty to aid the civil power became ever more important with the outbreak of the Troubles in Northern Ireland in 1969. In recent years, a number of important challenges have emerged, both internally and externally, with the Defence Forces compelled to adapt to changing demands at home and abroad.

This richly illustrated book explores the landmark successes and achievements,

struggles and missteps of the Defence Forces over the past century. Highlighting the men and women

of the Army, Air Corps, Naval Service and Reserve, it offers the first complete overview of the development of the Defence Forces from the foundation of the Irish Free State to the present day. What emerges from Kinsella's research is a story of an institution that has, since the foundation of the state, formed an essential safeguard of Irish democracy and remained steadfastly the servant of the nation.

Eoin Kinsella is Managing Editor of the Royal Irish Academy's Dictionary of Irish Biography. He is the author of several books, including Dublin City University, 1980-2020: designed to be different (2020), Catholic survival in Protestant Ireland, 1660-1711 (2018) and Leopardstown Park Hospital, 1917-2017: a home for wounded soldiers (2017).





Fergus Cahill, Eneni Anthony and Molly Smith who will perform in *The Cricible* as part of BIFE's 2023 Showcase.

BIFE 2023 Showcase

The Performing Arts Department of BIFE are delighted to announce their end-of year show. Performed by the Acting and Dance students of Bray Institute, SHOWCASE 2023 is guaranteed to be an entertaining night of comedy, drama, music and dance. SHOWCASE 2023 will present the talents and hard work of the performing arts students from the acting and dancing courses. With actors performing popular scenes and monologues from acclaimed productions of the stage and screen - *The Crucible*, *The Producers*, *The Cripple of Inishmaan*, *Saturday Night Live*. While the dancers will present energetic and original choreographed pieces - with Jazz, Contemporary and Commercial.

The show is for two nights only (8pm, Wednesday 29th and Thursday 30th March) and booking is essential. Entry is free. To book, call 01 282 9668. Places Limited.

Síomha live at Whale Theatre

Saturday 1st April, 8pm (doors 7pm). Tickets €22 and available at www.whaletheatre.ie or call the booking office on 01 2010550 to book.

Independent Irish singer and guitarist Síomha (pronounced She-vah) dances the line between folk, jazz and neo-soul effortlessly taking audiences on an unexpected and unforgettable journey with her soulful melodies.

Her debut album 'Infinite Space' - described by The Irish Times as "a seriously accomplished and self-confident debut" - is a collection of songs in both Irish and English. A kind of cosmic, folk-informed, jazz-tinged, post-pop - it was produced by GRAMMY-nominated Tyler Duncan and features an all-star lineup of musicians including Joe Dart (Vulfpeck), Louis Cato (Bobby McFerrin/ Snarky Puppy), Martin Atkinson Borrull (Toucan) and violinist Jeremy Kittel (Bela Fleck/ Chris Thile). Síomha's voice is full of raw heart-felt experience. When listening to her, audiences are instantly moved to feel on the deepest level and come out more intimately connected to their own worlds.



Síomha

Carnew's Colaiste Bhride wins 'Rubbish' Film Festival Award

Colaiste Bhride in Carnew has won the County Wicklow award for the 'Rubbish' Film Festival 2023, the first time schools from Wicklow have entered the competition.

Participating schools received two days of training in filmmaking with Createschool who are based at the new film hub on Clermont Campus in Rathnew. Wicklow County Council sponsored the training.

Schools had the challenge to make a short film focussing on climate action, consumption and the sustainable development goals and to deliver a message visually in

just one minute.

In a close competition Colaiste Bhride came out on top with their film called 'The Last Drop' exploring water conservation. Temple Carrig School in Greystones were runners up with a film entitled 'ReAct' which explored energy conservation and climate.

Schools also produced a film poster and East Glendalough School in Wicklow Town took the

prize for best poster for their film 'A Matter of Responsibility' which focussed on waste management.

Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council, Emer O'Gorman, said: "The creative approach TY students took to expressing their views on a range of climate change and sustainability topics is very inspiring. They showed great skill in their use of film to develop and present their message."

Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Tommy Annsley, stated: "The Rubbish Film Festival competition show-

cased the talent of youth in screenplay writing, acting and film production under the

guidance of Createschool. It great to see the next generation of screen talent being developed here in Wicklow, the home for film production in Ireland."

The best film and runner up will now represent County Wicklow against entries from other counties in a national final to be held in May. All the film entries from County Wicklow can be seen on the 'Rubbish' Film Festival YouTube page in the 'Rubbish'

Film Festival Regional Awards - Co Wicklow video.

Peter Baxter of Createschool commented: "Since 2016 The Rubbish Film Festival has been a great success in Co Meath, and this year, with the support of a number of local authorities, including Wicklow, we have been able to reach a broader national audience. The standard of entries from participating schools in the county has been incredibly high, which bodes very well for the film industry. Thank you to Wicklow County Council for their support

and to the staff and students of the participating schools for wonderful efforts."

The full list of entries from Wicklow schools were: Colaiste Bhride, Carnew - 'The Last Drop'; Temple Carrig School, Greystones - 'ReAct'; East Glendalough School, Wicklow - 'A Matter of Responsibility & EarthVsClimate'; North Wicklow Educate Together, Bray - 'Plastic Romance The Window'; St. David's School, Greystones - Break the Cycle; Presentation College, Bray - 'B(r)oke'.

It's Magic! - with Joe the Magician

Whale Theatre, Sunday 2nd April, 1:30pm (doors 1pm) & 4pm (doors 3.30pm). SOLD OUT but register for waiting list www.whaletheatre.ie or call the booking office on 01 2010550.

Joe the Magician is coming back to The Whale Theatre! Yes, It's Joe from RTEjr's 'abraKIDabra' and 'Dizzy Deliveries'. His brand new show 'It's Magic' features an array of impossible spellbinding magic and illusion presented in Joe's unique style that will have the children of all ages roaring laughing one minute and in complete awe the next.

The show fuses magic, music, special effects and illusion that will bring kids (and grown ups) on an unforgettable journey. An afternoon of laughter, suspense, amazement and surprise awaits. Advance booking is advised as all of Joe's previous shows have sold out.



Fading Light: an Exhibition by Kaisa Ypya

Signal Arts Centre, Monday, 17th April to Sunday 30th April



Lavender by Kaisa Ypya

When creating this collection of watercolour paintings, Kaisa Ypya wanted to look into how tumultuous nature can be and how there is beauty in its destructiveness, volatility and its ability to create both life and death.

With every storm, every dying leaf or freezing river, nature is showing us how small and insignificant we are and that we are here just for a blink of an eye, as visitors. We try to grasp the magnificence of the world, and almost always fail.

When choosing her subject matters, Kaisa found herself to be especially drawn to misty landscapes, cold winters and changes that happen in between weather changing gears. The intoxicating instability.

Kaisa is originally from Finland and has lived in Ireland for the last 15 years. Her background is in Fine Art and Art Facilitation. In her art work she usually focuses on nature themes and mainly uses watercolour, paying special attention to perception of light and colours. 'Fading Light' is Kaisa's second solo exhibition.



Evening Mist by Kaisa Ypya

Austin Hearne - Slabs II and Whispers

Mermaid Arts Centre, 25th March - 6th May

Curated by Anne Mullee, with guest performance by Stéphane Béna Hanly & limited edition zine by Austin Hearne and Lily Cahill

Friday 24th March saw a preview open in the Mermaid of a solo exhibition by artist Austin Hearne. Featuring an opening performance by Stéphane Béna Hanly, the exhibition is accompanied by a limited-edition DIY cut'n'paste zine hand made by Hearne, which features a newly commissioned text by writer Lily Cahill, a frequent observer of his work.

Main Gallery

Slabs II is an ongoing, growing and open ended photographic archival project drawing on Austin Hearne's extensive personal archive, collated over 20 years and including

family photographs, newspaper clippings and advertisements. In its essence it consists of individual used painter and decorator wallpaper pasting tables. These damaged tables are utilised to hold photographic material on their surfaces.

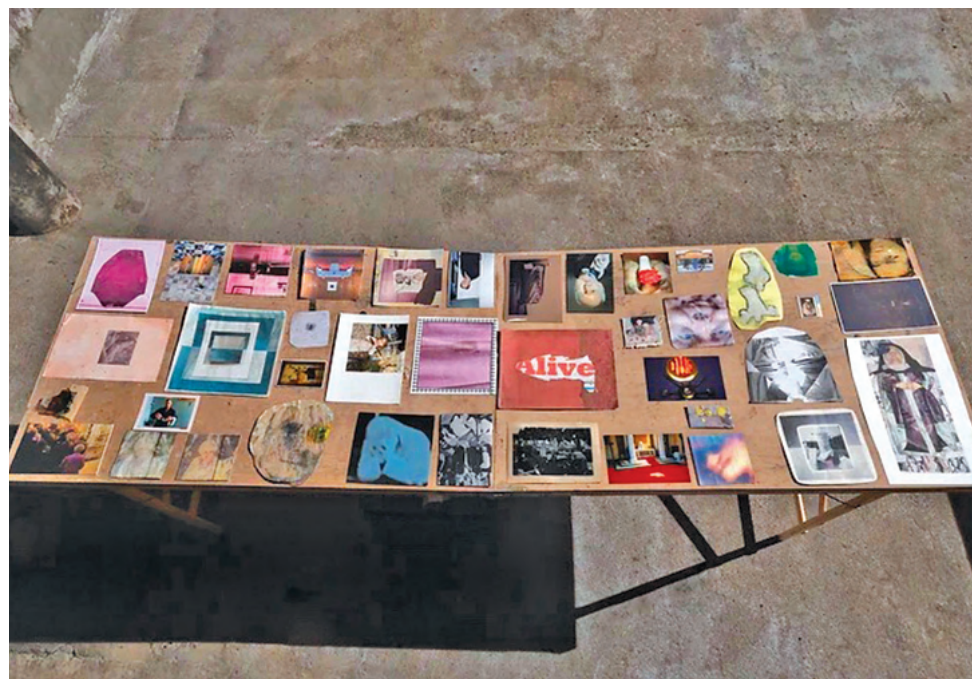
From a vast array of ephemera, Hearne makes choices as to what is brought forward, what is excluded - what does it all mean? And why these photographic works, now?

"I've long since grappled with the volume and value of my past and present photographic content," he explains. "Issues around storage, care, and quality of the material abound. The world of photographic practice has rapidly changed over these past two decades, from the analogue age of film and darkroom production to the swift infiltration of the digital, information and social media ages we find ourselves embedded in today. My relationship with the new methods of working and engaging with the medium have at times been fruitful, frenetic and maddening. Frustration with new technologies and the tech giants who now have a big hand in our ways of working and even bigger eyes on our archives. I don't trust this digital age of photographic storage and ownership."

"I recently purchased a new computer, and its lack of ports are not accepting of a large external hard drive or the many discs that house various portions of my archives. It seems we, the users of this technology, constantly have to keep a step ahead and fight to keep our property accessible. I value the printed photograph over the untrustworthy digital image, be these fine darkroom prints or mere desktop prints on



Video still from Austin Hearne's Whispers



Austin Hearne's Slabs II. Photo by Kate Bowe O'Brien

office paper. I trust that these objects will outlive the latent digital files. Technology with all its inbuilt obsolescence and the tech giants ever changing, monetisation of systems for iCloud upgrades etc. is both tiresome and engaging."

Gallery 2

A moving image accompaniment to Slabs II's static visual riot, Whispers is Hearne's award winning short film interlacing snippets of video, mobile phone footage and television, filmed in and around ecclesiastical sites over ten years. Describing himself as a 'flâneur' of these locations, as the Queer protagonist of the film, Hearne reveres, provokes and chastises their meaning and power.

Biographies

Austin Hearne is an artist from Dublin, living in Co. Wexford. He holds a MFA from NCAD (2016). His recent solo show at the Royal Hibernian Academy, Requiem For Raymo, presented a fictional sce-

nario of obsession transmuting from hate to love/lust, expressed through performance, painting and sculpture. In 2021 he collaborated on a music project Satin Shadow with film maker and music producer Glenn McQuaid with a live stream performance in The Complex, Dublin, as part of Tanad Aaron and Mark Swords' exhibition Portico. They have subsequently released three albums.

His film work Whispers recently won Best Irish Short at the 2022 Gaze LGBT Film Festival. Austin has recently had solo shows in Gorey School of Art (2021) and group shows with WEART-FETISHISTS, PhotoIreland Festival (2022) and Speech Sounds at Visual Carlow (2022). His work is held in private collections in the USA, Europe and the OPW collection.

www.bishopaustinearne.com

Stéphane Béna Hanly is a multidisciplinary artist working through sculpture, video, sound, and performance often with the intention of

combining them to produce dynamic multimedia events. Reproducing fragments extracted from fantastical scenarios with the aim of presenting them to an audience, Stéphane draws parallels with the contradictions in the world around us.

Lily Cahill is a visual artist, writer, facilitator and editor. She is the winner of the Visual Artists Ireland/ Dublin City Council Art Writing Award 2019. She has written or performed her work for The RHA, The Lab Gallery, Visual Artists' News Sheet, CIRCA, Art and Research Collaboration (ARC) at Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design & Technology, Paper Visual Art, the School of Visual Culture at NCAD and Foaming at the Mouth. Lily has facilitated writing and creative projects with Temple Bar Gallery + Studios, The RHA, The LAB Gallery, Dublin and MoLI - Museum of Literature Ireland. She has been a co-editor of Critical Bastards, funded by the Arts Council of Ireland, since 2014.

'Aftersun': Film at The Courthouse

Courthouse Arts Centre, Friday 7th April 8pm, €7/€6

The Courthouse Arts Centre is pleased to present Aftersun, starring Oscar nominated Paul Mescal.

11-year-old Sophie and her father Calum travel to a holiday resort in Turkey for a relaxing sunshine break. As they lounge by the pool and explore the tourist sights, they record their trip on a camcorder. Twenty years later, an adult Sophie looks back on the holiday and her relationship with her father - but the fond memories and the things that have been lost forever.

The extraordinary debut feature from Scottish writer/director Charlotte Wells is an achingly tender portrait of a father-daughter relationship. Driven by magnificent performances from young Frankie Corio and Ireland's own Paul Mescal, Aftersun dives deep and unearths the unspoken emotional truths that exceedingly few films manage to capture.



Chloe McInerney and Juliette Anderson of the Sound Crowd at the Wicklow Sings concert in Temple Carrig School, Greystones. Wicklow Sings represented a significant moment for the Wicklow singing community. The evening featured performances from thirteen choirs from all over County Wicklow. 13 choirs with 400 singers performed to an audience of 500 people. Wicklow Sings was filled with community spirit, laughter and beautiful singing. The choirs gathered, performed and were able to showcase their talents in a non-competitive, inclusive and multi-generational event which featured community, school and gospel choirs, choral societies, barbershop, and more.



Amira Toomey at the St. Patrick's Day parade in Rathdrum.

Have the most powerful cup of tea of the year on May 4th



Bryan Murray and Una Crawford O'Brien

Fair City and Real-Life Couple Bryan Murray and Una Crawford O'Brien are calling on the people of Wicklow to host an Alzheimer's Tea Day and have the most powerful cup of tea of the year on Thursday, May 4th.

Bryan was diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease three years ago. Bryan and his partner Una have teamed up with The Alzheimer Society of Ireland (The ASI) to invite everyone to come together for a cuppa, a chat, and maybe a treat or two on May 4th to help raise vital funds for families living with dementia nationwide.

Bryan and Una ask everyone to get involved with local Tea Day events in their homes, gardens, workplaces, schools, local community centres or somewhere special.

In August 2022, Bryan, a member of The ASI's Irish Dementia Working Group, a group of people living with dementia who advocate for better services, supports and policies in Ireland, and Una first spoke publicly about Bryan's diagnosis in hopes of helping others impacted by the condition.

Alzheimer's Tea Day is The ASI's biggest and most important fundraiser.

The Alzheimer Society of Ireland Ambassador Bryan Murray, said: "I was diagnosed with Alzheimer's three years ago. That's why my Partner Una and I are proud and excited to join The Alzheimer Society of Ireland as Tea Day ambassadors - and we really hope you'll get the kettle on too and host your very own Tea Day party on Thursday, May 4th!

Alzheimer's Tea Day returned last year after taking place online in 2020 and 2021 due to Covid-19. Traditional Tea Day events in the past have raised €500,000. The ASI hopes to continue rebuilding Tea Day and, this year, raise €300,000.

There are an estimated 1,838 people living with dementia in Wicklow, and each year more than 11,000 people develop the disease across the country - at least 30 people every day. However, there is one thing you can do to help - you can put the kettle on and host your very own Tea Day!

*SIGN UP on teaday.ie or call (01) 207 3800
Can't host a Tea Day this year? You can still support dementia care and services by making a donation on Alzheimer.ie*

Dublin among most congested cities in Europe

While the noble goal of a superb public transport system displacing cars is being worked on, the current reality is that economic success and other factors are leading to severe congestion in the greater Dublin area - and especially in Dublin City Centre.

By Martin McCarthy

Many Wicklow motorists drive through greater Dublin to get to work or their place of education and a recent survey shows that we have now one of the most congested cities in Europe.

Many of the Ireland's main economic engines are Pharmaceutical and Med Tech firms and many put 40 minutes as the outer limit as to how long their staff should have to spend getting to or from work. Increased congestion will impact our economic future.

"The most congested cities in Europe have been revealed with some drivers spending almost half an hour to travel just 10 kilometres.

London drivers experience the worst congestion in Europe - travelling at an average of just 14kph during rush hour.

Motorists in Dublin experience the second worst congestion in the continent, driving at an average speed of 17 kph at peak periods.

Bucharest and Paris both make the top five of the heaviest traffic jams, both taking over 25 minutes to drive just 10 kilometres.

Drivers in Italy also experience long wait times sitting in traffic, as Milan, Rome and Turin make the top 10 list also.

Wrocław and Hamburg rank at the ninth and tenth worst congested cities in Europe, with an average speed of 20 kph and 23 kph respectively, during rush hour.

Brussels also has some of the busiest roads in Europe, with drivers spending over 25 minutes

making just 10 kilometres of progress during peak travel times.

A UK spokesperson said: "It's unsurprising to see London at the top of the league table - living in one of the most populated cities in Europe means that you'll be driving at an average of just 14 kilometres an hour at rush hour. Of the top 10, it's only drivers in Wrocław, Poland and Hamburg, Germany who can make a 10 kilometre journey in less than 25 minutes. For motorists in the busy cities of Turin, Brussels and Rome, the journey will take an average of 25.2 minutes.

"But it's even worse news for drivers in Paris,

Bucharest, Milan, Dublin and London where a 10 kilometre trip will take close to half an hour. Drivers are experiencing slow moving traffic every day - with an average speed of only 18.9kph during rush hour across Europe as a whole.

"And many motorists are spending over 40 minutes doing their daily commute because of how congested European city roads have become. This is frustratingly slow and none of us particularly enjoy spending longer than we already do sitting in our cars while we miss out on things we would rather be doing.

"But it is surprising not to see some of Europe's biggest cities on the list - Wrocław ranking above

Berlin is surprising when you consider the population and congestion reputation in Germany. What we might be seeing is the result of differing levels of investment into improving roads and public transport from city to city.

"As we try to meet targets on pollution and emissions, European leaders need to invest more time and money into helping the traffic flow more freely. This might involve bringing in more congestion charges for motorists in these cities, building new and better roads, pumping more funding into improving existing roads as well as public transport systems, to tackle congestion across Europe."



WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

I Desmond Shorten, intend to apply for full planning permission, For 1: New two storey rear extension 2: Forming 4 new dormer window structures at first floor 3: For changing of main roof covering from concrete tiles to Zinc covering 4: All associated site works at Cush Bawn, Ballinacash, Co Wicklow, A67K318.

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

FULL PLANNING PERMISSION Sought for:
1. Proposed New Dormer Window to replace Existing Rooflight to Front Elevation.
2. All ancillary works at 'La Verna', Meath Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow A98 P864.
Signed: Deirdre Gegan
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.

Property Registration Authority (PRA) Cork Road Waterford TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Re lands known as The Marshes at The Stones, Annamoe in the County of Wicklow
Application for first Registration by Michael Weichert and Carla Weichert
PRA Reference D2022LR007332W

TAKE NOTICE that Michael Weichert and Carla Weichert of The Stones, Annamoe, Co. Wicklow has applied to be registered as owner in fee simple of the property known as The Marshes at The Stones, Annamoe, Co. Wicklow being part of the Townland of Tomrilan, the Barony of Ballinacor North and in the County of Wicklow containing 0.431 hectares or thereabouts more particularly shown on the map lodged with the application and which may be inspected in this office. Any objection to such registration must be filed in writing in this office and duly verified within one calendar month of the date of publication of this notice.
In the absence of a valid objection being received within that time registration will proceed
Collette Cassidy Solicitor of O'Connor LLP Solicitors, 8 Clare Street, Dublin 2, Solicitors Reference CC/WEJ008/0005.

RECRUITMENT

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Location: Kilcoole Lodge Nursing Home, Lott Ln, Kilcoole, Co. Wicklow

Contact:
recruitment@mowlamhealthcare.com

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

Brendan Adamson seeks planning permission for:
Attic Conversion including raising the ridge level of the roof, new dormer roof to rear and roof lights to front slope along with new single storey extension to the rear of the existing dwelling at 13 Charnwood, Bray, Co. Wicklow. A98 XY29
The planning application may be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy at the offices of Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Wicklow during its public opening hours and a submission or observation in relation to the application may be made to the authority in writing on payment of the prescribed fee within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the application.

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THE MIRACULOUS PRAYER

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

Josh Loveridge named All-Star Business Person of the Month

Wicklow entrepreneur Josh Loveridge has been named All-Star Business Person Of The Month for March 2023 by the All-Ireland Business Foundation.

Josh, a former student of BIFE, is the founder and CEO of Loveridge Digital full-service agency with expertise in managing and delivering high-performance campaigns across the whole digital spectrum.

Josh founded his company while still at secondary school, building it into a multi award winning agency with a client list that boasts heavy hitters such as PlayStation, BMW, McLaren, HitTV,

Red Bull and many more.

Josh's All-Star Business Person Of The Month is his company's fifth consecutive Business All-Star Accreditation, and it comes in recognition of his role as an informed opinion leader and the go-to person in his field.

Reacting to the news of his achievement, Josh Loveridge said: "It is a huge honour to be named All-Star Business Person Of The Month for March 2023 by the All-Ireland

Business Foundation. At Loveridge Digital, we are obsessed with performance and this achievement shows that our dedication to excellence is appreciated by our clients and our peers. I am proud to be part of the Business All-Stars TRIBE and I look forward to sharing this achievement with my talented teams."

Announcing the news of Josh Loveridge's achievement, Deputy Chair of AIBF's

Adjudication Board, Kieran Ring, said: "Josh Loveridge CEO of Loveridge Digital has been named All-Star Business Person of the Month for March 2023 Accreditation. Josh is an informed opinion leader and the go-to person in his field. He is a trusted source who moves and inspires people with innovative ideas, Josh turns ideas into reality, and knows and shows how to replicate his success. Josh Loveridge CEO of Loveridge Digital is hereby included in the AIBF Register of Irish Business Excellence."

The All-Ireland Business Foundation (AIBF) is an autonomous national accreditation body tasked with enterprise development and the promotion of Best-in-Class in Irish business.

The Foundation actively engages and supports its network through peer dialogue, collaboration, mentoring and enterprise development activities. Companies are qualified for accreditation by completing an enterprise audit and are identified by their use of the AIBF's Business All-Star Marque.

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Josh Loveridge

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