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Tuesday 2nd May 2023 First Floor, The Boulevard, Quinsborough Road, Bray. A98 R6D7. Tel: 01 - 2869111 E-mail: wicklowed@localtimes.ie www.wicklowtimes.net

# CHEAPER HOUSES ON THE WAY?

Development levies are to be scrapped as part of new extra measures under the Housing For All Plan which aim to kickstart housing construction by making it cheaper to build and refurbish homes, thereby speeding up home building. Fianna Fail Senator Pat Casey has welcomed the new measures, however others have expressed the concern that Local Authorities such as Wicklow County Council could be 'short changed'.

The cost of construction will be reduced by temporarily scrapping the development levies required to connect new homes with roads, water and other services, and subsidising development levies, saving up to the value of €12,650 per home on average. This cut to the cost of building a home will apply for a limited time only to act as an incentive. Senator

Casey said, "Development levies will be scrapped for a limited period of time which will cut the cost of building a home and increase delivery of houses. Vacant and derelict property grants are being increased as bringing those properties back into the housing stock is the fastest way of increasing supply. "The government has also committed €750 million

via the Land Development Agency and other providers as part of this initiative to complete 4,000 to 6,000 additional affordable apartments under the Cost Rental system. This will be a massive boost to our rental stock and will put downward pressure on rental prices." Responding to the Government's proposals Senator Victor Boyhan a member of the



*Sadie Doyle celebrates her 90th birthday with her grandchildren and great grandchildren at Fitzgerald's in Avoca. Pic: Michael Kelly*



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Oireachtas Housing Committee told Wicklow Times that he had "very serious concerns" about any proposal to curtail or remove any financial income levy for developers. "Councils' development levies are essential for infrastructure and are a transparent financial condition attached to planning consent," he said.

"If it is Government policy to suspend certain development levies for local authorities, then government needs to spell out clearly how it intends to provide a local authority with that loss of income and an alternative means and funds to put in place local infrastructure related to development consent." Development levies are charged by local authorities at different rates per square metre to fund essential infrastructure including roads, sewage, water, parks and foot-

paths. Senator Boyhan said, "The adoption of a development contribution scheme is a reserved function of the elected members of each planning authority, namely its City or County Councillors, and applies to the administrative area of each Council - so it is imperative that Councillors are fully consulted on any proposed changes to their approved development contribution scheme and that the government explain how they will compensate councils for loss of expected income relating to local development." Senator Boyhan said there are concerns that developers will not pass on the savings from the levy to house buyers and that's an issue that the Minister will need to address.

"It's suggested that plans to waive development levies on new houses could reduce the cost

of building an average home by more than €21,000. This figure

needs to be independently validated; the Minister would also need to set

out a full cost-benefit analysis (CBA) for his proposed new scheme."



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Martina Lynch, Peter Kennedy, Amy Penston and Sharon Hersee-Kavanagh at 'Six: The Musical' in St. Mary's Hall, Arklow.

## Trout in Strange Places

East Wicklow Rivers Trust invites you to Ken Whelan's talk 'Trout in Strange Places' on 12th May, 7-7:30pm, in Ashford Heritage Center. All Welcome, Email [wicklowrivers@gmail.com](mailto:wicklowrivers@gmail.com) for attendance.

In this talk, Ken Whelan will bring you on a unique journey of discovery across the globe to some truly exotic locations. Brown trout are considered one of the hardest and the most invasive of our freshwater fish species. They have been transported to a wide range of extraordinary locations and in this talk Ken will describe a wide variety of regions where brown trout have not alone survived but thrived! Possessing the ability to colonise both new freshwater environments and marine habitats, trout are now widely distributed across the northern and southern hemispheres.

## Greystones Active Retirement

Chair Yoga: This new activity has been introduced to GARA's schedule on Mondays from 1.15pm to 2pm, excluding Bank Holidays. There's no pressure in this class. Everyone can work within the level of their own ability. Hazel, the instructor, will take into account any individual health concerns. The aim of the class is fun and healthy movement.

On Daffodil Day, 24th March, Greystones Active Retirement Association hosted a fundraising Coffee Morning for Greystones Cancer Support. There was a wonderful response from the Greystones Community and there was a lively friendly atmosphere in the crowded Kilian Hall. The amount raised on the morning was €1850.00.

Afternoon Tea Dance will take place on Saturday, 20th May from 2pm-5 pm at the Parkview Hotel, Newtownmountkennedy. A lovely way to spend time with friends and have a fun enjoyable afternoon. Music to dance to by the wonderful Tommy Carroll. Tickets €15 from GARA committee at Kilian Hall on Tuesday

mornings. As always, you can join in regular weekly activities as follows: Art group, Mondays 2.30 - 4.30; Indoor Short Mat Bowling Tuesdays 10.45 - 12.45; Bingo Thursdays 2.30 - 4.15; all taking place in Kilian Hall.

## Kilmacanogue History Society

On Monday 8th May, 8pm, Kilmacanogue History Society have the pleasure of having Felix M Larkin Historian and retired public servant as our Speaker in Kilmacanogue Parish Hall. He has written extensively about the history of the press in Ireland. His Talk will be on "Dublin Opinion 1922-1968". Dublin Opinion, Ireland's most celebrated satirical magazine, was published monthly between 1922 and 1968. It was a miscellany of quips, short articles, poems and cartoons, all in a humorous vein, but with serious intent. His Talk will outline the history of the journal, and will review how it portrayed the 'folly, pomposity and injustice' of Irish public life over its 46 years of continuous publication.

"We can look forward to a fascinating Talk that will leave us in a good mood for the Summer break. Remember it's the last Talk of this Season, so hopefully our excellent attendances will continue and usher out our past year on a high note," Kilmacanogue History Society said.

## Music in Calary

Musici Ireland will play the first concert of Music in Calary's 2023 series at 8pm on Thursday 11th May. This will be the concert that unfortunately had to be cancelled last September.

Dianne Marshall (harp), Mia Cooper and Lidia Jewloszewicz-Clarke (violins), Beth McNinch (viola) and Katie Tertell (cello) will play pieces by Jessie Montgomery, Siobhan Cleary, Arnold Bax, Rebecca Clarke, Valentin Silvestrov and Andre Caplet. The concert begins at 8pm sharp.

For more information or to book tickets, which are €18 and €15 for concessions, please ring John at (01) 2818146 or email [derekneilson11@gmail.com](mailto:derekneilson11@gmail.com).

## First Saturday Book Sale

The May First Saturday Book Sale, which supports the Shankill Old Folks Association will take place in the Shankill Day Centre, Lower Road, Shankill, on Saturday May 6th from 10am to 1pm and all are welcome to attend. This will be an excellent opportunity to obtain some first class reading material for during the Summer. Donations of books, which must be in a clean and good condition appreciated.

## Newtownmountkennedy Male Voice Choir

Do you like to sing? Why not join a lovely group of like-minded men!! "We sing a variety of styles: light classical, folk, Irish, jazz, popular. A bit of everything!!" Rehearsals take place in Ashford Community & Heritage Centre on Wednesdays at 7.30pm. No Auditions. Contact: Pat @ 0857371883

# Invitation to come along to the Wicklow PPN Community Catch Up meetings

Wicklow PPN is inviting community groups and volunteers to come along to their community catch ups in April and May.

Helen Howes PPN Resource Worker said "Last year Wicklow PPN and Wicklow County Council asked communities, What is Your Vision for Co Wicklow? We got a great response, and we want to let communities know what we did with the information they gave us.

There will also be an opportunity to meet members of the Wicklow Disability & Inclusion Steering Committee and find out about the

Toolkit that was developed to help community groups to be more accessible to People with Disabilities. People will also find out about the Age Friendly Programme and meet the team from Co Wicklow Volunteer Centre to find out how they can help community groups. Groups are also welcome to share information about their work, events, and fundraisers". The meetings will take place in

Bray Family Resource & Development Centre 3rd May, Kilcoole Community Centre 10th May and CEART (Crinion Park) Wicklow 17th May. Meetings start at 7.30pm but the kettle will be boiled from 7pm for early tea and chats.

For more information and to register Email [info@countwicklow-ppn.ie](mailto:info@countwicklow-ppn.ie) or call Helen 087 189 5145 or Grainne 086 048 7434

# Disability Inclusive Employer Breakfast Briefing held in Bray

A recent breakfast briefing in the Glenview Hotel on how to become a more disability confident and accessible employer attracted employers from as far afield as south Dublin and north Wicklow, as well as from local businesses in the Bray and Greystones area.

The event was put on by Bray Area Partnership's Disability Network in collaboration with national organisation Employers for Change, with funding and support also provided by Bray Area Partnership's IMPACT Initiative.

Opening the event, Bray Area Partnership chairperson, Councillor Aoife Flynn Kennedy, said "There is a higher level of unemployment among people with disabilities, which means employers are missing out on an innovative and creative pool of talent. We know from research that there is a strong business case for disability inclusion, with more inclusive and diverse businesses proven to be more successful."

Christabelle Feeney from Employers for Change then gave a presentation on the diversity of disability, the positive business case for disability

inclusion, how employers can implement Reasonable Accommodations, inclusive recruitment practices and grants available to employers. Employers for Change is a national service that gives advice and information to employers on recruiting and employing people with disabilities. Christabelle noted that "In today's world, people are looking to employers who value them and who are including their needs in their processes. Having an accessible website is important, as this is the front door to any organisation. Providing reasonable accommodations at every step of the recruitment and job retention process is crucial to creating an inclusive work environment."

This was followed by an input from Conor Brandon Byrne, who talked about his journey to employment as a fashion retail sales

advisor in the men's department in Arnott's.

Conor said: "I am here today speaking before you because of the fantastic supports I received from my family, Rehab-Care Bray, Bray Area Partnership's IMPACT initiative and the employers who believed in me". He said that people with a disability just needed to be given the same opportunities as non-disabled people and he hoped employers present would commit to having an inclusive workforce, showcasing the many skills and talents that people with a disability could bring to their companies.

The event concluded with a panel discussion that was joined by Edel McSorley from Mr Price, who shared stories about her company's innovative approaches to implementing recruitment and employment practices that

are truly inclusive of people with disabilities.

Edel said "We value the diversity of our employees and consider different types of applications. We understand that every individual is different and has something to offer our organisation. We use a reasonable accommodation passport to support all employees that require adjustments at work."

This event was made possible with funding and resources from Employers for Change, the IMPACT Initiative and Bray Area Partnership's Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP), which is co-funded by the Irish Government, through the Department of Rural and Community Development, and the European Social Fund Plus under the Employment, Inclusion, Skills and Training (EIST) Programme 2021-2027.



At the breakfast briefing were Laura O'Callaghan, Disability Federation of Ireland; Orla Butler, IMPACT Initiative; Conor Brandon Byrne; Shay Hiney, NLN Wicklow; Maureen Coburn, Festina Lente; Michelle Rogers, Bray Area Partnership; Christabelle Feeney, Employers for Change; Edel McSorley from Mr Price.

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Ian Colgan, News Editor - [ian@localtimes.ie](mailto:ian@localtimes.ie)  
Sales / General enquiries - [info@localtimes.ie](mailto:info@localtimes.ie)

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# Drugs and anti-social behaviour key issues raised at Joint Policing Committee meeting

Questions regarding issues such as community policing, e-scooters, drug debt intimidation and anti-social behaviour were raised at a public meeting of Wicklow County Council Joint Policing Committee in the Arklow Bay Hotel on Wednesday 26th April.

The purpose of the JPC is to provide a forum where the Local Authority, Senior Garda Officers, Public Representatives and Community Representatives can consult, discuss and make recommendations on matters affecting the policing of their area. Cllr Gerry Walsh, Chair of Wicklow County Council Joint Policing Committee, welcomed and thanked all present for taking the time to attend the meeting and for their engagement during a

lengthy questions and answers session. Chief Superintendent Derek Hughes gave a short presentation and welcomed questions from the floor. He noted the importance of community engagement and encouraged the public to report incidents to the Gardaí. During the questions and answers session issues raised related to community policing, community engagement, e-scooters, drug trends, drug services, drug debt intimidation, bicycles on footpaths,

lighting and anti-social behaviour on the Wexford Road and the new Garda Diversionary project for Arklow. Chief Superintendent Derek Hughes, Detective Inspector Seamus Ryan, Superintendent Rory Sheriff, Inspector Michelle Byrne and Wicklow County Council Chief Executive, Emer O'Gorman, provided comprehensive responses to all questions raised. Attendees also paid tribute to the Community Gardaí in Arklow and

recently retired Superintendent Declan McCarthy, who provide an excellent service to their local communities in County Wicklow. Emer O'Gorman, Chief Executive, Wicklow County Council, thanked everyone for their attendance and engagement adding that public JPC meetings were an excellent example of community, Gardaí and the Council working together through a collective approach to the benefit of all members of our local communities.



Anne Doyle and Moya Ginty at the opening of the new ASD Centre in Moneystown National School.



Superintendent Rory Sheriff, Helen Purcell, Wicklow County Council; Detective Inspector Seamus Ryan, Emer O'Gorman, Chief Executive, Wicklow County Council; Cllr Gerry Walsh, Lorraine Gallagher, Wicklow County Council; Inspector Michelle Byrne and Chief Superintendent Derek Hughes.

## Whitmore calls on AIB to reopen cash services in Blessington branch

Friday 21st April saw the permanent closure of Ulster Bank's branches in Blessington, Bray and Wicklow Town.

These were among the many closures of Ulster Bank's branches nationwide. Meanwhile, Social Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore has written to AIB calling on them to reopen cash services at their branch in Blessington. The Blessington branch was one of the first AIB branches to remove cash services and was not included in AIB's July 2022 announcement that they would reverse their decision for 70 branches to go cashless.

Deputy Whitmore said: "Following the closure of the Blessington Ulster Bank branch last Friday, AIB is now the only bank in the town and I am calling on them to reintroduce cash services at this branch as a matter of urgency. At the moment customers must travel 12.7km to the AIB branch in Naas in order to avail of cash services.

"The decision to remove cash services from the Blessington AIB branch has disproportionately impacted vulnerable customers, who may not be in a position to deal in a digital economy or make the journey to Naas, especially as there is no regular public transport service between the two towns. The local economy has also been impacted by the lack of cash services in the town."

Whitmore went on to say: "The trend of centralising bank services has been happening for a number of years now and disproportionately impacts our rural areas. Places like West Wicklow in particular, have been impacted by unilateral moves made by banks who decide to change their banking model. It is time that these banks put communities first and supported their customers in a practical way by providing cash services."



## Lá Oscailte an Earraigh

Campas Bhóthar Chill Chainnigh, Ceatharlach  
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# Aughrim awarded €10,000 to research improvements to town's accessibility

*Town centre regeneration project for Aughrim selected for the Irish Architecture Foundation's Reimagine Hometown Architect initiative*

An Aughrim town centre regeneration project has been selected for the Irish Architecture Foundation's Reimagine Hometown Architect initiative, a programme which focuses on the revitalisation of Ireland's towns and villages and comes with the support of €10,000 per project.



*Aughrim pictured on St. Patrick's Day, when the community project was launched.*

The Hometown Architect programme connects architects with community organisations to reimagine aspects of their built environment.

The funded project, called 'Suppose a Stone', includes developing a pathway for making 'The Granite City' of Aughrim, more accessible for all ages and abilities, and for multiple species. The team includes the not-for-profit contemporary art space Kunstverein Aughrim, Aughrim Tidy Towns,

Aughrim Active Retirement Group and architect Jenny O'Leary.

The Aughrim project is one of five around the country selected by a panel of experts following an open call that invited community groups and an architect who has a connection to their town or village to partner on and submit a regeneration project proposal that aligns with the Government of Ireland's Town Centre First Policy. The Town Centre First Policy aims to promote

the regeneration of town and village centres across Ireland and to create town centres that function as viable, vibrant and attractive locations for people to live, work and visit. Each of the Hometown Architect projects will receive €10,000 in development funding, as well as practical support under the Irish Architecture Foundation's Reimagine placemaking programme.

Speaking about their project, the Aughrim

team said: "We are thrilled to have the opportunity to work with the Irish Architecture Foundation and to collaborate so closely with architect Jenny O'Leary in pursuit of imaginative, creative and sustainable ways of making Aughrim more inclusive, mobility-friendly and accessible for all."

The 'Suppose a Stone' team is undertaking an all-ages, interspecies accessibility audit of Aughrim. This community project was launched as part of Aughrim's St Patrick's Day parade on 17th March. Visitors to Kunstverein Aughrim were invited to complete a worksheet, aimed at discovering and uncovering some of the successes and challenges of Aughrim's built environment. Based on these findings, they will devise a series of workshops on specific issues within the local built environment, towards developing and testing potential solutions.

'Suppose a Stone' prioritises accessibility through creativity and inclusivity, with a long-term vision of radical hospitality for all.

Commenting on the Hometown Architect funded projects, Nathalie Weadick, incumbent director of the Irish Architecture Foundation, said: "The IAF team and I are very excited that 'Suppose a Stone' is one of the five selected projects from around the country. The Aughrim project balances big vision, local insight and a creative approach. We look forward to seeing how it tangibly enhances accessibility and inclusivity for the Aughrim community over the course of the year and further into the future. We are delighted to have the support of Government, whose Town Centre First Policy for improving, energising and transforming rural towns to make them better places to live, work and enjoy is at the heart of our Hometown Architect programme."

Also commenting, Minister Heather Humphreys, TD, Minister for Rural and Community Develop-



*Visitors to the Aughrim St Patrick's Day parade engaging with Suppose a Stone activity maps. Photo by Ste Murray*

ment, said: "My Department of Rural and Community Development shares responsibility for the national Town Centre First Policy. A key aim of this policy is to enable local communities and local businesses to be key drivers of development as well as central to the reimagining and planning of their towns for the future."

"The IAF's Reimagine programme, with its focus on placemaking, further enhances the Town Centre First approach and the work of local groups towards

making our towns attractive places to live, work and visit. The applicants to Hometown Architect presented a wide variety of quality projects aimed at affecting change on a local level. The selected projects will set the scene for others attempting similar focus on vacancy and dereliction in our rural towns and bringing new life and focus back to our town centres."

Along with the Aughrim project, four other projects were funded under the Hometown Architect initiative. These include a master-

plan solution for a cluster of vacant buildings in Tipperary town; a visionary blueprint for Lisdoonvarna, Co Clare that's rooted in the spa town's heritage of wellbeing, by Pritzker Prize-winning architect and Lisdoonvarna native Shelley McNamara of Grafton Architects, together with the skill-sharing not-for-profit Common Knowledge, co-founded by Harrison Gardner, presenter of the RTÉ television series 'Build Your Own Home'; a whole-community vision for the sustainable

development of the historic planned market town of Belmullet, Co Mayo; and a one-stop shop for bringing the community of Tuam, Co Galway together to address the issue of vacancy within the town.

Hometown Architect is an initiative of the Irish Architecture Foundation's nationwide Reimagine placemaking programme. Reimagine supports communities across Ireland to partner with architects to co-create and co-design solutions to problems or opportunities they have identified in their locality.



*Kate Strain of Kunstverein Aughrim gathering feedback via the Suppose a Stone Survey. Photo by Ste Murray*

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Wicklow Lions Club members in Fitzwilliam Square, helping to get the word out about the upcoming Darkness Into Light talk on May 6th.

## Lions prepare for Darkness into Light

On Saturday April 22nd a team of Wicklow Lions members got together at Fitzwilliam Square in Wicklow to highlight the 2023 Darkness into Light walk/run which will take place on May 6th at 4.15am.

The DIL committee consists of Lions members who will organise this year's important event for Pieta. They will also be assisted by staff and students from CCM.

Saturday's promotion was to help people who may have difficulty with registering or just to answer any queries they had about the actual event. Members of the community as usual were very generous with donations on the day which was passed on directly to Pieta.

All funds collected will support the work of Pieta who provide a professional one-to-one therapeutic service to people who are in suicidal distress, those who engage in self-harm, and those bereaved by suicide. All the services are provided free of charge and no referral is needed.

Come join the people of Wicklow and surrounding areas for the annual Darkness Into Light event on the 6th of May for the most important sunrise of the year and help save lives.

# Tinahely community coming together for Darkness Into Light 2023

Darkness Into Light 2023, in aid of Pieta House, will take place at 4:15am on the morning of Saturday May 6th 2023 at a number of locations around Co. Wicklow.

Darkness into Light was back with a bang in 2022 incorporating 203 venues globally- 152 in the Republic of Ireland, 17 in Northern Ireland and 34 internationally. The money raised in 2022 helped to fund 156 helpline hours, 10,056 crisis counselling sessions and 6,123 therapy sessions.

Over 200 early morning risers took part in the Tinahely 2022 walk/run raising €6,913.47. The morning kicked off from Tinahely Community Hall, where Hannah Nolan from Why Weight Ireland completed a light warm up session with the early morning walkers and runners, whilst others enjoyed a cup of tea and chat with friends and family.

Volunteers from South East Security and Mountain Rescue were on hand to ensure the safety of all taking part-thankfully they had a quiet morning. Many of



Pictured are Seren Byrne, Ellie Dolan and Kate Dolan - Darkness Into Light Volunteers from Colaiste Bride, Carnew.

the walkers treated themselves afterwards to a well-earned Full Irish Breakfast in Murphys Hotel, who opened up early for the occasion.

The Tinahely route has been changed slightly this year. The walk/run will again commence at Tinahely Community Centre and will progress down Kellys Hill out towards The Togher and return through the forest towards the railway car park and back up the school road.

Colaiste Bhride, Carnew and Colaiste Eoin, Hacketstown are actively working with the Tinahely committee to get students and teachers involved. The engagement of the local secondary schools is vital as 60% of clients presenting to Pieta are under the age of 25 and 40% are under the age of 18. Further updates are available on the Tinahely DIL Facebook page.

Sign-Up is via the website <https://www.darknessintolight.ie/sign-up>.

All funds raised through donations and fundraising will go back into funding the services that Pieta provides. Pieta was founded in Dublin in 2006 and was established to provide free, accessible support to people affected by suicide and self-harm. Pieta now

has over 20 centers nationwide with over 300 staff and offers a variety of supports to people impacted by suicide and self-harm, completely FREE of charge.

Tinahely Darkness Into Light are hopeful that many more walkers and runners will join them for the most important sunrise of the year and help raise

much needed funds for suicide awareness and prevention and make 2023 the biggest and brightest Darkness into Light.

There are 5 other official Darkness Into Light walks taking place in County Wicklow in Arklow, Baltinglass, Blessington, Bray and Wicklow Town. Tinahely Community Hall will be

open for a gentle warm up session with Hannah Nolan and refreshments from 3:30 AM. Murphys Hotel will open again early for breakfast after the event.

If you or someone you love is in suicidal crisis, please contact Pieta 24/7 Crisis Helpline (Ireland only). Call 1800 247 247 or text HELP 51444



Tinahely Darkness Into Light volunteers Hannah and Chloe Nolan.

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# Donnelly tours refurbished Wicklow Community Unit

Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly TD visited the newly refurbished Wicklow Community Unit in Wicklow Town last Friday to tour the facility and meet with staff and service users.

The former District Hospital Wicklow was closed in 2010 due to physical infrastructural concerns following a fire audit of the building. Works to completely refurbish and upgrade the facility commenced in 2020 at a cost of approximately €1.4m, and it reopened to the public in 2021.

The new Unit now operates as an 18-bed short-stay care hub for Wicklow's elderly community. It offers 12 community respite beds, 2 convalescent care beds and 4 rehabilitation beds.

During the visit, Minister Donnelly T.D.

discussed how important supporting infrastructure is to the delivery of front-line health services. "Funding for this facility was granted in order to respond to the needs of the older population of East

Wicklow. New or upgraded facilities like this Unit are key to the delivery of our Enhanced Community Care (ECC) Programme, a Slaintecare initiative. They support our health service staff to provide specialist services in the community such as Integrated Care for Older Persons (ICPOP) and Chronic Disease Management Programmes."

The Unit has a full nursing and care support team

together with a dedicated team of allied health professionals including Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy. There is also a Day Care Centre for the Elderly adjacent to the Unit which was also substantially upgraded during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Day Centre can accommodate 20 attendees daily and links closely with both the onsite ICPOP and Nursing teams to enable proactive interventions where necessary.

Wicklow Community Unit carries out anonymous patient surveys with all attendees. To date the

responses have been overwhelmingly positive from those who have availed of this service.

During the visit, Martina Queally, Chief Officer, HSE Community Healthcare East acknowledged the dedication of staff, commenting: "It is very clear from this visit today that staff at the Wicklow Community Unit are highly dedicated to the care and support of their service users. They are also witnessing the benefits of integration between the acute hospital and community healthcare sectors first-hand. Having multi-disciplinary teams on site also enables staff to take a holistic approach to care in the community for the older population of Wicklow. An approach which puts the needs of the service user at its very core."

Beds at Wicklow Community Unit are accessed via GP and /or Public Health Nurse. The Unit also accepts referrals from hospitals to assist with hospital egress. On-site services are supported from a medical perspective by Sheeran-Purcell Medical Practice and the Consultant Geriatrician attached to the local ICPOP Team.



Minister Stephen Donnelly meeting with service users and staff at the newly-refurbished Wicklow Community Unit

## Brady appointed to Public Accounts Committee

Sinn Féin TD John Brady has been appointed by the Party's Leader Mary Lou McDonald as the party's representative on the Public Accounts Committee. The Committee plays an important and significant role in ensuring that transparency and accountability are maintained in the manner in which government departments offices, and designated public bodies spend and manage their finances.

Speaking following Deputy Brady's appointment to the Public Accounts Committee, the Sinn Féin leader Mary Lou McDonald commented: "John brings decades of relevant experience to the Public Accounts Committee and has earned a reputation both as a Councillor and TD as a public representative who will fearlessly hold public officials to account. Throughout his public life John has been a champion of the public interest and has always put the interests of the people first."

Deputy Brady said, "I want to thank the party for my appointment to this important role. It is always an honour and a privilege to represent the people of Wicklow in any capacity. But, in the economic current environment where ordinary families and workers are suffering under the increases in the cost of living, which has reached unprecedented levels, it has arguably never been more



John Brady TD

important to ensure that spending by government departments is kept accountable. Members of the public need to know that interests are being represented and that every effort is being made to ensure that their tax payments are being utilised to the best effect for

our society at large.

"I look forward to the time ahead to working for the best interests of both the people of Wicklow, and members of the public across the state. I am very conscious of the privilege offered to me to represent the public interest. The structure, and the workings of the Public Accounts Committee allows members to call in witnesses to account for expenditure and to ensure that the public are receiving value for money.

"Public accountability and transparency are at the heart of good government. And I intend to continue as I have throughout my time in public life to act in the interests of those I represent - ordinary families and workers. The very people worst affected by the poor decision making and policies of a government that has shown it cares little for the welfare of the general public."



Devon Davis with Minister Simon Harris at the opening of the new Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Centre in Moneystown National School

## Bray Adult Education Centre Open Day

Friday 12th May 2023  
Times: 10:00 - 12:00 & 1:30 - 3:30

Join us on our open day to learn more about our centre and chat with our teachers about courses that might interest you.

We offer free full-time and part-time courses accredited by QQI, ICDL and CompTIA.

We are open every day to answer your questions please feel free to contact us at:

087 1666074 / 01 5242796  
baec@kwetb.ie

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Civic Centre, Main Street, Bray, A98 R6W4



# TDs inspect new battery powered Dart carriages

Green Party TD and Social Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore visited Inchicore Works last week where they were given a chance to inspect the new battery powered Dart+ carriages that will be used to extend the Dart to Wicklow Town.



Deputy Whitmore inside one of the new battery operated Dart+ carriages that will make it possible for the Dart to be extended beyond Greystones to Wicklow Town.

For Deputy Matthews, it was a return to his old training ground to see the demo model of the new carriage that will make his medium-term project of bringing the Dart south to Wicklow possible.

Deputy Matthews said, "It was great for me on a personal level to visit the works where I trained as a young Irish Rail apprentice while in the background progressing my commitment to bring the DART to Wicklow Town.

"These trains are levels up from the current DART stock. They are battery electric trains. The inside feels spacious and efficient. There is a roomy layout, great signage. Legroom has increased, while there is adequate space for bikes and buggies. There are dropdown seats and there is good wheelchair access.

"It will probably be around two years before we see these roll out but they will enormously change the feel and comfort level of travelling by DART for all passengers so will be worth the wait."

Deputy Whitmore said, "It was great to see the demo model of the Dart + battery train that will bring the Dart to Wicklow Town. This model has integrated accessible ramps, with bike, family, and wheelchair spaces onboard.

"Being able to bring the Dart to Wicklow Town without needing all the traditional infrastructure like overhead wires will be a game changer.

"Fast and reliable public transport is needed now more than ever for Wicklow as our population continues to grow. It is great to see progress being made towards bring the Dart to Wicklow Town.

"This visit follows on from a meeting where I received confirmation that the NTA has provided an allocation to Irish Rail to commence the planning and design works associated with the provision of an electrified service to Wicklow using battery-electric fleet. Irish Rail will now assemble a design team to commence work on that project later this year."



Deputy Matthews pictured alongside one of the new Dart+ battery operated carriages

## Wicklow to benefit from regional development programme

Over E663 million is to be invested in the Southern Region and the Eastern and Midland Region which includes Wicklow over the next seven years to help create quality jobs, transition to low carbon and support higher education, enterprises, public bodies and local authorities in delivering balanced regional development.



Pictured at Kilkenny Castle at the launch of the Southern, Eastern & Midland Regional Programme 2021-27 were Cllr Oliver Walsh, Cathaoirleach of the Southern Regional Assembly, Miia Jouppi, European Commission, and Andrew Condon, Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform. Pi: Dylan Vaughan

The Southern, Eastern & Midland Regional Programme 2021-27 launched on Tuesday, April 25th, is co-financed through the European Regional Development Fund, (ERDF), by the European Union and the Government of Ireland and managed by the Southern Regional Assembly. ERDF aims to strengthen economic, social and territorial cohesion in the EU by correcting the imbalances between its regions.

This Programme invests in activities that will build research, development & innovation capacity, assist homeowners in or at risk of energy poverty and contribute to the revitalisation of our regions' towns centres through sustainable urban development.

The Programme Area has a population of 3.8 million and covers just over half of the country.

Wicklow, Limerick, Clare, Cork, Kerry, Waterford, Carlow, Tipperary, Wexford, Kilkenny, Kildare, Meath, Louth, Westmeath, Laois, Offaly, Longford as well as Dublin are targeted as part of the Programme, which is aligned with the Irish Government's aim of promoting balanced regional development through the Regional Economic and Spatial Strategies for the two regions of the Programme Area.

David Kelly, Southern Regional Assembly Director, said the Assembly is delighted to lead the roll out of the Programme as Managing Authority.

"This Programme will have a direct impact on balancing regional disparities in Ireland by targeting support at regional level for research and innovation, energy efficiency and sustainable regeneration of our regional towns.

"Over the past half-century, Ireland's EU membership has changed how we live, work, study and travel for the better. This new chapter in the story of ERDF in Ireland will continue to improve our way of life in the Irish regions by addressing key regional challenges," Mr Kelly said.

The Programme will target its funding supports through three priority areas. Priority 1 is the creation of Smarter and more Competitive Regions by enhancing research and innovation capacity and supporting regional enterprise. It has a total budget of €337 million. Supports will be delivered through six streamlined schemes in the Programme Area. Six of the country's universities and two Institutes of Technology are in the targeted Programme Area, and it is also home to four newly-established Technological Universities. Investing in collaborative research and innovative activities will build capacity within and between the institutions and collectively support the regional innovation ecosystem and knowledge economy.

These schemes will be rolled out by Programme delivery partners which include Science

Foundation Ireland, Enterprise Ireland and the Higher Education Authority.

Priority 2 is the creation of Low Carbon, Energy Efficient Regions and has a budget of €199 million. This will be achieved by supporting investments to improve energy efficiency of residential homes, targeting homeowners in or at risk of energy poverty.

Responding to the energy challenges, the Programme will fund deep retrofitting to ease the burden of homeowners in or at risk of experiencing energy poverty, reducing the amount they are spending on energy consumption and reducing their carbon emissions. These deep retrofits will be delivered by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland, SEAI.

Priority three is Sustainable & Integrated Urban Development. It involves taking an integrated strategic approach to the regeneration of our towns using a Town Centres First Framework.

Aligning closely with the objectives of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies for the Southern Region and the Eastern & Midland Region, the Programme

supports the regeneration of regional town centres as the vibrant heart of local communities to live, work and visit.

A budget of €90 million has been set aside for this work which will be rolled out by the Southern Regional Assembly through the local authorities in the Programme Area.

Jim Conway, Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly Director, said: "Both regions in this Programme Area have strong opportunities and diverse challenges. While they both have a strong urban feature, they also each have a rural and smaller regional focus and we have many opportunities and challenges that can be addressed together. This Programme will support targeted investments which will make a real difference to quality jobs and inclusive growth by breathing new life into our regional towns and villages."

Cllr Oliver Walsh, Cathaoirleach of Southern Regional Assembly said they will work in partnership to deliver for the regions.

Schemes in the Southern, Eastern and Midland Regional Programme are due to be launched throughout 2023.



# Journey times to Airport from Greystones as long as from Belfast

**Fine Gael councillor Derek Mitchell says significant improvements are needed to the Aircoach service between Greystones and Dublin Airport, with journey times taking almost as long as it takes the Belfast Aircoach to get to Dublin Airport.**



Cllr Derek Mitchell

"We need to encourage people to take Aircoach to Dublin Airport instead of the car. The TFI app shows that it takes 1hr 39 mins from Greystones. Also as it goes through very congested parts of Dublin so one has to allow extra time when catching a plane,"

said Cllr Mitchell.

"The bus used to be much quicker and more reliable when it went across the Toll bridge directly to the Airport

Tunnel. Many have transferred from the bus to the car because of this, the opposite of what needs to be achieved.

"Dublin Port is consulting about a new bridge in the port. I have asked the Council and Greystones District to write to the NTA &

Dublin Port saying we want the Aircoach to use the new bridge to speed up the journey so people revert to the bus.

"It takes about 45 mins to drive the M50, most people are now doing this. The Belfast Aircoach takes 1hr 55 mins to Dublin Airport,

almost the same duration as from the Dublin Metropolitan region! Belfast is a considerable distance outside the Greater Dublin Area.

"Many transport professionals and politicians are saying people should use public transport to get to the Airport while

presiding over a worse service. A way must be found to get buses from the N11 to the Airport Tunnel reliably. It was intended that the Southern Port Tunnel would have catered for this but this was cancelled by the Minister for Transport, Eamon

Ryan, with no alternative put in place.

"There are also many bus routes from Wicklow on the N11 that could use this route and also connect to the LUAS at The Point stop. Also the Aircoach needs to run hourly and all night as before."

## 'Chapel Road upgrade taking too long'

**Cllr Derek Mitchell has once more urged for the completion of upgrade works on Chapel Road in Greystones, which have been planned since 1989.**

"This upgrade will provide a better road, with a cycle and foot path on either side from Delgany to Blacklion," he said. "It will join five schools with the many new houses in that area. This important link was put on the plans in 1989 and I have been pressing for completion for a decade. "Sections have been done as part of housing developments but the Council remainder section seems to be taking forever. I asked for it to be on the agenda recently and was told it still had to be tendered and parts of the Compulsory Purchase Order finalised. I can't see it being done this Summer as little progress has been made in the last year.

"The population has tripled since it was planned in 1989, so it's really badly needed now."

## Appeal lodged with ABP over Archer's Wood decision

**Greystones Green Party councillor Cllr Lourda Scott has lodged an appeal with An Bord Pleanála following the decision by Wicklow County Council to allow the removal of a planning condition for a community building in Archer's Wood, Delgany.**



Cllr Lourda Scott

Cllr Scott has previously raised community concerns over shortfalls in infrastructure and community facilities and in 2021 had instructed the Council to commission an audit to highlight deficiencies in this area. Speaking on the matter Scott said: "Greystones and Delgany have seen huge growth over the past number of years. It is well known by people who live locally that the social infrastructure hasn't kept pace with the number of houses built. This was confirmed by an independent audit published that I asked the Council to carry out. The

key audit findings confirmed what

people have been telling me from their own experience. Specifically the need for more community indoor spaces was highlighted.

"It is incredibly disappointing to then see the Council permit a much needed facility to be removed from a planning permission that was granted four years ago. It simply doesn't make sense. Since being elected, the lack of amenity buildings is an issue I have highlighted constantly. I am always asked by local groups for more community space to rent and I am constantly pushing the Council about this issue on their behalf. I simply couldn't go back to my constituents and say that I allowed this planning decision to go unchallenged. The matter is now in the hands of An Bord Pleanála and I look forward to hearing their decision in due course."

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SPECIAL NEEDS ASSISTING AND INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY STUDIES

INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY STUDIES AND SPECIAL NEEDS ASSISTING

PERSONAL TRAINER/ SPORTS REHABILITATION/ PHYSIOTHERAPY ASSISTANT/

STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING/SPORTS MASSAGE THERAPIST

FITNESS INSTRUCTOR AND EXERCISE SCIENCE

PHYSICAL EDUCATION & SPORTS COACHING

YOGA & PILATES TEACHER TRAINING

AIRLINE AND TRAVEL INDUSTRY STUDIES

HOSPITALITY, TOURISM AND EVENT MANAGEMENT

SOCIAL STUDIES INCLUDING CRIMINOLOGY & ADDICTION STUDIES

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# FET for All at Bray Adult Education Centre



Civic Centre, Bray

**“I never thought I could do this!” “This has opened up whole new worlds for me!” “I feel like a different person. I was going nowhere for a bit, but now I really think I could take on anything!”** These are typical comments made by people who have completed courses in Bray in recent years.

During the past few decades, one of the most exciting developments in modern Ireland has been the growth of Further Education & Training (FET). Every corner of the country has opportunities for valuable learning nowadays. Where once we thought of education as something you do while you're in school, now it can continue throughout a person's life.

Bray is no exception to this - in fact, Bray is better served than most parts of Ireland. The people of this town and its surrounding region can get involved in a very wide range of learning opportunities. Some of the very best of them are provided by the local Education & Training Board, KWETB.

One of KWETB's FET centres is Bray Adult Education Centre (BAEC) in the Civic Centre on the Main Street. BAEC's Open Day is on Friday 12th May. The centre is signing up applicants for its courses that will start in late August. Year after year, people come in the door to enquire about the courses, and before they know it, their lives have taken an exciting new direction. FET is for everyone - and it genuinely does change lives.

# Free school books for pupils of primary and special schools

**Children attending primary and special schools in Wicklow, are set to benefit from free schoolbooks from September, the Fine Gael Minister has said. Minister Simon Harris outlined details of a hugely significant funding package which will eliminate the cost to families for all schoolbooks, workbooks and copybooks at all primary and special schools within the free education scheme.**

“This is a landmark funding package, totalling €50 million, which was secured in Budget 2023 and fulfils Fine Gael’s commitment to have a first class education system, which was contained in the Fine Gael 2020 General Election manifesto Minister Harris said.

“I am delighted that the delivery on this promise to ease the burden of back to school costs for families has come to pass today. The scheme will benefit more than 558,000 pupils nationally, who are attending approximately 3,230 primary schools, including over 130 special schools.

“Closer to home, I’m very pleased that so many children and families in Wicklow will benefit from this package, which gives parents and guardians one less back to school expense to worry about, as well as saving them the time that traditionally would be spent across the Summer going to suppliers to try to buy everything on the booklist.

“Grant payments are being made this week, which means schools will now have the funding required to cover the costs of providing all these items well in advance of the start of the next school year.

“It’s important to also acknowledge that this provision, as well as easing the Cost of Living burden of families, means that every child will be equal in the classroom, with access to all the required materials which can and will only enhance their educational experience,” concluded Minister Harris.

# Wicklow Montessori pupil is spelling Bee champion

**The competition had 10 students representing their school with a great turn out of supporters at the event. The winner was 12-year-old Lucas Tyner from Wicklow Montessori Primary School.**

Lucas soared to the top following an intense competition in which he faced 10 fellow spelling enthusiasts. Lucas is a keen reader and also loves to play football. He will now be moving forward to the Leinster final later on this May.

Other pupils from Co. Wicklow who competed were: Caoilin Lally from St. John's SNS; Ciara Ní Cheallaigh from St Saviour's NS; Cormac Mac Carthaigh from Gaelscoil an Inbhir Mhóir; Edith Horan Flynn from Kilcommon National School; Éirinn Deegan from Scoil Aodán Naofa; Leia Curran from St. Coen's NS; Niamh Lowe from St Laurence O'Toole's National School; Sadbh Nalty from St. Joseph's NS; Ally Clancy from Rathcoyle NS.

As well as the prestigious title of Eason Spelling Bee 2023 Champion, the top Bee will also take home a collection of books for their school library, worth €7,500 as well as a personal collection of books worth €500.

This year, over 500 schools nationwide will compete against each other in a bid to win the coveted prize. The Eason Spelling Bee team will be travelling around the country to host County Final Bees, and then progressing to a Provincial Bee contest. The champions from these will then go head-to-head in the All-Ireland Final Bee, taking place in June 2023, with the lucky winner being crowned King or Queen Bee.

Kilcommon National School; Éirinn Deegan from Scoil Aodán Naofa; Leia Curran from St. Coen's NS; Niamh Lowe from St Laurence O'Toole's National School; Sadbh Nalty from St. Joseph's NS; Ally Clancy from Rathcoyle NS.

Celebrating its tenth year, the Eason Spelling Bee provides a fun, educational outlet for school kids, encouraging them to expand their vocabulary and develop their confidence.

Other Wicklow pupils that took part were Group Head of Marketing at Eason, Brendan Corbett, said; "At Eason, we can't quite believe that we are celebrating the 10th year of the Eason Spelling Bee. It's a tremendous achievement and a testament to the bright-sparks of the nation. We're incredibly proud to have created something that allows children to engage in an educational activity that develops their literacy, spelling, confidence and gives them so much enjoyment."

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Wicklow Spelling Bee Champion Lucas Tyner.



Pictured are the pupils from around Co. Wicklow who competed in Eason's Wicklow Spelling Bee competition. The competition had 10 students representing their school with a great turn out of supporters at the event. The winner was 12-year-old Lucas Tyner from Wicklow Montessori Primary School.

# New autism centre opened at Moneystown National School

**Last Thursday night, Fine Gael Minister Simon Harris T.D. cut the ribbon on Moneystown National School's new building and visited the school's new autism class.**

Speaking after the event, Minister Harris said, "It was an honour to be able to cut the ribbon tonight for Moneystown National School's new building and the school's new autism class. Encouraging education is one of my top priorities and ensuring that our students have access to the right supports is vital in pursuit of this.

"It is fantastic to see that the school's dedication towards providing appropriate and accessible education for all students has been recognised, and the work put in by the current and past staff of Moneystown National School has been rewarded.

"Tonight has been a super opportunity to see the positive impact that this new class is already having and to meet with the students there," Minister Harris concluded.



Minister Harris cuts the ribbon to open Moneystown National School's new ASD Centre, with Principal Anne-Marie Morris, Maebhe Durston and students.



# Model United Nations Conference held in Wicklow

Minister Simon Harris opened the Model UN conference in Wicklow's Educate Together Secondary School on Friday 21st April.

The event had 120 delegates from all over the Country, held over two days over the weekend of 22nd-23rd April. Minister Harris opened the conference on Friday evening and congratulated the General Secretary Hannah O'Callaghan on the fantastic work carried out by her team to make this event such a great success.

Minister Harris also quoted the late poet Seamus Heaney - "Hope is not optimism, which expects things to turn out well, but something rooted in the conviction that there is good worth working for."

Speaking after the opening speeches Minister Harris said "These young people are making such a difference by being involved in the Model UN and being so interested in politics."

During the visit Minister Harris took the opportunity to tour the school with the Principal Mr John Maddock and discussed the need for extra accommodation for September 2024 and was briefed on the refurbishment of part of the school scheduled for later this year.



Minister Simon Harris with General Secretary Hannah O'Callaghan

## 'Additional capacity for Blessington Community College welcome, but immediate needs must be addressed'

Sinn Féin TD John Brady has welcomed the recent announcement that the Department of Education has given the green light to the decision to expand plans for Blessington Community College to build an 800 pupil school to a 1000 pupil school.

The decision is important to cater for the expanding population base in the Blessington area.

Deputy Brady described the decision as the 'first step' in what could be a lengthy process to deliver a completed expanded school for the area. A process, he says,

which needs to be accelerated to meet demands. He also expressed his disappointment with the failure of Wicklow's two government Ministers "to use their influence to secure a meeting between Wicklow's five TDs and Education Minister Norma Foley and senior officials to get a time-

frame for the school build and the provision of temporary classrooms for the school for the start of the new school year in September."

Deputy Brady said, "I welcome today's announcement and offer my congratulations to everybody involved in the process, the School

Principal Kieran Burke, staff, board of management and parents representatives at the school. The decision to expand the school from an 800 to 1000 pupil capacity is a necessary and important development to cater for the growing population of the Blessington area.

"There however remains a significant lead in time before the school will be complete, and in the interim period there is

an urgent need for the Department of Education to provide additional temporary classrooms before the start of the next school term in September.

"I, along with the other four TDs from Wicklow have previously met with the School Principal, and the Parents representative body within the school, which is an ongoing engagement. The five TDs

from the county gave a commitment to sit down with the Minister to lobby for the provision of the additional temporary classrooms and get a clear timeframe.

"There has been no clarification or commitment forthcoming from the Minister that this meeting will take place. I find it particularly disappointing that with two

senior government colleagues of the Minister for Education in the County that a commitment from the Minister cannot be secured.

"The reality is that the needs of Blessington Community School for additional temporary classrooms in September remain. And I am calling on the two government Ministers in Wicklow,

Ministers Simon Harris, and Minister Stephen Donnelly to secure a meeting with Minister Norma Foley and the five TDs from the County at the earliest opportunity to ensure that the staff and pupils at Blessington Community College have the necessary facilities in place come next September at the start of the new school year."

## Whitmore discusses issues of the day with St. Mary's students

Social Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore recently visited St. Mary's college Arklow to meet with the 5th year European Studies Class and the Transition Year Politics and Society Class.

Invited by teacher, Ms. Aislinn Cullen to discuss issues such as Housing, Climate Change and Biodiversity, Deputy Whitmore said it was a great opportunity to engage with young minds on all the issues that matter.

"I was delighted to receive the invitation from St. Mary's in Arklow to meet with the politics and society students and the European studies class to discuss my role as a TD and the importance of becoming engaged in society. It's very important that stu-

dents and young people understand how politics can and should work for them, and how they can make their voices heard and the things that are important to them.

"Meeting young people directly, especially the young women in St. Mary's who are engaged in their community is one of the highlights for me as a TD. Young people are a very important part of all discussions around issues facing our communities in Wicklow and visits like this one is an opportunity for me to engage with them, hear

their views and ideas. It is also very rewarding as the only female TD representing Wicklow, to be able to support young women in their engagement with politics and show them the need for more women in politics.

"With so many issues affecting young people these days such as climate action, the housing crisis, social media, mental health issues and access to further education-including accommodation at college issues, young people should be listened to and have their voices heard. The stu-

dents posed really relevant questions such as how do we, as a society change the way government addresses the problems that communities are facing. It was great opportunity to discuss the importance of having their voices heard, getting involved in local issues, addressing the issues with their local representatives and becoming voters as soon as they are old enough to. I also received a proposal from student Eva with her proposals on the housing crisis.

"I want to thank the Principal, Aidan Ward, teachers Ms. Cullen, Ms. Stapleton and Ms. Oí Dea and the students of St. Mary's. There is no doubt a very tangible sense of pride in all St. Mary's girls both past and present and I would love to see one of them joining me in Leinster House in the future. I will continue to engage with students and young people in the county and look forward to meeting other students across Wicklow."



Deputy Whitmore with St. Mary's College students

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# Wicklow constituents welcomed to European Parliament



Pictured with Sean Kelly MEP at the European Parliament are visitors from Co Wicklow: Jackie Lambert, Maurice and Jenny Mitchell, Nuala Kenny, Bridie and Jimmy Dunne, and Alan Kenny.

Sean Kelly, MEP for Ireland South, recently welcomed fifty constituents from across Ireland South to the European Parliament in Brussels. The group included individuals from Wicklow, Wexford, Tipperary, Laois, Kilkenny, Kerry, Cork, and Limerick.

Jackie Lambert, Maurice and Jenny Mitchell, Nuala Kenny, Bridie and Jimmy Dunne, Alan Kenny from Co Wicklow joined other visitors for a tour of the European Parliament's hemicycle chamber and information sessions with MEPs and Parliament officials. Visitors had the chance to learn more about the day-to-day functioning of the Parliament and the variety of work undertaken by MEPs.

The group were particularly pleased to be joined by MEP, and former Lithuanian Prime Minister Andrius Kubilius. MEP Kubilius shared his perspective on how the EU can continue to support the ongoing war in Ukraine.

Kelly said "I am always delighted to welcome constituents from across Ireland South to the European Parliament. Sponsored visits such as this one are a wonderful opportunity to highlight the work we do here in the Parliament. By its nature, the EU legislative process can be complex and sometimes opaque, having constituents visits the Parliament is a way to bridge the gap between our work here in Parliament, and what is happening on the local level."

"It was also beneficial to speak with the group and to hear their concerns and hopes for Europe. As the voice for members of my constituency in the EU, engagements such as this are extremely important for orientating my work in the European Parliament."

During their time in Belgium, the group also had the opportunity to visit Brugge, Ypres, and historical WW1 battlegrounds known as the Flanders Fields.

If you are interested in applying to take part in a subsidised trip to visit the European Parliament in Brussels, please contact [sean.kelly@europarl.europa.eu](mailto:sean.kelly@europarl.europa.eu) for further details on upcoming trips.

# Wicklow community groups welcome Minister

A delegation of volunteers and staff representing Wicklow PPN, County Wicklow Volunteer Centre, Wicklow Welcomes, County Wicklow Partnership and Wicklow County Council welcomed Joe O' Brien Minister of State at the Department of Rural and Community Development with responsibility for Community Development & Charities as well as Integration, to Wicklow Town on Tuesday 25th April.

The Minister met each of the groups in the Centre for Education and Resourcing Travellers (CEART) where he appreciated the panoramic views across the harbour and Wicklow Bay with the backdrop of the Sugarloaf in the distance.

He was given a quick tour of CEART, home to Wicklow Travellers Group and the Shuttleknit social enterprise, before taking some time to have tea and chat with the groups about their work in facilitating community action and volunteering, as well as supporting some of the more vulnerable members in our society.

Helen Howes, Wicklow PPN Resource Worker said "We were delighted when we received word that the Minister wanted to stop in Wicklow Town on his journey through the county and meet some of the passionate and dedicated community activists within our community groups and services. He was genuinely interested and supportive of our efforts in promoting citizen engagement and inclusion in the county."



Minister of State Joe O'Brien with Yvonne Ryan and Leah Kinsella of Wicklow Volunteer Centre during his visit to Wicklow.

## LEADER PUBLIC MEETINGS

For the formulation of Wicklow Local Development Strategy

County Wicklow Partnership, on behalf of Wicklow LCDC, are inviting all those interested in sharing their ideas on what the next LEADER programme should focus on, to a series of public meetings. Please come along to any of the meetings to let us know your proposals on what is important to your local economy, your community and your environment.

For any queries on the events, please contact:  
[info@wicklowpartnership.ie](mailto:info@wicklowpartnership.ie)

Open to all Wicklow people interested in the future of Wicklow's communities, economy and environment

<b>Tinahely</b> May 2nd Location: Tinahely Community Hall Time: 7pm - 9pm	<b>Rathdrum</b> May 3rd Location: RDA Hall Time: 7pm - 9pm	<b>Arklow</b> May 4th Location: Arklow Bay Hotel Time: 7pm - 9pm
<b>Blessington</b> May 9th Location: Coimin Centre Time: 7pm - 9pm	<b>Glen of the Downs</b> May 10th Location: Glenview Hotel Time: 7pm - 9pm	<b>Baltinglass</b> May 11th Location: Parish Centre Time: 7pm - 9pm



Minister of State Joe O'Brien with Louise Rooney and Jack Kincaid of Wicklow Welcomes, and Laurie Whelehan and Liz Dunne from Wicklow Partnership.



# Wicklow photographers show love for the coast

**Clean Coasts' annual Love Your Coast photography competition has officially opened for entries for its 14th edition.**

This summer, bring your camera with you when you are exploring the coast in County Wicklow and submit your best shots for a chance to win from a prize fund of E6,000.

The Love Your Coast competition asks for photographers to capture and celebrate the uniqueness of our coastal communities, environments, or waterways such as its stunning coastline, beautiful beaches, epic cliff faces, and raging rivers.

Ireland has some of the most spectacular coastlines in the world and Clean Coasts want to encourage people to get out their cameras this summer as they explore the Irish coast and capture its beauty.

This year, the Clean Coasts programme is celebrating its 20th anniversary, and the Love Your Coast competition will be a chance to celebrate this achievement. For the past 20 years, Clean Coasts has been working with communities on the ground, to help foster pride in our coastline, supporting Clean Coasts communities, groups, and volunteers to tackle issues affecting their local area.

To mark the occasion,

a new category has been added to the competition, iProtectors of the Coast which will showcase what volunteering on the coast and community spirit is all about. Other changes to this year's competition are the reintroduction of the Underwater category, which was temporarily removed during Covid due to restrictions around diving.

The competition's categories this year are: Wildlife and Coast; Coastal Landscape; People and the Coast; Coastal Heritage; Underwater; Protectors of the coast.

Photographers have until 9am on 28th August 2023 to submit their best images in one of five categories to be in with the chance to win a prize from a fund of E6,000 across all categories.

Last year, Christopher Howes with the image titled 'Seals have fun too' taken at Brides Head, Wicklow Town, received the second place prize in the Wildlife and the Underwater Category. Christopher commented: "I have been photographing the Seals in Wicklow for a number of years now and I wanted to try to get something different for a change. I planned to



**Philip Reilly - Wicklow Head Lighthouse at Sunrise, Wicklow Head Lighthouse, Dunbur Head**

go out during the mating season of the Seals to see if I could get a playful shot of them and they didn't disappoint me. It ended out to be a bit stormy, so it took some patience and time. But it was well worth the wait."

Moreover, 'Bray Air Show Crowds 2022' by Aoife Hester taken in Bray, and 'Wicklow Head Lighthouse at sunrise' by Philip Reilly taken at Dunbur Head, were short-listed among the top ten images in the People and the Coast and Coastal

Heritage categories, respectively.

For the past 14 years, the Love Your Coast photography competition has represented an opportunity to view and celebrate the coast and our waterways that the Clean Coasts programme has been working to protect since 2003, and see the beauty captured therein. The competition began in 2010 and has grown from strength to strength since, with entries going from approximately 500 in year one to over 1,100 in 2022

with massive improvement in quality. For 2023, Clean Coasts is looking forward to receiving even more amazing entries.

Photographers are encouraged to explore new and different methods and angles in capturing the coastal regions and wildlife and would discourage photographing of locations and species that have been heavily submitted in previous years.

Clean Coast manager Sinead McCoy stated: "Clean Coasts are delighted to be launching the Love Your Coast competition for the 14th year. The competition draws considerable interest from Ireland's photographers and coastal enthusiasts and over the previous years it has received thousands of entries with the standard getting higher with each passing year. We are delighted to welcome back the Underwater category and excited to introduce the new category Protectors of the Coast. The Love Your Coast competition is a fantastic addition to the Clean Coasts programme as it showcases the stunning environment that our groups work so hard to protect."

To enter, visit the Clean Coasts website at <https://cleancoasts.org/our-initiatives/love-your-coast/>



**Chris Howes - Seals have fun too, Brides Head, Wicklow Town**



**Aoife Hester - Bray Airshow Crowds 2022, Bray**

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# Wicklow students set to compete in national final of Student Enterprise Programme

The stage is set for an exciting showdown at the National Final of the Student Enterprise Programme. Out of over 25,000 entrants, 82 Finalists will compete across three categories on Friday, May 5th in Croke Park.

Each of the 31 Local Enterprise Offices have one representative each in the Senior category with the remaining Finalists spread across the Junior and Intermediate categories. The Finalists span a whole range of sectors from agriculture and design to sustainability and healthcare.

Wicklow is proud to have three fantastic enterprises representing the County at Nationals this year. The Senior Finalist is TR Technologies, from Glenart College, who

make personalised crafts using a 3D printer. The Intermediate Finalist is Kelly's Cookies from Arklow Community College, with their baked treats. Finally, the Junior Finalist is The Crafty Pair from Avondale Community College, who create seasonal, personalised decorations with multiple purposes.

These three outstanding businesses have proved their mettle by winning their respective categories at the Wicklow County Final last month. Now

they are gearing up to compete at national level. The Student Enterprise Programme has been a fantastic platform for young entrepreneurs to showcase their innovative ideas, and the Wicklow representatives are excited to showcase their businesses at the Final.

Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council Tommy Annesley said "The standard of this year's programme was extremely high, with a wide variety of innovative business ideas. I would

like to wish our three county winners the very best of luck in the National Final. This programme gives all of the participating students the experience of creating their own business and will hopefully shape the landscape of Wicklow SMEs in the future."

Michael Nevin, Chair of the Local Enterprise Offices' Enterprise Education Committee, said; "There is another fantastic selection of Finalists for this year's programme. Across all three categories we are seeing some really innovative thinking and an ambition to solve societal and environmental issues through entrepreneurship, which is really heartening for the future. We're looking forward to seeing them all at the Finals in Croke Park and for those that didn't make the finals this year they will have learned some invaluable skills and will hopefully bring that spark of entrepreneurship into later life."

An initiative of the Local Enterprise Offices to encourage entrepreneurship in secondary schools, the Student Enterprise Programme has seen over 350,000 secondary school students take part in the programme since it first began.

Participating students



The Intermediate Finalist is Kelly's Cookies from Arklow Community College, with their baked treats

compete across three categories, Junior (1st year), Intermediate (2nd and 3rd year) and Senior (4th, 5th and 6th year, LVA, LCA and Youth Outreach). Each student enterprise is challenged with creating, setting up and running their own business, which must show viable sales of their service or product. Following the conclusion of county and regional finals, Student Enterprises from across the country will now take part in the Final at Croke Park next month.

In addition to the three categories that students will be grouped under by class, students also had the option to take part in further 'optional competitions'. This year saw the introduction of three additional categories of optional competitions including - the 'Best Business Website' sponsored by IE, the "Green Go Getter Award" sponsored by the EPA, as well as the "SMART Business Idea" award sponsored by Folens. These three new awards categories are in addition to 'My Entrepreneurial Journey', 'Social Stars' and 'Intellectual Property' competitions from previous years.

Last year's winner of

the Student Enterprise Programme were "Barrelda" - an eco-innovation created by two young farmers from Co. Meath. Barrelda specialise in revamping old, blue polythene drums and recycling them to create meal silos and teat feeders. The young entrepreneurs have won high praise from eco organisations and farming organisations nationwide for their sustainability

focused project which also addresses the rising costs of farming equipment.

The Student Enterprise Programme is funded by the Government of Ireland through Enterprise Ireland and delivered by the 31 Local Enterprise Offices in local authorities throughout the country. Since the Student Enterprise Programme began in 2003, over 350,000 stu-

dents have taken part, learning key skills on how to create a business idea, start a business and grow a business. The Student Enterprise Programme also has new range of online resources for 2021 / 2022 at [www.StudentEnterprise.ie](http://www.StudentEnterprise.ie), which will feature regular blogs and houses a full range of Student Enterprise resources for students and teachers.



The Senior Finalist is TR Technologies, from Glenart College, who make personalised crafts using a 3D printer.

## WHC Labs founder to represent Wicklow at National Enterprise Awards

An innovative biotechnology business from Newcastle serving the brewing sector will represent County Wicklow at this year's National Enterprise Award, Local Enterprise Office Wicklow has announced.

Tony O'Kane of WHC Labs, previously trading as The Wicklow Hops Company, will represent Local Enterprise Office Wicklow at the 23rd National Enterprise Awards at the Round Room in The Mansion House, Dublin, on the 1st June.

Originally set up to grow and sell hops to the brewing industry, the business has evolved to become a specialised supplier of niche products and laboratory services to the brewing and distilling sector and to reflect this change the company are now trading as WHC Lab.

Having started by targeting the microbrewing sector with a wide range of laboratory analysis services, the company has also succeeded in disrupting the market for yeast in the brewing industry by developing a liquid yeast production facility in Newcastle.

The company has grown steadily since 2018 and now employs eight people and sells to international markets.

WHC Labs will now be competing against 30 other finalists from every local authority area for a share of the €35,000 winner's prize fund as national judging gets underway in May. Categories this year include

Best Export Business, Best Start-Up and Innovation along with One to Watch and a Sustainability/Green awards in addition to eight regional awards.

Companies from Wicklow have enjoyed success in the National Enterprise Awards in the past with Kate Dempsey's company, Aqualicense, winning the overall title in the 2022 National Enterprise Awards and a cash prize of €10,000.

Cathaoirleach, Cllr Tommy Annesley, commented: "WHC Labs is at the forefront of innovation in the brewing sector which is vibrant in County Wicklow and beyond. With the unique range of products and services on offer at WHC Labs, coupled with their growth ambition, they will be a very strong contender in this national competition and I wish them well."

Speaking at the announcement, Emer O'Gorman, Chief Executive, Wicklow County Council said: "WHC Labs is a great success story, operating in a unique biotechnology sector and providing highly skilled jobs based in Newcastle. Tony's strategic focus on growing export markets offers great potential for additional growth and job creation."

Vibeke Delahunt, Head of Enterprise at the Local Enterprise Office Wicklow, said: "We are so proud to have WHC Labs and Tony O'Kane representing County Wicklow at the NEAs this year. The innovative founder saw an opportunity in the brewing industry and pivoted to develop a unique product that has gone on to disrupt the brewing industry. The LEO has supported the company in its growth and job creation and we wish WHC Labs every success!"



The Junior Finalist is The Crafty Pair from Avondale Community College, who create seasonal, personalised decorations with multiple purposes.



# Top Wicklow artists go undercover for Incognito 2023

*Ireland's most mysterious art sale raises important funds for Jack and Jill Children's Foundation*

Wicklow artists have once again illustrated their hearts of gold with 48 local artists taking part in Incognito 2023, Ireland's most mysterious online art sale which took place last Wednesday, April 26th, in aid of the Jack and Jill Children's Foundation.



Pictured is one of the original posard artworks from this year's Incognito art sale

What makes Incognito so special is that prospective buyers have absolutely no idea who the artist is behind their favourite postcard-sized artwork until the collection has sold out, and the artists are revealed.

Among the Wicklow artists who participated this year were Derval Freeman from Delgany, Zelda Cunningham from Rathdangan, Attracta Manson from Redcross, Susie Kenny from Greystones, Maria Gallagher from Lacken, and Kathrina Shine from Wicklow town.

They joined a galaxy of superstars taking part including rock legend Ronnie Wood, Westlife's Mark Feehily, singer Brian Kennedy, fashion designers Don O'Neill and Paul & William Costelloe, folk singer Mary Black, actress Norma Sheahan, and 'The Voice' Eimear Quinn.

Now in its seventh year, Incognito has raised over €860,000 to date in providing in-home nursing care and respite support to Jack and Jill families, including 17 families living in Wicklow.

Jack and Jill is hoping that funds generated in 2023 will bring the total amount raised through this impactful art initiative to an incredible €1 million.

With artists participating from both home and abroad, including from



Pictured is one of the original posard artworks from this year's Incognito art sale which took place on Wednesday 26th April.

the United Kingdom, Europe, the USA, Australia and New Zealand, each artwork is an original and was priced at just €65, no matter who the artist is.

## Popular artworks

Lucinda Hall has been the curator of Incognito since 2017. So, what are the most popular artworks? "While there is much about Incognito for which I am sworn to secrecy, I can reveal that artworks featuring farm animals are among the most sought-after. Cows are always hugely popular, followed by pigs, hens and even goats! Of course, there's something to suit everyone's taste and, every year, thankfully, has been a sell-out success.

"I can honestly say that the standard this year is the best I've seen since I started working on Incognito and our artists really have gone the extra mile. I do think that if people have ever been intrigued by art, but felt a little out of their comfort zone, at €65 an artwork, Incognito is the perfect way to get a collection started. Whether by a renowned artist, or an up-and-coming talent, one thing's for sure, you'll have selected a piece that you've already fallen in love with."

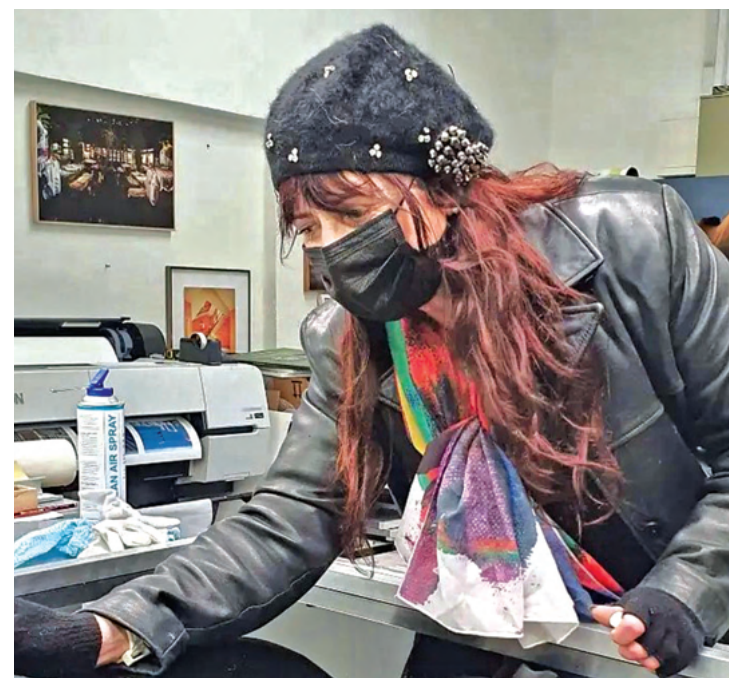
For June Foxton, Jack and Jill Liaison Nurse Manager for Wicklow, Incognito is not just about the amazing art from local artists, but about the difference it makes to the lives of families in the community:

"Our talented Wicklow artists have once again come up trumps and shown huge generosity in turning their art into a currency for



Pictured is artist Derval Freeman from Delgany who was one of 48 artists in Wicklow who took part in the Incognito 2023 art sale in aid of the Jack and Jill Children's Foundation.

care," she says. "Each work of art purchased is valuable, not only in its own right, but also for the hours of in-home nursing it funds for children with highly complex and life-limiting medical conditions. It is great to see so many artists rallying to support local Jack and Jill families and demonstrating what real community spirit means."



Pictured is artist Kathrina Shine from Wicklow town.



Pictured is artist Zelda Cunningham from Rathdangan who was one of 48 artists in Wicklow who took part in the Incognito 2023 art sale in aid of the Jack and Jill Children's Foundation, supporting 17 children in the county.

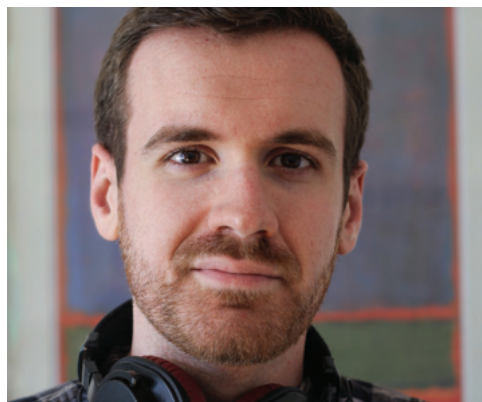






# New Wicklow-made radio drama explores impacts of climate change on coastal communities

Wicklow-made radio drama “Changing Coasts” had its premiere last weekend on Newstalk Written and will be repeated on Saturday May 6th at 9pm. Directed by Rob Flynn and produced by Bjorn Mac Giolla for Bear Print Media, it will be available as a podcast on the Drama on Newstalk feed.



Set in an Irish coastal town threatened by sea level rise, the story follows two researchers tasked with interviewing the remaining residents about the area's past, present and uncertain future. The researchers hold contradictory views about their work and, as they learn more about the people they meet, their differences of opinion reach breaking point. It is a story set in the near future but drawing on the concerns of today, delving into contemporary debates around our relationship with nature, activism, migration and the challenges facing rural communities.

The production was recorded on location in Wicklow and Dublin in late 2022. The creative team come from a background in film and television, and one of their goals with the project was to bring a cinematic sensibility to the story.



Director Rob Flynn (above) and producer Bjorn Mac Giolla (below)



Recording the 'Changing Coasts' radio drama on location in Wicklow

Through recording on location, they were able to capture naturalistic performances and authentic soundscapes, which were later augmented with original music, sound effects and Foley recordings.

Writer/director Rob Flynn says: “I wanted to examine the possible impacts of climate change

on Irish society in a way that felt grounded in the conversations we are having now. Although climate change is a subject often covered in the news, there's still a great deal of scope to examine it through the lens of narrative fiction. Radio drama felt like the ideal medium for this story, as the

emphasis on dialogue allowed us to highlight multiple perspectives and experiences on the topic.”

Changing Coasts was performed by Kwaku Fortune (Normal People, Hidden Assets), Geraldine McAlinden (The Last Rifleman, Bad Sisters), Maria McDermott (The Dead, Glenroe), Paul

Murphy (Aisha), Brian Mulvey (Foundation) and Aleesha Joe (Bad Sisters). Sound recording was by Stephen McHale, music by Emer Landers and editing by Rob Flynn. It is a Bear Print Media production funded by the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland with the television licence fee.

Founded in 2015, Bear Print Media is an award-winning production company that has produced work funded by Screen Ireland, DLR First Frames and the Arts Council. In 2022 they released Resident, a 10-part radio documentary series about the experiences of immigrants in Ireland.

## CAP Awards for Independent authors now open for submissions

*Submissions accepted until 1st June*

The CAP Awards provide a platform to showcase Independently Published Authors in Ireland, bringing them to the attention of book shops, distributors, and the media with all money raised going to the charity Aware.

Aware is a non-profit organisation that provides education, support, and information on mental health, particularly depression, bipolar disorder, and positive mental health. Founded in 2016 by author Carolann Copland, The CAP Awards have helped to promote and encourage Irish Authors, with the awards providing recognition for the best that Ireland has to offer from Independent

Authors.

After Publishing her own books, Carolann felt there was an opportunity to recognise other Authors that had also self-published in Ireland.

“After leaving my job as a primary school teacher, I wanted to find a new project that would showcase Irish Authors and help a charity close to my heart which is Aware. I felt that recognition for Independent Authors would be a good mix of something I was passionate about while also raising money for a good cause.”

Carolann has also succeeded in getting other Irish Authors involved in organising the event and prides herself on the quality of the judges she will have on the panel this year.

“We are very fortunate to have other Irish Authors get involved with the event and are very proud this year to have Zoe Miller, Patricia O'Reilly, Orna Ross, Emma-Jane Leeson and ER Murray as our judging panel.”

The CAP Awards have also received direct support from Stephen Butterfly, Head of Fundraising at Aware who will benefit directly from the proceeds raised from the Awards.

“We are honoured to have been chosen as the partner charity for The CAP Award. This is a fantastic initiative to recognise and celebrate the achievements of Ireland's many self-published authors. We are very grateful to Carolann for her ongoing support of Aware, for bringing attention to the topic of mental health and raising much needed funds for the organisation.”

To find out more and to submit your application for the Awards



Carolann Copland, Founder of the CAP Awards



Cathaoirleach of Bray Municipal District Cllr Erika Doyle with Bray artist Adam Connors at the launch of Adam's exhibition 'Turbulence' at his studio on Quinsboro Road in Bray.



Judge and Irish Author Zoe Miller



# BYD, Build Your Dreams - a coming force



BYD - Build Your Dreams

'BUILD YOUR DREAMS' or BYD as it says on the tin - is the biggest brand we have never heard of. But we will hear a lot more of them in the Irish motoring scene, as they team up with Irish car distribution royalty - the O'Flaherty holdings Motor Distributors Ltd. (MDL) to provide new technology, battery electric motoring to Ireland.

By Martin McCarthy

BYD is an amazing firm. Founded just 18 years ago as a battery maker in Shenzhen, it expanded into Semiconductors, Energy and later transport after attracting investment from Warren Buffett and others who were impressed with their engineering determination.

Founder, Chairman Wang, has grown the firm from 49 staff to 600,000 today with a turnover of \$57 billion in 2022.

In transport, they have been leading in electric buses & trucks and are now using a new, cobalt free, 100% recyclable, Blade battery for their new generation cars (they sold over 3m cars domestically, last year). The introductory model, the

BYD ATTO 3 was shown for this first time in Ireland at the K Club, Co Kildare with a test route up to Blessington and around West Wicklow and back. This is a very advanced machine using the floor mounted batteries as a structural member and having an 800 Volt electric power system.

The Atto 3 is a C Class SUV, somewhat larger than a regular C Class machine. The range is 420Km WLTP with plenty boot space (440l) expandable to 1338L with the rear seats folded flat.

The price is €37,128 including the €5K SSEI grant (reducing to €2.5K on 1st July). The drivetrain and batteries have an 8-year warranty.

On the test run, the Atto 3 is exceptionally impressive. Solid doors, perfect panel fit, beautiful interior detailing all imply superb build quality. The range of standard equipment and features is vast - but the neat, compact central screen carries the main data (speed, speed limit, range remaining and next turn).

Stephen O'Flaherty changed the Irish car market in the 1950s when he started importing Volkswagen. He also assembled and sold Mercedes Benz from his Dublin 4 factory. In the 1970s he brought Toyota, Mazda, Audi, Skoda to Irish car buyers from his HQ on the Naas Road. In recent years MDL have imported only Mercedes

cars and vans but with the addition of BYD, they return to be a multi franchise operation. Their MSL garage at Deansgrange now stocks the three grade levels of the ATTO 3 - though the differences are small with the top of the line variant being still under €40,000. Stephen O'Flaherty understood better than anyone that there is huge variety of Irish motoring users and it is not a matter of 'one size fits all'. Electric cars are not for everybody, yet and their remains a strong rural / sub urban loyalty to the diesel engine, in particular. But for those for whom battery electric is a workable option, BYD will be a serious consideration.

## Minister Fleming congratulates Wicklow Global Goal Getters

Minister of State for International Development and Diaspora, Sean Fleming T.D., has launched the first of two 2023 editions of the popular online magazine Global Goal Getters, featuring the work of primary school pupils across Ireland taking part in this year's Our World Irish Aid Awards.

Three projects created by pupils from Kilcommon National School in Tinahely are amongst the 32 submissions from 14 schools across Ireland chosen to feature in this year's first edition of Global Goal Getters, which is now available to view online at ourworldirishaidawards.ie.

The Our World Irish Aid Awards form an important part of Ireland's commitment to overseas

development and global citizen education. This helps to reinforce the importance of the global development work carried out by the Government on

behalf of the people of Ireland. This year the awards attracted more than 250 submissions from schools across the island of Ireland.

This year's theme urged pupils to follow the lead of activists such as education campaigner and Nobel Peace Prize winner Malala Yousafzai and raise their voices in support of Equality for All.

The first project from Kilcommon National School chosen for inclusion is a PowerPoint presentation created by 4th Class pupils Sophia Brennan, Paula Pia Moroney and Aoife

Spillanne focusing on Uganda, one of Irish Aid's focus countries. Sixth Class pupils Ava Killane and David Killane also created a PowerPoint presentation, this time about Vietnam which is also an Irish Aid focus country. Finally, 4th Class pupils Zara Maher, Ruth Johnson, Chloe Quinlan, Hope Ryan and Lauren Ryan created a

PowerPoint presentation displaying the facts on Tanzania which is the largest country in East Africa and an Irish Aid focus country.

Congratulating the pupils and their teacher,

Minister Fleming said: "It is wonderful to see so many primary school pupils in Wicklow and right across Ireland take part in this year's Our World Irish Aid Awards. The level of commitment from our young people to making the world a better place for all shines through in all the submissions. This reflects the work our national school teachers carry out as part of these Awards to nurture an ethos of global citizenship and help to create a new generation of change-makers."

"I have recently returned from a visit to Malawi to see how Irish

Aid-supported programmes are helping people there. Climate change is reducing the amount of food people can produce, while many young people, particularly girls, are not accessing education. It is important for young people in Ireland to learn about these inequalities and about how they can make a positive change."

Kilcommon National School will now compete for a place at the National Final Ceremony which will take place in Dublin on Wednesday 7th June 2023.

### WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

We, Margaret Byrne and Sean Lenehan, intend to seek Permission for a new single and two storey detached dwelling, New vehicular access with set back low level wall and gate onto public road, wastewater treatment unit and polishing filter, surface water soakaway, timber fence and hedgerow boundary treatment to west, south and east site boundaries, landscaping and all associated site works at site located approximately 60m to the South East of St Mary's Church, Killamoat Lower, Rathdangan, Co Wicklow; within the Killamoat Lower, settlement boundary.

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.

### PLANNING

#### WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

##### Significant Information / Revised Plans

I hereby give notice of the submission of significant further information to Wicklow County Council in relation to planning application Reference Number: 22/1395 for Anthony Gilvarry who is applying for permission at Ballinabarney North, Redcross, Co. Wicklow. Significant further information / revised plans have been furnished to the planning authority in respect of the proposed development and are available for inspection or purchase at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy at the offices of Wicklow County Council during its public opening hours. A submission or observation in relation to the further information or revised plans may be made in writing to the planning authority within the period of 2 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the revised notices. A submission or observation must be accompanied by the prescribed fee except in the case of a person or body who has already made a submission or observation.

#### WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

##### Waste Facility Permit

Notice is hereby given in accordance with Article 12(4) and Articles 7 and 8 of the Waste Management (Facility Permit and Registration) Regulations 2007, as amended, that Ger Devlin Haulage & Plant Hire Ltd of Knockfadda, Roundwood, Co. Wicklow, intends to apply for a Waste Management Facility Permit at Annagolan, Ashford, Co. Wicklow, to carry out the importation and deposition of inert soil subsoil and topsoil for land profiling and recontouring purposes at an existing agricultural holding. The application for a waste facility permit will be made to Wicklow County Council within 10 working days of the date of this notice. The Classes of Activity at the site, as specified in the Third (Part I) Schedule of the Waste Management Act, 1996, as amended, is/are as follows. "Class No. 5." Recovery of excavation or dredge spoil, comprising natural materials of clay, silt, sand, gravel or stone and which comes within the meaning of inert waste, through deposition for the purposes of the improvement or development of land, where the total quantity of waste recovered at the facility is less than 100,000 tonnes. A copy of the application for the waste permit will as soon as is practicable after receipt by the Local Authority, be available for inspection or purchase at the principal office at Wicklow County Council, Environment Section, Wicklow County Buildings, Whitegates, Wicklow Town.

#### WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

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Roisin Vigors, Joanne Logue and Leah Byrne at 'SIX: The Musical', in St. Mary's Hall, Arklow.

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# Three Wicklow groups shortlisted in Digital Town Awards

.IE, the national registry for .ie domain names, has announced that three entries from Wicklow groups have been shortlisted for the .IE Digital Town Awards 2023.

The awards, now in their 3rd year, recognise and reward projects created by town groups and local communities that have a digital element,

supporting Ireland's digital development. .IE provides the pathway for people, communities and businesses to access and unlock a digital world of potential and opportunity by managing the infrastructure that allows this to happen.

The shortlisted entries include:

In the Digital Sustainability and Digital Rising Star categories, The Bee Sanctuary, Tinahely, has been set up to tackle the biodiversity crisis and raise awareness of the current threats to bees. Within 5 years, the sanctuary has gone from a 'bricks and mortar' project advocating for bees and nature locally to a digitally focused project with international reach through clever use of Twitter hashtags. Now featuring in the Metaverse, the project continues to educate the public on sustainability practices.

The Sandwich Economy/Smart Villages, in Newtown, shortlisted in Digital Sustainability cate-

gory, involves the implementation of an online portal enabling communication between the 6 rural villages sandwiched between Bray, Greystones and Wicklow town. There are further plans to connect these villages by providing cycle/walking routes to improve connectedness and to launch remote digital working hubs to improve the local economy and increase job availability.

Wicklow town's Students Share Digital Skills project, shortlisted in the Digital Education category, allows TY students to share their digital skills one-to-one with adults in their local communities. Adults bring their own devices and learn what they want at their own pace.

In addition, national suicide charity Turn2Me, has been shortlisted in the Community category. The fully online, digital platform offers free counselling and peer support in

a safe, anonymous confidential space, eliminating barriers to accessing support including cost, waiting lists and travel time.

The awards offer a prize fund of €100,000 which is split across the 10 categories. Winners will be announced at a Gala Awards event on Wednesday 24th May.

Congratulating the finalists, National Director, .IE Digital Town Programme Oonagh McCutcheon said "The .IE Digital Town Awards are a celebration of the incredible work being undertaken at a local level to promote innovation and breathe new life into local communities. The awards also afford the opportunity to recognise and show appreciation to the volunteers across the country who devote their spare time working tirelessly to enhance their local area, towns and villages and we look forward to celebrating all of our finalists at our Gala Awards ceremony in May."

## CLASSIFIEDS

### THE MIRACULOUS PRAYER

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

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Casey and Shane Doyle with baby Noah at Sadie Doyle's 90th birthday party in Fitzgerald's, Avoca.

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