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Tuesday 9th May 2023 First Floor, The Boulevard, Quinsborough Road, Bray. A98 R6D7. Tel: 01 - 2869111 E-mail: wicklowed@localtimes.ie www.wicklowtimes.net

WORRIES ABOUT BRAY AIR SHOW

Concerns have been raised over the lack of consultation with Bray residents with the running of Bray's Air Show, in particular the extension of the show to two days and its carbon footprint.

Bray Air Show should be carbon neutral says Bray's Cathaoirleach and Green Party Councillor, Erika Doyle. That's one of the several suggestions Cllr Doyle has put forward in her submission on the license application for this year's air show. Organisers have proposed an extension to the show from one day to two, and Cllr Doyle says while many will welcome this, residents of Bray should have their say.

Cllr Doyle said,

"Firstly it's important to note that many thousands of people enjoy the air show every year. It's also unquestionably beneficial to the seafront traders. A submission does not necessarily mean an objection - it's just an observation on how things might be improved or tweaked. It's only right that residents of Bray, who must deal with the negative knock-on effects of the event, get to have their say.

"In a time of climate

crisis, we need to look at the carbon print of an event like this - now extending to two full days of air display and pleasure helicopter flights. Thousands of litres of jet fuel will be used during the event. A similar show in the seaside town of Bournemouth - Europe's largest air show, recently committed to offsetting their carbon emissions using various initiatives and other air shows have followed.

"I see no reason why



Abigail Doyle from St David's Holy Faith Secondary School, Greystones, pictured modeling her Alice in Wonderland themed outfit designed for the Upcycled category of the An Taisce Green-Schools 'Let's Fix Fashion' catwalk event in Cashel last week. Let's Fix Fashion is a campaign by An Taisce Green-Schools to help students develop and promote more sustainable fashion habits, which aligns with Sustainable Development Goal 12 - responsible production and consumption. Photo by Diarmuid Greene

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the Bray air show cannot follow their lead. It's disappointing to see no reference to environmental impact in the application.

"In previous years the Saturday of the air show weekend was used as a practise day and full traffic restrictions were not implemented. Should permission be given to extend the show to two days, the road closures and heavy traffic will be in place for the full weekend. It's important that local residents feed back on how this has impacted them in previous years. The license application lists the stakeholders who were consulted ahead of the application being made, and no residents groups or representatives are listed. The only option available to them is to complain after the event. I suggest that in future years, residents of the seafront and surrounding areas are consulted.

"Other issues that I hope are reviewed are the hours during which the private helicopter trips are allowed take place. The noise of these running all day for a full weekend is intense for residents living in the vicinity of Bray Head. Consideration should be given to the elderly or those requiring visits from carers or medical staff, and appropriate free parking should be provided to those who will not be able to park near the relevant properties.

"We all want this event to run smoothly and many people living in the town look forward to it every year. However, the organisers must be cognisant of the fact that many people in Bray are significantly impacted by the show. It therefore makes sense for them to listen to the concerns and address them in advance."

The license application

is available to view on www.wicklow.ie or at Wicklow County Council

buildings and you can make a submission by emailingplandev@wick-

lowcoco.ie The period of public submissions closes on Thursday May 11th.



**Good luck to
The Wicklow Ladies
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Peter and Elsie Cooper pictured at the Caryfort National School Summer Fete in Arklow.

Wicklow's wild waters

All are welcome to attend an upcoming talk with acclaimed Wicklow author and ecologist, Richard Nairn, on his latest publication 'Wild Waters the magic of Ireland's Rivers and Lakes'.

The talk will take place in Wicklow Town library on Thursday 11th May from 7-8pm. Richard Nairn is a well-known writer who has published six previous books on themes of natural heritage.

'Wild Waters: The Magic of Ireland's Rivers and Lakes' is the third volume of his memoirs following the acclaimed titles 'Wild Woods' (2020) and 'Wild Shores' (2022).

The Avonmore River features heavily in the book making it of particular interest to Wicklow audiences. This event is organised by the heritage office of Wicklow County Council in association with Wicklow library services. Attendance is free but booking is required as the venue has a limited capacity. Book by email to wicklowheritage@wicklowcoco.ie.

Rathdrum Cancer Support AGM

Rathdrum Cancer Support Group are holding their annual AGM in the RDA Annex Rathdrum on the 24th May 2023 at 7.30pm. Open to anyone who wishes to attend.

BirdWatch Ireland upcoming events

Tuesday May 9th Indoor Talk: Bats in Wicklow by Enda Mullen, Ashford Heritage Centre at 19:30; Sunday May 14th Dawn Chorus Event at

5am in Avondale Forest Park, Rathdrum; Tuesday May 23rd Wicklow Branch AGM Via Zoom at 19:00 on May 23rd, please email the branch (birdwatchwicklow@gmail.com) to request the Zoom meeting link. "If you are interested in getting involved in the Branch Committee and would like to know more please send us an email or ask us in person at the upcoming branch events."

Community Catch Up

Wicklow Public Partnership Network are holding a 'Community Catch Up' event in Kilcoole Community Centre on 10th May. Refreshments and Informal Networking from 7pm. Presentations, Discussion and Q&A from 7.30pm to 9pm. An evening of chat, networking and information exchange. All are very welcome, please spread the word to family and friends. Please book if you can, as it helps with planning for the sessions.

Heart of the Community Fund

This is an open grant round designed to meet the needs of not-for-profit organisations. The Heart of the Community Fund 2023 will provide Organisational Investment Funds. The fund will prioritise applications from organisations working in the following areas: Facilitating re-engagement with Education & Learning, both formal and informal; Building Community Resilience; Designing & Delivering Grassroots Peace & Reconciliation Activities; Protecting & Promoting the Arts; Supporting Local Solutions to Global Challenges. Full information and details from Irelandfunds.org.

We Can Quit stop smoking programme in Bray

Would you like to stop smoking? Or have you tried before and feel you could benefit from more support to help you quit?

Bray Area Partnership is running a free We Can Quit stop smoking programme, starting on Wednesday 17th May in Bray. The course will run one evening a week for seven weeks and will offer group support, one-to-one support and free stop smoking medication. You must be living in the Bray or north Wicklow area to qualify to attend.

People who have attended the course to date have found it really beneficial – as one participant said: "We Can Quit gave me the confidence to try to stop smoking. The weekly meeting with other smokers really helped as you feel you are part of a team working together to support each other. I especially appreciated the phone call after the weekend – when will power would be running low after struggling to socialise without cigarettes."

The We Can Quit programme is part of the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme, which aims to provide support to people in local communities to make real and tangible changes in their lives to improve their health.

To find out more and register call Jennifer Jones at Bray Area Partnership on 01 286 8266. See www.brayarepartnership.ie for more information.

Delgany village clean-up weekend

Delgany Tidy Towns need volunteers for our upcoming Village Clean Up Weekend taking place on May 13th and 14th, from 10am-1pm.

"Come join us and help keep our heritage village beautiful. Even if you can only give an hour of your time, it will be time well spent helping neighbours and friends clean up our village and its surrounding areas. Volunteers will be litter picking, sweeping footpaths and doing a big tidy-up. ALL WELCOME! This is a great opportunity for people from across our community to meet up and help keep our village litter free."

required) and gloves. We have a limited amount of equipment so we ask that you bring any other gardening tools that might be useful across the weekend, such as gloves, brushes, spades, hoes, secateurs etc.

"If you would like to volunteer you can register online at eventbrite.ie or meet the DTT team in the Old Burial Ground, Delgany Village at 10am on May 13th & 14th."

Volunteers will meet at 10am each day in the Old Burial Ground in the heart of Delgany Village and will then split into groups to clean one of the 10 Zones across Delgany.

For more information, visit <https://delgany.online/dtt>, Email DelganyTidyTowns@gmail.com. You can also reach out to them on social media: Instagram - [delganytidytowns](https://www.instagram.com/delganytidytowns); Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/DelganyTidyTowns>

"We ask that all volunteers wear a face mask (when



Eoin Coogan, Johnnie Kelly, Michael O'Toole, Helena Dunne, Anne Moorhead, and Catherine Coogan of Rathdangan Drama Group, who performed in 'Poor Jimmy' in Rathdangan Community Hall.

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A DAY TO REMEMBER

You are invited to a re-enactment march for the battle of Newtownmountkennedy 1798. Sunday 28th May 2023.

Assemble at Abwood, march after 2pm. Mass is on the mass rock beside Abwood.

Pike or no pike, man, woman or child. No entry fee. Just be there and be part of history.



WICKLOW Times

Shay Fitzmaurice, Managing Editor - shay@localtimes.ie

Ian Colgan, News Editor - ian@localtimes.ie

Sales / General enquiries - info@localtimes.ie

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First Floor, The Boulevard, Quinsborough Road, Bray. A98 R6D7. Tel: 01-2869111

A 'raw deal' for Wicklow commuters?

The NTA has published its National Fares Strategy for commuter and inter-urban journeys on Public Service Obligation (PSO) bus and rail services. As part of the strategy, for short distance trips crossing the 'Dublin City Zone' boundary (e.g. Greystones to Bray), the NTA says passengers will get the benefit of the National Fare Structure and the associated lower fare reflective of the short distance travelled.

However, Greystones Independent councillor Stephen Stokes has expressed concern that Greystones, Charlesland, Delgany, Kilcoole, Killadreenan and Newcastle have been lumped into the new 50 kilometre outer zone which could mean increased fares if traveling to Dublin.

Greystones and Wicklow Town are to be included within a new 'Outer Dublin Commuter Zone' extending to approximately 50km from Dublin city centre. Greystones Municipal District commuters travelling to Dublin will pay either a national fare or Express Bus fares, plus a surcharge for every kilometre to the new Dublin City Zone.

The final fare decisions based

on the Strategy will be determined and published at a later date. Under this Strategy, the NTA says, changes introduced in future fares determinations will reflect a more consistent, equitable approach, and one that is easier to understand for customers.

Speaking on the matter, Cllr Stokes said, "We will have to see what the precise impact is. However it feels like commuters can't catch a break from the Government and the NTA. Many people in Greystones will remember when a return train ticket to Dublin was around E10. While I appreciate that the NTA wants to create fare consistency, it seems mad to put the Greystones District in to the same bracket with Trim,

Navan, and Drogheda which are much further from Dublin."

The new changes are expected to take effect from late 2023. Cllr Stephen Stokes believes that the NTA logic which created the Dublin City Zone boundaries is questionable. He added: "The new Dublin City Zone is 23 kilometres. That is an unusual number to pick. Yet when you look at their strategy map, there are several commuter towns like Greystones just barely on the wrong side of the boundary. It looks like a prelude to much higher fares for Charlesland, Delgany, Greystones, Kilcoole, Killadreenan and Newcastle. Additionally as Newcastle is the furthest away from Dublin, com-



Eva Belle Bradshaw with her prize-winning cupcake at the Carysfort National School summer fete in Arklow.

muters there are likely to be hit hardest by per kilometre stealth charges."

Cllr Stephen Stokes has written to the NTA and Green Party Minister, Eamon Ryan to highlight his concerns.

He concluded: "Here we are again, talking about the NTA and

Minister Ryan giving East Wicklow commuters a raw deal. If we want to get people out of cars we need to ensure that public transport is affordable, available and reliable. You would have to question the decision making."

The migration of current fares to the National Fare Structure is

likely to take place over a number of years and will depend in part on upgrades to existing ticketing equipment and the procurement of next generation ticketing equipment, currently underway. NTA hopes to implement revised fare structures in the Dublin commuter area as a priority.

No transport provision impacting people with disabilities

Speaking in the Dail last week Social Democrats TD Jennfer Whitmore called on the Government to address the lack of rural transport for people with disabilities who have been made 'prisoners in their own homes'.

Deputy Whitmore said, "I have been contacted by a number of constituents who are themselves service users or are family members of service users who cannot, because of the lack of transport provision, access the day services that have been allocated. As a consequence, these people are unable to access the day services such as Sunbeam House Services.

"These are people who need the ser-

vices for support and socialisation and without being able to attend will be left at home, isolated. I have spoken to one individual who, on the 14th of June this year will be one full year without transport to his day services. The same individual had to go into respite for one week because of the stress and isolation he felt. In his own words, 'at least Respite changed the scenery' for him.

"I believe this is unacceptable and despite this man advocating for himself and pleading with the service providers, the HSE and contacting the Minister's office, he is still at home for nearly a year. The HSE advised him that they had overspent, and as a consequence there are no funds available to cover his transport needs. How can a department overspend, when they know in advance who is on their service list?

"He has no indication from the HSE whether or not there will be funding available for him in the coming years and the uncertainty has driven him to

say that he will give up his place at Sunbeam so that other service users on the waiting list can have his place. His quality of life and level of independence has been negatively impacted because of where he lives. It is incredible that in 2023 that a service user is disadvantaged because of his post code.

"It is time for the government to step up and address transport for disability head on. We cannot allow a situation where rural service users are disadvantaged because they cannot access the same services that urban service users can," concluded Deputy Whitmore.



Deputy Whitmore



Spring Open Day

Kilkenny Road Campus, Carlow
Saturday 13 May, 10am – 2pm

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Over 100 Wicklow groups joined the National Spring Clean

Communities in County Wicklow came together to make a difference for our environment, by removing 16 tonnes of litter from various locations across the county

Throughout the month of April, the National Spring Clean encouraged communities from across Ireland to tackle the problem of litter in local areas and to see the benefits of a litter-free environment.



Cllr Melanie Corrigan with members of Enniskerry Tidy Towns

This year over 100 Wicklow groups registered to carry out clean-ups throughout the county making Spring Clean 23 one of Ireland's largest anti-litter campaigns to date.

Overall, approximately 3,000 volunteers joined Spring Clean 23 in County Wicklow removing an estimated 16 tonnes of litter. Furthermore, National Spring Clean has been a

starting point for a large number of groups to organise regular clean-up events all year long!

In County Wicklow, clean-ups took place in various locations, including Arklow, Baltinaglass, Bray, Delgany, Greystones, Newcastle, Tinahely, and many more. Among them, Greystones Tidy Towns organised several clean-ups as part of this year's National Spring Clean

campaign in Dr Ryan Park. Moreover, this group hosted several biodiversity initiatives in the town during the spring.

Enniskerry Tidy Towns hosted two events for their National Spring Clean, on 25th March and 1st April, where volunteers removed litter from different areas in the towns, and also created a community vegetable garden.

Finally, the Native Woodland Trust hosted their National Spring Clean event over the Easter Bank Holiday weekend, and a crew of 21 volunteers and branch members joined them at Poulaphouca Lough Parking lot. With the support from local 12th Wicklow Dunlavin Scout Group, they removed 21 bags of litter, including some larger dumped items such as tyres, traffic cones, a mattress and wooden barrel.

The group commented: "The action started in the car park, wound its way along the greenway and up to the cross-roads of our reserve. We tackled the water's edge first, and got a chance to admire some of the beautiful mature trees that run along its banks. We then circled back to tackle the reserve proper and, in particular, the roadside boundary where the majority of our bags were filled. Habitat restoration sounds complicated, but it can start with an action as simple as a spring clean."

National Spring Clean 2023 has been an opportunity for communities in Wicklow and nationwide to come together and do their bit for their local



Cllr Stephen Stokes with Greystones Tidy Towns volunteers taking part in the National Spring Clean.

environment, contribute to creating a more sustainable community, be with like-minded people and make a difference.

This year, the aim for National Spring Clean was also to raise awareness about how the adoption of a circular economy model, will reduce our litter, and climate impact, meaning that as we transition to a more circular economy, we'll see less waste, less litter, and lower emissions, and thus, cleaner planet.

The principles of a circular economy have always been central to the ethos of National Spring Clean for the past 24 years. This year, some 35% of all waste collected was recycled, thanks to recyclable waste bags provided to groups and individuals who register, while the removal of litter from

our natural environment has helped tackle biodiversity loss.

Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications, Eamon Ryan TD, said of the initiative: "An Taisce's National Spring Clean continues to showcase the dedication of volunteers all over the country. The commitment of volunteers in continuing to organise local clean-ups each year is a testament to the spirit in Irish communities and I would urge as many people as possible to get involved in the campaign. My Department will continue to support the campaign and An Taisce, whose role in organising this successful campaign each year, deserves to be acknowledged. I look forward to the many events that will be held

all over the country in the coming months."

National Spring Clean, manager, Emlin Cullen, added: "This was one of our biggest years ever with regards people taking part. We can't thank the volunteers enough for giving up their time and energy to make Ireland a cleaner, greener country this April. Huge credit also goes to the Local Authorities who work hard during the month to collect the full bags after events. Also I'd like to thank our funders, the Dept. of Environment, Climate and Communications and sponsors, Mars Wrigley Ireland."

There are plenty of campaigns and activities that The National Spring Clean run and endorse that you can get involved in. A few of these include:

When you are out for a walk, visiting a park or a beach, do a quick #2MinuteStreetClean or a #2MinuteBeachClean; Avoid single-use plastic when possible, by choosing more sustainable alternatives, such as reusable bottles and coffee cups, cotton bags, metal straws, etc; Don't litter and if a bin is overflowing, keep your waste until you find a waste to dispose of it properly; If you can't reduce or reuse, recycle; know where and how to recycle all types of waste; Recent statistics show that, in Ireland, discarded cigarette butts make up for 60% of litter on the streets. Always bin your butt! Make sure to bin your chewing gum when you're done to avoid a €150 gum littering fine and keep our streets clean!

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Members of the Native Woodland Group taking part in the National Spring Clean

Better bus connection for Bray and Wicklow Town begins this week

Bus Eireann's newly enhanced 131 and 133 routes began operating on Sunday 7th May. Among the changes that have been implemented are improved frequency, greater capacity and new accessible vehicles.

Bus Eireann was announced as the operator of the routes following a competitive tender process. These two enhanced routes will operate on new, fully accessible vehicles provided by the NTA. The newly enhanced services will launch for customers from Sunday, 7th May. Full details and timetables are available at buseireann.ie.

Route 133 from Wicklow town to Busaras via Ashford, Newtown and UCD has been enhanced, with 143 departures each way per week. This service will no longer route via Bray, to achieve greater punctuality and reliability. Passengers will continue to be able to connect through to Dublin Airport by transferring to Route 101 at Busaras. The route has been consolidated so that the former 133B, 133L and 133X routes will cease.

On Route 133, passenger numbers are up 30 percent on 2019 and will deliver over half a million passenger journeys this year, a record. All services will be operated by double-deck coaches in response to increased passenger demand.

A new service, Route 131 is providing the first dedicated local bus service between Bray Dart station and Wicklow town, with 112 departures each way per week.

Speaking about the latest improvements to public transport in

Wicklow, Steven Matthews, Green TD for Wicklow, said "This is wonderful news for commuters in Wicklow. Since I became TD for Wicklow, bringing viable and efficient public transport options to communities around the county has been amongst my top priorities. These new and enhanced bus routes will make a genuine difference for people's lives, slashing travel times and connecting smaller towns and villages with major DART and bus routes. It is hoped that these improvements will help reduce our over reliance on car travel by encouraging the use of more environmentally sustainable forms of travel.

"The Green Party has always led the way in improving public transport options and these new bus routes are just the latest example of our commitment to this. There is still a lot of room for improvement, and these are improvements which I will continue to push for going forward. Other advancements which I continue to push for at a local and national level are the extending of the DART line to Wicklow town as well as the restoration of bus the Arklow-St. Vincent's bus route. I am confident to see progress on these matters soon.

"The new timetables will be operational this week but if there are any teething issues of anomalies in the coming week and months, I

would encourage users of these services to get in touch and I will work with the NTA and Bus Eireann to work through any concerns," concluded Deputy Matthews.

Jennifer Whitmore TD welcomed the commencement of the new dedicated bus between Bray and Wicklow Town, but said she'd like to see even more frequency.

"The need for this route, and to improve connectivity between Bray and Wicklow Town, serves as a reminder for the long term need to deliver the DART extension from Greystones to Wicklow. While the process on that continues, the new bus service will provided an option but the extension of the DART is still badly needed."

Deputy Whitmore is also calling on Bus Eireann to engage in an local information campaign so that customers know how and where they can access the updated services.

Sinn Féin TD John Brady has also welcomed the commencement of the new service.

"Having highlighted many of the difficulties and problems faced by commuters over the years on the bus-route, I want to welcome the news from the NTA that from the 7th May the 133 bus-route upgrade will come into effect," he said.

"With the 133 now by-passing Bray, commuters travelling to

Belfield and Dublin City Centre will save ten minutes on their journey time. A new 131 bus route between Wicklow Town and Bray will also come into operation.

"The introduction of a new service from Wicklow Town to Bray Town Centre is particularly welcome to those passengers that relied on the 133 to get into Bray. Particularly, students from the Bray Institute of Further Education (BIFI), and the many other commuters who were dependent on the 133.

"The new 131 route will address the difficulties encountered by passengers who were previously dependent on the 133 through the provision of the new hourly service directly to the centre of Bray Town and Bray Daily Train Station."

Brady continued: "The new 131 route is really welcome and the delivery of the three bus based Park and Ride sites along the N11/M11 in the area of Fassaroe, Ashford, Rathnew, and Kilpedder, are going to be critically important. These are currently in design stage, the NTA intends to commence the planning consent process for Fassaroe in Q2 2023, for Ashford/Rathnew in Q3 2023 and for Kilpedder in Q3/Q4 2023. Subject to planning approval, the aim is to deliver Fassaroe in Q4 2024, Ashford/Rathnew in Q1 2025 and Kilpedder in Q2 2025."

Éabha's hair cutting fundraiser

10-year-old Éabha Brennan Hobbs is cutting her hair to donate to the Rapunzel Foundation. Éabha will be donating the money raised, meanwhile, to RehabCare in Bray, which her aunty attends.

Éabha's GoFundMe page (<https://www.gofundme.com/f/rapunzel-bray-rehab-care>) states "Éabha is finally cutting her very long and gorgeous locks to donate to the Rapunzel Foundation! Something she has been waiting to do for some time now. Éabha hopes that her hair will contribute to making some girl or boy very happy, with something she takes for granted! Thanks to one of her best friends and their dad she will be in very safe hands. Dylan Bradshaw is supporting the cause and he will be cutting Éabha's hair this term!

"Éabha also wanted to use the opportunity to raise some funds to support the Bray Rehab Resource Center, a charity which provides supports and services for local people with disabilities and which her Aunty Fiona attends. Éabha is very appreciative of any donation you can make."



Éabha Brennan Hobbs



James and Emer Kinsella at the launch of the Robbie Tyrrell exhibition in the Maritime Museum in Arklow.

OPEN DAY
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Local communities to benefit from heritage funding

Wildlife, local economies and tourism in Wicklow are set to benefit from Heritage Council funding of €97,100 for seven individual projects.

The Heritage Council's Community Heritage Grant Scheme will help to conserve and restore built, cultural and natural heritage throughout the county.

Work on these projects can begin immediately which will see local communities enriched through initiatives, from making previously unseen works of art available to the public, to equipping local communities with skills needed to protect biodiversity, to making landmarks of national significance accessible again. The projects will all be completed by the end of the year.

The projects to receive funding in County Wicklow include the Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation which will be offered €20,000 to design a high quality, dynamic interpretation and visitors experience which will share the rich heritage of the Glencree site with the community in creative and accessible ways.

The Rathnew Heritage Group will use its funding of €19,457 to create a Wicklow Community Archival Heritage film featuring hitherto unused footage captured by Mr JT O'Byrne, former Wicklow County Engineer and also the General Secretary for the Wicklow RNLI.

The footage shows his interests in engineering works, mining, lifeboat material, harbour life, political and religious events. The film will be made by the Glenealy IT students who will be taught the skills of digitisation, editing, sound and documentary making.

Birdwatch Ireland is getting €19,500 for a Coast Nature Reserve project while the Arklow Town Team is receiving funding of €14,000 for the Arklow Pottery Online project.

Avoca Parish Finance Committee will

spend its grant of €9,600 on conservation work at St Mary's and St Patrick's Church. Rewild Wicklow will spend €8,500 on Phase 2 of the Barnaculan Ridge Peatland Restoration and Roundwood and District Historical Archaeological and Folklore Society is receiving €5,953 to fund its Castlekevin project.

Cllr Tommy Annesley, Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, welcomed the funding announcement stating: "This investment from The Heritage Council in seven community heritage projects in County Wicklow represents an investment of €97,100 in our natural, built and cultural heritage and all the groups who work tirelessly to protect it."

Emer O'Gorman, Chief Executive, Wicklow County Council, also welcomed the diversity of groups and projects funded and praised all those involved.

Minister of State for Heritage and Electoral Reform, Malcolm Noonan, TD, said: "Every year, I love to see the creativity and dedication of our heritage sector through these projects from the Community Heritage Grant Scheme. It reminds me that despite the challenges we face, our heritage remains in safe hands. It is a truly valuable scheme and is also a significant investment in this Government's commitments under the Programme for Government to promote and protect our heritage."

Chairperson of The Heritage Council, Martina Moloney, stated: "Heritage Council funding for the Community Heritage Grant Scheme has more than tripled since 2020 and the quality of the projects awarded funding is ample justification for this enhanced support. In many cases, the beneficiaries of the work being

carried out is the public, who will be able to access newly digitised resources and enjoy newly restored buildings, objects and natural heritage sites of national significance."

Virginia Teehan, Chief Executive, The Heritage Council, commented: "Our recently published Strategic Plan, Our Place in Time, acknowledges the pivotal role that community groups play as custodians of our national heritage and we are committed to ensuring that funding streams are in place to support communities to care for heritage and habitats. We will continue to run the Community Heritage Grant Scheme but will also develop new schemes which adapt to the needs of the sector as they evolve. For now, though, I wish to congratulate all the grantees and look forward to seeing the fruits of your labour later in the year."

"On behalf of the Glencree team, I am delighted to accept this generous Community Award grant from The Heritage Council," said Naoimh McNamee, Glencree CEO. "Through the support of the Heritage Council, Glencree will work with Tandem interpretative design consultancy to create an inclusive interpretative 'storytelling' design and vision for the historical site of Glencree. We want to welcome people from all walks of life across the island to learn about Glencree's intriguing heritage, as well as the key lessons of peace and reconciliation that we can share from our work on the Northern Ireland Peace Process. As we move towards Glencree @ 50 in 2024, fifty years since the Peace Centre was founded in 1974, there has never been a better time to explore all that Glencree has to offer," she added.



Lily Monahan, Scoil Naomh Íosaif, was the Girls Football Skills winner at the recent Cumann na mBunsol Skills Day, and will now go on to play in Croke Park in the INTO Mini 7's during the summer



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Council to receive €1.8 million for Housing adaptation grants for older and disabled people

Wicklow County Council will receive €1,881,950 funding for Housing Adaptation Grants for Older and Disabled people for this year.

The Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Darragh O'Brien TD, and Minister of State for Local Government and Planning, Kieran O'Donnell TD, have announced €2.3m in funding for Housing Adaptation Grants for Older and Disabled people in Wicklow in 2023. Nationally, €83.125m has been allocated for these grants to benefit 12,300 people, a 2.3% increase on the 2022 initial allocation. This represents a continuation of the year-on-year increases in the grant since 2014.

This funding will help facilitate older people and disabled people in Wicklow to live independently in their own homes. Of the 2023 funding allocation of €2.3m for Wicklow, the Exchequer will provide €1.88m. Wicklow County Council will provide the remaining €470,488.

aids," Minister Harris explained.

"Empowering and enabling people to live as independently as possible in their own homes is at the heart of this - enhancing their lives, as well as those of their family members. But an added benefit to this grant scheme is that it will also boost the local economy in Wicklow, creating employment opportunities for local contractors. The ripple effect of this increased funding package will be wide-reaching," Minister Harris concluded.

Minister O'Brien said: "I am delighted to allocate increased funding in 2023 to deliver Housing Adaptation Grants for Older and Disabled people in Wicklow. This allocation will build on the success of last year where we exceeded the number of home adaptations initially targeted nationally. We want to empower and enable people to live independently in their own homes for as long as possible - these grants help us to do just that. They also provide a

boost to the local economy in Wicklow, creating employment opportunities for local contractors."

Minister O' Donnell added: "I am pleased that funding for our local authorities to administer Housing Adaptation Grants has been increasing year-on-year since 2014. This Government is committed to this scheme as it is essential in supporting older and disabled people in their daily lives. These grants have a huge bearing on the home life of their many beneficiaries and play a critical role in helping disabled people and those reaching an age when they are less mobile, to continue to live independently in their own homes."

"As Minister of State with responsibility for housing for older people and disabled people, I am fully committed to supporting individuals in Wicklow to continue living independently at home and within their own communities. The funding announced today will facilitate this goal."

'Ground hog day' on energy costs discussions

Social Democrats Jennifer Whitmore has spoken in the Dail calling for supports for small businesses operating in Wicklow in light of the rising cost of energy. Also speaking last week, Sinn Féin TD John Brady has called on Wicklow TDs to act to support struggling workers and families overwhelmed by the cost of energy.

As Party Spokesperson on Energy, Deputy Whitmore said, "it feels like ground hog day. Every few weeks we are talking about energy prices, energy markets and energy failures and the reason why we are still talking about it is that the energy market is no longer fit for purpose. There is a fundamental need for market reform.

"I have spoken many times in this chamber about the impact this is having on homes and businesses, the difficulties it is causing people. The supports that the government had introduced for businesses is no longer helping the very people it was put in place for. This is the reality of people contacting my office. I spoke recently to a restaurant-cafe business in Wicklow. The owner said her average monthly bill for electricity in 2021 was €2,000, in 2022 that increased to €4,000, and in February of this year, because she is now out of contract, it increased to €8,900. Such businesses will not survive these price increases.

"The entire hospitality sector has had a number of setbacks over the previous years with the pandemic and then the energy crisis and despite managing to keep their heads afloat they are now being hit with exorbitant energy costs. This week, two very popular cafes, Mocha Joes in Rathdrum and Little Betty's in Avoca have closed in the



John Brady TD

past couple of weeks. They didn't just serve coffee, they served communities and now they are gone.

"Unsustainable and unpredictable jumps in energy costs are detrimental to the hospitality sector. Energy providers now require a security deposit of between 5,000 and 7,000 if someone wants to take a new contract in the hospitality sector which is prohibitive for most start-ups. The government needs to take action now before more businesses in Wicklow have to close their doors," concluded Whitmore.

Deputy Brady was speaking ahead of a Sinn Féin motion, brought forward by the party's spokesperson on Climate and Energy, Darren O'Rourke, that calls on the government to intervene to reduce rip-off energy bills.

Deputy Brady said, "Households are struggling to keep their heads above water in this cost-of-living crisis as Government continues to prioritise the profits of energy companies over workers and families at every turn.

"Wicklow TDs have an opportunity this week to show that they stand on the side of domestic consumers. I am calling on the three government TDs in particular, whose parties have failed to address the crisis, Minister Simon Harris, Minister Stephen Donnelly, and

Steven Matthews, to support Sinn Féin's proposals, which call on government to intervene to reduce rip-off energy costs.

"Average gas and electricity bills have doubled over the last year to the point that the price of electricity here is the highest in Europe and the price of gas is eighth most expensive.

"There is no excuse for this. Wholesale prices of gas and electricity have fallen significantly - electricity by half - yet there have been no efforts to pass these savings on to consumers.

"As energy companies rack up eye-watering profits, the number of people living in energy poverty doubled over the last year and at its peak was a shameful record-breaking high of 40%.

"One in five Irish homes are now behind on their gas bills - of those 679,000 people that rely on gas to heat their homes, 139,785 were in arrears at the end of December with this rising to 152,276 by the end of February.

"Sinn Féin is calling on the government to introduce a windfall tax which addresses the superprofits of energy companies. Government must also provide financial relief and certainty to households by reducing domestic electricity prices to their pre-Ukraine invasion levels and capping them at that level - as has been done in Germany, Austria and the Netherlands.

"They must also reverse the increase in carbon tax, and introduce new regulatory powers for the Commission for the Regulation of Utilities that empowers them to tackle instances of price-gouging and to ensure that it has the resources to do so.

"These are all sensible measures that the government can and must introduce to protect struggling households from greedy profiteering.

"All of the TDs in Wicklow, including and perhaps most importantly, the government TDs, must stand up for their constituents."



Jennifer Whitmore TD

National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy

The people of Wicklow are being asked to have their say on a new draft plan that aims to tackle the significant challenges around all aspects of waste in Ireland.

The National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy is Ireland's framework for the prevention and management of waste and will cover the years 2023 to 2029.

The plan aims to shift Ireland towards a more circular economy where resources are reused or recycled as much as possible and therefore waste generation is minimised. It contains six key targets, including the aim to reuse 10kgs of resources per person annually during the period of this plan.

The plan aims to encourage sustainable consumption, with proposals for more awareness campaigns, education programmes, demonstration projects as well as promotion of the correct ways to use your waste collection bins, be it at home or at work. The plan wants to ensure that when a product reaches the end of its life, its materials are kept within the economy wherever possible.

The public consultation is open until July 5th 2023. Submissions or observations can be made online at www.mywaste.ie, by email to submissions@nationalwasteplan.ie or by post to the Lead Authorities.



Eve Smith and Hanna Murphy at the Arysfort National School Summer Fete in Arklow.



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Climate change education programme launched for primary schools

To celebrate World Earth Day 2023 recently, SSE Renewables, Ireland's leading renewable energy owner and operator of renewable energy in Ireland and the UK, has collaborated with Wicklow-based EnviroSafe Ireland and Welsh-based Our Classroom Climate (OCC), to launch a climate and sustainability pilot programme for primary schools.

Launched in the Arklow Bay Conference & Leisure Hotel on 19th April, the programme, which is approved by University College Dublin and Cardiff University, is the first of its kind to be introduced into Ireland.

The programme includes: Downloadable digital lessons; A climate measuring device and dashboard to record results; A science kit with over 80 experiments (including DIY algal bioreactor for carbon capture) which students can safely use under the supervision of their teacher.

Schools represented at the launch included: St John's Senior National School, Arklow; Realt na Mara National School, Brittas Bay; The Glebe National School, Wicklow Town and Scoil Ghormain Naofa, Castletown, Co. Wexford. Students at the event had the opportunity to undertake carbon

capture experiments with Dr Iwan Palmer and Dr Elke Rink.

Deirdre Keogh, Community Engagement Manager, for the Arklow Bank Wind Park with SSE Renewables, said: "Community Engagement is very important to us as a company. Launching the 'Our Classroom Climate' programme has involved considerable planning with our partners over recent months. The programme aligns with SSE Renewables' vision and strategy to promote sustainability through championing education and training activities and programmes in communities close to our development sites like Arklow Bank Wind Park Phase 2.

"By funding programme resources, we hope to encourage and support children's learning about the environment, climate, and how they can make a positive difference both individu-

ally and collectively, to a greener and more sustainable future. We will be advancing with our partners, in the coming weeks, to offer the programme to schools close to our other offshore development sites."

Mark Douglas, Founder, OCC, said: "We are delighted to be introducing Our Classroom Climate into schools in Ireland. We have been working with leading educators and scientists to produce a climate change education programme, www.our-classroom-climate.com, that not only raises awareness, but also shows schools, pupils, and parents that we can have a hugely positive affect on our local climate, starting in the classroom.

"Our climate monitors that each school receive will not only produce live air quality data but will allow schools to share their climate dashboards with any other

schools. Ultimately, this will create a network of climate aware schools and pupils across Ireland, UK and the world.

"The launch in Arklow was funded by SSE Renewables as part of its social value proposition. As a leading renewable energy company, this sends out a powerful and positive



Pictured at the Arklow Bay Hotel are pupils from The Glebe National School. Pic: Patrick Browne

message about the need to educate the next generation on climate, air quality, and renewable

energy solutions. We would also like to thank our official partner EnviroSafe Ireland,

along with University College Dublin for their support in bringing this unique schools' offering to schools and look forward to the project extending to other schools in Ireland."



St. John's Senior National School with Senator Pat Casey at the Arklow Bay Hotel

Matthews' new Bill will protect the trees and the bees

The lack of protection for urban trees and important biodiversity sites in County Wicklow is being addressed by a new Bill launched last week by Green Party TD for Wicklow Steven Matthews.

Deputy Matthews' 'Urban Tree Protection and Sites Locally Important For Ecology Bill 2023' will allow protection for urban trees based on their value to climate, air quality and flood risk, rather than simple amenity value. With only around 40 trees or sites protected in the County, it's clear greater protections are needed.

Deputy Matthews said, "Put simply this Bill will do three things: Strengthen 'Sites Locally Important For Ecology' sites - LIFE sites - which communities can designate to protect important local nature areas; Prioritise treatment and management of trees over cutting down - there will be a duty to replant and public bodies must supply an arborist report; Change the Tree Preservation Order (TPO) process and allow for appeals.

"For many of us, being able to walk around our parks and green spaces was a lifeline and the only thing that kept us sane during the pandemic. We rediscovered the importance of nature locally. This Bill puts power back into the hands of local communities, to decide what is important locally, so that we don't lose these precious sites.

"What this means practically is that anybody in the community can request that their local Council protects a certain local nature site. The Council may then prohibit the wilful destruction of the site and, and landowners may have to enter into an agreement with the planning authority to properly manage the site."

Regarding the new protections for urban trees, Deputy Matthews added: "There are only 164 TPOs in force in Ireland relating to areas or individual trees. Over a quarter of these relate to Wicklow alone and only 16 of the 31 Local Authorities have a record of TPOs. At the same time, Local Authorities have been cutting down thousands of trees every year. This trend is in the wrong direction for what we are scientifically and legally required to do. International and EU laws mean that we are legally required to increase our green urban areas. This Bill is a step in that direction." The overarching goal of the Bill is to protect more of the spaces and features important to people and nature while not hindering much needed local housing and infrastructure.



Steven Matthews TD



COMHAIRLE CONTAE CHILL MHANTÁIN
WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

BRAY MUNICIPAL DISTRICT COMMUNITY OPEN SPACE ENHANCEMENT SCHEME 2023 PUBLIC SPACES & GREEN AREAS IN RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS

The Community Open Space Enhancement Scheme proposed by Bray Municipal District is in response to the broader community's experience of increased use, and improvement of, public spaces immediate to their own residential environment. Many of these spaces are often underutilised in terms of their intended visual and social function.

Bray Municipal District now invite applications from Residents' Associations within the Bray Municipal District who have an interest in exploring the enhancement or functional improvement of these spaces to offer a community space that facilitates pride of place and fosters positive community engagement. Enhancement measures could include biodiversity enhancement, planting, community gardens, seating areas, play areas, football areas, or areas for young and old to simply meet up.

Application forms and further details can be requested by emailing BrayMD@wicklowcoco.ie

Closing date for receipt of applications is Friday 9th June, 2023.

Linda Healy,
District Administrator,
Bray Municipal District,
Civic Offices, Main Street,
Bray, Co. Wicklow.

Website: www.bray.ie

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HU Applied Ecology and Biodiversity Studies
LJ Brewing and Distilling Technology

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Campaign for a dog park in Bray

Local well known disability activist in Bray and qualified dog trainer Cian O'Neill has teamed up with Sinn Fein Cllr Dermot 'Daisy' O'Brien to organise a campaign for the delivery of a Dog Park for Bray.

Cllr O'Brien noted that Cian had been "hounding" him for a long time to take action on this issue.

"I have submitted a motion and made calls for this numerous times since I was elected and knowing Cian very well, we had a chat and decided to bring the campaign up a level and use digital media and a survey to capture people's attention and more importantly to get them involved in the considerations for where a Dog Park might be best located in the town.

"We created a video where Cian's expertise and awareness made the case for why we need one and what the benefits would be to dogs and owners. We also included a link to an online form where people could make suggestions for locations and also outline

some benefits and barriers."

According to Cian there is a real need for this, and one might not even be enough at this stage.

"As a dog owner myself and someone who has just qualified as a dog trainer, I can see the need for a dog park but it has to be done right. People need to be involved in this and we want to get all of the ideas together and then hold a public meeting to share the results and then present our results to the Council. I am very committed to making this happen and when it does happen, I will be even more committed to making it a success." If you are interested in getting involved, contact Daisy or click on the link and complete the form.



Cllr O'Brien with dog trainer Cian O'Neill. Scan the QR code to go to the online form.

Cllr Stokes congratulates Anglesey Freeport success



Cllr Stephen Stokes with Anglesey MP Virginia Crosbie

The Isle of Anglesey is set to become a freeport. Holyhead, which is twinned with Greystones, will be a key part of the new freeport. Independent Greystones councillor Stephen Stokes has congratulated Anglesey MP Virginia Crosbie who spearheaded the initiative.

Freeports seek to create economic development around ports or airports. Goods and raw materials imported into a freeport are exempt from tariffs. Meanwhile products made inside the freeport area are exempt from duties, if exported abroad. Both the UK and Welsh Governments have now confirmed that the Anglesey Freeport will be one of two new freeports to be established in Wales.

Cllr Stephen Stokes discussed the proposal with Virginia Crosbie MP in the build up to the announcement, during her first visit to Greystones. He noted

that the investment benefits to an area are quite significant. He added: "Companies inside a UK freeport can claim lower property tax, and lower national insurance if they take on new staff. Some analysts believe that this could create thousands of new jobs in North Wales. Such opportunities are worth considering."

Ireland had the world's first freeport project with the establishment of the Shannon Free Zone in 1959, which was a 600 acre site. While many companies remain in Shannon, most of the incentives have ceased. Cllr

Stephen Stokes noted: "The UK Government wanted to stimulate development in the aftermath of Brexit. Derry and Belfast are also being considered for future freeport bids. The Irish Government should look closely at the potential for a new freeport or free zone. Rosslare campaigned for freeport status in the early 1980s. Perhaps some smaller ports could also be considered, such as Arklow or Wicklow Port. It is a conversation worth having."

As part of the Anglesey Freeport campaign Virginia Crosbie MP mentioned the matter

28 times in the House of Commons. Cllr Stephen Stokes praised her sustained commitment. Cllr Stokes stated: "Virginia Crosbie deserves great credit for pursuing the Anglesey Freeport with vigour. I also commend Stena, Anglesey Council and all of the key stakeholders for their hard work to make this happen. I will seek to support any trade initiatives between County Wicklow and Anglesey."

Cllr Stephen Stokes wished everyone involved with the Anglesey Freeport great success in their venture. He concluded: "This is an exciting new chapter for everyone involved. Hopefully it will also strengthen our twinning relations between Greystones and Holyhead."

Greystones crowns its perfect pooch



Sienna with Pippi

Given that just about every home in Greystones has a dog, the annual search for the perfect pooch has long proven to be a very popular one.

There can only be one winner though, and this year, it was the pocket-sized Pippi who got the most votes.

With part of the winner's prize being a grooming session with V.I.Pets on Theatre Lane, owner Fernanda handed Pippi and her best friend, Sienna, with her framed certificate. And that free groom.

"Greystones is a town that's seems to be about fifty percent dogs and fifty percent coffee," laughs Fernanda, "so, we're very proud to be associated with this annual search. It's an almost impossible task picking the very best dog, given that every dog we meet is wonderful..."

For 2023, there were over 100 entries to the Greystones Guide's long-running Me & My Pooch competition, which is sponsored by local eco heating suppliers Glenegy. For founder Jonathan Leonard, being part of the competition each year "is a bit of fun, and it reminds people just how wonderful dogs are..."

The organisers stated that there are currently no plans to run an annual search for Greystones' finest feline, given that each and every cat believes that they are the greatest creature to ever walk God's green earth.



Rosabelle O'Keefe at the Carysfort National School Summer Fete in Arklow

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Spring Open Day 2023 at SETU

South East Technological University (SETU) will host its annual Spring Open Day at its Kilkenny Road Campus in Carlow on Saturday, 13th May from 10am to 2pm, showcasing its undergraduate, postgraduate, and part-time courses on offer and highlights student life and the exciting atmosphere at SETU's campus in Carlow.

As SETU celebrates its first anniversary as a technological university, the Spring Open Day highlights a range of brand-new courses for 2023/24, developed by our experts in academia and industry, in the areas of agricultural science, set design, and sports management.

With the CAO Change of Mind facility now open, it is a key time for prospective students to visit SETU's campus in Carlow and speak with our lecturers, course leaders, and student support staff who can guide you on detailed course content, work placements, internships, and career opportunities; as well as answer your questions on areas of student life such as accommodation, admissions, and sport. It is also an opportunity to explore SETU's growing, state-of-the-art campus in Carlow.

This year, SETU is proud to launch nine new degree courses available to study at levels 7 and 8. This includes the Bachelor of

Science in Organic Agriculture, a cutting-edge new course that is the only one of its kind offered in Ireland and will be delivered at SETU's Wexford campus. It is an excellent opportunity for those with an interest in the agri-food industry and complements the university's existing suite of specialty land and food science programmes. Alongside this, the Bachelor of Engineering in Agricultural

Systems Engineering launches in September 2023 for delivery at SETU's Carlow campus. It is another of SETU's expert-led courses in the areas of agribusiness and agricultural engineering that supports the agri-food sector as one of Ireland's most important indigenous sectors.

At SETU in Carlow, students can now enrol in a brand-new Bachelor of Science in Set Design and Construction that focuses on developing graduates who can contribute to the expansion of

Ireland's film industry. Alongside studying the traditional elements of set design and construction for film, TV production, theatre, and event management; fourth year students will explore new technologies by examining the world of virtual production and its sustainability benefits for the industry.

With a long history of excellence in sport, SETU has expanded its Bachelor of Arts in Sports Management and Coaching that strategically combines these techniques with the principles of business and enterprise. This degree is available to study at levels 7 and 8, with options to choose from three specialties: GAA; rugby; and football.

Alison Moore, Schools Liaison and Alumni Officer at SETU in Carlow commented, "Joining us for our Spring Open Day is a fantastic opportunity to meet with our lecturers and have any of those niggling questions answered before the CAO Change of Mind



deadline, and right before the Leaving Certificate exam begins. Our current students will be running guided campus tours to showcase our amazing facilities and to share with you their own experience as an SETU student."

Among the new courses on

offer, SETU continues to develop its existing suite of courses in the areas of business, computing, software development, science, engineering, humanities, and sport, and plays a pivotal role in liaising with industry in the south east to ensure its graduates are best equipped to

pursue successful careers after their time here.

SETU's Spring Open Day takes place from 10am to 2pm on Saturday, 13 May 2023 at its Kilkenny Road Campus in Carlow. For more information check out setu.ie/events

KWETB Career Pathway Day at Railway House

Kildare and Wicklow Education & Training Board last week hosted an inspirational career pathway day of education for the second year Hairdressing Apprentices from Naas and Wicklow Hairdressing Academy.



Eryka Reid demonstrating some hair lightening techniques

Trichologist Michelle Christle from Cheveux Hair & Scalp Clinic in Tullamore attended the Hair Academy and inspired the apprentices when she shared her own Career Pathway and wowed Apprentices with her knowledge around the extremely important study of disease and problems related to hair and scalp. Michelle demonstrated a Scalp Analysis on everyone using a

Trichoscope followed by one-to-one consultations.

A lovely lunch was provided by KWETB culinary students from the Talbot collection after which a practical session took place under the guid-



Hairdressing Apprentices from Naas and Wicklow Hairdressing Academy with Trichologist Michelle Christie at the KWETB Career Pathway Day at Railway House, Wicklow Town

ance of Wella Educator Eryka Reid. The Hairdressing Apprentices got to experience on trend hair lightening techniques demonstrated by Eryka before getting some hands-on experience.

Kildare and Wicklow Training Services have a State-of-the-Art Hairdressing Academy in Wicklow and Naas where they deliver the National Hairdressing Apprenticeship, Traineeships, and short accredited courses for upskilling those already in the Hairdressing Industry and those returning to the Industry. KWETB Training Services have recently opened a brand-New Barbering Academy where there are Accredited Part Time and Full-Time courses

available.

Expressions of Interest are now open for the new intake of the National

Hairdressing Apprenticeship in the Wicklow and Naas Academy. You can register your interest

through <https://hairdressingapprenticeship.ie/expression-of-interest-form-2/>



Emma Sinclair, Sandra Berstock, Stephanie Dinn, Eileen Cullen, Michelle Christle, Linda Levingstone and Jenny Comerford are pictured at the KWETB Hairdressing Apprentices Career Pathway Day at Railway House, Wicklow Town



Trichologist Michelle Christle with students

'It Takes a Village' initiative aims to support children's positive wellbeing

A surge in the number of young children suffering from levels of anxiety has prompted the creation of a community wide initiative involving all primary schools in the Greystones and Delgany catchment area.

'It Takes A Village' is a community led positive well-being initiative borne out of concerns expressed by teachers of worrying levels of anxiety amongst children attending primary schools in Greystones and Delgany. The initiative, led by Rachel Harper, Principal of St. Patrick's National School in Greystones, seeks to build a community of services to assist children, families and teachers in need of help with issues around anxiety in young children in the eight primary schools in the catchment area. The 'It Takes a Village' initiative will launch on Friday May 12th.

Rachel Harper, Principal of St. Patrick's NS, explains the origins of the initiative: "In the last few years it was not that unusual to have had individual pupils presenting with anxiety for which they were accessing external support; however the level of anxiety we are now facing in our primary schools is unprecedented. Children have been at the centre of a lot of the disruption and change that we've all experienced in recent years. The advancement of social media further exacerbates their exposure and understanding of some of the current societal issues. In the local school environment, we are noticing that there is an increase amongst children at a primary level dealing with anxiety. In particular children as young as 10 years of age are struggling with what would have been considered teenage issues at an earlier age."

According to Ms Harper school teachers are feeling overwhelmed and unqualified to fully assist and offer adequate support: "Class teachers, SET and SNAs are doing their best to support the wellbeing of all the pupils. Time normally

assigned to support children with Literacy and Numeracy are now used to provide support for emotional well-being. As non-specialists in this area, trying to support the children and families is also putting unnecessary stress onto the teachers. These are children's formative years and it is imperative that proper attention is given in order to equip children with the tools that will help them to thrive during their teenage years and beyond. We have sent questionnaires to principals, teachers and parents in the eight participating schools to collect data identify challenges and needs that require immediate priority."

The first step of the 'It Takes a Village' initiative is the recruitment of a Play Therapist to work across all eight primary schools in the catchment area of Greystones and Delgany. The play therapist will work to help equip children, parents, teachers and principals with the tools to navigate their way through the many challenges society and primary schools are experiencing.

The wellbeing of the children is at the centre of the 'It Takes A Village' initiative. It will be a platform where parents, teachers and local community group members, sports coaches etc can share experiences, learn new techniques, interact with like-minded people and equip themselves with tools and resources they need to help support their children's wellbeing.

'It Takes A Village' will be managed by a committee of community members, local school principals, public representatives and local medical representatives. The initiative is supported by the principals of the three secondary schools in Greystones - Temple

Carrig School, St. David's Holy Faith and Greystones Community College.

Rachel Harper goes on to say: "The Department of Education already recognises the importance of early intervention for learning support and the positive effect that has to ensure students reach their full potential. It is time now for the focus to be on mental health and the importance of early intervention. Children's wellbeing is our concern, as schools are seeing an increase of behaviour issues in response to some of the challenges that young children experience in their lives. We are not trying to solve the issues however by launching the 'It Takes A Village' initiative each of us can help in our own way and together we can make a real difference now in our community for our young people."

The launch of the 'It Takes A Village' community initiative will take place on Friday May 12th at 8pm in the Whale Theatre, Greystones. It will hear views from school principals, medical professionals, counsellors, political leaders and other community members to include members of the Greystones Town Team.

Guest speakers on the night will include Louize Carroll, Psychologist and co-founder of PRISM Therapy Online, Minister Simon Harris T.D. who will speak in a personal capacity as a parent and as a Government minister. Minister of Health, Stephen Donnelly T.D. and Jennifer Whitmore T.D. will also be in attendance. The launch will be facilitated by Andrea Splendori, host of the Social Fabric podcast.

Tickets are free of charge and can be booked by logging onto whaletheatre.ie

€800,000 in minor works funding paid to primary and special schools

Minister for Education Norma Foley has today announced E800,000 in minor works funding has been paid this week to primary and special schools in County Wicklow.

Schools will have the autonomy to use this funding for maintenance and small-scale improvements to school buildings and grounds. Minor works funding may also be used for the improvement or replacement of mechanical and electrical services, the purchase of standard furniture and physical education equipment, the purchase of floor coverings and window blinds and the purchase of IT related equipment.

Arrangements are now being made for the early payment of these grants, to provide schools with a good lead-in period to plan and undertake works that will support the operation of the school going into the 2023/24 school year.

Minister Foley said: "Minor works payments are a

vital resource in terms of supporting the operation of schools generally and I am pleased to be able to announce €800,000 in funding that will allow school communities in County Wicklow to address issues at local level.

"Given that each school setting is different, individual schools are best placed to decide how best to use this funding to address their particular needs. In this respect the minor works grant funding provides good flexibility to address issues at local school level."

The department's Planning and Building Unit is currently finalising updated guidance for schools in relation to good practice arrangements for maintenance of school buildings. It is envisaged that this guidance will be finalised and published later in Q2 2023. The guidance will be provided in an online interactive format that is intended to be easily accessible and user-friendly for use by schools.



Eden Doyle-Weston at Carysfort National School's summer fete in Arklow.

Greystones schools storm the Dail

Social Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore, hosted a gathering of nearly 100 Greystones pupils from Greystones Education Together and Greystones Community National School at Leinster House recently. The pupils from fifth and sixth class along with their teachers were ready for the visit with loads of questions prepared to ask the Deputy and the Ushers alike.

On their arrival at Leinster House, they were taken for a tour of the houses that included a visit to the Dail Chamber. During the Leaders Questions session in the chamber, Greystones Community National School received a special welcome by Social Democrats leader Holly Cairns. The groups then made their way along the corridors absorbing the history towards the Seanad where Greystones Educate together received a special welcome from the Cathaoirleach.

"I was delighted to have the opportunity to host both Greystones Educate Together and Greystones Community school at Leinster House this morning. It is inspiring to see so many young faces paying an interest in their communities and local politics."

"Politics needs to be for everyone and it's something that young people should feel empowered to engage with. For too long politics has been out of reach of young people and it's encouraging to see the interest of the students from both schools in Greystones in local issues," concluded Deputy Whitmore.



Deputy Whitmore with visiting students

Tennis club serves up community-based programmes

County Wicklow Lawn Tennis Club (CWLTC) in Bray was delighted to welcome Minister Simon Harris on Friday 28 April. The club said it was a wonderful afternoon which showcased the range of facilities and tennis programmes County Wicklow LTC has available to all.

In particular Minister Harris was interested in two community-based programmes that County Wicklow LTC are heavily involved in; Fáilte Isteach Conversational English Classes and Enjoy Tennis.

Firstly, with the ongoing war in Ukraine, County Wicklow LTC was interested in seeing how the club could assist in any way to help refugees from that conflict and others to settle in Bray. When the club was approached by the Bray Area Partnership with the idea of hosting a weekly conversational English class, now titled Fáilte Isteach Conversational English Classes, the club eagerly agreed to offer our facilities and hospitality. Today Minister Harris joined more than 50 people at the club, students and volunteers, to hear about their experiences of arriving in Ireland and settling in Bray.

Secondly, Enjoy Tennis; Enjoy Tennis is the Tennis Ireland programme for players with a disability to learn and enjoy playing tennis in clubs around Ireland. County Wicklow LTC is one of more than 90 clubs offering their facilities to host this programme and the club welcomes participants from the local community on a weekly basis.

Speaking on the afternoon of the visit, Tom Armstrong, Chairman of County Wicklow LTC said, 'It was fantastic this afternoon to welcome Minister Harris to the club, not only to showcase the fantastic facilities the club offers the local community, but also to highlight the work that County Wicklow LTC, its volunteer General Committee, and its members do in relation to supporting local community based programmes that offer something back, such as Enjoy Tennis and Fáilte Isteach'.



Minister Harris with members of County Wicklow Lawn Tennis Club

Olympic runner attends kids marathon event in Arklow

The finale of the Wicklow Marathon Kids event saw 650 primary school children descending on the Arklow running track to welcome Olympian David Gillick to their end of programme event.

David Gillick, who competed in the 400 metres and 4x400 metres relay at the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing, was on hand to inspire the young participants and lead them through a series of exercises and stretches before they embarked on their run.

The event was a huge success with children and teachers praising the initiative and the opportunity it provided for young people to stay active and healthy. Speaking afterwards, David Gillick said: "It's great to see so many young people out here today, having fun and being active. I hope this event has inspired them to keep running and to stay

active in the years to come."

The Marathon Kids eight-week programme targets 5th and 6th class students who learn the health benefits of physical activity and perform four running sessions per week. Over the course of the eight weeks the children run 26.2 miles to complete their first marathon.

Michael Nicholson, Director of Service, Wicklow County Council, expressed his admiration for the children's hard work and dedication stating: "It is truly inspiring to see these young children pushing themselves to achieve such a great goal. The Marathon Kids event

promotes not only physical activity, but also discipline and perseverance, which are values that will serve these children well in all aspects of their lives."

Carol Coad, Chairperson, Wicklow Sports and Recreation Partnership, congratulated everyone on their Marathon Kids journey and said, "there was a positive atmosphere and a great sense of achievement at the event."

The Marathon Kids event, which had children of a range of abilities coming together to celebrate their achievements, could not have taken place without the volunteers from the Arklow Junior Park Run that takes place every

Sunday morning at Arklow Duck Pond. These volunteers and the teachers epitomise the dedication required to deliver such a programme and to have a meaningful impact on young people's lives.

Praising the initiative, Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Tommy Annesley, opened the event saying: "I was delighted to see so many children take part in the Marathon Kids event," and he encouraged them to follow in the footsteps of the famous Arklow born Olympian Ronnie Delany.

Emer O'Gorman, Chief Executive, Wicklow County Council, said: "It's important that we encourage our young people to get involved in physical activity and develop a healthy lifestyle. Events like Marathon Kids are a great way to do this, and

I'm delighted to see so many young people taking part in Wicklow."

Aisling Hubbard, Coordinator, Wicklow Sports and Recreation Partnership, added: "Wicklow Sports and Recreation Partnership were delighted to facilitate this programme and give primary school children the opportunity to keep active. We would like to thank all the teachers for their support and congratulate the children on their achievement of running 26.2 miles over the last eight weeks."

Over 700 children took part in running a marathon over eight weeks in Wicklow. The children were from the following schools: St Coens Rathnew, Gaelscoil Chill Mhantain, Tinahely NS, Crossbridge NS, Coolfancy NS, Scoil Mhuire Na Naird, Carnew



Students from Barnacleagh National School with Irish Olympian David Gillick at the Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership's Kids' marathon event in Arklow.

NS, Rathdrum Boys Carylfort NS, St John's Wicklow Sports & School, St Saviours, Our SNS and Scoil Naisunta Recreation activities can Lady's School Rathdrum, Naomh Padraig Bearacle. be found at www.wicklowsp.ie. St Joseph's Templarney, Information on all



Students from Coolfancy National School with Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council Tommy Annesley, Irish Olympian David Gillick, Garda Therese Kelly and Garda Niall Kennedy at the Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership's Kids' marathon event in Arklow.

One year of art lessons for Ukrainian children in Bray

Art Hill, an art organisation that provide art sessions for Ukrainian children who have fled the war, run a weekly art class in North Wicklow Educate Together for young Ukrainian children living in Bray since March 2022.



The class is led by artists Jole Bortoli, Olga Vnukova, and Olga Khomiak. To celebrate the first-year anniversary of Art Hill sessions an exhibition of the children's work was held in the school's library.

Recently, they held an exhibition to celebrate their 1st anniversary of art lessons in Bray. RTE news2day interviewed the children about their exhibition.

North Wicklow Educate Together said they are delighted to provide the space for these important art classes.

It is a safe place for these children where they can create, express their thoughts, ideas and feelings through art, but also to just chat, make friends, celebrate birthdays and have biscuit breaks.

Over the year the team of facilitators and mums have observed how the regular attendance to the art sessions have contributed in helping the children to settle in, have creative freedom and fun and be just children.



Children being interviewed by RTE news2day

The Ukrainian children pictured with the art teachers at Wicklow Educate Together

Open call for Music Network Artist Residencies

Applications are open for six new music residencies taking place across the country.

Professional musicians performing in a range of genres are invited to apply for RESONATE 2023, Music Network's artist residency programme in partnership with Glór (Ennis), Ionad Culturtha (Baile Mhuirne), The National Opera House (Wexford), Triskel Arts

Centre (Cork City), The Dock (Carrick-On-Shannon) and Regional Cultural Centre (Letterkenny).

Now in its 3rd year, RESONATE provides support for professional musicians with a strong

track record in music performance to develop new work and/or collaborations. Each residency provides a grant of

€6,000 to enable the selected musicians to devote time to the creation of new work, in

addition to a range of in-kind supports from both Music Network and each venue partner along with opportunities to showcase the work through live performances and digital updates.

The six residencies

are open to established musicians of professional performing standard working in a range of genres. Applicants must be resident in the Republic of Ireland and be aged 18 or over.

Applicants may apply as solo artists, on behalf of an existing group or ensemble, or for a new collaboration.

Commenting on the announcement, Music Network's CEO Sharon Rollston said: "We're very pleased to be offering RESONATE together with our partners for a third consecutive year. It's the most extensive of our musician residency programmes and offers lots of scope for musicians to develop imaginative new work, including cross-artform ideas where music is central. Audiences will also have an opportunity to engage with the resident musicians when they perform live in their host venues later in the year."

Speaking about her experience as part of the 2022 residency, renowned singer Pauline Scanlon commented: "It has been a really difficult time to get space, and head space to think about songs and collaborative things that I have wanted to do for a long time. As an artist it is a

real luxury to be able to dream things up, and to have the time, resources and support to do that. It's priceless really because, what you do in this residency, you can build on. It's very important for artists like myself to be able to do that."

Pauline was a RESONATE artist in Ionad Culturtha, Baile Mhuirne in 2022. She developed 'The Longing', a collaborative traditional singing project with Armagh singer and multi-instrumentalist Barry Kerr and performed with singer and harpist Síle Denvir and percussionist Eamon Murray.

The other 2022 RESONATE residencies were awarded to an eclectic mix of artists. Mezzo-soprano Naomi Louisa O'Connell worked with pianist Gary Beecher and composer Emma O'Halloran at Glór, Ennis, concertina player Niall Vallely collaborated with cellist Kate Ellis and Kenneth Edge on soprano saxophone at the National Opera House, Wexford, while Irish-Dutch singer and guitarist Patrick Stefan Groenland joined forces with Irish Persian group Nav at Regional Cultural Centre, Letterkenny.

In Carrick-On-Shannon at The Dock, Soprano Elizabeth Hilliard worked with composer Grainne Mulvey to create a new, comic work for voice and tape inspired by íspamí and classical violinist Patrick Rafter pushed the boundaries of the standard concert format with artist and composer Sam Perkin through their exploration of music and physicality/movement at Triskel Arts Centre, Cork.

A recording of a recent online information session is available on Music Network's website.

This year's residencies will run from July to October and the closing date for applications is 2pm on Thursday 11th May. Applications are made online. The application form, more information about the residencies and guidelines for applicants are all available on the Music Network website. Music Network is committed to equity and inclusion, and particularly welcomes applications from under-represented musicians, including but not limited to: musicians of colour, musicians with disabilities, Traveller musicians and LGBTQ+ musicians.



Roisin and Avril Vigors at 'Six: The Musical' in St. Mary's Hall, Arklow.



Asha Jordan, Leah O'Hare and Shauna Cull at 'Six: The Musical' in St. Mary's Hall, Arklow.

The Barn Ensemble dips into the Whale

Whale Theatre, Sunday 14th May, 4pm
(doors 3.30pm). Tickets €10/€8 and
available at www.whaletheatre.ie or call
the booking office on 01 2010550 to book.

If you've ever dreamt of taking up a musical instrument or reviving those skills from years ago we hope our concert will inspire you.

The Barn Ensemble will present an afternoon of baroque to traditional music, film and world music.

There will be an eclectic mixture of musical instruments: cello, flute, guitar, keyboard, tin whistles, violin and even the odd percussion instrument.

"We originated from a Music Network initiative for people over 55 to learn an instrument in partnership with Sonamus," says The Barn Ensemble.

"It became a COVID project starting in January 2021. We now continue to meet weekly to explore and play music together.

"The concert in the Whale theatre will showcase the progress we have made - and you won't believe it - and neither do we!"



Saturday Night Fever screening at Whale Theatre



Saturday 13th May, 8pm (doors 7pm)
Tickets €2 and available at
www.whaletheatre.ie or call the booking office on 01 2010550 to book.

Given its eventual cultural and commercial impact, hard to believe that Saturday Night Fever (USA/15A/118mins) started out as an indie underdog film.

As with all great disco, its success was all down to timing, the Bee Gees' soundtrack tapping perfectly into the zeitgeist of 1977 as it took disco from the New York underground and firmly into the mainstream.

Hits such as Stayin' Alive, Disco Inferno, More Than A Woman and Night Fever topped singles charts all over the world, and helped make the film's soundtrack album the greatest selling

album of all time. Until another dancefloor demon, Thriller, came along five years later.

All of which makes the Rocky Does Disco tale at the heart of Saturday Night Fever surprisingly downbeat, Travolta playing angry young Brooklyn boy Tony Monero, escaping his dreary life by taking to the dancefloor every weekend, besuited and booted, and his weekdays generally arguing with



his parents and being disillusioned with his lot in life.

The film made Travolta a star, gave The Bee Gees

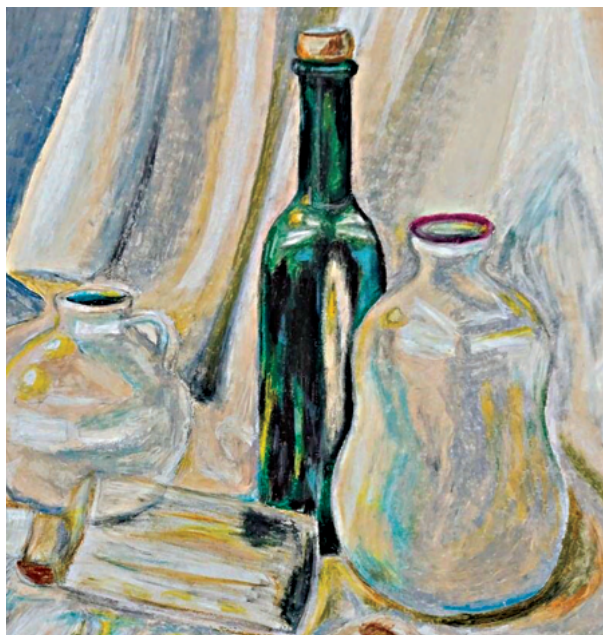
a second if ultimately poisoned second wave of success, and, most importantly, had everybody dancing like a loon.

So, put on your dancing shoes and your drinking pants for a Whale night of singalongs and maybe even a dance.

Happening on Saturday, May 13th at 8pm, your €12 admission comes with a free box of freshly-popped popcorn.

ArtFX: an exhibition by Bray Adult Education Centre

Signal Arts Centre, Monday 15th May to Sunday 28th May



The Signal Arts Centre hosts Bray Adult Education Centre's annual exhibition, a selection of artwork created by first- and second-year art groups, 'ArtFX'. The collection of work reflects personal journeys through various art disciplines.

The artwork captures a wide range of diverse themes. Using Art and Design elements, the students explore their creative voice.

The work embraces a vibrant range of mixed media pieces, including Mosaics, Printmaking, Painting, Drawing, Textile Art, Felt Making, Fabric Printing and Ceramics, Wood, Sculpture and Mixed media. The use of colour, texture, surface pattern and form, play an integral role in individual self-expression.

"Most of our artists come from Bray and the surrounding areas. Their work demonstrates the courage to learn, discover and explore."



Theatre under an open sky

Chapterhouse Theatre Company presents
A Midsummer Night's Dream and *The Secret Garden*

Chapterhouse is delighted to be returning to County Wicklow for their 2023 Summer tour. This summer, audiences will have the opportunity to enjoy *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Secret Garden* in the stunning settings of National Botanic Gardens Kilmacurragh and Powerscourt Gardens.



A Midsummer Night's Dream
National Botanic Gardens Kilmacurragh.
Thursday 22nd June, 2.00pm

The Secret Garden
Powerscourt Gardens, The Secret Garden
Sunday 25th June, 3.00pm

A Midsummer Night's Dream
By William Shakespeare

Chapterhouse Theatre Company presents Shakespeare's best-loved romantic comedy. Let yourself be whisked away on an enchanting journey to the most magical of forests and meet bewitched lovers, playful fairies, and hilarious travelling players. Beautifully designed Elizabethan

costumes, a wonderful musical score and fine performances come together to make this an evening of unmissable summer garden theatre.

One of Shakespeare's most famous comedies, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* follows three story threads as they are tangled together by fae trickster Puck; four young lovers traverse an enchanted forest on Midsummer's night, The Faerie King Oberon and Queen Titania feud with one another, and a travelling troupe present a

play within a play. Believed to have been written in 1595 or 1596 to celebrate an aristocratic wedding, ours is a story of order and chaos, waking and dreaming and love and marriage.

The Secret Garden
By Frances Hodgson Burnett Adapted for the Stage by Laura Turner

Join young Mary Lennox on her journey of discovery as she travels to her uncle's house deep in the Yorkshire countryside, where unexpected friends

and magical creatures help her unlock the mystery of the secret garden. This enchanting story, loved by children and adults alike, is presented in a beautiful setting. Alive with music and song and featuring an array of especially designed creatures, *The Secret Garden* captures the spirit of summer and promises to be an unforgettable evening of magical theatre in magical surroundings.

About the Play "If you look the right way, you can see that the whole world is a garden." - Frances Hodgson Burnett, *The Secret Garden*

Newly orphaned Mary Lennox is sent to live with her uncle Archibald Craven in his sprawling Yorkshire estate, Misselthwaite Manor, where she discovers a mysterious door and clashes with the

other children of the estate, the gardener's boy Dickon and her cousin Colin. Originally published as a serialised story in *The American Magazine* by Frances Hodgson Burnett, now in the hands of accomplished playwright Laura Turner, *The Secret Garden* becomes a charmingly pastoral tale of self-belief and the healing power of nature.

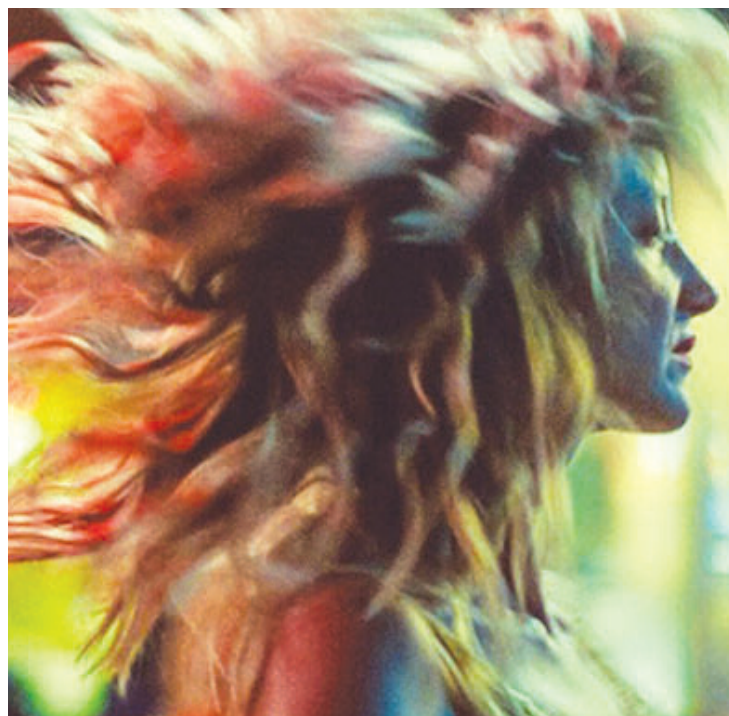
To Leslie (Cert: TBC)

Mermaid Arts Centre, Monday 15th May, 8pm,
€9/€7, Duration: 119 mins. English with Open
Captions (English subtitles)

Leslie (Andrea Riseborough) is a Texas woman whose life was seemingly transformed by a sizeable local lottery win. A few years later, her substance abuse has left her with no money, few friends and an estranged son. At her lowest point, Leslie finds herself sleeping rough.

However, a chance job offer from a motel owner gives her an unexpected opportunity to turn her life around.

Andrea Riseborough has been deservedly praised for her Oscar-nominated performance in this gritty but heartfelt indie drama. She gives it her all, ensuring Leslie is a genuinely complex, multi-layered character. Director Michael Morris also draws strong supporting performances out of the rest of his cast, which includes the likes of Allison Janney, Marc Maron, Stephen Root and Andre Royo.



New film highlights Dublin links to Santiago de Compostela

A new short film, *Camino de Dublin*, written and directed by historian Caoimhe Leppard, documents the ancient pilgrim journey that medieval pilgrims would have taken from St James's Gate through the city of Dublin to the area in which pilgrims would have embarked to set sail for Spain, allowing us to follow in the footsteps of those medieval pilgrims today.

The history of St James's Way dates to the beginning of the 9th century with the discovery of St James's tomb at Santiago de Compostela in north west Spain. Every year hundreds of thousands of pilgrims of all faiths, ages and backgrounds walk to the Cathedral in Santiago, which is the resting place of Saint James the Apostle.

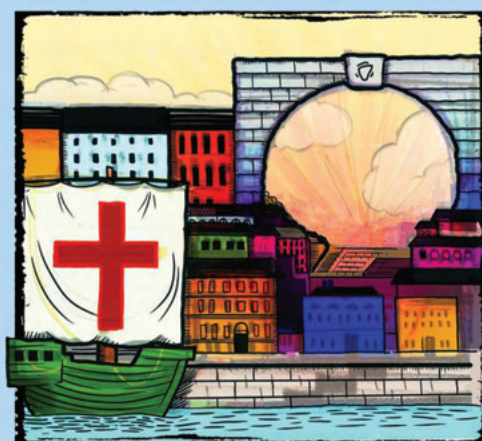
St James's Gate, on James Street in Dublin has been a traditional embarking point for Irish pilgrims commencing their pilgrimages from Dublin since the 13th century. Pilgrims assembled here, before walking through the city and setting sail to Santiago de Compostela. The links between this ancient part of Dublin and St James span more than 800 years and we can see plenty of evidence of the Camino within this short distance.

This documentary features interviews with Turlough

O'Donnell SC, former Chairman of the Camino Society of Ireland and Patt Gibbs who leads the volunteers in the Camino Information Centre, who discuss the role of the Camino Information Centre and the motivations of pilgrims who are undertaking the Camino from Dublin in modern times.

Dr Susan Hood, Librarian and Archivist of the Representative Church Body Library speaks to us about the *Alen Register*, a 16th century compilation of medieval sources which report the intention of a hostel for pilgrims in Dublin who intended to travel to the shrine of St James at Santiago de Compostela.

Many thanks to all those involved with the filming in The Camino Information Centre, Pearse Lyons Distillery, and The Representative Church Body Library.



Camino de Dublin

Petrol & diesel engines still dominate - but electric gaining ground

The Society of the Irish Motor Industry have released their official 231 new vehicle registrations statistics for April.

By Martin McCarthy

New car registrations for the month of April were up 14% (8,941) when compared to April 2022 (7,857). Registrations year to date are up 16.0% (67,018) on the same period last year (57,762).

Light Commercial vehicles (LCV) are up 33.3% (2,153) compared to April last year (1,615) and year to date are up 25.3% (13,734). HGV (Heavy Goods Vehicle) registrations are also showing an increase of 35% (243) in comparison to April 2022 (180). Year to date HGV's are up 41.0% (1,207).

Imported Used Cars seen a 9.1% (3,839) decrease in April 2023, when compared to April 2022 (4,222). Year to date imports are up 2.8% (16,312) on 2022 (15,861).

For the month of April 1,870

new electric vehicles were registered compared to 1,280 in April 2022 (+46.1). So far this year 11,164 new electric cars have been registered in comparison to 7,515 (+48.6%) on the same period 2022.

Electric Vehicle and Plug-in Hybrids and Hybrids continue to increase their market share, with a combined market share now of 42%. Petrol continues to remain dominant 32.85%, with Diesel accounting for 22.34%, Hybrid 17.44%, Electric 16.66% and Plug-in Electric Hybrid 7.90%.

Brian Cooke, SIMI Director General commenting: "April's new car registrations show a 14% increase on the same month last year, while year to date registrations are 16% ahead of 2022, but still remain 8% behind that of pre-

COVID 2019.

Commercial vehicle registrations both the heavy and light sectors, demonstrated strong growth for the month of April. Electric vehicle sales continue to power ahead with 1,870 new electric vehicles registered in April and 11,164 registered so far this year, a 49% increase on the same period 2022.

The Electric Vehicle share of the new car market has increased each month this year, with sales for the month of now April representing over 20% of the market. The momentum behind new EV sales is clearly there, but we need to continue to incentivise EV purchases if we want to continue the growth in the new EV market share, but also to create an active used EV market."



The KIA EV6 GT was voted world electric performance car of the year 2023

People of Wicklow encouraged to participate in 100K in 30 Days event

100K in 30 Days have teamed up with the Marie Keating Foundation to support their vital breast cancer services and organisers are calling on the people of Wicklow to sign-up for the June event.

Marie Keating lost her life to breast cancer 25 years and her son Ronan Keating will be running 100K across the 30 days of June to raise awareness and show support for the Foundation he and his siblings set up in her name. Joining Ronan in the challenge is his wife Storm, children Missy and Jack, Dancing with the Stars Judge Arthur Gourounlian, Dara Quilty, broadcasters Glenda

Gilson, Norah Casey, Laura Woods and Anna Daly, to name but a few.

2023 is the fourth year of the event and to date over €4million has been raised for breast cancer services in Ireland, including the state-of-the-art Clinical Trial Centre in the new Breast Centre at Beaumont Hospital.

Ronan Keating said: "We are delighted to team up with 100K in 30 Days in aid of The Marie

Keating Foundation's vital breast cancer services. We lost Mum 25 years ago, she was just 51.

Mum's cancer was one of the most curable forms of breast cancer but unfortunately she didn't know enough about it. That's why it's crucial that we get the message out there of the importance of early detection, it can save your life! So much money has been raised by so many people over the last three

years and The Marie Keating Foundation are very grateful to be the chosen charity for the 2023 100k in 30 Days challenge, and we will do all we can to make this the best year yet."

100K in 30 Days was founded by Co. Louth (Blackrock, Dundalk) couple Niall Carroll and Cara McAdam and launched in 2020 after Cara was diagnosed with breast cancer. They are delighted to team up with The Marie Keating Foundation for this year's event.

Liz Yeates, CEO of the Marie Keating Foundation and breast cancer survivor, said: "Some of the breast cancer services provided by the Marie Keating Foundation that will benefit from this year's event include our community nursing service, Schools Cancer Awareness Programme, Comfort Fund, BRCA Peer To Peer Support, Survive and Thrive Programmes and Positive Living Workshops supporting our Cancer Community at every step."

Steven McKenna, CEO of Sherry FitzGerald said: "We are thrilled to once again be lead sponsor of 100K in 30 Days for the third consecutive year. Our 550 employees from over 100 offices around the country eagerly anticipate this event in June as it serves as a fantastic team building opportunity, albeit a highly competitive one. Breast cancer has affected so many people, and we take pride in supporting The Marie Keating Foundation."

100K in 30 Days for breast cancer in aid of The Marie Keating Foundation takes place over the month of June. Organisers are calling on everyone to runners, walkers, those in wheelchairs, families, colleagues, schools, community groups and sports teams, whether you're based in Ireland or abroad, to join the #pinkarmy and take part in the June event. Registration is now open at www.100kin30days.ie.



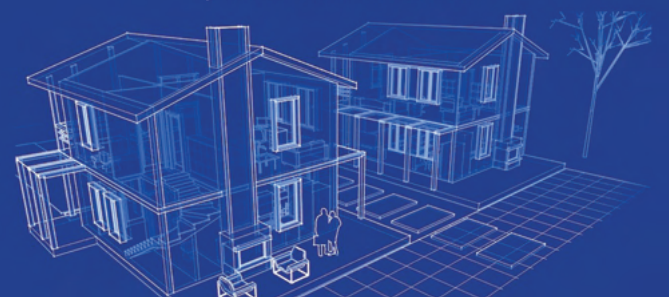
Pictured is Wicklow's 100K in 30 Days Ambassador Eimear Coffey



Members of the Tyrrell family at the launch of the Robbie Tyrrell exhibition in the Maritime Museum in Arklow.

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Majority of Wicklow businesses believe they may grow over the next 12 months

CLASSIFIEDS

BOI Payment Acceptance (BOIPA), a provider of payment technology solutions, recently surveyed Irish businesses about the current payment landscape as well as business confidence and concerns.

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. S.M.

72% of Wicklow businesses expect to grow this year despite the cost of living crisis and running costs dominating as key concerns.

Over 7 in 10 Wicklow businesses believe their business will grow over the next 12 months despite global economic uncertainty. This was the second highest score in BOIPA's annual survey, just behind Monaghan. Unsurprisingly the cost of living crisis and running costs, chosen by 78% and 81% of respondents respectively, were the main concerns the majority of Wicklow business owners had on impacting their business bottom-line. Under a third had noticed an increase in some cash usage due to the cost of living crisis. As well as offering quicker and more seamless transactions in-store, 61% of Wicklow businesses also said accepting more card payments at the expense of cash is more cost effective, safer and more secure than handling cash and helps with administrative tasks.

This sentiment was strongest in neighbouring counties Laois, Westmeath and Kildare. 2 in 5 businesses nationally felt the general increase in card over cash transaction had made no material change to how they run their business. Over 4 in 10 businesses nationally are unaware that there is no contactless limit on mobile wallet transactions. Merchants in the Orchard County scored better with just 3 in 10 unaware that there was no limit.

BOI Payment Acceptance's General Manager Conor Quirke said "Our findings show that businesses are becoming accustomed to realising the adjacent service benefits digital payment technology offers - from reducing cash lodgement trips to the bank branch, managing day-to-day cash flow through to streamlining administrative tasks and planning. And let's not forget the reduced security risk of not having large amounts or indeed any cash on site."



Cathy McGuinness and Grainne McMullen at the launch of the Robbie Tyrrell exhibition in the Maritime Museum in Arklow.

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