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Tuesday 27th June 2023 First Floor, The Boulevard, Quinsborough Road, Bray. A98 R6D7. Tel: 01 - 2869111 E-mail: wicklowed@localtimes.ie www.wicklowtimes.net

NURSING HOMES FUNDING CRISIS

Two nursing homes have closed in Wicklow in the past three years

Several nursing homes in County Wicklow met with TDs and Senators in Leinster House recently to outline the severe funding crisis facing the private and voluntary nursing home sector.

Representatives from Asgard Lodge Nursing Home, Knockrobin Hill Care Home, Atlanta Nursing Home, and from Cairnhill nursing home in Bray, were part of the Nursing Homes Ireland delegation which presented politicians with the findings of an independent PwC report into the funding crisis which has already seen the closure of 31 nursing homes and 915 beds in the past three years. This includes two nursing homes in County Wicklow during that period. The PwC report, commissioned by Nursing Homes Ireland, shows that nursing home closures are increasing rapidly despite their role becoming increasingly pivotal in the Irish healthcare system. The report also outlines a number of recommendations to solve the crisis, including increased State funding for nursing homes and basing Fair Deal Rates on residents' individual needs. Representatives from nursing homes urged politicians to take immediate action and implement the report's



Kamilla Molchanova, Alannah Ni Cheallaght, Holly Carey, Kayla Williams, Sophia Corcoran, Nina Schmidt, Grace Ryan and Ciara Ni heallaiagh from St. Saviour's National School, Rathdrum, are pictured with their bushcraft boxes which won them the Class of the Year Award in the Junior Entrepreneur Programme. See more, page 11



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recommendations to prevent further nursing home closures. In the immediate term, the report recommends the provision of the necessary funding to the National Treatment Purchase Fund to enable them to prevent further nursing home closures and to ensure that no more residents lose what is their home. In the longer term, the report recommends reform of the Fair Deal Pricing mechanism to enable Fair Deal Rates to be based on resource allocation and resident's individual care needs. Alongside this is required engagement planning between stakeholders to ensure future bed capacity for Ireland's ageing population, PwC recommend. Tadhg Daly, CEO of Nursing Homes Ireland said: "The funding crisis for nursing homes is extremely serious in

Wicklow, as it is across the country. Unless we see the Government taking urgent action on this and follow the recommendations in the PwC report, it is certain that we will see further nursing home closures. "This will result in elderly residents being forced to move out of their communities and away from their families. It will also result in greater pressure on our healthcare system as nursing homes facilitate the discharge of older persons from acute hospital settings either through long term residential care or step down rehabilitation, which frees up acute bed capacity. "Private and Voluntary nursing homes are facing unsustainable pressure which will have dire consequences for Ireland's ageing population. In the absence of immediate action, closures will

persist. More than 20 nursing homes have closed since the start of last year, due to rapidly rising costs and a variety of challenges including recruitment and increasingly complex resident profiles."



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Sunbeam House Services go 'WILD'

Sunbeam House Services provides a range of supports to adults with intellectual disabilities.

"We aim to empower people with the necessary skills to live full and satisfying lives as equal citizens of their local communities. The Student Learning Centre (SLC) in Bray are a day service for young adults who are aged 18-25 years old, and just like all young adults would love nothing more than the opportunity to go experience a fun filled festival. The staff and students are so excited to announce that they are putting on their first EVER music festival 'WILD' taking place in August.

"To help raise funds for the event SLC ran a cake sale. We were overwhelmed with the donations of cakes and spot prizes we received from student's families and local businesses; we would like to thank all involved. We raised over a €1,000.

"We have an amazing list of musicians from our slot on East Coast Radio and had many donations of items we need to make it a success. We are looking for some food Vendors to trade on the day, and we require some technical equipment like generators, speakers, lighting, outdoor chairs, bunting etc. If anyone can help support us with this, we would very much appreciate it. You can contact Niamh on 086 1429551."



Sophie O'Connell selling cakes with a smile

New awareness campaign to increase visibility of National Housing Strategy for Disabled People

The Implementation Plan for the National Housing Strategy for Disabled People 2022 - 2027 was launched last week by Minister of State for Local Government and Planning, Kieran O'Donnell, TD, and the Minister of State with responsibility for Disability, Anne Rabbitte, TD.

The Plan will deliver on the primary objective of the National Housing Strategy for Disabled People 2022 - 2027, which is to facilitate disabled people to live independently with the appropriate choices and control over where, how and with whom they live, promoting their inclusion in the community.

An awareness campaign on the Strategy and the Implementation Plan was also launched. The purpose of the campaign is to promote the Strategy and its Implementation Plan locally and nationally with stakeholders, the general public, and throughout the disability sector through various platforms.

The campaign will ensure the housing needs of disabled people are afforded a high level of visibility at local and national level in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCPRD) principles.

The campaign will feature adverts in regional newspapers and news sites, the sharing of videos of disabled people on their views of the Strategy across online platforms, poster campaigns on public transport and in train stations. It is expected that the local Housing and Disability Steering groups

ery to be done in a coordinated and collaborative way. Furthermore, the awareness campaign that is being launched today is an opportunity to raise awareness with disabled people, families, the general public and others on the National Housing Strategy for

Disabled People and the emphasis it places on disabled people being supported to live independently and be included in the community, in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities."

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Contacts:

Shay Fitzmaurice, Managing Editor - shay@localtimes.ie

Ian Colgan, News Editor - ian@localtimes.ie

Sales/General Enquiries, info@localtimes.ie



COMHAIRLE CONTAE CHILL MHANTÁIN
WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

SECTION 75 – ROADS ACT, 1993 PROVISION FOR TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF PUBLIC ROAD

Wicklow County Council hereby gives notice of the temporary closure of the following public road.

Road to be closed
L-58084 Ravenswell Road (Dargle River Walk).

Period of closure
From 0:00 hours to 0:00 hours Monday 3rd July to Monday 17th July.

Alternative Routes
Minor Deviation from the path through Ballymore owned lands, safe surface for cyclists and pedestrians via this diversion (approx. 50m long).

Reason for Closure
Installation of river outfall to the River Dargle.



Cara Theobald and Tess Mitchell at the St. Patrick's GAA Fun Day

Redcross Summer Fete

The Redcross Summer Fete for 2023 will take place in the grounds of Redcross Church, Redcross village (Eircode A67 KX04), on Saturday 1st July from 2-4 pm. There will be Afternoon Teas & Cakes, Pancakes, Home Baking, Plants & Garden Produce, Toys, Books, Pre Loved Fashion and Fashion Accessories, Games & Raffle Prizes.

Free Entry & Parking and all funds raised go towards Parish Funds. It's going to be a great family event and all are welcome. More information on Redcross Church facebook page and www.redcross-church.ie.

Casting teens for new series

Macalla, a television production company in Dublin are currently producing a new tv series for RTE. They are looking for outgoing, chatty 12-15 year old teenage boys to take part in a two-week summer camp at the end of August. They are looking to cast predominantly in the Dublin/ Wicklow area.

Permission from a parent/guardian is required. Applicants must be available for the last two weeks of August. If you are interested have your parent/guardian send in your video of you talking about yourself and why you would like to take part. Send to castingmacalla@gmail.com

Bray Beach BBQ

Get ready to indulge in a sizzling celebration of sun, sand, and mouth-watering food this summer as

the Beach BBQ Festival makes its return to Bray's spectacular seafront on Saturday, July 22nd and Sunday, July 23rd, 2023. This family-friendly scorcher is set to be the ultimate summer party, offering an incredible selection of activities including a funfair, demos, games, DJ sets, mouth-watering BBQ & food trucks.

The festival promises an unforgettable taste experience combined with a vibrant outdoor party atmosphere. From 11am daily, a top-notch line-up of vendors will fire up their grills, serving up a delectable array of BBQ meats including burgers, sausages, kebabs, wings, veggie and vegan dishes with sauces and sides that will tantalise your taste buds.

Best of all, admission is completely free, making it an accessible and enjoyable experience for everyone. No tickets are required, so gather your mates or family and head over to Bray for the ultimate summer party. For more information, please visit the official festival website at beachbbqfestival.com

Walking Festival

Follow me up to Carlow may be an old marching tune associated with times past, but the title is very apt today as it is the call being issued by Carlow Tourism to walkers of all standards as it announces details of the Summer Walking Festival 2023. With a selection of over 14 walks to choose from, and ranked in order of their difficulty and duration, this festival, which takes place from Friday 7th July to Sunday 9th July 2023 is all-encompassing. For further information on the walks, starting points and rules of participation and to book into the walks, log onto www.carlow-tourism.com/walkingfestival or phone 059-9130411

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Wicklow's school accommodation crisis

Social Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore and Sinn Fein TD John Brady have spoken out on the accommodation issues being faced by Temple Carrig School in Greystones and Blessington Community College.

"Deputy Whitmore TD expressed her frustration with the Department of Education regarding the delivery of temporary accommodation for Temple Carrig Secondary School. Temple Carrig School have been working with the Department on this application for one year, and there is still no timeframe being given for its installation, or if it will be available in time for the start of the school year. Deputy Whitmore raised this issue in the Dail last Wednesday with the Junior Minister for Education.

Deputy Whitmore said: "The response from the Minister today was woefully inadequate. Temple Carrig School requires additional classrooms in order to accommodate all the students enrolled from September 2023. I submitted this Topical issue in order to get a meaningful update for the school, and all the Minister could provide was a summary of the work the school has done to get to this place.

"In order to accommodate the new intake for September 2023, Temple Carrig Greystones need this temporary accommodation in place. They have worked with the Department of Education for over a year to get this organised, and even still, the Department has not done so. We are not talking about a new build here, it is simply the relocation of four prefabs from another school. It is unbelievable that the Department cannot deliver this in a timely fashion.

"I pressed the Minister and asked if he would commit to making sure this school would have the rooms it needs for its student population by September, classes that the Department themselves have asked the school to take. He could give no such commitment and now the school is heading into the summer period in a state of limbo.

"The Department has identified suitable modular accommodation to be relocated to Temple Carrig Secondary. However, the Minister could not say if this would be moved to the school before September, saying only that it would be done at some point in the 2023/24 academic year. It is completely unfair to leave a school in the lurch like this. Classrooms are the most basic of accommodation needs for a school and the fact that the Minister thinks it is acceptable to leave schools with uncertainty about their class sizes for next year is just galling."

Deputy Whitmore also expressed her frustration Blessington Community College still does not have any certainty as to whether their temporary student accommodation, needed for September 2023, will be in place in time. She raised the issue of the accommodation application made by the school in the Dail with the Junior Minister for Education during a topical issue debate.

Deputy Whitmore said: "The response from the Minister, on behalf of Minister Foley, was woefully inadequate. Blessington Community College has applied for four existing prefab buildings to be replaced which were in poor condition, and also for two further general classrooms in order to accommodate all the students enrolled from September 2023. I submitted this Topical issue in order to get a meaningful update for the school, and the response from the Minister was totally inadequate.

"Minister Byrne told me that 'it is a matter for schools to progress these projects'. Blessington Community College has been going through the process for this project for months now, following all the required steps as laid out by the department, and yet still they have not been given clarity if they have gotten the classrooms they need. I pressed the Minister and asked if he would commit to making sure this school would have the rooms it needs for its student population by September. He could give no such commitment and now the school is heading into the summer period in a state of limbo.

"Parents and teachers have been talking to us about the urgent need for these additional classrooms since last February. We are now nine weeks away from the start of the new school year and there is

still uncertainty about whether there will be enough classrooms to accommodate all of this year's students.

"Classrooms are the most basic of accommodation needs for a school and the fact that the Minister thinks it is acceptable to leave schools with uncertainty about their class sizes for next year is just galling.

"The lack of clarity about when these additional classrooms will arrive is causing a huge amount of stress for parents, students, teachers and school staff and is hanging over their summer break like a dark cloud. Our community has been really let down by this situation and it is very frustrating to yet again hear from the Department that there is no set date for the delivery and completion of these much needed classrooms," commented Deirdre McCormack, Social Democrat Local Area Representative for West Wicklow.

Addressing the issue, Deputy Brady said "There is an ongoing crisis in parts of Wicklow in relation to school places. Earlier this week I once again wrote to Minister Norma Foley in relation to progress to date regarding the provision of additional temporary classroom accommodation for Blessington Community School, and Temple Carrig Secondary School in Greystones.

"Despite the fact that I had received notice from the Minister in November last year that



Jacqueline and Ronan Jr Carroll at the 15th annual Open Door mid-summer lunch in the Open Door Centre on Vevay Road, Bray.

her department had approved interim accommodation, concern remains that the classrooms will not be in place in time for September.

"Excuses have been proffered in relation to

timelines involved with the movement of temporary prefab classroom accommodation from North County Dublin. This is unacceptable. Schools are putting in place emergency provisions for September,

which could see the introduction of a four-day week for pupils in an attempt to stagger attendances and could possibly be forced to reintroduce remote teaching. We need to see a commitment by the Minister that

the provision of the temporary classrooms will be accelerated to ensure that they will be in place by September. That pupils and staff would be forced to endure continued disruption and delays in totally unacceptable."



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St. Francis NS begins fundraising for Will's Playground



Hozier with Will Leeson's parents Julie and Andrew and sister Emily at the turning of the sod for Will's Playground



Hozier greeting pupils from St. Francis National School

Famous musician and Newcastle resident Andrew John Hozier-Byrne (Hozier) has lent his support to local St. Francis National School in its fundraising campaign for a new playground.

Will's Playground is to be built in memory of Will Leeson, a pupil of the school who sadly died in October 2021 when he was just 8 years old. The school is hoping to raise €65,000 towards building the playground, which will be an enduring legacy in his memory.

Hozier attended a ceremony at the school last week, along with Will's parents Andrew and Julie and sister Emily, to turn the sod on the new playground.

TDs Steven Matthews and Jennifer Whitmore, and Cllr Tom Fortune were also in attendance, as well as members of the Gardai and Revd Ross Styles.

"We are planning to build a playground at St. Francis School where he enjoyed his time with his friends and his something we know he would have loved. A space where chil-

dren can laugh and play together the way they should," the school says.

"Will was a happy and playful child always looking for the entertainment value in every situation and he was never happier than when surrounded by his school friends, clowning around and building a place of collective imagination. His friends and the succeeding children at the school will have a place to exercise, play together and enjoy."

In his remarks, Revd Ross described Will as both a special member of the school and a special member of the community.

Will's father Andrew also said a few words, thanking the local community for their support during the difficult time for the family since Will's passing.

The pupils treated

Hozier to a rendition of the gospel song 'This Little Light of Mine', on what was an uplifting occasion for the local community.

So far approximately €7,000 has been raised.

Will died suddenly and

unexpectedly on 15th October 2021. He was a much loved and active member of the local community, and played for the U9 team at Newcastle Juvenile GAA Club since the age of 4.

A candle-lit vigil was held after Will's passing which was attended by many people from the local community and beyond. To donate, see idonate.ie/fundraiser/willsplayground.



Hozier and Steven Matthews TD at St. Francis National School, supporting the fundraising campaign



Will Leeson

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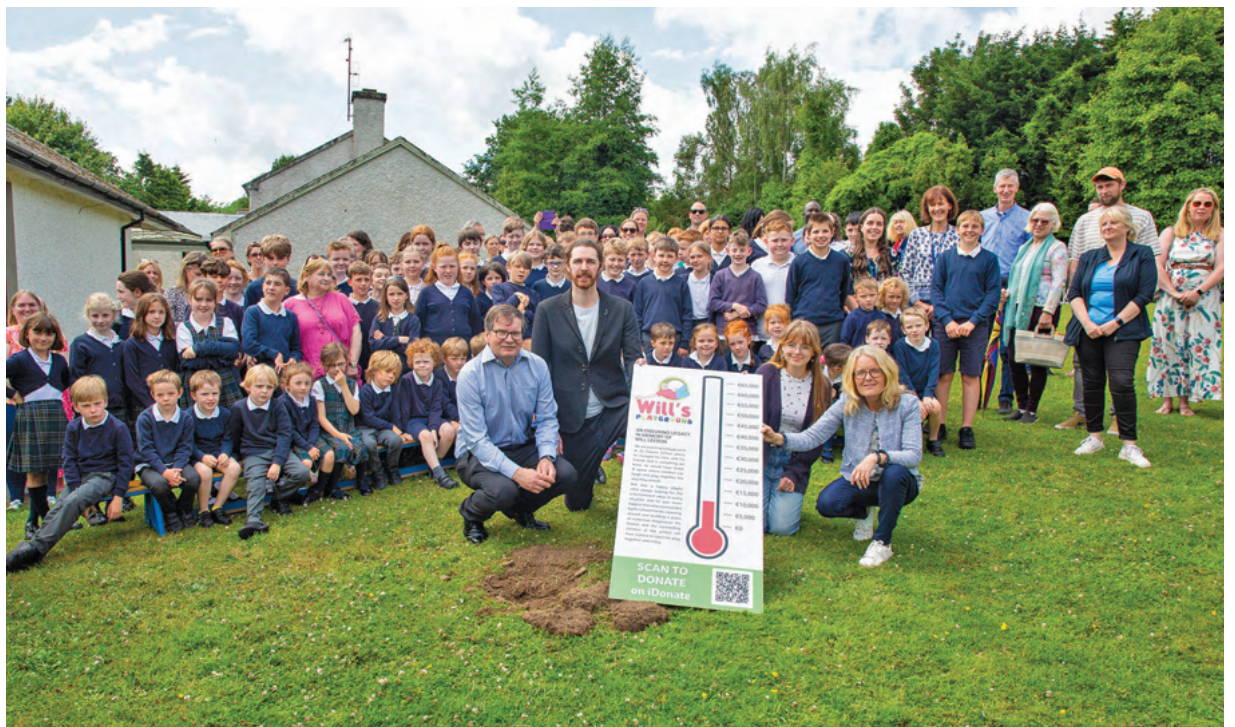
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Staff and pupils of St Francis NS, with Hozier and the family of Will Leeson, turning the sod on Will's Playground.

Flynn-Kennedy elected Cathaoirleach



Cllr Aoife Flynn-Kennedy

Fine Gael councillor Aoife Flynn-Kennedy has been elected the new Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council for the next 12 months.

The annual election for the positions of Cathaoirleach and Leas Cathaoirleach for Wicklow County Council took place at the Annual Meeting held on Monday 19th June at County Buildings.

In her acceptance speech, Cllr Aoife Flynn-Kennedy, stated: "I'd like to thank the Elected Members for their support in electing me to the position of Cathaoirleach for the coming year. It is an honour and a privi-

lege to represent the County and humbling to be elected to this role. I will work hard over the coming 12 months to represent the elected members of this Council and the people of County Wicklow to ensure Wicklow as a county continues to develop and reach its potential."

Cllr Gail Dunne was elected as Leas-Cathaoirleach for Wicklow County Council. He said: "I am honoured to be elected Leas-Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council and I thank my colleagues for nominating me to this role."

Chief Executive, Emer O Gorman, joined with the elected members in congratulating Cllr Flynn-Kennedy and Cllr Dunne on their appointments and pledged her support and the support of the Senior

Management Team and staff of the Council saying "we are committed to working with you both and the all of the elected members of this Council over the coming 12 months in serving the communities of County Wicklow."

Cllr Flynn-Kennedy was nominated for the



Cllr Aoife Flynn-Kennedy (centre), with outgoing Cathaoirleach Cllr Tommy Annesley and Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council Emer O'Gorman



Cathaoirleach Aoife Flynn-Kennedy with her family

role by Cllr Irene Winters, and the nomination was seconded by Cllr Dunne.

Councillors also paid tribute to outgoing Cathaoirleach Tommy Annesley for his work and achievements during his time in the role over the last year, despite dif-

ficult personal circumstances which included a bereavement in his family and significant eyesight problems which required an operation. Councillors praised the sense of honour which he brought to the role, with which he was able

to diffuse some heated debates.

New Cathaoirleach Flynn-Kennedy said, "Tommy has continuously shown commitment to the role and the county. It's highly unlikely I'll be bringing the same level of humour but if I can

live up to the standards he set I'll be very happy. Life has thrown me a few challenges, I never dreamed I'd be sitting here representing my community, I never thought I'd be sitting in this chair. It's very humbling and an honour."



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28th June 2023
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8.00 pm



Danica Tingzon celebrating Criumiu na nOg in Rathdrum.

Installation of bus shelter in Kilmacanogue welcomed

Sinn Fein TD John Brady has welcomed the news that the long-awaited bus shelter at the bus stop 4533 in Kilmacanogue has been installed following a series of delays over the years, including the most recent in relation to a breakdown in negotiations between the NTA and the preferred civil contractor.

Deputy Brady said: "I am delighted that the bus shelter at the bus stop in Kilmacanogue has finally been installed. This is a project I was first involved with as far back as my time on Bray Town Council.

"At the time I was told that it would not be possible to put a bus shelter there for safety reasons due to the bank directly behind where the bus stop was situated.

"Over the years since then we have had to counter objections and delays from the NTA. But, despite all of the setbacks the bus shelter is now in place. I have been working with Wicklow County Council, the NTA, Dublin Bus and Bus Eireann on the issue for many years to in an effort to secure the installation of the shelter at the bus stop.

In April 2022 I

secured agreement from the NTA for the provision of the bus shelter. Which was scheduled to be completed last summer, or early Autumn at the latest. In the interim there were delays due to the withdrawal of the preferred contractor from the scheme, and the NTA was forced to source another contractor.

"This is an important development for the local community who use the bus stop here. This is not just a matter of being able to shelter from the wind and rain, but it will also provide a degree of safety for bus users, who would have previously had to wait by the side of the road.

"Large numbers of school children use this bus stop to get the bus into Bray or further. I've spoken to many parents over the years about their children arriving in

school soaked to the skin for a bus from Kilmac. shelter will be warmly having waited in the rain So, the installation of the welcomed by all users."



Deputy Brady at the new bus shelter in Kilmacanogue

Archaeology Day held in Arklow

A free family archaeological day was held in Arklow on Sunday 18th June. Participants were invited to the Abbey Car Park, adjacent to the Abbey Park/Cemetery, where the centrepiece was 'The Big Dig', a Mobile Viking House Excavation Workshop from the School of Irish Archaeology which offered an innovative and immersive way for children to explore Arklow's Medieval past.

this aspect of our heritage accessible to all, including younger audiences."

Wicklow County Council Chief Executive, Emer O'Gorman, added: "I am delighted that Wicklow County Council is hosting this event as part of European Archaeological Days, an initiative to raise awareness among European citizens of the richness and cultural diversity of Europe. Events like this are a great way to showcase our Wicklow heritage and present it in new and engaging formats."

Throughout the day there were opportunities for children to participate in a hands-on simulated archaeological excavation, digging for Viking treasures and artefacts dating back over 1000 years and learning about Arklow's Viking ancestors through the eyes of real archaeologists.

This event was also an opportunity for everyone to find out more about recent research on

Medieval Arklow undertaken as part of the Community Monuments Fund (CMF) and co-ordinated through the Heritage Office of Wicklow County Council.

The Council, in partnership with The Heritage Council, recently engaged a part-time Community Archaeology service for Wicklow. Yvonne Whitty, Wicklow Community Archaeologist, and Jim Rees from the Arklow

Maritime Museum were on hand to talk about Arklow's Viking history, recent archaeological research undertaken and display artefacts uncovered.

Then Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Tommy Annesley, speaking before the event stated: "Arklow town is steeped in Viking heritage and I am delighted to see that the focus of this event will be on making

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Funding for local heritage projects

Green Party TD, Steven Matthews has welcomed the report published by The Heritage Council outlining that so far this year, over E224,000 has been awarded by the group to multiple projects across Wicklow. The Heritage Council has put particular emphasis in recent years in supporting communities and towns across the country and Wicklow has seen significant support as a result.

Discussing the report, Deputy Matthews said: "I was delighted to read the report which contextualises the level of support that Wicklow has received so far this year from the Heritage Council. Often these announcements are one off but when put in this wider context, it shows the hugely positive level of investment and support that community groups in Wicklow have received this year.

"I work closely with the council on various issues, particularly in my role as Chair of the Oireachtas Committee that deals with heritage supports and to see Wicklow getting this level of

support in just the first six months of this year, is extremely rewarding.

Local Wicklow projects funded for 2023:

- Birdwatch Ireland
- Rathnew Heritage Club
- Roundwood and District ñ Historical, Archaeological and Folklore Society
- ReWild Wicklow
- Avoca Parish Finance Committee
- Arklow Town Team
- Glenree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation
- Wicklow Uplands Council
- Alfred Beit Foundation
- Wicklow Community

Archaeological Project (Wicklow CoCo)

- Glendalough Community Excavation (Wicklow CoCo)
- Our Wicklow Heritage (Wicklow CoCo)

"I look forward to working with the groups that received funding to work towards completing their project goals and in particular with Wicklow County Council on their community-based projects. If any community or local group wants help about how to apply for Heritage Council support, I would be more than happy to sit down with them to discuss the process.

"This is excellent, targeted funding that directly supports community projects in Wicklow, and I will continue to work with the Heritage Council to advocate for further funding this year and again next year in the context of their budgetary decisions," concluded Deputy Matthews.

Labour Court talks with Fire Service welcomed

Sinn Fein TD John Brady welcomed the announcement that talks will resume between SIPTU acting on behalf Retained Fire Fighters and the LGMA at the Labour Court this Monday. The Retained Fire Fighters suspended their planned strike last week, along with de-escalating industrial action to allow space for the talks to take place.

"Obviously I welcome the fact that all sides believe that there is a basis for talks to continue at the Labour Court. This is a positive development. But it is important to state that the Retained Fire Fighters did not want to engage in industrial action at any time, but felt they were forced into taking action by the obtuse manner in which Minister O'Brien has engaged with this process.

"The Fire Fighters have had at all times acted in good faith, they set out from the outset to secure commitments from government to address core issues at the very heart of the recruitment and retention crisis in the Retained Fire Service, which if left unaddressed will lead to the total collapse of the service.

"Minister O'Brien and his government colleagues must remove the roadblocks that scuppered earlier attempts at reaching a negotiated solution. The government must instruct DPER to release the necessary resources to meet the needs of the Retained Fire Service to prevent the further erosion of its strength.

"The reality of the situation is

that while talks may take place within the Labour Court between SIPTU and the LGMA, the outcome of the dispute will be decided in Government Buildings by Minister Darragh O'Brien and his colleagues in government. The outstanding question that everybody is waiting to see answered is whether they will honour the recommendations of their own report into the crisis in the Retained Fire Service?

"I believe that Minister O'Brien has absolutely underestimated the resolve of the Retained Fire Service and the support for their actions amongst members of the public. And I would encourage him to acknowledge the fact that he is wrong, that the manner in which he has engaged with the Retained Fire Service has been seen as high handed and arrogant by fire fighters, and use Mondays talks as an opportunity to reset the government approach and do the right thing by the Retained Fire Service."

Also welcoming the talks, Greystones Independent councillor Stephen Stokes, said, "The current situation is untenable. We

need to listen to our firefighters and act, whether that is at the Local Government level or from the Irish Government. Our firefighters are basically on call indefinitely. We need a decisive drive in recruitment.

"However the buck really stops with the Irish Government when it comes to funding. I urge them to invest in our emergency services as a matter of priority."

Cllr Stokes joined the picket line on Sunday, June 18th at Greystones Frie Station. Cllr Stokes added: "I would like to commend our firefighters, and all of our emergency services for the work they are doing. This recent industrial action has again highlighted how under resourced they are. For an area that is consistently growing, Charlesland, Delgany, Greystones, Kilcoole, Killadreenan and Newcastle need increased resources."

Cllr Stokes is hoping that a positive outcome can be found following the Labour Court discussions. Cllr Stokes noted: "There is a lot of goodwill from our from firefighters. The public definitely supports them."



Dargle Bridge club recently held their end of season dinner and Prize giving in Bray Golf Club. They were delighted to be able to play a full season of bridge and wish to thank all their members for adhering to the restrictions that were still in place until recently. "It has helped keep us all safe while playing bridge," they said. Pictured is the Player of the Year Breda O'Driscoll being presented with her trophy by former winner Lily Noonan.

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Wicklow supporters in the stands celebrating after Wicklow's recent victory in the All Ireland U14 Bronza Final against Clare in McDonagh Park, Nenagh, Tipperary. Pic: Michael P Ryan, Sportsfile.

Data reveals skyrocketing costs of household goods

'Ordinary workers across Wicklow have had enough'

Sinn Féin TD John Brady has responded to data published by the European Commission that names Ireland as the most expensive country in Europe for household goods, with members of the public paying 46% above the EU average last year for goods and services.

The data released by the European Commission which came quickly in the wake of figures released by Eurostat that showed that Irish living standards have fallen further behind other European countries in 2022. "This is a damning indictment of the failure of the government to get to grips with the cost-of-living crisis and the startling levels of inequality in Irish society," Deputy Brady said.

"Last year Ireland paid 46% more than their European counterparts for goods and services. At a time when Wicklow households struggled under the biggest cost of living crisis in a generation. Ireland is now the fourth most expensive country in the EU for food, with prices here

15% above the EU average. Restaurant and Hotels prices are 28.5% above the EU average - and that is before we even begin to mention the Taylor Swift effect!"

"This is in addition to having to deal with continuing government failures in housing, health, and high living costs from energy to childcare. With rental costs in Wicklow some of the highest in the country.

"After Denmark, Irish consumers are forced to pay the second highest energy prices in the EU, where the cost of electricity and gas is 38% above the EU average. Communication prices here are the third highest in the EU, at 56% above the EU average.

"The figures clearly depict a situation where ordinary workers and families in Wicklow and indeed across the state are witnessing a continuing slide in living standards compared to their European neighbours. Irish living standards now stand in the bottom half of the European league table.

"Unfortunately, this is part of a continuing downward trend since Fine Gael took power in 2011. And which appears to have no chance of abating. It exposes the growing gap between our economy's performance and Irish living standards.

"Even with the drive towards getting commuters to use public transport, costs here are 27% above the EU average. The fail-

ure of Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael and the Green Party to convert much touted economic gains into higher living standards remains a clear failure.

"A deepening housing crisis, access to healthcare, childcare costs and the high cost of living continue to hit the pockets and quality of life of Wicklow workers and families. This drift is a growing threat to the competitiveness of our economy, impacting the ability of firms to attract and retain staff. It cannot be allowed to continue, ordinary workers and their families across Wicklow have had enough. If the government are unable to manage the states finances its time to pack up and go."

West Wicklow to lose vasectomy services as contract lapses

Social Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore has criticised the Department of Health for allowing the lapse of the national contract for local vasectomy services in West Wicklow. From 20th August 2023, a national vasectomy services contract, which entitles anyone holding a General Medical Services (GMS) card access to a vasectomy, will end with the retirement of Dr O'Keeffe. This will mean the loss of the only public service provider of vasectomies for the West Wicklow area.

Deputy Whitmore said: "This is very disappointing news for the area. It follows a trend around the country of allowing the contracts of providing GPs to lapse with their retirement and not renew them. Government are allowing access to this medical procedure to become a postcode lottery for men. I have put a question to the Minister on this asking how he plans to address the issue. It is time for a new national contract

for the provision of vasectomies for public patients.

"There also needs to be a serious consideration for the budget allocation for these as many GPs who do offer them to public patients run out of their budget early in the year and cannot perform them again for months at a time. This is especially unfair for those who cannot afford to go private as the costs run between €400 and €700.

"This government has acknowledged the value of universal access to free contraception for women and people aged 17 to 26 years. Yet, when it comes to men who may want to play a role in family planning the services have been left to dwindle. The knock effect of this is that the burden of contraception falls increasingly on women. I will continue to raise this issue in the weeks ahead with the Minister for Health and the Department."



Senator Pat Casey is pictured with Failte Ireland's CEO Paul Kelly, and Sarah Fitzpatrick, Manager, Ireland's Ancient East, attending Failte Ireland's Oireachtas Information Clinic for TDs and Senators to hear first-hand about the work Failte Ireland teams are doing on the ground in Wicklow to drive sustainable tourism, grow visitor numbers, increase tourism revenue and to support jobs across the constituency and region. The National Tourism Development Authority provided Senator Casey with details on Failte Ireland's investment and development in Wicklow, including outdoor enhancement projects, digitalisation, business and skills supports, festival funding and promoting tourism as a career across Wicklow and Ireland's Ancient East. Picture by Shane O'Neill, Coalesce.

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Ninth Green Flag for St. Mary's and St. Gerard's National School

Fine Gael Minister Simon Harris visited St. Mary's and St. Gerard's National School on 16th June to celebrate the school being awarded their 9th Green Flag.

Minister Harris said, "I am delighted to have been able to celebrate and raise St. Mary's and St. Gerard's National School's ninth Green Flag, which has been awarded for the school's efforts to encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport or carpooling as viable transport options to and from school. This theme showcases the positive impact that these practices have on both a local and global scale, leading to improved air quality and a variety of other environmental benefits."

"It was fantastic listening to the school choir and getting to see the performances by St. Mary's and St. Gerard's National School's students. The students truly are a credit to their school, and I am grateful for the opportunity to have met them along with the school's staff and parents," Minister Harris concluded.



Minister Harris with pupils and staff of St. Mary's and St. Gerard's National School helping to raise the school's ninth Green Flag



Lily Cunningham and Mary Kate Nolan at the St. Laurence O'Toole's National School's recent centenary celebrations.

Whitmore highlights parents' back to school cost burden

Social Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore last week called on the Government to address the financial burden placed on Wicklow parents with back to school costs, and called on Government to make education truly free. Deputy Whitmore also raised the financial deficit that schools are left in every year. This call was made in the Dail during an opposition private members motion on Education Costs.

Deputy Whitmore said: "It's the time of year when parents and guardians of school age children will be opening up school bags, or logging onto apps to find their children's book lists and uniform lists for the coming school year. Many of them will go into debt when they are trying to meet back-to-school costs. It is a particularly tough year for families as we go through a major cost of living crisis and this will be a summer of scrimping, saving, and borrowing for many parents just to try and get their children ready for September."

"According to research conducted by Zurich, parents of secondary school children spend an estimated €1,838, on average per school year. The government must act now to provide relief for parents on back-to-school costs for each child. Schools have been chronically

underfunded for years by successive government. Schools are being left with no option but to ask parents and guardians to try and make up the short fall via voluntary contributions or, as is the case with every school in Wicklow, fundraise on a constant basis."

"Having spoken to many principals and teachers across Wicklow, they have told me that they would much rather be focusing on education than running fashion shows and other fundraising events to make up the difference."

"I have heard from parents in Wicklow who are reliant on social welfare payments to make ends meet, being asked to find €600 for iPad. Parents facing hundreds of euros in school uniform costs. One parent who had access to school-book rental scheme was still finding themselves spending €1000 for school supplies for their child, because these costs go way beyond books. The Government knows this and yet has still not acted to make free education a reality for our students."

"The school funding deficit should not be a burden to parents, guardians, and schools anymore. It's time that we made education genuinely free. School capitation grants should be at sustainable levels relieving the pressure most parents in Wicklow find themselves under. This has gone on long enough. The government must act now," concluded Deputy Whitmore.



On Wednesday 14 June 2023 the Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO) held a national lobby day ahead of Budget 2024. Teachers from Wicklow met with Deputy Jennifer Whitmore and Deputy Steven Matthews to discuss the key areas of investment required for primary education. Pictured (left) is Steven Matthews TD, INTO President Dorothy McGinley and INTO member Maebh Egan ; and (right) INTO President Dorothy McGinley, Jennifer Whitmore TD and INTO Wicklow CEC rep Gerry Brown.

Rathdrum school scoops top award in Junior Entrepreneur Programme All-Island Awards

10,000 Irish primary school children have launched 300 classroom businesses this year as part of their participation in the Junior Entrepreneur Programme. The pupils combined their innate creativity with the skills they developed on the programme. They worked together as a class to create original products and launch businesses ranging from board games and toys to high-end craft and educational products.

5th and 6th class in St. Saviour's National School, Rathdrum, were named Class of the Year 2023 for their JEP business BushCraft Boxes. The children zoned in on the interests of the community in Wicklow and created this useful box containing everything needed for a family day out in the wilderness. The pupils made clever compass bracelets and created a discovery trail guide with web-linked QR codes and an activity booklet that included tips

for fishing for insects and a tree hunt. The contents of BushCraft kits are sold in an attractively packaged box, with artwork also created by the children, and are now for sale in the locality.

The children made professional sales pitches to Avondale Forest Park and Hidden Valley Holiday Park, who both agreed to stock the product. The class is also selling the Bushcraft Boxes in the local community and has made a profit of over €800. Staying true to

their product, the pupils have decided to spend their earnings on a class camping trip.

JEP participants are guided and encouraged by inspirational teachers who are passionate about giving their class a rounded education.

"For me, the biggest benefit of it is that it gives the children a very different education. What we are really trying to do is bring up young people who will achieve their very best in life, and that can be from a range of different experiences and a range of different abilities," said Victoria Spencer, 5th & 6th class teacher in St. Saviour's National School.

This is the second win in a row for Co. Wicklow of this prestigious award. Last year the fifth and sixth class pupils of Sacred Heart National School, Aughrim, were named the All-Island Class of the Year for their class business Alfie's Aughrim Adventures.



Sophia Corcoran and Clark Fitzpatrick. Pic: Jerry Kennelly



Jacob Santos



Alannah Ni Cheallaigh, Caoilfhionn McLindon, teacher Victoria Spencer, and Molly Corcoran

Funding for St. David's facilities and temporary accommodation removal

Minister Simon Harris has confirmed that the Department of Education will remove the temporary accommodation units currently in place on the site of St. David's Secondary School in Greystones and open two brand new special classrooms in the school.

Along with this, the proposed higher-spec and uplift ball court has been approved for full funding from the Department of Education. After working closely with St. David's Secondary School's Principal, Simon Carey, and the Department of Education for a number of months, Minister Harris has commended the Department's decision to ensure that funding and an actionable plan is in place so that the temporary accommodation can be removed without delay.

Minister Harris said, "I am beyond delighted that St. David's

Secondary School has been approved for funding that will vastly improve the quality of life and educational experiences of our students. I want to thank the school's principal Simon Carey for his work and commitment to St. David's, as his efforts and close engagement on these issues ensured that this matter was driven forward. The two new special classrooms will also be a great addition to the school and will ensure that our young people with additional needs receive the same high-quality education as every other student."



Minister Harris with staff and pupils of St. David's



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Wicklow Lions 'Move4Parkinsons' at gala ball

Wicklow & District Lions Club has supported Move4Parkinson's for the past six years. During this time the charity club has covered the cost of weekly physio sessions which have proven to be a tremendous help to Parkinson's sufferers.



Jakie and Sean Olohan



Jim and Mary Margaret Molloy

Wicklow Lions also support the Parkinson's choir and any other ongoing activities which help in any way possible to ease the burden of this terrible disease.

The proceeds of the Gala Charity Night which was held on Saturday 17th June in Druid's Glen Hotel and Golf Resort is to fund the continuation of these very important Physio sessions for the next 2 years at least. The aim was to raise a minimum of €25,000 on the night. Hopefully when all donations and ticket sales come in this will be exceeded.

On the night as guests arrived they were treated to a wine reception in beautiful surroundings followed by a sumptuous meal as they were entertained by top comedian Dave Young who created a very enjoyable atmosphere. The excellent Swing Cats took over from Dave and had the audience dancing until late that evening.

The raffle also raised a considerable amount of money.

Separately from Saturday's Night Gala Ball one extremely generous person has donated a large sum of money which will be used totally for the training of specialised Parkinson's nurses as well as Parkinson's research in Galway University.

President Maurice Corr and all Lions members would like to sincerely thank everyone who supported this extremely important



Tom Corr and Blathnaid Treacy with Nadia and Simon Paruk-Collier at the Wicklow & District Lions Club Gala Ball in aid of Move4Parkinson's in the Drud's Glen

fundraising event, especially those who attended on the night or who purchased tickets and to the many who donated money to Parkinson's. Every cent raised will help many people and could save lives.

Move4Parkinson's believe that self-management is key to achieving quality of life, but that each PwP (person with Parkinson's) should be empowered to choose the self-management activities and approaches which work for them.

"We cannot tell you what to do or what will work for you," they say. "What we can do though is share stories of what

has worked for others and guidance on actions or activities to try based on current research.

"We have a vision of a world in which People with Parkinson's are empowered to achieve their best possible quality of life. Our services are centred on improving People with Parkinson's' understanding of their illness and teaching them how active self-management can reduce symptoms and enable them to have a better quality of life. We also aim to serve the families and carers of People with Parkinson's and build a community of support for everyone affected by Parkinson's."



Blathnaid Howe and Karl Giles



COMHAIRLE CONTAE CHILL MHANTÁIN
WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

SECTION 75 – ROADS ACT, 1993 PROVISION FOR TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF PUBLIC ROAD

Wicklow County Council hereby gives notice that it proposes the temporary closure of the following public road.

Road to be closed
R766 – Albert Avenue, Bray, Co. Wicklow.

Period of closure
From 23:00 pm Friday 7th July, 2023 to 05:00 am Saturday 8th July 2023.

Alternative Routes
Via Adelaide Road, Quinsborough Road Road across railway level crossing and Strand Road.

Reason for Closure
This closure is to facilitate repairs of height restriction signage on railway bridge UBR142 Albert Avenue, Bray, Co. Wicklow.

Any person wishing to object to the proposed road closure must lodge their objection in writing to Transportation and Roads, Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Co. Wicklow or via email at roadtrans@wicklowcoco.ie not later than 12.00 noon on Friday 30th June, 2023.



Paul Daly, Kate Gray, Denise McGrath and Maurice Corr

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Bray Soroptimists' fashion show raises funds for charities

Soroptimist International Bray & District were delighted with their sell-out Fundraiser Fashion Show held on Thursday 8th June 2023 at Fishers of Newtownmountkennedy, in aid of local charities.



Jo McCloskey, Becci Harrison, Éadaoin Lawlor, Tanja Haak O'Riordan, Orla Finn, and (Front) Ann Broekhoven

Fishers are famous for their monthly Friday Fashion Shows, and pulled out all the stops once again on this occasion providing our models with a fabulous summer collection to suit all tastes.

Becci Harrison and her team at Fishers welcomed President Tanja Haak O'Riordan of SI Bray,

members, friends and fashion-followers to their shop in Co. Wicklow. One hundred people enjoyed prosecco and canapés on arrival, and Soroptimist National President Éadaoin Lawlor, expressed her delight at being able to attend the event. Éadaoin spoke of the Soroptimist worldwide network of members working to empower, educate and enable women. She congratulated SI Bray for their hard work over the past year, and in particular this fundraiser event in aid of local charities. Becci Harrison commented that the fashions were modelled by members of SI Bray and their families and friends; local Councillor and newly-elected Cathaoirleach of Bray Municipal Council, Melanie Corrigan; and volunteers from BARRS (Bray Area Rough Sleepers Support), and congratulated them on doing a magnificent job of modelling real clothes for real people. They certainly did a great job as the tills were ringing after the show! The evening was rounded off by a well-supported raffle of fabulous prizes, giving us a grand total of €2,500 in aid of our local charities. President Tanja thanked Becci and her team at Fishers for all their hard work, and also members of SI Bray, Phil and Mark who dispensed the drinks, and of course the wonderful models!



Cathaoirleach of Bray Municipal District Melanie Corrigan, Ann Acton, Brioc McHugh, Ray Comerford, Orla McDonnell, Mandy Comerford, Lucia Bourke, Leo Tammem, Aoife McDonnell, Victor Meganetty, and Lieve Francken

Temple Carrig hold Fashion Show in aid of Gavin Glynn Foundation

On Thursday the 4th of May The Transition Year Students and Teaching Staff in Temple Carrig School hit the runway in an end of Year Charity Fashion Show themed 'The Deep' and modelled a range of outfits from top leading labels & local boutiques; Gym+Coffee, XV Kings, Folkster, Escape Boutique, Ashanti Gold Boutique, and Tansey's.



Rebecca Kelly's Junk Kouture design

Alongside the incredible outfits that models wore on the night, Temple Carrig displayed some of the creative excellence of the Transition Year's and showcased the groups talents through their stellar quality Sustainable Stage Decorations and Costume Designs that were made throughout the year in their Junk Kouture and TY Wearable Art Modules. Students awed the crowd down the ramp with their Glow in the Dark LIVE Art Performance, featuring some large "Deep Sea" themed moveable sculptures that were created throughout the year in their Art Construction Module. In between model walks, struts and poses, the TY's filled the evening with Creative Dance, Music, and Singing, to a lively entertained audience. The TY's played a large role in organising the Fashion Show themselves and lead the way from beginning to end, being involved in the Show Advertising, Marketing, Sound Production, Co-Ordination, Ticket Sales, Staging and Comparing. Organisers said they were very grateful for the support provided by a number of local businesses Alive Outside, Squirrel Scramble, The Wicklow Arms, Flanagan Kerins, Mrs. Robinson's, Ju Ju Boutique, Ashanti Gold, Folkster, Escape Boutique, Tansey's Menswear, XV Kings, Gym + Coffee in supporting the show and The Gavin Glynn Foundation whose mission is to assist families with all the logistics and financial aspects of travelling overseas for specialist cancer treatment not available in Ireland. Over two thousand euro was raised on the evening for the Gavin Glynn Foundation from the proceeds of Show Ticket and Raffle sales. Many thanks



Creative Dance students entertaining the audience on the night

are extended to the local Sponsors, Shop owners, local primary school and wider school community contributors for their involvement in making the night such a success. The Show Director and Niamh McAleer, Art Teacher for Sustainable and Wearable Art/Construction Modules was the Show Director on the night. Peter Wallace produced the show, choreography was done by Eoghan Clearly and the dance art teacher is Lisa Bottaro. The Photography was done by Russell Harris



Sustainable art in aid of the Gavin Glynn Foundation

New Screen Hub at Clermont completed

The keys to the newly constructed Clermont Screen Hub at the Wicklow County Campus in Clermont, Rathnew, were handed over on Monday 19th June.

The Clermont Screen Hub, adjacent to the historic setting of Clermont House, is now seeking expressions of interest from prospective tenants.

The Hub will provide 10,000sq ft of private and co-working spaces and aims to boost job creation by supporting local businesses operating in the film and audio-visual sector.

It will support the content creation sector and will complement the film industry, with a particular focus on businesses servicing productions happening in County Wicklow.

The Hub offers collaborative social spaces, a conference centre, podcast studio and access to a range of existing meeting rooms and training facilities on the larger Clermont campus. Facilities offered at the Hub will continue to grow and change into the future in line with the changing needs of businesses in the sector.

Funding for the development was secured under the Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment's Regional Enterprise Development Fund, through Enterprise Ireland. The remainder was matched by Wicklow County Council.

Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Tommy Annesley, stat-

ed: "The new Clermont Screen Hub has been completed to a very high standard. It is a very exciting development for Wicklow which demonstrates that the Council continues to be proactive in promoting the local screen industry and supporting local businesses in the sector."

"This building represents the continued growth of a long and productive association between the film industry and County Wicklow."

Emer O'Gorman, Chief Executive, Wicklow County Council, said: "We are very pleased to reach this stage in the ongoing development of Wicklow County Campus as a driver of innovation and job creation for Wicklow. There is already strong interest from prospective tenants which demonstrates that this project is aligned with the needs of the screen sector."

"The education and training remit of the Campus will also be reflected in the use of the Hub, with a range of training opportunities offered by the National Talent Academy for Film & TV Crew East."

Clermont Screen Hub would like to hear from potential tenants operating in the screen and audio-visual sector. Expressions of interest should be sent by email to clermont-hub@gmail.com



Cllr Tom Fortune, Lorraine Gallagher, Eoin Naughton (Manager of Clermont Screen Hub), Vibeke Delahunt (Wicklow Local Enterprise Office), Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council Emer O'Gorman, then Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council Tommy Annesley, Christine Flood and John Powderly (Wicklow County Council Film Commissioner) are pictured at the handing over of the keys to the newly completed Clermont Screen Hub

Arts Office accepting applications for Strategic Projects Award Scheme

Wicklow County Arts Office is inviting submissions to the 11th edition of the Strategic Projects Award Scheme.

This scheme is open to artists, national resource organisations, individual curators and artist collectives. As with previous years, two funding streams are available for the 2024 round of Strategic Projects Awards: Stream 'A' is for new applicants and proposals. Designed to support for new initiatives, projects

which add significant value to existing arts practice, experience and participation in Wicklow, will be prioritised under Stream 'A'.

Stream 'B' is for projects previously awarded under this scheme. Existing Award recipients who wish to consolidate a project currently underway or to

develop an area of practice previously awarded under the scheme can reapply under Stream 'B'.

While the scheme is open to individuals and organisations from across all arts disciplines, the Arts Office would particularly welcome thoughtful applications that propose innovative solutions such as bespoke audience engagement projects exploring, for example, audio technology, outdoor installations

or public performance.

Regarding this year's Award, Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council, Emer O'Gorman, stated: "We welcome strong applications which focus on nurturing practice, enhancing connectivity, generating new perspectives and cultivating new voices within County Wicklow."

Artists who have previously been successful in this award process include: Mary Coughlan, Shane Finan, Kate Strain, Josh O'Caomh, Eamon Sweeney, Lisa Freeman, MaÓa Nunes, Anna Newell, Aisling Ennis, and West Wicklow Chamber Music Festival.

The total amount of the funding available is expected to be in the region of

€80,000 to €100,000 for 2024.

New Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Aoife Flynn Kennedy, said she is "delighted that the Council will fund selected projects up to a maximum of €15,000 again this year. It's important that Council continue to invest artists across all art forms who are working in Wicklow."

Further information relating to the Award and the application process is available at www.wicklow.ie. The closing date for completed applications is Friday 11th August 2023 at 4pm. Late applications will not be accepted. Questions relating to the Award application process may be directed to: wao@wicklowcoco.ie



Helen Gubbins and Yvonne Kenny with the Avoca Minors celebrating Cruinniú na nOg in Arklow Library

Local writers selected for national mentoring programme

Three local Wicklow-based writers have been selected by the Irish Writers Centre to receive a mentorship under the National Mentoring Programme.

Following a national callout where over 300 applications were received, 37 writers from across Ireland were selected to receive a mentorship with Abbie White, Eleanor O'Reilly and Noline Foley, emerging as the successful Wicklow applicants.

Funded by Wicklow Arts Office and the Arts Council, the programme is an investment in the long-term literary reputation of the region and will potentially have life-changing effects on Abbie, Eleanor, and Noline's writing careers.

The hope for the National Mentoring Programme is that the chosen mentees will go on to write great works

of literature with the support and guidance of their chosen mentor. This form of peer-to-peer teaching is increasingly popular in literature, formalising the process whereby successful writers pass on their craft and experience to the next generation of writers across the island.

Abbie White is a fiction and non-fiction writer as well as an occasional poet based in Laragh. After studying creative writing in UCD for four years, coupled with a lifelong passion for creativity, Abbie hopes to publish her work and continue doing what she loves for the rest of her life.

Eleanor O'Reilly is a

full-time teacher of English and Classical Studies at Gorey Community School. Eleanor is an international Award-Winning writer and novelist. Her debut novel 'M for Mammy' is an Irish Times Best Seller.

Noline Foley is an Arklow-based fiction writer who writes about social issues, attitudes, and prejudices in the 1950s and 60s Ireland and has published in Stories from the Waterside, Undercover Wexford and was short-listed for an Irish Times writing award.

Running since 2017, previous recipients of the mentorship have described the experience as having been invaluable. This programme has numerous published authors among its alumni, including Doireann

Ni Ghriofa, Nidhi Zak/Aria Eipe, Fiona Scarlett, and Victoria Kennefick.

Outgoing Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Tommy Annesley, stated that he "understands that it is support a vibrant and diverse community of writers of all types and talents to develop their craft, capacity and confidence to thrive in County Wicklow and was pleased to see Wicklow Arts Office continue to fulfil its remit."

Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council, Emer O'Gorman, said: "I am pleased that the Council is supporting three local writers to receive professional literary mentoring over the next eight months from acclaimed Irish writers of their choice."

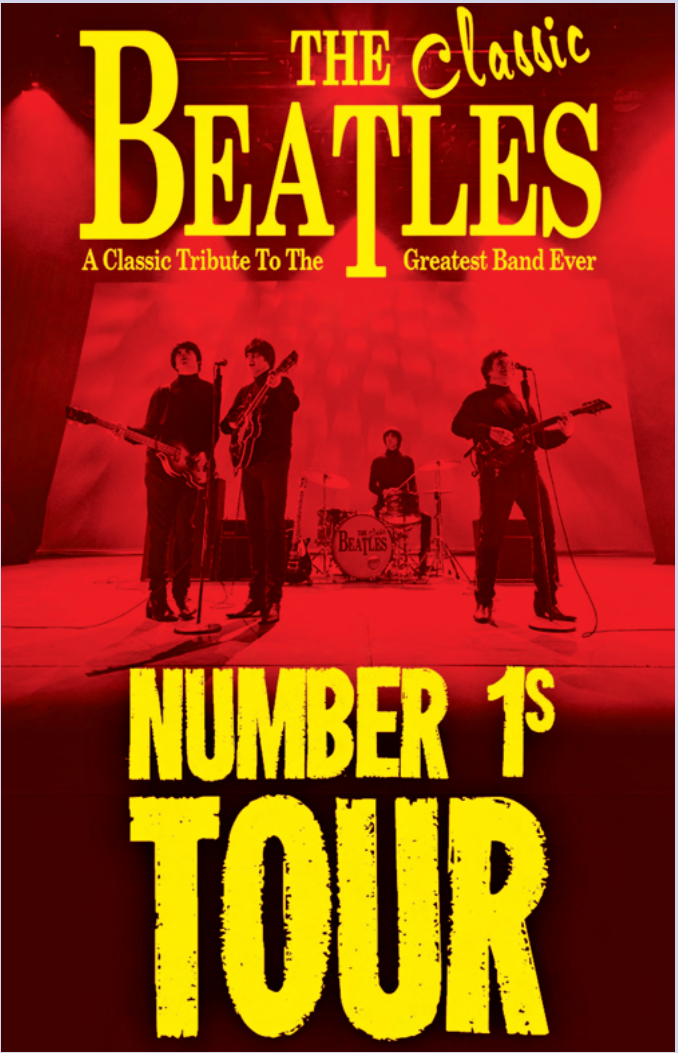


Flynn Molloy on the bells, celebrating Cruinniú na nOg in Arklow Library.

The Number 1s Tour

Whale Theatre, Friday 14th July, 8pm (doors 7pm). **SOLD OUT** but register at www.whaletheatre.ie or call the booking office on 01 2010550 to register on the waiting list.

The Classic Beatles are the only Beatles tribute band in the world endorsed by legendary Beatle producer Sir George Martin and are the stars of the multi award winning Get Back Show. They're back on the road with "The Number 1s Tour". This set gives the band the chance they have always wanted... to play every Beatles number 1 live. It's simply incredible how many amazing songs they wrote, hit after hit and all presented with an authenticity and affection that's second to none. With multiple costume changes and a few hidden gems on the night, be sure to book early for this much anticipated show!



Jack O'Rourke at The Whale

Saturday 15th July, 8pm (doors 7pm). Tickets are €25 and available at www.whaletheatre.ie or call the booking office on 01 2010550 to register on the waiting list.

Wild Place is Jack's first release since 2019's **Ivory Towers** and the first full album release since his acclaimed debut, **Dreamcatcher**, which entered the Irish Top 5. In the intervening years Jack has established himself as one of Ireland's finest songsmiths and a live favourite.

For the recording of **Wild Place**, during lockdown, Jack and his band based themselves in Triskel Christchurch in Cork and used the wonderful acoustics and Triskel's grand piano to great effect. The results are probably Jack's most endearing work to date - the songs emanating from a soulful and folk-inspired place.

Jack first came to prominence with his ode to misunderstood youth and growing up gay, 'Silence', became a torch song for the Irish Marriage Equality Referendum and won the Nashville Songwriting Competition (judges included Tom Waits and Bill Withers). Chosen as a 2019 headliner for Other Voices, Jack was featured prominently in the television series (most recently part of the Home special in December, featuring himself, Loah, Villagers and Denise Chaila). His collaboration, 'New Day' with electronic artist, Kormac has nearly 500,000 views for its award winning music video.



Jack O'Rourke

"Easily one of the year's best albums." - *Irish Times*

Coming up at Mermaid...

Film: 1976

Monday 26th of June, 8pm. €9/7.
Duration: 95 mins. Spanish with English subtitles

Chile, 1976. Pinochet's military dictatorship has been in control for a few years. Carmen is an upper-middle class woman overseeing the renovation of her family's beach house.

When the family priest asks her to look after a badly wounded young man named Elias, she accepts. She quickly figures out Elias has been the victim of political violence. As the weeks pass, Carmen's world-view starts to change and she begins to suspect the authorities are watching her.

Chilean actress Manuela Martelli makes her directorial debut with this expertly-crafted character study. Martelli searingly explores a period of political and social turmoil, while also building a palpable sense of unease and paranoia. Aline Kuppenheim is brilliant as Carmen, a truly fascinating protagonist.

"The blend of character study, Hitchcockian intrigue and an excellent central performance, makes for a tensely involving tale" - *Screen International*



Sing Me To The Sea

Monday 3rd - Friday 7th of July. 10:00am, 11:00am & 2pm. Duration: 20 minutes & 20 minutes free play. €15 - covers 1 child and 1 carer. Illustration by Gillian Eilidh O'Mara



SING ME TO THE SEA is a blissful immersive adventure for children/young people with complex needs. It is performed in hydropools with 3 audience members per show, each with an adult companion, with everyone in the water!

Three performers take the audience on a magical journey of exquisite harmony singing and gentle water play designed especially for children with complex needs, embracing and celebrating the sensory dialogue that they have with the world around them.

Anna Newell is one of Ireland's leading theatremakers for young audiences and her work for extraordinary audiences has been seen on six continents. Each child/young person should have an adult guest in the water with them.

Wicklow harpers to feature at international harp festival

An Chúirt Chruitireachta International Harp Festival, An Grianán, Termonfeckin, Co. Louth, 25th-30th June

Established in 1986, An Chúirt Chruitireachta is an annual international harp festival run by Cairde na Cruite (Friends of the Harp). The festival sees harpers of every standard from all over the world come together for an immersive week of harping. Participants have the opportunity to engage with other harpers, gain a better understanding of Irish music, song and dance, and learn more about the harp and its music.

This year's festival takes place from Sunday 25th June to Friday 30th June at An Grianán, Termonfeckin, Co. Louth, and features a panel of exceptional tutors and tal-

ented artists set to deliver an outstanding celebration of harp music.

Residential students will stay onsite in An Grianán, where they will engage in daily classes,

workshops and concerts. They will learn about historical and contemporary aspects of the harp tradition and explore the harp in its many forms through performances and demon-



Aisling Ennis

strations on Irish, early Irish and pedal harps.

Wicklow Harpers to Lead the Way

Wicklow harpers will be to the fore throughout the week. Rachel Duffy is co-directing the festival, Aisling Ennis will perform with Trio Táin in 'Stars Align' on Tuesday night and lead a 'Goltraí and Geantraí' workshop in Drogheda Library on Wednesday 28th. Wicklow musicians Aoife Ní Bhriain and Colm Ó Briain will perform in 'Rising Stars at the Tholsel' on Tuesday 27th and will join Bray CCE Harp Ensemble to perform in an evening concert on Wednesday 28th June in An Grianán.

Public Events

The festival will kick off at 3pm on Sunday 25th June in the pic-

turesque surroundings of An Grianán, Termonfeckin, Co. Louth with a pop-up concert featuring local musicians from the Music Generation Louth Harp Ensemble. A harp-makers' exhibition will also run throughout the afternoon with leading Irish harp makers on hand to discuss their work. Entry to both the afternoon pop-up concert and the exhibition is free and all are welcome.

Members of the public are also invited to attend an exciting line-up of concerts taking place each evening for the duration of the festival (8pm daily at Grianán, Sunday 25th - Thursday 29th June).

Renowned harpist Clíona Doris (pedal harp) and sisters Deirdre and Aoife Granville (Irish harp and flute) will open proceedings on Sunday 25th, while Gerry Cullen and the Drogheda Singers, early-music trio Nobody's Jig and harper Gráinne Hambly will take to the stage on Monday 26th to celebrate the 250th anniversary of collector Edward Bunting's birth. On Tuesday 27th Jean Kelly (pedal harp) and Trio Táin (pedal harp, flute, viola) perform in 'Stars Align', while the festival gala concert on Thursday 29th June will feature two acclaimed duos, Anne-Marie O'Farrell and Cormac de Barra (harps) and Scottish musicians Rachel Hair and Ron Jappy (harp and guitar).

The mid-point of the week sees harp ensembles from all across Ireland joining the fun. Artist-in-residence Rachel Hair will lead 7 visiting ensembles from Wicklow, Mayo, Antrim, Donegal, Clare, Louth and Dublin in a day of workshops, culminating in an evening performance on Wednesday 28th June at 8pm.



Aoife Ní Bhriain

Fringe Events - Harping for all ages!

Festival fringe events will take place in Drogheda town throughout the week. The continuation of the festival's popular 'Rising Stars of the Harp' series highlights up-and-coming performers in lunchtime concerts at the Tholsel, Drogheda on Monday 26 June and Tuesday 27 June at 1pm.

Admission is free and all are welcome, no booking required.

Tickets for all evening concerts (€15) can be purchased through Eventbrite (An Chúirt Chruitireachta International Festival for Harp 2023 at <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/643641598347>). See www.harpfestival.ie for further details.



Rachel Duffy

Misery Loves Pottery : An Exhibition by Dylan Clucas

Signal Arts Centre, Monday 4th to Sunday 17th August

Misery Loves Pottery is a small collection of ceramic pieces by Signal staff artist Dylan Clucas. Dylan was a graphic designer who became addicted to pottery after being coaxed into trying the wheel by his uncle.

While he was exploring ceramics, Dylan suffered a collapsed lung for which he needed major surgery. As a result, he became miserable and depressed but discovered that pottery gave him an incentive to move forward. The opportunity to immerse himself in art made his recovery time more bearable.

This collection mainly consists of wheel-thrown pieces and trimmed pots made with terracotta clay. They reflect Dylan's love of graphic design and graphic-based aesthetics.

Misery Loves Pottery is the artist's reflection on his journey through the pain of recovery, and his evolving relationship between his own health and his clay creations.



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Upcoming festivals will celebrate community engagement with the Coastal Uplands: Heritage and Tourism Project

The CUPHAT (Coastal Uplands: Heritage and Tourism) project team are inviting communities in the Wicklow Mountains and Blackstairs Mountains to join them for a day of thanks and celebration of their support over the last year. The Blackstairs Mountains Festival will take place on 27th June in Kiltalea Community Hall from 12pm to 8pm, and the Wicklow Mountains Festival will be on the 28th June in Avoca Community Hall from 12pm to 8pm.

CUPHAT, supported by the European Regional Development Fund through the Ireland - Wales Cooperation programme, focuses on developing heritage-based tourism opportunities in the coastal uplands of Ireland and Wales. The project is working with communities to showcase the shared and distinctive heritages of the Blackstairs Mountains in Ireland, and Cambrian Mountains and Preseli Mountains in Wales.

The festival events will showcase the range of work that has been ongoing in local communities. It will provide an opportunity for people to see first-hand the work of school children from across the area, hear oral histories with

community members, view historic photographs and objects that were contributed during the heritage celebrations and hear how local businesses and community groups have been supported. There will be demonstrations of new citizen science activities and an opportunity to have a sneak preview of the ongoing digital reconstruction of local artefacts and landscapes. Entries to the CUPHAT photographic competition for each area will also be on display.

Community members are invited to drop-in at any point during the day. An exciting programme of events is planned to add to the festival atmosphere. There will be face painting and balloon crafts, music and

entertainment, as well as fieldtrips, showings of old video footage, presentations from local businesses and community groups and the announcement of the winning area entries for the CUPHAT photographic competition. The events are free to attend and tea, coffee and cake will be provided throughout the day.

The CUPHAT Project Team describe the event as being "an important opportunity for us to give something back to the local communities who have been so welcoming to us over the course of the project. We hope that people from across the areas, whether they have contributed directly themselves or not, will drop in to see the work that has been done by indi-



viduals, school children and community groups to help capture, preserve and promote the cultural and natural heritage of these unique areas."

The final CUPHAT project event "Regenerative Tourism in the Coastal Uplands: Heritage, Place & Community" will be an end of project community conference on Thursday 6th July from 10am - 4pm in the Ashdown Park Hotel, Gorey. This event is also free to attend but registration is required through Eventbrite: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/cuphats-end-of-project-event-tickets-662849961077?aff=oddtcreator>. This will be an opportunity to learn about the overall project findings across the strands of tourism development, microenterprise and community support, engaging communities with their heritage, citizen science and digital reconstructions in Ireland and Wales. More details will be released on our website and social media channels in the coming days.

Coastal Uplands: Heritage and Tourism (CUPHAT) is funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) through the

Ireland Wales Co-operation Programme. The project will work with a range of community, local and national stakeholders from Wales and Ireland, with Aberystwyth University leading the project, and working in partnership with University College Dublin and the Dyfed Archaeological Trust. The project aims to

showcase the natural and cultural heritage of four coastal upland areas in Ireland (Wicklow and Blackstairs Mountains) and Wales (Cambrian and Preseli Mountains) to increase sustainable forms of tourism within them, thus leading to the creation of more sustainable livelihoods, communities and environments.

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Candidates should have experience in a leadership/management role, excellent interpersonal skills, experience of the community/voluntary sector and an interest in natural heritage, the environment and sustainability.

A full job description is available at our website wicklowuplands.ie/current-vacancies/

Apply with a CV and cover letter to info@wicklowuplands.ie no later than 5pm June 30th

St. Patrick's Missionary Society

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- Minimum of 5 years post graduate experience with a minimum of 2 years previous experience in Care of the Older Person within the previous 6 years.
- Have not less than 3 years' experience in a management capacity in the health and social area.

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