

LOCAL Wicklow Times

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Tuesday 19th September 2023 First Floor, The Boulevard, Quinsborough Road, Bray. A98 R6D7. Tel: 01 - 2869111 E-mail: wicklowed@localtimes.ie www.wicklowtimes.net

'IT'S A TOTAL DISGRACE!'

The Government has come in for stinging criticism from the unlikelyst of sources for the 'disgraceful' state of the security forces. The La Touche Legacy ran over the weekend in Greystones and was opened by former Greystones Fine Gael councillor and Chair of the conference, George Jones who took the opportunity to launch a broadside at the Fine Gael led Government.

Speaking at the opening of the Seminar Weekend George Jones called out the Government on the current state of the Defence Forces and Gardai.

"Since I retired from active politics in 2014, I have seldom made any comments on the current situation either in the Country or Wicklow but it's with

huge regret what I currently see happening our Navy, Air Force and Army along with the Garda situation and leaves me very disappointed.

"The Historical links Fine Gael have with the Defence Forces and Gardai would appear to ring hollow with the current Fine Gael Government Ministers, who appear to have their

'heads in the sand' concerning the dire situation that exists.

"The Navy, because of low numbers can now only put two ships on active duty, yet the need for such protection from the Navy has never been more required, both with the war in Ukraine and the drugs problem. The recruitment problem is being blamed on post Covid, but the



The Dancing Skirts perform at Playful Street in the People's Park, Bray. See more on page 14. Photo by Mark Harrison.



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problem has existed prior to Covid.

"The lack of attention to these problems is a total disgrace. Providing overtime to the Gardai is no solution, what is now required is a proper pay and promotional policy along with the decision to increase the Garda force to 20,000 to reflect the huge increase in our population. Plans should be prepared to provide a second training college to fast track recruitment.

"The Government also needs to address the Navy, Air Force and Army issues now and plan long term to again provide a proper pay structure and promotional opportunities, along with providing a full Minister of Defence going forward.

"The La Touche Legacy Seminar and Festival of History and the weekend has spent many hours discussing

the foundation of this State and it is very sad to consider the way the men and women of our security forces have been treated in recent years," George Jones concluded.

Sinn Féin TD John Brady added his voice to the criticisms offered by Fine Gael stalwart George Jones: "Both the Defence Forces and the Gardaí are modern day organisations, staffed by highly professional women and men motivated by the highest standards of public service, who are beholden to no political party, but merely desire to be treated fairly by whatever party is in power," said Deputy Brady.

"As a former Sinn Féin spokesperson on Defence, I have worked closely with the Defence Forces representative groups in the fight to secure appropriate remuneration and

working conditions for personnel, in the face of unbelievable govern-

ment obstinacy and arrogance. Just last month we see two more

ships tied up, as the crews are no longer in

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 Let's talk business
 WICKLOW



Sean Olohan with the Voices of Ukraine ladies choir, who will be performing in Wicklow Library on Culture Night

Culture Night in Wicklow Library

A number of events are taking place in Wicklow Library in Wicklow Town for Culture Night on Friday 22nd September.

5pm - 6pm: Ceoltas Ceoltoiri Eireann.

6pm - 7:30pm: Threading Place launch. Booking for this event is essential. Please call 0404 67025 or email wicklib@wicklowcoco.ie

6:15 - 6:30pm: Voices of Ukraine: A ladies choir formed recently by musician Sean Olohan in Wicklow town.

8pm - 8:30pm: Wicklow Boathouse set dancing. Participation encouraged!

Arklow Coffee Morning for Wicklow Hospice

There will be a coffee morning at St. Saviour's Church Hall in Arklow on Thursday 21st September (10am - 12pm). Everyone is welcome to attend. The event is part of the 'Big office Morning Social for Hospice' series of coffee mornings taking place nationwide.

Recovery month

The Bray Community Addiction Team (BCAT) is celebrating Recovery Month throughout September at 12pm. The next events will be:

Middle Ground Walk on Friday 22nd September. Meeting at BCAT, Dublin Road. "We are meeting with other community development projects from the area. We walk together from Bray to Killiney. Our friends will join us from Dun Laoghaire. We will meet in the middle, chat and eat together. No need to bring lunch - a packed lunch and minerals will be provided." There will be Guest speakers and Mindful meditation.

Football Tournament, Sunday 24th September. Venue TBC.

For more information Email: info@bcac.ie/ www.bcat.ie or call 01 2764692.

Greystones Active Retirement

Greystones and District Active Retirement Association has started activities as of September 2023.

"We have Chair exercise/Yoga on Mondays at 1.15. This is aimed at working on and maintaining our mobility and balance. Balance is a vital component of our health as we get on in years. Our informal art group is also on Monday at 2.30/4.

Guidance is given by Ann O'Neill and it is a relaxed group space for every level from total beginner through to those with a lot of experience. On Tuesday mornings we have indoor short mat bowling - 10.45 - 12.45. Newcomers are most welcome and you will be encouraged to join in and learn the ropes.

"On Thursday afternoon from 2.30 - 4.15 there is Bingo - light hearted fun for all. Our new year is starting now and we welcome new members to join with us all who have been members previously. Registration for the coming year is open on Tuesday mornings from 10.30/11.30.

"Active Retirement is open for anyone from 55(ish) onwards. We'd love to be able to add new members and activities which would be of interest to you! So come and join us.

"A special note - our monthly coffee Morning will be in Kilian Hall, Friday 29th September from 10.30am, in aid of Wicklow Hospice. All are welcome. Email: garagreystonesplus@gmail.com."

Bray Celtic Camino

Bray Municipal District with the Camino Society Ireland, CLG, invite you to view The Mouteira which marks the start of the Bray Camino Coastal Route to St. James's Church at St. James's Gate, on 22nd September at 4pm on Bray Promenade (beside Sea Life). The unveiling ceremony will take place at 4pm, reception to follow at the Martello Hotel.

Bray Cualann Historical Society

Theresa Hicks will present 'The Kennedys of Newtownmountkennedy' at 8pm on Thursday September 21st in the Royal Hotel, Main Street, Bray. All are welcome - admission is E8 for non-members.

Birdwatch Ireland

Bidwatch Ireland Wicklow branch's first outdoor event of the new season will be on Saturday 23rd September for the annual Autumn outing to Kilcoole to look for seasonal migrants. Meet at Kilcoole Train Station car park at 10.00am.

Laragh mobile library

A mobile library comes to Laragh every second Thursday from 12.15 to 12.50pm and parks at the back of Lynhams Hotel. Phone on 087 9135229 or email library@wicklowcoco.ie. For people who have difficulty accessing their nearest public library, the Mobile Library Service gives them the opportunity to avail of a public library facility. The mobile library carries approximately 2,500 items with free access to many online resources including downloadable audio books, newspapers and more. The next Laragh dates are Friday 22nd September and 6th October.

Exploring Wicklow's coastal biodiversity

A range of Coastal biodiversity activities, news and events has been organised by Wicklow County Council. The Council's 'Behind the beach' biodiversity awareness programme at Brittas Bay continues with a Bird Migration workshop on Saturday, 30th September (8am-11am) led by ecologist, Alan Lauder.

Observe the changing of the seasons as expressed in the coastal migration routes of our birdlife. Meet at North Beach Car Park (bring binoculars if you have them). Future events planned at Council-owned land at Brittas Bay from October-January (dates to be announced) include:

* Big Dune Community Clean-Up - for swimmers, surfers, local residents and all beach visitors this clean-up is an opportunity to show your appreciation and to give something back.

* Sea Buckthorn volunteer days - hands on volunteer workdays to remove this invasive species which is damaging to native dune flora.

This series of free outdoor public workshops and activities aims to increase awareness and appreciation of the rich ecology of coastal habitats and species that lie behind our most popular beaches and to highlight the vital role that healthy

dune systems play in creating a more climate resilient environment for County Wicklow.

To register your interest in attending an event (and to be notified of any changes) please email Deirdre Burns, Heritage Officer, at wicklowheritage@wicklowcoco.ie.

Finally, the annual All Ireland Coastwatch Survey takes place from 15th September to 15th October. This Citizen Science survey invites volunteers to sign up for one or more survey units (500m) along the coast of Ireland. Participants then visit their survey unit once at low tide over the four-week period, fill in the survey questionnaire to record their observations, and return it to Coastwatch where it is collated to form part of the National Coastline map.

The end result provides an invaluable snapshot of the coast of Wicklow and other coastal coun-

ties, helping to identify changes, trends and threats. Survey forms, identification sheets and full details are available at <https://www.coastwatch.org/all-ireland-survey>.

Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Aoife Flynn Kennedy, stated: "These upcoming events and training courses are a really worthwhile way to increase awareness of the biodiversity value of our coast and to provide hands opportunities for members of the public to play a role in looking after it."

Wicklow County Council, Chief Executive Emer O'Gorman also welcomed the latest programme saying: "Wicklow County Council is delighted to partner with members of the public, coastal communities and environmental groups to look after our coast and marine environment which contributes so much to our quality of life in county Wicklow."

Wicklow voters encouraged to check the register

Fine Gael Local Area Representative for Wicklow, Graham Richmond, has launched a new campaign to encourage locals to register to vote.

With Local Elections due in June, the secondary school teacher, is currently calling to homes in Wicklow with leaflets explaining how easy and important it is to register to vote; he is also offering to drop voter registration forms out to those who might not be able to collect them themselves.

"If you care about where you live then it is vital that you are registered to vote," said Mr Richmond.

"Every resident in Ireland, aged 18 and over regardless of their nationality can vote in local elections, held every five years. The next local election will be held on the 7th June 2024.

"You can check to see if you are registered to vote with your local authority or by visiting www.checktheregister.ie. If you wish to be included on the Electoral Register and register to vote you can register or amend your details by logging on to www.checktheregister.ie or www.voter.ie/ (if you have a public service card or a MyGovID account).

"Alternatively, you can pick up the form from your local Garda station, library or council office. Once completed, just return the form to your local authority. I am also more than happy to deliver a form to anyone who

needs a copy. Over the past number of years, there's been lots of new homes built in our area and lots of new arrivals into Wicklow.

"I am appealing to all of these people, as well as those who have turned

18 in recent years or perhaps others who have never got the chance to please take a few minutes to register to vote. Your vote is your voice and it is vital that as many people as possible are registered."

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Ardmore Rovers suspended

Bray soccer club Ardmore Rovers has been suspended by the DDSL (Dublin & District Schoolboys/Girls League) after the club advised parents not to use the DDSL's new registration system to register players for the new season due to data protection concerns.

The new rules requiring members to submit personal documents before they were eligible to play, were introduced during the summer. The DDSL is using the 'Sportlomo' software and asks parents to upload copies of their children's passport photos, birth certificates or Department of Justice certificates in order to register them to play. It also asks parents/guardians to sign a waiver acknowledging that their child's data will be used by their club and/or the DDSL. This is separate to the 'FAI Connect' registration system used by the FAI.

The process is in place to ensure the child's proof of age to prevent older players from playing in younger age groups, however previously parents just had to complete a form on their child's behalf. Ardmore Rovers advised its members not to go along with the new system. In response, the DDSL has not provided the club with fixtures for its teams. The club has not been kicked out of the league but until its players are registered via the new system it is not allowed to take part in DDSL competitions.

In a statement, the Club's Executive Committee said: "Ardmore Rovers is extremely disappointed in the DDSL decision not to provide fixtures for our teams. This is a result of us advising our members not to use the DDSL registration system until all concerns regarding data security, privacy and protection were fully

resolved.

"This matter is now with the Data Protection Commissioner (DPC), and they will guide our actions going forward. We will update our members as soon as possible on this urgent matter and hope to have our teams active again and playing football as soon as possible.

"We have not made this decision lightly; however, the welfare of our players will always remain our primary concern."

The Deputy DPC has met with the FAI to discuss the dispute and parents' concerns. Other clubs have also raised concerns with the new online registration system.

In the meantime Ardmore Rovers hasn't been able to compete in any DDSL competition but has been trying to organise friendlies with other clubs to keep its players active.

A spokesperson for Ardmore Rovers told *Wicklow Times* "We want to get the kids back onto the pitch - they haven't done anything wrong".

The club is standing firm in its non-compliance with the new registration system and want its concerns addressed in a satisfactory way. The club want discussions between the DDSL, FAI and DPC to continue but is hopeful that some way can be found to allow its players to play in the meantime, as it's anticipated that these discussions and negotiations could drag on for some time.

Speaking on the matter, Social Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore said "The safety and protection of children's online information needs to be paramount and I can completely understand both Ardmore Rovers and parents' concerns regarding how this data is being stored, used and who has access to it. Until clarity can be provided relating to this from the Dublin League and the FAI, I think it is important that children are not excluded from playing upcoming matches. I think there should also be an examination of the extent of the information that is being requested in order to play, and whether that level of detail, such as passports, is really warranted. We shouldn't lose sight of the fact that these are children at the centre of this controversy, and the most important thing is simply that they get to play soccer with their friends and enjoy the game. The administrative process of any organisation should not get in the way of this."

More than 30,000 boys and girls play in the DDSL, from Dublin and surrounding counties. Co. Wicklow clubs include Ardmore Rovers, Arklow United, Arklow Town, Greystones United, Sporting Greystones, Verona FC, Wolf Tone & District YC, Enniskerry FC, Enniskerry Youths AFC, and Blessington FC.

Ardmore Rovers has 32 teams, from U8 to U19, catering for about 500 children from all areas in Bray and further afield.



Penalty Shoot-out at Playful Street at the People's Park, Bray. See more page 14. Photo by Mark Harrison.

'IT'S A TOTAL DISGRACE'

Continued from page 1

place to put them to sea. While the Government was celebrating the purchase of two ships from the New Zealand navy, ships which are so unfit for purpose on the rough seas around our coastline, that they had to be transported from the Southern hemisphere to Ireland by special cargo ships, as they are not suitable for open seas.

"Garda morale is close to collapse. Just last week, rank and file members of the Gardaí voted overwhelmingly in favour of a motion of no confidence in the Garda Commissioner. The Minister for Justice has failed to grip the rising fear and tension wrought by the levels of lawlessness in our capital. And here in Wicklow we see Gardaí being pushed to the edge by their increasing workload.

"Given these criticisms offered by a senior Fine

Gael figure of the Minister for Justice, a role that was also held by Minister Simon Harris during Minister McEntee's maternity leave, it asks serious questions of Minister Harris's performance in the role, particularly during given the escalating crisis that continues to take place in the Gardaí."

Brady concluded: "The party that likes to express itself as the party of law and order has failed the custodians of the peace. They have stood by as crime rates have sky-rocketed, they have overseen the erosion of Garda morale. And like the Gardaí, members of the Defence Forces have seen their standard of living collapse. As more members leave the forces, it means the remaining members must work even longer, more unsociable hours, away from their families, for pay rates that bear no relation to the hours which they work."



Former Fine Gael councillor George Jones and Sinn Féin TD John Brady



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Thurs 14th Sept: Arklow Bay Hotel
Thurs 21st Sept: Newtown Community Centre
Tues 26th Sept: Blessington St Kevin's Community Centre
Mon 2nd October: Rathdrum RDA Hall
Thurs 19th October: South Wicklow (venue to be confirmed)
Thurs 26th October: To be Confirmed
Thurs 5th November: Greystones (venue to be confirmed)

MEETINGS WILL COMMENCE @7.30PM

Senator **Pat Casey**

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Hollywood's Mick Burke stars on price at CCM Skipton online working sheepdog sale

Irish handler Mick Burke, of Hollywood village in west Wicklow, starred at Skipton Auction Mart's September timed online sale of working sheep dogs when claiming £4,900 top price with a well-bred black and white bitch related to top trials dogs.



Deputy Jennifer Whitmore and West Wicklow Social Democrats Representative Deirdre McCormack at the International Sheep Dog Trials

His Kemi Meg is a fully broken January, 2021-born daughter of Welshman Kevin Evans' European Nursery Champion and dual Welsh and International Brace Champion, Derwen Doug, out of Scalpsie Joy, herself a daughter of fellow Welsh handler Ross Games' talented trials dog Roy.

She is also a full sister to Evans' Kemi Jack, the current European Nursery Champion, with litter sisters of Meg themselves selling at £5,200 to £7,100 and two of her siblings competing for the Swiss National team. Eligible for this year's nurseries, the top price performer sold to Norwegian buyer Hilmar Eide, of Torvastad, Rogaland, a past Skipton online purchaser.

Mick, who was selling his first dog at the leading North Yorkshire venue, is a house builder by trade, running his own company, Slievewood Construction. He also farms, running a flock of 150 hill ewes and 20 head of commercial Limousin and Beef Shorthorn cattle, alongside his working sheep dogs. Several years ago, he was a member of

the Irish National team.

Powys's Kevin Evans, of Llwynfedwen, Brecon, again made his mark when claiming second top call of £4,500 with an unbroken youngster, the seven-month-old red, tan and white dog, Kemi Franco, a daughter of the Swedish-bred Midderry Frank, whose litter sisters have also sold well. Out of Dunelle Gwen, the up-and-coming young dog went to Scotland with Roddy McIntosh, of Dyce, Aberdeenshire.

The renowned Welsh breeder and trialist also made £1,300 with an even younger black and white unbroken dog, Griff, born this April to his Tanhill Glen, a dual European Nursery and Royal Welsh Champion who has had a major impact on selling prices at Skipton in recent years.

Making £4,100 was local handler Peter Simpson, of Harrogate, with an older five-year-old fully broken black and white dog, Ben, by Irish trialist James McGee's Glencregg Silver, the 2015 International Supreme Champion and granddaughter of Becca, a dual Irish National



Mick Burke's £4,900 top price online Skipton dog Kemi Meg. Photo by SMH Photography

Champion and 2011 World Sheepdog Trials Champion, out of J Ryan's Lyn.

A brace of entries topped £3,000. Doing best at £3,600 was a part-broken March, 2022, black, white and tan dog, Boy, from George Simpson, of Huntly in Aberdeenshire. This, too, was by another highly regarded Kevin Evans' sire, his German import, Red Spot, out of I Bowen's Wozzy Peg. Boy goes to the Isle of Skye and Donald Beaton.

From Dent in Cumbria, Colin Townson, claimed £3,200 with his fully trained January, 2021, black and white bitch, Gyp, also by Glencregg

Silver, out of County Donegal handler Donal Mullaney's Nan. With three Open trials placings this summer, Gyp fell to Bedale's Peter Elcombe.

Cheshire's Colin Pickford, from Macclesfield, made £2,600 with his fully broken black and white bitch, Rainow Blue, a four-year-old daughter of Welshman Aled Owen's prolific trials winner Llangwm Cap, a Welsh National and International Supreme Champion. Out of his own Rainow Liz, Blue joins Alice Muir at Caithness in the far north of Scotland.

Other three and four-figure sales were recorded, the fixture once more

demonstrating the versatility and flexibility of the online sales format and again catering for both tastes and pockets of virtual buyers, supported by working videos posted by vendors of their charges.

The next live field sale at Skipton is scheduled for Friday, October 13, followed by an online sale on Friday, November 29.

The International Sheep Dog Trials were held in Blessington from 8th-10th September. The event brought dogs and handlers together, offering an exciting display of skill and tradition, with 60 finalists competing from Ireland, England, Scotland, and Wales.

'Supports needed to help combat Ash Dieback Disease'

Sinn Féin TD John Brady has called on Minister Charlie McConalogue to introduce support for farmers to deal with the costs involved with addressing the loss of trees due to the ash dieback disease, which is estimated to cost landowners in the region of €7,000 per hectare.

Ash dieback was first discovered in October 2012 in a forest in Leitrim and has the potential to kill 90% of Ash trees in the state. There is also a need for

further funding for local authorities to assist them in addressing the danger posed to motorists and pedestrians from trees which have been affected by the Ash

Dieback disease.

The fourth cycle of Ireland's National Forest Inventory (NFI) was completed last year. The NFI was conducted to record and assess the

extent and nature of the state's forests. Results from the NFI indicated that the Ash Dieback disease is now present at 34,395 hectares of forests. The disease is capable of killing the tree in as little as two growth seasons.

It is estimated that the total cost of the disease to date has been over €800 million.

Deputy Brady said: "The unfortunate reality is that Ash Dieback is now endemic to Ireland's forests which have been devastated by the disease. And although Teagasc has been attempting to develop an ash dieback resistant strain of Ash trees since 2015, there is no means to cure the disease. This means that once affected that trees will atrophy and die. This represents a significant financial setback for forest owners, estimated at approx. €7,000 per hectare. Which the government must address through increased grant aid.

"There is also a considerable health and safety

risk to road users and walkers from diseased trees along roadsides and parks which have been undermined by the disease and fall over. This will become an increasingly important issue for landowners, workers and visitors as the disease progresses.

"The government must also fund local authorities in order to enable them to assist landowners in the removal of trees that represent a health and safety risk as a consequence of the Ash Dieback disease.

"The disease is also largely responsible for the state's failure to reach its 30% annual broadleaved planting target. And according to experts in Teagasc the disease will have grave implications for biodiversity, carbon sequestration, landscape and culture, along with timber production.

"The government needs to act immediately to address the impacts of the disease. Landowners and local authorities need to be supported. Ash dieback is devastating Irish broadleaved forests. Along with the financial and environmental impacts of the

disease, there are health and safety implications to motorists and pedestrians,

as the trees die and fall onto roadways and walkways. Minister

McConalogue must act to protect those affected immediately."

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Open Night 2023

Incoming First Year Applications 2024-2025

Venue: St David's Holy Faith Secondary School, Marine Road, Greystones
Date: Tuesday, 26 September 2023
Time: 7pm to 9pm.
Principal's address: 8.15pm
Strictly Only Sixth Class Students, Parents and Guardians

Council staff commence industrial action

Wicklow County Council staff part of the Fórsa trade union commenced industrial action on 11th September as part of nationwide industrial action across Local Authorities.

The extent and nature of the industrial action has been limited to engagement on political representations from politicians, however Fórsa members plan to escalate the industrial action this week with a 24-hour email ban on Friday 22nd September followed by a 48-hour telephone ban on Tuesday 26th September and Wednesday 27th September. This will affect all internal and external local authority email correspondence, and calls on all local authority phone lines including video calls.

In a statement last week to Wicklow Times, Wicklow County

Council said, "Fórsa advised Wicklow County Council management of the intention to commence industrial action by its clerical administrative grades nationally with effect from the 11th September 2023. As advised by Fórsa, the industrial action will commence with an indefinite ban on engagement on political representations (verbal, email and written). This action follows engagement at the Workplace Relations Commission in relation to job evaluation, attended by the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA) representing local authority management. LGMA

have advised Fórsa that this issue is broader than the local authority sector and should be dealt with at central level on a public sector wide basis.

"The extent and nature of the industrial action has been limited to engagement on representations and should not impact on any other aspect of elected representatives' role and function as it relates to engagement with staff of this local authority. Service delivery to the public is as normal. Staff who are not Fórsa members are not part of the dispute and will be undertaking their duties as normal."

New Security Allowance Scheme for Councillors

Mr. Kieran O'Donnell TD, Minister for State for Local Government and Planning has announced a new allowance of up to €2,500 for Councillors to provide for measures to enhance their personal physical security.

The announcement comes following a number of security and safety incidents experienced by Councillors and the recent introduction of a similar allowance scheme for Oireachtas members. Regulations signed by Minister O'Donnell and

Mr Paschal Donohoe TD, Minister for Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform today set out details of a scheme under which Councillors will be able to claim up to 50% of their personal security costs, to a maximum value of

€2,500, whichever is the lesser amount. The allowance will be made on a once-off, vouched basis and will be administered by Local Authorities. Guidelines regarding the operation of the scheme will issue very shortly to local authorities.

The allowance will allow Councillors to take measures to improve their personal physical security at the Councillors' homes

following a review to be carried out by a member of An Garda Síochána.

Eligible expenses under the scheme include the installation of intruder alarms, CCTV and the provision of panic buttons/GPS-tracked panic button app. Work to install any security measures must be carried out by Private Security Authority registered installers and must meet industry standards.



Kate Kavanagh and Anna O'Toole at the Newcastle Colour Run held recently to fundraise for Will's Playground. The fundraising campaign is for a new playground for St. Francis National School in memory of former pupil Will Leeson.

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Open Night Tuesday 26 September



Jim and Mona Driscoll of Greystones who celebrated their golden wedding anniversary with family and friends in the Summerhill Hotel, Enniskerry on 8th September. A large gathering attended from many parts of Ireland. Photo by John McGowan

In-road disability parking bay sensors piloted in Bray

The piloting of in-road disability parking bay sensors for a 12-month period has been agreed by Bray Municipal District members.

The in-road sensors detect if the parking bay is occupied and users are able to see which disabled parking bays are occupied and which are free. The user can then use Google maps, or a similar mapping app, to direct them to the parking bay.

If the trial of the in-road disability parking bay sensors is successful

they will be rolled out on an initial three-year contract.

The App is currently in use and can be downloaded from the playstore and appstore, simply by searching 'ParkTime', set up a free profile and select Bray as city to test the app.

If you select a green (empty) space it will

direct you to parking bay using Google maps or Waze maps. Red spaces indicate that the parking bay is occupied.

Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Aoife Flynn Kennedy, welcomed the initiative and outlined the importance of using modern technology to improve people's quality of life.

Welcoming the pilot, Cathaoirleach of Bray Municipal District, Cllr Melanie Corrigan, advised that the ParkTime App for the town of Bray will help people in the community who have a Disabled Parking Permit to be able to access parking spaces more easily, and support them in their everyday lives to be independent.

Chief Executive of Wicklow County

Council, Emer O'Gorman, noted that the initiative was in line with Wicklow County Council's commitment to improving the quality of life and access for all in the county.

Use of the ParkTime app, she said, would provide real time information to the person with a Disabled Parking Permit and minimise the time spent searching for parking.

Plans for new hourly airport bus service from Greystones

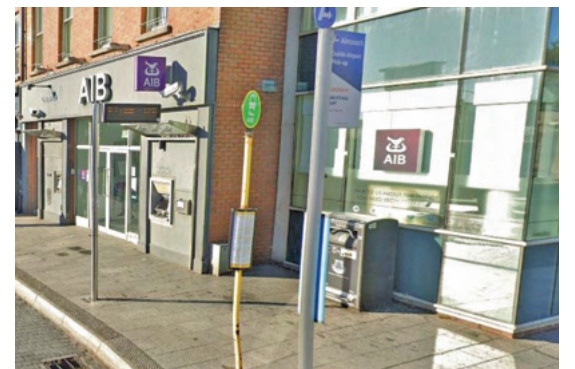
Fine Gael Minister Simon Harris has announced that he is working closely with the National Transport Authority on a new proposal for an hourly airport bus service from Greystones.

Minister Harris confirmed that Aircoach are expecting to have an application for said route submitted to the National Transport Authority in October where it will await the NTA's decision.

Speaking recently, Minister Harris said, "Today I wanted to confirm my support for a new proposal to introduce an hourly bus service running from Greystones to Dublin Airport.

"This would be a fantastic addition and a service that I know would be in high demand in Greystones.

"The application for this service should be submitted to the National Transport Authority for decision in October, and I look forward to continuing to work with the NTA as this application progresses. Minister Harris concluded.



The Greystones Aircoach stop

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Casey to host workshops on home ownership

Fianna Fáil Senator Pat Casey is to host a series of information workshops in towns and villages throughout Co. Wicklow and North Wexford on the various supports for home ownership and first time buyers/builds provided by Government.



Senator Pat Casey

"In the ever-changing landscape of modern Irish society, the importance of home ownership remains paramount," said Senator Casey. "It serves as the bedrock of stability and prosperity for individuals and families alike. At the forefront of this endeavour stand two pivotal government initiatives - the Help to Buy and First Home schemes.

"Home ownership is more than just bricks and mortar; it fosters a profound sense of security, belonging, and responsibility. It provides a stable environment for families to thrive, promoting emotional well-being and strengthening community bonds."

Home ownership serves as a potent tool for wealth creation. As property values appreciate over time, homeowners accumulate equity, providing a vital financial safety net and the means to invest in a brighter future. Government support for home ownership actively addresses wealth disparities and ensures financial

security for the citizens of Ireland.

From an economic perspective, a robust housing market is a catalyst for economic growth. Data shows that homeowners are more likely to be deeply invested in their communities, resulting in lower crime rates and well-maintained neighbourhoods. The housing sector generates demand for various goods and services, creating jobs and stimulating local economies.

The Help to Buy and First Home schemes play a pivotal role in expanding access to home ownership across a broader demographic spectrum. For example, with an annual single or joint income of €52,500 you can afford to buy a home to the value of €300K with the help of these schemes. These government initiatives provide essential financial assistance, including grants and tax incentives, to help first-time buyers step onto the property ladder. They are indispensable tools that ensure the dream of home ownership remains within reach for all segments of the population.

Moreover, these schemes demonstrate their importance during times of crisis by stabilising housing markets. They offer crucial support to Irish families during challenging periods, preventing foreclosures and evictions, and guaranteeing a secure place to call home during uncertainties.

Senator Casey's information tour aims to shed light on the details and

impact of these government schemes and how they can restore hope for owning your own home. The government's unwavering support for the Help to Buy and First Home schemes is pivotal in making this dream a reality for many, creating a

more equitable and prosperous Irish society for all.

Join Senator Casey at one of the upcoming information evenings from North Wicklow to North Wexford to explore how these schemes can once again rekindle the hope of owning your own home.



Pictured is the Rathnew team at the Doran Soccer Blitz in aid of Wicklow Cancer Support

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- **Adobe.** 6.45-9.45pm. Duration 10 weeks.
- **ESOL.** 7.30-9.30pm. Duration 10 weeks.
- **Film Special FX.** 7.00-9.00pm. Duration 10 weeks.
- **Employment Opportunities** in Ireland: Understanding your Potential (through Ukrainian language). 7.00-9.00pm. Duration 6 weeks.
- **Ukulele.** 7.45-9.15pm. Duration 10 weeks.
- **Pilates** - Level 1. 7.30-8.30pm. Duration 10 weeks.
- **Pilates** - Level 2. 8.30-9.30pm. Duration 10 weeks.
- **First Aid and Cardiac first responder.** 7.00-9.00pm. Duration 10 weeks.
- **Dress Making.** 7.30-9.30pm. Duration 10 weeks.
- **Bridge** - Beginners. 7.30-9.30pm. Duration 10 weeks.
- **Yoga** - Beginners. 6.45-8.00pm. Duration 10 weeks.
- **Yoga** - Improvers. 8.00-9.15pm. Duration 10 weeks.
- **Tai Chi.** 7.00-8.30pm. Duration 10 weeks.
- **Digital Photography.** 7.30-9.30pm. Duration 10 weeks.
- **Furniture Making** - Woodwork for Beginners. 7.30-9.30pm. Duration 10 weeks.
- **Italian** - Beginners. 6.45-8.10pm. Duration 10 weeks.
- **Italian** - Improvers. 8.15-9.45pm. Duration 10 weeks.
- **Conversational Irish** - beginners. 6.45-8.15pm. Duration 10 weeks.
- **Conversational Irish** - Improvers. 8.15-9.45pm. Duration 10 weeks.
- **Pottery/Ceramics.** 6.40-9.10pm. Duration 10 weeks.
- **French** - Beginners. 8.15-9.45pm. Duration 8 weeks.
- **French** - Improvers. 6.40-8.10pm. Duration 8 weeks.
- **Spanish** - Beginners. 6.45-8.15pm. Duration 10 weeks.
- **Spanish** - Improvers. 8.15-9.30pm. Duration 10 weeks.
- **Beekeeping** for Beginners. 7.30-9.30pm. Duration 8 weeks.
- **Introduction to Make-Up Artistry.** 7.30-9.30pm. Duration 10 weeks.
- **TEFL.** 7.30-9.30pm. Duration 10 weeks.
- **Leaving Certificate Irish.** 7.15-8.30pm. Duration 10 weeks.
- **Guitar.** 7.30-9.00pm. Duration 10 weeks.
- **Social Media Marketing** (Online). 6.30-8.30pm. Duration 10 weeks.

Commercial vacancy rate rises to 12.8%

The commercial vacancy rate in Wicklow stood at 12.8% in June 2023, according to the latest GeoDirectory Commercial Buildings Report, issued on 7th September. This represents an increase of 0.7 percentage points (pp) compared to June 2022.

The report, prepared by EY, found that the national commercial vacancy rate stood at 14.1% in June 2023, a marginal increase of 0.2 percentage points (pp) when compared to the same period in 2022. The national commercial vacancy rate is the highest level recorded by GeoDirectory since it began reporting on the rates in 2013. Commercial vacancy rates increased in 20 out of 26 counties in the twelve months to June 2023, with a total of 29,798 vacant commercial units recorded across Ireland.

The GeoDirectory Commercial Buildings Report examined the commercial vacancy rates among a sample of 80 towns across the country in June 2023. Of the towns in Wicklow analysed, Bray had the highest commercial vacancy rate in Q2 2023 at 15.2%, while Greystones had the lowest at 6.8%. In the twelve months to June 2023, Greystones and Carrigaline switched positions in the ranking of lowest vacancy rate with Greystones now having the lowest vacancy rate in the country at 6.8%, 0.9pp lower than Q2 2022. Carrigaline, Co. Cork had the second lowest vacancy rate at 7.5%, followed by Gorey, Co. Wexford at 9.3%.

Further details on courses are available on www.bife.ie/morning-and-evening-courses/evening-classes

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Nominees shine in Pride of Place competition

Four Wicklow nominees in the 'Pride of Place' 2023 competition recently presented to the visiting judges. The entries were nominated by the Community, Cultural and Social Development Directorate of Wicklow County Council to represent the county.

ReWild Wicklow was nominated in the 'Climate Action and Biodiversity' category while the villages of Hollywood (under the Population 0-500 category) and Avoca (in the Population 500-1500 category) were also entered. Greystones Tidy Towns was nominated under the 'Creative Place Initiative' for the creation of an all-inclusive Sensory Garden adjacent to the Burnaby Park in Greystones.

Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Aoife Flynn Kennedy, attended the presentations during the judges' visit to Wicklow, and offered her congratulations to the four nominated projects stating: "These are very inspirational projects and community groups who have shown how volunteering is beneficial and a valuable source for change and development in local communities in the county."

Emer O'Gorman, Chief Executive, Wicklow County Council, added her congratulations and expressed the hope that Wicklow would excel in the 'Pride

of Place' competition. She thanked IPBMI and Co-operation Ireland for their ongoing support for the annual competition and added: "These groups are already considered winners in the county by the making of such fantastic contributions to their local area for all the residents."

The judging of the projects took place on the 5th and 6th of September. The two judges visited the participating towns and attended the four presentations where the residents, various groups and committees, with great effort and pride, showcased their community work in the best of summer weather.

The winners will be announced at an awards ceremony on Friday, 10th of November, in Armagh City Hotel, hosted by Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council. The competition is sponsored by Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurance Company (IPBMI), in association with Co-operation Ireland.



Sol Royo Erasquin, Assistant Staff Officer, Wicklow County Council; Caroline Fox, A/Senior Executive Officer, Wicklow County Council; Michael Nicholson, Director of Services, Wicklow County Council; Cllr Tommy Annesley, Cathaoirleach, Arklow Municipal District; Bernie Ivers, Avoca Tidy Towns; Michael Fahy, Avoca GAA; Martina Maloney, Pride of Place Judge; Sean Warde, Avoca GAA; Tim Caffrey, Pride of Place Judge; Myles Smith, Avoca Tidy Towns; Michael O'Neill, Avoca GAA and Cllr Pat Kennedy



Tommy Tutty, Emma Lyons and Ann Halpin, Hollywood Village; Martina Maloney, Pride of Place Judge; Cllr Aoife Flynn Kennedy, Cathaoirleach Wicklow County Council; Tim Caffrey, Pride of Place Judge; CJ Darby and John Glennon, Hollywood Village



Brian O'Toole, Wildacres; Sol Royo Erasquin, Assistant Staff Officer, Wicklow County Council; Tim Caffrey, Pride of Place Judge; Danny Alvey, ReWild Wicklow; Martina Maloney, Pride of Place Judge; Caroline Fox, A/Senior Executive Officer, Wicklow County Council and Gilly Taylor, Wildacres



Adam Calliman, Rebecca Gill (with her son Cal), Margaret O'Callaghan and Maurice Carey, Greystones Tidy Towns; Martina Maloney, Pride of Place Judge; Cllr Aoife Flynn Kennedy, Cathaoirleach, Wicklow County Council; Tim Caffrey, Pride of Place Judge; Liz Dillon, Greystones Tidy Towns; Cllr Lourda Scott, a member of Greystones Tidy Towns; Caroline Fox, A/Senior Executive Officer, Wicklow County Council and Sol Royo Erasquin, Assistant Staff Officer, Wicklow County Council

Proposed road closures for N11 Bus Priority Scheme raise concerns

Wicklow County Council, in partnership with Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, Transport Infrastructure Ireland and the National Transport Authority (NTA) are progressing the N11/M11 Bus Priority Interim Scheme (N11/M11 BPIS).

Cllr Melanie Corrigan has raised concerns about some of the proposed road closures to facilitate the scheme while Cllr Derek Mitchell has also raised concerns, saying the scheme will create traffic jams.

At a public display of the preferred options in the Glenview Hotel on Tuesday 12th September last the public, stakeholders and interested parties were invited to attend to view the preferred options identified for the BPIS, the work undertaken to date and the programme for advancement of the project.

Cllr Corrigan who attended the event was concerned to see the proposal to close the Herbert Road exit onto the N11, and has been contacted by several residents on the Herbert road also concerned about its closure.

The traffic is proposed to be exit onto the N11/M11 at the roundabout at Hills garage where the roundabout will be updated to a signal controlled crossing.

Cllr Corrigan is also concerned about the proposed closure of the R117 road from Enniskerry to the N11/M11, there are two other route options proposed to access N11 to join either the Fassaroe roundabout or the Kilcroney roundabout. As well as other pro-

posed options of road closures to allow for the Bus corridor.

Cllr Derek Mitchell said "The N11 Interim Bus Priority Scheme provides for bus lanes from Loughlinstown to Fassaroe on both sides and from the Glenview to Kilmacanoge, Northbound. Also a more complex Central Section from Fassaroe to Kilmacanoge on both sides of the road. A detailed look at it shows it is much more extensive than initially appears.

"It involves closing the Enniskerry and Kilcroney turnoffs from the N11 to all traffic. I think this will divert a lot of traffic back into Bray and increase queues on the N11 at Bray South. Also the rural roads to the South of Enniskerry will get busier.

"The original scheme had a parallel road, on each side, for buses and local traffic to take the traffic from the closed junctions but this scheme omits that. The original scheme was postponed/cancelled by Minister Eamon Ryan who does not want a road capacity increase in spite of the huge population growth South of Bray. I think we should go back to the original scheme.

"Added to these transport problems the recent All Island

Rail Review has ignored the rail improvements planned for Greystones DART and South of there."

People can send in their submissions/observations on the proposed scheme. Additional information in relation to overall progress, current news items and project reports can be found on the N11/M11 website. www.n11m11bpis.ie n11m11@arup.com

Following the Public Display, submissions will be accepted via the online feedback form available on the project website www.n11m11bpis.ie or by email to n11m11@arup.com or by post addressed to N11/M11 Bus Priority Interim Scheme, Transportation Department, Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Whitegates, Wicklow Town, A67 FW96. Submissions will be accepted from Tuesday 12th September 2023 and must be received on or before Friday 13th October 2023.

Wicklow County Council welcomes feedback and submissions from the public and interested parties. The knowledge gained from the engagement will be considered by the project team as part of the next stages of the development of the scheme.

New Leap Card facilities coming to Kilcoole

Green TD Steven Matthews has announced that new ticket vending machine and a Leap card validator will shortly be installed at the Kilcoole rail stop.

This will allow leap card users to tag on and off at this location as part of the 'short hop zone' fares, saving commuters up to €3.20 per day for a return journey. Prior to this, Leap card users at Kilcoole were forced to seek fare rebates from Irish rail as there was no facility to tag on or off at this stop. It is expected that these facilities will be installed in before Halloween.

Deputy Matthews said: "This is very positive news for Kilcoole commuters, and it was something that has been raised to be by many rail passengers in recent months. Irish Rail have committed to installing a Leap Card tagging system within the next two months, with most of the work already complete. The only remaining issue related to connectivity in the station which is expected to be resolved in the coming weeks.

"While passengers getting on and off at Kilcoole were technically able to avail of



Steven Matthews TD in Kilcoole

Leap card savings previously as it is in the short hop zone, it was a real hassle of having to apply online to get a rebate and I know many commuters from Kilcoole found it difficult to get the rebates they were owed.

"I am also working with Irish rail to get more stops in included

in the Leap Card zone so to further reduce the cost of rail for passengers. I believe this should be expanded to include Wicklow Town as part of my wider plans to bring the DART to Wicklow Town and to triple the number of daily rail journeys to and from the town. I will continue to engage with Irish Rail to avoid any further delays and if any commuters from Kilcoole have any problems with the system once it is installed, I would ask that they get in touch and I will flag any teething issues with Irish Rail directly," concluded Steven Matthews.

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'I'm horrified that my life will be reduced to very little'



Ann Kennedy after one of her accidents which left her hospitalised.

Ann Kennedy (70) in Greystones says she has been "left alone with no care" for too long, and is now speaking out after suffering through a number of accidents in the home since last summer.

These have included bad falls which have resulted in a broken elbow, broken wrist and shoulder damage. She's received MRIs and a blood transfusion.

Ann, who is wheelchair bound due to a neuromuscular disease, says that she has received no elder care assistance since Christmas Day. She has become increasingly frustrated with the health system and is

currently seeking a personal assistant under the social model of disability for independent living. Personal assistants are similar to carers but offer additional supports which enable disabled people to live more full and independent lives.

Ann says she's not just speaking out for herself but for the many people who are in a similar situation.

"Over three million

care hours were unfilled last year, effecting a devastating number of human lives all living what should be an equal life barring prejudice on age, disease, and disability," she says.

"I have lost hundreds of hours care and feel trapped and burdened beyond what I can endure and should not be expected to cope with unaided. I have had blood transfusion, broken arms, torn mus-

cles, and bleeding from face and nose this year and with no help whatsoever from a service that has assessed me as needing it. Between the dreadful accidents I try to live but need help. I need to live."

Ann is an artist who currently has a painting in the Mermaid Arts Centre in Bray celebrating their 21st anniversary. However, contact and engagement with care agencies, Ann says, has left her with little hope of finding the quality of life she's looking for. "I'm hor-

ried that my life will be reduced to very little indeed," she says.

"I wish to draw attention to important legislation that must guide us through a rights-based approach for all citizens in Ireland. We have upheld the rights of the citizen to be equal and that includes no discrimination of the person on age grounds, therefore a continuity of the lived reality should be upheld as the right course of living for all of us.

"This also means we have a right to engage

with the State on how we want to be cared for and that such a right should carry weight, it's called a partnership in care, and it is a dignified approach and part of HSE policy.

"It can be emotive and painful for us who are living through a minefield of constant begging, weeping, screaming, and writing and receiving very little at the end of it except a bad name and a re-framing of the person for expediency and convenience," she says.

Avondale House welcomes older people's Council

Members of the County Wicklow Older People's Council (OPC) took part in a guided tour of Avondale House on Tuesday 12th September to assess the accessibility of the venue and the experience for older people.

The newly refurbished Avondale House is an added attraction for visitors to Avondale Forest Park, in addition to the Beyond the Trees Walkway and Viewing Tower. Officially opened last June, guided tours are available for visitors which will take them through the home of Samuel Hayes, its first owner; the Parnell family who inhabited the house in the 1800s and the forestry school which was subsequently set up in the house once it was acquired by the state in 1904.

The OPC is a representative group of older people, established by Wicklow County Council as part of the national Age Friendly Programme. The key purpose is to

provide the authentic voice of older people in the county, representing the diversity that exists among our ageing population.

The walkability audit at Avondale House was co-ordinated by Alice Corbett, Age Friendly Ireland Regional Manager and Clodagh Whelan, Age Friendly Programme Manager for County Wicklow.

Carina Holmes, Chairperson of the County Wicklow Older People's Council, said: "It was a great pleasure to visit Avondale House and the experience was enhanced by the knowledge of the tour guide, who made the history of the house and the families who lived there very real and accessible to all."

Katheine Webster, Avondale Operations Manager, stated that iCoillte are committed to ensuring that all its operations at Avondale are accessible to all. We also have two wheelchairs available for visitors to borrow, on request, if you feel that your legs need a rest at any stage of the one-hour guided tour of Avondale House.

Overall feedback on the venue and the experience for older people was very positive and detailed feedback will be sent to Coillte operations team.

The Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Aoife Flynn Kennedy, commended Coillte on their commitment to seeking feedback from older people. "It is essential that this very

large demographic group be heard and that their needs are met. As our aging population is projected to increase, with people living longer into the future, we want to ensure that Wicklow a great place to grow older for all," she stated.

Beyond The Trees Avondale was certified as the first Age Friendly tourist destination in Ireland last year by Age Friendly Recognition and Achievement Awards 2023, under the Business Innovation Category.

Emer O'Gorman, Chief Executive, Wicklow County Council, also offered her congratulations to Coillte on being



Pictured at Avondale House are Rita McMullan (Avondale Tour Guide), Kathleen Kelleher, Anne Thornton, Margaret Byrne, Clodagh Whelan (Wicklow County Council); Tom Cavanaugh, Adrian Keogh (front), Gertrude Salley, Carina Holmes (Chair OPC); Alice Corbett (Age Friendly Ireland) and Mai Quaid.

shortlisted for the National Awards, saying: "It will be a great opportunity for you to show-

case the fantastic work you've put in to making this such a successful initiative."

Residents of County Wicklow and who are over the age of 55 and want to find out more

about the work of the Older People's Council should contact: agefriendly@wicklowcoco.ie

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Arklow Meals on Wheels providing 120 meals per week

Arklow Meals on Wheels are now providing around 120 meals a week compared to the 20 per week when the organisation was set up, Arklow Municipal District Members were told last week.

A deputation from Arklow Meals on Wheels were welcome to the September meeting by the Cathaoirleach, Cllr Tommy Annesley. Meals on Wheels Volunteers, Hilary Sharpe, Catherine Kavanagh and Nellie Carr provided the members with information relating to the service they provide.

They said that founding members, Maureen Spacey and Patsy Boyle along with others, originally provided around 20 meals per week.

Volunteers now provide approximately 120 meals per week post Covid with Hilary Sharpe saying that they provide more than just a meal, it's a lifeline.

Cathaoirleach Cllr Annesley thanked the

area. John Bowes, Acting District Manager, congratulated the Meals on Wheels volunteers on reaching an

important milestone. Elected Members praised the work of the volunteers but especially thanked them for exten-

sion of the service beyond Arklow during Covid. They wished them well as they secure a permanent home in Arklow.



Alvina Brehony, Arklow District Administrator; Catherine Kavanagh, Arklow Meals on Wheels; Cllr Pat Kennedy, Hilary Sharpe, Arklow Meals on Wheels; Cathaoirleach Cllr Tommy Annesley; Nellie Carr, Arklow Meals on Wheels; Cllr Pat Fitzgerald, Cllr Sylvester Bourke and John Bowes, Acting Arklow District Manager.

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Have you considered how you or your family would cope if you were to suffer from some accident or illness which deprived you of the mental capacity to look after your own affairs? With advances in medical care, increasing life expectancy and varying property values there is a growing need for people to make arrangements which can be brought into effect in the event of mental incapacity arising.

An Enduring Power of Attorney is a legal document which allows an individual to choose to appoint a specific individual (usually a close family member) to look after both your person and financial affairs in the event that for any reason you lose your mental capacity in the future.

An enduring power of attorney can be an extremely powerful document that significantly bypasses

the hurdles and problems your family could face when trying to deal with your affairs should you become incapable. The main purpose of an enduring power of attorney is to enable somebody of your choosing to have the entitlement to manage your financial and personal affairs for you if you lose your mental capacity at some future date.

The execution of an enduring power of attorney is an excellent way of planning for the future and provides a mechanism for the management of the donor's affairs in the event that the donor becomes incapable of doing so themselves in the future.

Unlike a general power of attorney which has immediate effect once executed, an enduring power of attorney will only come into effect at a later date should the donor become incapable of manag-

ing their affairs. The enduring power of attorney will not come into force should you remain in control of your affairs.

As a donor of an enduring power of attorney, there are a number of safeguards designed to protect you.

When executing an enduring power of attorney, you can decide as to the scope of your affairs that you wish to have delegated to your attorneys. As donor, you can decide whether to grant authority for the control of your financial affairs, personal care, housing, medical affairs etc. Your solicitor will take great care in discussing all options so as to determine what is best for you.

An enduring power of attorney therefore allows you to maintain control of your affairs until such time as you may become unable to do so yourself through mental incapacity.



The Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) Act: What you need to know

The Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) Act 2015 came into law on the 26th April 2023. This Act has radically altered the means by which citizens can make arrangements for their affairs to be managed in the event that they are not able to do so for themselves due to a reduction in, or loss of their mental capacity.

The new Act has brought into law a range of options that can now be availed of to either assist someone to make decisions for themselves, or to take over full control of a person's affairs if that is necessary.

The three new possible options that are now available are called;

1. A Decision Making Assistance Agree-

ment. This is an agreement a person (who for the purposes of the new act is called a "relevant person") can enter into with another person whereby they can nominate someone who can assist the relevant person to make decisions by giving them explanations of the nature of the decision to be made and the implications of the decision for

the relevant person, using such communication techniques as are necessary, so that the relevant person can then make the decision for themselves.

2. A Co-Decision-Making Agreement is a higher level agreement in that under this arrangement, the relevant person can authorise a third party, not only to assist the relevant person to

understand the nature of the decision to be made in the hopes that the relevant person will then make the decision, they can also authorise the other person to then make the decision on behalf of the relevant person if a decision needs to be made and the relevant person

3. Appointment of Decision-making Representative is the highest level of assisted decision making arrangement that now exists. This involves someone making an application to the Circuit Court to be appointed as a Decision-Making Representative for the individual in question. This application is based on a medical report to confirm that the relevant person is in fact incapable due to mental incapacity of making the decisions to be made. The court can make orders authorising the Decision-Making Representative to make one or more than one decision for the relevant person depending on the circumstances of the case.

4. In addition to the three new regimes for the management of a person's affairs the old concept of creating an Enduring Power of Attorney to enable you to make provision for who you want to manage your affairs for you if you lose your mental capacity still exists. Significant changes

have been made to the process of creating an EPA however and for those people who wish to

instruct a solicitor to assist them with the creation of an EPA it is now taking significantly

longer than it used to do this.

There is an online option available at

www.decisionsupportservice.ie for people to log on and create their own EPA if they wish to do so.



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Contract signed for Blessington Town Centre First plan

Blessington set for exciting project that will see the regeneration of the town over the next few years

On Monday, 4th September Wicklow County Council signed the contract for the development of a Town Centre First Masterplan for Blessington.

As part of the national Town Centre First Policy, Blessington has been identified as a 'pathfinder' town and funding has been granted to Wicklow County Council for the development of the plan.

As a 'pathfinder' town, Blessington will serve as a model for regeneration plans for other towns in the county.

The aim of the Town Centre First Policy is to create town centres that function as viable, vibrant and attractive locations for people to live, work and visit. The town centre is envisaged to function also as the service, social, cultural and recreational hub for the local community.

The plan will be developed in partnership with the people of Blessington and led by the Town Regeneration Officer.

Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Aoife Flynn Kennedy, highlighted the importance of engage-

ment saying: "We want to work with all sectors of the community - business, retail, community, shoppers, parents and children, people with disabilities and more. Everyone who uses the town centre is invited to get involved in our surveys and our consultations. We want to make this plan as inclusive as possible."

Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council, Emer O'Gorman, added: "We want to bring our town centres back to being the centre of social, economic and community life. This is an exciting opportunity for Blessington as the initial pilot for the Town Centre First plans. Wicklow County Council is currently leading out on a number of regeneration projects across the county and will continue to do so."

Details of the surveys and consultation events will be announced shortly.



Deirdre Whitfield, Cllr Avril Cronin, Liam Cullen, Cathaoirleach of the Baltinglass Municipal District Cllr Edward Timmins, Cllr Vincent Blake, CEO of Wicklow County Council Emer O'Gorman, and Brege Kilkenny at the signing of the contract for the Blessington Town Centre First Plan

Climbing boulders installed in Bray playground

Wicklow County Council has announced the installation of climbing boulders in Ballywaltrim Playground in Bray.

The funding for the project was provided by the Department of Health via the Slaintecare Healthy Communities Programme. Under this programme, Bray has received additional resources with the aim of improving the long-term health and wellbeing of the community.

While there are numer-

ous natural climbing sites in County Wicklow, this is the first purpose built climbing facility that brings this form of outdoor recreation to an urban setting. The installation, which consists of four large structures and several smaller introductory boulders, is designed to be accessible for a variety of ages and abilities.

The boulders are already proving very popular with the local community, suggesting that structures for more advanced climbing skills could be added at the site and that similar installations could be considered for other areas in the future.

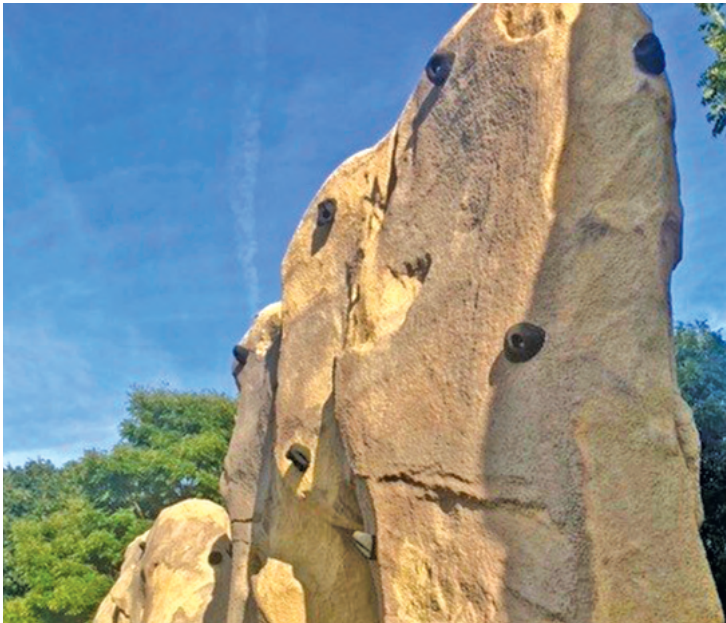
Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council,

Cllr Aoife Flynn Kennedy, welcomed the installation saying: "It is great to see such a novel facility being provided for the community. The climbing boulders are a fabulous way to introduce young people to a new form of sport and recreation, and to encourage healthy physical activity."

Emer O'Gorman, Chief Executive, Wicklow County Council, added: "Wicklow County Council is committed to supporting and delivering initiatives that protect the health and wellbeing of everyone in the county. I am very pleased to see this project complete. The

boulders look fantastic on site and are a very positive resource for the local community."

Meadhbh Cahill, Slaintecare Healthy Communities Local Development Officer, Wicklow County Council, explained: "Physical activity of all kinds has a hugely positive impact on life-long health and wellbeing. One of the priorities for the Slaintecare Healthy Communities Programme is to provide facilities that encourage physical activity and participation in sport and recreation. The boulders are a key element in that plan and it is wonderful to see that they have been so positively received."



Carys, Beth, Bryn and Merryn Kelly at the recent Newcastle Colour Run fundraiser for Will's Playground. The fundraising campaign is for a new playground for St. Francis National School in memory of former pupil Will Leeson.



The new climbing boulders in Ballywaltrim playground

Over 150 volunteers help clean up Wicklow's beaches

10 groups and 152 volunteers from Wicklow joined the Big Beach Clean from 15th-17th September to remove marine litter and be part of an international citizen science project.

The Big Beach Clean is part of the International Coastal Cleanup (ICC) organised by the Ocean Conservancy, and it entails an annual call-to-action for individuals, families, and communities to join forces to carry out a clean-up at the end of the bathing season and join a worldwide citizen science project.

Volunteers are encouraged to host a beach clean or join an existing one. In 2022, more than 500 clean-up events were organised around the country, with participants removing an astounding 42 tonnes of litter from Irish coastal areas and inland locations.

The results of the annu-

al survey of coasts and inland waterways by business group Irish Business Against Litter (IBAL) have recently been released. These results show that, for the first time since IBAL started its coastal surveys in 2017, no area was classified as a litter hotspot in 2023. However, despite a summer marked by lower visitor numbers due to unsettled conditions, the study of 33 locations nationwide unveils that the majority of beaches still fall short of attaining a clean status.

As the bathing season comes to an end, Clean Coasts volunteers once more demonstrated their willingness to get invol-

ved and tackle the marine litter problem by registering for this call-to-action.

Clean-ups took place in various locations around Co. Wicklow, including Bray, Arklow South Beach, South Quay and Newcastle Beach.

Joining forces with the An Taisce National Spring Clean programme, the Big Beach Clean encourages residents from all corners of Ireland to participate. Urban litter has been identified as a significant contributor to marine litter, underscoring the importance of even non-coastal communities in preventing litter from entering waterways and oceans.



Volunteers cleaning up in Greystones

Bray Lions Club seeking Young Ambassador

Bray Lions Club has begun its search for a Young Ambassador who will represent the club in an international competition. The Lions Young Ambassador programme rewards young people (aged under 19 in June 2024), who are making a contribution to their local community through voluntary work, sporting activity or good citizenship.

The programme, which operates throughout Europe, is part of the Lions Opportunities for Youth initiative. It is a competition that recognises young people (between the ages of 15 and 19) for their outstanding community service involvement, leadership accomplishments, and their speaking ability. The programme encourages young people to see community service as an integral part of leadership skills. Lions are looking for leaders of the future with an emphasis on community service as being part of that leadership.

Bray Lions will select their candidate through a local competition based on application forms and interview. The winners progress to the District (All Ireland)

Final in Dublin to select District 133's Young Ambassador. The District winner receives a trophy and a bursary of €600 to be used for a community project. She/he also participates in a Finals Weekend in the UK (in Feb 24) to gain initial international experience and later represents Ireland at the Europa Forum in Bordeaux.

In addition, the national winner will be sponsored to attend a Lions International Youth Exchange and Camp in a European country next Summer. Young people who wish to participate should contact Frank Corr, Bray Lions Club on 086-8274710 or at fcorr100@gmail.com

Take on the September Swim Challenge

If you've been thinking about taking the plunge for the first time or you are a regular swimmer who is looking to push themselves, ISPC has just the challenge for you.

"We are launching the September Sea Swim for Childline. It's very straightforward: Simply sign up to do 10 swims on septemberseaswim.com whenever you want throughout the month. You can do it as a solo challenge or with a group of friends.

"This is a fantastic opportunity to nurture your mental and physical health while supporting the wellbeing of children and young people. All funds raised will go directly to Childline, Ireland's only 24/7 listening service, to ensure that there is always someone to listen when a child or young person needs to talk.

"Once you have signed up on the ISPC website, Childline will send you a September Sea Swim digital pack including your own swim chart, a swim checklist that includes swimming locations nationwide, and a September Sea Swim sponsorship card. Choose 10 days throughout the month and which location works best for you.

"Once you have completed the 10 swims, you will receive a September Sea Swim Certificate of Completion and if you raise €200 or more, we will send you a Childline by ISPC Keep Cup - the perfect accessory for a 'sip and dip'. Fill it with tea or coffee to keep you warm after your next plunge. Go to septemberseaswim.com to sign up or for more information

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Paul and Jack Conyard with Philly Carragher at the recent Doran Soccer Blitz in aid of Wicklow Cancer Support.

Playful Street comes to the People's Park

Bray's first 'Playful Street' took place in the People's Park on the Lower Dargle Road on Sunday 10th September. The event, organised by the Dargle Area Residents Association (DARA) in conjunction with Bray Tidy Towns, focused on welcoming the local community and park users to partake in games and sports activities.



Lorraine Duffin with a local resident at the Playful Street event. Photo by Mark Harrison.

Approximately 100 people were in attendance, including Wicklow County Council Cathaoirleach Cllr Aoife Kennedy, Jennifer Whitmore TD and Minister Simon Harris.

There was a football festival led by football enthusiast neighbours and a series of workouts led by the CSP (Conditioning, Strength, Performance) gym located on Ardee Street. For younger children there were giant garden games and facepainting by Genie Mackers, Dublin. The beautiful acoustic sounds were provided by talented neighbours and local musicians such as Ravi Kasinathan, Colm Jackson, LAUREN, Clarkesville, all of whom provided the music for The Dancing Skirts Bray who put on a wonderful moving performance.

Alongside all the activity, the local Bray Community Policing Unit were present with Sergeant Andrew Sullivan and his team talking to neighbours about their role in the community whilst showing the queue of young people their police vehicle. The event was sponsored by various local businesses.

The event was part of the Ireland Community Play Fund, sponsored by



Cllr Aoife Flynn-Kennedy, Sarah Harrison, Ciaran Irwan, Joe Roe, Lorraine Duffin, Garda Sean Murphy, Jennifer Whitmore TD and her daughter. Photo by Mark Harrison.

LEGO Foundation, which is aimed at supporting existing groups and individuals (once they form a team) in Ireland to start new projects that improve community wellbeing,

ultimately improving the quality of life for community members.

Communities choose the project they want to start based on their community's needs, from a

portfolio of ideas on the ChangeX site. Once applicants have demonstrated their commitment and ability to start the community project by successfully completing a 30

Day Challenge on the ChangeX website, ChangeX will provide funding, information guides and support to give the applicant the best chance of success.



Minister Simon Harris with Sarah Harrison at Playful Street, Bray. Photo by Mark Harrison.

Energy Master Plan launched in Arklow

Arklow Sustainable Energy Community and Arklow Tidy Towns held an Energy Awareness day on the 9th of September in the Coral Leisure Sports Hall. The event had exhibitors with a wide range of services for retrofitting homes and a selection of electric vehicles. During the event Arklow Sustainable Energy Community launched its new Energy Master Plan with South East Energy Agency SEAI and Wicklow County Council.



St Marys students making smoothies with a bike

Cllr. Tommy Annesley, Cathaoirleach of Arklow Municipal District accepted a copy of the plan from the consultants. He congratulated the SEC group for their work to bring the plan to fruition.

Wicklow County Council sponsored the event for Arklow SEC. The energy master plan profiles energy usage for the town. A key figure is that the annual spend on energy in Arklow is close to €35 million each year. Newer homes spend €1,500 each year on heating while the oldest homes in Arklow spend €4,000 each year on heating.

The energy plan sets out opportunities to decarbonise Arklow. Working with householders and businesses to implement some of its recommendations will be the next challenge for volunteers in Arklow



Cathaoirleach of Arklow, Cllr Tommy Annesley, helping to launch the Energy Master Plan

SEC. Encouraging people to upgrade the fabric of their homes through insulation will be a priority as the surest way to lower heating bills. Arklow has huge potential for Solar PV with some of the best solar gain in the country. Homes and businesses in the town have huge potential to generate energy from roof space.

Arklow SEC are moving into the phase for exploring project development so new volunteers are very welcome to help us bring Arklow on its decarbonisation journey, making the town a leader in low carbon living with a vibrant and sustainable future for the town.

Several hundred visitors came to Coral

Leisure Centre to learn more about the range of services available including heat pumps, lighting, insulation, solar ovens and more. Car dealers brought a range of EVs including Audi, Hyundai, Kia, Peugeot, BYD and Mercedes.

There were fun event for the kids with SEAI doing science and energy

experiment, a local bee keeper and a bike making smoothies with Transition Year students from St Mary's providing the pedal power.

Gavin Harte gave three talks called Stepping Stones to Energy Efficiency with participants staying on afterwards to grill Gavin with questions.

From sleeping in Dublin's doorways to welcoming Croatia's Prime Minister to Ireland

Arriving in Ireland from Croatia in 2015, Allen and Jay Bobinac found their dream of a fresh start was met with the harsh reality of life in Ireland during a recession and a growing housing crisis. With a lack of English, meagre finances and not a friend in the world, the Bobinac twins stumbled across one of the few lifelines in the intimidating and isolating world of homelessness. This opportunity was not presented to them until many challenges had been overcome and dangerous situations avoided.



Allen and Jay Bobinac

On a cold winter evening on Dublin's O'Connell Street, Jay and Allen met Tiglin Chairman, Aubrey McCarthy, who immediately recognised their vulnerability.

Throughout the weeks and months that followed, Aubrey and his team of staff and volunteers built the trust of these two men and tried to intervene and advise them on their options. Thankfully, Jay and Allen avoided many of the dangers associated with homelessness and today they have achieved awards for academic achievements and humanitarianism and obtained Master's degrees.

"It is often the denial of opportunity that creates inequality. This poverty of opportunity leaves many individuals in perilous situations where they are disabled from meaningful and dignified participation in life," says Aubrey McCarthy, Tiglin Chairman.



Allen and Jay meeting with An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar, with Tiglin Chairman Aubrey McCarthy and Tiglin CEO Phil Thompson

Today, Allen manages the very service that welcomed him in eight years ago, the Tiglin night café at the Lighthouse in Dublin. Jay manages and runs Tiglin's youth homeless facilities in Naas, Jiginstown Manor.

"As Croatian immigrants to Ireland, we were deeply honoured to welcome the Prime Minister of our home

nation, Croatia to the place we call home today. We are humbled to meet and share our appreciation of both cultures and nations with our President," says Allen Bobinac.

"I hope that our story brings inspiration to others who face challenges and are considering their options of how to overcome. There are people

out there who for sure believe in helping others in their time of need. We were fortunate that we met some of these people in the services of Tiglin and today, we stand shoulder to shoulder."

Tiglin was established by Aubrey McCarthy and Phil Thompson in 2008 with the purchase of the "Tiglin Mountaineering Centre" to try and help the

most vulnerable in Irish society. Tiglin now has seven centres in Dublin, Kildare and Wicklow. Two of these facilities are in Greystones - Carraig Eden and Coolnagreina, which are housing "vulnerable" people, 107 of whom are Ukrainian. The "Rise at the Cove" social enterprise café and bakery initiative is part of the facility.

ACE-ing community and volunteer excellence in Arklow

Arklow Community Excellence (ACE) is a newly established volunteer-led community group in Arklow established with the purpose of building a network of volunteer and community groups in Arklow Town. Today, ACE launches its campaign seeking nominees for its upcoming awards event on 18th November to acknowledge the contribution of community and volunteer organisations in Arklow.

Arklow Community Excellence is a new volunteer-led community group has announced plans to host an awards event in the Arklow Bay Hotel on 18th November 2023.

Launching the 'ACE Awards' campaign today, the group is seeking to recognise the outstanding contributors to the local community. Having already contacted 40 groups locally, ACE is reaching out to volunteer and community groups in Arklow town, to seek nominations from across the spectrum of volunteers, community scheme workers, clubs, societies and community-based organisations.

ACE is the brainchild of three local volunteers, Stephen Tierney, Tammy Byrne and Cleo Russell, who collectively share a common aspiration to profile the exceptional work carried on within the community.

Ballot boxes for nominations are available in 12 locations in Arklow Town from 1st September and anyone from the local public can nominate by filling in the paper ballot and simply dropping it into the boxes. Cleo Russell, PRO and ACE volunteer commented, "This is our first event, and we are encouraging the Arklow public to participate in the ballot to recognise the sterling contribution made by volunteers, community workers and groups in Arklow".

As Stephen Tierney, ACE chairperson aptly puts it, "there are certain people who give their all to a cause without any expectation of a return and it's important that as a community which benefits from their efforts, that we recognise the outstanding contribution made by individual volunteers and those who go the

extra mile in our community groups. This is the main purpose behind the ACE awards".

The event on November 18th promises to be an exciting opportunity for local participating groups to build linkages within the community in our public fair / networking opportunity which runs from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Next in the line-up will be a novel sustainable fashion show co-ordinated by Tammy Byrne, with local charity shops competing for awards in across a number of fashion categories. Rounding off the evening, is the official awards' celebration with Devin Reardon as Master of Ceremonies.

For further information, to participate in the event on 18th November, or simply to volunteer to help or sponsor the myriad of activities, please email aceawardsarklow@gmail.com

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Rathnew to stage new Anne Frank story

British-Irish Composer and Multi-Instrumentalist Girish Paul will perform a special concert with his virtual orchestra to mark the worldwide release of his new album *The Diary of Anne Frank Her Journey in Music* at St Brigid's Hall, Rathnew Community Centre, Rathnew on Saturday 7th October 2023 at 8.00 pm.

The production has received the full support of the Anne Frank Fonds Foundation in Switzerland that was set up by Anne's father Otto Frank after World War Two, and has received several accolades.

Known for his spectacular solo concerts that combine theatre, acting, film and music, Girish single-handedly performs the heartwarming music score with several instruments backed up by his famous virtual orchestra that together with dramatic visuals provides a stunning backdrop to the story of Anne Frank between 1942 and 1944.

The powerful story-telling is supported by filmed re-enactments of scenes in Anne's life by talented Irish actors, from her happy schooldays in Frankfurt to the secret hiding place in Amsterdam as the Nazis closed in.

Says Girish: 'Carmel Barrett, the show's Executive Producer and I are thrilled to be bringing this powerful story, as relevant as ever now that war has sadly returned to Europe, to this lovely venue.'

Asked why choose Anne Frank, Girish says, "Way back in 1991 working as a teacher in the

Middle East, my students and I found ourselves under scud missile attack as Operation Desert Storm kicked off around us, the largest military conflict since the second world war. We were all fearful with thoughts of never seeing our loved one back home again, but I was determined to ensure that my students got on with the job of learning in spite of the Gulf War that raged around us for five long months. I looked for words with which to inspire my students and to calm them in frightful times and I found them in *The Diary of a Young Girl*, a copy of

which I found in the school library. I knew then that someday I would bring Anne Frank's inspirational words, her dreams, compassion, resilience and her words of Hope of the thirteen year old schoolgirl who has inspired millions through music, or film, or theatre and now finally we have produced a concert that combines all of these arts."

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Sean Ahern as Otto Frank.



Mary Gallahue as Edith Frank.



Clodagh Foster as Anne Frank.

Wicklow basket weavers awarded

Wicklow Willow (husband and wife team Aoife Patterson and Pat Reid) based in Glendalough, were delighted to be awarded The Goodbody Outstanding Artist Award at Sculpture in Context this year for our artwork 'Fia Mór'.

"It was great to be selected, and then to receive this award was the icing on the cake," they said. "We would like to thank all the organisers, artists and people involved in this year's fantastic exhibition. We are looking forward to visiting many times over the next few weeks and seeing all the artworks that make this exhibition so special."

Wicklow Willow produce handmade willow-based products, from small bespoke basketry and courses to a large of playground features and river revetments. Both Aoife and Pat have worked for many years in the Irish heritage sector.



Wicklow Arts Office announce launch of 'Sing in Wicklow' website and funding

Wicklow County Arts Office has announced the launch of the 'Sing in Wicklow' website (www.singinwicklow.ie) and funding Award.

The ability to sing is innate within us and, regardless of tone, with a little guidance and practice, the singing voice can improve dramatically. Singing in a group has many well evidenced, life-enhancing benefits that include improved physical, mental, social and emotional health and wellbeing. Collective singing enables people of all ages and abilities to join together and create something special.

In 2018, with the support of Creative Ireland, Wicklow County Arts Office explored the mechanisms needed to support the development of choral music in the county. Following a comprehensive consultation process with Strategic Consultant and specialist Katherine Zeserson, and the involvement of 18 choirs of varying age groups and genres, the Choral Activation

Strategy was published in 2019.

Key priorities of the Strategy include the creation of a county-wide choral network and the advancement of choral music practitioners and singers.

To support the delivery of these key priorities, Wicklow County Arts Office is pleased to announce the launch of the 'Sing in Wicklow' website and funding Award.

The 'Sing in Wicklow' website aims to provide a base for all Wicklow choirs, not only to help the choirs promote their work, events and achievements but also to recruit new members and support a countywide choral network.

The 'Sing in Wicklow' Award aims to support choirs across the County to participate in workshops and choir competitions, facilitate inter-choir collabora-

tions such as performances, peer-learning and networking, recruit new members and purchase essential equipment and instruments. Open from 1st September 2023, the deadline for submission of applications is 4pm on Friday 29th September.

Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Aoife Flynn Kennedy, welcomed the launch of the 'Sing in Wicklow' website and urged more Wicklow Choirs and singing enthusiasts to sign up and get involved.

Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council, Emer Gorman, said she was grateful for the continued support of Creative Ireland which has enabled the Wicklow County Arts Office to invest in choral music in the county.

To find out more, get involved, register a local choir or apply for the Award, visit the 'Sing in Wicklow' website: www.singinwicklow.ie.

Local ordinary heroes the focus of new exhibition for Culture Night

An exhibition exploring the various interpersonal connections that form the backbone of rural communities in Wicklow, will be launched in Wicklow Town on Culture Night, 22nd September.



Becky Sillery, Secret Garden, Wicklow Town

'Threading Place' is a site-specific visual art exhibition. It will be staged outdoors across three public spaces - Black Castle, Barrow Green and at the beginning of the Murrough River Walk.



Ian Davis, Tomnafinnogue Woods

The exhibition brings visitors on a walk across the different sites where they will discover a series of images, each of which is accompanied by audio recordings of interviews and sounds of the places

where the photos were taken.

Through the mediums of photography and field recording, the exhibition traces the different social threads that link individuals in the Wicklow community to each other. Each participant in the exhibition was photographed and interviewed in a place that has a special meaning to them. Each was asked to nominate one of their connections, who were in turn photographed in their own chosen place. This sequence continued and documented three threads of people, all of whom are connected in different ways.

The exhibition is a collaboration between photographer and filmmaker Finn Richards and architectural practice Cineal, and brings together the mediums of photography, field recording and spatial design.

Commenting on the exhibition, Finn Richards said: "It all started with Rita, at her favourite Wicklow spot, Clara Vale. I had recently moved to Wicklow in 2020. New to the area, I had a strong desire to



Dan Healy, Ennereilly Beach

meet the local people and get to know the stories that connect people to this place. I never thought that I would meet so many interesting people or have such a range of fascinating conversations. I hope that people will get a sense of this experience through the exhibition, 'Threading Place'."

'Threading Place' is free to attend and will run from Wednesday, 20th September 2023 to Wednesday, 11th October 2023 with an official launch on Culture Night, Friday 22nd September. As part of the launch on Culture Night, a panel discussion will take place from 6pm until 7.30pm in

Wicklow Town Library. During the panel discussion photographer Finn Richards, architects Phoebe Brady and Sarah Doheny from Cineal, and sociologist Dr Nikki Dunne, will discuss various aspects of the project, from inception and theme, to production and build.

All Together: Culture Night 2023

Two towns, two venues: Shillelagh Courthouse, Shillelagh & St Vincent dePaul Resource Centre, Tinahely. No booking required

The Courthouse Arts Centre has created a special celebration of music off-site in two venues in two villages for Culture Night. Both events are FREE.

From 3.30pm come sing, dance and celebrate Culture Night at this free, family friendly concert. The music is ideally suited to primary school aged children, but all ages are welcome, children and adults alike. Complimentary local apple juice and treats after the concert. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

New original music by Roona Sally Hartman, performed with Izumi Kimura, Matthew Halpin, Niall O'Lochainn and Michael McCarthy.

At 8pm in St Vincent de Paul Resource Centre, Tinahely, the Tinahely CC... wil perform an evening of uplifting music. Doors open 7.30p.

Esri Ireland map tells the story of Irish dance in Wicklow

Esri Ireland, the market leader in Geographic Information Systems (GIS), has created a digital map showcasing the rich history, diverse styles, and vibrant music of Irish dancing to celebrate International Irish Dance Day which fell on Sunday, 17th September.

Using Esri's ArcGIS digital mapping system, the interactive map charts a captivating journey through the history of Irish dancing, tracing its roots all the way back to 400 AD. Explore pivotal milestones, learn about varying dance styles, hear some lively traditional music, and search for schools in Wicklow to hone your Irish dancing skills across the entire island. From beginners to championship contenders, opportunities to learn and perfect Irish dancing are abound around Ireland.

International Irish Dance Day was launched on 17th September 2020 and is midway to St. Patrick's Day. It has since grown to unite people worldwide through their shared passion for Irish dance. Each year, individuals and dance schools across the globe showcase their incredible dancing skills by sharing engaging videos online.

This map also comes as preparations are underway to embrace the spirit of Culture Night on Friday, 22nd September. It will bring the timeless allure of Ireland's traditional dance to life as the country comes together to celebrate culture, creativity and the arts.



Wordskills Ireland event taking place this week

Gowan Auto, the importer and distributor of Alfa Romeo, Citroën, DS Automobiles, Fiat, Fiat Professional, Honda, Jeep, Opel and Peugeot in the Republic of Ireland will take a stand for the first time at the forthcoming WorldSkills Ireland event, being held in Dublin's RDS from September 20th to 22nd.

By Martin McCarthy
Gowan have invested heavily in looking after their customers with the brand new, 330m., HQ building in Dublin's City West Campus being opened last month in the finest establishment of its type in the country.
Main Dealer support for Wicklow customers is only as good as the mechanics and technicians employed. With increasing electrification, the technical skills and training required by the modern car mechanic are increasing all the time. Continual training is a must in an arena where Gowan Auto excel and are investing in for the future.
The upcoming event will be engaging with people interest in working in the Wicklow main dealer-



ships of Opel, Peugeot, Citroën, Honda, Fiat and Alfa Romeo, most notably. Darrell Doyle, Training Co-ordination Manager said: "We recognise that the WorldSkills Ireland event is a truly unique opportunity to promote careers both within Gowan Auto and across our 150 retail dealers. Indeed, we

have reached out to each of our dealer partners to use the event as a platform to directly promote current vacancies for young people within their companies. Crucially, we have not limited our recruitment drive solely to technical apprenticeships; many dealers will take this opportunity to promote vacancies across a broad spectrum of posts, across all facets of their motor business including Sales, Service, Parts, Warranty, and Finance. Furthermore, we are placing a major emphasis on attracting more women to the business to consider both technical and non-technical roles. It promises to be a very exciting, fulfilling event for us."



Kerry Callery, Shelia Kavanagh, Linda Lee and Georgia McErare at the Colour Run fundraiser for Will's Playground in Newcastle. The fundraising campaign is for a new playground for St. Francis National School in memory of former pupil Will Leeson.

Wicklow says 'Willkommen' to German travel agents



German luxury travel professionals during their visit to Powerscourt Hotel, with Orla Kraft, Tourism Ireland (fourth left); and Orla Moule, Fáilte Ireland (left).

A group of German travel agents and journalists - all specialising in luxury travel - has been exploring Wicklow on a visit to Ireland's Ancient East, as guests of Tourism Ireland and Fáilte Ireland.

The aim of the visit was to showcase some of the many things to see and do here for high-end German travellers and to highlight some of our fantastic luxury and culinary experiences.
The group's action-packed itinerary included afternoon tea and an overnight stay at Powerscourt Hotel.
Nadine Lehmann, Tourism Ireland's Manager Germany, said: "Tourism Ireland was delighted to invite this group of luxury travel agents and journalists to visit Wicklow and Ireland's Ancient East, to experience at first-hand some of our luxury tourism offering, including our boutique hotels and resorts as well as our rich culture and heritage, and not forgetting our superb culinary experiences. "Seeing is believing - and our aim is that when they return home, they will be even more enthusiastic about the destination, helping to secure a greater share of their business for Ireland."
Germany is the third-largest source of visitors to the island of Ireland and one of the largest outbound travel markets in the world. In 2019, we welcomed 749,000 German visitors to the island of Ireland.

APPLICATION TO WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL FOR A WASTE FACILITY PERMIT

Notice is hereby given in accordance with Articles 7 and 8 of the Waste Management (Facility Permit and Registration) Regulations 2007 as amended that Peter Corrigan of Rathattin, Hollywood, Co. Wicklow intends to apply for a Waste Facility Permit at his lands at Rathattin, Hollywood, Co. Wicklow for the importation of inert subsoils and topsoil for the purposes of land reclamation of a disused sand & gravel pit.
The sole activity is Class D1 of the Third Schedule of the Waste Management Act 1996, as amended (Deposit into or on to land (e.g. landfill, etc.))
The Class(es) of Activity proposed at the site, as specified in Part I of the Third Schedule of the Waste Management (Facility Permit and Registration) Regulations 2007, as amended, are as follows; Class 5. Recovery of excavation or dredge spoil, comprising natural materials of clay, silt, sand, gravel or stone and which comes within the meaning of inert waste, through deposition for the purposes of the improvement or development of land, where the total quantity of waste recovered at the facility is less than 200,000 tonnes.
The application for a waste facility permit will be made to Wicklow County Council within 10 working days of the date of this notice. A copy of the application for the waste facility permit will be available for inspection or purchase, as soon as is practicable after receipt by Wicklow County Council, at the principal offices of Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Whitegates, Wicklow Town A67 FW96.



WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL
Application is being made to Wicklow County Council by Colin Keenaghan for Planning Permission for a one storey extension to an existing dwelling including all ancillary site works at 10 The Hollows, Lugduff, Tinahely, Co Wicklow. The planning application may be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy at the offices of Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Wicklow during its public opening hours and a submission or observation in relation to the application may be made to the authority in writing on payment of the prescribed fee within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the application.

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL
Robert and Kim Brown seek permission for (a) the demolition of the existing single-storey flat-roofed rear extension, (b) partial demolition and post-construction rebuilding of the existing rear boundary block wall to allow for construction access and (c) construction of a new single-storey partially pitched, partially flat-roofed rear extension and all associated site works at No.3 Alexandra Terrace, Novara Avenue, Bray, Co. Wicklow, A98 HX25 (a protected structure). The planning application may be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy at the offices of Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Wicklow during its public opening hours and a submission or observation in relation to the application may be made to the authority in writing on payment of the prescribed fee within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the application.

ATTENTION

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Social enterprise with Wicklow Hub awarded share of €100,000 funding to tackle hygiene poverty

Five social-impact organisations tackling prevalent social problems across Ireland have been announced as awardees of the Social Entrepreneurs Ireland (SEI) 2023 Impact Programme. Hygiene Hub, with a base in Wicklow, is one of the five chosen organisations.

Co-founded by Sorcha Killian in 2020, Hygiene Hub is actively addressing hygiene poverty through providing and distributing hygiene products to those needing it most, increasing awareness about this problem and pioneering the first formal research on hygiene poverty in Ireland.

To date Hygiene Hub has distributed over 43,000 kilograms of hygiene goods to members of the homeless population, low-income families, asylum seekers and the elderly via its community partner network.

The Impact Programme is part of SEI's €500,000 investment into social entrepreneurs who are ready to grow their solution. Each awardee will receive an equal share of €100,000 in direct funding, in addition to tailored support and training throughout the nine-month



The 2023 SEI Impact Awardees, with Sorcha Killian pictured back row right.

programme, to build strong organisational foundations and take their organisation to the next level. The programme runs from September 2023 to May 2024.

Commenting at the announcement event for the SEI Impact awardees,

Sorcha Killian of Hygiene Hub said: "To be a Social Entrepreneurs Ireland awardee is an immense privilege; it is a recognition of the issue of hygiene poverty and a signaling that people are willing and inspired to support us in our journey to tackle it. It is a sign of growth and proves that we are shifting the needle in creating awareness and increasing support for a historically hidden and overlooked element of poverty."

The SEI Impact Prog-

ramme identifies high-potential social entrepreneurs and supports them through funding and mentoring. Impact Awardees receive training in areas such as fundraising, communications, governance and leadership.

Three of this year's awardees - Education for Sustainability, Little Fitness and the Together Academy - are previous graduates of SEI's Ideas Academy, a programme aimed at early-stage social entrepreneurs to develop their solutions.



Roisin and Georgina Flynn at the Newcastle Colour Run in aid of Will's Playground for St. Francis National School.

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