

LOCAL Wicklow Times

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ONE MILLION STARS
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SCREEN HUB
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MARATHON WOMAN
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Tuesday 31st October 2023 First Floor, The Boulevard, Quinsborough Road, Bray. A98 R6D7. Tel: 01 - 2869111 E-mail: wicklowed@localtimes.ie www.wicklowtimes.net

WAVE GOODBYE TO SEALIFE

The iconic Bray tourist attraction, Sealife, the National Aquarium, is to close its doors for good before the year end. After 25 years in Bray it is believed that they could not reach agreement on terms for a new lease. The owner of the building is Carlow based business man Jim Flynn who acquired the freehold when the Bray Town Council changed his lease to a much longer length which automatically allowed him to purchase the freehold. He did this for €10,000. The building also houses Fibeas restaurant, Butler and Barry pub/restaurant and Gino's Geleto, all of whom are tenants of Mr Flynn who refused to comment on rumours that he plans to let the aquarium out as a night club.

In a statement to Wicklow Times. Sealife said "SEA LIFE Bray can confirm that it will be permanently closing its doors towards the end of 2023 after more than 25 years in operation.:

"After careful consid-

eration, we have taken the difficult decision to close this attraction. The priority now is to support our team members with advice on career opportunities at other attractions across the Group, and find suitable homes for the animals

we currently house, utilising the rest of our SEA LIFE global and European network. As the world's leading aquarium chain, the SEA LIFE brand maintains a strong presence across the UK and Europe as part of a net-



Pictured is Sophie Mooney who took part in the Addams Family show in St. Mary's College, Arklow. Pic: Michael Kelly

work of more than 50 aquariums across the globe."

Sea Life is a chain of commercial sea life-themed aquarium attractions owned by the British company, Merlin Entertainments.

Merlin is a global leader in location-based, family entertainment. As Europe's number one and the world's second-largest visitor attraction operator, Merlin operates more than 140 attractions, 23 hotels and 6 holiday villages in 24 countries and across 4 continents. Merlin's purpose is to deliver memorable experiences to its millions of guests around the world, through its iconic brands and multiple attraction formats such as The London Eye and Madame Tussauds.

The National SEA LIFE Centre on the Seafront in Bray was described as a "perfect family fun day out". An

aquatic Zoo with 30 plus displays which were home to over 1,000 creatures including: Black Tip Reef Sharks, Octopus, Seahorses, Stingrays and Red-Bellied Piranha. The Aquarium was completely indoors making it a perfect rainy day activity. Just a 2 minute walk from Bray DART Station and a relaxing and scenic 30 minute train ride from Dublin or Wicklow making it a perfect choice for tourists and residents alike. The National SEA LIFE Centre, Bray was one of the East Coasts top visitor attractions and a destination venue for any visitor to the town.

In 2018 it celebrated its 20th anniversary in Bray and Government Minister and local TD, Simon Harris joined the business community to mark the occasion and commented:

"I want to congratulate Bray Sea Life on a

very successful 20 years in business in our county.. Bray Sea life is an integral part of our busi-

ness and tourism industry here in Co Wicklow and its wonderful attractions has helped bring

visitors to our county from all over. milestone for Bray Seal Life Aquarium."

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The Barn at Belmont is home to The Barn Café run by Chef Patrons Oran Colhoun & Darryl Haynes.

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www.thebarnatbelmont.ie



Mr C.J. Mc Henry, who owns a small yacht in Wicklow harbour, has spent the last seven years working on it in a friend's back yard and as his sailing colleagues had not seen it, they thought it was a phantom boat! His wife Jackie came up with a plan, and approached Pat Davis, known for painting the murals at Wicklow pier, and who had just completed a major overhaul of all his murals during his first year of retirement. Jackie asked Pat to paint an image of C.J.'s yacht ADDISON on the wall, unknown to him. Earlier this month, the small mural was completed, and Pat informed them to take a walk down the pier. When C.J. saw his yacht on the wall, they became the happiest couple on the pier! "For me it was a great pleasure to make people happy," says Pat, "as the world at the moment is not a happy place". Pictured are C.J., Jackie and Christopher Mc Henry admiring their mural on the pier at Wicklow.

Wicklow Cheviot Sheepowners Dinner Dance

Members of the Wicklow Cheviot Sheepowners are delighted to be hosting their 53rd annual dinner dance in the Glendalough Hotel on Friday November 10th at 7.30pm. Music on the night will be by John and Terry who have been entertaining audiences for many years. There will be many spot prizes on the night donated by local businesses. Guest Speaker on the night will be Billy Kelleher MEP. A great night's entertainment is guaranteed and Wicklow Cheviot Sheepowners look forward to meeting everyone on the night. Tickets are on sale now and available from the committee members or contact charimman Mr. Pat Dunne.

Free Meditation Programme

Turn2Me, a national mental health charity, has launched a free Meditation Programme on its website, Turn2Me.ie. The guided meditation sessions are available on the Turn2Me website. Anyone can access this content; they just need to go to the post and click 'play'. Mindful meditation brings your focus to the present moment, breath by breath. Suzanne Ennis, Clinical Manager at Turn2Me, said, "It allows you to notice what happens within your body, moment to moment. Meditation has become more and more recognised within western medicine in recent years. It can assist with sleep, assist with managing symptoms associated with depression and anxiety, in some cases it reduces some of the psychological difficulties associated with chronic pain.

It can also improve cognitive and behavioural functions. To avail of this free meditation programme, go to <https://turn2me.ie/information-centre/>

Kilmacanogue History Society

Kilmacanogue History Society next Talk of the Season will be on Monday 6th November in the Kilmacanogue Parish Hall at 8pm. They said "We are delighted to have Dr Pat Wallace, Former Director of the National Museum of Ireland and excavator of Wood Quay as our Speaker. Dr Wallace has popularized archaeology both at home and abroad on radio, television and elsewhere. This time he will be speaking to us on the subject of "Bray, Wicklow and the roads to Wexford and Tullow -1700 to 1850." All are welcome to attend.

Roundwood Christmas market

Roundwood Creative Hub are holding a fundraising Christmas market and bumper raffle in Roundwood Parish Hall to raise vital funds for Roundwood Cancer Support on 4th and 5th of November from 11am til 5pm. Free parking and admission. Lots of crafts, vintage clothing and gift ideas. Refreshments available.

Launch of WWHS Journal

The next event of the West Wicklow Historical Society is the launch of their 12th Journal, taking place on Thursday, November 9th from 7.30pm to 9.30pm in the Coimín Centre, Main Street, Blessington. The launch will feature a visual presentation by Aidan Cruise, WWHS member, on the Blessington Tram. Admission is free and journals will be on sale at €15. It will be available to buy in local outlets after the launch. Orders for the journal can be taken currently on the website: westwicklowhistoricalsociety.ie at a cost of €20 including postage.

First Saturday Book Sale

The November First Saturday Book Sale, which supports the Shankill Old Folks Association, will take place in the Shankill Day Centre, Lower Road, Shankill, from 10am to 1pm on Saturday November 4th and all are welcome to attend. This will be an excellent opportunity to obtain some first class reading material for the Winter months. Donations of books are appreciated but must be in a clean and good condition and are limited to two bags per donor, and gratefully accepted only on the day of the book sale.

Local chess player celebrates 100th birthday

Members of the Bray-Greystones Chess Club recently gathered to mark the occasion of Vincent Denard's 100th birthday.

Vincent is originally from Bangor in Co. Down. In 1935 he won a scholarship to Bangor Grammar School. Following this Vincent successfully completed a degree in Philosophy from Trinity College in 1948. He subsequently worked as a lecturer. In June 1963, Vincent had the honour of robing President John F. Kennedy for the conferral of his honorary doctorate.

Vincent Denard is a long time member of the Bray-Greystones Chess Club having joined in 2004. He continued playing actively in Leinster chess competitions deep in to his nineties. In 2017, Vincent was a key member of the Bray-Greystones Team that lifted Leinster's O'Sullivan Cup. He followed up this success in 2019, helping Bray-Greystones to win the William Brennan Cup. At a critical moment Vincent scored an impressive draw against one of



Vincent Denard celebrating his 100th birthday with Cllr Stephen Stokes, Tom Janowski, and Bernadette Stokes

Ireland's top junior players. Additionally he would regularly slot in for teams at short notice, and secure vital results. Veteran chess captain Eugene Rellis described Vincent as "the best damn chess sub in the world." Today Vincent

continues to inspire younger generations with chess lessons.

Cllr Stephen Stokes paid tribute to Vincent Denard. Cllr Stokes stated: "Vincent is amazing. He is full of life, and an inspiration in chess longevity. To continue to

get positive results for the club, well in to his nineties is remarkable. On behalf of everyone associated with the Bray-Greystones Chess Club I would like to wish Vincent many more years of good health and happiness."

The Boy Who Talked To Dogs

Mermaid Arts Centre, Friday 3rd Nov 8pm; Saturday 4th Nov | 3pm & 8pm. Pay what you can from €8

Published by Skyhorse Publishing **The Boy Who Talked to Dogs** tells the true story of Martin McKenna growing up in Garryowen, Limerick in the 1970's. Born the smallest of identical triplets into a family of 8 siblings, Martin was always thought of as the runt of the litter and cruelly nicknamed as the stupid boy by his alcoholic and abusive father.

Fearing he would not survive after birth, Martin was placed between his family's two German Shepherds Major and Rex while his German born mother tended to the other two newborn babies. Martin defeated the odds and survived, beginning a lifelong bond with his canine companions.

Life in Garryowen in the 1970's was especially tough on Martin, and he spent many nights locked in the coal shed, seeking comfort and warmth from Major and Rex.

When his beloved companions were taken away by the Dog Catcher and destroyed, Martin ran away from home in fear, seeking shelter in hay barns and railway culverts for three gruelling years.

Adopted by a pack of stray dogs, Martin learnt how to provide food and shelter and communicate with the animals at a deeper level. But the greatest skill by far Martin learnt during his time living rough with the dogs was how to be human. Immigrating to Australia



over 30 years ago, Martin now resides in Northern New South Wales and uses the skills he learnt living rough with his pack of 6 stray dogs as a dog whisperer and published author.

To book see mermaidartscentre.ie or call Box Office on 01 2724030

Film at Mermaid: Chevalier (cert 12a)

Monday 6th November | 8pm. €9/7. English with Open captions

18th century France. Bologne, the illegitimate son of an African slave and a French plantation owner, rises to improbable heights in French society as a celebrated violinist-composer and fencer, becoming part of Marie-Antoinette's royal inner circle. However, Bologne falls out of favour with the Dauphine and her court when he tries to become head of the Paris Opera, and also gets embroiled in an ill-fated love affair with a married woman.

Produced by Irish company Element Pictures, and featuring a tour-de-force performance from Kelvin Harrison Jr. as Bologne, Chevalier throws the spotlight on a brilliant composer and violinist, who has been previously forgotten.



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'Efforts must be accelerated to protect our waters'

A new report from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has identified Arklow and Avoca as two of 26 towns and villages in the country that are discharging raw sewage because their public sewers were not connected to treatment plants. Both areas are not scheduled for treatment until 2025.

The new 'Urban Waste Water Treatment 2022' report, published last week, also names Kilcoole and Kildraper as two areas where there is no clear timeframe to complete improvements or Uisce Éireann (Irish Water) does not plan to start the upgrade works until at least 2029.

In 2022, treatment at Arklow did not meet the mandatory standards in the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive as it failed the secondary treatment standards to remove organic matter. According to the directive the treated waste water must meet basic effluent quality standards used to assess polluting potential.

The report concludes that "While Uisce Éireann is making progress, it is concerning that Ireland has still not met all its obligations under the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive, some 30 years after the country was required to bring provisions into force to comply with the Directive. Waste water continues to impact the quality of our rivers, lakes, estuaries and coastal waters and it will take substantial investment

over many years to bring all treatment systems up to the standards needed to protect our environment and build resilience for the future."

Reacting to the report, Social Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore, the Party's biodiversity spokesperson, said Uisce Éireann must accelerate efforts to end discharges of raw sewage into Ireland's rivers and coastal waters. At the current rate of progress, she said, Ireland stands to be in breach of EU regulations for 50 years.

Deputy Whitmore said "In its 'Urban Waste Water Treatment 2022' report, published today, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) highlights the scale of the challenge facing Uisce Éireann in eliminating raw sewage discharges into our waterways. It is going to take a multi-billion euro investment, and at least two more decades, to bring all waste water treatment systems up to the standard needed to protect our environment and provide for future needs.

"The EPA reveals that over half of Ireland's waste water discharges are not meeting EU standards, which has serious implications for

public health and nature protection. As many as 26 towns and villages around the country were discharging raw sewage daily in mid-2023, according to the report.

"There are areas identified in the report where Uisce Éireann clearly need to up their game. For instance, it is extremely disappointing that poor management practices at a number of upgraded plants have caused inadequately treated sewage to be discharged into the sea. This is completely unacceptable given that such incidents were preventable.

"It is now 30 years since Ireland was required to bring provisions into force to comply with EU treatment standards to protect the environment. With just 45 per cent of waste water treated to these standards, at the current rate of progress Ireland stands to be in breach of EU regulations for 50 years.

"Uisce Éireann must now take steps to accelerate its improvement programme and focus its resources on preventing pollution in the priority areas highlighted by the EPA."

Protection works confirmed for The Murrough

Protection works and Irish Rail funding has been confirmed for the Murrough in Wicklow Town. The popular amenity has been severely impacted by erosion which has been accelerated by recent storms.

At this month's meeting of Wicklow County Council, after Storm Agnes which further damaged the path, Independent councillor Mary Kavanagh queried why works that were scheduled to take place in September had not yet occurred.

Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council, Emer O'Gorman, said "We had anticipated work to be done on the ground in September. There seems to be a delay in Irish Rail. But in the meantime, we will talk amongst the Municipal district and see what we can do. I fully appreciate how important a recreational facility and site it is to the people of Wicklow, and the weather we've been having is not helping the situation. We will have a long-term solution to it."

Confirmed the funding and protection works last week, Green Party TD Steven Matthews said "The Murrough coastal walk in Wicklow suffered further serious erosion

and loss of the coastal path over the weekend due to Storm Babet. The damage is significant and a new section of pathway has had to be created running close to the rail line and further from the coastal edge.

"This area has been under threat for years from storm surges and erosion and each year we lose a bit more of the route. This is only going to get worse due to climate change. With sea level rise, and the increasing intensity and frequency of storms and weather events, this will create serious flooding and erosion at low lying land along our Wicklow east coast.

"Following recent events on the Murrough, I have been liaising with Wicklow County Council and Irish Rail to ensure funding is made available to carry out interim measures to protect the rail line and coastal path.

"I am pleased to confirm that funding is now available through Irish Rail, and the protection

works can proceed. By my estimation, there is a requirement to extend the rock protection by around 300m to prevent further loss at a vulnerable pinch point near the 'monkey pole'. I expect this work to proceed as soon as possible.

"The railway is at risk and this is an important piece of strategic transport infrastructure connecting Dublin to Roslare. It also provides a vital commuter link for Wicklow residents. With my DART extension project progressing well, I am also working to ensure a more permanent coastal protection project progresses.

"The East Coast Railway Infrastructure Protection Project (ECR-IPP) is a large engineering project which is progressing through early design and options phases and will provide protection against storm surges at sites where the railway is vulnerable to flooding or erosion.

"Irish Rail have always acted quickly to

protect the Murrough coastal path but Wicklow County Council will need to step up too and decide what their priorities and objectives are for the coastal route from Wicklow to Greystones.

"As long as I represent the people of Wicklow, I will keep working on these projects; the Wicklow DART, the coastal route, the protection of the Murrough and ultimately the larger ECRIPP coastal protection project. The biggest threat we all face is climate change and this weeks flooding and coastal erosion has given us a small taste of what the future holds if we don't act quickly and with urgency to reduce carbon emissions.

"I know how important and valuable the Murrough is to the people of Wicklow and I am pleased to have played my part in ensuring the protection works can go ahead as soon as possible," concluded Deputy Matthews.



Pictured are Olivia Connell and Roisin Vigors who took part in the Addams Family show at St. Mary's College, Arklow.

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Wicklow joins 'One Million Stars' project

Following an initiative by Soroptimist International Bray & District, Wicklow has become the 25th County to join the One Million Stars Ireland Project in solidarity against violence.

On Saturday, 21st October, Soroptimist International Bray & District organised a workshop in Purple House Cancer Support, launching the Wicklow Star Weaving Campaign. The One Million Stars Ireland Project is an inclusive community arts project connecting communities across Ireland in solidarity against domestic abuse and all forms of

violence. Each eight-point star represents light, hope and solidarity against domestic, sexual and gender based violence, promoting the project's eight points of healthy love within relationships.

The project is part of the global 'One Billion Stars Project', founded in Australia in 2012 by artist Maryann Talia Pau after the rape and murder of Gillian Meagher, an Irish woman living in Melbourne. The project is being directed in Ireland by Art Therapist Siobhan McQuillan and Amber Women's Refuge in Kilkenny.

There are now star weaving communities in 25 counties across Ireland. Together with groups, businesses and individual star weavers across the country, we have already woven over 250,000 stars to end violence in Ireland.

JOIN THE MOVEMENT - register as a star



Members of Bray Soroptimists weaving stars for the 'One Million Stars' project against gender based violence.



Cllr Aoife Flynn Kennedy and Bray Soroptimists supporting the One Million Stars project.

weaver or weaving group at bray.soroptimistsinternational@gmail.com and contribute towards the goal of weaving One Million Stars to End Violence in Ireland. If each of the 32 counties

on the island of Ireland wove 32,000 stars we will reach our goal. www.onemillionstarsireland.ie On 25th November, at the Whale Theatre in Greystones there will be

an art installation - 'Behind the Veil: Our Journey to Freedom' - for the Global 16 Days campaign to eliminate gender based violence. Admission is free. Register at

www.whaletheatre.ie. 1 in 4 Irish women and 1 in 7 Irish men will experience abuse from an intimate partner in their lifetime. 1 in 2 women murdered in Ireland are murdered by an intimate partner.

7 in 10 Workers want greater employer supports for women returning to the workplace

70pc of employees believe that Irish employers should offer additional supports such as career coaching and additional training for women returning to the workplace following maternity leave or an extended career break to start a family.

In a recent survey commissioned by Lockton People Solutions, female workers (82pc), those working in large organisations (79pc) and people in healthcare and education (83pc) are most likely to be in favour of such initiatives.

Tom Curran of Lockton People Solutions commented on the findings: "This issue clearly resonates with workers. What's particularly noteworthy is that this support transcends gender lines, granted more women than men would like to see employers step up in this regard, but still, a not insignificant six in ten men also acknowledge the importance of such support. This points to a shared recognition of the challenges women may face when returning to work and the importance of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion objectives in workplace strategy formation."

'Reproductive leave is a worker's rights issue'

Bray Labour Party councillor Anne Ferris has called on the Government to provide up to 20 days miscarriage paid leave and 10 days paid leave for fertility treatment for workers.

Cllr. Ferris said: "Reproductive health is a deeply personal issue. In Ireland, around 14,000 women will experience a miscarriage each year, and around one in six couples will experience fertility issues. In 2021, Labour published the Organisation of Working Time (Reproductive Health Related Leave) Bill 2021 calling for 20 days paid leave for women and 10 days for fertility treatment. Since then, we have been deeply moved by the testimony sent by people across

Ireland. We need to provide leave to women when they need it most and ensure that our workplaces take account of our lived experiences as women.

"For far too long, women have had to remain silent in their workplaces about the grief of early miscarriage; or have had to use their annual leave to attend appointments for IVF treatments. We need to provide women - and men - with support in the workplace, where they are

struggling with fertility or other reproductive health issues.

"With the flick of a pen, the Government can address the clear and obvious inequalities in our workplaces and provide early miscarriage leave. This Government is failing to pave the way to greater workplace equality by giving workers time off when it matters most. I am calling on the Government to follow the examples in New Zealand and provide this support."

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*In contentious business, a solicitor may not calculate fees or other charges as a percentage or proportion of any award or settlement



Naomi Barron, Helena Lawlor and Pauline Yankoski at the recent St. Mary's College Arklow Open Day

Clermont Screen Hub opens for business

Clermont Screen Hub, a new facility for content creators located at Wicklow County Campus in Rathnew, was officially opened on Thursday 26th October by Mr Simon Coveney, TD, Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment in the presence of Cathaoirleach Cllr Aoife Flynn Kennedy and Chief Executive Emer O’Gorman.

The Screen Hub is part of a strategy by Wicklow County Council to boost job creation in the film, TV and content creation industry in County Wicklow and the surrounding Mid East region. It is already being used by well-known Irish actor, Chris O’Dowd, for a new production.

Clermont Screen Hub offers a mix of private and co-working spaces attractively set around a suite of social spaces, a conference centre, a podcast studio, and screening facilities, along with access to a range of meeting spaces and training facilities on the larger Wicklow County Campus.

The Content Creation Hub was built with support from the Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment’s Regional Enterprise Development Fund administered by Enterprise Ireland, along with match funding provided by Wicklow County Council.

Speaking at the launch Minister Simon Harris said: “Creative workspaces like these put Wicklow centre stage in the Irish film industry. I’m delighted

to be launching this hub which will have a huge and overwhelmingly positive impact in Wicklow.

“This 10,000 sq. feet space is going to create many jobs in the county and support a number of local businesses that work in the audio-visual and content creation sector.

“There’s so much this space has to offer including social spaces, a conference centre, a podcast studio and so much more. I am astonished at the work being done here by staff already and look forward to hearing more about what they are planning to do in the coming months.

“Creative spaces like these ensure that Ireland becomes a capital of film-making and I’m delighted that Wicklow is playing such a big part in making that a reality. Wicklow and the East Coast Region has a long history with Irish film-making and has established itself as an attractive place to do business when it comes to film making with many studios setting themselves up here.”

Carol Gibbons, Manager, Regions and Local

Enterprise, Enterprise Ireland stated: “The success of Irish companies and individuals in the creative arena is a testament to the immense, strong emerging talent of the Irish digital entertainment sector here and this facility will provide more fledgling businesses with the support, guidance and collaboration they require to bring their ideas to the next level. Our artistic and VFX skills are recognised globally and over the last number of years a coordinated effort to increase investment and collaborate with industry both at home and abroad has led to huge strides for the sector.”

The Hub aims to become the home for content creators throughout the Mid East region and realises an important part of the objectives in the Mid East Regional Plan to develop the region as a hub for content creation.

It is also the latest step in the ongoing development of Wicklow County Campus as a centre of excellence in Third Level education, innovation and job creation.

Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Aoife Flynn Kennedy, stated: “I’m truly delighted to open the doors of this important development for our ever-expanding film and television sector. As I’m surrounded by film makers and industry professionals, I don’t need to remind you here how County Wicklow has long been punching above its weight in terms of producing high quality feature films and television productions.

“We now see the development of unscripted projects being made locally with the production of the Gordon Ramsay show ‘Next Level Chef’ in Ashford Studios creating further job opportunities. The Hub is a very exciting development for Wicklow which demonstrates that the Council continues to be proactive in promoting the local screen industry and supporting businesses in the sector. This building represents the continued growth of a long and productive association between the film industry and County Wicklow.”

Emer O’Gorman, Chief



Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council Emer O’Gorman, Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council Aoife Flynn-Kennedy, Minister Simon Coveney, Minister Simon Harris, and Steven Matthews TD at the official opening of the Clermont Screen Hub.

Executive, Wicklow County Council, added: “The opening of this Hub brings to fruition one of the County Council’s objectives outlined in the Mid East Regional Enterprise Plan, which seeks to establish the Mid East as a hub for content creators. This industry is an important employer in the county and the strong interest from prospective tenants demonstrates that this project is aligned with the needs of the screen sector. Today’s launch also marks an important milestone for the development of Wicklow County Campus as driver of innovation, economic development and job creation.”

Stakeholders in the screen industry as well as development agencies and training providers were widely consulted in the development of this project which aims to boost job creation in the film and content creation industry, particularly focusing on productions in County Wicklow.

The Hub has become a hive of activity since its soft opening in July and, with plenty of early interest from the industry, it is currently at full capacity already with the Chris O’Dowd production for Sky, ‘Small Town, Big Stories’, taking up most of the office space.

Wicklow has often been called the ‘Hollywood of Europe’ and is home to world-class film studios, including Ardmore Studios and Ashford Studios. The county is ideally situated with rural locations and urban loca-

tions side-by-side and everything that might be needed virtually on the doorstep.

In addition, and this is a big draw for international productions, the county boasts world renowned, talented and highly experienced crew and cast.

The Garden of Ireland has played host to an enviable line up of productions including ‘Braveheart’, ‘The Tudors’, ‘Penny Dreadful’, ‘Into the Badlands’, ‘Fate: The Winx Saga’, ‘Vikings’, ‘Valhalla’, ‘Cocaine Bear’, ‘PS I Love You’, ‘Disenchanted’ and many more. This line up attracts visitors from all over the world to the beautiful locations throughout the county.

The new Hub is adjacent to the offices of Screen Wicklow, a divi-

sion of Wicklow County Council and a single point of contact for all filming inquiries. Screen Wicklow is dedicated to making film, television or commercial photography shoots run as smoothly as possible when on location in the Garden of Ireland.

Amongst the tenants in the hub is the Film and TV Crew Academy East, one of the five National Talent Academies, funded by Screen Ireland and tasked with upskilling new and existing crew.

Also in attendance was Simon Harris TD, Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, who paid tribute to the development and everyone involved. Ms Carol Gibbons represented Enterprise Ireland.

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Wicklow residents urged to make climate plan submission

Green Party Deputy Steven Matthews is urging people to make a submission on Wicklow County Council's Climate Action Plan and advises that there is still time to attend one of the public consultation drop-in clinics taking place in libraries around the county.

Deputy Matthews said, "During my time as a Wicklow County councillor I proposed a Climate committee and we declared a climate emergency, the first local authority in the county to do so. Now, Wicklow County Council is preparing their draft Climate Action Plan, to facilitate the transition of Wicklow County Council's services and operations to a low carbon future. To do this, the council must promote best practice in cli-

mate action at local level.

"You don't have to be an expert on climate to make a submission. It doesn't need to be long and doesn't have to read like an academic document.

"I'd advise people to take a look through the draft plan, available online, at Wicklow County Council buildings or at libraries, and submit their thoughts on relevant areas."

Deputy Matthews attended the public

consultation clinic in Bray Library and said it is worthwhile to attend if you are interested in making a submission.

Further clinics will take place in Wicklow Library on October 24th on and in Greystones Library on November 7th. The Climate Action team will be on hand to assist you in answering your questions and making a submission. You have until November 15th to make a submission and can do so online or by post.



Deputy Matthews at the public consultation clinic in Bray Library

An Tairseach celebrates 25 years of ecology and biodiversity



Deputy Whitmore celebrating the achievements of The Dominican Sisters, Paula Johnston and the staff of An Tairseach Organic Farm and Ecology Centre

The achievements of The Dominican Sisters, Paula Johnston and the staff of An Tairseach Organic Farm and Ecology Centre in Wicklow Town in leading the Irish organic farming movement for 25 years were recently celebrated at an event at the centre.

Speaking after the occasion, Deputy Whitmore said: "As someone who has always been personally and professionally concerned with finding the most practical and effective solutions to climate change and biodiversity loss, I was honoured to be part of the celebrations today at An Tairseach as they marked 25 years of impactful engagement in the biodiversity of Wicklow.

"With decades of experience in conservation and biodiversity enhancement, everything that is being done in An Tairseach truly matters to the environment and to have had the foresight that they had to develop the organic farm, farm shop and the ecology centre a quarter of a century ago is truly incredible and is a testament to the vision of the Dominican sisters.

"The approach at An Tairseach to sustainable farming, ethical shopping, community employment, biodiversity, natural heritage, and education, together with the peace and serenity of a traditional retreat demonstrates the importance they place on community ownership and participation. It is no wonder that their dedication to sustainability has been recognised by being nominated recently for a Spirit of Wicklow Sustainability Award as a flagship environmental organisation in Wicklow.

"This haven for wildlife above Wicklow Town is a source of the healthiest and tastiest food available and with the installation of the Labyrinth, their beautiful meditation feature in the garden, and seeing the skill and insight on display by everyone there, An Tairseach is truly inspiring."

Also attending the event, Green Party TD Steven Matthews said "I was delighted to visit Sister Marian and her Dominican Sisters col-

leagues at éAn Tairseachí organic farm and ecology centre in Wicklow Town this week to celebrate their 25 years as a centre for ecological sustainability," said Green TD Steven Matthews.

"An Tairseach means 'the Threshold' and when you enter the centre you are crossing into special place which is deeply committed to peace, science, sustainability, protection of nature and climate action.

"We were provided with an overview of the 25 years of evolution of the centre and then brought on a tour of the organic gardens, greenhouses, farm and beautiful farm shop brimming with their carefully grown local produce and organic meats by their experienced and dedicated

horticulturists and farmers.

"It was a hugely enjoyable tour and great to see their progress, having last toured 'An Tairseach' in 2008 with my then Green Party colleague Minister for Food and Horticulture Trevor Sargent. We were then treated to a beautiful meal, prepared by Wicklow Naturally and Arklow chef Tadhg Byrne and all sourced from the farm and garden. You couldn't possibly get more locally produced food!

"The Dominican Sisters describe An Tairseach as 'An educational and cultural hub, a haven for wildlife, a source of the healthiest and tastiest fresh food available, and an iconic canvas of green organic fields above Wicklow Town, An Tairseach is an

invitation to everyone to respond as positively as they can to the environmental crisis, to try to live out a deeper grasp of their position in the web of life, a deeper connection to our planetary home and all the other lifeforms that share.

"I want to thank everyone who has worked to develop the centre over the past 25 years, it is an ecological jewel in the Wicklow crown. They are protecting nature, providing employment and education and opportunities to learn about sustainability and develop an appreciation of locally produced food. If you ever want quality, organic local produce, the An Tairseach farm shop is one of the best places to go," concluded Deputy Matthews.



Deputy Steven Matthews with Sr Marian at An Tairseach



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Plans for new transport routes for Baltinglass and Dunlavin

Minister Harris has been regularly in touch with residents from West Wicklow in Dunlavin and Baltinglass regarding public transport and the need for it to increase as soon as possible.



Minister Simon Harris

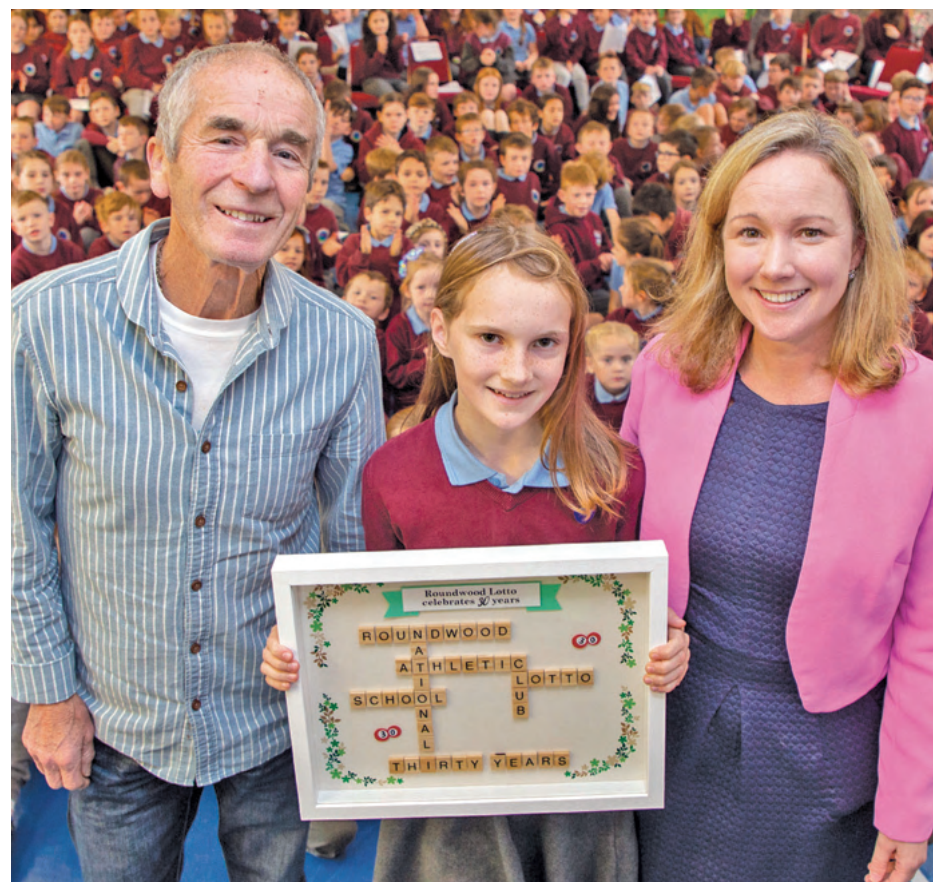
After regular engagement with the National Transport Authority there is light at the end of the tunnel as a new route is in the works. The National Transport authority have confirmed they will introduce services on Route 885.

Minister Harris said: "News of new services being considered for Route 885 will be hugely welcome by people in West Wicklow. Before the end of the year The National Transport Authority is going to introduce services on Route 885 as part of the Government's Connecting Ireland Initiative. This route will serve Dunlavin and travel from Baltinglass to Naas / Sallins, while passing through Ballymore Eustace and Blessington.

"I can also confirm that there are now plans in place for this service to be extended to Carlow Town after the service is fully up and running. This service will be a fantastic resource for anyone needing to visit Naas Hospital or the Sallins Train Station."

Minister Harris added "As the population of Wicklow continues to increase it is essential that public transport services increase at the same rate. Residents in West Wicklow can count on me to monitor this matter closely and I will continue to keep them updated as soon as any service timetables are published.

"Although this is good news for the time being, it falls short of what is required in terms of public transport for Wicklow as a County. I will not stop campaigning for increased public transport routes and frequency county-wide."



Liadh Fitzmaurice and School Principal of St. Laurence O'Toole's National School Sinead Sharkey make a presentation to Terry Kavanagh to celebrate 30 years of the Roundwood Lotto.

Bray Railway Station plaza works announced



Deputy Matthews at Bray Dart station

The long-awaited refurbishment to the forecourt and station road area at Bray Railway Station is set to commence within a few weeks, according to Green Party TD Steven Matthews.

"It has taken much longer than I expected," said Matthews, "but it is urgently needed and will make a huge difference to pedestrian, cyclists and commuters' safety when using the bus or train station.

"Currently it is one of the most hostile road layouts in the town for any users including drivers. There is no clear indication for anyone exiting the station on where you should walk or cycle while buses, cars and taxis compete for limited space.

"The new design and planning permission was agreed in 2018 when I was a Bray councillor and I participated closely in design and safety improvements in this fully NTA funded scheme. The entire road frontage at the station will be reconfigured for pedestrian safety, with better bus parking and taxi spaces and provide

a much more attractive introduction to our town for anyone arriving by bus or train. There will be wider footpaths, safe crossing points and clear cycling routes to the station and lots of bike parking. The design and layout of the paths and roadways will create an urban plaza type area with tree planting and seating.

"The work will also include the construction of 2 speed tables and pedestrian crossings at the junction of Station and Adelaide Road and at the junction of Adelaide Road and Quinsborough Road. This will greatly improve pedestrian safety and accessibility at these busy crossing points where most commuters cross when going to the station area.

"I have worked constantly with the Roads section in Wicklow County Council and with Irish Rail to ensure advance works, co-operation and agree-

ments were in place between both organisations before the main work starts. There was lots of planning of temporary access routes, rerouting of drainage and services, and alternative bus stops and taxi stands to be agreed and now that is all completed. The design is finalised, funding is in place and contracts for work have been awarded and works are ready to start. The job will take around 9 months to complete, there will no doubt be some temporary inconvenience, but the end result will be worth it. Visitors to Bray will be greeted by a far more attractive gateway to our town and local commuters, cyclists and residents will have far safer access to public transport.

"The next objective is to improve the Albert Walk route and my Green Party colleague Cllr Erika Doyle is working closely with Bray Municipal District engineers to deliver improvements to the area with lighting, surfacing and a pedestrian crossing on Albert Avenue," concluded Deputy Matthews

Hollywood village in line for better transport facilities

Wicklow County Council and Transport Infrastructure Ireland are considering three measures to improve rural transport in Hollywood with: A new bus stop in Hollywood; Traffic calming measures to improve safety; and New Parking Facilities.

Confirming the news, engaging with both the Minister Simon Harris Council and Transport authorities in a bid to secure a new bus stop in Hollywood and make sure Hollywood residents have

better transport facilities.

"There is a clear and urgent need for improved traffic and public transport measures in Hollywood and I am determined to get these over the line as soon as possible.

"The proposals currently being considered will see a very welcome investment in Hollywood's transport infrastructure including traffic calming measures, a bus stop and the construction of new parking facilities.

"I'm really glad these issues are being pro-

essed as residents in Hollywood deserve better when it comes to transport infrastructure. On top of this, Bus Eireann have informed me they have a team ready to get their boots on the ground and install any bus stops that are approved, so I'll be pushing for these to be expedited in the coming weeks.

"I plan to monitor this issue closely and deliver the right infrastructure for people living in Hollywood village. approved."

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Arklow woman reflects on over 40 years of marathons

On Sunday 29th October, 11 runners continued their record of running every Dublin Marathon event since 1980. The 2023 Irish Life Dublin Marathon was the 42nd edition of the event. Amongst them was Mary Hickey Nolan of Arklow, the only woman to have completed every Dublin Marathon.

Mary was joined by the youngest of the group Dubliner Martin Kelly (61) while Peadar Nugent (80) of Galway had the honour of being the eldest. The remainder of this legendary group were Donal Ward (Donegal), Seamus Cawley (Limerick), Seamus Dunne (Meath) and Dublin based Donal de BuítlÉir, Mick Carolan, Patrick Gowen, Dominic Gallagher and John McElinney.

In the inaugural race in 1980 there was 2,100 participants and Mary Hickey was only one of 40 women who took part, she finished it in 3 hours 38 minutes.

Mary's most memorable Dublin marathons were "The year I broke three hours that was magic, to come across the line and see the clock reading sub three was something else. Getting around it when I was six months pregnant was special too and pushing my ex-husband around it in 2017, who was very sick at the time, that was very emotional."

Mary supported Tony to keep his unbroken Dublin marathon run after he was diagnosed with a brain tumour. Mary along with three of

his friends pushed him around the course in an adapted wheelchair, he passed away the following June.

71-year-old Mary has been fundraising this year for the Wicklow hospice (see <https://www.idonate.ie/event/maryhickey43rddublinmarathon>). The Irish Life Dublin Marathon raises an estimated €9 million annually for charities.

Reflecting on the early days of marathon running Mary said: "Back in 1980 women out running on their own were viewed like aliens. There were days you did feel uncomfortable out on your own, but it never stopped me because I'd been running track and cross-country for 12 years beforehand."

She added "Now it's completely different and much, much better. The Irish Life Dublin Marathon now has an option to defer your entry to the next year if you fall pregnant. In 1988 I ran it while I was six months pregnant, but I was a competitive athlete and knew my body very well. I was prepared to drop out if anything felt wrong but

it all went well."

Earlier in the year, Dublin Marathon organisers announced its new pregnancy and postpartum policy. Any woman who secures a place in the Irish Life Dublin Marathon but cannot run in because of pregnancy or postpartum can defer their place to one of the following three years.

"There's so many more women doing the Irish Life Dublin Marathon now. I know in shorter race the balance is often 50:50 and is getting closer to that in longer distances too. Women are getting much braver about longer distances."

To encourage more women to sign up for the marathon, the Dublin Marathon organisers are offering all female participants from the 2023 Half Marathon the same preferential early entry as the 2023 entrants for next year's Irish Life Dublin Marathon (2024). This will provide an early entry window before the lottery is opened to the public and increase the opportunity for women to secure a marathon entry place.



Mary Hickey Nolan

Crucial funding for Wicklow's Local Sports Partnership

Minister Simon Harris has confirmed that funding will be made available in Wicklow to promote social inclusion and empower individuals through sport and physical activity.

Last week, Minister Harris launched a new Government and European Programme to promote social inclusion, educational opportunities and employment through sport.

The new initiative

titled 'Sport 4 Empowerment' is backed by an €11million grant allocated to Sport Ireland, Ireland's main sport development authority. This initiative is a new European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) programme.

These programmes are dedicated to ensuring no one is left behind in terms of employment and education.

The programme has key objectives such as working to ensure equal opportunities, non-dis-

crimination and active participation while also improving employability in communities for individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The funding will see the creation of a new Social Inclusion Sport Officer for Wicklow's Local Sports Partnership (LSP) in 2025 which will help drive these objec-

tives of social inclusivity.

Speaking today Minister Harris said "Sport has always been a huge catalyst for social inclusion and an equaliser when it comes to educational opportunities. The 'Sport 4 Empowerment' Programme by Sport Ireland aims to empower individuals through a range of

activities that are set to improve employment opportunities for people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

"I'm also glad to announce that in 2025 funding will be made available for a new Social Inclusion Sport Officer position in Wicklow's Local Sports Partnership which will help drive the objectives of the programme by reaching out to disadvantaged communities and will implementing a number of targeted and innovative initiatives to help tackle discrimination, poverty and social exclusion."

By 2025, Sport Ireland

aims to have an ESF+ Social Innovation in Sport Officer across all 29 LSPs in their network and across the country.

The 'Sport 4 Empowerment' programme will pilot and implement a variety of targeted and innovative initiatives aimed at enhancing the wellbeing, education, and economic prospects of the participants. The programme will support individuals at risk of social exclusion and poverty including the following groups ethnic minorities, youth at risk, persons with disabilities, and persons from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Minister Harris con-

cluded "I want to thank Sport Ireland for the role they play in our communities. Initiatives and programmes like these have such a positive impact and I will always be there to back them and make sure that the right funding is behind them to make it a success. I'm determined to see more innovative programmes come to fruition. They make our communities fairer more resilient and more inclusive."

For more information about Sport Ireland and the 'Sport 4 Empowerment' programme, please visit www.sportireland.ie.

Young whistlers trained up and ready to go

Cumann na mBunscol Wicklow held a Young Whistlers referee course for Gaelic football in the North East of the county on Wednesday September 27th in Kilcoole Primary School. This course has grown from strength to strength over the last number of years from 12 to 26 participants.

There was a wide representation across the district, with thirteen different schools represented on the day. The participants were made up of mature, responsible 5th/6th class boys and girls who share a passion for Gaelic football and are interested in learning more about refereeing.

The coaching session was led by North East GDA (Games Development Administrator) Garrett Doyle, who engaged the group in discussion about the basic rules of the game and how best to communicate those rules to players, coaches and spectators alike. The course content covered topics such as: Motivation to be a referee, Knowledge of rules, Problem scenarios and Communication styles. The children worked very well together in group and pair work and showed a high level of engagement and enthusiasm throughout. It is heartening to see the next generation of young whistlers begin their refereeing journey,

as without referees, we have no game. Thank you to all the boys and girls who volunteered and we look forward to seeing you refereeing your local Gaelic football games in the future!

The course participants were: Jack Coughlan, Jack McCloy, Molly Bates (Nuns Cross NS), Sean Levins, Orla Meehan (Kilmacanogue NS), Zach Hollingsworth, Saorla Ní Artlaigh (Gaeilscoil Chill Mhantáin), Eva Power (St. Coen's, Rathnew), Chloe Doyle, Mila Dowling (Greystones ETNS), Rafa Toolin, Fiona Marschner (Greystones CNS), Bláithín Keating, Evan Hatton (Kilcoole PS), Ciarán Ó Rodáin, Róisinn Ní Annaidh (Scoil Chualann, Bray), John Hogan, Zac Brien, Jack Taylor (St. Cronan's, Bray), Tommy Ryan, Aoife Elliot (Newtown PS), Amber Boden (St. Brigid's, Greystones), Hayley Carraher, Max Heatly (Roundwood NS), Henry Doyle and Clodagh Phelan (St. Saviour's, Rathdrum).



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Guest speaker Catherine Wright (left) from Wicklow Co Council with Fionnuala Olohan, Jean May Byrne and Councillor Pat Kennedy at the recent Charles Stewart Parnell memorial ceremony. This annual event is organised by the RDA in Rathdrum. The Parnell Memorial Pipe Band, seen in the background, also performed on the day.

New Greystones Coast Guard Station goes to tender

The tender process for construction of the new Greystones Coast Guard Station has now begun, and is being advertised on the E-Tenders website.

Speaking in Greystones, Minister Simon Harris said, "I know how absolutely vital this coast guard project is for the incredible team in the coast guard who carry out lifesaving work and for our entire community. We are so fortunate in Greystones with our coast guard team but the facilities they are operating from are not acceptable and also are too far a distance from the sea."

"This new state of the art facility for the coast guard beside the sea will provide them with modern facilities and enhance their work further. I am really conscious that this project has been long discussed and awaited and I have been intensively engaging with the Coast Guard, Wicklow County Council and the Office of Public Works. I also want to thank my colleague, Cllr Derek Mitchell for his tireless and ongoing work on this."

"This week I received written confirmation that the project has now begun the tender process and the construction is expected next year. I will closely monitor this project every step of the way," concluded Minister Harris.



The site of the new Greystones Coast Guard Station

Library Service introduces ACORN smart tablets for seniors

As part of its Age Friendly Library Strategy, Wicklow County Council Library Service has interesting news for older people who may be considering the purchase of an electronic tablet.

The library, with support from Dormant Account Funding along with financial support from Age Friendly Wicklow, has purchased ACORN smart tablets, uniquely tailored for older residents in Wicklow.

These tablets will be available on a three-week loan basis, offering older people a 'taster' experience allowing them to familiarise themselves with the technology before deciding to purchase.

ACORN tablets come with an easy-to-use interface, curated content for senior interests, and built-in safety features. The initiative aims to bridge the digital divide, foster community connection, and promote lifelong learning

among our older communities.

The Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Aoife Flynn Kennedy, said: "This is more than just introducing a piece of technology; it's about weaving the essence of connectivity, knowledge, and accessibility into the fabric of our senior community's

everyday life. As a Council, we are making strides in ensuring that every resident of Wicklow feels heard, valued, and empowered in this digital age."

Emer O'Gorman, Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council, stated: "We are delighted to introduce this initiative. Technology is evolving,

and it is imperative we ensure our senior community isn't left behind.

By offering ACORN tablets on a loan basis, we are not just promoting digital inclusivity but also offering our older residents a chance to experience the benefits of modern technology before committing to it."

Wicklow County Council's age friendly Strategy 2023-2027 clearly identifies the need for older members of the community to be encouraged and supported to engage with digital devices. Including state-of-the-art technology like the ACORN tablets within our services embodies this commitment.

Wicklow County Council Library Service is a testament to its dedication to ensuring that all community members, regardless of age, have access to the tools and resources they need in today's digital age. It is a hopeful and exciting step towards a more connected future for Wicklow's senior community.

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Greystones Cathaoirleach calls for urgent remedial works at The Cove

Cathaoirleach of Greystones, Social Democrats Councillor Mark Barry, has today reiterated the need for urgent remedial works on the outdoor swimming facilities at The Cove in Greystones.

Cllr Barry said: "The Cove has become a very important facility for swimmers over the last few years, used extensively for both leisure and training for local sports clubs, etc. The recent storms have once again highlighted the need for urgent attention to this most precious local amenity."

"The existing entrance point to the sea is no longer fit for purpose, with recent storms having further eroded the original steps and railings, and at this stage the facility would represent a safety concern for the many local users."

"Together with Cllr Lourda Scott, I have a proposal waiting to be tabled with Wicklow County Council, for plans and costing to upgrade the existing sea entrance facility."

"More and more people are swimming and dipping as a means for staying fit and healthy, so we need to ensure the public safety and access to this incredible natural resource on our doorstep. We need to continue to encourage the use of these types of activities, but can only do so with the proper facilities in place."

"Although this swimming area from the rocks is used year round, it is only realistic to perform remedial works during the fine weather, and with that I will be pushing to have works completed in time for the Summer 2024 swim season."



Cllr Mark Barry at The Cove in Greystones

Arklow Cancer Support goes pink for breast cancer awareness



Window decorations for Pink Day in Arklow

Support on Friday 13th October for their Pink day celebrations and Grand opening of their new Pod.

The centre was a hive of activity from early morning with people turning up in their droves despite the weather. Pink was the theme of the day creating the importance of Breast Cancer Awareness. Mary Graham entertained with music song and dance which set the tone. Beauty therapists from Enchanted Beauty and Armstrong Life were on hand to pamper and treat the ladies. St Mary's college were represented by some students helping out for the morning. Pink cakes were in abundance donated by

dedicated volunteers and lots of spot prizes were given out on the morning. The community of Arklow once again gave huge support for Breast Cancer Awareness by turning their windows pink and staff coming out on the day in pink and generating their own awareness in their businesses. From the start of this year to date, Arklow Cancer Support has provided 356 counselling sessions, 119 reflexology appointments, 320 trips supporting cancer patients for their daily radiation therapy.



Celebrating Pink Day at Arklow Cancer Support to raise breast cancer awareness

Mary O'Brien from Arklow said, 'We have also added an additional 55 new clients to our service. 3,827 people have crossed our doors over the past 10 months to either access supports or support us. If you know anybody in need of support please ask them to contact us on 0402-23590. The cancer

patient or family member has to make that first call. "Arklow Cancer Support took this opportunity to have the grand opening of our new Pod which will be a great asset to Arklow Cancer Support especially to those with mobility issues. This Pod was funded by an anonymous donator who seen the

great work Arklow Cancer Support were doing for this community. Fainne Kenny performed the grand opening with her family as her grandad Denis Kenny was one of our truly dedicated volunteers and this was the last project he worked on with us. "Arklow Cancer Support

would like to thank the people and businesses of Arklow, all those who supported us in any way on our annual Pink Day and opening of our Pod. The staff and therapists at Arklow Cancer Support who go above and beyond leaving no stone unturned in supported people on their cancer journey."

Community Mental Health Clinic opens in Greystones

Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly has welcomed the opening of Waverly House in Greystones which will be used to house the Community Mental Health Team.

The service, which had up until now operated out of Newcastle Hospital, will be open to see patients just off the Main Street in Greystones.

The Greystones CMHT is made up of a multidisciplinary team led

by a Consultant Psychiatrist, but also includes medical, nursing, occupational therapy, social work, psychology, as well as individual placement support (IPS) staff.

The team works in close partnership with local GPs and other

local healthcare, social care, addiction and rehabilitation services as well as voluntary support agencies and housing providers.

The team also has access to psychiatric inpatient beds at Newcastle Hospital.

Minister Donnelly said: 'I recently met with the staff in Greystones at the new centre to see first hand the incredible work they are doing.

"Waverly House is an important step in transforming how we deliver healthcare in this country as it allows patients to be treated in the community.

"Patients will be able to undergo psychiatric assessments, medication reviews, physical health checks, a wide range of psychological, occupational therapy at the centre.

"There will also be support in place to help them link in with housing services as well as look for employment.

"The dedicated team working there is entirely focused on enhancing the patient experience enabling them to access the right care, at the right time and in the right place. Ultimately, it is about bringing together a whole range of expertise to help patients recover and achieve a better quality of life.'

New Community Mental Health 'Recovery Village' rolls out in Wicklow

HSE Community Healthcare East's Mental Health Service has opened a unique Recovery Village project in Co. Wicklow that aims to put service users, and their families and carers, at the centre of service delivery. This pilot project has been developed in partnership with the ARCHES Recovery College and was launched earlier this month via an open day for the public on World Mental Health Day.

The new Recovery Village will offer courses, talks, peer support and social events to promote mental health recovery, personal growth and well-being. The project uses an approach known as Recovery Education which involves the delivery of educational modules and courses on mental health recovery in community or HSE settings.

Martina Queally, Chief Officer, HSE Community Healthcare East, comments: "Our Community Mental Health team are passionate about this unique project. Our hope is that this new service will have a positive impact in the Wicklow community by empowering people to take an active role in their own mental health recovery, or the recovery of others. People who want to avail of this service will receive expert knowledge about different coping strategies and ways of making sense of psychological distress in a



Dr Donal O'Keeffe, HSE Community Healthcare East Recovery Coordinator; Ellen Conalty, HSE Community Healthcare East Clinical Nurse Manager II and Recovery Village Lead; Charlie Burke, Chairperson Mental Health Wicklow; Ronan Murray, HSE Community Healthcare East Director of Nursing (Assistant); and Andrea Koenigstorfer, HSE Community Healthcare East Area Lead for Mental Health Engagement.

way that allows them to experience belonging, meaning and empowerment."

Ellen Conalty, HSE Community Healthcare East Clinical Nurse

Manager II and Recovery Village Lead adds: "The Recovery Village is delivered using a Recovery Education approach. This means the lived experience of our service users

is combined with our professional experience, and working together, we develop knowledge and understanding. Ultimately, this approach gives our service users, family

members and carers more opportunities to achieve maximum recovery outcomes."

The service will offer a combination of therapeutic activities such as horticulture, yoga, self-compassion courses, creative writing courses, fitness classes, music appreciation and more. These activities are developed in collaboration with local community partners Woodlands for Health, the National Learning Network, and Wicklow Local Sports Partnership.

The Recovery Village is based on the grounds of Newcastle Hospital in Killadreenan, Newcastle, Co. Wicklow (previously the Kilmullen Enterprise Centre). Anyone living in Dublin South East, Dun Laoghaire and East Wicklow with mental health needs who would like to avail of the programmes and courses on offer can be referred through community mental health teams.

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2023 Pure Mile Awards night

The Pure Mile Awards was back again this year in the Brooklodge Hotel in Macreddin, Aughrim, on Thursday 26th of October to celebrate the hard work and achievements of all the Pure Mile Volunteers in Cleaning Up The Wicklow/Dublin Uplands.

The Pure Mile Awards is an environmental, community, heritage initiative, established by Pure, which encourages communities and groups living in rural areas of Wicklow, South Dublin and Dun-Laoghaire, to adopt a mile of road, or miles of road, in their local area, or in the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands and organise litter picks, clean-ups, anti-dumping campaigns, research information about their local wildflowers, plants, trees, animals, and the built, cultural, and social heritage of an area. The awards night is an opportunity for all of the Pure Mile Groups to meet for one night, in one room, and celebrate all of their hard work and achievements in Cleaning Up

The Wicklow/Dublin Uplands, and for Pure to thank them all. Certificates of Participation were presented to all Pure Mile Groups on the night by the Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr. Aoife Flynn-Kennedy, the Mayor of South Dublin, Cllr. Alan Edge, and the Cathaoirleach of Dun-Laoghaire Rathdown County Council, Cllr. Denis O'Callaghan.

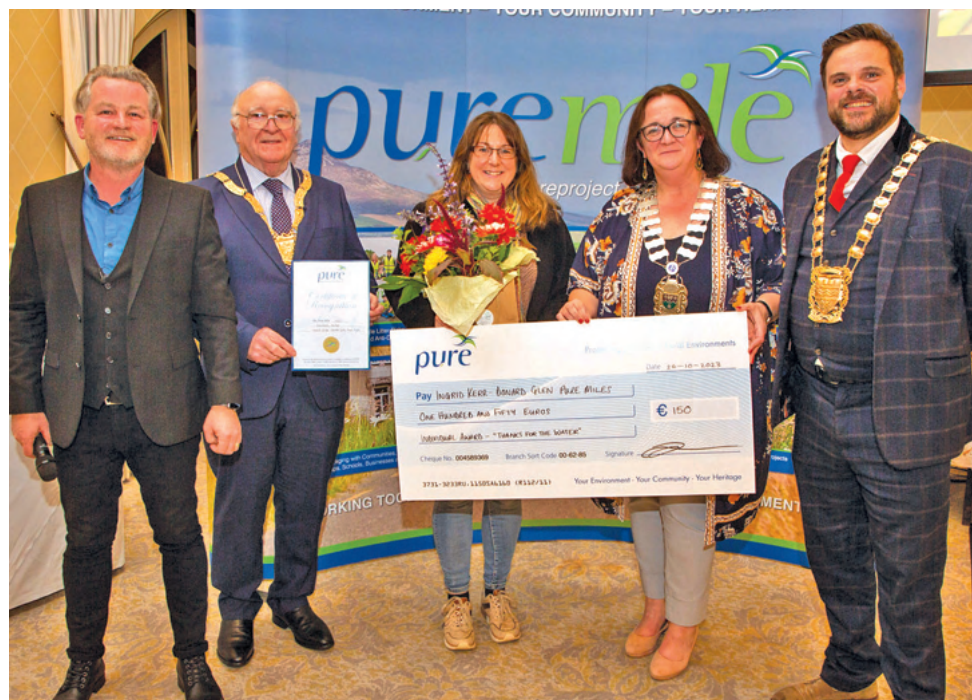
On the night, the Mayor of South Dublin, Cllr. Alan Edge, added, 'I can't overstate the importance of the Pure Mile in South Dublin. The trojan work that Pure and its army of volunteers do in keeping our uplands clean represents the best in local environmental action and community

engagement at its finest.'

2023 was the fourteenth year of the Pure Mile, with the largest number of groups and volunteers involved in the project since it was established in 2009. In the first year the Pure Mile had 5 miles of road (8.5 kilometres), and over the years the project has grown extensively to involve communities, groups, individuals, scouts, beavers, schools, walking groups, cycling groups, running groups, hiking groups, businesses and organisations, who have collectively improved and enhanced over 900 miles (1,450 kilometres), of road, mountains, woodlands, valleys, forests, upland amenities, car parks, and even some coastal areas, with the

removal of tonnes of illegal dumping and litter from the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands. Over 2,600 litter picks and clean-ups were organised in 2023 and additional projects included, natural heritage, built heritage, community, biodiversity, and education.

The groups ranged from all over Wicklow, South Dublin and Dun-Laoghaire and each one received a Pure Mile Certificate of Participation, native Irish trees, and all will be included in the popular Pure Mile Calendar, which will also be launched this year. There were a number of Certificates of Recognition presented on the night with cash prizes reaching over €6,000 distributed to groups



Pure Project manager Ian Davis, Cathaoirleach of Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council Denis O'Callaghan, Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council Aoife Flynn-Kennedy, and Mayor of South Dublin Paul Edge present an individual award to Ingrid Kerr of the Donard Glen Pure Mile group.

which will further assist them in their local projects to improve and enhance the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands.

The Cathaoirleach for Dun-Laoghaire Rathdown County Council, Cllr. Denis O'Callaghan commented, "Pure is a wonderful example of a collaboration across several state bodies and one that Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council is proud to part of. Working with our partners in Department of Environment, Climate, and Communications, Wicklow County Council, South Dublin County Council, Coillte, National Parks & Wildlife Service, and the Wicklow Uplands Council has had great benefits. Moreover, the work by our communities is a critical part of Pure and its success is a testament to the work done by each community involved."

The Pure Mile is the perfect opportunity for communities and groups who want to make a positive contribution to their locality and environment, and assists people in improving and enhancing the place they live in, or recreate in. Special inter-

est groups such as, walking groups, cycling groups, scout groups, businesses, and organisations, adopt a mile, or miles of road, in the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands and help Pure to Clean Up The Uplands. Pure provide all groups with Pure Mile signage, Pure Mile high-vis vests, Pure Mile bags, gloves, and litter pickers and Pure also removes all of the rubbish collected by the groups.

Ian Davis, Pure Manager commented on the success and growth of the Pure Mile: "The Pure Mile has grown every year and we now have thousands of volunteers involved. This year we saw some large-scale clean-ups and litter picks which resulted in the removal of approximately 4,700 bags of rubbish and illegal dumping from the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands. Over the years the Pure Mile Volunteers have removed tonnes of litter and illegal dumping from upland roads, verges, hedges, and drains, and they have made a huge difference to the areas they live in, or recreate in. We estimate that Pure Mile Groups removed over 47 tonnes

of illegal dumping, including, tyres, batteries, mattresses, radios, hovers, TV's, cables, piping, furniture, chairs, bed-frames, building materials, toys, prams, suitcases, buckets, bikes, and much more. I would like to thank and congratulate all of the Pure Mile Groups this year for their dedication in Cleaning Up The Wicklow/Dublin Uplands."

Pure was launched in 2006 and since that date it has proven extremely successful, in both reducing illegal dumping, and engaging with all demographics in society. It's the first project of its kind in Ireland involving a multi stakeholder approach collaboration with, the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications, Wicklow County Council, South Dublin County Council, Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council, Coillte, National Parks & Wildlife Service, and the Wicklow Uplands Council.

Pure has made huge progress in reducing illegal dumping in the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands. If you compare the amount of dumping col-

lected by Pure in 2022, which was 140 tonnes of waste, to 2008 which was their busiest year, when they removed 440 tonnes, the initiative has seen a 68% reduction in illegal dumping in Wicklow/Dublin Uplands.

If any groups, communities, individuals, schools, walking groups, cycling groups, scouts, businesses, ANYONE, want to get involved in Pure Mile, they can contact Pure at info@pureproject.ie or download an application from www.pureproject.ie/what-we-do/the-pure-mile/. You can also write to: Pure Project, Unit 6 B, Riverside Business Centre, Tinahely, Co Wicklow, Y14 R978, and they will post out all the information, or request an application form and information pack by phoning Pure on 0402 28662.

Further information on Pure can be found on www.pureproject.ie

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Students from Tinahely National School being presented with the Education & Awareness Award



The Litter Free Pure Mile Award being presented to members of Clara Vale and Glenmalure Pure Mile groups.



Individual Pure Mile awards being presented to Geraldine Boland, Evelyn Ryan and Julia Glass

Wicklow student awarded Naughton Foundation Scholarship

On Saturday, October 14th, 2023, County Wicklow student Ronan Gilpin was awarded a Naughton FoundaCon Scholarship worth €24,000 at a ceremony in the Trinity Business School in Dublin. The award was presented by founding patrons of the Naughton FoundaCon, Dr. MarCn Naughton, and his wife Carmel, who were joined by former Taoiseach Mr. Enda Kenny to present winning students with their awards and cheques.

Supporting academic and innovative excellence in Irish students, the Naughton FoundaCon Scholarship Awards are an investment in the future of Ireland's reputation as a country with outstanding graduates promoting the study of engineering, science, and technology at third level. The County Wicklow winner, Ronan Gilpin, a former student of East Glendalough School, has accepted a place studying Biological and Biomedical Sciences at Trinity College Dublin. Since its establishment in 2008, scholarships worth over €6 million have been awarded to over 350 students. The scheme started in three counties and has continued to expand annually to become a nationwide scheme in 2016. There is one guaranteed scholarship (€24,000) for each participating county, with some counties awarded more than one scholarship and each scholarship is worth €6,000 per annum for each year of a student's three- or four-year undergraduate degree.

Ronan joins 37 exceptional Irish students who were awarded third level scholarships towards their studies in the areas of engineering, science, technology, and maths. The prize winner's former secondary school, East Glendalough School, was awarded a prize of €1,000 towards their school's science facilities, for their support of their winning student. More than 250 schools have also benefited from this prize to date with some schools receiving it on more than one occasion.

Speaking about the growth and development of the programme over the past fourteen years, Dr. MarCn Naughton has said: "We are delighted to have been able to help and contribute in some small way to support undergraduate studies in the STEM fields in Ireland since 2008. We are very conscious of the pressures on students to finance their full courses studies and with the increased costs they face and are therefore increasing our annual Scholarship awards to €6,000 per annum for all of our new and existing Naughton Scholars €24,000 for their four-year degree. When we meet these young engineers, researchers, and mathematicians I am very happy knowing that we have invested in Ireland's wealth creators and leaders of the future."

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Former East Glendalough student Ronan Gilpin being presented with his Naughton Foundation Scholarship Award by former Taoiseach Enda Kenny, alongside Martin and Carmel Naughton in Trinity Business School.



Minister Simon Harris

Students reminded of Nov 2nd closing date for SUSI applications

Further and Higher Education Minister Simon Harris has urged families and students to apply for SUSI before closing date on Thursday 2nd November.

Minister Simon Harris urged Wicklow families and students to apply for SUSI before the closing date in early November to make sure they benefit from the cost of

living measures announced this month in Budget 2024.

"As Minister for Further and Higher Education I know that SUSI grants can make a huge difference to families of

young students going to college.

"That's why in the Budget announced this month I made sure there was a package of measures students would benefit from including significant increases in student grants this year and the next for all students who are eligible and in full time under-

graduate degrees.

"The cost of going to college for many is too high and with Budget 2024 families and students are getting money back in their pockets through:

- Cuts to the student contribution fee for undergraduate students
- Significant increases in stu-

dent grants

- Increased and extended renters' tax credit
- Extended public transport fare discounts for young people

"Today I am calling on all who are eligible to get their SUSI application done before the closing date on Thursday 2nd November. There is so

much for those who are eligible to benefit from and I want them to avoid having to request a late application form from SUSI after the closing date.

"Please go to www.susi.ie to complete your application form. If you have any questions please contact my office."

Nominations open for Teacher's Inspire

Teachers Inspire, an initiative organised and run by Dublin City University, is once again calling on the public to share stories about the positive impact a teacher has made on their lives and nominate them for this year's awards.

The initiative, which aims to honour and celebrate teachers across the country, highlights how they can inspire imagination, creativity, confidence and courage, inside and outside of the classroom. Anyone can nominate a teacher who has made a difference in their lives by going to teachersinspire.ie and clicking on Share Your Story. Nominations will remain open until January 2024, and the four most inspiring stories will be selected and celebrated at an event early next year.

Author Louise O'Neill returns this year as curator and host of the Teachers Inspire podcast.

Speaking about Teachers Inspire, Louise O'Neill said: "I am thrilled to be part of the Teachers Inspire initiative for a third year. I have seen first hand the impact that teachers can make on the lives of students, and they deserve to be celebrated every day. The

people I've met and the conversations I've had on the podcast to date have been truly inspiring, and I can't wait for everyone to tune into the new season. From speaking with previous Teachers Inspire awardees and their nominators, to chatting with experts about autism friendly universities and STEM education in primary schools, we have a lot of interesting episodes lined up."

Teachers Inspire is an Ireland-wide initiative that seeks to celebrate teachers and to recognise the transformative role they play in our lives and in our communities. It is organised and run by Dublin City University and generously supported by a philanthropic donation by Mr. Dermot Desmond. Mr. Desmond also supports The Desmond Chair in Early Childhood Education at DCU's Institute of Education. Now in its fourth year, Teachers Inspire celebrated teachers in 2019, 2021, and 2022.



ICS Mortgages Chief Commercial Officer Ray McMahon (left) presented the finance textbook 'Money Matters - Transition Year Finance' to students from East Glendalough School and their teacher, Brian Reid. ICS Mortgages provided a number of schools with sets of the textbook which will further enhance the students' understanding of finance.



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A taste of Wicklow at 'Flavours of Ireland' event

Seventy (70) tourism companies from Ireland recently attended Flavours of Ireland 2023 in London - including Beyond the Trees Avondale and Powerscourt Estate. 'Flavours' is Tourism Ireland's annual B2B tourism workshop, where tourism companies from Ireland meet and do business with top global inbound tour operators.



Marina Hughes, M&N Travel; David Boyce, Tourism Ireland; and Ann Kilcoyne, Beyond the Trees Avondale, at Tourism Ireland's Flavours of Ireland 2023

Now in its 21st year, 'Flavours' was held in Guildhall, in the City of London, and was attended by around 100 top global inbound tour operators who are mainly based in London and who deliver business from all over the world, including the United States, Mainland Europe, Asia, Australasia and Africa.

'Flavours' provides an excellent opportunity for the participating tourism providers from Wicklow and Ireland to highlight and sell their tourism product and build valuable relationships with the global inbound buyers in attendance. The global operators are preparing to sign contracts for 2024 and beyond, so it's a key time to influence the addition



Annie Brigard, AB Travel Consulting Ltd; Jennifer Edwards, Tourism Ireland; and Vivienne Nyhan, Powerscourt Estate, at Tourism Ireland's Flavours of Ireland 2023

of new tourism products to their programmes that have the potential to deliver more regional and longer-stay business for Ireland.

David Boyce, Tourism Ireland's Head of Global Inbound, said: "Tourism

Ireland is delighted that so many tourism organisations from Ireland and so many leading global inbound tour operators took the time to join us at our annual Flavours of Ireland event.

"In 2019, these tour

operators were responsible for delivering around 5 million bed-nights to the island of Ireland. As they prepare to sign contracts for 2024, we very much welcome the business and networking opportunities our work-

shop presented. Our aim is to increase awareness of Ireland among these influential global inbound tour operators and to help Ireland and our tourism partners secure a greater share of the huge world-wide tourism market."

Highlighting Ireland as the 'Home of Halloween' in the Netherlands



Performer Sarah Barry, The Armagh Rhymers; Odhran Dunne, Visit Derry; Melanie Harrison, The Harrison Chambers of Distinction; Loes Hennephof, Aer Lingus; Ronan Treacy, Sandymount Hotel; Eef Belckx, Tourism Ireland; actor Paul Treanor; Karen van der Horst and Orla McElhinney, both Tourism Ireland; Jill Robins, Russborough House; and performer Annie Callaghan, The Armagh Rhymers, at Tourism Ireland's 'Halloween Evening' in Kasteel Woerden in the Netherlands

Six tourism companies from Ireland - including Russborough House - travelled to the Netherlands recently to take part in Tourism Ireland's special 'Halloween Evening' which was attended by around 25 Dutch travel professionals and journalists in Kasteel Woerden (Castle Woerden).

The aim of the event was to use Halloween as a 'hook' to raise awareness about the many things to see and do in Wicklow and Ireland among Dutch travel professionals - giving the tourism companies from Ireland an opportunity to showcase their product and its link with Halloween. It was also a good opportunity to highlight the many reasons to visit Ireland during the off-season months - including events like Púca Festival and Derry Halloween. Guests heard all about the origins of Halloween in Ireland and enjoyed a performance by The Armagh Rhymers.

Karen van der Horst, Tourism Ireland's Manager for Northern Europe, said: "Tourism Ireland is delighted that these influential Dutch travel professionals took

the time to attend our special 'Halloween Evening'.

"The event provided a valuable platform for our partners from Ireland to meet, and network with, the Dutch travel professionals in attendance - and to showcase their product and its link with Halloween. It was also a good opportunity to highlight the many reasons to visit Ireland during the off-season months including events like Púca Festival and Derry Halloween."

The world's present-day Halloween celebrations are firmly rooted in Celtic customs and traditions of Samhain (summer's end), established in Ireland thousands of years ago. Tourism Ireland has been rolling out its 'Ireland Home of Halloween' campaign - celebrating Ireland as the birthplace of Halloween.

Wicklow says 'Hola' in Spain as part of travel roadshow

Wicklow and Ireland were recently promoted to around 200 tour operators and travel agents in Spain at a travel trade roadshow visiting the cities of A Coruna, Madrid, Bilbao and Barcelona. The roadshow was organised jointly by Tourism Ireland and VisitBritain.

Seventeen (17) tourism companies from Ireland including Powerscourt Estate and Russborough House took part in the roadshow, which involved a workshop event in each city. They met and did business with the Spanish travel professionals, to encourage them to extend their Ireland offering, or to include Ireland for the first time, in their programmes for 2024 and beyond.

The cities of A Coruna, Madrid, Bilbao and Barcelona were selected for the roadshow, as they are key gateways to Ireland for Spanish holidaymakers. The roadshow provided a valuable opportunity for Tourism Ireland and its partners to remind the Spanish travel professionals all about the many great things to see and do around the island of Ireland, and all

that is new and exciting.

Susan Bolger, Tourism Ireland's Manager Spain, said: "We're delighted that so many of our key Spanish travel trade contacts have taken the time to come and meet with our partners from Ireland this week, to learn all about our superb tourism offering. Our aim is to increase awareness of Wicklow and Ireland among these influential Spanish tour operators and travel agents - and to help Ireland and our tourism partners secure a greater share of their business for 2024 and beyond."

Spain is the fifth-largest market for overseas tourism to the island of Ireland. In 2019, we welcomed 431,000 visitors from Spain to the island of Ireland, who spent €218 million during their time here.



Vivienne Nyhan, Powerscourt Estate (second right); Jill Robins, Russborough House (right); and Susan Bolger, Tourism Ireland (left), pictured in Madrid at a travel trade roadshow organised jointly by Tourism Ireland and VisitBritain.

SSE Renewables to sponsor sustainable fashion show event

Arklow Community Excellence has announced SSE Renewables as title sponsor for both the upcoming sustainable fashion show event on 18th November in the Arklow Bay Conference & Leisure Hotel, and for the overall recognition award - the 'SSE Renewables Spirit of the Community' award.

Cleo Russell, Secretary and PRO, Arklow Community Excellence, said: 'Arklow Community Excellence is very grateful SSE Renewables for their continued commitment to supporting Arklow's volunteer, charity, and community sector. SSE Renewables' involvement aligns perfectly with the goal of Arklow Community Excellence (ACE) to promote sustainable fashion, and environmental awareness. It provides a real boost to the event with large companies such as SSE Renewables lending their support for initiatives within the local community'.

The SSE Renewables Sustainable Fashion Show will showcase couture from local charity outlets competing across a range of fashion categories such as casual wear, bridal, 'glitz and glam' and charity couture. Tammy

Byrne, Chairperson and Treasurer of the newly established ACE group commented, 'I've always held the view that Arklow's people will go the extra distance to support one another, and that includes employers like SSE Renewables who are actively supporting a wide range of initiatives, projects and activities in our town to benefit the local community'.

Deirdre Keogh, Community Engagement Manager, SSE Renewables said: 'Sustainability is embedded in everything we do at SSE Renewables. Partnering with ACE for both the sustainable fashion event and the 'Spirit of the Community' award provided a perfect match with our company values. With Christmas fast approaching, it's opportune to think about how we can reuse, recycle, and

upcycle our clothing to create stylish attire that makes us feel comfortable, glamorous, and confident, no matter what our age'.

She added: 'The Spirit of the Community award is the apex award recognising the contribution of that special person who has gone above and beyond within their community. No doubt there are many worthy individuals who qualify as award beneficiaries in a town where community spirit and altruism has featured so strongly for generations'.

For information about the ACE event on 18th November, email aceawardsarklow@gmail.com and for information on the SSE Renewables Arklow Bank Wind Park 2 Sponsorship Fund, contact deirdre.keogh@sse.com.



Deirdre Keogh, Community Engagement Manager, SSE Renewables (centre), with Tammy Byrne, Chairperson and Treasurer of Arklow Community Excellence, and Cleo Russell, Secretary and PRO, Arklow Community Excellence.

Tiglin founder honoured at TCD Alumni Awards



Aubrey McCarthy being presented with his award by Linda Doyle at the TCD Alumni Awards

Tiglin founder and Trinity graduate Aubrey McCarthy was recognised at the recent TCD Alumni Awards for his dedication to supporting homeless, displaced, and addicted individuals.

Aubrey has long been aware that addiction is a major adversary of Irish society. It is the fuel behind much of the pain and destruction we see and hear about across all sectors of society. From marital breakdown and domestic violence to the erosion of mental health and the marginalisation of vulnerable homeless people, addiction has been a key causal factor.

Having experienced the force of addiction that blew through his family as a young child, Aubrey knew that education was a route to escape both the present and the future painful effects that addiction caused.

Setting up Tiglin, a charity that provides an option to escape addiction and homelessness, Aubrey knew that this was a means of sending the ladder back down to give a way out for those who were caught in these societal traps.

In accepting this award, Aubrey remarked "I take this award on behalf of those who currently are living on our streets, who cannot find the will to lift their heads because they believe that their identity is found in their substance abuse, those who have been affected by domestic violence or have been displaced by war. There is nothing more dehumanising than being powerless to change your circumstances. I am grateful to have been given the Grace to change mine and to be able to provide a means for others to change theirs."

Accompanying Aubrey on the night was the Ukrainian ambassador to Ireland, Her Excellency Laryssa Gerasko who thanked Aubrey for opening the doors to over 100 Ukrainian nationals and for making them feel welcome and at home in Ireland.

"Charity is wasted when it only reaches down. It has to reach out; it has to be one

human soul reaching another human soul in a way that offers hope and not just the contents of your hand". Aubrey received this award on the grounds of the University, which is only "a stone throws away" from Tiglin homeless café called Tiglin at the Lighthouse which serves over 400 meals daily and provides vital supports and pathways out of homelessness from 28 Pearse Street, several Trinity alumni express the desire to get involved with the café which delighted Aubrey.

Tiglin, in all its services, from homeless supports to rehabilitation programmes to supported housing and accommodation for those who have been displaced, strives to find a means to offer much more than a handout. Their focus has been on a means of progress so that potential can be realised and reached - education and employment play a key role in this process.

Wicklow sites recognised at National Heritage Week Awards

Ballyknockan and Altidore Castle were recognised for their success at the National Heritage Week Awards which took place in Offaly the weekend before last.

Social Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore said "It is fantastic to see these two Wicklow events receiving national recognition at the National Heritage Week Awards. Wicklow has a rich history, and it is important to celebrate and share this local heritage. I would like to congratulate both the O'Flaherty Family in Ballyknockan and the Emmet Family at Altidore on their success at the awards and for finding new and engaging ways of sharing their family and local heritage with others."

Ballyknockan won the National Heritage Week Wicklow County Prize for their event, 200 Years of Ballyknockan. A Living History. Organised by the O'Flaherty Family this two-hour walking tour of 'The Granite Village' marked the Bicentenary of the Ballyknockan Granite Quarries being in operation

and celebrated the rich tradition of stone-cutting in the area.

Philip and Thomas Emmet's biodiversity walk across the Altidore estate came runner up in the Climate and Sustainability Award category. This walking tour brought participants on a journey through the ancient and recently planted native woodland and wildflower pastures of the Altidore Castle estate. It successfully spotlighted the rich biodiversity of the estate and featured the native birds and insects that call Altidore their home.

Thomas Emmet said "We were really honoured to be nominated and to be the only Wicklow event short-listed across the awards apart from the hugely well deserved '200 Years of Ballyknockan' event which won the Wicklow County Prize. We've been an organic farm since the 1990s

and are in the process of beginning to rewild and a huge part of that for us is educating people on biodiversity and sustainability and connecting people with nature. We were delighted with how the event went and to have this recognition shows we're on the right path."

Philip Emmet said "The intention of the event was to educate and inform. We spotlighted birds, insects and of course the native woodland we have here on the estate. We discussed hedgerows, deer fencing, deadwood and wildflower meadows all of which are evident at Altidore. The awards ceremony was wonderful because it was such a positive event and we got to see what other people are doing across the country for sustainability. We were impressed by the winner of the award, a SPAB working party event in Cavan."



Altidore Castle was the runner up for the Climate and Sustainability Award at the National Heritage Week Awards 2023.

Greystones hosts Wicklow Stories Film Festival

For the second year running, the Wicklow Stories Film Festival opened its doors at the prestigious Whale Theatre earlier this month, welcoming powerful Irish stars such as Laura Whitmore, Ciara Kelly and Emer O'Neill and amazing local filmmakers. The ribbon was cut by Cathaoirleach Aoife Flynn Kennedy, who also attended the 8pm screening, bringing her official support to the festival.

The local community came together to make this event possible. Sponsored by the Rise at the Cove Cafe, which is run by Tiglin and with support from the Greystones Town Team and the Whale Theatre, festival organisers Marlena Murphy, Ronika Merl and Dave Thomas were able to pull the

show together.

A special thanks also goes to Cllr Erika Doyle, who brought support and guidance to the BIFE film studies students, as well as Ross McParland from the Whale Theatre who as always was the most gracious host.

The night was packed with stars who graced the red carpet. Remarkable

filmmakers from all over the county and beyond were invited to share their passion projects. The experimental dance film *iTo the Waters* and the Wildf was a delightful journey through incredible Wicklow landscapes, while the Ukrainian refugee film *iSkedaddle* pulled on the heartstrings with its simple yet pow-

erful storyline. The films 'BINGO!' and 'Wait for Me' made the audience burst into laughter, while 'Locked In' by Brian O'Riordan and 'The Wrong God' left the glamorous Whale Theatre reeling with their impact.

Outside of the official selection, three films were invited to be shown. 'Rise at the Cove' showcased the social impact of the Rise at the Cove Cafe and what it means to have a space like this in Greystones.

Gavin Murphy and Phil Thompson, who operate the cafe, also attended the festival, highlighting what collective community effort can do to change lives. Another high impact special invitation film was the short version of Dave Thomas' 'Journey to Pride', filmed by Liam O'Leary, which documented how Wicklow's first ever Pride Parade came to fruition. The film felt impactful, moving, and very timely, leaving some audience members in tears.



Filmmaker Dave Thomas with Patrick Bracken at the Wicklow Stories Film Festival.



Attendees of the film festival with Laura Whitmore, Ciara Kelly and Marlena Murphy, and Phil Thompson and Gavin Murphy from Tiglin and Rise at The Cove.

One of the highlights of the evening was the showing of Laura Whitmore's heartbreaking drama 'Sadhbh'. Laura flew over from London, especially for the festival, bringing it to new heights. She spoke in a very candid and honest way about the writing

process behind the scenes. 'Sadhbh' is a film about motherhood and deeply human emotions, which she portrayed brilliantly as the main character, Claire.

Interviewed by Ciara Kelly, Laura spoke about her career highlights, next steps and the impor-

ance of storytelling, echoing the sentiment that the Wicklow Stories Film Festival was built around: Wicklow people are great storytellers and deserve a homegrown platform.

The six selected films were given locally sourced, sustainably

made trophies, created by Ecoset, a Greystones company that is tackling the plastic problem, one high quality cup at a time. For next year, the festival will soon open its submissions, which will be announced on the website wicklowstories-filmfestival.com

Gaelán Quartet at Coolattin House

Sat 11th November 8pm €16/€14

The Gealán Quarte (Gina Maria McGuinness, violin; Eoin Ducrot, violin; Fiachra de hOra, viola; Paul Grennan, cello) returns for the second tour for the Foundation with a fascinating programme featuring a new quartet by Derry composer Michael Doherty.

Schumann wrote his gorgeous A minor quartet just seventeen years after Beethoven's last quartets and the spirit of the master is clearly still present, but there is also some of the lightness of touch of the quartet's dedicatee Mendelssohn as well as glimpses of the future richness and density of Brahms' great chamber works. Bartók's musical language is utterly distinctive and his second quartet is built around the stunning, frenetic virtuosity of its second movement. Written in the war-torn Europe of 1917, the quartet is pervaded by an expressive intensity and sense of tragedy. The Courthouse Arts Centre is presenting this off-site concert.

Gina Maria McGuinness

Born in Dublin, Gina Maria began her musical path at the age of four with Maria Kelemen and later followed her studies with Prof. Ronald Masin, winning the title "Young Musician of Tallinn", Estonia in 1998. In 2006, she was invited back by the Estonian Symphony Orchestra on an Estonian tour of Brahms Double Concerto, and later gave her debut solo recital at the NCH Dublin

alongside renowned pianist Alasdair Beatson in June of 2007. Over countless years of leading the YES Chamber Orchestra (YESCO) and regular participation of the West Cork Chamber music festival, Gina developed her never ending love of chamber music. Her love flourished when she continued her studies with Prof. Shmuel Askenasi in Lübeck, Germany and later in Chicago, where she received her performance diploma with the highest of honour. It was here, home to the Chicago Symphony orchestra, that her passion for orchestral playing began. Gina later continued her studies in Lausanne "HEMU Site De Sion" in the class of Prof. Pavel Vernikov where she again received with high honour her Masters degree.

Calling Zurich her home for more than 10 years, Gina enjoys a flourishing career as a soloist, chamber and symphonic musician. A frequent guest of the GAIA Chamber Music Festival, Gina performs with countless orchestras throughout Switzerland, and is a proud member of the European Philharmonic of Switzerland (EPOS), the City Lights Orchestra Lucerne and is regularly invited as guest co-principal of the

Brussels Philharmonic. Gina fondly plays and Andre Amati violin, School of Cremona, Ivano Conti.

Eoin Ducrot

Eoin is a prizewinner at numerous international and national competitions both as a soloist and chamber musician, and has become an all-rounded experienced performer, of solo, chamber music and contemporary repertoire. Eoin has premiered many contemporary works for violin and chamber-music, and has performed as a soloist with orchestras such as Sinfonieorchester, Basel, CSM Symphony Orchestra, and Orchestra du Cnr de Nantes. Eoin is the founder of the Opalio Quintet and a member of Quartetto Zart. He is working as the assistant of Raphael Oleg at the Hochschule für Musik in Basel as well as being a guest player at Tonhalle Orchester Aarau. Eoin completed both his Performance Masters, and his Specialised Soloist Masters with unanimous maximum marks. He is currently doing post graduate studies win the class of Guy Braunstein as well as being a member of the masterclass series with Leonidas Kavakos at HSM Basel.



The Gaelán Quartet

Fiachra de hOra

Dublin born Fiachra de hOra (1999) is currently in his bachelor studies at the Conservatorium van Amsterdam, studying with Nobuko Imai and Marjolein Dispa. He has given recitals in the National Concert Hall in Dublin and in the Westport Festival of Chamber Music, and has performed as soloist with orchestras such as the Ulster Orchestra and the Conservatorium van Amsterdam Symphony Orchestra.

He plays with a bow by Ivan Conti donated through the inaugural International Master Course held in the National Concert Hall Dublin in August and plays on a Bertrand Galen viola supported by Music Network's Music Capital Scheme.

Paul Grennan

Irish cellist Paul Grennan spent

his childhood roaming the fields and beaches of County Wicklow. After studying at the RIAM he was accepted to the RNCM following masterclasses and a personal recommendation from the renowned cellist Mstislav Rostropovich. Whilst at the RNCM, Paul won the John Bariboroli Cello Prize, received second place in the Premio Francesco Geminiani in Verona while also receiving scholarships and a Music Education Award from the MBF.

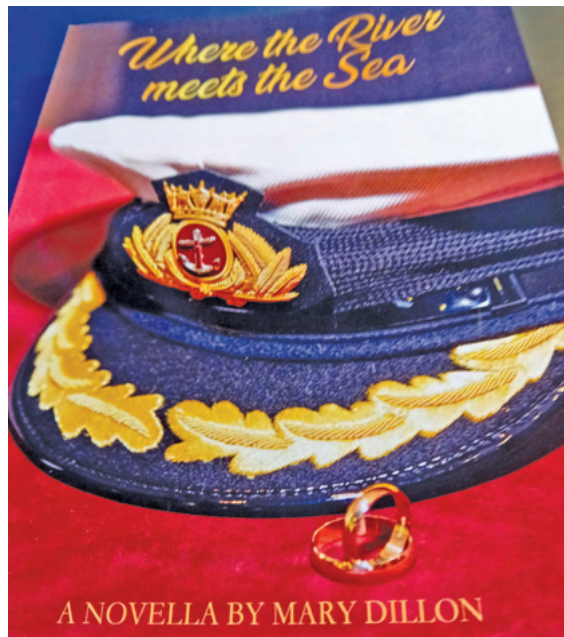
He has given chamber music recitals throughout Europe and worked on a personal basis with composer such as Kurt Schwertsik, Alexander Goehr, James MacMillan and Colin Matthews. Paul has performed chamber and solo works by James MacMillan and quartets and works for Cello and Piano by Goehr at the Wigmore Hall in London.

As well as being a member of

the wonderful Hallé cello section, Paul freelances with orchestras throughout the UK and Ireland including The BBC Philharmonic, RLPO, Irish Chamber Orchestra, RSNO, BBC National Orchestra, of Wales and more. He is currently on trial for principal cello with the RTE Concert Orchestra in Dublin. Paul has toured Asia, USA, Australia and Europe with various classical and pop groups as well as completing a residency in the Hong Kong Academy of Performing Arts with the contemporary ensemble Psappha.

As a soloist, Paul has performed at the Stockhausen Festival and Minimalist Festival at the Onassis Cultural Centre in Athens as well as performing at the Barbican Hall with the BBC Symphony Orchestra in a production of Max Richter's Memoryhouse.

Where the River Meets the Sea: A new work of fiction from Arklow writer



A new and exciting piece of fiction is being launched in Arklow on 3rd November. The novel 'Where the River Meets the Sea', is set in the 1950s and explores the impact of rumour and gossip on Carrickbawn, a small, close knit town. Written by Mary Dillon, a native of Arklow, each chapter is told from the perspective of a different character leading the reader to an expected conclusion.

Mary is a member of Arklow Writers Room and contributed to their sell out anthology, Glimpses, which was published in July. She has been writing for many years but this is her first novel. Having travelled the world, Mary is now back in her native Arklow and describes writing this novel as an absorbing project. Although a work of fiction, each character contains elements of people she has come across during her travels and she seeks to bring something from under the surface of each character to the fore in her writing.

Sadly, Mary lost her husband, William Mates, in January 2022, and this novel is dedicated to his memory. Mary and William supported the children of the Darndale Childrens Creche for a number of years and the proceeds from the sale of this book are being donated to this cause.

Copies of the novel will be available from Kavanaghs shop on the Wexford Road, Paul Doyles Main Street and Burkes Spar Lower Main Street and from Mary Dillon through Facebook.

Where the River Meets the Sea is being launched upstairs in the Harbour Bar in Arklow at 8pm, on Friday 3rd November, and all are welcome.

Wicklow writer Jody O'Neill among winners at Zebbie Awards

Wicklow writer Jody O'Neill was among the winners at the 16th Writers Guild of Ireland (WGI) Zebbie Awards, held on 17th October in the Sugar Club in Dublin. The awards celebrate the best of Irish writing for stage, screen and radio. O'Neill won the award for Best Animation Script, for *Fia's Fairies (The Little Lost Gráinneog)*.

Lisa McGee received a Best Television Drama Script Zebbie for an episode of her smash hit comedy *Derry Girls*, beating off stiff competition from Sharon Horgan, for *Bad Sisters*, and Mark O'Halloran, for *Conversations with Friends*. An Cailín Ciúin, which had the distinction earlier this year of becoming the first Irish language film to be nominated for an Academy Award, secured a Zebbie for Colm BairÉad for Best Feature Film Script. It was up

against the scripts of *Lakeland*, written by Robert Higgins & Patrick McGivney, and *Aisha*, written by Frank Berry.

Ciara Elizabeth Smyth won the Zebbie for Best Theatre Script for *Lie Low*; Joanne Ryan won Best Radio Drama Script for *Eggsistentialism*; Carmel Callan won Best Continuing Drama Script for *Fair City* (Series 33, Ep 106); Katie McNeice won Best Short Film Script for *Lambing*.

The Zebbie Awards, which were present-

ed by writer and actor Tara Flynn, celebrate the best of Irish writing in Theatre, Television Drama, Continuing Drama, Short Film, Feature Film, Radio and Animation. Only WGI members can vote for the winners from the nominated scripts. The awards are named in honour of O.Z. 'Zebby' Whitehead, a Broadway and Hollywood actor who was a great supporter of theatre and writing in Ireland after he moved to Dublin in 1963.

The WGI campaigns for rights, remuneration, more control of work and better recognition for its members, with writers typically not getting a proper share in the success of their work as programmes are more likely to be associated with the director or actors.

Irish American Arts Award for Bray artist

Bray-based artist Róisín O'Farrell has been named the IBAM Chicago 2023 Visual Artist of the Year. Nominated by Cork gallery owner, Ken Buckley, and artist Phillip Gray, the prestigious award is to be presented at a Gala Awards Dinner at the Irish American Heritage Centre in Chicago on November 18th next.

Other winners of IBAM awards this year include Colm Tóibín for literature, Eileen Dunne for broadcasting, and author and filmmaker Dr. Mary Pat Kelly, as Person of the Year. A weekend IBAM festival programme will showcase Irish art, painting demonstrations, live music, book reviews and author talks, as well as the awards ceremony.

Róisín O'Farrell has enjoyed a meteoric rise to become one of Ireland's most successful artists, both commercially and artistically popular. She is known for her vibrant,

emotionally resonant works, in jewel-like colours, that capture the essence of home, family, and the human spirit.

Personalities including Jeremy Clarkson, Máiréad Ronan, Gavin Lambe Murphy and the late Sir Jack Leslie have collected her work, and Róisín's paintings regularly pop-up in films, TV and advertising.

Her bright, colourful paintings in textured, buttery oils feature light-filled period interiors, with vintage furnishings and china teacups, as well as her charming whimsical gatherings of

Wellington boots on door steps and in hallways.

The artist's recent work features abstract landscapes that reflect a new and contemporary development in her work, and reflect a new life-stage for the Irish artist, who now spends a large part of the year abroad, hosting transformative art retreats for creative women.

A Rare Breed

Obviously delighted with the international recognition, Róisín O'Farrell is hoping the U.S. award platform will extend awareness of her

art and teaching work.

"I am among a rare breed of Irish artists, managing to make a living doing what I love, creating and teaching art. So, I do count myself fortunate. Being awarded this prize in Chicago is like the icing on the cake, and a super honour when you think of Ireland's immense artistic talent."

Award organiser, IBAM Chicago, is a non-profit organisation dedicated to celebrating Irish Books, Arts and Music, since 2009. Previous award winners include Liam Neeson, Gabriel

Byrne, Jim Sheridan and Stephen Rae for Performing Arts; musicians Sharon Shannon, Maura O'Connell, and Daniel O'Donnell; writers Colum McCann, Marian Keyes and Tim Pat Coogan, and artists Phillip Gray, Jim Fitzpatrick and Robert Ballagh.

Róisín O'Farrell's family, from Dalkey and Kinsale, is steeped in art. Her mother, Patricia Aherne O'Farrell, is also a talented artist. Living in Wicklow, between the sea and the mountains, Róisín says the light and landscape on the east coast fuels her artistic energy.

Ironically, being made redundant in 2009, propelled the talented Irish artist from the world of business into creative pursuits. Posting her works on social media quickly led to gallery representation and a first sell-out solo show in 2010.

Since her discovery, Róisín O'Farrell's work

ARCLIGHT DRAMA STUDIOS PRESENT

Little Women

BY LOUISA MAY ALCOTT

ADAPTED FOR THE STAGE BY PAUL CULLEN

The Whale Theatre
Greystones

Friday November 10th @8pm
Saturday November 11th @8pm
Sunday November 12th @4pm

ARCLIGHT DRAMA STUDIO
Tickets €18/€15 www.whaletheatre.ie

WHALE THEATRE

Little Women

Whale Theatre, Friday 10th, Saturday 11th & Sunday 12th November 2023 at 8pm (doors 7pm) & 2.30pm (doors 1.30pm) on Saturday & 4pm (doors 3pm) on Sunday. Sold out but register for Waiting List at www.whaletheatre.ie or call the booking office on 01 2010550.

Arclight Drama Studio are delighted to present 'Little Women', Louisa May Alcott's classic and moving story, adapted for the stage by Paul Cullen. This celebrated coming of age drama focuses on the lives of the four sisters Meg, Jo, Beth, and Amy, as they grow into young ladies in the nineteenth century. All the familiar scenes play out in a tapestry of New England life as the March girls deal with the Civil War, young love, and striving to be brave, intelligent, and imaginative young women, while reconciling their own ambitions with societies expectations. Celebrated as much today as it was when it first appeared, this timeless story exhibits the virtues of a close and loving family whose perseverance continues to inspire.

This production has an original score written by acclaimed Irish musician, D. Cullen. Age suggestion 7 +. Show length 2 hours including interval



Bray-based artist Róisín O'Farrell at work in her studio

has been widely exhibited in established galleries across Ireland and the UK, with sellout exhibitions in London, Edinburgh, Amsterdam,

Barcelona and in the United States. A mum to two daughters, Róisín O'Farrell is both a passionate artist and teacher, deeply com-

mitted to nurturing creativity in others. She teaches and, more recently, hosts inspirational artists retreats in Ireland, the U.S.A., and in Malta.

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Salary: €53,345 – €65,172 per annum
(Includes 2nd LSI)
REF: 53/2023

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**CLOSING DATE FOR RECEIPT OF COMPLETED
APPLICATION FORMS IS 12 NOON ON
THURSDAY 23RD NOVEMBER, 2023 SHARP.**

Wicklow County Council reserves the right to shortlist candidates in the manner it deems most appropriate
Wicklow County Council is an Equal Opportunities Employer.

Lorraine Gallagher,
Director Of Services,
Enterprise & Corporate Services,
Wicklow County Council,
County Buildings,
Wicklow.
Phone: 0404 20159
Fax: 0404 20112
E-mail: recruitment@wicklowcoco.ie



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Phone: 0404 20159
Fax: 0404 20112
E-mail: recruitment@wicklowcoco.ie

Funding for Tiglin Challenge under Community Safety Innovation Fund

The Tiglin Challenge is set to receive further funding for innovative community safety projects. Under the Government's Community Safety Innovation Fund, €3 million has been allocated in between a number of projects that enhance and promote community safety.

The Tiglin project is one of the successful projects under the Community Safety Innovation Fund, which uses the proceeds of crime as seized by An Garda Síochána and the Criminal Assets Bureau to help build stronger, safer communities and further invest in communities.

Minister Simon Harris said, "I am delighted to confirm that the Tiglin Challenge is to receive funding under the Government's Community Safety Innovation Fund. Tiglin has long been an incredible resource for County Wicklow and has done fantastic work towards helping to develop and foster caring communities across the county. I am glad to confirm now that they will be receiving funding to further develop their rehabilitation programmes.

This fund uses the proceeds of crime as seized by An Garda Síochána and the Criminal Assets Bureau and is now being re-invested into communities and areas that need our greatest help. Earlier this year, I brought An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar to Tiglin to see the incredible, life-changing work they do. Today is a further recognition of the invaluable role they play in changing the lives of families and communities across this country



The Tiglin Centre in Ashford

Funding announced for new 'Class B' fire appliance

*New appliances will help maintain
a reliable frontline response fleet*

The Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Darragh O'Brien TD, has announced funding of €20.8 million for the provision of 40 new 'Class B' fire appliances, which will be allocated across the country's 27 Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services. Wicklow County Council will receive one of the new appliances.

'Class B' fire appliances are the first appliances mobilised to all incidents. They generally carry 1,800 litres of water, have a main pump built in and carry equipment including a selection of hoses, ladders, breathing apparatus equipment, hydraulic cutting equipment, chimney fire equipment and first aid equipment.

A new Joint Procurement Framework agreement with the Office of Government Procurement (OGP) has been established for the supply of the appliances.

Outlining the details Minister O'Brien said, "in order to maintain a reliable frontline response fleet in optimal condition, a total of €20.8 million will be allocated for new 'Class B' fire appliances which will be allocated in three tranches from 2023 to 2025."

Speaking about the Fire services, Minister O'Brien said, "I have a longstanding admiration and respect for the work of the fire services. Our firefighters are dedicated and committed people that protect lives, communities, property and local infrastructure

from fire and other emergency situations. The allocation of these 40 new appliances is a clear demonstration of the Government's support for local authority Fire and Rescue services and its commitment to strengthening emergency response capacities."

Speaking about the new arrangement, Minister of State with responsibility for Public Procurement and Government, Ossian Smyth TD, said, "this new Joint Procurement Framework Agreement is an excellent example of collaboration between Government bodies, and I am really pleased to see such a positive, practical solution from partnership working."

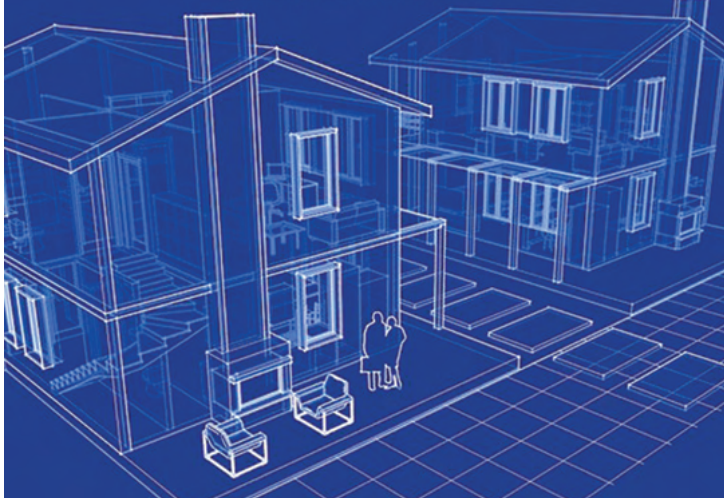
This news comes following the conclusion of Fire Safety Week, which this year ran from the 9th to 15th of October. During Fire Safety Week, community groups were asked to check in with vulnerable neighbours, family and friends in their communities. A working smoke alarm is the first line of defence

should a fire break out at home and an additional €100,000 has been invested this year, through the expanded Community Smoke Alarm Scheme from local Fire Authorities, to provide specially adapted smoke alarms for more vulnerable members of our society.

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WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

I Louise Noble intend to apply for Planning Permission at No. 63 Charnwood, Vevay Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow, A98ND37 for the removal of an existing Porch and Shed, and the building of a new single storey house extension to the Southside, front and rear of the existing House, consisting of one Bedroom / Office, Snug Room, Toilet and Utility Area. The planning application may be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy at the offices of the 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.

16th year of 'Going for Growth'

Going for Growth, the award-winning business development scheme for female entrepreneurs determined to grow their businesses is now accepting applications for the 16th year of the programme.

The programme, which is supported by Enterprise Ireland and KPMG, helps ambitious female entrepreneurs to achieve their growth ambitions - helping to build stronger companies, create new jobs and increase revenues.

The deadline for applications for the 16th cycle of Going for Growth is Friday 17th November

2023. Up to 60 places will be available and applications are sought from female entrepreneurs across all sectors who are strongly focused on growth. There is no charge for those selected and the six-month initiative will begin in January 2024.

Going for Growth has seen more than 900 busi-

nesswomen take part since its first cycle in 2008.

Some of the past participants include Aimee Connolly of Sculpted by Aimee; Andrea Doolan of Atlantia Clinical Trials; Derval O'Rourke of Derval.ie; Kate Scott of HoloToyz; Louella Morton of TestReach; and Vanessa Creaven of

Spotlight Oral Care. Going for Growth has been repeatedly recognised by the EU, OECD, and European Institute of Gender Equality as a key initiative in helping to foster greater ambition among female entrepreneurs and to support their growth aspirations.

The programme brings together female entrepreneurs for monthly peer-to-peer roundtable discussions facilitated by successful businesswomen. They are known as Lead Entrepreneurs. Their participation is completely voluntary and is done in a spirit of altruism and the wish to share their experience and insights with others at an earlier stage of their growth journey.

Seven of this year's Lead Entrepreneurs are former Going for Growth participants.

This year's voluntary Lead Entrepreneurs include Anne Cusack,

formerly Critical Healthcare; Chupi Sweetman-Durney, Chupi; Jeananne O'Brien, Artizan Food Co.; Leonora O'Brien, formerly Pharmapod; Louise Phelan, Phelan Energy Group; Marissa Carter, Carter Beauty; Monica Flood, formerly Olas IT; Oonagh O'Hagan, Meaghers Pharmacy Group and Tara Beattie, Prep-sheets.com.

The 15th cycle of Going for Growth reported significant results for its 69 participants. Combined turn-over increased from €80.6m at the start of the cycle to almost €92.3m by the end, almost a 15% increase in just six months. Their combined workforce increased by 118 people over the cycle, while nine participants began exporting their products and services for the first time.

Feedback from the previous cycle was also extremely positive, with 96% of participants saying their involvement brought about practical change within their business and 97% saying they felt nearer to achieving their ambitions. All participants said they would recommend Going for Growth to others.

The support provided does not end on completion of the six-month cycle, with most participants becoming part of the Going for Growth community. Going for Growth alumni can apply for the Continuing the Momentum programme, which offers Lead Entrepreneur-facilitated roundtables to those looking to continue their growth journey, with the aid of peer support, focused goals, and milestones.



Cllr Tom Fortune supporting Wicklow Naturally at the launch of Screen Hub at Clermont Campus last week.



Olivia Lynch, Partner KPMG; Leo Clancy, CEO of Enterprise Ireland; past participant Grainne Mullins, founder of Gra Chocolates and Lead Entrepreneur Oonagh O'Hagan, owner and Managing Director of the Meaghers Pharmacy Group

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