

# LOCAL Wicklow Times

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Tuesday 7th November 2023 First Floor, The Boulevard, Quinsborough Road, Bray. A98 R6D7. Tel: 01 - 2869111 E-mail: wicklowed@localtimes.ie www.wicklowtimes.net

## 145 BOARDED UP COUNCIL HOUSES

Sinn Fein TD John Brady at a meeting of the Dail Public Accounts Committee last Thursday questioned the Secretary General at the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Graham Doyle on the failure of the government to provide sufficient funding to Wicklow County Council to allow for something in the region of 145 vacant and boarded up local authority properties in County Wicklow to be repaired and refurbished to the level that they could be relet to some of the thousands of families on the housing list.



John Brady TD

Brady said: "We are in the midst of a chronic housing shortage. It is the number one political challenge for the government. A whole generation have been affected by the mess that this government has created in housing. And it is a national crime that we have what was confirmed to me as approx. 2,000

vacant and boarded up local authority houses across the state. 145 of which are in Wicklow. Some of which have been left vacant for up to two years.

"These are not empty shells, they are potential safe harbours to some of the many, many families who have found their hopes and dreams crushed by



Evaine Healy pictured with Elsa the sheep in Roundwood. Evaine raised Elsa herself after finding her half frozen in a field. Elsa is currently carrying twin lambs, and will be shortly appearing in a music video for Niamh Beatrix Smith, who recently wowed audiences in the Junior Eurovision Ireland contest.

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the failure of the government to address the housing crisis in the State.

"The fact that Wicklow County Council are unable to draw down the funding required from central government to allow these properties to be repaired and brought up to a standard that would allow them to be re-let to some of the thousands crying out for a home, is indicative of the ham-fisted approach of this government, and in particular, the Minister for Housing, Darragh O'Brien.

"Last year the Department of housing had an underspend of over half a billion euro, and yet they are unable to provide local authorities, such as Wicklow County Council with the funds

that could put 145 houses back into use for families. At this week's PAC meeting I called on Graham Doyle, the secretary general at the Department of Housing, to engage with local authorities across the state, but particularly here in our own county of Wicklow, where we have an identifiable and quantifiable housing stock that can be brought into use for families if the government provide the local authorities with sufficient funding to do so.

"I am also calling on Minister Darragh O'Brien to ensure that the 2,000 vacant and boarded up properties across the state, and not allowed to be left in this continual state of disrepair and abandonment, when people are literally crying

out for homes. There are huge challenges in the whole area of the

provision of housing. This is something that is eminently doable.

All that is required is for the Government to do their job."

### Cllr. Stephen Stokes

Independent Councillor & Peace Commissioner Serving  
Charlesland, Delgany, Greystones, Kilcoole, Killadreenan & Newcastle

MONTHLY ADVICE CLINICS  
Second Saturday of Each Month

**Greystones**

9.15am - 10am

Dr. Ryan Community Centre

**Newcastle**

10.30am - 11.15am

Newcastle Community Centre

**Delgany**

12pm - 12.30pm

Wicklow Arms



stephenstokes101@gmail.com

@StephenStokesGreystones

An Independent Voice for the Greystones Municipal District



# YARN Storytelling Festival in Wicklow

Now celebrating its 14th year, YARN is a community based non-profit making festival that strives to bring the art-form of storytelling to as many people of all ages in the community as possible.

This year's programme is once again brimming with some of Ireland's finest storytellers and organisers are thrilled to welcome international guest Monique Burg from France and have Storyteller and Bray local Philip Byrne as our 2023 Storyteller in Residence.

"Thanks to the partnership and support of Wicklow Arts Office and Wicklow Libraries we are once again extending YARN right across the

county," Mermaid Arts Centre said.

"With the kind support of Dlr Libraries, Liz Weir has been running a series of storytelling workshops in St. Kieran's School for Travelling Children in Bray, harnessing the children's storytelling skills and exploring their rich storytelling heritage.

"Máirín Mhic Lochlainn and Paddy O'Brien will be performing bilingually in Mermaid and as Gaeilge in some local Gaelscoileanna, connecting children of all ages to this ancient traditional art."

Below are details of the public events. Behind the scenes events are taking place in schools, community groups and nursing homes. Many thanks to all who support the festival and make this possible"

Kicking things off on **Saturday 11th November** Cork storyteller **Maria Gillen** will be sharing stories for children in Bray Library on Eglinton Road at 11am. Admission is free. Following that, French storyteller **Monique Burg** will be in the Shoot Room at Killruddery House & Gardens at 2pm for more family tales. Again, admission is free. On Saturday evening, **11th November at 8pm** there is **Southern Weave**, upstairs in Bray Town Hall at 8pm. This is an evening of storytelling for adults featuring both Maria Gillen and Monique Burg and tickets cost €12 and €10 concession.

On **Sunday 12th November at 2pm** the **Little Bray Writer's Group** will be in Mermaid with readings from Inside

Out. Admission is free, booking essential. At 7pm **Brian White** from Bray Cualann Historical Society will be sharing stories and photographs relating to earth, wind, fire and water in Bray. Tickets are €7/5.

The YARN film is **Tarrac**, the story of Aoife, a workaholic based in Dublin, reluctantly returns home to Kerry to care for her father after his heart attack. Having left years previously after the death of her mother, the relationship between father and daughter is strained. The film is as Gaeilge with English subtitles.

On **Tuesday 14th November at 8pm** in Mermaid three storytelling greats come together for **'Wisdom Fair'**. Simone Schuemelfeder (Germany/Ireland), Fiona Dowling (France/Ireland) and Senem Donatan Mohan (Turkey/Ireland) show us how, beyond their great power to entertain, stories can also help us with the business of living. In **'Wisdom Fair'**, audience members propose life questions or dilemmas to a panel of three storytellers who will try to respond with a matching folktale. Tickets cost €12/10.

Over the last six months, **Mr Sands Youth Theatre** in Bray has been exploring the art of storytelling with storytellers Órla McGovern (Moth & Butterfly), Aron and Sorcha Hegarty (Candlelit Tales), and Llion Parry (Arad Goch Theatre Company, Aberystwyth). On Thursday 16th November they bring 'A Yarn of Sand' to the Mermaid. Tickets are €5.

YARN Storytelling

Festival is thrilled to welcome **Thomas McCarthy** to the stage at Mermaid for the first time on **Friday 17th November at 8pm**. Irish Traveller, Singer and Storyteller Thomas McCarthy is passionate about his heritage and keeping stories of his ancestors alive. Join him as he shares both songs and stories he has learned from his family which have been passed down through the generations. Tickets are €12/10.

**Saturday 18th November** is a busy YARN events day - starting off with **family tales** in Ballywaltrim library at 11am with Senem Donatan Mohan. Admission is free, no booking required. At 2pm Galway based **Moth & Butterfly** tellers will be sharing family stories in the Shoot Room at Killruddery Farm Market. Again, admission is free. At 3pm Mermaid's Storyteller in Residence **Philip Byrne** will be hosting another free event, **Tea & Tales** for adults in Ballywaltrim library. Storyteller **Liz Weir** and the children from St. Kieran's NS for Travelling Children will be in Mermaid at 3pm also with **Tales Along the Road** - showcasing their learnings from a series of workshops harnessing their natural storytelling skills. Admission is free, booking essential.

**Colum Sands and Anne Harper** will be performing 'Knowing the Ground on Which We Stand' on **Saturday 18th November at 8pm** in Mermaid Arts Centre. Armed with guitar, harp, clarinets and whistle, singer-songwriter Colum Sands and classical musician Anne Harper share

stories, songs and tunes inspired by the language that connects us to the places where we live. On **Sunday 19th November at 11am** both Colum and Anne will be facilitated a workshop on the healing potential of music and stories. Tickets are €15.

Mermaid Arts Centre is delighted welcome Máirín Mhic Lochlainn and Paddy O'Brien with **'Scéal I mBarr Bata/ A Tall Story'** on **Sunday 19th November at 2pm** in Mermaid. Stories will be performed bilingually. Máirín and Paddy will spend the following days telling as Gaeilge to hundreds of primary school pupils.

The YARN Story Circle has been taking place monthly all year. As part of the festival, with the kind support of The Harbour Bar, Mermaid are coming together for the YARN Story Circle Story Swap on **Sunday 19th November at 3.30pm** upstairs in the Harbour Bar. This event is donation based in aid of the lifeboats (RNLI Wicklow). All welcome. The Bean an Tí (MC) for the Story Swap is the very talented Órla McGovern.

With the kind support of Wicklow Arts Office, Mermaid are taking their stories into West Wicklow. Colum Sands, Jack Lynch and Eimear Burke will be performing **'After Autumn Almanac'** on **Wednesday 22nd November in the Glenmalur Lodge at 8pm** and on **Thursday 23rd November at 8pm in Lynham's of Laragh**. Both events are free of charge.

**YARN storytelling** events are coming to libraries across County

Wicklow: Bray Library - Eglinton Road, Bray - Sat 11th Nov at 11am-12pm - Storyteller Maria Gillen (Family Storytelling ages 5+). Baltinglass Library - Tuesday 14th November at 6.30pm-7.30pm - Storyteller Jack Lynch (Tales for adults 14+). Tinahely Library - Tuesday 14th November at 6.30-7.30pm - Storyteller Joe Brennan. Enniskerry Library - Wednesday 15th November at 6.30pm-7.30pm - Storyteller Nuala Hayes (Family Storytelling ages 5+). Ballywaltrim Library, Bray - Saturday 18th November at 11am-12pm - Storyteller Senem Donatan Mohan (Family Storytelling ages 5+). Grey-stones Library - Tuesday 21 November at 6.30pm-7.30pm. -

Storyteller Simone Schuemelfeder (Family Storytelling ages 5+). Rathdrum Library - Wednesday 22 November at 6.30pm - 7.30pm - Storyteller tbc. Wicklow Town Library - Thursday 23 November at 6.30pm-7.30pm - Storyteller tbc. Admission to all library YARN events is free of charge.

The YARN Storytelling Festival is curated and organised by Aoife Demel, Mermaid's Communications Manager/ Speaking about this year's festival Aoife said "There is something magic that happens when a story connects a teller and a listener. Ireland is renowned worldwide for its rich oral storytelling tradition. I am delighted to continue to bring this wealth to Wicklow".

Full details are available on [www.mermaid-artscentre.ie](http://www.mermaid-artscentre.ie) or by calling Box Office on 01-2724030.



Japanese born storyteller Masako Carey comes to YARN on Wednesday 15th November at 8pm with 'Ohanashi'. In this première for YARN, Masako Carey invites her listeners to enter another world and explore Japanese culture. This event takes place in Mermaid Arts Centre and tickets are €12/10.

## Local History talk at Wicklow Town Library

All are invited to attend an upcoming talk with one of the county's finest historian Rosemary Raughter entitled "'This dread illness': the impact of the 1918-19 influenza epidemic in Co Wicklow". Having emerged first as a 'summer scourge' in June 1918, with two further peaks in autumn 1918 and spring

1919, the Spanish Flu left behind a death toll of approximately 20,000 in Ireland as a whole, with Wicklow one of the counties most severely affected. While the impact on various parts of the county varied from time to time, no neighbourhood remained untouched, and local and national newspapers, as well as official death records and family lore, offer a vivid picture of the events of that traumatic period. This talk will take place at Wicklow Library, in the Exhibition Space on the third floor on Thursday, November 16th at 7 p.m. To book your place contact Wicklow Library on 040467025 or email [Wicklowlocalstudies@wicklowcoco.ie](mailto:Wicklowlocalstudies@wicklowcoco.ie)

## The Old Dublin Society

Dr. Angela Byrne will present her lecture recalling 'John Lees visits to Dublin in 1806 and 1807' at 6 p.m. on Wednesday November 8th in the Conference Room of Dublin City Library and Archive, 139 - 144 Pearse Street, Dublin 2. All are welcome - admission is free - no booking required.

## 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.



David Drakeford, Gerlanda Maniglia and local historian Jim Rees are pictured in Wicklow Library where Jim gave a talk on Captain Ropbert Halpin. See more, page 10.

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Shay Fitzmaurice, Managing Editor - [shay@localtimes.ie](mailto:shay@localtimes.ie)

Ian Colgan, News Editor - [ian@localtimes.ie](mailto:ian@localtimes.ie)

Sales / General enquiries - [info@localtimes.ie](mailto:info@localtimes.ie)

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# Petition opposing junction closure delivered to Council

*'The voices of local people must be listened to'*

Sinn Féin TD John Brady on Friday 3rd November handed in a petition with 1,853 signatories along with his own personal submission to Wicklow County Council regarding the proposed closures of vital junctions on the N11.

The petition and Deputy Brady's submission opposes plans to close the Herbert Road Junction onto the N11 and to remove the roundabout at Hills Garage, instead putting in place a traffic lights system in order to facilitate the Bus Priority Corridor on the N11, which he described as a disaster which will bring the whole of Bray to gridlock if the plans are permitted to go ahead.

Deputy Brady said "There is strong opposition for the traffic plans in Bray which will result in the closure of the Herbert Road Junction, and the installation of a traffic lights system at Hill Garage in place of the existing roundabout.

"The strength of public opinion is evidenced by the 1,853 signatories to a Sinn Féin petition opposing the moves. And this is not to mention what I believe is quite a significant number of submissions submitted by local people opposing the moves. The voices of local people must be listened to.

"The stark reality is that the traffic plans as they currently stand are not just unworkable, they



Deputy Brady outside Council Buildings, Wicklow Town, with the petition containing 1,853 signatures.

are going to result in a disaster for motorists and residents who currently use the Herbert Road Junction, and the Hills roundabout.

"There are three other junctions in Bray. I do not believe that the traf-

fic. Which will result in traffic being forced to use the new junction at the former Hills Roundabout.

"Planners have already conceded that the new junction will privilege traffic exiting the N11. The anticipated influx of additional traffic will be more than this junction can cope with. Particularly when we consider that vehicles are forced to queue out onto the N11 as they await access to the junction.

"This white elephant contrived at the expense of the taxpayer will result in little more than the creation of a car park on the N11 under the guise of introducing a bus lane. Through my interaction with local people and motorists on this issue, and the response in terms of support for the petition and the number of submissions tabled, the strength of opposition is abundantly clear.

"Once again, I am calling on the Green Party Minister for Transport Eamon Ryan to abandon his ideological approach to our transport infrastructure, and to listen to the appeals of the people of Bray."

## Wicklow property prices rise by €5,000

Property prices in Wicklow have risen by €5,000 during the quarter, according to the latest MyHome.ie Property Price Report.

The report for Q3 2023 shows that the median asking price for a property in the county is now €395,000. This means prices have risen by €6,000 compared with this time last year.

Asking prices for a 3-bed semi-detached house in the county also rose by €5,000 over the quarter to €390,000. This means that prices in the segment have risen by the same amount compared to this time last year.

Meanwhile, the asking price for a 4-bed semi-detached house in Wicklow stayed flat over the quarter at €495,000. This price is up by €20,000 compared to this time last year.

There were 664 properties for sale in Wicklow at the end of Q3 2023 which is unchanged from the previous quarter.

The average time for a property to go sale agreed in the county after being placed up for sale now stands at three and a half months.

The author of the report, Conall MacCoille, Chief Economist at Davy, said: "The period of falling house prices we saw earlier in the year has come to an end, with the underlying imbalance between demand and supply providing fresh impetus to the market."

He said that housing demand had remained resilient, despite interest rate hikes.

"That competition for homes is heating up is evident in the 3% premium over the asking price that buyers were prepared to pay in September, up from 1% at the beginning of the year. Furthermore, in July the average mortgage approval was €298,800, up 4% on

the year, lending volumes up 18% on 2022."

He said Ireland had avoided the house price declines seen in the UK and other countries for two reasons.

"First off, the Irish economy has performed far better with employment already 12% above pre-pandemic level, an extraordinary pace of job creation. Hence, housing demand has remained robust. Second, the Irish housing market has been less liquid than other countries, so less vulnerable to the unexpected rise in ECB rates."

However, he noted that supply was still a major issue: "The figures suggest any period of catch-up for housing activity following the Covid19 pandemic is now over. Worryingly, homebuyers may have to reconcile themselves to this tighter market."



Local children gather for a Halloween bonfire in Oldcourt, Bray. Pic: Shayne Phelan

## FLAG public meeting in Arklow

FLAG (Fisheries Local Action Group Programme) is a Community Led Local Development scheme. FLAG operates under Union Priority 3 of the EMFAF regulations and seeks to enable a sustainable blue economy in coastal, island and inland areas, and foster the development of fishing and aquaculture communities.

As part of developing the strategies, they are asking for community input and are hosting a public consultations in November to engage with com-

munities and gather insights into the strengths of the area, the challenges that exist and actions which could be implemented to aid in development.

The Co. Wicklow public meeting will be held in the Arklow Bay Conference & Leisure Hotel on 14th November, 7-8:30pm.

## Public Meeting



Fisheries Local Action Groups  
Grúpaí Gníomhaíochta Iascaigh Áitiúla

FLAG (Fisheries Local Action Group Programme) is a Community Led Local Development scheme that seeks to:

*"enable a sustainable blue economy in coastal, island and inland areas, and foster the development of coastal communities."*

This consultation will aid in the development of a strategy to seek funding from Priority 3 of the **European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF)**.

**South East FLAG** invite you to offer your views on what support is needed to secure the sustainable development of your local coastal community.

- What are the area's strengths?
- What are the challenges that need to be addressed?

This consultation is open to all, including:

- Tourism and other sectors of the Blue Economy
- Aquaculture
- Fisheries
- Community Groups

**14<sup>th</sup> November 2023**

**Talbot Hotel, Wexford | 2-4pm**

**Arklow Bay Conference and Leisure Hotel, Wicklow | 7-8.30pm**

*This is your local community. Please share your views.*

Contact: [FLAG.Strategies@ie.gt.com](mailto:FLAG.Strategies@ie.gt.com)



# Council showcases solar car port at NOAC seminar

A solar car port project installed at Wicklow County Council's headquarters in Wicklow town was showcased at the annual Good Practice Seminar organised by the National Oversight and Audit Commission (NOAC) in Kilkenny on Thursday 26th October.



Gillian Power of Wicklow County Council speaking about the solar car port at Wicklow County Buildings at the seminar.

The car port is generating renewable energy and is assisting with achieving climate change targets in County Wicklow. This innovative project is the largest solar car port project in Ireland covering 107 car park spaces and circa 1600m<sup>2</sup> at County Buildings. The 300kWp of solar panel capacity commenced energy production during the summer of 2022.

Wicklow County Council has identified the use of renewable energy and energy efficiency as a key goal in meeting the national targets and in reducing long-term energy costs in our public buildings.

The Council is the Lead Authority for the Mid-East Energy Unit, established in December 2022 in partnership with Meath and Kildare County Councils and under the SEAI Pathfinder Programme. The Energy Unit will assist all three local authorities in achieving their combined public sector climate action ambitions.

The Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Aoife Flynn



The solar car port at County Buildings, Wicklow Town

Kennedy, commented: "It is great to see County Wicklow being showcased on a national scale for the hard work and innovation carried out by the staff of Wicklow County Council."

Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council, Emer O'Gorman, stated: "The installation of the solar panel car ports at County Buildings in Wicklow is a great example of using existing sites, such as car parks, to generate renewable energy and assist in achieving Wicklow's Climate Change targets."

The 6th annual Good Practice in Local Government Seminar, organised by NOAC in collaboration with the

Local Government Management Agency and the County and City Management Association, presented a wide range of local authority innovations across numerous areas such as renewable technology, building on crisis management, recruitment, education, tourism, strategy development and accommodation assistance for vulnerable persons.

Opening the event, Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Darragh O'Brien TD, recognised the initiative, innovation and hard work of local authorities while addressing attendees. He also praised the "significant work carried out by the NOAC Board and the vital role it has in

providing independent oversight of the local government sector."

Minister O'Brien added: "The variety and calibre of projects showcased today really brings the work of our local authorities to life and shows the positive impact being made across the country through our local government colleagues. The projects also show the importance of local action and coordination on topics as diverse as housing, education and climate change and the leadership of our local authorities as the driving force behind so much good work. I commend the great projects discussed this morning and

NOAC for creating the opportunity for local authorities to learn from each other at this annual best practice event."

The hybrid event, held both in-person and virtually in Kilkenny Castle, took place as part of the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform's Public Service Transformation Week 2023 and was attended by Chief Executives and senior officials from local authorities. The showcase provided an opportunity for local government to demonstrate good practice within the sector and gave a platform to share innovative projects that could be replicated across Ireland.

## Introduction to Irish Politics event held in UCD

Working as a county councillor can be extremely rewarding according to Greystones Green Party Councillor Lourda Scott. She made her comments as part of a panel discussion titled 'An Introduction to Irish Politics', organised by UCD Politics and International Relations Society last month.

The speakers, comprising a number of local and national representatives discussed their personal journeys into politics and what attracted them to their respective parties.

Cllr Scott mentioned

that "the biggest motivation for me is to make sure all voices in the community are represented in the decisions being taken by the Council," noting that, of the six councillors in Greystones,

she is the only woman.

She also highlighted the importance of really listening to people to understand the challenges they are facing and said that getting things done requires 'persistence and an ability to

deal with setbacks'.

The speakers agreed that despite the challenges, there are unique rewards to the role, such as the satisfaction that comes from helping to address issues of importance to the community with Cllr Scott giving some examples of the kind of projects she has successfully brought forward.

When asked about the best way to a career path in politics the speakers discussed their different backgrounds and how there is no 'one way' into

politics, with Cllr Scott noting that being an elected representative required above all else a passion for working on what you believe in.

In what was a lively and wide-ranging discussion, members of the audience also heard the views of the panel in relation to a range of other matters such as housing and direct provision.

"The level of engagement and interest from UCD students was fantastic to see. I encourage everyone to make sure that they have their say in the upcoming local and European elections and make sure that they are registered to vote."



Cllr Lourda Scott, Sam Windle, UCD Pol Soc, Richard Boyd Barrett TD, Lynn Boylan TD, and Cllr Carly Bailey

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## Limited edition young adult cards introduced by County Council Library Service

Wicklow County Council Library Service has introduced a limited edition Young Adult library card for patrons aged 12-17.

The distinctive and playful card was designed by participants in the Bray Library Comic Clubs alongside comic book artist Elida Maiques. It reflects the creativity, talent and enormous interest in comics, graphic novels and art present in our community.

Children across the county are invited to upgrade their membership to Young Adult once they turn 12, allowing them to access books and DVDs suited to children in 6th class and above. The new limited edition card is a fantastic way of celebrating this transition.

"Reading for pleasure supports resilience, wellbeing and develops empathy which is of great benefit to our whole community," said Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Aoife Flynn Kennedy, who added: "This limited edition library card encourages young people to re-engage with the library during adolescence and discover the many resources available to them there."

Emer O'Gorman, Chief Executive, Wicklow County Council, commented: "This limited edition design encourages

children and young people to re-engage with the library service at an age where reading for pleasure often declines. It is vitally important that children and young people in our community have the opportunity to read engaging stories that reflect their lives and the lives of those around them."

To upgrade a Junior library account to Young Adult, it is necessary for a young person's guardian to fill out a Young Adult Membership form. These are available at the desk of every library in Wicklow County Council, and the process should take less than five minutes.



# 'Roll out of e-bike scheme in Greystones could help alleviate transport issues'

Greystones could soon benefit from the roll out of an e-bike sharing scheme thanks to a recent motion by Green Party Councillor Lourda Scott.



Cllr Lourda Scott

Cllr Scott has welcomed the unanimous support for her motion on bringing an e-bike sharing scheme to the district.

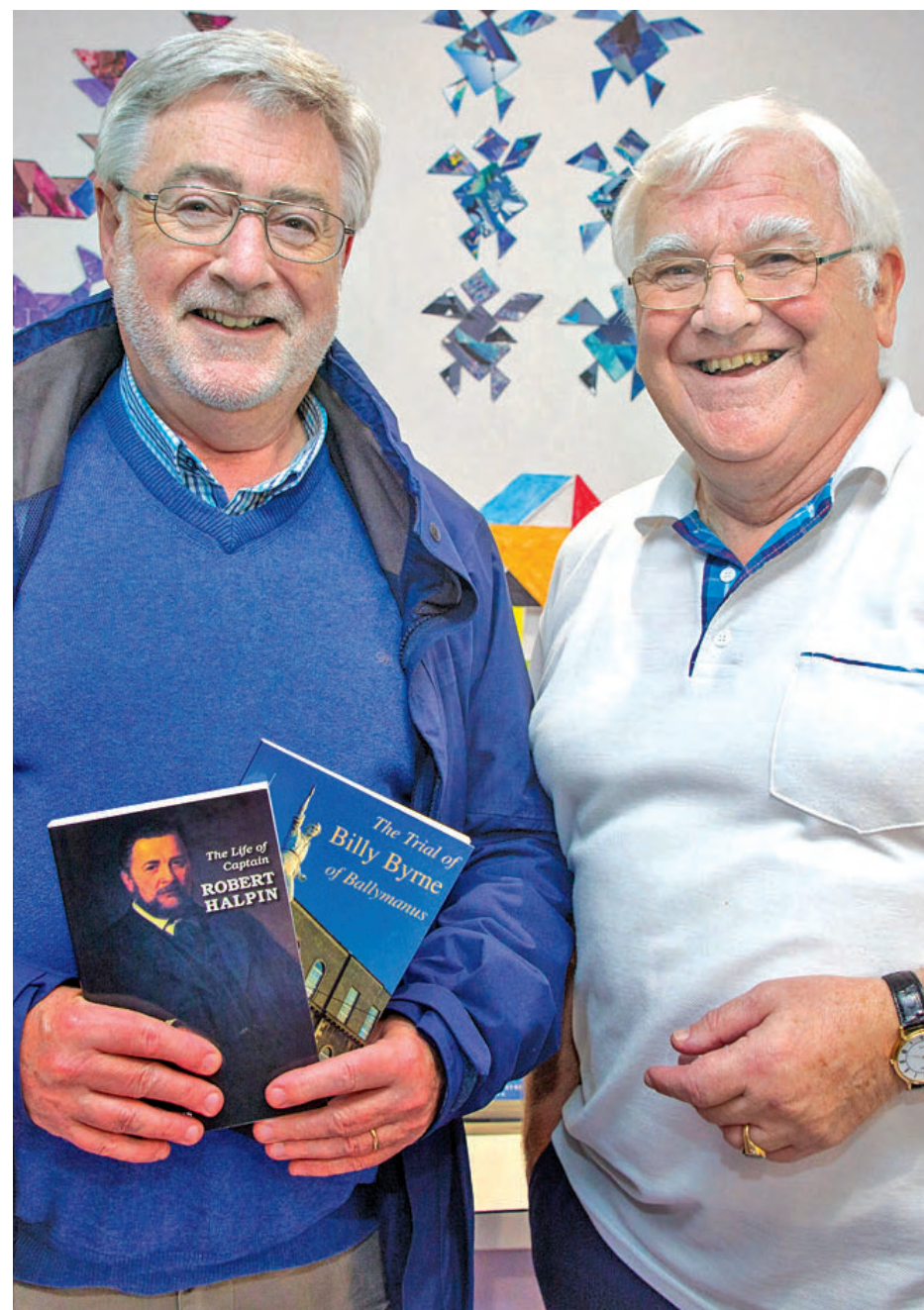
Following a brief discussion at a recent meeting of Greystones Municipal District, it was agreed the council would explore options to bring a scheme to the area. Councillors agreed to write to the Chief Executive making the case that Greystones be considered for the next Bolt e-bike hub.

Speaking after the meeting Cllr Scott said: "E-bike sharing schemes have been very successfully rolled out in other areas across the country such as Athlone and Mullingar, and most recently in Bray. They are a great help in encouraging people to get out of their cars and hire a bike for those short journeys. E-bikes are robust and easy to cycle."

The Green Party Councillor said that the roll out of an e-bike scheme in Greystones would help people to navigate the steep roads in the area as well as being a fun alternative to car transport.

"One of the big advantages is that e-bikes would make it much easier for people to get around our very hilly roads in Greystones and Delgany. Greystones is a rapidly growing town that desperately needs alternatives to car transport. Introducing an e-bike sharing scheme won't solve all the problems in travelling around the area but it would definitely offer an attractive and fun alternative."

"This would also provide a nice option for visitors to the town to get out and explore the area. I have been asking for an e-bike scheme to be rolled out here for some time and I am delighted to have the full support of my fellow councillors on this matter," concluded Cllr Scott.



Jim Smith and Arklow historian Jim Rees in Wicklow Library where Jim Rees gave a talk on Captain Robert Halpin. See page 10.

# Calls for new shuttle bus for Ashford

Fine Gael local representative for Wicklow, Graham Richmond, has written to Minister for Transport Eamon Ryan to press for a new shuttle bus serving Ashford and the surrounding areas.

In the letter, Graham says that he has been contacted by people whose loved ones avail of the new Wicklow

Hospice but who struggle to make the journey out.

"I am writing to you in relation to the clear

need for the commencement of a shuttle bus to serve the Ashford area," Graham said in the letter.

"I have received a

number of calls and emails from local residents who cite the pressing need for a shuttle bus service, particularly to bring residents out the new Wicklow hospice.

"There had previously been plans to establish a shuttle bus service from Wicklow town to the new hospice in Brittas which would also take in Ashford," he added.

In his letter to Minister Ryan, Graham concluded: "I am asking that you and your officials would revisit these plans and work towards the creation of a much needed service that would connect many rural and urban areas in a manner that would provide access to key population areas and important amenities."

Graham, a local teacher, added: "It's clear from talking to Ashford residents that there is a real need for this bus service to be re introduced and I think it is something that will really benefit the community."

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WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL



## NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

### WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL JOINT POLICING COMMITTEE

Wicklow County Council Joint Policing committee will hold a public meeting on

Wednesday 22nd November 2023

At Kilcoole Community Centre, Old School House, Kilcoole, Co. Wicklow  
Commencing 7.00 p.m.

The purpose of the JPC is to provide a forum where the local authority and the senior Garda officers, responsible for the policing of that area, can consult and make recommendations on matters affecting the policing of the area and in particular to keep under review the levels and patterns of crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour occurring and the factors underlying and contributing to it.

Membership of the committee consists of the Chief Superintendent, Senior Members of the Gardaí, Wicklow County Council Chief Executive, Elected Members and representatives from the voluntary and community sector.

The focus of the public meeting will be on policing, rather than individuals and obtaining the co-operation of the public in preventing crime. The local community will have the opportunity to make their views known and ask questions and all are welcome to attend.

To increase the productivity of the meeting and encourage greater participation written questions may be submitted prior to the meeting to [hpurcell@wicklowcoco.ie](mailto:hpurcell@wicklowcoco.ie) or in writing to the undersigned.

Questioners should give their name and contact details, which will not be publicised. While every effort will be made to provide the information requested in certain circumstances it may not be possible for legal reasons or because it would not be in the public interest to do so.

Helen Purcell,  
Senior Executive Officer,  
Wicklow County Council,  
County Buildings, Wicklow.

25th October 2023.



# Harris urges Sea Life owners to reconsider closure

Minister Simon Harris has expressed his shock and deep disappointment at the decision by the Merlin Entertainment Group to close the Sealife facility in Bray, and has called on them to reconsider the decision.

Speaking last week after news of the closure broke over the weekend, Minister Harris said, "This has come as a real shock and surprise to residents in Bray and across our county. Sealife is an important tourism attraction in Bray and in County Wicklow and it is also an important educational hub for students from schools in the community and further afield who enjoy visiting and learning about marine life.

"This decision seems to have come as a bolt from the blue and it was widely recognised that visitor numbers were increasing again since the difficult pandemic days. These days the town of Bray is bustling with visitors and the seafront in particular is a hive of activity. Sealife has been an important draw in attracting visitors into the town and the spin off economic benefits of that are really important.

"I am also thinking of the excellent and dedicated staff and their families at this time of uncertainty. While Merlin have made their decision known, Sealife is still currently operating and I would call on Wicklow County Council, Fáilte Ireland and all relevant State agencies to see if they can assist in having this decision reversed. I would encourage the company to engage in a meaningful way to see if a resolution can be found. I intend to actively pursue this."



Local children pictured at the unveiling of two new 'sea dragons', which were brought from Southern Australia to Sea Life in Bray in 2011

# Amphitheatre performance space planned for Greystones

A grant of €250,000 has been allocated for the construction of an Amphitheatre Performance Space at the La Touche car park in Greystones. The announcement was made at the October 2023 meeting of Greystones Municipal District.

The funding is part of the Outdoor Space Public Scheme 2021, with a majority of the the funding from Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media.

The project will require a Part 8 consultation process.

Welcoming the news, Cllr Stephen Stokes stated: "Greystones needs this type of civic space, as we have tremendous local talent, which will complement the Whale Theatre. I would like to commend Michael Nicholson and Wicklow County Council for their efforts."

The funding for the project is conditional on money being spent within the next year. Cllr Stokes added: "I have been pressing for a number of improvements in this area. At the Greystones District meeting I again mentioned that the security gate can be pushed open by anyone. As such I would like to see a long term solution. We will need to factor in access for Irish Rail, who require large vehicle access."

Cllr Stephen Stokes says this is an excellent opportunity to make the area more user friendly. He noted: "Of course we still need to consult fully with local people to ensure that their views are listened to, but it seems like a positive opportunity. It has great potential to further enhance our area as a creative hub."



Cllr Stephen Stokes in the La Touche Road car park where it's planned to create an amphitheatre performance space



The Dowling family pictured at Rathdrum Rugby Club's 50th anniversary celebrations.



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# Older people urged to avail of Senior Alert Scheme

Already 2,503 Wicklow people have availed of Senior Alert Scheme, including 308 in 2023. Fine Gael TD Simon Harris has urged more people in Wicklow to avail of it.

The Senior Alert Scheme provides funding for a free personal monitored alarm for people aged 65 and over and of limited means.

Minister Harris said: "The Senior Alert Scheme is a fantastic initiative that aims to help older people live safer and more independently in their homes. I'm glad that so over 2,500 have already availed of it in Wicklow since the start of the scheme, including over 300 in this year alone.

"However more people are eligible for this scheme which provides financial help towards a personal alarm which can be worn as a pendant or around your wrist like a watch.

"From speaking to people in Wicklow who have already availed of it I can see the direct benefit and peace of mind it bring to families across the county and I hope more people apply for the scheme. This scheme is about making sure older people feel safe and secure at all time while also providing their families with that extra layer of reassurance.

"If anybody in Wicklow requires any assistance to avail of this scheme, please contact my office at [simon.harris@oir.ie](mailto:simon.harris@oir.ie).

To be eligible for the Seniors Alert Scheme, you must be aged 65 or over and have limited means or resources.

You must also be any of the following:

- Living alone
- Living alone for significant periods of time during the day
- Living with someone who meets the criteria
- Caring for someone else in your household

You must live in the area covered by the registered group administering the funding and be able to benefit from the equipment being supplied. You also need to be willing to keep contact with the registered group.

Registered community or voluntary groups apply to Pobal on the older persons behalf. Pobal does not accept applications from individuals. If you feel you may be eligible for the Seniors Alert Scheme, you should contact the group registered to operate the scheme in your area. Pobal publishes a list of registered organisations on its website. You can also contact Pobal at the address below for details of your local group. Groups wishing to register for the scheme can register online at [pobal.ie](http://pobal.ie).



Wicklow Rugby Club President Graham Burleigh, Jake Keating, James Keating, and Wes Wojnar, pictured at Wicklow Rugby Club's inaugural Inclusive Rugby Festival.

# Newtown Tidy Towns launch 2024 calendar

This year's theme is 'The people and places of Newtownmountkennedy' and features the staff and volunteers of many local businesses and community groups in front of their premises such as Fishers, Wicklow Wolf, the Community Centre and the Men's Shed.

The calendar was put together by Danny Alvey, Jen Quinn and Marie O'Neill and is on sale now for €7 in the local Post Office and Eugene's Foodstore.

Speaking as the calendar was launched, vice-chairperson Danny Alvey said: "This calendar is one of the main sources of fundraising for our Tidy Towns group each year and the funds raised from sales will help us with landscaping, improvements and maintenance around the town over the next year. This year we decided to take a different approach

with the photos and Jen and I had great fun taking photos of all our well-known businesses and characters from around the town. Many local people purchase the calendar each year and send it to family overseas so we thought this would be a nice theme. There is also a collage of professional photos taken by Joe Garde of our 1798 'Battle of Newtownmountkennedy' reenactment event held this year on the Main Street. We really appreciate everyone's support in purchasing the calendar!"



Jen Quinn and Danny Alvey launching the Newtown Tidy Towns Calendar

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# Boxing club receives lease and keys for community facility from Council



Deputy John Brady, Mark Buckley and some of the boxers at Top End Boxing Academy's new premises in Giltspur Heights

Sinn Fein TD John Brady has expressed his delight in helping to secure a full-time premises for the Top End Boxing Academy in Bray. The community based boxing club had been at risk of permanently closing down due to the lack of community space to operate from.

Over the last year or so Deputy Brady has been working with the club and Wicklow County Council to put in place a lease for the community centre in Giltspur Heights in Bray, on Friday last the club finally got the keys.

Deputy Brady said "I want to commend the work of Mark Buckley, David Dunne and all in the Top End Boxing Academy for their commitment and perseverance for the community, boxing and for the club to succeed, so I congratulate them for finally getting the keys from Wicklow County Council for the use of the community centre in Giltspur Heights.

"Over the last year or so, I have been working hard with the club to try to secure alternative full time accommodation to suit their needs and stop

the club permanently closing down. We approached the council with a view of using the community centre in Giltspur Heights, after a number of meetings and putting forward a formal proposal, the council agreed to put a lease in place for the use of the premises and over the last number of months a lease has been worked on.

"This is a win for the community and for sport. The council must be commended for all their work on making this possible. I would like to use this as a stepping stone for the club and will continue to work with them to secure a larger more permanent community based clubhouse."

Dermot 'Daisy' O'Brien expressed his congratulations to Top End Boxing Academy who have shown such resilience amid so many barriers and so much struggle in their search

for a home. "Now they can finally get back to a focus on doing what they do best which is to provide a fantastic outlet for young and old in the community, from champion boxers to people who just need an outlet to clear their head a few times a week or stay fit, the coaches and members of this club are playing a key role in our town and should be supported to do so."

Deputy Brady concluded "The fact that Top End Boxing Academy like many other community based clubs and organisations struggle to survive due to a lack of community space needs to serve as a wake up call. If we want strong, vibrant communities we must put in place the proper facilities, I will continue to work with the council to ensure that the needs of the community are properly served."

## 'Pedestrian crossing needed on Lower Dargle Road'

The Lower Dargle Road must have a safe pedestrian crossing point Green Party Councillor Erika Doyle has said, pointing out that there is not one dedicated crossing point along the entire stretch that runs along the People's Park.

Cllr Doyle said she will ask for funding to be allocated to construct a crossing from the district's allocation of local property tax.

Cllr Doyle said she was aware of the need

for a crossing from talking to residents and as a park user herself and also from witnessing busy evening periods when the park is heavily used.

Cllr Doyle said,

"There is no crossing point along the entire length of the Lower Dargle road. Not only that but there is no footpath alongside the majority of the length of the park. That makes

crossing into the park at its midpoint entrance and lower entrance tricky. Pedestrians are at the mercy of car drivers seeing them and stopping to allow them across to the park. Not everybody can get across quickly, older people and parents with buggies and young children or people with mobility impairments may need a little longer to get across and at busy times this can be difficult.

"The time where the lack of crossing is most evident and causes most issues is weekday evenings when children and adults train in the park. Hundreds of children

are dropped by car to the surrounds or walk from surrounding areas and must cross over to access the park. The heavy traffic at this time and busy movement of children and young people creates an unsafe environment. Parents of slightly older children in the locality would also be reassured knowing that their children can cross safely to the park to play with their friends.

"I have discussed the issue with the council engineers and asked that they cost a crossing at this location in the interest of both local residents and visitors to the park. I will work with the council to progress this proposal in the interests of safety for all concerned," concluded Cllr Doyle.



Cllr Erika Doyle at the People's Park in Bray



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## Waste cleared at Beechbrook Park in Greystones



Cllr Stokes at Beechbrook Park

Cllr Stephen Stokes has thanked Wicklow County Council for clearing a large amount of overgrowth and garden waste, at the Beechbrook Park exit in Greystones.

Cllr Stokes stated: "The dumping and overgrowth was a significant issue for local residents. It caused a visual impairment for vehicles exiting from the estate. Several residents were in touch about the issue, and I was happy to press their concerns to the Council."

Local residents had also expressed concern about having a large amount of organic waste collected in a residential area. Cllr Stokes added: "Like any dumping, it is not environmentally friendly to have waste laying idle. I believed it was imperative to get it cleared. I am grateful to the Council for taking action following my request. They have done an excellent job."

Following the removal of the waste, a footpath was rediscovered for pedestrian use. Cllr Stokes added: "It was a great boost to regain the footpath. This makes it easier and safer for pedestrians to get around. This is particularly important for children walking to local schools, including St. Laurence's National School. I am particularly keen to see road and pedestrian safety enhanced."



# Investigation called for following train failure

**Jennifer Whitmore TD has called for a full investigation by Iarnród Éireann following an outage to overhead DART lines last Wednesday night.**

The incident, which resulted in passengers having to deboard the train between Bray and Shankill and walk along the tracks in the dark, is a cause of concern regarding passenger and staff safety.

Greystones and Dalkey as a result of the power failure, leading to major disruption.

Deputy Whitmore said: "I was very concerned to learn about the deboarding of a DART between Bray and Shankill. An outage to

Services were suspended between

power in overhead lines along the DART line is very serious, and when it results in passengers having to walk along the tracks at night, questions have to be asked about how this happened.

"While I have no doubt that the staff of Iarnród Éireann did all to ensure the safety of all involved, people will have been very nervous. This should not have happened, and we need to know as soon as possible if there are any works required across the line to update the infrastructure in order to prevent this from happening again.

"I will raise this issue with Iarnród Éireann and the National Transport Authority. The DART is a key amenity for us here in East Wicklow, and we must ensure its smooth running into the future."



*Rathdrum Rugby Club's first captain Michael Tierney and present captain Shane Burch unveil a memorial plaque at the club's 50 anniversary celebrations. The plaque states: "In memoriam of all those who have contributed to the game and club we love".*

# 'Electric DART extension to Wicklow Town must be prioritised'



*Jennifer Whitmore TD*

**Jennifer Whitmore TD is calling for the government to make the extension of the electric DART to Wicklow Town a top priority. This comes after Deputy Whitmore met with the National Transport Authority regarding works on the project.**

Speaking after the meeting, Deputy Whitmore said: "The National Transport Authority has confirmed that Iarnród Éireann contracted a team to conduct an options analysis regarding the required infrastructure changes needed to bring the DART to Wicklow. This review is looking at the infrastructure that is required to be put in place, such as double tracking, if a passing loop would be

required, and what would be necessary in the way of charges for the new battery-powered train charges 90 of which have been ordered by Iarnród Éireann.

“The NTA has told me this process has started, and it is due to be completed by September 2024. I welcome this development, however there are significant barriers to overcome with the project.

"It has yet to be confirmed by the NTA or Iarnród Éireann that any of these new carriages will be made available to the Wicklow line. There is also no government funding yet been made available for the delivery of the electric DART to Wicklow.

‘I want to see the DART delivered to Wicklow town, but government promises not backed up by the funding and the political will to deliver it won’t keep this project on track. I will keep on top of this with the Minister for Transport and fight to ensure Wicklow is a top priority for DART extension in the coming years.’



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Filmmaker Dave Thomas

# 'Wicklow needs a short film bursary'

Wicklow is home to major film studios in Admore Studios and Ashford Studios, and Greystones Media Campus, when completed, will be Ireland's largest film and TV studio. Last month saw the official opening of the Clermont Screen Hub, a new facility for content creators located at Wicklow County Campus in Rathnew. Despite all of this activity which is giving Wicklow the reputation as 'The Hollywood of Europe', Wicklow County Council currently doesn't have a short film bursary award. However, Arklow-based filmmaker and author Dave Thomas is hoping to change that.

Over the last couple of years Dave has been pushing for the creation of a Wicklow Short Film Bursary Award. He sent a proposal to Wicklow County Council, the Wicklow Film Commissioner, and the Wicklow Arts Office.

Dave's written proposal outlines how this could be achieved. Many Local Authorities around the country have been offering such bursaries so the mechanism is already there, he says.

"There is no need to reinvent the wheel when it exists and is running smoothly", says Dave.

Dave knows only too well how these bursaries work as he won the FilmOffaly Bursary Award in 2018 (run by Offaly County

Council) and he shot his film 'Aretha' in 2019 in Tullamore. The film has since been screened all over the world, has entertained passengers on Aer Lingus flights and it has won many awards from national and international film festivals.

"The benefits to having a similar bursary in Wicklow is immense", states Dave. "It nurtures new talent, it helps tell engaging stories that may never be told, it provides a real hands-on training opportunity for young people and it showcases the county the film was made in, to a global audience. It's a win-win for everyone."

Dave is currently doing post production on a feature documentary film called 'The Journey to Pride' which was shot entirely on

location in County Wicklow. He is also crowdfunding to shoot a drama/comedy short film in May 2024 starring Pat Nolan.

Dave is reaching out to everyone in County Wicklow and those that support independent film, to write to the Wicklow Arts Office and the Wicklow Film Commissioner to encourage them to bring this initiative to fruition in 2024.

You can support Dave's initiative by contacting: John Powderly, JPowderly@wicklowcoco.ie, Campus Manager | Film Commissioner | Senior Enterprise Development Officer (SEDO), Clermont House, Rathnew, Co. Wicklow, A67 X566, or Jenny Sherwin, Wicklow Arts Office (JSherwin@wicklowcoco.ie).

## Wicklow County Council Library Local Studies Service launches local history talks autumn/winter 2023 schedule

Wicklow Local Studies Library marked the launch of its new autumn/winter schedule of events on Thursday 26th October with a talk by esteemed Historian Jim Rees' entitled 'The Remarkable Captain Robert Halpin'. The evening was a great success with Jim regaling the audience with the maritime feats of their very own local hero Captain Robert Halpin.

As part of the new schedule, each month, one of Wicklow's most prestigious historians will visit Wicklow Town library to present a talk on an aspect of the county's heritage. Rosemary Raughter will be visiting the library in November to speak about the impact of the 1918/19 Spanish Flu in the County. In December, Jim Scannell will be using the local newspapers to provide a glimpse into 'Christmas in Wicklow in 1957'. Pat Power will be ringing in the New Year with his talk on Arklow

Street Preachers, a prominent feature in the town in the late 1890s. Jim Scannell returns in February with his aptly named talk 'Rough Justice' which will look at police intelligence reports from various newspapers to highlight how offenders were treated in 19th century Wicklow. The autumn/winter talk schedule comes to a close in March with a final talk by Joan Kavanagh marking International Women's Day.

Cllr Aoife Flynn Kennedy, Cathaoirleach,

Wicklow County Council, said: "Wicklow County Council Library Service is a centre of community and is committed to developing and promoting cultural vitality, wellbeing and identity. Within this context, the Local Studies Service, through these talks and other initiatives, plays a key role in meeting these commitments, providing the community with a greater understanding of the places, events and people that shaped their surroundings.

Chief Executive, Emer O'Gorman, added:

"County Wicklow has a rich and diverse history. These talks provide the ideal opportunity to celebrate that history, bringing people of all ages and backgrounds together to engage and experience their local history in a welcoming and informal space.

The talks are free and people are advised to book early to avoid disappointment. Bookings can be made by contacting Wicklow Library on 0404 67025 or email Wicklowlocalstudies@wicklowcoco.ie.



Arklow historian Jim Rees giving a talk on Captain Robert Halpin in Wicklow Library

## A new horizon for Wicklow's craft practitioners

Wicklow Craft Foundation (WCF) and County Wicklow Partnership (CWP) are excited to announce a significant milestones in the development of the Wicklow Craft Strategy 2023-2027.

With the backing of the LEADER Rural Development Fund in conjunction with the support of Wicklow County Council and LEO Wicklow, WCF have announced an open call for all Wicklow-based craft practitioners to participate in the creation of the first ever 'Made in Wicklow' Craft Trail.

The project represents a pivotal moment in the advancement of craft in the garden county. It aims to amplify the voices and talents of Wicklow's craft practitioners via a digital craft trail platform, ensuring that the skills and artistry of Wicklow craft are showcased and celebrated as an integral part of our county's rich cultural heritage.



A carving in Irish grown lime, in progress for an organ case, by Chaim Factor

## Funding for late-night events at Mermaid Arts Centre

The Arts Council and the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media announce funding for 14 Arts Centres to open their doors into the night as part of the Late-Night Events Pilot Scheme. This initiative intends to diversify late-night activities, create opportunities for innovative work, and welcome new audiences into existing cultural facilities. The Mermaid Arts Centre in Bray is to receive €30,000 under the scheme.

The programme will encourage new partnerships, supporting engaging night-time arts activities, advocate for a place-based approach, support additional Night-Time Economy interventions, promote cost-effective events, and ensure fair payment for artists and creative workers.

Minister Catherine Martin TD said: "I would like to congratulate the 14 Arts Centres who have been awarded funding through the Late-Night Events Pilot Scheme, one of a number

of Night Time Economy initiatives to benefit from support from my department. This scheme aims to promote a vibrant cultural ecosystem in Ireland that thrives after dark. Through the extension and diversification of our later night cultural activities, it will also provide opportunities for new and exciting work partnerships, encourage new audiences into existing cultural facilities and make the arts more accessible. It will also seek to identify and address any challenges which

venues may associate with staying open late. I wish the arts centres well with their upcoming events."

Maureen Kennelly, Director of the Arts Council, said: "With additional funding from the Dept. of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, we are delighted to fund 14 Arts Centres as part of our Late Night Events Pilot Scheme. The project's core objective is to create a sustainable framework for cultural experiences beyond standard operating hours.

The plans proposed by these 14 Arts Centres will provide tantalising experiences for audiences and artists alike."

For this pilot scheme, the lead applicant was required to be an Arts Centre funded by the Arts Council. The total awarded amount across the 14 Art Centres was €723,407.



# A special selection of new homes nestled in the heart of Greystones

Fairfield is an elegant new development on New Road in Greystones which features a special selection of new homes including 2-bedroom ground floor apartments, 3-bedroom duplex homes and 4-bedroom semi-detached and detached houses. These beautifully crafted high-spec new homes are perfect for families, both big and small.

Developed by Durkan, Fairfield consists of 82 units in total, with 16 units to be released containing a mix of 2 and 3 bedroom homes. The 4-bedroom homes are to be released in the coming weeks. The interior design was done by Jane Duffy Lynch.

This year Durkan is celebrating 60 years in business. For all this time, Durkan have been at the forefront of the building of modern, quality homes with a focus on design and functionality. In today's homes, Durkan have added high-specification materials to maximise energy efficiency and cutting-edge technology to deliver passive and certified homes to very high standards.

Durkan continues to be a family-run business and stays true to its original ethos and character, which holds honesty, authenticity and excellence at its core. Their mission is 'To safely deliver the most energy-efficient family homes through integrating design, construction techniques and new technologies that ultimately create a dynamic and healthy building environment that is sustainable in every sense.'

Examples of Durkan's prestigious work to date include: Sillan, Vartry Wood, Bishops Gate and The Grove.

Fairfield is located only a short stroll from the bustling main street in Greystones and the train station, where Durkan are proud sponsors of the first Corton steel totem art installation at the station - the first in the Legends of Greystones series.

## Apartment & Duplex Special Features

**External Features:** High-quality brick and render finishes complement the energy-efficient Munster Joinery UPVC double-glazed windows. Both the ground floor apartments and three-bedroom homes boast spacious, paved patios, with storage areas available for the latter. External lights are fitted at all unit entrances and patios.

**Media:** Units are pre-wired for high-speed CAT 6 broadband, with TV and data points in the main bedroom and living room. Infrastructure is ready for both Virgin and Eir services, and USB charging sockets are provided in primary rooms.

**Wardrobes & Storage:** Full-height Shaker style wardrobes are present in all rooms, with the master bedrooms' wardrobes featuring LED strips.

**Heating & Energy Efficiency:** Homes use heat pump systems, zonal controls, and Mechanical Ventilation Heat Recovery systems (MVHR) to maintain temperature and air quality. All units achieve an A2 BER rating, benefit from superior insulation and airtightness, and utilize energy-saving LED fittings.

**Bathrooms & Ensuites:** High-quality tiling, presurized showers, separate bath options for duplex units, and premium sanitaryware by Niko define the

bathrooms. All bathrooms come equipped with heated towel rails.

**Kitchen and Utility Rooms:** The kitchens, designed by FitzGerald Kitchens, come with LED strips, stone worktops, and integrated appliances. All homes have utility rooms, and the two-bed apartment features a bespoke kitchen bench for open-plan living.

**Interior Finishes:** Homes enjoy elevated ceiling heights on the ground and first floors, painted doors, stylish skirtings, architraves, and a consistent internal white finish. All interiors are plaster skimmed traditionally.

**Structural Features:** All homes are built using Insulated Concrete Formwork (ICF), boasting concrete walls and floors for superior sound insulation and solidity.

**Warranty:** Each home comes with Homebond Structural and Latent Defects Insurance (10 years) and Mechanical and Electrical Defects Insurance (5 years).

## Houses

The houses are a must-see in Fairfield and are not to be missed with extra ceiling heights finished with detailed coving, stylish skirtings, brushed satin brass finish ironmongery, and antique brass sockets and switches. With impressive Kitchens, Bathrooms, and Master Bedrooms you will need to see for yourself.

**Selling Agents:** DNG New Homes, 30 Leeson Park, Ranelagh, Dublin 6. Tel: 01 4912600.

**Duplex and apartments**  
**Show Homes on view Saturday. 11am - 1pm.**

### Unit types released:

The Schooner (Type A) - 2 bed own door apartment on ground floor of the duplex block c. 79 sq m/c. 850 sq ft.

**Priced from €490,000**

The Caravel (Type B) - 3 bed duplex over first and second floors of the duplex block c. 122 sq m/c. 1,313 sq ft.

**Priced from €575,000**

**The Galleon (Type C) - 4 Bedroom Semi Detached Houses c. 170 sq.m/1,830 sq.ft.**

**The Brigantine (Type E2) - 4 Bedroom Detached 3 Storey House c. 213 sq.m/2,293 sq.ft.**

**The Clipper (Type E3) - 4 Bedroom Detached 3 Storey House c. 240 sq.m/2,583 sq.ft.**

**Prices from €900,000**



The duplex kitchen at Fairfield



Clara Jenkinson, Siobhan Hanrahan, Bert Nicholson and Julieann Moran at Wicklow Rugby Club's inaugural inclusive rugby festival.

## Co-operative Housing Ireland to launch record number of homes in Wicklow

Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Darragh O'Brien TD, and Wicklow County Council Cathaoirleach, Councillor Aoife Flynn Kennedy, will launch Kilruddery Glen later this month.

Kilruddery Glen is a development of 208 A-rated homes comprising a mixture of houses, apartments and duplexes delivered by Co-operative Housing Ireland (CHI) on the Southern Cross Road in Bray on Wednesday 15th November at 11am.

The launch is the largest development of afford-

able and social housing in Wicklow announced in 2023 and one of the largest delivered by an Approved Housing Body in this calendar year. CHI will also be marking the occasion with a 50th anniversary celebration as the organisation has been in operation since 1973.

## Housing Alliance to lead the charge on decarbonising the social housing sector

**Access to funding for retrofitting is a significant challenge for Approved Housing Bodies (AHBs) in Wicklow in meeting net zero carbon targets. That's according to the Housing Alliance, which launched a report on how best to deliver a decarbonised housing sector that meets national climate targets.**

The Housing Alliance, a collaboration of six of Ireland's largest AHBs, commissioned the report, funded by the Housing Agency, to identify the issues, challenges and opportunities for delivering a decarbonised housing sector in Wicklow and across Ireland. The report sets out recommendations to enable the Housing Alliance members to work together to tackle climate challenges.

Key findings of the report:

- Across all stakeholder groups, there was consensus that the top three climate-related issues for the sector are energy management, fuel poverty and retrofit finance.
- Access to finance for retrofitting older homes is a challenge for the sector due to structural issues around how the AHB sector is funded.
- There are retrofit supply chain challenges such as shortages in materials, equipment and labour.

The report was launched by Steven Matthews, TD, Chair of the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Housing, Local Government and Heritage, at an event in No. 6 Kildare Street, Dublin. Guest speakers at the event included Laura Heuston, co-founder at Sustainability Works; Dr. Ad Hereijgers, Director of Business

Development at RITTERWALD in Amsterdam and Mervyn Jones, Consultant Director at Savills Housing Consultancy.

Commenting at the launch, Deputy Matthews said, "I wish to thank the Housing Alliance for their work on this report. It is the challenge of our time to provide public and private housing on a scale that is affordable to purchase or rent, that is energy efficient, warm, healthy and affordable to run and all this is framed in the obligation to decarbonise construction, building materials and domestic energy requirements.

"This report assists us in our research, policy development and legislation; it highlights the role AHBs not only play in the provision of social housing but also in meeting this challenge while delivering homes for our communities."

Commenting on the findings of the report, John Hannigan, Chair of the Housing Alliance said "Approved Housing Bodies (AHBs) across Ireland have a central role in providing social and affordable housing in Wicklow and across Ireland. With over 43,000 homes, decarbonising the sector will be essential in tackling the climate crisis and meeting national targets. The main challenge lies in

funding for decarbonising the current AHB stock through retrofitting. Residential energy efficiency upgrades, also known as retrofits, have been shown to deliver more comfortable homes and health benefits for the occupants as well as reduced energy bills.

"We commissioned this report with the goal of identifying tangible actions to enable the Housing Alliance members to work together to tackle the challenges of decarbonisation. We are proposing that the Housing Alliance should be seen as strategic partners for Government, contractors and finance. Through collaboration and partnership, we can create an efficient and cost-saving way of achieving our housing targets.

"Throughout the report, finance was a key issue raised by respondents. AHBs reported difficulty in accessing public or private debt to fund retrofits. Engaging with Government and key stakeholders to ensure there is a common understanding on how this process can be streamlined is vital. We hope that by sharing our vision and the insights and recommendations in this report, the sector and its key stakeholders will engage and collaborate to realise our potential."



# Kids camp event held at Shelton Abbey

Last week, the Irish Prison Service and the Katharine Howard Foundation hosted an unprecedented event, "Kids Camp," at Shelton Abbey Open Centre on October 31st and November 1st.

The "Kids Camp" event was a unique initiative aimed at strengthening family connections and providing a memorable experience for children with a parent in custody. This ground-breaking event aimed to create a supportive and engaging environment where families can spend quality time together.

Speaking at the event the Irish Prison Service, Director General, Caron McCaffrey said, "I am delighted to see the collaboration between our organisation and the Katharine Howard Foundation in hosting the 'Kids Camp' event at Shelton Abbey. This initiative underlines the vital importance of family contact for those in custody. We firmly believe that maintaining strong family bonds is crucial for the well-being and rehabilitation of individuals within our care. By providing a supportive environment where families can spend quality time together, we aim to create lasting memories and foster hope for a brighter future. This event represents our commitment to prioritising the needs of children with parents in custody and highlights the positive impact that family connections can have on their lives."

During the two-day event, children and their parents had the opportunity to participate in a range of carefully designed activities and programs that promote positive interactions and create lasting memories. The Katharine Howard Foundation arranged accommodation for the children and their mothers in a local hotel, conveniently located near Shelton Abbey Open Centre.

The event featured a series of engaging activities hosted at Shelton Abbey, fostering personal growth, strengthening family bonds, and developing a sense of community. Furthermore, the esteemed staff of Arklow Library participate in this initiative, lending their expertise and support to ensure an enriching experience for all involved.

Chief Executive Officer of the Katharine Howard Foundation, Dr. Cliona Hannon said, "Katharine Howard spent her childhood in Shelton Abbey, when it was the home of the Howard family. Katharine committed her life to supporting small community organisations, many of which focused on those most in need of support. This innovative family-focused programme to help children of par-

ents in custody, to strengthen and maintain their family bonds, and to have some Hallowe'en fun, is exactly the kind of project Katharine Howard would have loved. We wish it every success and thank the great team in Shelton for

devising this programme."

Through the "Kids Camp" event, the Irish Prison Service and the Katharine Howard Foundation aim to provide an opportunity for families to reconnect, build cherished memo-

ries, and foster a sense of hope for the future. By prioritising the well-being of children with incarcerated parents, this collaboration seeks to create a positive impact on their lives and contribute to their overall development and resilience.



Margaret Birchall of the Wicklow County Library Services helping with the arts & crafts at the Kids Camp event at Shelton Abbey Open Centre.



John O'Callaghan, Karen McCaffery, Saoirse Brady, Katie Byrne, Patricia Hayden, William McNeill, Cliona Hannon and Joseph Donohue of the Irish Prison Service at the Kids Camp event at Shelton Abbey Open Centre, Arklow.

## It Takes A Village - Nurturing Minds Workshop Series

In today's digital age, ensuring that our children possess the skills and attitudes necessary to navigate the online world safely and responsibly is of growing importance to us all. To address this critical issue, "It Takes A Village" is delighted to present a workshop on Digital Literacy featuring guest speaker Jane McGarrigle, Project Officer with Webwise, the Irish Internet Safety Awareness Centre, and facilitated by podcast host, Andrea Splendori.

"Digital literacy extends far beyond technical know-how, it involves the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that enable children to both thrive and stay safe in an increasingly digital world. From play and participation to socialising, searching, and learning, digital literacy is an essential life skill for today's youth. This workshop aims to shed insights on the nuances of technology, its advantages, drawbacks, and what parents, guardians and teachers need to understand to ensure the digital safety of children." Rachel Harper, Principal, St. Patrick's NS and co-founder of the "It Takes A Village" initiative.

The event is scheduled for November 23rd, starting at 7:30pm and will be held at St. Patrick's National School in Greystones.

The workshop will be led by Jane McGarrigle, Project Officer with Webwise, the Irish Internet Safety Awareness Centre. Webwise, co-funded by the Department of Education and co-financed by the European Commission, is at the forefront of promoting the autonomous, effective, and safer use of

the internet by young people. They focus on educating parents, teachers, and children about internet safety through consistent and relevant messages.

Webwise also plays a crucial role in developing and disseminating resources to help teachers integrate internet safety into their school curricula and offers information, advice, and tools to parents to support their children's online lives. The organization's Youth Advisory Panel helps create youth-oriented awareness-raising resources and campaigns addressing topics such as cyberbullying.

Jane McGarrigle has been instrumental in the development and delivery of key online safety and digital literacy education programs for primary and post-primary schools. Her leadership has also resulted in award-winning campaigns tackling issues like online grooming, coercion, and harassment. Jane is a member of the National Advisory Council for Online Safety, actively involved in Media Literacy Ireland, and participates in a

European media literacy research project.

This "It Takes A Village" workshop is a unique opportunity for parents, guardians, and teachers to gain invaluable insights into the digital landscape, equipping them to guide and support the children in their digital journeys.

Tickets for the event are Free. To book your spot log onto Eventbrite.

It Takes A Village is a community led positive well-being initiative borne out of concern expressed by principals, teachers and parents of worrying levels of anxiety amongst children attending primary schools in Greystones and Delgany. The initiative, led by Rachel Harper, Principal of St. Patrick's National School, seeks to build a community of services to assist children, families and teachers in need of help with issues around anxiety in young children in the eight primary schools in the catchment area. The initiative is supported by the principals of all the eight primary schools and by the three secondary schools in the area.



The Gaelscoil na gCloch Liath team who took part in the first Cumann na mBonscol Chill Mhantain camogie blitz of the year last month at Bray Emmets



# Blessington woman honoured with IACP Award

**Aoife Smith of Blessington was honoured with the Dublin Regional Award at the Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy 8th Annual Conference**

The IACP Regional Awards recognise an IACP accredited member who makes a notable contribution to the profession of counselling and psychotherapy in their local community and region.

Speaking today regarding this year's awards IACP Chief Executive Officer Lisa Molloy stated:

"I would like congratulate Aoife Smith our Dublin Regional Award honoree for her passion and positive approach to promoting the benefits of

counselling and psychotherapy within her region and beyond. Aoife does outstanding work at the Irish Kidney Association supporting patients, where she is a full-time counselling coordinator."

Ms Smith is a fully accredited humanistic integrative psychotherapist, working in private practice since 2008. She was also a specialist care representative in the healthcare industry for 20 years, during this time gaining invaluable experience

working in chronic illness in the form of diabetes, respiratory diseases and pain management. These combined careers have given her a wide range of knowledge both medically and therapeutically allowing her to fully support patients through her role at the Irish Kidney Association. Aoife brings to her clients and patients a professionalism that encapsulates warmth, generosity and a profound interest in the betterment of their lives. Her commitment to this work is ongoing and of immense importance.

Commenting following the award IACP member Aoife Smith noted:

"I am very grateful and honoured to receive this award and I want to thank the IACP and the Dublin Regional Committee. As a therapist you really don't look for reward, you do the work because you want to support others, you want to give back, you want to build and create better services that are more accessible for clients - services that really meet their needs. I work with the Irish Kidney Association, and we provide counselling for patients, their families and carers, as we recognise the impact of chronic illness on the household, not just on the patient. We aim to give as much support as we can to try make a difference in

journeys that can be long and very challenging.

To be acknowledged for the work that I do is really special. This award acknowledges the tremendous effort of every person I have ever had the honour to sit with and their commitment to change and growth, and for every person that has supported me on my own journey and for all the incredible therapists with whom I work. I am very thankful to be able to do the work that I do."

The annual awards ceremony was held at the IACP's 8th annual conference on the 21st October 2023 at the Royal Marine Hotel in Dún Laoghaire, Co Dublin.



*Aoife Smith of Blessington with the Dublin Regional Award at the Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy 8th Annual Conference*

## HSE announces fund to strengthen children's disability services

**Service providers and community groups that offer services or supports to children with disability can NOW apply for funding under the new HSE children's disability service grant fund. The aim of this fund is to strengthen services for children with a disability currently waiting for Children's Disability Network Team services (CDNTs).**

Martina Queally, Chief Officer, HSE Community Healthcare East comments: "Developing complementary supports for children with disabilities across all aspect of community life is a vital resource and will enable all children to achieve their best outcomes. We know that early intervention for children with disabilities is so

important, and the children's disability fund will help increase the variety and volume of services on offer to families."

With the support of Anne Rabbitte T.D., Minister of State for Disability at the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, the HSE is calling on disability service

providers and community groups who can provide additional and innovative services, such as but not limited to: Recognised sensory programmes; Evidence-based therapies; Respite services - clubs, evening and weekend sessions, Saturday clubs, sports sessions; Additional therapy sessions for service users, such as managing

challenging behaviours.

Patricia McEvoy, Head of Disability Services, HSE Community Healthcare East adds: "We are calling on all disability service providers and community groups who wish to provide additional services for children with disabilities that are currently wait-listed in Wicklow, Dublin South and Dublin South East, to apply for this funding. Successful applicants wishing to develop additional services will be awarded funding in 2023 and some proposals

may be funded for up to three years."

Anne Rabbitte TD, Minister of State for Disabilities, said: "I welcome this fund as an initial step by the HSE in developing further supports for families. I am conscious that many families are awaiting services and I expect this fund will provide additional options for those children with complex needs, whether that be respite services, essential therapy interventions or additional support programmes."

Additional services will be con-

sidered for funding if they meet some of the needs of children with disabilities and their families currently waitlisted for Children's Disability Network Services provided by the HSE and its partner organisations. Organisations applying for funding must outline the benefit they expect to achieve.

More information and an online application form is at [www.hse.ie/childrensdisability-fund](http://www.hse.ie/childrensdisability-fund). Closing date for receipt of applications is close of business on Monday, 13th November.

## Whitmore calls for CAMHS report progress

**Jennifer Whitmore TD, the Social Democrats' spokesperson for Children, today raised in the Dail the need for better access to child and adolescent mental health services. Deputy Whitmore raised this directly with the Minister for Mental Health during Questions on Promised Legislation in the Dail chamber.**

Speaking afterwards, Deputy Whitmore said: "As a TD for Wicklow, this issue comes up regularly. Wicklow has some of the longest wait times in the country for services. Currently, 4,400 children and young people across the country are waiting for first-time CAMHS appointments, many hundreds of whom are from across Wicklow. That is

thousands of children every day struggling with anxiety and depression, with no access to support. I have been in contact with parents who are at their wit's end.

"A fundamental challenge to the services is that so many vacancies have yet to be filled. Recruitment and retention are vital. The staff already working in these services

are working incredibly hard to deliver for as many children and teens as they can, but they are stretched beyond reasonable measure.

"It is very telling that the head of the Mental Health Commission themselves has said that the CAMHS system is not working as it should. We have an report from the Independent Review of the

Provision of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services outlining the 49 recommendations for improving the service, and these need to be implemented urgently. I met with Families for Reform of CAMHS today in Leinster House and listened to their powerful testimony. They endorse the report's recommendations and have asked the government to act now."

Regarding the response she received from the government, Deputy Whitmore went on to say: "Minister Butler's response to me in the Dail Chamber today on this issue left much to be desired. While

I know she is tasked with building confidence in the CAMHS system, she must also accept that more of the same will not suffice.

"Children living with eating disorders, depression, fear of going to school and suicidal thoughts simply cannot be left waiting like this any longer."



*Deputy Whitmore with members of Families for Reform of CAMHS*



## COPD Day in Bray

*If you have been experiencing ongoing breathlessness, have a cough that won't go away, with or without phlegm, and are over the age of 35, then you are urged to seek a spirometry lung check. Of course, exercise is one of the best things that we can do to improve our breathing and symptoms of COPD. This World COPD Day, Wednesday November 15th, from 12 midday to 2pm, COPD Support Ireland will host a 'Step Up and Step Out' virtual COPD exercise masterclass. The online event for people with COPD will feature exercise coaching, physical activity challenges, and presentations from experts with lots of tips on how to stay active. To mark the day, people with COPD and their supporters are also being encouraged to take part in the COPD Step Challenge and set themselves a challenge of a target number of steps, individually or as part of a group. In Bray, a walk will be taking place on the Seafront, starting from the harbour at 11am, to Bray Head and back.*

*To register for the 'Step Up and Step Out' exercise masterclass, or to take part in the COPD Step Challenge, visit [www.copd.ie](http://www.copd.ie). The Bray group will also be broadcasting live between 12pm and 2pm as part of the Global COPD Day Big Baton Pass, where they will join international colleagues to share the work they do and the importance of physical activity in COPD self management. This will include exercise classes, talks from experts and conversations with people living with COPD as well as a live step challenge. To find out more, see [copd.ie](http://copd.ie) or [copdbigbatonpass.com](http://copdbigbatonpass.com).*





Professor John Heywood receiving the Lifetime Achievement Award in Washington from President of the American Society for Engineering Education (ASEE), Professor Jemma P. Carpenter.

# Bray resident is first non-US national to receive Lifetime Achievement Award from American Society for Engineering Education

**Professor John Heywood (93), who has lived in Bray for almost 50 years has become the first non-US national to be honoured with the American Society for Engineering Education (ASEE) Lifetime Achievement Award.**

The ASEE is in its 130th year and to date only 10 of these awards have been presented. Professor Heywood was Chairman of the Board of Management of St Fergal's NS in Bray and in 2015 led the process of amalgamating the junior and senior schools into one.

He was Professor and Director of Teacher Education at Trinity College Dublin from 1977 to 1996. During the 1980's and 90's he directed the Christian Brother's school technology projects in Ireland. The Christian Brothers established the Marino Curriculum Service with a view to undertaking research and development in new curriculum studies, especially technology which he directed and which led Trinity to establish a

national programme of in service education for teachers giving teachers working in rural areas the opportunity to study for diplomas and masters degrees locally.

Prof Heywood's papers relating to the Committee on the form and function of the Intermediate Certificate, the Curriculum and Examinations Board, and teacher education, have been deposited together with a Commentary in the archive of Trinity Library.

He edited the first handbook for optical and radio observers of artificial earth satellites. This began his lifelong interest in the public understanding of engineering (technological and engineering literacy). He directed a pioneering study of what engineers do at work. In 2006 he was recognised

by the American Educational Research Association with the annual award for the best published research on the professions (Engineering Education: Research and Development in Curriculum and Instruction).

He is one of a small group of people in the US and UK who pioneered research into engineering education both in K-12 schools and higher education. In the US it is now a very substantial activity.

His special interests are in the relationship between theory and practice in the professions (particularly in engineering, teaching and management), the public understanding of engineering and technology, and the philosophy and history of engineering education.

Professor Heywood has authored or co-authored

200 publications including twenty books. His latest book on the history of research in engineering education and public policy will be published by Oxford University Press later this year.

The ASEE Lifetime Achievement Award recognises individuals who have retired or are near the end of their careers for sustained contributions to education in the fields of engineering and/or engineering technology. The contributions may be in teaching, education, research, administration, or educational programmes, professional service, or any combination thereof.

The award was established by the efforts of the Lifetime Achievement Award Steering Committee created for the award by the contributions

of ASEE Life members and like-minded, not-yet Member Fellows. Professor Heywood received the honour in recognition of 'contributions to engineering education research and the development of engineering education as a field of scientific inquiry'.

Professor Heywood joined ASEE in 1962. He is both a Life Member and Fellow. In 2016 he was elected a Fellow of the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE), the world's largest and most prestigious professional association for the advancement of technology for humanity.

IEEE Fellowship is conferred on individuals with an outstanding record of accomplishment in an IEEE field of interest. It is a rare honour with only one-tenth of one percent of the organisation's total voting membership receiving the accolade annually.

## Green light for interim works at BIFE

*Harris confirms works to upgrade BIFE are proceeding to tender*

**Fine Gael TD and Minister for Further and Higher Education Simon Harris has announced that an application submitted by KWETB for an investment in fencing for Bray Institute of Further Education (BIFE) has been green lit and will proceed to tender.**

"This is good progress and an investment that the college has long sought for," said Minister Harris.

This is Phase 1 of the project with two further projects planned for the BIFE campus, including a new roof and new modular facilities also planned.

Minister Harris added: "I am delighted to announce that BIFE's application for fencing works is set to go ahead. This is a much-needed investment in the College and I look forward to seeing the works being completed soon."

Commenting on broader issues, Minister Harris added: "I have also received in recent days through my agencies an application to replace some old temporary facilities in BIFE with newer, modern and fit-for-purpose ones."

"I expect this application to be assessed in the coming weeks and I am very eager to provide support to BIFE in relation to this. This is timely as last year Kildare Wicklow ETB was selected by my Department and SOLAS, the State's training agency, to be developed as a

new, major, and modern Further Education training College.

"We are determined to work together to provide third level opportunities for the people of Bray, for Wicklow and the East Coast with so many opportunities for young people in terms of access to third level education, skills and pathways."

Minister Harris concluded: "However, I am very conscious that in the interim it is imperative that temporary works are progressed in a rapid manner to support students and staff. I will be monitoring these planned works very closely in the coming weeks and months and I am very eager to do more to deliver more opportunities for young people across Wicklow."



Minister Simon Harris



Scoil na Coróine Mhuire receive a winning award for the Marine Institute's Explorers Ocean Champion Award 2023 for their ocean literacy project.

## Ashford school wins Explorers Ocean Champion Award

**Scoil na Coróine Mhuire, Ashford, is the winner of the Marine Institute's Explorers Programme Ocean Awards school project, in the category 'Ocean Literacy' 2023.**

Congratulating the children and teachers, Cushla Dromgool-Regan, manager of the Explorers Education Programme, presented the award and plaque to the children saying: "We're extremely impressed with the level of work the children undertook. We're also delighted that the teachers and children have embraced becoming an ocean literate school and are creating ocean champions!"

"Coming up with a research question about 'the 95% of the ocean yet to explore' was an excellent way to learn more about the ocean. The children's enthusiasm taking part in a seashore safari and creating a marine week with activities

involving dances, songs, artwork and experiments, was an incredible achievement of engaging with the whole school," she added.

Explorers outreach officer Mona McCrea said showcasing the project at events outside the school was a brilliant achievement: "We're delighted the children got to share their research with the wider community in Wicklow and Dublin. This type of enthusiasm to learn about their local community and the wider oceans sets a wonderful example for other schools to follow."

Speaking at the presentation, school principal Conan Daye welcomed the award and said the Explorers project had been

a highly successful experience for the children: "The passion expressed by Mona McCrea and lead teacher Laura McWatt for the ocean rubbed off on everyone. The children and teachers said the way they learned the best was when they were active, in groups, outside, well-resourced and when the teacher made it interesting."

"This was proven throughout the Explorers project and is a model for future projects within the Scoil na Coróine Mhuire."

Twenty-eight coastal county schools took part in this year's healthy ocean school projects: Marine STEAM, Ocean Literacy, SDGs and the Ocean, Marine Outdoor.

Celebrating the successful projects, the Ocean Champions Awards is organised by the Explorers Education Programme and is funded by the Marine Institute, Ireland's state agency for marine and research.

It is the only ocean-themed award for primary schools in Ireland. The awards recognise the effort, commitment and collaboration of school management boards, teachers, children and the Explorer outreach officers, who have engaged in the all-school, marine-themed projects.

The Marine Institute's Explorers Education Programme is delivered in Wicklow by Mona McCrea.



# 'Our Climate, Our Future'

*Kilcoole school to host Wicklow's first ever youth climate conference*

Students at Colaiste Chraobh Abhann secondary school in Kilcoole are preparing to host the county's first ever youth climate conference.

Transition Year students in CCA say over 400 students and local representatives are due to attend the conference which will take place at the school on Thursday November 16th.

The conference, which is entitled 'Our Climate, Our Future', is being organised by a committee of transition year students in Colaiste Chraobh Abhann with the support of Codling Wind Park.

The main objective of the conference is to provide a platform for the voices of young people in Wicklow on the climate crisis and to enable and encourage all attendees to become lifelong advocates for a better and sustainable future.

Invitations have been extended to neighbouring schools, community groups, decision makers and policy makers at

regional and national levels.

The conference will include panel discussions with young people as well as presentations from key speakers including Eimear Manning, Youth & Climate Justice Development Officer at the National Youth Council of Ireland, environmental campaigner John Gibbons and Codling Wind Park Project

Director Scott Sutherland. The conference MC stand-up comedian, author and columnist Colm O'Regan will be joined by Colaiste Chraobh Abhann Head Boy, Cayden Elliott as Co-Host. Rachel Corcoran spokesperson for the youth committee has no doubt who is to blame for the climate crisis.

"Humans have created a planet sized crisis that threatens the future of young people everywhere. If we want a future, and to live safely on this planet, we have to act now. We don't have time for delays and need to take every opportunity to make sure people hear us. We are looking forward to using this conference to tell the world to act now and act fast to save our futures."

Her fellow committee member Aaron Roy highlighted the devastating impact climate change is having on people all over the world on a daily basis.



CCA students Aaron Roy, Ben Synnott, Tom Gammell, Oisín Reynolds, Hannah Jaison, Rachel Corcoran, Ketty Gray, and Head Boy Cayden Elliott



Kerry Gray, Hannah Jaison and Rachel Corcoran

## Young people in Wicklow continue to be passionate and enthusiastic environmental activists a quarter of a century on

Young people in Wicklow are as concerned today about our environment and are still eager to take action and raise awareness about environmental issues. Since the inception of the Young Environmentalist Awards (YEA) 25 years ago, young people have been committed to protecting the environment for present and future generations.

The work of young people who raise environmental awareness and improve the environment is celebrated by ECO-UNESCO - Ireland's leading environmental education youth organisation. ECO-UNESCO has opened its Young Environmentalist Awards (YEA) programme for entries, marking its 25th year in existence, and is calling on young people in Wicklow to get involved and enter the Young Environmentalist Awards 2024.

Since it began, the Young Environmentalist Award has engaged more than 60,000 young people, recognising those who are raising awareness of environmental issues in the community.

Registrations for the Young Environmentalist Awards 2024 are now open. Entries are invited across 13 categories including climate change, biodiversity, water, energy, transport, marine life and waste.

Projects entered are required to show that young people have taken action that protects the environment in some way and also raises awareness in the community. Entries are welcome from young people in aged 10-18-years across Ireland, in primary and sec-

ondary schools, youth groups, community groups and Youthreach Centres.

Commenting on the awards Elaine Nevin, National Director, ECO-UNESCO said "This year marks a significant milestone for ECO-UNESCO and the Young Environmentalist Awards as we celebrate 25 years of the awards programme. Looking back on the entries over the last 25 years, the environmental issues from when we first started are still as relevant today. Young people in Wicklow have been raising their voices about environmental issues including biodiversity loss, pollution and climate change for over two decades, coming up with tangible solutions to address the crisis we are facing and finding ways to have an impact in their own communities. The awards provide an important opportunity to recognise the action our young people are taking in the fight against climate change and other areas of environmental concern. We also know that young people are becoming more anxious about environmental issues and the Young Environmentalist Awards provides an important opportunity for young people to feel they can

make a difference.

"Coming into our 25th year, we want the awards to be bigger and better than ever, impacting more young people, their communities and their environment. We have worked with more than 60,000 young people from all across the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland who have had a direct and positive impact on improving our environment, and on making our world more sustainable through their action projects each year. We want as many young people in Wicklow as possible to get involved in this year's awards. The YEA programme is a fun and exciting way to empower young people to become better citizens, to build awareness of environmental issues in the community and promote local actions and lifestyle changes to benefit the environment.

"As one of the official Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Champions in Ireland, I'm delighted to open the registrations for Young Environmentalist Awards programme for 2024. We look forward to seeing the innovative ideas from young people in Wicklow and across Ireland in this year's awards."

"From extreme weather events to droughts and food shortages climate change affects all of us. But if we all work together, we can help save the environment and make a brighter, greener future for all of us."

And Kerry Gray stressed the need for people to take individual responsibility.

"Climate change is everybody's problem not just the Governments and businesses, which is why it is important for our climate conferences to happen now. I don't think people really understand the effects climate

change will have on the world. We need to not just tell people about climate change, but really do something. Everyone can help tackle climate change by, for example, reducing the amount of energy they are using in their homes, businesses and factories, so we need to spread the word to them as well."

Oliver Stack, Principal of CCA Kilcoole praised the students for taking a leadership role on the climate crisis, the most important issue facing the world today.

"We are proud to extend our warm wel-

come to neighbouring schools in the community as we take the lead to host 'Our Climate, Our Future' youth conference in partnership with Codling Wind Park. This event exemplifies CCA's commitment to our role as community leaders, giving young people a prominent platform to amplify their voices in shaping the future of our environment."

Scott Sutherland, Project Director of Codling Wind Park, said they were delighted to support the event: "We are keenly aware that it is young people who face

the most uncertain future in the fight against climate change. Codling Wind Park is really proud to be in a position to provide a platform to inform and empower young people in the Wicklow community and beyond. Young people understand that everyone has a role to play in this fight and its time for leaders around the world to listen to them and most importantly to take action."

The conference will take place on Thursday November 16th between 10 and 1pm at CCA in Kilcoole.



Sophie O'Neill with teacher Miss Rochford at the St. Mary's College open day.



# The Mystery Code - an action packed Greystones adventure from local author

The Mystery Code is the fourth book in the 'Adventures of Finn O'Shea' series. The chapter book is written by local Newcastle author Marian Brennan and illustrated by Mark Beech. It will be on bookshelves in mid-November.



Local author Marion Brennan

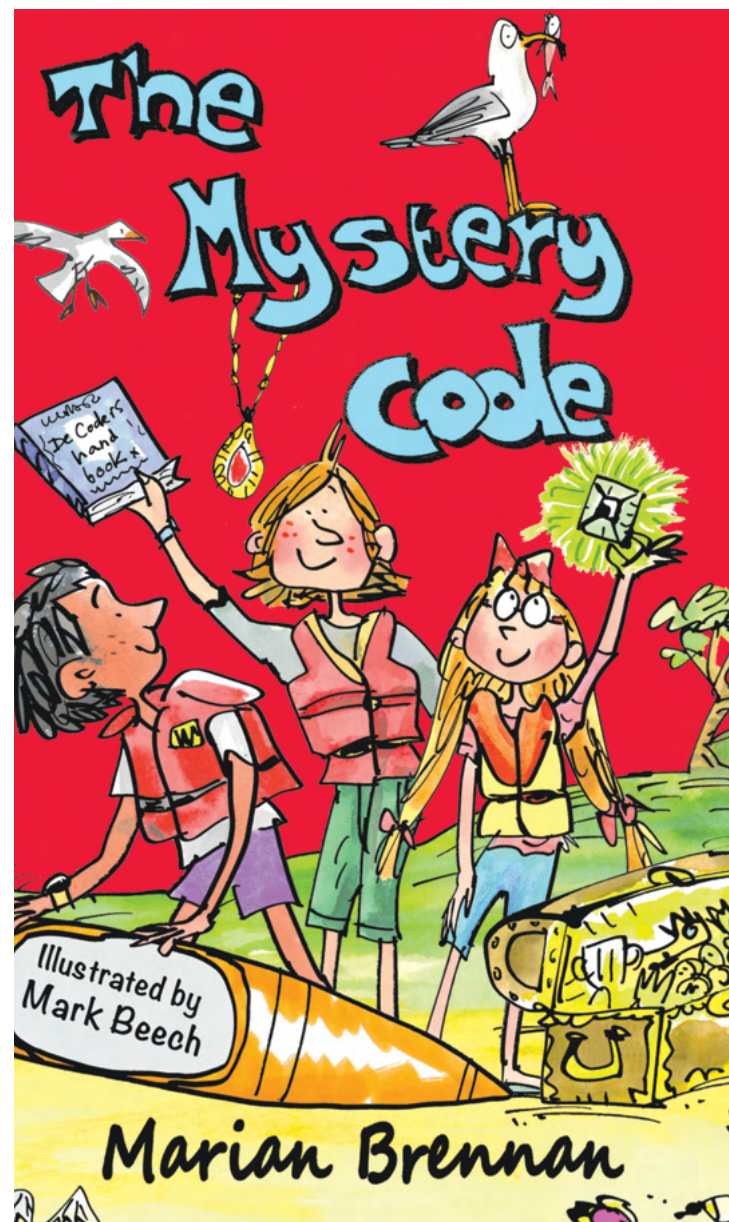
The first book in the series 'The Inventions of Finn O'Shea' stars a little boy living in Greystones who is smart, witty and an inventor! It is full of robots, rockets and gadgets, and hopes to inspire budding young scientists. The first book quickly ascended to the Amazon children's bestseller lists where it remains. Astro Fiasco continues the adventure to the space centre where Finn is accidentally jettisoned into space where he uncovers a plot to take over the space station. The stakes become high and his friends have to use their coding skills to help save Finn. In the third book, the children find themselves on another unexpected adventure where they meet Digiboy trapped in a video game. They have to work together to code their way out and beat the hackers! The Mystery Code returns to Greystones where the children's teacher disappears while she is teaching them to decode secret messages. Then they find a coded message on the beach and they use their computer coding skills to decipher what it means. The message is a riddle that they need to solve to find the hidden treasure and their teacher.

The Mystery Code is an action-packed story that takes Finn and his friends on an exciting adventure full of coded messages, hidden treasure with a dramatic sea rescue where they have to work as a team

to save the day. Marian Brennan is a local writer and scientist living in Wicklow. The book launch event for The Mystery Code is being held in Greystones Library on the 18th of November at 2 pm. The event is a free event for 5-9 year olds, but younger and older siblings are welcome. Please book your spot on Eventbrite (<https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/book-launch-the-mystery-code-tickets-733978598747?aff=oddtcreator>) to avoid disappointment.



Marian Brennan's successful 'Adventures of Finn O'Shea' series of books



## Juniper's Christmas

### A family book event with Eoin Colfer

Whale Theatre, Sunday 19th November, 2pm (doors 1pm). Tickets €12/€8 or €35 for Family Ticket - 2 adults & 2 Children and available at [www.whaletheatre.ie](http://www.whaletheatre.ie) or call the booking office on 01 2010550.

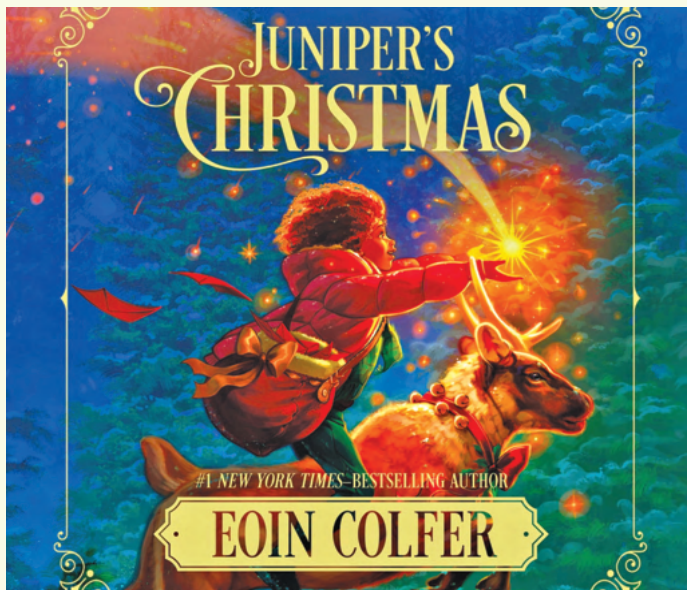
Join bestselling author, Eoin Colfer for an exclusive event, in association with Halfway up the Stairs children's bookshop in Greystones. Eoin will talk about his brand-new book, Juniper's Christmas.

Juniper's Christmas is an adventure story set in London and the North Pole featuring all the imagination, humour and warmth that Eoin is famous for. It's been ten years since Santa Claus performed his Christmas duties, can Juniper Lane track him down and save the day?

Eoin is one of Ireland's best-loved authors, don't miss this chance to be enchanted and entertained by his legendary storytelling.

The event will run from 2pm - 3pm. Please allow extra time if you'd like to get your book signed. Doors will open at 1pm. Ticket holders can buy a copy of Juniper's Christmas before the event at a special discounted price. Details will be sent to you when you book. There will also be a pop-up bookshop at the event supplied by Halfway up the Stairs children's bookshop.

Age Guidance: 8+ years



# The Mai at the Mermaid

Following the past years success of 'Death of A Salesman' and 'The Importance of Being Earnest', Square One Theatre Group, the Bray drama society, is delighted to bring the work of renowned Irish Playwright Marina Carr to life with her gripping drama 'The Mai'.

Marie McCourt directs an exceptional cast in this thoroughly Irish story with universal themes.

It is the story of four generations of women, their loves and losses, their hopes and dreams, and the cruelty of reality. Marie is delighted to have an incredibly talented cast of eight women and one man along with the support of an amazing creative design and production team.

The Mai is a beautiful and accomplished 40-year-old woman whose musician husband walked out on her after 17 years of marriage. She builds a dream home for him and sits by the window waiting for his return. The story is told through the eyes of Millie at age 16 and 30 who is one of four children of Robert and The Mai.

Colourful characters include The Mai's 100-year-old Grandmother who "was married to the 9 fingered fisherman" and whose father was "The Sultan of Spain" and constantly repeats the story of her nine fingered fisherman husband because "people never tire of great love stories".

Two sisters of The Mai (Connie and Beck) battle constant interference into their lives by two aunts who are members of the "Connemara Clique".

You will recognise most of the characters as members of your own family and may even see yourself.

Director Marie remarks: "I've been a great admirer of the work of Marina Carr since 1997 when I was cast as Julie in 'The Mai' and subsequently appeared in productions of her other works 'By the Bog of Cats' and 'Portia Coughlan'. I chose this play because of the rich language; finely drawn characters and the many challenges the production presents. It is funny, romantic, and tragic."

The Mai written by Marina Carr won the Best New Irish Play award at the Dublin Theatre Festival (1994-1995). Together with By the Bog of Cats and Portia Coughlan are commonly known as the Midlands Trilogy. The Mai is a moving story of a family of 4 generations of women, their loves and losses, their hopes and dreams and the cruelty of reality. It centers on a formidable forty-year-old woman, a teacher known as The Mai, whose husband Robert, a musician, has always felt stifled

by her ideals of perfection. After seventeen years he leaves her, whereupon she sets about building a dream house in the hope that he will one day return to her. The play explores how history repeats itself - no matter how tragic the results.

Running from Tuesday 7th to Saturday 11th of November at Mermaid Arts Centre in Bray, from 7:30pm each evening.

Tickets are available online at: <https://www.mermaidartscentre.ie/whats-on/events/sql-the-mai>

Or by contacting Mermaid Art Centre in person or by phone on 01 272 4030.

Box Office opening hours are Monday to Saturday 11am to 4pm, open until 7.30pm on performance nights.



Director Marie McCourt behind the scenes



# Acclaimed Bray Irish dancing teacher to showcase art on national stage

One of Ireland's best known Irish dancing teachers will find herself centre stage at Ireland's premier art fair Art Source at the RDS this month. Having begun both Irish dancing and painting during her schooldays, Bray local Nóirín Dodd said she can't think of one art form in isolation from another.



Nóirín Dodd

"A painting should captivate the mind of the viewer and, in a similar fashion, the dancer should captivate the mind of the adjudicator," said Nóirín. "There should be energy in a painting and in a dancer but all should be well balanced and controlled."

"What's interesting is that both are subject to interpretation and expression. You could have twenty painters working from the same landscape or twenty dancers performing the same piece and they would all inevitably produce a very different picture because of their different styles."

Attendees can view the product of Nóirín's unique perspective at Ireland's premier art fair Art Source at the RDS from November 10th-12th, which will feature 200 of the best in con-

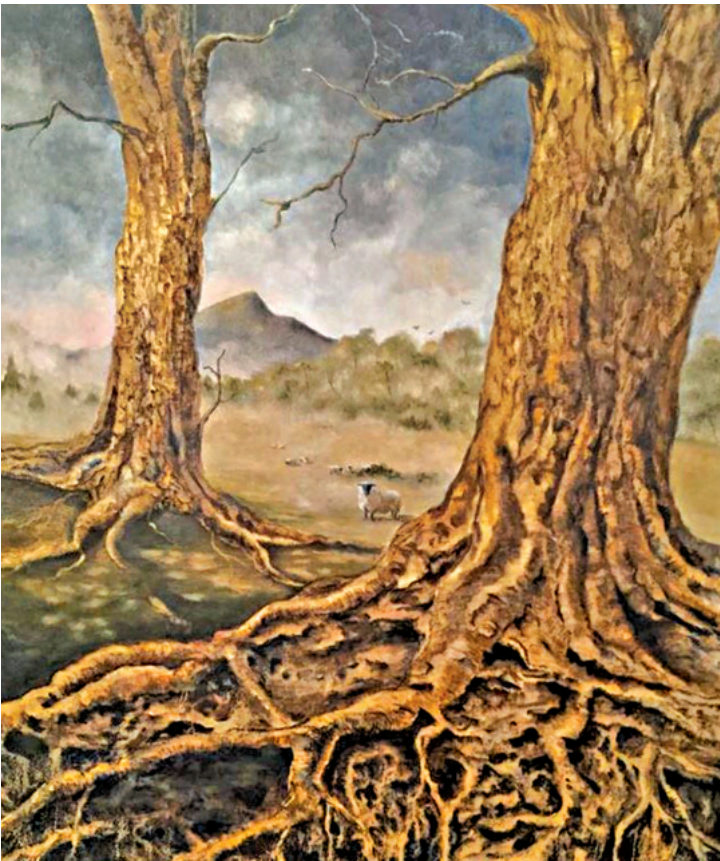
temporary Irish and international artists and galleries.

And Irish art lovers will have the unique chance to get their hands on 100 pieces of original artwork for €100 each on a first-come, first-served basis on the opening morning of the show on Friday, November 10th.

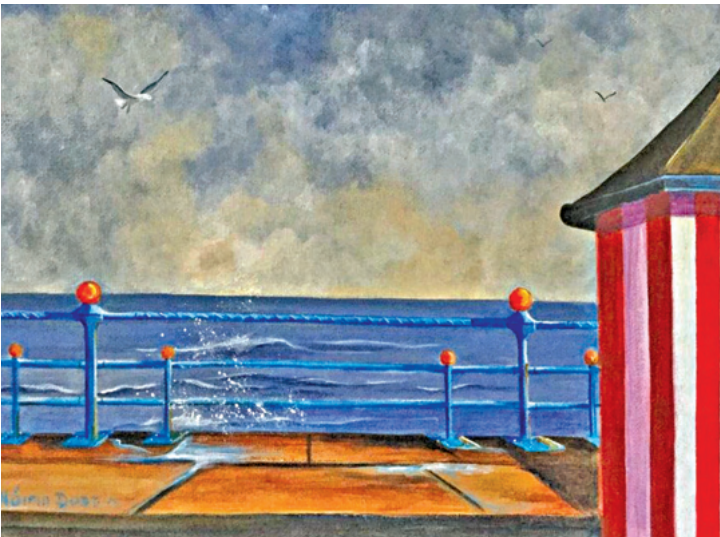
The Irish dancing powerhouse not only made Bray's Durkin Dodd School of Irish Dancing a name in the An Chomhdháil dancing world but has moulded many young teachers who have opened their own schools as well.

She also founded the Artists' Circle Bray, which celebrated its 20th anniversary this year. She takes advantage of her travel across the country for Irish dancing commitments, using it as an opportunity to scout locations for painting.

Her next project will draw inspiration from Irish dancing once again, as she will be painting Irish set dances such as The Fiddler Around the Fairy Tree and The Hurling boys for An Chomhdháil's next AGM.



Ok Trees, by Nóirín Dodd



Red Kiosk by Nóirín Dodd

## Open Door exhibition 2023

Open Door will host an exhibition of Art, Ceramics/Mosaics and Woodwork in the Centre on The Vevay Road in Bray, running from Monday 6th November to Friday 10th November, 11.00am - 1.00pm each day.

This exhibition of Art, Crafts, Ceramics and Woodwork will showcase the various activities and celebrate the creative works of our members and is an opportunity for family and friends to visit the Centre and see the various activities. It is also a great place to purchase unique Christmas gifts. All are welcome.

## It Takes A Village: Funny-Raiser

Whale Theatre, Saturday 18th November, 8pm (doors 7pm).  
Tickets €30 and available at [www.whaletheatre.ie](http://www.whaletheatre.ie) or call the booking office on 01 2010550.

They say laughter is the best medicine, so Whale Theatre is delighted to be hosting a very special comedy fundraising event in aid of the It Takes A Village community initiative.



Having been the first town to roll out the voluntary no smartphones code in Primary Schools, Greystones/Delgany has recently been making headlines around the world! We've seen what the world's media had to say about it, and now we've invited some of Ireland's funniest parents to get their unique (and highly entertaining) take on the idea!

Presented in partnership with the Lisa Richards Agency, the event will feature a range of comedians including Kevin McGahern, Julie Jay, Colm O'Regan, Bernard O'Shea, Aine Gallagher and Aidan Greene. A huge thank you goes out to all of these incredible comedians who are performing free-of-charge, in support of this initiative.

Another aim of the campaign is to recruit two Play Therapists to provide weekly support across all eight primary schools in the catchment area of Greystones and Delgany, and proceeds from this "Funny-Raiser" will go towards supporting It Takes A Village's many initiatives and projects. Age Guidance: 18+ event



Pictured at the announcement of AIB's sponsorship of the Press Photographer of the Year Award 2024 are PPAI President David Brannigan and AIB CEO Colin Hunt with last year's award winner Mark Condren. Mark is holding his photo of a woman in a displaced persons camp in Mogadishu, Somalia who had walked for days when her crops failed and her animals died. Somalia is the second most climate-vulnerable country in the world. Entries for this year's Awards will open on the 8th December 2023 and close on the 4th January 2024 and will showcase the extraordinary work of Ireland's press photographers of the many highs and lows of the year gone by. Once again, there will be eight awards categories; News, People & Daily Life, Sports Action, Sports Features, Portrait, Arts & Entertainment, Reportage and Multimedia. The announcement was made in Kinsale at The Big Picture, Festival of Press Photography. The awards will take place in February 2024.



# Mazda rotary engine production passes two million units

Mazda Motor Corporation have announced that the total production volume of Mazda rotary engine vehicles has surpassed two million units. A new version of the Mazda rotary engine will be fitted to the new hybrid MX-30.

by Martin McCarthy



Mazda MX-30 e-Skyactiv R-EV

Electrification is providing new opportunities for the Felix Wankel invented powerplant, which can be only a third the size of an equivalent conventional piston engine.

The very first Wankel engine appeared in the NSU RO80, tiny numbers of which were imported into Ireland in the late 1960s by Ashford resident and motorcycle legend Reg Armstrong. NSU were subsumed into Audi shortly thereafter and they sold the manufacturing rights to Mazda, who ironed out a number of reliability challenges and fitted it to their high-performance sports cars, finishing with the RX-8 in 2012.

The engines ability to provide prodigious power outputs from a small package made it ideal for motorsport and in 1991 they launched a Le Mans challenge team which featured Irish driver David

Kennedy. His father Louis was a past Captain of Bray Golf Club, then situated on the bank of the River Dargle.

The Japanese equipt won the overall 59th Le Mans 24-hour race in 1991 with the sleek 87B Sports car.

The rotary engine is unique in that it uses rotational movement of triangular rotors to generate power. The first vehicle Mazda equipped with a rotary engine was the Mazda Cosmo Sport (Mazda 110S), introduced in 1967. From there, Mazda continued to refine the performance of their rotary engines improving output, fuel economy, and durability, and maintaining their position as the only automaker mass-producing rotary engines for many years.

In June this year, Mazda resumed production of rotary engine vehicles



for the first time in eleven years after having ended production of the Mazda RX-8 in 2012. The company will start selling their twelfth rotary engine vehicle, the Mazda MX-30 e-Skyactiv R-EV, in the coming days in Japan. Sales in Europe

will begin shortly.

Rotary engined cars - especially the NSU RO80 and the Mazda RX7 and RX8 appeared at Classic car shows all over Wicklow this year. Most notably the marvellous

Bray and Arklow Shows and the Kilmacanogue

Show run by The Garden of Ireland Motor Club. Examples also appeared at the IVVCC Powerscourt Picnic in June.

Being Mazda we can expect superb, reliable and innovative engineering coupled with a build quality second to none.

# Wicklow woman to receive Nuffield Ireland scholarship at annual conference

Molly Garvey, an independent food facilitator and communications consultant, from Wicklow, has been announced as one of the recipients of a Nuffield Ireland scholarship for 2024. On Friday 10th November she will attend the Nuffield Ireland annual conference in the Mount Wolseley Hotel, Tullow, Co. Carlow where she will formally commence his scholarship.

**WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL**

Gavin & Siobhan Kerr seek planning permission for: Conversion of Existing Attic Space including introduction of roof lights to front and rear roof slopes along with 2no. frosted windows in gable wall of existing dwelling at 8 Eastmount Gardens, Chapel Road, Delgany, Co. Wicklow A63 Y540.

The planning application may be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy at the offices of Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Wicklow during its public opening hours and a submission or observation in relation to the application may be made to the authority in writing on payment of the prescribed fee within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the application.

Molly has worked at the cross-over of community, food, and farming since graduation. Manager of the UCC community garden 2016-2018 while a MSc student with the Centre for Co-operative Studies, she co-founded the Cork Urban Soil Project in 2018, piloting a closed-loop food system for a local food business in Cork City. She has held the roles of Social Impact Lead and Community

Manager with social enterprise GIY (Grow It Yourself) and most recently completed a programme for regenerative agriculture start-ups in the Netherlands. Molly has also started a podcast dedicated to food system entrepreneurs. She now works as an independent food facilitator and communications consultant and is on the board of Community Gardens Ireland.

The Nuffield Ireland

conference, will be officially opened by Minister of State for Land Use and Biodiversity in the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Pippa Hackett and will hear presentations from four returning Nuffield Ireland Scholars. The theme for this year's conference is 'Finding Common Ground' between consumers and the farming community which will be discussed by agricomunicator and keynote speaker

Amy Jackson, Director of Oxtale and Nuffield UK 2012 Scholar.

One of the presenting scholars will also be the inaugural recipient of a new award in honour of the late agri-leader and Nuffield Scholar, Padraig Walshe who passed away last February. In addition to hearing the research findings from returning Nuffield 2022 scholars, attendees will have the opportunity to be introduced to the successful candidates for 2024 including Molly Garvey.

Speaking about the inaugural Padraig Walshe Award, Joe Leonard, Nuffield Ireland Chair-person, said "This award will be given annually to the best presentation by a returning scholar, as voted on by the conference attendees. The award will include a beautiful perpetual trophy which is Ronan Halpin's Queen Maebhis Bull and a ticket to a major international agricultural conference or event. Our 2022 Scholars will be the first to compete for the Nuffield Ireland Padraig Walshe Award. This award will honour Padraig's memory and legacy into the future."



Molly Garvey

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Volunteers at the Wicklow Rugby Club's inaugural inclusive rugby festival



# Wicklow apprentice shines bright

*Lisa O'Sullivan scoops top category award at national 'Apprentice of the Year' awards*

The National Apprenticeship Office has named Cork-based apprentice, Hazel Johnston as national 'Apprentice of the Year' 2023. Studying at Munster Technological University, Hazel is a Manufacturing Engineering apprentice with DePuy Synthes Cork and stands as the first-ever female 'Apprentice of the Year' at the independently judged Generation Apprenticeship awards.

There was great success for the Leinster region with Auctioneering and Property Services apprentice, Lisa O'Sullivan from Wicklow taking home a category award in the 'ICT, Property Services, Recruitment and Sales' category, while Google ICT apprentice Paul King also won a top category award

at the awards ceremony from a record number 222 nominations of top apprentice talent across Ireland.

Minister Simon Harris TD said: "Congratulating to Hazel and all apprentices. I especially want to congratulate Hazel on her fantastic achievement. As a Department, we are working hard to increase the number of females taking up apprenticeships and, while it is heartening to see the numbers increase every year, we know much more needs to be done. Hazel, and the many other female apprentices pursuing their dream careers across Ireland, should act

as an inspiration to others considering the path they want to take in life".

Lisa O'Sullivan is from Rathangan and is delighted to develop her career as an apprentice, and was elated to take home a top category award.

Commenting on her learning journey as an apprentice she said: "I am so grateful for the apprenticeship program, which granted me the chance to learn through hands-on experience. Unlike a traditional academic path, this practical approach allowed me to excel in college while avoiding the financial constraints of full-time education."

After winning the

award, she said: "I want to say a huge thank you to DNG Ella Dunphy for taking a chance on me! They advertised a role 2 years ago looking for a part-time receptionist and I talked them into giving me a full-time apprenticeship! I am honoured to even just be nominated for 'Apprentice of the Year' and now I can't believe I have won this incredible award. Looking forward to the exciting journey ahead!"

Dr Mary Liz Trant, Director of the National Apprenticeship Office said: "The NAO was delighted to present the national 'Apprentice of the Year' award for 2023 to Hazel Johnson and 14



Pictured at the Apprentice of the Year awards are Pat O'Doherty, NAA Chair, Property apprentice and category award winner Lisa O'Sullivan, NAO Director Dr Mary Liz Trant

exceptional finalists including Paul and Lisa from a 26,000-strong Generation Apprenticeship community of dedicated apprentices.

"Apprentices are transforming the landscape of

Ireland's skilled workforce, bringing exceptional creativity and innovation, adaptability, leadership, fresh perspectives and a steadfast eagerness to learn that makes them valuable additions to any

industry or workforce.

"The 'Apprentice of the Year' awards not only celebrate the apprentices nominated but also the power and impact of apprenticeship as a mode of learning and career development.

The ongoing focus on continuous improvement within the apprenticeship system enables businesses to share their knowledge and expertise with upcoming talented apprentices of all ages and backgrounds."

## CLASSIFIEDS

### THE MIRACULOUS PRAYER

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

## Doing business in Las Vegas

Thirty-five tourism enterprises from Ireland - including Powerscourt Hotel Resort & Spa - recently attended IMEX America in Las Vegas. IMEX (International Meetings and Events Exhibition) America is the largest trade show in the United States for the global meetings, events and incentive travel industry.

Over 3,500 buyers from North America and elsewhere around the world attended the three-day show - which provided valuable business and

networking opportunities for the participating tourism companies from Ireland. The show included scheduled appointments and evening networking events with top meetings and incentive travel buyers.

Alison Metcalfe, Tourism Ireland's Head of North America, said: "Tourism Ireland was delighted to join with Failte Ireland and

Tourism NI, as part of the 'Meet in Ireland' team, at IMEX America. IMEX is an important platform for Tourism Ireland and our partners to showcase the world-class meetings and incentive facilities on offer right around Ireland. Our message is that the combination of our unique experiences, professional DMCs and warmth of our welcome ensures that Ireland is a



Tourism operators from Ireland at IMEX America in Las Vegas, including Deirdre Purcell, Powerscourt Hotel Resort & Spa (fourth from right).

fantastic destination for incentive travel and corporate meetings."

'Meet in Ireland' is the official MICE (meetings, incentives, conferences and events) brand for the island of Ireland, com-

prising Tourism Ireland, Failte Ireland and Tourism Northern Ireland - who work in partnership to promote the island of Ireland as a leading business events destination.

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Grand unveiling 24th November 2023.  
for more information visit [whaletheatre.ie](http://whaletheatre.ie)



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