

# LOCAL Wicklow Times

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Tuesday 28th November 2023 First Floor, The Boulevard, Quinsborough Road, Bray. A98 R6D7. Tel: 01 - 2869111 E-mail: wicklowed@localtimes.ie www.wicklowtimes.net

# NO DOUGH FOR WICKLOW

The Restaurant Association of Ireland (RAI) has strongly criticised Government's decision to exclude restaurants, cafés and pubs in Wicklow from its €10 million support scheme to help businesses in areas with large numbers of rooms in local hotels and B&Bs being used for humanitarian purposes, such as the housing of Ukrainian refugees.

The RAI said that, while it fully supports the Government's humanitarian effort to house refugees, it does not make sense for some tourism and hospitality businesses to be supported with others being ignored.

As part of Budget 2024, Tourism Minister Catherine Martin announced that a €10 million fund would be

made available to support downstream businesses in areas with high levels of tourism bed stock displacement as a result of the Government's humanitarian efforts.

However, since then, correspondence received by the RAI from the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media and, separately, from Fáilte

Ireland has confirmed that only tourism activities and attractions businesses will be eligible for support.

Fáilte Ireland - which has been tasked by the Department to come up with a plan for how the scheme may operate, with its report due imminently - told the RAI in a letter from the organisation's Interim Chair, Tom Coughlan,



Colaiste Chraobh Abhann students Clodagh Hennessy and Acceline Beings at the Youth Climate Conference 'Our Climate, Our Future' which was held in the school. Over 400 secondary school students from around Co. Wicklow attended. Pic: Michael Kelly. See page 14.

that 'Restaurants, cafes and gastropubs are not within the scope of the ministerial request and as such will not be included.'

Meanwhile, the Department has pointed towards the Increased Cost of Business (ICOB) scheme that was also announced by the Government as part of Budget 2024 as a scheme that will support local restaurants and cafes. However, with approximately 130,000 businesses eligible for the scheme, the funds received by each business will not be enough to keep the doors of many restaurants and cafes open. The €10 million scheme to support businesses in areas with large numbers of tourist beds unavailable provided a good opportunity for the Government to address specific challenges being faced by food-led hospitality busi-

nesses in local communities, but instead it has decided to ignore large swathes of the industry.

Commenting on the decision, CEO of the Restaurants Association, Adrian Cummins, said: "Restaurants, cafes and gastropubs across the country have encountered the same challenges and difficulties as other tourism businesses resulting from the reduced custom and footfall caused by large numbers of tourist beds having been taken out of supply.

"We are calling on the Government to reverse its decision and to include all businesses - including restaurants, cafes and gastropubs - in its scheme to support these areas that have witnessed significant reductions in tourism and custom.

"Our worry is that by including certain businesses and excluding

others, the Government will create division and toxicity within local

communities in counties such as Wicklow, with tensions inevitably arising around which busi-

nesses received funding and which did not."

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Naima Reynolds at the Ballycoog National School Open Day

## Bray Rotary and Soroptomists ask for support for the 'Giving Tree'

Bray Rotary Club has been involved in the Christmas Giving Tree for 20 years and it has become a regular feature at the Holy Redeemer Church's forecourt on the first two weekends in December.

The tree has gift tags with the first names and ages of local needy children and older people. These names are supplied by the four local St. Vincent de Paul Conferences, the Five Loaves Soup Kitchen, and Bray Cancer Support Group.

The public is asked to take a gift tag and buy that child or older person a present and return it to the Giving Tree. The toys and presents are then given to the charities who distribute them to the relevant families.

Over the years the people of Bray have been extremely generous, and have helped approximately 200 - 300 children each year and many older lonely people receive a very welcome present.

The Rotary Club is handing over the reins of the Giving Tree to the Soroptomists, but they will run it in conjunction with them this year. It will be on the first two weekends in December, 2nd and 3rd and 9th and 10th and will be in its usual place.

### Laragh Christmas Tree Lights

It's that time of year again when organizers of the Laragh Christmas lights need the community's support to help continue the amazing Laragh Christmas Lights and Parade. They said "We are so grateful to everyone who supported our table quiz and to the people and businesses who have given donations already. We look forward to seeing you all on the 2nd December for the turn on of our lights. You can donate at <https://www.gofundme.com/f/rvpjw-laragh-christmas-lights>."

### Holy Rosary soup & sandwiches

The next Soup & Sandwiches lunch will be held on Wednesday, 29th November in Kilian House Family Centre from 12.15 to 2pm. Everyone is welcome to come along for good home-made food and a friendly chat. All proceeds are given to local charities. The suggested donation is €7.

### Greystones Flower Club Christmas meeting

Greystones Flower Club will hold its Christmas meeting on Tuesday 28th November at 8pm in the Evangelical Church, Hillside Road, Greystones. Guest demonstrator will be Karen Robinson. Members and non members very welcome.

### Bray Lions Charity Auction

Bray Lions Club Christmas Charity Auction for local families takes place in The Wild Goose, Bray on Thursday 30th November at 9pm. More than 100 gift items, artworks and vouchers will be knocked down to bidders and great bargains are guaranteed. Don't miss this evening of bargains and craic.

### Rewilding Wicklow

Rewilding Wicklow would like to work collaboratively with Laragh & Glendalough Tidy Towns to plant trees in and around the community. Please let them know your ideas as to where these trees might be planted. All suggestions are welcome.

# BIFE now enrolling for September '24

Bray Institute of Further Education's Graduation Ceremony 2023 took place this year on the BIFE campus on Saturday 11th November. Conferring took place over two sittings.

"We were delighted to have so many graduating this year as we celebrate over 30 years of serving the Wicklow, Wexford, Kildare, and Greater Dublin area," said Deputy Principal Gabriel Allen. "having a Level 5/Level 6 Certificate, Diploma or Higher National Diploma award remains a prerequisite to finding meaningful employment, irrespective of location. These awards are portable and their quality is recognised internationally which gives the graduate every opportunity of success.

BIFE has been going from strength to strength over the last decade and is now one of the largest colleges of further education in the country. They offer over 80 different courses in many different subject areas. They have signed agreements with all of the IT's and Universities in the South-east region allowing their students to progress seamlessly to higher education on completion of their course in BIFE. Their



graduates also have the opportunity to gain advanced entry onto higher education degree courses and in some instances complete an honours degree with one extra year of study in Higher Education Institutes.

Work Placement is a vital part of BIFE courses and now all students in the College have the opportunity to complete a 3-week or a 3-month work placement abroad in countries

such as Spain, Portugal, Poland, Italy, Finland, France, Malta or Czechia under the Erasmus+ Programme which is sponsored by the European Union. "This is a terrific opportunity for our students" according to Allen,

"not only to gain valuable work experience in a European country, but also to experience a different culture and to broaden their horizons". BIFE is adding several new coun-

tries to their Erasmus+ portfolio with partners in Athens, Istanbul, Berlin & Austria coming on board.

Bife are now enrolling for September 2024. Full details of all courses are available on their website [www.bife.ie](http://www.bife.ie). Students can apply online on the website by clicking on the "Apply Now" button. There is no application fee. You can also call the Institute during office hours on 01-2829668.

## Busy period for Wicklow Lions

The last few months of every year are busy ones for Wicklow & District Lions Club members.

The annual Quiz Nights which have been running for over 25 years will be restarted on Thursday November 16th in Chesters in Ashford. The 'Voices of Ukraine' ladies choir have been busy performing at a number of events including Culture Night and at KnockRobin nursing home as well as the Independence Day celebrations in the Wicklow Library. Earlier this month a plaque was placed at the Hawthorn tree planted to mark the formation of the only Leo Lions Club in all of Ireland in the grounds of DCW.

The Leo committee is also involved in Childhood Cancer awareness in the school and a special Christmas cook book is planned over the coming weeks. The usual Lions Christmas Food/Cash Appeal commenced on November 24th and 25th at Centra in Ashford. This appeal will continue right up to

Christmas in conjunction with SVP and members are depending on the generosity of the shoppers at all venues. As from the first arrivals from Ukraine almost 2 years ago Lions continue their support for displaced families living in the area. Ukrainians in Wicklow will hold a special Christmas fundraising event on December 10th in the Ecology Centre in Wicklow. The ladies will also be part of the Wicklow Christmas Market with their own outlet where wonderful typically Ukrainian gifts and crafts may be purchased along with special gingerbread baking and a beautiful calendar featuring scenic locations around Wicklow.

The newest volunteer to join the local Lions Club is Anna Zinchenko from Kyiv in Ukraine. Anna is looking forward to getting involved in the various Lions projects especially the Quiz Nights and the Food Appeal. New members are always very welcome.



The Voices of Ukraine Choir

WICKLOW  
Times

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# 13 HSE properties lie vacant

Sinn Fein TD John Brady has expressed his concern at the number of vacant HSE properties across Wicklow and the wider state. He has called on the Government to act immediately to ensure that these vacant properties are brought back into use for the benefit of communities and social housing, particularly given the chronic housing shortage in the County, with many families in crisis mode.

Information revealed to the Public Accounts Committee following questioning of HSE officials by Brady revealed the existence of 214 vacant properties across the state, while a number of these properties were listed with a value of just under €10 million - a full valuation is not available as many currently listed as being under review. Leading to a potential value which is substantially higher. Many of the properties are now just sites, with the former properties having been demolished.

Brady also requested details on the costs of safely securing the sites, many of which have been idle for over 8 years. While it was acknowledged that there continue to be substantial expenses incurred in relation to security and other costs, the HSE did not have the figures available, but undertook to commence work to gather the relevant information to Brady.

There are 13 properties in Wicklow listed on the schedule of properties released by the HSE. A number of which are listed as being in disposal, with others under review, awaiting a decision regarding what will become of them. While a full valuation of the properties in Wicklow is not available, those that are listed have a value of approx. €1.725 million.

Deputy Brady said: "Following requests which I made to the HSE at a recent meeting of the Public

Accounts Committee it has been revealed that across our county here in Wicklow we have vacant properties valued at almost one and three quarters million euro.

"Two of the properties in Wicklow, Trudder House, and Delgany Health Centre are listed as being among the top five valued properties on the list. Trudder House being valued at €1.2 million, and Delgany at €385,000.

"While I welcome the fact that there has been some engagement with Wicklow County Council in respect of the disposal, and future use of these properties, this has been ad hoc.

"Some of these properties have left lying idle for over 8 years. All the while the cost of providing security and associated costs have accumulated.

"The current reality we are faced with it is the fact that there is a housing crisis. Families across the county are struggling to source and fund accommodation needs.

"Alongside this we have community groups, who play a vital role within our communities struggling to source venues. Some of whom have been forced to close as a result of crippling rent costs.

"There are 13 HSE properties listed here in Wicklow as being vacant. And although there are 214 listed

vacant across the state, at a meeting of the Public Accounts

Committee where I questioned HSE officials at length on this issue last month, the HSE Chief Financial Officer Stephen Mulvany revealed that there was roughly 400 vacant HSE properties across the state. Which if taken pro-rata, could have the effect of increasing the actual number in Wicklow substantially."

Brady concluded: "The state needs an active land management agency. Currently the Land Development Agency has no authority to compulsory purchase disused properties and lacks the power to compel state bodies to reduce their holdings.

"This is not acceptable in the midst of an unprecedented housing crisis. These buildings need to be brought back into use. There is a clear demand. There are clear benefits. But no clear pathway to do so.

"They have been left as a blight on the landscape, while the taxpayer foots the bill of providing security, and other additional costs, on properties left idle. Properties which could be put to good use by communities.

"The government needs to act with the urgency that the situation demands and put in place the provisions that will allow these disused but valuable properties to be back into use for the benefit of communities and social housing."

## Funding to develop two outdoor adventure projects

The Lugnaquilla Recreation Plan and Bray Head's sustainable Recreation plan are to receive €45,000 in funding.

The funding being Infrastructure Scheme Rural and Community announced comes under (ORIS) which is under the Development. the Outdoor Recreation remit of the Department of This scheme is all about

developing walkways, cycleways, rivers and lakes.

The projects, when ultimately delivered are set to provide a major boost to local economies by attracting visitors and furthering our reputation as a destination for adventure tourism. Minister Simon Harris said:

Minister Simon Harris said: "Lugnaquilla and Bray Head's Recreation Plans are in line to receive €45,000 each to develop, protect and maintain their walking trails. This investment is about protecting and developing further the great outdoor activities Wicklow already has.

"The days are getting darker and it's more important than ever to make the most of those precious daylight hours by getting out and about when you can. The funding announced today will support the further development of Wicklow's unique landscape for outdoor activities."



Jade Savage and Trisan Williams at the Greystones Christmas Market

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# Funding announced for 15 Wicklow Men's Sheds groups

Over 400 Men's Sheds around Ireland are to receiving funding including 15 in Wicklow.

The Men's Sheds in Wicklow are in line to receive grants of up to €3,000 to financially support them.

"Men's Sheds play such an important role in our communities and it is vital we continue to back them financially so they can continue to operate across the country," said Minister Simon Harris.

"I want to thank my Fine Gael colleague Minister for Social Protection and Rural and Community Development Heather Humphreys who has announced the funding.

"The funding that is being made available to each shed is going to help with the cost of heating bills, electricity utility bills and insurance bills. We know the cost of everything has gone up in recent times and it is vital Government continue to intervene to help meet that cost and soften the blow for organisations like Men's Sheds.

"As we head towards the colder months of the year we know that these supports are crucial to all. Men's Sheds have had such a positive impact since

they came to be, they help tackle isolation and provide a safe, comfortable and welcoming environment where men of all ages can come together to socialise, share skills and work on meaningful projects."

Also welcoming the funding, Green Party TD Steven Matthews said it shows the long-term commitment of the government to Men's Sheds: "This is great news for Men's Sheds that are so important in our communities to help tackle social isolation and share skills. I have met with several of the men's sheds groups and hosted them Leinster House and the most common issue raised is related to the cost of energy and running costs of the men's shed. This grant of €3,000 is a 50% increase on last year and reflects the key role that these groups play in our communities."

The 15 Men's Sheds that are in line to receive grants of up to €3,000 in Wicklow are: Tinahely, Vale of Avoca, Greystones, Newtown & Newcastle, Kilcoole, Wicklow, Bray, Baltinglass, Kilcoole Lodge Nursing Home, Blessington, Arklow, Rathnew, Roundwood, Rathdrum, and Shelton Abbey.

## Built heritage funding grant schemes open for applications from Wicklow

Owners of eligible buildings in County Wicklow are invited to apply for grants under two schemes: the Historic Structures Fund (HSF) and Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS).

The closing date for applications is 19th January 2024, see [www.wicklow.ie](http://www.wicklow.ie) under latest news for full details and application forms.

The Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS) and the Historic Structures Fund (HSF) support labour-intensive projects to repair and conserve our historic built environment. The projects will also provide vital support for local jobs in conservation, traditional skills and construction.

Owners or custodians of historic properties are eligible to apply, whether these are community groups, public authorities or private individuals. Under the BHIS, grants of between €2500-€15,000 may be allocated to eligible projects. There is also scope under the BHIS to apply for a smaller maintenance grant for works of upkeep to protected structures.

Under the HSF scheme grants of €15,000 to €50,000 are available under Stream 1. This includes a new allocation for historic shopfronts.

Allocations of €50,000 up to €200,000 are available under Stream 2 and a 'Vernacular Building' allocation offers a grant of €10,000 for repair and conservation of structures of heritage interest which

may not be included on the Record of Protected Structures.

Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Aoife Flynn Kennedy, stated: "This funding allocation is welcome news for the owners of historic buildings all over the county and will greatly support them in their efforts to look after this important aspect of our Wicklow heritage."

Wicklow County Council Chief Executive, Emer

O'Gorman, said the Council is pleased to coordinate these important funding streams to protect the historic buildings, traditional houses and historic shopfronts that contribute so much to the character and attractiveness of our towns, villages and countryside in County Wicklow.

Full details and application forms are available on [www.wicklow.ie/latest](http://www.wicklow.ie/latest) news, please read careful-

ly. For paper copies (and to return completed applications) please email [plandev@wicklowcoco.ie](mailto:plandev@wicklowcoco.ie).

Postal applications are also accepted to 'HSF /BHIS' Planning Section, Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Wicklow Town. Closing date for applications is Friday, 19th January 2024.

For specific queries please email Deirdre Burns Heritage Officer on [dburns@wicklowcoco.ie](mailto:dburns@wicklowcoco.ie)



Juliana Demery and Joe Taylor of the RNLI at the Greystones Christmas Market.



COMHAIRLE CONTAE CHILL MHANTÁIN  
WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

### BUILT HERITAGE GRANT SCHEMES 2024

Wicklow County Council invites applications from owners of historic buildings, protected structures and structures within Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs) under the following two grant schemes as operated by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage;

- Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS) 2024, and the
- Historic Structures Fund (HSF) 2024.

Under the Built Heritage Investment grants of between €2,500 and €15,000 will be awarded, with applicants required to provide a minimum of 50% of total costs. Smaller grants to support the upkeep and maintenance of historic properties will also be considered, and up to €2,000 of the county allocation may be reserved for this purpose (subject to applications received).

The Historic Structures Fund focuses on caring for and restoring historic structures and buildings for the benefit of communities and the public.

There are three streams of funding:

- **Stream 1** €15,000 - €50,000 (max. 80% funding) with a sub stream for Historic Shopfronts,
- **Stream 2** €50,000 - €200,000 (50% of eligible costs) In exceptional circumstances a higher percentage may be sought, subject to a maximum of 80%
- **Vernacular Structures** - €5,000 - €10,000 (max. 80% funding)

Please note applicants cannot avail of funding under both the **Historic Structures Fund** and the **Built Heritage Investment Scheme** in the same year.

Full details of each scheme including guidelines and application forms are available on [www.wicklow.ie](http://www.wicklow.ie) (under latest news) or by request from Wicklow County Council Planning Office Tel: 0404 20100, e-mail [plandev@wicklowcoco.ie](mailto:plandev@wicklowcoco.ie)

All completed applications (Form A) should to be clearly marked BHIS/HSF and returned by e mail to [plandev@wicklowcoco.ie](mailto:plandev@wicklowcoco.ie) or by post to: Planning Section, Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Wicklow Town.

Please note that the closing date for applications under both schemes is 4.00 pm Friday 19th January 2024.



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# Joint Policing Committee meeting held in Kilcoole

intimidation, drug prevention and additional Garda resources were raised at a public meeting of Wicklow County Council Joint Policing Committee in the Kilcoole Community Centre on Wednesday 22nd November.

The purpose of the JPC is to provide a forum where the Local Authority, Senior Garda Officers, Public Representatives and Community Representatives can consult, discuss and make recommendations on matters affecting the policing of their area.

Cllr Gerry Walsh, Chair of Wicklow County Council Joint Policing Committee, welcomed and thanked all present for taking the time to attend the meeting and for their engagement during a lengthy questions and answers session.

Chief Superintendent Derek Hughes, Detective Inspector Seamus Ryan and Superintendent Pat Connell gave a detailed presentation and welcomed questions from the floor.

Chief Superintendent Hughes noted the importance of community engagement and encouraged the public to contact the Gardaí in relation to local issues, he also drew attention to the remarkable reduction in burglary figures across the County.

During the question-and-answer session issues

raised related to drug searches, drug dealing in local communities, road safety controls, road fatalities, road safety initiatives, proposed bus lanes on the N11/M11 and improvement works at Greystones Garda Station.

Chief Superintendent Hughes, Detective Inspector Seamus Ryan, Superintendent Pat Connell, and Wicklow County Council Chief Executive, Emer O’Gorman, provided comprehensive responses to all questions raised.

Attendees paid tribute to the Community Gardai in the area, particular reference was made to the recent Santa Parade which was a great success involving young and old throughout Greystones and the surrounding areas.

Emer O’Gorman, Chief Executive, Wicklow County Council, explained that the Gardaí and the Council are working together on a strategic road safety forum to reduce road fatalities and serious injuries in support of Vision Zero.



Chief Superintendent Derek Hughes, Cllr Gerry Walsh, Emer O’Gorman, Chief Executive, Wicklow County Council; Helen Purcell, Wicklow County Council and Superintendent Pat Connell at the Joint Policing Committee meeting in Kilcoole Community Centre.

# ‘Govt putting Wicklow patients’ lives at risk’

Sinn Fein TD John Brady has said that the Government's decision to underfund the health service this year is putting Wicklow patients' lives at risk.

Speaking ahead of Sinn Fein's motion to lift the recruitment embargo and properly fund the health service, brought forward by the party's spokesperson on Health, David Cullinane, Brady said that the recruitment embargo is having disastrous consequences in Wicklow.

Deputy Brady added: The Government's decision to underfund the health service this year and next has now led to a recruitment embargo, meaning 7,000 essential posts have now been scrapped. It is clear the Government has thrown in the towel on health and the longer they are in power the worse things will

get. They are putting patients' lives at risk this winter and beyond.

"The memorandums sent by the Chief Executive Officer of the Health Service Executive which directed a severe escalation in the recruitment embargo across the health service note that the embargo 'will create difficulties' in the face of éan enormous increase in demand. It is in black and white that this decision will spell disaster. "It has caused the removal of vital frontline vacant posts here in Wicklow which were needed for the winter ahead, and the withdrawal of job offers from prospective

health service workers. It has sent a message to Irish workers abroad not to come home, a message to workers frustrated with the health service in Ireland to emigrate, and a message to overseas health services to come and take our healthcare workers.

"This week, Sinn Fein Health is bringing forward a motion to the Dail calling on the Government to lift the recruitment embargo and properly fund the health service, to urgently bring forward revised estimates for 2023 to properly fund the health service to year end, and reverse its disastrous decision to deliberately underfund the health service in 2024."



Noah and Kitty Sheehan at the Ballycoog National School Open Day.



COMHAIRLE CHONTAE CHILL MHANTÁIN  
WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL



## WICKLOW COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2022-2028 PREPARATION OF THE GREYSTONES-DELGANY & KILCOOLE LOCAL AREA PLAN CONSULTATIONS UNDER SECTION 20 OF THE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000 (AS AMENDED)

Wicklow County Council intends to review the existing plan and prepare a new Local Area Plan for the settlements of 'Greystones-Delgany' & 'Kilcoole'. An online consultation portal has been created, which makes reference to the significant planning topics that the Local Area Plan will address. The portal can be accessed through the online consultation hub <https://www.wicklow.ie/Living/ConsultationHub> or scan the QR code here. Submissions will be accepted from 29 November 2023 to 31 January 2024.

The Greystones-Delgany & Kilcoole Local Area Plan 2013 – 2019 is the current land use plan for the settlement and is available to view at <https://www.wicklow.ie/Living/Services/Planning/Development-Plans-Strategies/Local-Area-Town-Settlement-Plans/Greystones-Delgany/Greystones-Delgany-Kilcoole-Local-Area-Plan-2013-2019>

### TWO INFORMATION DAYS

A public information day will be held in Greystones and one will be held in Kilcoole during the consultation period. Further details will follow with regard to the dates and times for these public information days.

### SUBMISSIONS

Submissions or observations regarding the review of the existing plan and the preparation of the new Local Area Plan are hereby invited from the public and interested bodies, between the period 29 November 2023 to 31 January 2024. Children, or groups or associations representing the interests of children, are entitled to make submissions or observations.

Submissions may be made in either of the following ways:

1. Write to: 'Greystones-Delgany & Kilcoole LAP', Administrative Officer, Planning Department, Wicklow County Council, Station Road, Wicklow.
2. Through the online consultation portal here at <https://www.wicklow.ie/Living/ConsultationHub> or scan the QR code on this add.

<https://www.wicklow.ie/Living/Services/Planning/Development-Plans-Strategies/Local-Area-Town-Settlement-Plans/Greystones-Delgany/Greystones-Delgany-Kilcoole-Local-Area-Plan/Pre-Draft-Public-Consultation>

### NOTE

All submissions should include your name and an email address/contact address and, where relevant, details of any organisation, community group or company etc., which you represent. Please make your submission by one medium only, i.e. hard copy or through the portal. The planning process is an open and public one. In that context, all submissions/ observations are a matter of public record, and may also be placed on the County Council's website. LATE SUBMISSIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.



# Fine Gael selects Local Election candidates in Arklow

Fine Gael is in the process of selecting the candidates that will represent the party in next year's Local Elections in the constituency. The Arklow convention was held on the 3rd of November in the Arklow Bay Hotel.

Sitting councillor on Wicklow County Council, Sylvester Bourke, was selected as one of the Party's candidates. In addition, the Party nominated Laurie Kearnon, a first-time candidate.

Councillor Sylvester Bourke was first elected in 1999, and was subsequently returned to office at every election since. He is a farmer by profession and is married with three children. Laurie Kearnon is happily married to Stephen with their five children. For nearly two years, she has served as a civil servant at Wicklow County Council.

Sylvester spoke of the difficult work in securing housing but noted the significant strides that have been made and how the works done on management of water and sewage would facilitate more housing.

Keeping on the housing theme Laurie spoke of her work in the housing section of the council.

Paul Kehoe, TD for Wexford chaired the selection convention. He said: "We are lucky to have a great team representing the party at local level. These candidates have already shown how invested they are in their own areas. They have already demonstrated great commitment to improving their local areas and that commitment is set to grow."



First-time candidate Laurie Kearnon, with Pal Kehoe TD and Cllr Sylvester Bourke

Minister Simon Harris said: "Fine Gael has started to select the candidates for next year's local elections, the candidates selected will bring a strong mix of experience, energy, youth and diversity to the party. We had a successful local election in 2019, with 255 councillors returned. We were the first Government party in two decades to buck the trend and



Laurie Kearnon of Ballinaclesh recently graduated from the Fine Gael Ladies Aspirant Candidate Programme. Laurie is a resident of the Arklow Local Electoral Area and Secretary of the Arklow & Rathdrum Fine Gael branch. At the recent graduation event, Laurie Kearnon spoke passionately about her experience, emphasising her delight in being the sole female participant from South Wicklow. Her involvement in the program provided her with a platform to engage directly with Minister for Public Expenditure, Paschal Donohoe TD, where she highlighted and discussed the pressing needs of the people in Co Wicklow. "We commend Laurie Kearnon for her dedication and successful completion of the Fine Gael Ladies Aspirant Candidate Program," stated a representative of the Arklow & Rathdrum Fine Gael branch. "Her active participation is a testament to her commitment to understanding and addressing the needs of the people in Co Wicklow. Laurie's engagement with Minister Paschal Donohoe TD exemplifies her dedication to advocating for our community."

# Social Democrats select candidate for Bray East

The Wicklow Branch of the Social Democrats have formally selected Bray resident Aaron McAllorum to contest the 2024 Local Elections in the Bray East Electoral Area.

Aaron is parliamentary assistant to the former co-leader of the Social Democrats, Catherine Murphy TD, and has been working with the party and Wicklow TD Jennifer Whitmore since its early stages.

Aaron's candidacy brings almost 20 years of experience on the civil and political side of public service. Originally from Blanchardstown, he has made his home in Bray and is raising a young family in the town.

Speaking after the selection convention, Aaron said:

"I am honoured to be given the opportunity to represent the Social Democrats as a candidate for the next local elections. The party are very progressive when it comes to their policies on housing provision, public services, healthcare and transport.

"The fundamental ethos of the Social Democrats can take our country to a fairer and more sustainable place to live and prosper instead of people just getting by.

"I am proud to live in Bray and I look forward to engaging further with the community in order to bring badly needed political change and fresh perspectives to our town."

Reacting to Aaron's selection, Deputy Jennifer Whitmore said:

"I am very proud to see Aaron selected to run in Bray East for the Social Democrats. We have worked

together on local issues in Bray for years and I know that Aaron will be a wonderful representative for the area.

"Having lived here for years and being active in the community, he knows what people in the town are concerned about.

"His commitment to making positive local change in Bray and his proactive nature will prove to be indispensable if he is elected as a councillor. I wish him every success with his campaign in the months ahead."



Deputy Jennifer Whitmore and Bray East Social Democrats candidate Aaron McAllorum



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# Wicklow schools among first to claim free solar panels

Wicklow schools will be among the first to receive free solar panels, it's been confirmed. County Wicklow is one of the first counties to be included in the first phase of funding that will eventually provide free solar panels to all schools in the country.

Welcoming this progress, Green Party TD Steven Matthews said: "I am delighted that Wicklow schools will be in the first phase of counties to have solar panels installed. This wasn't an easy process and required significant work behind the scenes to get to this point. The removal of planning permission for solar panels was a huge hurdle and it means that schools get the ball rolling on their solar applications much faster than they could have otherwise."

"The provision of free solar panels for schools is a very practical measure that the Green Party introduced in Budget 2023 to assist schools with rising energy costs. Schools are at the centre of our communities here in County Wicklow, and it makes sense that schools will be at the forefront of Ireland's solar rollout. The transition to renewable energy sources will allow schools to reduce their energy bills and take action on climate change."

"I have been assured that the information provided to schools will make it clear how to apply, the timelines for completion and how the funding can be drawn down. The Department of Education has set up School Hub, a new online school community engagement platform that schools can liaise with on any teething issues."

"The solar PV panels in schools



Steven Matthews TD

will also be connected to the electricity grid, so that solar energy can power other homes and businesses when schools are closed at weekends and during school holidays. Applications will open on 30th November 2023. All schools in the first phase which includes County Wicklow, will be contacted by the Department of Education and invited to apply on that date. I look forward to working directly with Wicklow schools to work through any queries they have in relation to

the application process and rollout," Deputy Matthews concluded.

The scheme will provide eligible schools with 6 kilowatts of roof-mounted solar PV, which equates to approximately 16 solar panels. The full cost of installing the solar panels will be paid for entirely by the state's Climate Action Fund and the scheme will open for applications from November 30th.

Local Fianna Fail Senator Pat Casey has also welcomed the commencement of the first phase of the Solar for Schools Programme.

Senator Casey said: "It's excellent news that schools in Wicklow can apply for free solar panels under the Solar for Schools Programme from 30 November. All schools will be contacted by the Department and invited to apply and I would encourage them all to do so in this is an excellent scheme that will provide tangible financial and climate benefits while also delivering the added benefit of encouraging discussion and uptake of solar panels in the wider community."

"Fianna Fail in Government strongly believes in helping schools to reduce their energy costs. This scheme will help schools to manage those costs in the near future while also helping them in terms of their energy independence and climate concerns in the long term."



Comhairle Contae Chill Mhantáin  
Wicklow County Council

## NOTICE TO FARMERS AND AGRICULTURAL CONTRACTORS

Wicklow County Council reminds all farmers and agricultural contractors of their obligations to the requirements of the Good Agricultural Practice for the Protection of Water Regulations 2022.



### ORGANIC FERTILISER OR SOILED WATER SHALL NOT BE APPLIED TO LAND WITHIN:

- 5m of Streams or drains
- 20m of lakeshores
- 25m of domestic wells
- Drinking water supplies (public, group, private) - 200m for supplies serving 500 persons or more, and 100m for supplies serving 50 or more.

Slurry must be applied under the right conditions and at the right time of year to deliver on our commitments to improving water quality. Farmers are reminded to observe Buffer Zones that apply at this time of the year.

### ORGANIC AND CHEMICAL FERTILISERS OR SOILED WATER SHALL NOT BE APPLIED TO LAND IN ANY OF THE FOLLOWING CIRCUMSTANCES:

- the land is waterlogged;
- the land is flooded or likely to flood;
- the land is snow-covered or frozen;
- heavy rain is forecast within 48 hours, or
- the ground slopes steeply and there is a risk of water pollution having regard to factors such as surface runoff pathways, the presence of land drains, the absence of hedgerows to mitigate surface flow, soil condition and ground cover.

### USE OF LESS (LOW EMISSION SLURRY SPREADING) EQUIPMENT:

- LESS (Low Emission Slurry Spreading) equipment must be used for the application of slurry on holdings with stocking rates of 150kgN/ha or above from grazing livestock manure prior to export of livestock manure from the holding from 1st January 2023.
- LESS (Low Emission Slurry Spreading) equipment must be used for the application of slurry on holdings with stocking rates of 130kgN/ha or above from grazing livestock manure prior to export of livestock manure from the holding from 1st January 2024.

### WINTER SLURRY SPREADING CLOSED PERIOD (2023 - 24):

Wicklow County Council is reminding farmers and agricultural contractors that the spreading of organic fertilisers is prohibited in County Wicklow from 8th October 2023 until 12th January 2024.

In addition, due to wet weather during the summer and autumn of 2023, farmyard manure that is currently appropriately stored on land can remain there for the duration of the closed period this Winter.

CONTACT US: [EMAIL - AGRICULTURE@WICKLOWCOCO.IE](mailto:AGRICULTURE@WICKLOWCOCO.IE)  
[TEL - 0404 20236](tel:040420236)



Altidore Castle, in Kilpedder, held its final biodiversity walk of the year the weekend before last. The walk around the ancient and newly woodland was done by Philip Emmet and his son Thomas. There were twenty five people on the two hour walk which looked at trees, insects and rewilding. Philip Emmet said "it's a great resource we have here in Altidore and we love to share it. The walk combines our ancient woodland with the native trees we have more recently planted and there is a great variety of biodiversity to be seen."

Thomas Emmet said "A big part of the future of Altidore will be rewilding the estate and being able to show people what we have done already in the thirty years Altidore has been organic as well as what we have planned is a great pleasure. Education about rewilding processes and on a more simple level connecting people with nature is a huge motivation for our work."

Altidore will be open again for biodiversity walks and house tours in 2025.

# Greystones rail commuters getting a raw deal



DART users left waiting on the platform in Greystones

Cllr Derek Mitchell has criticised Irish Rail for failures in the service from Greystones, following Saturday 11th November when a cancellation and delay left approximately 150 people waiting on the platform for an hour.

"On Saturdays, when there is an hourly Dart service, Irish Rail cancelled one and then the diesel train from Rosslare was delayed 25 minutes," said Cllr Mitchell. "The electronic signs showed that there would be a train sooner. There was no announcement - only the wrong electronic display. There were no staff in the station. About 150 passengers were left on the platform for 50 minutes expecting a train soon, many were families with babies and older people. This is very bad management of the customers."

Speaking about what needs to happen, Cllr Mitchell said "The DART controller should send another one down if a train is cancelled, especially if the Saturday interval is 1 hour; There should be a service board on the public side of the station showing all departures as in Dun Laoghaire. Passengers need to be told what is happening with announcements; We



Cllr Derek Mitchell

were told to expect a more frequent weekend service when more drivers were trained a year or two ago but they never appeared. This is needed now; Many people tell me that the DART scheduling has got much worse. The plan for a 20 minute inter-

val service to Greystones requires a much better approach to scheduling and management.

"The details of the DART+ South were to have been announced many months ago but nothing has appeared. The Greystones improvement is separate from the more contentious closing of four level crossings further North and should proceed now especially as Greystones population increased 22% in the Census period, much more than Dublin's 6% increase. I wrote the original Report on the partial double tracking in 2018 and the Jacobs report of April 2019 confirmed its feasibility. Implementation needs to be speeded up.

"I have written to the Chief Executive of Irish Rail and demand an improvement. I have also asked Minister Simon Harris and the NTA to assist in pressuring Irish Rail to do better."

## Matthews welcomes new bus service for West Wicklow

Green Party TD Deputy Steven Matthews has welcomed the expanded and improved 885 bus service for West Wicklow.

Speaking after the launch of the new service on Monday November 20th, Deputy Matthews said "The West Wicklow area has never had good public transport options and I am delighted to see this newly enhanced service from Baltinglass, to Stratford on Slaney, Dunlavin, Brannockstown, Ballymore Eustace, Blessington and on to Naas start today.

"The enhanced route will provide peak-time services and evening services for commuters and will continue to offer improved connectivity from West Wicklow to Sallins Train Station, Naas Hospital and

regional bus and rail services.

"I have been pushing the NTA to expand the service to provide better options for residents in West Wicklow, with many residents in Dunlavin stressing the urgent need for a bus service. This improved service will initially run 4 return trips a day, Monday to Sunday with the first bus departing Baltinglass at 07:30 and the last bus arriving back at 23:25.

"This adds to the new 183 service introduced last year which provides a Local Link service east west from Sallins to Arklow. It is one of the longest and most

scenic routes across Wicklow but has suffered some punctuality issues due to the length of the route. I have been discussing the 183 bus issue and the introduction of a new Roundwood to Bray bus with the NTA and I hope to see progress on this soon.

"Providing better public transport for Wicklow is a priority for me. There are new Local Link routes for rural Wicklow, new Wicklow Town and Arklow to Bray and Dublin routes and the DART extension to Wicklow Town is progressing well. As long as I remain a public representative, I will continue working to deliver better transport for all of Wicklow," concluded Deputy Matthews.



Deputy Steven Matthews in Dunlavin

## Major overhaul planned for Bray's Fran O'Toole Bridge

The National Transport Authority have confirmed that Wicklow County Council are developing an Active Travel project at Fran O'Toole Bridge, Bray, that envisages two new bridges being built.

The proposed new bridges will be on either side of the existing bridge and will serve pedestrians only.

The ambition is that Fran O'Toole Bridge would then be used to provide a cycle lane in both directions, with bus priority provided through traffic signal arrangements.

Speaking on the proposed works, Social Democrats Local Election candidate Aaron McAllorum says: "This is very welcome news, active travel projects are going to be key to getting Bray moving as the town and its surrounds grow.

"With improved cycle, pedestrian, and bus corridors I hope this will assist the flow of public transport through the town. Far too often I see the rows of buses parked on the Main Street in traffic congestion.

"I also see the potential to address safety issues for vulnerable road users at the junction of Seapoint Road and the Maltings".



Aaron McAllorum - Social Democrats 2024 Local Election Candidate

## Hawkstown Road to get bus stops

Green TD Steven Matthews has confirmed that the NTA and Wicklow County Council are identifying suitable locations for the installation of new bus stops along the busy Hawkstown Road, just outside Wicklow Town.

Deputy Matthews said, "The Hawkstown Road area in Wicklow is seeing considerable residential growth and it makes sense that public transport should be expanded to serve this area. I am contacted every week by constituents seeking better public transport, more options, higher frequency and more reliability of services and it has been one of my priorities since being elected.

"I was contacted by local residents and bus users seeking a bus stop for the Hawkstown area and following my contact with Wicklow County Council and the National Transport Authority, both agencies are now advanced in identifying suitable safe locations for the stops.

"Wicklow is growing in population especially in areas such as Kilcoole, Rathnew, Wicklow, Blessington Delgany and Greystones and it is vitally important to those communities that public and community services are provided and improved in line with population growth. I am continuously working with community groups and residents association to ensure that services are adequate for their area and if I can assist any group please get in touch with me," concluded Deputy Matthews.



Deputy Matthews at Hawkstown Road in Wicklow Town



# Ruby Mc's

Welcome to Ruby Mcs, a whimsical and vibrant eatery created by Ruby Mc, a 12-year-old girl with a passion for all things colorful and fun as well as animals. At Ruby Mcs we believe in creating a joyful and inclusive space where everyone, including our furry friends, can come together to enjoy delicious food and create lasting memories.

One of the unique features of Ruby Mcs Diner is our dog-friendly policy. We understand that dogs are an important part of many families, and we welcome them with open arms. Bring your four-legged companions along and let them enjoy a special treat from our dog-friendly menu while you indulge in our delectable offerings.

Speaking of indulgence, our menu is a delightful mix of sweet and savory treats that are sure to satisfy any craving. Start your day with a full breakfast or brunch featuring classics like fluffy pancakes, crispy bacon, and perfectly cooked eggs. For those with a sweet tooth, our waffles, crêpes, and Taiyaki or slushies are a must-try. And don't forget to save room for dessert! Our ice cream creations are a feast for the eyes and the taste buds.

At Ruby Mcs we believe in using high-quality ingredients to create dishes that are as visually appealing as they are delicious. We take pride in sourcing local and fresh ingredients whenever possible, supporting our community and ensuring the best flavors in every bite.

But Ruby Mcs is more than just a place to eat. It's a place to connect, have fun, and embrace the joy of being young at heart. Our colorful and playful decor sets the stage for a memorable dining experience, where laughter and good times are always on the menu.

So, whether you're looking for a delightful breakfast, a tasty treat, or a place to spend quality time with loved ones, Ruby Mcs is the perfect destination. Join us in celebrating the creativity and passion of Ruby Mcs as we embark on this colorful and delicious journey together.



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# 208 new social-rental homes delivered in Bray

This month saw 208 new social homes being launched in Southern Cross, Bray. This project has been delivered by an Approved Housing Body (AHB) - Co-Operative Housing Ireland - working in partnership with Wicklow County Council and Lioncor Developments.

Speaking at the launch on 15th November, CHI Chairperson, Pearse O'Shiel said, "208 homes is a significant development for Co-operative Housing Ireland, our largest to date. It is equivalent to the annual social housing delivery of a county the size of Wicklow. It is fitting that we mark our 50th anniversary with this achievement. We are a national organisation currently with 5,000 homes, community building in 24 counties and on target for a record delivery of over 700 homes this year."

Welcoming the new homes, Minister Simon Harris said "These 208 new homes are set to make a real difference in Bray and shows how government is making every effort to increase the number of available homes."

"As a constituency TD

these homes are vital for our community. I know from dealing with people from all across the county who are on very long council waiting lists that these homes are desperately needed.

"These 208 homes are going to really speed up the process of waiting lists for Wicklow County Council. I'm delighted that Bray is benefitting from the largest development by an AHB in Wicklow, equivalent to the annual social housing delivery of a county the size of Wicklow.

"The new homes include 30 houses that are three and four bed in size, 18 duplex houses and 160 apartments which mainly two bed and 22 one-bed. This is going to have a really positive impact for people in Bray.

"We need a lot more of these initiatives and we already making great

strides in housing with over 500 people first time buyers every week across the county.

"Housing is the biggest challenge of our time and of this generation. We are showing people in very tangible ways how we are dealing with this. My job as Minister for Further and Higher Education is to make sure that there are enough people trained to build the houses and only this year I've announced 3 new apprenticeships in housing.

"In the past 12 months, 30,000 new homes have been built 50% more than 3 years ago."

Minister Harris concluded: "I will always back initiatives and schemes that are there to help people buy new homes or help them rent a home. This week the Government approved



Cathaoirleach of Bray Municipal District, Cllr Melanie Corrigan, CEO of Wicklow County Council, Emer O'Gorman, Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Aoife Flynn Kennedy, Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Simon Harris, TD, Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Darragh O'Brien, TD, Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly, TD, Senator Pat Casey, Deputy Steven Matthews and Cllr Stephen Stokes at the launch of 208 Co-operative Housing Ireland (CHI) homes at Kilruddery Glen

plans to extend the Local Authority Home Loan to those buying derelict home, a Government backed mortgage to help people with buying or renovating a home.

"On top of this, the Rent a Room tax relief is being extended to people living in council houses for third level students, this means that if you live in a local authority home and have spare room you can rent it out to a third level student and get €14,000 tax free."

The acquisition of the 208 homes in Bray was made possible using the Capital Advance Leasing Facility (known as CALF), provided by the Department of Housing, as well as private finance that Co-Operative Housing Ireland has sourced.

This development is just one of a number of projects that Co-Operative Housing Ireland is undertaking, in partnership with local authorities around the country, to provide new social homes.

Wicklow County Council supported Co-Operative Housing Ireland to acquire these 208 homes in Southern Cross. The estate represents the largest delivery of any CALF supported social housing estate in Wicklow in 2023 and the largest estate in ownership in the history of Co-operative Housing Ireland.

Also welcoming the housing development, Greystones councillor Stephen Stokes said more infrastructure investment is needed in North Wicklow.

Cllr Stokes stated: "For many people their housing dreams will be now realised, so it is a great day. It was nice to see decorations already up for their first Christmas in their new homes. Cooperative



Kyra Brett, and Jack and Alex Tobin at the launch of the new Kilruddery Glen housing development.



CHI Member tenant and new resident of Kilruddery Glen, Emma Brett and her daughter Kyra, in their new home



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## 'Housing For All is helping people to buy or rent a home'

Fianna Fail Senator in Wicklow and Spokesperson on Finance, Pat Casey, has said that Housing For All, the Government's Plan to increase housing availability and affordability, is gaining momentum and making a real difference on the ground for housing in Ireland.

Senator Casey made the comments after the Government published the Housing for All Action Plan Update & Q3 2023 Progress Report, which clearly outlined the progress being made in tackling the issue of housing.

Senator Casey said: "The latest Housing For All update shows the real progress Fianna Fáil in Government is making in tackling housing, the defining issue of this generation. The facts show that 22,443 new homes were completed in the first nine months of 2023 and almost 30,000 new homes were completed in 2022, representing the largest annual delivery of new homes in over a decade and exceeding that year's Housing for All target of 24,600. In Wicklow alone, 1,025 homes were built during the first nine months of 2023, a record number since the CSO began recording this in 2011.

"Additionally, more people are buying their first home than in any period in well over a decade, supported by affordable purchase initiatives, including the First Home Scheme, the Local Authority Home Loan and Help-to-Buy, which has been extended to the end of 2025.



Senator Pat Casey

"Sinn Féin have said they would scrap these schemes if they were in power, blocking families from owning their family home. Fianna Fáil's top priority remains doing everything we can to help people to afford to buy or rent a home. Today's update shows that our plan is working and my focus is on doing whatever I can to keep this positive momentum going."



ISME has launched its 2023 Shop Local campaign, calling on Irish shoppers and businesses to THINK LOCAL. ISME is not asking customers to confine all their festive shopping to local businesses but IS asking that they ensure that they devote a proportion of their Christmas shopping to local bricks-and-mortar or 'Irish' online stores.

Local shopping for locally produced goods and services returns multiples of the spend to the community and keeps the main street in towns active and vibrant. Because Ireland is a small, open economy, a lot of our spending as consumers is on imported goods. This limits the

'multiplier' flow of wealth around the community. However, if we try to ensure that at least a proportion of our purchases are locally sourced, each euro we spend can produce two, three or four euro of additional wealth in the community.

The focus of the campaign is for us all to Think Local before we buy, not just for Christmas, but throughout the year. Local spending helps to:

- Support the local community.
- Maintain the anchor tenants in our main streets.
- Reduce our carbon output and transport costs.
- Promote goods and services that are sustainable and traceable.
- Ensure consumers get value for money and high quality.
- Creates real high value local jobs, therefore making a genuine contribution to the economy.

Neil McDonnell, Chief Executive at ISME, said: "We can all make a difference for local retailers and

hospitality providers this Christmas through our spending decisions. We can save time, money, effort, and the environment by devoting at least a portion of our festive spend to local businesses this Christmas."

ISME has created two online portals - one for consumers and one for businesses. Consumers can browse a variety of categories such as activities and entertainment, fashion, food and drink, retail, and Irish breaks which offers gift ideas for Christmas and showcases local businesses. For businesses, they can access a directory of B2B products and services such as corporate gifts, legal and financial services, IT and market-

ing, transport, training and more.

Alan McGrath, the CEO of Health Stores Ireland, says: "Release the Christmas spirit this year by supporting local business. Specialist shops and family-run businesses give better service, saves you money and offers support and employment back to your community. Enhance your seasonal shopping experience by including a visit to your local cafe, pub or hotel for a Christmas lunch or family treat as part of a day out in your town."

Tina Coy, the Director of Operations at Accounting Pro Ireland believes that shopping local "ensures every cent is put back into the local economy: investment in local jobs, supporting entrepreneurs and enterprise, reducing emissions is key. Also give your cards a holiday from online purchasing and take your cash for a Christmas walk."

Linda Murray from Play Activity Leisure Ireland said: "Shop, Play & Stay local this Christmas! With oodles of local businesses including restaurants & pubs, retail stores, entertainment centres and comfortable accommodation why not stay local for all your Christmas shopping list and Christmas party nights! And best of all "when you buy from a small business an actual person does a little happy dance!"

To find out more about the campaign and to explore the businesses involved please visit <https://ismie.ie/shop-local/>



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# Kilmacanogue car park upgrade announced

The Kilmacanogue community is set to benefit from a significant enhancement as plans are underway to tarmac the local car park adjacent to the 1916 memorial. Currently surfaced with gravel, the car park is poised for transformation into a well-structured, accessible parking area.

At the recent Bray Municipal District Budget Meeting, it was proposed by both Cllr Rory O'Connor and Cllr Melanie Corrigan that "20,000 will put towards the project. The proposed upgrades include kerbing, drainage improvement, road regulation, surfacing, and dedicated disability parking spaces.

"In a proactive move, the Council is also actively pursuing an additional €30,000 in funding from development levies to ensure the comprehensive completion of the project," said Cllr O'Connor.

"While there is no guarantee that the development levies will be available, the Council is committed to seeking these funds to maximize the positive impact on the community.

"Quote by Cathaoirleach of Bray Municipal

District Cllr Melanie Corrigan " I am delighted that money has been set aside from the Discretionary Funds for this project, the carpark is becoming heavily used by parents in the school, walkers and visitors to the area, and by having a properly marked accessible carpark it will increase the capacity and enhance the area."

"Quote by Leas Cathaoirleach of Bray Municipal District Cllr Rory O'Connor " I believe these works will make the car park within Kilmacanogue far more accessible and safer for all its users. I think going forward we need to look at the possibility of an electric charger for this area as currently the village of Kilmacanogue doesn't have one. I believe as a council we're going in the right direction for this area and I hope to carry on improving it for the local people."

# Light at the end of the tunnel for Kilpedder

After writing to the ESB, Minister Simon Harris has confirmed work is underway to get lights switched on in coming weeks.

Minister Simon Harris has been campaigning for public lighting in Kilpedder Village and has repeatedly raised the issue with ESB representatives. Last August, funding was finally approved for new footpaths and public lighting but the connections are still not operational.

Last week Minister Harris received correspondence from ESB confirming that: A local ESB Networks team is to work on the connections of the lights; Assuming all necessary works are carried out, the supervisor in charge of the works is planning to complete all connections by the week of the 4th of December.

Minister Simon Harris said "I am very glad to hear

that there is light at the end of the tunnel for Kilpedder Village. For months this has been an issue I have been aware of and have been following up on. As far as I understand the certificate for the connections were issued weeks ago and therefore the lights should already be on.

"It's clearly in the interest of everybody's safety that we get the lights on as soon as possible. We know that as we head into much darker days, these lights are vital for people's welfare. It is a positive step forward that the local ESB Networks team is to start completing the connections so we can get the lights switched on at the start of next month.

Minister Harris concluded: "I intend on following up on this issue until I am assured that all the necessary works are completed and the residents in Kilpedder are satisfied with the lighting in their village."

# Whitmore calls on Council to secure future of Ashford Park and Playground

Social Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore has written to Wicklow County Council Chief Executive Emer O'Gorman asking for the Council to examine the possibility of acquiring the current Ashford Park and Playground site by means of a Compulsory Purchase Order.

Deputy Whitmore made this request in light of the news that following an extensive search of the local area Wicklow County Council has been unable to identify a suitable alternative site for the playground and park in Ashford. Talks between Wicklow County Council and the owners of the land on which the community park and playground are located failed to resolve the issue and Ashford Park and Playground have remained closed since October 2022.

"The community in Ashford have been locked out of their local playground and park for over a year now," commented Deputy Whitmore. "The sudden loss of such an important and well-loved community amenity has had a negative impact on the town and is effecting local businesses as well as community morale. Ashford Park was much more than a place for children to go to play, it was a focal point for the community here, a place where people could go and enjoy nature and reflect. I visited the park many times with my family and while my children enjoyed the playground, I was always struck by the park's natural beauty."

Social Democrats Local Area



Jennifer Whitmore at Ashford Park

Representative for the Wicklow Town Municipal District, Danny Alvey also commented on the park's importance to the community: "The Ashford playpark is one of the nicest in the area and I would often visit with my three-year old daughter. We were very disappointed when it was closed last year, and I can understand the frustration among Ashford residents who put so much work into creating this playground and community space. The community in Ashford deserve their playground back."

Deputy Whitmore concluded, "Parks and Playgrounds are funda-

mentally important to the wellbeing of our communities and towns. I have written to Wicklow County Council and asked them to explore the possibility of acquiring the Ashford Park and Playground site by way of a Compulsory Purchase Order. Wicklow County Council have been working hard to resolve this situation but with no suitable alternative site available and the community already waiting for over a year without access to this much-needed facility it is time that action is taken, and the future of this park is secured for the people of Ashford."



Greystones woman and pro bodybuilder Lisa Duggan got married in Las Vegas to Colonel Steve Rogers of the United States Army, on the same day as competing in an international bodybuilding competition representing Ireland

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# People with type 2 diabetes to benefit from HSE services and care closer to home

Patients now referred by GP for specialist diabetes care in HSE integrated care hubs

The Lancet report published earlier this year estimates that over 1.31 billion people worldwide could be living with diabetes by 2050, describing it as 'the defining disease of the 21st century'. The increase (from 529 million in 2021) is expected due to more people developing type 2 diabetes.

Recently on World Diabetes Day (Tuesday 14th November), HSE Community Healthcare East highlighted new developments in care for people with complicated type 2 diabetes, supporting person-centred, integrated, accessible care as close to home as possible.

Supported by both the Enhanced Community Care (ECC) programme and Modernised Care Pathways (MCPs), GPs are now able to refer patients to Integrated Care Hubs in South Dublin and Wicklow for specialist diabetes care. This reduces patients being referred to an acute hospital for a

scheduled care review and it is anticipated that this will also reduce referrals to Emergency Departments.

Martina Queally, Chief Officer, HSE Community Healthcare East, comments: "Diabetes is a long-term health condition that needs ongoing treatment and management. The new development in care provides a more efficient service and empowers people to self-manage their health and prevent the complications of diabetes. Multidisciplinary teams provide care based on the needs of patients. This supports direct referrals to podiatry, dietet-

ics, and nursing services, all of which in the past may have resulted in a referral to an acute hospital but now means the care and services are provided in the community and as close to the patient's home as possible."

One of the supports available under this is the DISCOVER Diabetes programme. This is a self-management education and support group programme for all patients with a confirmed diagnosis of Type 2 Diabetes. It is free and can be accessed online or in-person in venues across HSE Community Healthcare East (which service



The Diabetes Team in HSE Community Healthcare East's Integrated Care Hub, Bray

Wicklow, Dublin South and Dublin South East) over 4-6 weekly sessions.

The dietetic led service in the Diabetes team in the Integrated Care Hubs in Bray and Clonskeagh were recently awarded a commendation at the 2023 Health Services

Excellence Awards under the 'Improving Patient Experience Category' for their project

'Improving access to services for people living with Type 2 Diabetes'. The team at these two hubs have delivered 36 DISCOVER Diabetes courses online and in-person with many more planned for 2024.

Patients are able register their interest in attending this programme on [www.hse.ie/diabetescourses](http://www.hse.ie/diabetescourses) or by calling HSE live on 1800 700 700.

For further information on this diabetes course please see <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/type-2-diabetes/courses-and-support/discover-diabetes/>

# Donnelly launches Purple House 2022 Annual Report

Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly recently visited Purple House in Bray to launch the organisation's 2022 Annual Report. The launch took place in the charity's flagship premises on Duncairn Terrace in Bray and coincided with Childhood Bereavement Awareness Week.



Jamie Eaglesfield at the launch of the Purple House annual report

The report states that in 2022, a total of 822 families availed of Purple House's various cancer services, including counselling, cancer rehab physiotherapy, survivorship programmes, support groups, wellness programmes, hospital transport, complementary therapies, with a further 629 families availing of the telephone support line.

527 individuals benefited from 4,950 program sessions, surpassing their target of 500 individuals availing of programs.

Purple House's child and family services have witnessed substantial growth, and the organisation aspires to further expand this vital service. In 2022, 297 new clients contacted the organisation for support, exceeding their goal of 260 new clients, and we are delighted to have extended our support to each and every one of them. Purple House clients in 2022 resided in

Wicklow, Dublin, Kildare, Louth, Meath, Wexford and Tipperary. Minister Donnelly also announced recently that Purple House is one of a number of community cancer centres in an alliance that is to receive an increased allocation in 2024.

Minister Donnelly said: "I'm pleased to confirm that Purple House will receive

approximately €135,000 in funding in 2024, a substantial increase on the 2023 grant of €21,000. I have been a long time supporter of the incredible work they do there for not just the people of Wicklow but all across the country.

The Minister for Health announced the allocation of €3m in funding to the National Cancer Control

Programme's Alliance of Community Cancer Support Centres through Budget 2024. The National Cancer Strategy 2017-2026 highlights cancer support centres as a valuable support to cancer patients and their families outside of the acute care setting.

Announcing details of the funding, Minister Donnelly, said: "I have

allocated €3 million in funding to Community Cancer Support Centres for 2024. This is to support the continued provision of services in the community for cancer patients and their families across Ireland. One of the principal objectives of the National Cancer Strategy is to improve quality of life for cancer patients."



Launching Purple House's 2022 report were Cllr Tom Fortune, Minister Simon Harris, Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council Cllr Aoife Flynn-Kennedy, Director of Operations at Purple House Conor O'Leary, Cathaoirleach of Bray Municipal District Cllr Melanie Corrigan, CEO of Purple House Veronica O'Leary, Purple House Chairperson John Woods, and Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly.



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**OUR TRACK RECORD SPEAKS FOR ITSELF**

# Wicklow's first youth climate conference held in Kilcoole

A leading commentator on climate and the environment has warned that one fifth of the earth's surface where three billion people live will be unliveable by 2070 if global warming continues at current levels. Environmental campaigner John Gibbons was addressing over 400 secondary school pupils at a major youth climate conference in Wicklow.

Mr Gibbons told attendees at the conference, which was entitled 'Our Climate, Our Future', that his generation had bequeathed the climate crisis to young people, and it was vital the current generation stepped up and addressed the challenges of global warming. But he added that this was not to give a free pass to his generation and that they owed it to their children and future generations to help younger people mitigate and reverse the damage they had caused.

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

The conference was organised and hosted by transition year students at

Colaiste Chraobh Abhann (CCA) in Kilcoole, with the support of Codling Wind Park. Students from St Davids, Colaiste Chill Mhantain and the Dominican College Wicklow also attended, as did several local politicians and community representatives. It was co-hosted by author and comedian Colm O'Regan and CCA head boy, Cayden Elliott.

Panel member and member of the organising committee Hannah Jaison said she'd like to see Climate Change given far more prominence in the primary and secondary school curriculums.

"My friends and I only truly became aware of the devastating effects of climate change during our post-primary school years. This is far too late and as a result we are far behind where we should be. Climate Change needs to be

made a core part of the primary curriculum and a compulsory subject in secondary right up to Leaving Cert Level. That would focus minds and show leadership to the world. It would also enable people to make informed decisions as young adults - young adults who will shortly have the right to vote. And 16 and 17-year-olds should remember that they can pre-register online and will be automatically added to the electoral register when they turn 18."

Other speakers included Eimear Manning, Youth & Climate Justice Development Officer at the National Youth Council of Ireland, Noel Cunniffe, CEO of Wind Energy Ireland and Codling Wind Park Project Director Scott Sutherland.

Noel Cunniffe, said deploying renewable generation technologies such as

wind and solar are the best solutions humanity has to addressing the climate emergency. In his presentation he pointed out that one off-shore wind turbine can generate enough electricity in just over 16 minutes to power an average Irish house for a year. Along with several other speakers at the conference he pointed to the exciting career opportunities which existed in the renewable energy sector and urged students to consider them.

Scott Sutherland who was interviewed by Colm O'Regan during the conference said Codling Wind Park was 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 empow-

er 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 political leaders and policy makers to listen to them and most importantly to take action."

"I was delighted, inspired, hopeful and frightened in equal measures by the Youth Climate Change Conference at Colaiste Chraobh Abhann," said Green Party TD Steven Matthews after attending the Wicklow Youth Climate event.

Deputy Matthews said, "The organisation of the event is a real credit to the CCA staff, the Transition Year Youth Conference Committee and The Codling Wind Park team who supported the school in hosting. There was a huge attendance with hundreds of young students who care deeply about climate change and deserve urgent action to protect their futures. The enormous school hall was packed, the lighting and stage set up was professional. The event opened with a frightening video cataloguing recent Irish climate events of flooding, droughts and storm damage."

"This was followed by an inspirational presentation by Noel Cunniffe, CE of Wind Energy Ireland on the future of renewable energy, the role of RE in climate action and for the young people the vast array of employment and training opportunities as we decarbonise our economy and move to electrified transport and heating systems."

"Climate expert John Gibbons of Think Or Swim

presented the hard cold truth about our climate change predicament in his usual honest and straight approach. He told the packed house what their future may look like if we don't act with greater urgency to reduce carbon emissions.

"I've followed John's presentations and reporting for many years, and it always sends a shiver through me when he explains how climate breakdown is impacting us now and what is expected within the lifetime of the young students who were intently listening. The younger you are the more you will suffer from climate impacts."

"The CCA school climate committee Hannah, Lena, Jason, Rachel & Tom took to the stage to hold a tough provoking and informative panel discussion. They said they wanted more action from politicians. As the only TD present, I sensed a room of young people, despairing of too little action on mat-

ters that will make their lives much harder in a more chaotic world. They said they wanted more information from Government on what is being done, what needs to be done and what is stopping us."

"I entered politics many years ago. For over twenty years I have knocked on doors seeking support to halt environmental damage and to take action on our climate breakdown. That was often a lonely road but over the last decade we are seeing a greater awareness emerge of the action that is required. I was on Wicklow County Council in May 2019, the day we declared a climate emergency. I asked the packed crowd in the visitors' gallery that day, would they stay with us when we implement the urgent actions to address this emergency? Looking at the young hopeful faces in Colaiste Chraobh Abhann, with their lives before them, I'm not sure I can honestly tell them that enough voters in this coun-

try are ready to protect their futures," concluded Deputy Matthews.

Also attending the event, Greystones councillor Stephen Stokes said "Renewable energy is the present and the future. It was good to see so many schools involved. I would like to applaud the students, school staff, and sponsors for making this event a reality. It was interesting to hear from a wide range of speakers including students and significant guests. Special thanks is due to the Colaiste Chraobh Abhann, and the organising committee for hosting the Conference. The message to public representatives is clear. Decisive action is needed. If we get wind energy right, we can not only power all of Ireland, but we could become a leader of energy exports to Europe. That would be a huge positive to help Europe to reduce its dependency on Russian oil and gas. I will continue to support effort to deliver positive change."



St. David's students Hannah Mahoney and Aisling Cahatol at the climate conference



Deputy Principal Leanne Coleman, Steven Matthews TD, Codling Wind Park Project Director Scott Sutherland, Cayden Elliott, Principal Oliver Stack, Cllr Tom Fortune and Cllr Stephen Stokes.



Pat Sammon, External Affairs Manager at Codling Wind Park, and Pamela McCann, Communications Project Manager at Codling Wind Park, with the Youth Conference Committee



Dominican College students Ella McEvoy and Jill Connolly

# Young students inspire audience at Soroptimist public speaking competition

On Saturday 11th November, girls from a variety of local schools came together at Marino Community Special School for the Local Heat of the 2023/24 Soroptimist International Bray & District Public Speaking Competition.

Speaking on topics such as People & Human Rights, Peace & Democracy, and our Planet & Environment, these inspirational young women spoke passionately about the impact we can make when we work together collectively for the greater good of humanity.

As the 43rd anniversary of the competition dawns, the original aims of this Public Speaking Competition remain true today. Soroptimist Ireland strives to encourage girls to play a more prominent role in public life, to develop the skills to speak effectively with clarity and conviction and

ultimately to develop their self-confidence in having their voice heard.

These traits were clearly evident this weekend as each participant spoke on their chosen topic. But it was Emma Wilson, student of Loreto Abbey Secondary School, Dalkey, who walked away as winner of the inaugural 'Pat Mc Hugh' Memorial Trophy and a place in the Regional Competition, with her speech 'Partnership & Empowerment of Women ; "No one can make you feel inferior without your consent" - Eleanor Roosevelt'. She will be joined by runner-up Ella

Huang from Loreto Secondary School, Bray, who spoke passionately on People & Human Rights "To deny people their human rights is to challenge their very humanity." - Nelson Mandela'. Congratulations to all of the participants and sincere thanks to their teachers for their support.

Soroptimist International is a global volunteer movement of women coming together to change lives. To follow the work of our local Bray & District branch, please see our Facebook, Instagram and Twitter platforms.



Jo McCloskey and Aisling Flynn at the at Marino Community Special School for the Local Heat of the 2023/24 Soroptimist International Bray & District Public Speaking Competition.



Participants at the SI Bray Public Speaking Competition Public Speaking Competition

# New autism class opened at St Mary's National School

Friday 17th November saw Minister Simon Harris open the new 'Stepping Stones' autism pre-school class in St Mary's National School in Bannardrig.

Minister Harris said: "I am delighted to be opening this new autism class here in St Mary's. This is going to be a major new educational resource for autistic children and really a model we need to see so much more of.

"We know that we need more of these and we need to make sure all the schools around the county are as inclusive as possible. This new autism class will cater to the needs of children with autism and will allow them to participate more in the daily activities of the school.

"This is something, and many will know this already, that is very close to my heart. Proving the appropriate resources for school has and always will be one of my priorities as a public representative of Wicklow.

"I want parents to know that when their child goes to school they are going to progress and not regress. This is going to make a huge difference to the families and children that are going to benefit from this class and this is definitely going to be a huge boost for St Mary's NS."

Minister Harris concluded: "A huge congratulations to the school and the community. It was great to meet the newest pupils and their parents."



Minister Harris in St. Mary's National School

## Local schools receive Cineáltas flag to mark anti-bullying week

Local Fianna Fail Senator Pat Casey, has welcomed news that every primary and post-primary school received a Cineáltas flag and poster to mark anti-bullying week, which took place from November 13th to 17th.

The Cineáltas Flag serves as a visible national symbol of the school community's shared commitment to be kind and to work together to prevent and address bullying.

The Cineáltas flag, which is an action in Cineáltas : Action Plan on Bullying, acknowledges the good work that schools are already doing and will do to prevent and address bullying and to promote kindness, respect, inclusion, diversity and wellbeing.

Senator Casey said, "Cineáltas means kindness. Anti-bullying week is an important week in the school calendar where we can increase awareness about bullying behaviour and its impact on children and young people and remind ourselves of the importance of kindness.

"I look forward to a Cineáltas showcase event near the end of this school year to celebrate the good work that our school communities are doing and I would encourage all schools to get involved by holding anti-bullying activities and initiatives to raise awareness about bullying behaviour."

# Five-star dance show *MINSEACH* coming to Bray



29th November, Mermaid Arts Centre, 8pm. Pay What You Can

Created by dancer and former reality tv winner Sibéal Davitt. *Minseach* (she-goat) is a sean-nós dancer's journey through time, from being the cailín álainn to full-blown she-goat. *Minseach* is a love letter to the Irish language, a navigation through past and present, a recalibration of thoughts on identity. It explores the absurdity of entertainment, the commodification of tradition, the universality of language, winning, failing, waiting - all in a few boxes.

At its premiere in Dublin Fringe 2021, *Minseach* was a sleeper hit with audiences of all ages and stages, bringing many new eyes and ears to both sean-nós and contemporary dance. Sibéal is delighted to be bringing it back to a wider national audience now in 2023 - it's an ideal night out as it is highly entertaining and accessible to a broad audience.

Sean-nós is a freestyle, improvisation form of Irish traditional 'step' dance which stems from the Gaeltacht and is performed to live music. Sibéal's mother, who is from a Gaeltacht area, taught her sean-nós dancing in their kitchen when she was a teenager, passing down steps which she learned from her grandfather and others. Irish was Sibéal's first language, and when she started making her own work she wanted to make a work about the Irish

language but found that telling her own story does that exact thing.

*Minseach* is the Irish word for she-goat. *Minseach* is Sibéal's alter ego; she says it how it is but can also be a bit of a loose canon. *Minseach* is also a play on the word *misneach* which means courage. The themes in *Minseach* are very specific to Ireland, but also universal - failure, success, overcoming adversity. The work is bilingual, blending both languages with dance so that all audiences can understand and appreciate the work without subtitles. It's about messing up, dressing up, stepping up - and embracing your inner goat.

*Minseach* presents traditional dance through a fresh, modern lens. It looks at our attitude to our indigenous language and culture, and examines thought and

behavioural patterns in post-colonial Ireland, specifically how we package our traditional arts and brand young female performers as 'sexy'.

*Minseach* is a unique experience featuring various dance styles from traditional to contemporary, some spoken word and a performative transformation from cailín álainn to full blown she-goat. *Minseach* is beautifully and stylishly brought to stage by a team of amazing Irish artists. Set and costume design are by Molly O'Cathain. The wonderful Sinéad Diskin has created a truly amazing score, giving the show a gig-like feel at times. The opening section in particular presents a seamless interweaving of percussive dance and sound design which builds and gets pushed to the limit - it's impossible not to bop along to! Original music by Cormac Begley also features.

## Dames, Dolls & Divas with Stella Bass

Whale Theatre, Saturday 9th December, 8pm (doors 7pm). Tickets €28 and available at [www.whaletheatre.ie](http://www.whaletheatre.ie) or call the booking office on 01 2010550.

Direct from her recent sell-out show at The National Concert Hall, Stella Bass brings you a fabulous evening's entertainment, featuring the songs and stories of the greatest "dames, dolls and divas" who have graced the world's biggest stages over the last 100 years.

From Ella Fitzgerald to Judy Garland, from Barbara Streisand to Amy Winehouse, and indeed from Broadway to Birdland, Stella's repertoire features something for everyone, and her first-rate interpretations of these classic songs will make you laugh and cry in equal measures. Don't be surprised too, to find some timeless Christmas songs sprinkled throughout the evening!

Stella is joined by the exquisite Johnny Taylor Trio - their new album together drops in February 2024; safe to say this show promises to be the perfect pre-Christmas night out!



Stella Bass

# Beki Hemingway coming to Arklow

Bridge Hotel on Thursday 30th November at 8.30 pm

Coming to the Bridge Hotel Arklow on Thurs 30th November at 8.30 pm, singer songwriter Beki Hemingway is a recording artist from USA, with several albums to her credit, available on the usual platforms especially Bandcamp.

Based currently in County Louth, with stops in Chicago, Nashville, and Denver along the way, it has been said that Beki writes and sings some of the 'best songs you've never heard'.

Her long and varied career has found her singing in several bands, including comical punk-rockers This Train, as well as singing live and studio backup vocals on everything from industrial to inspirational music.

Things really clicked when she started collaborating with Randy Kerkman in the late 1990's, releasing

5 CDs on the Minneapolis-based indie Salt Lady Records, performing up to 150 shows per year, and sharing the stage with nationally and internationally acclaimed singer/songwriters such as

Aimee Mann, Shawn Colvin, and Duke Special. Support on the night is by Bernard and Cilene.

The Arklow concert is donations only, with the proceeds going to the Vis de Copil Day Centre (Child's Dream) charity providing educational opportunities for children in Romania. To reserve your place - email [arklowrootsmusic@gmail.com](mailto:arklowrootsmusic@gmail.com)



*The Muppet Christmas Carol*, 1992's take on the Charles Dickens' classic, will be screened at Whale Theatre on Sunday 10th December at 4.30pm (Doors 4pm). Tickets €12 and available at [www.whaletheatre.ie](http://www.whaletheatre.ie) or call the booking office on 01 2010550). Starring Michael Caine as Ebenezer Scrooge, this Brian Henson film has become a staple in many people's festive film calendar.



Beki Hemingway and Randy Kerkman



# First teaser trailer released for new feature documentary 'The Journey to Pride'

Dave Thomas Films and Bella Vision have revealed the first teaser trailer for their new feature documentary film titled 'The Journey to Pride'.

The film was shot over 10 months in 2023, documenting the return of the Wicklow Pride Festival and its plan to bring the first ever Pride Parade to County Wicklow on 1st July this year.

"A group of strangers came together to form a committee with the intention of creating the

first ever LGBTQIA+ Pride Parade in County Wicklow," explains the film's producer and director Dave Thomas. "Wicklow Pride had been on hiatus for a few years due to Covid, so this was the big comeback for the festival. The heart of the film is really the amazing volunteers who organised the entire

event, and we follow their journey to pride, as we learn who these people are, what motivates them and what their expectations were. The journey to pride over several months was anything but plain sailing. As the months progressed, there were challenges to face, obstacles to overcome, and clashes

of personalities along the way. All captured on film. There was a lot of fun, some tears, and a lot of drama too."

The first teaser gives very little away. However, it sets the scene beautifully, the film is presented with strong colours while introducing the main characters we will meet

in the film.

"We are in post-production at the moment and we hope to have the finished film ready by March 2024," explains Dave. "We want to submit the film into the best film festivals in Ireland and around the world so it can be enjoyed by everyone. Hopefully a film distributor will take it on so we can have a cinema release in 2024. It is a

film filled with emotion, while being very inspirational."

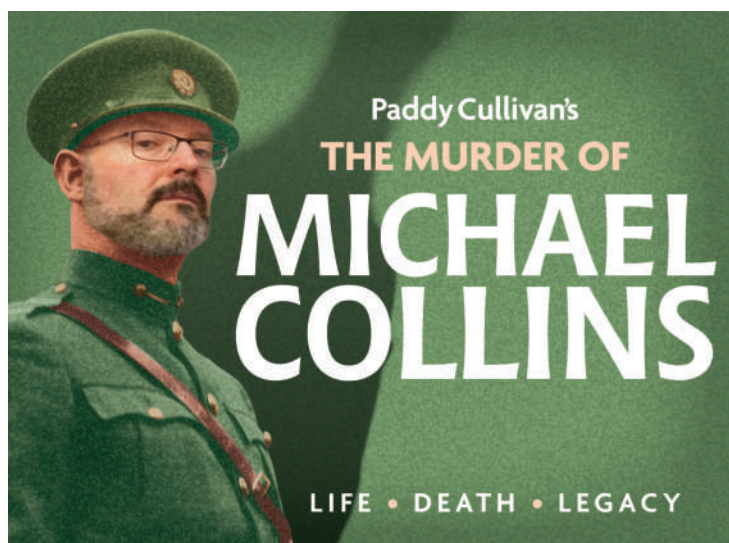
Behind the scenes photographs and videos can be found at the Dave Thomas Films social media accounts. Between now and June 2024 there will be more trailers dropped, so keep an eye out for that.

The trailer can be viewed on the Dave Thomas Films & Bella Vision YouTube channel.



Dave Thomas

# The Murder of Michael Collins



Whale Theatre, Friday 8th December, 8pm (doors 7pm). Tickets €20 and available at [www.whaletheatre.ie](http://www.whaletheatre.ie) or call the booking office on 01 2010550.

Historical Entertainer Paddy Cullivan brings you the incredible story of the death of Ireland's first Commander-in-Chief. An audio-visual spectacular featuring hundreds of images, shocking new research and incredible songs, Paddy dares to unravel the secrets and lies around what happened that fateful day in Béal na mBlath, 22nd August 1922.

Did Michael Collins have a secret son in London? Was he really going to keep to the Anglo-Irish Treaty or was he planning to

resume the war? If the anti-treaty side shot him, why did the Free State instigate a massive cover-up? How can one of the most important men in Irish history have no autopsy report, no investigation, inquest or even a death cert? And who really shot Michael Collins? Why is there such reticence from certain quarters - to this day - to find out the truth?

No less complex or mysterious than the death of JFK and with as many twists and turns, 'The Murder of Michael Collins' is a fascinating rollercoaster ride that will change your perceptions of Irish history forever.

### WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

Elizabeth Cullen and Howard Smith seek permission for (A) demolition of the existing converted garage, boiler house & chimney, conservatory & side porch, (B) alterations to the front, rear & side elevations including the addition of new front & rear facing first floor windows and (C) widening of the existing entrance gateway to a maximum of 3.5 metres, installation of an electric sliding gate and all associated site works at No.5 Mountainview Park, Greystones, Co. Wicklow, A63 ED70. 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.



YARN Storytelling Festival recently partnered with dlr Libraries to run a series of workshops in St. Kieran's School, Bray. The children are natural storytellers and award-winning teller Liz Weir MBE led the workshops, celebrating Traveller culture and encouraging a love and appreciation of stories. The children had the chance to enhance their talking and listening skills, to hone their natural storytelling skills and to collect stories from their families and communities. The workshops took place across all class levels during October and November and culminated in two performances in November where they shared their stories and songs. Photo by Noel Sweeney

## PLANNING

### WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

Chris Dunne seek planning permission for alterations to unit types and site development works granted planning permission under Reg Ref 19-138 as follows. 1. An omission of the 2 No. Type E1 Duplex Blocks containing (4 No. - Second Floor Duplex / One Bed Duplex Apartments) and (4 No. - Ground/First Floor / Three Bed Duplex Dwellings) Units 51-54, 59-62 and the replacement with 2 No. - Type E Duplex Blocks containing (4 No. - Ground Floor / Two Bed Duplex Apartments) and (4 No. - Upper / Three Bed Duplex Dwellings). 2. Minor alterations to site development works to all Type E Duplex Blocks, and minor modification to elevations / fenestration and materials granted planning Reg Ref 19-138. 3. The omission of the 6 No. - Four Bed Dwelling Units: Type N Units 69,70 & N1 Units 68,69,71,72, and replacement with a row of terrace of 8 No. - Three Bed / Two Storey Dwellings. All this together with required site and development works at Burkeen Dales, Hawkstown Road, Co Wicklow. The planning application may be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy at the offices of Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Wicklow during its public opening hours and a submission or observation in relation to the application may be made to the authority in writing on payment of the prescribed fee within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the application.

### WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

Planning permission is sought by Paul McClatchie and Maria Maguire for alterations and extensions to existing single storey (with converted attic and dormer windows) home at San Miguel, Glencormack South, Kilmacanogue, Bray, Co Wicklow, Eircode A98CR67. The application includes conversion of the existing garage and boiler area for use as a master bedroom and home office, internal reconfiguration of the existing living kitchen and ancillary areas, the addition of two large bay windows to the north elevation, the addition of one large bay window to the East elevation, and the addition of two small bay windows to the South elevation. It includes replacement of the two existing dormer windows with similar dormers of squared-off contemporary styling. It includes raising the roof of the former garage area by 400mm, and the provision of a bay window at the new masterbedroom location. It includes relocating the entrance doorway to the West elevation. It includes the installation of external insulation, and solar panels, and it includes the provision of a large patio area at the new East-facing bay window. Finally, it includes removal of two old sun-rooms from the South elevation. The planning application may be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy at the offices of Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Wicklow during its public opening hours and a submission or observation in relation to the application may be made to the authority in writing on payment of the prescribed fee within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the application.

### WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

Andrew and Georgie Lacey intend to apply for retention permission for a partially widened existing front vehicular entrance onto Ballyman Road which, when complete, will have a clear width of 4.0m. To include permission for splayed vehicular entrance as well as all ancillary site development works at Southfield, Ballyman Road, Enniskerry, Co. Wicklow, A98 DP02. The planning application may be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy at the offices of Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Wicklow during its public opening hours and a submission or observation in relation to the application may be made to the authority in writing on payment of the prescribed fee within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the application.

### WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

Rodney Whelan seek Permission for a proposed porch at the main entrance, additional first floor level, balconies to the east & west facing elevations, new roofs, refurbishment of the existing Ground Floor and all associated site works at Bayview, Tonleage, Brittas Bay, Co. Wicklow. The planning application may be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy at the offices of Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Wicklow during its public opening hours and a submission or observation in relation to the application may be made to the authority in writing on payment of the prescribed fee within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the application.

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# Beyond The Trees Avondale attends world's largest travel fair

Tourism Ireland mounts strong presence at World Travel Market in London

Overseas tourism to Ireland continues to rebound in the first year post pandemic limitations - according to Tourism Ireland. Air access to Ireland is up for winter 2019, including from two of the island's biggest source markets, Great Britain (at 103% of 2019 levels) and North America (112%).

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Hotel occupancy is also ahead of 2019 levels, albeit with the caveat that the industry is operating in a new reality, with 13% of rooms under contract for humanitarian reasons.

As Tourism Ireland prepares for 2024, the organisation is mounting a significant presence at World Travel Market (WTM) in London, with around 75 tourism companies from Ireland on its stand - including Beyond The Trees Avondale. Around 2,800 meetings will be conducted on the Ireland stand, delivering overseas tourism business for Ireland next year worth millions of euro. Tourism Ireland will be bringing together those Irish tourism providers who have more capacity to welcome visitors with international tour operators with the skills and scale to bring valuable tourists to the island.

WTM marks the beginning of the promotional drive overseas for 2024. It's the largest B2B event in the global travel and tourism calendar.

Alice Mansergh, Chief Executive Designate of Tourism Ireland, said: "As we look to 2024, our presence at World Travel Market is really important to kick-start our promotional drive overseas. In our first full year post pandemic, every tourism business is eager for recovery.

When we talk to tourism operators across Ireland, we know that overseas tourism is playing a vital role.

"We are delighted to have around 75 tourism companies from Ireland joining us at this year's WTM, for an estimated 2,800 commercial meetings with international tour operators. We facilitate connections between the world's leading tour operators and diverse tourism businesses across Ireland, helping introduce overseas visitors to delightful experiences on our island and strengthening the spread of the economic and social benefits that tourism brings."

Tourism Ireland's message at WTM is that Ireland has so much to offer across regions and seasons. The organisation will be showcasing iconic reasons to travel to Ireland, expanding peo-



Ann Kilcoyne, Beyond the Trees Avondale; and Joe Cruise, Tourism Ireland, at World Travel Market in London.

ple's bucket lists from best-known spots to our hidden gems. It's an exciting year ahead, as 2024 marks the 10th anniversary of the Wild Atlantic Way, providing another great hook to showcase the iconic route. Next year, Tourism Ireland will dial up its 'Ireland, Home of Halloween' message, celebrating Ireland as the

birthplace of one of the world's most celebrated festivals, and ultimately growing Halloween in Ireland to be an iconic 'must do' in the shoulder season. Tourism Ireland brings a sensory burst of nature to WTM this year, with a spectacular wildflower installation and an interactive area to listen to the sounds of nature on its stand. The installation consists entirely of Irish

planting and has been designed by Worm, a floral design studio in East London which is owned by two Irish women. Visitors to the stand can also enjoy the 'sounds of

Ireland' - they'll be able to don headphones to listen to the soothing sounds of the sea, our forests, cosy pubs and the spoken word from some of our best-loved poets.

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Application Forms and further details may be obtained from Enterprise & Corporate Services at 0404 20159 or by emailing [recruitment@wicklowcoco.ie](mailto:recruitment@wicklowcoco.ie) and on the Wicklow County Council website [www.wicklow.ie](http://www.wicklow.ie)

**CLOSING DATE FOR RECEIPT OF COMPLETED  
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# Fundraising night for local youth theatre

Mr. Sands Youth Theatre will host a fundraising evening with Mr. Sands Scrapbook on Thursday, 30th November in the Whale Theatre, Greystones. The Scrapbook will feature a retrospective of the work of the members over the past two years. This retrospective will feature theatre, storytelling, films, and audio dramas.

Funds raised on the evening will support Mr. Sands' next project, a brand new play devised by the members.

Casey Hallanan, Managing Director of Mr. Sands Youth Theatre said: "It has been a privilege to watch how the Mr Sands members have developed over the last two years, as theatre-makers, friends and citizens. This evening will allow our members to showcase their talents and raise vital funds to continue our work."

Zita Monahan McGowan, Artistic Director of Mr. Sands Youth Theatre said: "The youth theatre members are talented, focused, hard-working and creative and I look forward to the process of creating an original show with the youth theatre members which this evening will raise funds to do."

Sam Ferrie, Former Member of Mr. Sands Youth Theatre said: "My time in Mr Sands will forever stick with me as one of the most influential periods of my life as a theatre-maker. Having been there since the start, I'm so proud to see how the youth theatre has grown and flourished."

Tickets are €12 or €10 for concessions and are available at <https://whaletheatre.ie/>.

Mr Sands was founded in 2017 by a group of teenage artists who had a keen desire to make theatre. Since then, their members have travelled from Kilkenny to Belfast, and even to Tirana, Albania with plays, short films, and audio dramas.

Mr Sands Youth Theatre meets on Wednesday nights at the Wolfe Tone Youth Club in Bray. Mr Sands welcomes new members from all walks of life aged 12 to 17, looking to make new friends and gain confidence in a creative, exciting environment.



Catherina Cudlipp at the Greystones Christmas Market

# Wicklow consumers to have the right to repair products in near future

Last week, the European Parliament adopted its position on a new 'Right to Repair' law, which will empower consumers with stronger rights to have their products to be both repairable and repaired in the near future.

The directive will see an obligation for manufacturers to repair their products for a certain period of time, with the

prioritisation of repair over replacement in the event of a product defect during the statutory guarantee period.

MEP for Ireland South Grace O'Sullivan welcomed this news, having campaigned successfully with the Greens/EFA

Group in the European Parliament to prevent practices that stand in the way of repair, such as the device no longer working

with spare parts not produced by the manufacturer.

"The Right to Repair is another win in the fight against throwaway economics; practices intended to make repairing our appliances difficult with incorporated planned obsolescence. It can be very frustrating to have a product come to the end of its life prematurely with no option to repair it, or where the cost of repair is more than purchasing a new item altogether. Consumers are long overdue these protections and it's high time that companies acted responsibly with the limited resources our planet can provide. The days of 'sell sell sell' have to come to an end, manufacturers must prioritise quality, longevity and repairability if we are to work towards a real circular economy," O'Sullivan stated.

The new rules note that repairs should be both accessible and

affordable, providing access to inexpensive spare parts and repair instructions. The parliament will also continue negotiations with Member States, fighting to extend the legal guarantee by one year after repair. The Right to Repair rules aim to open up the previously unchallenged market, dominated by powerful corporations such as Apple, who have historically kept tight control over the access to parts and repair

process of their devices.

The Right to Repair Law will now progress with further negotiations with the European Commission and Council to take place, before it is expected to become law.

"This new law is a way of enabling both consumers and manufacturers to be more sustainable and less wasteful. The right to repair and the circular economy are inseparable," O'Sullivan said.

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