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Tuesday 16th January 2024 First Floor, The Boulevard, Quinsborough Road, Bray. A98 R6D7. Tel: 01 - 2869111 E-mail: wicklowed@localtimes.ie www.wicklowtimes.net

NO SURRENDER

Elected councillors are facing “an existential threat” says Cllr Tom Fortune. A document outlining the terms of reference for 'Bray Town Team' has set alarm bells ringing among some councillors who see their functions being given to these unelected bodies as undermining the role of elected councillors, and a continuation of the erosion of councillors' powers following the abolition of Town Councils in 2014.

Independent councillor Tom Fortune raised the matter at last week's meeting of Wicklow County Council, where he was strongly supported by fellow Independent councillor Joe Behan. There are currently four Town Teams in Co. Wicklow - in Greystones, Arklow, Blessington and Wicklow Town - and a Bray Town Team is now being proposed. The matter was also discussed at last week's Bray Municipal District meeting, however no decision was taken as councillors want to take more time to weigh up the implications. Cllr Fortune said that despite being Chairperson of the Economic Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) he had not previously been made aware of the formation of the terms of reference for Bray Town Team and it had not been discussed by the SPC. The document states that the town team is “neither a substitution for the previous town council or a new body with similar resources”. However, Cllr Fortune says that in many instances the role of the



Darragh Heffernan at the 100 Lights Walk in Glenmalur. See more, page 2. Pic: Michael Kelly

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Town Team, as it's outlined in the terms of reference, is a duplication of the role of democratically elected councillors.

The policy framework of the Bray Town Team includes the national Town Centre First Policy launched in 2022, and the 'Bray Town Health Check', conducted in 2019, puts forward the establishment of a Bray Town Team as its main recommendation.

“The Bray Town Team consists of representatives from key stakeholders in the town,” the document states. “It is a mechanism for these stakeholders to work together on actions which could make the town centre a better place. In this regard, the Health Check Report contains a number of recommendations which the Bray Town Team can take in

considering in planning for actions The Bray Town Team will be able to apply in its own name for funds from other sources including national departments and agencies.”

The Town Team can choose to operate as a company limited by guarantee (CLG) if it wishes and open its own bank account.

It is proposed that Town Team members will serve for a period no longer than five years, and that members can be replaced if they wish to stand down or have a continued period of absence from meetings.

“How is it envisaged to do this or control this?” asked Cllr Fortune. “There's already a democratic process where councillors go before the public to be elected”.

The terms of reference state that the Town

Team Chair will be appointed by the members of Bray Town

Team and that four Bray Municipal District councillors would sit on the

Town Team. Cllr Fortune says that this

Continued on page 7



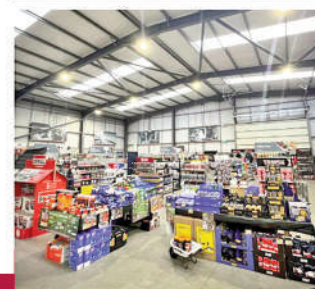
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Glenmalure's mining history remembered

The mining village of Baravore at the head of Glenmalure valley was brought to life again on Sunday 7th January when a large crowd gathered for the '100 Lights Walk' which seems set to become an annual event.

Lead mining flourished in many townlands in Glenmalure and throughout the upland glens of Co. Wicklow in the nineteenth century, bringing hundreds of mining families to reside and work in these remote mountain glens with basic accommodation being provided by the

mining companies. Almost three hundred people were recorded to be living in the townland of Baravore in 1851. Local folklore recalls how 100 lighted lanterns were carried over the ford crossing of the River Avonbeg in Baravore every Christmas Morning as families of all

religious denominations gathered to make the seven-mile trek to Mass in Greenane and church services in Ballinatone. This story has captured the imagination of many and has inspired beautiful poetry by Seán Healy and Jane Clarke. This walk is organised by the

Glenmalure PURE Mile group to remember and celebrate this special tradition.

All afternoon, the 'head of the glen' was a flurry of activity as all members of the community young and old, hill walkers and Friends of Glenmalure Hostel all worked together to prepare for this great event. The ford crossing and the old mining paths were illuminated with candlelight, while the majestic crusher house buildings, both of which have been conserved in recent years by Coillte and the National Heritage Council through Wicklow County Council, were also lit up and decorated, as was the An Óige hostel, a former summer residence of Dr. Kathleen Lynn a well-known and respected doctor and founder of St. Ultan's Hospital, Dublin. Welcome refreshments were provided by the volunteers at the hostel for those involved in the preparations.

Under a beautiful starry sky and following the trail of candlelight, walkers made their way across the river to the newly conserved crusher house where local historian, Carmel O'Toole, gave a short account of the history of the mining industry



Poet Jane Clarke, former miner Robert Carter and Sandra Behan at the 100 Lights Walk in Glenmalure



Ellie Mai Heffernan at the 100 Lights walk in Glenmalure.

and of the significance of both crusher houses in the industrial history of Glenmalure. From here, the walkers proceeded to the An Óige hostel where the local poet, Jane Clarke and singer/ songwriter Marian McEvoy enthralled the crowd with original poetry and song written and inspired by the mining heritage of Glenmalure and the asso-

ciation of Dr. Kathleen Lynn with the hostel at Glenmalure.

After rapturous applause and following the candlelit pathway, the walkers continued uphill along the Coillte Looped Trail and returned by the taller and second crusher house where Sandra Behan, poet and frequent visitor to Glenmalure, read some of her original

poetry, also inspired by the crusher houses and their history.

The evening concluded with tasty refreshments provided by Glenmalure Lodge and wonderful entertainment provided by the 'Wicklow Miners' traditional music group followed by poetry and a sing song with Marian McEvoy and other singers and some witty and entertain-

ing poems excellently delivered by Jack Byrne, Moneystown. Walkers also generously donated €300 to Rathdrum Cancer Care Group, organised by Josie Simpson and Bill Porter.

Glenmalure Pure Mile committee wishes to thank Coillte and all who worked and those who came along on the day. It was a truly magical evening in Glenmalure.

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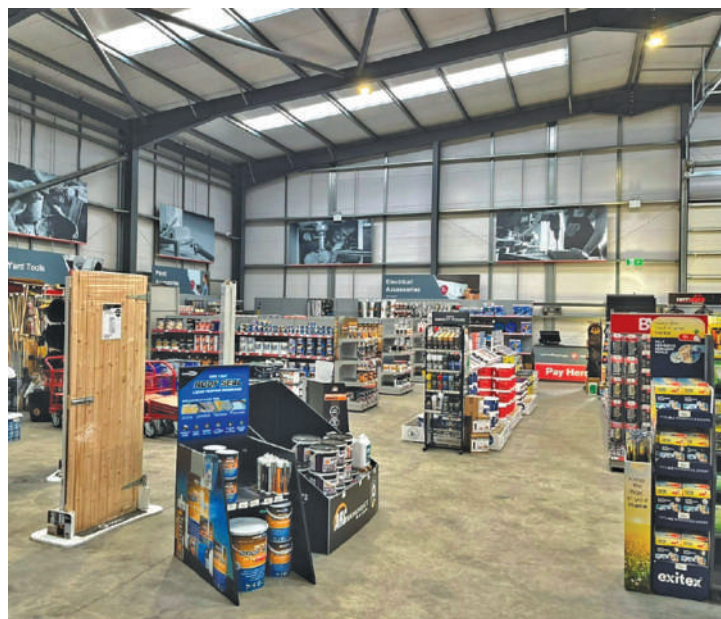
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WICKLOW Times

is published by Wicklow Times,
First Floor, The Boulevard, Quinsborough Road, Bray. A98 R6D7. Tel: 01-2869111

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Council purchases Greystones building for Enterprise Centre



Cllr Derek Mitchell

Wicklow County Council has purchased a building built for an Enterprise Centre in Hawkins Wood, Greystones. It will now get it fitted out and open it later in 2024 with an emphasis on start up businesses.

Cllr Derek Mitchell said "I welcome this as Greystones has the least local employment of any town in Wicklow, we can't all commute in the future. This was zoned with an Enterprise Centre as a compulsory condition, about 15 years ago following a campaign by the then Chamber of Commerce. The site was later sold to Cairn, who were not keen to build it but it was a planning condition for Hawkins Wood. The land surrounding it is zoned industrial and I would like to see this being developed for job creating purposes."



Janette Kinch with Kelly and Michelle Bardon at the Arklow Residents Right of Way (ARROW) protest at Arklow North Beach. The group is campaigning for more open access for the public to Arklow's walkways and to ensure Rights of Way are kept open for future generations.



Steven Matthews TD at the Pytland junction

New safety measures at busy Bray junction

Deputy Steven Matthews has announced progress on his long-held ambition to provide safe crossing points at the Sidmonton Road/Putland Road junction in Bray. Works are expected to begin in the coming weeks to provide signalised traffic controls, making the junction safer for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers.

"Pedestrians who walk this route will know just how difficult it is to cross at this at any part of this junction when there can be traffic approaching from up to four different directions," said Deputy Matthews.

"For drivers too there it can be confusing when approaching from the minor roads and many incidents and near misses have been recorded at this location over the years. As well

as being the main walking route to the seafront for the southern end of Bray, a great number of school children use this route to get to one of the many schools along the Vevay Road. Apart from the pedestrian crossing at the very top of the hill, there is nowhere else to cross along the entire stretch of Putland Road. This will only intensify when the development goes ahead in the old Pres grounds.

"I'm grateful to Bray Municipal District for working with me to get this across the line. This will complement nicely the work being done by Cllr Erika Doyle to provide safe crossing options at Albert Avenue and the Lower Dargle Road, making the Bray East district safer for pedestrians and car users, and in particular vulnerable road users - children, older people and people with disabilities or mobility issues."

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Bray again 'Clean' in 2023 IBAL litter rankings



Bray Seafront

The final litter survey of 2023 by business group Irish Business Against Litter shows Bray deemed 'clean to European norms', in 16th position in the ranking of 40 towns and cities nationwide. For the first time since surveys began 20 years ago, no area was deemed 'seriously littered', with Maynooth claiming top spot. IBAL says the impending Deposit Return Scheme will improve cleanliness levels further but is calling for action on coffee cups.

The An Taisce report for Bray stated:
A consistently strong performance by Bray with just one heavily littered site. Both the Main Street and Quinsboro Road scored very well. Other top-ranking sites included Bray Recycle Centre and a couple of approach roads. A miscellaneous Laneway off Main Street presented poorly and is likely to deteriorate further if not addressed. There was no notable change to the poor litter situation along Dargle Road Upper - to the casual observer it was mildly littered but anybody walking along would note heavier levels on the left-hand side.
While litter levels rose slightly nationwide, over 60% of towns surveyed were deemed clean in 2023, with Maynooth edging out Mallow and much improved Sligo to take the title of cleanest town.

Waterford was again our cleanest city, ahead of Galway. These were the only cities to be judged 'clean', with Cork City Centre improving to 'moderately littered' but Dublin falling to 'littered', alongside Limerick.
"There is some good news in our cities, however," says Conor Horgan. "For years our worst performing areas were deemed either 'litter blackspots' or 'seriously littered'. This baseline would seem to be changing, with 'littered' becoming the bottom tier. Cleanliness begets cleanliness, and there is reason to hope the improvement will continue in future years."
"We need action on coffee cups." A surprise finding of the IBAL study was the rise in coffee cup litter, which is now close to peak-Covid levels. Coffee cups were found at over 30% of the 500+ sites surveyed. "We are concerned at potential delays in

introducing a coffee cup levy," says Conor Horgan. "We believe this action is needed to stamp out a product which is out of step with the circular economy. Irrespective of how recyclable or compostable take-away cups are, these statistics show too many of them are ending up on our streets." IBAL says Killarney has benefited from having banned single-use cups last year, a move embraced by the community.
IBAL welcomes the introduction next month of the Deposit Return Scheme as a potential game-changer in the fight against litter, much as the plastic bag levy was. The scheme will see consumers pay a deposit of 15 cent on cans and up to 25 cent on plastic bottles, refundable on their return. "This latest survey shows these items to be present in just under half of the hundreds of sites we surveyed. This scheme will remove a large por-

tion of this litter and bring about a significantly cleaner environment in 2024. While there may be some inconvenience for consumers, the prize is a very real, and a very immediate one."
There was another significant rise in the prevalence of disposable vapes, highlighted previously as an emerging source of litter. These were found in more than 10% of all sites covered.
2023 marked the 21st anniversary of the IBAL Anti-Litter League. Set up in 1996, Irish Business Against Litter is an alliance of companies sharing a belief that continued economic prosperity - notably in the areas of tourism, food and direct foreign investment - is contingent on a clean, litter-free environment. As part of the IBAL Anti-Litter League, An Taisce monitors towns independently and in accordance with international grading standards.

Wicklow students learn about climate change thanks to EPA

Students from Wicklow primary schools recently joined 27 schools nationwide whose students had the opportunity to learn about climate change during Science Week thanks to volunteers from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

34 EPA volunteers guided 853 students through climate change workshops during Science Week 2023. The 'Climate Change & You' workshop, developed by Junior Achievement Ireland (JAI) in partnership with the EPA, aims to increase awareness and knowledge of global warming and encourage students to identify ways to reduce their carbon footprint and help their community. Throughout the year, 800 students nationwide participated in the workshop bringing the total student reach to more than 1,600.

Teacher, Chelsea Maguire, 4th class teacher in Newtownmountkennedy Primary School commented that "our pupils really enjoyed the workshop and learning about the impact climate change has on us, as well as the impact we have on climate change. It was a great experience, and gaining an understanding about their own carbon footprint has made them all consider our individual responsibility in caring for the environment. Thank you to Katelyn and the EPA for this impactful opportunity."

Gerard O Leary, Director of the EPA's Office of Communications and Corporate Services said: "The education of young people on the importance of climate action and the environmental impact of daily activities needs to be a priority. The EPA is delighted to partner with Junior Achievement Ireland during science week in order to increase environmental awareness among primary school children participating in JA programmes schools around the country. The workshops are fun and an inventive way of engaging with these important issues at primary school level."

The EPA environmental workshop is just one of many opportunities afforded to students thanks to the EPA's support of JAI since 2016. In that time more than 200 EPA volunteers have reached 7,000 young people through Junior Achievement (JA) programmes designed to encourage young people to remain in education and help them to develop the skills they need to succeed in a changing world.
Helen Raftery, CEO of JAI, said: "The educational value of students working with role models and getting the chance to learn from them is well-established. Thanks to the EPA, more than 850 students had an exciting opportunity to experience environmental issues brought to life in a real and meaningful way. We are grateful to both our partner schools and the 34 EPA volunteers that helped us to communicate these important messages to young people all over the country."



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Rowan Earls and Lisa Tyrrell at the Arklow Residents Right of Way (ARROW) protest at Arklow North Beach. The group is campaigning for more open access for the public to Arklow's walkways and to ensure Rights of Way are kept open for future generations.

NO SURRENDER

Continued from page 1

outright ignores a motion previously motions passed by members of Wicklow County Council.

"We had a motion passed three months ago by this Council, stating that all Municipal District councillors would sit on the Town Team in their district, and also that the Cathaoirleach of the district would chair the Town Team. That was agreed by the members. We're democratically elected. So are we going to accept that our decision can just be ignored?"

"It is an attack on local government and more importantly it is an attack on accountability," Cllr Fortune concluded. "It is well-known and well accepted even across in Europe that local government here in Ireland is one of the worst local government systems there is across Europe. We're putting people in place who have no mandate. They are not elected by anybody."

Also speaking at last week's meeting, Cllr Behan described the Bray Town Team terms of reference document as "five pages of dynamite".

"Effectively what this is, four months before the local election, is the final nail in the coffin of local town democracy before we all go to the electorate and ask for their support. Because basically what it is doing is setting up a committee to manage the town centre in Bray made up of unelected people who are outside the Council - A combination of Chamber

of Commerce, PPN, council officials, this official, that official and the other official. When we go to the people in a few months' time and ask them to vote for us, what will they think if we tell them 'we are going to represent you the people of Bray Municipal District but by the way four months before the election we gave away the last little bit of power we had to the Council officials. The Director will come every two months and give us an update on what is happening. They can set up their own account. They can use public money. We as councillors will have no oversight of it. This is Government policy in action."

Speaking to *Wicklow Times* after last week's Bray meeting, Cllr Behan said: "Elected Councilors are being asked by Government Parties, i.e. Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael and the Greens as well as unelected Council Executives to surrender further powers to establish a 'Town Team' in Bray. The purpose is theoretically to put greater focus on developing the town centre in Bray which is an objective we can all share."

"However, the democratic accountability of such a body will be completely absent as elected Councillors will only number 4 out of a total of 15 Team members. Furthermore, it is envisaged that a separate bank account could be set up which would not be overseen by the Councillors but instead by Council management

even though the money coming into the account would be public money.

"We, in Bray, have seen the dramatic erosion of the powers of elected Councillors over the past 20 years particularly with the decision to transfer most of the powers of Urban District Councils to the County Councils including Wicklow Cou-

nty Council. Whereas, in the past, Bray UDC Councillors had powers and influence in the areas of housing, planning, roads, rates, finance, parks, sports and recreation, etc. those powers have been transferred to Wicklow County Council.

"This has a direct effect on the people of Bray, Enniskerry and

Kilmacanogue, as we are paying property tax every year for allegedly improved services in the Municipal District but in fact the money is divvied up by Wicklow County Council, spread far and wide around the county, and the people have no say in how it is spent.

"With Local Elections coming in June, I firmly

believe that people should be aware of how much damage has already been done to local democracy by Fine Gael, Fianna Fáil and the Greens and hopefully they will vote for candidates who will work to protect and enhance local democratic accountability rather than for those who wish to give it away."



Cllr Tom Fortune

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Cllr Joe Behan



Tony Murray, PJ Busher and Adam Duggan at the Arklow Community Action Resource Centre Community Dinner in Arus Lorcan, Arklow.

Over €60k in funding for two Wicklow based groups supporting communities

Minister Simon Harris has welcomed funding for two organisations supporting communities in County Wicklow. Both Greystones Family Resource Centre and Bray Women's Refuge Housing Association are in line to receive funding worth over €60,000 in total to help them provide services and supports.

The funding is part of a wider funding announcement for organisations across the country totalling more than €7.7m for some 70 organisations to support victims of crime and communities, using the proceeds of crime to invest back into the community.

Speaking on this breaking news Minister Harris said: "The funding announced today is of crucial importance and will be transformational for organisations across the country and across County Wicklow. These allocations are being made through the new agen-

cy for domestic, sexual and gender based violence Cuan n̄ these will range from €3,000 to over €1m.

"Greystones Family Resource Centre and Bray Women's Refuge are fantastic organisations in County Wicklow that provide a vital service for the community, and it is crucial we continue to invest and fund these organisations so they operate to meet the need of people coming through their doors.

"It is so important that victims of crime feel and members of the community are supported by

groups in their local area and both the Greystones Family Resource Centre and Bray Women's Refuge Housing Association play a huge part in doing just that and making our communities safer and stronger.

Minister Harris concluded "I want to thank the staff of both Wicklow based groups for the often difficult job they carry out year in and year out and which I am in constant awe of. The funding announced today will no doubt provide some form of relief as we start 2024."

Tiglin calls for long-term solutions to homelessness

The Department of Housing has released the latest homeless figures, with the reported figures show an increase in homeless individuals since the last report.

The constant increase in children experiencing homelessness has been striking with the current number standing at 4,105 children. This is an increase of 186 homeless children since July of 2023.

The overall figure of homeless individuals now stands at 13,514 individuals, which is the highest in the history of the state. The emergency homeless services are at full capacity with a reported 118 rough sleepers on the streets of Dublin alone; this is a 30% increase since the previous year.

Tiglin, an organisation working with those in homelessness, has also seen an increasing trend in the presentation of clients from a variety of backgrounds, including women with children. Tiglin's homeless service in Pearse Street, Tiglin at the Lighthouse has been operating at maximum capacity over the last 12 months, providing an average of 400 meals each day. The CEO of Tiglin, Phil Thompson, explained that the organisation's family support therapist provides specific interven-

tions for children who have been impacted by homelessness or addiction.

On the frontline, in Dublin City Centre, Tiglin's homeless café has seen an increase in clients availing of the service. These clients are no longer predominantly single males, with a proportion experiencing addiction issues, and others who are able to secure stable housing. The service manager, Allen Bobinac, explains: "We experience a large demand for our services on a daily basis; in the last six months, we have seen a large increase in people with homeless issues presenting at our café; some of whom are living in homeless

accommodation with their children.

Aubrey McCarthy, the voluntary chair and founder of Tiglin, has been consistently advocating for turnkey solutions and joint-up thinking to focus on the homelessness crisis and its devastating impact on the most vulnerable members of society, that is - children. Mr McCarty stated: "National nonprofits such as ourselves are willing to play a role in running services that can bridge the gap before the new housing stock becomes available - there are opportunities with vacant buildings, both state and privately owned, to be put into use and help to remedy this societal crisis. We are

ready to do this, we are doing this. What we have is a model that helps some of the 14,000 people but not the vast majority who are on the list. We are willing to talk solutions. This is already a big crisis, but it can become even bigger than it already is. Tiglin currently provides transitional housing services for those who have been impacted by homelessness but, at this moment, doesn't provide housing for children. However, these latest figures have highlighted the need for an immediate response that can provide longer-term solutions to support those at risk of homelessness, especially children, as noted in this report."



Tiglin Chairperson Aubrey McCarthy

Wicklow marginally above national average in Pobal HP Deprivation Index

Wicklow is marginally above the national average level of affluence according to the 2022 Pobal HP Deprivation Index. The Index, which is Ireland's primary social gradient tool, found a nationwide improvement in measures such as employment and population growth, with levels largely returning to those observed in 2006, however persistent disadvantage remains for many communities.

The Pobal HP Deprivation Index uses data from Census 2022, analysing ten measures of an area's levels of disadvantage. These include educational attainment, employment status and the numbers living in individual households. Almost 19,000 small areas, including 517 in Wicklow, (50-200 households) were indexed leading to the development of a detailed map of the relative affluence and disadvantage.

Anna Shakespeare CEO of Pobal said "The 2022 Pobal HP Deprivation Index is created to inform national policy and ensure that resources can be properly directed to where they are most needed. There has been an overall improvement for the majority of communities in Ireland, however we must also recognise that this is not being experienced equally.

"At Pobal, we are committed to working on behalf of government to support communities to combat disadvantage. This tool helps to create an understanding of the challenge of disadvantage and where it is prevalent, which is an important step towards achieving social inclusion for all."

The 2022 Pobal HP Deprivation Index, which is available on Pobal Maps, a free online Geographical Information System map viewer, outlines the deprivation score for various geographic units such as county, constituency, electoral division or small area.

Percentage data for the area is provided under a range of categories such as unemployment, educational attainment and population change. The data can also be extracted for further analysis through the geoprofiling viewer and compared between the 2022 Index Census and the three previous editions.



Neil Jarvis, Malcolm Earls and Cllr Pat Kennedy at the 100 Lights walk in Glenmalure to commemorate the local mining history of the area. It's told that in the 19th century, local families living in Baravore would walk to Mass on Christmas morning and that one hundred lights could be seen as they made their way down the valley.

Corrigan takes over as Chairperson of the LCDC

Cllr Melanie Corrigan has taken over as Chairperson of the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC).



Cllr Corrigan with outgoing LCDC Chairperson Pat Kennedy

Cllr Corrigan has sat on the Local Community Development Committee since 2019, and took over from previous chair Cllr Pat Kennedy at the December meeting. Cllr Corrigan, who has a keen interest in community development and supporting community groups said she is "delighted to have been appointed as Chairperson for this hardworking committee and I look forward to working with all the relevant stakeholders and agencies to continue the good work that is being done."

She also thanked the outgoing chair Cllr Pat Kennedy for all his hard work and thanked him for all his support.

Local Community Development Committees were established under the Local Government Reform Act. It serves as a platform for local community engagement and decision-making in matters related to community development and local services. The committee is made up of representatives of the local authority, other state agencies, community and voluntary sector and social partners. The LCDC is independent of the Local Authority in the discharge of its functions.



Denise Kavanagh, Lisa Mellon, Maria Mallen, Heather Darby, Catriona Phelan and Lorraine Kells at the Arklow Town Team Little Christmas annual lunch in the Woodenbridge Hotel.

Deadline approaching for Built Heritage Grants

The Heritage Office of Wicklow County Council is reminding members of the public of the upcoming deadlines for applications for built heritage grant schemes.

Co-ordinated by the Council on behalf of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, the Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS) and the Historic Structure Fund (HSF) both provide capital funding to support architectural heritage (protected structures, historic shopfronts, vernacular houses and other historic buildings).

The closing date for applications is **4pm on 19th January** to plan-dev@wicklowcoco.ie or post to BHIS/ HSF

Application, Planning Section, County Buildings, Wicklow Town.

The Community Monument Fund (CMF) provides grants to support archaeological heritage (monuments protected under the National Monuments Act 1930). Closing date for applications is **4pm 30th January** to wicklowheritage@wicklowcoco.ie or post to CMF 2024, Heritage Office, County Buildings, Wicklow Town.

The BHIS and the 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 eligible historic properties may apply, whether these are community groups, public authorities or private individuals. Under the BHIS, grants of between €2,500-€15,000 may be allocated to eligible projects. Under the HSF scheme grants of €15,000 to €50,000 are available under Stream 1; €50,000 up to €200,000 under Stream 2 and a 'Vernacular Building' allocation offers a grant of €10,000.

The Community Monument Fund (CMF) 2024 will support the conservation, maintenance, protection and promotion of archaeological monuments. Local authorities, private owners, community groups and custodians of monuments are eligible to apply.

Stream 1 will offer grants up to €100,000 aimed at essential repairs and capital works for the conservation and repair of archaeological monuments.

Stream 2 will offer grants of up to €30,000 for development of Conservation Management Plans/ Reports that are aimed at identifying measures for conservation of archaeological monuments and improv-

ing public access.

Stream 3 will offer grants of up to €30,000 for enhancement of access infrastructure and interpretation (including virtual) at archaeological monuments.

Wicklow County Council

Chief Executive, Emer O'Gorman, said "The allocation of funding to safeguard monuments and built structures plays an important role in improving the climate resilience of the built environment in accor-

dance with Wicklow County Council's climate action objectives and national policy.

Application forms for each scheme are available on www.wicklow.ie under latest news or by request

to Tel 0404 20100.

Applicants are advised to read guidance documents carefully for each scheme.

For queries on these schemes please contact the Heritage Office at dburns@wicklowcoco.ie

Councillors get safety advice for canvassing

Councillors last week were given a presentation by Sergeant John Fitzpatrick on their personal safety, in advance of the local elections in June.

"Unfortunately the landscape is changing and we are aware that being an elected representative nowadays means that you are taking on certain risks and putting yourself in a certain light unfortunately that you may not have done so previously, or maybe exposed to more risks that you were exposed to previously," he told councillors.

He recounted an incident in Coolock, Co. Dublin, where a TD and his brother were "abused, harassed, harangued, and intimidated the whole way around the estate" where they were canvassing.

He also noted an incident in Clonakilty, West Cork: "A Fine Gael councillor called to a house. The householder was of a different political persuasion to him and grabbed the literature out of his hand and

there was a bit of a scuffle and the picture speaks for itself. So canvassing is a serious business and it can have quite serious consequences on your personal safety or the safety of someone on your canvassing team."

He said that while most of the electorate will welcome the chance to interact with their local representatives on the doorstep in a respectful manner, "there is a cohort, a minority out there that will take a chance to maybe have a go at you, particularly if you are of a different political belief to them. If you feel unsafe at any stage, then disengage."

"Generally you should be carrying out a dynamic risk assessment. Indeed anyone working for you or anyone canvassing for you should do that. You should always, always trust your gut instinct."

He told councillors about the 'Triple A' risk assessment method: Assess the surroundings, the householder, and the Act on those assessments: "You assess the drive of the house, the area, the driveway, estate you are going into, etc. And before you go into it ask yourself if there anything here that is going to cause me problems? Is there anything unusual in the garden? Are there any weapons, baseball bat? Is there load of dog poo all around that might indicate there is a dog on the premises? You are going to assess the householder, the person you are canvassing. What is their reaction like? What is their behaviour like? How are they greeting you? Are they acting in a strange manner? Then lastly you are going to act on your dynamic risk assessment."



COMHAIRLE CONTAE CHILL MHANTÁIN
WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

PREPARATION OF THE GREYSTONES-DELGANY & KILCOOLE LOCAL AREA PLAN – PUBLIC INFORMATION DAYS

PRE – DRAFT PLAN PUBLIC CONSULTATION

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 by scanning the QR code here or through the consultation hub at <https://www.wicklow.ie/Living/ConsultationHub> and is accepting submissions up to **31st January 2024**.

PUBLIC INFORMATION DAYS

Everyone is invited to public information days with the plan team on the following dates:

Tuesday 16th January 2024: 10am to 1pm and from 4pm to 7pm in Kilcoole Community Centre, Lott Lane, Kilcoole, A63 X862.

Thursday 18th January 2024: 10am to 1pm and from 4pm to 7pm in Greystones Municipal District Offices, Mill Road, Greystones, A63 TX86.

SUBMISSIONS

Submissions regarding the review of the existing plan and the preparation of the new Local Area Plan are invited from the public and interested bodies up to **31st January 2024**. Submissions may be made in either of the following ways:

1. Write to: 'Greystones-Delgany & Kilcoole LAP', Administrative Officer, Planning Department, Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Station Road, Wicklow Town, A67 FW96.
2. Through the online consultation portal via the QR code here or at <https://www.wicklow.ie/Living/ConsultationHub>

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 are a matter of public record, and may also be placed on the County Council's website.



Mick Ryan fills vacant Bray Sinn Fein seat

Bray man Mick Ryan has been co-opted onto Wicklow County Council to fill the Sinn Fein councillor role left vacant by Grace McManus. McManus announced in October that she was stepping down from her role as a councillor and will not contest the next local elections.

"I am deeply honoured to have been co-opted onto Wicklow County Council, assuming the role left vacant by my colleague Grace McManus," said Cllr Ryan. "I want to express my utmost gratitude to all in Sinn Féin for entrusting me with this responsibility, and I am keenly aware of the significance of this opportunity for myself and the community. I also want to thank my entire family for their support.

"I wish to pay tribute to Grace McManus for her dedicated service and hard work in representing Bray Municipal District. Grace's commitment to our community has been commendable, and I am humbled to follow in her footsteps. Her contributions have left a lasting impact, and I am committed to building upon the foundations she has laid. I pledge to work tirelessly for the residents of Bray Municipal District, prioritising their needs and aspirations.

"It is my firm belief that every voice in our community deserves to be heard and valued. I am dedicated to fostering a sense of inclusivity and working towards initiatives that will enhance the lives of

all residents. This appointment is not just a personal honour but a privilege that comes with a great responsibility. I am genuinely excited about the opportunity to contribute to the betterment of Bray Municipal District. I assure you that I will bring my years of experience in the Trade Union movement, and community activism to the fore, advocating for the interests of our workforce and supporting local development initiatives. I am ready and eager to dedicate myself to the service of all residents within Bray Municipal District."

Deputy John Brady congratulated Cllr Ryan: "I am delighted to extend my sincere congratulations to Mick Ryan on his appointment to Wicklow County Council, representing Bray Municipal District. Mick's appointment, stepping into the esteemed position left vacant by Grace McManus who had to step down for personal reasons, signifies a new chapter of dedicated service and commitment to our community.

"Mick's extensive experience and unwavering dedication make him a valuable addition to

Wicklow County Council. His active involvement in the Trade Union movement, and role as vice-president of the Bray Trades Council demonstrates a profound understanding of labour issues, advocating tirelessly for equitable working conditions. Additionally, Mick's long-standing engagement in community activism underlines his passion for grassroots initiatives and local development. His commitment to fostering stronger, more vibrant communities aligns perfectly with the responsibilities of a County Councillor, benefiting the residents he serves.

"I am confident that Mick's vision for an inclusive and thriving community will guide his endeavours on the council. Furthermore, Mick's longstanding membership of Sinn Féin speaks volumes about his dedication to commitment to social justice and equality will undoubtedly contribute positively to his new role as a County Councillor, benefiting the residents he serves.

"As we welcome Mick, it is equally important to pay tribute to Grace McManus for her exemplary hard work and service to the community of Bray Municipal



Deputy John Brady, Cllr Mick Ryan, Cllr Dermot 'Daisy' O'Brien and Grace McManus

District during her tenure. Mick inherits significant responsibilities, and I am confident that he will approach them with the same dedication and passion exhibited by Grace."

Cllr Dermot 'Daisy' O'Brien

added his congratulations to Cllr Ryan: "I am delighted to see Mick stepping into this role and taking the baton from Grace. I am very fortunate to have such a calibre of people to share the responsibility of representing the people of Bray

as Sinn Féin Councillors. Mick will bring a wealth of his own experience to this role and the people of Bray will benefit from his absolute dedication to a responsive and respectful type of representation."

West Wicklow selects Sinn Féin team for local election

Sinn Féin TD John Brady has offered his warm congratulation to Connor Byrne and Aidan Kinsella, who have been selected to contest the 2024 local elections as the Sinn Féin candidates for West Wicklow.

Deputy Brady said: "It gives me heart and confidence to witness candidates of the quality of Conor Byrne and Aidan

Kinsella stepping up to the mark and allowing their names to go forward to contest the local elections for the Baltinglass

electoral area in June of this year.

"Aidan, who is based in Carnew, has been a long-standing campaigner for

Southwest Wicklow. Narrowly missing out on election to Wicklow County Council in 2019. Aidan brings huge pas-

sion, experience, and commitment to his community into politics.

"Connor is a native of Kilbride, where he still lives. He is a graduate of TUD, and holds a degree in Business and Information Technology. Combined with his commitment to bringing about change for his community, Connor, along with Aidan form a strong political team, dedicated to improving the lives of the people of South and West Wicklow.

"Both of whom are formidable advocates for their local communities and are two people who I believe have real potential to make a big impact on local politics here in Wicklow. The fact that they will form part of the largest ever Sinn Féin team put forward at a local election in County Wicklow, is a measure of the demand for change that is growing across the county.

"The local elections, which will take place on the same day as the EU elections, represent the first opportunity that the electorate in Wicklow has had since the general election of 2020, to send a clear and unambiguous message to the government.

"A message that lets them know that the people of this county have had enough of the failure to address the housing crisis, the cost-of-living crisis, and the neglect of our health service. Connor and Aidan will be

at the forefront of that campaign to bring about change."

Speaking following his selection Connor Byrne said: "It is an absolute privilege to be given the honour by my party col-

leagues of going forward as one of our two local election candidates here in the West Wicklow area.

I am passionate about my local community here in West Wicklow, and will work hard to make

Kilbride, Blessington and the wide area a better place for all. I want to see a future where my generation can own their homes, and families can access quality local services without a struggle."



Your local health services

 For health information, advice, supports and services visit hse.ie

 **HSELive** is here to answer your questions. Open Mon - Fri, 8am-8pm, and Sat 9am-5pm.
Freephone 1800 700 700

HSE Injury Unit - St Columcille's Hospital

Loughlinstown, D18 E365. Open 7 days, 8am to 6pm, ages 14 and over.
For broken bones, sprains, minor burns and other non life-threatening injuries.

Check hse.ie/injuryunits before you go to see if you can be treated there, and for phone numbers and Eircodes. Opening hours for holidays may vary.



GP Out-of-Hours Services - Call ahead to book an appointment

North Wicklow	South Wicklow	West Wicklow
EDOC 01 223 4500 <ul style="list-style-type: none">St Columcille's Hospital Loughlinstown, D18 E365.St Michael's Hospital Dún Laoghaire, A96 D628.	Caredoc 0818 300 365 or 059 913 8100 <ul style="list-style-type: none">Wicklow Primary Care Centre, Wicklow, A67 K5C7.The Health Clinic, Arklow, Y14 AE10.	KDOC 045 848 701 <ul style="list-style-type: none">Vista Primary Care Campus, Naas, Co. Kildare, W91 E6H2.

Call 112/999 for serious or life-threatening emergencies



Deputy John Brady, Connor Byrne and Aidan Kinsella

Malcolm Byrne to run in new Wicklow-Wexford constituency

Fianna Fail Senator Malcolm Byrne has announced his intention to seek to contest the next General Election for Fianna Fail in the new Wicklow-Wexford constituency. He will not now be seeking a nomination to contest June's European Parliament elections.

Senator Byrne said: "I am very grateful to members of the party who nominated me to contest the European election but I intend to concentrate on trying to win a Dail seat in the new North Wexford and South Wicklow area. I believe that I have worked as an effective national legislator over the last few years and would love to represent

the new constituency in the Dail after the next election."

Senator Byrne is from Gorey while his mother comes from Arklow and he has extensive connections across both North Wexford and South Wicklow.

He added: "I have spent my life involved in organisations across our community and know the issues affecting urban

and rural areas through listening to people and advocating on their behalf. If fortunate to be nominated to contest the General Election, I look forward to the campaign."

Senator Byrne polled well in the 2019 European Elections in the Ireland South constituency but will not contest the Fianna Fail convention on this occasion.

He concluded: "I will be supporting Billy Kelleher, MEP, who has done an excellent job, and whomever is chosen as his running mate."

Senator Byrne is the Fianna Fail spokesperson on Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science. A graduate in Law, in Arbitration and in Governance, he worked as Head of

Communications and Public Affairs with the Higher Education Authority before his election to the Oireachtas. He previously worked with Chambers Ireland, as Commercial Manager with MyHome.ie, as Director of Screen Producers Ireland and as Chief Executive of Community Games.

He becomes the first

candidate for any party to seek a nomination in the new Wicklow-Wexford constituency, which was formed as part of the Electoral Commission's constituency review last year. The new three seat constituency comprises large areas of South Wicklow, including Arklow, and of North Wexford, including Gorey.



Fianna Fail Senator Malcolm Byrne

Fine Gael Wicklow-Wexford forms first constituency executive

The new Fine Gael Wicklow Wexford Constituency Executive recently held its inaugural meeting at the Coach House in Gorey. The meeting was chaired by Minister Jennifer Carroll MacNeill with local Fine Gael TDs Paul Kehoe and Minister Simon Harris in attendance.

A new officer board was elected with representatives from all over the new constituency. The new chairman is Donal O'Sullivan, a Solicitor in Arklow who lives between Gorey and Arklow and who was a councillor in Arklow for ten years and Chairman of the old Wicklow Constituency on two separate occasions.

Addressing the meeting, Donal said his new team's main priority is for Fine Gael to win a Dail seat in this new constituency. North Wexford and South Wicklow with its two main towns, Arklow and Gorey have always worked very closely together, he said, and "it is a fantastic opportunity to have a TD elected in this area that can repre-

sent both towns. We have lost out in recent years this area with no local TD and soon we will have three, and at least one of those will be from Fine Gael."

Speaking at the meeting Councillor Sylvester Bourke pointed out that this is a fantastic opportunity to develop further the close links that exist in this area. Councillor Bourke said that he lives alongside the main M11 route and all he hears from 5am onwards every morning is the roar of cars heading for Dublin. Cllr Bourke said "We need to double down on our efforts and use this new constituency to increase investment in our area so that more people can work where they live."

Ministers Carroll



The new Fine Gael Wicklow Wexford Constituency Executive at its inaugural meeting

MacNeill, Harris and Deputy Keogh all addressed the meeting and spoke on the issue of public order and the

events in Dublin on the 23rd November. Both Deputy Keogh and Minister Harris also pointed out that they

will continue to represent Wexford and Wicklow respectively until after the next general election and they

are here to help in any way they can.

The new Chairman stressed that the Fine Gael needs to "hit the

ground running" to support its election candidates - especially their new candidates such as Laurie Kearon running

in Arklow/Wicklow South and Darragh McDonald running the Gorey/Kilmuckridge district.



Vicky O'Leary, Denise Guilfoyle, Claire Monaghan, Helen Neala, Carol McBarron and Mairead Shelton at the Arklow Town Team Little Christmas Annual Lunch in the Woodenbridge Hotel.

City of Dublin FET College Ballsbridge Campus



- Business
- Criminology
- Psychology
- English EFL
- Multimedia
- Marketing
- Social Studies
- Event Management
- Property
- Human Resources
- Health & Fitness
- Design

Open Day

Thursday 18 January 2024

1.30pm-5.30pm

All Welcome

How to Find Us: Shelbourne Road Ballsbridge Dublin 4
Bus: 4, 7, 7A, 120 via City Centre | 37, 38, 38A, 38B, 39, 39A, 70 via Baggot Street | 15A, 15B, 26, 66A, 66B via Merrion Square | 118, 145, 32X, 41X, 51X, X25, X27, X28 via Donnybrook | 56A, 77A via Barrow St | S2 via Ballsbridge | C1, C2, C3, C4 via Sandymount
Luas: Beechwood stop (Green Line) is a 15min walk from the college
Dart: Lansdowne Road stop, 5min from the college
Walking: Ballsbridge College is a 20min walk from Grafton Street

T: +353 1 668 4806 E: info@ballsbridge.cdetb.ie
W: www.ballsbridgecollege.com

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Wicklow graduates, Danah McAuley (left), Suzanne Behan (second right) and Kate Gilbert (right) pictured celebrating with Dubliners Aoife Kingsbury and Bethan O'Driscoll, were amongst the 1,190 students from all 26 counties to qualify in Primary and Post-Primary teaching, Inclusive and Special Education and Data Analytics at the annual Hibernia College conferring ceremony which saw the largest ever number of teachers graduate in Ireland.

Harris welcomes his former secondary school to Oireachtas

Minister Simon Harris recently welcomed students from his former secondary school St. David's in Greystones for a tour of the Dail and Seanad.

Minister Harris said: "I am truly delighted to have welcomed once again my former secondary school and some of their students to the Oireachtas today. It's a huge privilege as a public representative of Wicklow to be able to welcome schools and students to Leinster House every week where they get to learn about the history of the House and get to see the how both the Dail and Seanad work.

"Today is particularly special as I was able to welcome two groups of students from my own former secondary school St David's in Greystones which the Taoiseach and I recently visited. I think it's very important for young children to witness how the houses of parliament work in their country and what we are doing in these Houses and what I am doing as Minister for Further and Higher Education.

"I got to speak to some students about their options

for third level education when they finish in secondary and tell them about the new joint tertiary degrees I have set up, which are degrees outside the CAO points race, this means no matter how many points you get in the Leaving Cert you can still get access to degrees like Nursing, Business, Computing and so much more.

"On the tour they get to learn about democracy and the State, how old you have to be to vote, how people are elected to the Dail and Seanad, how Government works, how Oireachtas Committees function, what role the Constitution of Ireland plays and also how the upcoming European and Local elections influence the country's politics.

"I hope to welcome many more students and schools through the New Year. If anybody would like to enquire about doing a tour of the Houses they can email me at simon.harris@oireachtas.ie."



Minister Harris with students from St. David's at Leinster House

New Nurturing Skills Fund for early years professionals

An exciting new pilot Nurturing Skills Learner Fund was recently announced by the Minister for Children, Roderic O'Gorman. This fund will pay up to 90% of course fees for existing early years educators looking to upskill by studying a QAB-approved Early Learning and Care degree.

The new fund further demonstrates the Government's commitment to the aim of achieving a graduate led early years workforce. The funding will be paid directly to the educational institution, reducing the upfront cost of studying for early years educators. A further 10% of the course fees will be payable to the graduate at the end of the programme, meaning that the fund will effectively pay all of the fees of eligible courses. Importantly, this funding will be available for part-time blended learning programmes, enabling early years professionals to up-skill whilst still working in the sector.

There has never been a better opportunity to flexibly earn a Level 7 or Level 8 early years degree leading to career development and enhanced pay. The recent Employment Regulation Order for the Early years sector defines minimum rates of pay for early years educators with Level 6 and for Level 7 qualifications which can only be accessed with the appropriate qualification. Early years service providers also benefit when staff gain Level 7 qualifications as the service is then able to draw

down enhanced rates via the early years core funding scheme.

St. Nicholas Montessori College is a QQI accredited College offering education & social science degrees in a highly supportive student environment from its new campus in Dun Laoghaire. For over 50 years, St. Nicholas has pioneered early years education in Ireland and today remains the only institution which combines a QAB recognised award with an authentic education and training in the Montessori method. The Montessori method is widely recognised as the leading early years curriculum, one which focuses on the development of the whole unique child. The national early years curriculum (Aistear) and the new Primary Curriculum Framework are both heavily influenced by the philosophy and practice of Montessori.

In order to facilitate early years educators who may already have existing Level 6 awards and/or extensive experience in the sector, SNMCI has developed an innovative high-quality semester-long bridging programme. The Bridging programme is designed to "bridge" the gap for applicants who already

hold a qualification in Early Childhood Education and Care at Level 5 or 6, and who wish to progress onto the Level 7 (or Level 8) degree programme. Depending on the applicants existing qualifications and experience, applicants may be able to bridge into year 2 or year 3 of the B.Ed. Montessori Education Early Years.

Both the Bridging Programmes and the Level 7 programme are offered as a blended study option - Tuesday and Thursday evenings online, with some Saturdays in person at the SNMCI Dun Laoghaire campus. The cost of the Bridging to Level 6 or Level 7 course is currently reduced by 50% to €495, and the Level 7 degree programme is priced €3,990 per year. 90% of this fee will be covered for successful applicants to the Nurturing Skills Learner fund.

The College is holding an **online information session** about this bridging programme and the early years Montessori degree itself on **Tuesday January 16th at 7pm** via zoom. You can register to attend and find out more information on the College website at <https://smsi.ie>

Wicklow students to benefit from increases in maintenance grants

From Thursday 11th January thousands of Wicklow students and families of students are to benefit from an increase in student maintenance grants as part of Budget 2024.

In Budget 2024 Minister Simon Harris secured funding to increase student maintenance grants among other measures that reduced the cost of going to college and helped students and families of students with the cost of living.

For some eligible students receiving the increase in their student maintenance grant this could be worth a total of €342 between now and May and a total increase of €615 in their grant rate for the year. Minister for Further and Higher Education Simon Harris also secured other measures in Budget 2024 that will further reduce the cost of going to college such as:

- The reduction of college fees of €1,000 for the second year in a row.
- The re-introduction of maintenance grants worth up to €2,384 to eligible post-graduate students;
- A €3,000 increase in the stipend for PhD researchers funded by the Irish Research Council and Science Foundation Ireland.
- An increase and widening of the renters' tax credit now worth €750 which can now be claimed by parents of students paying for their



Minister Simon Harris

accommodation and can be backdated to 2022.

Minister Harris said: "I am thrilled to announce that student maintenance grants are set to be increased which is going to make a huge difference to those in college and the families that support them. As Minister for Further and Higher Education I know how the cost of going to college can be a barrier to

getting an education and that's why every year I have secured measures that dramatically reduce the cost of going to college. The increase in student maintenance grants is going to benefit tens of thousands of families across the country and across Wicklow.

"I know there is so much left to do to help families and students with reaching their full potential but I believe the measures announced today shows we are standing up for families, making sure that cost is not a barrier and putting money back into people's pockets.

"I also want to send a message to all parents that are paying for their child's accommodation if they are going to college. From this year you can now claim an increased rate of the renters' tax credit worth €750 per renter. This tax credit can be claimed whether parents are paying for digs, student accommodation or private accommodation and on top of this it can be backdated for the years 2022 and 2023 where the credit was worth €500. This means some families could be in line for at least €1,750 by claiming the renters tax credit."

Erasmus+ Malaga 2023

A BIFE student's experience

By Jack Siverand II

Under the powder Irish skies, our journey began. I don't remember the weather being cold on our flight day to Malaga. I was wearing two jumpers on the plane, trying to pack as much as I could into my suitcase to prepare for everything in another country so close. The anticipation, laced with a touch of dehydration, ignited my excitement. Do you ever feel that initial burst of adrenaline when embarking on an unknown journey after a cramped flight?

Before Malaga, the application process for Erasmus+ was akin to a choreographed dance, a balance of eagerness and anticipation. As I filled out the forms, I couldn't help but feel a surge of excitement for the adventure into a city I had never been. When the news arrived that I was chosen to go to Malaga, the elation was palpable.

My experience at BIFE has not been confined to the classroom alone; it's always an immersion into a world where every lesson extends beyond the lectures. This trip to Malaga is no different, except for a few thousand kilometres. The bus ride to the Malaga accommodations offered a moment to collect my thoughts, a welcomed respite from the chaotic plane.

Whirring tires of the Malaga road harmonized with my thoughts of Ireland. It sparked relief and curiosity, a precursor to the surprises Erasmus+ held.

The Film Production placement was a short bus ride away from our comfortable accommodation. Kike Mesa, the owner of production company Kandale Films, set the tone and was a joy to collaborate with. Safe to say I was very grateful, be involved with a gathering of down-to-earth, creative souls.

As we delved into the Erasmus+ work placement, my initial inquiries were modest - team dynamics, daily routines, and project parameters. Yet, with each day in the film production studio, my questions expanded



Malaga Halloween (Left to Right: Lorette Martin, Ben Duffy, Orla Byrne, Anneliese Fox de krester, Chloe Tobin, Maya Majewska, Ryan Wheelock, Ross Arnold, Jack Siverand II, Lucy Culliton, Michelle McLoughlin)

with curiosity. Walking down the street gave way from work to a small Moroccan deli with hot food tempting everyone that walked closer to the city centre.

After work, Erasmus+ organized a walking tour of the city and the Alcazaba Fortress. We were guided by a charming lady with a yellow umbrella and the Erasmus+ chaperone. The passageways pulsed with life, much like Temple Bar, revealing new wonders. Amidst the tour, a question surfaced

throughout the group. Was there time for churros with gelato? That question went unanswered, we never did get to try the churros that day. The sun started to set while our tour guide spun history into an engaging narrative and gave us a perfect opportunity to encapsulate our trip with a photo. Have you ever encountered someone who can make history come alive with smiles and facts even when your group almost gets locked inside a fortress?

Halloween in Malaga

unfolded whimsically. Kike Mesa and another Erasmus student dressed as the Joker, along with about a hundred other Jokers, the favourite costume of the night. My costume dilemma birthed a purple alien conjurer, a creative response to budget constraints. As rain descended during the Halloween block party, spirits remained undampened. Umbrellas shielded costumes, and the nocturnal stroll revealed Malaga's vibrant spirit through other creative costumes. On the walk back to the accommodation, I saw a Poison Ivy serving the best chips in Malaga. I did not walk around all night but it's nice to know there are nice places to get food around our accommodations in Malaga.

A lesson for future Erasmus+ adventurers - secure necessities before Saturday's curtain falls. One thing I didn't know about Malaga was everything closes on Sundays and Holidays. These rules are taken pretty seriously by shop keepers and regular people alike. If you end up going to Malaga for Erasmus+, make sure you buy what you need before Saturday. You have been warned again.



Malaga Airport (Left to Right: Maya Majewska, Ryan Wheelock, Lucy Culliton, Ross Arnold, Chloe Tobin, Danylo Ulianov, Joshua James Nichels, Lev Perez Rodriguez, Jack Siverand II, Alina Mochalkina, Ben Duffy, Anneliese Fox de krester, Orla Byrne)

The city always wakes up at night so even when you're out of luck on a Sunday, the moon will always save you.

The city, with its surprising character and idyllic landscapes became a cherished chapter in my

Erasmus+ voyage. As I ride the charter bus back the airport, I carry with me the seaside adventures, the taste of Morocco and gelato, and the confidence from an opportunity where I received payment to travel and explore a country I had never been to.

The lessons and adventures will forever resonate in the beaches of my memory. I'm eager to sign up for the next journey wherever Erasmus+ may take me.



Malaga Catamaran (Left to Right: Lev Perez Rodriguez, Chloe Tobin, Jack Siverand II, Ben Duffy, Ryan Wheelock, Maya Majewska, Ross Arnold, Joshua James Nichels, Orla Byrne)

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Two Wicklow sports stars honoured at Sportswoman Awards

Two Wicklow sports stars were among those honoured at The Irish Times / Sport Ireland Sportswoman Awards which took place in the Shelbourne Hotel in Dublin recently. This is the 20th year of the awards and two of the 15 sportswomen who were recipients of monthly awards included Wicklow's Katie Taylor and Lucy Mulhall.

Undisputed world champion Katie Taylor, who has won the Sportswoman of the Year award a record 5 times, picked up her latest monthly award in November. She did so after producing an unforgettable performance in the ring in her rematch with Chantelle Cameron at Dublin's 3Arena. Back in May, Taylor had suffered her first professional defeat at the hands of the

English boxer. But in a fight for the ages, her victory in front of a crowd of 9,000, Taylor added super lightweight belts to the lightweight collection she already owned, making her the first undisputed Irish world champion at two weight divisions.

After a rough start to the year for Irish women's rugby, the Sevens

squad gave the sport a much-needed boost when they sealed qualification for next summer's Olympic Games by finishing fifth in the seven-tournament World Series, which featured 17 nations. Captain Lucy Mulhall was in inspired form in the final tournament in Toulouse, during which she won her 50th cap, Ireland opening in style with a 27-7 win over France. Ultimately, it was their 10-5 defeat of Fiji that clinched qualification, Mulhall finishing as Ireland's highest points scorer through the Series and fourth in the overall standings. Having played for the Sevens for nine years, and after being part of the team that came close to qualifying for Rio and Tokyo, the Wicklow woman finally had her reward and the Sportswoman of the Month

award for May.

Unfortunately, both were unable to attend the Awards ceremony - Katie Taylor was abroad and Lucy Mulhall was getting married! Her trophy was accepted on her behalf by Eimear Flannery from the IRFU.

Paying tribute to all the 2023 winners, Sport Ireland CEO Dr Una May commented: "The unparalleled performances by Irish sportswomen in 2023 captivated the Irish public. The inspiration these outstanding women and teams provide for the next generation of aspiring sports stars is invaluable. I would like to congratulate all of the monthly winners and also pay tribute to their families and all of the coaches, volunteers and support teams who have helped them to reach the highest levels of sport."



Lucy Mulhall was unable to attend the Sportswoman Awards this year as she was getting married. Her award was accepted on her behalf by Eimear Flannery, IRFU Women's Rugby National Teams Programme Manager. Eimear is pictured with Dr. Una May, CEO of Sport Ireland and Noel O'Reilly, Sports Editor of The Irish Times.

Wicklow athletes nominated for Her Sport awards

The Her Sport Awards are back to celebrate and recognise the magnificent achievements of our sports stars, as well as the community volunteers and behind the scenes heroes that make the sports we love possible.

The Wicklow athletes nominated are Siofra Lawless (Personality Of The Year), Mary Hickey-Nolan (Personality Of The Year), Fionnuala

McCormack (Personality Of The Year), Lara Gillespie (Young Athlete Of The Year), Katie Taylor (Athlete of the Year) and Lucy Mulhall

(Athlete of the Year).

2023 was an unforgettable year in Irish sport. There were World Championship highs, athlete comebacks, a World

Cup to remember and not to mention Olympic and Paralympic qualifications.

Irish sportswomen have captivated across the board with outstanding performances, brilliance on and off the playing field, some rising from the ashes and defying all odds. The Her Sport

Awards celebrate these inspirational Irish women in sport, in what has been a momentous year!

"Voting for this year's awards is open to the public until Sunday the 19th of January. You can vote by going to our website at awards.hersport.ie," said Her Sport.

"We also invite all our community to attend the live show in University College Dublin, Astra Hall on Saturday January 27th with doors opening at 6:15pm with the ceremony kicking off at 6:50pm!

"We promise an inspiring night full of like-

minded people recognising the amazing calibre of athletes we have here in Ireland as well as interesting panel discussions and an amazing goodie-bag!

"This year there will be a raffle on the night with some great prizes to be won! The raffle will fund workshops for schools

that are unable to afford them, empowering students to create a cultural change and level the playing field in sport. If you can't make the event, but want to enter the raffle get in touch with Her Sport and they will help arrange pre-purchase of tickets."



Gillian Priest and Donna Nolan at the Parkrun in Avondale Forest Park, Rathdrum.

Funding gifted to amateur athletes and sports clubs

Two amateur sports clubs and an athlete based in County Wicklow each received a 1,000 uplift courtesy of Kingspan, an insulation and building envelope solutions company.

The Kingspan Kickstart Sports Fund was launched in 2023 with support from Irish professional golfer, Shane Lowry, to provide support for grassroots level athletes and community sports clubs, and has already awarded a total of €90,000 to successful applicants across Ireland.

As part of the fund, athlete, Caoimhe Gilligan, from Blessington, has been awarded €1,000, alongside Bray Emmets and Enniskerry Football Club, which will help to provide sporting equipment, training and other necessary resources, alongside offering assistance with any campaigns that are currently underway.

An international basketball player, 16-year-old Caoimhe is considered one of the best in Ireland and made her Superleague debut last year. She also competed in the European Championships in Bulgaria earlier this year and has received correspondence from colleges in the United States regarding scholarships once she finishes school in 2025. Caoimhe plans to utilise the Kingspan Kickstart Sports Fund to help cover travel costs to and from competitions.

The team at Bray Emmets is currently working hard to encourage female participation in GAA and currently boasts an U14 team that have been playing together since the age of four or five.

Training twice a week, Bray Emmets will use the funding to purchase branded hoodies or light rain jackets to enable to girls to play in all weather conditions.

Elsewhere, Enniskerry Football Club has been established for many years and is an integral part of the local community. In 2022, the Club formed its Senior Ladies team, which gives girls an opportunity to continue playing football after the age of 18. Alongside its recent expansion, the Club plans to put the funding towards purchasing football kits.



Basketball player Caoimhe Gilligan from Blessington

Wicklow triathletes win national titles and awards

Wicklow Triathletes recently performed very strongly at Triathlon Ireland 2023 national series, which consisted of 18 races covering various triathlon distances, ran all over Ireland.



Emma O'Brien won the overall female national series title

The events were: Sprint - 750m swim, 20km bike, 5km Run; Olympic - 1500m swim, 40km bike, 10km run; 70.3 - 1.9km swim, 90km bike, 22km run. Specific events offered national distance titles, with Wicklow Triathlon Club featuring very strongly, especially the



Kate Fitzpatrick competed in the 2023 IronMan 70.3 world championships that were held in Finland.



Wicklow Tri also came 3rd overall in the mixed club National series

female athletes who are up there with the best in the country.

Emma O'Brien won the overall female national series title, comfortably winning nearly every event she competed in during 2023, she also won the National Olympic distance title that was held in Kilkee, Co. Clare. This event is aptly called 'Hell of the West'.

Wicklow Tri also came 3rd overall in the mixed club National series, which was made up of the top three women and the top three men; Emma O'Brien, Archie Bremner, Deirdre Murphy, Fiona Kelly and Brendan and Finn Buck. Each either won or had a podium finish.

Lara Buck received two national trophies: 14-15-year-old National champion and overall National series winner.

Kate Fitzpatrick competed in the 2023 IronMan 70.3 world championships that were held in Finland.



Lara Buck received two national trophies: 14-15-year-old National champion and overall National series winner.



Tiernan and Sienna Duffy at the St. Pat's GAA New Year's eve Friendly in Dunbar Park, Wicklow Town.

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Sean Begley

FAUX PAS comedy in Greystones

Award-winning comedian Sean Begley brings two performances of his new solo show 'FAUX PA' to theatres this January, including Whale Theatre in Greystones on 26th January.

Sean is known as the resident host of Good Craic Comedy Club in Bray's World famous Harbour Bar and has become a regular on the Irish comedy scene after winning Best New Act at Bray Comedy fest 2018 and subsequently being shortlisted for RTE's Stand Up and Be Funny in 2019.

Speaking ahead of his January shows, Sean gave some insight into what audi-

ences can be expected from 'FAUX PA'.

"In essence, this new show is about cataloguing the many awkward, divisive and embarrassing situations I have experienced in my daily interactions with colleagues, friends and society at large," reveals Sean.

"I have no doubt that everyone will be able to relate to these stories, as we all deal with failure on a regular basis. I think you have to embrace the failure, because

each situation is ultimately a learning experience which builds character."

The first of Sean's 2024 dates will take place at DLR Mill Theatre Dundrum on January 20th followed by Whale Theatre, Greystones on the 26th of the month.

'FAUX PA' will also feature support performances from rising stars Paddy Aramas and fellow Bray resident, Louise O Toole, fresh off her highly successful debut solo show at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. Limited tickets still available for both shows at www.milltheatre.ie and www.whaletheatre.ie

Welsh school choir visits Wicklow

A choir from Ysgol Uwchradd Bodedern, a secondary school in Anglesey, Wales travelled to North Wicklow to perform in Greystones, just before Christmas. The school which is Welsh speaking, sang songs in both Welsh and English during their performances. On Thursday, December 21st they performed in Temple Carrig School. On Friday, December 22nd, they performed in St. David's Secondary School.

Greystones is twinned with Holyhead in North Wales. Ysgol Uwchradd Bodedern is located close to Holyhead, and is also in Anglesey. Greystones District Cathaoirleach, Cllr Stephen Stokes & Former Greystones Mayor, Kathleen Kelleher have been centrally involved in twinning efforts since its inception in 2012.

They welcomed the Welsh students to North Wicklow. Cllr Stokes stated: "We are grateful to Ysgol Uwchradd Bodedern for travelling over. Their

performances added a great vibrancy to the school concerts. Additionally I would like to praise all of those that took part in the performances in both Temple Carrig and St. David's. They were memorable occasions."

A Greystones delegation is expected to travel to Holyhead for St. David's Day on March 1st, 2024. Any groups or organisations that are interested in twinning partnerships can contact Cllr Stephen Stokes on stephen-stokes101@gmail.com for further information.



Cllr Stokes and Kathleen Kelleher in Bray with the visiting choir from Ysgol Uwchradd Bodedern

Bray One Act Drama Festival

Mermaid Arts Centre, 23rd-27th January. 7:30pm. €16 full price

Bray One Act Drama Festival is bringing back to the Mermaid a full programme of one act plays which will bring a wonderful mix of comedy to drama to the stage. These plays will be performed by both newcomers and seasoned performers and are sure to provide 5 nights of varied entertainment. All proceeds from the Festival will go to charitable causes.

"We are very pleased to welcome our adjudicator, Michael McCabe, along with our loyal audience. The Festival will take place from Tuesday 23rd January to Saturday 27th January 2024 at 7.30 p.m. Tuesday 23rd is our dedicated Youth Night with three groups performing. We look forward to seeing you there!"



Enya Martin - Ask Yer Ma!

Mermaid Arts
Centre, Saturday
20th January. €26
Full Price

Enya Martin, stand up comedy queen and creator of the hilarious facebook page "Giz A Laugh" is returning to Bray at the Mermaid Theatre in January.

A powerhouse on stage live as she recaps her crazy madcap life. Everything is on her hit list for some comedy gold.

Enya is also a presenter on FM 104, she loves cats, cushions, and chocolate. So go on "Ask Your Ma"



Enya Martin



Sharon Kavanagh puts the finishing touches to AnnMarie Kenny who played Malabelle in Arklow Panto Creations' production of Beauty and the Beast in St. Mary's Hall, Arklow.

Wicklow singer shares new live version of Red Sun

PLANNING

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

We, Simon & Elaine Kelly, intend to apply for permission for development at 16 Richmond Park, Bray, Co. Wicklow. The development will consist of the conversion of existing attic, incorporating new angled and flat roof dormer style roofs to rear of existing two storey semi-detached dwelling, incorporating new bedroom & en-suite areas to new attic level, replacement of existing first floor landing window with new larger window to side of existing dwelling, minor internal alterations and associated site works. 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 the receipt by the authority of the application.

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

I Pádraig Murphy wish to apply to Wicklow County Council for permission for the construction of a two storey dwelling, bored well, secondary treatment system & soil polishing filter, new entrance, and all associated site works at, Garyhoe, Tinahely, Co. Wicklow. The planning application may be inspected, or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy, at the offices of the Planning Authority, during its public opening hours. A submission or observation in relation to the application may be made in writing to the planning authority on payment of the prescribed fee, €20, within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the application, and such submissions or observations will be considered by the planning authority in making a decision on the application. The planning authority may grant permission subject to or without conditions, or may refuse to grant permission. Signed James Kealy Planning & Design Services 085-100 2 200

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

Novara Construction Company Limited seeks Retention Planning Permission for (1) the existing boundary fencing enclosure to the front external area and (2) the existing fixed covered canopy structure to the front of the ground floor cafe unit, at a protected structure at No. 5A Goldsmith Terrace, Bray, 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

Stephen and Cathy Pearson seek planning permission for: Single Storey Extension to rear of existing dwelling along with alterations to existing roadside gated entrance at The Fallows, Ashtown Lane, Roundwood, Co. Wicklow A98 AK57. 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

Arc Design seeks full planning permission on behalf of Andrew King for the development at "Pretty Hill", Knockroe, Kilcoole, County Wicklow, A63 C998 which consists: 1) Demolition of existing 105sqm single storey bungalow (plus non-habitable attached 24sqm garage/ boiler house), 2-bedroom dwelling. 2) Construction of 309sqm two storey 5-bedroom dwelling and detached 42sqm garage. 3) Install proposed waste water treatment unit and soil polishing filter that meets current EPA standards. 4) Provision of surface water soakaway to meet BRE Digest 365 standards for the new detached house. All associated site development works, drainage and landscaping to accommodate new dwelling. The planning application may be inspected, or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy, at the offices of the planning authority during its public opening hours. The planning application may be viewed online at www.wicklow.ie, under planning online enquires. A submission or observation in relation to the application may be made in writing to the planning authority on payment of the prescribed fee, €20, within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the application, and such submissions or observations will be considered by the planning authority in making a decision on the application. The planning authority may grant permission subject to or without conditions, or may refuse to grant permission.

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

We, Colm Reid & Kathryn O'Reilly intend to apply for permission for development at this site at 4 Newcourt Avenue, Bray, Co. Wicklow. The development will consist of the demolition of an existing garage and construction of a new side and rear single storey extension together with widening of the existing vehicular access & driveway and associated works. 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.

Anna Mieke has released “Red Sun (Live),” a reworked version of the closing track of her acclaimed 2022 LP Theatre (Nettwerk). The spell-binding live rendition arrives with a clip of its recording at Dundalk, IE's Black Mountain Studios, interspersed with gorgeous natural footage and brought to life by videomaker Anna Heisterkamp.

“It was an exciting and very satisfying project to work on as it was all arranged and recorded in a very short space of time, so there was a sort of tension and adrenaline rush behind everything,” explains Anna Mieke.

The spacious track features new collaborators Niamh Dalton (fiddle) and Sam Clague (electric guitar, bass clarinet), as well as live bandmates Ryan Hargadon (on alto saxophone) and Matthew Jacobson (on percussion). “Red Sun (Live)” follows Anna Mieke's November single “Ornament,” a Theatre B-side that earned international support from Rolling Stone ('Songs You Need to Know'), WNYC's Soundcheck (“a beautifully woven web of sounds...while the arrangement becomes quite expansive, it never loses the intimacy created by Mieke's pensive yet comforting vocals”), Brooklyn Vegan, Northern Transmissions, and more.

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

Thomas and Fiona Comerford seek planning permission for: Single Storey Extension to rear of existing dwelling at 6 Carrigmill, Killincarrig, Greystones, Co. Wicklow A63 XV66. 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

1 Eoghan MacMahon seeks planning permission for the lowering of footpath to allow vehicle access to driveway at front of property at 31 Wolfe Tone Square South, Bray, 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.

Theatre and its singles (“Seraphim,” “Mann-equin,” “For A Time,” “Twin”) arrived to great overseas press from NPR Music, WNYC New Sounds (Soundcheck session/interview), Brooklyn Vegan, FLOOD Magazine, Cool Hunting, Guitar World, Uncut, MOJO, The Guardian, Shindig!, and more.

The album envelopes listeners in the warmth of Anna Mieke's world, radiating with an intense heat that lies closer to the desert or the jungle than her hometown of Wicklow. A captivating artistic statement, it finds Anna Mieke at her most assured and poetic as she contributes a challenging, exciting new voice to alt-folk.

Anna Mieke's world



New single Red Sun (Live)

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

I, Ronan Jordan intend to apply for Permission for a) the construction of a part single storey, part two storey extension (43.1sqm) to the rear of the existing semi-detached house, b) provision of a velux rooflight to the tiled pitched roof to the front of the house and c) renovation and alterations to the existing house and all associated ancillary site works at 18 Monastery Road, Enniskerry, Co. Wicklow, A98 RK70. 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

John O'Donoghue & Damhnait Ó Donnchú seek permission for (A) conversion of existing attic space to habitable accommodation and (B) addition of new first floor windows and rooflights to existing north, south & west elevations and all associated site works at 'Little Acre', Killadreenan, Newtownmountkennedy, Co. Wicklow, A63 V225. 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.



Anna Mieke

Theatre is more about sensation than theme. “Perhaps the music enables some form of dreamlike movement towards an imaginary place,” says Anna Mieke. “I'm just creating a sound world to escape to, built

from moments in time. I hope it reminds someone else of their own experience...memories of youth infused with an intense warmth, like that childhood sensation of summer.” A stunning artistic statement, Theatre finds Anna Mieke at her most assured and poetic as she contributes a challenging, exciting new voice to alt-folk.

As a child, Anna Mieke cycled over The Pyrenees to Gibraltar, learned Maori songs while living in New Zealand (age 5) and, later, traditional songs in Bulgaria. “It was a surreal time,” she recalls of New Zealand. “Climbing glaciers and an active volcano, trekking through jungles.I remember that otherworldly feeling, somewhere totally alien to all your senses.” Theatre recalls this familiar feeling. It is a world in bloom with deep evergreens, shocks of red coralline beneath numbered skies, and auburn leaves scattered across captivating soundscapes. It is all filtered through a terracotta vision that burns like deep heat and penetrates the surface with the humidity and

claustrophobia of a concrete city; words like 'asphalt', 'tarmac', 'plastic' are layered over delicate guitar melodies - their urban harshness unapologetically highlighting day-to-day ugly mundanity instead of sugar-coating it with a romanticized invention of a possible past. “The lyrics are also fairly rooted in the ugly, mundane side of things. I guess that side feels grounded and real to me, because it surrounds me, it is my actual environment,” she says.

Over the years Anna Mieke has amassed skills as a guitarist, bouzouki player, pianist, cellist, and vocalist. She learned piano mostly by ear (after teaching herself the Bach ringtone from her dad's old mobile phone), and is also self-taught on guitar and classical cello; she learned to harmonize by singing with her siblings. After visiting and working in Bangladesh and Switzerland, she eventually moved to Granada, Spain, and later, after returning to Ireland in her early twenties, discovered a community of other artists there, and her own sound world began to take shape.

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BRIEFS

Healthy Food Made Easy

If you'd like to learn how to cook delicious healthy meals on a budget, Bray Area Partnership has a free Healthy Food Made Easy course starting in Bray on Friday 9th February, running one morning a week for five weeks. Healthy Food Made Easy is designed to have a relaxed and fun approach, with the emphasis on group learning rather than formal teaching. Over five weekly sessions, you'll learn all about healthy eating, food shopping and planning meals on a budget, and get to prepare, cook and taste some delicious healthy recipes. You have to be aged 18 or over and living in the greater Bray area to attend. To find out more see www.brayareapartnership.ie or call Louise Curtin on 01 286 8266 for a chat or to register.

Genealogy Workshop

There will be a Genealogy Workshop at Wicklow Town Library branch with Claire Bradley, on Thursday 25th January, 7pm.

Wicklow Libraries has an array of available subscription sites that can be used, free of charge, to help people with their family history research. However, many people don't know where to start their research. This workshop will give people an idea of the first steps needed to undertake family history research. Demos on how to search sites will be provided including the Census, IrishGenealogy.ie, Findmypast.ie and the British News Archive websites. Claire Bradley is a professional Irish genealogist. She is passionate about teaching people how to research their own ancestry and regularly lectures both in person and online to family history and historical societies in Ireland, the UK and countries with large Irish diasporas. This event is free but booking is required. Please contact Wicklow Town Library 0404 67025 or email Wicklowlocalstudies@wicklowcoco.ie.

Bray Cualann Historical Society

The AGM will take place in the Royal Hotel, Main Street, Bray, at 20.00hrs on Thursday 18th January and will be followed by a presentation from James Scannell 'A Dangerous Occupation: Working on the Railway in the Bray Area'. All are welcome - admission is E8 for non-members.

Glendalough Walk With Strangers (Dry January)

Take part in a Sunday morning walk/hike to Glendalough on Saturday 20th January from 10:30 to 2pm. This event is open to anyone, come alone or with friends. These events are made to be social and to meet new people. Your host for this event is a very experienced host to make going to events less awkward. You must meet us at the site, no transport is being organised, there is a bus that runs from Dublin. No experience is necessary, no fancy gear is needed, just come along and meet new people. This is free with no catches and is part of Dry January Festival 2024. Further info on www.eventbrite.ie.

Bereavement support

Bereavement charity Anam Cara, are encouraging parents who have faced the death of a child, to reach out for support. It can become a new tradition, attending a meeting once a month over the entire year. It is not a tradition anyone wants to have to start but sadly, organisations such as Anam Cara need to exist. Over 2,000 bereaved parents attended Anam Cara events in 2023 at no cost to themselves, all their services are free of charge.

On Monday 15th January, Anam Cara will hold their Wicklow meeting in The Parkview Hotel, Newtownmountkennedy at 7:15pm. They welcome any bereaved parent, regardless of the age of the child or circumstances of death to the meeting. Registration is not required to attend the meeting. Anam Cara would welcome any bereaved parent in the Wicklow area and surrounds. Anam Cara can be contacted on 085 2888888 or by email info@anamcara.ie.



Protesters at the Arklow Residents Right of Way (ARROW) demonstration at Arklow North Beach. The group is campaigning for more open access for the public to Arklow's walkways and to ensure Rights of Way are kept open for future generations.

10 tips to beat 'The January Blues'

Turn2Me, a national mental health charity, has published a list of ten ways to beat the 'January Blues'. The charity stated there are three main reasons many experience the January Blues, which include Post-Holiday Let Down, Seasonal Affective Disorder and Financial Stress.

The charity described the Post-Holiday Let Down as the time after the excitement and busyness of the holiday season, where many people experience a sense of let down or sadness once the festivities are over. Returning to work or daily routines after the holidays can lead to a feeling of emptiness or disappointment, especially if expectations for the holidays were high.

Seasonal Affective Disorder: Some people may experience Seasonal Affective Disorder, a type of depression that occurs

at a specific time of year, typically during the fall and winter months. Reduced exposure to sunlight during shorter days can disrupt the body's internal clock and lead to changes in serotonin and melatonin levels, affecting mood and causing depressive symptoms.

Financial Stress: The holiday season often involves increased spending on gifts, travel, and social activities. As January arrives, many people face financial strain due to holiday expenses, leading to stress

and anxiety about managing debts or tightening budgets.

Turn2Me's ten tips to help people overcome the January Blues:

1. Stay active: Exercise has a significant impact on mental well-being. Engage in physical activities you enjoy, whether it's going to the gym, taking a walk, practicing yoga, or dancing. Regular exercise releases endorphins, which can boost your mood.

2. Get out in nature: Many studies have outlined the benefit of 'forest bathing', nature walks, hik-

ing, and gardening. Spend time around nature to benefit your mental health.

3. Practice self-care: Take care of yourself by prioritising self-care activities. This could include getting enough sleep, eating nutritious foods, practicing relaxation techniques like meditation or deep breathing, and pampering yourself with activities you enjoy.

4. Socialise: Even if it's tempting to hibernate during the winter, make an effort to socialise. Plan activities with friends or family, join clubs, or attend social events to combat feelings of isolation.

5. Use the start of the year as an opportunity to explore new hobbies or

activities. Learning something new can provide a sense of accomplishment and boost your mood.

6. Travel: Plan a trip to have something to look forward to. This doesn't have to be a lavish expensive holiday abroad; it can be a cheaper staycation in Ireland.

7. Make time for fun: Incorporate enjoyable activities into your routine. Whether it's outdoor swimming, watching movies, reading books, cooking, or any other hobby you love, scheduling time for activities you find pleasurable can help lift your spirits.

8. Practice gratitude and focus on the positives in your life. Keep a gratitude journal, where you write

down things you're grateful for each day. Shifting your perspective towards positivity can improve your mood.

9. Avoid toxic people: Cut out 'energy vampires' in your life. These are people who drain your energy with drama, manipulate, selfish or hurtful behaviour. If they're family members that you can't cut out of your life, reduce the time you spend with them.

10. Seek professional help if needed: If you have feelings of anxiety or depression, don't hesitate to seek help from a mental health professional. Counselling can provide valuable support and guidance.

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Women forecast to hold 45% of assets under management by 2030

'The Future is Female' as growth of Irish female wealth and economic influence forecast

Women are forecast to hold 45% of assets under management by 2030, according to 'The Future is Female', a new paper commissioned by AIB. Showcasing the increasing impact of Irish women in the economy, the paper outlines how women are pioneering change in work cultures and business practices, leading to a forecasted shift in female economic influence.

AIB partnered with trend forecaster, The Future Laboratory, to develop the paper which

looks at the current landscape and maps the trends that will inform the future for female finance and financial planning in Ireland.

Key points in the paper include:

- Women are forecast to hold 45% of assets under management by 2030.
- Female entrepreneurship is on the rise in Ireland with female founders securing €234m in funding for tech startups in 2022, and the third-highest rate for early-stage female entrepreneurs across all European countries.
- There has been a 21% point increase in female representation on ISEQ listed companies in the last 5 years; women across other listed boards exceeding the 25% target for 2023 at 28%.
- The labour force participation rate increased by 1.0% point to 65.8% over

the past year, boosting the labour force by 52,000, with rising female participation rates, currently standing at 61%, up from 56% pre-Covid.

• A new generation of Gen Z and millennial female businesspeople are now responsible for starting one third of businesses globally.

• While women are more risk averse when it comes to investing generally, when they do invest, they are more likely than men to place ESG (Environment, Social and Governance) at the heart of their investment portfolio, with 52% of women claiming a preference to invest in businesses that have a beneficial social or environmental impact compared to 44% of men.

• There is a shift towards 'agile leadership', away from presenteeism and supervision, enabling female career advancements.

• Globally, childcare, and familial care stand out as two of the key areas that prevent women from fulfilling their ambitions, with a move away from 'Greedy Jobs' that require people to prioritise their work commitments over all other aspects of their life on the horizon.

Author of the paper, Miriam Rayman of The

Future Laboratory, said: "While there is quite rightly a huge focus recently on the gender pay gap, gender pension gap and obstacles facing

women in the Irish economy, there is also so much momentum and progress being led by women in Ireland today. Taking global trends into

consideration with this progress, there is a definite shift in the economic influence of Irish women emerging."

Collated from global



Fran Lacey, Myra Connolly, Sheila Byrne and Annmarie O'Sullivan at the Arklow Town Team Little Christmas Lunch in the Woodenbridge Hotel.



Miriam Rayman, cultural strategist at The Future Laboratory.

research and supported by interviews with business leaders including Margaret Heffernan, five times CEO and author, Gillian Harford of Ireland's 30% Club and Martin Raymond, CEO of The Future Lab and author of the Great Wealth Transfer Report, 'The Future is Female' looks at the current land-

scape and maps out the trends that will inform the future for female finance and financial planning in Ireland.

'The Future is Female' was commissioned by AIB as part of its focus on the importance of financial planning to support women continuing to do what matters to them.

CLASSIFIEDS

THE MIRACULOUS PRAYER

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

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- KC** Fine Art Practice
- KE** Creative Craft

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- DD** Architecture Design & Technology
- DN** Jewellery Making & Woodcraft
- DI** Furniture Design & Carpentry/Joinery
- DC** Fashion & Textiles
- DK** Garden Design
- DJ** Furniture Design & Cabinet Making (Advanced)

MUSIC

- MI** DJ Techniques & Music Production
- MJ** Music Production
- MK** Music Performance
- MF** Sound Engineering
- MN** Traditional Irish and Folk Music Performance

COMPUTING & ENGINEERING

- NA** Computer Software Development
- NB** Computer Science
- NC** Computer Networks and Cyber Security
- ND** Computer A+ Operating Systems
- NE** Digital Arts & Creative Media
- NF** 21st Century Skills for Work
- HV** Engineering Pre-University

SPORT

- EA** Sport, Exercise & Fitness Instruction
- EC** Personal Trainer, Strength & Conditioning
- ED** Soccer Coaching & Sports Management
- EF** Sports Injury & Massage Therapy / Pre-University Physiotherapy

ANIMAL CARE

- HA** Animal Care
- HI** Animal Care & Management Pre-University
- HJ** Animal Science Industry
- HT** Dog Obedience & Training - Start Your Own Business
- HX** Equine Studies

SOCIAL STUDIES & CHILDCARE

- OA** Special Needs Assistant (Primary & Post-Primary)
- OB** SNA & Disability Studies (Level 6)
- HD** Early Learning & Care / Childcare
- HF** Supervision in Early Learning & Care / Childcare
- HE** Social Studies & Community Care

HAIR, BEAUTY & WELLNESS

- HG** Holistic & Wellbeing Studies
- FJ** Professional Make Up & Hairstyling
- FF** Hairdressing - Junior Stylist
- FG** Hairdressing - Senior Stylist
- FH** Barbering
- FD** Nail Technician & Salon Administration
- FC** Fashion Theatre and Media Make-Up

SCIENCE

- HS** Forensic Science - Pre-University
- HK** Science - Pre-University
- HZ** Food Science with Dietetics - Pre-University
- JF** Pharmacy Assistant
- JJ** Pharmacy Technician
- HU** Applied Ecology and Biodiversity Studies
- LJ** Brewing and Distilling Technology

BUSINESS

- JA** Business Management & Administration
- JB** E Business
- JC** Business Management - Advanced Certificate
- JD** Accounting Technician
- LD** Business Tourism Advanced Certificate
- SD** Legal Administration Pre-University Law
- SF** Medical Administration (Mornings Only)
- SE** IT & Office Administration (Mornings Only)
- EE** Security & Pre-Garda

HOSPITALITY & TOURISM

- LA** Tourism, Reception & Event Management
- LB** Tourism with Airline Studies
- LH** Restaurant & Bar Management
- LC** Culinary Arts
- LE** Culinary Arts Advanced
- LG** Pastry, Baking & Barista
- LI** Hospitality & Business Management (Level 6)

ADULT LEAVING CERT

- RB** Adult Leaving Certificate

HEALTH

- HB** Nursing and Midwifery Studies - Pre-University
- HH** Healthcare Assistant & Activity Coordinator
- HP** Occupational Therapy Assistant
- JK** Emergency Care Studies (Pre-paramedic, Fire & Ambulance)
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- HW** Applied Psychology (Advanced)

FILM & COMPUTER GAMING

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- MB** TV & Film Production - Advanced
- MC** Immersive Media Production Degree (Hons)
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- MG** Games Development

ACTING & DANCE

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- PB** Acting for Stage & Screen Advanced
- PD** Dance Technique, Performance and Choreography
- PE** Dance Technique, Performance and Choreography - Advanced

ENGLISH LANGUAGE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

- AA** English Language and Computers for International Students
- AB** English Language and Business for International Students
- AC** English Language and Healthcare Studies for International Students
- AD** English Language and Sport for International Students
- AE** English Language for Employment (level 4)

APPRENTICESHIPS

- JG** Accounting Technician Apprenticeship

PART-TIME COURSES

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- ZB** ICDL (level 4)
- ZC** Computers for beginners (Level 3)
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