

LOCAL Wicklow Times

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Tuesday 9th April 2024 First Floor, The Boulevard, Quinsborough Road, Bray. A98 R6D7. Tel: 01 - 2869111 E-mail: wicklowed@localtimes.ie www.wicklowtimes.net

'STOP!...NO MORE HOUSES'

Concerns have been raised about a 'last-minute' amendment to the Planning & Development Bill making its way through the Oireachtas, which would prohibit local authorities or An Bord Pleanála from refusing to grant permission for a residential development on grounds that a government set housing target for the location where the planning permission is situated has already been met. The amendment would have major implications for areas in Co. Wicklow such as Greystones, where the population target for 2028 has already been exceeded.

According to Sinn Féin TD John Brady, a letter from the Attorney General Rossa Fanning makes it clear that the amendment is based on a single decision by Wicklow County Council regarding a planning application by Cairn for 98 units in Greystones. Deputy Attorney General's letter suggests that the wording of the amendment, based on the wording contained in the decision by Wicklow County Council, would not be appropriate for other Local Authorities and may need further amendments. It has been revealed that Minister for Housing Darragh O'Brien's political advisor met with representatives of Cairn construction following the decision of Wicklow County Council to refuse planning permis-



Making music again - County Wicklow residents aged 55 and over have been reconnecting with the instruments they use to play with the Rosanna Trio as part of the Wicklow Teaching Residency, a partnership with Wicklow County Arts Office and Music Network. Last week in Clermont House, Rathnew, 15 residents from the Wicklow area graduated from the Wicklow Teaching Residency. Photo by Senija Topcic



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sion for the 98 houses because the area had exceeded its population target, and prior to the tabling of the Minister's amendment. "Cairn also have an application for 580 houses with An Bord Pleanála, which is yet to be decided. It is quite apparent here that Minister O'Brien is more concerned with meeting the needs of greedy developers who have little or no concern about the planned development of the Greystones area. "The fact of the situation is that Greystones has already exceeded its population target of 22,000 for 2028. And if current growth rates continue this will substantially increase by 2028. Before the Minister railroads any more developments in the Greystones area, we need to witness a commitment from Minister O'Brien and the new

Taoiseach Simon Harris who is based in the town, to deliver on the much needed infrastructure for the area which would support population growth. "Like many people who remember previous experiences of Fianna Fail's manipulation of the property market, there is a fear here that the Minister wants to drag us back to old Fianna Fail style unregulated planning - and we all know how that worked out in the past." At the local Greystones Municipal District level, councillors Derek Mitchell (FG) and Lourda Scott (GP) have also raised serious concerns. At the recent Municipal District meeting they called for the new amendment of the Bill to be scrapped. The Council is to write to Minister O'Brien asking for the cancellation. Speaking about the mat-

ter, Cllr Mitchell said "Town infrastructure, such as water, schools,

transport is planned for the target population. So a major increase in pop-

ulation needs more infrastructure. *Continued on page 3*



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Ian Barrett and Alison Graham with Junior Captain Charlie Fox ready for the Captains Drive In at Delgany Golf Club recently.

Free home energy event in Greystones

Greystones Green Party Councillor Lourda Scott is to hold a public meeting on home energy in Greystones Tennis Club on April 16th 7.30pm. Cllr. Scott will be joined by Gavin Eaves of Churchfield Home Services, an expert in retrofitting and energy upgrades, along with representatives from Greystones Delgany Sustainable Energy Community and Greystones Credit Union. The aim of the meeting is to inform homeowners about the various grant schemes on offer either for standalone jobs or full retrofit.

Soup & sandwiches

A Soup and Sandwiches lunch will be held in the Swann Hall at St. Patrick's Church, Greystones on Tuesday, 16th April from 12.30 until 2.00. Everyone welcome. Do come and meet friends while enjoying the food. Suggested donation of €7 for local charities.

Kilmacanogue History Society

Kilmacanogue history Society's next talk is on Monday 8th April at 8pm in Kilmacanogue Parish Hall. The Speaker is Kevin Myers, well known journalist, writer and broadcaster on the subject of 'Wicklow, Ireland and the Second World War'.

Wicklow Sailing Club Table Quiz for RNLI

Wicklow Sailing Club's table quiz in aid of the RNLI will be held on 12th April in the Sailing Club. It promises to be a great night with Charlie Kavanagh as quiz master.

All are welcome to attend, members and non members. Tables of four are €40.

There will also be a raffle on the night. Doors open at 7:30pm and the bar will be available throughout the evening.

Delgany Spring Clean

Delgany Tidy Towns need volunteers for their upcoming Village Spring Clean Weekend taking place on April 13th & 14th, from 10am-1pm. "Help us keep our heritage village beautiful, even if you can only give an hour of your time, it will be time well spent helping your neighbours and friends clean up our village and its surrounding areas. Volunteers will be litter picking, sweeping footpaths and doing a big tidy-up. ALL WELCOME! This is a great opportunity for people from across our community to meet up and help keep our village litter free. Meeting at 10am each day at the Old Burial Ground and the Carmelite Monastery Gates and then splitting into groups each day to clean areas across Delgany. We ask that all volunteers wear gloves. We have a limited amount of equipment so we ask that you bring and use any other gardening tools that might be useful across the weekend, such as gloves, brushes, spades, hoes, secateurs etc. If you would like to volunteer just turn up on a day that suits."

Birdwatch Ireland April events

Tuesday 9 April: "Life as a Kilcoole Little Tern Warden" by Jonathan Stanley. Ashford Heritage Centre, at 7.30pm. Note: branch talks our free of charge, a small contribution towards the cost of room hire would be appreciated.

Saturday 20 April: Outing to Kilcoole to look for Spring migrants and breeding waders. Meet in Kilcoole Train Station carpark at 10.00am

Sunday 12th May: National Dawn Chorus Day Event. Do note the very early start time. Meet in Avondale Forest Park carpark at 5:00am. The Dawn chorus event will follow the 3km long Cairn Trail.

Tuesday 14 May: BirdWatch Wicklow Branch AGM, at 6:45pm in Ashford Heritage Centre. The agenda for the AGM will be circulated in advance. "Wicklow Uplands and the Biodiversity they support" by Ecologist Faith Wilson. Ashford Heritage Centre, at 7.30pm

Tree Festival takes place at Belmont Demesne

of the event was Belmont Demesne in Greystones. There were live performances and a tree planting ceremony. Additionally the Tree Festival was campaigning to reduce speed down to 80km per hour in order to cut emissions.

Cllr Stephen Stokes, Cathaoir-leach of the Greystones Municipal District commended all of the organisers and attendees. Cllr Stokes stated: "It was an enjoyable occasion that marked the emerging spring season. It was nice to see new trees being distributed for planting. It is important to support any activities that enhance our environment."

There were a number of activities on offer to attendees including archery lessons, puppet making, willow weaving, upcycling sewing demonstrations and more. Over 3000 trees were given away. On the day there was a strong turnout from North Wicklow residents, and those from further afield. More information can be found on www.80max.ie.

Cllr Stokes concluded: "We have a great sense of community in the Greystones Municipal District. It was great to see such a strong turnout."



Steven Matthews TD, Cllr Stephen Stokes and John Brady TD at the Tree Festival

€200k for outdoor projects

Eight Wicklow projects are set to benefit from much needed funding under the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme. This funding, ranging from €22,000 to €30,000, helps to support the economic well being of the county and boost tourism.

Minister Simon Harris said: "The significant level of funding announced today is much needed and will be welcome by communities across Wicklow. This funding aims to attract more visitors to our towns and villages. I want to remind Wicklow residents and visitors that our county has so much to offer when it comes to the outdoors especially the many cycling and walking trails we are lucky to have. It is essential we continue to resource local community and outdoor projects in County Wicklow. These projects help boost the local economy and more importantly our tourism sector."

The projects in line for funding are the following:

- Provision of a natural play area within Ballysize forest in Hollywood (€29,700)
- Construction of a 200m route and resurfacing at Wicklow Way (€29,700)
- Replacement of Knockree bridge with bike traffic blockades (€29,700)
- Repair and Drainage works of two bridge at Stranhely (€29,700)
- Enhancement and resurfacing works at Three Wells and Cushbawn (€29,700)
- Re-branding of the

Uplands Way to 'Sugarloaf Way' (€26,280)

- Marketing and QR Plaques at each Wicklow trailhead (€30,000)
- Improvement works to Lackan mass path (€22,725)

Minister Harris added: "Strengthening and sup-

porting the sustainable development of the outdoor recreation sector in Ireland is key to driving economic and tourism growth in the county. The funding also aims to make sure the many Wicklow outdoor activities are more sustainable.

"These projects once completed will provide fur-

ther opportunities for people of all ages to enjoy more healthy outdoor activities. At the core of this funding is Government's willingness to prioritise and enhance the quality of life across the country by developing outdoor infrastructure for all to enjoy."

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Brady slams awarding of licence to GoAhead to operate new bus routes

Sinn Fein TD John Brady has criticised the decision to award the licence for the provision of the new L1, L2, and L3 Bus service which will operate in North Wicklow to GoAhead. The company has previously been mired in controversy over the poor quality of its service provision on bus routes, for which it has been previously issued with fines by the National Transport Authority (NTA) of over €3 million for shortcomings relating to reliability, punctuality, and service quality.

Following a meeting with senior NTA representatives earlier last week, who confirmed that they will be launching the new bus routes in July, Deputy Brady called for Minister Eamon Ryan to intervene based on the poor record of GoAhead and have the licence awarded to Dublin Bus. Deputy Brady said: "In the first instance, it is very welcome that the original plan for the L1, L2, and L3 routes have been amended to allow for a more frequent and accessible service on paper. The new routes, due to be launched in July are: Route L1 which will run every 30 minutes between Bray and Newtownmountkennedy via Greystones, Delgany and Kilpedder. Route L2 will run every 30 minutes between Bray and Kilcoole and every 60 minutes between Kilcoole and Newcastle via Greystones, Charlesland and Kilcoole. Routes L1 and L2 will offer a combined service every 15 minutes between Greystones and Bray. Route L3 will run every 30 minutes between Delgany and Charlesland via Greystones.

"The plan allows for the service of many of the newer estates in the area which have developed since the plans were first brought forward a

number of years ago and will be particularly welcomed by communities in Greystones and Bray. But again, the key issue here is the abysmal record of GoAhead in the provision of bus routes in North Wicklow. The continuing insistence on the privatisation of bus routes has witnessed a huge deterioration in the standard of transport services.

"As I have noted repeatedly in the past, the experience for bus commuters in North Wicklow on GoAhead routes has been dreadful, and in some instances horrific. With last minute cancellations seeing many bus users stranded by the side of the road, resulting in missed hospital appointments, and being unable to get to work on time. This is unacceptable. And it is unacceptable that considering the dreadful record of GoAhead, for which the NTA has issued fines of several million euro, that they would then turn around and grant them this new contract.

"While I raised the issue with the Minister in the Dail at the time, and with senior management at the NTA, who acknowledged GoAhead's failings, the service continued to prove so bad, and was impacting so many public transport users in North Wicklow that I intro-

duced a petition at the time calling on Minister Ryan to sort out the mess created by Go-Ahead's mismanagement of their bus routes in Wicklow.

"I was overwhelmed at the levels of support I received for the initiative with nearly 1000 people signing the petition. The accompanying feedback from ordinary people who were let down by GoAhead set out very clearly the failure of the company to deliver a fit for purpose service."

Deputy Brady continued: "Among the new routes due to come into operation in July, the L12 and L14 to be operated by Dublin Bus. Whose record of service delivery far surpasses that of GoAhead. And there is no reason why Dublin Bus cannot be awarded the contract for the L1, L2, and the L3 routes. I am calling on Minister Ryan to intervene directly to direct the awarding of the contract to Dublin Bus, and put an end to the frustrations of bus commuters in Wicklow who are heartily sick and tired of GoAhead's failures, of being left at the side of the road, of buses running late and overcrowded, of buses being cancelled without notification, of being left late for work, for school, and important medical appointments."



John Brady, Aidan Kinsella, Anthony Hill, Esther Kelly, Cllr Mick Ryan and Connor Byrne at Wicklow Sinn Féin's annual 1916 commemoration in Bray on Easter Monday. Over 100 people attended the commemoration which was led by a piper down Bray Main Street to the 1916 garden in the People's Park in Little Bray. Proceedings were chaired by Greystones local election candidate Esther Kelly; the Proclamation was read by Anthony Hill from Wicklow Town, and West Wicklow Candidate Aidan Kinsella read the Wicklow Republican Roll of Honour, while Bray Councillor Mick Ryan read the poem from Bobby Sands The rhythm of time. A wreath was laid by Greystones representative Brian Fogarty.

'STOP!...NO MORE HOUSES'

Continued from page 1

"Greystones is already over its population target of 22,000 for 2028. It is likely to be 26,000 (20% over target) by 2028 with all the current planning permissions and applications.

"Greystones would need at least one extra School with this increase. Already the Council has spent 35 years talking about building the Delgany to Blacklion cycleway and road but no tender has yet been issued. Targets were set based on an improvement in Greystones DART and the N11 but none of these have progressed.

"Lack of jobs is the biggest problem and this is why a higher growth rate was selected for Bray and Wickow Town as they have more local employment which is more sustainable than commuting. Cairn have been refused permission for 98 houses in Greystones because the town is over the population target. They also have a 580 house application still being decided by Bord Pleanala. Ironically they have substantial land zoned for industry but have only proceeded with a small part of it. If developed this could have reduced the amount of commuting making their housing developments more sustainable."



Climate Project Update

Location:
Wicklow Town Library

Date:
16th, 17th, and 18th April 2024

Time:
10 am to 4 pm

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For more information, visit www.codlingwindpark.ie or contact us at contact@codlingwindpark.ie
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Connecting With Nature launched at Avondale

Mental Health Wicklow have collaborated with Healthy Wicklow and Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership to provide a series of monthly 'Connecting With Nature' events. The events will be held at Coillte's Avondale Forest Park near Rathdrum in County Wicklow. Avondale is a great space to enjoy nature with its beautiful woodland walking trails.

Nollaig Cruise is a walking instructor and has worked previously with the Irish Heart Foundation in outdoor activity. Nollaig will encourage you to be active in nature and to continue to find a place to walk which suits your level of mobility and fitness. Being active for one hour is just 4% of your day.

Deirdre Madden is a nature forest bathing guide; Forest bathing is about taking notice of your surroundings by bathing yourself in forest nature, you don't have to go into water it is about soaking up the atmosphere in the forest and escaping the

business of life by focusing on the sounds, the touch, and your senses.

Oran O' Sullivan is our nature guide from Irish Garden Birds and has a keen interest in forestry. Oran is also the author of the Irish Garden Birds series of books and has previously worked with Bird Watch Ireland.

Mental Health Wicklow is a voluntary organisation serving the local community promoting positive mental health.

Healthy Wicklow aims to improve the health & wellbeing of everyone living in County Wicklow. The vision for Healthy Wicklow is where everyone can enjoy phys-

ical and mental health and wellbeing to their full potential, where wellbeing is valued and supported at every level of society and is everyone's responsibility.

Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership aims to increase participation in physical activity across the county. They aim to create a more active, healthier, and inclusive Wicklow community.

The first Connecting With Nature event will be held at Avondale Forest Park on Saturday, April 13th at 3.00pm.

The event is free of charge. There is a car-parking fee of €5.00.



Life-changing medication for Izzy

Four-year-old Wicklow girl Izzy, who has cystic fibrosis, finally got her life-changing CF modulator medication last week from Rathnew Pharmacy.

Izzy was born with CF and has a rare second gene so she wasn't eligible to go on any of the amazing modulator medicine until the HSE finally approved same 1st April.

Izzy has been hospitalised in Crumlin, twice in last 4 months, for 2 weeks at a time to receive IV antibiotics due to exacerbations of her CF.

Izzy's mum Emma says "This is a major moment in Izzy's life and my family's."

65 roses day, the national fundraising day for cystic fibrosis, will take place on 12th April. For more information see cfireland.ie.



Lorraine Dunne and Demise O'Shea of Wicklow Sports Partnership with Charlie Burke from Mental Health Wicklow at the launch of the Well-Being Walk in Avondale Forest Park, which will take place on 13th April.

Cllr. Stephen Stokes
 Independent Councillor & Peace Commissioner Serving
 Charlesland, Delgany, Greystones, Kilcoole, Killadreenan & Newcastle

MONTHLY ADVICE CLINICS
 Second Saturday of Each Month

Greystones
 9.15am – 10am
 Dr. Ryan Community Centre

Newcastle
 10.30am – 11.15am
 Newcastle Community Centre

Delgany
 12pm – 12.30pm
 Wicklow Arms



✉ stephenstokes101@gmail.com
 📌 @StephenStokesGreystones
 Cathaoirleach of the Greystones Municipal District

Whitmore raises need for Bray Neuro Rehab facilities

Social Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore has called on the Minister for Health to ensure that the long-promised neuro rehabilitation facility in Bray is not delayed any further by the HSE recruitment freeze.

Deputy Whitmore said "In 2018, the Government committed to setting up a new neurorehabilitation centre for CHO 6 area, that is, east Wicklow and South Dublin. The centre was planned for Bray and work was underway to get it up and running over the last year, with a team of 13 posts being pulled together. Funding was available, and recruitment was to commence.

"Unfortunately, a response from the HSE to parliamentary question I asked recently stated that all plans for the new centre are now all on hold because of the recruitment freeze in the HSE.

"This is hugely disappointing and will be devastating for those residents in Wicklow that are unable to access support and rehabilitation following stroke, brain injuries, Parkinson's patients, and others in need of physical or speech therapy. These are essential healthcare services that are needed in Wicklow for



Jennifer Whitmore TD

hundreds of residents. "However, it is possible for the Minister to make an exception of certain services through the use of a derogation from the recruitment freeze. And I ask that the Minister does so urgently. "The importance of this centre, and the impact of not having these supports available to those

that need it, shows that it is critical that the Minister intervenes and provides the necessary derogation from the HSE recruitment freeze.

"I brought this important issue to the attention of the Tanaiste Michael Martin in the Dail, and he committed to discussing it with the Minister for Health. I will await the outcome of those discussions, but hopefully common sense will apply. The money is there, and the recruitment process started. It seems a shame that it is now being held up because of the recruitment freeze."

Whitmore concluded, "I will continue to raise this issue with the Minister until the services that are in need are in place."

Speaking in The Dail, Tanaiste Michael Martin said "There has been a substantial increase in employment numbers in health over recent years and provision was made for additional numbers this year."

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Wicklow Gap Junction in Glendalough gets a makeover

On Saturday 30th March, thirty volunteers from ReWild Wicklow and Laragh and Glendalough Tidy Towns partnered to plant trees at the Wicklow Gap junction just opposite the entrance to Glendalough Visitor's Centre.



Danny Alvey, ReWild Wicklow and Judy Doyle, Laragh and Glendalough Tidy Towns

With support from the NPWS rangers, they planted fifty mixed native trees in protective mesh cages on the land that was cleared as part of widening the junction back in 2021. ReWild Wicklow have been partnering with local Tidy Town groups and land-owners to plant thousands of native trees and hedgerows since the start of the year.

Speaking after the event, ReWild Wicklow chairperson and Social Democrats local election candidate Danny Alvey said: "Thank you so much to Judy and everyone in the Laragh and Glendalough Tidy Towns for partnering with us on this planting, and to Hugh and the NPWS rangers for facilitating it. It is a difficult site to plant because of the steepness of the bank and the quality of the soil but we're hopeful the trees here will survive and make this entry point to Glendalough a lot more attractive. It was incredible to get thirty volunteers out on a rainy morning, made up of locals from Laragh and Glendalough and ReWild Wicklow's regular volunteers from further afield.

We planted mostly rowan, with some haw-thorn, hazel and birch mixed in, that will hopefully give this area a lift and help wildlife in years to come.

"Over the past three months ReWild Wicklow has worked with Tidy Town groups in Wicklow Town, Roundwood, Delgany and now Laragh/

Glendalough to identify sites on public land to increase native hedgerows and native tree cover. I know from my own volunteer work as vice-chair of Newtownmountkennedy Tidy Towns how important these community groups are to the towns and villages they work in. Hundreds of hours are

donated by these volunteers every year litter picking, landscaping, planting trees and flowers, maintaining public spaces and organising all sorts of community events. However funding for most of the work we undertake has to come from our own fundraising, which is more work on top of that

already undertaken. If elected to Wicklow County Council in June I will campaign to have the funding allocated to the Tidy Town groups increased, as it is such a good return on investment for maintaining our towns and villages and making them enjoyable places to live."



ReWild Wicklow and Laragh and Glendalough Tidy Towns Volunteers Planting Trees at Glendalough

€30,000 for local Wicklow water projects

On World Water Day in March funding was announced from the Local Authority Waters Programme (LAWPRO), working on behalf of Ireland's 31 local authorities to protect and restore good water quality.

Funding of €30,000 is going towards nine projects in Wicklow under the 'Community Water Development Fund Open Call 2024'.

The single largest recipient was ReWild Wicklow which received €11,500 for a project to expand its native tree nursery to facilitate more riparian planting and riverbank restoration projects in the county.

Other community groups and projects funded in Wicklow this year include Enniskerry Tidy Towns (Invasive Species Survey of Glencullen River), Laragh/Glendalough Tidy Towns (Survey and AA Screening for Invasive Species Management at Glenmacnass River), An Oige Knockree Conservation Environmental Group (Glenree River Freshwater and Biodiversity Survey and Community Awareness Day), Newcastle Residents Association (Continued assessment of Newcastle river), Art Collective (The Salmons Eye Eco Art Festival on The Avoca River Catchment), Kilcoole Biodiversity Group/Keep Kilcoole Tidy (Recommended Actions arising from the LAWPRO funded Cannistown River/Kilcoole Stream assessment and management plan),

Greystones Tidy Towns (Greystones Catchment Assessment) and Arklow Town Team (Harbour to Headwaters).

Green TD Steven Matthews said, "Under the fund local communities and groups were invited to apply for financial assistance to support the delivery of projects and initiatives to enhance local water bodies and benefit water quality and biodiversity.

"I have worked with some of these groups and know how valuable their contributions are to citizen science. High quality, clean water is essential for our wellbeing and that of our environment and this funding will help those groups work towards maintaining the standard needed for all our health."

Also welcoming the funding, Cathaoirleach of Greystones Municipal District Stephen Stokes, said "I would like to thank these organisations for their continued hard work in the community. This funding is a vote of confidence in local projects. I will continue to support efforts to enhance biodiversity and water quality in Charlesland, Delgany, Greystones, Kilcoole, Killadreenan and Newcastle."

"We're really excited about the funding we've received," said chairperson of ReWild Wicklow Danny Alvey. "We've setup a native tree nursery at Jacksmill/Hub13 near Newtownmountkennedy which this funding will help us to expand. We've also done several riparian tree plantings already this spring and this funding will help us fence and maintain these sites. And finally, as part of the funding, we hope to do some riverbank restoration projects with local partners this summer. This activity involves using willow cuttings and timber posts to stabilise river banks that have collapsed and eroded along rivers in Wicklow. We're currently reaching out to public and private landowners who have a river bank in this condition and would like to see it restored. If you have such a river bank or know of one on public land please get in touch with us at rewildwicklow.ie."

Since 2018, LAWPRO has made over €2.7m available through this funding scheme to local communities and groups, assisting in the implementation of the Water Framework Directive through Ireland's River Basin Management Plan.

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At the Yew Room, we believe in the power of wisdom and wellness practices to transform lives. Immerse yourself in ancient wisdom traditions like yoga, meditation and Tai Chi / Qi Gong. Regulate your nervous system with breath work, somatic experiencing, deep relaxation and sound healing. Reconnect with nature through forest bathing excursions and eco-conscious workshops. Tap into your intuition and self-expression with our creativity workshops.

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Enjoy a diverse range of drop-in classes, longer courses, inspiring lectures, and events that we have carefully curated to support your journey toward wholeness as a human being and empower you to become a steward of the Earth. We feature thought leaders and visionaries from diverse backgrounds, offering insights and perspectives that expand our consciousness and inspire positive change.

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Co Wicklow
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Tel. 0872287101
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www.theyewroom.ie



The Yew Room WISDOM | WELLNESS | WHOLENESS Timetable - April 2024

<p>Monday</p> <p>10.00am Hatha Yoga with Elaine - 60mins 11.30am Somatics with Louise - 75 mins 1.15pm Gentle Yoga with Elaine - 60mins 7.00pm Yoga Flow with Brianna - 60 mins</p> <p>Tuesday</p> <p>10.00am Hatha Yoga with Hannah - 60mins 11.30am Chair Yoga with Elaine - 60mins 1.00pm [Course] Tai Chi / Qi Gong (6 weeks) with Trish 7.00pm Somatics with Louise - 75mins 8.30pm Yin Yoga with Laura - 60mins</p> <p>Wednesday</p> <p>7.00pm Hatha Yoga with Elaine - 60 mins 8.30pm Meditation & Yoga Nidra - 45min</p> <p>Thursday</p> <p>7.30pm [Course] Tai Chi / Qi Gong (8 weeks) with Trish - 60mins</p> <p>Friday</p> <p>7.00pm Monthly Restorative Yoga, 26th of April - (90mins)</p>	<p>Saturday</p> <p>8.45am Hatha Yoga with Laura - 60 mins</p> <p>Sunday</p> <p>8.45am Hatha Yoga with Elaine - 60mins 7.00pm Restorative Yoga with Jean - 90mins</p> <p>Prices for Classes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 45min class is €60 for 6 class pass or €12 drop in. • 60min class is €60 for 6 class pass or €12 drop in • 75min class is €72 for 6 class pass or €16 drop in • 90min class is €90 for 6 class pass or €20 drop in • Unlimited 30 Day Pass €139 (excludes courses) <p>Courses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tai Chi / Qi Gong 6 week course €90 • Tai Chi / Qi Gong 8 week course €120 <p><small>*The above courses are rolling courses and can be joined at any time</small></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><small>*Please Note, timetable is subject to change and times may differ on bank holidays</small></p>
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Public display events for Wicklow to Greystones Greenway Scheme announced

The public is being invited to have their say on the emerging preferred route corridor for the Wicklow to Greystones Greenway scheme.

In conjunction with Transport Infrastructure Ireland, Wicklow County Council have been progressing the development of the project, which is currently at Options Selection Stage (Phase 2). All stakeholders and interested parties are invited to attend and view information on the scheme at upcoming public display events.

These non-statutory consultation events will also provide an opportunity for feedback and observations to be submitted regarding the process and conclusions reached to date, which may inform the further development of the scheme.

Two public display events will be held as follows: -

Thursday 18th April 2024 from 4pm to 8pm in Greystones Library, Mill Road, Greystones, Co. Wicklow, A63 KN52

Thursday 25th April 2024 from 4pm to 8pm in Wicklow Library, The Mall, Main Street, Wicklow, County Wicklow, A67 X504

Members of the Project Team will be available to provide guidance and to answer questions.

The public display documents will also be available to view on the project website (www.wicklow-greenways.ie) from Tuesday 9th April 2024.

Submissions will be accepted by email to wicklowgreenway@wicklowcoco.ie, via the online feedback form available on the project website (www.wicklow-greenways.ie) or by post marked as Wicklow to Greystones Greenway Project, addressed to the Senior Executive Officer, Transportation, Infrastructure Delivery and Emergency Services Department, Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Whitegates, Wicklow Town, A67 FW96. Submissions and observations will only be accepted on or before Tuesday 7th May 2024.

The vision of Wicklow to Greystones Greenway is to create a

walking and cycling path of greenway standard between Wicklow Town and Greystones that provides a safe and scenic experience for people of all ages and abilities.

Integrating with and contributing to the existing and planned active travel network of County Wicklow, the greenway will enhance the health and economic opportunities for local communities while preserving and promoting the natural environment.

Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Aoife Flynn Kennedy stated: "Wicklow County Council values the opinion of the community on this project and welcomes feedback and submissions from the public and interested parties."

Chief Executive, Emer O'Gorman, added: "The knowledge gained from the engagement will be considered by the project team as part of the next stages of the development of the scheme."

Greystones St. Patrick's Day participants commended

The Greystones St. Patrick's Day award winners ceremony took place in the Greystones Municipal District Offices on Wednesday, 27th March. Cllr Stephen Stokes, Cathaoirleach of Greystones Municipal District, commended all of the participants and award winners.

Cllr Stokes stated: "It was great to attend the St. Patrick's Day Parade awards. There was a great spread of dynamic winners. I would also like to express my sincere thanks to all of the coordinators and volunteers."

Cllr Stephen Stokes served on the judging panel alongside Kathleen Kelleher, former Mayor of Greystones and representatives from local secondary schools. Cllr Stokes added: "It was incredibly challenging to judge. The calibre of entries was high.

Furthermore some entries had hundreds of participants. It was all very impressive."

In his remarks on the evening, Cllr Stephen Stokes paid tribute to everyone who took part. He was also delighted to see a number of new entries. Cllr Stokes paid special tribute to Wicklow Archers who are a club on the rise in the area. Several of their members have been selected to represent Ireland.

Cllr Stokes remarked: "Our sports clubs are buzzing across North Wicklow with excellent participation rates. The only way is up for clubs like Wicklow Archers. Like so many other clubs, they give back a huge amount to the community."

In summary Cllr Stephen Stokes praised all of the coordinators. Cllr Stokes concluded: "There is a very long list of people that should be thanked. Yvonne O'Neill, Tom O'Mahony, Cllr Gerry Walsh and Joe Grennan are some of those who must be acknowledged. Additionally though there are hundreds of people

who made a contribution including local shops, stewards, emergency services and many more."

The winners were: Best Window Display - Escape Boutique; Most Colourful Entry - Educate Together N.S.; Best Social Cultural Entry - Greystones Churches Together; Best Commercial Entry - South Stack Lighthouse, Holyhead; Most Entertaining Entry - Sugarloaf Lions Club; Best Sports Entry - Wicklow Archers; Overall Parade Winner - St. Kevin's N.S.



Pictured are Cllr Stephen Stokes, Richie Power, Louise Blaides and representatives from Overall Winners St. Kevin's National School.



Vice Captain Sean O'Rourke, Junior Captain Charlie Fox, Captains Alison Graham & Ian Barrett Vice-Captain Siobh-n Mooney and President Willie Kennedy at the Failte Stone before the Captain's Drive In at Delgany Golf Club

2024 Greystones Municipal District

People of the Year Awards



The Awards will be presented in the Greystones Golf Club, Greystones on Thursday 25th April, 2024 at 8pm

TICKETS ON SALE NOW

Tickets are available from Greystones Municipal District, Tel: 01 2876694 or Email: Kcoughla@wicklowcoco.ie / greystonesmd@wicklowcoco.ie Ticket Price €35 www.wicklow.ie

- Sportsperson of the Year
- Civic Award
- Special Person of the Year
- Cultural Person of the Year
- Commercial Award
- Young Entrepreneur of the Year



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Codling Wind Park announces further reduction in number of turbines and details of €200m Community Benefit Fund

Planning application for project to be submitted in summer 2024

Ireland's largest Phase One offshore wind project, Codling Wind Park, which will be located off the County Wicklow coast, has confirmed a further 25% reduction in the number of turbines which will be required to deliver the project.

Previously it had been had thought around 100 turbines would need to be constructed but announcing the details of the project's final design and layout today the project confirmed a maximum of 75 and a minimum of 60 turbines would now be required. The minimum proposed turbine tip height has also been set at 288 metres or a maximum of 314 metres.

Although this is a significant reduction in wind turbines, the development will still generate 1,300 megawatts (MW) of clean electricity, enough to power over one million homes. According to the CSO this amounts to almost half (48%) of all permanent dwellings in Ireland.

While the original estimate for the number of turbines required had been put at around 440, huge advances in wind turbine technology, and more efficient turbine models combined with a

more detailed understanding of the wind farm site, means a maximum of 75 turbines - a reduction of 83% - will now be required.

The project, which will be located approximately 13 to 22 kilometres off the Co. Wicklow coast between Greystones and Wicklow Town is a 50/50 joint venture between Fred. Olsen Seawind and EDF Renewables.

When operational, it will help Ireland meet over 26% of its 2030 grid connected offshore wind targets while also helping the country achieve its target of generating 80% of its electricity from renewable energy by the same year.

The new details about the project were announced ahead of a third and final series of public engagements which will be taking place this month. The series will include a number of exhibitions and dedicated informa-

tion clinics in Wicklow Library, at a pop-up shop in Greystones and in Sandymount Community Centre.

The exhibitions and information clinics will provide members of the public as well as public representatives with further details on the design and layout as well details on the various onshore and offshore environmental, technical and feasibility surveys which have been carried out as part of the project. Virtual reality headsets will also be available to attendees, enabling them to view the project from a variety of perspectives.

Project Director Scott Sutherland said everyone at Codling Wind Park was looking forward to sharing details of the final design with members of the local communities and other stakeholders ahead of submitting the planning application for the project.

"This is one of the largest energy infrastruc-

ture investments ever seen in Ireland and a tremendously exciting one to work on. As well as supplying over a quarter of Ireland's 2030 offshore wind target, Codling Wind Park will support Irish energy independence, help stabilise the cost of electricity for Irish consumers and will displace 1.7 million tonnes of carbon. It will also help the country realise its enormous potential to become a world leader in offshore wind.

"Through various rounds of public consultation, we have listened to the people of Wicklow Ringsend and Poolbeg and incorporated their feedback into the design where possible. The reduction and layout of the reduced number of turbines was always key in that regard.

The design of the project has been informed by a range of inputs including geophysical, aerial and vessel-based surveys

- some going back over 15 years - which have all fed into an extremely detailed Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report which forms a critical part of the planning application. Our aim at all times has been to protect the environment and mitigate any potential impacts as well as proactively enhancing it where possible."

As well as details of the turbine numbers and layout, a Community Benefit Fund (CBF) of up to €200m will be established as part of the project to fund local community-based projects.

The aim of the fund, which will be administered by an experienced and independent Fund Administrator, as part of the Offshore Renewable Energy Support Scheme (ORESS), is to deliver economic, environmental, social, and cultural benefits to local community groups over a twenty-year period.

Mr Sutherland said

that the €10m per year Fund, one of the biggest anywhere in the world, would not become available until after the project had received planning and begun construction. He urged community groups to consider what projects or initiatives they would like to benefit from the fund.

"The Community Benefit Fund for this project will create lasting legacies for local communities near the project over the next 20 years. While the fund will not become operational until the construction phase of the project, we believe it's very important for clubs, groups, and voluntary organisations to start their own preparation and planning, so they are fund-ready when the time comes.

"The key thing to remember is that while Codling will provide the funding, the community will decide how it is spent. We want the community to start thinking



Scott Sutherland, Project Director of Codling Wind Park

now about what they will do with the funds."

When developed, Codling Wind Park will be Ireland's largest offshore wind farm. The project is expected to create over 1,000 jobs in the construction phase and 75 new, long-term jobs associated with its proposed Operations and Maintenance Base.

Subject to it receiving planning permission and all other necessary per-

mits and consents being received, Codling Wind Park could begin construction in 2026-27. Construction is expected to take two to three years to complete.

To find out more about Codling Wind Park, its final design and the series of public information meetings which will be taking place in the coming weeks please visit www.codlingwind-park.ie

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Blessington's unique potential highlighted in Timmins' Local Area Plan Submission

In a ten-page submission to Wicklow County Council, Cathaoirleach of the Baltinglass Municipal District, Councillor Edward Timmins has highlighted how the Luas extension, multi-use sports complex and Blessington Greenway would have a transformative effect on the area.

Other issues emphasized include urban regeneration, improved footpaths, the need to fast-track the 1000 student Secondary School and age-friendly tourism.

Speaking last week, Councillor Timmins stated: "The 'rapid commuter-focussed residential expansion' in the Blessington area without an increase in proper services has been

highlighted in the NTA Greater Dublin Area Transport Strategy 2022 - 2024 which estimates population growth in the region is expected to follow an upward trend. The Luas Red line from Saggart and Tallaght can bring 6,000 passengers into Dublin city in the morning peak hour. To the east, the Luas Green line has a similar capacity.

Saggart is just 8 miles from Blessington yet the area has to rely on low-capacity buses as the only mode of public transport."

On the need to connect Blessington to nearby rural villages, Councillor Timmins specified: "It is essential this plan promotes greater local bus linkage to connect Blessington with Manor Kilbride, Lackan, Bally-

knockan, Vallemount and Hollywood. This would enable greater mobility for residents in more rural areas including senior citizens. Such a service provided through the Local Link could furthermore assist in combatting rural isolation."

On the need for more community facilities and a multi-use sports complex, Councillor Timmins said:

"I have requested that the plan designates a location for a multi-use sports complex. This would include a swimming pool and other sports facilities. The soccer club needs a home and has a huge membership. The GAA club continues to grow and needs more facilities.

"Many other clubs including athletics and rugby need more facilities. The Blessington Town Centre First Plan observes how the provision of proper community facilities has not coincided with the rapid population growth."

On the opportunities of the Greenway and outdoor recreational activities, Councillor Timmins said: "The Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways (July 2018) observed the transformative effect of greenways

including health benefits and their role as a key enabler to rejuvenating rural towns and villages. Furthermore, I have included a walking route from the ring road to Glending woods in my submission as I want increased access to the forest."

Councillor Timmins added: "The Blessington Town Health Check explicitly states the greenway will put Blessington on the map as one of Ireland's foremost sustainable destinations. Accordingly, sustainable transport to Blessington (i.e.) the Luas from Dublin must be an option in the future."

If you would like a digital copy of the submission made by Councillor Timmins or require a hard copy, please email ETimmins@Wicklowcoco.ie or 087-235 7914.



Cllr Edward Timmins



Vallemount Bridge, Blessington

Blessington sports clubs call for facilities to be included in Local Area Plan

Several Blessington sports clubs and community groups are calling for the development of a multi-use sports complex with a swimming pool, football and rugby pitches and a running track, to be included in the upcoming Blessington Local Area Plan.

Blessington AFC, Blessington Rugby FC, The Lakeshore Striders running club and the Community Pool for West Wicklow campaign have joined forces to call for the inclusion of a multi-use sports complex with facilities for a range of sports at one location to be included in the new Blessington Local Area Plan.

Supporting the clubs, Jennifer Whitmore TD said "The Blessington Local Area Plan is an opportunity for Wicklow County Council to plan for the future of the town and its growing community. I believe that an important part of this is ensuring that there are spaces for sports clubs and community groups to grow whilst also being accessible and inclusive for all members of the community.

"At present the community in Blessington and the surrounding areas do not have access to the sporting facilities needed by their growing sports clubs. Blessington AFC, with a membership of over 700 people, have long outgrown their facilities which are located just over the Wicklow/Kildare border in Crosschapel. Blessington Rugby FC



Deirdre McCormack and Jennifer Whitmore TD in Blessington

split their training between the nearby Russborough House and Naas but do not currently have a dedicated home. The Lakeshore Striders running club have limited access to a shared running track at Blessington Community College and the Community Pool for West Wicklow committee continue to campaign for the development of a swimming pool in the district."

Community Pool for West Wicklow Chairperson and Social Democrats Local Election Candidate Deirdre McCormack explained the

urgent need for the development of these facilities in the town.

"Our community here in Blessington is growing and more and more people, especially children and young people, are getting involved with our local sports clubs. This is fantastic and something that we as a community should be embracing and encouraging but our clubs are under pressure because of the lack of local facilities. When we brought the Swim Ireland Pop-Up Pool to Blessington in 2022 we had 600 children a week learning how to swim but

since it left many of these children don't have access to a swimming pool anymore and their participation in sport has stopped. It is imperative that the development of a multi-use sports complex with a swimming pool, football and rugby pitches and a running track is included in the upcoming Blessington Local Area Plan so that everyone in our community can access and participate in sports locally."

Deputy Whitmore concluded, "the locating of this multi-use sports complex with a swimming pool, pitches and a running track, together in one place will enable a sharing of resources that will not only help the local sports clubs to grow but will also encourage a greater participation in sport across the Blessington community and surrounding areas. I fully support this development and commend the clubs and community groups for coming together on this project which I hope will be included in the new Blessington Local Area Plan."

The Blessington Local Area Plan pre-draft submission period closed on Wednesday April 3rd.



COMHAIRLE CONTAE CHILL MHANTÁIN
WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

NOTICE OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON DRAFT DUBLIN AGGLOMERATION NOISE ACTION PLAN 2024-2028 ENVIRONMENTAL NOISE REGULATIONS, 2018 (S.I. NO. 549 OF 2018, AS AMENDED)

Submissions are invited from the public on the draft Dublin Agglomeration Noise Action Plan 2024-2028, prepared under S.I. No. 549 of 2018 (as amended), to address environmental noise in the Agglomeration of Dublin (as defined in the above regulations), and prepared jointly by Dublin City Council, Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council, Fingal County Council, South Dublin County Council, Wicklow County Council and Kildare County Council.

This is a four-year strategic plan with the main purpose to inform and consult on the health effects of noise exposure from road, rail and major industrial sources and the measures that may be considered to address this issue in the Agglomeration of Dublin (as defined in the above regulations). The plan excludes noise from domestic activities, noise created by neighbours, noise at workplaces or noise inside a means of transport or due to military activities in military areas.

The public consultation will be open from 9a.m. Friday 12th April 2024 for a period of 6 weeks until 5p.m. Friday 24th May 2024.

The draft Noise Action Plan is available for inspection in Co. Wicklow at the following locations:

- Wicklow County Council Offices (Mon-Fri, 9a.m.-5p.m.)
- Bray Municipal District Offices (Mon-Fri, 9a.m.-5p.m.)

In addition, the draft Noise Action Plan may be viewed on the Dublin City Council website or the Dublin City Council Consultation Hub at the following links;

- <https://www.dublincity.ie/residential/environment/air-quality-monitoring-and-noise-control-unit/dublin-city-noise-maps/noise-action-plan>
- <https://consultation.dublincity.ie>

Submissions on the draft Noise Action Plan may be made through the Dublin City Council Consultation Hub or alternatively by email at airquality@dublincity.ie or in writing to, Air Quality Monitoring and Noise Control Unit, Environment & Transportation Department, Block 3 Floor 1, Civic Offices, Wood Quay, Dublin 8.

Arklow Municipal District welcomes new addition to Seaview Avenue Playground

Arklow Municipal District welcomed a new inclusive swing to Seaview Avenue playground on Thursday last, 28th March. The new swing was sponsored by The Arklow Vikings Special Olympics Club on behalf of its members.



Arklow Municipal District Cathaoirleach, Councillor Tommy Annesley, Sean Quirke and Irene Sweeney from the Arklow Viking Special Olympics Club and Conor Burke from Spraoi Linn Limited.

Former Club committee members, Irene Sweeney and Sean Quirke were present for the handover of keys for the piece and dedicated the new piece to all the former club members and their families.

Arklow Municipal District Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Tommy Annesley, thanked the Vikings Special Olympics Club for their sponsorship and welcomed the new piece saying 'This is a very popular playground and this new swing enables more children to enjoy playing outdoors safely'.

Chief Executive of Wicklow County

Council, Emer O'Gorman, expressed her gratitude to the committee of the Arklow Vikings Special Olympics Club. She added the new unit is a welcome progressive addition and will no doubt provide hours of enjoyment to children of all abilities." Leonora Earls, District Manager, Arklow Municipal District welcomed the donation, "We would like to thank the sponsors while acknowledging the support and work of both Arklow Municipal District and Social Development staff along with Spraoi Linn, the suppliers of the swing, who all helped get this project over the line."



The newly installed inclusive swing in Seaview Playground

Greens call on Wicklow Municipal District candidates to commit to Roundwood path funding



Deputy Matthews with Green Party Rep for Wicklow Town and the surrounding areas - Mia Fahey McCarthy

Green TD, Steven Matthews has joined local Green Party Rep for Wicklow Town and the surrounding areas - Mia Fahey McCarthy, in support for active transport funding for a new pedestrian path along the road between Roundwood Village and Roundwood Cemetery.

Discussing the plan, Deputy Matthews said: "This is a daily safety concern for those visiting the Cemetery. The narrow road is not safe for pedestrians and it isn't right that those wishing to visit the cemetery are forced to drive. Several local people have written to me in recent months and have highlighted that it is a particular issue when there is a funeral, and the road is fully reopened to cars."

"I have spoken with local officials from Wicklow County

Council and the clear issue preventing this work from proceeding is funding. In the run up

to the Local Elections, people in Roundwood need to be asking candidates that if they are

able to support walking and cycling infrastructure and I hope that all candidates for Wicklow MD in the local election will join our Green Party Rep - Mia Fahey McCarthy in committing to pushing for this project if elected. Building this pathway is something that should have been done years ago, but I hope that local candidates and councillors can work with us to get this funding prioritised."

able to support walking and cycling infrastructure and I hope that all candidates for Wicklow MD in the local election will join our Green Party Rep - Mia Fahey McCarthy in committing to pushing for this project if elected. Building this pathway is something that should have been done years ago, but I hope that local candidates and councillors can work with us to get this funding prioritised."

COMHAIRLE CONTAE CHILL MHANTÁIN
WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING
WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL JOINT POLICING COMMITTEE

Wicklow County Council Joint Policing committee will hold a public meeting on
Tuesday 23rd April 2024
At The Avon, Burgage More, Blessington, Co. Wicklow W91 HFX3
Commencing 7.00 p.m.

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

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

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

To increase the productivity of the meeting and encourage greater participation written questions may be submitted prior to the meeting to lreynolds@wicklowcoco.ie or in writing to the undersigned.

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

Michael Nicholson,
Director of Services,
Wicklow County Council,
County Buildings, Wicklow.

25th March 2024.

Council accused of 'dragging its feet' on former Carnew bank building development

Fine Gael Local Election candidate in West Wicklow Peter Stapleton has called on Wicklow County Council to stop 'dragging its feet' on the development of the former Bank of Ireland building in Carnew.

Wicklow County Council purchased the former Bank of Ireland building in Carnew in July 2022 with the intention of making it a remote working hub for the local community.

The sale settled in October 2022 and in December 2022 the Council allocated €49,999 to its refurbishment. However, there has been no further progress on the development of the building and the tender acceptance date has now passed.

"The only thing the Council has done in relation to the former Bank of Ireland building in Carnew is delay," said Mr Stapleton. "While I absolutely welcome the building's acquisition to serve the local community, the state of purgatory that it's been in needs to end. We were told in October 2023 that the procurement process was underway for the new building's design. In September 2023, the Council announced that contractors would be appointed by October 2023. Here we are five months later, now past the tender acceptance date, 1.5 years since the building's acquisition and there's still no update.

"That is just unacceptable to local residents, who are sick of the glacial pace and rife inefficiencies in the delivery of local projects.

"I call on Wicklow County Council to explain the reasons for the ongoing delay and to involve the local community in the envisaged design of the new building. Local residents will be ones using the service, they know what facilities they need and must be included in the decision making progress."

Ashford beekeepers attend annual conference



Pictured at the conference are (l-r): Dermot Fanning (Glenealy), Tony Lyons (Brittas), Colm Penston (Arklow), Mike Palmer (Vermont), Joe Good (Brittas), Loretta Neary (Dunlavin) and Prof. Grace McCormack (University Galway).

Members of Ashford and District Beekeepers Association attended the Native Irish Honey Bee Society (NIHBS) annual conference in March.

Entitled 'Keep it Local', the conference attracted their biggest numbers yet with speakers including Professor Grace McCormack from Galway University who spoke about the work the Galway Honey Bee Research Centre has carried out showing that Ireland still held significant populations of *Apis mellifera mellifera* (Amm), the subspecies native to here, and under threat elsewhere across its range and also that wild honey bees are common here.

Eoghan Mac Giolla Coda is a commercial beekeeper whose primary interest is in honey production, and over the 12 years he has worked as a full-time beekeeper, his colonies averaged close to 80 lbs p.a. Given Ireland's cool and damp climate, he believes that to achieve good yields, it is important to work with locally adapted bees that

can best take advantage of the generally short periods of good weather.

Mike Palmer, also a commercial beekeeper, but from Vermont spoke about how best to improve local bee stock and the weekend was wrapped up with Colm O'Neill on practical queen rearing for conservation.

Speaking about the success of the conference, NIHBS Chairperson, Loretta Neary, from Dunlavin Co. Wicklow said: "We are very pleased to see the biggest turnout yet. Our membership rose by 20% this last year which is encouraging and means our message is reaching the general public who are interested in learning more about our threatened native Irish honey bee and are keen to help us conserve it."

Ms. Neary continued: "Honey bee hybridisation in Ireland is worrying and rose from under 5% in

2018 to over 12% in 2023 with some areas having more than 30% hybrids.

Many beekeepers confirm that hybrids are leading to aggression and other undesirable characteristics. There will be no return once we lose these important genetics, and the more people we can inform, the more chance we have to save this important part of our natural heritage."

Legislation to prohibit imports of non-native honey bees was introduced into the Seanad with full party support. Unfortunately, the bill was paused until the completion of a review by the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine. In the meantime, to prevent further worsening of hybridisation, under the precautionary principle an interim ban on imports is urgently required. More information can be found on nihbs.org website.



106 dogs seized by Wicklow warden in 2023

There were 106 dogs seized by Wicklow's dog warden in 2023, figures released by way of Freedom of Information to Social Democrats Local Election candidate Aaron McAllorum have revealed.

The figures further revealed that 33 dogs were reclaimed by owners, 36 dogs were rehomed, 4 dogs were euthanised, and the balance of dogs were sent to an animal group.

The number of annual

dog licences issued in 2023 was 4,721 with a value of €94,420.

The number of lifetime dog licences issued in 2023 was 343 with a value of €48,020.00. The total number of licences was 5,064 with a

value of €142,440.

Also released was information in relation to the number of stray dogs, unwanted dogs, seized dogs (including lurchers and greyhounds) in the Wicklow County Council Dog Pound as of 23rd

January 2024, for which Wicklow County Council stated that: "The number of dogs in the pound on 23rd January 2024 was 9, 6 of which were lurchers. There were no greyhounds in the pound on 23rd January 2024."



Aaron McAllorum



COMHAIRLE CONTAE CHILL MHTÁIN
WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

WICKLOW TO GREYSTONES GREENWAY NON STATUTORY PUBLIC CONSULTATION, EMERGING PREFERRED ROUTE CORRIDORS

This public consultation is being conducted to gather input on the emerging preferred route corridor and to invite the public to provide feedback before the preferred route corridor is decided and the route options selection and evaluation process commences.

Wicklow County Council will hold two information evenings, with route maps and information on display and members of the Project Team in attendance to answer any questions as follows:

Date	Location	Time
Thursday, 18th April 2024	Greystones Library, Mill Road, Greystones, Co. Wicklow, A63 KN52	4:00 pm to 8:00 pm
Thursday, 25th April 2024	Wicklow Library, The Mall, Main Street, Wicklow, County Wicklow, A67 X504	4:00 pm to 8:00 pm

An online consultation process will commence on Tuesday the 9th April 2024, running until Tuesday the 7th May 2024.

The project website: www.wicklowgreenways.ie will provide you with the most up to date information on the project.

Submissions can be made at the addresses below: last date for submissions is Tuesday 7th May 2024.

- **Email:** wicklowgreenway@wicklowcoco.ie
- **Website:** www.wicklowgreenways.ie
- **Post:** Wicklow to Greystones Greenway Project, Transportation, Infrastructure Delivery & Emergency Services, Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Whitegates, Wicklow Town. A67 FW96

'Dogs out of control have wreaked havoc on farm animals and farm incomes'

Dogs out of control have wreaked havoc on Farm Animals and Farm Incomes

Senator Victor Boyhan a member of the Oireachtas Committee on Agriculture said he welcome the appointment of former garda assistant commissioner John Twomey to head up a new national stakeholder group on dog control.

"Dogs out of control have wreaked havoc and destruction on farm animals and farm incomes, it's about time the issue was given national prominence. Farm organisations and the Oireachtas Committee on Agriculture have been calling for action on this issue for years!

"I welcome Minister Humphreys plans and her proposals to include representatives from the Irish Farmers' Association (IFA), Dogs Trust, and the ISPCA on the new national stakeholder group."



Senator Victor Boyhan

School bus between Ashford and Wicklow reinstated

The school bus that operates on school transport route B9212 from Ashford to Wicklow will finally be operating again this week from Monday 8th April, it was announced last week. The issue left 53 pupils without school transport since the start of the school year even though they had secured places on school transport.

Jennifer Whitmore TD received communication from the Regional Transport Manager responsible for the Wicklow school service, confirming the news.

Deputy Whitmore said "It is very welcome news to hear that the B9212 route, which is one of the

last remaining routes to be reinstated in Wicklow will recommence on the 8th of April. I know parents are relieved that this route has now finally been resolved, albeit for the last term of the school year. The impact that the non-operation of this service had on parents and

students cannot be understated.

"With one of the main difficulties faced by Bus Eireann being the recruitment of drivers for Bus Eireann, I am heartened to hear that a newly recruited driver will be driving on this route for the

remainder of the year.

"The timetable is as before with no changes. The bus will drop pupils in Wicklow town as previously, including dropping and collecting pupils from Colaiste Chill Mhaintain. The service will also operate at the earlier school times on a

Wednesday afternoon as the previous timetable did. Official notification has also been sent to the parents of pupils who have been issued with tickets for this service. A list of pupil names will also be given to the driver to cover any lost or mis-laid tickets.

"Unfortunately, there are still two routes outstanding. Bus Eireann have assured me that they are working very hard on getting the remaining routes operational as soon as is possible and I will continue to monitor the situation closely until those routes are reinstated also."

Deputy Whitmore continued: "While this is an issue I see in my office every year, this school year was particularly bad. The same problems are raised time and again with routes being cancelled or capacity issues arising and leaving children stranded at the side of the road and families with no way to get their kids to school at the last minute. Every year the lack of trained and certified drivers is mentioned as a reason. The

Government have had the benefit of hindsight and sufficient time to put

measures in place to make sure that there are enough drivers for the next school year intake in September 2024.

"I will continue to prioritise school bus transport for the children of Wicklow I will also continue to raise this issue so that we are not in the same situation next year. The Government have time to rectify the situation and avert the same crisis occurring next year, but they must act now."

Also welcoming the news, John Brady TD said "I welcome that seven months into the school year the school bus between Ashford and Wicklow Town is finally going to be reinstated. These were 53 children who the Department of Education has effectively abandoned by the side of the road. This service will be operated by a newly recruited driver driving a Bus Eireann school bus.

"The timetable is as before with no changes. The vehicle will drop pupils in Wicklow town as previously, including dropping and collecting pupils from Colaiste Chill Mhaintain school. The service will also operate



Jennifer Whitmore TD



John Brady TD, Abbie O'Loughlin, Mary Lou McDonald and Anthony Hill

at the earlier school times on a Wednesday afternoon as the previous timetable did. Since last September I have been in constant contact with the Department of Education on the issue and called on the Minister for Education Norma Foley to directly intervene."

Sinn Fein's Area representative and local election candidate Abbie O'Loughlin said "The situation was not only inconvenient and frustrating for families, it was impacting directly on the education of the children in question. Since September last year I've had many families in con-

tact with me expressing complete anger and frustration at the entire process and how they have been failed.'

Anthony Hill who is also standing for Sinn Féin in the June elections said "These children and their families have been badly failed. They had secured places on school transport, yet since the start of the school year have not been provided with a place on school transport, even though the service had previously been available. This should not be allowed to happen again, and lessons need to be learned from it."

Five young people from Wicklow travel to Dail na nOg 2024

Over 160 young delegates from Comhairle na nOg (local youth councils) across Ireland met in Dail Eireann last week to debate the critical issue of mental health, one of the biggest topics of concern to young people in Ireland, particularly since the pandemic. Mental health was identified by over 3,000 young people across Comhairle na nOg as their priority issue for discussion in advance of the day, which they feel that the Government should do more to address.

Dail na nOg, Ireland's National Youth Parliament, now in its 22nd year, tackled a range of issues related to mental health, including body image, school stress, and mental health services. The biennial parliament, which provides a platform for young people to speak about and make recommendations on the issues that most affect them, was hosted by the Ceann Comhairle, Sean O Fearghail, who chaired the Opening Session in the Dail Chamber. There were closing remarks in the chamber from Minister of State for Mental Health &

Older People, Mary Butler.

Delegates from Comhairle na nOg - representing each of the 31 local authorities across Ireland - filled the committee rooms in Leinster House where they took part in workshops to debate the three mental health topics. Discussions were held around how mental health affects the lives of young people in their communities and what changes need to be implemented to address these challenges and improve the experiences of young people in Ireland.



Wicklow Comhairle na nOg members Sofia McDarby, Kate Macadam, Donncha O'Reilly, Oscar Kavanagh and Adam O'Neill at Leinster House

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Stokes to contest Local Elections in Greystones

Highlights schools, roads and public transport as key issues

Cllr Stephen Stokes will contest the 2024 local elections in the Greystones Municipal District as an Independent candidate, he's announced. Cllr Stokes, who grew up in Greystones and lives in Charlesland, will be campaigning on a number of key issues including infrastructure, amenities and biodiversity.

Cllr Stokes was co-opted to the Council in 2022 following the resignation of Mags Crean. He previously served on Greystones Town council and was Mayor of Greystones from 2013 to 2014. He is currently Cathaoirleach of Greystones Municipal District.

Expressing his enthusiasm for the upcoming elections, Cllr Stokes stated: "It is an honour to contest this election in the area that I grew up in. I have listened to the views of hundreds of local residents already, and I am excited for the campaign. Since joining Wicklow County Council in June 2022, I have worked on hundreds of pieces of casework. Additionally I have delivered improvements in a range of areas including housing applications, Charlesland bottle bank, road safety initiatives and more. Should I be

elected on June 7th I will lead with energy and enthusiasm."

Cllr Stephen Stokes has highlighted schools, roads and public transport as key infrastructure areas. He was on the founding committee of Gaelscoil na gCloch Liath and has experience of delivering school facilities. Cllr Stephen Stokes added: "Infrastructure is not keeping pace locally. Schools are a perfect example of this. My three point plan for schools is to firstly build Greystones Community College without delay. Second, I would seek a school in Newtown, which would greatly benefit residents in Killadreenan and Newcastle also. Thirdly I believe it is time to pursue another secondary school in Greystones, such as an Irish speaking secondary school."

Cllr Stokes, as a frequent user of public transport, says he understands

that decisive investment is needed in this area. He remarked: "I know what it's like to be parked in traffic on the N11, have my 184 bus not show up, or be severely delayed by a late Dart. I campaigned to stop Charlesland being skipped by Go Ahead. While it is not always perfect, we have seen a massive improvement in the 184 service. If we want to reduce car journeys, we need to stop beating motorists with a stick, because some people have to drive. Instead, we need to re-focus on giving people real alternatives. Let's work together to extend the Luas into North Wicklow, get the Dart to Kilcoole and have more express buses to & from Dublin via Newcastle, Kilcoole, Charlesland, Greystones and Blacklion."

Cllr Stokes believes that local road infrastructure needs to be re-

vised as a matter of priority. He remarked: "Local residents deserve to be able to drive or commute safely on our roads. I want us to be ambitious with road resurfacing and road marking schemes. Let's take inspiration from other Councils like Blackburn with Darwen in England. They have also had a road marking problem, so they came up with a two year road programme to fix the issue. Over the past two years, I have reported dozens of trip hazards and potholes. I am grateful to the Council outdoor team, but they need more staff to do the work. I will campaign vigorously to ensure that the Greystones Municipal District gets its fair share of resources and staffing."

In terms of amenities, Cllr Stephen Stokes has had success with a wide range of resources and facili-

ties. He proposed the first ever motion seeking a dog park for Greystones in 2012. This is now present in Charlesland, with Cllr Stephen Stokes serving as the gatekeeper on bank holidays. His mum, Bernadette Stokes, chaired the Campaign for the Dog Park.

Over the years, he has also been closely involved with outdoor chess tables, more benches in the Burnaby Park and big belly bins. He is currently supporting the campaign for an arts centre, the Greystones Squash Initiative, and believes that a hotel is needed now, more than ever in Greystones. He worked closely with Wicklow County Council to secure a bottle bank for Charlesland and successfully moved a district motion calling for a recycling centre for the Greystones Municipal District.

He was educated locally in St. Kevin's N.S. and St. David's and graduated from UCD with a BA History & Politics, and MA American Studies.

Cllr Stephen Stokes can be reached on stephenstokes101@gmail.com. Cllr Stokes concluded:



Cllr Stephen Stokes

"On June 7th, residents in Charlesland, Delgany, Greystones, Kilcoole, Killadreenan, Killincarrig and Newcastle will have an opportunity to elect a strong Independent Councillor. I will work relentlessly to get things done."

O'Connor to stand down from politics

Independent councillor Rory O'Connor from Enniskerry has announced that he will not be running in the local elections this summer. Cllr O'Connor was elected in 2019 for Bray West, becoming Wicklow youngest ever councillor and the country's second youngest at 20 years old.

Cllr O'Connor was the chair of the climate change and biodiversity committee for Wicklow county council and led the charge on several policies & projects for the committee. This included Wicklow's first roundup policy, which limits its usage due to its damaging impact on biodiversity by adding paperwork for council staff and a tree management policy to increase native trees across Wicklow and give more protection to current trees already planted.

On his time in Bray municipal District, he was elected the Leas-Cathaoirleach in 2023. During his tenure he established two different grants. One for defibrillators for estates across the area and a community grant for estates to create areas of biodiversity.

"It's been an honour to serve the people of Bray, Enniskerry and Kilmacanogue during my 5 year term as councillor. It's with a heavy heart to not run again. I've thoroughly enjoyed representing my community. I would recommend politics to anyone who considers it. It's easy to be cynical and frustrated in the world we live in. But your work can make a real difference within your community and country.

"I would like to thank all the people who voted for me, I hope I have served you well. I would also like to thank my colleagues for their goodwill, co-operation and friendship over the past five years."



Cllr Rory O'Connor

Lourda Scott launches campaign in Charlesland Community Centre

Charlesland Community Centre was the venue for a family-friendly election campaign launch for Greystones Green Party councillor Lourda Scott on Sunday 24th March.

Cllr. Scott is running in the local elections set to take place on 7th June. Ireland South MEP, Grace O'Sullivan was in attendance as guest speaker.

There was a strong showing of support for Scott with a mix of young and old from the community coming out to talk and enjoy some baked good from local businesses. MEP O'Sullivan spoke about her work in Europe.

Speaking directly, on a number of occasions, to the children in the audience, guests were entertained with insights into her varied career as an environmental activist as well as her experiences working as a MEP in Brussels. People also took the opportunity to share their experience of working with Cllr. Scott on a number of local issues.

In her speech, Cllr. Scott spoke about her motivations to enter politics and shared some of her experiences as a sitting councillor, and only female Councillor, in Greystones. She referred to some of the successful projects she has brought forward to the community - in the areas of road safety, biodiversity and environmental protection, school places and enhancements in local amenities and accessibility.

Speaking afterwards Scott said. "I am truly blown away by the kind words spoken today and the amount of people that came. As a Councillor you are often on your own so it's wonderful to feel the support in the room for the work I have been doing in the last 5 years. I have worked hard to bring

improvements to our community and want to keep doing this work. I'm a big believer in finding a solution and getting on with fixing the problem. I've learned that persistence is key in getting results and I am very persistent! Apart from seeing issues getting resolved, one of the best things about the last term has been meeting all of the incredible people we have in the community. We live in a world where words of hate and division seem to be getting louder and amplified on social media. We need to stand together and keep our communities strong and welcoming places, no matter where you come from. I really believe that who we elect to represent the place

where we live has a massive role to play in that. Now more than ever we have to keep pushing for environmental causes and now more than ever we have to keep fighting for social justice. And that fight has to be underpinned by compassion. I really want to bring these values to my work in the Council for another term."

The people of Wicklow will go to the polls on June 7th to vote in the local and European elections. All residents of a local community who are over the age of 18 and on the electoral register are entitled to vote in the local elections.

Check you are registered to vote or join the electoral register by going to checktheregister.ie



Lourda Scott with and Donal Flynn from Sustainable Greystones



Lucianne Hughes, Grace O'Sullivan MEP and Cllr Lourda Scott

Sonia Casey-Shortt launches bid for council seat

Sonia Casey-Shortt, a professional public servant with a background in community advocacy, officially launched her candidacy for the county council seat in Wicklow LEA before a large and enthusiastic crowd of supporters in Kavanagh's Lounge in Roundwood on Friday 22nd March.

Sonia Casey-Shortt's career includes her role as the Human Resource Director for the Dublin Midlands Hospital Group. She played a pivotal role

in setting up the City West Covid Centre, which has successfully delivered over a million vaccinations. Furthermore, she played a critical

role in the implementation of the National Cancer Programme, a politically sensitive initiative at the time. Despite the challenges, it was the

right course of action, and the results speak for themselves - survival rates have improved throughout this country. The five-year survival rate has increased from 39% to 63% for men and from 46% to 61% in women. We have over 200,000 people in Ireland who are living after a cancer diagnosis. "I am here to serve you and your family, to bring my dedication to public service to the county council," said Sonia Casey-Shortt. "With a proven track record in leading complex negotiations and policy implementation, I am ready to tackle the challenges our community faces."

At the campaign launch, she presented a plan to tackle critical issues facing the community. These include housing, transport, and community facilities.

Sonia Casey-Shortt is advocating for increased Council-led affordable housing initiatives. She highlighted the success of the Greenhills project in Wicklow town, where homes were offered at



Emma, Imelda and Ruth Wolohan with Sharon Shortt, joining Sonia Casey-Shortt at her election campaign launch in Kavanagh's, Roundwood.



Sonia Casey-Shortt with Senator Pat Casey and Minister Stephen Donnelly, at her campaign launch in Kavanagh's, Roundwood

15% below market rates, and the serviced sites program, both of which serve as exemplary models for future development.

Sonia said she is committed to enhancing transportation services to meet the demands of both rural and urban residents, ensuring reliable and

accessible options for all.

"I will urge the Government to allocate capital funding from the Future Ireland Fund to bridge the gap in community infrastructure. This investment is crucial for fostering balanced development and enriching community life for gener-

ations to come."

Sonia has pledged to maintain an open dialogue with constituents, ensuring their voices are heard and their concerns are addressed with actionable solutions. "Communities and villages will not be left behind on my watch,"

she says.

The campaign has already gathered significant support. As the campaign progresses, she will continue to engage with residents to understand your needs and develop policies that will have a lasting positive impact on the community.

Sinn Féin selects Arklow team to contest elections

Sinn Féin TD John Brady has offered his warm congratulations to Sheila Busher and Warren O'Toole, who have been selected to contest the 2024 local elections as the Sinn Féin candidates for the Arklow Area.

Deputy Brady said: "I am delighted to be able to announce that Shiela Busher and Warren O'Toole have been selected at convention to contest the local elections on June 7th for Sinn Féin in the Arklow Area.

"Shiela is a native of Arklow, where she married and raised four children. A veteran community activist, she has spent fifteen years on the front line fighting for families, and the marginalised in her community. She studied Community Youth Work in UCC, and Maynooth. Shiela is currently involved with the Drugs Task Force and Arklow Positive Ageing Committee. Shiela not only brings a wealth of experience to the campaign, but she also brings drive, determination, and compassion. She will be an excellent advocate for the people of South Wicklow.

"Warren is a native of Arklow, and the parent of a son with Down Syndrome and Autism, and has advocated for people with disabilities for over two decades. Warren is a dynamic individual committed to delivering change for South Wicklow. He is passionate about the outdoors and has a vision for substantial growth in nature friendly recreation. Warren is an individual with the capacity to bring fresh ideas, energy, and vision to Wicklow County Council. He is deeply aware of the need for a comprehensive plan for South Wicklow, with the levels of investment needed for the jobs, housing, and infrastructure that can provide a future for young people in the area.

"Both Shiela and Warren 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 an opportunity for the electorate in Wicklow to put in place a team committed to bringing about change, to sending 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. Shiela and Warren will be at the forefront of that campaign to bring about change."

Speaking following her selection Shiela Busher said: "It is an absolute privilege to be given the honour by my party colleagues of going forward as one of our two local election candidates here in the South Wicklow area.

For the past fifteen years I have been dedicated to serving my community. I am committed to serving the people of Arklow, Aghrim, Rathdrum and beyond. I want to see the development of our community, we badly need to see investment in jobs, housing, and local services. We need to provide young people with the hope that they can have a future here."

Warren O'Toole said: "I want to echo the sentiments expressed by Shiela. It is absolutely an honour, and one which comes with a great sense of responsibility to our local community. South Wicklow has faced neglect for a long time. I believe our community is crying out for a strong voice. I have seen firsthand through my own experience the years of government neglect and indifference

towards South Wicklow. Our area needs investment in jobs, housing, and infrastructure. It needs a plan committed to providing a future for young people in the area. I am proud to have been select-

ed as part of the Sinn Féin team selected to contest this June's local elections. We, along with our colleague John Brady TD, are committed to bringing new ideas, energy, and vision to politics in Wicklow.

We believe that as a team, we can bring about the change capable of positively impacting across all of Wicklow, and in particular in towns, villages, and communities across South Wicklow."



John Brady TD with Shiela Busher and Warren O'Toole at recent selection convention in Arklow

Dinner 2050: The Future of Food in Ireland

Film and panel discussion. Courthouse Arts Centre, Saturday 20th April 7pm, €5

'Dinner 2050: Future of Food in Ireland', The first ever Irish documentary film about food, is a collaboration between Wicklow Chef/ Food Historian Tadhg Byrne and Dublin Filmmaker, Max Barry.

The 1 hour documentary explores how Ireland will eat in 2050 - looking at issues such as how technology will change farming, food security, robot chefs, drone deliveries and sustainability in the food supply chain. The film is due to reach a large audience in 2024.

There have been several screenings of the film so far in 2024, all of which have spurred lively discussions.

Ireland's Minister for Biodiversity and Land Use, Pippa Hackett, tweeted

after recent showing: "A well balanced film which avoided polarizing the debate on farming and food. Very enjoyable".

RTE's Suzanne Campell also tweeted "A great production with lots of strands" Multi-award winning food writer and founder of Flavour.ie Kate Ryan said:

"This is a film that must be made, and it must be seen by as many people as possible"

Speaking on the reception so far to the film, Byrne has said "The fact

that so many people with high-powered jobs were willing to give up their time to be in the film and the many encouraging emails we have had, reminds me this is a very important project and I think it will be well received nationwide".

Commenting on the importance of the film Michelin JP McMahon said: "Food affects every single aspect of our lives. If we don't look at the how, why and where our food is coming from, then we lose control of that food".

Irish History Writer and Lecturer at Hope University, Liverpool said: "This new film by the multi-talented Tadhg Byrne examines the future of food in Ireland... I'm honoured to have been a part of it... A must-see for anyone interested in sustainable food futures."

Irish filmmaker Max Barry, who directed the documentary, expressed the importance of the film: "When Tadhg came to me with the idea I was very excited to help develop the project. As supply issues,

inflation, climate change and war in Europe continue to cause instability, how we will grow, process, market and eat our food in the future is something that needs to be highlighted. With his film, I hope to shed light on how food ends up on our plate in Ireland."

Food Security Expert, Jennifer McConnell said: "I hope this will be the first of many films focusing on sustainable food production and the importance of making Ireland food secure."



Filming The Future of Food

Wine & Song for Wicklow Hospice

Whale Theatre, Saturday 13th April, 8pm (doors 7pm). Tickets €50 and available at www.whaletheatre.ie or call the booking office on 01 2010550.

Join acclaimed singers Aoife O'Connell and Ross Scanlon for an evening of music and song, carefully paired with a range of fine wines by local sommeliers, all in aid of Wicklow Hospice.

Featuring music from La Traviata, Candide and Carmen, along with audience favourites like 'O Sole Mio' and 'Granada', guests will enjoy a night of melodies and fine wines, where music and flavours intertwine to create an unforgettable symphony for the senses.

Wine tasting is included in the ticket price, and proceeds will be donated to Wicklow Hospice. Non alcoholic pairings are also available.

WHALE THEATRE

Wine & Song for Wicklow Hospice

Aoife O'Connell

Ross Scanlon

Kieran Goss and Annie Kinsella

Whale Theatre, Friday 12th April, 8pm (doors 7pm). Tickets €25 and available at www.whaletheatre.ie or call the booking office on 01 2010550

Irish duo Kieran Goss and Annie Kinsella will be touring in Ireland in March/April 2024 and Whale Theatre are delighted to announce that they will be appearing for the first time in their venue, performing tracks from 'Oh, The Starlings'; their critically acclaimed debut duo album.

Widely praised as a stunning piece of work, 'Oh, The Starlings' gained the attention of musicians and music fans from all over the world, receiving rave reviews. They will also perform songs from Kieran's stellar back catalogue, and will be introducing new unrecorded material.

An evening of beautiful music and heart breaking harmonies. A show not to be missed.

"Individually, they are both gifted singers but when they sing together, magic happens... the harmonies, the chemistry... just sublime." - Time Out Magazine.

"Oh, The Starlings, the debut album from Irish duo Kieran Goss and Annie Kinsella, is quite simply stunning. Great songs, beautiful harmonies and an artistic triumph." - Irish Times

WHALE THEATRE

Kieran Goss & Annie Kinsella

12 FRI APR 2024 GREYSTONES WHALE THEATRE

THEATRE LANE, ADJACENT MERIDIAN POINT, GREYSTONES, COUNTY WICKLOW, A63 V1F8, IRELAND 8.00PM / TICKETS: WWW.WHALETHEATRE.IE



The cast members of 'Singularity', a drama being performed by BIFE students on 17th & 18th April, pictured during rehearsals; Luci Snell, Diarmaid O'Driscoll, Pierce Walsh, Justina Rymovic, Alicia Ivory and Callum Farrelly.

Thornton Wilder's 'Our Town' to be staged in April

'Our Town', Thornton Wilder's moving masterpiece about family life in a small American town in the early 1900s, will be staged by St Patrick's Dramatic Society in Dalkey Town Hall from Wednesday 17th to Saturday 20th April inclusive.

With compelling simplicity, OUR TOWN tells the story of the residents of Grover's Corners in New Hampshire through three acts - Daily Life, Love and Marriage, and Death and Eternity. Narrated by the stage manager, audiences follow the Webb and Gibbs families as their children grow up together, fall in love, marry, and eventually - in one of the most famous scenes in American

theatre - die.

Directed by Nadia Quick, the large cast and production for this tale about small town morality, features seven Wicklow residents. These are Seymour Cresswell, Jamie Cox, Jessica Cox, Sebastian Cox, Len Nealon and Derek Pullen and Sharon Cox. Members of our production team are also Wicklow based (Clare Cresswell and Joan Gregg who has

served as Secretary for the Bray One Act Amateur Drama Festival Committee for years).

Thornton Wilder's OUR TOWN will be staged (by arrangement with Concord Theatricals Ltd) in Dalkey Town Hall nightly at 8pm from Wednesday 17th to Saturday 20th April. Tickets (€18) are available online from www.gr8events.ie and Tel. 01-280 7185.



Cast members pictured above in Thornton Wilder's 'Our Town', Dalkey Town Hall, 17-20 April. Left to Right - Seymour Cresswell (Wicklow) Hannah Blair White and Jamie Cox (Wicklow)

After Rain: an exhibition by Paula Kearney

Signal Arts Centre, Monday 24th June to Sunday 7th July

Paula Kearney's new collection of paintings explore the heavy calm felt after rain has dispersed. A sense of quiet prevails throughout the pieces as life unfolds after unadulterated rain has soaked the landscape.

The plants awaken, the birds arise slowly and hover over the land, while the heavy clouds linger before departing. Shadows move across the landscape while a little light is allowed to break through.

Paula's paintings wish to capture the weight of the heavy skies upon the forever-soaked landscapes.

In her last solo show in Signal Arts Centre she presented the landscape as an abstract moody backdrop while her high sweeping grasses dominated the forefront of the paintings. This time the paintings imply that the landscape and the sky are two dominant partners. The lands here are painted

abstractly with a palette knife making marks, while for the heavy skies she uses a brush in order to be more constructive and real. This allowed Paula the freedom to play with the paint and create a vast view.

These paintings hope to invite the viewer in, for them to connect with a location, imagined or real. But ultimately the paintings wish to share with the viewer the feelings of a place, the silent wind, the cold, the heavy skies, the soggy ground and the peace felt while standing alone in the view.

The paintings themselves marry the two mediums of oil paint and graphite. The brush cre-



Silent Wind by Paula Kearney

ates lush dark and broody scenes while the graphite allows her to make sharp bold complex lines of the lifting uncurling foliage.

Mood and memory and silence are central to her overall composition.

These images don't have to be real like a photograph is of a place but

they are about the feelings you have when standing there in peaceful isolation. The paintings allow the viewer to decide what they see and feel.



After Rain by Paula Kearney

Drama is alive and well in South Wicklow

Following a very successful festival, with many full houses over the eight nights, herewith are the results of the Festival, as determined by Adjudicator Imelda McDonagh. Imelda's insightful adjudications held the attention of both the groups and the audiences each night.

The winning group in the open section, who also won the audience cup was Ballycogley Drama Group with their hugely popular production of 'Out of Order' by Ray Cooney. In the Confined Section, Kilrush Drama Group reigned victorious with their production of Gillian Grattan's 'Hooked' clocking up their 6th win on the 2024 Festival Circuit.

The Winners of the 2024 South Wicklow Drama Festival

Confined Section

- 1st - Kilrush Drama Group - 'Hooked!'
- 2nd - The Clodiagh Players - 'Trad'
- 3rd - Kilmuckridge Drama Group - 'I Do Not Like Thee Dr, Fell'

Open Section

- 1st - Ballycogley Players - 'Out of Order'
- 2nd - Bridge Drama - 'The Wake'
- 3rd - Bunclody-Kilmyshall Drama Group - 'The Lonesome West'

Confined Section

Best Actor in a Supporting Role - Eddie Condon as Fr. Rice in 'Trad', Clodiagh Players

Best Actor in a Major Role - John Redmond, in 'Hooked!', Kilrush

Best Actress in a Supporting Role - Kay Cahill as Mary in 'Hooked!', Kilrush

Best Actress in a Major Role - Erin Hogan as Lydia, in 'Hooked!', Kilrush

Best Director - Niall McGrath - 'Hooked', Kilrush

Open Section

Best Supporting Actress - Catherine Stafford as Pamela Willey in 'Out of

Order', Ballycogley

Best Supporting Actor - Ken Murphy as Finbar in 'The Wake', Bridge

Best Actress - Mairead Ryan as Vera in 'The Wake', Bridge

Best Actor - Fr. Pat Mernagh as Richard Willey in 'Out of Order', Ballycogley

Best Director - Pat Whelan - 'Out of Order', Ballycogley

Adjudicator Award 1 - Tom Kennedy & Kris Mooney, for lighting design, Balally

Adjudicator Award 2 - Joseph Sunderland, Bridge

Adjudicator Award 3 - Mag Clooney for window work, Ballycogley

Best Comedy Performance (Jim Tighe Trophy) - Sean Carthy as George in 'Out of Order', Ballycogley

Magic Moment in Theatre (Pat Connaughton Award) - The fight scenes in 'The Lonesome West', Bunclody-Kilmyshall

Audience Cup (Altura Credit Union Award) - 'Out of Order' - Ballycogley Players

Best Presentation - 'The Wake' by Bridge Drama

The people who make Bray home, for everyone

Meet two of the volunteer information providers in the Bray Citizen Information Centre

Triona Irving and Anne Mooney are two people in Bray who offer their time and experience in making our town a welcoming and helpful place for everyone. They joined Bray Citizens Information Centre (CIC) in October 2023 and they are currently training to become volunteer Information Providers in Bray CIC.

What does an Information Provider do, one might wonder. Well, they assist people with all sorts of queries, providing them with information, assistance and advocacy services on their rights and entitlements particularly in relation to social welfare, housing, employment, immigration and health services. While in training Triona explains "we would be sitting in with trained people and observing and sometimes we look up information for clients on our website, www.citizensinformation.ie, which is an excellent resource". Anne chimes in: "I'm still the person sitting there, listening and learning from what's being discussed. And when the client leaves, I can ask the fully trained Information Provider what I didn't fully understand."

Both Anne and Triona retired not long ago so we

wanted to see what drove them to get back to work, as volunteers, and how has that been, up until now.

What was your initial motivation?

Anne: My motivation came from my career in banking where I enjoyed meeting and helping her customers, who sometimes exhibited financial and literacy difficulties.

Triona: I used to work in the local authority, interacting frequently with Bray CIC in relation to social housing. After 40 years of public service, I am happy and proud to be able to give back to my local community.

What is your current role with Bray Citizen Information Centre?

Triona: It's a one day per week commitment. Up until now I've trained

in form filling, assisting at the reception and I am being mentored by the qualified staff to deal with queries from clients who drop in to talk to us. Hands-on learning!

Anne: Everyone's really generous with their time and the training is good as well. I am used to dealing with people from various backgrounds and nationalities and with different challenges. I suppose the big difference is that here you'd be giving assistance but you don't tell anybody what to do. They make their own decisions, you just give them the information and if there's another organisation that might help them better, you might direct them to that organisation.

Where do you take your work satisfaction from?

Triona: The job satisfaction is from helping people really. For exam-

ple, people think forms are easy to fill out, but they're not always easy. They're easy if you know how to do them. People who come in, they might have lost their job, which is a big shock, they might have had a bereavement and they don't know where to go so they come in somewhere that's not judgmental, where they'd be listened to, and they don't have to have money to pay for it. It's really important that there's no cost and it's strictly confidential!

Anne: I am happy here, there's a really good atmosphere, there's lots of support, even during a consultation with a client there's a support line we can ring for help. There are lots of questions about social insurance contributions, for example, and you might not be fully up to speed on that, but there's always some-

one to back you up. I think the other big area that we have is applications forms on the internet. Because if you can't access these, it's a bit like not being able to read. Yes, there is a lot to learn here and I enjoy it!"

"An important part of the Citizen Information Centres' work is carried out with the help of our volunteers, in Bray and elsewhere, and we would like to thank them and congratulate them for offering their time and know-how for the greater good. Strong, resilient communities are connected and empathetic communities!" said the Bray CIC.

Funded by the Citizens Information Board, the range of areas covered by the CIS are wide including social welfare rights and entitlements and other social issues such as employment, health services, housing, educa-



Anne Mooney and Triona Irving, volunteer Information Providers (in training), helping out with promotional activities of Bray CIC.

tion, family matters and consumer rights on which people need access to information. To find out opening hours or if you would

like the CIC to address a specific query please contact your local Citizens Information Centre. There are offices in Arklow and Bray

where customers can drop-in, telephone or make an appointment. Telephone: Arklow - 0818 07 6750 and Bray - 0818 07 6780.

Harris races towards victory

Motorsport fans in Wicklow are closely following the progress of 18-year-old Alex Dunne, whose dramatic race driving is garnishing attention from Formula One teams, thanks to strong support from the Harris Group, motor importers based on the Naas Road Dublin.

RECRUITMENT

The youngster has done two races in the FIA F3 series - the first in Bahrain and the second in Melbourne (24th March). These events supported the Formula One Grand Prix and are a wonderful

By Martin McCarthy and his team MP Motorsports.

opportunity for the youngster to showcase his talent to motorsport's powerbrokers.

The ten-race series is televised live around the world (Sky TV here) with both the Saturday Sprint races and the Sunday Feature races being shown in their entirety.

The competition is white hot as the best young drivers in the world - 30 in total - battle for honours.

Alex had a brilliant Sprint Race in Melbourne - picking off opponents one by one to move for 17th at the start to 7th at the finish and earn precious championship points for himself

and his team MP Motorsports.

Alex has a few weeks prep time until the next event - the Emilia Romagna Grand Prix at Imola near Bologna on May 12th and the Monaco Grand Prix two weeks later. Monte Carlo is the highlight of the year - with its great tradition as the most glamorous and prestigious motor race in the world. It dates back to 1929 and while Grace Kelly and her son Prince Albert bring a strong Celtic flavour to the event, no Irish driver has ever won the Formula One or Formula 3 race there, so victory in the principality would be a dream come true.



Alex Dunne flies the flag in the Harris sponsored Formula 3 racecar.

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Harris assures businesses they will continue to be prioritised

The new leader of Fine Gael has said businesses will continue to be supported and their challenges will be responded to at a meeting with a party representative group.



Minister Simon Harris

Fine Gael established its Small Business and Enterprise Council in September 2022 and has engaged with and listened to the views of business people in a series of roadshows across the country.

The party has also held a series of events nationwide, including two major conferences, to give those involved in the SME sector an opportunity to engage with senior Government ministers on the issues they feel are of the utmost importance.

Speaking following a meeting last night with the Fine Gael Small Business and Enterprise Council, Fine Gael Leader and Minister for Further and Higher Education, Simon Harris, said: "I am delighted to have had the opportunity to meet with colleagues from the Fine Gael Small Business and Enterprise Council. This is one of the policy areas that I intend to focus on as Fine Gael leader. Small businesses are at the heart of our communities - they are crucial to the local economy, to employment in the regions and to the social fabric of our country."

"I want to thank the members for the chance to engage and for all their work, for trav-

elling and listening to people. It is now essential we gather that information and take concrete steps to address the concerns of this vital part of our economy and society."

Kathryn Lynch, business consultant and Chair of the Fine Gael Small Business and Enterprise Council, said: "The Council was delighted to have the opportunity to meet the new leader of Fine Gael, Minister Simon Harris, to discuss how Government can continue to support small and medium sized businesses."

"It is welcome that Minister Harris has stated that he wants to prioritise the sector and we had a positive and engaging meeting during which we spoke about a range of issues. Irish businesses have experienced significant challenges and volatility over the past number of years. These businesses add so much to our economy and our communities, and we must respond to those challenges with solutions. Minister Harris' engagement with the council is positive and we will work with him and Fine Gael on solutions to ensure that businesses can grow and thrive into the future."



SKSC (Smurfit Kappa Security Concepts), has announced that Managing Director Tom O'Mahony will retire after 33 years with the business. Peter Thomas will take over the role, effective 1st May 2024. Tom joined the business in 1990 as an accountant when it was De La Rue Smurfit Limited, a joint venture by De La Rue plc, the currency printers and Jefferson Smurfit, the carton manufacturers. Before he joined the business he worked in the Middle East. In 2008 the Company became a wholly owned Smurfit Kappa company, trading as DLRS Ltd and in 2018 changed its name to Smurfit Kappa Security Concepts. Tom O'Mahony said: "I wish Peter and the team every success. I have enjoyed my time here, building a company with its roots in Ireland, where we honed our skills and expertise on award winning projects including the Irish Passport before bringing that experience to support organisations around the world. I have worked hard to make this a good place to work where we look after people and are part of the local community. I hope that is part of my legacy."

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. G.S.

PRAYER FOR A SPECIAL REQUEST

Oh! Dear Mother of God. Our Lady of Conception Aparecida! Oh! Saint Rita of Cassia and Saint Jude worker of miracles and helper of impossible causes pray for me. Saint Expedite, Saint of urgent causes. Saint Edwige the Saint of the needy, you know how desperate I feel, please ask Jesus to help me (mention request) May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be adored and glorified for ever. Pray 1 Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be..... Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Pray for 3 days. Publish on the 3rd day. See what will happen on the 4th day. G.S.

Doyle welcomes progress on Bray Central

Green Party councillor Erika Doyle welcomed the news that Penneys has officially announced its Bray store will be opening this summer, and other positive Bray Central news that two other new stores will be opening later this year.

"It's great to hear that Penneys has officially announced what has to be the longest running will they won't they in Bray history," said Cllr Doyle, who officially opened the Bray VCentral development during her time as Bray Cathaoirleach last summer.

"We have known they were coming for quite a while but the announcement will hopefully put to bed the rumours that it wouldn't be happening. In other Bray Central news two new stores will open there later this year - Sketchers and Mountain Warehouse.

"Along with upcoming anchor tenants Penneys and Sports Direct, they will join existing businesses Elephant & Castle, Wow Burger, Card Factory, Holland & Barrett, Butlers Chocolate Cafe, Sally's Ice Cream and shortly Grafton Barbers.

"As I've said on previ-

ous occasions it was never going to be the case that every unit opened on the same day and while we have seen delays it's important to focus on the positive - that each time a new store opens it will provide employment to existing shops. And vitally, if we want to encourage business to the town we need to continue to shop local," concluded Cllr Doyle.



Cllr Erika Doyle at Bray Central, with the plaque that was put in place following its official opening in June, 2023.

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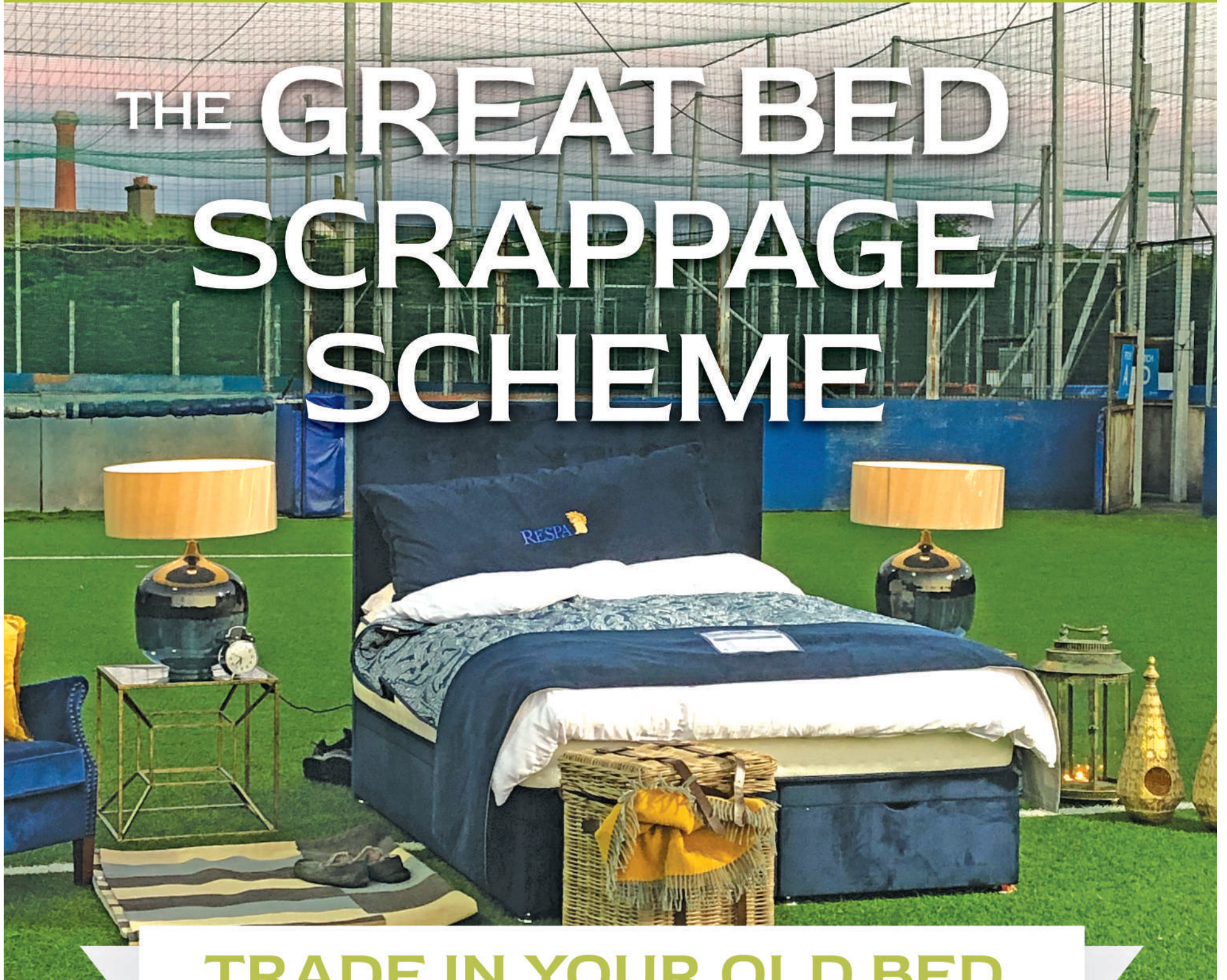
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