



E-BIKES
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NEW HOMES
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MARATHON KIDS
Page 15

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THREAT TO FIRST-TIME BUYERS

In adopting their current Development Plan, Wicklow county councillors inserted a clause that they hoped would assist first-time buyers secure a home. They stipulated that any new apartment developments could not be sold to vulture funds but must be available to individual purchasers.

Independent Councillor, Joe Behan, fears that this limitation on mass purchase may be overturned. "Thousands of potential first-time buyers in County Wicklow may have their hopes dashed by An Bord Pleanála in the next few months," he said. "This is because a developer is appealing the Council planning condition that new apartments must be available to individual

purchasers and not bought by Institutional investors.

"The development in question is at the former Dell site in Bray which has been approved for 178 apartments and associated works. Local residents have concerns about the development, some of which I share. However, given that the Council has granted permission, I was glad that they inserted a condition (No 5) that 'The first

occupation of any residential unit shall be by individual purchasers or by those eligible for the occupation of social and/ or affordable housing including cost rental housing and shall not be by a corporate entity'. This condition is a direct result of a decision by Wicklow's councillors to make this our policy in our new Development Plan and we hoped would give a chance to the many peo-



Maebh Flynn on her scooter at the commencement of work on Ballywaltrim Skate Park. The location of the park in Ballywaltrim will further enhance and add to the existing sports facilities found in the area. See page 6

**VOTE
#1**

**Bray East
LEA**

**Cllr. ERIKA
DOYLE**

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erikadoylegreen

ple in our county who have very little chance of buying a starter home anywhere in the county.

"Regrettably, the developer in question has appealed this condition to An Bord Pleanála and has asked for it to be removed. When Wicklow County Council had the opportunity to respond to this appeal, the Council Management decided not to make any submission defending our policy. I was deeply disappointed with this as I believe this appeal will be used as a test case for other similar planning applications in the future. If An Bord Pleanála removes this condition it will be yet another nail in the coffin of the aspirations of potential first time buyers in our county who only want to be able to put a roof over their heads.

"This is a major test

of the Government's declared policy of assisting first time buyers because they could ensure that our adopted policy becomes national policy. If that could be done, the condition would have to be retained and there might be some hope for the hard pressed first time buyers everywhere in the country."

Speaking at last week's meeting of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Behan said "We were the first council in the country to [put in this condition]. You'd think we should be celebrating. But what's happened? The developer has appealed that condition to An Bord Pleanála. The only thing he has appealed? Condition number 5, he wants that taken out. He refers to the fact that previous decisions that were made by An Bord Pleanála - not by us, but

by An Bord Pleanála - didn't put in that condition in their new deci-

sions in Wicklow, therefore, why should it apply to them? "This is

the first test case for us as a Council.

Continued on page 3

AONTÚ **LIFE • UNITY • ECONOMIC JUSTICE**

VOTE #1

CIARÁN HOGAN

VOTE FOR INTRIGRITIY AND EFFECTIVENESS

- Bring business & jobs back to Bray
- Tackle traffic jams
- Ensure safe and clean streets

Students graduate from Bray Area Partnership Beauty Diploma programme

Fourteen students recently graduated from Bray Area Partnership's Beauty Diploma programme that took place in Bray over the past six weeks.

Cllr. Melanie Corrigan, Cathaoirleach of Bray Municipal District and Chairperson of the Wicklow Local Community Development Committee was on hand to present the students with their certificates.

Speaking about their time on the programme, one of the participants said "I have not been working since I had my children, doing this course made me love this type of work and to put time into thinking what I will do next". Another noted that "it has given me the confidence to sign

up to a further education course".

Jennifer Jones from Bray Area Partnership highlighted the encouragement and expertise of the tutor Siobhan Tobin, from 'Nail it Today Education' and the commitment of the students with all of the students who started the programme seeing it through to the end.

The Programme was funded by the Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP) and the Department of Social Protection (DSP).



Participants who graduated from Bray Area Partnership's Beauty Diploma programme, pictured with Cllr. Melanie Corrigan, Cathaoirleach of Bray Municipal District.

Street Feast Festival comes to Baltinglass



Suzie Cahn, Artist in Residence Project Artist pictured with Avril O'Reilly, Rathcoran Resident

Residents of Rathcoran Housing Estate and neighbouring community groups are invited to participate in Street Feast Festival Day on Saturday 25th May, for an afternoon of fun, food, community planting and outdoor games. Running from 12pm until 3pm, it will allow the community to come together to celebrate diversity, encourage integration, and honour our community spirit.

On the day, people will get a chance to meet the Estate's Artist in Residence Project Artist, Suzie Cahn and help her plant the beginnings of a new community growing space. Local artist and resident Avril O'Reilly will provide face painting, and there will be other activities for children and families to enjoy, such as giant outdoor snakes and lad-

ders and Jenga, candle and jewellery making workshops, and music. All of these events are free to participate in.

A group of Rathcoran residents have worked over the past year with Respond and Wicklow County Council's Creative Places Baltinglass programme to think of ways to deliver new projects and activities for the estate to

enhance the neighbourhood.

The participating residents' aims were to see what work from the Brain Health Village Initiative could be achieved to build a greater sense of community in the estate, and to see what options would enhance the appearance of and improve gathering spaces for residents. As a result of the input of the

residents group, Respond and Wicklow County Council are providing this day of community participation by joining in the Street Feast national day of food sharing. You are encouraged to bring along your own food and drinks to consume and share.

This event has been coordinated as part of the Creative Places Baltinglass initiative run by Wicklow County Council and supported by the Arts Council. The project has also been funded and supported by Respond as part of the Brain Health Project initiative. Thanks

are also extended to Men's Shed for their support in building the planting structures and the residents of

the estate who came on board to design this day for all their neighbours to enjoy.

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Bray Choral Society Summer Concert



Bray Choral Society's highly anticipated Summer Concert takes place on Sunday May 26th at 8pm in the Holy Redeemer Church, Main Street, Bray. This delightful evening of music - featuring two complete works - will showcase the talent and dedication of Bray's finest choristers.

Under the musical direction of local legend Frank Kelly, Bray Choral Society will take to the stage alongside the acclaimed Degani Sinfonia, under the leadership of Alan Smale, for

a performance of Howard Goodall's Eternal Light and Mozart's Requiem.

The concert will feature a stellar lineup of soloists, including Jade Phoenix (soprano), Anna-Helena MacLachlann

(mezzo-soprano), Ross Scanlon (tenor), and Dylan Rooney (baritone).

Musical Director, Frank Kelly remarks, "We are delighted to combine the old and the new in an evening of dramatic, lyrical and emotional music, where we perform the much-loved Requiem by W.A. Mozart, full of drama and pathos, with the uplifting and comforting modern Requiem: Eternal Light by the English composer Howard Goodall. It's a nice touch that he tells us we are performing it on his birthday!"

Tickets available on Eventbrite <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/bray-choral-society-summer-2024-concert-tickets-880845421367>, from choir members or at the door on the night (subject to availability).

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Dr. Fergus Duddy Dentist

Wishes his Brother

MALACHÍ

and

All other Candidates

The Best of Luck in the Local Elections

Let's Make Bray Great Again !

WICKLOW LOCAL Times

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Big win for SaveBray campaigners

'We've won this battle but the war is not over'

The SaveBray campaign group have won a significant victory with their High Court case against An Bord Pleanála's 2022 decision that no Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) was required for Wicklow County Council's proposal for what they describe as a Sustainable Transport Bridge over the River Dargle, next to the railway line.

SaveBray has consistently supported the opinion of many wild life experts that the planned suspension bridge, similar to the Liffey's Samuel Beckett bridge, would be dangerous and life threatening to swans. SaveBray has also criticised the proposed plans for the bridge's access road being located on a high wide embankment across the floodplain of the old Bray Golf Club lands, blocking a flood path; and for the bridge ending at the narrow junction between Seapoint Road and its railway bridge, next to Seapoint Court.

Three communities - SaveOur-Floodplain; the volunteers who care for Bray harbour's colony of swans; and residents of Seapoint Court - formed SaveBray in 2021 to fight the present proposal, saying: "Bray needs another bridge, but this is the wrong design, in the wrong place."

An Order of Certiorari, quashing the April 2022 decision was granted last Tuesday by Judge Hyland in the High Court. The Final Order accompanying it directs An Bord Pleanála to look again at SaveBray's application for a

screening determination "to be determined in accordance with law".

SaveBray activists say, however, that their relief that this long and expensive court case is over is "tempered by the knowledge that the rewilded environment that existed on the floodplain of the old golf course lands when we first took this case is now a barren wasteland and a building site".

They point out that an Order issued by An Bord Pleanála seventeen months ago for a Natura Impact Statement (a more rigorous environmental inspection than an EIA) has still not been carried out by Wicklow County Council, and when it is, it will again be looking at "a ravished wild life habitat".

"This court case is just one battle in what may yet be a long war, and we hope that the people of Bray, as well as people who simply care about the environment and about justice, will continue to support us, as they have done so generously up to now", said spokesperson, Noeleen McManus, in whose name the case was taken by O'Connell Clarke Solicitors (a legal firm specialising in envi-

ronmental and planning litigation) on behalf of SaveBray. The group "fund-raised ferociously", explained Noeleen. "They had my back all the way."

"Any costs regained from the court case", she added, "will go into continuing the fight to ensure that the next Inspector realises that what they are seeing now does not reflect what was there when we first made our submission; that some form of accountability is demanded for the destruction of the rewilded lowlands while a court case was underway and an Order for a Natura Impact Statement ignored; and that a new proposal is necessary to build a badly needed second bridge over the Dargle - a bridge that is truly sustainable."

"Why build a wildly expensive bridge in such an inappropriate location in order to divert public transport away from the town centre, serving only a private development, and leaving cars - which will not be allowed to use this bridge - to continue to queue endlessly for our present bridge?"

"We hope candidates in the upcoming local elections will think seriously about this

issue now, before - as elected representatives - they will finally be asked to vote on it."

Reacting to the news last week, Bray Green Party councillor Erika Doyle said "I welcome the news that an Environmental Impact Assessment may now be possible. While a second bridge into the town for active and public transport is necessary, it was clear from the outset that this particular design was problematic. Having met with the residents of the Harbour area I agreed with the concerns they outlined to me and committed to them that I would not be in a position to support the bridge in its current form. There are environmental and road safety issues and I also had a concern at the bizarre half a bridge prospect whereby it ended short of its final destination, unfairly impacting residents who live close by."

"I understand that with any plan to create change, there will be people who are uncomfortable but I have no issue championing sustainable transport if the greater good is realised. In this instance however, I felt that was not the case."



Bea and Zoe Clissmann at the launch of Isabel Clissmann's exhibition 'Legendary Landscapes: Hidden Stories of the Wicklow Mountains' in Wicklow Library. The exhibition was officially opened by Wicklow County Council Heritage Officer Deirdre Burns who offered a glowing introduction to the citizen heritage project behind the exhibition, Heritage Hiking Wicklow, and its founder Isabel Clissmann. The 'Legendary Landscapes' exhibition will run until May 29th, and is located in the third-floor exhibition space in the Wicklow Library. This exhibition aims to raise awareness and appreciation of the history and folklore of lesser-known heritage sites in the Wicklow Mountains, and features original illustrations by local artist, Fionn Clissmann.

INDEPENDENT

Bray East
LEA



MALACHAI
DUDDY

THREAT TO FIRST-TIME BUYERS

Continued from page 1...

"We passed the first part but we failed miserably in the second part [...] We as a corporate body did not stand and defend the decision that we made at Wicklow County Council as elected members."

"I am deeply, deeply disappointed that we didn't take the opportunity, as this is a test case, to come back and say this is an intrinsic part of our policy and we want to get rid of the scourge of these investment funds taking over entire developments and denying first-time buyers the opportunity to buy them. We didn't go to the battle, we didn't defend it; we've left it up to the Board. And if the board don't put in that condition, where are we going to be then?"

"One of the things that really concerns me is that this will now be used as a test case not only in this county, but around the country. And the Government have a policy that no housing developments can be sold to investment funds, but their policy is still that apartments can be sold to investment funds and the developer is saying, it is government policy, don't mind them in Wicklow, go ahead and don't put in that condition. I am very disappointed. I would like to hear what the Chief Executive has to say because I think it is very, very important that the people of this county know where does she stand in regard to this matter."

"The Council and I firmly stand behind the Development Plan and the motion that was passed by the members

of this Council to insert that part into the policy document, which is the overarching document for the county. Everything else that we do stems from the County Development Plan. I suppose, at the time it was felt that the planner's report was a detailed enough submission to stand up your objectives of the development plan and we do not comment on every application that comes under appeal."

"I do hear your point about this potentially being a test case. The board have to have regard to our Development Plan and it is clearly there and clearly stated. We will have to await the outcome of the board. It was felt internally here that the planner's report was detailed and significant enough to stand up and didn't require any further comment from the Council at the time."



e-Bikes to remain in Bray after successful pilot scheme

Green Councillor for Bray Erika Doyle is delighted that Bolt eBikes will continue their presence in Bray with the contract being renewed by Bray Municipal District for another term. The eBikes were introduced on a pilot basis in June 2023 and since then have amassed over 75,000 trips.

Councillor Doyle said, "The news that Bolt eBikes will remain in Bray couldn't be better timed as it comes in the middle of National Bike Week. Right from the outset the response to the bikes was incredible. We have been seeing modal shifts taking place whereby people are hopping on an e-bike instead of jumping in the car for short town centre journeys. Tourists love them for taking a

spin around Bray when they visit, and commuters have been using them to get to and from the DART or bus stops. There are journeys happening up and down the seafront where people just take them for a spin for pleasure. They really have been a huge success.

"I'm hopeful that next year some of the long awaited infrastructure can be installed to make walking and cycling around the

town safer and more pleasurable. I have been in touch with the Chief Executive in Wicklow County Council to stress just how important it is to progress cycle schemes, for cyclists, pedestrians, for air quality and for traffic congestion. In the meantime, for anybody who hasn't tried a Bolt bike yet, this is a good week to start as they are offering two 20 minute free journeys during this week."



Cllr Erika Doyle trying out one of the Bolt e-Bikes



Independent candidate Malachai Duddy near N11/Herbert Road Junction on Herbert Road, Bray on the hairpin bend.

'Keep Herbert Road open'

Independent candidate Malachai Duddy argues that closing the N11/Herbert Road Junction to allow an N11/M11 continuous bus lane will backfire, forcing greater traffic to the Bray South N11 exit at Hollybrook.

"At present the N11/Herbert Road Junction causes no tail-back but in fact assists swift exit of traffic off the main road due to the Herbert Road having neither roundabout nor traffic lights until Bray Main Street at the Royal Corner," said Mr Duddy. "Though the Department of Transport and

Transport Infrastructure Ireland have postponed funding for the N11/M11 works over the last two years, a bus-only priority scheme has been progressed."

While opposing the proposed "ill-considered" closure of the N11/Herbert Road Junction, Mr Duddy supports the greater use of public transport along the N11/M11 and appreciates the idea of a dedicated bus lane. However, he says, any benefit would

be undone should the N11/Herbert Road Junction be closed, as any bus using the proposed bus lane would find itself trapped in even greater congestion at the Bray South N11 exit onto Hollybrook.

Mr Duddy said "such a proposal will backfire, causing a greater build up of traffic concentrated at the bigger Hollybrook exit, and a gridlocked bus lane. The Hollybrook exit sorely needs a proper off ramp redesign that

will not congest the N11 with tailbacks. Congestion at Junction 7 (Hollybrook) is having a knock-on effect back to the M50, thus creating an incentive for some drivers to avoid the gridlock by driving through the centre of Bray leading to further congestion there."

The Independent candidate held further that "it is unfortunate that a 'park and ride' facility has not been part of the development near the

new Woodbrook railway station. Again, as this area just north of Bray is being administered by a different local authority, the interests of nearby Bray are not considered."

Independent candidate and barrister Malachai Duddy said "any benefit to public transport by a dedicated bus lane will be wrought to nought by closing the N11/Herbert Road Junction. This is just basic common sense to anyone who knows and travels that road."

New e-Scooter and e-Bike regulations welcomed

Laurie Kearon, the Fine Gael candidate for South Wicklow, has welcomed the upcoming implementation of new regulations for e-scooters and e-bikes which take effect on 20th May 2024. These regulations are a crucial part of the Road Traffic and Roads Act 2023, aiming to enhance the safety and coexistence of all road users, including pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists.

"The introduction of these new regulations is a significant step forward in our efforts to manage the burgeoning use of e-scooters and e-bikes, particularly in urban areas," said Mrs Kearon. "I have heard from numerous elderly constituents in Arklow about their concerns regarding the safety of e-scooters on footpaths. It's essential that we address these concerns by regulating the use of these devices effectively."

The new rules will ensure that all e-scooter and e-bike users are over the age of 16, a measure put in place to safeguard both the riders and other road users, following extensive consultations with An Garda Síochána, the RSA, and the Minister for Justice. Under the new guidelines, ordinary e-scooters capable of speeds up to 20 km/h will be permitted on public roads and in bike lanes, mirroring the regulations for bicycles, but will not be allowed on footpaths or to carry passengers.

Regular e-bikes, with a maxi-



Laurie Kearon

mum speed of 25 km/h, will be treated similarly to pedal bicycles and can be used in cycle lanes and bus lanes, but not on footpaths. Meanwhile, more powerful e-mopeds, which can reach speeds between 25 km/h and 45 km/h, will

now require registration, a small annual motor tax of just €35, and will be excluded from bike lanes and bus lanes.

"By setting clear guidelines on where and how these powered personal transporters can operate, we are prioritising the safety of all our constituents," Laurie added.

"This is about respect and responsibility towards each other as we share our roads and pathways."

An Garda Síochána will also gain new powers to detain and store all small e-vehicles from the effective date of these regulations, ensuring compliance and enhancing safety across the community.

"These regulations mark a proactive approach to the evolving challenges and opportunities presented by modern transport technologies," Kearon concluded. As your candidate, I am committed to ensuring that these changes are implemented smoothly, balancing progress with safety and community well-being."



VOTE NO.1

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COMMONS
GREYSTONES



Sonia
CASEY SHORTT
WICKLOW



Cllr. Gail
DUNNE
WICKLOW

Kilmacanogue Marsh Trail officially opened

On Wednesday 8th May, Cathaoirleach of Bray Municipal District Cllr. Melanie Corrigan officially opened the Kilmacanogue Marsh Trail. Cllr Corrigan was also joined by Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council Cllr Aoife Flynn Kennedy.

The rehabilitation of the Kilmacanogue Marsh and the creation of a biodiversity trail was local community initiative, driven by Barbara Moore-Devine alongside Bray Elected Member, Cllr. Rory O'Connor. Cllr. O'Connor first brought this project to the attention of the Bray Municipal District Engineer and proposed a feasibility study should be carried out for turning the site into a community asset.

Funding for the initial works on clearing the heavy vegetation to open up the pond and clear a pedestrian access route was through the National Biodiversity Action Plan with the assistance of Deirdre Burns, Heritage Officer, Wicklow County Council, and the ecologist

Alan Lauder, who also provided the information for the information board on the site.

Subsequent funding was provided by ORIS to develop the trail. This work was carried out in 2023 by the Bray Municipal District crew based in Enniskerry. The scheme was finally completed this year with the installation of the information board and bench.

The transformation of the Kilmacanogue Marsh from a no-go area to a community asset could not have been achieved without the community initiative and support to drive it on. It is hoped that this facility, with continuing community involvement, will be source of recreation and education for the community and a flourishing



Mark Lambert, Stephen Fox, Liam Bourke, Cllr. Mick Ryan, Cllr Aoife Flynn Kennedy (Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council), Cllr. Melanie Corrigan (Cathaoirleach of Bray Municipal District), Lorraine Gallagher, Breege Kilkenny and Cllr. Rory O'Connor at the opening of the marsh trail.

habitat for wildlife for a long time to come.

Cathaoirleach of Bray Municipal District, Cllr. Melanie Corrigan in offi-

cially opening the trail noted, "The Kilmacanogue Marsh is listed on the schedule of proposed Natural Heritage Areas in County Wicklow. I would like to pay tribute to my colleague, Cllr. Rory O'Connor, and the local community who were all involved in bringing the project to fruition. The installation of the notice board will go a long way in raising awareness of the biodiversity in our local area and demonstrates the importance of maintaining and promoting biodiversity for future generations."

Speaking at the opening, Cathaoirleach Wicklow County Council Cllr. Aoife Flynn Kennedy said, "I welcome the development of this hidden gem in Kilmacanogue and I join Cllr. Corrigan in paying tribute to the local community in making this possible."

Bray District Manager Lorraine Gallagher commented, "This project is an excellent example of the Municipal District working in partnership with the local community and the elected members to develop a community project which promotes the biodiversity of the area."

Barbara Moore-Devine spoke on behalf of the community and expressed her thanks to all involved in the project, stating "This is the first stage of the project and the community will be seeking further enhancement of the facilities to be added in the future. We thank everyone involved in getting the trail opened today."

As well as the opening of the Kilmacanogue Marsh trail, Bray Elected Members visited the newly redeveloped Basketball courts and Futsal Court facilities at Giltspur Heights. The former tennis courts have been transformed into



Inspecting the new Giltspur Heights sports courts were Stephen Fox, Cllr. Rory O'Connor, Cllr. Melanie Corrigan (Cathaoirleach of Bray Municipal District), Lorraine Gallagher (Director of Services, Wicklow County Council), Cllr. Aoife Flynn Kennedy (Cathaoirleach, WCC), Cllr. Mick Ryan, Tom Bailey and Liam Bourke.



Cllr. Melanie Corrigan, Cathaoirleach of Bray Municipal District, speaking at the opening of the Kilmacanogue marsh trail.

Bryan KENNA

Working for you in Bray West



VOTE 1

Labour

Ph: 086 377 1028 Email: bryan.kenna@votelabour.ie
facebook: Bryan Kenna Bray West Candidate

two No. 3x3 basketball courts and one No. Futsal Court. The 3x3 basketball courts are the first such facilities in Bray Municipal District. The development will provide additional facilities for the local community and those living along the Southern Cross Road.

Bray Elected Members also marked the commencement of works on the development of the Bray Skate Park. Wicklow County Council worked with local stakeholders, including members of the local skateboarding community, to identify a suitable site for such a facility and local skaters also provided an input in to the design of the skate park. The location of the park in Ballywaltrim will further enhance and add to the existing sports facilities found in the area.

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Cllr. Aoife FLYNN KENNEDY

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Councillor Aoife Flynn Kennedy brings to representing Bray East.
Aoife continues to deliver for her community and is a strong voice on Wicklow County
Council, that is why I am asking you to support her in the upcoming local elections.*

On June 7th **VOTE 1** Aoife Flynn Kennedy!

An Taoiseach

Simon Harris TD



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Faster action urged for Greystones school build

Steven Matthews TD has urged Minister Foley to move quickly to the next stage in the construction of the new 1000 student school for Greystones Community College (GCC). His comments came following the news that that GCC will take an additional 20 students for September 2024.

Speaking to *Wicklow Times* following this announcement, a local parent explained: "Despite recent media and public reps reports about additional places being made available to sort the schools shortage many families are still awaiting a place. There are 12 children left without a place in Greystones."

"This has resulted from a piecemeal approach taken to resolve the situation rather than a proper plan being implemented. The extent of the problem was evident to everyone since last October. So here we are now in May and despite all the promises we are faced with the same problem as last year where school places will not be sorted until September. There is a clear lack of leadership and we feel very let down."

Speaking about the matter, Deputy Matthews said "We have waited far too long for the new

school, and it has been very stressful for students, parents, staff and teachers in GCC. The next stage of approval and construction must start within the next few weeks. The next step is the 'letter of approval' which I have asked the Minister for Education to issue as soon as possible. In large build contracts like the new GCC school, there are fine details that need to be agreed between the stage of a 'letter of intent' and a 'letter of approval'.

"I am urging the Minister to urgently focus on agreeing these details and pushing the contract to the next stage. These details must be dealt with appropriately but speedily. We cannot tolerate any further delays on this crucial school build for Greystones."

"Once the letter of approval has issued, I will be pushing the Department and the contractor to mobilise on site and get the shovels in the ground.

The timeline for construction has been assessed as 65 weeks but I would caution that in my experience, these projects tend to run over rather than under time.

"If the Minister acts quickly and the construction starts in mid-June or July, I believe with enough pressure behind it, a realistic timeline for students to be in the new building is January 2026. It's important to be honest with everyone and not create an unrealistic timeline which ultimately could cause more disappointment, stress and frustration for families and school staff."

"The construction of the new 1,000 student building for GCC in conjunction with the extensions for both Temple Carrig and Colaiste Craobh Abhann will provide a long-term solution to the secondary school place shortage for the wider Greystones area. The two school extensions are critical to the overall school places shortage in

the Greystones, Delgany, Kilcoole and Newtownmountkennedy area and I am keeping pressure on the Department and Minister to speed up their construction too.

"I will continue to offer every support possible to each school's management team to work through any remaining concerns both for the coming school year and for future student intakes," concluded Deputy Matthews.

Greystones Councillor Lourda Scott remains critical of the Department of Education's handling of the school places crisis.

Cllr Scott said: "The crisis with secondary school places is no surprise to anyone living in the area. Three months ago I called out Minister Foley for her handling of this situation, where children, including those with additional needs are being treated abysmally. Since then I have met in person with our TDs and repeatedly asked the Department

for a concrete strategy to manage the lack of appropriate school accommodation for the community's needs. I have also continually sought clarification on the exact number of places required for Sept 2024 and a contingency plan for Sept 2025. I have received absolutely no answers from either the Department of Education or our TDs. The so called solution has been to instruct GCC to take in another class, even though it is the only secondary school in the district based in temporary buildings across two separate sites. While I am delighted that 20 more young people will come off GCC's waiting list, it must be remembered that this will have a knock on effect on intake for next year.

"The fact that the Department has provided no plan to address this is extremely concerning to me. I am also concerned that there is no plan to address the children on



Steven Matthews TD

waiting lists for special classes. In Greystones, secondary school special classes are either not offered by the school or are full. I am baffled at the local politicians that are celebrating when in fact they should be holding the Department of Education to account for its failures in the handling of the issue and interrogating the lack of forward planning by the

Minister for Education."

Cllr Scott notes that several people have spoken to her recently about difficulties in getting children places in junior infant classes and expects that the school places crises is far from being resolved.

"While not yet confirmed, we hope that construction for the permanent building for GCC will start in the next few months,

almost five years after the announcement of the new secondary school for Greystones Kilcoole. In that time the proposed extensions for Colaiste Craobh Abhainn and Temple Carrig have progressed very slowly and all must be expedited to meet the needs in the area. I will continue to pressure the Department in this respect."



Minister Stephen Donnelly

'Ballywaltrim Masterplan approval vital for community development'

Health Minister Stephen Donnelly has welcomed approval of the Masterplan for Ballywaltrim Recreational Area. Following extensive consultation, a very well attended public event and a huge number of written submissions, last week the Masterplan was approved unanimously by Bray area elected representatives.

Minister Donnelly said: "It's fantastic news to see such a big milestone has been reached this week. I am committed to contin-

ued support on this great development plan for the entire community.

"We know that sports and recreation are vital for

communities, and they have great physical and mental health benefits too. I'm confident that the various projects will see significant additional sports and recreation, and the additional sports facilities should also see greater female participation in these sports too."

The agreed components include Pitch Upgrading, Cycle/footpath connection for schools and pool road, All-weather pitch, Running track, Practice wall, Exercise equipment, MUGA pitch, Cycle track, GAA pitch upgrade, Changing facilities, Community meeting room

and Seating.

Speaking in February about the plans, Cllr. Melanie Corrigan, Cathaoirleach of Bray Mun-

icipal District, stated "The facilities at Ballywaltrim are long overdue an upgrade and the community need to have the opportunity to be involved and have their say. Having consensus from all the user groups is equally

important. I've been working with the Bog Meadow User Group in Enniskerry to get this done, and Ballywaltrim deserves the same opportunities, both Cllr Aoife Flynn Kennedy and I will work hard to make sure they get them."

MARY KAVANAGH
INDEPENDENT
Wicklow Municipal District

VOTE No.1

Wicklow LEA

Your Voice in the Community

087 7823513 mkavanagh@wicklowcoco.ie Mary Kavanagh Cllr



Cllr Melanie Corrigan and Cllr Aoife Flynn Kennedy in Ballywaltrim

LOCAL ELECTION CANDIDATE
FINE GAEL

VOTE 1

Peter STAPLETON
Baltinglass LEA

087 972 5067 peterstapleton.finegael@outlook.ie

Continue Preference for Cllr Avril Cronin & Cllr Eilward Timmins

Record funding for Wicklow sports organisations

Funding of €461,533 has been announced for sporting organisations across Co. Wicklow. The total allocation represents the largest ever funding for sports equipment under the Sports Capital Equipment Programme nationwide, over €26 million in total.

In total, 20 clubs in Co. Wicklow will receive funding. Some of the funding allocations include: €10,300 to Greystones Sailing Club; €27,422 to Bray Sailing Club; €99,415 to Arklow Sailing Club; €20,000 to Blessington Sailing Club; €6,328 to Wicklow Basketball Club.

An Taoiseach Simon Harris has said he is determined to invest massively in Sporting organisations in Wicklow and across the country given their importance to mental health and well being as well as the wider community benefits they provide.

An Taoiseach Simon Harris said: "I am thrilled to announce close to half a million euros for sporting organisations across Wicklow.

"Sport is at the heart of every community and we are so lucky to have so many amazing organisations across County Wicklow which make for better and stronger communities. I have seen first hand the benefits of local sport organisations across County Wicklow and nationwide. They provide an invaluable service.

"Wicklow has so much to offer in terms of local organisations, from

sailing, to athletics, to Gaelic, to martial arts, basketball, canoeing and so much more. As Taoiseach I am committed to increasing investment in Sporting organisations and in any activity that seeks to improve mental health, wellbeing and community prosperity.

"It goes without saying that the Sporting organisations in receipt of this funding are very well deserved as so many working in these clubs provide a daily or weekly voluntary service."

Green TD Steven Matthews TD said "Wicklow clubs have done quite well this year. I was delighted to see over €460,000 going to a wide range of clubs for all types of equipment which will be of practical benefit to these organisations, their members and athletes. I know well how these clubs operate on very tight budgets and they make absolutely every penny count when running their clubs so these grants for equipment are always important. This funding is for sports equipment and I expect that the larger funding for capital projects will made in the coming weeks.

"The Wicklow clubs that were

successful this year for equipment includes Blessington, Greystones and Bray Sailing Clubs, Bray and Vartry Rowing Club, Bray Sea Scouts, Kilcoole Athletic Club, Wicklow Archers Club and Wicklow Basketball Club and Wicklow Pony Club. I regularly visit sports clubs all across this county and I am always impressed by the members and volunteers that give so much of their time because of their love for their sport. I always try to assist with funding applications, letting them know when funding applications are due and assisting with sometimes complicated applications processes.

"It's fantastic to see when these clubs are successful in an application. If any clubs across the county were unsuccessful this time or would like assistance with the many various funding schemes, I am always happy to meet, learn about their work and assist with an application," concluded Deputy Matthews.

Fianna Fail Senator Pat Casey commented "It is fantastic to see the time and effort put in every week by club members and volunteers in Wicklow be rewarded with this



Pictured are the winners of the Wicklow Badminton league which took place on Sunday 12th May in Roundwood: Claire O'Toole, Sinead Gaffney, Emma Quigley and Catherine Halligan.

grant funding. The grants will go towards funding critical equipment and upgrades for clubs, such as portable lights and goals and sailing equipment.

"I want to thank the volunteers and club members in our county for the invaluable work they do at the very heart of our communities. The grants announced today reflect the priority Fianna Fail in Government places on encouraging and facilitating sporting participation and excellence across the country."

Local election candidate for Fianna Fail in Arklow, Cllr Tommy Annesley, said: "I am delighted to see this level of funding being rewarded to three sports clubs across Arklow. The three clubs allocated

funding in Arklow through these grants are Arklow Rowing Club, Arklow Sailing, and Arklow Sea Scout. Arklow Rowing club was allocated €59,139, Arklow Sailing Club has been allocated €99,415, and 9th Wicklow (port of Arklow Sea Scouts group) have been allocated €30,000 through the Sports Capital and Equipment Programme.

"These grants will go towards funding equipment and upgrades for clubs across the county. These clubs would be nothing without the volunteers and members that do invaluable work. It is because of these volunteer and members that the clubs continue to thrive, and this funding will only enhance the growth of these clubs."

Laurie Kearon, the Fine Gael candidate for South Wicklow, said "The allocations announced today are crucial for the continuous development of sports at the local level. The successful applicants will receive necessary equipment to advance their operations, positively impacting multiple sports and contributing significantly to community health and engagement. This round of funding focuses on equipment-only applications submitted by sports organisations, reflecting the government's commitment to fostering active communities and supporting athletic excellence. The equipment will be of practical benefit to various sports organisations, ensuring athletes have the resources they need to excel."



VOTE #1

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31 NEW HOMES OFFICIALLY OPENED

On Thursday 16th May, 31 new homes in two housing estates in County Wicklow in Wicklow Town and Rathnew were officially opened by Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr. Aoife Flynn Kennedy, alongside Darragh O'Brien TD, Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage. Also in attendance was Cathaoirleach of Wicklow Municipal District, Cllr. Irene Winters and Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council Emer O'Gorman.

In Liam Kavanagh Park, Wicklow, 6 two-bed homes and 4 three-bed homes, all of which will be allocated in the next few weeks, were officially unveiled. Meanwhile in Merry Meeting Phase Two Rathnew, 16 two-bed

homes and 5 three-bed homes were opened. These houses will also be allocated to new occupants over the course of the next few weeks.

The provision of these homes is among many schemes being developed

in Wicklow under Wicklow County Council's Building and Supply Programme. All the houses are highly energy efficient, achieving a BER of A3. The majority of homes will also use high efficiency air to

water heat pumps, resulting in low cost in use.

Speaking on the event, An Taoiseach Simon Harris said, "I am thrilled that 31 new homes are coming on stream into Wicklow today. This will be of huge benefit to many families and to the community. We are seeing so much progress on housing and I intend on working every single day to make sure this Government builds more homes and increases homeownership. 500 people a week now are buying their first home and 337 new homes are going to construction every single day. Today's housing figures show more homes are being built this year in Wicklow than last year.

"As Taoiseach and as a public representative for the people of Wicklow, I will work tirelessly to keep up the momentum and most importantly ensure that this level of housing development is met by the infrastructural needs of each community."

Performing the official opening, Cathaoirleach of

Wicklow County Council Cllr. Aoife Flynn Kennedy said: "I recognise the serious challenge we face in terms of housing within Wicklow. A critical focus and priority has been firmly placed on responding to this challenge by Wicklow County Council through the development and implementation of the Social Housing supply programme. Today we officially open two housing estates Liam Kavanagh Park in Wicklow and Merry Meeting View in Rathnew and this marks the first of many official openings to come. Wicklow County Council vigorously continues to progress its development programme under the Rebuilding Ireland banner."

Commenting on the proceedings, Cathaoirleach of Wicklow Municipal District, Cllr. Irene Winters said, "It is a pleasure to be here today at the official openings of these two estates and in particular to welcome the Kavanagh Family to the opening of Liam Kavanagh Park, which has



Pictured at the official opening of the Liam Kavanagh Park in Wicklow were (L to R) Ciara Kavanagh, Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council Cllr Aoife Flynn Kennedy, Rosemary Kavanagh, Margaret Kavanagh, Darragh O'Brien TD, Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Cllr Irene Winters (Cathaoirleach of Wicklow Municipal District) and Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council Emer O'Gorman. Photo Mick Kelly



Pictured at the Official Opening of the Merry Meeting housing estate in Rathnew yesterday were (L to R) Cllr. Irene Winters (Cathaoirleach of Wicklow Municipal District), Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr. Aoife Flynn Kennedy, Darragh O'Brien TD, Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage and Wicklow County Council Chief Executive Emer O'Gorman.

Casey-Shortt calls for extensive affordable housing schemes and pledges to support all such projects

Fianna Fail Wicklow LEA candidate Sonia Casey-Shortt has commended Wicklow County Council for delivering the highest number of social housing units in the Wicklow's history. However, she is now urging the council to apply the same dedication and vigour to the provision of affordable housing options, including affordable purchases, serviced sites, and cost rentals.

While the first local authority-led affordable housing scheme in Wicklow Town in 15 years marks progress, and further developments are underway in various parts of Wicklow, the scale

remains insufficient, she said.

"The demographic in dire need of these affordable housing solutions is the 'squeezed middle'-families who fall outside the social housing bracket yet

cannot afford to buy a home and are burdened with rents comparable to or exceeding mortgage payments. It is imperative that we intensify our efforts to support these families."

As a central promise of her campaign, Casey-Shortt is committed to the acceleration of affordable housing delivery, ensuring it reaches every community, not just the major urban areas. This includes smaller towns such as Glenealy, Roundwood, Laragh, Ashford, and Newtown. She vows to endorse all initiatives that facilitate homeownership for families.

Casey-Shortt emphasises the significance of secure housing as a foundation for family stability,

instilling a sense of belonging and security.

"Homeownership encourages greater community involvement, enhancing local events and organisations, which in turn fosters community unity and creates safer, more dynamic neighbourhoods. Additionally, it boosts local economies through property taxes and investments in home improvements. Thus, owning a home is not

merely an individual achievement but a crucial element for flourishing families and communities.

Sonia Casey-Shortt says she is steadfast in her commitment to affordable housing. She believes that every family, regardless of their income bracket, deserves a place to call home. "I am determined to work tirelessly with local authorities to ensure that affordable housing is not just a dream, but a reality for all."



Sonia Casey-Shortt

599 new homes began construction in Wicklow in April

Wicklow Fianna Fáil Senator Pat Casey has welcomed the publication by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage of its monthly data on the number of Commencement Notices (residential construction starts) for April 2024. The data shows that last month, 18,000 Commencement Notices for new homes were received by the Building Control Authorities.

Senator Casey said: "The data for housing commencements last month shows the progress Fianna Fail in government is making in tackling the housing crisis.

"In April, building started on approximately 18,000 new homes nationwide. That is unprecedented for any month on record. The data represents in a single month, over half of last year's total commencements which was in itself a record.

"Here in Wicklow, building started on 599 homes. The recent continuation of the development levy waiver and Irish Water connection charge rebate shows that we are using every lever at our disposal to tackle housing.

"The dramatic acceleration of building caused by these measures means so far this year we have 29,000 homes under construction nationwide. That is approximately 340 homes starting on site every single working

day this year. It is remarkable evidence that the measures we have taken are bearing fruit and that Fianna Fail's policy, Housing for All, is working.

"Fianna Fáil's top priority remains doing everything we can to help people to afford to buy or rent a home. The figures published today show that our plan is working and my focus is on doing whatever I can to keep this positive momentum going."

Cllr. Paul O'BRIEN
Wicklow LEA

VOTE No. 1

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Labour

Sinn Féin urge Independent candidates to make public commitment on change

Sinn Féin TD John Brady has called on all of the Independent candidates in Wicklow contesting the local elections in June to clarify their political intent now at the outset of the election to allow the electorate to make a fully informed decision come polling day.

"Wicklow has endured decades of mismanagement as a result of the two main government parties of Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael operating private deals which allowed them to exercise power at the expense of the mandate of other members of the council," said Deputy Brady.

"As the demand for change across the county grows in the final few weeks before the election, those candidates campaigning under an independent banner need to give a pledge to the electorate that they are truly committed to democratic progress, and a County Council organised according to the principles of power sharing.

"In 2014 and 2019 Independent councillors in Wicklow played their role in ensuring that both Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael were able to continue to grip onto the levers of power here in Wicklow against the wishes of the people.

"One thing that we do not want to see repeated here in Wicklow is a recurrence of events where Independent local election candidates campaigning under a banner of change, as soon as they get into the Council here in Wicklow, turn around and give their support to Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael.

"We saw it happen in 2014, and we saw again in 2019, how Independent candidates presenting them-

selves to the electorate as the people to bring about change, turn around once elected and shore up the status quo here in Wicklow.

"And when I talk about the status quo, I am talking about the behaviour of Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael over decades, where they worked cosy side deals to allow them to rotate power between themselves, ensuring that any truly progressive forces were kept on the outside.

"This has contributed to muting the voice for change here in Wicklow. It has ensured that the lack of central funding for Wicklow County Council by the government centrally went unanswered as the majority block of Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael and their Independent backers suppressed protest in the Council.

"The result of this - hundreds of boarded up homes across the county, when families are being left homeless, with rents and mortgages skyrocketing as the parties of landlords and speculators continued to reap their profits. It has witnessed a run-down of services across the county, a lack of investment in our communities. It has kept Wicklow 'in the bag' for powers that be." Brady continued: "I believe that it is important that the electorate knows who and what they are voting for. Further to which I

am calling on all independent candidates in Wicklow who purport to be campaigning under a banner of change to pledge to give full expression to the will for change desired by the people of Wicklow.

"They need to pledge now while the electorate has the opportunity to fully weigh up what they actually stand for that they are prepared to commit to a council of progressive change. That once the election is over that they will refuse to be pulled into grubby side deals, and will not be party to the shoring up of the Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael axis of power here in Wicklow that has done this county of ours such a disservice over the decades. The country needs change, the county needs change, and God knows the Council needs change. The Wicklow electorate want to return a council which will give expression to the will for change wanted by the people of the county.

"Any candidate who intends to enter into office in June to give support for the traditional system which was developed by Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael to rotate power and privilege between themselves on the council needs to let the people know that that is what they are about.

"Or alternatively they need to openly pledge that they will not give their support to the outmoded



John Brady TD

undemocratic power structures of the past, and openly commit to a progressive future governed by the desire for positive change. There is an opportunity in this year's local elections to reboot our system and return a council committed to giving expression to the democratic will of the people."



Ciaran Hogan

'Look for integrity and effectiveness when casting your vote'

With the upcoming election many people are looking at the candidates' material coming in their letterbox and asking "How can I decide who to vote for?"

Aontú candidate Ciaran Hogan, who's running in Bray East, said "The short answer to that question is Me. I would love to earn your vote. But for non political, first-time voters, or newly arrived residents

wading through political jargon, there are two qualities that everyone should be looking for in their candidate regardless of your political leanings or priorities.

Those qualities are 'integrity' and 'effectiveness'.

"For effectiveness it is vitally important your candidate have a track record of getting things done; on time and under budget. Many elected councillors have the best of intentions but lack the

wherewithall to carry out the tasks and see projects to completion. The age old stereotype of politicians promising the sun, moon and stars to constituents but being completely unable to deliver in their term is unfortunately well deserved.

"For integrity; the quality of a candidate to

stand up for what they believe in and what they promised is vital. Again we all know political figures who check which way the wind is blowing before making any statement or move. The flip flop parties who speak for and against the same issues. They betray any alliance, position or issue when they sense

any sort of push back.

"Naturally I believe I have both of those qualities more than most. I have a track record of being effective in my own business I started and ran for the past 7 years. Before that I was a commercial pilot with ATPL license. During the referendums held recently, I and my Aontú

colleagues were the only party who stood up against the Government. With great fortune the NO NO won massively.

"Whatever your bias, main issue, or political leaning I hope everyone in Bray votes for candidates with great integrity and effectiveness and we have a council that works for Bray."

Record number of women running

In the upcoming local elections on June 7th, a record 640 women candidates are running for 949 seats across the country. Ireland currently ranks 103rd in the world for women's representation in national politics, and ranks sixth lowest in the EU for the number of women in local politics.

Even though women make up 50% of the population, just 25% of Councillors are women. But with more women running than ever before, the local elections present a unique opportunity for Irish voters to address this imbalance. "On June 7th, voters across the country have the chance to change the face of Irish politics and ensure there are more women at the decision making tables that impact on voters and on their local communities. More women in politics makes politics work better for everyone," said Brian Sheehan, CEO of Women for Election.

Women for Election have developed the Data Hub, a research resource showing historical information for every LEA and an interactive map showing women candidates in every LEA. This Data Hub will be further updated when final details of nominations are available.

Communities meet the Bray West candidates

The Wicklow PPN and Wicklow Older People's Council Meet the Candidate webinars are proving popular with people showing great interest in those running in this year's local elections.

Carina Holmes from the Older People's Council said "Seven out of the nine candidates running in the Bray West elections joined us on Thursday 16th May to respond to questions sent by PPN and OPC members on topics that covered a diverse range of issues including; transport management, local amenities, safety & security, social housing, , social inclusion, climate action, the proposal to build a suspension bridge over the River Dargle, the genocide in Palestine and the Westbank Orphanage. We really appreciate the candidates taking the time to engage with us and provide their opinions on these important issues."

Conor Kirwan from the Wicklow PPN Secretariat said "There are more than twice as many candidates than there are seats available in these local elections

and people are showing great interest in who's running. Along with the attendance at the webinars we have noted that the recorded sessions for the Arklow and Baltinglass MDs that are available on the PPN YouTube Channel have been getting a lot of views and the Bray West one is now available to view too. One group of young people who were curious for their first opportunity to vote in the elections told us they were fascinated by the whole process and likened their viewing experience to Gogglebox for local politics. So, we're delighted to be reaching our young people as well as our older generations with these events."

The events continue with Greystones MD on Tuesday 21st May, Wicklow MD on Thursday 23rd May and Bray East MD on Tuesday 28th May. To join the webinars Email info@countywicklowppn.ie

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Scoil Chonglais students, Emma Langrill, Roisin Woulfe and Grace Gordon, have been recognised for their contributions as female cycling ambassadors at the #andshecycles awards ceremony in Dublin.

Baltinglass students honoured as female cycling ambassadors

Scoil Chonglais students, Emma Langrill, Roisin Woulfe and Grace Gordon, have been recognised for their contributions as female cycling ambassadors at the #andshecycles awards ceremony in Dublin.

An initiative of Green-Schools Travel, the #andshecycles campaign was developed following research which indicated a staggering discrepancy in the number of female teens who cycle to school, compared to their male counterparts, with estimates as low as just one in every 250 girls across Ireland cycling. The aim of the campaign is to explore, understand and address barriers to cycling for teenage girls. The #andshecycles Ambassador Programme is an extension of this campaign with a focus on addressing the teenage cycling gender gap through trained student leaders who take action to enable and empower teenage girls to cycle to school. Throughout the school year, student ambassadors have taken part in a number of trainings including leadership and communication, bike maintenance, track cycling, and ambassador training, which have helped them to achieve significant actions within their school communities. This year's 44 ambassadors were celebrated for their achievements at the ceremony in Richmond Barracks in Dublin on the 1st of May, with 3 ambassadors honoured for their exceptional contributions to the campaign. All ambassadors received a medal for their contributions, and were congratulated by An Taisce's Director of Education, Cathy Baxter. Cycling enthusiast and performer Elaine Gallagher also provided enlightening entertainment on the history of women cycling. Addressing the audience at the awards ceremony, Orla Patton, #andshecycles Coordinator, said, "The ambassadors have been working tirelessly throughout the school year to dismantle gender barriers, promote inclusion, create opportunities for girls to cycle, and act as real role models within their school communities. The work done by the ambassadors is nothing short of amazing and has made incredible, lasting change in their own schools and beyond."

Innovative food products order of the day at SETU showcase

South East Technological University (SETU) students presented an array of innovative products at a special farmers market event, ranging from fortified juice targeting hormonal imbalance, anti-anxiety chewing gum, and cricket brownies, to premium offerings like fermented butter and cured duck meat.

During their final year, Food Science and Innovation, and Culinary Arts students undertook the challenge of creating unique food products from the conception to formulation, complete with packaging and marketing strategies. The semester concluded with a showcase event at SETU's Cork Road Campus, held at the Teaching and Learning Building, where products underwent taste testing in a farmers market setting. The students' products were put under scrutiny at a special Dragonís Den style presentation after the showcase. One of the judges, Paul Nolan of Dawn Meats, praised the exceptionally high standards of the food products and the students' enthusiasm.

Dr Elaine Duggan, course leader for BSc (Hons) in Food Science Innovation at SETU said, "The showcasing event is a wonderful experience for the students enabling them to proudly show off all their hard work from the year to the wider community. The combination of science, culinary, business, and marketing skills is all tied together in the project with their creative skills showing in their presentation stands."

Remark on the trend of health and well-being products, Dr Duggan said, "Improving health and well-being seems to be a focus of the younger generation. Many of the products on display were developed with certain target markets in mind including women experiencing menopause or perimenopause or protein, wellness, and sports nutrition products for the active younger generation. Alternative protein sources are increasing in popularity and one student incorporated crickets into a brownie product, which went down a treat."

Norbert Thul, Lecturer in BA (Hons) in Culinary Arts, said, "The showcase was a culmination of 12 weeks of hard work on behalf of all the students. A serious amount of consideration went into the products that were on show. It's not purely about developing the food product. It's about the marketing, the labelling, the labelling laws, the ingredients, the allergens. It's all that together and then presenting the product in a simulated farmers market."

Mr Thul's Culinary Arts students produced everything from premium products, using artisan production methods, flavoured kombuchas, traditional fare to doggie treats. As part of their studies, the final-year Culinary Arts students are encouraged to look at food production differently. As a result, there are many opportunities open to them upon graduation from working in high-end kitchens, artistic food production, and quality control, to opening their own business. "It's a very exciting time for the students ahead," he said.

One of the students presenting on the day was final year Food Science and Innovation student, Lucy Skehan. Lucy from Rathgormack, Co Water-



(L-R) SETU Final Year BA (Hons) Culinary Arts Students Ben Roche (Wexford) and Callum Priest (Waterford) showcase their products

ford created a fortified juice called NourisHer. The product is aimed towards alleviating the symptoms of hormonal imbalances in women such as polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS). "I've suffered from PCOS for many years. There are a lot of supplements on the market, and there's a lot of education and knowledge out there, but it's a struggle to find the right product. I wanted to create a product that is easily accessible to girls who have just got their period and who are struggling, or women going through menopause," Lucy explained. NourisHer contains natural ingredients including ginger and turmeric along with supplements for fertility issues and balancing hormones. "I wanted all these supplements in one product, and widely available for all people," she said. NourisHer is about educating, informing, and empowering women, says Lucy, who actively promotes her product and positive messages on her Nourisher Instagram. Lucy plans to bring her product to market and is in the final 50 of the Enterprise Ireland Student Entrepreneur of the Year Awards. Fellow Food Science and Innovation student Brian Marginean created an anti-anxiety chewing gum called Mindful Chews. "I suffer from anxiety, and I wanted to create something that didn't exist in Ireland and something more affordable for people suffering from anxiety." Recognising that chewing gum is a wasteful product, Brian incorporated a traditional Mexican plant-based product to ensure sustainability. Using a combination of amino acids and herbal products he created the anti-anxiety element of his product to boost serotonin and promote relaxation. "Not only does it help me to relax, but I also want my product to help others too," he said.



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Bray student elected onto National Student Executive

Jason Tamayo, a 16-year-old student from Woodbrook College, Bray, has been elected as the ISSU Regional Liaison and Support Officer of the Irish Second-Level Students' Union (ISSU). Since 2023, Jason has been involved in the Irish Second-Level Students' Union (ISSU), serving in the role of Regional Officer for Kildare and Wicklow for two terms in consecutive years. The Irish Second-Level Students' Union, known as ISSU is the national representative body for second-level students.

In July, Jason will start his official responsibilities. Organising and directing the Regional Officer Body, presiding over meetings, and guaranteeing effective communication between the Regional Officer Body (ROB) and the Coiste Gnó na nDaltaí (NSE) are the duties of the Regional Liaison and Support Officer also known as RLSO. The RLSO are essential to the grassroots growth of ISSU, helping regional officers with local projects, making sure national campaigns are carried out, and communicating with the Coiste Gnó na nDaltaí via action reports.

Speaking about his motivation to run for the position, Jason said "the reason he ran was because he has been involved in the Regional Officer Body for two years and he saw the issues facing secondary school students and he wants to bring that to a national level.

"Furthermore, I believed that my decision to run stemmed from the fact that the Regional Liaison and Support Officer works closely with the Regional Officer Body, which serves as the primary means of grassroots communication, and I can be aware of all the problems and issues that students in each county face and I can

bring that to a national level."

Jason is the first student to be elected on the Coiste Gnó na nDaltaí from Woodbrook College and is the second student to be elected as the Regional Liaison and Support Officer from County Wicklow. Jason would like to thank everyone for their tremendous support but specifically to his family and friends, Mr. Henry Hurley (Principal of Woodbrook College), Mr. Paul Murphy (Deputy Principal of Woodbrook College), Ms. Jasmin Troy (Student Leadership

Team Coordinator of Woodbrook College), and all the students and staff at

Woodbrook College.

Jason looks forward to working with the 11 other offices on the Coiste Gnó na nDaltaí and cannot wait to start working on the issues that matter to him the most. Jason anticipates to collaborate with local politicians, organisations, and council members during his time in office.

Additionally, he hopes to represent more than 500,000 second-level students in Ireland.

Students can visit the ISSU website at www.issu.ie or send an email to jason.tamayo@issu.ie to get in touch with him.



Jason Tamayo

Enniskerry students take action against car idling



Deputy Whitmore with students from St. Patrick's N.S., Curlestown

Jennifer Whitmore TD recently joined St. Patrick's N.S., Curlestown, Enniskerry students during their No Idling Day of Action. The event, which took place outside the school, was organised by St. Patrick's School Green Committee members as part of their work to earn the school a Green Flag for Travel & Global Citizenship.

Speaking after the event, Deputy Whitmore expressed her admiration for the students, parents, and teachers of St. Patrick's N.S. She commended their efforts and reiterated her commitment to supporting initiatives that promote children's health and environmental sustainability.

"I was proud to join with parents, teachers and students today at St. Patrick's National School in Enniskerry on their No Idling Day of Action. Today's action sends a strong message to parents and the wider school community about how seriously St. Patrick's takes children's health and air quality

in the area. They are a credit to their school and the county.

"Today's gathering was a positive action for the school community, and people were very receptive. It is wonderful to see children from primary school age being empowered to stand up for their school, fellow students and our environment. I do not doubt that St. Patrick's will

receive their Green Flag for Travel in the coming months.

"One of my very first bills published after being elected was the Protection of Children's Health Bill, which seeks to end the practice of car idling outside schools. The Bill aims to ban the unnecessary idling of cars within 100 m of schools and further protect the health and safety

of our children attending those schools. Emissions from vehicles in transit or idling at the school gates result in an increase in pollutants, including nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter in the air. In a report by the Royal College of Physicians, Every Breath We Take noted that particulate matter has been linked to suppressed lung growth in

children, asthma, heart disease and the onset of type 2 diabetes. It is a severe public health issue.

"It would be fantastic to see initiatives like this across the county. I know that students all over Wicklow are engaged on the issue of climate change and would be wonderful advocates for their local environment," concluded Deputy Whitmore.

Cllr.
Melanie
CORRIGAN

On June 7th
VOTE 1

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LOCAL ELECTION CANDIDATE

FINE GAEIL

'Those that cannot pay are left waiting'

Dr Caroline Winstanley, Social Democrats election candidate in Bray West is calling for transparency in waiting list times and the demographics for those who are awaiting autism assessments.



Dr Caroline Winstanley

Most children receive a diagnosis of autism between the ages of 6-11. Those that have been able to mask their differences may start to experience difficulties towards the end of primary and into post primary as their social relationships become more complex.

As of May 2025, Dail Eireann heard that 10,696 children had been waiting for more than 12 months for initial contact with their local Children's Disability Network Team and that 4,613 children were waiting on the Assessment of Need.

Commenting on this issue Dr Winstanley said, "I spoke to one lady in our community who has a 15 year old son who has been waiting 6 years for an autism assessment. She is worried that he will age out of children's services before he is seen and knows it's even harder to access an adult autism assessment in the public health system. One post pri-

mary school in Bray is having to source assessments privately to ensure that the young people they support can access the services they need."

Dr Winstanley further commented that "late unidentified neurodivergence can lead to people feeling overwhelmed and drained due to trying to fit in rather than having the opportunity to understand and celebrate their differences. This can sometimes lead to school refusal, an increase in need to access already stretched mental health and young people not reaching their full academic potential."

Dr Winstanley has submitted a parliamentary question to seek transparency around the number of young people that are awaiting autism assessments in the Bray municipal area and to identify whether other age groups are being prioritised.

Carnew Community Care celebrate 40th anniversary

The buzz at Carnew Community Care in April was palpable. Committee members retired and serving joined with the Daughters of Charity, Staff and Volunteers to launch celebrations and recognition for the 40 years since the concept of a village where people are enabled to live a full and active life in their own community for as long as possible was first mooted in 1984.



Nathan and Rebecca Sexton at Carnew Community Care's 40th anniversary celebrations.

The celebrations began with a Thanksgiving Service led by Fr. Martin Casey and the Rev. Canon David Bayne. The ceremony was beautifully enhanced by members of the Coláiste Bhríde Trad Band led by Mr. Somers. The lunch which followed was preceded by plenty of photo opportunities and much chat among colleagues, friends and committee members, reminiscing and celebrating the get together.

The more formal part of the day took place in the afternoon and was attended by original committee members too numerous to list. Pat Brennan Board Secretary ably performed MC duties whilst also giving some background on the organisation and wonderful anecdotal tales such as the time one of the Sisters attended the Mart and whilst waving



Mary Blake, Molly Cullen and Sister Helen at the Carnew Community Care 40th anniversary celebrations.

around fundraising tickets unknowingly drove up the bidding! Pat acknowledged the role of all the Board (known as committee) and in particular noted the role of one of the long serving Chairmen Jose Dowse whom he said "without Jose in the early years this organisation would not be what it is today".

John Mullen one of

the younger! committee members spoke about the history of the committee and its members unwavering commitment to the organisation. He said that the collaboration between the Committee, the Daughters of Charity and volunteers had achieved so much. He also spoke of the contribution of the HSE, the DSP, Wicklow Co. Council and other fun-

ders over the years, "not only have those bodies valued the services, activities and housing at CCC but the individuals that our Board and staff work with from those organisations have always gone above and beyond in their assistance and support" he said. John went on to say that an event celebrating the contributions of those organisations is firmly on the calendar of the celebratory year.

Sr. Aine O'Brien, Provincial of the Daughters of Charity gave a wonderful account of the role of the many Sisters over their 37 years in Carnew. Sr. Aine recounted that the Sisters along with local people played a significant role in promoting, planning developing and fundraising for CCC. Sr. Clare the first Manager and an elected member of the committee threw herself wholeheartedly into this project sharing all her gifts, energy, expertise and experience. "She had a deep concern for older people and wanted the very best for them" Sr. Aine said.

Sr. Aine concluded her speech by presenting Chairperson Fr. Casey with a gift cheque from the Daughters of Charity to Carnew Community Care. Sisters Helen Byrne, Carmel Casey, Mary Crosbie, Josephine Flynn, Christina O'Mahony, Anne O'Neill, Eileen Browne Marian Harte attended the event with Sr. Aine.

Guest of honour Anne Doyle (retired RTE newsreader) then congratulated everyone involved and formerly launched the 40th anniversary celebrations.

Anne kindly commented that she was not the real guest of honour, everyone in this room is the "guest of honour especially the volunteers" she said. Anne remarked that "she found it extraordinary that so many of the original Committee members were here today and looking so well!"

The event concluded with Jose Dowse who served as a founding Chairperson presenting Anne Doyle with the "Shoe boxes" History of Coolattin and the History of Coolattin House by local historian Kevin Lee. Anne and Jose enjoyed some discussion on the history of the Fitzwilliams and their sponsoring of the families move to Canada.

Proceedings then moved outdoors where Sr. Aine ably assisted by Sr. Mary Crosbie (former Centre Manager) planted a tree to commemorate the contribution of the Daughters of Charity.

Their planting of the tree was well overseen by founder member and expert in horticulture Kevin Ryan.

The large gathering then moved then swiftly moved to the Boutique Thrift Shop where Anne Doyle very kindly performed her second ceremony of the day by officially opening the newly refurbished Boutique. Anne admired the shop and even bagged a few great bargains before departing.

Proceedings were concluded with even more chat, banter and lots of tea and homemade biscuits provided by the hard-working and efficient CE team and staff in the Day Centre.



Sister Aine O'Brien with the Daughters of Charity, Centre Manager, Anne Kavanagh and Kevin Ryan, planting a tree to commemorate their contribution to the Carnew Community Centre at the 40th anniversary celebrations.

Running toward their goals

Recently nearly 500 West Wicklow primary school students gathered at Ballymore Eustace GAA running track for a special celebration of the Marathon Kids event, marking the programme's halfway point with Olympic athlete David Gillick. The programme involves the children training in four running sessions per week, over an eight week period, until they have reached their marathon goal of 42.2 kilometres.



Matilda Ayton from Donard National School with Olympian David Gillick.

The Wicklow Marathon Kids event saw enthusiastic participants from Donard NS, St. Mary's SNS Blessington, Scoil Naomh Iosaf Baltinglass, Scoil Niocláis Naofa Dunlavin, Jonathan Swift NS, St. Laurence O'Toole NS, Gaelscoil ns Lochanna and Blessington No.1 School join the Olympian to celebrate their progress and continue their journey toward completing the full marathon distance.

Cllr Aoife Flynn-Kennedy, Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, commented on the initiative, stating, "The

Marathon Kids event is more than just a running programme; it's a foundation for lifelong fitness and health awareness. Initiatives like these are crucial in instilling the values of physical health and perseverance in our children."

Emer O'Gorman, Chief Executive, Wicklow County Council, said: "It's important that we encourage our young people to get involved in physical activity and develop a healthy lifestyle. Events like Marathon Kids are a great way to do this, and I'm delighted to see so

many young people taking part in Wicklow."

David Gillick, renowned for his performance in the 400 metres and 4x400 metres relay at the 2008

Beijing Olympics, led the children through a dynamic session of exercises and stretches. His presence provided a significant boost to the young runners, reinforcing the importance of physical activity.

Speaking at the event he said, "My own passion for running was sparked by the encouragement I received from my primary school teacher. I hope today's event inspires these kids to keep up their running and to remain active throughout their lives."

Michael Nicholson, Director of Services for Wicklow County Council who officially opened the event, expressed his admiration for the children's hard work and dedication: "It is truly inspiring to see these young children pushing themselves to achieve such a great goal. Seeing the joy and determination on their faces of these children today reinforces the value of incorporating physical fitness into our educational curriculum."

Aisling Hubbard, Coordinator at Wicklow Sports and Recreation Partnership, commented on the progress of the programme, "This is our second year running the Marathon Kids programme. Reaching the halfway point is a major milestone for these young runners. The Marathon Kids programme not only teaches them about the benefits of physical activity but also builds their confidence and determination. We would like to thank all the teachers for their support and all of the volunteers that made today possible."



Grace Whelan from Blessington No.1 School.



Deputy CEO of Wicklow County Council Michael Nicholson, Olympian David Gillick and Aisling Hubbard, Co-ordinator with the Wicklow Aports & Recreation Partnership, pictured with students from Gaelscoil na Lochanna.



Ava Hannigan and Mary Brett Kelly from Donard National School.

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Grainne and Eleanor Shannon with 1993 Eurovision winner Niamh Kavanagh at the Mobile Music Machine in Asgard Lodge Nursing Home, Arklow.

A day filled with music, dance, and fun at Irish Goa Day 2024

Get ready for a day of pure bliss as the Irish Goan Community invites you to an unforgettable Irish and Goan culture celebration at Irish Goa Day 2024! Mark your calendars for Saturday, June 1st, 2024, and head over to Burnaby Park in Greystones for an exciting day.

Experience the thrill of live performances by some of the finest talents around! Groove to the beats of the Top Goan band "Tidal Waves", tap your feet to the tunes of local Irish musician "Robbie Doyle", and dance the night away with your favourite "DJ Ernest"!

But that's not all! Indulge your taste buds with mouth-watering traditional Goan, Indian and Irish cuisine, explore the vibrant flea

market, and watch your little ones blast in the kid's play area. Don't miss your chance to win big in our mega raffle draw trip to Portugal.

The Irish Goan Community, established in 1996, is dedicated to supporting those in need, both financially and emotionally. From aiding tsunami victims to assisting the homeless and sick, their mission is to make a positive difference in our community and beyond.

But wait, there's more! Craft markets, games, hair braiding, henna tattoos, and authentic Goan curry await you.

"We promise an experience like no other, filled with laughter, joy, and unforgettable memories. So come one, come all, and join us at Burnaby Park on Saturday, June 1, 2024, for a day of sheer delight at Irish Goa Day 2024! Let's celebrate culture, community, and compassion together."



Kevin McGahern is back with his brand new show *Shy Talker* on 25th May in Whale Theatre, 8pm (doors 7pm). Looking back on the last year of his life the terminally lazy Cavan comedian now realises going on *Dancing With The Stars* with a 6 week old baby at home may not have been the smartest idea in the world. Join Kevin for a night of jokes, japes, songs and stories in what many people are calling "the greatest stand up show ever at that particular time within that specific price range!"

Naturalness: an exhibition by Paula Iacovone

Signal Arts Centre, Monday 27th May to Sunday 9th June



Paula Iacovone's exhibition will showcase works with the motifs of flowers because flowers are nature's biggest show-offs. She intends to celebrate them in her work. Her paintings are all in oils and depict the Magical Realism realm from which she draws inspiration.

Paula graduated from The Institute of Art, Design and Technology in 2024, with a BA Honours in Art, her bouquets are often accompanied by creatures, like birds, fish, and small critters. Touching upon a mysterious nature with a colourful, vibrant, and energetic palette where lyric painting informs a universal congenial idiom.

Exploring alternate existences by tapping into unknown scenes and various other dimensions, she invites viewers to a whimsical, colourful journey to a world that transcends logic.

All Welcome. Opening Reception:
Friday 31st May 2024, 7pm to 9pm

Wicklow-based author celebrates 'The Weather Girls' who changed world history

Inspired by true events that went unrecognised for 70 years, a new children's book by Sarah Webb was launched at a special event at Halfway Up the Stairs children's bookshop in Greystones on 11th May.

Published by The O'Brien Press, 'The Weather Girls' is inspired by the story of Maureen Sweeney who, on the eve of her 21st birthday, provided hourly weather reports on a storm front from Blacksod Lighthouse and weather station to the war office in England, which proved crucial to the success of D-Day, the largest seaborne invasion in history.

A tale of bravery, adventure and friendship for readers aged nine and older, the book was close to completion when Maureen Sweeney passed away last December, aged 100. While researching the book, author Sarah Webb was helped by Maureen's grandson Fergus, who grew up in the lighthouse and is now head of visitor experience there, to retell his grandmother's story through the book's young heroine, twelve-year-old Grace Devine.

Seeing 'The Emergency' through Grace's young eyes, Webb explores how the second World War impacted the small rural community at Blacksod through the rationing of food and fuel, and confronts the question of Ireland's neutrality head-on when Grace and her friend Sibby risk their lives to save

a young German airman who crash lands on the Mayo coast.

Speaking on the launch of the book, Webb hopes 'The Weather Girls' will inspire young readers as well as inform them of Ireland's role in World War Two: "Maureen's story might have been written by a Hollywood movie-maker - a young woman in the 1940s who left her home in Kerry to work at a remote weather station in this small community, and ended up changing the course of world history through something as everyday as a weather report. What a fantastic story to tell young readers, to inspire them that small actions can not just change the world, but save it.

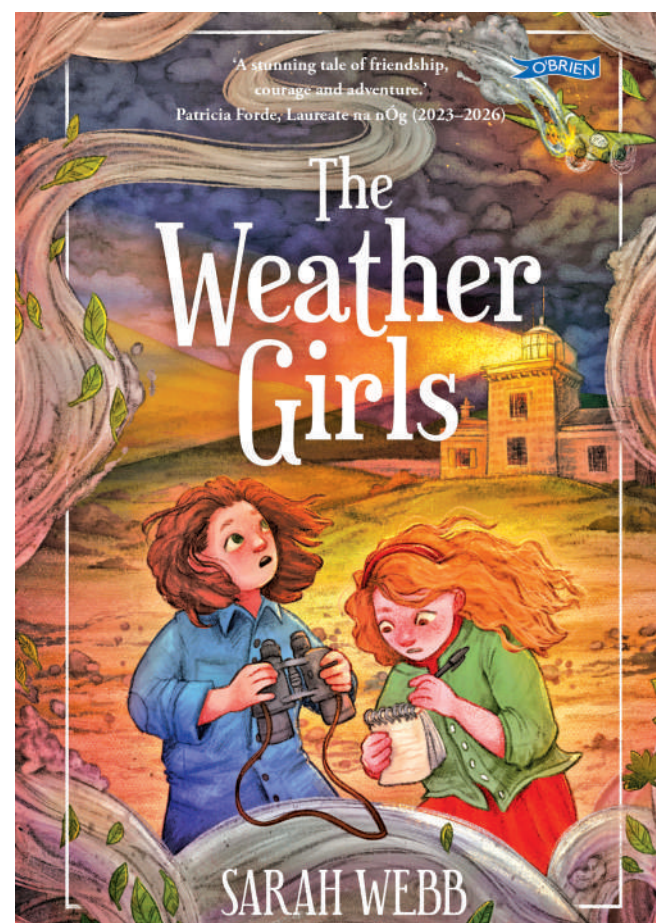
"I think it's important that children learn about Ireland's experience of The Emergency and consider the complicated feelings many must have had about our neutrality while bombs were dropped on Belfast just up the road. Today, many parents and teachers have to consider how to talk to children about the world's modern conflicts, but history gives us the perfect way into those conversations. We all learn from stories, and Maureen's is a story which every

child should know."

Fergus Sweeney, who includes his grandmother's story in his tour for school groups visiting Blacksod Lighthouse, agrees. "It is so special to our family that Sarah has captured our granny's story for children, a story we grew up with. We always knew that our grandparents had played this historic part in the war, but it's not until you tell it to others that you really see the huge significance of the lives those weather reports saved.

"Being 24-hours from the French coastline, the Blacksod Lighthouse weather station was perfectly located to inform the Allies' plans for D-Day. Without those hourly updates on the stormfront, the course of history might have run very differently.

"On our tours, we show visitors the instruments which Maureen used for those weather reports, something which Sarah captures wonderfully in the book - how crucial the accuracy of those reports was. When you think about the technology and equipment used to monitor the weather now, it really does make Maureen's role all the more inspiring. She was a young woman working in a scientific field and she was part of something so historic from right here in this small Irish village."



O deer: Wicklow singer releases debut album

O Deer releases his debut album 'OS' on CD and digital this week on 20th May. O Deer is the musical project of Oisín Walsh-Peelo from Co. Wicklow (now living in Cork).

Speaking about his recently released single 'Syros' from his album, O Deer says: "I wrote Syros when I went away to an island of the same name in Greece to write music for a few weeks. I found it amusing that my problems followed me there - even within the most idyllic circumstance, you can be plagued with doubt. Equally, however, upon returning home I found within the mundanity of everyday life, an ability to slip into the more positive, 'beach' mindset as well. This song is a playful, tongue-in-cheek expression of that strange duality and I had a lot of fun recording it. We played with lots of found-percussion during the process and had a brushed-bodhrán emulate sea-sounds. I loved learning the bouzouki and the baglamas (another traditional Greek instrument) while away, and they both feature heavily in this song. The

song features field recordings I took on the island of Syros as well - (listen out at the end!)."

Inspired by folk idioms, Oisín's music is mellow and delicate, and draws from his diverse musical language.

Oisín has travelled extensively with his music. As a session musician (piano, guitars, harp, low-whistles and vocalist) he has played throughout the USA, Europe, Ireland, and the UK. He has toured worldwide with a wide range of artists and bands including Hudson Taylor, Gabrielle Aplin, Hannah-Grace, Villagers, Sun Collective, and I Have a Tribe. Since the release of his first EP 'O Deer', Oisín has played support for Hozier in the USA, Joseph (US), Departure Lounge (UK), among others.

As touring and live music came to a stop in 2020, Oisín used this slower pace to record his debut album, speaking of the process, he

says: "The bulk of this album was recorded between April - June 2020, a span of time that will go down in history, the world was in disarray and everything felt strange and unknown. Despite the chaos, however, I found a beautiful sanctuary in the making of this album. For the first time in my life I paused. I had time to listen in earnest to the sounds around me - the clacks of the sparrow on my roof, the purr of the wood pigeon, the slow drip-drops of spring-rain on the studio, the cautious, slow approach of wind through the forest, the resonance of an open-strung guitar.

"My illustrious and endlessly talented brother Ferdia helped me capture some of these moments within this selection of my songs and I present them here for you in album form. I hope that it grants you some of the joy, quietude, and solace it brought us in making it."



Oisín Walsh-Peelo. Picture by Thady Trá

A final performance from Kilrush Drama Group - All Ireland winners

Kilrush Drama Group, Winners of The All Ireland Confined Drama Final will do one final performance of their multi award winning production of *Hooked* by Gillian Grattan in St. Brigid's Hall Carnew on Thursday the 23rd of May at 8pm.

Niall McGrath won Best Director at the All Ireland Drama Finals, and he also picked up seven out of eight Best Director awards on the Festival Circuit. Lar Duffy was the winner of the Best Stage Manager award at the All Ireland while Kay Cahill and John Redmond were nominated for Best Actress and Best Actor and Kevin McEvoy was nominated for Best Lighting. Kay,

John and Kevin were also winners of these awards on the Circuit, as was Erin Hogan who won both Best Actress and Best Supporting Actress awards. The Group also won other awards on the Circuit, including Best Technical, Best sound and Best Set.

Don't miss this final opportunity to see this 2024 award winning play.

Mónica Muñoz Dance presents: Fall and Float



Dance Performance for School and Family Audiences 4+ years.
Mermaid Arts Centre, Thursday
23rd May, 10am & 12pm.
Bookings through Box Office
01 272 4030

With playful energy, impressive acrobatics, comic timing and a joyful soundscape, two dancers create a magical world through the clever manipulation of simple balloons.

Their imagination seems to know no bounds - resulting in a hypnotic, funny and uplifting performance full of falling, throwing, catching, stumbling, floating... and sometimes maybe even a little bit of flying...

Created by Mónica Muñoz
Choreography: Mónica Muñoz in collaboration with the dancers
Performed by Martijn Joling and Amy Pender

Music and Sound Design: Denis Clohessy
Set & Costume Design: Laura Fajardo Castro

Lighting Design: Sebastian Pizarro
Tour Producer Michelle Cahill

Photo Credits: Maurice Gunning
The FALL and FLOAT National Tour is kindly supported by: The Arts Council and Meitheal: A Branar Initiative.

Teachers go free. Teachers packs will be available. Duration: 40 minutes

Jazzing on a Sunday Afternoon

Whale Theatre, Sunday 26th May, 4pm (doors 3pm).
Tickets €16 and available at www.whaletheatre.ie or call the booking office on 01 2010550.

Come and join jazz musicians from Wicklow and beyond for a wonderful selection of classic jazz standards, ranging from the Great American songbook, bossa nova, swing tunes, blues, bebop, funk and more. A relaxed afternoon featuring popular tunes, that will appeal to all music lovers.

Presenting four new and exciting bands, with musicians from the long established Wicklow Jazz Jam sessions that have been running since 2018. Local singers Dara MacMahon, Marion Smith and Anita Malzone will weave magic with their dulcet tones, and a dizzying array of the finest jazz musicians will feature.

Relax in the intimacy of the Whale Theatre, the perfect venue for some jazz on a Sunday afternoon!





Josie Flynn and Roma Hennessy at the Delgany ICA Alzheimer's Tea Day in St. Kilian's Hall, Greystones

National Volunteering Week

*A dedicated service for care-givers, offered by
Bray Citizens Information Centre*

National Volunteering Week is a weeklong celebration of volunteering which runs from the 20th to 26th May this year. It allows organisations, such as the Citizens Information Service, to highlight the incredible stories of volunteering in our local communities such as the contribution our volunteers make at a time when we need support more than ever. The theme for National Volunteer Week 2024 is 'Uniquely Us'.

Kasha Huse Byrne played an instrumental role in establishing a unique service in Bray Citizens Information Centre for those who are caring for a loved one. The free and confidential face-to-face clinic is provided by Kasha and is aimed at parents or parental supervisors of children and teenagers with severe disabilities. The service, which takes place twice a month, also caters to carers of adults with disabilities, or ageing conditions such as degenerative diseases that require constant care and attention. Together with the CIC team, Kasha makes sure that her clients feel comfortable, supported, seen and heard when they drop in to meet her.

We talked to Kasha Huse, the founder of the Domiciliary Care Allowance (DCA) Clinic, to find out more.

How did you come up with this idea?

"I started to volunteer with the CIC 8 years ago. During this time I realised there was a need for a specialist support service for people with disabilities who wished to avail of the Domiciliary Care Allowance scheme. This is a monthly payment for a child aged under 16 with a severe disability. The child must need ongoing care and attention substantially over and above that usually needed by a child of the same age and it is not means tested. However, the Domiciliary Care Allowance application form is complicated and time is needed to help my clients to fill in this application and this can vary from one to two hours. So I proposed to the Development Manager that a specialist clinic be established in Bray CIC and she agreed to my proposal".

My voluntary work gives me a feeling of making a difference in my local community, contributing in a meaningful way to the lives of those who are struggling. I feel confident that my clients leave Bray CIC with a lighter step and a sense of relief that they now have a champion who will support them and provide them with much needed assistance and to the best of my knowledge this is the only specialist DCA clinic across the national network of CICs.

How does it work?

"Carers are usually limited with time as many are 'on call' almost all day. That is why we give them an appointment, to facilitate them when they actually can come in and focus. If they need a second session, we can absolutely do that. So I am on the journey with them. We have made accommodations for people with sensory issues, for example, we meet them in spacious rooms, we remove clocks or other noise-producing devices. So, if an adult with special needs comes in with a companion, or they need to walk around while talking, we support that".

What motivated you to start this journey?

"I have a child with special needs, so I understand the pressure and stress of caring for a loved one. I was the grateful recipient of assistance from my local CIC and this inspired me to train to become a volunteer and offer to support others in the same situation as myself. I have this lived experience which enables me to be empathetic and understanding. I do my best to empower my clients to make progress, making small changes and I am there to support them. The consultations can be very emotional, bringing to surface a lot of the anxiety and pain that having a beloved one struggling entails, so it is very valuable to have support from someone who understands your journey.

How often is the clinic taking place?

"It used to be one month, but because often one client would need two appointments, we moved it to two per month".



Kasha Huse, the founder of the Domiciliary Care Allowance (DCA) Clinic

Do you work with experts in some areas?

"I am very fortunate that I work with a team of Information Providers who are always on hand to assist me where necessary. We work closely as a team in Bray CIC, supporting each other and I know I can always prevail upon the expertise of a colleague when I need it. I love volunteering with Bray CIC. I volunteer in a dynamic and agile working environment which motivates us to be creative in the way we address changing community needs, by really listening to the people and making those small, but important changes so everyone, no matter their age, abilities, gender or nationality, feels welcome and truly supported".

National Biodiversity Week Connecting communities with nature

Wicklow County Council has announced its participation in National Biodiversity Week, an annual celebration aimed at connecting communities with nature and raising awareness about the importance of biodiversity conservation. Running from the 17th to 26th of May, residents and visitors are invited to join in a series of events that showcase the rich natural heritage of Wicklow's landscapes.

Events in Wicklow include a whale watching event on Bray Head, a guided biodiversity walk in Blessington, a nocturnal bat walk in Rathnew. There will be three evenings of nocturnal exploration, investigation and a little immersion. These evenings will be focused on Wicklow's deer, barn owls and bats and moths. There will also be a daytime adventure in Tomnafinnoge Woods and the Derry River. More information on events taking place in Wicklow can be found on the National Biodiversity Week website.

Instigated by the Irish Environmental Network (IEN), National Biodiversity Week is a nationwide initiative dedicated to communicating the importance of biodiversity and motivating individuals to play their part in protecting it. This year, Wicklow County Council is proud to contribute to the festivities with a range of activities designed to celebrate the wonders of nature and inspire action for its preservation.

"Our participation in National Biodiversity Week underscores our commitment to preserving and promoting the natural beauty of Wicklow," said Cllr Aoife Flynn Kennedy, Cathaoirleach

of Wicklow County Council. "These events provide an excellent opportunity for our community to come together, learn about our local biodiversity, and explore ways to safeguard it for future generations."

Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council, Emer O'Gorman said, "These events offer valuable opportunities for our community to connect with nature and deepen their understanding of biodiversity conservation. Through education and engagement, we can all contribute to the preservation of our natural heritage."

Whether you're a seasoned nature enthusiast or simply curious about the natural world, there's something for everyone to enjoy during National Biodiversity Week.

Green TD Steven Matthews has encouraged Wicklow residents to attend the wide range of events. Speaking before the week began, Deputy Matthews said: "This year's National Biodiversity Week promises to be one of the best-ever with a jammed packed schedule of events and interactive experiences planned around Wicklow. There are a range of family-friendly events which invite

people of all ages to learn more about the rich natural heritage that we have here in Wicklow. I would encourage everyone to get involved in these events next week.

"National Biodiversity Week draws attention to the biodiversity crisis that we are facing both globally and in Ireland, where 1 in 3 native Irish bees are threatened by extinction. Protection of the natural environment is a key priority of the Green Party in Government. We have increased funding for the National Parks and Wildlife Service, allocated funding for the appointment of Biodiversity Officers in local authorities across the country and delivered a National Biodiversity Action Plan.

"It is incredibly important that we continue to raise awareness of the need to protect and restore our natural habitats through events such as National Biodiversity Week. I'm looking forward to attending several events in Wicklow next week and I hope to meet as many local residents as possible getting the chance to see the amazing biodiversity on their doorsteps," Deputy Matthews concluded

PLANNING

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

We Bruna Silvestri Gomes and Jose Renato Maurilio Gomes intend to apply for Permission for the conversion of existing Attic into walk-in storage space and home office including new internal stairs, gable window, roof lights to front and back of the house and all ancillary associate works at No. 7 Hawkins Wood Close, Greystones. The planning application may be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy at the offices of Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Wicklow during its public opening hours and a submission or observation in relation to the application may be made to the authority on payment of the prescribed fee within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the application.

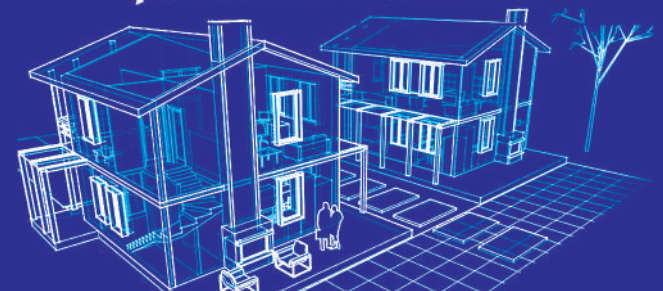
WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

Michael Quinn seeks planning permission for: Attic Conversion including new roof lights to front and rear roof slopes along with new frosted windows in existing gable wall at 24 Archers Wood Drive, Delgany, Co. Wicklow. A63 AD81 The planning application may be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy at the offices of Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Wicklow during its public opening hours and a submission or observation in relation to the application may be made to the authority on payment of the prescribed fee within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the application.

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Its prime location near Dundrum Shopping Centre, the RDS, and Dun Laoghaire makes it a favourite choice for visitors. Talbot Hotel said "As we raise our glasses to this milestone, we invite you to join us in celebrating the enduring legacy of Talbot Hotel Stillorgan's true testament to the spirit of Irish hospitality."



Codling Wind Park Consents Manager Lis Royle, Codling Wind Park Project Director Scott Sutherland and Alison Ryder at the Codling Wind Park project information reception in Wicklow Library.

Innovation and creativity in abundance at Kinia Creative Tech youth events

Over 600 of Ireland's future engineering and digital change-makers gathered at The Foundry in Google's EMEA HQ in Dublin recently to attend key events as part of Kinia's Creative Technology Week. Among them were members of Bray Youth Service.

Kinia, an education focused non-profit organisation and social enterprise is empowering educators to equip young people with future-focused skills to unlock their full potential. Now in its 11th year, Kinia's Creative Technology Week includes bilingual events, welcoming guests working in all types of youth focussed organisations.



Bray Youth Service at Kinia's Creative Technology Week

CLASSIFIEDS

THE MIRACULOUS PRAYER

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

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tions and roles, including teachers, family resource centre professionals, youth workers and young people aged between 12-18 years.

The events showcase the incredible creative technology projects young people throughout Ireland have been working on all year, in the areas of STEAM, Digital Media and Computer Science.

Kinia's Creative Technology Week culminated with two flagship events hosted in Google at The Foundry in Dublin. Tech Feile, an all-Irish event, and Creative Tech Fest, a bilingual event, marking a now annual celebration

of creative technology in Ireland, for young people and those working in schools and youth focused organisations.

Jessica McCarthy, Vice President and Engineering Site Lead of Google Dublin said: "Community-focused, inclusive events like Kinia's Creative Technology Week are absolutely vital to make sure that no young person is left behind in an increasingly complex and digital future."

Young people enjoyed a full programme of interactive workshops and makerspace activities including the highlight of the event for many - the Kinia Hydrogen Grand Prix (H2GP) Competition, the culmination of a programme which challenges tomorrow's young innovators to design, engineer, build and race their own hydrogen powered

cars (using kits sent out to participating schools and youth organisations in advance).

Throughout the H2GP programme, these future leaders develop the creativity, ingenuity and real-world problem-solving skills needed to tackle tomorrow's energy challenges.

Another event highlight was the Google Chrome Flex Station, a green initiative, whereby schools could bring their old hardware such as old PC/Macs to be transformed into usable Chromebooks, providing schools greater access to technology at a low cost by upcycling old hardware.

The week ended with the Kinia Creative Technology Award Ceremony where excellence in a range of digital and STEM projects was celebrated.



Gill Toal, Dan Corrigan, Cllr Melanie Corrigan, Tina Roche, Alex Pigott, and Marie Power

Enniskerry National Spring Clean Day

A wonderful community day was held in Enniskerry on Saturday before last when the Community came together for the annual An Taisce National spring clean Day.

This year it had the added attraction of a plant and seed sale and all proceeds went to the very active Enniskerry Tidy Towns Team, also on sale were the 2gocups, which are also being sold in all the coffee shops in the Village to promote Enniskerry being a paper cup free village. Cllr Melanie Corrigan, Cathaoirleach of Bray Municipal District, who attended on the day, said "The whole day was a resounding success, with the sale being held in the wonderful venue at the Dixons Well community Garden.



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