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Tuesday 11th June 2024 First Floor, The Boulevard, Quinsborough Road, Bray. A98 R6D7. Tel: 01 - 2869111 E-mail: wicklowed@localtimes.ie www.wicklowtimes.net

INDEPENDENTS' DAY

The local elections in County Wicklow threw up some surprise victories and some unexpected disappointments for some long-serving councillors.

The story of the election was that Sinn Féin failed to make the breakthrough that had been expected; Independents polled very well all over the county taking about 30% of the total vote and both Fine Gael and Fianna Fáil lost ground. Wicklow is divided into six Local Election Areas (LEAs), and all had Independent candidates who polled ahead of expectations.

In the Baltinglass

area, Gerry O'Neill, a one-time Sinn Féin member but now running as an Independent, topped the poll. Also, in this area Fine Gael did very well retaining 3 of the six seats. First-time candidate, Peter Stapleton, was attempting to retain the seat held by western councillor Vincent Blake. Based in Tinahely he polled extremely well and was the probable cause of John Mullen (FF), who is also based in the

area, losing out.

In the Arklow LEA, Independent Pier Leonard came in second to poll topper Pat Kennedy (FF). Fianna Fáil had held three seats here but Tommy Annesley lost out this time round with Sinn Féin gaining a seat.

In the Wicklow LEA John Snell a one-time Sinn Féin councillor, but now running as an Independent topped the poll. Shane Langrell a first-time candidate for Fine Gael came third



Independent councillor Tom Fortune with Aoife Sweeney, Kerrie Fortune, Catriona Whiston and John Kelly at the count centre at Shoreline Leisure Centre in Greystones. See more, pages 9-12. Pic: Michael Kelly

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filling the seat that had been held by retiring councillor Shay Cullen. Labour had Paul O'Brien returned (their only elected representative in Co Wicklow). Gail Dunne held his seat for Fianna Fáil with sitting Independent Councillor, Mary Kavanagh losing her seat to Social Democrat newcomer, Danny Alvey.

In Greystones LEA Independent councillor Stephen Stokes (former Labour Party) topped the poll followed by another Independent councillor, Tom Fortune (former Labour Party). Fine Gael had put huge resources into a campaign here in an attempt to get two councillors elected. However, they only

succeeded in getting Louise Gaskin across the line. Lourda Scott held her seat for the Green Party and Mark Barry held for the Social Democrats. Jack Commons failed to hold the seat vacated by Gerry Walsh (FF).

In Bray West which also includes Enniskerry and Kilmacanogue, Independent Joe Behan was the runaway success topping the poll with a thousand votes to spare. He was closely followed by Councillor Melanie Corrigan (FG) and Dermot 'Daisy' O'Brien of Sinn Féin. The final seat was taken by Social Democrat newcomer Dr. Caroline Winstanley.

Continued on page 9

Cllr. Melanie CORRIGAN

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Football clubs in Newtown launch fundraiser

Volunteers of Newtownmountkenedy Area Sports Development, who hold the lease on the sports pitch in the town, known as the Matt Kelly grounds, have launched a fundraising campaign for desperately needed facilities.

Currently the community grounds does not have any changing facilities or toilets for the children, teenagers and adults who play with the two football clubs Newtown Juniors and Newtown United. Security fencing

is also needed for the pitch and the playing surface needs substantial ground works and drainage.

The population of Newtownmountkenedy has grown substantially in recent years but, in

terms of sport facilities, the volunteers of the local clubs feel they have been very under-resourced.

"We are currently the only football club in all of north Wicklow, that I know of, that doesn't

have basic facilities for the kids and adults that play football with us," said chairman of Newtown United and the driving force behind the fundraiser, Mick O'Dwyer.

"We lease the pitch

from Wicklow County Council but it is basically just a field. We used to use toilets and changing rooms in the nearby Community Centre but these are no longer available. We really have an emergency on our hands here and feel really let down in the community when it comes to facilities for our kids, both boys and girls. Because of the lack of changing rooms and toilets, we don't currently have a women's team. It is crazy to think that four professional footballers have come through the club,

Paul Heffernan, Clive Clarke, Paul McShane, Katie Taylor and, our latest star in the making, Mason Melia, and yet we don't even have a basic clubhouse to show for it. The clubs are been put under pressure from the Wicklow and district football league to find alternative venues because of the poor quality of the facilities. We are losing kids as young as 8 to other clubs in the area that have better facilities and if this continues I can't see a future for our football clubs in the town. I'm calling on all

local businesses and individuals to support our fundraiser, and for the Council and Government to step in and help us more."

Also supporting the fundraiser, Social Democrats representative from Newtown Danny Alvey said: "Passionate members of the football clubs approached me last year to help them with accessing grants to improve their facilities. I work in fundraising for a living so I used this experience to help them write their first ever Sports Capital Grant application last year for

security fencing. These grants are due to be announced within weeks and I am hoping it will be successful. I have two very small kids and when they are a bit older I'm hoping they will have the opportunity to play football here in the town so I will continue to work with the clubs to get these desperately needed and deserved facilities. In the meantime, I urge everyone to consider supporting this fundraiser."

Donations to the fundraiser can be made online at [idonate.ie/fundraiser/nasdfund](https://www.idonate.ie/fundraiser/nasdfund).

Newtown group calls for positive integration of migrants in community

Following a turbulent month for the people of Newtownmountkenedy, a group of concerned residents and supporters have established Newtown Together.

The focus of this group, they explain, is the introduction of "constructive dialogue to address and alleviate the fears of residents - old and new, and to work on positive integration for the seekers of asylum who have been placed in River Lodge (formerly Trudder House)."

Newtown Together also calls on the government to listen to the needs of a growing community.

In a statement, Newtown Together said "The people of Newtownmountkenedy are hurt, divided, and scared. What was once a village, has expanded into a town in recent years and despite calls for adequate amenities, this has not transpired. It is imperative that now, more than ever, the needs of Newtownmountkenedy are not neglected by the Irish government.

"Unfortunately, the tipping point

for this community occurred last month with the views of members of the community about the IPAS centre not being listened to.

"Poor communication meant the situation escalated into a tense one that had divided the community. Anger and frustration have at times tipped into generalisation, stereotyping and ultimately racial profiling which has attracted the attention of national and international far-right activists.

"While integration is an inevitable and natural progression, the concerns of the community of Newtownmountkenedy around the lack of support and services mustn't be ignored. Areas that are already under pressure, and will continue to come under strain unless addressed, include the healthcare services, a lack of primary school spaces, a lack

of a secondary school, inadequate community facilities and services for the residents of Newtownmountkenedy and newcomers.

"While Asylum seekers deserve safety as a basic human right, they are now caught in the middle of the division that has been created, due to inadequate Government policies. It is important that the community can listen to each other respectfully. It is also important that our elected representatives, nationally and locally, help the community find that common ground by listening to the calls to find solutions and necessary positive actions representing the wishes of everyone in this friendly, tight-knit and diverse community.

"We know that, in welcoming others, we will build a kind, tolerant and welcoming environment. However, we cannot do this alone."



Irish Goa Day was celebrated in Burnaby Park, Greystones on Saturday 1st June, organised by Milla Hancock and her committee. The event coincided with the first day of Pride Month and so the Diversity Garda vehicle was on loan for the day from the National Diversity Office in Phoenix Park.

Cake Sale in aid of the Pallottine Union of Apostolate

The annual cake sale will take place after the 10 a.m. and 12 noon Masses on Sunday June 16th in St. Anne's Resource Centre, beside St. Anne's Church, Dublin Road, Shankill. Cathy's cards will also be available for purchase. Donations of cakes can be dropped into St. Anne's Resource Centre between 4pm and 5pm on June 15th.

Tinahely Library events

15th June - 11am to 12noon - Cruinniu na NOg - Sustainable Sewing for 8-12 year olds - Nature inspired art using recycled textiles/trims/buttons etc - booking essential as spaces limited; 19th June - 3pm - Summer Stars Arts & Crafts for children -

family event - all welcome; 29th June - 12noon to 1pm - Summer Stars Luke's Deadly Dinosaurs - all welcome

Bereavement support meeting

Anam Cara will hold their South East in-person meeting in The Brandon House Hotel, New Ross on Tuesday 11th June at 7:15pm. All bereaved parents are welcome to this free event, regardless of circumstances of death or the age of the child. For further information on this event and all other supports Anam Cara offer, their information line is 085 2888 888 or email info@anamcara.ie

Blessington Welcomes website goes live

The Blessington Welcomes website is a new comprehensive community directory designed to connect residents, newcomers, and visitors with everything the town has to offer. Moving to a new town can be daunting, but the Blessington Welcomes directory makes it easier. The website is available in over 20 languages, and provides essential information on schools, transportation, and tips for settling into the area. We're here to help you feel at home from day one.

Maedhbh McDonald, chair of Blessington Welcomes, said "Our mission is to foster a connected, informed, and engaged community. By providing a central hub for information and resources, we aim to support local clubs, promote community events, and enhance the quality of life for all residents. We created this website to celebrate our diverse community and to foster the dynamic and connected foundations on which it has been built. We hope this directory will be a valuable resource for everyone, whether you're a lifelong resident or just starting to explore all that Blessington has to offer."

Visit www.blessingtonwelcomes.com to start exploring.

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Govt being 'let off the hook' in dealing with vacant housing

A lack of fight in Wicklow County Council is letting the Government off the hook when it comes to dealing with vacant and boarded up houses across Wicklow according to Bray's Sinn Féin members.

Sinn Féin candidates for Bray, Cllr Mick Ryan, Cllr Dermot O'Brien, and Denise Cahill hit out strongly against the Council in Wicklow who "have allowed the Taoiseach Simon Harris's government off the hook over its failure to address the issue of vacant and boarded up houses in Bray and across the county of Wicklow."

The Sinn Féin team stated that funding is needed to allow local authorities to develop the capacity to carry out badly needed repairs and upkeep on houses to allow the homes to re-let as soon as possible.

"This can only be done by the recruitment of teams of tradespeople that could carry out work at the Councils direction at short notice when needed, as was the case in the past," they said.

Cllr Mick Ryan said: "We are in the midst of a chronic housing shortage. It is the number one political challenge for the government. A whole generation have been affected by the mess that this government has created in housing. And incredibly when my party colleague John Brady TD questioned the Secretary General of the Department of Housing at a

meeting of the Public Accounts Committee late last year, he was told that there were approx 2,000 vacant and boarded up local authority houses across the state, 145 of which are in Wicklow. Some of which have been left vacant for up to two to three years. We need to see a focussed and resourced Council policy towards reletting properties as soon as possible. This can only be achieved through government support and commitment."

Cllr Dermot 'Daisy' Brien said: "When we talk about vacant and boarded up houses, we are not just talking about empty shells, they are potential homes, sanctuaries of safety and security to some of the many, many families who have found their hopes and dreams crushed by the failure of the government to address the housing crisis in this state."

"The fact that Wicklow County Council are unable to draw down the funding required from central government to allow these properties to be repaired and brought up to a standard in a timely and efficient manner means that many families who are in housing distress find themselves walking

past these properties on a daily basis.

"Last year the Department of housing had an underspend of over half a billion euro, and yet they are unable to provide local authorities, such as Wicklow County Council with the funds that could resource the Housing dept to put 145 houses back into use for families, that could support people presenting as homeless, that could provide assurance for people in housing distress and that would ensure that they are equipped to respond to the vulnerable people who are asking for help on a daily basis.

Candidate Denise Cahill said: "My party colleague John Brady TD has called on the Minister for Housing Darragh O'Brien and his department to engage with Wicklow County Council where we have an identifiable and quantifiable housing stock that can be brought into use for families if the government provides the local authorities with sufficient funding to do so. One of the major problems we have in Bray and County Wicklow is that fact that there are coteries of Cllrs who do not want to fight for ordinary people."



A special presentation was made by Wicklow County Council to long-serving Wicklow Municipal District councillors Shay Cullen and Irene Winters, who both decided not to run for re-election this year.ictured are Cllr. Paul O'Brien; Cllr. Mary Kavanagh; Cllr. Shay Cullen; Cllr. John Snell; Cllr. Irene Winters; Wicklow Municipal District Manager, Brian Gleeson; Cllr. Gail Dunne and District Engineer, Pat Clarke. See more, page 8.

3,334 empty homes in Wicklow

Uplift, a people-powered campaign group, is urging political candidates who have been elected to prioritise bringing empty houses back into use. Research commissioned by Uplift has shown that Wicklow County Council could be doing much more to turn empty houses into homes.

Uplift's research has uncovered that councils could do far more to buy and lease empty houses; make it easier for families to access unused grants; work with businesses to turn empty main streets into vibrant communities; accurately count the number of vacant and derelict buildings in the county.

Patrick Kelleher, a Campaigner

at Uplift, said: "No matter who we are or where we come from, we all need a home where we can sleep at night, knowing that we will wake up tomorrow feeling safe and secure. But far too many of us are living on edge, not knowing where we'll live month to month, year to year. We have so much space for everyone, but can't use it."

"With elections on the horizon, politicians need to know that the only way to get and stay elected is to open empty homes for everyone who needs one, no exceptions. So we're asking election candidates to sign up to our pledge now, to show voters that they will prioritise turning empty houses into homes if they get elected."

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Plans announced for additional 706 acute hospital inpatient beds

The Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly has announced an additional 706 beds for the Dublin Southeast healthcare region under the new Acute Hospital Inpatient Bed Capacity Expansion Plan.

The plan has been introduced in response to the ongoing Health Service Capacity Review and aims to bring the number of beds in HSE Dublin Southeast from 2.2 per 100,000 people to 2.6. This will improve access to hospital in-patient care for patients across South-East Dublin, Carlow, Kilkenny, South Tipperary, Waterford, Wexford and

most areas of Wicklow. It also delivers on the Minister's commitment to ensure balanced regional bed capacity and to ensure patients across Ireland have equity of access (see table below). The plan includes: 195 new beds in St. Vincent's University Hospital; 97 new beds in Wexford General Hospital; 98 new beds in University

Hospital Waterford; 82 new beds in St. Luke's General Hospital Kilkenny; 48 new beds in South Tipperary University Hospital; 18 new beds in Kilcreene Orthopaedic Hospital; 60 new beds (additional capacity) in the new National Maternity Hospital. The plan does not include rehab, subacute or specialist beds. Minister Donnelly said: "The next seven years will see significant expansion in hospital capacity across the Dublin and South East region. It is vital that our health service

responses to the healthcare needs of the population, and we must deliver improvements that respond to changing demographics. "I'm confident that this plan will help to deliver a better service for people across the South East. We're building on the significant developments in the region in the last few years and with additional capacity in acute inpatient beds we are moving closer to our goal of ensuring that people receive the right care in the right place at the right time."



Minister Stephen Donnelly.

Health & Wellbeing Fair comes to Little Bray

Over 100 people and 30 community organisations recently attended a Health and Wellbeing Fair in the Little Bray Community Centre. The event was organised by Bray Area Partnership in collaboration with Health and Wellbeing, Community Healthcare East, HSE.



Patrick Dawson and Cllr Dermot 'Daisy' O'Brien at the Health and Wellbeing Fair.

The event showcased a number of Slaintecare Healthy Communities Programme services available to people living in the community such as the HSE Stop Smoking Service, Parenting Programmes, Healthy Food Made Easy, and Social Prescribing. A wide range of other community-based services involved in delivering health and wellbeing supports were on hand to offer advice and answer questions. "We are delighted to bring the Health and Wellbeing Fair to the local community," said Louise Curtin (Bray Area Partnership). The fair included activities such as Healthy Food Made Easy demonstrations and was closed out by the Chéile Community Choir. Shane Lee (HSE) described the health and wellbeing fair as a fantastic opportunity for individuals and families to access essential health services and learn more about maintaining a



Jennifer Whitmore TD with Evonne Harvey and Susanne Martin at the Health and Wellbeing Fair.

healthy lifestyle. In 2021, Healthy Ireland in the Department of Health, working with the HSE, local authorities, and community agencies launched the Slaintecare Healthy Communities Programme to provide increased health and well-being services in 19 community areas across Ireland. Bray was one of the priority areas identified and has benefited from a number of free health and well-being services being made available to the community.



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Danielle Mervyn, Shane Lee, Patricia Reilly, Jennifer D'Arcy, Karen Hammond and Louise Curtin at the Health and Wellbeing Fair.

'Access to Iarnrod Eireann funding for Murrough needed as soon as possible'

Cllr Gail Dunne has called for the funding of €250m to deal with coastal erosion in The Murrough to be accessed as soon as possible. The security of these funds was made late last year, and Cllr Dunne says the council must move quickly to prevent any further damage done to The Murrough.



The Murrough.

"The Murrough is one of the nicest areas in Wicklow, and it has been battered by storms causing coastal erosion. We must access these funds as soon as possible, this is very much an urgent matter," said Cllr Dunne.

"Due to continued bad weather conditions much of the area of The Murrough has been hit with severe coastal erosion, and is at risk of further erosion if there isn't intervention soon."

Cllr Dunne has called on Iarnrod Eireann to now put a plan in place to make use of this funding and give the constituents that use The Murrough with some clarity.

"We heard Iarnrod Eireann had secured this funding late last year, I am calling on them now to provide the people of Wicklow Town with clarity on this situation. The situation is only going to deteriorate if we don't act on this issue soon."

Cllr Dunne concluded, "It's time we sorted this issue for the people of Wicklow Town."



Alex Tripsa and Elena Diaconn at the Aldbrough Common Grounds Streetfest in Greystones.

'Increased capacity needed on Blessington 65 Bus Route'

A number of public representatives are calling for increased capacity on the 65 bus route, which runs between Dublin City Centre and Blessington. The service currently operates 15 times daily Monday - Friday, 12 times on Saturdays and makes 10 journeys on Sunday.

Cathaoirleach of the Baltinglass Municipal District, Councillor Edward Timmins, has written to his party leader and Taoiseach Simon Harris regarding the immediate provision of extra 65 buses to Blessington.

The route has come under added pressure in recent years, but that pressure has been exacerbated in recent weeks with people travelling to the Crookslin facility and there have been recent reports by many passengers that it is operating at overcapacity.

Councillor Timmins stated: "Following contact from residents in recent weeks, I wrote to the Taoiseach last week regarding the urgent need to provide additional 65 buses to Blessington. There has been a need for more buses for several years, but the route has come under heightened pressure in recent weeks. I am confident this is something which can be delivered as increased capacity is practical to achieve."

In a 'Public Transport Action Plan' summary announced recently, Councillor Timmins noted: "A key feature of the Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan is the provision of more local routes that connect smaller settlements with the regional public transport network. This can only be fully achieved

with the provision of more buses. Capacity and frequency of the 65 bus must be increased in addition to the expansion of other services. A more connected service is needed to meet the needs of Blessington Commuters. This is something I highlighted in my submission to the Blessington Local Area Plan.

"A proper public transport service underpinned by a measurable action plan has the potential to have a transformative impact on the quality of life for commuters in this District. Given the heightened pressures on the 65 service, increased capacity is required."

Councillor Timmins concluded: "We cannot have a situation where residents from Blessington are left stranded in Dublin after work and college or unable to commute, it is unacceptable, and this issue can be resolved through the provision of extra buses."

Green TD Steven Matthews has written to both Dublin Bus and the National Transport Authority (NTA) to seek a review of the existing 65 Bus service. Discussing his calls to increase capacity, Deputy Matthews said: "In recent weeks I have been contacted by a number of residents in Blessington, who rely on this service, reporting increasing capacity issues on the 65 Dublin Bus route. This

included overcrowding on buses and occasionally full buses passing them by. As this is already a relatively infrequent route, having a bus pass you by could leave you stranded for over an hour - the last thing someone needs after a long day in work or worse, causing them to miss appointments.

"Blessington is experiencing population growth with new houses and estates being built. We need joined up thinking here in terms of providing basic services like a frequent and reliable bus route that has the capacity to accommodate the increasing demand."

"I have written to Dublin Bus and the NTA to ask that an urgent review is conducted to assess the demand for an increased and improved service and to address the existing overcapacity issues that have been reported by a huge number of regular passengers on this route."

"I will continue to push for improved and new services for Wicklow to reduce car reliance and offer people a genuine alternative for work and recreation," concluded Deputy Matthews.

Social Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore has also called on the NTA to immediately increase the frequency of the number 65. She highlighted the fact that in the last 20 years there has only been

one additional service added to the route bringing it from 15 to 16 buses per a day, while the population of Blessington has more than tripled in that same time.

"The 65 Dublin Bus service is the only public transport route between Blessington and Dublin City Centre, and it is currently operating every two hours. The community here have been crying out for an increase in the frequency of buses on the route for years," commented Deputy Whitmore.

"In 2017 the Bus Connects plan was announced which would see the replacement of the 65 bus route and the introduction of the L44 bus route operating between Blessington and Tallaght on an hourly basis and the P44 bus route which would run at peak times between Blessington and Dublin City Centre.

"However, seven years later the L44 and P44 bus routes have not been introduced and the NTA have indicated that it will be Quarter Four of 2025 at the earliest before Bus Connects is rolled out in West Wicklow," explained Deputy Whitmore.

"Over the last number of years, I have been working with our Social Democrats Local Area Rep, Deirdre McCormack, and the community here to call for an increase in the frequency of buses on the number 65 route. In response the NTA have said that they are reluc-

tant to introduce additional buses due to the impending introduction of the L44 and P44 bus routes as part of Bus Connects. I don't think that it is fair to make the people of Blessington

wait another 18 months for the introduction of additional buses on a route that is currently operating at capacity. I have called on the NTA to immediately increase the frequency of buses on

the 65 route, so that the community here can avail of a reliable and frequent bus service," added Ms Whitmore.

Social Democrats Blessington representative Deirdre McCormack,

said "So many people rely on the 65 bus service to get to work, school and hospital appointments and at the moment the service isn't working for our growing community."



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SSE to submit offshore planning consent application for Arklow Bank Wind Park 2

Next key milestone in development of major 800MW offshore wind project

SSE has announced it is submitting an offshore planning consent application to Ireland's planning authority An Bord Pleanála this week for the offshore infrastructure required for its proposed Arklow Bank Wind Park 2 project in the Irish Sea.

This is the latest and most significant milestone in the delivery of SSE's flagship Irish offshore wind farm project, which is being developed off the coasts of Wicklow and North Wexford. The

Maritime Area Planning Application is being submitted by Sure Partners Ltd. (SPL), a wholly owned subsidiary of FTSE 100 listed company SSE Plc under SSE Renewables.

If consented and brought forward for construction, the up to 800MW Arklow Bank 2 project would play a crucial role in driving progress towards a cleaner and more secure home-

grown energy system for Ireland. Once operational, the offshore wind farm would be capable of producing enough renewable energy to displace over 800,000 metric tons of harmful carbon emissions annually while powering the equivalent of around 850,000 homes each year.

Submission of an offshore planning consent application for the Arklow Bank 2 project is the culmination of almost seven years' development work by leading renewable energy developer, owner, and operator, SSE Renewables. This recent phase of development builds on the original vision for offshore wind generation at Arklow Bank, which dates to 2003 when the original 25MW offshore project was first commissioned at the site.

Today, Arklow Bank 2 is one of the most advanced offshore wind projects in Ireland, having already secured planning consent for the development of a state-of-the-art

operations and maintenance base at Arklow Harbour, out of which around 80 full-time employees would be based, as well as consent for the development of onshore cabling and a substation that would connect the project to Ireland's national grid. This latest application marks the third and final planning consent required to move to the construction stage of the project.

Subject to planning consent and a final investment decision by SSE, construction of Arklow Bank 2 could commence as early as 2026 with first energy generated by 2029, contributing to Ireland's target of at least 5GW of offshore renewable energy by 2030. Additionally, Arklow Bank 2 is expected to deliver an overall national economic benefit of up to €800m - around €400m of which will be local to the Wicklow and Wexford region - while supporting around 2,300 direct and indirect jobs throughout its delivery and operational lifetime.

James O'Hara, Arklow Bank Project Director at SSE Renewables, said: "Our team of over 50 renewable energy professionals supported by a dedicated local supply chain has been working hard to deliver SSE's flagship Irish offshore wind farm - Arklow Bank Wind Park 2 - for almost seven years now. In doing so,



Dogger Bank Wind Park.

we're fulfilling the pioneering vision of delivering commercial scale offshore wind at Arklow Bank which dates back almost 20 years to when the first seven turbines were installed at the site and became Ireland's first and only operational offshore wind farm.

"Now, we're pleased to announce we're submitting what we believe is a robust and compelling planning application to deliver a world class renewable energy asset at Arklow Bank using the very latest offshore technology that can generate the additional green energy Ireland needs to meet 2030 renewable energy targets in a sustainable and environmentally sensitive manner.

"Arklow Bank is a unique and well-advanced project that enjoys widespread public and stakeholder support, especially among communities in south Wicklow and north Wexford. By delivering on the Arklow Bank vision we can make a significant contribution to climate action while bringing enormous national and regional socio-economic

benefits such as up to €800m economic investment, hundreds of jobs and a multi-million Euro Community Benefit Fund."

The planning application proposes the construction of up to 56 offshore wind turbines, depending on final wind farm project design, located in an array area of around 63 km2 on and around the Arklow Bank off the Wicklow and Wexford coast. Each turbine would be installed on steel monopile foundations. The offshore application also proposes two Offshore Substation Platforms as well as associated export, inter-array and interconnector sub-sea cabling that would connect the offshore wind farm to Ireland's national grid at a cabling landfall point at Johnstown North, north of Arklow Town.

The planning application submission follows an extensive period of public consultation with local Wicklow and Wexford communities and stakeholders which took place last year. The feedback received during that process has helped refine the application now

being submitted.

Alongside the planning application, SSE Renewables has submitted an Environmental Impact Assessment Report as well as a Natura Impact Statement in respect of the proposed development to An Bord Pleanála. Members of the public will be able to view and download the planning application and supporting documents at a dedicated website, www.arklowbank2offshoreplanning.ie.

In addition to accessing planning documents online, copies of the application and all supporting documents can also be viewed for a period of eight weeks commencing on 13th June 2024 at the following office locations:

- The Offices of An Bord Pleanála, 64 Marlborough Street, Dublin 1, D01 V902.
- The Offices of Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Whitegates, Wicklow Town, A67 FW96.
- The Offices of Wexford County Council, County Hall, Carricklawn, Wexford, Y35 WY93.



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Wicklow Municipal District acknowledges long-standing service of two elected members

On Monday 27th May, Wicklow Municipal District held their final meeting of the current Council. On behalf of Wicklow Municipal District, Brian Gleeson as District Manager presented Cllr. Irene Winters and Cllr. Shay Cullen with paintings by a local artist in recognition of their years of public service to the district.



Pictured at the Wicklow Municipal District Council meeting was Wicklow Municipal District Manager, Brian Gleeson with Cllr. Irene Winters.

Vartry Reservoir in Roundwood, Laragh, Newtown Mount Kennedy. Commenting at the presentation District Manager of Wicklow Municipal District Brian Gleeson said, "We acknowledge both Cllr. Irene Winters and Cllr. Shay Cullen for the integrity and commitment shown throughout their careers in local government. Neither was afraid to make a hard decision if it was the right decision."




Pictured at the Wicklow Municipal District Council meeting was Wicklow District Administrator, Georgina Franey; District Engineer, Pat Clarke; Cllr. Shay Cullen and Wicklow Municipal District Manager, Brian Gleeson.

Winners of European elections competition presented with prizes

On 28th May, Arklow Municipal District in partnership with Arklow Library were pleased to welcome some of the winning entrants to a prize giving event in the Arklow Municipal District Council Chamber.

During the month of May, two competitions were held to highlight the upcoming European Elections; children under 8 years of age were asked to draw and colour a flag from another EU member, while children over the age of 9 completed a quiz based on the upcoming European elections. Funding for the competition and prizes was provided by the Department of Foreign Affairs. All individual entries from the entrants are on display in Arklow Library and Arklow Municipal District Offices. Each entrant took home a prize for their participation. Welcoming the children, Cllr. Tommy Annesley, Cathaoirleach of Arklow Municipal District expressed his thanks to all the children for entering the competition, "I would like to commend all those who participated on the colourful display of entries. We acknowledge the support from the Department of Foreign Affairs in allocating funding to the District to run the competition, which was aimed at raising the awareness of the upcoming European elections. It was fantastic to see the staff from the library and municipal district working in partnership to hold such an event." Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council, Emer O'Gorman commented, "This was a fun but educational competition aimed at our younger citizens, and was a great way of highlighting the upcoming European elections." In addition to the prize for participation, each participant received a goodie bag with thanks to Lidl.





COMHAIRLE CONTAE CHILL MHANTÁIN
WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

SECTION 75 – ROADS ACT, 1993
PROVISION FOR TEMPORARY CLOSURE
OF PUBLIC ROAD

Wicklow County Council hereby gives notice that it proposes the temporary closure of the following public roads:

Roads to be closed
Adelaide Road, Bray (R766) between Quinsborough Road and Florence Road.

Period of closure
Thursday 8th August 2024 to Friday 20th September 2024.
24 hour closure.

Alternative Routes
Southbound
Via Quinsborough Road, Station Road and Florence Road or Quinsborough Road, Wyndham Park and Florence Road.
Northbound
Via Florence Road, Wyndham Park and Quinsborough Road.

Reason for Closure
This closure is necessary to facilitate the installation of paving and site clearance for the Bray Transport Interchange Project.

Any person wishing to object to the proposed road closure must lodge their objection in writing to Transportation and Roads, Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Wicklow Town, Co Wicklow or via email at roadtrans@wicklowcoco.ie not later than 12.00 noon on Tuesday 18th June, 2024.

Linda Healy,
Senior Executive Officer,
Transportation, Infrastructure Delivery & Emergency Services.

Arklow Electoral Area



Pat Kennedy (FF)

2,791 votes. Elected on 1st count with 1,324 surplus.



Peir Leonard (Ind)

2,025 votes. Elected on 1st count with 558 surplus.



Pat Fitzgerald (FF)

1,016 votes. Elected on 8th count



Sylvester Bourke (FG)

938 votes. Elected on 6th count.



Warren O'Toole (SF)

709 votes. Elected on 8th count.



Miriam Murphy (Ind)

513 votes. Elected on 8th count.

Baltinglass Electoral Area



Gerry O'Neill (Ind)

2,013 votes, elected on 1st count with 419 surplus.



Edward Timmins (FG)

1,586 votes. Elected on 2nd count



Peter Stapleton (FG)

1,373 votes. Elected on 9th count.



Avril Cronin (FG)

1,122 votes. Elected on 10th count



Patsy Glennon (FF)

790 votes. Elected on 10th count.



Jason Mulhall (Ind)

722 votes. Elected on 10th count

Continued from page 1

Bray east, another 4 seater, saw Aoife Flynn Kennedy (FG) top the poll with Erika Doyle of the Green Party closely behind her. The 3rd seat was taken by Ian Neary, (Independent Ireland) with Malacai Duddy (Independent) who lost by a single vote in 2019 filling the final seat.

In summary, Wicklow has been very good for Independents; Social Democrats have gained seats; the Green Party

despite all the dire predictions have held their 2 seats and came close to a few more. Sinn Féin have to be disappointed with their performance, which although slightly up on the 2019 local election, falls way short of expectations. Fine Gael and Fianna Fáil have both lost ground but nothing like what they feared.

The big winners are the Independents and it bodes well for a candidate in any forthcoming general election.



Sinn Féin's Warren O'Toole celebrates being elected in Arklow.



Independent candidate Jason Mulhall from Baltinglass Municipal District celebrates being elected with some of his supporters.

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Bray East Electoral Area



Aoife Flynn-Kennedy (FG)
1,114 votes. Elected on 5th count.



Erika Doyle (Green Party)
960 votes. Elected on 6th count.



Ian Neary (Ind Irl)
898 votes. Elected on 7th count



Malachai Duddy (Ind)
614 votes. Elected on 7th count

Bray West Electoral Area



Joe Behan (Ind)
2,449 votes. Elected on 1st count with 1,025 surplus.



Melanie Corrigan (FG)
1,742 votes. Elected on 1st count with 318 surplus



Dermot 'Daisy' O'Brien (SF)
567 votes. Elected on 8th count



Dr. Caroline Winstanley (SocDems)
513 votes. Elected on 8th count



An Taoiseach Simon Harris with some of the Fine Gael candidates who won seats: Peter Stapleton (Baltinglass), Graham Richmond (Wicklow), Avril Cronin (Baltinglass), Louise Fenelon Gaskin (Greystones), Aoife Flynn-Kennedy (Bray) Shane Langrell (Wicklow) and Melanie Corrigan (Bray).

Whitmore pays tribute to 'incredible' SocDems candidates

Social Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore has paid tribute to the Party's 'incredible' local election candidates in Wicklow, with three out of five of them winning council seats over the weekend.

The party has now tripled its number of councillors in the county, with Danny Alvey elected in the Wicklow LEA, Caroline Winstanley in Bray West and Mark Barry in Greystones.

Deputy Whitmore said: "I could not be prouder of our five amazing candidates in Wicklow, who all ran exceptional election campaigns. "The fact that they were all first-time candidates makes their success all the more rewarding. While we are obviously disappointed that Aaron McAllorum and Deirdre McCormack were not elected on this occasion, I am so grateful for the effort they put into their campaigns and the important role they played in spreading our party's core message on the doorsteps.

"In Baltinglass, Deirdre was in contention until very late in the count and put up a phenomenal fight in the hunt for that final seat.

"As a TD for Wicklow, I look forward to working closely with our three elected councillors so we can make our wonderful county an even better place to live. I have no doubt they will all work tirelessly for improved public services, better transport and the delivery of social and affordable housing in Wicklow."



Social Democrats' Mark Barry celebrates retaining his seat in Greystones.



First-time Social Democrats candidates Danny Alvey (Wicklow) and Dr Caroline Winstanley (Bray) celebrate being elected.



Social Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore and former Greystones Social Democrats councillor Jodie Neary celebrate with Dr. Caroline Winstanley, who won a seat for the SocDems in Bray West.

Greystones Electoral Area



Stephen Stokes (Ind)
2,059 votes. Elected on 1st count with 433 surplus.



Tom Fortune (Ind)
1,421 votes. Elected on 5th count



Louise Fenelon Gaskin (FG)
1,284 votes. Elected on 10th count



Orla Finn (Ind)
1,269 votes. Elected on 10th count



Mark Barry (SD)
1,077 votes. Elected on 11th count



Lourda Scott (Green)
1,054 votes. Elected on 11th count

Wicklow Electoral Area



John Snell (Ind)
2,118 votes, elected on 1st count with 360 surplus.



Danny Alvey (SD)
1,751 votes. Elected on 2nd count



Shane Langrell (FG)
1,376 votes. Elected on 9th count.



Gail Dunne (FF)
1,297 votes. Elected on 9th count



Paul O'Brien (Lab)
1,045 votes. Elected on 9th count.



Graham Richmond (FG)
976 votes. Elected on 9th count



Graham Richmond (FG) celebrates being elected in Wicklow.



Independent candidate Orla Finn celebrates being elected in Greystones.



Labour Party's Paul O'Brien celebrates being re-elected in the Wicklow District.



An Taoiseach Simon Harris chats with Sinn Féin TD John Brady at the count centre in Greystones.

INDEPENDENT

MÍLE BUÍOCHAS DIBH GO LÉIR
THANK YOU TO THE PEOPLE OF BRAY

MALACHAÍ
DUDDY



Fine Gael's Shane Langrell checking the tally with his daughter Erin at the count centre in Greystones.



Green Party's Erika Doyle with Green TD Steven Matthews at the count centre in Greystones. Cllr Doyle retained her seat.



Agnus and Joe Behan at the count centre in Greystones. Cllr Behan topped the poll in Bray West, with 2,449 first preference votes.

Commiserations and celebrations

A number of councillors failed to hold onto their seats. These included Fianna Fail's Tommy Annesley in Arklow and John Mullen in Baltinglass, Labour's Anne Ferris and Sinn Féin's Mick Ryan in Bray, and Independent Mary Kavanagh in Wicklow Town.

Tommy Annesley was first elected to Arklow Town Council in 2009, then to Wicklow County Council in 2014 and 2019.

Anne Ferris served as a Labour TD from 2011 to 2016. She was re-elected as a councillor in the 2019 local elections.

John Mullen served one term as an elected representative of the Baltinglass Municipal District. He previously worked as a community activist and as an assistant to Pat Casey when he was a TD.

Mick Ryan was co-opted onto Wicklow

County Council following the resignation of Grace McManus.

Mary Kavanagh was co-opted to Wicklow County Council in 2016 following the death of her late sister, Cllr Pat Kavanagh, also an Independent. She secured a second term in the Local Elections in 2019.

As these familiar names leave the Council, there were some surprise victories for first-time candidates. Among these is Independent Ireland candidate Ian Neary, who won a seat in Bray East and got 899 first-preference votes.

Neary (38) is a long-time resident of Little Bray and campaigned on a commitment to improving the quality of life for residents and bringing positive change to the political arena. He has a passion for sport and was an intrinsic member of the backroom team that helped St. Peter's FC win a historic quadruple in Wicklow in 2023. He has contributed to various charitable endeavours over the years.

"As a father of three young children and a lifelong resident of Little Bray, I am deeply invested in the well-being of our community," he said. "I believe it's time for real change and a renewed focus on addressing the needs of our area. We have a fantastic community spirit in little Bray, the people of this area are hugely supportive of each other and that is something I am immensely proud of. I will do everything I can to represent them, address their concerns and do everything I can to help improve the lives of the people of the area."



Mark Nolan, John Snell and Ian Neary at the count centre in Greystones. Cllr Snell topped the poll in the Wicklow LEA and Neary took a seat in Bray East.



Tommy Annesley greets Miriam Murphy at the count centre. Tommy Annesley (FF) lost his seat while Miriam Murphy held onto hers, being elected on the 8th count.



A late Saturday night for Dermot 'Daisy' O'Brien at the count centre. Cllr O'Brien retained his seat in Bray while fellow Sinn Féin councillor Mick Ryan lost his.

Progress on new school build for Colaiste Chraobh Abhann

An Taoiseach Simon Harris last week confirmed the new school build in Colaiste Chraobh Abhann in Kilcoole is due to go to tender in the Autumn. This is significant progress for the community in Kilcoole and will alleviate some of the pressure felt by parents across the area regarding school shortages, he said.

The large extension of the school will aim to increase school capacity and should cater for 1,000 pupils. The Taoiseach confirmed the Department of Education has today issued authorisation to complete the remaining work on the preparation of tender documents required for public procurement of building contractors for all six schools for the end of the year.

An Taoiseach Simon Harris said: "Today is another step in the right direction to tackle the issue of school place shortages in Wicklow. Yet again, the Department of Education has confirmed another school building project

is to get underway in Wicklow which is very welcome news for parents and children across the county. I have always been clear, the scale of development in Wicklow has to be met with the scale of infrastructure development and that means making sure we have the adequate number of school places.

"Since I have become Taoiseach I have been tireless and steadfast in my approach having consistently sought for progress on school building projects in County Wicklow. I will continue to work with the Department of Education and ensure that school

building projects are progressed as the year goes on.

"I know from speaking to a number of parents, they can no longer wait, they need to see boots on the ground and I won't rest until capacity meets demand. The children across County Wicklow deserve state of the art facilities and they will get that through these new school building projects. I want to thank all who have been involved so far in getting this project over the line. As a TD for Wicklow I will continue to seek regular updates on the progress being made regarding Colaiste Chraobh Abhann."



Principal Paul Ennis (Naas CNS), Principal Paul Molamphy (Greystones CNS), and Principal Deirdre Murphy (Brannoxtown CNS).

Principals attend national school conference

Multi-faith schools from Kildare and Wicklow were represented at a recent national conference for Principals of Community National Schools (CNSs).

The conference, organised last month (May 23-24) by Education and Training Boards Ireland, heard how three primary schools that were formerly under the patronage of the Catholic Church will reopen this September as multi-denominational CNSs.

The three schools - in Cork, Kerry and Limerick - will all now fall under the patronage of their local Education and Training Board (ETB).

Community National Schools are the primary school model offered by ETBs. They are State-run, co-educational and multi-denominational. Further information is available at www.cns.ie.

'Parents and pupils must be insulated from cuts to annual grant for primary schools'

Parents and pupils must be reassured that they will not face extra costs due to a Department of Education cut to the annual grant for primary schools, according to Social Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore.

Deputy Whitmore, who is the party's spokesperson on children, said: "Just one year into a free schoolbooks scheme, which was announced with much fanfare by the Government, it has now emerged that primary school funding for 2024/25 is being cut by €16 per pupil nationally - from €96 a year to 80.

"This total reduction of €7 million is going to put already stretched schools under further pressure to pay their bills and cover the cost of materials. It is one of the many little cuts that will really

hurt parents and schools, who deserve certainty and not fear of unexpected cutbacks and additional bills.

"It is disconcerting to see the Department quietly rowing back on funding commitments so soon after the introduction of the free schoolbooks scheme - hailed by the Government as major reform of the education system.

"Minister Norma Foley must now give a guarantee that families won't be hit with higher bills because of this sleight of hand," concluded Deputy Whitmore.



Jennifer Whitmore TD.

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Council to participate in European Archaeology Days

The Heritage Office of Wicklow County Council has announced an upcoming community archaeology programme at Glendalough that includes a guided walk of the Valley to coincide with European Archaeology Days on Friday 14th June.

Co-ordinated by UCD School of Archaeology, in partnership with the Heritage Office of Wicklow County Council, a community archaeology programme has been taking place annually at Glendalough for over seven years.

In previous years the focus has been on a two week volunteer excavation for Heritage Week, however this year the focus will be on post excavation work, with opportunities for volunteers to participate for 1 or more days during two separate weeks. One week takes place in Brockagh Resource Centre, Laragh from 10th - 13th June, while the second week will be based in UCD Campus, Dublin from 29th July - 2nd August. Post excavation work provides a unique opportunity to conserve and handle artefacts uncovered during previous excavations at Glendalough.

The Glendalough Valley Walking tour will be a daylong event on Friday 14th June, departing from the Monastery at 10am and returning by 4.30pm. The pace will be gentle but the distance will be approximately 10 km, participants should dress appropriately for the weather conditions, wear walking shoes and bring a packed lunch and water. All events are free of charge, but the number of participants is limited and anybody who is interested should email

glendaloughheritageforum@gmail.com for registration details.

Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr. Aoife Flynn Kennedy, said "These upcoming community archaeology events and volunteer opportunities are a fantastic way for everyone to engage with and learn more about Wicklow's rich heritage."

Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council, Emer O'Gorman, commented that: "I very much welcome the Council's longstanding partnership with UCD and the local community through the Glendalough Heritage Forum and the County Wicklow Heritage Plan. This is a wonderful way to research and share Glendalough's rich archaeological heritage with new audiences."

The Glendalough Community Archaeology programme is co-funded by Wicklow County Council and The Heritage Council through the County Heritage Plan Fund. The programme is co-ordinated on behalf of the Glendalough Heritage Forum, a non-statutory partnership seeking to research and promote the rich natural and cultural heritage of the Glendalough Valley.

European Archaeology Days are taking place from the 14th - 16th June in 46 member countries of The Council of Europe.



Pictured at the recent exhibition in County Buildings marking 125 years since the original formation of Wicklow County Council were L-R, Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr. Aoife Flynn Kennedy, Catherine Wright (Archivist, Wicklow County Council), Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council Emer O'Gorman and Lorraine Gallagher (Director of Services). Also included in the photo is the minute book from the first meeting of Wicklow County Council Elected Members dated 22nd April, 1899.

Including items from the Wicklow County Archives, the exhibition looked at earlier forms of local government such as the Grand Jury, the introduction of proportional representation and the role of women. It also explored the evolution of many local authority services such as Roads, Social Housing, Town Planning and Libraries. The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, in collaboration with Local Government Archivists and Records Managers, produced the national exhibition exploring the history and development of local democracy in Ireland. The first local elections, held in April 1899, changed the landscape of local government in Ireland dramatically. These elections followed the enactment of the Local Government (Ireland) Act 1898. The extension of the franchise beyond the landed gentry allowed many more to vote, bringing democracy to Irish local government and huge success to national candidates.

Glendalough Partnership Local Advisory Group hold inaugural meeting

The Glendalough and Wicklow Mountains National Park Visitor Experience and Management Masterplan Local Advisory Group held its first meeting on Thursday 9th May in the Brockagh Resource Centre. A welcome mix of community groups, residents and local businesses ensured a lively debate around the establishment of the group and what its role would be.

The Glendalough and Wicklow Mountains National Park Visitor Experience and Management Masterplan (VEMMP) is a seven to ten year plan and is designed to protect and enhance the setting of Glendalough and the Wicklow Mountains National Park.

Developed collaboratively in partnership with Coillte, Fáilte Ireland, National Monuments Service (NMS), National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), the Office of Public Works (OPW) Wicklow County

Council and representatives from the local community; the Masterplan seeks to enhance the natural built and cultural heritage, disperse the benefits and impacts of tourism and to improve the overall visitor experience.

A need for greater collaboration among stakeholders was identified as a key component in the successful delivery of the Masterplan. Consensus that greater levels of partnership are required was also agreed by

the key stakeholders, including government departments and led to the establishment of the Glendalough Partnership.

The Partnership comprises of a Steering Group, a Working Group and a Local Advisory Group. The Glendalough Partnership will work closely with the community via a new Local Advisory Group (LAG). Community consultation and participation is a central tenet of this Masterplan.

Membership of the Local Advisory Group was drawn from a wide range of local stakeholders who have a knowledge and understanding of the issues raised during the consultation phase and the overall objectives of the Masterplan. The Local Advisory Group will enhance the communication of progress

achieved under the Masterplan while also providing essential input on local issues and concerns.

Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr. Aoife Flynn Kennedy, said: "The community is at the heart of Wicklow County Council, so I welcome the establishment of the Local Advisory Group and their input to the implementation of this strategic plan for Glendalough and Wicklow Mountains National Park."

Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council, Emer O'Gorman, commented that: "The Local Advisory Group is a key component in the successful implementation of the VEMMP. The wider Glendalough and Wicklow Mountains National Park community will help the Glendalough Partnership to ensure local concerns are addressed and increase communication as objectives contained within the plan are achieved."

The Glendalough and Wicklow Mountains National Park Visitor Experience and Management Masterplan (VEM-MP) can be viewed at www.failteireland.ie/Regional-experience-brands/Ireland-s-Ancient-East/Ireland-s-Ancient-East-experience-development/glendaloughmasterplan.aspx

'Give more powers to Local Authorities'

Cathaoirleach of Baltinglass Municipal District Councillor Edward Timmins maintains it's time to give greater autonomy to Councils in Ireland. Councillor Timmins believes that innovation can be found within communities through increased participation in the local decision-making process.

Speaking from Donard ahead of the Local Elections, Councillor Timmins said Local Government in Ireland is weaker than most European Countries. He said: "Now is a key time to point out the need for greater autonomy for local Government including greater spending power. Last year a report from the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (CLRAE) found that local authorities in Ireland have limited democratic decision-making powers, insufficient resources, and one of the most centralised systems of local government in Europe."

"According to Social Justice Ireland (SJI), the high degree of centralisation can leave local communities feeling powerless

when it comes to shaping policy. SJI's 'National Social Monitor Local Issues Edition' published before the 2019 local elections, states that we should 'maximise the potential of local government to increase engagement locally and to develop and deliver local policy solutions to local problems'.

"This is particularly relevant to areas like West Wicklow with regards to public transport and the lack of services that would be available in North Wicklow. There is also a greater need for more innovation in policy such as finding new creative ways that communities themselves can map out how they would like their areas to look, not just around development plans, but more frequently."

Acclaiming some success in changing the funding model during his time as Chairman of Wicklow County Council in the past, Councillor Timmins, who is a Chartered Accountant, stated: "Here in West and South West Wicklow, a District which includes many rural towns and villages, it is essential there are no limitations on Councillors to provide essential services particularly when you are dealing with ongoing issues such as rural isolation, added challenges for small businesses, more limited access to childcare, slower broadband speeds, and lack of public transport options. However, as Chairman of Wicklow County Council, I was delighted to ensure more funding was divested to Wicklow's Districts. This resulted in more than €200,000 being available in each District county-wide for community use."

Councillor Timmins continued: "Greater autonomy would ensure

that the Municipal Districts would have a better say over how funding is spent. This would in turn result in the more efficient use of spending by the Council. The CLARE report found Ireland's Local Authorities faced significant financial constraints, limiting their ability to provide essential services and adequately respond to local needs. The report also found that financial resources which can be used at the discretion of local government remain restricted. This lack of financial autonomy was identified as a 'key obstacle' to effective local self-government.

"The report itself explicitly acknowledged the central role that Ireland's Local Authorities can take over greater functions under self-governing as what was displayed during the COVID-19 pandemic."

Councillor Timmins added: "When compared with other countries, both in Europe and interna-

tionally, Ireland's Local Authorities are increasingly expected to do more with less resources as highlighted in a 2018 Institute of Public Administration (IPA) Report. However, with more autonomy, resources and decision-making capacity, there is no limit to what could be achieved by the next Council elected in Wicklow. Until this change happens, I believe it's important we continue to elect experienced representatives who know how to work most effectively within the existing system of local government, and also so we can mentor newly less experienced councillors to deliver for the communities that we are voted to represent."

Councillor Timmins concluded: "Decisions should not be imposed on local communities by central government as this risks undermining local democracy and Councillors urgently need more powers over Quangos like the Office of the Planning Regulator -



Cllr Edward Timmins.

this is the same office who removed the Luas extension to Blessington from the County Development Plan before I was successful in getting it back in."



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Gemma Hayes: Acoustic Show at Whale Theatre

Saturday 22nd June 8pm (doors 7pm). Tickets €32 and available at www.whaletheatre.ie or call the booking office on 01 2010550.

After her sold out Whale Theatre show back in 2022, Gemma Hayes returns to Greystones this summer. This very special acoustic show from one of Ireland's best loved singer/songwriters, will feature songs from her new album "Blind Faith" as well as other hits from her extensive back catalogue.

Over the last year, Gemma has been busy touring, bringing her stirring live show to crowds that span generations. Gemma spent Autumn playing to audiences solo as well as with fellow living legends Lisa Hannigan and Paul Noonan. She recently sold out London's Omeara and Dublin's Whelan's as part of a UK and Ireland tour. Gemma has

been a cornerstone of the John Prine Celebration Shows at Dublin's Vicar Street and she performed the legendary artist's song 'Summer's End' on RTÉ's The Tommy Tiernan Show.

Gemma Hayes' debut album Night On My Side was released in 2002, for which she won Best Female Artist at the Hot Press

Awards and a Mercury Prize nomination. Since then, she has released four critically acclaimed studio albums and a limited-edition live album. The Business Post recently praised Gemma as "a songwriter whose work pivots between serious life experiences and an indie folk/rock style influenced as much by Nick Drake as My Bloody Valentine."



Gemma Hayes.

National Library acquires striking images from Wicklow for Covid-19 Collection

The National Library of Ireland has announced the acquisition of Press Photographers Ireland (formerly PPAI) 'Life under Covid-19 in Ireland' collection of press photography and videography. Taken between 2020 and 2021, the archive comprises close to 200 digital images and features the work of more than 70 press photographers across the country.

Documenting life in Ireland during the pandemic, it includes photos of social distancing; widespread mask-wearing; vaccination centres; sports teams playing to empty stadia (and prospective spectators watching through locked gates); deserted streets; healthcare workers in full PPE, as well as how people communicated with the elderly or medically vulnerable, and communities coming together - in a socially distanced way to pay respect to the work of

Ireland's frontline workers. It also captures photos of key officials, such as Taoiseach Simon Harris, then Minister for Health; former Chief Medical Officer, Dr Tony Houlihan, and immunologist Professor Luke O'Neill. Commenting, Director of the National Library of Ireland, Dr Audrey Whitty said: "The National Library of Ireland is Ireland's memory-keeper. In the 21st century, as the world embraces digital over print, it is essential that we evolve with technology so that culturally significant 'born digital' collections can be collected, managed, and made available for future generations. I am thrilled that these images from Wicklow were included in the project.

"The pandemic was a very difficult time in Ireland and across the globe and we all have our own experiences and memories of it. The 'Life under Covid-19 in Ireland' digital archive is an incredibly valuable visual historical record of this time. It will possibly be even more valuable in the coming decades as that period begins to fade from living memory. In an era when digital photos can so easily be deleted to make space for other content, it is important that such digital photographic records are collected, preserved, and made available for researchers - professional or amateur - for years to come.

"We are honoured that PPI has chosen to donate this archive to the National Library of Ireland. It will now become part of the national collections, alongside the books, manuscripts, newspapers, prints and drawings, music, and other physical items the NLI has been collecting since 1877."

The 'Life under Covid-19' digital archive will be made available to the public later this year, when it has been catalogued.



David Keogh of Thomas Davis receives treatment from team physio Carl O'Toole ahead of Dublin County Senior Hurling Championship Group 4 Round 1 match between Cuala and Thomas Davis at Bray Emmets GAA Club. Pic: Ramsey Cardy, Sportsfile.

Makers from Wicklow take part in DCCI Irish Craft Village at Bloom

Design & Crafts Council Ireland (DCCI) Irish Craft Village returned to Bord Bia Bloom this year, with three exhibitors from Wicklow taking part this year. The festival opened on Thursday, 30th May and ran until Monday, 3rd June in the Phoenix Park, Dublin and celebrated its 18th year.

DCCI's Irish Craft Village, situated in the heart of Bloom, hosted 42 Irish craft retail stands from textiles and printing to woodturning and glass blowing. Last year, 33% of visitors to Bord Bia's Bloom festival went specifically to visit the DCCI Craft Village.

The exhibitor from Wicklow was Linda Lexdina, founder and co-owner of Kaiko studio. Kaiko were delighted to announce the launch of their new Cherry Red Collection; Cherry Red Concrete spheres. Embrace the cherry red colour trend to create a striking and inviting atmosphere that reflects contemporary style. Also new to Bloom is Kaiko's exciting new collection of geometric leaf earrings and necklaces. Elevate your style with their brass earrings featuring a captivating fusion of delicate leaves and geometric shapes. These earrings exude a sense of modern sophistication and natural allure.



Maciej Grzechowink, Kaiko Studio.

Cruinniú na nÓg returns to Wicklow

Cruinniú na nÓg, the National Day of Creativity for children and young people, returns to County Wicklow on Saturday, 15th June. A flagship initiative of Creative Ireland's 'Creative Youth Plan', Cruinniú na nÓg aims to enable, celebrate, and encourage the creative potential of children and young people through creative activities.

This year's programme features a diverse and extensive line-up of events, activities, and workshops designed to inspire and delight. All events and activities are free. This year's theme is Performance and Participation! Expect a range of opportunities to see children and young people in performance and also when they can get 'hands on' and try creative workshops countywide.

Over 40 events, activities, performances and workshops will take place in twelve locations across the county, including:

- Me and The Moon will host a Walled Garden Mural workshop at The Fruit Room, within the enchanting walled gardens of Killruddery House. Children and young people will explore the garden using their 'artist's eye' and then return to the studio to create a mural using blot printing, painting, drawing, and collage. They will also have the pleasure of enjoying intricate instrumental arrangements by The Hot Dots.
- The Mermaid Arts Centre, in Bray, will facilitate an interactive building game designed by Rotterdam-based studio Collective Paper Aesthetics. Artist Elida Maiques will assist the children in drawing, colouring, folding and connecting paper building blocks to create beautiful structures.
- Arklow Music and Arts will present AMA Cruinniú na nÓg in the Arklow Library, an event to promote and introduce different aspects of the Arts for young people, including Song, Music, Dance and Drama.
- Ballywaltrim Library will host two Comic

Book workshops themed 'Far Out in Space' and 'Fantasy Island Adventure'. The themes will be presented as stories and the children will develop them into short comic books with the assistance of local artist Nicola Sedgwick.

- Wicklow Library will host Wicklow Gael Creative Writing and Illustration Workshop, where the children can learn about writing and drawing a book for young readers like themselves.
- The Courthouse Arts Centre will facilitate three art-themed workshops; two will take place in the Resource Centre, Tinahely, and one in The Pavilion in Aughrim. Cressida Knapp will be inviting kids to join her for a cake-themed workshop. There will be cake stories and the children will make giant cardboard cakes to be judged and then jumped out of together! Jumper cake anyone? In Tinahely Lucy Moller will be facilitating two upcycled fashion workshops for children.

- To celebrate 'Creative Places Baltinglass', Wicklow County Council Arts Office has again created a unique Cruinniú na nÓg programme for Baltinglass on Saturday, 15th June. This will feature workshops and activities by local artists including candle making with Karen Allison; Ancient West Wicklow Storytelling with Mairéad Kelly and Wild Forest School workshops with Siobhan Madden of The Natural School of Art. Performances will also include the Gohery School of Irish Dancing, Slaney House Drum Parade, and a Ukrainian showcase of music, choir, and dance titled Flowers of Ukraine. Activities will take place in the beautiful



surroundings of the Tearmann Community Garden.

Commenting on the plans for Cruinniú na nÓg, Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council Cllr. Aoife Flynn Kennedy said, "I am delighted to see such a broad range of creative activities for children and young people to both perform and participate in for the festival this year. There is something for everyone, and we hope many get to attend and enjoy these free events and activities."

Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council Emer O'Gorman commented, "I am pleased that the Arts Office, working with the Library Service and local partners and stakeholders, are presenting such a vibrant programme throughout the county. It is a wonderful day packed with activities which many across the county will be able to experience."

Some events require advance booking and some are drop in activities. To see the full programme and range of events together with booking information please visit <https://cruinniu.creativeireland.gov.ie/events/location/wicklow/>.

Greystones Players present: Americana - 4 x 1-Act Plays

Whale Theatre, 13th - 16th June, Thursday – Saturday 8pm.
Sunday 4pm. Tickets €20 whaletheatre.ie

Trifles by Susan Glaspell / The Bond by Amy Lowell and Robert Frost / Heart in the Ground by Douglas Hill / Thank You, Kind Spirit by Tennessee Williams

Greystones Players invite you to join them for an evening of four powerful one-act plays. Directed by Aideen Walton, these slices of life in the first half of the last century explore such universal themes as identity, love, loss, the ties that bind us, broken relationships and where we find consolation, all grounded in the soil and culture of rural America and New Orleans.

The evening opens with Susan Glaspell's seminal play, Trifles. First performed by Susan Glaspell herself, along with her Provincetown Players, in 1916, this masterpiece of a play explores themes of identity (constructed or innate), gender, justice and entrapment and the power of silence. Its setting is 'an abandoned rural farmhouse' after a mysterious murder has taken place. Two women and three men visit the scene and respond very differently to what they see and find. Susan Glaspell (1876-1948) was a Pulitzer Prize-winning American playwright, novelist, journalist and actress. She is recognised as a pioneering feminist writer and is one of America's first important female playwrights.

Our second play, The Bond by the great American poets Amy Lowell and Robert Frost, adapted by Walter Wykes, is based on three separate stories related by three different women; each woman's story is interwoven with the others

to create a powerful dramatic experience. Walter Wykes, a contemporary American playwright, has had over thirty plays produced across the US and internationally and has received the American College Theater Festival's Award for Excellence in Playwriting four times.

In Heart in the Ground by Douglas Hill, a young farming couple each struggle in their individual ways to cope with a heart-breaking bereavement and the subsequent fallout when both their home and relationship are at risk. Douglas Hill is a playwright, actor and director whose work has been performed both in the US and internationally and has been anthologized by Dramatic Publishing, Heinemann, Smith and Kraus, and Black Box Press.

Thank You, Kind Spirit by Tennessee Williams was written in 1941 and wasn't published or produced until nearly twenty years after his death. We find ourselves

on the Vieux Carré of New Orleans in a little 'crib-like room', the chapel of a spiritualist, Mother DuClos, 'an octoroon' (a term used to describe a person who is one-eighth African). As her 'service' unfolds, the proceedings are disrupted by an 'unkind presence' who has come with an agenda other than to listen to Mother DuClos' wisdom and revelations. Tennessee Williams (1911-1983), recognized as one of the 20th century's greatest American playwrights, explored passion with daring honesty and forged a poetic theatre of raw psychological insight that shattered conventional proprieties and transformed the American stage. According to Williams: 'Nobody sees anybody truly but all through the flaws of their own egos. That is the way we all see . . . each other in life. Vanity, fear, desire, competition – all such distortions within our own egos – condition our vision of those in relation to us.'

Miles Jupp: On I Bang

Mermaid Arts Centre, Friday 28th June 8pm, €23

Miles Jupp's critically lauded show - **On I Bang** - is coming to Mermaid Arts Centre on June 28th after a run of 40+ shows in the UK

Since Miles' last tour finished at The London Palladium in 2017, he's been in The Full Monty on Disney Plus, The Durrells and Why Didn't They Ask Evans? on ITV, as well as a heap of episodes of Frankie Boyle's New World Order and Have I Got News For You. He's made an award-winning radio series and he's published a novel. But for Covid, he would have played a lead at the RSC. Hey ho. Nevertheless he's done a play in the West End and played the Emperor of Austria and Europe in a Ridley Scott film.

Yet one sunny day in the middle of all this, he suddenly suffered a brain seizure. This led to the discovery of a tumour the size of a cherry tomato, and a rather pressing need to undergo major neurosurgery. Obviously, one doesn't wish to make a big deal of it, but the experience has left him with a story to tell and a few things that he'd like to share with the room. So that's exactly what he's doing in his new show On I Bang - a tale about surprise, fear, luck, love and qualified medical practitioners.

As an actor, comedian and writer, Miles' work spans across theatre, film, TV, radio, books and stand up. He recently starred in



Miles Jupp.

the Disney+ series The Full Monty and can soon be seen in the Belgravia sequel.

Other recent credits include Hugh Laurie's ITV mini series Why Didn't They Ask Evans, SAS: Rogue Heroes, Trigger Point, A Very British Scandal and Professor T. Further television credits: Sex Education, Grantchester, The Crown, The Durrells, Rev., A Young Doctor's Notebook and The Thick Of It.

Miles' film credits include: Napoleon, Misbehaviour, The Man Who Invented Christmas, Rosewater, The Monuments Men, The Riot Club, The Look Of Love and Greed.

Theatre credits include People, Rules For Living (National Theatre), The Way Of The World (Northampton Royal Theatre), A Day In The Death Of Joe Egg (Glasgow Citizens), Neville's Island (West End). Miles also starred in one-man play entitled The Life I Lead which toured around the UK and went into Wyndham's Theatre in the West End.

Miles has contributed to a number of BBC Radio 4 shows including The News Quiz, which he hosted for four years, his own sketch series Whatever Next and In And Out Of The Kitchen, which he wrote and created. He is the author of three books, the most recent of which is a novel, History.

For tickets: www.miles-jupp.co.uk/ or mermaid-artscentre.ie



The Legendary Landscapes: Hidden Stories of the Wicklow Mountains exhibition launch took place on May 14th at the Wicklow Town Library with an impressive turnout from the local community. 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 from May 14th to 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. Pictured at the launch are Fionn and Isabel Clissmann with Wicklow Heritage Officer Deirdre Burns.

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Lorraine Keane launches the 2024 Vision Ireland Dip at Dawn at the Forty Foot



Vision Ireland Dip at Dawn ambassador Lorraine Keane.

Irish TV presenter Lorraine Keane, Irish actress Victoria Smurfit, international footballer Michael Owen, and Irish Adventurer Pat Falvey are just some of the names that will be supporting Dip at Dawn, the new nationwide fundraiser for Vision Ireland, The New Name For NCBI. Dip at Dawn started in Lahinch in June 2023 as the brainchild of Senator Martin Conway, with a strong ambition this year for thousands of supporters to take to the local seashore, swimming spot, swimming pool, or even the bath-tub, to help raise funding on the longest day of the year, Friday 21 June, 2024.

Launching Dip at Dawn today at the Forty Foot in Dublin's Sandycove, ambassador and Vision Ireland supporter Lorraine Keane took to the sea with local swimmers. Speaking after her dip Lorraine said: "I am so delighted to support Vision Ireland especially this campaign as I love sea swimming! Dip at Dawn is something people of all ages can get involved in, whether it is at the forty foot like us, or your own bath at home you can Dip at Dawn this June 21st and support those living with sight loss in Ireland."

The mission of Vision Ireland, the new name for NCBI, is to enable people who are blind and vision impaired to overcome the barriers that impede their independence and participation in society. Dip at Dawn is proudly supported by national Retail group Costcutter.

Jim Barry, Managing Director of Barry Group which owns the Costcutter franchise, says that practical local support for good causes appeals greatly to the local store owners.

"Costcutter are proud to be the locally owned store at the heart of communities and, as such, can tap into the generosity of people who want to actively contribute to a cause that will likely end up benefitting someone who may live in their town", the retail boss said. Having learned that almost 300,000 people are either blind or vision impaired in Ireland, it only underlined the importance of our role in supporting this initiative. The fact that people can enjoy a fun activity that

supports wellness while doing so is an added bonus!"

Vision Ireland are calling on people to Dip at Dawn however way you prefer.

Swimmer or not, you can dip, splash, swim anywhere! sign up on

www.vi.ie for €15, and set your online fundraiser to share with your family, friends, and colleagues and join those who will Dip for sight loss on the 21st June. All funds raised go towards supporting the work of Vision Ireland, the new name for NCBI.



Vision Ireland Dip at Dawn ambassador Lorraine Keane with fellow sea swimmers at the Forty Foot and Vision Ireland staff have a strong ambition this year for thousands of supporters to take to the local seashore, swimming spot or swimming pool to help raise funding.

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

We, Bray Bowling Club, seek full planning permission for the removal of, two number, single storey existing prefabricated structures, (temporary changing rooms,) at west end of club house and the replacement of same with a single storey prefabricated structure (39.00 sqmts) containing two number changing rooms with toilet facilities, the retention of minor internal alterations to existing club house and ancillary site works at Bray Bowling Club, Faight Park, Adelaide Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow. The planning application may be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy at the office of Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Wicklow during its public opening hours. The planning application may be viewed on line at www.wicklow.ie under planning online enquiries. A submission or observation in relation to the application may be made in writing to the planning authority on payment of the prescribed fee, €20, within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the application. and such submissions or observations will be considered by the planning authority in making a decision on the application. The planning authority may grant permission subject to or without conditions, or may refuse to grant permission.

PLANNING

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

I, Victor Logan seek planning permission for the creation of a new entrance on to public road at Baronstown Lower, Grangecon, Co. Wicklow. The planning application may be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy at the offices of Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Wicklow during its public opening hours and a submission or observation in relation to the application may be made to the authority in writing on payment of the prescribed fee within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the application.

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

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 in writing on payment of the prescribed fee within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the application.

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

I, Karol Kawczynski, intend to apply for planning permission for development at the following address: Ballintober, Hollywood, Co. Wicklow, W91 R6C9. The development will consist of: Construction of a single-storey extension to the side, a single-storey extension to the front to accommodate a new porch, two dormer windows to the front, two dormer windows to the rear, three Velux windows to be installed on the front roof, and a canopy area to the side and rear. The planning application may be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy, at the offices of the Planning Authority during its public opening hours. A submission or observation in relation to the application may be made in writing to the Planning Authority on payment of the prescribed fee within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the Planning Authority of the application.

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Increased support for SMEs

Louise Fenelon Gaskin, Fine Gael Local Election candidate for the Greystones area, expressed her strong support for the Government's newly announced measures aimed at reducing costs for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

The Government has agreed on a comprehensive range of initiatives designed to alleviate financial pressures on SMEs, particularly in the retail and hospitality sectors.

Key measures include: Introduction of a Second Payment of the Increased Cost of Business; (ICOB) Scheme: This scheme will provide additional financial support to businesses in the retail and hospitality sectors; Doubling of the Innovation Grant Scheme. The grant amount has been increased to €10,000 to foster innovation among SMEs; Enhancement of the Energy Efficiency

Grant Scheme. The maximum grant available has been increased to €10,000, and the business contribution rate has been reduced from 50% to 25%; Expansion of the Trading Online Voucher. Eligibility has been extended to all sectors with up to 50 employees, and the grant amount has been doubled to €5,000; Increase in Microfinance Ireland loan limits with the lending limit has been raised to €50,000 from €25,000; The Government will also review the Economic and Social Research Institute's (ESRI) findings before deciding on any further increases in

statutory sick leave.

"I welcome the increased financial help by the Government to small and medium-sized businesses. As the owner of a small business based in Greystones, I am constantly speaking with business owners under pressure with increased costs. SMEs are the backbone of our local economy and provide much-valued employment in the community. It has been a priority of Taoiseach Simon Harris to support our small businesses since he took office, and I welcome the new measures announced," stated Louise Fenelon Gaskin.

Wicklow company wins at National Enterprise Awards

Brady's Coffee (Irish Decal Products Ltd.), who are supported by Local Enterprise Office Wicklow, were named the winners at this year's National Enterprise Awards. The awards, which took place on 23rd May at the Round Room in the Mansion House in Dublin, were in their 24th year and are organised annually by the Local Enterprise Offices nationwide.



Vibeke Delahunt, Head of Enterprise, LEO Wicklow; Craig, Catherine and Darren Brady, Brady's Coffee; Louise Fleming, Senior Enterprise Development Officer, LEO Wicklow; Leonora Earls, Director of Services, Planning & Economic Development, Wicklow County Council.

The LEO Wicklow awards nominee, Brady's Coffee, took home the South East Regional Award. Brady's is owned

by brothers Craig and Darren Brady, along with Craig's wife Catherine Leonora Earls, Director of Services, Planning and

Economic Development Section, Wicklow County Council, attended the event on behalf of Wicklow County Council, comment-

ing, "The calibre of entrants to this year's awards was extremely high. The tenacity, growth mind-set and dedication demonstrated by the nominees to their local areas must be acknowledged and we commend them on their achievements."

Expressing her delight at the win, Head of Enterprise at LEO Wicklow, Vibeke Delahunt thanked Brady's for an excellent job representing Co. Wicklow, saying "All of the team at LEO Wicklow are so happy for Catherine, Craig, Darren and their staff. Their hard work and innovation has seen them grow internationally in recent years, and they embody the entrepreneurial spirit of Co. Wicklow so well."



Lorraine Dunne and Marion van der Wel at the Bray Area Partnership Health and Wellbeing Fair in the Little Bray Community Centre.

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