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

MENTAL HEALTH EMERGENCY

Sinn Féin TD John Brady has described the publication of the Mental Health Commission's annual report for 2023 as 'revelatory'. The report lays bare the extent of underfunding and investment in Mental Health care in Wicklow.

There are no Commission annual report made several worrying findings, which once again have brought to light how the lack of funding and priority from Government is affecting services across the state, but particularly here in Wicklow.

"Another year and another report that highlights the postcode lottery of care that exists within our services. There are zero number of CAMHS or Intellectual Disability

beds available in Wicklow. In fact, there are only three counties in the state which have bed facilities for CAMHS patients, Dublin, Cork, and Galway.

"There are a total of 46 beds available in County Wicklow, which are exclusively for adult Mental Health patients. In Counties, Dublin, Cork, and Galway, there are a total of 1,767 beds available, which includes beds for adult,



Paul Smith, Caoilinn Byrne and Audrey Travers at the Craig in the Granite Festival in Aughrim.
Pic: Michael Kelly

CAHMS, and Intellectual Disability Patients. To place this in comparative terms, Wicklow has 2.6% bed availability in comparison to these three counties.

"There is also concern over compliance rates in the various CHO areas. Compliance rates of approved centres differed vastly over the topics Individual Care Plans, Premises, Staffing and Risk. These were measures of good practice and areas of concern.

"In CHO 6, which covers the county Wicklow and Dublin South East, the area had a 0% compliance rating for premises, staffing and risk with a total average of the four measures of just 16.7%. This is a cause for alarm. CHO 5 (South Tipperary, Carlow, Kilkenny, Waterford and Wexford) by compar-

son had a 60.7% average.

"The report further revealed that 529 people using Mental Health Services died in 2023, from a range of causes, a figure which represented an increase of over 6% on the previous year's deaths. The report also revealed that there were a total of 94 Serious Reportable Events (SRE) in 2023, 42 of which were categorised as criminal assaults, described in the report as sexual assaults. Of the 42 criminal assaults, over a fifth took place in CHO 6.

"The evidence contained in the Mental Health Commission Report speaks for itself. The undeniable fact is that Wicklow is being left behind in terms of the provision of Mental Health Services. With a serving and former Minister for Health in the County, this is sim-

ply not good enough. The people of Wicklow need to see results, at

the very least they need to see this government deliver a Mental Health

Service that at a minimum is on a parity with the rest of the State."



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Be part of Ireland's largest gathering of Marilyn lookalikes on Sunday, 4th August to support women's cancer care! Dip your toes with your fellow starlets and enjoy the Marilyn Mixer after-party. Your ticket includes:

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Young Wicklow people lead Ireland's largest Pride parade

Twenty young LGBTQ+ people from across Wicklow led this year's Dublin Pride parade on Saturday, 29th June, alongside hundreds of others from across Ireland. The 20 young people from Wicklow represented the Arklow LGBT and Bray LGBTQ+ youth groups, both part of Crosscare Youth Services, and marched with Belong To - LGBTQ+ Youth Ireland which was chosen as Grand Marshall for the parade this year.

Arklow LGBT is a peer support group for 12 to 18-year-olds, with weekly groups held on Tuesdays in Arklow town, while Bray LGBTQ+ Youth Group offers a wide range of support to hundreds of young people in county Wicklow and provides a safe and supportive space for young people aged 13 to 18 years.

The young people travelled from Wicklow to Dublin to march as part of a National Network of local groups providing support and community for LGBTQ+ people across the county. Others who led the parade with Belong To travelled from as far as Donegal and Kerry.

Belong To, which coordinates the National Network, was selected by Dublin Pride as the 2024 Grand Marshall in recognition of the charity's work with young LGBTQ+ people and their families across Ireland, delivering support services from crisis counselling and family supports to running anti-LGBTQ+ bullying campaigns and inclusion programmes in education settings and youth groups.

The Wicklow young people marched in the parade following a breakfast hosted by Belong To at Wood Quay, Dublin City Council Offices, which was also attended by Taoiseach Simon Harris,



Pictured at Irish charity Belong To - LGBTQ+ Youth Ireland's Pride breakfast on Saturday, 29th June 2024 at Wood Quay, Dublin City Council Offices, Dublin 2, which was attended by over 400 LGBTQ+ young people who travelled from across the country are members of Arklow LGBT and Bray LGBTQ+ Youth Group, both part of Crosscare Youth Services, with Taoiseach Simon Harris; Minister for Health and Wicklow TD Stephen Donnelly; and Moninne Griffith, CEO of Belong To. Photo Credit: John Ohle.

Lord Mayor of Dublin James Geoghegan, a number of Government Ministers, TDs and Senators, Dublin City councillors and a range of partner organisations.

Moninne Griffith (she/her), CEO of Belong To commented: "Today, we are delighted to embody the Dublin Pride 2024 theme and 'Shine' alongside hundreds of LGBTQ+ youth from Wicklow and across Ireland. This is a very

special day for them and for all of us - a chance to celebrate in all of our diversity. For many of the young people, this is their first time being out and proud, joining the community to celebrate their authentic selves. Particularly for those from more rural parts of the country, Pride wonderful opportunity to connect with the wider LGBTQ+ community of young people."

Also speaking at the parade was, Paul Murphy, Youth Information Officer at Crosscare Bray Youth Service who said: "I'm walking in Pride for all those that can't because of fears about coming out. Pride isn't going anywhere so when any young person is ready, we'll be here for them. Pride is such a positive experience. It really makes me feel like I am part of something bigger and reminds me that I'm not alone as I sometimes feel."



Peter Behan and Cllr Pat Kennedy at the launch of the Tinahely Show which will be held on Monday 5th August.

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John and Noreen Mulqueen Bee and Philip Bonus, the overall winners of the Wicklow & District Lions Club SSE Renewables Golf Classic in Blainroe. Wicklow Lions Club stated "thanks to all the golfers who took part and especially to the main sponsor SSE Renewables and the many Tee Box sponsors and to the staff in Blainroe." A special raffle was held on the day with novelty prizes donated by Ms. P Sigrist on behalf of various companies in Switzerland which was very much appreciated. All funds raised are distributed to deserving causes within the community.

Tinahely Library events

Baby & Toddler Storytime. Every Wednesday at 10am all through the summer holidays. Stories, rhymes, songs, play and colouring.

Adult Book Club, Tuesday 9th July 7pm, and Thursday 11th July 11am. All welcome.

Tuesday 23rd July - PlanItPlay, 1.30pm-2.30pm 4-8 year olds / 3pm - 4pm 9 years +. Come to a Workshop where art meets science. Learn about the lifecycle of toy production, consumption and waste. Become a toy designer. Make new toys from old ones. Make a superhero for climate action! No need to bring anything but if you have a broken toy/toys you would like to repurpose you are welcome to bring your own. Spaces are limited. To book phone (0402) 38081 or email tinahelylib@wicklococo.ie.

Glendalough Market

The next Glendalough Market is on Sunday, July 14th. Come shop indoor and outdoor with a variety of items for sale with beautiful handmade crafts and plenty of bargains and from gifts, clothes, plants, books, toys, skincare products, candles, art, tools, household items etc. You might be a keen bargain hunter or enjoy browsing for affordable gifts. Open to the public from 10am to 3pm. Tea, coffee, parking and food snacks are available. The

barrier will be locked from 6pm Saturday evening until 8am Sunday morning. You can contact organisers by phone 0404 45600 (Mon-Fri 9am to 4pm) or email brockaghooffice@gmail.com. All stallholders must pre book their space or no entry on the day. The Glendalough Market (carboot sale) is once a month on the second Sunday (except Jan/Feb).

NAC Glendalough Youth Weekend

A fun-filled weekend will take place at NAC Glendalough Youth Weekend at the Glendalough International Hostel. On Friday, 26th July from 4pm to Sunday 28th July 2pm. Free Event. Register on Eventbrite. Get ready for exciting activities, games, and bonding with other young adventurers. This is your chance to make new friends, explore the beautiful surroundings, and create unforgettable memories. Don't miss out on this amazing opportunity to connect with nature and fellow youth enthusiasts.

Aware webinar series - Understanding the Impact of Trauma

Aware is the national organisation providing free support, education and information services. These services are available to those impacted by anxiety, depression bipolar disorder and related mood conditions. A webinar on understanding the impact of trauma will be held on 10th July from 12pm to 1pm. Aware has a webinar series with a different theme each month. Webinars take place on the second Wednesday of the month.

You do not need to have a Zoom account to attend. You must register in advance for each webinar individually. If you cannot attend live, you can still register and receive a link the next day to watch back. This promises to be an excellent and helpful hour.

Guest Contributors will be Dr. Sharon Lambert, Senior Lecturer in Applied Psychology at UCC; Dr. Alan McDonnell, Counselling Psychologist with the HSE National Counselling Service. The webinar will be moderated by Stephen McBride, Director of Services at Aware. To register, go to aware.ie/webinars/upcoming-aware-webinars

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Arklow water supply awaiting verification to be removed from Remedial Action List

On Thursday Jan 25th, the Court of Justice of the European Union ruled that Ireland had failed to fully implement the Drinking Water Directive in relation to breaches of the 100ug/l limit for Trihalomethanes (THMs) in drinking water in 30 drinking water supplies. The EPA has regulatory oversight of 21 public water supplies managed and operated by Uisce Éireann. Local authorities have regulatory oversight of 9 private group water supplies.

Of the 21 public water supplies in the original complaint, 16 have been resolved. The 5 remaining public supplies are on the EPA's Remedial action list (RAL). Two have works complete and awaiting verification, two are expected to have works complete in 2024 and the remaining one is due for completion in 2026.

One of the five remaining on the RAL is the Aughrim/Annacurra water supply, which is being rationalised with a pipeline connection to Arklow. Works have been completed and a successful verification will mean removal from the RAL.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Drinking Water Quality in Public Supplies Report 2023 released last week shows that over 99.7 per cent of public water supplies comply with bacterial and chemical limits, which means our public water is safe to drink. However, many supplies still lack robust treatment measures to guarantee their long-term resilience and safety.

The EPA's Remedial Action List (RAL) identifies "at-risk" supplies that require improvements to safeguard public health. In 2023 there has been a further increase in the number of people served by supplies on the RAL (up to 561,000 - from 481,000). While it is positive to note that ten supplies were removed from the RAL following improvement works, the EPA - through enforcement and assessment activities - have identified a further nine "at-risk"

supplies that were added, primarily for THM and Cryptosporidium exceedances.

Good progress has been made in other areas such as disinfection, progression of the Drinking Water Safety Plan approach and making the lead remediation grant easier for the public to access.

Launching the report, Dr Tom Ryan, EPA Director said: "Our public water quality remains very high, which means that the public can remain confident that drinking water supplied to their homes is safe to drink. However, the resilience of drinking water supplies isn't robust enough as evidenced by more "at-risk" supplies being identified by the EPA, and an almost doubling of long-term boil water notices in 2023. Implementing the findings of Drinking Water Safety Plans will be crucial to improve the resilience of supplies- this will require corresponding sustained investment in water services to continue to provide the people of Ireland with a safe and secure supply into the future."

Margaret Attridge, Uisce Éireann's Head of Water Operations said, "The EPA report recognises the ongoing improvements made by Uisce Éireann in testing, monitoring and assessing water supplies and the key role this has played in identifying risks to drinking water quality, and ensuring a safer water supply for all. Where appropriate temporary Boil Water Notices or other restrictions are introduced to protect public health while the problems identified are

addressed. Most of the Boil Water Notices imposed in 2023 were in place for less than 30 days.

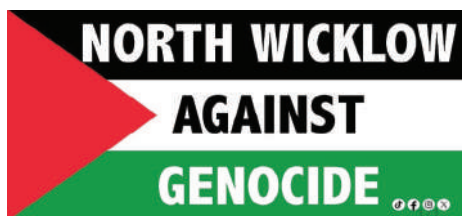
"Uisce Éireann also continues to make progress in addressing known risks to water supplies which are on the EPA's Remedial Action List. In 2023, 10 more supplies were removed from the list following the completion of remedial actions. For those supplies that remain on the list or for those added, Uisce Éireann is progressing plans to address any underlying issues and ensure resilient water supplies for the communities they serve."

In 2023, boil water notices impacted 254,000 people. Half of boil water notices were in place for more than 30 days, nearly double the number from 2022. This recent trend of significantly more long-term boil water notices needs to be reversed by Uisce Éireann and requires proactive measures to address the underlying causes and improve the resilience of these supplies.

In Co. Wicklow, as of 2nd July 2024, there are three water supplies currently on a Boil Water Notice (BWN) or Water Restriction (WRN). These are Killavane Public Supply (Tinahely); Johnstown South (Arklow) Public Supply; and Kilballyowen (Aughrim) Public Supply. In total, these notices affect 41 households. The Johnstown South boil water notice has been in place since June of 2015 and the Killavane notice has been in place since December 2023.



Lucy Geraghty and Anwyn Wilkinson at the Craic in the Granite Festival in Aughrim.



THE CALL FOR BOYCOTT, DIVESTMENT AND SANCTIONS

Since 1948, Israel has denied Palestinians their fundamental rights and has refused to comply with international law. Israel maintains a brutal regime of settler colonialism, apartheid and occupation over the Palestinian people. In addition to this, Israel has waged a genocidal campaign against the people of Gaza, killing at least 40,000 people and injuring nearly 100,000 more, in the past nine months alone.

This is only possible because of international support. Governments fail to hold Israel to account, while corporations and institutions across the world help Israel to oppress Palestinians.

Because those in power refuse to act to stop this injustice, Palestinian civil society has called for a global citizens' response of solidarity with the Palestinian struggle for freedom, justice and equality. This led to the Boycotts, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement as a form of non-violent pressure on Israel.

What can you do to help?

You can take part in a consumer boycott of Israeli goods and services and of companies whose exports are linked to some of the most evident aspects of the Israeli occupation and apartheid.

Supermarket products you should refuse to buy

The Israeli barcode usually starts with the numbers 729. However, it doesn't necessarily appear on all Israeli products so be sure to always check the label or ask your supplier for country of origin.

Check the country of origin for produce, particularly for oranges, carrots, potatoes, dates and avocados.



729 = MADE IN ISRAEL

- **Tivall** is an Israeli company that produces vegetarian foods.
- **Sabra** is an Israeli company that sells hummus and other dips. Its parent company, the **Strauss Group**, provides financial support to the Israeli occupation forces.
- **Sudocrem**, for many years thought of as a quintessentially Irish brand, was bought out by Teva (an Israeli company) in 2016.

Certain own brand **Babywipes** (such as **Lupilu**) are made in Israel.

Other companies to boycott

Act Now Against These Companies Profiting from the Genocide of the Palestinian People

Consumer boycott targets: 	Divestment and exclusion targets:
Pressure targets: 	Organic boycott targets:

Contact North Wicklow Against Genocide for further information about the BDS movement and to get involved! Join us!



Think Before You Flush campaign collaborates with Council to protect Blue Flag beaches

2023 was the first year of collaboration between the Think Before You Flush campaign, Wicklow County Council and the Blue Flag programme, with the combined goal of educating beach goers around what should and should not be flushed down public toilets when visiting the coast during the summer months.

2024 has seen a continuation of this landmark collaboration and the goal remains the same; keeping Ireland's beautiful Blue Flag beaches and marinas clean and tidy and protecting our spectacular marine habitats from sewage based pollution. The "Think Before You Flush" campaign, operated by Clean Coasts in partnership with Uisce Eireann, emphasises the importance of appropriate flushing behaviour and disposal of items including wipes and other sanitary products, even if they are labelled as flushable. Only the 3 Ps: pee, poo and paper should be flushed down the toilet, everything else should go in the bin. When items such as wipes and sanitary products are flushed down the toilet, they can cause serious blockages in waste water systems, causing sewage overflows which can pollute our rivers, lakes, beaches and coastlines.



Patrick Cross (Think Before You Flush Campaign Officer), Michael McNamara, (Wicklow County Council) and Mary Hussey (Uisce Eireann) at the 2024 Blue Flag Beach Awards in Galway. Photo: Aengus McMahon.



Think Before You Flush signage on Blue Flag Beaches and marinas, offering clear instructions on appropriate flushing behaviour, highlighting the main items people incorrectly flush down their toilets (the 'Dirty Dozen') and encouraging visitors to use designated sanitary waste bins. Recognising the urgent need to protect Ireland's remarkable coastal ecosystems Wicklow County Council has united in their commitment to spread awareness about the campaign and promote responsible waste disposal practices. Under this collaborative effort, participating Authorities will display Council supporting the Think Before You Flush campaign. This collaboration between councils and environmental programmes is crucial in safeguarding our Blue Flag Beaches. Their efforts and ongoing commitment to protecting our coastlines will help ensure vibrant ecosystems for future generations to enjoy." Talking about the importance of safeguarding our Blue Flag beaches and marinas Sean Corrigan of Uisce Eireann said: "By partnering with Clean Coasts and Uisce Eireann's Think Before You Flush campaign, Wicklow County Council aims to foster a culture of environmental responsibility, where individuals can take proactive steps to protect our coastal habitats. The success of this campaign hinges on the participation and support of Wicklow's stakeholders, including the public, beachgoers, residents, and tourists alike. The hard work, and positivity of everyone involved is inspiring to see."

Council launches 'Behind the Beach' biodiversity programme

Wicklow County Council has announced the continuation of its biodiversity awareness programme, 'Behind the Beach 2024', at Brittas Bay for the Summer/Autumn season.

This series of free outdoor public workshops and activities aims to increase awareness and appreciation of the rich ecology found in our coastal habitats and of the diversity of species with which we share our County's most well-loved beach. This programme aims to highlight the vital role that healthy dune systems play in creating a more climate-resilient environment. Key events in this year's programme include:

- A Walk and Talk Through the Habitats at Brittas Bay - Thursday 1st August, from 5.30pm to 7.30pm. This guided walk will explore the diverse ecosystems that thrive behind the dunes and offer insights into their ecological significance.
- Autumn Bird Migration Workshop on Saturday 21st September, from 11am to 1pm.

This workshop will focus on the migratory patterns of birds that visit Brittas Bay and the importance of preserving their natural habitats.

- Organised Beach Clean-Ups in the Dunes - Monday 22nd July and Thursday 15th August, from 5.30pm to 7.30pm.

These events aim to engage the community in maintaining the beauty and health of Brittas Bay's coastal environment.

All events will take place at the North Beach, with the exception of the Sea Buckthorn Volunteer Day, which will be held at the South Beach. All children must be accompanied by an adult. To register your interest in attending an event (and to be notified of any changes), please email eao@wicklowcoco.ie.

Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council,

Cllr. Paul O'Brien, said: "Behind the Beach 2024 is an exciting opportunity for the community to engage with and learn about the vital ecosystems that support our beautiful coastal areas. These events not only educate but also inspire collective action towards preserving our natural heritage."

Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council, Emer O'Gorman, commented that: "Through this programme, we aim to foster a deeper connection between our residents and the environment. Understanding the importance of biodiversity and the role of dune systems is crucial for building a resilient and sustainable future."

These events are part of a biodiversity programme coordinated by Wicklow County Council and supported by the Heritage Council and by the Local Biodiversity Action Fund through the Department of Housing, Heritage, and Local Government.

For more details, please visit the News and Events Section on www.wicklow.ie



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89% of Wicklow schools on track for free solar panels

Green TD Steven Matthews has welcomed the strong level of demand for the Schools PV Programme with 89 schools across Co. Wicklow progressing to tender to date and will shortly see panels on their rooftops. A further 11 schools have initiated their application but are slightly behind in the process.

The scheme will provide participating schools with 6 kilowatts of roof-mounted solar PV, which equates to approximately 16 solar panels. The full cost of installing the solar panels will be paid for entirely by the State's Climate Action Fund with no additional costs incurred by participating schools.

Discussing the progress of this scheme, Deputy Matthews said: "I strongly advocated for Wicklow's inclusion in the first phase of the school solar rollout, and it is very rewarding to see that there is a high level of interest in its rollout. The ultimate goal is to get rooftop solar panels on every school in Wicklow. This is a very practical measure that will assist schools with their energy costs, reduce carbon emissions and encourage the wider roll-out of solar PV in Wicklow."

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

"In recent days I have written to all schools including those yet to apply for the free solar panel scheme to offer my support with any issues in the application and installation process. In the last few months, I have worked directly with a number of schools on specific concerns related to their application and in each instance, we were able to work through them and complete the application process," concluded Deputy Matthews.



Steven Matthews TD.



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SOME TERMS AND CONDITIONS MAY APPLY

Brady calls for ban on herbicide weed killers in State nature reserve at Glen of the Downs

Sinn Fein TD John Brady has called for a ban on the use of herbicides on the roadside along the N11 as it passes through the Glen of the Downs, Ireland's first state owned nature reserve. He was particularly concerned at the potential for the herbicides to leak into the Three Trout stream which runs through the nature reserve, as herbicides are known to be particularly damaging to aquatic life.

Deputy Brady also raised a number of concerns around ongoing practices in the area to tackle the growth of weeds, which he says is effectively a 'scorched earth policy' which destroys all plants and fauna'. As the nature reserve is State owned, and given the highest environmental protection under Irish law, Deputy Brady says there is a clear onus on Minister Darragh O'Brien and Green Party Junior Minister Malcolm Noonan, who as Minister of State for Heritage and Electoral Reform describes himself as one who works "tirelessly for an Ireland where healthy, resilient ecosystems teem with wildlife", to ensure that the diverse ecosystem in the Glen of the Downs is protected from the use of herbicide weed killers, the use of which is heavily legislated for under Irish law, under section 40 of the wildlife act which stipulates that the untargeted spraying of road verges with herbicide is an offence under the aforementioned Act. It is also illegal to use herbicides at this time of the year, specifically from the 1st of March to the 31st of August.

It appears that in recent weeks that herbicide was employed by the company that is contracted to maintain the N11 / M11. These works are completely separate to works that were carried out last year in the nature reserve by experts to remove invasive species, which had full ministerial consent.

Deputy Brady said: "Under section 40 of the wildlife act the use of pesticides within or close to special areas of conservation or Natural Heritage Areas, such as the Glen of the Downs Nature Reserve, is a notifiable action which requires ministerial consent. Wicklow County Council (WCC) has previously recognised the dangers posed by the use of herbicides, which is known to be damaging to biodiversity. There are major and very real concerns as to whether glyphosate is carcinogenic. "WCC has recognised that there are concerns and public opposition to the use of herbicides near pollinating insects, and to humans. WCC committed

to ending the use of herbicides in the County. I have written to both Minister Darragh O'Brien, who as Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, and Minister of State for Heritage and Electoral Reform, Malcolm Noonan of the Green Party, raising my concerns at these actions. I have also sought clarification from both Ministers as to which of them, and whether both of them had granted consent for the use of herbicides in the Glen of the Downs. "The Glen of the Downs Nature Reserve is state owned, and its status is protected under Irish law. It is an area of incredible natural beauty here in Wicklow. It is also a very important and special area of conservation. The area

previously endured significant impact from construction work on the N11/M11 motorway which led to the loss of parts of the ancient woodland, with its associated flora, fauna, and biodiversity. "To maintain the delicate balance of biodiversity in the Glen of the Downs it is essential that every effort is made to preserve the health of the eco-system in the nature reserve. The Ministers in question must give assurances that the use of herbicides will cease, that alternative measures will be used on the N11 roadsides, and the no trace of the herbicides used are to be found in local water courses, particularly the Three Trout stream in the Glen. It is an environmental



John Brady TD at the Glen of the Downs

imperative that the Ministers are seen to be acting to ensure that the rich heritage which the people of Wicklow have inherited from their ancestors must be protected. The government must ensure that it carries out its role and responsibility in terms of securing this ancient woodland for future generations." Deputy Brady concluded: "I am calling on Minister Darragh O'Brien to confirm if Ministerial approval has been granted for the use of harmful herbicides on the road verge on the N11 passing through the Glen of the Downs Nature Reserve. I am asking if approval was given, which of the two ministers granted approval? Did the company staff who used the herbicide in the Glen of the Downs receive appropriate training in the use of herbicides, and were they registered with the Department of Agriculture, Forestry, and Marine, which is mandatory since 2015? Can they give a guarantee that no traces of herbicide have found its way into the local water system, particularly the Three Trout Stream, which runs through the Glen of the Downs? And are they prepared to give an assurance that they will in future ensure that safer, more environmentally friendly forms of weed control will be employed, in order to protect the delicate ecosystem in the Glen of the Downs? Are the Ministers prepared to give an undertaking to carry out an investigation as to whether there has been contamination of any part of the nature reserve, including the Three Trout stream by herbicides."

Progress on environmental project at the site of old Bray dump

Sinn Fein TD John Brady has welcomed confirmation that progress on the environmental project at the site of the old dump in Bray, which was used by Wicklow County Council up until the 1960s, to prevent the old landfill site at the North Beach from being washed into the sea is nearing completion.

The €2 million coastal project, came about as a result of a 17-year campaign for Brady, was a critical environmental intervention. The success of which now offers the opportunity to open the site for recreational and public amenities. Deputy Brady stated that he believed that the site could be suitable to develop as part of a coastal walkway running all the way from Dun Laoghaire in South County Dublin to Bray, which can link up with the old Bray to Greystones walk once it reopens, which in turn can link with the Greystones to Wicklow coastal Walk. The Bray TD who also made the argument that the site offers additional potential for the site of a water borne centre of excellence, called for a public consultation around the next phase of developing the area as a public amenity. Deputy Brady said: "The success of the project to address what was an environmental catastrophe at North Beach Bray, which represents the latest milestone in what has become a 17-year campaign to prevent refuse from being washed into the sea at the old landfill site. Our campaign goes back 17 years at this stage, during which time we battled with successive governments over the need to address what was an environmental catastrophe. It was estimated that there was 104,000 cubic metres of waste at the site including asbestos, excessive levels of ammoniacal nitrogen, potassium, and manganese. Tonnes of which were being washed into the sea during storms over the years. "I also want to congratulate the Engineers and workers of Wicklow and Dun Laoghaire and Rathdown for seeing through this project over the last number of years. "The project involved the placing of armour stone revetments at the toe of the cliff at the landfill site, and the stabilisation of the cliff face above, by regrading the area to a long-term stable slope. This will prevent contaminated material from

reaching the foreshore. The project, which is planned to be completed this month, presents an opportunity to reopen the area as a public amenity that can be enjoyed by everyone. I believe that it is important that the site is transformed into a public amenity, and that the public should have their say in how this is developed. I am proposing that the area could be developed into a walkway which could provide a linkup between Dun Laoghaire and Bray. This could form part of the existing Bray to Greystones coastal walk when it reopened. Which in turn could be joined with a new coastal walkway from Greystones to Wicklow Town. The creation of an uninterrupted walkway between Dun Laoghaire and Wicklow Town through Bray and Greystones would be a remarkable achievement. All the more remarkable as it would stand as a testament of how determination and community focus can transform what was an environmental disaster into something positive for our community. I also strongly believe that the area around the North Beach has the potential to be turned into a hub for water borne activities in North Wicklow. Offering opportunities to create jobs and provide a major tourist attraction to the area. Wicklow County Council should begin a process of public consultation to help determine the best fit for the site as a major public amenity."



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John Brady TD at Bray North Beach

‘Derelict Anvil store poses very real public safety concern’

Sinn Fein TD John Brady has called on Wicklow County Council to use its powers under the Local Government (Sanitary Services) Act 1964, to ensure that the former Anvils store on Bray Main Street is made safe. "In its current condition it is only a matter of time before sections of the building collapse, potentially causing death or serious injury to passers-by," said Deputy Brady.

Deputy Brady previously expressed concern and remains in regular contact with Wicklow County Council regarding the condition of the former Anvil store on Main Street Bray, which has been derelict for a number of years. Planning permission was previously granted in 2022 for fifteen apartments and commercial and retail space on the site.

In May the developer submitted a commencement notice to Wicklow County Council (WCC),

which should have allowed work to begin within two weeks, and led to the addressing of the safety concerns, but a number of technical problems led to further information being required, and this has added to delays.

Deputy Brady said: "While the developer of the former Anvils store on Bray main street issued a commencement notice in May, we are now in July, and there has been zero progress to address the imminent safety concerns to date.

There is an immediate and very real public safety concern here. The building in its current state represents a danger to members of the public. The structure of the building is badly compromised and sections are in imminent danger of falling down. Added to this is the presence of asbestos in the roof, which is badly damaged leading to asbestos falling down from the roof.

"This is highly dangerous, utterly unacceptable, and needs to be

addressed immediately by trained professionals. I am in regular ongoing contact with Council officials, who have been working with the developer. The developer needs to be either forced to carry out the necessary works to make the

building safe, which at this stage amounts to nothing less than the complete demolition of the premises, or the Council needs to act unilaterally.

"This building is right on a public street, members of the public are walking under a faade on a daily basis that is ready to collapse on top of them. And while the developer has committed to carrying out works on the site, as they continue to wait the site continually deteriorates. Three years ago, large sections of the facade on another premises, a three-storey building on Quinsboro

road, just off the centre of Bray, collapsed. We were all very lucky that there was nobody killed or seriously injured at the time.

"It is unlikely that Bray will be as lucky the next time round. Because if something is not done urgently, let there be no doubt, this building will collapse, and there is a real risk of death or serious injury occurring. Wicklow County Council need to use their powers under the Local Government (Sanitary Services) Act 1964 to make this building safe. Failure to act could result in the loss of life."



John Brady TD outside the former Anvil building on Bray Main Street

Consultation process shows extent of public opposition to Herbert Road junction closure

Sinn Fein TD John Brady has responded to an update by Wicklow County Council on the consultation process regarding the closure of the N11 access road to Herbert Road.

Between September and November last year, the Council carried out a public consultation to determine public attitudes to a proposed N11 / M11 Bus Priority Interim Scheme, the results of which Deputy Brady argued would reveal the strength of feeling and opposition in the community in Bray towards the proposal in its current form.

The level of opposition to the plans have been confirmed by the Council which stated that there was a significant negative response to the proposed closure of the N11 access to the Herbert Road.

Deputy Brady said: "I welcome the fact that Wicklow County Council has completed the public consultation process on the N11 / M11 Bus Priority Interim Scheme and is currently preparing a post publication consultation report.

"In November I submitted a Sinn Fein petition opposing the plans as they had been presented to the public. The strength of public opinion on the issue can be seen from the 1,853 signatories to the petition.

"In addition, there were a further 1,152 submissions, including one which I submitted in my own name, in which I outlined the reasons for my strong opposition to the existing plans.

"It is absolutely clear that the primary issue of concern for members of the public which was evident across the submissions to the Council concerned the closure of the Herbert Road Junction, and the installation of a traffic lights system at Hill Garage in place of the existing roundabout.

"A recent update from the Council has confirmed the strength of opposition to the proposal to close the N11 access road at the Herbert Road. The reality was that the original traffic plans as they have been presented are unwork-

able and would result in a disaster for motorists and residents who currently use the Herbert Road Junction, and the Hills roundabout.

"The council have carried out further environmental studies and traffic analysis on elements of the emerging preferred option. It is critical that whatever the emerging preferred option is, it needs takes cognisance of the level of community opposition to the original proposal.

"There are three other junctions in Bray. I do not believe that the traffic prevented from using the Herbert Road would travel to the Bray North Junction. Nor would they use the Old Fassaroe Junction, which would take them onto the Main Street, which is itself overwhelmed with traffic. Which would result in traffic being forced to use the new junction at the former Hills Roundabout. The anticipated influx of additional traffic would be significantly more than this junction could cope with. Particularly when we consider that vehicles are forced to queue out onto the N11 as they await access to the junction. Through my ongoing interaction with local people and motorists on this issue, and the response in terms of support for the petition and the number of submissions tabled, the strength of opposition is abundantly clear.

"Once again, I am calling on the Green Party Minister for Transport Eamon Ryan to abandon his ideological approach to our transport infrastructure, and to respect the fact that there is massive local opposition to the current proposals.

"I further call upon the Council to listen to the voices in the community who have and continue to express widespread opposition to a scheme which if it is allowed to go ahead will create traffic chaos in Bray."



**An Roinn Comhshaoil,
Aeráide agus Cumarsáide**
Department of the Environment,
Climate and Communications

NOTICE OF DETERMINATION

In accordance with the Foreshore Act 1933, as amended, the Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications ("the Minister") hereby gives notice that he has made a determination on an application received on the 27th April 2023 for a licence under Section 3 of the Foreshore Act, 1933 (as amended) made by Sure Partners Limited (a wholly owned subsidiary of SSE) ("the Applicant") in respect of conducting a range of site investigation survey works to support the development of the proposed Arklow Bank Wind Park - Phase II off the coast of County Wicklow (FS007555).

The full Notice of Determination which was published in the Iris Oifigiúil website on 9th July 2024 can be viewed at: <http://www.irisioifigiuil.ie/>

All documentation in regard to the application including the Notice of Determination can be viewed on the website of the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications at:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/foreshore-notice/ec998-fs007555-arklow-bank-wind-park-off-coast-of-county-wicklow/>

This material may also be inspected free of charge by appointment at the following office of the Department:

Foreshore Section
Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications
Newtown Road
Wexford
Y35 AP90
Tel: 01 6782000
Email: foreshore@decc.gov.ie

REVIEW PROCEDURE

An application for leave to apply for judicial review shall be made within three months from the date when grounds for the application first arose under Section 21(1) of the Order 84 of the Rules of the Superior Courts as amended by S.I No 691 of 2011. The time-limit for such a review commences from the Date of Publication of the full Notice of Determination. Further information on the review mechanism can be obtained on the Citizens Information Board website: www.citizensinformation.ie

Department of Environment, Climate and Communications
Dated this 9th day of July 2024

Council's role in promoting quality living highlighted on 'Your Council Day'

Wicklow County Council's role in supporting quality living within Wicklow was highlighted, promoted and celebrated to mark Your Council Day 2024, which took place on Friday 5th July.

Across Wicklow, amenities and services operated, supported and provided by Wicklow County Council have a very positive impact on local people's quality of life, wellbeing and health.

An extensive array of local authority services are used by people on a day-to-day basis which support quality living.

These include, but are not limited to, parks, leisure, sports, library,

arts, heritage and community services.

Councils also lead in protecting our living environments, including street cleaning, litter control, monitoring of waterways and beaches, urban and village renewal schemes, and maintenance of our roads and footpaths.

Staff in local authorities are embedded within communities, enabling people on an individual and collective basis to

enjoy life in places where they live, work and visit. Across social media, #YourCouncilDay highlighted the role of local authorities in promoting quality living and the work of committed and passionate staff in Wicklow County Council.

"On Your Council Day, Wicklow County Council is very proud to highlight, promote and celebrate our role in positively impacting upon people's quality of life,"

said Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr. Paul O'Brien.

Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council, Emer O'Gorman said, "Our staff are committed to supporting people living in and visiting Wicklow to enjoy a positive, high-quality experience within the county. Given the very considerable range of services supported and operated by local government in our communities, every

day councils are positively impacting upon people's lives."

Minister of State with responsibility for Local Government and Planning, Alan Dillon TD said: "All across Ireland, every day, our local county councils have an impact on our quality of life. They provide homes, improve our neighbourhoods, protect the environment, and strive to make our communities better places to live.



"My Department recently launched the 'Your Council' campaign to highlight these essential services and raise awareness of how local government works.

"Your Council Day'

provides an opportunity to emphasise this important message and celebrate the positive work of local authorities. So, to mark Your Council Day for 2024, I would like to thank all of the staff in

our councils for their dedication and contribution to local communities throughout the country. I wish all our local authorities continued success as they celebrate Your Council Day 2024."



Wicklow Town Library

€15,000 in funding for libraries

An Taoiseach Simon Harris has announced €15,000 in funding for Wicklow libraries. The funding is aimed at supporting and improving library services across the county making them more inclusive. The funding will fund new equipment such as new chairs, new desks and tools to help visually impaired individuals use the libraries.

An Taoiseach Simon Harris said: "I am delighted to announce brand new funding to help make the libraries in our county more inclusive and better equipped. The funding announced today will deliver a range of furniture and equipment including 26 ergonomic chairs, 2 height-adjustable desks and 18 Age Friendly trolleys to support the elderly and people with mobility needs or physical disabilities.

"Additionally, 10 visually impaired key-

boards and trackball mice to support people with visual impairments. Libraries across the country provide a vital service and it's crucial we fund each and every one to make sure they can cater for people with disabilities and other marginalised groups. This funding is set to make a huge difference and will help build stronger communities.

"Libraries in Wicklow are welcoming places and I know the staff working in libraries in County Wicklow will welcome

this funding announcement to help welcome even more people. As a TD in Wicklow and as a passionate advocate for people with disabilities I am particularly delighted to see this funding go to help improve libraries in making them more inclusive.

"I want to take this opportunity to thank the hard-working staff in libraries across Wicklow and pay tribute to their dedication day in and day out."

Local Authority Purchase and Renovation Loan to support first-time buyers

Local Authority Purchase and Renovation Loan (LAPR) is an expansion of the Local Authority Home Loan, the loan will support both the purchase and renovation of homes which are eligible under the existing Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant.

Eligibility for the new support is subject to the applicant meeting the existing local authority mortgage lending eligibility criteria and the project meeting scheme lending criteria. The introduction of the LAPR significantly expands the types and numbers of homes eligible under current local authority mortgage lending rules. Previously, only homes which were habitable were eligible for the Local Authority Home Loan and the loan was only available for the purchase of the property, not renovation.

The changes to current local authority lending policies will now provide support for non-habitable homes to be purchased and for renovations works to be financed. All homes to be supported must be eligible for the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant.

The Local Authority Purchase and Renovation Loan (LAPR) will be used for these types of homes. This loan is expected to be introduced in the coming weeks. The LAPR will have largely the same eligibility criteria and structure as the existing Local Authority Home Loan (LAHL), but with changes made to facilitate financing re-

novation projects.

People who wish to purchase and/or renovate a Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant eligible home but cannot get sufficient funding from commercial lenders will now be able to apply to their local authority for a LAPR..

A key feature of the LAPR is that a bridging loan, which is commensurate to the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant and repayable once the grant is paid out, is an integral part of the loan.

This has important benefits for an applicant:

- As the repayment of the bridging loan is based on the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant, the applicant's borrowing capacity is increased. They will be able fund works with the LAPR that would not have been available to them from bank funding.
- The viability of the project, which is based on the loan outstanding once the bridging loan is paid back, is improved. The LAPR will consider the cost of the project, net of the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant, when determining whether a project is viable or not.

There are two main types of likely beneficiaries (all of whom must meet the standard existing local authority mortgage eligibility criteria):

1. A person with a project that is viable and whose income is insufficient to source the necessary financing from a bank but is sufficient to demonstrate repayment capacity for their local authority.

2. A person whose project is not viable according to bank lending criteria but is viable according to LAPR lending criteria. They would also need sufficient income to demonstrate repayment capacity for their local authority.

The value of the end of the renovation works cannot exceed the existing LAHL price limits and associated LAHL loan limits. For a person seeking to use this loan, the relevant price for the scheme limits is the projected price at the end of the renovation, not the initial purchase price of the home. The maximum end-of-works market values of the property cannot exceed €360,000 in Dublin, Kildare or Wicklow.



Mia Henry and Maria Stephenson at the Craic in the Granite Festival in Aghrim.

Wicklow primary schools complete Heritage Trail

Local Primary School 6th Class pupils from Wicklow Educate Together, Holy Rosary School, St. Patrick's school and Gaelscoil Chill Mhantain completed the Wicklow Town Heritage Trail during the weeks of May and June.

They were fascinated by the history and heritage of their local town and very much enjoyed the trail, which covers 18 key sites of historical interest including the following:

- The story of local man Robert Halpin who laid the first Trans-Atlantic cable.
- The history of the Abbey Grounds and the Franciscan Abbey.
- The story of Billy Byrne and the 1798 rising in Wicklow Town
- The massacre of over 300 mainly women and children in Melancholy Lane by Sir Charles Coote in 1641.
- The story of the Black Castle including details of some of the battles that took place over 6 centuries.
- The attempted landing by St. Patrick at Travilahawk Beach.

• The history relating to the Barrow Green, including stories of the secret burials that took place there.

Many of the pupils were unaware of the rich history and heritage of Wicklow Town and as part of their homework they have undertaken to visit the Wicklow Town Team website www.wicklowtown.ie where they can view the 8 videos with various local actors telling them their story and the significance of each of their locations.

Pascal Burke, the Co-ordinator of the Wicklow Town Heritage Trail said that he had received very positive feedback from the schools that participated and the teachers from the participating schools spoke of the Wicklow Town Heritage Trail giving their pupils an increased awareness of the history of their town and an enhanced pride in their locality.

For further information on the Wicklow Town Heritage Trail, visit www.wicklowtown.ie.



Wicklow primary school pupils at Wicklow Harbour.

Book launch in Blackrock Education Centre



John Connor, Chairperson RTAI, Ciarán Byrne, Carmel Ni Ghairbhín, Secretary RTAI, Niamh Murray, Director of Blackrock Education Centre.

Recently, Ballinaclesh resident Ciarán Byrne launched his book 'Oh Brother: Memories of a Juniorate Journey' in the Blackrock Education Centre. The book is about the life of a postulant in the juniorate of the Irish Christian Brothers as seen through the eyes of a teenage boy.

Ciarán's book gives us an insight into a system that is no longer in existence for all kinds of reasons. It is a very honest, open account and Ciarán informs and enlightens us to a way of life that seems so archaic, but yet so recent. There are good and bad memories. Ciarán tells all and it is good to know that there were good memories and that there were brothers and teachers who encouraged and nurtured these young men through their adolescent years.

Included is a really interesting questionnaire at the end of his book. It is informative to read how different people reacted to and coped with life in the juniorate.

Their answers are well worth reading.

It takes a lot of bravery to write a book. It takes even more to write about your own life experiences. Ciarán treats everyone he writes about with respect and kindness. He gives a detailed description of a way of life which prepared young men to go forth to teach, preach and encourage more young people to become brothers and sisters. "Particular friendships" were discouraged. This affected and still affects the young men who were part of this system for the rest of their lives. Ciarán allows the reader to make up their own mind about the juniorate system.

This is a wonderfully informative book which would appeal to those interested in the history and sociology of education in the 1960s. Author, journalist and columnist, PJ Cunningham was master of ceremonies on the night. He reminded us that this was not Ciarán's first book. He also published a book A Year in Wicklow with Micko (2016) about Mick O'Dwyer's time as manager of the Wicklow senior football team. PJ took us on a whirlwind tour of life in the "outside world" 1974-1979 from Appendix Four in the book. John Connor, chairperson of RTAI Wicklow branch spoke about the book and compared it to boarding

school life in the '60s and '70s. He mentioned that corporal punishment was used by both lay teachers and religious at that time and that it wasn't abolished soon enough. He referred to and read some wonderful passages from the book. Monsignor Dan O'Connor, Episcopal Vicar of Education in the Archdiocese of Dublin spoke also and commended Ciarán on writing his book which will serve as a reference for educators in years to come.

Oh Brother: Memories of a Juniorate Journey is available in Bridge Street Books Wicklow or online at www.bridgestreetbooks.ie.

Eight Wicklow schools shortlisted for retrofit programme

Eight schools in County Wicklow have been shortlisted for an energy retrofit programme as part of an €81 million EU funding package. This is part of a package of funding totalling €240 million which Ireland has secured under the REPowerEU Programme.

The shortlisted Wicklow schools are; Avoca National School, St Mary's and St Gerard's in Enniskerry, Scoil Nioclais in Dunlavin, Kimoccommon in Tinahely, Carnew in Arklow, Bray School Project, St John's Senior School in Arklow and Scoil Chonglais.

An Taoiseach Simon Harris said: "I am delighted to announce eight schools in my home county have been selected for retrofits. Each school will benefit massively from having new and more energy efficient systems. Every school should strive to reduce their energy consumption and become more environmentally friendly for generations to come.

"This funding will achieve that goal and ensure pupils for years to come are in comfortable and energy efficient schools. This dedicated funding is such a

positive step towards securing the future of our children in county Wicklow and across the country. Children of this generation who are so conscious of the responsibility we all have in reducing our energy consumption will no doubt notice the difference these retrofits will make as will the teachers and staff working in the school."

REPowerEU is the EU's plan to rapidly reduce dependence on Russian fossil fuels, boost the independence and security of the Union's energy supply and accelerate the green transition.

A pool of 40 schools across five counties have been included in the initial assessment phase. Schools ultimately selected for inclusion in the programme will be given a deep retrofit to achieve a Building Energy Rating (BER) of at least B by installing heatpumps, LED light-

ing and mechanical heat recovery ventilation. The fabric and airtightness of the schools will also be upgraded and electric car chargers will be installed.

The €81 million funding to the Department of Education represents the largest of the five investments included in Ireland's funding allocation for its National Recovery and Resilience Plan. It will add to the number of schools being given deep retrofits under the existing school pathfinder decarbonisation and retrofit programme.

The schools which will benefit from the retrofitting funding were part of a pilot phase of the Schools Energy Inventory project. This project covered schools in Kildare, Meath, Offaly, Wicklow and Wexford. It was completed with support from the European Investment Bank.



An Taoiseach Simon Harris TD



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 of the temporary closure of the following public roads:

Roads to be closed:
Greystones, Co. Wicklow

- L-97627 Park Lane
- L-52145 Portland Road
- L-5214 St. Vincent's Road to Portland Road Junction
- L-1221 Old Mill Road

Period of closure:

From 09:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon, Sunday 21st July, 2024.

Alternative Routes:

- Park Lane go towards Killincarrick Road
- Portland Road go towards Whitshed Road
- St. Vincent's Road go towards Erskine Avenue

Traffic management will be in place.

Local Access only for residents and Emergency Services.

Reason for Closure:

This road closure is necessary in order to facilitate the King of Greystones Triathlon Event.

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



Sandra Byrne and Saoirse Leahy from In Sync Youth & Family Services (Kildare and West Wicklow) with Minister Mary Butler, Minister of State for Mental Health and Older People at the launch of the National Youth Council of Ireland's (NYCI) new Online Youth Mental Health Signposting Tool held recently at the Carmelite Centre.

NYCI launches online youth mental health signposting tool

The National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI) launched a new Online Youth Mental Health Signposting Tool on 27th June. The official launch event, held at the Carmelite Centre on Angier Street, featured Minister Mary Butler, Minister of State for Mental Health and Older People, and Psychotherapist and Author Colman Noctor.

The Online Youth Mental Health Signposting Tool is designed to provide young people, parents and youth workers easy access to mental health resources and services locally. This innovative tool aims to help bridge the gap in mental health support and ensure that young people can find the help they need quickly and efficiently. Minister Mary Butler emphasised the importance of this initiative, stating, "The launch of this Youth Mental Health signposting tool marks a significant step forward in how we continue to support youth mental health in innovative ways. Young people have embraced modern technology and receive a lot of their information from their phones and devices. It is crucial that young people have access to the right, appropriate supports when they need them, in an age of misinformation and disinformation. This signposting tool will play a vital role to ensure access to the many supports for youth mental health are highlighted and signposted and will also support their families."

NYCI National Youth Health Programme Manager, Rachael Traenor, highlighted the collective effort behind this project, saying, "This tool showcases the wealth of good work already being carried out by youth workers and youth services to support young people's mental health. We are immensely proud of the collaborative work that has gone into developing this tool. It reflects our commitment to enhancing youth mental health support across Ireland. Our thanks go to all the organisations and individuals who have contributed to this important initiative."

The launch event also included a showcase of youth mental health promotion programs and activities currently being facilitated by organisations across the country, including a discussion with Finglas Youth Resource Centre, Insync Youth Service, Kildare & West Wicklow and Limerick Youth Service.

West Wicklow Social Democrats congratulate Wicklow Pride on successful Blessington Coffee Morning

Deirdre McCormack, Vice-Chair of the Social Democrats Wicklow branch, has congratulated the Wicklow Pride committee on their hugely successful coffee morning in Brew 21 in Blessington, which was held on Monday July 1st.

This occasion, which was also attended by the Wicklow Pride Parade Grand Marshall Sara R Phillips, not only marked the start of a weeklong programme of events celebrating Pride across Wicklow but was also the first ever Wicklow Pride event to take place in West Wicklow. "I was delighted to join Sara and the Wicklow Pride committee in Blessington today

for a coffee and to celebrate the start of Wicklow Pride. I am so proud that this event took place here in West Wicklow and for our community to support Wicklow Pride in spreading their message of inclusion, love, and equality. I hope that today's coffee morning will be the first of many Wicklow Pride events to take place on this side of the county and I look forward to working with and supporting the committee as Wicklow Pride grows over the coming years," commented Ms McCormack. "It is so important to see community events like this taking place and for our towns and villages to be inclusive to everyone. Recent events elsewhere in the county have shown us that it is imperative for us to stand up, whether as allies or members of the LGBTQIA+ community, and use our voices in support of equality," added Deirdre McCormack, who is also the Social Democrats Local Area Rep for West Wicklow. "Patrick, Liam, Ricque, Adam, Bee and all the Wicklow Pride Committee have done an amazing job and I would like to congratulate them on a fantastic, informative, and exciting Wicklow Pride programme of events. I am especially looking forward to taking part in the Wicklow Pride Parade with my family again this year," concluded Ms McCormack.



Erin-Jade Thomson and Caitlin O'Connor at the Redcross Church Summer Fete.



Liam Redmond, Ricque Porter, Deirdre McCormack, Oonagh McCormack, Bee Fennell and Sara R Phillips at the coffee morning in Blessington

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FREE PARKING



Denise O'Sullivan, Ireland international player and professional footballer with North Carolina Courage, of the NWSL, USA; and Hannah Tobin Jones, SETU student and scholarship recipient, photographed during Hannah's role as masseur with the Irish women's national rugby team.

Applications open for SETU, FAI, and PFAI scholarship programme

South East Technological University (SETU), alongside its partners at the Football Association of Ireland (FAI) and the Professional Footballers Association of Ireland (PFAI), have announced the opening of applications for its annual postgraduate scholarship programme for coaches and football players, past and present.

Representatives of the FAI and PFAI joined the team from SETU's Department of Sport at its Kilkenny Road campus in Carlow to open applications for the 2024/2025 academic year.

SETU is the only Irish university to offer a postgraduate football scholarship with funding available across 34 postgraduate programmes delivered at SETU's Kilkenny Road campus in Carlow. Courses available span six of SETU's departments including engineering, business, science, computing, digital marketing, and humanities and social sciences, at higher diploma and master's levels.

The scholarship is an excellent opportunity for recipients to progress to postgraduate study while maintaining their sports interests. It also supports athletes in building a skillset and knowledge base that will sustain them throughout their professional lives.

Director of Sport, Donal McNally, said, "I am delighted to open applications for the third year running for SETU's scholarship programme in partnership with the FAI and PFAI. It is a key aim of the department here at SETU to continue to encourage and support postgraduate study among our athletes. Not only is this of personal benefit to the student,

but our university is enriched by the first-hand knowledge and expertise that players, former players, and coaches contribute to the research and learning environment. I want to thank our partners at the FAI and PFAI for their continued support collaboration."

Will Clarke, League of Ireland Academy Development Manager at the FAI, added: "Balancing football with education is something that the FAI fully endorses and SETU continues to provide the required expertise and support to help players to pursue that through this scholarship programme. Player develop-

ment is the foundation of everything that we do in Irish football and third level football plays a big part in that with a scholarship programme like this proving to have a hugely positive impact on the lives and careers of its graduates."

John McGuinness, PFAI Player Executive, commented, "We are delighted to continue the relationship between PFA Ireland, SETU, and the FAI in offering this postgraduate scholarship opportunity for our members. We encourage all our members to consider education as they prepare for their future, whether that lies within or outside the game. PFA Ireland offers a

range of initiatives to support members with their transition from playing, and this scholarship is another great opportunity for the right candidates to take the next step on the education ladder."

Former scholarship recipient, Hannah Tobin Jones, player with the DLR Waves, embarked on her MSc in Strength and Conditioning at SETU. Hannah spoke of her gratitude at the scholarship opportunity and how completing the master's programme will enhance her ability to progress her career in athletic therapy.

For more information on how to apply, visit setu.ie

Community lender supports groups in Wicklow to grow impact

Social enterprise Community Finance Ireland (CFI) has been helping sports clubs, community projects, faith-based groups, and other voluntary organisations in Wicklow to more than triple their impact in the last year. That's according to its Social Value Report 2023, which states that for every euro it loaned, a value of €3.69 in social return was achieved.

Since 2001, CFI has committed more than €110 million to hundreds of voluntary organisations throughout Ireland, funding initiatives that make a difference in local communities. The multiplier effect of the funding has enhanced groups' delivery on the UN Sustainable Development Goals

(SDGs) in their local area, in particular, 'Innovation & Infrastructure', and 'Health and Wellbeing'.

In Kiltegan, CFI funds were used by Kiltegan GAA to upgrade the clubhouse and complete the construction of a new astro pitch. Between January and December 2023, CFI loaned a total of €3.2 million to 33 organisations across Leinster.

The analysis was calculated by economic development specialists Rose Regeneration using its Social Value Engine (SVE). Rose Regeneration's SVE is used by public bodies across the UK and follows several key steps when calculating a loan's social value, such

as examining agreed project outcomes, to give them a financial value.

CFI Group Chief Executive D'Únaí Traynor said calculating the social return of their investments helped the charity understand the wider impact its loans were having.

"We're delighted to see how this report reflects the positive impact our loans have on the wider community and how they support our clients to achieve the SDGs. For more than two decades, CFI has been helping sports clubs, community projects, faith-based groups, and social enterprises to make a difference and we strive to create a lasting social impact in every community on the island."

Speaking about the support from Community Finance Ireland, Paula Boland, Secretary Kiltegan GAC said: "Our client manager made the process really simple. His communication was excellent. We knew within ten days that our application had been successful."



Kiltegan GAA Club players



ÁIT DUIT FÉIN

setu.ie

Tá campais againn i bPort Láirge, i gCeatharlach agus i Loch Garman. Anois an t-am is fearr chun d'áit a aimsiú ag Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta an Oirdheiscirt.



Enabling Our Older Generation to Stay in their Own Home with the Help of a Live-In Carer from ALHomecare

We all want our elderly relatives to get the best possible care, ideally in the comfort of their own home, but how do we go about organising this?

A lot of people have lost confidence in the nursing home option. So, what about private care at home?

There are many private visiting care agencies which offer homecare but this service can be very expensive, costing up to 30 euro per hour and 200 euro plus per night. This is a lot of money for any family to have to pay on an ongoing basis. With the visiting care option, you may not always have the same carer coming every time. This can cause confusion and anxiety for the elderly person.

If your relative wants to stay at home but if private visiting care is very expensive and not so consistent, is there any other option? The answer is Yes!

A company, founded by Tom Quinlan, a farmer's son in North County Cork, is providing a very practical and successful alternative to nursing home care and private visiting care. His company is called ALHomecare for short and he has placed over 1,000 live-in carers in the past 10 years and has over 270 live-in carers currently working in the country. During this

time, Tom has placed many carers in countryside locations.

An idea was born from necessity:

Back in 2013, Tom was working as a primary school teacher and was trying to organise homecare for his mother, Ann. Ann had COPD, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and her condition had progressed to a stage where she was admitted to intensive care.

She recovered enough to be discharged and the discharge coordinator gave Tom's family the choice between a nursing home and a visiting care service. Tom's parents had only recently celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary and he did not want to consider a nursing home. He contacted many visiting care services but the cost was way beyond what he could afford.

Subsequently, Tom contacted his friend in Poland and asked her if she would come over to Ireland and live with Tom and his family and help with the care of his mother.

A lovely lady called Lena came over in

October 2013 and took care of Ann until she passed away at home in April 2014.

Tom and his family were so happy and content that they had succeeded in keeping Ann at home up until the very end. The whole family will always be grateful to Lena and they are still in contact with Lena to this day.

During this time, Tom realised that there must be many other families out there in a similar situation who needed an affordable homecare solution for their elderly loved one. So, Tom made his idea a reality.

ALHomecare is offering a home-care solution that is not only very reliable, professional and personalised, but also excellent value for money.

Live-in care means consistent, reliable

and dedicated care in the client's own home. The carer develops a dedicated and supportive relationship with the client, which gives the family and the client great peace of mind.

The fact that ALHomecare has placed over 1,000 live-in carers and currently has over 270 live-in carers working in the country shows that this is a tried and tested service that works!

To find out more about affordable live-in homecare service, visit:

www.alhomecare.ie or phone the Family Enquiry Line on 087 744 0729

Remember, ALHomecare provides a nationwide service.



Tom Quinlan - ALHomecare



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For less than the Cost of a Nursing Home
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Nationwide Service

www.alhomecare.ie

Celebrating 10 Years of Making the Lives of Seniors better!



ALHomecare... The Live-In Care Specialists

Wicklow Film Festival becomes IMDb qualifying and opens submissions for 2024

After a soaring rise in 2022, and a festival in 2023 that left Greystones in awe at stars and celebrities on the red carpet at the prestigious Whale Theatre, Wicklow's only short film festival, The Wicklow Stories Film Festival has now got its sights set on an even more inclusive and spectacular 2024.



Ciara Kelly, Laura Whitmore and Emer O'Neill.

Following the fantastic news that Wicklow now has its own Film Bursary, the Wicklow Film Awards, the well established Wicklow Stories Film Festival once more opens its doors.

The festival organisers Marlena Murphy and Ronika Merl have been collaborating on this project since 2022, and have gone from strength to strength, selling out two screenings in October 2023, with local and international personalities such as Laura Whitmore, Ciara Kelly, and Emer O'Neill gracing the evening show.

The festival is now expanding horizons for its third year, accepting submissions not just from films that were shot and made in Wicklow county, but also those who have a strong connection to the county.

"What has always been the core message for the Wicklow Stories Film Festival was that we would uplift and celebrate independent, up and coming, and exciting filmmakers who are speaking with a Wicklow voice," said Ronika Merl, festival founder.

"This county is so full of storytellers, and there is so much wonderful work being done here - we're here to celebrate these voices. And in 2024, we can look forward to an even more inclusive panel of voices."

The festival qualifies for an IMDb listing, which means that selected films will be able to add their win to their IMDb listing, which gives the festival and



selected films even more prestige.

The Wicklow Stories Film Festival remains the only large independent film festival in the county, with support coming from The Whale Theatre, Rise at the Cove Cafe,

and is being independently organised by Marlena and Ronika, with assist from the Greystones Town Team.

"This grassroots festival exists because it's supported by brilliant individuals, groups and

enterprises that share our vision to celebrate Wicklow's beauty and its talent," said Marlena Murphy, festival founder.

The submission window is officially open and will run for several weeks. Films that are

either 60% shot in Wicklow county or can demonstrate a strong connection are invited to submit on Filmfreeway.com

The festival can be reached on wicklowstoriesfilmfestival@gmail.com



Ronika Merl, Cllr Aoife Flynn Kennedy, Dave Thomas and Marlena Murphy launching the Wicklow Film Festival at Whale Theatre.



St. Joseph of Cluny is a CoEducational School from September 2025 with the phased introduction of boys into First Year

OPEN DAY

Tuesday, September 24th from 5 to 8pm

We welcome boys and girls from Sixth class to attend our Open Day on September 24th from 5-8pm

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Phone: 01-2855027

Email: office@clunykilney.ie

Website: www.clunykilney.ie

Address: St Joseph of Cluny, Ballinclea Road, Killiney, Co. Dublin, A96 DK13

Film Exhibition to take place in Wicklow Town

Screen Wicklow has partnered with local production company Long Story Short to present an exhibition entitled 'Showcasing Film in Wicklow'. The exhibition, which is free to attend, will take place in the Assembly Hall on Bachelors Walk, Wicklow Town on the weekend of Saturday 13th and Sunday 14th July.

The exhibition will include props, posters and displays on the heritage of film shot in Wicklow, as well as some wonderful film costumes provided by the Irish Costume Archive Project.

The exhibit will coincide with the Leinster Fleadh, which will take place in Wicklow on the same weekend, and has been planned in consultation with The Boathouse Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann and with the assistance of Wicklow Municipal District.

Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council Cllr. Paul O'Brien said, "This showcase will be a great opportunity for the people of Wicklow to see and learn about the rich film heritage of Wicklow. It will be a great addition to the festivities on the Leinster Fleadh weekend."

Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council Emer O'Gorman said, "The thriving screen sector in Wicklow is built on a strong tradition of film-making and this exhibition highlights the many factors that have made the County so attractive to film makers over the years."

Running from 10.30am to 5pm on both days, all are welcome to attend the free exhibition.

Bray students create inspiring wall mural

Across April and May of 2024, the student council of St. Cronan's Boys National School in Bray collaborated with muralist Holly Pereira and human rights charity 80:20 Educating and Acting for a Better World to produce a vibrant and engaging wall mural celebrating inclusion and diversity.

The mural, unveiled 27th June at St. Cronan's School, stands as a testament to the power of art in promoting social values and fostering a sense of community.

The mural project, led by St Cronan's with 80:20 and supported by the ESD to 2030 fund by the Department of Education, aims to engage young minds in meaningful discussions about equality and the importance of diversity. Over several weeks, 36 members of the student council participated in workshops with Tony Daly and Ciara Regan of 80:20 and Holly Pereira, known for her vibrant, engaging and socially conscious artwork. These sessions provided a platform for the children to co-design and develop the ideas behind the mural, which include themes such as their school environment as a place of peace, friendship, and music. A driving theme, suggested by one of the students, that "big decisions take big people," is prominently featured.

Holly Pereira, lead artist involved in the project, commented:

"It was an honour to work with 80:20 and the Student Council of St Cronan's on this mural. I wanted to celebrate the diversity of the school's student body, and the inclusivity that St Cronan's fosters in the school, and the wider community of Bray. Thanks to the facilitations of 80:20, I had access to the colourful imaginations of the students, and was delighted to develop some of these concepts into a working design.

The best thing about Bray, in my mind, is that it is a multicultural, multiethnic, diverse community. We are stronger when we come together and celebrate our similarities and our differences. To be able to show that through my work is a great privilege, and I am proud to be part of this project."

The mural, prominently featured on one of the school's exterior walls, features a narrative built by the students and symbols representing various aspects of inclusion and diversity. Set against the striking backdrop of Bray Head and the Sugar Loaf, iconic to the landscape of Bray in

Co. Wicklow, the artwork serves as a daily reminder of the values that bind the community together. It is a statement of hope where all are welcome, and all young people belong.

The 36 members of the student council also developed a series of activity sheets for other students and classes to interact with the ideas of sustainability and diversity in the mural - from the peace location marker to the story of the lost rubber duck that bobbed all the way from the River Liffey in Dublin to the north of Scotland.

80:20 Educating and Acting for a Better World, which has a long history of promoting human rights education, engaged the students with the foundational knowledge and inspiration needed to explore these complex themes through art.

"We believe that education is a powerful tool for change, and this mural project encapsulates that belief," said Ciara Regan, Education and Research Officer for 80:20 and support artist to the project. "It gives so much hope to see young people take such active roles in advocating for a



The inclusion and diversity wall mural at St. Cronan's School.

better, more inclusive world. It has been such a positive and uplifting experience, working with the students from St. Cronan's and Holly."

The unveiling ceremony was attended by students, teachers, and members of the Bray community, all of whom were moved by the mural's powerful message and the collaborative spirit behind its creation.

Ashford school gets go ahead for extra classroom

Nuns Cross National School in Ashford has received approval for a new mainstream classroom. The school has been notified by the Department of Education they can reconfigure existing space in the school to provide an extra class.

An Taoiseach Simon Harris has said he wants to keep momentum going when it comes to delivering extra capacity for schools in County Wicklow. An Taoiseach Simon Harris said: "I am

delighted to announced Nuns Cross in County Wicklow has been approved for an extra mainstream classroom. Many parents and families who get in touch with my constituency

office have raised the issue of classroom capacity.

"As Taoiseach and as a TD for Wicklow I have been working with the Department of Education and principals around

County Wicklow to get more capacity delivered for schools in Wicklow. Children across Wicklow deserve to be accommodated in spacious and upgraded classrooms.

"This is a significant step in the right direction for Nuns Cross. The level of ambition from the Department of

Education when it comes to meeting demand with capacity needs to be kept apace.

"As the population in Wicklow continues to grow, we need to make

sure the infrastructure is there to deliver for families across the county. New classrooms in schools means more space but it also means the overall learning

experience of children is improved.

I will continue my efforts as a representative of the people of Wicklow to enhance educational facilities

within our community. Working to improve children's education and putting the supports behind schools to ensure top quality learning is a key priority for me."

Funding for projects tackling literacy, numeracy and digital skills

Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science Patrick O'Donovan TD has announced the allocation of more than €65,000 to innovative projects in Kildare and Wicklow supporting adults with unmet literacy needs.

Some of the projects receiving funding from SOLAS through the Collaboration and Innovation Fund include:

- Addressing unmet literacy needs through gardening
- Beginner computer courses
- * Women's health across the lifespan

Minister O'Donovan said: "I am delighted to see funding awarded to these innovative projects and partnerships in Kildare and Wicklow that are supporting adults to access the vital literacy services they need, helping us to work towards a more inclusive and equal society in Ireland.

"The fund is helping organisations and services to be more literacy friendly and accessible to adults with unmet needs. The innovation and diversity shown by these projects is fantastic to see and highlights the importance of having fun through learning, whether that is through music, arts, or comedy.

"This creative approach will help to reach communities such as older adults, members of the Traveller community, or persons experiencing addiction."



Minister Patrick O'Donovan.

The Collaboration and Innovation Fund was launched in April 2023 and is part of the Adult Literacy for Life Strategy, which is focused on ensuring that everyone has the literacy skills that they need, and that literacy is valued

and supported at every level of Irish society.

Yvonne McKenna, Director of Adult Literacy for Life in SOLAS said: "The ALL Collaboration and Innovation Fund, now in its second year, is supporting the delivery of a wide range of important literacy programmes that are supporting adults in Ireland to address their literacy needs.

"Literacy needs are greater than many people realise, in Ireland, one in six adults has unmet literacy needs which can affect their everyday lives - this includes being unable to fill in a form, understand health information, help kids with homework or use the internet. These projects are helping adults across Ireland to build their confidence with literacy, numeracy, and digital literacy skills.

"The initiatives also demonstrate the importance of cross-community collaboration at local level. This funding will help a range of learners including older adults, Travellers, migrants, lone parents, and early school leavers gain access to key supports to benefit their needs to participate more fully in society."

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Dreamgun Film Reads: Toy Story

Whale Theatre, Saturday 13th July 8pm (doors 7pm).
Tickets available €20 at www.whaletheatre.ie or call the booking office on 01 2010550.

Dreamgun is a comedy conglomerate of Stephen Colfer, Gavin Drea and James McDonnell. They write and perform the award winning Dreamgun Film Reads, a comedy show and podcast where they take a beloved film script and stuff it full of jokes and nonsense.

Film Reads has won Dublin Fringe's Best Ensemble Award, was one of BBC's Top 10 Culture Podcasts of 2018 and the fourth best reviewed comedy show at Edinburgh Fringe 2019. Selling out houses at Edinburgh Fringe, Dublin Fringe, Vodafone Comedy Festival, the Cat Laughs and Vicar Street.

In 2022 Dreamgun premiered their new hyper genre comedy Dreamgun Video at Edinburgh and Dublin Fringe and their new Dracula based comedy Dreamgun Dracula at the Bram Stoker Festival.

Dreamgun's original short films, including Millennials, Gym Gravy and Back in Town were viewed on people's phones at house parties a million times in 2016.

Taoiseach visits Netflix TV show set and meets Tim Burton

An Taoiseach Simon Harris TD recently visited the set of Netflix's show 'Wednesday' in Ashford Studios, where he met key production personnel, cast and crew as well as acclaimed director Tim Burton.

Entertainment production in Ireland continues to go from strength to strength with Ashford Studios bringing huge investment to Wicklow and locally based businesses.

Speaking last week, An Taoiseach Simon Harris said: "I was delighted to be on set of Wednesday's Season 2 production set and to meet all the creative individuals working on this huge project. As a TD for Wicklow I am thrilled to see that Ashford Studios continues to bring in more and more investment to County Wicklow.

"Locally based businesses have benefited from the increased activity in creative film and show production in Wicklow. It was a pleasure to meet acclaimed film director Tim Burton who is known from his incredible creative vision and distinctive storytelling."

An Taoiseach Simon Harris added: "It's my second visit to Ashford Studios and once again I witnessed the strength of Irish production filming in Ireland. As Taoiseach I want to see the level of investment in the creative industry continue to grow and I want Ireland to remain an attractive hub for this type of in-studio production.

"The Government has seen tax incentives as a powerful growth tool for the creative and production sector. In the 2023 Budget Section 481's eligible expenditure had been increased to €125 million which attracted more business to Ireland and was welcomed by the industry. I want to see us continue attract largescale international productions to Ireland which benefits our talented pool of people here in Ireland to seek a career in the business and also stimulates local economies.

"I want to thank all in Ashford studios who welcomed me to their set today and wish them the best while in production. I look forward to seeing the result."



An Taoiseach Simon Harris with director Tim Burton.

€15,000 awarded to two recipients of Wicklow Short Film Award

Screen Wicklow and Wicklow County Arts Office, supported by Creative Ireland, have announced the recipients of the Wicklow Short Film Award for 2024. The two funding awards of €15,000 each form part of the ongoing support provided to the local screen sector by Wicklow County Council.

The scheme was launched by Wicklow County Council on the 8th April with a closing date for applications on 24th May. Following a highly competitive application process, with many high-quality submissions

received, the two short film projects selected by the independent adjudication panel were:

- Dealing With It - Submitted by Santiago Rivas Pertile
- Sapphire - Submitted by Michael J.

Whelan

The award will act as a stepping stone in the careers of Wicklow-based film-makers and will support greater recognition of the vibrant independent film-making tradition in

the county.

These short films will be between 10 and 15 minutes in duration and will feature Wicklow locations. Upon completion, the short films will be entered into local and international film festivals, further boosting the strong international reputation of County Wicklow as a prime location for film and television production.

Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County

Council Cllr. Paul O'Brien noted, "These awards help to foster the great resource of creative talent in our county and underline the importance of the screen sector to the local economy. We congratulate the recipients of the funding award, and thank all those who took the time to submit an application."

Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council Emer O'Gorman

said, "Wicklow County Council recognises the importance of the screen industry within the county. These two awards will support local jobs and create new opportunities for the home-grown film industry."

Funding will allow these projects to progress from script to screen in the coming months and will provide opportunities for locally based cast and crew.

Bray Coastcare launches art competition to create logo

Bray Coastcare have been volunteering to help keep Bray beautiful since 2007 and as the group will be soon approaching its 20th anniversary it has decided to create an official group logo.

"We figured as we are a community voluntary group what better way than putting it to the people of Bray themselves. We are looking for anyone out there who would like to design and draw/paint a logo, that you think would suit our voluntary group, to submit your work to us," stated Bray Coastcare Chairperson Seamus Connor.

"This competition is open to ALL age groups and the winning entry will receive a prize of a €100 One4all card and also have their logo adopted as the official logo of Bray Coastcare.

"We would love to see as many people as possible submit an entry. Even if you are not a budding Van Gogh why not give it a lash just for the fun of it."

Competition details; The logo should include 1. The name Bray Coastcare; 2. The year it was founded 2007; 3. The fact that we are a voluntary group; 4. One or more images related to the work we do and where we do it (Bray Head, Cliff Walk, Bray Beach, Sealife, Wildlife, Flora and Fauna etc)

Entries should be submitted by Saturday 20th of July. To enter simply take a photo of your work and send the photo (in a private message) with your name, age, contact details, a brief description of your work and why you designed it the way you did to Bray Coastcare on Facebook.

"Good luck and best wishes from all at Bray Coast Care Group."



Bray Coastcare members cleaning up on Bray Head.

SANCTUARY: 25 Years of Glendarragh Studios

6th July - 3rd August

Mermaid Art Centre's summer exhibition, Sanctuary, celebrates a quarter of a century of Glendarragh Studios with a hybrid exhibition and in-gallery residency at Mermaid Arts Centre, featuring free workshops, demonstrations and a space to meet and talk.



Jenny Dungan.

Founded by Fiona Coffey in 1999, Glendarragh Studios is situated in a beautiful rural valley in North County, Wicklow, and provides a peaceful yet stimulating and environmentally beautiful workplace for professional artists. Residents past and present have diverse practices from making ceramics to bronze casting, painting and drawing, and between them have exhibited all around Ireland and much further afield.

Come along every Wednesday from 11am - 1pm and 2 - 4pm during the exhibition for free workshops, painting demonstrations and talks - visit the webpage for updates!

Participating artists: Chloe Dowds, Cathy Burke, Yanny Petters, Fiona Coffey, Jean Clyne, Brenda Malley, Erica Devine, David Eager Maher, Fergal Flanagan, James Hayes, Paul Douglas, Simon Lazewski, Heather Muir, Jenny Dungan and Helen McNulty.

Cathy Burke is a ceramic artist inspired by the natural world and its defiance of the precarious state of our environment.



Jean Clyne "My charcoal and coloured pencil studies of fish represent change, a new direction for my art making. I'm experimenting with new ways to push my process further to find new directions for my art making."

Jenny Dungan lives in Glendarragh Cottage, surrounded by a vibrant community of humans and nature. She's a food grower and forager, a jar filler and a cook. She's a Forest School leader and loves sharing food and nature with others.

Paul Douglas specialises in Marine Art and hosts the Marineartireland.com website and the Marine Art Ireland page and the Marine Artists group on Facebook.

Fiona Coffey is the founder of Glendarragh Studios, where she works as a visual artist, primarily with sculpture.

EVENTS

Wednesday 17th July, 11.30am - 1pm

Demonstration of a Seascape Painting in Oils with the Palette Knife with Brenda Malley Brenda will share her approach to working with the palette knife, covering materials and the painting process from start to finish.

James Hayes - Artist Talk, 2-3pm

James will discuss his career to date including his many public art commissions, studio work, and his involvement and work with the Umha Aois experimental bronze casting project. Places limited. Adults only.

Thursday 18th July, 10.30am

Billy Markham will be giving a talk on keeping bees, and their importance to our ecosystem.

Thursday 25th July, 11am - 12:30pm

A taste of Glendarragh: Workshop with Jenny Duggan. A sensory exploration of what Glendarragh has to offer. Open to children and adults.

And more TBA...!



Wicklow artists feature at Connecting Artists 2024 National Exhibition at RCSI

Wicklow artists Joe Hallam from Enniskerry and Brian Kennedy from Kilcoole and their artwork featured in the Connecting Artists 2024 Exhibit hosted by the Royal College of Surgeons of Ireland (RCSI) on Wednesday, 3rd July.



Brian Kennedy from Kilcoole and his artwork with Miriam OCallaghan at the Connecting Artists 2024 Exhibit.

2022/23 programmes include national exhibitions at prestigious venues such as the Royal Hibernian Academy (RHA), which attracted nearly 20,000 visitors, the University of Atypical in Belfast, and Art Source in Cork City Hall.

The programme has generated tangible financial benefits for its artists, with 58 individual art sales valued at €9,605 to date, supporting 20 artists. Additionally, artists have facilitated talks and demonstrations at institutions like RHA and Crawford Art Gallery in Cork. CAC is thrilled to announce continued support from RCSI and RHA, who have committed to hosting future CA exhibitions, talks, and workshops in 2025 and 2026, ensuring sustained exposure and development opportunities for participating artists.

Speaking at the opening, Miriam Spollen says, "Our plan for next year is to support up to 50 artists and have three national exhibitions. To achieve this ambitious goal, additional support, including corporate sponsorship, will be crucial. This will help us harness social inclusion in every county in Ireland and beyond."

Through increased visibility and recognition within the wider arts community, artists in the programme have experienced significant personal and professional growth.

Connections Arts Centre adopts a rights-based approach grounded in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). By providing long-term support and visibility, CAC ensures that artists can pursue and be recognised in their artistic careers on an equal footing. CAC seeks partners committed to fostering an inclusive society and supporting the arts as a dynamic force for social change.

Upon completing the programme, participants have the opportunity to join the Connecting Artists Collective, a platform for ongoing support and artistic growth. The Collective facilitates artistic expression, skill-sharing, and collaboration, hosting notable exhibitions at prominent venues like the RCSI and Royal Hibernian Academy. Connections Arts Centre continues to support artists with paid opportunities, including facilitating talks, workshops, and selling their artwork.



Joe Hallam from Enniskerry and his artwork with Miriam OCallaghan at the Connecting Artists 2024 Exhibit.

Toyota tops 2024 sales league - and boosts C-HR range

New SIMI stats show that while the Irish market is very steady overall - new cars sales in the first half of 2024 fell less than 1% from the level of 2023 - there were some significant changes behind that overall figure.

by Martin McCarthy

Toyota remained the market leader - at 14.8% being well clear of VW at 10.8% and its sister firm Skoda at 10.3%. The Korean duo of Hyundai (9%) and Kia (7.2%) complete the top 5.

Models which hit the sweet spot with Irish buyers include the Skoda Octavia (up 97%), Toyota Rav 4 (up 57%), Hyundai Kona (up 56%) and the Nissan Juke (up 270%).

Petrol power is the most popular choice in the last six months - up 2% to 33% with diesel also up a little to 23%. Petrol Hybrid at 21% is still doing well but electric only car sales fell 26% to 13.6% of the overall market. It doesn't mean electric cars aren't coming - it just means that many Irish drivers cannot make battery power work for their transport needs, yet.

Toyota Ireland are not willing to sit on their laurels and this week announced upgrade offers across the Toyota C-HR Plug-In Hybrid Sport+ and Sol models. With prices starting from €42,920, the Toyota C-HR Plug-In Hybrid is the same price as the Toyota C-HR Hybrid for a limited time. Offers are available on registrations made between the 1st - 31st July 2024 in Toyota dealerships. Customers can also benefit from a €1,750 trade-in booster, or 5.9% APR - making it one of the best Toyota deals on the road this year.

The 2.0L Toyota C-HR Plug-In Hybrid has proven popular with Irish motorists since its arrival earlier this year, thanks to its bold, new stylish exterior and 5th generation hybrid technology which offers a pure electric driving range of up to 66km.

The Toyota C-HR Plug-In Hybrid followed the arrival of the popular Toyota C-HR Hybrid to Ireland last year. The range marked an exciting new design direction for Toyota, a step away from more traditional models on the road, while also remaining environmentally conscious with an increased use of recycled materials.



Toyota C-HR.



Kiara, Patrick, Rachel and Laura Darcy at the East Coast Classic and Vintage Club Car Show in the Bridgewater Centre in Arklow.

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Matthews calls for 9% VAT Rate for food-led businesses to be reinstated in next Budget

Green TD Steven Matthews has written to the Minister for Finance - Michael McGrath to call for the 9% VAT Rate for food-led businesses to be reinstated following a series of engagements with Wicklow based cafe, restaurant, and pub owners in recent months. This intervention comes as calls from this sector ramp up in the context of ongoing negotiations ahead of the Autumn Budget.



Steven Matthews TD.

"During the local election campaign in particular, I spoke with many small business owners in the food sector, and they all raised the proposed reduction in the VAT rate as being something that could make a tangible, positive difference to their business.

"Any business owner that I have spoken to in recent months has raised concerns relating to increased food costs, operational costs, and genuine concern for the viability for many within the sector, particularly smaller businesses.

"In recent days, I have written to a hundred or so restaurants, pubs, and cafes to make it clear that I fully support this proposal and I have written to the Minister for Finance to ask that it is

urgently considered for inclusion in the next Budget.

"We are incredibly fortunate in Wicklow to have some of the best restaurants, cafes and pubs in the country and the Government should offer any support possible to small and medium businesses in this sector. I hope that the Minister will give due consideration to this proposal as I believe it is a balanced and reasonable support to offer businesses, particularly at a time of such high operational costs.

"Not only does this sector create huge employment in towns and villages across Wicklow; you also they offer incredible food and service for locals and tourists to enjoy, and this has to be valued and supported," concluded Deputy Matthews.



The Spirit of Wicklow Awards, hosted by Powerscourt Distillery, honoured the individuals and groups who embody the remarkable spirit and vibrant community ethos of Co. Wicklow. Pictured L-R are Diarmuid Haughian of Kilbride GAA (Community Award Winner); Eleanor Phillips and Don Rorke of Signal Arts Centre (Sports & Cultural Award winner); Brian O'Toole and Gilly Tylor of Wildacers (winners of the Extraordinary Spirit of Wicklow Award); Margaret and Eamon Bourke of Kilmullen Farm (Enterprise and Innovation award winner); and Paula Johnston of An Tairseach (Sustainability Award Winner).

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. D.B.

Wicklow man appointed Head of Agriculture at FRS Network

Neil Keane, who lives in Baltinglass, has been appointed as the new Head of Agriculture at FRS Network, the farmer owned national co-operative organisation that provides skilled people to meet customer requirements.

In his new role, Neil will be responsible for evolving and growing FRS Network's deep ties to the farming community, furthering their connections and offerings to Irish agriculture.

Neil has an extensive background in agriculture and agribusiness, having worked in the sector for more than 20 years, both in Ireland and abroad.

In his most recent role he was Commercial Director with Alltech, working across global markets. He previously managed Alltech's beef sales and farm products across Europe. He has also worked with Countrywest and Thomas Flynn & Sons over the course of his career.

Neil is also a former President of the Agricultural Science Association. Neil holds a number of agriculture and business qualifications from University College Dublin, the University of Plymouth and University College Cork.

Speaking about his appointment, Colin Donnelly, Group CEO of FRS Network said, "We are delighted to have Neil Keane join us in the role of Head of Agriculture. Neil brings in depth knowledge of

all things agriculture and agribusiness to the role, having gained extensive experience at home and abroad over the course of his career. As the last few years have shown, Irish agriculture is evolving fast. At FRS Network we pride ourselves in always being able to quickly adapt to the needs of the market. Neil's expertise will greatly assist us in not only improving what we provide to our customers today, but also knowing how we can further enhance our farming services for tomorrow."

Neil Keane, Head of Agriculture at FRS Network said, "I'm honoured to be joining FRS Network, it is great to be working for one of Ireland's most recognisable Co-Ops. Having worked internationally

for over 20 years, focusing on productivity and profitability, I can see how the net has widened to the industry in recent years as part of efforts to decarbonise food production. I'm looking forward to working with the talented FRS team and our stakeholders to help address these challenges and deliver for the needs of the agri-sector," Mr. Keane concluded.



Neil Keane from Baltinglass.

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• In **Blessington** we are parked in the square, near the Lemon Tree (which is now closed)
Note that during funeral Masses in Kilcoole we will be closed during the hearse arriving and leaving as a mark of respect.

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