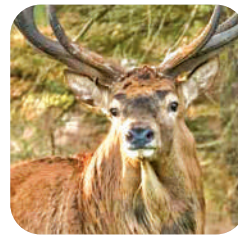




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Tuesday 24th September 2024 First Floor, The Boulevard, Quinsborough Road, Bray. A98 R6D7. Tel: 01 - 2869111 E-mail: wicklowed@localtimes.ie www.wicklowtimes.net

'WE NEED ANSWERS'

Sinn Féin TD John Brady has asserted that the Wicklow County Council Planning Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) has serious questions to answer, following revelations that the Planning SPC failed to perform its core statutory function of ensuring that local area plans are up to date. Its failure to do so has led to planning for hundreds of homes across Wicklow being turned down by An Bord Pleanála (ABP).

This includes 329 homes in Blessington, a further 352 homes in Rathnew, and with further questions being raised in the Arklow area.

Deputy Brady said: "The Planning SPC has a collective responsibility under its chairperson, Fine Gael Cllr. Edward Timmins to ensure that local area plans are kept up to date. Timmins

who is the current chair, along with his colleague FG Cllr. Sylvester Bourke shared the role of chair of SPC over the last five years which made up the tenure of the last Council.

"Their failure to ensure that the Planning SPC carried out its statutory obligation has resulted in planning applications being turned down at different

sites across the County. In Blessington, planning for 329 homes was refused as the local area plan was out of date resulting in a situation where there is no statutory zoning in place. The same situation arose in Rathnew, where 352 homes were refused planning permission for the same reasons. In both instances local area plans were allowed to



Anita Nolan, Tammy Byrne, Marion O'Reagan and Cllr Pat Kennedy at the Little Warriors football tournament in Travers Insurance Park, Arklow. The event saw 24 teams compete in a fundraising tournament for Little Warriors, a safe and inclusive space for neurodiverse children to play. Pic: Michael Kelly.

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lapse in 2019. A full five years ago. This cannot be passed off as an oversight or some obscure admin difficulty. They had five full years to fulfil their role, which includes ensuring that the local area plans were up to date, which would have addressed the key roadblock preventing the building of hundreds of homes across Wicklow. The whole matter raises serious questions as to what the six elected representatives were doing on the Planning SPC for the duration of the last Council.

"The role of Chairperson of the Planning SPC is a paid role, which begs a further question, as to what they were actually getting paid for, as the core functions of the SPC were quite clearly not being carried out. That this would take place in the middle of a housing

crisis is inexcusable. There are literally thousands of families across Wicklow who are struggling with crippling rents, many more are struggling to avoid homelessness as numbers of homeless across the State rise to record levels. The obvious and disturbing additional impact of the failure to build what amounts to just under 700 houses, is the inflationary effect it will have on existing housing stock. This will push house prices up further. Wicklow is already one of the most expensive counties in the state to have a mortgage in after Dublin. But this will push house prices up even further.

"Added to this the SPC failure has also impacted on the development of the social housing stock in Wicklow, as ten percent of the affected developments would have been

given over to social housing, of which there is a huge shortage

in the County. We need answers as to how this was allowed to happen. We need answers as to how this is going to be remedied."

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Ruth O'Toole pictured at the recent Newcastle Parish Summer Festival.

Wicklow Hospice Afternoon Tea

Wicklow Town Library invites you to Afternoon Tea in the Library in aid of Wicklow Hospice. On Thursday 26th September from 2pm-4pm. Come along and relax in the exhibition space, enjoy a cup of tea/coffee and a cake, and support this very worthy cause. No need to book just drop in.

Holy Rosary Soup & Sandwiches

Why not make a date for lunch on Wednesday September 25th in

Kilian House Family Centre (from 12.15 to 2pm.), and enjoy a choice of delicious food in a friendly atmosphere! Suggested donation €7. All proceeds go to local charities.

Greystones Wheel-a-bout

Wheelchair users /older people and Greystones MD councillors will conduct a walk-roll-wheel-about to see if improvements are needed. Join them on 24th Tuesday September 11am at health centre car park. If you have a high-viz jacket please wear it (they will supply if you

have not got one). Shops, essential services, amenities will be visited, roads, crossings etc. examined.

Sustainable sewing & life hacks

Sustainable sewing & life hacks with Tamara Fiabane takes place in Tinahely Library on Tuesday 24th September from 2pm. To book, call 0402 38081, email sivers@wicklowcoco.ie or ask at desk.

The Old Dublin Society

The next meeting of the Old Dublin Society

will take place at 6pm on Wednesday September 25th in The Conference Room, Dublin City Library & Archive, 139-144 Pearse Street, Dublin 2, when Edward Bourke will recall 'The Battle of Pearse Street - March 14th 1921' in which two Auxiliaries, two members of the IRA, and three civilians were killed in addition to numerous people being wounded. All are welcome to attend - admission is free and no booking is required.

Spinc Walking Trail Project

Spinc trail upgrade works started on Monday Sept 9th. This is a big project. The upgrade work is expected to take three months - September, October and November. During this time, the Spinc will be closed.

Tinahely Library events

Adult Book Club - Tuesday October 1st, 7pm, Thursday October 3rd, 11am Discover new books - chosen by the members Relax and enjoy the discussion All welcome.

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

Wicklow RNLI bids farewell to Mary Aldridge

On Friday 13th September Mary Aldridge joined lifeboat crew, operations team, fundraising volunteers, family, and friends at Wicklow Sailing Club for a special event to celebrate her retirement as Lifeboat Operations Manager.

To mark Mary's retirement, Coxswain Nick Keogh presented a gift from the crew, speaking at the event he said: "Best of luck in retirement again Mary, it was a pleasure working with you, on behalf of all at Wicklow RNLI enjoy all your free time and the camper van."

John Hayden of the Fundraising branch presented Mary with a framed collage of photographs as a memento of her time at Wicklow RNLI.

Speaking about her time at Wicklow RNLI Mary Aldridge said: "On 29th June 2017, my Mam died. I was only a few months in the station as a Launch Authority. I was in Naas at the wake, and a friend sent me a picture of the station flag at half-mast in Wicklow. That meant so much to me, and I knew that Wicklow Lifeboat would become an important part of my life. Leila Aldridge is proudly remembered, and her name displayed on Clifden Lifeboat.

During my time as a launch Authority and Lifeboat Operations Manager, we had some difficult shouts. The boats were out for long hours searching and recovering in some cases, and in



Coxswain Nick Keogh presenting Mary Aldridge with a gift from the lifeboat crew. (Photo by Wicklow RNLI / Tommy Dover).

some cases not. The lives saved and the comfort to families was rewarding. The willingness of volunteers to turn out at all times is what we do. Sometimes, it was just the bare crew, but the boat always went.

It is families, partners, and kids that I want to thank. Without their support and love, we could not do what we do. It was great over the past seven and a half years to see your kids growing up and,

in some cases, joining the crew and fundraising team. To the crew and fundraisers no longer with us, We remember them.

Best wishes to the new Lifeboat Operations Manager Joe Healy, I know he will do a great job with the support of you all. It was an honour to serve with you all"

Tributes were paid to Mary across Social media pages, with Girvan Hickey of the Fundraising

branch posting: "Congratulations on your retirement Mary and every best wish for the future. Thank you for all you have done, your dedication and support for all members. You did everything with a smile."

Wicklow RNLI said they "want to thank Mary Aldridge sincerely for her dedication and commitment to our station. We hope you enjoy your well-deserved retirement."



Pictured are Wicklow Lions Una Breslin Sean Olohan Ethna Neiland organising this year's series of the annual Lions Quiz Nights which will start in early October. It is very important that charity clubs and groups make contact with the Lions as soon as possible with a view to taking part. It is the perfect and most enjoyable way to raise funds for a particular charity thanks to Wicklow and District Lions Club. The quiz will run from October right through to March next year with a break for Christmas.

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Wicklow gets election ready

Election fever is consuming politicians across County Wicklow as the general election date draws near. Although the Taoiseach, Simon Harris, has consistently asserted that the government will run its full term up to Spring next year, many feel that November is still a likely time.

Driving this speculation are the facts that Fine Gael have a clear 5-point lead in the opinion polls and Sinn Féin have slipped so dramatically in the same polls. Also, the forthcoming budget is going to be a 'give-away' one and the government also has the €14 billion Apple money to play around with.

So, the political strategists are asking 'why wait?', anything could happen over the winter.

The Wicklow constituency is going from 5 seats to 4 with the Arklow area now joining north Wexford as a new 3-seat constituency. Sinn Féin have selected sitting TD John Brady to be their candidate; the Labour Party has chosen Councillor Paul O'Brien to run for them; The Social Democrats have picked sitting TD Jennifer Whitmore; former TD councillor Joe Behan will be running as an Independent as will Charlie Keddy and Fine Gael are running two candidates, Taoiseach Simon Harris and Councillor Edward Timmins who defeated former councillor Shay Cullen at the recent Fine Gael selection convention. Cullen got more votes than Timmins on the first count but when the Taoiseach's surplus was distributed,

they broke 4 to 1 to Timmins.

Although Tommy Healy, chair of Fine Gael Roundwood branch contacted us to say that it was always the intention for Cullen to seek the nomination, it came as a surprise to many in Fine Gael including the Director of Elections, Head Office and the Taoiseach.

Fianna Fáil still have chosen their candidate(s), indeed they have yet to even set a date for a selection convention.

However, in the Arklow/Wexford constituency Fianna Fáil have chosen councillor Pat Kennedy from Rathdrum to run with Malcom Byrne from Wexford. Sinn Féin is running councillor Fionntán Ó Súilleabháin from Gorey and Fine Gael has selected

Brian Brennan from Gorey.

The rationale for the new constituency was to ensure the Arklow area would have a representative in the Dail but there is a fear now that all 3 seats will go to Wexford candidates. Fianna Fáil are giving Arklow voters a chance to elect a local but the other parties are not. Many locals are calling on voters not to stick to party loyalties but rather to vote geographically.



'Current private childcare model is not working'

Jennifer Whitmore TD spoke extensively about the challenges parents in her constituency are experiencing while trying to access childcare, during a debate in the Dail last Wednesday evening. Fees amounting to a second mortgage, children's names being put on waiting lists the same week they were born, staff shortages and afterschool closures, were among some of the issues that Deputy Whitmore touched upon as she again called for the introduction of a public childcare service.

"Every week without fail I am contacted by families across Wicklow who are struggling in relation to childcare. I've spoken to parents in Blessington and Wicklow Town facing uncertainty in relation to fee increases and parents in Greystones and Bray who haven't been able to get their young children into creches despite registering them the week they were born," commented Deputy Whitmore, who is the Social Democrats spokesperson for Children.

"Parents are under huge strain to find childcare that is both available and affordable and the current private childcare model is not working. It's not working for parents and it's not working for childcare providers or Early Years Professionals," explained Deputy Whitmore.

"According to SIPTU's recent Early Years Professionals survey there are 30k children on waiting lists for a creche place, and 30% of managers are reporting issues with recruitment and retention of staff. This is leading to closures of rooms and services within childcare settings, which we are seeing across Wicklow. We need a public childcare model in State ownership that offers families accessible and affordable childcare. We need a childcare model that gives staff security and dignity in their wages and a system that is not subject to annual changes in funding levels and price increases.

"Speaking to parents about their experiences of getting childcare, the stress of trying to find places and pay for them, the stress of getting children there and making sure they have aftercare, brings me right back to that sick feeling that just sits in your stomach when you know you have to organise this for your own family and, if you do not, the repercussions of it. For some parents, usually mothers, this means they cannot work or that they must consider whether they can afford to go back to work, if they want to. I feel like we are having the same conversations about childcare in Ireland now that we would have been having ten or 15 years ago.

"If we continue to use sticking plasters in the form of public money to keep a private system as the model, we will continue to fail. The only way we will get this right is to have a fully public model of childcare that parents can avail of. It is time that parents in Ireland had the same service as parents all over Europe have. There is no reason they deserve less," concluded Deputy Whitmore.

Green TD Steven Matthews has welcomed the prospect of a €1.2 billion investment in childcare contained in the upcoming budget saying it will bring welcome relief to parents in Wicklow.

Deputy Matthews said, "The Minister for Children has

outlined plans for childcare in the budget and one of the most interesting is the Green Party idea of state childcare, provided directly through a public model.

"Investment in childcare has doubled under the current Minister, and this is the highest amount yet. Hardworking parents should not feel as though they are working for nothing. I'm also supportive of the 'baby boost proposal' which would see new parents receive a quadruple child benefit payment on the month of the baby's birth. This would be a €560 payment at the current rate of child benefit. Even when shopping carefully or for subsequent children where some baby items may already be in the home, the birth of a baby is still a very expensive time and I'm sure new parents will appreciate this boost.

"I regularly visit childcare facilities and pre schools and see the hard work and dedication that goes into caring for our youngest citizens while their parents are at work. I also know a great many childminders who keep the wheels turning for parents and I welcome the upcoming addition of childminders to the national childcare scheme. This welcome step should be legislated for by the end of the month and will finally allow state support to the many parents who employ childminders to care for their children."



Mason and Cinty Nolan at the Little Warriors Football Tournament in Travers Insurance Park, Arklow.

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Scott calls for an end to dumping

Recently there have been several incidences of dumping beside the recycling bins in Greystones, notably on Mill Road and South Beach Car Park.

Greystones Green Party Councillor Lourda Scott has been following up with the Council to try and put an end to it. Speaking on the matter Cllr Scott said "I was contacted in July about a heap of rubbish being left by the recycling bins just opposite the Municipal Offices in the South Beach Car Park. It was a big mess that was there for over a week before I cleaned it myself as part of our monthly beach clean. Unfortunately this wasn't a one off and very quickly more items were dumped there as well as at the recycling bins at Aldi on Mill Road. Apart from looking unsightly, rubbish is being spread around the area and into the sea as well as attracting rodents. I have been in contact with the Council to see what can be done about this and they are looking into solutions. Until something can be done I am urging people not to dump rubbish beside these bins. There is really no excuse for this. The recycling bins are very well used facilities and we don't want to have to remove them because of the poor behaviour of a few people."



Cllr Scott cleaning up litter at the recycling bins in the South Beach Carpark.



Holly Matthews and Anna Howard at the Sunbeam Wildfest in Bray.



These seal and its mother recently made an appearance on Greystones North Beach. Karen Kelly snapped these pics on 14th and 15th September while maintaining a safe distance behind the harbour wall so as not to disturb them. The pup is about three weeks old and Seal Rescue Ireland have been keeping them safe. Wicklow County Council is reminding beach users, and particularly dog owners, to avoid disturbing seals when they visit the coast at this time of year. September to December is a particularly important time for grey seals, as it is the breeding season during which time the adults seek safe sites to 'haul out' on land. It is also the time when they give birth to a single pup which is born with distinctive white fur and needs to stay on land for a number of weeks while it is being weaned by its mother. It is important to note that 'disturbance' can easily occur when seals become aware of human presence even at a distance. People and dogs are asked to maintain a minimum distance of 100m from seals that are on land as coming close to them will cause stress and can lead to the abandonment of pups by mothers.



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‘Harris must deliver full-time fire service for Wicklow in the budget’

Sinn Féin TD John Brady repeating his call for a full-time fire service in north Wicklow has called upon Taoiseach Simon Harris to commit the funding to establish a full-time fire service in next month's budget.

"Wicklow County Council does not have the funding to establish a full-time service, but Harris, who has previously pledged his support for a full-time service has the power to do so," said Deputy Brady, who argues "the time has now come for him to put his money where his mouth is."

Deputy Brady has consistently called for a full-time service throughout his time in public office, and the urgency of his call is backed up by what can only be described as an unprecedented but not unexpected population surge in north Wicklow.

Deputy Brady said: "While there have been several reviews into the retained fire service. Including a 2014 report on issues relating to the provision of a full-time fire service in Bray and north Wicklow drawn up by Wicklow's Chief Fire Officer, which I was critical of at the time, arguing that it was not future proofed, that it failed to take into account anticipated population growth in the north Wicklow area. My arguments from

the time have proven to be correct.

"Since then, north Wicklow has experienced an unprecedented but not unexpected population surge. A surge that is continuing, with both the county and the state approaching pre-famine levels of population for the first time since the 1840s. Nowhere is this more evident than in the north of the county with major developments including over 3,000 new homes planned for Old Fassaroe, which will effectively amount to the construction of another town between Bray and Enniskerry. There are also a further 1,200 residential units planned for the Old Bray Golf Club lands, adjacent to the river Dargle and other big developments throughout the town.

"The government has failed to plan to ensure that public services are resourced to meet the challenges that a growing population brings. Nowhere is this more evident than in the case of the Wicklow fire service which is currently a retained fire service.

Which means that members work on a part-time basis, where they are on 24-hour call out when scheduled for duty. Where possible members augment their salary with part-time jobs.

"A Fire station was built in Bray in the 1980s to house a full time fire service - if that was seen as a necessity in the 80s, that need has now risen exponentially, and is now a matter of real public concern. Currently the average call out numbers for Bray are 275 per annum. Although demand will continue to rise alongside the growth of the population. The development of multi-story apartments in Bray raises the risk level in responding to fires to high.

"The reality is we need a full-time service here in the north of the county. The retained fire service is crumbling under the current demands being placed upon it. Demand in north Wicklow is now on a par with parts of Dublin which is serviced on a full-time basis.

"The retained fire service model is in crisis across the state. Retained



John Brady TD at Bray Fire Station.

firefighters have already had to resort to industrial action in response to the abject failure of the government to address the crisis in the service. The reality is that retained fire fighters are underpaid, they are working and are on call for extraordinarily long hours and are being paid so poorly that many are forced to supplement their salary through social

welfare payments. In addition, they face the challenge of being understaffed to the point that crewing levels represent a danger to both firefighters and the public.

"The current model is unworkable, unsustainable, and doomed to failure as the strength and capacity of the retained fire service is continually eroded, as fire fighters

unable to continue in their roles, as result of the financial impact, and the effect on their work life balance.

Coupled with this, retained firefighters who are on call must respond to emergencies, by answering their pagers by returning to the fire station, where they must then equip themselves, and then travel to the site of the call out.

Battling chronic congestion all the while.

"Taken together, the number of call outs, the population increase, the difficulties in negotiating traffic congestion, the growth of multi-story apartment blocks, all combine to raise the risk level significantly.

"I am calling on the Taoiseach Simon Harris to put his money where his

mouth is and ensure that funds are allocated towards the establishment of a full-time fire service. There is no way that Wicklow County Council can afford to deliver the need for a full-time service, but Simon Harris can. He has the power to deliver for Wicklow. And he needs to step up and get the job done. The time for talking is now over."

‘Upgrades to Garda stations in Tinahely and Shillelagh important for rural law and order’

Arklow Fianna Fail Councillor Pat Kennedy has welcomed upgrades to two local Garda stations in Tinahely and Shillelagh. The upgrades are currently in progress and should be completed in the near future.

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Speaking on the matter Cllr Pat Kennedy said he welcomes upgrades to both stations, and the upgrades are essential for both stations to protect law and order in rural Ireland.

"I am delighted to hear of the upgrades to both Tinahely and Shillelagh Garda Stations. Law and order is of the upmost important right across the country, and it is no different in Wicklow. Rural law and order is essential for protection of the constituents we represent.

"The upgrades made to Tinahely Garda station is nearing its completion. I very much welcome the universal access upgrades, the new showers, and the upgrade to the reception to make it wheelchair accessible.

"The upgrades to the Shillelagh Garda station comprise of upgrades to



Cllr Pat Kennedy watching the progress at Tinahely Garda Station.

the structure of the building including repointing the lime mortar internally to make the building weatherproof and a complete rewiring."

Cllr Pat Kennedy is committed to rural law and order, and these upgrades are an important step for the communities of Tinahely and Shillelagh.

"I am committed to law and order. I am thrilled with these upgrades to both Garda stations and will seek to work for more funding and upgrades across

Wicklow. Garda stations like these are crucial for rural Ireland. Ongoing support must be given to them, so that they can carry out their duty and protect our constituents."

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If you're seeking a dining experience that combines authentic Italian flavours with a warm, inviting atmosphere, look no further than Berto's Pizzeria & Cafe. Located inside the historic Pluck's of Kilmac, at Junction 8 just off the N11, Berto's is perfectly positioned for commuters to and from Dublin, as well as visitors exploring Powerscourt, Glendalough, and Roundwood. With ample parking and easy access, it's the ideal destination for a meal that feels special from the moment you arrive.

A Passion for Food That Feels Personal

Roberto Macari, the man behind Berto's, understands that food is about more than just eating—it's about creating a connection, a feeling, a memory. Raised on the simple, heart-warming dishes his Nona Giulia prepared in Italy's Val di Comino, Roberto brings those beloved family recipes to Kilmacanoge, sharing them with the community.

The care and authenticity that go into every

dish at Berto's isn't just about quality—it's about making you feel like you're part of something special. "When people eat at Berto's, they're sharing in the stories and flavours of my childhood," says Roberto. "It's more than just a meal; it's a little piece of Italy."

Authentic Italian Flavours Without the Hefty Price Tag

Berto's offers a menu full of authentic pizzas, traditional pastas, and a

variety of Italian-inspired dishes, all crafted with ingredients imported directly from Italy. But here's the best part: Roberto believes that great food shouldn't come with a high price tag. "We want everyone to enjoy authentic, high-quality Italian cuisine without breaking the bank," he explains.

Whether you're stopping in for a quick coffee, enjoying Italian-inspired sandwiches for lunch, or sitting down to an exquisite dinner, you'll find the food at



Berto's is just as affordable as it is delicious.

A Space for Connection and Relaxation

Beyond the food, Berto's offers a modern yet cosy space that's perfect for gathering

with friends or relaxing with family. Every visit feels like an occasion, whether you're catching up over a casual meal or enjoying a more leisurely dinner. And with Pluck's Bar right next door, Berto's continues Kilmacanoge's tradition of creating spaces where commu-

nity and good times come together.

Don't Miss Out

Berto's is quickly becoming a must-visit for anyone who loves authentic Italian cuisine. If you haven't experienced it

yet, now is the time to discover what everyone's talking about. With its genuine Italian flavours, welcoming atmosphere, and fair pricing, Berto's Pizzeria & Cafe is the perfect place to enjoy a taste of Italy—without the hefty bill.



Roberto Macari outside Berto's in Kilmacanogue.

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New group aims to encourage participation in local politics

A new group of former council candidates is calling on the public to get more involved in local politics by attending local Municipal District council meetings around Co. Wicklow.



Ciaran Hogan.



Rob Carry.

Civic Action Wicklow was founded by local activists Ciarán Hogan and Rob Carry. "Public attendance in council meetings is counted on one hand," explained Hogan. "I canvassed hundreds of people in the run up to the last election but none had ever been made aware of where the council meets."

The group is aiming to encourage greater participation in elections amid low voter turnout at the Local and European Elections held earlier this year.

Rob Carry explained, "At Local Election 2024, Wicklow had a turnout of only 54 per cent. That sits in between the 2019 figure of 53% and 2014 figure of 55%. So roughly half of

those eligible to vote had their voice heard on election day."

The goals of the new group, Civic Action Wicklow, will be to inform residents of their local council meetings, boundaries, councillor actions and budgets.

The group also aims to support residents who want to be more up to date by arranging free transport to council meetings and chat groups with council minutes.

"During Covid Lockdown, council meetings were broadcast on live webcasts, but this stopped inexplicably shortly after restrictions were lifted," explained Hogan.

The business owner, who stood in the Bray East

When are the next meetings happening?

Bray

Tuesday 1st of October, Above McDonalds

Greystones

Tuesday 24th September Civic offices Mill Road

Arklow

Wednesday 9th October in Arklow Municipal District Offices

Baltinglass

Monday 23rd September Civic offices, Blessington

Wicklow

Monday 23rd September District Chamber, Town Hall, Market Square

LEA, continued, "This should be re-instated immediately so that people who can't make it to the council meetings can stay up to speed with what exactly is being done by elected councillors to improve the lives of the people of Wicklow."

The group have started a Facebook page, and WhatsApp chatgroup that is open to anyone who wishes to join.

It will include updates on council minutes and can cater to requests for transport to council meetings.

Free bike maintenance & repair workshops

The public are invited to join Janos Kohler, an avid member of Bray Wheelers, as he delivers free Bike Repair and Maintenance Workshops this Autumn across County Wicklow.

These workshops are supported by the Environmental Awareness Office and aim to champion the principles of the circular economy, encourage and support active travel, promote the numerous physical,

mental and environmental benefits of cycling.

Janos has been invited back by Wicklow County Council to deliver practical advice on maintaining your bicycle, and will cover among

other things, the industry-standard 'M check' safety inspection, bike setup, correct saddle height, changing a puncture, brake, gears and chain care.

Attendees are welcome to bring their bikes and ask any bike related questions on the day. Please note that no repairs shall be carried out on the day by Janos. The workshops should provide attendees with the

skillset required to fix their own bicycle. However, for any complicated repairs attendees should seek help from their local bike shop.

Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr. Paul O'Brien said, "Bicycle repair and maintenance workshops are a cornerstone of the circular economy. They not only extend the life of bikes, reducing waste but also empower indi-

viduals with the skills and knowledge to maintain their bicycles. This fosters a culture of reuse and sustainability, ensuring that resources are utilized to their fullest potential."

Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council Emer O'Gorman added "Supporting bicycle repair and maintenance workshops are essential for advancing the circular

economy. These initiatives besides reducing waste, promote sustainable transport, and build local skills. They help us move towards a more resilient, resource-efficient future, where communities are empowered to make environmentally conscious choices."

For further details and booking please contact eao@wicklow-coco.ie.

Young people call on elected representatives to increase funding for youth work services

The National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI), which represents organisations working with young people nationwide, held a special event bringing young people face to face with members of the Oireachtas to discuss funding for youth services. Taking place at Buswells Hotel in Dublin, the young advocates were able to speak directly to key decision makers ahead of Budget 2025.

Naomhan Ní Chonchobhair from Bray said: "I really enjoyed meeting our local repre-

sentatives and sharing with them some of the amazing experiences I've had with Crosscare.

There's so much important work happening in our local area to support young people and I want

to make sure that our local representatives carry that message to the national level, so that youth work in our area and beyond gets its fair share come budget time."

NYCI is calling for a €15 million increase in funding for youth work in order for the needs of young people to be met. The advocates present at an event earlier this month, many of whom were NYCI Local Champions, told policymakers about the vital role these services have played in their own lives and how this funding is essential to keep these supports running.

Kathryn Walsh, NYCI Director of Policy and Advocacy, said "The National Youth Council of Ireland is devoted to advocating for young people and youth work to receive the necessary investment and support they deserve. This event was a great opportunity for policymakers to hear about how youth work can transform young

people's lives. We hope that this has made its value clear and that our elected representatives will commit to increasing funding in this year's budget."

According to the NYCI, this investment of

an additional €15 million is needed to secure the future of crucial youth work services, which would have a significant positive impact on local communities.

Enhanced funding for universal and targeted

youth work would ensure that growing local demand is met, giving every young person in the community access to essential support.

Capital investment in physical youth work spaces would help maintain accessible, welcoming facilities in towns and neighbourhoods, making it easier for young people to engage with these services. Furthermore, strengthen-

ing Youth Information Services would provide local communities with a vital resource to ensure young people have access to accurate and trustworthy information that can benefit their development and well-being.

To learn more about the NYCI's efforts to advocate for increased investment in youth work, please visit youth.ie.



Pictured are (from left) Naomhan Ní Chonchobhair, Steven Matthews TD, Croíla Treanor and Cllr. Erika Doyle at the National Youth Council of Ireland's Pre-Budget Showcase Event in the Georgian Suite, Buswells Hotel.



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Glenart College, Arklow - a place to Grow, Care and Achieve

A parents group in Wicklow have launched a new campaign aimed at protecting young people online. The campaign, named Gen Free: Free to be Kids, was launched at a public meeting in last Tuesday September 17th in Templecarrig Secondary School in Greystones.



Minister Donnelly with Eoghan Cleary, English teacher and coordinator of SPHE and curricular wellbeing at Temple Carraig.

The meeting was free to attend for anyone with an interest in bringing about changes to legislation to protect children and young people online. The meeting also discussed improving digital education for children and young people and parents and increasing related support services for children and young people

Speaking after the meeting, Minister Donnelly said “We have led this national conversation now taking place across the country from right here in Greystones and we are sending a clear message to online companies - to do the right thing and make your product or service safe. The days of asking platforms just to remove harmful content are over.

"There's a series of legislative changes happening, and these platforms will be under intense scrutiny and will face the law if they continue as they have done."

Government is also committed to further legislation if required. "This is a public health crisis, and it is why I established the online health taskforce and asked them to develop responses to harms caused by certain types of online activity. I'm pleased that Wicklow is well represented on the taskforce with Eoghan Cleary (teacher and assistant principal at Temple Carrig Secondary School) and Rachel Harper (It Takes a Village) are members of the taskforce."

"The taskforce will be



Minister Donnelly speaking at the event in Temple Carrig.

making any recommendations they wish to me at any stage, will submit an interim report within six months and a final report by next summer.

"We are all aware of the devastating consequences of certain online activity, and for many parents who attended the launch and the talk it can be very frightening.

"However, I want to let parents know there is a message of hope. There are things parents can do, working with the legislators like me, working with the educators, working with the healthcare professionals and together we will tackle this. They do not have to act alone. It is why as Minister for Health I have provided further funding to

Cybersafe Kids and a new annual fund of €1 million for an information and awareness campaign.”

Ireland South MEP Cynthia Ní Mhurchú met with the parents group and offered to expand the campaign to Brussels to see if the initiative can be launched as a pan European effort.

Ní Mhurchú has told the parents group that she will support the three main asks of the 'Gen Free: Free to be kids' campaign. Which are, 1. Specific and effective legislation to protect children online, at both a domestic and EU level; 2. Digital media literacy in schools, smartphone free schools until effective legislation is in place and education programmes for parents;

3. Funding supports and resources for public health awareness campaigns, wellbeing training and support services for schools.

According to Ní Mhurchú, children and parents need to play a leading role in any initiatives: "I believe that that we need buy in from both parents and children so that we can work towards creating smartphone free schools. A fundamental part of this is public awareness and education. The priority and urgency is on robust, effective, specific legislation to make the online world safe for children. Responsibility and accountability needs to shift to the internet service providers."

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Donnelly highlights significant progress in services at Wicklow Hospice during 2024 Palliative Care Week

Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly has highlighted significant developments in palliative care in Wicklow and across the country. Minister Donnelly was speaking during a visit to Wicklow Hospice (12 September 2024) as part of palliative care week and following the launch of a new national Palliative Care Policy launched by the Minister, the first such strategy document for the services in over 20 years.

Minister Donnelly said: "I was delighted to meet the team at Wicklow Hospice during Palliative Care Week and thank them for the brilliant work they provide to patients and their families every day. Whether it is end-of-life-care, symptom control, respite or care in the home, the team at

Wicklow Hospice deserve recognition for everything they do.

"I was also pleased to recognise the progressive work underway at the hospice in conjunction with the community services. Wicklow Hospice is now a specialist training site for doctors who want to be consultants in pallia-

tive medicine, while specialist GP training is also happening here in Wicklow.

"Last year this hospice provided in-patient care to 207 people from Wicklow, with over half of referrals from the home and the remainder from our acute hospitals. Nearly 400 more patients were seen at

home with over 2,000 home visits.

"As Minister for Health I am proud to fund Wicklow Hospice with almost €5 million a year in funding. I was also pleased that as Minister I have been able to increase the budget for palliative care and that funding from this government means the hospice was able to pay off its bank loan earlier this year.

"This week I also launched the new national palliative care strategy which will transform palliative care services further over the next seven years. I'm delighted that Wicklow Hospice has also been chosen as a 'phase 1' site for the introduction of new and improved services that will make services even better for patients."

New Palliative Care Strategy:

The policy aims to strengthen and develop our palliative care services in Ireland to ensure all patients with a life-limiting illness, and their families, can access the appropriate care where and when they need it.

€2 million is being provided in 2024 to begin implementation of this new policy, while further



Pictured (l-r) at Wicklow Hospice during Palliative Care Week are Dr Cliona Lorton, Consultant in Palliative Medicine, Our Lady's Hospice & Care Services; Mary Flanagan, Interim CEO, Our Lady's Hospice & Care Services; Steven McDermott, Interim Head of Nursing (Palliative Care), Our Lady's Hospice & Care Services; Minister Stephen Donnelly; Hazel Bayley, Clinical Nurse Manager 3, Community Palliative Care Team, Our Lady's Hospice & Care Services and Patricia Scully, Deputy Head of Clinical Services, Our Lady's Hospice & Care Services.

funding for 2025 and beyond will be subject to the annual estimates process.

It has been developed to facilitate high quality patient-centred care through an integrated approach across primary, acute and social care settings, taking into account the range of patients requiring palliative care services, as well as the

projected increase in Ireland's older population.

The Government's commitment to the development of these services is reflected in the budget for palliative care which increased to over €155m in 2024, representing a €54 million or 53% increase since 2020.

The policy contains 25 recommendations, including:

- Improving public understanding of palliative care and support programmes in conjunction with service providers and voluntary groups.
- Providing support to GPs and other community-based service providers to care for more people with palliative care needs in the home setting

- Supporting family carers in the home.
- Addressing regional variation in specialist palliative care service provision and tailoring services to meet the needs of different populations.
- Developing and expanding out-of-hours palliative care in the community and reducing unnecessary hospital admissions.



Pictured at Wicklow Hospice during Palliative Care Week are Mary Flanagan, Interim CEO, Our Lady's Hospice & Care Services and Minister Stephen Donnelly.

Naas Injury Unit is here to stay

Social Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore has received confirmation from Naas General Hospital that they have been given approval from the HSE to proceed with the procurement process for a permanent Injury Unit for the area.

This decision follows the success of an initial six-week pilot scheme which was launched last January offering patients in Kildare and West Wicklow a walk-in public service for the treatment of a range of injuries.

The Injury Unit will continue to be located at Vista Primary Care in Naas during the procurement process and provides a walk-in service to patients over 16 years old from 10am to 8pm, seven days a week.

Providing full imaging and x-ray facilities, the Naas Hospital Injury Unit will be able to diagnose and treat a wide range of injuries on site. These include broken bones, sprains, minor facial injuries, minor scalds and burns, wounds, bites, cuts and grazes, small abscesses and boils, splinters, objects stuck in eyes, nose or ears and minor head injuries.

"This is very positive and welcome news from Naas General Hospital that the Injury Unit will become a permanent service for patients in Kildare and West Wicklow," commented Deputy Whitmore.

"With estimated waiting and treatment times of less than two hours for Injury Units, the trial unit in Naas has offered people a local and quick alternative to the long waiting times often experienced when visiting hospital emergency rooms," added Ms Whitmore.

"I have previously called for the HSE to expand the age range of patients being treated at the Naas Injury Unit to include children under 16, which is the practice in other similar Injury Units around the country. The HSE Injury Unit in Loughlinstown accepts patients from 14 years of age with other units treating patients from 10 or five years of age. Now that we have received confirmation that this service in Naas is to be made permanent, I hope that we will see the introduction of a similar age range for patients accepted for treatment in the Naas Injury Unit. This would allow more people and families access to faster, local injury treatment," explained Ms Whitmore, who is the Social Democrats spokesperson for Children.

"Of the 14 HSE Injury Units in operation across the country three, including Naas, have a treatment age range of 16 years and over for patients. St Colmeille's Injury Unit in Loughlinstown treats patients from age 14 years and over and the Cork City based HSE Injury Unit is for patients aged 10 plus. Cashel Injury Unit treats patients from three years old whilst the remaining eight Injury Units across the country treat patients from age five and up.

"With so many families living in the West Wicklow and Naas area and so many young people actively involved in sport, an expansion of the age range of patients that this service is available to would be another positive step for communities here," commented Deputy Whitmore.

"This is an opportunity to expand health services even further for West Wicklow and Kildare residents and I will again be asking the HSE to consider reviewing the patient age bracket and accept younger patients at the Naas Hospital Injury Unit in the future," concluded Ms Whitmore.

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Record number of deer culled

Data released by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) to the Irish Deer Commission show 78,175 wild deer were culled in the 12-month period up February 28th, 2023. The cull sets a record for the number of wild deer culled, up 41% from the previous record set in 2022 when 55,008 deer were culled. More deer were culled in Co. Wicklow (25,727) than anywhere else.

71% of the national deer cull came from the seven counties of Wicklow, Cork, Waterford, Tipperary, Kerry, Galway, and Clare. County Wicklow, an area believed to have an overpopulation of wild deer in some areas was responsible for 29% of the cull, a reduction of 8% of the national cull from the previous year. Poor deer management on state lands and no deer culling rights on some Coillte property are believed to be among the reasons behind the high deer numbers in County Wicklow. The data also highlights that Fallow deer are now the dominant deer species culled in Ireland, accounting for 46% of the national cull and exceeding the Sika deer cull for the first time.

Hunters must make an annual declaration to NPWS stating the number of deer culled by county, sex, and species, and this data is provided to the Irish Deer Commission annually. While the data is not independently verified, hunters are required to sign a declaration confirming the accuracy of the information returned.

However, Damien Hannigan a spokesperson for the Irish Deer Commission stated "the actual deer cull is likely to be significantly higher as the cull total does not

include wild deer killed illegally known as deer poaching, nor does the total include the growing number of deer killed on our roads. Over the last five years over 250,000 wild deer were culled in Ireland under licence from the NPWS and highlights the important role licensed deer hunters play in managing deer at sustainable levels to minimise negative impacts on farming, forestry, and the wider ecosystem." "The Irish Deer Commission actively work with landowners who suffer negative impacts from wild deer, we also support the various agencies who deal with an increasing number of deer vehicle collisions on our roads through a network of trained members."

Why are more deer being culled?

There may be several factors, firstly the number of hunters licensed to cull deer has grown significantly with 6,486 licenses issued in 2023, up 45% in the last 10 years when 4,502 licences were issued to cull deer during the open culling season from September 1st to February 28th, with dedicated periods when male and female deer can be culled. There is no open season for native red deer in County

Kerry due to their national conservation importance, deer management is undertaken by local NPWS staff. The average number of deer culled per hunter has remained between 6 to 8 deer annually since records began in 1999, however 2023 has seen a 20% increase in the number deer culled per hunter with the average now at 10 deer culled per hunter during the 2022/23 culling season.

The Irish Deer Commission believe restrictions around the management of deer during the Covid-19 pandemic, combined with a worldwide crash in venison prices, delays by NPWS in the issuing of deer culling permits, delays by NPWS in the issuing of deer culling permits, poor forestry design for the management of deer, and a rapid expansion afforestation in Ireland, all have created the perfect storm for deer numbers to increase.

In February 2024, the Minister with responsibility for wild deer, Malcolm Noonan TD announced changes to the culling seasons for deer, extending the female deer season from November 1st to March 31st, and the male culling season from September 1st to April 30th. Previously the culling seasons for male deer was from September 1st to December 31st, and female deer



Photo by Peter O'Toole.

from November 1st to February 28th. The Irish Deer Commission believe the changes to the culling seasons will cause deer numbers to increase, as by extending the male season from a five-month season to a nine-month season, will cause less breeding females to be culled and the population will increase. The Irish Deer Commission says culling more breeding female deer rather than male deer is recognised as best practice deer management to maintain deer at a sustainable and healthy population, as one male can breed with many females.

Why are there calls for a national deer cull recently?

The population of wild deer in Ireland is unknown, as a population census has never taken place, so calls for culls are often ill informed or from individuals who do not understand how to manage wild deer so they can co-exist with other land uses. The Irish Deer Commission says most people are not aware we already have a national cull of over 78,000 wild deer annually. The management of wild deer has become an increasingly emotive topic with polarised views from those in farming, forestry,

rewilding, tourism, photographers, hunting, and conservationists.

Why are there calls to suspend government plans to set up deer management units?

Minister for Agriculture, Food, and the Marine, Charlie McConalogue recently announced a tender for €3.4m (excluding VAT) to appoint a programme manager for the establishment of 15 deer management units in areas the department believe have high deer populations. In correspondence with the Minister, the Irish Deer Commission was informed there was no scientific basis or evidence for the proposed deer management units which would include large scale culling of wild deer, including County Kerry where the last remaining herd of native Irish Red deer can be found.

The Irish Deer Commission believe deer management units are being set up because of lobbying by some land use sectors and have asked the Minister to suspend the tender process pending an investigation into the justification in spending €3.4m (excluding VAT) of taxpayer's money on a task which is already undertaken

free of charge to the state by licensed deer hunters. Furthermore, the Irish Deer Commission said it is crucial decisions involving the culling of wild deer are well founded and evidence based rather than seat of the pants or arbitrary comment because of landowner or political pressure, otherwise areas that may need additional deer culling will see deer numbers increase with negative impacts for farming, forestry, and the wider ecosystem. It is possible the formation of deer management units will disenfranchise thousands of licensed hunters who currently manage deer at sustainable levels and without cost to the state.

The Irish Deer Commission have also written to Minister Malcolm Noonan, the Minister with responsibility for wildlife and our wild deer, regarding his duty of care to wildlife management and the unintended consequences of allowing the Department of Agriculture, Food, and the Marine take the lead on the management of a protected species under the Wildlife Acts, a development that has caused considerable concern among those involved in deer management and conservation.

'Coillte and NPWS collaboration creates opportunity for Glen of the Downs sale'

Steven Matthews TD has hailed the collaboration between Coillte and the National Parks and Wildlife Service for protection of nature, announced last week, as a great opportunity for the Glen of the Downs nature reserve.

Speaking after the announcement by Green Party Minister for Nature Malcolm Noonan, Deputy Matthews said "There is currently an opportunity for the state to purchase some land in Greystones that could provide a fantastic ecological corridor between Kindlestown Wood and the Glen of the Downs nature reserve. When I saw the land for sale, I contacted Minister Noonan to ask the NPWS to assess the ecological value for nature of the idea. I'm delighted that here is ongoing work to assess part of the site and there exists an opportunity for Coillte and NPWS to work collaboratively on this proposal."

Deputy Matthews has identified the collaboration, as a possible framework under which the purchase may be agreed. The Memorandum of Understanding signed by Coillte and the NPWS provides for greater

partnership and collaboration for the delivery of nature conservation projects and the management of the respective estates of both organisations.

Deputy Matthews said, "This agreement brings together the main agency responsible for biodiversity and the state forestry company, two of the biggest landowners in the country, to not only meet our legal obligations to nature, but also maximise shared opportunities. Within this framework, I see an opportunity to progress a proposal I have made to purchase some of the Greystones site for protection of biodiversity and the creation of an expanded nature reserve. I have been doing a lot of work in the background on this proposal. In recent days I have discussed the idea with Minister Noonan and Minister for Environment Eamon Ryan who are both very supportive. We need to ensure that there is value for the public money that would need to be spent and that the proposal would benefit nature and local amenity. If we can achieve that I am hopeful, we can progress this expansion of nature protection in Wicklow."

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SETU chosen to deliver new veterinary medicine

South East Technological University (SETU) has been selected to deliver a new veterinary medicine programme, marking a significant milestone for both the University and the future of veterinary education in the region.

In 2022, the Higher Education Authority (HEA) initiated plans to expand capacity in health-related programmes, including veterinary medicine. Following a thorough independent assessment, SETU's proposal for veterinary medicine was successfully endorsed.

Minister for Further and Higher Education, Patrick O'Donovan TD, alongside Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Charlie McConalogue TD, announced SETU's selection this afternoon at the National Ploughing Championships in Ratheniska, Co. Laois.

Welcoming the Government's decision, SETU President, Professor Veronica Campbell recognises it as a significant vote of confidence in the University's vision for the future. "Veterinary medicine is a highly sought-after programme of relevance to our region that will attract top talent from the south east and beyond. As the only university in the region, SETU is delighted to be chosen to deliver a new veterinary medicine programme," she said.

The announcement aligns with SETU's strategic plan and significantly builds on the University's established expertise in agricultural sciences, bolstered by a 50-year partnership with Teagasc at Kildalton College in Piltown, Co. Kilkenny.

Prof. Campbell expressed her sincere gratitude to the Government and the HEA for their leadership in tackling critical national skills shortages. She also extended her appreciation to public representatives from the region for pledging their support.

"SETU is now poised to deliver an innovative veterinary medicine degree that prepares students for the realities of veterinary practice in rural Ireland. Our distributed model of clinical teaching, where students will complete their clinical rotations in practices across the south east, will be transformative for both the University and the region," the SETU President said.

Acknowledging the many individuals involved in bringing the vision for a new programme to life, Prof.

Campbell stated, "A large team across SETU worked tirelessly on the application. I would like to especially recognise Professor Peter McLoughlin, Head (Waterford) Faculty of Science and Computing, and the entire Programme Development team for their efforts."

Commending the key members of the Programme Development team, including Eleanor Kent, Head of the Department of Land Sciences; Dr Mary-Kate Burke, MRCVS and Veterinary Medicine Programme Development Lead; Dr Siobhan Walsh, Interim Operations Manager for Veterinary Medicine; and Tim Ashmore, Principal of Teagasc Kildalton College, Prof. Peter McLoughlin said, "Their vision, hard work and dedication positioned SETU to succeed in this highly competitive process."

Prof. Campbell also acknowledged the support of numerous stakeholders, including Paul Nolan, Chair of SETU's Land Sciences Industry Board, and various agri-food, equine, life sciences, and veterinary

sector representatives. "Their unwavering backing has been instrumental in advancing the provision of a veterinary medicine programme here in the south east," she said.

Looking ahead, Prof. Campbell added, "We very much look forward to bringing this programme to fruition and are actively working towards accreditation from the Veterinary Council of Ireland with the inclusion of the new programme in the CAO listing in 2025/26 to provide for an annual intake of 40 students."

"We would also like to congratulate Atlantic Technological University (ATU) on their successful application to introduce a veterinary programme to the north-west region. This milestone paves the way for future collaboration between our universities. Together, we can advance veterinary education, research, and practice across Ireland, while addressing the needs of rural and agricultural communities nationwide. We look forward to the collaborative opportunities that lie ahead."



In the lead-up to South East Technological University's (SETU) selection to provide a new veterinary programme, SETU and Teagasc Kildalton College hosted Veterinary Ireland for an informative tour of the Piltown college's facilities. Pictured were Tim Ashmore, College Principal of Teagasc Kildalton College, Michelle O'Brien, Sheep Technician, Prof. Veronica Campbell, SETU President and Finbar Murphy, Chief Executive of Veterinary Ireland. Photograph by Mary Browne, Browne's Photography.

Meanwhile, SETU has also been shortlisted as a potential new provider of pharmacy education

with a Government decision expected shortly. "We are confident that our strong application

for pharmacy is also approved and that SETU can contribute to the skills requirements of

the health sector and vibrant pharma industry of the region," said Prof. Campbell.

Four Wicklow schools participating in rollout of new Leaving Cert subjects

Minister for Education Norma Foley TD has announced that four Wicklow schools are among the selected Phase One Schools which will be the first to offer the new Leaving Certificate subjects of Drama, Film and Theatre Studies and Climate Action and Sustainable Development from the start of the 2025/26 school year.

Among the schools participating in phase one, 57 post-primary schools have been selected to introduce Leaving Certificate Drama, Film and Theatre Studies from the start of the 2025/26 school year. These include St. David's Holy Faith Secondary, Greystones and Glenart College, Arklow.

In addition, 43 schools have been selected for Leaving Certificate Climate Action and Sustainable Development. These include Wicklow Educate Together Secondary School and Colaiste Bhríde, Carnew.

The announcement marks an important moment in the Senior Cycle Redevelopment Programme and the Minister's vision for a Senior Cycle that provides young people with an opportunity to study a range of subjects that align with their talents and passions.

Minister Foley said: "It was fantastic to see a strong level of interest from schools of all types in Wicklow and across the country in taking part in this first phase of delivering the new Leaving Certificate subjects of Drama, Film and Theatre Studies and Climate Action and Sustainable Development. These subjects are being introduced to provide greater choice for students to better reflect their range of interests and support the development of a wider range of talents and skills. I am pleased to

announce that four Wicklow schools will be among the first to offer the new Leaving Certificate subjects of Drama, Film and Theatre Studies and Climate Action and Sustainable Development in 2025/26.

"The applications received demonstrated the extraordinary talent, qualifications, experience, and commitment by teachers in schools across Ireland interested in introducing these two new subjects to their students. The level and variety of current subject provision in the selected schools and the enthusiasm shown by their school leaders, teachers, students and school communities was nothing short of exemplary and I have every confidence that the rollout of both subjects will be a success. I am most pleased for the students in the 100 post primary schools across the country who will experience either Drama, Film and Theatre Studies or Climate Action and Sustainable Development at Senior Cycle in this initial phase and who will have the opportunity to develop their interests, strengths and talents in these areas."

Teachers in the selected schools will begin working with Oide, the teacher support service, this school year, a year in advance of teaching the subject. All selected Phase One schools will be provided with the necessary resources to establish

new subject departments in their schools and to support the teaching and learning of the subject from the start of the 2025/26 school year.

Drama, Film and Theatre Studies will promote and encourage creativity as a basis for learning through immersive experiences. Students will have the opportunity to cultivate informed thinking through learning supported by creative and critical processes. Climate Action and Sustainable Development will develop students' capacity for informed and meaningful action for a just and sustainable world as they engage with key sustainability challenges including the climate crisis. Students will be empowered to build their understanding of a number of interconnected core concepts and principles related to climate action and sustainable development.

In 2022, the Minister set out a programme for the redevelopment of Senior Cycle, guided by the vision of a Senior Cycle that delivers 'equity and excellence for all'.

The programme is informed by, and builds upon, the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment's (NCCA) Advisory Report on the review of Senior Cycle, as well as the experience of Leaving Certificate students, a growing demand for change and international experience and perspectives.



COMHAIRLE CONTAE CHILL MHANTÁIN
WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

As part of the National Anti-Dumping Initiative
Wicklow County Council is offering a

FREE BULKY WASTE COLLECTION

Where: Wicklow County Council
County Buildings, Whitegates, Wicklow Town, A67 FW96.

Date: 28th September Time 10am – 2pm.

ITEMS ACCEPTED:

- Furniture, outdoor & indoor
- Bed bases & headboards
- Carpets
- Bathroom suites
- Bicycles, trikes

THE FOLLOWING WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED:

- WEEE
- Plastics
- Items that can otherwise be recycled at Civic amenity sites
- Hazardous Waste
- Black rubbish bags of any kind
- Construction Waste
- Agricultural equipment

**This service is Strictly limited to householders.
No commercial waste collectors allowed.
There is limited capacity for some waste types.**

Ph:0404-20100 (ext 2296) • Email: eao@wicklowcoco.ie

Bray Head walk will 'make huge difference' to youth mental health



Rob Carry, former Local Election Candidate, speaking at a previous mental health fundraising event.

A sunrise charity walk to and from Bray Head will make a “huge difference” to young people in the town struggling with their mental health, organisers have said.

The event will see a group of some 100 people set out for the iconic Bray Head cross on 29th September. Each hiker will carry a 20.45kg backpack in support of suicide prevention and youth mental health.

“The initial idea was to get 20 people each carrying 20.45kg,” explains event organiser Karl O’Rourke. “Total weight would be 449kg - one kg for each of the 449 people who lost their life to suicide in Ireland in 2021.”

However, after massive interest in the ‘Carry the Weight’ walk, O’Rourke opted to ditch the 20-person limit: “The number of people who wanted to get involved just kept growing and I didn’t see the point in turning them away. So now we’ve about 100 hikers ready to go.”

The event comes after a spate of suicides among Bray’s young people since the beginning of the year. O’Rourke decided to give participants the option of remembering someone they may have lost through suicide while on the hike.

He explained, “We’re getting t-shirts printed for

everyone taking part and they have the option of including the name of someone special they might have lost.”

The hikers will set out with headtorches first thing on the morning of the event with the goal of reaching the summit in time for sunrise. While the hike will be challenging, O’Rourke says that those who don’t feel they could manage it can still be of help: “Please get in contact if you’re willing to join and but if you don’t feel you’d be physically able to complete the hike, you can always let others know about the event.”

Those taking part will be gathering sponsorships in the run up to the event and the money raised will go towards a mental health initiative that provides free mental health services to young people in Bray.

“We lost a member of our club to suicide earlier this year,” said Jai Sua Martial Arts coach Rob Carry. “In the wake of that, we decided to pay for private mental health services for any of our members who needed it and then fundraise to

cover the cost.”

Carry explained, “The initiative has made a huge difference to the lives of quite a number of our students but it’s an ongoing challenge to keep it funded. So we were delighted when Karl put together this walk and committed the funds to our initiative.”

Anyone interested in taking part in the Carry the Weight sunrise hike, please contact Karl by phone on 086 446 6313 or by email at karlorourke-fitness@gmail.com. Those wishing to donate can do so here: <https://gofund.me/1e64e950>



Event organiser, Karl O’Rourke.



Karl O’Rourke, event organiser, pictured on top of Bray head

Bray Institute of Further Education

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Evening Classes

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AUTUMN 2024 | SPRING 2025

ART, CRAFT & DESIGN

Art, Painting and Drawing

10 Weeks - Time: 7.00-9.30pm

Fee €125

Oil Painting

10 Weeks - Time: 7.30-9.30pm

Fee €140

Pottery/Ceramics Beginners

10 Weeks - Time: 5.00-7.00pm

Fee €175

Pottery/Ceramics Improvers

10 Weeks - Time: 7.00-9.00pm

Fee €175

Woodwork for Beginners

10 Weeks - Time: 7.30-9.30pm

Fee €175

Dressmaking

10 Weeks - Time: 7.00-9.00pm

Fee €125

Crochet

10 Weeks - Time: 7.30-9.30pm

Fee €125

Graphic Design

10 Weeks - Time: 7.00-9.00pm

Fee €130

Digital Photography

10 Weeks - Time: 7.30-9.30pm

Fee €130

LANGUAGES

Italian : Beginners

10 Weeks - Time: 7.00-8.30pm

Fee €100

Italian : Improvers

10 Weeks - Time: 8.30-10.00pm

Fee €100

French Beginners

10 Weeks - Time: 7.00-8.30pm

Fee €100

French Improvers

10 Weeks - Time: 8.30-10.00pm

Fee €100

Spanish Beginners

10 Weeks - Time: 7.00-8.30pm

Fee €100

Spanish Improvers

10 Weeks - Time: 8.30-10.00pm

Fee €100

German for Beginners

10 Weeks - Time: 7.00-8.30pm

Fee €100

Leaving Certificate Irish

10 Weeks - Time: 7.30-9.30pm

Fee €130

Conversational Irish 1 (Beginners-Intermediate)

10 Weeks - Time: 7.00-8.30pm

Fee €100

Conversational Irish 2 (Intermediate)

10 Weeks - Time: 8.30-10.00pm

Fee €100

English for Speakers of Other Languages

10 Weeks - Time: 7.00-8.30pm

Fee €100

HOLISTIC HEALTH

Pilates: 7.00 Class

10 Weeks - Time: 7.00-8.00pm

Fee €100

Pilates: 8.00 Class

10 Weeks - Time: 8.00-9.00pm

Fee €100

Tai Chi: 7.00 Class

10 Weeks - Time: 8.15-9.30pm

Fee €100

Tai Chi: 8.15 Class

10 Weeks - Time: 7.00-8.15pm

Fee €100

Yoga: Beginners

10 Weeks - Time: 7.00-8.15pm

Fee €85

Yoga : Beginners and Beginners Plus

10 Weeks - Time: 8.15-9.30pm

Fee €85

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Bridge Beginners

8 Weeks - Time: 7.00-9.00pm

Fee €130

Beekeeping For Beginners

9 Weeks - Time: 7.30-9.30pm

Fee €115

First Aid And Cardiac First Responder

10 Weeks - Time: 7.30-9.30pm

Fee €125

Computers Introduction (Hardware and Software)

10 Weeks - Time: 7.00-9.00pm

Fee €140

MUSIC & DANCE

Guitar Lessons

10 Weeks - Time: 7.00-9.00pm

Fee €130

Ukelele Lessons

10 Weeks - Time: 7.00-9.00pm

Fee €130

Latin Dancing for Beginners

10 Weeks - Time: 7.00-9.00pm

Fee €130

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Carmen Cullen to launch new book in The Mermaid

Carmen Cullen, local well-known writer and promoter of the Arts in Bray, is to launch *Daisy*, her new book of collected stories in the Mermaid Theatre in Bray on Thursday 26th September at 6pm.



Carmen Cullen.

To avoid disappointment, the event is ticketed but free and tickets can be booked at the Mermaid Box office on 01-2724030 or online at www.mermaidarts-centre.ie.

The launch will be a lively affair, Carmen promises.

The book, published by Liberties Press will be launched by Lady Fionnuala Ardee of Kilruddery House. There will be a reading of one of the stories in the book with video on screen in the background, to create an atmosphere as well as music composed and performed by Ashford musician Gerry Anderson.

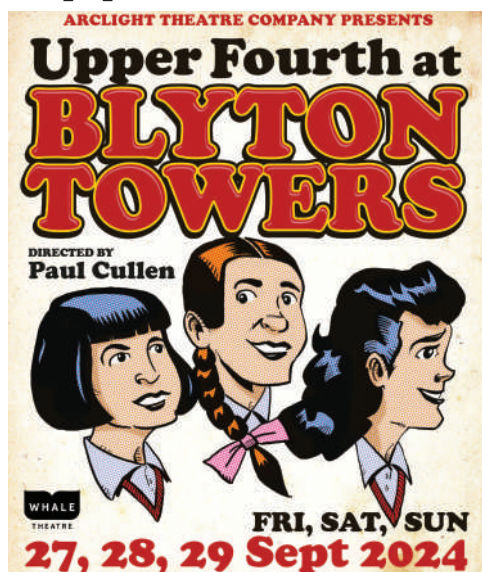
Carmen facilitates a creative writing group in Fassaroe Resource Centre as well as hosting a group of musicians, story tellers and poets in her own home on Thursday evenings. A selection from this last group will either read or perform as part of the launch. There will also be an opportunity to support the 26th September fund-raising day for the Wicklow Hospice.

Daisy, Daisy is the third book in Carmen's trilogy exploring family affairs. The first book, *Two Sisters Singing*, has as its main character the well known balladeer Delia Murphy. This collection, *Daisy Daisy* carried the main character Evelyn into each story. The stories are snap-shots from a marriage from the year 1969 to twenty two years later. The marriage that took place then changed over time and new characters come into our hero Evelyn's life. The stories reflect these changes.

Refreshments will be served in the foyer before and after the launch.

Daisy Daisy will be available to buy in-store in Dubray Books or online at www.libertiespress.com

Upper Fourth At Blyton Towers



Whale Theatre, Friday 27th & Saturday 28th September, 8pm (doors 7pm) & Sunday 29th September, 4pm (doors 3pm). Tickets €18/€15 and available at www.whaletheatre.ie or call the booking office on 01 2010550.

Jolly hockey sticks! ArcLight return to the Whale with 'Upper Fourth At Blyton Towers', a wholesome story about life in a 1940's English boarding school.

Carol Waters is forced to face and overcome snobbish prejudice and school girl pranks when she wins a scholarship to 'Blyton Towers School for Girls'.

Midnight feasts, hidden treasure, cliff top rescues, mysterious strangers, hockey finals and lashings of ginger beer!

If you love Malory Towers, Chalet School, The Four Mary's, St. Clare's etc., you'll love Upper Fourth at Blyton Towers.



Jackie Kennedy and Karen Kennedy from Shankill and Jules McCartyh from Bray are pictured at Ireland's Classic Hits Radio Leinster Party at the Harcourt Bar & Garden in Dublin. Photo by Paul Sherwood.

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Elena Ó Córdáigh Hayes, Pearl O'Connor and Isobel Spencer at the recent Trad Jam session in Bray. To celebrate Bray Comhaltas classes returning to Bray in Colaiste Raithin and Gaelscoil na gCloch Liath from this month, they invited families and friends to join them for a Trad Jam session in Bray on 31st August.

Wicklow Stories Film Festival partners with Ardmore Studios

Wicklow Stories Film Festival has announced their partnership with Ardmore Studios - Ireland's oldest and most iconic film studio.



Ardmore Studios has been the base for many successful Irish and international productions and we are proud to be working with this local, Bray based institution with such rich heritage and strong ties with local people.

"This is a very special collaboration based on a belief that Wicklow stories and the filmmakers are important ones to be heard and seen. Wicklow is often used, to pretend to be other locations, we want to celebrate Wicklow for what it is, its beauty, its people and its stories", says a spokesperson of the WSFF.

This year we are introducing a very special Ardmore Studio Recognition Award which will be announced and presented by Elaine Geraghty, Managing Director of Ardmore Studios during the evening show on Saturday, 12th October in the Whale Theatre.

"Ardmore Studios has been a 'resident' of Wicklow since 1958. We have a proud history of being part of the community since the gates opened and have seen



Ciara Kelly, Laura Whitmore and Emer O'Neill at the 2023 Wicklow Stories Film Festival at the Whale Theatre, Greystones.

generations of local families crew Film and TV productions over the years, and to this day. Ardmore was very pleased to be invited to partner with the Wicklow Film Festival and together we will recognise and showcase the depth of local talent and creativity that we have on our doorstep. We hope that we will see some, or all, of these talented filmmakers bring their work to Ardmore in the future", reflects Managing Director of Ardmore Studios Elaine Geraghty.

"The fact that our submission rate soared by 300% on last year's numbers, surpassed our wildest expectations. It also reassured us in our initial, strong belief from 3 years ago, that there is a bigger need than ever for an independent Wicklow film festival to showcase these films, that perhaps otherwise would never get a chance to be appreciated by local audiences. These stories are extraordinary and we have an incredible lineup for you this year. The standard of submissions was extremely high and we are already thinking about expanding the festival next year to

accommodate the growing amount of brilliant entries."

The intimate Whale Theatre in Greystones has been home to Wicklow Stories Film Festival for the last 2 years and we are very grateful to Ross McParland, Brian O'Regan, Nikki Barrie and their team for being a dream to work with. This

festival wouldn't be possible without their professionalism and the support of Greystones Town Team.

Tickets are selling fast especially for the very popular 8pm show. You can purchase them here to avoid disappointment (<https://whaletheatre.ticketsonline.com/ticketbooth/shows/873647760>)

Huge congratulations to the selected short movies:

NEXT, directed by Gerard Walsh

Wicklow - A Symphony of Light, directed by Rafal Rozalski

Where It All Began, directed by Alan Dunne

Alive Again, directed by Seán Treacy

Mourning, directed by Jackie Walsh

Take Care Now, directed by Richard Childs

Sonoma, directed by Brian Brennan

Ó Lá Go Lá, directed by Stu Teehan

Shiv. The Seanchaí of Greystones, directed by Tim Taylor



Cllr Aoife Flynn Kennedy helping to launch last year's festival.

A Present Absence

An exhibition by Doru Ivan

Signal Arts Centre, 30th September - 13th October

Doru Ivan's exhibition, "A Present Absence", is more than an exhibition; it is an invitation to explore the unseen and the ephemeral.



'Devil's Mirror' by Doru Ivan

Through a carefully curated selection of oil paintings, the exhibition challenges viewers to find meaning in what is missing and to appreciate the delicate balance between presence and absence in art and life. This exhibition invites viewers to contemplate the ephemeral, the intangible, and the often-overlooked aspects of existence through a series of evocative oil paintings.

Born in 1969, in Arad, Romania. Honours Bachelor of Arts, National University of Arts Bucharest, Faculty of Fine Arts, Graphic Art Department. He lives and works in Dublin, Ireland and he is member of VAI since 2018.

His art is a journey into the heart of human existence. Each piece is an exploration of the silent conversations and unseen dynamics that govern our daily lives. Through his work, he aims to highlight the beauty and complexity of these interactions and encourage viewers to reflect on their own experiences.

Opening Reception: Friday 4th October, 7pm-9pm



'Caught up in Nonsensne' by Doru Ivan.

Dates and ambassadors revealed for Irish Book Week 2024

Bookselling Ireland, the committee of Booksellers Association members representing bookshops big and small from across Ireland, together with Publishing Ireland, is delighted to announce that Irish Book Week 2024 will take place from Saturday, 19th October until Saturday, 26th October 2024.

Bookselling Ireland is also thrilled to reveal the stunning artwork for this year's campaign, which was produced by well-known children's illustrator and author, Una Woods, who has also come on board as a campaign Ambassador.

Joining Una as Ambassadors this year is Laureate na nÓg & children's author, Patricia Forde and fiction author, Felicity Hayes-McCoy.

Now in its 7th year, Irish Book Week is a nationwide celebration of Irish bookshops, Irish

books, publishers, writers, illustrators, and poets. The campaign aims to encourage people from across Ireland to visit their local bookshops to discover and enjoy a range of exciting and interesting events, readings, parties, displays and much more.

Dawn Behan, Chair of Bookselling Ireland, said, "It is a great pleasure to announce details of our 7th annual Irish Book Week campaign and we are delighted to reveal the stunning artwork from the very talented, Una Woods. We are really looking forward to working with our Ambassadors and with our members from all across the country on some exciting events and activities that will take place during the week long celebrations in October."

Speaking about Irish Book Week, Peter McKay, President of Publishing Ireland, commented, "Booksellers are an essential part of Irish cultural life and a vital part of the publishing ecosystem. Since 2018, Publishing Ireland has partnered with Book-selling Ireland to bring you Irish Book Week. In that week we celebrate the role of bookshops in Irish culture and entertainment and also their positive impact on the economy. Across Europe, publishing generates more revenue than any other single cultural activity and Ireland plays its part in that success. Dublin's status as a UNESCO City of Literature (one of fewer than fifty cities worldwide) is a marker of that status. Irish Book Week will be a truly marvelous time, but don't wait until October, give yourself a treat and visit your local bookshop this week and then, make a habit of it."



Chair of Bookselling Ireland Dawn Behan, President of Publishing Ireland Peter McKay, with this year's campaign ambassadors, children's illustrator and author Una Woods, Laureate na nOg and children's author Patricia Forde, and fiction author Felicity Hayes-McCoy.



Pearl O'Connor and Patreick Haugh at the recent Trad Jam session in Bray. To celebrate Bray Comhaltas classes returning to Bray in Colaiste Raithin and Gaelscoil na gCloch Liath from this month, they invited families and friends to join them for a Trad Jam session in Bray on 31st August. Past and present members entertained guests with a selection of traditional Irish music tunes. There were whistles, flutes, fiddles, banjos, bodhrans, concertinas, uilleann pipes and harps. It was a wonderful fun session for all.

Sustainable Development Goals Week

Ireland's third SDG (Sustainable Development Goals) Week is taking place right now. It began on Friday 20th September and will run until Sunday 29th September. The SDGs work towards ambitions such as an end to poverty, access to decent work, sustainable consumption, protection of nature, better health and wellbeing, universal access to education, gender equality, climate action, and peaceful societies.

The SDGs belong to everyone and SDG Week is open to all - individuals, groups, schools and colleges, businesses and institutions. Activities, projects and events are taking place during the wider European Sustainable Development Weeks, which started on Wednesday 18th September running until Tuesday 8th October, and can be viewed on <https://www.esdn.eu/esdw> Wicklow County Council Libraries and Climate Action Team have supported and/or planned over 48 events to highlight the Goals during Sustainable Development week 2024.

The following is an example of a number of these events:

Tuesday 24th September

- Reading Goals Ambassador Ceremony taking place at Greystones Municipal District offices.

Wednesday 25th September

- Bike Repair & Workshops, St. Kevin's Hall, Blessington
- Tidy Towns Workshop Event held in Greystones.

Friday 27th September

- Biodiversity Workshop for Children - build a Bug Hotel in Blessington Library.

Saturday 28th September

- Gardening course for Biodiversity and Climate Change in Arklow Library delivered by Aoife Munn.

- Bike Repair &

Workshops taking place in Arklow Recycling Centre.

- A Seasonal Reset - Mindfulness Workshop in Greystones Library.

- Department for Environment Inaugural Newcastle, Kilcoole and Greystones Climate Action Forum taking place at the Greystones Village Green.

- Guided Walking Tour: Art and the Environment around Wicklow with Greenhouse Culture, mee-ting at Wicklow Library.

Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr. Paul O'Brien, said, "Our organisation is proud to spread the Goals to all members of society. Wicklow always has a special focus on children and young people through engagement with the Children and Young People's Assembly ('Com-hairle na nOg') schools or our public libraries. Wicklow Libraries and Climate Action Team will continue to aim to promote the 17 development goals. Events have been organised for all ages, from young children to adults. The line-up includes workshops, sustainable crafts, family and community events."

Emer O'Gorman, Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council, added,



Pictured at the installation of new United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) wall art and cube seating at Wicklow Town library, which was sponsored by SSE Renewables, earlier this year were Mark Costello (Climate Action Coordinator, Wicklow County Council), Aideen Klauer (Green Team Chair, Wicklow County Council), Deirdre Keogh (Community Engagement Manager SSE Renewables), Sarah Rubalcava (Environmental Awareness Officer, Wicklow County Council), Loretta Rose (Librarian, Wicklow County Council), Margaret Birchall (County Librarian, Wicklow County Council), Catherine Costello (Librarian, Wicklow County Council), Julie Sammler (Community Climate Action Officer, Wicklow County Council) and James Callery (Climate Action Officer, Wicklow County Council). Photo: Michael Kelly.

"The SDG National Implementation Plan 2022-2024 has 5 Strategic Objectives. One of those objectives focuses on the integration of the SDGs into Local Authority work to better support the localisation of the SDGs. In accordance with this objective, Wicklow County Council has aligned a range of various publications, activities and events

in order to mark Ireland's third annual Sustainable Development Goals Week, as Ireland work towards the 2030 deadline."

Wicklow County Council has the following public consultations currently taking place which are relevant to the Sustainable Development Goals:

- Biodiversity Issues Paper, which launches on Monday 23rd September for public

consultation until Monday 4th November

- Wicklow County Council Corporate Plan 2024 - 2029 - closing date Friday 4th October at 5pm

- Draft Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) Policy and Development Guidance - closing date Wednesday 16th October at 4.30pm

- Draft Wicklow Noise Action Plan 2024 - 2028 -

closing date Friday 18th October at 5pm.

Further information on these events or other events can be found on Wicklow County Council Social Media channels and Website. Details of all Wicklow County Council public consultations taking place can be found on our consultation hub at <https://www.wicklow.ie/Living/ConsultationHub>.

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

Wicklow County Council: I, Niamh Merriman seek Permission for 1. To side (Northwest) new dormer to enable stairs to converted attic and rooflights to roof, alter ground floor windows. 2. To front (Southwest) new window in gable over entrance door. 3. To side (Southeast), widen window to proposed ground floor kitchen, new rooflights to roof, new dormer to bedroom. 4. To rear (Northeast) widen existing upper dormer floor gable window at 'Alberton', Cliff Road, Windgates, Bray, Co. Wicklow. The planning application may be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy at the offices of Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Wicklow during its public opening hours and a submission or observation in relation to the application may be made to the authority in writing on payment of the prescribed fee within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the application.

RECRUITMENT

MAINTENANCE/ DRIVER/ GROUNDS PERSON REQUIRED

INITIAL PART-TIME POST LEADING TO A FULL TIME POSITION

Basic maintenance skills / painting and decorating Full Irish Drivers Licence

Location : Bray
Please send CV to:

Woodbrookhouse25@gmail.com

BUS AND COACH DRIVER, GENERAL RUNS

Job Types: Full-time, Part-time, Permanent

Pay: €37,000 - €41,000 per year

Expected hours: 20 - 50 per week

Additional pay:

- Overtime pay

Benefits:

- On-site parking

Schedule:

- Day shift

Ability to commute/relocate:

- Bray, Co. Wicklow: reliably commute or plan to relocate before starting work (preferred)

Work Location: In person

Reference ID: JM

E-mail: joemoroneycoach@gmail.com

Website: www.joemoroney.ie



The new, fourth generation Suzuki Swift is a victory for common sense. At the national launch in Druids Heath, near Newtownmountkennedy, Suzuki Ireland staff are fairly confident their sales will get them to a record market share of over 2% by the year end.

By Martin McCarthy

In the first six months of the year, 1945 Suzukis were sold in Ireland but the new Swift will boost sales a lot.

Priced at €21,450, I drove the car on a route up to Laragh, back to Bray, some motorway

driving and some country roads.

This is a car that does a lot of things well - and bucks a few trends. While other car makers continue to pile the weight on cars, Suzuki opt for a 'lighter but stronger' approach.

This leads to a bare weight of just 945 kg in

manual form. This is turn leads to frugal motoring and petrol consumption of just 64 mpg on the combined cycle, from the 1.2 litre three-cylinder mild hybrid engine.

In practical terms, the interior space is ultra-flexible, with folding seats, a low floor boot and lots of cubby holes for bits and bobs.

Amazingly, the IT is as good as many cars four times the price ñ using Android Auto and Apple Car play.

Equally amazing is the fact that the Swift is still manufactured in Japan - probably the manufacturing hub with the highest quality reputation. There are several excellent Suzuki dealers adjacent to Wicklow - most notably James Tomkins of Gorey, Gerry Caffrey in Terenure and Pascal Kennedy in Dun Laoghaire. These dealers

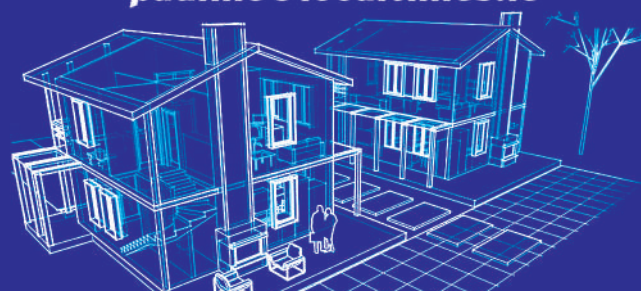
have been in business a long time - most notably Pascal Kennedy who can trace the start of the business to a Forge on the site in 1845!



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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. S.M.

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Wicklow's National Women's Enterprise Day event to take place in October

Female entrepreneurs and budding business-women from across Wicklow are being encouraged to 'make it happen' and register for this year's National Women's Enterprise Day (NWED), after the line-up for the event was announced last week.

Running from 12pm - 4pm, the Local Enterprise Office (LEO) initiative will take place on Thursday 17th October, with events scheduled across the country. There are 14 events nationwide and they feature a range of successful business-women, up and coming female entrepreneurs and amazing speakers in areas of sustainability, innovation, networking and marketing.

This year the Wicklow event is taking place in the beautiful surroundings of Clermont House, Rathnew, an 18th Century Palladian House on 50 acres, owned and restored by Wicklow County Council and now home to Wicklow County Campus, LEO Wicklow Offices and Clermont Screen Hub.

Lunch will be served on arrival from local female entrepreneur, Thea Kinsella's company Maidin Catering. From Rathnew, Thea has just returned to Ireland from

the vibrant London food scene, where she was head craft chef on movies such as Wonka, and private chef catering to stars such as George Clooney, Adam Sandler, and Noah Baumbach. Her lunch offering and bright pink coffee truck is bound to spark plenty of conversation and networking.

The theme of this year's event, 'Making it Happen' will encourage businesswomen to take that next step whether that be to act on an idea, grow their business or take steps to change or innovate in their business.

Guest speakers Lyndsey Cavanagh and Catherine Brady will be joined by Facilitator, guest speaker and entrepreneur in her own right, Margaret Hootor. Margaret has had a long career in corporate marketing, co-owns Kilmullen Farm (lamb, apple juice and corn) and is a business trainer and facilitator with The Entrepreneurs Academy. Most importantly, Margaret is a ball of positive energy and a master MC, who intends to involve the audience and get everyone talking.

Lyndsey Cavanagh, founded One Dame Lane in 2018. ODL is a jewellery manufacturing company and shop, growing rapidly, focusing on the bridal jewellery market and trend-led fashion jewellery. Lyndsey has collaborated successfully with comedian Joanne



Pictured at the launch of the line-up were Emer O'Gorman (Chief Executive, Wicklow County Council), Michelle Hegarty (LEO Wicklow), Cllr. Paul O'Brien (Cathaoirleach, Wicklow County Council), Catherine Brady (Brady's Coffee, Wicklow Town) and Cllr. Melanie Corrigan, (Leas-Cathaoirleach, Wicklow County Council). Photo by Mick Kelly.

McNally and influencer Lauren Arthurs.

Catherine Brady is co-owner of Brady's Coffee, Wicklow Town. Catherine started this coffee roastery business in 2018 with her husband Craig, and has seen very impressive growth and US exports. Catherine is LEO Wicklow's local Ambassador for NWED 2024.

Cllr. Paul O'Brien, Cathaoirleach, Wicklow County Council, who will attend on the day, said: "There are some amazing female entrepreneurs in County Wicklow and I am looking forward to meeting them at the NWED event and to listen to the inspiring stories of the guest speakers. Small businesses and

sole traders are such an important part of the fabric of society in this County and this event is tailor made for them."

Emer O'Gorman, Chief Executive, Wicklow County Council said: "I would like to call on all female founders and entrepreneurs to come and join us on Thursday 17th October in Rathnew to network, and celebrate the stories of these impressive speakers. There is nothing like supporting and learning from each other in business, especially for women who are often juggling many other responsibilities."

Vibeke Delahunty, Head of Enterprise at the Local Enterprise Office Wicklow said: "The theme for

this year's National Women's Enterprise Day on October 17th is 'Making it Happen' and we want to highlight all the supports that can empower women in Wicklow who want to start or grow their businesses into the future."

Established in 2014, the Local Enterprise Offices, part of the Local Authority and funded by the Government of Ireland through Enterprise Ireland, are the essential resource for any entrepreneur looking for support or advice. Since their inception, the Local Enterprise Offices have helped create over 75,000 jobs across the country. The team at LEO Wicklow work with thou-

sands of client companies in Co. Wicklow in a diverse range of sectors offering mentoring, training, expert advice and financial supports to small businesses.

Tickets which cost €15

for this event, are open to all.

To book your place and for more information on National Women's Enterprise Day please visit www.LocalEnterprise.ie/NWED

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