

# LOCAL Wicklow Times

WE DELIVER! - for 35 years



NEWTOWN SCHOOL Page 6



DIP IN THE NIP Page 12



ROAD SAFETY Page 13

Delivered to 44,500 homes & businesses

DELIVERED TO HOMES & BUSINESSES IN: SHANKILL, ENNISKERRY, BRAY, GREYSTONES, DELGANY, KILCOOLE, NEWCASTLE, KILQUADE, ASHFORD, KILPEDDER, NEWTOWNMOUNTKENNEDY, KILMACANOGUE, LARAGH, MONEYSTOWN, ROUNDWOOD, RATHNEW, WICKLOW, GLENEALY, BRITTAS BAY, AVOCA, WOODENBRIDGE, ARKLOW, SHILLELAGH, TINAHELY, REDCROSS, BALLINACLASH, AUGHIRM, RATHDRUM, DONARD, DUNLAVIN, CARNEW, COOLATTIN, BALTINGLASS, BLESSINGTON.

Tuesday 22nd October 2024 First Floor, The Boulevard, Quinsborough Road, Bray, A98 R6D7. Tel: 01 - 2869111 E-mail: wicklowed@localtimes.ie www.wicklowtimes.net

# CHAOS & MISERY ON N11

Last week's bad weather coupled with more employees returning to the workplace saw traffic congestion on the N11 return to pre-Covid levels.

School buses were running up to an hour late in the mornings and parents were reporting being penalised by creches for late pick-ups of their children in the evenings.

Sinn Féin TD John Brady hit out with scathing criticism at Minister Eamon Ryan's failure to overturn his decision to cancel funding needed for the major upgrade to the N11/M11 to go ahead. Thousands of motorists were condemned to

spend countless hours stuck in traffic as they attempt to negotiate the gridlock on one of the busiest roads in the State. He argued that the former leader of the Green Party is blinded by his ideological outlook and refuses to allow the badly needed upgrade to the N11 to go ahead for the simple reason that he wants to frustrate motorists to the point that they will abandon their cars. The crisis appears to have reached a new

level of chaos last week as Brady reported being inundated by people across Wicklow at the end of their tether; with workers being left late for work, children late for school, and patients missing out on important health appointments.

"The N11/M11 upgrade was specifically designed to address chronic congestion, improving safety, and optimising the efficiency and function of the N11/M11 as a transport



Pat Sammon, Sussie Cunningham and Richard Davis pictured at the male-only Dip in the Nip for Wicklow Hospice which took place on 13th October at Greystones South Beach. See page 12.

**INEOS GRENADIER**

**TEST DRIVE EVENT**

**POWERSCOURT DISTILLERY**

**27TH & 28TH OCTOBER**

PRICING FROM €68,995\*+VAT

WANT TO BOOK A TEST DRIVE? CONTACT US TODAY!

ORANGWORKSAUTOMOTIVE.COM

HELLO@ORANGWORKSAUTOMOTIVE.COM

01 690 2100

orangeworks | INEOS GRENADIER

corridor. Phase 2 of the overall project ended in 2021, while it was due to proceed to Phase 3, design and environmental evaluation, over two years ago, for ideological reasons Eamon Ryan blocked funding for the upgrade."

Brady added: "The situation on the N11 is a total and utter disgrace. We have a Government now in its last days who have given away billions of taxpayer's funds in attempts to buy the election yet have chosen to turn a blind eye to the long-suffering motorists of Wicklow. A damning report prepared for the Minister last year by Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) explicitly stated that a failure to invest in road projects would result in an additional 77 deaths, and 381 serious injuries on our roads in the next five years.

"In the morning traf-

fic is grid-locked as far back as Newtownmountkennedy with up to a twenty minute delay to get on the N11 at Kilmacanogue:- in the evenings south bound traffic is at a standstill as far back as Sandyford. Week by week the situation continues to deteriorate, with last week being by far the worst.

"Those who may have initially thought that a Wicklow Taoiseach could deliver for the county are now asking serious questions - where have all the billions gone? It is ironic that Minister Stephen Donnelly campaigned vociferously in the last election on the N11 yet is now nowhere to be seen on this issue. We have a Taoiseach, a senior Minister and a Green Party TD here in Wicklow who have done nothing for commuters in the county.

The fact that the senior government figures enjoyed chauffeur dri-

ven privileges, with the ability to race up the hard shoulder to beat

the congestion with lights flashing, won't be lost on people either."

**Oifig Fiontair Áitiúil**

**Local Enterprise Office**

**Boost Your Business Skills with the Local Enterprise Office**

**Thinking about starting a business?**

Looking to improve your business skills and grow your small business?

Your Local Enterprise Office will help you to take the next step.

**Upcoming training includes:**

- How to Sell Food and Craft Products at Markets and Pop-Ups 24/10/2024
- Start Your Own Business Bootcamp (4 days) 02/11/2024
- Data Protection & Security in a Virtual World 21/11/2024

Check out Your Local Enterprise Office at [www.localenterprise.ie/Wicklow/](http://www.localenterprise.ie/Wicklow/)

Call us at 0404 30800 or email [enterprise@leo.wicklowcoco.ie](mailto:enterprise@leo.wicklowcoco.ie)

European Union European Regional Development Fund

Local Enterprise Office Wicklow

Let's talk business

WICKLOW

# Local history talks at Wicklow Library

Wicklow County Council Local Studies Service has launched its annual Local History Talks Programme with a series of engaging events taking place which will explore the rich history of County Wicklow. Designed for history enthusiasts, local residents and visitors alike, the programme will feature a range of talks and presentations on the stories of the people and places and events that shaped the county.

Each month, one of Wicklow's most respected historians will visit Wicklow Town library branch to present a talk on an aspect of the county's heritage. The first event takes place on Thursday 24th October at 7pm with historian John Goodman's talk 'Wicklow People in WW2', which explores the experiences of Wicklow men and women, the casualties and the survivors of the conflict. Admission is free, however seating is limited. Places can be reserved by emailing [Wicklowlocalstudies@wicklow-coco.ie](mailto:Wicklowlocalstudies@wicklow-coco.ie) or contacting 0404 67025.

Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr. Paul O'Brien said: "These local history talks are a great way for community members to engage with our shared history. Our region is rich in stories that deserve to be told and heard. By bringing people together to learn about the past, we hope to foster a greater appreciation for our heritage and a stronger sense of community."

For those interested in researching their family tree, Wicklow County Council Library Service offers free access to valuable online genealogical resources, helping individuals explore historical records and newspapers without the need for costly subscriptions. Findmypast, the world's most comprehensive Irish family history website, provides online access to birth, marriage, and death records, census data, military records, prison records and much more from Ireland, the UK, USA and beyond.

The British Newspaper Archive provides online access to thousands of newspaper titles from the British

Library's collections with strong coverage of many historic Irish newspapers including the Wicklow News-letter, the Wicklow People and the Bray People. These digitized newspapers provide a window into the lives of everyday people, historical events, and cultural changes,

offering invaluable insights for genealogical research. Access to both of these resources is available for free from any Wicklow Library Service branch.

Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council Emer O'Gorman stated: "The library creates wonderful opportunities for people to connect and explore their local history in a friendly and relaxed environment. By granting free access to Findmypast and the British Newspaper Archive, individuals can now uncover rich, personal stories that connect them with their ancestors and bring history to life. These online resources offer a unique opportunity for genealogy enthusiasts, history buffs, and anyone curious about their family's past to dive deep into their heritage."

For more information about upcoming talks, visit the Wicklow Town library branch events page on [www.wicklow.ie](http://www.wicklow.ie), or follow the Wicklow Libraries team on social media.

## Celebrate Diwali

The vibrant and colorful festival of lights 'Diwali' is coming to Greystones! Organisers are thrilled to invite you to GreystonesKiDiwali, a fun-filled evening celebration of light, culture, and tradition at Greystones Community National School (GCNS).

Come along on 26th October at 6pm for an evening packed with exciting activities, performances, and festivities, perfect for the whole family. Whether it's your first time celebrating Diwali or you're looking to reconnect with your roots, GreystonesKiDiwali promises an unforgettable experience for everyone.

### What to Expect

- A festive evening filled with music and dance performances, showcasing traditional and contemporary styles. See special performer Abiha Mansoor who will perform at Junior Eurovision Eire 2024.
- Mouth-watering food stalls featuring delicious cuisine from local favorites like The Happy Tables by Turmeric Kitchen, Masala Kitchen, and Red Dot.

The Happy Tables by Turmeric Kitchen, Masala Kitchen, and Red Dot.

• Gift vouchers from renowned brands such as Tiffin by Sunil, Eurasia, Sun and Sands, Indian Spice Company, Daata, and many more!

• Fun and interactive Diwali-themed activities with Bollywood DJ and bingo night for the whole family, perfect for those who are new to the celebration as well as those continuing their traditions.

Don't miss out on this fantastic community event, where you can celebrate with family and friends, enjoy delicious food, experience captivating performances, and create lasting memories. You can book your tickets on event brite - search for Greystones KiDiwali.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

My idea for the Apple billions is to put back my village of Kilcoole and its hinterland to its original state. Europe has agreed to restore land that should never have been allowed to be destroyed. Where better to start than Kilcoole. Kilcoole, protected by law, was and is illegally being destroyed by Wicklow County Council. Because of fabricated evidence a man in China was on death row for many years and when it was shown that he was not guilty, he was set free. There was no fabrication in my objection to Wicklow County Council. When on a few occasions I reminded them on it, what the law said, the Council did not do what China did - own up.

The recent Ben Dunn program had the word 'corruption' several times. He asked why he was not charged for corruption. My literature when standing for elections asked to stop corruption, but never got me elected. There is corruption concerning a field beside me that always had some type of crop, but not this year. It is covered in weeds. The Council deny the corruption, the Garda refuse to investigate what looks like obvious corruption. As corruption is a serious offence in most countries, I wonder is that why we have so many asylum seekers to our haven.

Anti-abortion candidate,  
Charlie Keddy

WICKLOW  
LOCAL Times

Shay Fitzmaurice, Managing Editor - [shay@localtimes.ie](mailto:shay@localtimes.ie)

Ian Colgan, News Editor - [ian@localtimes.ie](mailto:ian@localtimes.ie)

Sales / General enquiries - [info@localtimes.ie](mailto:info@localtimes.ie)

is published by Wicklow Times,

First Floor, The Boulevard, Quinsborough Road, Bray, A98 R6D7. Tel: 01-2869111



Maureen Kelly, Jean Nolan, Joan Olohan, Michael Ryan (guest speaker), May Byrne, Karen Kennedy, and Fionnuala Olohan attended the Parnell Memorial Service in Rathdrum on Sunday 13th October. The Parnell Memorial Pipe Band supplied the music for the special ceremony on the day.

### Blessing of Graves in Redford Cemetery

The Blessing of graves in Redford Cemetery, Greystones, will take place on Sunday 5th November at 3pm. All are welcome.

### Adult Book Club in Tinahely

Adult Book Club takes place in Tinahely Library on Tuesday November 5th, 7pm and Thursday November 7th, 11am. Discover new books - chosen by the members. Relax and enjoy the discussion. All welcome.

### The Old Dublin Society

Dublin City Council Historian in Residence Cormac Moore will present 'A History of Lemon's Pure Sweets' at 6pm on Wednesday October 23rd in the Conference Room, Dublin City Library & Archive, 139-144 Pearse Street, Dublin 2. All are welcome - admission is free and no booking is required.

### Greystones Flower Club charity night

Greystones Flower Club's Club Night and Charity Night will be on Tuesday 29th October at 8pm in The Evangelical

Church Hall, Hillside Road, Greystones. Entrance Fee €10, which will be donated to 'As I Am' Charity. Demonstrators will be Club Members: Triona Ni Dhomhnaill, Kate McCarthy Walsh, Dex McLoughlin, and Sandra Shaw will report on Aoife weekend and Competition held in Wexford.

### Public Participation Network Roadshow

The Wicklow PPN Roadshow comes to Greystones on 22nd October, to Kilian House, behind Holy Rosary Church; 4.30 pm

to 8.30pm. Come along to find out what services are available in the Greystones area and how they can help, what groups and clubs are working locally and how you can join Lots of groups will be available on the evening, including: Clean Coasts Wicklow Volunteer Centre, KWETB, Older People's Council Wicklow PPN, Climate Action Team, Bray Area Partnership Slaintecare, Foroige, LAWPRO, Wicklow County Childcare NLN, Citizen's Information, Local Sports Partnership, Age Friendly Homes, Cat Trust, Wicklow Fire Station, Community Finance Ireland, Drug & Alcohol Task Force, Soroptimist Bray & District, Luisne, African Irish Society, AkiDwA Planet Youth, Wicklow Pride.

### Irish Uplands Forum October Lecture Series

The Irish Uplands Council's October Lecture Series continues this week on Tuesday, 22nd October at 7pm. The talk will be focussed on Agri-Climate Rural Environment Scheme (ACRES) Case Study - Breffni with Julien Carlier.

You can join this engaging webinar via the website: <https://buff.ly/3N4NpJS> The webinar is approximately 1 hour long.

**Benville Robinson LLP**  
SOLICITORS

**Personal Injury Lawyers\***

Medical Negligence\* Catastrophic Injuries\*  
Workplace Accidents\* Road Traffic Accidents\*  
Trips and Falls\*

For professional, confidential and expert legal advice regarding Personal Injuries suffered, please do not hesitate to contact Clare-Ann Temple or Hannah Stockwell-Quinn.

Brian Robinson  
B.B.L.S., L.L.M.  
State Solicitor

Eilish Bradshaw  
B.A., L.L.B., L.L.M.  
Clare-Ann Temple L.L.B.

Ciara O'Sullivan  
B.B.L.S., (Euro)  
Hannah Stockwell-Quinn  
B.C.L., L.L.M.

Peter McQuillan  
B.A. (Mod) Leg Sc TCD

24A Florence Road,  
Bray,  
Co. Wicklow.

Tel: 01 276 1330  
E-mail: [info@benvilleroobinson.ie](mailto:info@benvilleroobinson.ie)  
Web: [www.benvilleroobinson.ie](http://www.benvilleroobinson.ie)

\*In contentious business, a solicitor may not calculate fees or other charges as a percentage or proportion of any award or settlement

# WHAT'S HAPPENING TO WICKLOW'S DISABILITY SERVICES?

Parents and family members were left shocked and dismayed to learn last week that three of Sunbeam's residential homes were deemed to be non-compliant and were served with imminent threats of immediate closure. In addition, St Catherine's Bramble's Respite Home closed with less than a day's notice to clients and their families.

An inspection was carried out in March by HIQA at Sunbeam's Ard na Grainne facility and they were given six months to make changes. When HIQA returned in September, they threatened to shut the house with immediate effect.

There are 1600 disability services in the country. Sunbeam House had the third worst HIQA compliance in Ireland. 85% of their houses had some level on non compliance in 2023.

Sinn Féin TD John Brady has expressed his deep concern at reports that Sunbeam House Services in Bray have been found to be non-compliant by the regulator, HIQA. Concerns were raised in relation to fire safety and behavioural support, which have not been addressed. While Sunbeam gave previous reassurances to address the issues raised by HIQA, this did not happen.

"The problems encountered by Sunbeam House are compounded by the failure of the government to address the many challenges within disability services, including the issue of resourcing. Until the core issue of resourcing is addressed, those providing services within the sector will continue to encounter difficulties."

Brady continued: "It is extremely alarming to read a number of inspection reports where Sunbeam House Services have been found to be non-compliant by the regulator, HIQA. HIQA has raised very serious issues relating to fire safety and behavioural support over long periods of time and these have gone unaddressed by Sunbeam. Where commitments have been given by Sunbeam to rectify the problems, they appear not to have been met. In this day and age, this is simply unacceptable.

"Community living, and person-centred planning have been a major success across Ireland. With this comes issues of compatibility of residents, staffing, and management oversight. A regular issue raised with me has been the acquisition of suitable property and the high cost of this. If a resident with complex needs wishes to live in Bray, the likelihood of securing a suitable house is almost nil. Addressing such issues requires a joined-up approach from the council, HSE, and Sunbeam. At the end of the day, residents' rights are fundamental and must be upheld.

"I have been in contact with Sunbeam House Services seeking a meeting to assess where the problems lie, and I will be making representations to the Minister. The areas of disability day service, respite, and residential care have been grossly under-resourced by a government who are throwing taxpayers money around like no tomorrow. Many families are struggling without the access to the right support. I am working with numerous families who rely on providers like Sunbeam, and it is essential that they operate effectively and with the right resources.



John Brady TD.

"According to Adam Harris the CEO of 'AsIAM', one of the leading Autism charities in the State, the recent budget delivered 'a little for a lot' but 'doesn't go far enough', in reference to the series of one-off payments in Budget 2025. Those with additional needs and family carers deserve so much better but instead feel abandoned, that they are not being listened to and that they have been constantly let down by the government.

"We see the crisis in residential and respite services here in Wicklow and for parents trying to get an Assessment of Needs for their children. The average duration of the Assessment of Needs process, as of Quarter 2 in 2024 was 23.72 months. This compares to 19.06 months in Quarter 2 in 2020.

"Just last week Brambles Respite Centre, at St. Catherine's in Newcastle had to close at a day's notice, despite the best efforts of management and staff, leaving parents and children distraught. The fact of the matter is that the whole area of disability and additional needs is under-resourced."

"We see the crisis in residential and respite services here in Wicklow and for parents trying to get an Assessment of Needs for their children. The average duration of the Assessment of Needs process, as of Quarter 2 in 2024 was 23.72 months. This compares to 19.06 months in Quarter 2 in 2020.



Pictured is local Bray pharmacist Paul Burns of Dargle Valley Pharmacy who is a finalist in this year's People's Pharmacist of the Year competition.

you're invited to...

## Bray's big birthday bash

At: Crown Decorating Centre Bray

When: 21<sup>st</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> October 2024

To celebrate we have daily deals on our best products, Saturday's amazing deal is...

### 3 for 2

on coloured emulsions!



Unit 10, Bray South Business Park, Killarney Rd, Ballywaltrin, Bray, Co. Wicklow, D98 V5N7, Ireland

Opening hours Mon - Fri 7.00am - 5pm | Sat 8am - 4pm | Sun CLOSED  
01 2724801 | bray@crownpaints.ie  
www.crowndecoratingcentres.ie

T&Cs apply. Ask in store for details.

# SSE Renewables launches the 2024 Design a Christmas Tree Decoration Competition in Arklow

## Schools' competition to select one child to help Santa turn on the Christmas Tree lights in Arklow



Deirdre Keogh (SSE Renewables) and Alvina Brehony (Arklow Municipal District) at the launch of the 2024 Sustainable Christmas Tree Decoration competition.

In promoting a 'green Christmas', SSE Renewables, in partnership with the Arklow Christmas Festival Committee and Arklow Municipal District, announced last week a competition to design a Christmas tree decoration from recycled materials. Building on the success of two years of the competition, this year, the competition differs slightly in asking young people from the Arklow Municipal District to specifically design a decoration that can hang on a Christmas tree.

The competition is divided into four age categories: 7 and under; 8-10; 11-12; and 13 years and over. Winning competition category prizes include 'One for All' vouchers. One lucky child, with the overall winning entry, receives a voucher for €100 and will help Santa turn on the Christmas lights at the launch of the Christmas Festival on Saturday, 23rd November 2024, in St Mary's Park, Main Street, Arklow.

Completed competition entries should be dropped into the Arklow Library on Main Street during staffed hours on or before 8th November 2024. Deirdre Keogh, SSE

Renewables Community Engagement Manager for Arklow Bank Wind Park said: "We're opening the competition earlier this year to give the schools more time to get as many young people involved. The competition has grown year on year, and we're delighted to once again link in with local schools in the Arklow District and to work with the Municipal District staff and Christmas volunteer committee to host the competition. Thinking creatively about sustainability and the circular economy is key to our common future and what better way to remind us of the importance of sustainability than through a

Christmas tree decoration competition that celebrates local creativity and talent. As with previous years, this year's overall competition winner will join Santa and Mrs Claus as their guest of honour and turn on the Christmas tree lights marking the start of the Christmas festival period in Arklow town. We're looking forward to seeing the imaginative tree decorations creations again this year".

Alvina Brehony, District Administrator with Arklow Municipal District said: "This year we're delighted to be involved with SSE Renewables and the volunteer Arklow Christmas Festival Committee

to launch the sustainable Christmas tree decoration competition 2024. The number and quality of entries exceeded our expectations last year and we were very encouraged by the willingness of local schools to support the young people in submitting entries. We're hoping that this year will bring even more entries."

For more information about the competition and other upcoming Christmas festival events, please see the Arklow Christmas Festival page on Facebook. For information on the SSE Renewables Arklow Bank Wind Park 2 Sponsorship Fund, contact deirdre.keogh@sse.com

# Public consultation launched on the future of Ireland's National Parks

The Minister of State for Nature, Heritage and Electoral Reform, Malcolm Noonan TD, has launched a new public consultation on the future of Ireland's National Parks. The initiative - titled 'Your Parks, Your Say' - will give members of the public and stakeholder organisations the opportunity to express their views on Ireland's National Parks across a range of topics, from biodiversity conservation and restoration to visitor amenities, education, community engagement and legislation. Definitions of what a National Park is will also be sought.

Speaking at the launch in Wicklow Mountains National Park, Minister

Noonan said: "Under this Government, we have transformed the National Parks

and Wildlife Service, increased its funding by 170% and created new

National Parks for the first time in over 25 years. Now is the right moment to reflect

on this progress and have a meaningful national conversation on what National Parks are and how they should be managed. There is currently no legislative underpinning for National Parks in Irish law and no definition of what a National Park is or what it's for. This is something I'd like to see addressed on foot of this consultation.

"It's important that we evolve and refine our view as to what National Parks mean for Ireland," the Minister added. "We are fortunate to have a network of Parks with tremendous community buy-in and support. Our Parks are uniquely Irish, providing protection to a range of flora and fauna across multiple habitats in landscapes that people have lived in for

thousands of years.

They also provide a range of environmental, social, economic and health benefits to local communities, and are enjoyed by millions of visitors. But their future development - both in terms of ecological restoration and visitor and educational facilities - needs deep and broad consideration. As we look towards the coming decade, it is only right that we take stock of where we are and encourage people to have their say, tell us more about how they see the Parks and what suggestions they have for their future direction."

The first phase of the consultation is an online questionnaire with a number of questions across seven topic areas. It will run until the end of the year, closing on 31st December 2024. The ques-

tionnaire is available in both Irish and English here.

The Minister also announced that he has commenced the development of a framework for management planning across all eight National Parks and Coole Park Nature Reserve. This framework will include detailed information on each Park, including an inventory of natural and cultural resources, the challenges and opportunities that each Park faces, and how these are being addressed. Once the framework is developed, individual management plans will be finalised. Further public engagement will happen as each plan is developed.

The Minister said: "For the first time in a long time thanks to increased resources under this Government, we are in a position to bring people closer to the inner workings of our National Parks. I am determined to improve the ways in which

information from and about our National Parks is made available to the public, and to share greater insights into their current condition and on the decision-making behind their management. By providing for deeper understanding and creating new opportunities for engagement, I hope to dispel some of the negativity we see on social media.

"Our National Parks are amazing places, staffed by incredibly dedicated and expert people who go above and beyond to protect nature and provide access to all. These vast, diverse landscapes - which co-exist alongside local communities - face a range of complex challenges. But with greater transparency, continued investment and collective action and effort, it is my hope that Irish society can see them for what they are: the jewels in the crown of our nation that should be cherished."



**Marrakesh**

Marrakesh Ltd is a family run business specialising in Construction and Demolition Waste Management & Recycling, Site Clearance and Supply of Material from 4" down to Blinding, Recycled Screened Soil, Sand, Gravel etc.

**EPA LICENCED FACILITY • ALL TRUCKS CARRY WASTE PERMITS**

**Recycled:**

- Screened Soil
- Screened no 2 soil
- 4" Down Crushed Concrete
- 4" Clean Crushed Concrete
- 3" Down Crushed Concrete
- 3" Clean Crushed Concrete
- Crushed Concrete Fines
- Crushed Tarmac Fines
- No 2 Stone

Also available:

- Granite • Pebble • Sand



We also accept for recycling: • Clay • Stone • Concrete • Tarmac • Sand



We can organise SITE CLEARANCES - no job too big or small




Minister Malcolm Noonan with Damian Clarke and Ann Fitzpatrick of the NPWS, at the Consultation launch in Wicklow Mountains National Park About our National Parks.

Tel: 01 286 8119 Mobile: 087 664 1866  
[www.marrakeshltd.com](http://www.marrakeshltd.com)

# Home Tax up by 6% for 2025

Every homeowner in County Wicklow is facing a 6% increase on the base rate of their Property Tax in 2025 following the meeting of Wicklow County Council on Monday 14th October last.

Independent Councillor Joe Behan, said “The decision to increase the tax was carried by 21 votes to 11 votes against. I salute those Councillors who voted against the increase. They were ... Cllrs Ian Neary, Peir Leonard, Tom Fortune, Dermot Daisy O'Brien, Warren O Toole, John Snell, Gerry O'Neill, Orla Finn, Malachaí Duddy, Pat Kennedy and myself.

“The Chief Executive recommended to Councillors that they increase the tax by 10% every year for 5 years. Thankfully no Councillor agreed to that proposal.

“Those who voted for the 6% increase will say that as there is no increase on last year's tax, you won't be paying any more



Cllr Joe Behan.

than last year. However, that is because the Councillors last year had voted for the same 6% increase and it just carries on next year. The homeowners of County Wicklow can decide whether they agree or disagree with that argument.

“The debate was civil and peaceful and in the end it concluded with every Councillor deciding on what they felt was best for the county.

“My personal opinion is that this tax is an unfair tax on the family home and we should be doing all we can to reduce this burden at a time when the cost of living is rising all the time. That is why I actually proposed that the tax be reduced by 15% and this proposal was seconded by Cllr Ian Neary and supported by Cllr Malachaí Duddy. However we never got to vote on my proposal or Cllr John Snell's proposal for no increase because the 6% increase was voted through first.

“Ultimately, this decision is another blow to hard pressed homeowners in our county and comes

on top of regular increases in the costs of electricity, gas, coal, home heating oil, car and house insurance, medical bills, food, clothes and many other basic necessities. At a time when the national coffers are full to the brim, it is hugely disappointing that the Government refuses to fund local Councils properly and yet again passes on the burden to the hard pressed homeowners.”

Councillor Tom Fortune, Independent councillor, said “It is unfair to tax a family home. A person's family home is not an asset unless they sell it and live on the side of the road or get housed by the local authority. People save and borrow to own a family home. In purchasing their home they pay charges and taxes up front, their home does not provide an income so you can legitimately say that it is unfair but you would also have to wonder is it legal. In 2013 the leader of one of our large political parties said 'it is unfair to tax a person's home'.

“What is left out of the commentary on property tax is the reduction in funding through the Local Government Fund, which funds the running of local authorities. This began around 2006 during the housing boom. It was again reduced in 2008/9 when we experienced the economic crash. When property tax was introduced in 2014, it was again reduced by the amount that property tax collected. The end result of all this is that Local Government is massively under-funded. So in Real Terms we actually get no Additional Funding from property tax. This was a key question from residents during the recent local elections, people saying they see no benefit in the district from property tax. Especially lack



Cllr Tom Fortune.

of footpath repairs, lack of road markings, lack of road maintenance etc.



Cllr Malachaí Duddy.

“None of this is the fault of the Local Authority executive as they are instructed by the Department of Environment as to how they fund their activities. However, it is unfair of the Cllrs that support property tax to ignore what I have said above. This was also ignored in the Dial when questions from Verona Murphy were responded to. This is a political decision. The way property tax functions is each year when it is being reviewed the number starts at 0 % which is termed the base rate, the elected members can change the rate with either a 15 % increase or reduction. What was proposed on Monday last was a 6% increase There was a lot of talk around the increase only being equal to the cost of a cup of coffee. “For me this is just spin, the issue is annual rate and for me the issue is that there should be no property tax on the family home. The valuation band ranges from band 1 to 20, band 1 home valuation starts at €200,000, however you will not purchase a home in North Wicklow for €200,000. So, in North Wicklow you start at band 5 which is a valuation starting at €437,000 and goes up to 1m plus from this. At band 5 you are paying up to €585 pa, most people are paying more than this, heading for €850 plus for an average home. So an increase of 6 % or any increase is a challenge for people.”

Malachaí Duddy, another Independent councillor, said “In lending my voice in support of Cllr. Joe Behan in his motion before Wicklow County Council for a reduction in the Local Property Tax Rate for one

year at the 14th October, 2024 Council Meeting, I expressed my support for the principal of local control over the setting of local taxation. I explained that the powers the County Council have over setting the Local Property Tax allows the Members of County Council to increase the Local Property Tax, but also allows for the reduction in the rate. I supported the comments of Cllr. Tom Fortune in his criticism of the concept of Property Taxation as being unfair and unjust. Cllr. Fortune, bringing his long experience to the deliberation of the Council Meeting explained that the increase in the Local Property Tax rate to 6% was originally made some years ago as a temporary measure, following which the rate would return to 0. I am opposed to the taxation of the family home. As an asset, the family home generates no income until sale, at which point the new purchaser pays Stamp Duty,



Cllr Edward Timmins.

usually at 1% of the purchase price. It must be one of the few assets that is subject to double taxation, and only applies to home owners.

“At a time when this government is supposedly making a 'Give-away Budget', a Local Property Tax rate of 6% is effectively a tax increase on families, who are already suffering from a cost of living crisis, and once more it's the squeezed-middle who end up paying. Where is the social solidarity? This is at a time when we have witnessed epic waste at national level on a luxurious bike shed at Leinster House, and an over-the-top security kiosk at Government Buildings. Locally we have seen public realm works at the Bray Railway Station and on the Quinsborough Road,



Noelle Clarke of Square One Theatre Group pictured at the recent launch of the Mermaid Art Centre's 2024-2027 Strategic Plan.

which are well over due, but has included the removal of vast lengths of presumably Wicklow cut granite curbstones, which must be as old as Quinsborough Road and the Railway Station, so circa 1850s. Much of the rest of Quinsborough Road lost its Wicklow cut granite curbstones in 1992: where have they gone?

“Mention was made at the Council Meeting that the Local Property Tax had provided Wicklow County Council defibrilla-

tors to a number of places, which is worthwhile. I know of private individuals and groups who have done the same at their own cost. I think specifically of Peggy Kennedy in Kilmacanogue, Bray Credit Union on Main Street, Bray and the Kilmacanogue Community First Responders in Kilmacanogue.



“Now that a majority of Wicklow County Council have voted for an upwards increase from the 0% baseline rate to 6%, I

am adamant that the funds collected will be spent wisely and where is most needed.”

Edward Tiimmins, a Fine Gael councillor who is running in the upcoming general election said “I support no increase in the property tax for 2025. The tax has remained the same since 2021.

“The funds raised contribute towards various improvements in our towns and villages. From a national point of view the system needs to

change as it is flawed. This is because Wicklow does not get to keep all of the property tax raised. This is unfair. If, I'm successful in the coming General Election I will prioritise changing the current system to allow Wicklow retain all of the €21m property Tax raised. It's purely a matter of fairness. This is one of a number of fairness issues in our tax/social welfare/fair deal system that I will look to rectify.”

 <p><b>An Roinn Cosanta</b> Department of Defence</p> <p><b>ARMY RIFLE RANGES</b></p> <p><b>WARNING</b></p> <p><b>If you are walking in the countryside do not walk onto any of the Military Firing Ranges as you could be in GREAT DANGER at all times from unexploded shells and other dangerous ammunition RED FLAGS indicate LIVE FIRING Watch out for the warning signs AND TAKE CARE!</b></p>	 <p><b>An Roinn Cosanta</b> Department of Defence</p> <p><b>RAONTA RAIDHFILÍ AN AIRM</b></p> <p><b>FOLÁIREAMH</b></p> <p><b>Má bhíonn tú ag siúl faoin tuath, ná siúil isteach i gceann ar bith de na Raonta Lámhaigh Míleata mar d'fhéadfá a bheith i nDEARG-BHAOL i gcónaí de bharr sliogáin neamhphléasctha agus armlón contúirteach eile Is ionann BRATACHA DEARGA agus BEO-LÁMHACH Bí ag faire do na comharthaí foláirimh AGUS BÍ AR d'AIRDEALL!</b></p>
--	--

# Campaign launched for secondary school in Newtown

A campaign group of local parents has been established in Newtownmountkennedy and Roundwood to lobby the Department of Education to build a new secondary school.

Land was zoned for community and education purposes as part of the Local Area Plan for Newtownmountkennedy, as far back as the 2002 edition, with the expectation it would be used to build a secondary school for the growing population in the wider area.

However no movement has been made by the Department to provide such a school and instead students from the local primary schools travel to Kilcoole, Greystones or Wicklow Town for secondary education. In recent years schools in all of these towns have reached capacity and local students have been forced instead to travel as far as Dublin to get a school place.

There has also been a huge amount of house building in both Newtownmountkennedy and Roundwood and the campaign group feel a new secondary school is now desperately needed for the area.

The first meeting of the campaign group was on Monday 15th October when local TD Jennifer Whitmore and Anya Llewellyn from the campaign for the new Greystones Community College met local parents and teachers to share experiences and advice from their successful campaign.

Following on from this the group has launched a petition and will be asking all TDs and candidates in the upcoming general election to pledge their support for this new secondary school.

Local councillor Danny Alvey, is one of the campaign organisers and said at the launch: "Newtownmountkennedy is now the 7th biggest town by population in all of county Wicklow but the only one in the top ten without a secondary school. With two primary schools now in the town and another in nearby Roundwood there is sufficient local demand to

immediately fill a new secondary school. When I recently called to doors in advance of the local elec-

tion, secondary school places was amongst the biggest issues raised by residents in Newtownmountkennedy, Roundwood and right across the district. I have two young children and I'm already worried how much worse the situation will be when they are older if we don't build this new school to match the massive amount of new houses in this area."

Also speaking at the meeting, member of the Board of Management of Newtown Primary School, mother of three and also a campaign organiser, Ciara Martin said: "Our children are yet again being forgotten by the Department's lack of forward planning. Year after year we are seeing families in Newtownmountkennedy, Roundwood and beyond agonising over the unknown when it comes to their children's place at a 'local' secondary school.

"It's at the top of everyone's mind, because people realise the bad situation we're being left in here in Newtownmountkennedy, we've seen huge demand for school places due to the accelerating population increases in the area.

"The sanctioning of a secondary school in Newtownmountkennedy must be a priority - our current feeder school for our 6th class students is bursting at the seams and the Department of Education is sleep walking into yet another enrolment crisis. We must have immediate common sense solutions for the children, families and community of Newtownmountkennedy."

Anne Gregory is chairperson of Woodstock Educate Together National School in Newtownmountkennedy and Heather Boyle is the parents representative on the Board of Management, both are also campaign organisers. Speaking at the first meeting, Heather said: "Newtownmountkennedy is one of the fastest growing towns in Ireland. In 2019, Woodstock Educate Together National School

opened and we are reaching capacity already. There's a real concern amongst the parents in the schools in the area about the lack of a secondary school for the children after primary school. In this day and age, this is an unnecessary anxiety for parents and students.

"Education is globally recognised as a basic human right, and in Ireland for many years we have taken immense pride in our education system. Sudden population growth, such as what we have seen in Newtownmountkennedy, is a natural progression, but it is crucial that the infrastructure and supports are developed in conjunction with it. It is imperative that the government acts now in order to ensure that a whole generation of children do not get left behind in this town."

Local TD Jennifer Whitmore attended the first meeting of the group to give them support and advice. Speaking at it Jennifer said: "Every October in recent years, when enrolment opens for secondary schools in Greystones and Kilcoole there has been chaos as parents try desperately to get their children a place. Just this year, yet again, several students did not have places until the 11th hour. These secondary schools are clearly at capacity, with three waiting on new builds or extensions. This has a knock-on effect down the coast as more and more students are travelling to these schools from Newtownmountkennedy, Roundwood and further afield. It is now time that the Department of Education planned for the future and started a new secondary school build in Newtownmountkennedy.

"This would alleviate some of the pressure in Greystones and Kilcoole and prepare for the increased demand coming from over 1,000 new build homes in Newtown alone. I commend these local parents for coming together to campaign for this and I will do my best to support them and urge all my local colleagues in the Dail to



The campaign group established in Newtownmountkennedy and Roundwood to lobby the Department of Education to build a new secondary school.

do the same."

Read more and support their petition at [www.change.org/secondaryschoolforNewtownmountkennedy](http://www.change.org/secondaryschoolforNewtownmountkennedy).

Meanwhile, councillors Paul O'Brien and Stephen Stokes have jointly called for the establishment of a secondary school in Newtownmountkennedy. Together they have submitted a motion to Wicklow County Council calling on the Department of Education to deliver such a facility. Cath-airleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Paul O'Brien also serves as Chairperson of Kildare and Wicklow Education and Training Board (KWETB). Cllr O'Brien stated: "We need to provide decisive educational opportunities, so that our young people can reach their full potential."

Both councillors believe that an integrated approach is needed for a secondary school. With Newtownmountkennedy rapidly expanding in recent years, both councillors have emphasised the urgent need for local infrastructure to keep pace, especially in the education sector. Currently, students from Newtownmountkennedy are forced to travel to neighbouring towns such as Greystones, Kilcoole, and Wicklow, for second level education, a situation that both Cllr O'Brien and Cllr Stokes describe as unsustainable. Cllr Stephen Stokes also serves as Chairperson of the Transport, Infrastructure & Emergency Services committee of Wicklow County Council.

He added: "It's quite remarkable that Ireland is building so many houses, but not ensuring that the infrastructure is in place to cater for growth. We must be ambitious for change. Not only does this place a huge strain on existing schools, but it puts a lot of extra vehicles on to the road. If we also want to reduce traffic

and emissions, it makes sense to provide local facilities such as schools."

In the statement, Cllr O'Brien highlighted the strain on families, saying: "Our community is full of potential, but we need services to match the growth. The lack of a secondary school in Newtownmountkennedy means that families are under unnecessary pressure, with long commutes and overcrowded schools in nearby areas. It is time to invest in Newtown and ensure that young people have access to quality education right where they live. Such a school would also boost access for people living in Killadreenan, Newcastle, Roundwood and other areas."

Cllr Stephen Stokes echoed these sentiments, pointing to the growing young population and the long-term benefits of a local secondary school. Cllr Stokes added: "Newtownmountkennedy has one of the fastest-growing populations in

County Wicklow. The young families moving into the area need a secondary school that can cater to the educational needs of their children. This is not just about convenience, it's about planning for the future and giving the next generation the best possible start in life."

The two councillors have submitted a formal motion to Wicklow County Council, seeking immediate attention from the Department of Education to develop a new secondary school. They are also calling for consultation with local stakeholders, including parents, educators, and community groups, to ensure the project reflects the needs of the community.

Cllr Paul O'Brien concluded: "We are asking the Department of Education to prioritise Newtownmountkennedy in their upcoming development plans. This is a vital investment in our young people and the future of our area."



Cllr Stephen Stokes and Cllr Paul O'Brien, Cathairleach of Wicklow County Council.

# Calls for an end to delays in fixing broken streetlights

Sinn Fein TD John Brady has expressed concern at delays in addressing the large number of street light outages across Wicklow. He called on the Council to take measures to ensure that the contractor is forced to carry out the repairs as quickly as possible.



John Brady TD.

There was a complete outage along Bray SeaFront for three weeks. With further outages in Aughrim Oaks for several weeks, and on the Herbert Road for over a month, with other areas across the county also reporting faults. This despite the fact that there is a contractual obligation to address street light outages within a maximum of two weeks of the fault being logged. The extent of these outages is causing public health and safety, and security issues, particularly as the evenings continue to close

in, and with the time set to change in a matter of weeks.

Deputy Brady said: "Despite the fact that these outages have been logged in a timely manner, there has been a delay in addressing the faults. The fact is that the contract to service the public lighting system in Wicklow stipulates that all faults be addressed within a period of a maximum of two weeks, which in itself is excessive. The current contractor is the fourth in a line running from ESB Networks, Airtricity, and Enerveo. Up

to now there wasn't a problem in dealing with outages in a prompt manner. The extent and the duration of the delays we are seeing now is absolutely unacceptable. Two weeks to address an outage is more than enough time.

"We are heading into winter, the evenings are closing in, and we are only a few short weeks away from the time changing. To have housing estates, and busy pedestrian walkways such as the Bray Seafront, Aughrim Oaks, and the Herbert Road in darkness represents both a health



Cllr Edward Timmins.

and safety, and security issue to the public, and local businesses. The ESB had provided an excellent

service for many years, if the new contractor is incapable of meeting the conditions of the contract it must be looked at.

At the minute this is causing trip hazards, and security issues. People need to feel safe when they are walking around towns and villages across Wicklow at nighttime. To see areas in darkness sends out a terrible message. It is an invitation to criminals, and a message to stay clear to members of the public. I am calling on the council to act to ensure that this work is carried out within the scheduled timeframes."

Fine Gael General Election Candidate for Wicklow Councillor

Edward Timmins is calling for proper investment and repairs of public lighting which is an ongoing problem in every town and village in the county.

Councillor Timmins said: "This an ongoing problem all over Wicklow. Councillors raise it regularly at our meetings.

"We need a workable strategy to fix lights and get funding for new lights in order to solve this.

Timmins continued: "Currently all local authorities are in the process of converting their public lighting to LED luminaires. This change in technology will improve energy efficiency, cut costs and reduce CO2 emis-

sions. Twenty-one local authorities are collaborating in the National Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project (PLEEP) to retrofit public lights in their areas to LED and I'm delighted Wicklow is one of these authorities. As we move towards LED luminaires, it would be timely to address the ongoing issues with lighting particularly as darker evenings creep in."

Cllr Timmins concluded: "Communities should be left in the dark and a proper funding stream for public lighting across Wicklow must be made available as a long term solution to this ongoing issue."

# Whitmore renews call for new bus route as NTA confirms Wicklow Town will be left waiting

Social Democrats TD for Wicklow, Jennifer Whitmore has renewed her call for the introduction of a new bus route to connect Wicklow Town and Greystones. This comes following an NTA presentation to members of Wicklow County Council on Monday (October 7th) where the NTA Chief Executive, Anne Graham, confirmed that the long talked about DART extension to Wicklow Town, DART+, was approximately four to five years away. The extension of services would see a battery electric train fleet operate between Greystones and Wicklow Town.

"It is very disappointing to hear that the much-needed extension of DART services to Wicklow Town will not be delivered till at least 2029 or 2030," commented Deputy Whitmore.

"Wicklow Town has a growing population of almost 13,000 people and their current public transport options are under pressure due to an increase in demand and lack of capacity. The rail connections between

the town and Dublin are infrequent and at capacity during peak travelling hours. People in Wicklow Town have been promised again and again that the DART+ extension would become a reality and now we are hearing they are going to have wait even longer," added Deputy Whitmore.

"We need to be offering commuters in Wicklow Town a solution now. So I am again calling on the NTA to introduce a bus to

connect Wicklow Town and Greystones. This would enable Wicklow Town based commuters to access DART services from Greystones and increase their public transport options.

"During their briefing for Wicklow County Council the NTA mentioned that they had explored the idea of introducing a diesel-fuelled shuttle train between Wicklow Town and Greystones, but this was dismissed as it would require the

construction of a third platform at the Greystones station. The introduction of a new bus route to cover the 20km between Wicklow Town and Greystones needs no additional construction or infrastructure and could be quickly and effectively introduced. It makes sense and would greatly improve the public transport options available to people living in Wicklow Town," concluded Deputy Whitmore.



Jennifer Whitmore TD.

## Public consultation on Carlow to Knockananna bus service

The National Transport Authority (NTA) has today opened a public consultation on proposed service improvements for the Carlow - Knockananna bus corridor. This consultation seeks feedback from the public on key enhancements designed to improve service levels in the area and will remain open until 5pm on Friday, 15th of November.

The proposed upgrades for the Carlow - Knockananna corridor focus on increasing service frequency and improving access to public transport. The enhancements aim to

offer better connections and more reliable transport options for rural communities in this region.

Under the proposals, the NTA aims to introduce a new seven-day

week service between Carlow and Knockananna, providing connections with Kernanstown, Tullow, Rathvilly, Baltinglass, Kiltegan and Hacketstown.

The proposed service

will provide four services per day, offering greater connections to Carlow train station as well as local services including routes 132, 800 and 874.

The new services will integrate with the TFI Go app for easy journey planning and cashless payments will be facilitated by the Leap Card Scheme. Free Travel Passes will also be valid

on applicable services on the corridor.

Additionally, the NTA is working to introduce modern, accessible vehicles and upgrade bus stops to improve comfort and accessibility for all passengers.

Public participation is essential in shaping these improvements. The NTA encourages residents along this corridor to

share their feedback.

Anne Graham, CEO of the NTA, stated: "We want to hear from the community as we work to deliver more reliable and accessible public transport. This is an opportunity to make your voice heard on proposed changes that could transform connectivity in your area."

To review the proposals

and submit your feedback, visit: <https://consult.nationaltransport.ie/en/consultation/connecting-ireland-october-2024-consultation>

These proposed enhancements are part of the Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan, a national initiative aimed at strengthening rural public transport as part of the

Network (TFI). The plan, which is developed and funded by the National Transport Authority, is aligned with the goals of Project Ireland 2040 and the Climate Action Plan.

The NTA aims to begin implementing the proposed service enhancements by the end of 2025, subject to securing the necessary funding and resources.

## 'Donard needs LocalLink bus service'

Green TD Steven Matthews has highlighted the lack of public transport options in Donard and called for the village to be included on existing LocalLink routes in West Wicklow.



Deputy Matthews in Donard.

Discussing the need for improved bus services in Donard, Deputy Matthews said: "Following a meeting with a local community group, one of the key issues highlighted was the need to urgently improve public transport options in Donard Village. The reliance on cars for locals is unavoidable without the provision of a viable alternative. We need to meet this demand for public transport through including Donard on a LocalLink bus route."

"I have written to the NTA to seek their intervention in adjusting existing LocalLink with a proposal to extend the 892 LocalLink route from Dunlavin to Newbridge to include Donard. I have also suggested that the 885 LocalLink Baltinglass to Sallins route could be changed to include a stop in Donard. Both options would provide connectivity to the Bus ...ireann 132 stop at Annalecky Cross with onward connection to Dublin City Centre. This would significantly improve the current provision of public transport in Donard."

"Over the last 5 years, we have seen unprecedented investment in public transport but there is still significant investment needed in parts of Wicklow that have not been connected by a LocalLink service. I will continue to work with the NTA and the Department of Transport to seek priority funding for these much-needed services. If anyone has any suggestions regarding public transport in Donard or elsewhere in Wicklow, please drop me an email and I will help in any way I can," Deputy Matthews concluded.

## Greens call for bike lockers at train stations

Green TD Steven Matthews has called on the Department of Transport to establish a ring-fenced fund for the NTA and Irish Rail to provide secure bike lockers at commuter rail stations.

Highlighting the lack of bike-locking facilities at train stations in Wicklow, Deputy Matthews said: "It is clear that we need to provide more bike lockers at commuter rail stations across Wicklow. I have been contacted by a number of bike and scooter users who would like to take public transport but are reluctant to due to the lack of secure bike-locking facilities."

"I have engaged with Irish Rail on this issue and while they are supportive of bike lockers being provided for passengers, they require additional central funding to put this into place. We cannot have a situation where people are forced to drive due to the lack of bike lockers in our commuter rail stations. I have contacted my Green Party colleague Minister Eamon Ryan calling for the provision of a ring-fenced fund for bike-locking facilities in train stations."

"I have been contacted by frustrated commuters on several occasions recently related to bike theft at various stations and I am consistently working with the Garda on this issue. I fully understand that Garda recourses are stretched so this should make up part of a forward-thinking solution."

"The Green Party has had a significant impact in reducing rail fares, but this is not the only factor in whether

people choose to take public transport. We need to remove every barrier that keeps people in their cars for their commute and the provision of bike lockers is a relatively simple and cost-efficient way of opening public transport up as an option for more people," concluded Deputy Matthews.

Greystones Green Party councillor Lourda Scott spoke on the matter following the tabling of a motion at this month's Greystones District meeting.

"The population of Greystones has expanded massively over recent years, however we are very much a commuter town with most people travelling to work outside the area," she said. "With more and more people using e-scooters and e-bikes to connect with the DART in particular, we really need a safe secure place where people can secure these expensive items as they continue their commute to work. This is particularly urgent with the up coming bac on taking e-scooters on public transport for safety reasons, which are expensive. I have asked the Council to work towards fixing this and they have agreed to write to Irish Rail as the first step. I will follow up to get this in place as the more options that are available to people, the easier it is to leave the car at home."

## Agreement from NTA on new bus stops



Councillor Edward Timmins.

Fine Gael general election candidate for Wicklow Councillor Edward Timmins has welcomed agreement from the NTA that new bus stops will be provided in Stratford and Dunlavin adding public transport is a pivotal issue across the Wicklow constituency.

Speaking following confirmation of the new stops, Councillor Timmins said: "I confirm that I have received agreement from the NTA that a new 885 bus stop (northbound and southbound) will be delivered in Stratford. I have requested, on behalf of commuters, that this includes a bus shelter. Furthermore, a new 885/129 terminus stop (northbound and southbound) will be delivered in Dunlavin following representations that I have made. More connected bus stops are needed in rural areas to ensure the successful implementation of the Connecting Ireland

Rural Mobility Plan".

Regarding Blessington, and the urgent need to provide a bus stop on the Naas Road, Councillor Timmins remarked: "I am continuing to campaign rigorously on the issue of a new bus stop on the Naas road, and have suggested locations for these. Residents in Glending have a twenty minute walk to the nearest bus stop in town, and the bus passes the Naas road anyway, so it makes sense to have a bus stop here".

Speaking on his plans for public transport as an general election candidate, Councillor Timmins

added: "We must be ambitious about public transport in Wicklow whether it's extending the Dart to Wicklow Town or extending the Luas to Blessington. I have clearly outlined proposals on the Luas extension to Blessington detailing the preferred route. There have been significant improvements to our public transport service in recent years, and I look forward to working on these further with our Taoiseach Simon Harris if the people of Wicklow afford me the opportunity to represent them in the next Dail as a new TD for this constituency."

# Council announces launch of biodiversity working group

Wicklow County Council has announced the successful launch of the Biodiversity Working Group (BWG), which took place the week before last at the historic Clermont House. This marks a significant step in the development of the Wicklow Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP), a key initiative aimed at protecting and enhancing the county's rich natural heritage.

The Biodiversity Working Groups role is to guide the development of the Wicklow Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP), by working with the public and key stakeholders to shape a plan that will protect and enhance Wicklow's natural heritage.

Speaking about the event, Cllr. Paul O'Brien Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, said, "The launch of the Biodiversity Working Group is an exciting milestone for our county. This group will play a crucial role in shaping the future of Wicklow's biodiversity, ensuring that our natural heritage is protected for generations to come."

Chief Executive Emer O'Gorman added, "Wicklow is renowned for

its stunning landscapes and vibrant wildlife, and it is our responsibility to ensure that these are preserved and restored. The Biodiversity Action Plan is not just about protecting the environment; it's about creating a sustainable future for all of us who call Wicklow home."

As this launch coincides with Climate Action Week, Wicklow County Council encourages everyone to take the time to connect with nature, explore the county's incredible biodiversity, and reflect on the role we all play in protecting our environment.

For more information on the Biodiversity Action Plan and how you can get involved, visit [www.wicklow.ie](http://www.wicklow.ie)



Pictured at the launch of the Biodiversity Working Group were from L-R Back Row: Damien Byrne, Ruairi O'Hanlon, Aoife O'Rourke, Mark Costello, Wesley Atkinson, Brian Dunne, Justin Ivory and Brian Burke. Front Row: Lorna Kelly, Ann Fitzpatrick, Hannah O'Kelly, Faith Wilson and Hans Visser. Photo by Michael Kelly

# Council congratulated on first Climate Action Week

Jennifer Whitmore TD has congratulated Wicklow County Council on its first ever Climate Action Week which ran from Monday October 14th to Sunday October 20th with events taking place across the county.

Climate Action Week 2024 included a number of events covering various environmental topics and will help to highlight several projects that have featured in the Wicklow County Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2029.

"I'd like to congratulate Wicklow County Council and in particular the team in their Environment Section for all of their hard work creating Wicklow's

first ever Climate Action Week," commented Deputy Whitmore.

"The events will help communities across Wicklow engage with Wicklow County Council's Climate Action Plan by bringing the ideas and projects featured in the plan off the page and helping the public see them in action. Getting communities involved and taking part is so important if we want our climate

actions to be effective and make a difference," added Deputy Whitmore who is the Social Democrats spokesperson for Climate and Biodiversity.

A wide range of events took place across the county last week, with everything from Oyster Restoration to Nature Based Sustainable drainage systems being discussed. There was an opportunity for people to learn more about what retrofit options are available to them by visiting the interactive Mount Lucas Energy Truck on the Prom in Bray and Libraries across the county also played their part with various events including a Gardening course for Biodiversity in

Greystones.

"It is also really encouraging and exciting to see communities getting involved and organising Community Climate Action events to coincide with the week, such as the Blessington Tourist Office Halloween Swap Shop, which will help to promote sustainability and a circular economy," said Deputy Whitmore. "We need to ensure that the conversations and initiatives that start at these events are nurtured and encouraged so they can grow into successful Community Climate Actions," concluded Deputy Whitmore.

# Environmental groups' support for Glen of the Downs expansion welcomed

Social Democrats spokesperson for Climate and Biodiversity, Jennifer Whitmore TD, has welcomed the support of four of Ireland's most prominent Environmental NGOs for the expansion of the Glen of the Downs.

An Taisce, the Irish Wildlife Trust, the Native Woodland Trust and ReWild Wicklow have backed Deputy Whitmore's proposal which would see the

State purchase 200 acres of land adjacent to the Glen of the Downs and Kindlestown Forest to allow the natural regeneration and joining of the two woodlands. In a joint

open letter to Taoiseach Simon Harris the four Environmental groups expressed their support for the proposal and highlighted the long- and short-term environmental

benefits that such a move would have for the Glen of the Downs Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the surrounding areas.

In the letter representatives from the four organisations describe the project as an exciting and rare opportunity to protect and enhance one of Ireland's oldest nature reserves and a site of international ecological significance. They go on to explain how this project would help Ireland fulfil our ecological obligations under the Nature Restoration Law and they draw attention to the widespread support being demonstrated by communities across Wicklow for Nature Restoration.

"Four of Ireland's most experienced environmental organisations who specialise in the protection, preservation and expansion of our native woodlands, habitats and heritage have put pen to paper not only voicing their support for this project but also calling on the Taoiseach and Government to get on

board too. This is a huge endorsement for the purchase of the site by the State," commented Deputy Whitmore.

"Under the Nature Restoration Law (NRL) we, as a country have targets and obligations that we must reach. When the experts in the area of Nature Restoration are writing to you and saying that by purchasing a piece of land the State can effectively double a native woodland which is considered a Special Area of Conservation as well as

helping to meet the country's NRL targets, then we need to be sitting up and listening," added Deputy Whitmore.

"Since this site came to market last month there has been widespread support from the people of Wicklow, Ecologists and Environmental organisations for the purchase of this land by the State. Our online petition has gathered almost 5,000 signatures and I held a packed Public Meeting in Delgany in late September which was an

opportunity for the local community and experts working in the area of Nature Restoration to come together and talk about this once in a lifetime opportunity to help regenerate one of Ireland's last remaining ancient woodlands," commented Deputy Whitmore.

"Minister Malcolm Noonan recently spoke about how the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) would consider the purchase of this land and this was a very positive and wel-



Jennifer Whitmore TD.

come statement, but we need to see the Minister and Government take action before this opportunity is lost."

# Deposit and Return Scheme reduces plastic litter in Wicklow

Green TD Steven Matthews has welcomed a massive reduction in litter on beaches in Wicklow and across the country following the launch of the Deposit and Return Scheme in February.

According to the annual Coastwatch survey of 250 beaches across Ireland, there has been a significant decline in the number of plastic bottles, aluminium cans, and steel tins on Irish shores.

Discussing the success of the Deposit and Return scheme, Deputy Matthews said: "I am delighted to see that there has been a major reduction in litter on Irish beaches. The Deposit and Return Scheme has been a fantastic success in reducing the amount of litter in our public spaces. Over 500 million drinking cans and bottles have been returned since the launch of the initiative in February.

"Already we are seeing the positive impacts of the scheme with cleaner streets, parks, and beaches in our local communities across Wicklow. I am very pleased that more than fifty retailers are participating in the scheme in Wicklow. I want to thank everyone for playing their part by returning their drinking bottles and cans and helping us to create a cleaner and healthier local environment.

"The Deposit and Return Scheme has been a major step forward in our transition to a circular economy. The Green Party have led on this initiative in Government. Our aim is to reduce levels of plastic litter and increase rates of recycling in every community across Ireland. If anyone has any questions or would like further information relating to the scheme, please don't hesitate to contact my office and I will provide any support that I can," Deputy Matthews concluded.



Steven Matthews TD.

DÉARDAOIN 24Ú DEIREADH FÓMHAIR 5:30-7:30

**Oíche Oscailte**

COLÁISTE RÁITHÍN

012865180  
colaisteraithin@kwetb.ie  
www.raithin.ie



# Have your say on the Draft Wicklow Town - Rathnew Local Area Plan 2025

Wicklow County Council has prepared a draft Wicklow Town - Rathnew Local Area Plan 2025 and it is currently out for public consultation. The purpose of this plan, in conjunction with the County Development Plan, is to put in place a land use framework that will inform and manage the future sustainable development of the 'Wicklow Town - Rathnew' area.

- On the Council's website [www.wicklow.ie](http://www.wicklow.ie) through an online consultation portal (Scan the above QR code to access the portal);
- Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Station Road, Wicklow Town
- Wicklow Municipal District Office, Town Hall, Market Square, Wicklow Town
- Wicklow Town Library.
- A public information day about the draft plan will be held in Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Station Road, Wicklow Town



Pictured are the members of Voices of Ukraine ladies choir who performed for the 70th Anniversary of the Glenealy Community Hall. The Hall was full to capacity and the large crowd enjoyed the special celebration concert on Saturday 12th October.

Station Road, Wicklow Town, A67 FW96 on Thursday 24th October from 10am to 1pm and 4pm to 7pm. The public are invited to attend during those hours, where the planning team will be available to answer any questions on the draft plan, the plan process and to help guide the public on how to make a submission.

Local community/sporting groups are invited to arrange a one to one meeting between 1pm and 4pm with the planning team on that date. Please ring 0404 20148 to arrange a one to one meeting.

Written submissions/ observations regarding the draft Local Area Plan, associated maps, appendices and variation are invited from the public and interested bodies. Submissions made before midnight on 20th November 2024 will be taken into consideration before the making of the Local Area Plan.

Submissions may be made in one of the following ways:

1. Through the online consultation portal at [www.wicklow.ie](http://www.wicklow.ie)
2. Write to 'Wicklow Town - Rathnew LAP', Administrative Officer, Planning Section, Wicklow County Council, Station Road, Wicklow Town.

Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr. Paul O'Brien, said "The Wicklow Town - Rathnew Local Area Plan is a land use plan that sets the

framework for future development in the area over the next 6 - 10 years. It is really important that we get the views of the public on the draft plan as it will set the priorities and locations for investment in regeneration, new housing, employment, schools and recreation facilities. I encourage everyone to get involved and have your say."

Emer O'Gorman, Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council, added, "Myself and my team are committed to improving the lives of the residents of the County and developing the County in a sustainable manner, driving forward our County Development Plan goals of 'healthy placemaking', 'economic opportunity' and 'climate change'. The draft Wicklow Town - Rathnew Local Area Plan addresses both national policy goals and the County Development Plan goals, but also the needs of the people in the area and I encourage you all to make a submission to the forward planning team regarding the future development of this area."

Submissions or observations should include your name and, where relevant, details of any organisation, community group or company etc. which you represent. Children, or groups or associations representing the interests of children, are particularly encouraged to make submissions or observations regarding the foregoing.

All the  
**LEADING BRANDS**  
at  
**OUTLET PRICES...**

UP TO  
70%  
OFF

Deposit secures for 8 weeks  
w: [bedoutlet.ie](http://bedoutlet.ie)

**Tallaght Outlet**  
phone: 01-4940200

**Opening Times**  
Mon - Sat (10.00am - 5.00pm)  
Sun & Bank Holidays - Closed  
Unit B7, South City Business Pk, Tallaght, D24

**FREE PARKING**

**Ballybrack Outlet**  
phone: 01-2720788

**Opening Times**  
Mon - Sat (10.00am - 5.30pm) Thurs 7.30 pm  
Sun - Closed (Bank Hols 2.00pm - 5.30pm)  
Church Road, Ballybrack, Co. Dublin

**FREE PARKING**

# Bray Loreto expansion project will go to construction

Loreto Bray Secondary School's expansion project has been approved by An Bord Pleanála to go to construction, it was announced last week. As of this month, An Bord Pleanála has green lit Loreto's project to construct a new school building that will increase the school capacity to 1,000 students.

This school and its expansion has been a key priority for the Taoiseach for years. An Taoiseach Simon Harris said: "I am thrilled to confirm Loreto Secondary School has been granted approval by An Bord Pleanála to construct their new school building which will cater for 1,000 students. At long last, we have the green light, and the school will now shortly progress to start the procurement process.

"The new building will bring Loreto to the next level, by enhancing the educational experience of its students with up to date facilities and equipment such as Art Rooms, Music and

Performance Spaces, Sciences Labs, Sports halls and so much more.

"Loreto Secondary school is at the heart of the community in North Wicklow and we all in the community know how crucial this new building is to the welfare of students across the area. Students in North Wicklow deserve state of the art, upgraded and fit for purpose facilities when it comes to their educational journey.

"As Taoiseach I have placed a particular focus on driving school projects forward in the County. I know too well as a parent and from speaking to many across the county how important and reas-

suring it is to hear that many school projects are going ahead in the County. I will continue to work every day to make sure that families and children in County Wicklow get the school facilities that they need in their area.

"I want to thank the principal of the school, the teachers and all the families involved in making sure this project progressed to the stage it's at, we will continue to work tirelessly on this together until we cut the ribbon for the opening day."

Also welcoming the news, Social Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore said "This is fantastic news for the school community and

Loreto Bray and I am delighted that they are one step closer to their new school building and facilities. Loreto has a long, established history in Bray, educating generations of young women over the last 175 years," commented Deputy Whitmore.

"This new state-of-the-art building will enable the school to further expand the range of subjects and courses available to students, especially in the area STEM, and provide improved facilities for their already established subjects such as Art and Music. Great care has been put into the design of this new development to ensure that the history and protected structures within the school are considered and I would like to commend the Board of Management and school community on their determination and



Deputy Whitmore at Loreto Bray.

commitment to this project," added Deputy Whitmore.

"Loreto Bray is the latest of a number of schools across Wicklow to have received approval to develop into 1,000 student schools. The expansion and

development of our schools is much needed and welcomed, however we now need to see these projects progressing from the planning stage to construction and completion in a timely fashion," concluded Deputy Whitmore.

## Taoiseach welcomes Delgany schoolchildren to his office



An Taoiseach Simon Harris meeting with Primary school students from Delgany National School alongside Principal of the School Anna Ovington.

An Taoiseach Simon Harris recently welcomed 30 primary school students from Delgany National School alongside Principal of the School Anna Ovington. The Taoiseach gave the 30 pupils a tour of his office and Government Buildings and spoke to the students about their dreams and aspirations for the future.

Speaking after the visit, Taoiseach Simon Harris said: "I am delighted to have welcomed these young children to my office in Government Buildings to tell them about the work I do here on their behalf as Wicklow constituents but also on behalf of the people of Ireland, I was so glad to hear how curious they were about the office and about the job of being in government.

"Their questions were so sharp and insightful, a testament to the high standard of education in our schools across the county and country. It was so inspiring to hear what young people in Wicklow wanted to do later in their lives, from wanting to become a Garda, to an engineer, to a doctor, a footballer and so much more. This visit to the office definitely started the week with uplifting energetic, bright students and makes me want to work even harder to secure the future of these young children and provide them with a future to look forward to.

## Architecture students showcase resilient design at world-first exhibition

Architecture students from South East Technological University (SETU) showcased their work as part of the 'Building Change' project during the Royal Institute of Architects' (RIAI) Annual Conference at the RDS in Dublin, recently.

### Become a Friend of Mermaid!



Support us in championing artists and bringing people together. Be part of something special – become a Friend today.

Please contact us for full details: [mermaidartscentre.ie](http://mermaidartscentre.ie) | 01 272 4030

Mermaid Arts Centre is a registered charity. RCN: 20051761

**mermaid**  
COUNTY WICKLOW ARTS CENTRE

The SETU students presented work as part of the 'Constructive Interference' exhibition on a range of topics, including architecture's relationship to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and resilient design for local neighbourhoods.

Unique globally, Building Change is a national, collaborative project between all six Irish schools of architecture to empower future graduates to meet the ongoing challenges of the housing and climate crises. Since 2022, the schools have been working together to radically transform the professional curricula by embedding the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals alongside Ireland's Housing for All and Climate Action plans.

The exhibition was curated by Rubble, a collective of architecture graduates from Wicklow,

Carlow, Waterford, Westmeath, and Dublin and featured a wide range of Building Change projects and studies encompassing designs, models and films.

Hugh Campbell, Professor of Architecture at UCD, said: "The exhibition draws together the thoughtful, inventive and optimistic ideas of students from all six schools, including UCD and TU Dublin, whose working lives will be spent meeting the fundamental challenge which the climate emergency poses to architects and to the construction sector generally: how do we continue to provide environments to serve human needs and activities without further endangering the future of the planet?"

"We see a real appetite for change amongst our students, so we were delighted to see that same enthusiasm from members of the Department of



Photographed with their projects at 'Constructive Interference' during the RIAI Annual Conference were Building Change architecture students from SETU, (L-R) Chloe Laurent, Marion Presle, Maelia Ouassif Mauleon, and Anais Ravet.

Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science - Secretary General Colm O'Reardon and Principal Officer of the Construction and Green Skills Policy Unit, Sarah Miley, who were shown around the exhibition by students and lecturers of the six partner universities."

Curator Nicolas Howden from Rubble said: "The work of students and young designers from Wicklow and across the country sent a resounding message to the building industry; change is needed. Through their individual projects, presentations of their works, or from the questions they were ask-

ing to guests, there was a clear desire to re-invent, re-think, and re-imagine ways we can produce buildings and space going forward. They were not afraid to confront more established architects with their issues and concerns, and to challenge industry standards of manufacturing and demolition."

# Whitmore calls on Taoiseach to intervene in ongoing Cliff Walk saga

Social Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore has called on fellow Wicklow TD, Taoiseach Simon Harris to intervene on the ongoing issues which have seen the Bray to Greystones Cliff Walk closed to the public since 2021.

The 7km Cliff Walk follows the coastline between Bray and Greystones and had been a firm favourite with both locals and visitors to the area due to its breathtaking sea views and array of cliff side wildlife and flora.

In 2021 the walk was deemed unsafe following several landslides which resulted in the path becoming unstable in some areas. As a precaution Wicklow County Council took the decision to close it to the public and it has

remained closed since.

Deputy Whitmore said "Over the last three years I have been contacted by constituents from both Bray and Greystones who are frustrated with the lack of progress being made to reopen the Cliff Walk. I understand their frustration and agree that the walk has been closed for far too long," commented Deputy Whitmore.

"Wicklow County Council have been working to try to find a way to reopen the Cliff Walk but they seem to be encountering several hurdles that are delaying the project. For example, the proximity of the Cliff Walk to the rail lines has had an impact on the cost of insurance for the repair work," explained Ms Whitmore.

"We have seen far too many delays on this project, and I am calling on the Taoiseach to convene a group with representatives from all the involved stakeholders, including Irish Rail, Wicklow County Council and the Department of Tourism, tasked with finding a solution to this situation. We can not go through another Spring and Summer season with the Cliff Walk closed. An agreement must be reached so that repair work can be carried out as soon as possible and people can again enjoy the rich natural beauty that the Bray to Greystones Cliff Walk is renowned for," concluded Deputy Whitmore.



Deputy Whitmore in Bray.

## €11.5 m in payments to more than 1800 farmers in Wicklow

Fianna Fáil TD and Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly has welcomed confirmation from the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Charlie McConalogue, TD that advance payments under the 2024 Basic Income Support for Sustainability (BISS) and Complementary Redistributive Income Support for Sustainability (CRISS) have commenced to farmers in Wicklow.

Minister Donnelly said: "The news that BISS and CRISS payments totalling €11.5 million to 1,867 farmers in Wicklow has commenced is excellent news. These payments are a vital support to our farm families and give a real boost to family farm income."

"Minister McConalogue has confirmed that he has committed to ensuring that these payments continue to issue in the most efficient way possible and that payments will be visible in farmers' bank accounts in the coming days. These payments further underline Fianna Fáil's commitment in government to supporting farm families and protecting the viability of farming livelihoods to the maximum extent possible. We are focused on listening to farmers, acting on their concerns and being absolutely committed to continuing to help them meet the varied significant challenges across the sector."

Announcing the funding,

Taoiseach Simon Harris said: "I am delighted that my Government has started to give farmers the advance payments under the BISS & CRISS, worth over €11.5 million to over 1,800 Wicklow farmers. These payments are of vital importance to farmers and make a significant contribution to farm incomes."

"People in Wicklow know how crucial a role our farmers play in our county's economy. Given the importance of these payments to farmers, I welcome the fact payment dates for 2024 have reverted to the payment schedule in place in previous years."

"Nationally, 110,186 of farmers have been paid €506m which is in line with our commitment under the Farmers Charter to pay 90% of eligible applications. 6,000 more farmers have been paid and €54m more in payments has gone out this year compared to the commencement of payments in 2023.

"This further shows my

Government's commitment to delivering for farmers and Rural Ireland. Payments will be visible in farmers' bank accounts in the coming days, and I am calling on the Department of Agriculture to issue outstanding payments as a matter of urgency as they become clear for payment."

Payments under the 2024 Areas of Natural Constraints Scheme (ANC), which commenced last month, are also continuing as more cases are cleared for payment and 2024 payments under the Eco-Scheme will commence from next week.

For those farmers wishing to contact the department regarding their BISS or ANC payments, extended hours are in place for the Direct Payments Helpdesk.

From Monday 14 October to Friday 18 October, the Helpdesk will be available up to 8.30pm. Farmers can ring the Helpdesk at 057-8674422. Farmers can also submit any queries they may have online via [www.agfood.ie](http://www.agfood.ie).



Martha O'Reilly and Gabby O'Donoghue at the Wicklow Cancer Support Art Exhibition in Wicklow Library.

## Arklow Coastguard extension construction to begin in 2025

Construction on the planned extension for the Arklow Coastguard Station will commence next year and all going well, should be completed by Christmas or in early 2026. Senator Malcolm Byrne raised the matter in the Seanad having been pursuing the question for a while with the Office of Public Works (OPW).

Senator Byrne pointed out that even though planning permission was granted by Wicklow County Council for the extension to the existing facility to provide a shower room, storage and a kitchen / meeting room, there had been no action to date.

Minister for the OPW, Kieran O'Donnell assured the Senator that the tender process for construction has now commenced and that it is expected a tender will be awarded in the first Quarter of 2025. Construction work is expected to take about nine months.

Senator Malcolm Byrne stated "This is a vital facility for hardworking crew members who keep our coasts safe. The improvements to the existing rocket house are urgently required and I am glad that work will now commence next year. I would hope that the tender could be awarded as soon as possible."



Bray Chirology & Podiatry

Reduced rate for HSE Chirology Card holders

## Get your Feet Winter Ready

### Services available:

- Diabetes Foot Screening
- Full Vascular Assessments
- Biomechanics Assessments for Metatarsalgia, Plantar Fasciitis, Morton's Neuroma
- Full Podiatric care for ingrowing toenails, corns, callouses, skin and nail infections
- Nail Surgery for ingrown toenails
- Home Visits

NOW ACCEPTING NEW PATIENTS



T: (01) 2760271

[www.braypodiatry.com](http://www.braypodiatry.com)

The Mews, Rear of 1 Prince of Wales Terrace, Wyndham Park, Bray, A98 K5Y9.

Open Mon-Sat 8.30am - 6.30pm

# Men 'dare to bare' in aid of hospice care

Thirty brave men took the plunge on the morning of Sunday 13th October at Greystones South Beach, taking part in the Wicklow Hospice Male Only Dip in the Nip. The annual event has been running since 2019 and was again supported by offshore renewable energy project, Codling Wind Park.

There was a wonderful atmosphere as the participant and their supporters enjoyed live music from singer-songwriter, Bray

native Enda Kelly on arrival to the beach. Before the nerves had a chance to kick in, the men were whisked off to

a more secluded section of the shoreline by staff and volunteers from Our Lady's Hospice & Care Services. With a fear-

some roar, the group rushed headlong into the sea, led by Dip in the Nip Community Ambassadors JJ O'Byrne, Brian

Whelan and Richard Davis! After a short but sharp dip, the men retreated to the beach and were served a welcome hot drink. Each participant also received a goody bag, sponsored by Codling Wind Park, including an exclusive 'Dip in the Nip' beach towel.

Codling Wind Park Project Director, Scott Sutherland, said: "The Codling team are proud to be strong supporters of Wicklow Hospice and the incredible work they do with families across the county."

Allison Ryder, Fundraising, Events & Campaigns Coordinator at Wicklow Hospice said: "Fundraising and community support continue to be the life blood of our work at Our Lady's Hospice & Care Services, Wicklow. This



Derek Collier from Arklow, Niall Kaye from Arklow and JJ from Gorey at the Dip in the Nip in Greystones.



Pictured are some of the men taking part in the male-only Wicklow Hospice 'Dip in the Nip' 2024, sponsored by Codling Wind Park.

event really shines a light on both of these things. I would like to thank all of the men who braved the water this year raising vital funds for Our Lady's Hospice & Care Services, and all of the brilliant community

groups who supported, including the Greystones Coastguard Unit, Wicklow Civil Defence, David Bell from Wicklow Swim Club and Kai Fitzsimons, our event lifeguard and of course our event sponsor

Codling Wind Park." "Thanks to the coming together of everyone for Dip in the Nip 2024, we will have raised in the region of €25,000 for local hospice services, which is an incredible achievement".

## Newtownmountkennedy calls for Government action on integration

In response to escalating tensions and division in Newtownmountkennedy, residents and community leaders are urgently calling on the Irish government to create a comprehensive blueprint for the successful integration of those seeking protection into communities like theirs.

This call to action comes in the wake of the recent *Prime Time: Inside the Protests* documentary, which spotlighted the town's significant chal-

lenges in recent months, particularly around the relocation of individuals to IPAS (International Protection Accommodation Services) centres.

Residents have highlighted the urgent need for Government intervention in communities to ensure change is sufficiently supported.

For many months, the residents of Newtownmountkennedy have witnessed their town become a flashpoint for division, fuelled by a lack of clear

communication and support from those in power. The construction and operation of IPAS centres, including the housing of asylum seekers at River

Lodge (formerly Trudder House), have escalated fears, anxieties, anger and tensions within the local community.

"As long as there are no clear guidelines on how to safely and effectively integrate those seeking protection, communities will remain vulnerable to fear and division," said Rachel Dempsey, a founding member of Newtown Together, a grassroots group formed in response to the situation.

"We are calling on the government to provide not just funding, but a framework for building inclusive communities."

Newtown Together was founded in May to provide 'a positive, inclusive voice'. The group has taken a hands-on approach to integration by organising English lessons, cultural inductions, and community-building activities.

"We've witnessed new friendships and understanding blossom, but also alarming levels of intimidation and abuse," said Newtownmountkennedy resident Kevin Graham.

"Protestors have disrupted our events, harassed asylum seekers, and even threatened our volunteers simply for offering support to those in need."

Despite these challenges, Newtown Together has pressed on, organising local outings, establishing the Newtownmountkennedy Sanctuary Runners to promote mental

health and facilitating cultural exchanges. However, the group acknowledges that their efforts can only go so far without further government support.

Newtown Together urges local and national politicians to take immediate steps to help communities like theirs navigate the complexities of integration, especially in the face of rising hostility.

The group has outlined several key actions that need to be implemented:

1. Develop a National Blueprint for Integration: Establish clear guidelines for communities housing IPAS centres. This includes proactive communication strategies to combat misinformation and guidelines on how to foster trust and inclusion.

2. Provide Financial and Logistical Resources: Communities need government support to fund local initiatives, provide mental health services, and offer security for those facing harassment or intimidation.

3. Uphold Equal Status Acts: Ensure Ireland's human rights laws are enforced to protect vulnerable populations and counter racism, discrimination, and hate speech in these communities.

4. Promote Community Dialogue: Encourage open dialogue through town halls, public forums, and cultural exchanges to facilitate healing and understanding between long-

time residents and new arrivals.

"Our town is capable of becoming a model for inclusivity, but we cannot do it alone," said Newtownmountkennedy resident, Melissa Bosch. "Government leaders must stand with us, showing that Ireland remains a place of compassion and respect for all."

Heather Boyle, resident of Newtownmountkennedy, said "We live in a wonderful community that is undergoing so much growth and change, which can be challenging. But it is important that as we grow, we don't lose sight of the fact that we are talking about people, many of whom have been through the darkest of times."

Newtown Together is calling on individuals, organisations, and local leaders across Ireland to show their support. Community events will continue to be arranged with the goal of achieving a level of solidarity and acceptance, and to unite communities in a collective stand against hate and division.

"We are not asking for miracles, we are asking for leadership," said resident Brian Mac Gloinn. "We believe that, with the right support, Newtownmountkennedy can become an example of what is possible when communities come together, rather than being torn apart by fear and misinformation."



A free Bray-based self-defence course for women living in the Wicklow area sold out "within hours," organisers have said. The event was launched by Rob Carry, owner of Jai Sua Martial Arts on Bray's Boghall Road. Within hours of launching the initiative, the 20 available spaces were snapped up with a further 30 people on a waiting list. "It's always great to see strong interest in a class, but it was worrying to see how many women and girls around Bray and Wicklow now have concerns about their safety," said Carry. The class takes place every Tuesday at 6pm and runs for six weeks. Carry, who stood as an election candidate in in Bray West earlier this year, came up with the idea of a free women only course after being contacted about specific self-defence training by students at his gym and martial arts club. Carry contacted a second martial arts coach, Shane Mullen who teaches at SBG Ireland, and the pair put together the course. It blends elements of boxing, Muay Thai, MMA and Jiu Jitsu. In light of the massive interest, Carry has decided to run a second free six-week course to cater for the demand, starting on 29th October.

# Over 250 transition year students attend road safety event

More than 250 Transition Year students from three schools in County Wicklow attended a Road Safety event on Monday 14th October. This event, organised by County Wicklow Road Safety Working Together Committee, is part of an ongoing education awareness campaign.

The event took place in Scoil Chonglais Baltinglass and was attended by Transition Year students from St. Kevin's Community College, Dunlavin and Blessington Community College. The intention of the event was to target young drivers and those about to start their driving career, to encourage them to take responsibility for their own driving behaviour.

On the day Baltinglass Retained Fire Fighters carried out a number of demonstrations for the students using four different scenarios, showing how casualties are cut

from vehicles following a road traffic accident. Also in attendance were members from An Garda Síochána, who gave first-hand accounts to the students on the legal proceedings and consequences that follow in the aftermath of a crash, when drink or drug driving is involved.

Students saw and heard about what happens when inexperienced and overconfident drivers get behind the wheel of a car without the necessary safety skills required.

The Road Safety Authority Shuttle was also present on the day

which allowed the students to:

- Practice driving and hazard perception skills in a car, motorbike or bicycle simulators.
- Experience first-hand the dangers of driving and texting and driver fatigue.
- Try the brake reaction timer to see how driving environments and speed affect your braking distances.
- Learn about tyre safety.

Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council Cllr. Paul O'Brien said: "This roadshow tackles the harsh realities of what can happen on our roads. By seeing these

scenarios, students will hopefully realise they're not invincible. It will instil a sense of responsibility in young people, both as passengers and future drivers, for their own safety and the safety of others."

Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council Emer O'Gorman added, "This event is a vital part of our road safety programme. Raising awareness and educating our young people about the dangers they can face on the roads is how we can make a lasting difference. We want our young people to stop and think before they get into a



Transition Year students from Scoil Chonglais Baltinglass, St. Kevin's Community College, Dunlavin and Blessington Community College at the Road Safety Event with demonstrations by Baltinglass Retained Fire Fighters and An Garda Síochána. The event which took place on Monday 14th October was organised by County Wicklow Road Safety Working Together Committee.

car; whether it's the driver's fitness to drive, how fast they drive, or simply remembering to wear a seatbelt."

Garda Inspector Michelle Byrne stated, "Every death or serious injury on our roads brings grief and greatly affects families and com-

munities. I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to all the stakeholders involved in this Road Safety event. The Road Safety awareness event is an important part of County Wicklow's Road Safety Working Together Com-

mitment to improving road safety in our county specifically targeting young drivers who are just starting out."

The Road Safety awareness event comes as more than 139 people have died on Irish roads so far this year. Last year, almost three-

quarters of all road deaths occurred on rural roads. Speeding and intoxicated driving are key contributory factors.

Statistics show that young males are the group most likely to be involved in a fatal collision.

and Wicklow County Council to secure funding for a permanent home for the volunteers in the Dublin & Wicklow Mountain Rescue Team," concluded Deputy Matthews.

## Matthews voices support for Dublin & Wicklow Mountain Rescue Team

Green TD Steven Matthews has called for a cross Departmental, collaborative approach to funding a new permanent premises for the Dublin & Wicklow Mountain Rescue Team (DWMRT) in Roundwood.

Deputy Matthews has met with Minister James Lawless and Minister Darragh O'Brien in recent days to seek significant state investment in this project and has also raised this with Wicklow County Council in conjunction with the board of DWMRT to progress this project.

Discussing the need to

provide a permanent base for the group, Deputy Matthews said: "The Dublin & Wicklow Mountain Rescue Team operational 24/7 and respond to over 120 callouts per year. This is an entirely voluntary organisation that offer an incredible lifesaving service for locals and visitors alike that enjoy the incredible landscapes we

have in Wicklow.

"For the last six years, DWMRT has been trying to build a mountain rescue base from which they can operate and in July 2020 they purchased a plot of land and subsequently got planning permission to build a base. The design is ready, they just need the centralised funding to back it up.

"The group are temporarily based out of Roundwood Garda Station, but this is not sustainable. They deserve to have their own premises to operate out of and safely store their equipment and vehicles.

"The group has raised a significant amount of money through fundraising efforts and this needs to be matched with Government support. This group has been historically underfunded as their role falls between

several Government departments, meaning that they often can't qualify for community funding grants.

"Previous attempts at securing funding have failed due to the service

falling across a number of different Government Departments. However, that may be able to be used as a strength if smaller levels of funding can be sought individually from Wicklow County

Council and the Departments of Health, Transport and Rural Affairs rather than one larger funding stream.

"I will continue to work with the various Government Departments

and Wicklow County Council to secure funding for a permanent home for the volunteers in the Dublin & Wicklow Mountain Rescue Team," concluded Deputy Matthews.



Ann Houston, Susan Hill, Martha O'Reilly, Bernie O'Donoghue and Anne Stewart at the Wicklow Cancer Support art exhibition in Wicklow Library.

National Learning Network  
*Learn to change your story*

Don't know what to do next?

# JobStart

## Training in the Workplace

Our hands-on, FREE job-seeking JobStart Training in the Workplace course will teach you the skills you need to get a job. With full & part time options, we'll help you to find the job you want!

Our 'Place and Train' approach, means you'll train in a company of your choice for three days a week and train in our centre for the other two days.

**Contact Colette O'Loan at NLN Bray:**

- ☎ 086 0432869
- ✉ colette.oloan@nlm.ie
- 📍 @NLNWicklow
- 📍 @NLNWicklow
- 🌐 www.nln.ie

**Free** life-changing courses and supported **training**

# 'Work in Wind'

*First of its kind student job and education fair in wind energy, attracts 480+ post-primary students from Arklow and Wexford*

The first of its kind wind energy job and education fair for post-primary students in Co. Wexford and Arklow, took place on Tuesday, 24th September, in the Amber Springs Hotel, Gorey. Sponsored by SSE Renewables, the event was organised by Wind Energy Ireland, County Wexford Chamber of Commerce and championed by Senator Malcolm Byrne.

Over 480 students from participating schools actively engaged in the event including Arklow's Glenart College, St Mary's College, Gaelcholáiste na Mara, and Arklow CBS.

The student careers' fair provided the opportunity for young people to meet with professionals working across the spectrum of the wind energy sector and to find out more about the wide variety of roles and career opportunities offered by working in wind.

Senator Malcolm Byrne said: "There will be incredible opportunities for Ireland and particularly along the East Coast with offshore renewables. It will mean energy security for the country as well as

Ireland potentially becoming an energy exporter. It is vital that we have the skilled individuals to grow this sector so getting young people to think now about careers in wind is essential. I hope that this is an annual careers event, and that the success of this year can be built upon".

SSE Renewables Community Engagement Manager on the Arklow Bank Wind Park 2 offshore project Deirdre Keogh said: "SSE Renewables was delighted to sponsor and exhibit at the 'Wind in Wind' event. Our team on the day highlighted the myriads of roles, pathways, and opportunities offered in the wind industry. Our own team at the event from across the consent-

ing, engineering and corporate affairs disciplines, illustrated that working in the wind sector goes far beyond what one might think. In addition to chatting about career pathways, we shared information about our flagship Arklow Bank Wind Park 2 offshore project, which if consented, will bring economic investment, employment, and career opportunities to the Wicklow and Wexford region and help drive the transition towards a cleaner, more sustainable future for these and other young people. Our 3-D simulation of the Arklow Bank Wind Park 2 offshore development site garnered particular interest from students and the day proved to be very worthwhile."



Deirdre O'Flynn (Co. Wexford Chamber), Deirdre Keogh (SSE Renewables), Lisa-Anne Crookes (Wind Energy Ireland), Senator Malcolm Byrne and Deborah Coleman (SSE Renewables) at the 'Work in Wind' student carers fair in the Amber Springs, Gorey.



Gaelcholáiste na Mara students at the 'Work in Wind' student carers fair in the Amber Springs, Gorey.



Students from St. Mary's College at the 'Work in Wind' student carers fair in the Amber Springs, Gorey.



Arklow CBS students at the 'Work in Wind' student carers fair in the Amber Springs, Gorey.

# Wicklow Archers hosts 2024 Irish National 3D Archery Championships

The Irish Open Field Championships took place in Dargle Valley, Enniskerry, Co Wicklow on October 12th and 13th. The two-day competition welcomed 57 archers over both days to the venue, with some travelling from as far as Norway to take part.

The course itself was designed by a team of archers from the club and was designated as World Record Status (WRS), meaning successful scores could be submitted for global record consideration. It consisted of 24 targets of mixed sizes and distance, on a course mapped out around the Wicklow Archers field range.

Club Competitions Officer, Tom Fox explains: "It's always an honour to host an event like the

Nationals. A lot of work goes into it, but it's incredibly rewarding. It's especially worthwhile seeing archers travelling from overseas to enjoy the venue and take part."

"I was delighted to see lots of new members and younger archers taking part too. We've welcomed a lot of new people to the club over the last year while through beginner's courses, and their enthusiasm for archery was really shown here today."



Participants in the Irish Open Field Archery Championships in Dargle Valley.

"Wicklow Archers is a community-based club supporting the growth and promotion of all forms of archery. We support social inclusion and equality, and believe archery should

be open to everyone. This is something we strive for in our coaching and facilities.

"We have multiple venues for different styles of archery, and hold regular club, county and national competitions. This helps us promote the recreational and competitive aspects of archery, and support those trying to achieve the highest standards in the sport."

# Wicklow dancers selected for Irish National Youth Ballet

Wicklow is celebrating as four local dancers-Elwood Sweeney, Mika Kelly, Anna Keaskin, and Anna Shields-have earned spots in the Irish National Youth Ballet (INYB), the premier youth ballet company in Ireland. These dancers will represent Wicklow in The Nutcracker, part of INYB's 30th anniversary performances this December.

Elwood Sweeney, from Delgany, trains under Duane Watters and returns to INYB for another exciting season. Alongside him is Mika Kelly from Rathdrum, who trains with the Wicklow School of Dance. Mika will be taking on the prestigious role

of the Sugar Plum Fairy in one of the casts-a major achievement for such a young dancer.

New to the company this year are Anna Keaskin, who trains with the Bray School of Dance, and Anna Shields, one of INYB's youngest members. Anna Shields,

in particular, marks an inspiring example of emerging talent from Wicklow.

Lindsay Ashe-Browne, Artistic Director of INYB, highlights the dedication of these dancers, saying, "To be selected for INYB, you really need to be among the best

dancing talent on the whole island. The level of performance is similar to elite athletics. Our dancers undergo a strict and competitive audition process and are highly trained."

Funded by the Arts Council, INYB offers an exceptional platform

for young dancers, giving them the opportunity to train with internationally acclaimed teachers and perform in semi-professional productions. Many

former members have gone on to professional ballet careers, and this opportunity gives Elwood, Mika, Anna Keaskin, and Anna Shields a strong foundation for their future in dance.

Wicklow's community

is invited to show their support as these talented dancers take the stage at Samuel Beckett Theatre in December. The Nutcracker will be the highlight of INYB's 30th-anniversary celebrations, with performances running from Friday,

December 6th, to Sunday, December 8th, including matinee and evening shows. This is a moment for Wicklow to be proud of-a celebration of local talent, dedication, and the cultural contributions our community brings to the national stage.



Wicklow dancers selected for prestigious Irish National Youth Ballet (left to right): Elwood Sweeney, Anna Keaskin, Anna Shields, and Mika Kelly. Photo credit - Justin Farrelly.

Take  
**WICKLOW TIMES**  
with you...wherever you go  
on your Phone, Laptop or Tablet!

✓ NO PASSWORDS ✓ NO PAYWALL ✓ NO PROBLEM!  
PLUS access to over a year's worth of back issues!

Go to our new address:  
**www.wicklowtimes.net**  
or email [info@localtimes.ie](mailto:info@localtimes.ie) and we will email you a copy!

# Michelle Wolf, Marnie Manning & Kyla Cobbler

Whale Theatre, Thursday 24th October, 8pm (doors 7pm) Sold Out but register at [www.whaletheatre.ie](http://www.whaletheatre.ie) or call the booking office on 01 2010550 for any returns.

Michelle Wolf, Marnie Manning & Kyla Cobbler met doing comedy in Barcelona and decided it would be a great idea to explore Kyla's homeland - She assured them it is absolutely beautiful, that no one is funnier than the Irish and that the weather at the end of October won't be awful the whole entire time. So there you have it, two Americans and one Irish woman (or cailin as we're told) are hopping in a van and touring through Ireland doing comedy shows at night and exploring the country by day - They are excited to see you soon!

MICHELLE WOLF has established herself as one of the most influential voices in the comedy landscape. The Village Voice calls her "the voice comedy needs right now," and The Daily Beast declared, "Michelle Wolf is the future of stand-up comedy." Most recently, Wolf released her third stand up special, "Michelle Wolf: It's Great to Be Here", a series of three 30-

minute episodes on Netflix. The special premiered to rave reviews and rose to the Top 10 most watched TV on Netflix. Her previous special "Michelle Wolf: Joke Show" is also on the platform. In 2018, Wolf made international headlines as the much-buzzed-about headliner of the White House Correspondents Dinner.

MARNIE MANNING is a Barcelona

based American comic. She is the first comedian to perform in English at Cruilla Festival and La Llama Fest. She is a regular opening act for Michelle Wolf and tours all over the United States and Europe. When she is not touring, she is a classic on the Barcelona scene for more than seven years and won funniest new comic in 2017 as voted on by her peers.

KYLA COBBLER is one of Ireland's funniest emerging comedic talents. Kyla brings freshness to the scene with her undeniable talent and immediate connection to the different crowds in Europe's different showcases. Her honest, blunt and deep storytelling comedic style has made her one of the European scene's favourites.

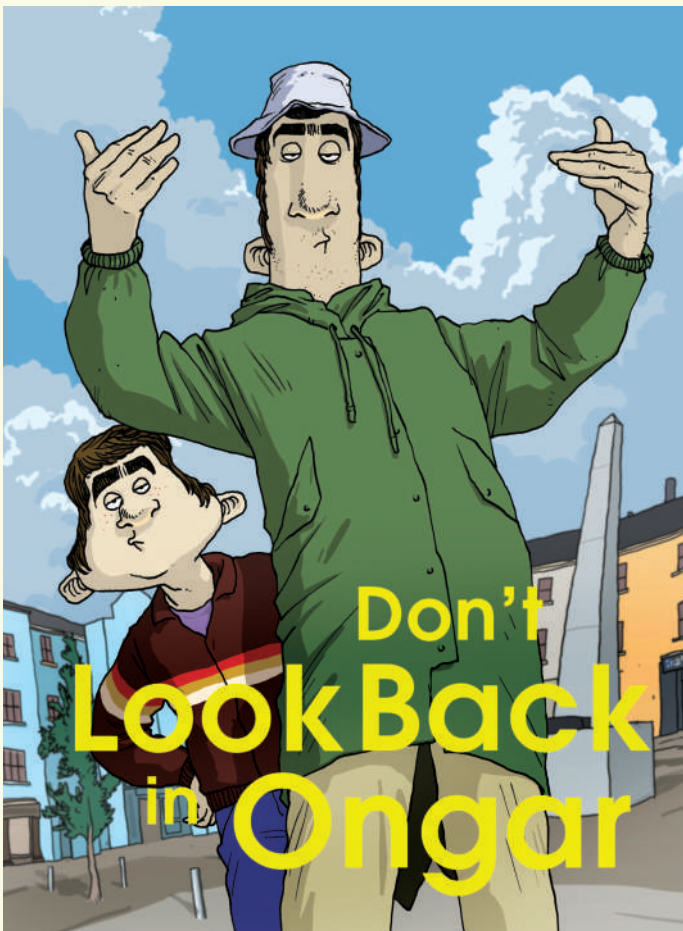
## Don't Look Back in Ongar - Paul Howard (aka Ross O'Carroll Kelly)

A night of stories, nostalgia and belly-laughs aplenty.

Whale Theatre, Friday 25th, Saturday 26th & Sunday 27th October, 8pm (doors 7pm) Sold Out but register at [www.whaletheatre.ie](http://www.whaletheatre.ie) or call the booking office on 01 2010550 for any returns.

Author Paul Howard wrote the first four Ross O'Carroll-Kelly books in the boxroom of a house in Greystones. Now, twenty years later, he returns to the village he once described as "a southside Skerries for Protestant underachievers" to read from 'Don't Look Back in Ongar', the final instalment in the multi-award-winning series.

After two and a half decades, Ross - like his great heroes, Brian O'Driscoll and Johnny Sexton - has decided that it's time to call it a day. But for perhaps the first time in his life, the man who was famous for sneaking out of bedroom windows, wants to say goodbye... face-to-face.



## 'This Land': an exhibition by Laurence O'Toole

Signal Arts Centre, 29th October - 10th November

This show is a look at the many places in Ireland that Laurence O'Toole has travelled to over the recent years. These are memories and "stop you in my tracks" moments that this land continually throws up, the light cutting across the land, the skies opening up to battle and break the incessant grey, the billowing white towering clouds that dominate and protect this land.

Primarily these pieces are painted in oil on canvas with a lot of the pieces in panoramic form, for this is where the viewer really gets to feel the vista, to see the scope of this ever-changing land. Co Wicklow, where Laurence was born, features heavily in this show, as it always has in his professional painting career, and probably always will.

This is a show of colour, of energy, it will be an insight into how the artist sees this land and what he finds important in it.

Laurence O'Toole is a realist painter in both oil and acrylic, whose work is a melding of figurative and nature with a surrealist approach to convey the message in his

works. A self-taught artist from Ireland, he has had many solo shows, in Ireland and abroad and is present in many group shows including museums in the USA.

He has won two awards at the Royal Ulster Academy and has shown at the Royal Hibernian Academy in Dublin and Royal Scottish Academy. His work has been collected by the OPW and featured in publications and in collections of Banks, film directors, actors, and state institutions. He has also completed many residencies, including Japan, New Zealand, Australia, Spain and France and is part of the time capsule programme that has 30,000 pieces of

digital art, music and literature that was on board the Nova Lander that landed on the moon this year and is a new library of humanity for future generations. Currently his

work is in the 20 year anniversary of 9/11, which is touring the States and shows in Gallery 33 Contemporary in the USA, Signet Contemporary, London

and Hambly and Hambly here in Ireland. Most recently he is a part of the Chianciano Art Biennale 2024, in Italy and a finalist in Lethbridge 20000 art awards Australia.



The Hawks and The Doves by Laurence O'Toole.



The Call, by Laurence O'Toole.



# West Wicklow Festival Winter Weekend

Thursday, November 14th to Sunday, November 17th



“...passion and musical imagination throughout, the fiendish multiple stops and alternations between bowed and plucked notes assured in tone and precise in intonation.”

BBC Music Magazine, 2015 (on Tamsin Waley-Cohen)

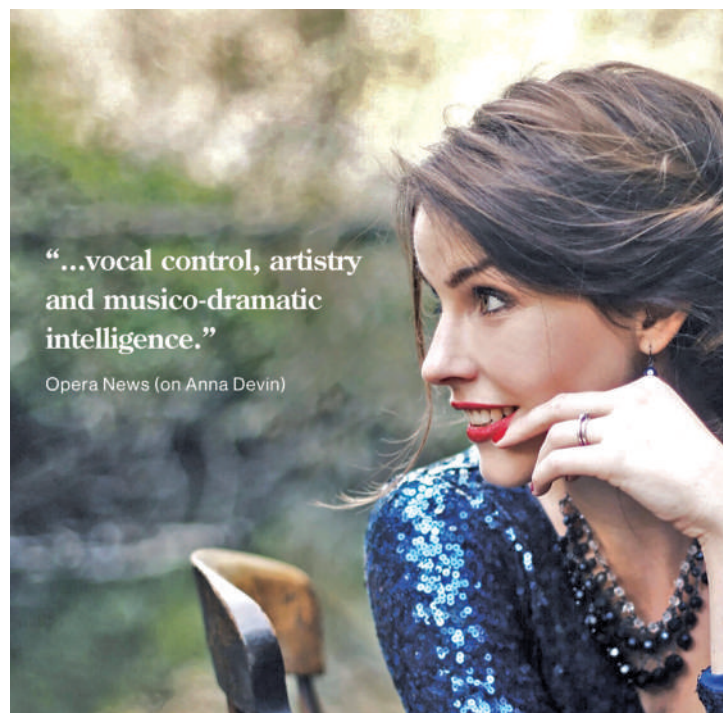
The West Wicklow Chamber Music Festival returns with a Winter Weekend at the Manor House, Tulfarris, from 14th-17th November. With four days of music featuring acclaimed international and Irish artists, this season promises to delight all audiences.

There will be a series of captivating concerts featuring internationally renowned artists, including Irish violinist Patrick Rafter, acclaimed clarinettist Carol McGonnell, and star soprano Anna Devin, who is also an ambassador for the British Dyslexia Association. In addition, the weekend will showcase the highly anticipated world premiere of a new commission by Irish composer and conductor Elmeare Noone, celebrat-

ing Wicklow-born ballet icon Dame Ninette de Valois.

**Patrick Rafter & Fiachra Garvey - Violin/Piano:** Thursday 14th November, 8pm.. Tickets €35/ €17.50 student concession (+ booking fee)

**Carol McGonnell, Tamsin Waley-Cohen & Fiachra Garvey - clarinet/violin/piano.** Friday 15th November, 8pm. Tickets €35/ €17.50 stu-



“...vocal control, artistry and musico-dramatic intelligence.”

Opera News (on Anna Devin)

dent concession(+ booking fee)

**Trio Talweg - piano/violin/cello:** Saturday 16th November, 8pm. Tickets €35/ €17.50 student concession (+ booking fee)

**Rising Stars Concert: Jisun Min & Didzis Kalnins - violin/piano.** Saturday 16th November, 12pm. Tickets €15/ €10 student concession (+

**Anna Devin & Fiachra**

**Garvey - soprano/piano,** Sunday 17th November, 3:30pm. Tickets €35/ €17.50 student concession (+ booking fee)

For full details see [www.westwicklowfestival.com/](http://www.westwicklowfestival.com/)

## Wicklow LCDC seeking applications for LEADER funding for projects supporting new and developing festivals in Wicklow

Wicklow Local Community Development Committee are calling for Wicklow festivals to apply for €100,000 in LEADER funding being made available for new festivals and events running in 2025.

Launching the call for festival applications, LCDC Chairperson Cllr Melanie Corrigan said “festivals are a really great way of encouraging tourists to Wicklow, engaging people with their local communities and telling stories of our county and we would like to encourage new, innovative festivals in County Wicklow to come forward for funding”. County Wicklow Partnership LEADER Development Officer Evelyn Murray stated that “we real-

ly see the positive impact rural festivals have on their communities so we are delighted to encourage new festivals to come forward to help develop their event to have even greater impact”.

This targeted call is aimed to encourage new festivals in county Wicklow. Applications from existing festivals are welcome, but only where they are developing new elements to their festival.

The festivals being targeted in this call are to be scheduled to run between June 2025 and June 2026.

This targeted call for applications is a two stage process. CWP are asking interested festivals to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) form to County Wicklow Partnership before October 22nd, 2024. Eligible EOIs will be informed of the outcome of stage one by November 1st and will be

invited to progress to the second stage of the process. This stage 2 is to complete a LEADER application and these will be submitted to CWP by December 13th 2024 with a decision on complete, eligible applications by Spring 2025.

Applications will be for between €2,000 and €20,000 and can support equipment purchase or rental and marketing costs.

Interested groups are encouraged

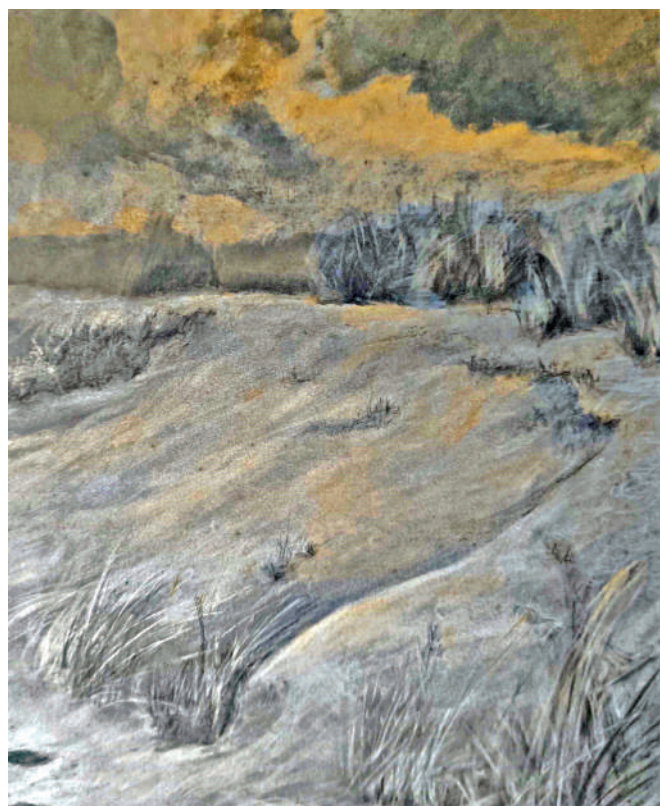
to go to visit the CWP website <https://www.wicklowpartnership.ie/leader-rural-development-programme/> for a copy of the Expression of Interest form and further information on this targeted call for applications for funding for festivals in Wicklow.

Please submit completed expression of interest forms to [dhealy@wicklowpartnership.ie](mailto:dhealy@wicklowpartnership.ie) before October 22nd.

## Old Songs of the North

An exhibition by Santa Silina, Monday 14th October to Sunday 27th October

“Old Songs of the North” is the first solo exhibition of Santa Silina in Ireland, taking place at Signal Arts Centre.



She presents drawings and paintings inspired by the ancient atmosphere of Ireland and finds this connection with other countries of North Europe, particularly Latvia, from where she hails. Her artworks express her deep interest in the natural environment and habitat of the people of the North and her subconscious memories. Santa is interested in the cycle of life and how people connect with nature. Through her exploration of the history of culture and traditions, she is finding connections with the generations of the past and future.

Santa Silina is a Latvian visual artist, graphic designer and illustrator who has lived for nearly twenty years in Ireland. She is a successful scenography and costume designer, dedicating her time to Latvian theatre companies in Ireland and the UK.

Santa Silina has a bachelor's degree in graphic design, but during the lockdown, she decided to return to her first love - visual arts. Santa prefers drawing, especially pencil and charcoal, as her favourite media. As a staff artist at Signal Arts Centre, Santa teaches classes in classical drawing techniques.



Darren Coogan, General Manager at Mermaid and Jenny Sherwin, Wicklow Arts Officer, pictured at the launch of the Mermaid Arts Centre's Strategic Plan 2024-2027.



Ali and Maisie Butterworth collecting their Halloween Stamp at Wicklow Historical Gaol. Photo by Michael Kelly.

# Collect your Wicklow Halloween Stamp this month

Enjoy the many Halloween experiences and events around Wicklow and collect the exclusive Halloween Stamp! The stamp was specially designed as part of the Wicklow Passport Seasonal Stamps Series.

Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr. Paul O'Brien, said: "Halloween is special time of year for families. Wicklow has loads to offer during that period, and the special Halloween Stamp will make visits more memorable. Don't forget to collect fifteen or more stamps to become a Wicklow Ambassador!"

Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council, Emer O'Gorman, commented, "The Wicklow Passport is proving again a great tool to entice visitors to discover

the many wonders of Wicklow. The Halloween stamp is a fun initiative that adds to the Wicklow Experience."

There are more than twenty five stamps around Wicklow representing the various areas and districts of the County. Collect fifteen or more stamps to become a Wicklow Ambassador and you will receive a certificate and pin. You can order your Wicklow Passport online at <http://visitwicklow.ie/passport>

## RECRUITMENT

**HARD METAL**  
EST. 1975

### WAREHOUSE AND LOGISTICS ASSOCIATE

Bray Co. Wicklow • Full-Time • Competitive Salary based on experience

**About Us:**  
Hard Metal is a leading supplier of metal cutting and finishing tools in Ireland. Our headquarters is in Bray Co. Wicklow, and we also operate from extensive premises in Shannon Co. Clare. Next year we celebrate 50 years in Business.

**Qualifications:**

- A primary degree or equivalent experience
- A proven mathematical ability with a good working knowledge of Excel and similar programs
- Experience in a logistics or warehousing type role
- Experience in Manufacturing Engineering, though not essential, would be an advantage

**What We Offer:**

- Competitive salary with opportunities for growth.
- On-the-job training and development.
- Supportive and inclusive work environment.

**How to Apply:**  
Interested candidates, please submit your CV and cover letter to:  
[philip@hardmetal.ie](mailto:philip@hardmetal.ie)  
Or via post to:  
**Philip Hannigan, Hard Metal, Dargan House, Duncairn Terrace, Bray, Co. Wicklow, A98 Y4C9**

JOIN US AND BECOME A VITAL PART OF OUR TEAM AS WE CONTINUE TO GROW AND SUCCEED

**Key Responsibilities:**

- Receive, inspect, and organize incoming stock and materials.
- Accurately pick, pack, and prepare orders for shipment.
- Maintain inventory accuracy through regular cycle counts and stock audits.
- Coordinate with the logistics team to ensure timely dispatch and delivery of goods.
- Collaborate with other departments to ensure smooth workflow and communication.
- Create a positive link with Suppliers and Customers

We are seeking a reliable and detail-oriented person, based in Bray, to join our dynamic team. If you are self-motivated, organized, and thrive in a fast-paced environment, this is the perfect opportunity for you.

# Polestar goes bigger and better

Polestar are surely going to be one of the ultimate classics of the 2020s in fifty years time. The cars are high end, innovative, exclusive and arguably the most beautiful cars on Irish or any other roads, today.

By Martin McCarthy

Pure, clean, crisp and reflective of their snowy Swedish heritage, Polestar have sold hundreds of their launch models 1 and 2 in Ireland and now bring their bigger SUV - the Polestar 3 and 4 to Ireland via their direct sales outlet in Sandyford Business Park. Interestingly, CEO Kieran Campbell pointed out that they now have cars in every county in Ireland except Leitrim!

Polestar are first cousins of Volvo ñ sharing the same parent ñ the giant Geely Corporation of China.

This allows them in Ireland to be supported and serviced by Spirit Motor Group's Volvo dealerships.

The McCourt family, owners of Spirit Motor Group, were much in evidence at the recent introduction of the new cars in Sandyford, so buyers can be assured they are committed fully to the brand, as it expands.

The 3 and 4 are similar ñ being big, powerful and long range but there is a different coupe style to the 4. Aerodynamics and drag reduction is the name of the game here, so the sloping bonnet and slippery rear helps the car improve its range.

In Ireland initial versions will be the top of range versions with four wheel drive, long range batteries (620 km) and epic performance (0-100kph in 4,3 second) and with a reflective price tag of €99,000.

The Polestar 4 interestingly has no rear window, but has a powerful, wide angle camera that provides a much better view of what is going on behind than the conventional rear-view mirror.

The interior is beautiful - and innovative by using many recycled materials to provide a wonderful texture and durability.

Polestar 4 - especially ñ is different and unconventional and surely the equivalent of the dramatic, space age styled Citroen DB 19 when it hit the streets of Paris in 1955 and went on to become the most coveted model for car collectors today.



**WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL**

I, Neil Collen, intend to apply for permission for development at this site Old Boley's Lodge, Glencree, Co. Wicklow. The development will consist of the installation of 28 no. ground mounted solar panels within the private grounds of Old Boley's Lodge, Glencree. The total area of the proposed PV panel array is 60 sqm. The planning application may be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy, at the offices of the planning authority, during its public opening hours. A submission or observation in relation to the application may be made in writing to the planning authority, on payment of the prescribed fee (€20.00) within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the application.

**Missionary Sisters of St. Columban (Ireland) CLG**  
St Columban's Nursing Home, Magheramore, Wicklow  
Tel: 0404-68699/67348 Email: [maghmanagement3@gmail.com](mailto:maghmanagement3@gmail.com)

### Advertisement for NURSING HOME SECRETARY/ADMINISTRATOR

This is a fulltime job 39hrs/week • Experience is required

**Reception:**

- Phone, Emails, for Residents and Nursing Home, Post and Newspapers for Residents and Nursing Home. Welcomes Visitors -Visitors Book, Implement Protocols as required.
- Forms and docs for daily use in NH and keep notice boards up to date
- Orders office supplies and checks deliveries. Maintenance of office equipment.

**Administration**

- Official correspondence – Enquiries NHI/HSE/HIQA PIC Service Companies etc
- Maintenance of Staff files.
- Submits relevant forms to HIQA as required.
- Staff Mandatory Training Matrix updates
- Maintain educational materials and makes them available as needed.
- Type letters and forms as needed
- Manages documents for interviews and Garda Vetting
- Updates Statement of Purpose and Residents Guide as necessary
- Assist with monthly Time & Attendance records for submission to the finance department.
- Preparation and upkeep of regulatory documents.

**Benefits:** Meals provided, Competitive remuneration package, Paid training

Apply with CV to the Secretary, St Columban's Nursing Home at the above address or by email on or before 5pm on Friday Oct 25th



## ATTENTION

### Architects, Planners & Builders

Reach the widest readership for your planning notices in County Wicklow with Wicklow Times

Call 01 286 9111 or email [pauline@localtimes.ie](mailto:pauline@localtimes.ie)

# Wicklow bookshop longlisted for the 'An Post Bookshop of the Year'

12 bookshops across the country have been longlisted for the 'An Post Bookshop of the Year' category at this year's An Post Irish Book Awards, the annual literary event that celebrates and promotes Irish writing and authors to the widest range of readers possible.

The 'An Post Bookshop of the Year' category is designed to acknowledge the significant role played by independent bookshops and local branches of bookshop chains in helping their local communities to find and savour the titles of their choice. Previous winners include Kennys Bookshop and Art Gallery, Galway in 2021, Bridge Street Books, Wicklow in 2022 and Halfway Up The Stairs, Greystones, Wicklow in 2023.

The longlist of twelve bookshops around Ireland for 2024 in alphabetical order are:

- Bantry Bookshop, Bantry, Co. Cork
- Books Upstairs, Dublin 2
- Bridge Books Dromore,

- Co. Down
- Hodges Figgis, Dublin 2
- Hubb16, New Ross, Wexford
- Leaf and Bower, Ballincollig, Co. Cork
- Liber, Sligo town
- Little Acorns Bookstore, Derry
- O'Mahony's, Limerick
- Tales for Tadpoles, Bray, Co. Wicklow
- The Company of Books, Ranelagh, Dublin
- The Secret Bookshelf, Carrickfergus, Co. Antrim

Customers were asked to vote for their favourite bookshops and to explain the reason for their choice. The bookshops that received the most votes were then longlisted and have been invited by the judges to enter a written

submission. Mystery shoppers will now visit the twelve bookshops as part of the judging process to establish the shortlist of six bookshops. The shortlist will be officially announced on the 24th October.

The overall winner of 'An Post Bookshop of the Year' will be presented with their trophy at the An Post Irish Book Awards event on 27th November along with a prize worth €15,000 from An Post Commerce.

Each year, the An Post Irish Book Awards bring together a vast community passionate about books - readers, authors, booksellers, publishers and librarians - to recognise the

very best of new and established Irish writing talent and 2024 will be no different. Other categories in the An Post Irish Book Awards include Novel of the Year, Children's (Junior and Senior), Food and Wine, Crime Fiction, Popular Fiction, Non-fiction, Sports, Short Story, Poem, History, Teen and Young Adult and Irish Language.

Larry Mac Hale, Chairperson of the An Post Irish Book Awards, says: "Bookshops are at the heart of many communities across Ireland and this category was introduced to recognise the important role bookshops play, not only in the books industry but in Ireland's literary tradition and heritage."



Ireland was promoted to thousands of Italian travel professionals attending this year's TTTG Travel Experience in Rimini. Nine companies from Ireland - including Russborough House and Powerscourt Estate - joined Tourism Ireland at TTTG Travel Experience - Italy's main B2B travel show, which was attended by influential tour operators, travel agents and leading Italian travel journalists and bloggers. Over 400 commercial meetings were conducted on the Ireland stand. Pictured were Vivienne Nyhan, Powerscourt Estate (seventh right); Jill Robins, Russborough House & Park (fourth right); with Irish tourism organisations and Marcella Ercolini (sixth right) and Mary O'Connor (third right), both Tourism Ireland, at TTTG Travel Experience in Rimini.

# Russborough House & Park joins Tourism Ireland's B2B workshops

Wicklow was promoted to around 40 top tour operators and travel agents from Belgium and the Netherlands recently at Tourism Ireland's 2024 trade workshop, which took place in Brussels and Amersfoort.

Twenty-three (23) tourism companies from Ireland - including Russborough House & Park - took part in the workshops, meeting and doing business with Belgian and Dutch travel professionals, to inspire them to extend the Ireland content of their existing programmes and itineraries, or to include Ireland for the first time in their 2025 programmes. Around 450 commercial meetings took place during the two workshops. The workshops provided a valuable opportunity for Tourism Ireland and its partners to remind the Belgian and Dutch travel professionals all about the many great things to see and do in Ireland including our spectacular

scenery, great food and drink offering, as well as our world-class visitor attractions and outdoor experiences. Karen van der Horst, Tourism Ireland's Manager for Northern Europe, said: "Our annual B2B workshops provide a really valuable opportunity for our partners from Ireland to showcase their product."



Karen van der Horst, Tourism Ireland; Heather Nicholl, Ella Mor Outdoor Adventures; Esther Verbueken, Ei Travel Group; Loes Hennephof, Aer Lingus; Gerry Lanigan, Abbey Ireland & UK; Martina Canty, Failte Ireland; Mark McHale, Hidden Howth Experiences; Maura Fay, Caherconnell Stone Fort & Sheepdog Demonstrations; Bernadette O'Carroll, Holiday Ireland Tours; Ruth Flynn, Visit Belfast; John Greene, DoDublin; Ian Baillie, Stena Line; Mark McGrann, Visit Causeway Coast and Glens; Barbara Smyth, Silverline Cruisers; Jill Robins, Russborough House & Park; Ciara McCaughey, Vintage Tea Trips; and Cliff Waijenberg, Walking Holiday Ireland, and Kevin Conmy, Irish Ambassador to Belgium, at Tourism Ireland's 2024 trade workshop in Brussels.

**THE MIRACULOUS PRAYER**

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

**LOCAL BUSINESS LOCAL BUSINESS LOCAL BUSINESS**

**ALLSHADES BLINDS**

- Roller • Vertical • Wood Venetian
- Pleated • Velux • Roman

**Tel: 087 2201600**

FACTORY: Unit 10, Block 1, Broomhall Business Park, Rathnew. Tel: 0404 20344

**LEAF 2 LEAF LANDSCAPES**

DRIVEWAY & LANDSCAPING

Limited Time offer **30% Discount**

Mike is an Experienced Paving & Landscaping Specialist  
Reference Jobs available on Request.

Call Mike on: 085 11 88 081  
[www.leaf2leaflandscapes.ie](http://www.leaf2leaflandscapes.ie)

**ML SECURITY SYSTEMS**

- Intruder Alarms • Home Monitoring
- Fire Alarms • Emergency Lighting
- CCTV Service • 24/7 Monitoring
- Maintenance Contracts • Online Quotes
- Repairs to existing systems

Hillside Cottage, Delgany, Greystones, Atlas, Oulart Gorey, Co Wexford  
Co Wicklow. Tel: 01 - 2870043 Tel: 053 9136066

[info@mlsecuritysystems.com](mailto:info@mlsecuritysystems.com)  
[www.mlsecuritysystems.com](http://www.mlsecuritysystems.com)

**Mobile 087 9912387 24/7 Emergency**

**DJ ROOFING & GUTTERING**

COVERING ALL WICKLOW AND SHANKILL, CO. DUBLIN

For any inquiries or a free consultation contact anytime on:  
**Tel: 085 287 7636**  
Email: [info@djroofingandguttering.com](mailto:info@djroofingandguttering.com)

**PROVIDING**

- ROOF REPAIRS
- GUTTER REPAIRS AND REPLACEMENT
- ROOF CLEANING
- CHIMNEY REPAIRS
- FLAT ROOFING
- FASIA AND SOFFITS
- GUTTER CLEANING
- LEAD VALLEYS
- REPOINTING AND REBEDDING OF RIDGE CAPS

**O'BRIENS ROOFING & GUTTERING**

Gutters Cleaned & Sealed **From €49** Roof Repairs **From €199**

Call Richard: 087 348 8516  
[www.obriensroofingandguttering.ie](http://www.obriensroofingandguttering.ie)

**DERMOT FORTUNE PAINTING & DECORATING**

20 Years Experience

REASONABLE RATES NO JOB TOO BIG OR SMALL

FREE QUOTE ON:  
**086-8613651**

**ANTO'S TREE SERVICES**

Fully Insured Tree Surgeon

Pruning, Reductions and Removal

All Aspects of Tree Surgery

**Tel: 087 610 9128**

**ValleyView Paving Ltd**

Kilmurray Cottage, Kilmurray, Glen of the Downs, Co. Wicklow. A63 PW13.

- Stone Wall Cladding
- Driveways
- Fencing
- Patios
- Landscaping
- Tarmac

**087 698 3734 01 2872568**  
[ValleyViewpaving@gmail.com](mailto:ValleyViewpaving@gmail.com)

# DARGLE VALLEY PHARMACY DELIVERY SERVICE



(01) 286 2210

**YOUR  
MEDICATION  
TO YOUR DOOR**  
TUESDAYS & FRIDAYS



CONTACT US FOR TERMS AND CONDITIONS



**AVOID TRAFFIC  
& PARKING**

**HASSLE-FREE  
HOME DELIVERY**

**BLISTER PACKAGING  
OPTIONS AVAILABLE**



UNIT 15, EGANS BUSINESS CENTRE,  
BRAY, CO. WICKLOW, A98 E367



darglevalleypharmacy@gmail.com  
darglevalleypharmacy.bray@healthmail.ie