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Pages 12 & 13



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Tuesday 8th October 2024 First Floor, The Boulevard, Quinsborough Road, Bray. A98 R6D7. Tel: 01 - 2869111 E-mail: wicklowed@localtimes.ie www.wicklowtimes.net

WILL ARKLOW FINALLY GET A TD?

The constituency of Wexford/Wicklow was established to secure representation in the Dail for south Wicklow and in particular for Arklow. Residents in and around Arklow are being urged by community leaders to seize the opportunity of the forthcoming election and to vote 'local', even if it means crossing party lines.

Fine Gael run a risk of getting no seat in the new Wicklow Wexford constituency as voters are showing a clear intent for the Wicklow part of the territory to have a seat. In an exclusive poll for Wicklow Times by national polling firm iReach, Fine Gael's only flag bearer, Gorey's Brian Brennan is polling beneath the party's national strength (13% vs 27%

nationally) and could get pipped by Fianna Fáil's second candidate Pat Kennedy or Independent Councillor Peir Leonard were she to run and if the research bears out in the General Election campaign with Wicklow determined to have a seat in Arklow. The poll shows Senator Malcolm Byrne and Sinn Féin's Councillor Fionntán Ó Súilleabháin as con-

tenders too for seats, with Byrne likely to have transfer benefits from his running mate Councillor Pat Kennedy sweeping Wicklow votes for him to get over the line. Interestingly, SF support in Wicklow and Wexford shows str-onger than the party's national numbers. "Reach Insights conducted this research for Wicklow Times up to the 1st of October



The Carey and Hamilton families pictured at the Newcastle Parish Colour Run. Pic: Michael Kelly.

Councillor Edward **Timmins**
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examining opinions on voting in the upcoming and previous general election. The research conducted is representative by age, gender, and by County demographics, and in a sound sample received 202 responses across Wicklow and Wexford. As not all candidates are declared, the research had to test possible candidates too. I-Reach Research are expressing a confidence level with the poll of + or - 2.5%. The majority (93%) of respondents are likely to vote in any upcoming general election, of those 74% are very likely to vote. 95% of adults registered in Wexford are likely to vote and 90% of adults registered in Wicklow are likely to vote. Over half (57%) of adults think in the Wicklow-Wexford con-

stituency, the Wicklow part (Arklow) should have one of the three TDs. 55% of those registered in Wexford think the Wicklow part should have one of the three TDs and 60% of those registered from Wicklow. If this trend and determination bears out, a Wicklow candidate will win a seat despite Wexford's dominance in the constituency. Independent Councillor Peir Leonard could be the beneficiary as transfers and her new appeal in Wexford could take her over the line as the strongest Wicklow candidate in the field, with 12% most likely to give her first preferences on current polling and 21% in the Wicklow part of the constituency, compared to 13% for Brian Brennan of FG. At this point in time, 28% of respondents

think Sinn Féin would Wicklow Wexford Con- Wexford likely to get their first prefer- stituency with 27% of vote Sinn Féin and ence in the new adults registered in Wicklow. *Continued on page 7*

Government waste opportunity to transform communities in €24 billion budget giveaway	John Brady is committed to serving, building, and delivering for communities in Wicklow
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rail upgrade	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> An upgraded rail service
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N81 / N11 upgrade	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N81 / N11 upgrade
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social / affordable housing increases	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 21,500 social and affordable homes
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Affordable childcare	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Affordable childcare at €10 a day
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Addressing Healthcare crisis	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Universal Healthcare

JOHN BRADY TD
FOR CLINIC DETAILS PLEASE CONTACT
CONSTITUENCY OFFICE: 1st Floor, 27 Main Street, Bray, Co. Wicklow.
* Accessibility needs accommodated by request
01-276 2623 john.brady@oireachtas.ie

Sinn Féin

Library Service unveils new digital literacy project

Wicklow County Council Library Service has officially launched an exciting new initiative aimed at improving digital literacy across the County. The DigiLit Digital Literacy project will run until early December in participating libraries across the county.

This initiative responds to the critical needs identified in Ireland's Adult Literacy for Life Strategy, which highlights that 47% of adults lack basic digital skills. The strategy notes that the most marginalised in society have suffered the most from a move to an almost wholly online digital world, reinforcing the urgent need for enhanced digital skills education.

The DigiLit project, developed in partnership with Kildare and Wicklow Education and Training Board (KWETB), will deliver weekly one-to-one digital skills clinics in participating libraries across County Wicklow, including Arklow, Blessington, Greystones, and Wicklow Town.

These free clinics are led by qualified tutors and designed to equip citizens of County Wicklow with the essential skills to navigate the digital landscape, ensuring they can access and engage with vital online services provided by the government, such as Revenue, the Department of Social Welfare, and Employment Services. Personalised one-to-one support will allow learners to receive tailored assistance, at their own pace, in a safe, welcoming, inclusive space, leading to a more

comfortable learning experience.

Cathairleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr. Paul O'Brien said, "In today's increasingly digital world, the ability to navigate online platforms is not just a skill, but a necessity. The DigiLit project reflects our dedication to empowering the people of County Wicklow with the tools they need to engage fully in society. By offering these personalised digital one-to-one clinics, we are bridging the gap for those who may feel left behind, ensuring they have access to the same opportunities as everyone else."

Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council, Emer O'Gorman commented, "The DigiLit project marks a pivotal step in our commitment to creating an inclusive, digitally connected community. As more services and resources shift online, it is essential that all our citizens, particularly the most vulnerable, have the skills to access and benefit from these opportunities. By offering free, one-on-one digital skills support clinics in our libraries, we are ensuring that no one is left behind in the digital age."

County Librarian, Margaret Birchall remarked, "Libraries have always been at the heart of learn-

ing and community engagement, and the DigiLit project continues that proud tradition. This programme is about more than just teaching digital skills; it's about giving people the confidence to engage with the online world in a meaningful way. Whether it's accessing essential services or simply staying connected with loved ones, we're here to ensure that everyone in County Wicklow can benefit from the digital age."

For more information on the dates and times of the clinics, contact participating libraries as follows:

- Arklow Library: 0402 39977 or email arklowlibrary@wicklowcoco.ie
- Blessington Library: 045 891740 or email blessington-lib@wicklowcoco.ie
- Greystones Library: 01 2873548 or email greylib@wicklowcoco.ie
- Wicklow Library: 0404 67025 or email wicklib@wicklowcoco.ie

The DigiLit one-to-one Digital Literacy project is a key step toward closing the digital skills gap and ensuring that everyone in County Wicklow has the opportunity to thrive in an increasingly digital world.

Public consultation for the draft sustainable drainage systems policy

Wicklow County Council has announced that the public consultation phase for the draft Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) Policy and Development Guidance is now live. The public are invited to submit their observations up until 4.30pm on Friday 18th October. They would welcome submissions from various relevant Consultancies on the document.

The SuDS policy and guidance is in line with Action 5 NEGI of the Wicklow County Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2029, further details of which can be found on www.wicklow.ie.

The relative main Sustainable Development Goals promoted and delivered through this policy include the following:

- SDG 6 - Clean Water and Sanitation where SuDS components directly improve the quality of rainwater runoff through the reduction of pollution to receiving waters.
- SDG 13 - Climate Action with Nature Based SuDS components delivering both mitigation and adaption benefits.
- SDG 14 - Life Below Water is protected through the removal of pollutants through Nature Based SuDS

improving the quality of water entering our rivers and seas.

- SDG 11 - Delivers Sustainable Cities and Communities with the delivery of Nature Based solutions, such as green roofs or bio retention areas within Urban Areas delivering amenity areas that improve environmental conditions and reduce urban heating.
- SDG 15 - Life on Land is delivered through the use of Nature Based SuDS through the promotion of biodiversity which encourages a healthy ecosystem including the cleaning of air and water.

Submissions can be made via the Online Consultation Hub on www.wicklow.ie, via email to climatepolicy@wicklowcoco.ie or in writing to the Climate Action Coordinator Wicklow County Council, Station Road,

Wicklow Town A67 FW96.

On Tuesday 15th of October, a public consultation event will be held during Wicklow County Councils Climate Action Week between 7pm and 9pm at Clermont House and the SuDS Policy will be presented as part of a wider programme. Interested parties are welcome to attend this event to discuss the draft policy.

**SAINT BRIGID'S
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We look forward to welcoming you.
Warm regards,
Emma Uí Shúilleabháin, Principal

WICKLOW
LOCAL Times

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Cllr Orla Finn, Cllr Tom Fortune, and Social Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore are pictured at the 32nd annual Bewley's Big Coffee Morning for Hospice, at Our Lady's Hospice and Care Services in Magheramore. Deputy Whitmore said "I was delighted to attend today's coffee morning in Wicklow Hospice and show my support and appreciation for the important work being carried out by staff and volunteers here and in hospices around the country every day. I would like to congratulate Wicklow Hospice on organising another successful coffee morning again this year. End-of-life care is such an important part of our healthcare and the impact that the staff and volunteers have on both patients and their families can not be under stated. Today was a wonderful opportunity to thank them and show our support so that hospices like Wicklow Hospice can continue the vital work they do."

Shankill Classical Music Club

The next meeting is on Wednesday 9th October (this season the meetings are on the SECOND Wednesday of the month). Usual time - 7:45 to 10:00 pm, including a teabreak; and venue - Shankill Day Centre, Lower Rd, Shankill (100 yds from the main street, car parking available). The music will be as always: a varied programme of classical music on CDs, covering many genres - orchestral, instrumental, vocal, opera etc. - in a friend-

ly setting. You don't need to be an expert! Visitors and new members are always welcome. There's no charge on the night. For further info phone or text John at 0872109175.

Soup & sandwiches

There will be a Soup & Sandwiches lunch in the Swann Hall at St.Patrick's Church Greystones on Tuesday 15th October from 12.30 until 2.00. Everyone welcome. Come and meet old friends and make new ones. Suggested donation of €7 for charity.

The Old Dublin Society

Dr. Elizabethanne Boran will present 'Disease and Illness in 18th Century Dublin' at 6pm on Wednesday October 9th in the Conference Room, Dublin City Library and Archive, 139-144 Pearse Street, Dublin 2. All are welcome - admission is free - seats are allocated on a first-come basis.

The rut is on

Autumn is the mating season for deer, a period known as the Rut. During the rut, stags become more active as

they fight for females. On our Rut Watch, National Park staff will have telescopes set up to enable visitors to get a better view and to find out more about our deer.

NPWS staff are holding a Rut Watch on Sunday 13th October. Drop by their telescopes any time between 11am and 4pm. This event is free of charge. Booking is not required. For more info, please phone 0404 45425. All dogs MUST be kept on a lead throughout the National Park. Visitors wanting to see deer would be advised to leave their pet at home.

Greystones Family Resource Centre Race Night

Greystones Family Resource Centre Race Night takes place on 10th October, Greystones Rugby Club at 7:30pm. Sponsors are needed and horses can be bought for €20. Sponsors, helpers and donors can contact ask@greystonesfrc.ie for details. Greystones FRC offers a wide range of programmes, including parenting workshops, Mental Health services, youth activities, Outreach initiatives that strengthen the fabric of the local community. You can help by supporting Greystones Family Resource Centre Race Night.

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Construction to start on new wastewater treatment plant for Avoca

In the coming weeks, Uisce Eireann will break ground on the €17m Avoca Wastewater Treatment Plant that will deliver critical upgrades to the wastewater infrastructure in Avoca.

Working in partnership with Wicklow County Council, Uisce Eireann says it is committed to “ending the unacceptable practice of untreated wastewater being discharged into the Avoca River”.

The Avoca Sewerage Scheme will deliver the construction of a new wastewater treatment plant which will bring a host of benefits to Avoca including significantly improving the water quality of the Avoca River; better health and integrity of the environment and will ensure there is capacity available for future social and economic growth in the area. The new wastewater treatment plant will also enhance biodiversity at the site through habitat creation.

Ward and Burke Construction Ltd. will be delivering the project works on behalf of Uisce Eireann, which are anticipated to be complete in 2026.

Commenting on the benefits of this vital infrastructure for the community, Conor Delaney, Programme Manager at Uisce Eireann, said: “We are delighted to be progressing this significant project for the local community in Avoca. This project will end the current practice of discharging untreated wastewater into the Avoca River, thereby improving water quality and protecting marine life. The project reflects Uisce Eireann’s ongoing commitment to the efficient delivery of critical infrastructure to support growth in local communities across County Wicklow as the new plant has been sized to accommodate an increase in the local population.”

Conor added, “This project showcases Uisce Eireann’s drive for innovation and commitment to sustainability. Constructing new reed beds will dewater treated sludge using solar evaporation, providing a sustainable and cost-effective solution for the long-term treatment of sludge from wastewater.”

This project in Avoca is one example of how Uisce Eireann is working in partnership with Wicklow County Council to protect our environment and support the local community to thrive. In Arklow, works are ongoing to construct a new wastewater treatment plant at North Quay, Ferrybank, which when complete in 2025 will also eliminate the discharge of raw sewage into the Avoca River.

Welcoming the news, A Taoiseach Simon Harris said “I am delighted to confirm that construction will begin in the coming weeks on the Avoca Wastewater Treatment Plant. This facility is an investment in trying to end the unacceptable practice of untreated wastewater being discharged into the Avoca River. This €17m facility will significantly improve the water quality of the Avoca River and help to improve the overall health and well-being of the local environment. I want to thank those in Uisce Eireann and in Wicklow County Council who have been working relentlessly to get this project to this point, and I look forward to working with them to ensure that we see even further progress on this project as soon as possible.”



Chloe Madden at the Newcastle Parish Colour Run.




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Upgrade to Greystones to Kilcoole pathway

Sinn Fein TD John Brady has queried the lack of progress made by Wicklow County Council in completing a much-needed upgrade to the public pathway running from Greystones heading into Kilcoole. "The ongoing failure to complete the upgrades to the pathway is creating a safety issue, with the uneven surface causing a hazard for elderly, and physically impaired persons using the pathway," Brady said.

"I have been approached by quite a few people in the area about the failure of Wicklow County Council to complete its upgrade to the public pathway running from Greystones into Kilcoole. The pathway in the area upgraded to a good standard, with the exception of one remaining section. There was also work carried out to facilitate public lighting, and work on the new pathway. But the specific area that I refer to, which is the last link in that pathway, sticks out like a sore thumb, with its uneven surfaces, which pose a safety hazard to both the elderly and the physically impaired. I am asking that Wicklow County Council provide details as to why this particular section of pathway has not been completed, particularly in light of the safety issues that this has thrown up. Quite obviously Wicklow County Council are keenly aware of the value of a good pathway running in the area from Greystones to Kilcoole, as evidenced by the work already carried out. But this being the case, it further raises the question as to why the work has not been completed."

Wicklow County Council told *Wicklow Times* "A new footpath has been provided between Kilcoole and Greystones under the NTA Active Travel scheme. A short section of the footpath requires the application of final surfacing. Works are scheduled to commence in mid-October and will be substantially complete by year end."



John Brady TD on the Kilcoole footpath.



Cadhla and Ben Duncan at the Newcastle Parish Colour Run.



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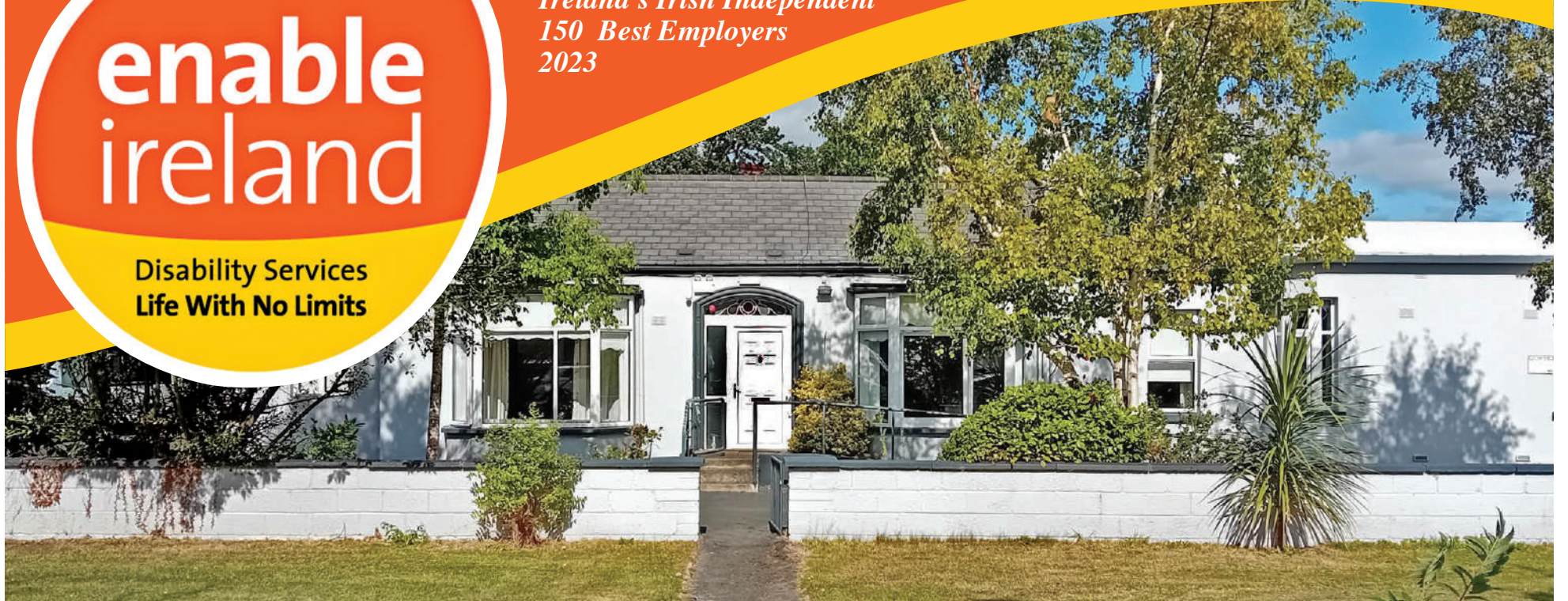
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ARKLOW DAY SERVICE, ARKLOW

Enable Ireland Arklow is a newly established Adult Day Service based in Avoca River House at Bridgewater Shopping Centre. The Day Service is aimed at supporting those with Autism and/or Intellectual Disabilities.

Staff work closely with Service Owners to become more independent and to reach personal goals, through activities such as community exploration, social inclusion through community collaboration, exercise, cooking, life skills, creative expression, horticulture, social trips and much more.

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which are appropriate for their age, interest and ability. All activities are designed to promote maximum independence and inclusion in the local and wider community.

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- Staff Nurse - Permanent, full time role.*

RATHMORE RESPITE HOUSE, ARKLOW

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Deputy Matthews walking on The Murrough.

Matthews outlines long-term plan to address Murrough storm damage

Green TD Steven Matthews has outlined what is required to address the ongoing concern of erosion at The Murrough following further damage and loss of the walking route due to recent storms. Deputy Matthews has engaged extensively with Wicklow County Council, the National Transport Authority (NTA) and Irish Rail on proposals to put in place long terms solutions to address this over the last year.

Discussing the issue, Deputy Matthews said: "I have been contacted by many concerned residents about the significant storm damage to the Murrough. Unfortunately, this damage is repeated every time we get a storm surge, high tides and an easterly wind. Last year following Storm Babet, I attended the site in coordination with Irish Rail and Wicklow County Council to assess the damage. Separately, I engaged further with the NTA to discuss funding for Irish Rail to carry out further rock armour defences.

"That funding was secured and is available and I am currently working with Irish Rail and the council to assess the damage and what interim defence works may be required. As recently as last week, I met with Irish Rail Engineers on site to show them the latest level of damage just to emphasise the urgency that needs to be applied. "Ultimately, this area will need a large-scale coastal defence project and that is what is planned. Our railway is under threat of flooding and damage. The DART extension to

Wicklow Town and Kilcoole is progressing well, and we need to protect that rail line. The solution, for the long-term protection is the East Coast Railway Infrastructure Protection Project (ECRIPP). This project is to protect low lying parts of the rail line from Dublin to Wicklow such as Merrion, Booterstown, Kilcoole and the Murrough. "The project has advanced through preliminary design and is now going to the public consultation stage and a presentation will be made to Wicklow councillors very soon. I know

how important the Murrough is to residents and visitors to our beautiful town. I will ensure we protect the walk, protect the railway and deliver the DART extension to Kilcoole and Wicklow Town. I have worked on railway engineering projects for over 30 years, have studied planning & environmental management and I know the Murrough very well. I am confident of using that experience with my position as TD for Wicklow to save the Murrough," concluded Deputy Matthews.

Making waves at Fair Seas protest for marine protected areas

Social Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore joined protesters from across Ireland outside the Dail on 25th September as part of the protest organised by the Fair Seas coalition, calling for urgent progress to be made on the promised Marine Protected Areas Bill.

Deputy Whitmore, an ecologist who previously worked in the field of marine biology, explained the importance of the Marine Protected Areas Bill:

"The Marine Protected Areas Bill is hugely important for our coastal areas around Ireland. This is legislation which will legally protect areas of seas and coastline from activities that damage the habitats, wildlife and natural

processes that occur there. "In Wicklow we are seeing more and more varied activities happening in our coastal areas and it is vital that we have legislation in place which protects our marine wildlife before it is

irreparably impacted by these activities," commented Deputy Whitmore, who is the Social Democrats spokesperson for Climate and Biodiversity. "Despite multiple promises and guarantees

from the Green Party Minister for Heritage and Biodiversity, we have seen little, or no progress being made on the proposed Marine Protected Areas Bill. Time really is of the essence here and we need the Government to act," added Ms Whitmore.

"I recently met with an International Marine Biologist who has carried out over 48 global studies and has travelled to waters around the world. He told me that he has never seen waters so devoid of nature and bio-

diversity as the ones surrounding Irish coasts. He described the condition of our coastlines as alarming and he was scathing of our approach to marine protection here.

"I want to commend the Fair Seas coalition for their continued work to highlight the urgent need for this legislation to be introduced and I am again calling on the Minister to take action and introduce the Marine Protected Areas Bill before it is too late," concluded Deputy Whitmore.



Donal Griffin from Fair Seas Coalition with Jennifer Whitmore TD.

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John and John Boland Jr with Cllr Tom Fortune, Cathaoirleach of Greystones Municipal District at the Newcastle Parish Colour Run.

Additional bus on 133 route at peak times

Bus Éireann has confirmed it will be adding an additional bus for morning peak times on the 133 Bus Éireann Route from Monday, October 7th. This is a service that was frequently flagged as having capacity issues by passengers.

Discussing the development, Deputy Matthews the announcement follows extensive engagements between him, the National Transport Authority and Bus Éireann. Deputy Matthews said: "Of all public transport routes in Wicklow, the 133 is by far the one that I receive the most emails raising issues with capacity, punctuality and reliability on a weekly basis.

"I have been working with the NTA and Bus Éireann over the last few months and the confirmation from their regional manager that an additional bus will be on the route for rush hour morning commuters is hugely welcome.

"This follows a review of the service by Bus Éireann in conjunction with the NTA which considered passenger feedback, reliability surveys and a capacity assessment. The fact that the new vehicle will be in place from October 7th is a clear acknowledgement of the need to urgently improve such a heavily used service.

"In order to convince people to make the switch to public transport, we need to ensure that any reliability or capacity issues are addressed as soon as possible. On this occasion, it did take longer than I would have wanted but to see Bus Éireann putting in place concrete measures to improve passenger experience has to be acknowledged and supported.

"I will continue to engage with all passengers that have contacted me to ensure that the increased capacity does have the desired impact, but I believe that this move will hugely improve this service, particularly at rush hour", concluded Deputy Matthews.

An Taoiseach Simon Harris said: "I am glad to confirm that Bus Éireann will be placing an additional bus on Route 133 from Wicklow via Rathnew, to help cater for the high demand for this service. This extra



Green TD Steven Matthews

bus will start service from Monday the 7th of October in the morning to accommodate the extra demand. After speaking with local commuters, I understood that with the return of school and colleges in September, the demand for the Route 133 had increased significantly, and action needed to be taken to ensure that this service could continue to accommodate commuters along this route.

"I want to thank Bus Éireann and the National Transport Authority for their efforts, and for listening to the concerns of local residents along the line, who have been active in engaging with me on this issue and ensuring that their needs are met."

Jennifer Whitmore TD



Jennifer Whitmore TD

said "I am delighted that Bus Éireann have confirmed that an additional morning bus will be operating on the 133 route from next Monday. I have been contacted by a huge number of very frustrated commuters from the Newtown area who have repeatedly been left standing at their bus stops each morning because the 133 bus is full when it reaches them.

"People have been unable to get to work, college or school and I have been working with the NTA to have this capacity issue resolved as a matter of urgency. Commuters in Wicklow deserve public transport options that they can rely on, and I raised this with Minister Jack Chambers in the Dail today (October 3rd). We need to see proper forward planning and investment in these services so that public transport is a viable and accessible option for people.

"While I welcome this additional bus for the 133 morning service, I believe that this will only be a temporary fix. Our communities across Wicklow are growing and our public services such as public transport need to catch up. We need joined up thinking to connect people with the services they need.

"I have called for the introduction of a bus ser-

vice between Wicklow Town, with its population of almost 13,000 people, and Greystones, so that people can access DART services. This 20km bus route would open up more transport options to those living in Wicklow Town and alleviate the pressure that current transport routes are under.

"Wicklow Town and Newtownmountkennedy are only two examples of a really poor service when it comes to public transport, this is an issue that impacts every community across Wicklow. It is incredible considering the amount of money that we have in this country that we cannot get the basics right and put on bus services that are reliable and frequent for people. I will continue to be the voice for Wicklow calling for more joined up thinking and improved public transport services for our communities across the county."

Sinn Féin TD John Brady said "For too long, people in areas such as Newtownmountkennedy, Kilpedder, and Kilmacanogue have been left stranded at bus stops as full buses pass them by, particularly during peak morning hours. I have repeatedly raised this issue with the NTA and Bus Éireann, highlighting the urgent need for additional capacity on the 133. Many people have contacted me to express their frustration at the growing frequency of buses reaching maximum capacity and being unable to accommodate passengers. This has caused significant inconvenience for commuters, many of whom rely on this service to travel to work, school, or other essential activities.

"I have been advocating for a solution to this problem, and I am glad to see that our concerns are finally being addressed. However, while the intro-



Pictured is young Alice helping out at Delgany Tidy Towns' recent clean-up of the village on 28th September, which left it never looking better. "We are so grateful for our volunteers who worked so hard and who continue to help us keep Delgany clean and green," Delgany Tidy Towns stated. "Our before and after pictures speak for themselves so thank you so much! We hope to see you at an upcoming clean-up in the Village to do it all over again and if you know any of our volunteers, please pass on your personal appreciation of their efforts." Missed out on cleaning the Village? Follow DTT on Instagram, Facebook or sign up to their newsletter which you can access at <https://delgany.online/dtt>

duction of this additional bus is a positive development, it is essential that this is not seen as a temporary or short-term fix. The population in Newtownmountkennedy, Kilpedder, Kilmacanogue, and surrounding areas has grown substantially in recent years, and public transport services

must adapt accordingly. This increase in demand requires a sustainable and long-term solution that ensures reliable and sufficient public transport for all residents. To that end, I am calling for a comprehensive review of the 133 timetable and the overall capacity of the service. It is vital that we

assess whether the current service can meet the needs of the growing population and if additional buses or increased frequency are required, particularly during peak hours. "A well-functioning public transport system is key to reducing traffic congestion, promoting sustainable trans-

port, and ensuring that people can rely on buses to get where they need to go. I will continue to work with the NTA, Bus Éireann, and other stakeholders to push for a lasting solution that ensures 133 route can meet the demand and provide the level of service that people deserve."

Social Democrats

Jennifer WHITMORE TD

Your Social Democrats Representative for Wicklow

Where's Government's Vision?

Budget 2025 was an opportunity to deliver:

- Public Childcare system that's affordable and available.
- Public Transport that's frequent and reliable.
- Healthcare that's based on need – not ability to pay.
- Homes that are affordable.
- Education that's truly free.
- An Environment that thrives.
- Value for Money.

Government failed!

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WHITMORE WORKING FOR WICKLOW

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WILL ARKLOW FINALLY GET A TD?

Continued from page 1

28% from Wicklow would likely to do the same. SF is showing 20% nationally in polls.

22% of adults would most likely vote 1 for SF's Cllr. Fionntán Ó Súilleabháin with 18% of adults registered to Wexford likely to vote the same and 23% of adults registered in Wicklow likely to vote for him.

Nearly half (47%) of adults feel that the track record of getting things done in their area

determines the choice of candidate. 52% of those registered in Wexford feel the same and 42% of those registered in Wicklow agree.

It would appear that Fine Gael may need to put a second candidate in the field, one from Wicklow, to guarantee a seat. Tinahely's FG Councillor Peter Stapleton who had a strong showing in the local elections, and got decent support at the FG selection convention, has a resonance in this research too.

When he is tested in the field, even though not a candidate or even mentioned as one, the young man polls 9% in Wicklow, only four points behind the actual candidate who has been in the field for FG since July.

Meanwhile, Malcom Byrne and Pat Kennedy are both showing well with one certain to be elected and if voters cross party lines to support Wicklow candidates, then there is a chance that Fianna Fáil could secure 2 seats.



Humanitarian aid convoy leaves Greystones for Ukraine

A group of Greystones volunteers have set off on a 3,500 km journey across Europe to bring vital aid and vehicles to war-torn Ukraine. A centrepiece of the convoy is an ambulance donated by AllView Healthcare whose CEO is Greystones local Eoin O'Reilly.

"As a healthcare company we know only too well the reality of ill people and what they need so it's our duty to help those in need," explained Eoin.

He co-founded the Carrickmines based AllView Healthcare which is Ireland's largest dermatology service provided with clinics around the country. Eoin said the ambulance, which is fitted out with essential medical supplies, will be going to a paediatric hospital in Ukraine.

He is driving the ambulance accompanied by a group of friends, primarily from Greystones, as part of a convoy delivering utility vehicles (SUVs), a minibus, a truck along with nearly €500,000 worth of essential supplies for the

Ukrainian people.

In all, 22 men will drive 14 vehicles, each loaded with medical supplies travelling through Belgium, Germany and Poland en route to Ukraine. This 3,500 km journey has been organised by Sammy Byrne and Finola Harrington, founders of the philanthropic organisations Jeeps for Peace and What About Us.

The team will drive the supplies deep into Ukraine, a country still enduring daily attacks from Russian forces. Mr Byrne emphasised the urgency of the mission, noting that the average lifespan of a four-wheel-drive vehicle on the frontline is less than three months.

SUVs play a critical role in field hospital work, transporting injured

soldiers from war zones, making them ideal for carrying medical supplies.

Generous contributions for the aid convoy have come from various organisations and companies, including AllView Healthcare and PetStop in Carrickmines and Caterhire in Sandyford - along with all major Dublin private hospitals and the HSE - helping to fund over €500,000 worth of critical supplies.

For security reasons the team is not disclosing their exact route or the location of the vehicle handovers in Ukraine. They departed from Greystones on Thursday morning, September 26th with a blessing at St Patrick's Church and a heartfelt send-off from a choir of St. Patrick's school children.



Eoin O'Reilly, CEO of AllView Healthcare who donated the ambulance, pictured with children from St. Patrick's School, Greystones.

Anti-racist doc screened despite intimidation

On Sunday 22nd September, North Wicklow Against Genocide (NWAG) and Newtown Together successfully hosted a screening of the documentary REFUGE (2021) to an audience of 40 people at CrossFit Solas in Greystones after five other venues backed out. The screening was followed by a discussion joined remotely by Chris and Melissa Buckley, two of the main documentary protagonists.



Newtown Together.

The award winning documentary follows Chris Buckley, a leader in the Ku Klux Klan who finds healing from the people he once hated. He becomes friends with Muslim heart doctor Dr Heval Kelli and his town of refugees, after Chris' wife Melissa finds him dedicated support for people involved in hate groups. The screening was followed by an open and honest conversation between the audience and Chris and Melissa who joined via video call. Chris shared his experience of leaving hurt behind and facing backlash from relatives following his speaking out about white nationalism and against racism. Melissa shared her experience of dealing with a loved one getting involved in a hate group.

Kellie McConnell from NWAG said: "We were pleased to see an outpouring of support on social media and in person last week following the initial venue cancellations. We're delighted

how smoothly the film screening went on Sunday, which could easily have been held in any of the five venues. This shows that our community has an appetite for opportunities to show their solidarity and for spaces where they can have these sometimes difficult conversations. Over the past few months, people in many of the venues have received emails and verbal abuse from people who wanted to prevent this kind of event from happening. We would like to make it clear that bullying is not acceptable. Fear should not be used as a tool to shut down conversations. The community centres and boards should be supported to make principled decisions when faced with these difficult encounters. We would also like to sincerely thank everyone involved - it was a real collaboration of teamwork and we look forward to continuing our community events and actions. We



Refuge the movie screening in CrossFit Solas, Greystones.

encourage people to watch Refuge (2021) if they haven't already."

Member of Newtown Together Jb Kenny said: "It is such a shame that we couldn't show a documentary about healing and hope in our town. Integration has been slow but a few businesses have welcomed us, most are still reluctant for fear of retaliation. We would love to hold a solidarity

dinner for asylum seekers and refugees for the community to get to know their new neighbours. The film screening was a lost opportunity for the area this time but we hope that we can address any concerns and work together for future occasions. We are calling on our community leaders and councillors to take the initiative to bring everyone together,

dispel myths and allay fears. TD Jennifer Whitmore has been so supportive and we appreciate her solidarity and attendance. Thanks again to Crossfit Solas for stepping up, Kitchen28 for the chairs, and the team for never giving up - and providing popcorn and refreshments. It is amazing what we can achieve when we all work together."

Pioneering empathy programme to expand in Wicklow

An award-winning national youth empathy charity hopes to expand its pioneering programmes in schools and youth groups in County Wicklow over the coming months.

Narrative 4 uses innovative storytelling and story exchange programmes to promote wellbeing and bridge divides. It wants Ireland to emulate France by introducing empathy lessons in all schools to improve social skills, self-esteem, and social cohesion.

Narrative 4 is offering subsidised facilitator training to teachers and youth workers throughout the county. It says the training can help cultivate greater levels of empathy and connection in schools, communities, and across society.

"France is taking a lead on empathy education in schools and we believe Ireland can be a world leader too," says Dr. James Lawlor, Director of Narrative 4. "Young people in Wicklow and across Ireland face huge challenges these days. Research shows that issues

surrounding social media, peer pressure, anxiety, body image, bullying, and racism are all too prevalent. The research shows that young people feel disconnected, lonely and isolated. By focusing on empathy, young people can become empowered to

connect better, understand and support each other. This social connection is the foundation for tackling social division and building bridges to create a kinder, more inclusive and compassionate country."

Research has demonstrated that Narrative 4's programmes effectively increase empathy skills, strengthen relationships, reduce stress, and boost positive emotions such as confidence, optimism, and a sense of belonging, according to studies from the University of Chicago, University of Limerick, NUIG, and

Yale University.

Narrative 4's Story Exchange programme is closely aligned with the new Junior Cert Wellbeing programme, making it an invaluable tool for teachers across Ireland. The programme supports key wellbeing goals, such as fostering resilience, enhancing emotional and social competence, and building a sense of belonging among students.

Narrative 4 operates a 'train the trainer' programme in Ireland, which has trained over 1,100 secondary school teachers and youth workers across 302 schools. With 40% of secondary schools having at least one N4-trained teacher, these educators and community leaders are better equipped to support young people in mental health, resilience, and team building.



'Govt has once again failed the retained fire service'

Sinn Féin TD John Brady has accused Minister Darragh O'Brien of once again failing the retained fire service following the rejection by SIPTU affiliated members of the retained fire service last Wednesday of a pay proposal relating to the retainer paid to retained firefighters from the government and the LGMA, delivered via the WRC.

Speaking last week Deputy Brady said that "the Minister needs to act immediately to address the fallout of what firefighters are describing as his betrayal of the retained fire service, which has a high probability of leading to a recommencement of industrial action. Last year retained firefighters suspended planned industrial action to allow space for the Minister to fulfil his commitment to the firefighters to fight tooth and nail for a 'significant increase' to the retainer paid to retained firefighters.

"Today, a bitterly disappointed majority of the members of the retained fire service (RFF) voted to reject the WRC proposals, which they believe fell well short of what was intimated as to what could be delivered with the support of the Minister.

"Yet again Minister Darragh O'Brien has failed the retained fire service. The Minister stood up in the Dail and proclaimed himself as

the Minister who would champion the needs of retained firefighters. RFF members previously suspended industrial action in good faith following assurances by the Minister. He has not delivered.

"Members of the retained fire service who I have talked to today, told me that the Minister deliberately lied to them to get them off the picket line, and then once he had created space for himself, he stabbed them in the back through his failure to deliver on his pledge

to support them.

"It is incredible that after one of the biggest give away budgets in the history of the state, that the government with a surplus of €24 billion has failed to seize the opportunity to bring the RFF into the twenty-first century.

"We are now faced with the reality that there is a high probability of a return to industrial action by the firefighters, as yet again the government don't see fit to follow through with their commitments to champion retained fire-

fighters and give them a decent wage. There is no way that retained firefighters should have been put in this position. They have been lied to, and treated with contempt by the government, and Minister O'Brien in particular.

"The responsibility for this situation lies clearly with Minister Darragh O'Brien. He needs to act now to clean up this mess of his own creation. He needs to deliver on the commitments that he has given to the retained fire fighters."



John Brady TD addressing a protest by Retained Fire Fighters outside the Dail last week.

Housing adaptation grants to be increased



Senator Pat Casey.

Fianna Fáil Senator in Wicklow, Pat Casey, has welcomed confirmation from the Minister for Housing Darragh O'Brien of his intention to increase grant limits by over 30% and the income thresholds by 25% for those applying for support under the Housing Adaptation Grants for Older People and People with a Disability Scheme.

The planned proposed changes follow the publication of the Report on the Review of the Housing Adaptation Grants for Older People and People with a Disability Scheme. The review recommends an increase in grant limits in excess of 30% and an increase in income thresholds of 25%. The report also recommends adjusting the burden sharing for local authorities by reducing the local authority funding contribution to 15% (from the existing 20%) together with a number of amendments to the means test.

These changes, which will mean that more people will qualify for these grants, are expected to take effect in Q1 next year.

Commenting, Senator Casey said: "Having called

for an increase to both the grant limits and the thresholds for some time now I am delighted to see that Minister O'Brien has received Cabinet approval to do just that. Grant limits will increase by €10,000 in some circumstances which will be welcome news to many.

"I am particularly pleased to hear that the means testing arrangements will also be amended so that just the owner/tenant and their spouse will be assessed and that a person's income 'in year' can be taken account of in certain circumstances. These grants are a lifeline for many families and individuals. The ESRI projections indicate that the numbers of people aged over 65 will more than double to 1.3

million people by 2040. As more people live longer lives, they will want to stay healthy and independent, live in their own homes and communities and keep to a minimum their use of in-patient and out-patient

hospital services.

"Since taking office, Fianna Fáil in Government has increased the investment in these grants by over 27% from €73m in 2020 to €93m in 2024. It's appropriate now that we make the grants easier to access and to support as many people as possible to age with dignity in their homes," the local Fianna Fáil Senator concluded.



Yet another DART timetable as service reverts back to previous schedule

Retired Greystones Fine Gael councillor and long-time DART campaigner Derek Mitchell has vented his frustrations over the continued tinkering with the DART timetable. Irish Rail announced last week that morning timetables on routes operating to/from Connolly Station will revert to the pre-August 26th timetable with minor time changes.

"Irish Rail don't seem to know what they are doing," said Mitchell. "They are going back to a pre-August timetable, the third change in a year. They say only one change, to a Rosslare train, affects Wicklow. However the pre-August timetable resulted in many delays in Greystones. I hope they do better this time but I'm not confident. They have increased the Greystones journey time by 15% since 2004 which is a very disappointing performance. "The timetable will be implemented on 14th October. The Wicklow rail line is the only single track line in the Greater Dublin Area and careful scheduling is need-

ed. Irish Rail have not produced a future plan though they rumour about a 50% increase in Greystones service and trains every 30 minutes to Wicklow.

"The latter is not possible without major track changes. I produced a plan for the former in 2018, validated by a Jacobs study, however Irish Rail's plan, is for much lesser works so I think it won't work. The Minister for Transport Eamon Ryan needs to pay much more attention to commuters' needs, especially if the population is increased around Dublin," concluded Mr Mitchell.

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15th Anniversary of the Pure Mile

Pure Mile volunteers to celebrate their achievements at the 2024 Pure Mile Awards Night

The 2024 Pure Mile Awards Night will return to the The Brooklodge Hotel in Macreddin, Auhgrim, on Thursday 17th October. The Pure Mile is an environmental, community, heritage initiative, established by Pure, which encourages communities and groups living in rural areas to adopt a mile, or miles, of road, and keep this area litter-free, research information about their local wildflowers, plants, trees, animals, and the built, cultural, and social heritage of an area.

Ian Davis, Pure Project Manager commented "This will be the 15th year of the Pure Mile, with the largest number of groups and volunteers involved in the project since it was established in 2009. The first year we had 5 miles of road, and this year, 15 years later, we have a record number

of areas involved in the initiative and we know have roads, mountains, woodlands, valleys, forests, and upland amenities, with over 3,500 volunteers. The Pure Mile demonstrates that people want to make a difference to the environment, and Pure gives them the assistance, so they can make that difference. The Pure Mile Awards Night is Pure's way of thanking all of the people involved in the Pure Mile, and it enables Pure Mile Groups to meet up all together for one night and one night only."

During the awards night



The Glenree Walking Group Pure Mile volunteers.



Last year's Pure Mile Awards Night.



Celebrating 15 Years of the Pure Mile

Since 2009 the Pure Mile has grown from only 5 areas, to over 1,000 in 2024 and Pure would like to thank all of the groups, communities, individuals, schools, walking groups, cycling groups, scouts, special interest groups, businesses, organisations, EVERYONE, who has taken part in the Pure Mile over the last 15 years. Because of the hard work, enthusiasm and dedication of all the Pure Mile volunteers, the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands are pure, clean and pristine.

If you would like to register with the Pure Mile Competition
Web: www.pureproject.ie/the-pure-mile/
Email: info@pureproject.ie
Tel: 0402 28662

Your Environment - Your Community - Your Heritage

Pure is a partnership project and the first of its kind in Ireland which incorporates statutory and non-statutory organisations, including; Wicklow County Council, South Dublin County Council, Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council, Coillte, National Parks & Wildlife Service, and the Wicklow Uplands Council. Funded by The Department of Environment, Climate and Communications, Pure was established to combat illegal dumping/fly-tipping in the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands.

Jason Non-Party MULHALL
BALTINGLASS MD

Wishing PURE MILE Continued Success

jmulhall@wicklowcoco.ie

Danny ALVEY

Congratulations to Pure Mile groups around the county - I look forward to continuing to work with you on keeping our beautiful Wicklow environment pristine.

Social Democrats

every group will receive a Pure Mile Certificate of Participation, a selection of native Irish trees, and all will be included in the popular Pure Mile Calendar, which will also be launched on the night.

Certificates of Recognition will also be presented by Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly TD., and the Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr. Paul O'Brien with €6,000 of prize money being handed out to the winning Pure Mile Groups and their volunteers.

The Pure Mile is the perfect opportunity for communities and groups who want to make a positive contribution to their locality and environment, and assists people in improving and enhancing

the place they live in, or recreate in. Special interest groups such as, walking groups, cycling groups, running groups, hiking groups, businesses, and organisations, adopt a mile, or miles of road, in the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands and help Pure to 'Clean Up The Wicklow/Dublin Uplands'. Pure provide all groups with Pure Mile signage, Pure Mile high-visibility vests, Pure Mile bags, gloves, and litter pickers, and Pure also removes all of the rubbish collected by the groups.

If any groups, communities, individuals, schools, walking groups, cycling groups, scouts, businesses, ANYONE, want to get involved in next year's Pure Mile, they can contact Pure at

info@pureproject.ie or download an application from www.pureproject.ie/what-we-do/the-pure-mile/. You can also write to; Pure Project, Unit 6 B, Riverside Business Centre, Tinahely, Co Wicklow, Y14 R978, and they will post out all the information, or request an application form and information pack by phoning Pure on 0402 28662.

Further information on Pure can be found on www.pureproject.ie

TO REPORT DUMPERS AND DUMPING IN THE WICKLOW/DUBLIN UPLANDS - CALL 1800 365 123



The Glendalough Distillery Pure Mile Group.



Dumping in the South Dublin Uplands.

The Pure Project

Pure is a partnership project and the first of its kind in Ireland which incorporates statutory and non-statutory organisations, including; Wicklow County Council, South Dublin County Council, Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council, Coillte, National Parks & Wildlife Service, and the Wicklow Uplands Council. Funded by The Department of Environment, Climate, and Communications, Pure is the first regional partnership initiative established in Ireland to combat fly-tipping/illegal dumping and was officially launched in September 2006.

The concept of the Pure project developed after a number of forums between the above organisations were held over a one-year period, between 2005 and 2006, with the objective of finding a solution to the increase of fly-tipping and small-scale illegal dumping activity in the Wicklow/Dublin upland regions, as each of the organisation were affected by the problem.

The project is funded directly by The Department of Environment, Climate, and Communications, and is the first statutory and non-statutory regional partnership initiative established in Ireland to deal with incidents of fly-tipping/illegal dumping.

The Pure project focuses directly on the fly-tipping/illegal dumping issue and has introduced a number of enforcement, preventative, and educational initiatives including:

- * A phone-line for reporting of fly-tipping/illegal dumping - 1800 365 123
- * Dedicated clean-up vehicle which responds to all incidents of fly-tipping/illegal dumping
- * GPS/GIS database to record all incidents of fly-tipping/illegal dumping
- * Pure Promotional/informational material
- * Public awareness campaigns
- * Website - www.pureproject.ie
- * Social Media
- * Education programmes - Primary school teacher's pack - Pure Animation, Pure Music, Pure Theatre, etc.
- * Community initiatives - The Pure Mile
- * Suitable preventative measures
- * Media campaign

Cllr. GRAHAM RICHMOND
 Wishing Continued Success to PURE MILE
 If I can be of assistance, please get in touch with me at:
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An Taoiseach Simon Harris TD.

Taoiseach delivers his first Budget with significant cost of living package

Last week, the Taoiseach delivered his first Budget as Taoiseach with a very substantial cost of living package. An Taoiseach Simon Harris said he wanted to help people "in the here and now". This budget was delivered to put money back into people's pockets and especially families, he said.

Speaking exclusively to the *Wicklow Times*, Taoiseach Simon Harris said: "The Budget I have delivered this year is designed to help people with the cost of living, the cost of raising a family and the rising bills. My priority was to make sure people could keep more of their hard-earned money in their pocket and that's what this budget has done. We have done this by reducing people's taxes but also delivering a number of energy credits before and after Christmas.

"Most importantly, and this was a measure I was really keen on delivering was the double payment of double child benefit between now and Christmas. In November and December parents will receive a double child benefit per child which will make a significant impact.

"By way of example, a family with three children will receive between now and Christmas a total of 840 euros, just from child benefit. We are also giving additional help to those who need it the most

with increases in payments for our pensioners, our carers and people with disabilities.

"There are so many measures this budget has brought forward which are positive and impactful for the people of Ireland, for instance the roll out of Universal Companion Pass. This pass will now allow those who have a free travel pass to bring a companion on board their travel for free.

"This measure is aimed at tackling isolation and making sure that older people travelling on the free travel pass can be accompanied by their family member or friend for free. The most important big idea from my perspective is how we tackle child poverty and how we help children and objectively this is a budget that is really good for families. Let me give you another example - we have delivered the biggest increase we have ever seen in the child support payment, it'll now be worth €62 a week to a child over the age of twelve and €50 for somebody under the age of twelve, in recognition of the fact

that we have to lift children out of poverty. On top of this free school books are being extended up to the Leaving Cert. Free school meals being rolled out to all of our primary schools. College fees being reduced again by €1000.

"These are real measures that are going to make a difference in terms of child poverty, in terms of equality and in giving children a good start in life. When I became Taoiseach I said clearly I thought it was only appropriate that we would use the return from bank shares to invest in infrastructure like housing, like water and like electricity, so that the generation who had suffered from the mismanagement of the country would actually start to see a return from those bank shares on those key issues.

"This Budget not only delivers for people in the here and now with a significant cost of living package but it also delivers for the future by making huge investments in key infrastructural areas this country needs. I know from speaking across Wicklow this week that a lot of measures we have announced this week have been well received and I am determined to do so much more to help families, especially as we head into darker and colder days this winter."

Greens hail Budget focused on families, children and the environment

Green Party TD Steven Matthews welcomed another Budget focused on "improving the lives of our children, families and the environment while also planning and providing for the future".

The Green Party-backed baby boost will see €420 paid to new mothers on the birth of their child. That comes on top of a €15 increase to child benefit and two double child benefit payments before Christmas worth €560. Children under-nine will also get free public transport and all primary school children will receive hot school meals every day for the first time. Leaving Certificate students will meanwhile benefit from free schoolbooks and the abolition of fees to sit the exams. Students in third level will see the cost of fees

reduced and the quality of their education improved. Other family measures include increased access to IVF and free HRT.

Other Green measures include a €15m increase for the National Parks and Wildlife Service which is now 170% better funded than it was in 2020.

Deputy Matthews said: "Every budget since the Greens took office has been aimed at making Ireland a fairer and more progressive country by supporting the people who need it most. This year is no exception. We have

introduced measures to protect the environment and expand local bus routes. The warmer homes scheme will be increased by €90m while the scheme for low-income households will have a budget of €240m or ten times higher than it was in 2020. This is more funding than ever will be available to make homes warmer, healthier, more comfortable and less expensive to heat.

"Turning to the long-term, Budget 2025 lays the foundations for massive investment in public transport, the national grid, water and housing. Both the proceeds of the sale of AIB shares and the money from the Apple judgement will be used to improve the country's infrastructure and ensure that we are ready for

a rising population and future energy shocks. This will improve services for existing homes and businesses and make it possible to build more homes in the right places across the country.

"Another progressive measure introduced by the budget is the land hoarder's tax to discourage land hoarding by developers of land that is serviced and ready to be used for new homes. This is an issue that the Green Party pushed consistently and ensured that this policy was enacted. I look forward to progressing these measures in the Finance Bill in the coming weeks and I will continue to do all I can to represent Wicklow for as long as I am elected to do so," concluded Deputy Matthews.



Steven Matthews TD.

'Unprecedented support for Wicklow's farming futures'

"I recently met with representatives of Farm groups. Running a farm business is extremely challenging and volatile."

The new funding in Budget 2025 provides a record €2bn in funding for the farming sector, Fine Gael General Election Candidate Councillor Edward Timmins has said.

Councillor Timmins firstly welcomed the exemption that Landowners can avail of from the Residential Zoned Land Tax (RZLT) in 2025 having recently made a video where he discussed this issue. This increased support includes targeted measures for tillage, beef, sheep, and dairy farmers in Wicklow to ensure they are well-positioned to plan for the future.

Speaking from Dunlavin County Wicklow, Councillor Edward Timmins General Election Candidate remarked: "Budget 2025 reflects Fine Gael's firm commitment to Irish agriculture, one that acknowledges the challenges farmers in Wicklow face while providing them with the support they need.

"A new tillage scheme will provide €100 per hectare on all sown ground in 2024, offering much-needed support to tillage farmers after a difficult few months. If we are to maintain and grow Ireland's tillage area then we must support farmers who have battled difficult weather conditions over the last 12 months.

"We're also delivering increased support for suckler farmers, with payments under the



Cllr Edward Timmins.

National Beef Welfare Scheme to rise from €50 to €75 per calf. Taken with the Suckler Carbon Efficiency Scheme, this will deliver payments of up to €225 per cow in 2025. Sheep farmers will also receive a boost, with payments increasing from €20 to €25 per ewe.

"We will also increase funding available under the Dairy Calf Welfare Scheme. Currently a payment of €20 per calf is available and this will be doubled to €40 per calf. I want to see these additional funds going to farmers who rear the calves."

Cllr Timmins added: "Furthermore, farmers will benefit from changes to inheritance tax thresholds secured by Fine Gael. This reform is particularly important for family farms, helping to ease the financial burden experienced by many farmers in Wicklow of passing farms from one generation to the next. We are also strengthening the protections around agricultural relief to ensure this support goes to genuine farmers, and not wealthy investors."

Fine Gael's Minister in the Department of Agriculture Martin Heydon T.D. said: "Fine Gael's focus in Budget 2025 has been to support farmers and provide them with certainty. Additional funds for the suckler, beef, sheep, and tillage sectors will complement the continued rollout of the CAP strategic plan as significant schemes such as ACRES and TAMS 3.

'Budget 2025 eases cost of living pressures'

Fianna Fáil Senator Pat Casey has said Budget 2025 will deliver targeted supports to people, families and businesses to alleviate pressures caused by the increased cost of living.

Senator Casey said, "In Budget 2025 we are implementing measures to protect the most vulnerable in society, give families and households a break, safeguard the economy and prepare for the future.

"We want to cushion people, families, pensioners and businesses from the impact of inflation over recent years. That is why we are giving every household €250 in energy credits this Winter.

"Fianna Fáil in Government has championed increases to the State pension and prioritised the well-being of older people and the most vulnerable. Budget 2025 sees a €12 rise in all weekly social protection payments and lowers the eligibility age for the Fuel Allowance from 70 to 66."

Fianna Fáil councillor



Senator Pat Casey.

Pat Kennedy added: "This budget sees the most any Government has ever invested in housing. Over 115,000 new homes have been completed since we entered government in 2020. We are guaranteeing the Help-to-Buy scheme will be in place to the end of the decade and for renters we are increasing the renters tax credit for both this year and next to €1,000 per renter to help them with the cost of rent.

"In healthcare we are focused on affordability and universal access based on need, not ability to pay. We are increasing investment in mental health services and addressing overcrowding and waiting lists by expanding surgical hubs, fully funding the National Cancer Strategy, and rolling out free HRT for women.

"Budget 2025 prioritises those who need it most, offering significant income tax relief to help address ongoing cost-of-living pressures. Under Fianna Fail, the average worker will be approximately €1,000 better off, thanks to a combination of income tax cuts and targeted cost-of-living supports.

"We have provided unprecedented supports to

SMEs across the country which are the backbone of our economy, providing jobs and supporting local communities. Budget 2025 measures will provide direct cost-of-doing-business support grants of up to €4,000, reduce complexity, boost Ireland's attractiveness as a place to do business, support innovation and provide (delete for) a range of new and enhanced tax relief schemes and incentives."



Cllr Pat Kennedy.

Some of the key measures

- A €12 increase in the state pension.
- Over-70s are to benefit from a new 'bring a friend' expansion of the free travel scheme.
- The point at which people pay the higher rate of tax of 40% will increase from €42,000 to €44,000.
- The personal, employee PAYE and earned income tax credits will go up by €125.
- The 4% rate of Universal Social Charge is reduced from 4% to 3% on incomes €25,000 to €70,000.
- Parents of newborns will receive a one-off payment of €420.
- €15 weekly increase in maternity, paternity and parents' benefit.
- Free IVF scheme will be expanded.
- Two double payments of Child Benefit in November and December.
- A double payment of all welfare rates in October and December.
- A €400 lump sum for those in receipt of the working family payment.

'Budget shows Govt is out of time and out of ideas to fix the problems in society'

Sinn Féin TD John Brady has said that Budget 2025 is further proof that the Government is out of time and out of ideas. Deputy Brady said that the government has no plan to fix the big problems in society, and that they have 'thrown in the towel' on housing and health.

Deputy Brady added that it beggars belief that there has been no additional funding to increase housing output when the state has a surplus of €24bn.

Deputy Brady said: "Budget 2025 is further proof that we have a government that is out of ideas and out of time. They have thrown a lot of money around but have no plan to fix the big problems in society.

"It is clear that they have thrown in the towel on health and housing - it simply beggars belief that despite having a surplus of €24bn that the government has provided no additional money to increase housing output.

"This budget is another example of a government incapable of delivering real

change and unable to deliver value for money. Ordinary workers, families and communities are asking if this budget will address the housing crisis, will it fix the health service, will it tackle the cost of living in a meaningful way or will it deliver fundamental change to our childcare system. The answer to all those questions is no. This budget fails on housing, fails on health, fails on childcare, and fails carers and people with disabilities. This is a government that has all the resources but is incapable and unwilling to deliver the change that is required.

"In contrast, Sinn Fein's alternative budget set out a real alternative for our people. We outlined how we would

make housing affordable, delivering 300,000 public and private homes over five years - homes that are secure and affordable. We set out how we would fundamentally change our childcare system by introducing childcare at €10 a day per child, which would be a game-changer for families.

"Crucially, our alternative budget was an action plan to tackle the cost of living, one that gives workers and families a break and puts money back into people's pockets. That includes the abolition of the USC on the first €45,000 of income for all workers, which would benefit every worker, with USC removed from all or most of their income.

"We also introduced the most substantial package of supports ever presented for carers in a single budget, increasing the thresholds for carers from €900 to €1,460 for a couple, and we have committed to abolishing the unfair means test for carers in government.

"Everyday Fianna Fail and Fine Gael remain in office, we are squandering valuable time, and squandering valuable resources and when the general election is called, there will be a choice to make. A choice between those repeated failures of Fine Gael and Fianna Fail, or a new government that will roll-up its sleeves and get down to work, delivering real solutions and a better life for ordinary people and our communities."



John Brady TD.

'People of Wicklow will not be fooled by giveaway budget'



Jennifer Whitmore TD.

"With its dizzying array of one-off measures, Budget 2025 was not about improving public services or helping people cope with cost-of-living increases. It had just one overriding purpose - self preservation of the Government parties," Social Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore said.

"It was a throwback to the Celtic Tiger era, spraying money around like there is no tomorrow. The massive splurge is designed to create a distraction, with the Government hoping it will do enough to win an election.

"But it is obvious to most people that the Government is trying to buy their votes with their own money. They recognise textbook electioneering when they see it and realise that the few extra quid in their pockets will quickly be gobbled up by cost-of-living increases.

"All the one-off payments will be very welcome in the short-term - but they won't last long. And what then? What happens when the bonus payments dry up,

prices continue to rise and people still struggle to pay their bills or put a roof over their heads?

"This budget will not make homes in Wicklow any more affordable or healthcare easier to access. It won't increase the availability of childcare places or make disability services for children with additional needs more accessible.

"It will not allow disabled people to live more independent lives or better support older people to remain living at home. Nor will it end the scandal of child poverty or inequality in our society.

"It won't improve poor public transport services in Wicklow or create extra classroom places in

our schools. We all know that the only way to significantly drive down costs for everyone is by investing in public services. That means quality childcare, genuinely free education, affordable housing, accessible healthcare, reliable public transport and strong social care delivered in the community.

"But under this Government, we live in a country where children awaiting scoliosis surgery languish on waiting lists in agony for years while resources are frittered away on bonus payments and energy credits for the wealthiest in our society.

"People are sick of public money being squandered, from runaway children's hospital costs to €330,000 bike sheds and €1.5 million security huts - not to mention ludicrous plans to spend €9 million on mobile phone pouches for schools.

It begs the question: how on

earth can a Government so wasteful of public money be trusted to manage a €25 billion surplus? This budget is a bad deal for the public and for the States finances. The electorate will not be bought so easily.

"Nor is it the answer to dealing with the insidious problems of social media usage by our teens, most of which happens outside of school hours. Government energy would be better placed ensuring that stringent controls are placed on social media companies in relation to the content they can push on children such as limiting the algorithms that force unimaginable horrors on our children every minute they are on the phone.

"As we see time and time again with this Government, they go for the easy policies that garner big headlines rather than make the systems changes that will make an actual difference."

Students 'flabbergasted' over €9 million phone pouches

The Irish Second-Level Students' Union (ISSU) is shocked at the allocation of €9 million for mobile phone pouches in Budget 2025.

Speaking last week, ISSU President Jack McGinn said: I am flabbergasted over the allocation of €9 million euro for glorified 'zip-lock' bags for mobile phones. To put this figure into context, Capitation Funding for schools that covers heating and lighting costs is merely €10 million. This will directly affect families as schools will be forced to rely on Voluntary Contribution Fees to cover the funding shortfall that was not addressed in this budget. Voluntary Contribution Fees can amount to hundreds of euros, adding an additional financial pressure on families as the winter weather sets in."

Mr. McGinn welcomed the delivery of free school books

to Senior Cycle students, but highlighted the spending of €9 million on phone pouches created the sense that the Department of Education was out of touch with the needs of schools on the ground.

"I am calling on the Department to own this mistake, and urgently re-allocate the funds to much needed areas such as school buildings, additional SNA and teaching posts, the DEIS Plus scheme and Capitation Funding for schools. The idea that phone pouches is a top concern, amid a teacher retention and recruitment crisis, sends the wrong message to those on the ground in schools."

Mr. McGinn highlighted that most schools already have successful mobile phone policies in operation, with students usually placing their phones in their school locker or bag throughout the day.

'Budget deepens crisis for hospitality sector'

The Irish Hotels Federation (IHF) expressed deep disappointment with Budget 2025, saying the Government has failed to respond to the commercial crisis facing hospitality food-led businesses.

IHF President Michael Magner says: "The Budget does next to nothing to address the enormous challenges confronting our sector while at the same time imposing further costs on thousands of hospitality businesses. The decision not to reduce the hospitality VAT rate is short-sighted and extremely concerning given the stark commercial environment that food service businesses are operating under. These businesses are facing a perfect storm as they grapple with rising costs, the impact of the 13.5% VAT rate

and very tight margins. It is becoming increasingly clear that Government policies are now fundamentally at odds with the long-term interests of our sector and wider tourism industry. The half-baked measures announced today will have almost no impact for businesses that are struggling with ever-increasing costs, much of which are a direct result of the Government's own economic policies. The bottom line is that inaction now poses an enormous risk to our wider hospitality and tourism industry which, as

one of Ireland's largest indigenous employers, supports over 280,000 livelihoods some 70% of which are outside of Dublin. We are calling for an urgent re-assessment of the Government's policy approach to Irish hospitality and tourism in order to stave off a growing commercial crisis within the sector before it is too late. This must involve a direct intervention by the Government party leaders to address the alarming deterioration in the commercial model of hospitality food services."

'A Budget which will turn to dust'

Independent councillor Joe Behan says "As the dust settles on Budget 2025, a number of things are now clear. While presiding over the most enormous amount of money ever available to an Irish Government, Fine Gael, Fianna Fáil and the Greens decided to splash the cash in one-off payments in a cynical attempt to bribe the people with their own money."

"One-off Child Benefit payments before Christmas will be wiped out by the hugely increased costs of food, clothes and other essentials needed for Christmas. Meanwhile the ongoing costs of childcare will surely be increased as the costs for child care providers continue to rise.

"The grudging small changes in the means testing for Carers is one of the most insulting of all in this giveaway Budget as it leaves Carers still providing billions of euros worth of free care to the State, while receiving very little respite or respect for their loving care of family and friends, many of whom have highly complex needs, often on a 24/7 basis.

"The most damning aspect of the Budget has to be the complete absence of a radical and emergency funding plan to provide the hundreds of thousands of homes we need now to cater for those who are working their socks off but will never be able to buy their own home as well as those who qualify for social housing but who are destined to wait for many years before their housing need is met.

"This is a Budget which will turn to dust in the months ahead as the underlying problems we face in housing, health, education and business will still be with us next year and the year after and the year after unless and until we tackle these challenges in a much more intelligent way."



Cllr Joe Behan.

Step into Comfort: Discover the Bray Chiropody and Podiatry Difference

Are your feet yearning for a little TLC? Look no further! Welcome to Bray Chiropody and Podiatry, where every step you take leads to absolute comfort and relief. Our team of podiatrists are dedicated to putting the spring back in your step and ensuring your feet feel fantastic.

Why Choose Bray Chiropody and Podiatry?

Expertise You Can Trust: Our team of podiatrists boasts a wealth of knowledge and a track

record of success. From common ailments to complex conditions, we have seen it all, and we're here to guide you towards healthier, happier feet.

Personalised Care: At Bray Chiropody and Podiatry, we understand that no two feet are alike. For this reason, we offer tailor-made treatment plans designed specifically

for you. Whether you are a weekend warrior looking to prevent or treat a lower limb injury, or someone in need of everyday comfort, we have you covered.

Cutting-Edge Technology: We stay at the forefront of podiatric advancements, employing the latest technologies and techniques to ensure you receive the highest standard of care. Our state-of-the-art facilities are equipped with the most advanced diagnostic and treatment tools available.

Comprehensive Services:

- **Foot Pain Relief:** Bid farewell to nagging foot pain. Our specialists will identify the root cause and provide targeted treatments for swift relief.

- **Nail Surgery:** Partial and full nail removal for

ingrowing, thickened or pincer nails.

- **Swift Emblation for Verrucae:** The most effective treatment for verruca in medicine today.

- **Custom and Off-the-Shelf Orthotics:** Experience a bespoke approach to foot support. Our custom-made orthotics are crafted to fit your unique foot structure, ensuring unrivaled comfort. We also have a full range of off-the-shelf devices to support, correct and cushion your feet, as well as thermal insoles to insulate cold feet and cool down hot feet.

- **Sports Injury Manag-**

ement: Whether you're a weekend warrior or upcoming marathoner, our sports-focused treatments will get you back in the game using Medical Grade Laser, Acupuncture and Dry Needling and Taping techniques.

- **Diabetic Foot Care:** Our compassionate team understands the unique needs of diabetic patients, providing specialized care to safeguard your foot health. ABPI, Toe pressures, ultrasound and full neurological assessments carried out.
- **HSE Chiropody Card Service:** We offer a reduced rate for those with HSE Chiropody Cards, and are committed to providing the highest possible standard of personalised care for less.

A Holistic Approach to Wellness

"At Bray Chiropody and Podiatry, we believe that healthy feet are the

foundation of overall well-being. Our holistic approach encompasses education, prevention, and intervention to promote lifelong foot health. From routine podiatry to therapeutic laser, we're committed to keeping you on your feet and thriving."

Your Journey to Happy, Healthy Feet Starts Here

"Don't let foot discomfort hold you back. Step into a brighter, more comfortable future with Bray Chiropody and Podiatry. Schedule your appointment today and experience the difference expert care can make. Your feet will thank you! "Contact us at (01) 2760271, email us on enquiries@braypodiatry.com or visit our website at www.braypodiatry.com to learn more.

"Your feet deserve the best, and we are here to provide it."



COMHAIRLE CONTAE CHILL MHANTÁIN
WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL



WICKLOW COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2022-2028 PROPOSED VARIATION NO. 2

Notice is hereby given pursuant to Section 13 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) that Wicklow County Council, being the planning authority for the area, proposes to VARY the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 in respect of the following:

PROPOSED VARIATION NO. 2

Integrating the land use zoning map and key development objectives from the Wicklow Town – Rathnew Local Area Plan (LAP), which is being prepared separately but alongside the Proposed Variation, as well as other changes consequent into the County Development Plan.

Reason for Proposed Variation:

The purpose of the Variation is to ensure consistency between the draft and final Wicklow Town – Rathnew LAP with the County Development Plan 2022 - 2028.

A copy of the Proposed Variation, together with

- Strategic Environmental Assessment screening report and associated determination (pursuant to the European Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC and the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (as amended)) and
- Appropriate Assessment screening report and associated determination (pursuant to the EU European Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)),

will be available to view at the following locations, during their normal opening hours, from Wednesday 09 October 2024 to Wednesday 20 November 2024 inclusive:

- Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Station Road, Wicklow Town
- Wicklow Municipal District Office, Town Hall, Market Square, Wicklow Town
- Wicklow Town Library
- Copies of the variation are available to download and view on the Council's website www.wicklow.ie through an **online consultation portal**. Scan the QR code on this notice to access the portal.

MAKING A SUBMISSION

Submissions or observations regarding the Proposed Variation and the associated reports are hereby invited from the public and interested bodies. Children, or groups or associations representing the interests of children, are entitled to make submissions or observations. Written submissions or observations made before midnight on **20 November 2024** will be taken into consideration before the making of the Proposed Variation.

Submissions may be made in one of the following ways:

1. Write to 'Variation No.2, Administrative Officer, Planning Section, Wicklow County Council, Station Road, Wicklow Town.
2. Through the **online consultation portal** at www.wicklow.ie or scan the QR code on this notice.

NOTE

- YOU ARE STRONGLY ADVISED TO MAKE YOUR SUBMISSION AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE.
- All submissions are to be clearly marked with 'Variation No.2'.
- All submissions should include your name and a contact address, a map (where appropriate) and, where relevant, details of any organisation, community group or company etc., which you represent.
- Please make your submission by one medium only, i.e. hard copy or e-mail.
- All valid submissions will form a part of the statutory Chief Executive's report and will be available to view online.
- The planning process is an open and public one, therefore all submissions/observations are a matter of public record and will be available for public viewing, they may also be placed on the County Council's website.
- LATE SUBMISSIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Wicklow County Council is committed to Access For All. All of the above documents are available in alternative format on request. Please contact Wicklow County Council on 0404-20100 should you have any specific access requirements.

New strategy seeks to transform pharmacies into healthcare hubs

The Irish Pharmacy Union has launched a new White Paper, has outlining a policy framework to transform pharmacy care in Wicklow by turning pharmacies into key healthcare hubs, improving access to community care. The IPU says, that with the right strategy and resources pharmacies can play a greater role in improving access to community healthcare.

TD Steven Matthews attended the event held to mark World Pharmacist Day in Dublin at the end of September. Speaking at the launch Tom Murray, President of the IPU, said, "With 78 million visits per year pharmacies are the most accessed part of our healthcare system. However, the absence of

a national pharmaceutical care policy limits their potential."

To enable the rollout of this vision Murray said "pharmacy care will require the appropriate level of resourcing. Many pharmacies, particularly those in rural areas, are facing financial difficulties due to outdated payment structures and rising costs.

"The average pharmacy receives almost two-thirds of its income from the State for providing care through the community drug schemes. The fees provided for this care have been frozen since 2009, and pharmacies like every other business and individual, have experienced soaring operational costs."

In conclusion Mr Murray said, "There is so much exciting potential in pharmacy care. It is possible to revolutionise our pharmacy care services within a few short years, but it will require vision and, above all, the proper resourcing of our pharmacies to make this a reality."



Helena Browne and Jess Doolin at the Honey Festival in Ashford.

Wicklow region sees highest increase in practising GPs

Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly has welcomed new data showing the Wicklow area recording the highest increase in GPs. Nationally the increase in the number of GPs has been 7%, but it is multiples of that in some areas, including Wicklow.

Minister Donnelly said: "General Practice is an important part of the reform and improvement of our health service. Our GPs are playing a much bigger role in providing care closer to home, and in keeping people out of Emergency Departments and hospitals. We now have more doctors than ever in training to become a GP with the

number of training places increasing by 80% since 2019. Our GP to population ratio has increased and with the increased numbers in training will continue to do so. "The increase in active GPs in CHO7 which includes West Wicklow is 20.4% since 2019, while in CHO6 which includes the rest of the county it is nearly

14.5%. In the new HSE Health area of Dublin and South East we currently have 7.9 GPs per 10,000 population, which is above the national average of 7.4. I'm confident that as more and more GPs qualify each year this number will continue to increase. A career as a GP is now deemed more attractive in Ireland as evidenced

by over 1,300 applications for the 350 training places this year.

"I know we need to keep increasing GPs and to ensure people can get an appointment when they need it and that at certain times of the year, or in certain areas there remains some pressures."

General Practice has developed significantly in recent years with the addition of primary care centres and the Enhanced Community Care Programme. This has resulted in more care close to or at home and means patients do not need to attend hospitals for appointments.

Minister Donnelly added: "We're exceptionally lucky in Wicklow with a network of primary care centres across the county, and I was delighted to see the planning application for a major development in Greystones lodged recently. We also have the Integrated Care Hubs and I've been very impressed with the impact, particularly in Bray where waiting times for services for older people and people living with complex chronic diseases have fallen from in some cases years to just weeks."



Minister Stephen Donnelly and Dr Louise Campbell at the new Wicklow Family Practice in Wicklow Town Primary Care Centre.

Brady slams delays in approval for safety measures for mobility impaired individuals

Sinn Féin TD John Brady has slammed the amount of time that it is taking the HSE to grant approval for the installation of safety measures such as grab rails for individuals at risk from falls due to mobility issues arising from hip replacements or other orthopaedic ailments, and people recovering from accidents and injuries.

It generally could take up to eight months for the installation of the safety equipment to be approved following a site visit from an occupational therapist. Which is creating unnecessary and unacceptable risk levels for vulnerable individuals who are at risk from falls.

Deputy Brady said: "I have been contacted by many, many people from across the county of Wicklow, some recovering from hip operations, or other orthopaedic procedures, many more suffering as a result of accidents, and all deeply concerned around their personal situations as they wait for the HSE to approve the installation of safety measures in their homes.

"One man who we have been in regular contact recounted his own personal difficulties, the falls that he has endured, and how that has made him fearful of living on his own, but having no option but doing the best he could until the HSE eventually gave approval for contractors to install safety measures in his home.

"I have been in contact with the HSE about this issue, urging for an improvement on the turnaround times, and they have confirmed that it can take up to eight months before a patient receives a visit from an occupational therapist, who has to give approval for the installation of safety measures, following which the work is then carried out by a contractor.

"I don't know why it takes this long. But I do know that it needs to improve. Seven or eight months is far too long for patients in need to have to wait for the HSE to approve the installation of safety measures such as grab rails and other measures to safety proof their homes against falls. We are talking about vulnerable individuals who need to have these measures installed to help them stay safe from falls. The HSE is operating under capacity constraints as a result of government underfunding. In their response to my questioning, the HSE stated that their response times are based on the current level of referrals and their resources available to them to respond across the wider Wicklow area. It is the responsibility of Minister Stephen Donnelly to ensure that there are sufficient resources available. This is a further indictment of his and his government colleague's decision to suspend recruitment last year."



COMHAIRLE CONTAE CHILL MHANTÁIN
WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL



WICKLOW COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2022-2028 DRAFT 'WICKLOW TOWN – RATHNEW LOCAL AREA PLAN 2025' HAVE YOUR SAY ON THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUR AREA!!

Notice is hereby given pursuant to Section 20 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) that Wicklow County Council, being the planning authority for the area, proposes to make a new Local Area Plan (LAP) for **Wicklow Town – Rathnew**. This plan will, when adopted, replace the existing 'Wicklow Town – Rathnew Development Plan 2013 – 2019'. The new LAP should be read in conjunction with the County Wicklow Development Plan (CDP) 2022 – 2028.

The 'Wicklow Town – Rathnew LAP 2025' will consist of a written statement indicating the objectives in detail as may be required by the planning authority for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, maps and appendices. Appendices include;

- An Environmental Report on the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the LAP – pursuant to the European Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC) and the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (as amended).
- Habitats (Appropriate) Assessment Stage 2 Report (Natura Impact Report) - pursuant to Article 6[3] of the European Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended); and
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment – pursuant to Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

DISPLAY OF LAP

The 'Draft Wicklow Town – Rathnew LAP 2025' and associated documents will be available to view at the following locations, during their normal opening hours, from **Wednesday 09 October 2024 to Wednesday 20 November 2024** inclusive:

- Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Station Road, Wicklow Town
- Wicklow Municipal District Office, Town Hall, Market Square, Wicklow Town
- Wicklow Town Library
- Copies of the plan are available to download and view on the Council's website www.wicklow.ie through an **online consultation portal**. Scan the QR code on this notice to access the portal.

PUBLIC INFORMATION DAY

Everyone is invited to a public information day that will be held in the Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Station Road, Wicklow Town, A67 FW96 on **Thursday 24 October 2024** from **10.00 to 13.00 and 16.00 to 19.00**. The plan team will be available on the day 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 13.00 and 16.00 on that day. Please ring 0404 20148 to arrange a one to one meeting.

MAKING A SUBMISSION

Submissions or observations regarding the draft LAP and the associated reports are hereby invited from the public and interested bodies. Children, or groups or associations representing the interests of children, are entitled to make submissions or observations. Written submissions or observations made before midnight on **20 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. Write to 'Wicklow Town – Rathnew LAP', Administrative Officer, Planning Section, Wicklow County Council, Station Road, Wicklow Town.
2. Through the **online consultation portal** at www.wicklow.ie or scan the QR code on this notice.

NOTE

- YOU ARE STRONGLY ADVISED TO MAKE YOUR SUBMISSION AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE.
- All submissions are to be clearly marked with '**Wicklow Town - Rathnew LAP**'.
- All submissions should include your name, a map (where appropriate) and, where relevant, details of any organisation, community group or company etc., which you represent.
- Please make your submission by one medium only, i.e. hard copy or through the portal.
- All valid submissions will form a part of the statutory Chief Executive's report and will be available to view online..
- The planning process is an open and public one, therefore all submissions/observations are a matter of public record and will be available for public viewing, they may also be placed on the County Council's website and therefore should not include any personal information.
- LATE SUBMISSIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Wicklow County Council is committed to Access For All. All of the above documents are available in alternative format on request. Please contact Wicklow County Council on 0404-20100 should you have any specific access requirements.

Bray Choral Society celebrate 40 years

Bray Choral Society (BCS) is celebrating its 40th anniversary with a very special event: 'What to Wear' - A Style & Image Evening, taking place at Powerscourt Hotel in Enniskerry on Friday, 11th October.

The evening will begin at 7pm with a live performance by local saxophone player Donie Deveney setting the mood while guests browse displays from local boutiques in Wicklow and Wexford. At 8pm sharp, Kathryn Byrne, renowned Image Consultant from YourImageMatters.ie, will take to the stage to deliver a dynamic and interactive presentation focusing on style, fashion and personal image.

The first half will be entirely about the audience, learning better ways to shop, how to work with your existing clothes, discovering your style personality, personal colouring, how to dress for different body shapes, plus lots more.

After a short break, Kathryn will weave clothes from the various boutiques in to her presentation, showing you why and how they work by relating back to information from the first half. By the end of the evening, guests will have gained valuable insights into their own personal style that they can confidently apply in their everyday lives.

They may also gain a prize from 'Raffle of Experiences' that BCS have put together thanks to the enormous generosity of local hotels, theatres, garden centres and individuals. Too many to mention, these prizes will offer 'another day out' for the lucky winners.

Indeed the choir have reported their own experience of a 'wave of love' from the Bray community as they prepare for this event, with local photographer Fergal Holmes offering his services free of charge, and Kilruddery House providing their magnificent Orangerie for the photoshoot, a testament to this cherished local choir which is going strong for 40 years with legendary and much loved musical director Frank Kelly at the helm since Day 1.

'What to Wear' promises to be a joyful social night out of fun, music and fashion. Tickets are €30 on Eventbrite. For hard copy tickets call (086) 244 3034 or email: info.braychoralsociety@gmail.com



Bray Choral Society choir members at the orangerie in Killruddery.

The Wait is over!

For their brand new show, An Táin Arts Centre's theatre Community Company in residence - Encore Productions, bring 'The Beckett List' to the Mermaid Arts Centre on Wednesday 16th October, 1pm. €10.

Samuel Beckett changed the world of theatre with his ground breaking plays, winning a Nobel Prize for his efforts. But while his plays have been said to have neither plot nor action, his life story reads like a novel.

From grey Dublin in the 1900's to colourful times with the great writers and

artists in Paris during the 1920's Beckett's outlook and art were transformed.

As the victim of a near fatal stabbing and as an active member of the French

resistance against the Nazis in world war two he knew his hardships- but there was

friendship along the way. He got to know fellow Irish writer James Joyce and his huge encyclopaedic books, but it was the stripped back sculptures of Alberto Giacometti that were to provide a way forward for the struggling writer.

The Beckett list' vividly tells the life story of Samuel Beckett and his art with striking stage images, passionate acting and atmospheric music and film. More than this the play uses iconic characters from works such as

'Endgame', 'Happy Days' and his breakthrough 'Waiting for Godot' to help tell the story and introduce audiences to some of Beckett's great works.

Jamie Linden will play Samuel Beckett, with Mary Francis McAteer and David Coyle as his parents. Alex Tamuyeye plays Beckett's teacher, Dolores McKeever and Nicki Cormican team up as master and servant Hamm and Clov, while Oliver Hanratty is the banana eating Krapp. Anita Guest is Winnie - buried in sand but with her handbag and hair brush at the ready.

Melissa lFox and Sandra Shields play Peggy and Suzanne - two of the loves in Samuel Beckett's life. Paddy Durmin is the chess playing surrealist Marcel Duchamp while Rodger Zyro and Olivia McGinnity will play existentialist superstars Jean

Paul Sartre and Simone De Beauvoir. Martin Hanley, Christopher McKeivitt, Brendan O'Shea have a busy time of it swapping paintbrushes for pistols as modern artists and as soldiers. Finally, stepping out from the pages of waiting for Godot we have Rachel Tinniswood and Grainne O'Hanlon as Estragon and Vladimir and Aoife Lawless and Moninna McCarthy as Lucky and Pozzo.

The actor's performances are enriched by films created by Dara McCluskey featuring the voice talents of Therese Baxter and Jason Kelly who also acts as technical assistant on the production. The show is directed by Sandy Sneddon and all the actors are drawn from RehabCare's services in Dundalk. Encore productions was the recipient of an Irish Healthcare Centre

Award last year recognising their innovations in delivering a social care service with a serious theatrical focus within a professional arts setting.

The group are delighted to be touring again after a long hiatus imposed by the Covid pandemic and its aftermath. With shows lined up in the Mermaid centre in Bray and the Iontas Centre in Castleblaney the group are set to bring their unique theatrical vision to fresh audiences.

Beckett's plays are thought by some as difficult - the characters often isolated and lonely or lost and unsure of how they should go on. But his characters meet their fate with humour and hope and the knowledge that when the hard times come they are best faced together - despite the company!



Cohen Unlimited, performing at their concert in Wicklow Parish Church.



ETSS Wicklow secures permanent school site

Educate Together Secondary School (ETSS) Wicklow is set to embark on an exciting new chapter as the Department of Education has confirmed the school's permanent site. The former Abbey Community College in Wicklow town will soon be transformed into a state-of-the-art facility for the Educate Together school, with construction expected to begin under the Department's fast-track ADAPT programme.

The new campus will cater to 600 students, with additional provisions for students with special educational needs. The Department's decision follows extensive studies confirming the suitability of the site. The project is now on a priority list for accelerated delivery, with the appointment of a design team anticipated by the

end of 2024. The ETSS Wicklow community will take an active role in the design and planning process, ensuring the new building reflects the school's ethos of collaboration, innovation, and creativity. School leaders have welcomed the announcement, describing it as a landmark moment for the school. "This is a signifi-

cant step forward for our students and staff," said Principal John Maddock. "The new building will provide modern, inspiring spaces that will enhance learning and foster a sense of community." With cutting-edge facilities and specialised learning environments, the new building will allow ETSS Wicklow to

continue delivering high-quality education and preparing students for future success. Danny Haskins, Chairperson of the Board of Management, added, "This permanent site represents stability and growth for ETSS Wicklow. We're excited to see the school community thrive in a purpose-built environment."



ETSS, Wicklow Town.

The start of a new chapter for St.Cronan's

Social Democrats TD for Wicklow, Jennifer Whitmore visited St Cronan's school in Bray recently to wish them the very best ahead of their Open Evening which took place on Wednesday 25th September.

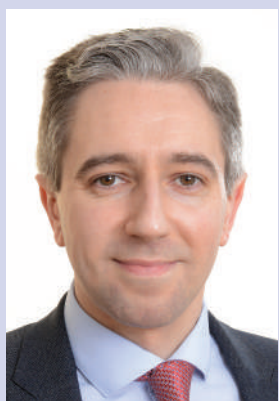
St Cronan's school are at the start of a new chapter and from next September will be accepting Junior Infant girls and boys for the first time in their 204-year history. "I was delighted to visit the students and teachers at St Cronan's today and to wish them luck for their Open Evening. It was wonderful to meet with Principal Eoghan Breathnach and to see the facilities that the school has to offer, as well as meeting members of staff," commented Deputy Whitmore. "The school is at the start of an exciting and positive change by not only becoming co-ed but also

enrolling a Junior Infants class for the first time in its history. Up until now, parents have sent their junior infants to the neighbouring St Patrick's school. The girls then continued at St Patrick's up to 6th class and the boys transferred to St Cronan's for 1st to 6th class. But now parents in Bray will have the opportunity for their children to attend either school and for the first time, brothers and sisters will be able to attend St Cronan's or St Patrick's for all their primary school years," added Deputy Whitmore, who is the Social Democrats spokesperson for Children.

"I would like to commend the Boards of Management and school staff of both St Cronan's and St Patrick's, who have worked together to ensure a smooth transition which will allow both schools to thrive and offer parents in Bray more choice when it comes to primary schools for their children," concluded Deputy Whitmore. The two schools will operate a Common Enrolment Application Procedure initially so that the change happens smoothly, with enrolments for both schools open from October 1st 2024.

Extension for St. Saviour's National School

An Taoiseach Simon Harris has announced that St. Saviour's National school in Rathdrum has been approved for an extension by the Department of Education. The Extension will allow the school to accommodate one full extra mainstream classroom.



An Taoiseach Simon Harris.

The Taoiseach says this will be a huge improvement on the school and will cater for the increase in students in the area. The Taoiseach said: "I am thrilled to share that St. Saviour's has been approved for an extension under the Additional School Accommodation Scheme. This will be hugely welcome news for families across the area, and I look forward to seeing the positive impact this will have for the growing community in Rathdrum. "Wicklow has had to deal with school place shortages for too long, and I will continue to work closely with the Department of Education to ensure that similar projects are pursued across the county. "As Taoiseach, and as TD for Wicklow, children and local communities are at the heart of everything I do, so I am delighted to see this project being given approval."



St Cronan's Principal Eoghan Breathnach and Jennifer Whitmore TD.

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PRAYERS

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.C.

PRAYER FOR A SPECIAL REQUEST

Oh! Dear Mother of God. Our Lady of Conception Aparecida! Oh! Saint Rita of Cassia and Saint Jude worker of miracles and helper of impossible causes pray for me. Saint Expedite, Saint of urgent causes. Saint Edwige the Saint of the needy, you know how desperate I feel, please ask Jesus to help me (mention request) May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be adored and glorified for ever. Pray 1 Our Father. Hail Mary, Glory be..... Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Pray for 3 days. Publish on the 3rd day. See what will happen on the 4th day. A.C.

OH, BEAUTIFUL FLOWER OF MOUNT CARMEL

Oh, most beautiful flower of Mount Carmel, fruitful vine, splendour of Heaven, blessed Mother of the Son of God, Immaculate Virgin assist me in my necessity. Oh, Star of the sea, help me and show me herein you are my Mother. Oh, Holy Mary, Mother or God, Queen of Heaven and earth! I humbly beseech from the bottom of my heart to succour me in this necessity. There are none who can withstand your power. Oh, show me herein you are my Mother. Oh, Mary conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse in thee (3x). Holy Mother I place this cause in your hands (3x). say this prayer for 3 days and publish. Your prayers will be heard. A.C.

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. A.C.

Call for communities to help grow native woodlands

This month, The Nature Trust invites you to enjoy the beauty of autumn by joining their National Acorn Gathering including a gathering in Coillte's Ballygannon Wood, Rathdrum, on Tuesday the 15th October. This community event from 3.00-4.30pm promises to be a fun and rewarding way to connect with nature while helping to expand Ireland's native woodlands - one small acorn at a time.

Last year, with the help of amazing volunteers, schools, and local communities; The Nature Trust collected thousands of acorns, weighing in at 150kg. These acorns are now thriving in nurseries, ready to be planted into new native woodlands. This year, they are calling on you to help them gather more acorns to secure the future of Ireland's magnificent native oak.

Ciaran Fallon, Director of The Nature Trust, said: "These gatherings offer an incredible opportunity for communities across Ireland to take an active role in safeguarding our environment. As a social enterprise, our goal is to create new native wood-

lands at scale in Ireland. Community involvement and support is key to achieving this goal. Native trees like oak don't just look beautiful, they also play a vital role in capturing carbon and creating habitats for native wildlife. We are looking forward to increased participation in the national acorn gatherings this year. It's more than just a fun day out - it's a chance to make a meaningful, lasting impact to our natural heritage."

Acorns collected at this year's gatherings in Wicklow, Sligo, Kildare and Mayo will be sent to the Coillte tree nursery at Ballintemple, Co. Carlow to be weighed, graded, dried, stored and

subsequently germinated to produce oak seedlings. They will be grown on at the nursery until they are two to four years old, when they will be ready to be planted out to create new native woodlands.

Acorn Gathering 2024 will include community events and an exciting school's initiative, featuring hands-on learning, beautiful walks through mature woodlands, and of course, plenty of acorn collecting.

For more information on the National Acorn Gathering and to book your place, visit The Nature Trust website <https://naturetrust.ie/acorn-gathering-2024/> and check their social media pages for updates.



Acorn gathering in Ballygannon.

BYD expands electric range with first hybrid

BYD have done astonishingly well in establishing their brand in Ireland. Up to now, their three models were battery electric vehicles (BEV) only, but in a dramatic departure they will now offer Wicklow motorists a full plug in hybrid SUV complete with 1.5 litre petrol engine.

By Martin McCarthy

The BYD SEAL U Super Hybrid has a very much electric dominant powertrain, even though the hybrid engine itself is a fascinatingly clever and efficient piece of engineering.

The four cylinder engine has a high, 15.5:1, compression ratio, can rev to 15,500 rpm and achieves a thermal efficiency of 43%. It produces a hefty 72 Kw and 122 Nm of torque on its

own. Its range is over 1000km on a full tank. However, for some SEAL U drivers, they will never hear or use the ICE engine. In electric mode the range of 80km will be enough for most jour-

neys. The engine output has twin clutches - one driving the wheels and the other driving the generator. The spec and finish in the car I drove was amazing - as is the price. The range starts at €42,150



for the Boost version while the Design version with four-wheel drive and panoramic sunroof and other enhancements is €47,000 more.

Interestingly MG have recently also expanded

their formerly all BEV range with a hybrid. The future will not just be one type of car, but horses for courses where the hybrid will be sensible and sustainable solution for some years to come.

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

Planning Permission is sought by Giles and Madeleine Smyth for the construction of 3 no. single storey detached ancillary structures, within the curtilage of the site, including (a) a c.55 sq.m enclosed car port; (b) a c.24 sq.m enclosed barbecue and dining area; (c) a c.40 sq.m garden shed. And all associated site and drainage works to facilitate the development at 'Vico', 14 Dromont, Kindlestown Upper, Delgany, County Wicklow, A63 TF29. The planning application may be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy, at the offices of Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Whitegates, Wicklow Town, A67 FW96, during its public opening hours. The planning application may be viewed online at www.wicklow.ie, under planning online enquiries. A submission or observation in relation to the application may be made in writing to the planning authority, on payment of the prescribed fee (€20.00) within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date the application is received by the planning authority.



Pictured are Kieran Taylor, Rita Fitzpatrick and Eileen Kavanagh at the Greystones Active Retirement Association's Big Coffee Morning for Wicklow Hospice in Killian House. There was a full house for the coffee morning as loyal supporters of both GARA and Wicklow Hospice turned up in huge numbers. Alison Tyner from Wicklow Hospice came along to express her sincere thanks for everyone's generosity. Alison said, "Without your help, we would not be able to continue to offer our services to Wicklow people." Retiring Treasurer, Pat Riordan, received special words and a round of applause for his loyal work over many years. Pat was presented with a wonderful display of potted plants in recognition of his service. A total of €1,338.00 was raised on the day which will go directly to Wicklow Hospice for their vital services. GARA Greystones always welcomes new Members. Membership of €25 can be made each Thursday, 10.30 am to 11.30 am, Kilian House. Also, GARA Chair Yoga, each Monday, 1 pm to 2 pm.

PLANNING

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A further €2,752 paid out in Government business grants in Wicklow

Chartered Accountant and General Election Candidate for Fine Gael Councillor Edward Timmins has welcomed the news that a second round of business grants has now issued to 1123 businesses in County Wicklow.

"This is in addition to the first round of the Increased Cost of Business Grant issued earlier this year, bringing the total for County Wicklow to €6,458,919. I was delighted to be informed by my Fine Gael colleague Minister Peter Burke that a second round of the Increased Cost of Business grant has now been paid directly into businesses' bank accounts in county Wicklow.

"Retail and hospitality businesses have been issued with a second payment, in recognition of the cost pressures many are under. Research commissioned by Minister Burke has highlighted that these types of businesses have faced the highest rate of cost increases, and the Government under our new Taoiseach Simon Harris, has now responded by providing a second payment of up to €5,000 per business.

"As a business per-

son, I know that many of our small and medium-sized businesses across County Wicklow need support, in light of rising energy costs, staff costs and other pinch points. I have raised these issues with Minister Burke, who understands these pressures, and is preparing budget proposals with this in mind.

"The first round of the Increased Cost of Business grant was paid earlier this year to all businesses in rateable premises, amounting to half of their commercial rates bill to a maximum of €5,000. Now a second payment has been made, targeted to retail and hospitality, so that these businesses have had the value of their full rates bill hit their bank accounts.

"A total of €6,458,919 (€4,046,167 first round and €2,412,752 second round) has now been issued to businesses in County Wicklow, and I know that this

money will be valued by many small businesses locally."

Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment Peter Burke said: "We have now paid out over €226 million to 81,592

businesses nationwide, with a double payment issued to businesses in hospitality and retail. While the payment cannot offset the total cost increases experienced by businesses, it is targeted

government support for the businesses that need it most. The grant is only available to small and medium sized businesses whose rates bill is under €30,000, again targeted relief for our family businesses who are the backbone of our economy. I know from meeting businesses up and down this

country, from Bandon to Ballinasloe, Sligo to Sixmilebridge, support for our SME sector is needed and with the full backing of Taoiseach Simon Harris, I plan to continue to provide this support.

"Minister of State for Business, Employment and Retail Emer Higgins

said: "We have brought forward a number of new measures since April, including further supports being made available through our network of Local Enterprise Offices and a new platform for businesses to check which grants and supports they are entitled to; neh.gov.ie. Fine Gael will continue to support our SMEs as we head into our negotiations for Budget 2025."



Cllr Edward Timmins



After the success of Greystones' first Halloween swap shop last year the spooky swap shop returns to Greystones Library. Organised by Cllr Lourda Scott, Barbara from local sustainability business Greenthread and local parent Clodagh, the Halloween Swap Shop is happening Saturday, October 12th from 12.30pm. The organisers are asking for your old costumes now: Please have a look and see if you have any old costumes that won't be used this year. We are looking for anything that is clean and in good condition. If you can't make it on Oct 12th please drop what you have into the library and another Halloween spook can get to wear it! This will help reduce some of the waste at Halloween and help people save some money in the process." Costumes can be dropped into the library in advance of the day. Pictured are Barbara, Clodagh and Cllr Scott at last year's swap shop.

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Note that during funeral Masses in Kilcoole we will be closed during the hearse arriving and leaving as a mark of respect.

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We want to make sure that every child has the best start in life and we want to eliminate child poverty. That's why we are increasing investment in health care and the education system.

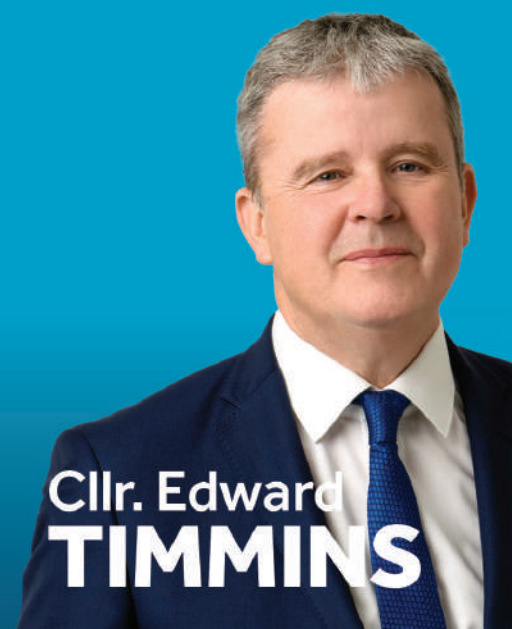


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