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Tuesday 1st April 2025 First Floor, The Boulevard, Quinsborough Road, Bray. A98 R6D7. Tel: 01 - 2869111 E-mail: wicklowed@localtimes.ie www.wicklowtimes.net

'GRIDLOCK AT BREAKING POINT'

Sinn Féin TD John Brady has called on the Taoiseach to immediately reinstate the funding for the upgrade of the N11/M11 that was cut in 2022. Speaking in The Dail last week Deputy Brady raised the chronic congestion on the N11/M11 directly with the Taoiseach and the need for the funding for the project.

"I called on the Taoiseach to immediately reinstate funding for the N11/M11 upgrade and deliver the infrastructure that Wicklow desperately needs," said Deputy Brady afterwards. "The government states in their Programme for Government that they will invest in all road projects in the National Development Plan - so they must honour that commitment

and allow this project to proceed.

"The gridlock on the N11/M11 has now reached breaking point, and the government's failure to act is a complete disgrace. This critical road upgrade was included in the National Development Plan 2021- 2030, yet in 2022, the government pulled its funding, despite serious warnings from the National Road Safety

Authority and the fact that Wicklow's population has grown massively in recent years.

"The lack of investment in infrastructure, job creation, and public transport in Wicklow has forced thousands of commuters into their cars every single day. They have no choice because the government has failed to provide viable alternatives. Now, every morning



Poppy Caffery pictured during rehearsal for the BIFE End of Year Showcase 'CONNECT', which will showcase the talents of BIFE's Performing Arts students. Pic: Michael Kelly.

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Ciaran Hogan

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6pm
Outside the Dáil
Kildare St.



Peadar Tóibín

and evening, people are trapped in hours of gridlock, missing work, school, and vital medical appointments - while their quality of life continues to suffer. Parents are losing precious time with their children, businesses are losing productivity, and workers are left exhausted before their day even begins.

"The economic cost of this inaction is staggering. Businesses across Wicklow and the wider region are suffering from delays, increased transport costs, and a reduced ability to attract investment due to poor connectivity. The government's failure to act is actively damaging Wicklow's economy and preventing the creation of much-needed local jobs, forcing even more people into long commutes.

"Beyond the econom-

ic impact, there is a serious environmental cost. Every day, thousands of vehicles sit idling in traffic, pumping unnecessary carbon emissions into the air. The government claims to be committed to reducing emissions and tackling climate change, yet their inaction on this issue is making things worse, not better. Instead of allowing traffic to flow efficiently, they have created a chronic bottleneck that increases pollution and damages air quality for everyone.

"The Taoiseach has confirmed that a review of the National Development Plan will be completed in July. It is critical that, once this review is concluded, this essential project moves forward without any further delay. Wicklow cannot wait any longer.

"The government must immediately reinstate the funding they

cut in 2022 and deliver the N11/M11 upgrade now. The people of

Wicklow deserve better infrastructure, better public transport, and a

government that actually delivers on its commitments."

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Kilmacanogue History Society

Kilmacanogue History Society's next Talk is on Monday April 7th in Kilmacanogue Parish Hall at 8pm. Sean J. Murphy, genealogist, author and lecturer will be speaking on the subject of 'Irish Surnames: Origins and Frequencies'.

He is one of Ireland's most experienced genealogists and has researched hundreds of cases over the past four decades. He will look at Gaelic, Norman, English, Scottish and other settler surnames over the centuries.

Shankill Classical Music Club

The next meeting is on Wednesday 9th April. Usual time - 7:45 to 10:00 pm, including a teabreak - and place - 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 friendly setting. Visitors and new and returning members are always welcome. You don't need to be an expert! There's no charge on the night. For further info phone or text John at 087 2109175.

Mountainous Clean Up Event

On April 5th, people will meet somewhere in the Wicklow Mountains (exact location to be confirmed), 10am to 1pm to spend a few hours helping to remove accidental and mindless litter. It's a small act that makes a huge difference! Afterward, attend a celebration picnic to connect with fellow mountain lovers and enjoy the fresh air. To get involved you have register via Eventbrite: <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/a-mountainous-clean-up-tickets-1140069130459>. This event is brought to you by Wicklow Uplands Council.

Knock Pilgrimage

Pilgrimage to knock on the 21st September 2025. Leaving the Memorial park, Rathdrum at 7:30am sharp via Grand Hotel Wicklow at 8am. Price per person is €80 this will include bus, breakfast and dinner. Names and payment before the 1st of June 2025. Contact Susan at 087 6273032.

Glendalough District Development Association AGM

The Glendalough District Development Association Ltd is pleased to announce the upcoming Annual General Meeting (AGM), which will take place on the 10th of April at 8:30pm at the Brockagh Resource Centre. All members of the community are welcome to attend. One of the key aspects of the AGM is the election of new Board Members and new nominations are encouraged. For any questions or additional information regarding the AGM, please feel free to reach out at GDDAChair@gmail.com.

Will street name changes bring chaos?

The special committee set up by the then Taoiseach, Simon Harris, to look at the street names in County Wicklow is due to present its first findings. They were tasked with 'de-colonising' street names and were given total freedom to come up with appropriate new names. The changes are not suggestions and will be enacted without any debate.

Their first report is on changes to Bray street names and they are already working on street name-changes for Greystones/Degany and hope to have all towns in Wicklow completed by the end of summer.

The changes in Bray are as follows:
King Edward Road/Lawn will be renamed Eamon de Valera Road

Carlisle grounds will become Michael Collins grounds.

Albert Road/Walk will change to Frank Aiken Road.

Eglinton Road will become Robert Emmet Road.

Wyndham Road will be renamed Oscar Wilde Road.

Putland Road will become Padhraig Pearse Road.

Royal Marine Terrace will change to Hibernian Terrace.

Adelaide Road will become Todd Andrews Road.

In a 'hands across the border' gesture Prince of Wales Terrace will be renamed Ian Paisley Terrace. And finally, Loreto Avenue will become St Agnes Terrace. (St. Agnes' name means 'chaste' and she is the patroness of girls, chastity, engaged couples, virgins, rape victims, and the

Girl Scouts).

Bray-based Independent councillor, Joe Behan, said "The news that centuries old street names are being changed by a secret committee set up by the Taoiseach, Simon Harris, will come as a shock to many people in the county.

"While I thoroughly agree with the Taoiseach that our streets need to be de-colonised, I have to ask why there was no prior consultation with the people of County Wicklow or indeed the elected councillors before such far reaching decisions were made.

"This is yet another example of the

powers of locally elected representatives being eroded and pushed aside by central Government. While the suggested new names are certainly more reflective of our nationalist heritage and are definitely worthy of consideration, I still believe that the full implications need to be teased out further.

"I will be raising this matter first at the April Council meeting and if anyone thinks this will be pushed through without more discussion, he would be a fool."

It should be an interesting meeting of the Bray Municipal Council on Tuesday 1st of April.

Theo's first haircut raises €1,535

Five-year-old Theo Carton from Roundwood recently got his hair cut for the very first time. Theo's Mom linked up with LauraLynn Children's Hospice and signed Theo up for their campaign Locks of Love for LauraLynn.



Theo Carton before...



... and after his haircut for LauraLynn.

Spotlight Studios' Night at the Movies

Spotlight Studios took to the stage in Gorey Little Theatre recently with their four jam-packed annual Shows. On Friday night, March 21st they saw their Acting classes perform stunning renditions of Peter Pan and Dead Poets Society and Saturday and Sunday saw three sold-out performances of their 'A Night At The Movies' Shows.



With over 400 young people ranging from 3yrs-18yrs gracing the stage over the weekend, the audiences were treated to spectacular Movie-themed entertainment comprising of dancing, singing, cheer-leading, musical theatre and much more all enhanced by stunning costumes, visuals and special effects. The Studios have just recently returned home from Disneyland Paris where 60 of their dancers dazzled on the main Disney Stage

whilst their 110 family and friends cheered on in the audience alongside many other Disney guests. It's been a very busy month for Spotlight Studios with many more exciting things to come!



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‘Government has declared war on Irish neutrality’

April 9th rally for our neutrality and the Triple Lock

Aontú Leader Peadar Tóibín TD has criticised the government 'for declaring war' on neutrality after the Tánaiste admitted Irish troops could be deployed as part of EU missions under legislation the Cabinet approved at the beginning of March to dismantle the Triple Lock. Aontú are holding a rally for Peace and Neutrality on Wednesday April 9th at 18:00 outside the Dáil at Kildare street and all are encouraged to attend.

Peadar Tóibín, the Aontú leader and TD for Meath West, said: "The Triple Lock is a key safeguard of Irish neutrality. It ensures that Ireland cannot be militarily aligned with any military bloc and provides our troops with the legitimacy of a UN mandate for peace-keeping." The new legislation, which removes the requirement for UN Security Council approval, allows up to 50 Irish troops to be deployed without such approval."

The Triple Lock is a system whereby the Irish Defence Forces can only deploy more than 12 troops on overseas missions when unanimously approved by three parties; The Government, Dáil Éireann as a whole, and the United Nations. Under current geopolitical situation it means that Russia, as a permanent member of the UN security council, would veto any UN approval of Irish troops in Ukraine or Eastern Europe for peacekeeping or as part of EU forces.

Tóibín added, "It is clear the government is taking a sledgehammer to our neutrality legacy."

Article 29.1 of Bunreacht na hÉireann states "Ireland affirms its devotion to the ideal of peace and friendly co-operation amongst nations founded on international



Aontú Leader Peadar Tóibín TD

justice and morality"; - the Seville Declaration inserted into the Treaty of Nice, to facilitate the holding of a second referendum on the matter and the insertion of Article 29.9 into Bunreacht na hÉireann that the State would not take part in any EU common defence arrangement;

Repeated polls confirm the unwavering support of the majority of Irish people to Irish neutrality, and yet the government are talking of joining EU forces, and even buying at huge cost jet fighter aircraft. In a Dáil private members bill held on Wednesday, 25 Oct 2023 both Micheál Martin,



Ciaran Hogan, Wicklow Aontú representative

and Simon Harris Voted in support of the triple lock and neutrality which now they are hastily working to dismantle.

The judgment of the High Court in Horgan v An Taoiseach [2003] IEHC 64 highlighting "the great historic value attached by Ireland to the concept of neutrality";

At a local press event, Aontú's Wicklow advocate, Ciarán Hogan, emphasized that the Irish people overwhelmingly support neutrality and oppose sending Irish Defence Forces into conflict or as part of European military missions. He remarked, "The

government is waging a baseless campaign to dismantle the Triple Lock, despite many ministers who, as recently as 2023, defended this very system. Fianna Fáil's 2020 election manifesto, under Micheál Martin's leadership, committed to 'fully maintain neutrality and the Triple Lock.' They did not campaign on changing this stance in the 2024 election, so they have no mandate to do so now."

Along with the planned march on April 9th, Aontú are calling for a referendum so that the people can once again remind this government who they are supposed to represent and serve. According to Peadar Toibin, "The argument that the UN Security Council requirement should be removed because it gives power to its five permanent members is simply redundant when these measures will have Irish troops deployed under the auspices of the EU, commanded by other nations where the Irish people will have no input. The government must abandon this relentless undermining of our neutrality and its desire to play with the big boys of Europe at the expense of the men and women of our defence forces and their families."



Brendan, Alexander and Benjamin Murphy at the 'When Kerry Came to Wicklow' evening in Templarainey Church, Arklow. Stories of seven west Kerry families who moved to Wicklow in the 1950s were told.

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€25,000 for Wicklow in climate action funding

Funding will directly benefit five projects in County Wicklow

Five community organisations in Wicklow have been awarded funding as part of the €500,000 Climate Actions Work Engagement Fund. This initiative will see grants of between €2,500 and €10,000 distributed to support climate action efforts across the country.

The Wicklow projects to be funded are:

1. Eire Og Greystones GAA Club - The Greystones Sports Club Climate Action Charter (€5,000) will unite over 30 sports clubs in the Greystones area (including Delgany, Kilcoole, Newtownmountkennedy and Greystones) to work together on Climate Action relevant to sporting clubs.

2. Green Sod Land Trust Company Limited by Guarantee - With €2,500, this programme will engage local communities in biodiversity pro-

tection and sustainability awareness.

3. Greystones Tidy Towns - A €5,000 grant will support the establishment of a sustainable community between Greystones and Delgany, fostering eco-friendly practices.

4. Laragh Glendalough Sustainable Energy Community - The €2,500 funding will raise awareness of climate change issues in the local community and encourage sustainable energy practices.

5. Wicklow Uplands Council - A substantial

€10,000 grant will fund the Gully Woodland Restoration Project, focused on restoring vital woodlands in the Wicklow Uplands, which play a key role in biodiversity and carbon capture.

In total, 96 community groups from 23 counties will benefit from this funding, which is designed to support local communities in raising awareness about climate change, promoting sustainability, and engaging new audiences on environmental issues. It is estimated that 30,000

people will benefit from the activities generated through this fund, with the support of over 2,000 volunteers.

Tánaiste Simon Harris said: "Local communities are doing remarkable work in addressing climate change. This funding will help groups in those communities raise awareness of that work and bring the climate action message to a wider audience. In Wicklow, five community-based projects have been awarded funding under this initiative, reflecting the County's ongoing

commitment to sustainability and climate action.

"These projects are part of a broader nationwide effort under the Climate Actions Work Programme to engage people across Ireland in meaningful climate action. The programme aims to enhance community awareness and promote the great work already being done by local groups.

Speaking from Dail Eireann following the announcement, Deputy Edward Timmins remarked: "I am delighted

several projects in Wicklow will benefit from the Climate Actions Work Engagement fund. The funding directly provide opportunities for community groups to promote their work and spread the important message of community-led climate action. The fund is administered by Community Foundation Ireland which as part of its mission of Equality For All in Thriving Communities has been empowering local groups, researchers and advocates to take action on climate and nature since 2000.



Tánaiste Simon Harris TD.



Edward Timmins TD.

"Having been a Councillor for more than 20 years I am deeply aware of the environmental efforts being made across Wicklow by local groups namely our Tidy Towns Groups. As a

newly elected TD, I am committed to securing more funding for local groups who volunteer tirelessly to improve our local environment and make Wicklow a better place for all."

Stokes announces annual Spring Clean in Dr. Ryan Park



The 2024 Dr Ryan Park Spring Clean.

Cllr Stephen Stokes has announce that the Annual Spring Clean of the Dr. Ryan Park, Greystones is scheduled for Saturday, April 26th. It will again take place from 11.30am to 1pm. This community driven initiative aims to enhance the beauty of our local environment and foster a sense of civic pride among residents. The Dr. Ryan Park is located behind St. Laurence's National School.

Participants of all ages are encouraged to join in this collective effort to clean and rejuvenate the Dr. Ryan Park. In previous years, the clean-ups have attracted participants from across Greystones, Delgany and Charlesland. The litter collection will strive to

ensure that the park remains a welcoming space for all. Cllr Stokes emphasised the importance of community involvement in maintaining our shared spaces. He stated: "Our parks are the heart of our community, providing a place for relaxation, recre-

ation, and connection with nature. The Annual Spring Clean is an opportunity for us all to come together and contribute to the upkeep of this vital area."

Equipment is being supplied on the day, however volunteers are encouraged to bring their own gloves

where possible. The event is being supported by An Taisce and Wicklow County Council. Cllr Stephen Stokes added: "Our sincere thanks to An Taisce and the Greystones District Office for their logistical support. They provide a lot of the equipment for us to use. Wicklow County Council also offer a post clean-up collection which is invaluable."

Cllr Stokes has also repeated his call for people

not to dump waste in the locality. He noted: "It's disappointing that community clean-ups are necessary but at least it shows unity within the community. The Dr. Ryan Park has great potential to be a more family friendly park. Hopefully this event will be a continued step in the right direction."

Anyone seeking further information can reach Cllr Stephen Stokes at stephen-stokes101@gmail.com to find out more.

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Nature boost as three local groups receive grant support

Wicklow community efforts to protect and promote local plants, wildlife and nature are getting a major boost with three projects being supported to develop and implement local action plans.

The plans are being supported under a long-standing partnership between Community Foundation Ireland and its philanthropists with the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Under the partnership communities in Laois and across the country are provided access to expert ecologists to decide the best ways to protect or promote wildlife and then to implement through the Action Plan.

Some 252 communities across the country have been supported by the Community Foundation and the Parks Service since 2019. The latest Wicklow Groups are: **Newcastle Residents Association (€9,000)** to boost education and awareness raising of local wildlife, plants and nature. The provision of permanent signs in the village to provide information on hedges, trees, wildflowers, insects, bees and butterflies. In addition, there will be engagement with local primary school children to encourage their participation in future conservation efforts.

Bray Tidy Towns (€5,000) to support a wide range of local works including the installation of a rainwater harvesting system close to Springfield Cemetery to

allow the watering of the meridian and alcove areas. There will be repairs to the existing rainwater harvesting system in place at Headlands Community Garden. Further bat boxes will be installed around the Bray area as well as new biodiversity signage and the planting of pollinators.

Enniskerry Tidy Towns Association (€5,000) to partner with an expert ecologist to identify areas that have high ecological value that can be saved for future generations. There will be a focus on plants and wildlife which are currently under threat with a focus on identifying measures which can reverse these trends.



Announcing new grants for biodiversity projects through a partnership between Community Foundation Ireland and the National Parks and Wildlife Service are Minister of State Christopher O'Sullivan with Jerry O'Connor of the Foundation.

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Over €160,000 for repair and protection of Russborough House

€160,069 will be awarded to help repair and protect Russborough House in Blessington as part of this year's Historic Structures Fund (HSF). The awarded funding will go towards stone restoration to 61 distinctive decorative limestone urns on the roof parapet to the main house, the east wing principal elevations and the two colonnades at the heritage tourism attraction.

Alongside other heritage funding streams such as the Built Heritage Investment Scheme and the recently re-opened Conservation Advice Grant Scheme, the HSF aims to conserve, protect, and promote the use of historic buildings across our cities, towns, villages, and countryside.

The funding recipients will benefit from the preservation of their historic structures, ensuring their long-term sustainability and usability. From providing safe and restored residential homes to supporting vital services like supported accommodation, these projects will have a lasting impact on their communities.

Speaking from Blessington Deputy Edward Timmins stated: "I am delighted to welcome €160,069 in funding for Russborough House under the Historic Structures Fund. This Georgian Palladian house which was built between 1741 and 1755 is regarded as one of Ireland's most beautiful houses and has an important role to play for tourism in Wicklow".

Deputy Timmins added: "Alongside other heritage

funding streams such as the Built Heritage Investment Scheme and the recently re-opened Conservation Advice Grant Scheme, the HSF aims to conserve, protect, and promote the use of historic buildings across our cities, towns, villages, and countryside."

Deputy Timmins pointed out: "At Russborough House the funding will be used for stone restoration to 61 distinctive decorative limestone urns on the roof parapet to the main house, the east wing principal elevations and the two colonnade at this heritage focused tourism attraction."

Deputy Timmins concluded: "Russborough House has been described as one of Ireland's Ancient East top attractions so I am very pleased with today's funding."

Tánaiste Simon Harris said: "I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to Chairperson Judith Woodworth (Alfred Beit Foundation), former CEO Eric Blatchford, current CEO Orla Gallagher, Development Manager Theresa Crowley, and



Tánaiste Simon Harris at Russborough House.

Christopher Gallagher for their unwavering dedication to this project.

"I have been working closely with the board and the local community for a long time to secure this funding. It has taken effort, collaboration, and perseverance. Today marks a significant milestone in that journey."

"I have always believed that Wicklow's natural beauty is one of our nation's greatest treasures. That's

why I fully support any investment aimed at protecting, enhancing, and revitalising the landscape we are so lucky to call home."

The Tánaiste added: "It is paramount that Government plays a role in ensuring that historic sites such as these continue to be maintained. Not only is this vital for our tourism industry and local economies, but it means that we can continue to understand and appreciate our history and heritage."

Wicklow Uplands Council & East Wicklow Rivers Trust collaborate for community-led climate action

Uplands Council gets awarded grant to engage new audiences in their region on climate

Wicklow Uplands Council is receiving funding from the Climate Actions Work Engagement fund to support the collaborative work with East Wicklow Rivers Trust to bring people together and share information on landscape scale climate action. The fund is focused on climate engagement, awareness and communications - helping communities to reach new audiences in their locality. It will also provide opportunities for community groups to promote their work and spread the message of community-led climate action.

ties are delivering great work on climate action, much of which often goes unseen. This funding will help groups in those communities raise awareness of that work and bring the climate action message to a wider audience. From workshops to events to content creation, this fund is really targeted at storytelling - helping people to tell their stories about climate action. I am very pleased to help these initiatives showcase examples the great work going on across Ireland."

Minister Dillon said: "Climate change affects different communities in different ways. The impacts we feel in the West of Ireland are different to those in Dublin, or the Midlands. This fund helps to shine a light on specific local responses to climate change. From developing engaging social media content to supporting local environmental collectives, this funding will provide valuable assistance to promote the work of community groups, many of whom are working tirelessly on a voluntary basis. I commend their work and welcome this opportunity to showcase and celebrate it."

Congratulating Wicklow Uplands Council Denise Charlton, Chief Executive of Community Foundation Ireland said:

"Partnership is key to meeting the climate challenge. At Community

Foundation we are proud to have contributed knowledge and insights from our network of local community groups to inform and deliver this Government initiative. A network which underpins all our work as a philanthropic hub. We look forward to seeing the impact of these imaginative projects."

The fund is a core component of the Climate

Actions Work Programme. This programme has built on engagement with community groups through the National Dialogue on Climate Action over the last few years.

The engagement showed that many community groups and organisations are supported through volunteers who often have to give up nights and days to under-

take engagement and communications activities.

The fund is intended to provide support to promote the incredible work already underway, and to encourage new participation.

The fund supports groups to work with audiences who have not previously engaged in climate action at a local level or beyond.

Connect.

A BIFE PERFORMING ARTS SHOWCASE



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Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications Darragh O'Brien, and Minister for the Circular Economy Alan Dillon today announced the awarding of €500,000 worth of grants nationally under the Climate Actions Work Engagement fund. The grants, ranging from €2,500 - €10,000, will be distributed to 96 community groups and organisations across 23 counties. It is estimated that 30,000 people will benefit from the activities generated through this fund with the support of over 2,000 volunteers.

The fund is administered by Community Foundation Ireland which as part of its mission of Equality For All in Thriving Communities has been empowering local groups, researchers and advocates to take action on climate and nature since 2000. The foundation's work in this space is informed by its 25 years' experience of partnering with 5,000 voluntary, community and charitable groups as a philanthropic hub. A network which continues to grow.

Announcing the grantees, Minister O'Brien said:

"Our local communi-

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Inter-country EU training exercise in the Wicklow Mountains a success

Wicklow County Council, as part of a European consortium, hosted Ireland's first EU MODEX simulation exercise on Wednesday 26th March in County Wicklow.

The EU MODEX exercise is a wild land and forest fire advisory mission to test Irish procedures and evaluate Ireland's capacity to prepare for and manage large forest fires. It is also an opportunity to share best international practices in the response to wild land and forest fires.

This multi-agency

exercise involved over 250 participants from Ireland and other EU member states, simulating a wildfire scenario near Turlough Hill in the Wicklow Mountains National Park.

The Wicklow event was part of a week-long EU MODEX exercise organised by the National Directorate for Fire and

Emergency Management (NDFEM) working with Wicklow County Council as part of a European consortium.

The EU mission will provide expert guidance and feedback on Ireland's current wildfire preparedness through a final report to be published at a later date. The exercise allows Ireland to evaluate its

capacity to manage large forest fires and enhance future response capabilities. It also aims to help develop improved strategies and capabilities, particularly regarding the potential deployment of EU fixed-wing assets, such as Canadair aircraft.

As part of Wednesday's exercise, an on-site coordination centre was estab-

lished at the Brockagh Resource Centre in Laragh, facilitating direct interactions among participants including: Air Corps Ops, Civil Defence, Coast Guard Ops, Coillte Forestry Managers and NPWS. Various fire trucks and personnel from the Kildare, Wexford, and Laois fire brigades attended, including three emergency helicopters at Lough Dan involved in aerial firefighting.

Additionally, a Regional Coordination Centre was set up in the Wicklow County Council Buildings, involving participants from An Garda Síochána, Kildare Fire Service, Civil Defence, Dublin Fire Service, Health Service Executive, Maynooth University and Uisce Éireann as well as support personnel from other Local Authorities in the East Region.

Maynooth University demonstrated their new fire modelling software, 'Wildfire Common Operational Platform', developed over the past three years in partnership with NDFEM and Wicklow County Fire Service. The software provided a live stream of footage captured by drones on the day, which was presented in real-time at both the



Members of the Coast Guard prepare to reach a casualty in Glendasan during the Wicklow County Council MODEX Training Exercise in the Wicklow Mountains.



Helicopters drop water from Bambi buckets over Lough Dan during the Wicklow County Council MODEX Training Exercise in the Wicklow Mountains.

Brockagh Resource Centre and Wicklow County Council Buildings.

Paul Rock, Deputy Director of the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management, stated: "The weeklong assessment began on Monday with the arrival of twenty eight EU team members including experts in forestry management and aerial firefighting. They had meetings with relevant Government department officials and agencies and the EU representation in Ireland over a two-day period.

"The operational element of MODEX exercise in Wicklow demonstrates the importance of inter-agency exercises, coordination and training - bringing all aspects of the State's response mechanisms to help to protect lives and save natural habitat. The exercise will also help develop improved strategies and capabilities, particularly around the potential deployment and integration of EU aerial firefighting assets through RescEU in the event of a large wildfire or forest fire."

Emer O'Gorman, Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council, commented, "Wednesday's exercise was a huge success and showcased the preparedness of Wicklow County Council and the Eastern Emergency Response Group in the event of future forest fires. Collaborating with our partners from various agencies, sharing knowledge, and participating in the exercise will enhance our responses to any potential emergencies."

The exercise is funded by the European Union.



A Helicopter takes water with a Bambi bucket from a waterhole on Scar Mountain during the Wicklow County Council MODEX Training Exercise in the Wicklow Mountains.

BIFE Culinary Arts Team wins Gold at European Culinary Championships

Bray Institute of Further Education (BIFE) is celebrating a remarkable achievement after its Culinary Arts team showcased their exceptional skills at the European Culinary Championships in Riga, Latvia. Competing against 400 top culinary students from 35 colleges across 11 countries, the BIFE team demonstrated outstanding talent, professionalism, and dedication on the international stage.



Gold Medal Glory for Conor Bradshaw

Among the highlights of the competition was Conor Bradshaw's stellar performance in the Gourmet Butchery category. Conor secured a Gold Medal for Ireland after impressing the international judging panel with his precision, creativity, and technique. The competition required him to butcher, prepare, and cook five different dishes, each serving two portions, while also incorporating a mystery basket of ingredients. His ability to adapt and execute his dishes flawlessly earned him high praise from the judges, solidifying his place among Europe's top young culinary talents.

Strong Performances from Morgan McGinty and Deacon Greene

Conor's teammates, Morgan McGinty and

Deacon Greene, also delivered impressive performances in their respective categories. Morgan competed in the Vegetarian Culinary Arts division, where she was tasked with preparing three starters and three main courses using compulsory ingredients set by the organisers. Despite narrowly missing out on a medal, Morgan received glowing reviews from the judging panel for her attention to detail and refined culinary techniques.

Meanwhile, Deacon Greene faced fierce competition in the Professional Cookery category, going up against some of Europe's best up-and-coming chefs. He was required to use compulsory ingredients set by the organisers and prepare three main courses and three desserts. His exceptional professionalism and skill saw him finish inside the top 10, a significant achievement in such a highly competitive



field. Deacon's dedication and composure throughout the event were commended by the judges, reinforcing his reputation as a rising star in the culinary world.

Pride and Recognition for BIFE

The outstanding performances of the BIFE Culinary Arts team have further cemented the institution's reputation as a leader in culinary education. Their success is a testament to the dedication of both the students and their mentor, Master

Chef Willie Rochford, whose guidance and expertise have been instrumental in their development.

"We are incredibly proud of Conor, Morgan, and Deacon for their achievements at this prestigious competition," said Chef Rochford. "Their talent, hard work, and professionalism were evident throughout, and their per-

formances have made both BIFE and Ireland extremely proud."

Bray Institute of Further Education extends its congratulations to the entire Culinary Arts team for their incredible success on the international stage. Their achievements serve as an inspiration for future students and a shining example of the excellence fostered at BIFE.

€3.5m for Wicklow's roads

Tánaiste Simon Harris has welcomed the announcement of over €3.5 million in funding from Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) for the maintenance and enhancement of Wicklow's national road infrastructure in 2025.

The Tánaiste said "Our roads are one of our greatest assets and it is crucial we invest in them for safety and to hinder traffic congestion.

"This is a significant boost for Wicklow's road network. This funding will directly support the safety, and long-term

sustainability of our national roads, benefiting both residents and businesses."

The funding includes:

- €3.23 million in capital investment, which will support:
- Minor works and safety upgrades along national sec-

ondary routes

- Pavement rehabilitation and resurfacing works
- Critical route lighting improvements
- Engineering support to ensure project delivery standards
- An additional €280,239 for

ongoing maintenance, which will help ensure that national primary and secondary roads remain in good condition year-round, including winter maintenance and lighting.

"I will continue to work closely with Fine Gael Councillors who have played a

massive role in getting this funding over the line.

"This investment showcases a priority of mine in Government and one which I campaigned on which is to improve road safety and infrastructure across Wicklow."



Tánaiste Simon Harris TD.



The Principal and members of St. Patrick's Loreto Primary School Parents Association were delighted to present Jigsaw with a cheque for €1,000 which was raised by the school community this year to help support the continued important work of Jigsaw in supporting young people's mental health. Pictured are Adam Burke and Ciara Heaslip (Jigsaw), Niall McCarthy and Roisin Ni Chearbhaill (St. Patrick's Loreto Parents Association) and Anne-Marie McGovern (Principal, St. Patrick's Loreto Primary School). Pic: Joe McQuillan.

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Cllr Stephen Stokes in Delgany.

L3 traffic chaos being examined

The National Transport Authority is liaising with Go Ahead about adjusting the L3 terminus on Chapel Road, Delgany. The update was provided directly to Cllr Stephen Stokes who had written to the NTA about a range of issues.

Cllr Stokes stated: "The L3 is a handy new bus service circling around Delgany, Greystones and Killincarrig. However the terminus on Chapel Road is causing traffic chaos in Delgany, especially during school runs. It would be fine as a quick stop and go, but not as a terminus."

At a recent Greystones Municipal District meeting, Council Officials advised that this stop on Chapel Road was never meant to be a terminus. Instead the only terminus on the L3 route was meant to be opposite Glenbrook Park, which has a dedicated bus bay.

Adjustments for the Chapel Road L3 terminus are being actively looked at, including parking somewhere else or having the L3 bus drive around to use up time. Cllr Stephen Stokes commented further: "For me the L3 terminus

on Chapel Road is another reason why we need to have local residents involved in local decisions. Someone probably made this terminus decision in an office in Dublin, without looking too closely at parking and traffic. Now the NTA and Go Ahead are trying to fight a rearguard action."

Cllr Stephen Stokes has also expressed a view that he would like alternative parking arrangements to be explored, rather than have buses circle around aimlessly thus creating extra traffic. Cllr Stokes added: "From an environmental standpoint it's not great to have buses wasting energy for no reason. Even if the buses were zero emissions it would not make much sense, let alone buses that use fossil fuels."

The L3 route was introduced as part of the BusConnects Phase 6a roll out. It connects North

Delgany, Blacklion, Greystones Railway Station, Killincarrig and Glenbrook Park. The current terminus near Delgany has led to traffic issues, causing safety concerns for motorists, cyclists and pedestrians. Cllr Stephen Stokes has welcomed the update from the National Transport Authority. Cllr Stokes also highlighted that Wicklow County Council is planning to undertake a major upgrade on the Chapel Road from April 2025. He believes that the upcoming works are an opportunity for the NTA and Go Ahead to reset the L3 terminus situation. Cllr Stephen Stokes concluded: "The L3 is a good concept, we just need some important tweaks. I will continue to campaign for road and public transport improvements across Delgany, Charlesland, Greystones, Kilcoole, Killadreenan and Newcastle."

Works confirmed to improve pathway between Darcy's Park and Cliff Walk

Greystones Councillor Lourda Scott welcomed confirmation at this month's Council meeting that improvement works will take place on the well-used path between Darcy's Park and the start of the Bray-Greystones Cliff Walk.

The path, which is the only section of the Cliff Walk currently open on the Greystones end, has become difficult to navigate during the winter months due to persistent muddy conditions. In response to concerns from the community, Cllr Scott secured a commitment from the local engineer to develop a more permanent solution that will enhance accessibility for all users.

Cllr Scott stated: "I am delighted that a plan

is now in place to improve this important local amenity. The new surface will be similar in structure to the one at St Crispin's Cell and Burnaby Park. This will make the pathway more durable and accessible all year round. Given the heritage value of this area, I have been assured that no digging will take place as part of the works."

This pathway is a key outdoor space for the local community, regularly used by walk-

ers, runners, and families. The improvements will ensure that people of all ages and abilities can enjoy the area without the challenges caused by muddy and uneven terrain. The new pathway surface has been chosen to be in keeping with the surrounding natural landscape while minimising any potential disruption to the local environment.

At last week's Greystones Municipal District Council meeting, the local engineer confirmed that the necessary materials have been purchased and that work will begin as soon as resources allow.

"While we continue to work on a solution for the Cliff walk, it is important that we also maintain and improve the outdoor amenities that we have. This is a valuable walking route for our community, and I am pleased that steps are being taken to ensure it remains in place. I will continue to keep this on the agenda and make sure it is done as soon as possible," added Cllr Scott.



Cllr Lourda Scott.

Brady slams Uisce Eireann for 'catalogue of system failures' leading to raw sewage discharge at Bray's North Beach

Sinn Féin TD, John Brady, has strongly criticised Uisce Eireann following their admission of a serious failure in their systems, which resulted in raw sewage being pumped onto North Beach in Bray for 4 days over the Christmas period. He has called for urgent action to prevent a recurrence, highlighting the significant environmental and public health risks posed by the discharge.

Speaking after meeting with Uisce Eireann representatives Deputy Brady said: "The serious issue that occurred over the Christmas period on the North Beach in Bray where an electrical failure at the Corke Abbey pumping station resulted in thousands of litres of raw sewage flowing onto the beach. This went unnoticed by Uisce Eireann for 4 days, until I lodged an official complaint with the local authority, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and Uisce Eireann itself.

"It has emerged that several emails reporting this serious issue were also never picked up by Uisce Eireann, further exposing major flaws in their communication and oversight systems. This led to a substantial amount of raw sewage being discharged onto the beach, creating not only an environmental hazard but also a serious risk to the many people who use the area for swimming, walking, and other recreational activities.

"Uisce Eireann has acknowledged multiple failures that contributed to the incident. These include an electrical failure that directly caused the discharge, a failure in their alarm system that



Deputy John Brady at the North Beach in Bray where raw sewage is flowing into the sea.

should have detected the issue, and a failure in their response mechanisms that resulted in a delayed reaction.

"The situation is completely unacceptable, such fundamental flaws in Uisce Eireann's infrastructure and operational procedures cannot be allowed to persist. I made the official complaints regarding this incident, yet Uisce Eireann failed to respond until after my intervention.

"On top of that, multiple emails reporting this serious issue were ignored, which is totally unacceptable. This was not just a single failure -

it was a complete breakdown of their systems at every level, from detection to response. A failure of this magnitude poses a serious risk to public health and the environment, and urgent action is needed to ensure it never happens again.

"Following my intervention, Uisce Eireann has informed me that new measures have been put in place to prevent a similar incident in the future. These include an upgraded alarm system designed to detect any failures immediately and improved response procedures to ensure swift action is taken and the

public is promptly notified.

"Despite these assurances, I believe that further scrutiny is required to guarantee the effectiveness of these new measures. There needs to be regular testing and monitoring of Uisce Eireann's systems to ensure they are robust and fit for purpose. There also needs to be greater transparency from the company, any future failures must be reported immediately to the relevant authorities and the public.

"This was an entirely preventable incident that caused serious environ-

mental damage and posed a risk to public health. It is completely unacceptable that it took an official complaint for Uisce Eireann to even become aware of the issue. If proper monitoring and response mechanisms had been in place, this situation could have been avoided.

"We need to ensure that Uisce Eireann is held accountable and that the new systems they have promised are effective. This beach is used by families, swimmers, walkers, and visitors. It is vital that people can enjoy it safely, without the risk of exposure to raw sewage. I will continue to push for stronger protections and oversight to make sure that an incident like this never happens again."

Deputy Brady concluded by saying "I am calling on the EPA to conduct a full review of the incident, including a detailed examination of Uisce Eireann's handling of the situation.

"We need to ensure there is proper accountability and preventative measures must be a priority, as similar failures elsewhere could have devastating consequences for other communities across the country."

Over 180 motor thefts reported in Wicklow last year

The Central Statistics Office (CSO) 2024 statistics revealed that 187 motor theft and related offences were reported in Wicklow last year, a 2% increase on the 184 incidents from the previous 12 months.

A total of 7,623 motor thefts were reported in 2023, with 5,000 of those vehicles being cars.

The 2024 national figure has surpassed 2023 by 4%, demonstrating an upwards trend in car thefts and related incidents and highlighting 2024 as the worst year for motor theft in Ireland in more than a decade.

In 2024, the primary hotspots for motor theft incidents across Ireland were Dublin, Cork and Limerick. Dublin makes up a sizeable proportion with 4,305 vehicles stolen, followed by 851 in Cork and 502 in Limerick.

Commenting on the latest motor theft statistics, OUTsurance Ireland CMO Ian Kennedy, said:

"The growing trend of motor thefts continued last year, with 2024 surpassing 2023 figures - increasing by 4%. The Irish public needs to be increasingly vigilant in protecting their vehicles and ensure not to make simple mistakes like leaving keys near their front door or valuables on display in their vehicle."

Commercial Vacancy Rate in Wicklow was 13.1% in December 2024

The commercial vacancy rate in Wicklow was 13.1% in December 2024, increasing by 0.2 percentage points (ppts) compared to December 2023 according to the latest GeoDirectory Commercial Buildings Report.

The commercial vacancy rate in Wicklow was lower than the national average of 14.5%.

In total, 30,365 of the commercial units were vacant across the state in December 2024. The report also found that the commercial vacancy rate increased in 15 out of 26 counties. With a 0.1 percentage point (pp) increase from Q4 2023, Sligo recorded the highest commercial vacancy rate at 20.6%, followed closely by Donegal (20.1%) and Galway at 18.8%.

Even though all four provinces experienced an increase in vacancy rates, four of the top six counties with the highest vacancy rates were in Connacht,

continuing the trend of high commercial vacancy rates in the west of the country. The vacancy rate in Connacht reached 18.5%, an increase of 0.2 pp from Q4 2023.

Meath once again remained the county with the lowest commercial vacancy rate in the country at 9.9%, followed by Wexford (10.8%) and Kerry (12.3%).

Dublin's commercial vacancy rate stood at 13.6%, a 0.5 pp increase on Q4 2023. Despite this being the highest level of vacancy recorded in Dublin since Q4 2016, the current rate is still below the national vacancy rate of 14.5%.

This report examined a

sample of 80 towns throughout Ireland, as well as 22 districts in Dublin, to assess the shift in commercial vacancy rates from the fourth quarter of 2023 to the same period in 2024.

Of the urban areas in Wicklow surveyed, Arklow had the highest commercial vacancy rate (16.1%), while Greystones had the lowest (5.5%).

The report found that Ballybofey, Co. Donegal was the town with the highest commercial vacancy rate in the State in Q4 2024 at 36.4%. Shannon, Co. Clare moved to second place with a vacancy rate of 30.8% with Edgeworthstown, Co. Longford (28.3%), Boyle, Co. Roscommon (27.7%) and

Sligo Town (26.8%) completing the top five towns by highest commercial vacancy rate.

In contrast, the lowest commercial vacancy rates in the country were recorded in Greystones, Co. Wicklow (5.5%) and Carrigaline, Co. Cork (5.1%). Commenting on the findings of the GeoDirectory Commercial Buildings Report, Dara Keogh, CEO of GeoDirectory, said, "The national vacancy rate for commercial properties increased again in Q4 2024, continuing the trend of recent years. At 14.5% it is now at its highest rate on record, with vacancy rates increasing in all four provinces."

Wicklow amongst the top ten counties for complaints submitted to the Financial Services and Pensions Ombudsman in 2024

The Financial Services and Pensions Ombudsman, Liam Sloyan, has published his Overview of Complaints for 2024, detailing the activities of the Office of the Financial Services and Pensions Ombudsman (FSPO) in 2024. For the second year in a row the FSPO received over 6,000 complaints from customers concerning financial institutions, insurance companies and pension providers.

The FSPO received 164 complaints from Wicklow residents placing Wicklow amongst the top ten counties by volume of complaints in Ireland. The number of complaints made by Wicklow residents fell by 10% between 2023 and 2024.

The Overview provides a summary of the 6,185 complaints made to the FSPO in 2024 and details its outcomes for customers including:

- 5,907 complaints closed during 2024, an increase of 14% over 2023.
- Total of €5,733, 868 benefit to consumers overall
- €4,271,372 agreed in mediated settlements through the FSPO's Dispute Resolution Service.
- €1,001,573 offered in settlements with complainants during the FSPO's formal investigation process.

- €308,750 directed as compensation by the Ombudsman in legally binding decisions.
- An additional €152,273 in redress from providers was noted by the Ombudsman as available for acceptance by complainants, leading to legally binding decisions where those complaints were not upheld because the offer in question was reasonable and adequate to redress the conduct complained of.



Chris Kenny, David O'Connor and Chris Connor in rehearsal for the BIFE end-of-year showcase 'CONNECT', which will showcase the talents and hard work of BIFE's Performing Arts students.

2025 Greystones Municipal District / Wicklow Times

People of the Year Awards



The Awards will be presented in the
Greystones Golf Club, Greystones
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Closing date for nominations is Friday 25th April

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Student from Wicklow celebrates success at Ulster University Business School 2025 Awards ceremony

A student from Wicklow has received an Award at Ulster University Business School's Excellence Awards, led by the Department of Management, Leadership and Marketing.

Amy Johnston, an MSc Management & Corporate Governance postgraduate student from Wicklow, received the Ocorian Prize for Best in Strategy. Now celebrating their fourteenth year, the awards are an opportunity to acknowledge exceptional talent across a range of subjects including Marketing, Management, Business Studies and Human Resource Management.

Awards were presented to the 29 top-performing students in a variety of subjects including the highest achieving first, second and final year student, excellence in placement and highest mark on various modules.

Last year, Ulster University was awarded University of the Year 2024 at the Times Higher Education Awards. This year, Ulster University's Business School will celebrate 50 years of excellence, showcasing their commitment to excellence as they continue to shape careers for generations to come.

The awards were held at Ulster University's Academy Restaurant at the Belfast Campus across two afternoons, one for undergraduate students and another for postgraduate students.

Dr Mary Boyd, Head of Department, congratulated all of this year's winners: "Congratulations to all our award winning students. It's truly inspiring to wit-

ness such a diverse pool of talent across our management, leadership and marketing programmes and it's great to be able to come together to celebrate their hard work and dedication at the awards. It's also fantastic to be able to host these at our very own Academy Restaurant on campus. Here at Ulster University Business School, we are dedicated to preparing students with the relevant skills to become leaders in their various fields. It wouldn't be possible to hold these awards year on year without our sponsors, so I'd like to say thank you to each of them for their support. The Awards are particularly special to us this year as we also celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Business School later this year."

Award sponsors included Chartered Accountants Ireland Ulster Society, CIM, CIMA (Ireland), Deloitte, Factor, Grant Thornton, Hastings Hotels Group, Hunter Savage, Labour Relations Agency, Lynas Foodservice, Ocorian, Pilgrim's Europe (formerly Moy Park), Professor Julie Hastings Scholarship, Red Star Brands, Shred Bank Ltd, Staffline Recruitment, The Belfast Telegraph, The Marketing Institute of Ireland, Whale, and the Worshipful Company of Chartered Secretaries & Administrators.



Local prize winner from Wicklow Amy Johnston (middle) alongside Course Directors Dr Darryl Cummins and Dr Rita-Marie Murtagh and Amy McMullan and Holly O'Neill from Award Sponsor Ocorian

Wicklow students honoured as accounting graduates

Raminta O'Reilly from Bray and Noelia Zamora from Wicklow Town were honoured as Accounting Technicians Ireland conferred membership to graduates at the Talbot Hotel, Stillorgan.

School-leavers, those changing career, or looking to get back to work can avail of Accounting Technicians Ireland's recognised and respected qualifications, which open the door to a rewarding career in accounting.

Qualifications combine professional exams and assessments with practical work experience.

ATI delivers its programmes via a network of partner colleges all over the island of Ireland, and online, and its syllabus is tailored to suit students in both jurisdictions. Students can study full-time, part-time, online and as apprentices.

Graduates were conferred across three programmes, the Accounting Technician Apprenticeship, the Higher-Level Apprenticeship and the Diploma for Accounting Technicians.



Sean and Raminta O'Reilly from Bray at the Accounting Technicians Ireland graduation.



Noelia Zamora with Darragh and Eilis O'Sullivan from Wicklow Town.

St. Gerard's student competes in National Linguistic Olympiad

A student from St Gerard's School, Patrick Chen, attended the National Final of 18th All Ireland Linguistics Olympiad (AILO), hosted by the ADAPT Centre at Dublin City University (DCU) last week.

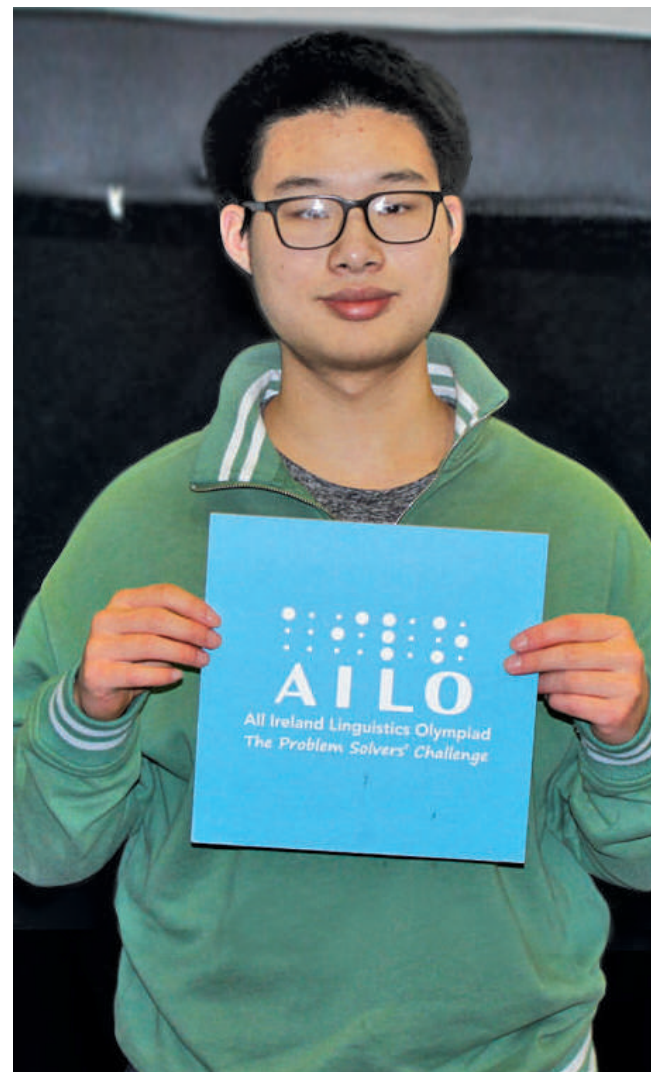
This national finale brings together 104 students from 47 schools spanning 18 counties, all vying for a chance to compete on the international stage this summer.

Run by ADAPT, the world-leading Research Ireland Centre for AI-Driven Digital Content Technology, the contest challenges secondary school students to apply logic and reasoning skills to solve complex puzzles that range from Norse scripts to the complexities of the Bukiyp counting systems. The competition is not just about languages, it is a challenge that tests their ability to think differently, analyse data, and decipher rules from the unknown.

Director of ADAPT, Professor John D. Kelleher, praised the finalists, saying: "The analytical skills displayed by these students are truly inspiring. We are very proud of this competition which exemplifies the passion we have for fostering the next generation of thinkers and innovators."

The 104 national finalists came through preliminary rounds held in schools all over the island in January. More than 3,500 students registered for this year's contest. Competing in individual and team rounds, today the finalists battle it out for the honour of being one of the four winners who will represent Ireland on the global stage this July in Taipei, Taiwan.

The results of the National Final of AILO will be released next week. For those eager to try the challenges, sample puzzles from the Olympiad can be downloaded at <https://ailo.adaptcentre.ie/sample-puzzles/>



St Gerard's School's Patrick Chen.

Academic achievement awards acknowledge three Greystones students

Three Greystones Community College students were recently acknowledged by the University College Dublin and the Business Studies Teachers Association of Ireland at a recent event in the Quinn School of Business, UCD.



Greystones Community College students Emer Rowe, Luan Morris and Anna Dillane.

Anna Dillane, Emer Rowe and Luan Morris were recognised having achieved top Distinction marks in their Junior Cycle Business Studies State Examinations in 2024. 120 students from 22 different schools from right across Dublin, Leinster and Ulster were guests of honour at the ceremony which celebrated the best and brightest business students nationally. Associate Professor Maeve Houlihan, Director of the Quinn School of Business, extended her congratulations to the students and their teachers, and acknowledged the support of their families in securing a strong academic performance.

Commenting on the success the President of the BSTAI Ciara O'Riordan congratulated the students on their academic achievement and acknowledged the work of the Business Studies teachers who have supported students to achieve at this level. Greystones Community College Principal Ruairi Farrell said "This is a very proud day for Greystones Community College to have three students pick up these high stakes academic awards for excelling in state examinations. "It is testament to the students' hard work and the support of their dedicated teacher Mr. John Blake who has encouraged the students over the past three years," he said.



Molly Hynes and Inga Gabrile in rehearsal for the BIFE end-of-year showcase 'CONNECT' which will showcase the talents and hard work of the Performing Arts students from BIFE.

Skillnet Ireland celebrates 10 years of inspiring next generation of female leaders through STEM

The national STEM Teacher Internship (STInt) programme, coordinated by Dublin City University (DCU), is urging teachers and businesses to get involved and inspire the next generation of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) leaders. One primary teacher will impact 1,000 learners in their career, while one secondary teacher will impact 5,000. Now in its 10th year, 310 teachers have engaged with the STInt programme to date and their involvement has the potential to impact over 1.2 million learners over the course of their careers.

The STInt programme is supported by Skillnet Ireland, along with the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science; Connecting Women in Technology; the 30% Club; CASTel and Intel. The initiative provides primary and post-primary teachers with paid summer internships in STEM roles, in a wide variety of industries across Ireland. It helps student and early-career teachers gain real-world insights and equips them with the knowledge of what it is like to work in STEM in Ireland right now.

Dr Eilish McLoughlin, Associate Professor DCU School of Physical Sciences and founder of the STInt programme, said: "Encouraging young people, particularly female

students, to engage in STEM from an early age is crucial for inspiring them to pursue future careers in Ireland's growing science and tech sectors. Over the past decade, the STInt programme has provided unique opportunities to over 310 teachers to experience STEM roles and careers and empower them to design innovative learning experiences for young learners based on real-world contexts.

"More STEM graduates are needed to tackle societal challenges, such as, climate change, energy, health and issues we have yet to imagine. Organisations and businesses are strongly encouraged to collaborate with the STInt programme and help shape a brighter future for individuals and societies."

Skillnet Ireland, the

national talent development agency, has been a programme partner since 2023, providing support for the STInt programme to contribute to a lasting impact on the future

workforce.

Tracey Donnery, Director of Policy & Communications at Skillnet Ireland, said: "The mission of the STInt programme reflects Skillnet

Ireland's commitment to building a diverse and highly skilled STEM workforce that will drive Ireland's future economy. With industries like biotechnology, engineering, and AI shaping the country's economy, empowering young people in STEM ensures a more inclusive, competitive workforce and inspires the next generation of leaders and innovators."

After parents, teachers are the most influential adults impacting the lives of students. The STInt programme supports pre-service and early-career primary and post-primary teachers with paid internships in STEM roles across a variety of industries across Ireland. The programme involves seven universities which include Dublin City University, Maynooth University,

Trinity College Dublin, University College Cork, University College Dublin, University of Galway, and University of Limerick.

Together, they have supported over 310 STEM placements, with over 60 host companies across a range of sectors including technology, biopharma, medtech and professional services.

According to the 2024 STInt programme annual

report, 94% of STInt participants were very confident they could identify diverse STEM role models for their students, 92% felt very confident they could design a STEM learning experience based on a real-world context and 91% were very confident they could advise students on STEM careers after taking part in the programme.





Blainroe Lady Captain Denise Luddy, Valerie Cox and Miriam McGrath celebrating International Women's Day at Blainroe Golf Club.

New Pétanque pistes open in Burnaby Park

Two new Pétanque pistes have been opened in Burnaby Park, Greystones. Following representations from the community, Cllr Lourda Scott applied for funding in 2023 through the Community Recognition Fund. The pistes, which complement the existing community chess tables, offer a new recreational space where people of all ages and abilities can come together to enjoy this accessible and sociable game.

Cllr Scott says: "I'm delighted to see the Pétanque pistes open and ready for use. This is a fantastic example of what can be achieved when local representatives, the community, and the Council work together to enhance our public spaces. I had no idea how popular Pétanque was until I was approached by Naazim Mohungoo, who told me that there is an enthusiastic band of players locally who needed somewhere to play. I'm so pleased that we now have a dedicated space for it in Greystones."

Pétanque (or boules) is an inclusive game that can be played by people of all skill levels, including those with mobility challenges or who cannot take part in high-impact sports. The new courts will provide social, mental, and physical benefits to the community, while also providing much needed additional recreational facilities.

In addition to the Pétanque pistes, new benches have also been installed in Burnaby Park, offering more seating areas for visitors to enjoy.

To encourage more people to take up the game, Pétanque equipment is expected to be available for loan from Greystones library soon. Those interested in playing can also join the Greystones Pétanque Players Facebook group at facebook.com/groups/813283863717220, where local enthusiasts are helping to grow interest in the sport.

"The opening of the Pétanque pistes marks another positive step in improving community

facilities in Greystones. Residents are encouraged to visit Burnaby Park, try out the new courts, and get involved in this fun and welcoming activity. If anyone wants to volunteer to teach me how to play, I'd love to hear from them!," Cllr Scott added.



Cllr Lourda Scott in Burnaby Park.

Arklow's Asgard Swimming Club joins with SSE Renewables on World Water Day 2025 to mark sponsorship of youth training equipment

22nd March is recognised internationally as World Water Day 2025. Celebrating the importance of water in our daily lives whether as a life-giving essential or a means to socialise and enjoy the water through sport and leisure activities, it was a fitting day for the members of Asgard Swimming Club to join with SSE Renewables to mark the company's sponsorship of specialist swim training equipment for the Club's youth members.

Asgard Swimming Club Chairperson Freddie Millar said: '2025 marks 25 years of Asgard Swimming Club in Arklow. We're delighted to be joined by SSE Renewables today to mark World Water Day and to acknowledge the company's sponsorship of specialist youth training equipment that will significantly support the skills' development and swimming capabilities particularly for our youth members.

Our club caters for athletes at different stages of development and with varying levels of skills and capabilities. We endeavour to make our club one that is friendly, inclusive, and encouraging, where individual swimmers can achieve their full potential and develop social and life skills in a sporting environment that will stay with them throughout their life. The Club has grown to over 140 members and we train young people upwards from seven years of age.

Many of our members participate in other water-based sports and there's a strong link between club and community with several of our members serving local communities as lifeguards on our beaches

in Wicklow, Wexford, and Dublin. On a competitive level we're proud to have participated in a number of international events such as the World Surf Life-saving Championships 2024, the British Junior Para Championships and at several Swim Ireland National Open Water Swimming competitions as well. The funding towards specialist youth training swimming equipment will support our amazing coaches in furthering the talent and capabilities of our youth members, who might very well turn up on your local beach as lifeguards, just when you need them.'

Deirdre Keogh, Community Engagement Manager, SSE Renewables said: 'We're delighted to mark World Water Day with Asgard Swimming Club in the Coral Leisure Centre in Arklow. The Club's inclusive ethos and dedication to advancing the skills and capabilities of young people is impressive. The wider links into the community and the nature of the specialist equipment much needed by the Club to continue to support training for its youth members were important considerations in their application.

Through our Arklow

Bank Wind Park 2 Sponsorship Fund, we've supported many water-based clubs and initiatives in Arklow and along our offshore project development site area in coastal communities south from Wicklow into North Wexford. We're always interested to learn more about initiatives and projects that are engaged in enjoying or preserving the marine environment and its local heritage; projects that drive community centred environmental or social sustainability; and projects that seek to deliver reduced energy consumption through energy efficiency. We wish Asgard Swimming Club every success as it moves forward into the next 25 years and beyond'.



Alex William, Freddie Millar, Nicola Nugent and John Kealy of Asgard Swimming Club with SSE Renewables Community Engagement Manager Deirdre Keogh, marking World Water Day 2025.



SSE Community Engagement Manager Deirdre Keogh with Nicola Nugent, John Kealy, Freddie Millar and young members of the Asgard Swimming Club.

Brian Friel's Aristocrats to be staged at Dalkey Town Hall

ARISTOCRATS, Brian Friel's moving play about a once-powerful Catholic family which has declined from a position of social power to one of genteel poverty, will be staged by St Patrick's Dramatic Society, Dalkey in Dalkey Town Hall this week (2nd to 5th April inclusive).

The play is set in the mid-1970s in a crumbling Georgian mansion outside Ballybeg, Co. Donegal, where members of the O'Donnell family have gathered for the wedding of the youngest sister but stay for a funeral. Still living in the decaying Big House, with the financial help of a local business man, are the eldest sister who cares for her bid-ridden but still domineering father, her silent uncle and the emotional bride-

to-be. Back in Ballybeg for the first time in a decade is the only son, still intimidated by his father. His fanciful stories about the family, Ballybeg Hall and its famous visitors fascinate and then con-

fuse a visiting American academic researching a book about the life and lifestyle of the Big House and Catholic 'aristocracy' in Ireland.

Also home for the wedding is the third O'Donnell sister, with her husband, a local Ballybeg man. Their lonely life in a damp basement flat in London is made even more difficult by her battle with the bottle and his unrewarding job as a probation officer.

Directed by Judith Elmes, the cast features Jamie Cox, Karen O'Brien, Annette Burns, Odette Colgan, Tom Delahunty, Robert Boland, Mark Aylward, Len Nealon and Seymour Cresswell.

ARISTOCRATS by Brian Friel will be staged nightly at 8pm in Dalkey Town Hall from Wednesday 2nd to Saturday 5th April inclusive. Tickets (€18) are available from www.gr8-events.ie or tel. 01-280 7185.



Len Nealon as Uncle George with Odette Colgan as Alice in Brian Friel's *Aristocrats*.

Wicklow GAA 2025

Corporate Sponsorship Package

Support Your County

Contact: treasurer.wicklow@gaa.ie



Joe O'Brien and Paul O'Toole at the Rathdangan Drama Group's *Separate Beds* in Rathdangan Community Hall.



Gold Package €10,000

SIGNAGE: Perimeter Signage at Echelon Park Aughrim & Echelon COE Ballinakill. County will be responsible for the cost of the sign. Signs will be located at the County discretion

TICKETS: 6 x Leinster Football Tickets and 4 All Ireland Tickets 2025 (Both Football or Hurling) & 10 Passes to Local Club Games 2025

MATCH PROGRAMME ADVERTISING: Club Football & Hurling Championship Final Program

MERCHANDISING: Some Wicklow Items reusable Cups, Bobble Hat, Signed Jersey

MEDIA & DIGITAL PLATFORMS: Two full pages in the county final program promoting your company, pictures and editorial. A spotlight on your company and people shared 4 times per year on our GAA social media platforms. Logo & Promotional Presence on Wicklow GAA Website & Social Media platforms with media announcement of sponsorship. Moving Banner on our Website

WICKLOW EVENTS: Partner Event, Sponsors Day



Silver Package €7,500

SIGNAGE: Perimeter Signage at Echelon Park Aughrim. County will be responsible for the cost of the sign. Signs will be located at the County discretion

TICKET ACCESS: Options to purchase 4 x Leinster Football Tickets and 2 All Ireland Tickets 2025 (Choice of Football or Hurling) & 4 Passes to Local Club Games 2025

MATCH PROGRAMME ADVERTISING: Club Football & Hurling Championship Final Program

MEDIA & DIGITAL PLATFORMS: Logo & Promotional Presence on Wicklow GAA Website & Social Media platforms with media announcement of sponsorship

WICKLOW EVENTS: Partner Event, Sponsors Day



Bronze Package €5,000

SIGNAGE: Perimeter Signage at Echelon Park Aughrim. County will be responsible for the cost of the sign. Signs will be located at the County discretion

MATCH PROGRAMME ADVERTISING: Club Football & Hurling Championship Final Program

MEDIA & DIGITAL PLATFORMS: Logo & Promotional Presence on Wicklow GAA Website & Social Media platforms with media announcement of sponsorship

WICKLOW EVENTS: Partner Event, Sponsors Day



Greystones Players present: Circle Mirror Transformation

Whale Theatre, Thursday April 24th - Sunday
April 27th, 8pm Thur-Sat and 4pm Sunday

In a small town in Vermont, New England, five unlikely strangers come together in a community centre for a creative drama class for adults.

They are a free-spirited drama teacher Marty, recently divorced Schulz, former actress Teresa, self-conscious high school student Lauren and Marty's elusive husband James. Over six weeks of drama exercises and games, relationships form and falter and their lives become entangled and transformed in hilarious

and sometimes heart-breaking ways.

Directed by Caolfionn Murphy/Assistant Direction by Alana Evans, Circle Mirror Transformation is a meditation on theatre, life, death, the passing of time and the ability of people to truly listen to one another. Tender, disarming and unexpected, Pulitzer Prize

winner Annie Baker's immaculate play has been called 'absorbing, unblinking and sharply funny' by The New York Times. Enjoy a play that is at once beautifully human and laugh-out-loud relatable by one of America's most exciting playwrights.

This production will be staged 'in the round'

CAST

James - Kevin Keliher
Lauren - Katie Lacey-Curtis
Marty - Niamh Clancy
Schulz - Paul Ring
Theresa - Caolfionn Murphy
Age Recommendation: 14+

which refers to the staging of the play with the audience seated encircling the performance. Some seating will be on cushions on the edge of the

stage. Please advise the box office if you have any physical issues, and an appropriate seat reservation will be made.

Making Waves Youth Theatre presents: Twelfth Night & Infernal Affairs

Whale Theatre, Friday 4th, Saturday 5th April, 7.30pm (doors 6.30pm) and Sunday 6th April 4pm (doors 3pm) Tickets €16 and €12 and available at www.whaletheatre.ie or call the booking office on 01 2010550.

Making Waves Youth Theatre presents a great evening of comedy in the form of two plays, one 424 years old and the other brand new.

TWELFTH NIGHT

Presented by the Junior Group and adapted and directed by Cian Ó Náirigh, this fast-paced version of William Shakespeare's great comedy about the power of love and mistaken identity follows twins Viola and Sebastian, who are washed ashore in a strange land after a shipwreck, each thinking the other has perished. Viola disguises herself as a man, to become a servant of the local Duke Orsino.

She quickly finds herself in love

with the duke, despite being recruited as the messenger for his wooing of the countess Olivia. Not only is Viola's 'wooing' on behalf of the Duke unsuccessful, but Olivia falls for the messenger! A wild knot of comic misunderstandings ensue that can't fail to make you laugh. Prepare to be entertained!

INFERNAL AFFAIRS

It's hell, but not as we know it! Devised by the Senior Group and

Aideen Walton, directed by Aideen, and with original lyrics and music by Making Waves member Maisie Grey, this brand new play turns Dante's Inferno upside down and inside out.

The play has a great cast of characters that includes none other than Dan (Tay) and Beah (Trice), Satan's son and daughter Damien and Uro (Euridyce), and a who's who of famous (and not so famous) sinners. Hell TV's 'The Mourning Show' hosts Rick and Susie can hardly sup-



Making Waves Youth Theatre.

press their rivalry, and, predictably, there aren't many surprises from Carla the weatherwoman - it's Hell after all! Scooper, hell's paparazzo, keeps us up to date on recent

arrivals, and of course everyone's favourite fire-starter, the Supreme Purveyor of All That Is Evil, Satan himself, appears in person.

It ends with a game of hellish

Jeopardy in which an array of dodgy (and not so dodgy) contestants battle it out to win a couple of rare Amnesties - free passes to the 'Other Place'.

TuneClub set to transform how aspiring musicians learn, connect and perfect their craft

25th - 27th April. €250,000 Creator Fund launched to support music educators, professional musicians, content creators, and event organisers in developing music learning experiences

TuneClub, a revolutionary music-learning platform, is launching to transform how musicians learn, connect, and participate in live music. By blending structured digital learning with real-world music experiences, TuneClub equips learners with the tools and confidence to engage in sessions, master new skills, and make meaningful musical connections.

To celebrate its launch, TuneClub presents The Sugarloaf Sessions, an innovative new festival debuting in Bray, Co. Wicklow from 25th - 27th April 2025.

To support and encourage music educators and event organisers to develop more opportunities, TuneClub is also unveiling a €250,000 Creator Fund to foster innovative learning-driven music experiences that blend online preparation with in-person engagement.

TuneClub: A Phyigital Approach to Music Learning Open to both learners and creators, TuneClub is a phyigital (physical + digital) platform, designed to bridge online learning

with live participation. Learners prepare in advance with structured pathways, interactive tools, and personalised feedback, so that they arrive at live sessions more confident and engaged.

Creators - including event organisers, music educators and artists can monetise their expertise, blending digital learning with physical events and tapping into the Creator Fund.

The Sugarloaf Sessions

From 25-27th April, The Sugarloaf Sessions is an exciting new learning experience designed for adult learners. Using the TuneClub

app, learners start their learning journey at home before bringing their skills to life in an immersive, in-person event with fellow musicians in Bray. Students will learn tunes - and a whole lot more, including how to develop their session playing skills from skilled performers.

The Sugarloaf Sessions will be delivered by a team of expert tutors including Tim Doyle and Rachel Duffy. Dr. Liz Doherty, CEO of I Teach Trad, is advisor to the project, providing professional development training to the teaching team. If you are an adult learner, keen to level up your skills and improve your session playing, this is an experience not to

be missed!

Early bird registration is now available at €150 from www.tuneclub.com

TuneClub's €250,000 Creator Fund

TuneClub is investing €250,000 to help experience creators to integrate digital learning into real-world music experiences. The platform is lowering the barrier for music educators, innovators and event organisers to incorporate a digital learning aspect into their events, ensuring participants arrive better prepared, more engaged, and ready to play.

The fund is open to:

• Music educators & masterclass hosts eager to scale their teaching

into structured digital courses.

• Festival & event organisers looking to enhance participation engagement through pre-event learning.

• Innovators in music education creating curated masterclasses, concert-led workshops, or music travel adventures.

Applications are open for direct or co-funding support, with the successful applicants receiving financial support to access TuneClub's digital infrastructure for learning materials, ticketing, and community-building. Events may be fully hosted on TuneClub or co-promoted across the platform's growing user base, connecting creators to a wider international audience.

Gabe Moynagh, founder of TuneClub commented "Our vision is to make music learning more

immersive, social, and rewarding. We don't want learners just practicing in isolation - we want them gearing up for real sessions, festivals, and meaningful performances."

He continued "We want learners to arrive ready to focus on expression and collaboration instead of feeling left behind in sessions. By integrating digital preparation with live experiences, we're giving both learners and creators a new way to engage with music."

With The Sugarloaf Sessions, TuneClub App, and TuneClub Creator Fund, the platform is redefining how, when, and where people learn and play music together.

For details, visit www.tuneclub.com or contact info@tuneclub.com

Little Caesar goes to Greece

Wicklow filmmakers rocking the film festival circuit with their animation

Rathnew's Amy Tierney is celebrating the success of her animated short film, *Little Caesar*, following its premiere at the Dublin International Film Festival (DIFF). This weekend, the film received further acclaim at the prestigious Dingle Animation Festival.

Little Caesar is a poignant tale exploring themes of rejection, diversity, and belonging. The film was made possible through the support of the National Talent Academy's First Credit Animation Scheme and Screen Ireland.

Tierney, who has two published books and multiple screenwriting awards to her name, makes her directorial debut with 'Little Caesar'. She expressed her excitement, stating, "It was an incredible opportunity for a first-time director to have our

film screened at Dingle. Engaging in discussions about directing with Peter Lord of Wallace and Gromit fame was off the wall brilliant! The screening itself was wonderful - we received great feedback with lots of laughs and have generated great

interest in our other projects, which is fantastic!"

Produced by Ashford-based Rowena Kelly of Immortal Films and Production Manager Lauren Kirwan from Newtownmountkennedy, the team is thrilled with the film's recognition. Kelly remarked, "Being selected and screened in Dingle was a huge endorsement of our work. Meeting local studio heads and reps from Netflix, Disney, RTE, BBC, and Sky is strategically advantageous for us. It was wonderful to connect with industry luminaries, enhance our profile, and gain support for our upcoming projects. A heartfelt thank you to Animation Dingle, the National Talent Academy for Animation, and Screen Ireland for this opportunity!"

Little Caesar has been selected for and screens at Animfest in Athens this coming weekend before continuing its journey on the international film festival circuit.

For further information, please contact: rowenakellyfilm@gmail.com or 086-2779437 (My phone cover is terrible - but WhatsApp will generally get me - or email me your contact details and I can phone you back if you'd like further information).



Little Caesar Writer/Director with Animator Elliot Doran and Production Manager celebrate at Dingle Animation Festival.



The Little Caesar Creative Team at Dublin International Film Festival - Harry Robinson (background artist), Lauren Kirwan (production manager), Elliot Doran (animator), Kathleen Warner Yates (actress), Paddy C. Courtney (actor), Rowena Kelly (producer, Immortal Films), Amy Tierney (writer, director).

Coming up at Mermaid

The Blooze Brothers

Saturday 5th April 2025 - 8pm €25

To celebrate the 45th Anniversary of 'The Blues Brothers movie', The 11-piece Blooze Brothers band featuring Jake & Elwood are returning to the Mermaid Theatre with their 'Getting the Band Back Together' show.

Having played for packed clubs and sold-out shows across Ireland and Europe for nearly 30 years, The Blooze Brothers keep the music and spirit of everybody's favourite movie alive, playing all the hits and plenty more besides. Whether you love the movie or just love great music, this is a night not to be missed!

Tickets can be booked through mermaidartscentre.ie or 01 272 4030 Mermaid's new Apr - June brochure is out now, available online or to pick up at Mermaid Arts Centre, Bray



Film at Mermaid: A real Pain

Film Cert: 15A. Monday 7th April 2025 - 8pm. €10 Full Price €8 Concession

After the death of their beloved grandmother, a Holocaust survivor, mismatched cousins David and Benji take a trip to visit her family home in Poland to honour her. Previously close, they have drifted apart due to the responsibilities and disappointments of adult life.

The trip forces them to confront their own resentments and personal demons, with both humour and raw emotion.

Against the backdrop of immense generational trauma, actor/director Jesse Eisenberg

explores the complications of familial bonds. Eisenberg and Kieran Culkin give devastating, funny performances as the characters grappling

with their history and the ways their own lives have diverged. The deftly humanistic script - rooted in Eisenberg's own family past - plus

terrific performances give this film a powerful emotional kick.

Tickets can be booked through mermaidartscentre.ie or 01 272 4030.



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Sunbeam service users complete skills-based training programme

Bray and North Wicklow Area Partnership's (BNWAP) IMPACT WorkAbility Inclusive Pathways to Employment Programme recently awarded certificates to service users from Sunbeam House Services for successfully completing a skills-based training programme.

The training covered key workplace skills, including HACCP Food Safety, Job Ready Skills, Conflict Resolution, Personal Development, Personal Awareness & Boundaries, Minding Myself & Others, and Positive Mental Health. The goal was to enhance job readiness, enabling

participants to advance in their careers or achieve their goal of paid employment.

Presenting the certificates, Orla Butler, BNWAP IMPACT WorkAbility Programme Coordinator, praised the participants for their dedication and thanked trainer Finola Dolan for her sup-

portive approach. "We are delighted to have collaborated with Sunbeam to provide this skills-based training. IMPACT WorkAbility is all about supporting people with disabilities to secure the job they want and progress in their careers," she said.

IMPACT WorkAbility is a free service supporting people with disabilities in the Bray and North Wicklow area to find employment, advance their careers, or start their own businesses. The programme also assists employers in creating inclusive and accessible workplaces.

Co-funded by the Government of Ireland (through the Department of Social Protection) and the European Union, IMPACT WorkAbility is committed to making employment more accessible for all.

Find out more on www.bnwap.ie or call (01) 9633342.



Sunbeam House service users with their certificates.

Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership Disability Sports Club Grants 2025 now open for applications

Wicklow Sports and Recreation Partnership has announced that applications are now open for the Disability Sports Club Grants 2025. This funding aims to support sports clubs across County Wicklow to make their activities more inclusive and accessible for people with disabilities.

Clubs can apply for funding of up to €1,000 to help create opportunities for everyone to take part in sport and physical activity. The grant can be used in a range of ways, including:

- Disability support for education and training building awareness and skills among coaches and volunteers.
- Programme activation and delivery - supporting inclusive sessions, events, or programmes.
- Small scale equipment - purchasing equipment that helps make activities more accessible.

Speaking about the initiative, Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr. Paul O'Brien said: "Inclusive sport is about giving everyone the chance to enjoy the benefits of being active. This grant is a fantastic opportunity for clubs to enhance what they offer and remove some of the barriers people with disabilities may face."

Emer O'Gorman, Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council stated "We know that small changes can make a big difference. With this

funding, clubs can access the resources they need to create a more inclusive environment where everyone feels welcome to take part."

Theresa O'Brien, Director of Services for the Climate, Environment and Amenity added: "We are committed to supporting local clubs in playing sports more inclusive and welcoming for people of all abilities. This grant is a great opportunity for clubs to take positive steps towards inclusion and to grow participation within their communities."

Applications are now open, and we encourage sports club affiliated to a National Governing Body interested in developing inclusive opportunities to apply.

For more information on how to apply, please visit <https://wicklow-lsp.ie/>.

Closing date for appli-

cations: Thursday 1st May 2025 at 5pm.

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

I, BNRG Ballymoney Limited, seeks permission to amend the design of the approved development (Planning Reference: 19/627 and ABP-305289-19) which comprises consent for a Solar Farm within a site area of 19 hectares consisting of solar photovoltaic panels covering an area of up to 9.8ha on ground mounted steel frames, 1 no. on-site substation; 3 no. inverter/transformer stations, underground cables and ducts, boundary security fence, new internal tracks, CCTV cameras and all associated site services. Planning permission was sought for a period of 10 years. Proposed amendments include (1) relocation of part of the internal access track, and (2) a gate will be added along the access track. The planning application may be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy at the offices of Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Wicklow during its public opening hours and a submission or observation in relation to the application may be made to the authority in writing on payment of the prescribed fee within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the application.

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

Permission is sought by Alan O'Brien & Denise Byrne for construction of 2no. Single storey pitched roof detached dwellings of 182sqm each, each having a separate double garage of 85sqm, on lands adjacent Coolboy handball club, Carnew Road, Coolboy village. Total GFA of 534sqm. Works to include separate vehicle & pedestrian access onto Carnew Road for each dwelling. The planning application may be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy at the office of Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Wicklow during public opening hours and a submission or observation in relation to the application may be made in writing on payment of the prescribed fee within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the application.

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

Ciaran and Niamh O'Brien seek permission for the addition of a dormer structure with window to the rear of the existing dwelling and a roof light to the front of the dwelling to accommodate a toilet and home office at 17 Churchlands, Delgany, Co. Wicklow, A63FH72. The planning application may be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy, at the offices of the planning authority during its public opening hours. A submission or observation in relation to the application may be made in writing to the planning authority on payment of the prescribed fee, €20, within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the application.

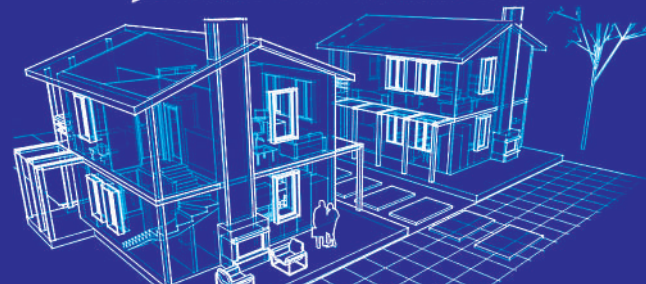
WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

We, Leinster Cricket Union CLG. Are applying for planning permission for a Proposed New 4m wide gate entrance and access road to the existing Oakhill Cricket Club with new stone wall & pillars to match the existing shared entrance and to include ancillary works at Oakhill Cricket Club, Kilbride, Co. Wicklow. A67 KX70. The planning application may be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy at the offices of Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Wicklow during its public opening hours and a submission or observation in relation to the application may be made to the authority in writing on payment of the prescribed fee within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the application.

ATTENTION Architects, Planners & Builders

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pauline@localtimes.ie



RECRUITMENT

Full Time-Permanent

FARM WORKER

Full Time-Permanent Farm Worker position is available on a modern farm 2kms from Wicklow Town. Experience in livestock care and general farm duties is required but training will be provided. The successful candidate must have a full driving licence and have the ability to operate farm machinery.

Please contact: 0404-67164
Mon-Fri 9am - 5.30pm
or via email: herbst@herbst.ie

New CUPRA line up revealed in Wicklow

Once again, the Irish motor industry have shown that they know Wicklow is the ideal location for a stellar car launch. This time the beautiful Catalan brand CUPRA unveiled their expanded range to the entire Irish motoring press in Enniskerry, and in the Powerscourt estate specifically.

by Martin McCarthy

Back in 2018, CUPRA launched their unconventional challenger brand, as an annex to SEAT, much like Toyota and Lexus. Seven years and seven cars later, CUPRA is breaking both conventions and records - with more than 800,000 accumulated sales in Europe since its inception.

In Ireland, where the brand launched just over four years ago, CUPRA has rapidly emerged as a key player in the performance and electrified

vehicle market. The brand's commitment to performance, innovation, and a distinctive, bold design has struck a chord with Irish drivers, fueling remarkable growth across the country - with new car sales performance increasing fivefold since 2022.

Electrification remains a hot topic in the automotive world. Already in 2025, CUPRA has seen demand for its Battery Electric Vehicle (BEV) models grow, with BEVs

accounting for 34% of sales in January and February - helped by the ever-popular CUPRA Born and the recently launched CUPRA Tavascan. Meanwhile, plug-in hybrid models accounted for 12% of sales, buoyed by the new next-generation plug-in hybrid engines that offer extended electric range, and the arrival of the new Terramar Plug-in Hybrid SUV. Despite these shifts, internal combustion engines remain strong in the

Irish market, with CUPRA's petrol and diesel powertrains accounting for 54% of sales month-to-date.

CUPRA Tavascan

Launched just recently in Ireland, the Tavascan is an all-electric SUV coupe that stands out with its futuristic design and exhilarating performance. It showcases CUPRA's commitment to pioneering electric mobility, offering a seamless blend of style



and efficiency.

CUPRA Terramar

The Terramar is a plug-in hybrid SUV that perfectly balances performance with environmental responsibility. This

innovative model combines powerful performance with fuel efficiency, marking a significant step forward in CUPRA's hybrid technology portfolio. Available in petrol, mild hybrid and plug-in hybrid.



Janet Drew.

Start-up and mid-stage food entrepreneurs encouraged to apply for Food Academy

Janet's Just Delicious, a Wicklow-based company who are Ireland's leading artisan producer of chutneys and relishes, is encouraging start-up and early-stage food and drink Irish businesses to apply for the Food Academy 2025. With applications now open, start-up and mid-stage food entrepreneurs have a unique opportunity to take their products from concept to consumer, gaining expert mentorship, retail insight, and exposure through this programme.

Supported by SuperValu and the Local Enterprise Office, Food Academy provides a launchpad for start-up to mid-stage food and drink producers, equipping them with the tools to thrive in the competitive retail landscape. With consumer interest in homegrown, innovative products at an all-time high, now is the perfect time for new producers to take the leap and apply.

Food Academy has surpassed €260 million in retail sales over the past 11 years, highlighting the programme's significant impact. In 2025, Food Academy products are projected to generate €30 million in retail sales, reflecting strong consumer demand for local, high-quality, and sustainable Irish food. By fostering local entrepreneurship, SuperValu continues to drive economic growth and innovation in Ireland's food and

drink sector. At the same time, changing consumer habits are shaping new opportunities for food producers.

Apply for the Food Academy today through your Local Enterprise Office: www.localenterprise.ie/FoodSupports/Food-Academy-Programme/

The closing date for applications is April 5th, 2024

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CLASSIFIEDS

Gospel: John 14:1-6

'Do not be troubled! Trust in God and trust in me! In my Father's house there are many rooms; otherwise, I would not have told you that I go to prepare a place for you. After I have gone and prepared a place for you, I shall come again and take you to me, so that where I am, you also may be. Yet you know the way where I am going.' Thomas said to him, 'Lord, we don't know where you are going; how can we know the way?' Jesus said 'I am the way, the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father but through me.'

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. **H.M.**

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