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Tuesday 25th March 2025 First Floor, The Boulevard, Quinsborough Road, Bray. A98 R6D7. Tel: 01 - 2869111 E-mail: wicklowed@localtimes.ie www.wicklowtimes.net

MASSIVE DEVELOPMENT FOR FLOOD ZONE

A site notice erected at the Old Bray Golf Club lands has announced the intentions of Ballymore Group subsidiary Shankill Property Investments Limited to apply for permission for a mixed-use development that would include a hotel, pub, 341 residential units and an apartment block up to 15 storeys high.

The site notice is dated March 14th but at the time of going to press the plans had not yet been made available to the public on the Council's eplanning site.

The 11-hectare site is located largely within the former Bray Golf Club lands off the Dublin Road and off Ravenswell Road. The site is bounded to the north by the Northern Access Road, the existing Ravenswell school campus and Sea Gardens, to the east by the rail line, and to the west by mixed-use

development and the Dublin Road.

Last summer, An Bord Pleanála granted permission to Ballymore for a Strategic Housing Development of 586 homes on the same old Bray Golf Club lands, with the development needing to tie-in with the controversial proposed public transport bridge at Bray Harbour.

The new plans, as detailed in the site notice, would include; 94 terraced houses (2-3 storeys in height); 106 duplex units (2-3 storeys in

height); 109 apartments in 'Block E' (3-15 storeys in height); 32 apartments in 'Block H' (3-4 storeys in height).

The retail and commercial element of the development would consist of four other blocks that would include a pub, medical centre, childcare facility, several retail units and a 3-7 storey hotel with 150 rooms - including pool and well-being centre, wedding/function venue and rooftop restaurant.

The development would also include over



Tony Cox with Saoirse and Scott Doyle at the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Wicklow Town. Pic: Michael Kelly.

Kathleen Funchion MEP

Standing up for Ireland South in Europe



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THE LEFT

500 car parking spaces (over 50 of which for electric vehicles), over 1,000 bicycle parking spaces, and communal open spaces in the form of two podium gardens for the apartments in Blocks E and H and two community gardens for the duplex units, as well as public open spaces and play areas.

An Environmental Impact Assessment Report and Natura Impact Statement have been prepared to accompany the planning application.

Concerns about development on the old golf club lands have been raised by many in the Little Bray community including the SaveBray campaign group who maintain that as a floodplain it must be protected as a 'safety valve' in times of flooding. The group has written to

Bray's Municipal District councillors asking that, at the very least, the area within the old golf club lands at the highest risk of flooding (a Flood Zone A) should be zoned for Land Use as Open Space in the upcoming Local Area Plan.

A spokesperson from SaveBray told *Wicklow Times* "That narrow corridor extends from the flood defence wall up to the line of trees just below where the old club house used to be, and from the side entrance into the old golf links (in Dwyer Park) all the way down to the railway tracks. It's the land that has always flooded because rivers always flow along the lowest ground, and they always flow towards the sea.

Continued on page 9



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Purple House Coffee Morning

Mccabes Pharmacy Bray are delighted to announce they are hosting their 8th annual coffee morning in aid of Purple House Cancer Support. It will be held in McCabes pharmacy, 24 Quinsboro Road Bray, Co. Wicklow. This year it is very exciting as Liz Hipple the organizer is retiring on the same day, so she would love all their customers and friends to join her on the day to raise much needed funds towards the great work Purple House Cancer Support do for the community. Lots of local Businesses kindly donate food and spot prizes for the raffle that will be held on 28th March, 11am - 1pm.

Newtown Parkinsons meeting

The Wicklow Branch of Parkinsons Ireland meets this Wednesday 26th March from 11am-12.30pm at the Parkview Hotel, Newtownmountkennedy. Speakers include Alisha O'Rourke (Public Health Nurse), Fiona Cosgrave (Physiotherapist) and Michelle O'Keefe (Occupational Therapist). Anyone with an interest in connecting with the Parkinson's community in Wicklow is welcome. No charge. Refreshments included. Enquiries 086-8146926.

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 0872109175.

The Old Dublin Society

Eamon Delaney will present 'The Old Tenements and the New Suburbs' at 6pm on Wednesday March 26th in the Conference Room, Dublin City Library & Archive, 139-144 Pearse Street, Dublin 2. All are welcome - admission is free and no booking is required.

Greystones Flower Club

The next meeting of Greystones Flower Club will be on Tuesday 25th March at 8pm in The Evangelical Church Hall, Hillside Road, Greystones. The demonstrator will be Brenda Joyce. Members and non-members most welcome. Membership fee is €35 (new members are very welcome). Entrance fee for non-members is €10 per evening. Tea / Coffee is available at the end of the evening.

Glendalough District Development Association

The Glendalough District Development Association Ltd AGM will take place on the 10th of April at 8:30pm. The meeting will be held at the Brockagh Resource Centre. One of the key aspects of the AGM is the election of new Board Members. "We encourage new nominations and are particularly interested in individuals who are passionate about community development and have skills or experience that can contribute to the success of the association. If you or someone you know would like to be considered for a position on the Board, please submit your nomination in advance of the meeting."

The AGM is not only a time for formal proceedings but also an opportunity to engage with the wider community. Attending the AGM is an excellent way to stay informed about the activities and direction of the association. It provides a platform for transparency and accountability, allowing members of the Community to ask questions and seek clarifications on the association, actions and plans. For any questions or additional information regarding the AGM, please feel free to reach out to Glendalough District Development Association at GDDAChair@gmail.com.

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Rosemary Fitzpatrick, Linda Uhlemann, Mary McCabe, Deirdre Fitzgerald, Margaret Boles and Yvonne O'Rourke of Bray Bathers at their St. Patrick's Day swim in Bray. Pic: Joe McQuillan.

'Coffee with a Cop' initiative relaunching in Greystones

On the 29th June 2016, Greystones Community Gardai launched their first ever coffee with a cop at Cafe Delle Stelle, Greystones. Over the years, Coffee with a Cop has taken place in numerous venues in Greystones, Kilcoole and Delgany and has been very successful in reaching the community and extremely effective in regards to meeting Neighbourhood watch representatives.

Coffee with a Cop was an initiative first introduced in America and is a more personal and engaging way to communicate with the residents. The meet up focuses on creating a neutral space where Gardai engage with community members in one-on-one conversations with 'no agenda and no speeches'. In effect, it turned the formal Garda meetings on its head - Gardai talked with community members instead of at them.

Coffee with a Cop works because it's simple. Coffee with a Cop creates an atmosphere that facilitates communication by breaking down the traditional barriers.

Coffee with a Cop events create a relaxed, neutral atmosphere with no speeches, no agenda, and no pre-set subjects. They allow residents to sit down with the local Community Gardai to discuss the concerns that are most important to them. The conversations are intimate and personal.

A Garda spokesperson explained "Coffee with a Cop provides 'faces' for Community Gardai to connect with; to encourage them to get to know each other and form a working trust based on their mutual goal - a better, safer community. Coffee with a Cop provides distraction-free time with no pending radio calls or mobile phones ringing, just good communication.

"In the past, residents have expressed to us that they were encouraged to

meet us in an informal setting because they found the Garda station too much of an intimidating place. They especially felt intimidated since the concerns they expressed were important enough for us to know but they expressed that if they called into the Garda station they might

be delaying a call that required more urgent Garda attention. I informed them that all calls are treated equally at the Garda station but it was the way they felt and could or would not be overcome. They expressed these feelings at a Coffee with a Cop in the past to me and were

delighted to engage with community Gardai on that specific day. That report was regarding traffic congestion on a housing estate. Everyone's concerns are valid and important. This was an indication to me that that the Coffee with a Cop initiative was a success.

"We are delighted to

be bringing back this initiative to Greystones. On Tuesday the 25th March from 10am to 12noon, Garda Maria Curtis and Garda Molly Corbett will be at COSTA in the Meridian Centre for our relaunch of Coffee with a Cop. Maybe we will see some of you there if you are free!"



Grand Marshal Kathleen Kellehger pictured leading the Greystones St. Patrick's Day Parade. Pic: Andres Poveda.

WICKLOW
Times

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Burglaries in Wicklow rise by 33%

Fourth highest increase in the country

New data reveals that the number of burglaries in the Wicklow Gardaí division has surged by 33% in the past 12 months compared to the same period the year prior with 301 burglaries occurring. This is one of the highest increases in the country. On a national level, burglaries increased by 10% in the same period.

Home Security Safety Tips

** Get a monitored alarm: Having a monitored home alarm will keep you protected 24/7 whether you're at home and away.*

** Use lights: Put your lights (inside and outside) on timers so that even when you're away your home doesn't appear empty.*

** Neighbour assistance: Ask a neighbour to take in your post and bins while you're away, so that it looks as if you're home.*

** Maintain your garden: Keep your lawns cut and shrubs pruned, so it looks freshly done, especially if you're going on holidays.*

** Lock windows and doors: Always lock your doors and shut windows when you aren't home. Never leave spare keys under the mat.*

** Social media updates: If you are posting holiday pictures on social media, do so when you're back home.*

According to the latest figures from the Central Statistics Office (CSO), burglaries have risen sharply across both urban and rural areas. The data outlines that 21 of the 28 Gardaí divisions have experienced an increase in burglaries within this period. With the combined Roscommon and Longford Gardaí division experiencing the highest increase at 56% (277 burglaries), Tipperary Gardaí division enduring the second highest increase at 50% (371 burglaries), Westmeath increase by 35% (272 burglaries) and Limerick by 27% (571 burglaries).

The CSO report did also outline positive decreases in burglaries within some Gardaí divisions, as the Mayo division cited the highest decrease in burglaries at -19% (137 burglaries), Wexford and Dublin Eastern divisions had the joint second highest decrease at -5% (292 and 361 burglaries respectively) and Kildare had a decrease of -2% (465 burglaries).

Eoin Dunne, Managing Director of PhoneWatch commented; "This 10% increase in burglary rates means that 878 more homes compared to the previous 12 months had to endure a burglary and the traumatic aftermath that comes with it. Even one burglary is one too many. In a recent survey conducted with Bounce Insights, it's no surprise that

50% of homeowners outlined that they're more concerned about a break-in in their home now compared to a year ago. Regardless of whether burglary rates increase or decrease in your Gardaí division, our message to Irish homeowners never changes. It's imperative you take control of your home security, as burglars are opportunists and identify a weakness in security very quickly and capitalise on this. Homeowners need to act on their security concerns and implement simple but effective home security recommendations, to help deter burglars from their homes."

While Gardaí continue to work diligently to curb burglary rates, homeowners are reminded that prevention is a shared responsibility. An investment in security measures, coupled with increased vigilance within local communities, is key to reducing the likelihood of becoming a victim of burglary.

The rise in burglaries highlights the importance of prioritizing home security to protect not only personal property but also the sense of safety and peace of mind that every homeowner deserves.

For more information on how to protect your home and regional burglary rates, please visit <https://www.phonewatch.ie/blog/post/s/ireland-crime-statistics/>



Khloe Ellis and Eabha Porter-Grant at the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Wicklow Town.

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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

Exciting new community food-growing project receives LEADER funding

A new initiative empowering people to grow their own food - regardless of space - has been awarded LEADER funding, to the delight of Greystones Councillor Lourda Scott and Anna Mazzarotto of Greystones Town Team, the team behind the project.

The Plot to Plate Community Garden Project, delivered by Jason McCormack of FoodTree, will offer hands-on training in organic gardening, sustainability, and the circular economy. Whether you have a garden, a balcony, or shared green space, this initiative will equip participants with practical food-growing skills. The project is now seeking enthusiastic participants of all ages and experience levels. From complete beginners to more experienced gardeners, this is a chance to learn practical food-growing skills and connect with the community.

Speaking about the funding, Cllr. Scott said: "This is a fantastic opportunity for people in our community to learn how to grow fresh, healthy food while strengthening community ties. Food security and sustainability are key issues, and this project will provide lifelong

skills to participants whether they have a small balcony or a shared garden."

The programme will feature practical hands-on workshops and online sessions with guest speakers from established community food-growing projects across Ireland. Participants will learn everything from vegetable growing and composting to using natural fertilisers and upcycling materials for gardening.

Anna Mazzarotto of Greystones Town Team added: "Food growing is more than just produce - it's about connecting with nature, meeting like-minded people, and building community. One of the most exciting aspects of this course is how it will bring people together, whether working side by side in the garden or sharing progress over a cup of tea."

The initiative will be rolled out in a local housing estate with a mix of private, social, and affordable housing, with strong support from Greystones Town Team, Tuath Housing, Greystones Family Resource Centre, Common Ground residents group, the residents associations, and the estate's management company. Jason McCormack encourages people to get involved: "You don't need any prior experience - just a willingness to learn and take part. This is a great opportunity to learn, connect and be part of something truly positive for your community. Spaces are limited, so I urge anyone interested to get in touch as soon as possible. To register your interest or find out more about the Plot to Plate Community Garden Project, please contact Julie at plot2plateproject@gmail.com. We'd love to hear from you."



Lynne O'Connor, Greystones Family Resource Centre, Anna Mazzarotto from Greystones Town Team, Cllr Scott, Karl Quinn, Common Ground Residents Association, and Georgia Rogers, An Tuath Housing Association

BNM Recycling workers serve strike notice

SIPTU members employed by Bord na Mona (BNM) Recycling, the country's last publicly owned domestic waste collection service, last Tuesday served notice of a two-day strike action which will stop the company's domestic waste collection services on 2nd and 3rd April.

SIPTU Divisional Organiser, Adrian Kane, said: "The management of Bord na Mona Recycling have carried out a plan to privatise the company behind the backs of its workforce. No legally

sound guarantees have been provided to our members that their hard fought for terms and conditions of employment will be maintained by a new employer. "The deal to privatise

the State's last publicly owned domestic waste collection service has been structured in a manner which doesn't provide the workers with the legal protections to their terms and conditions of employment which is normal in such a transfer of owners. Management has so far refused to provide the workers with the

legal protection of a Registered Employment Agreement that will ensure their standards of employment are not reduced and that under their new employer they can maintain their right to collectively bargain."

He added: "Our members have been forced to take this course of action. They are calling upon the loyal customer base of Bord na Mona Recycling to support them in this action, as

protecting the manner in which the company operates will ensure that they will not be victim to massive increases in bin charges and ensure the service maintains its record of adherence to the highest standards of environmental legislation."

SIPTU Organiser, Pat McCabe, said: "It is the Minister who has the final responsibility concerning whether this service is sold and if our

members are to have their terms of employment protected. The buck stops with him and he should have the decency to hear the workers' side on the issues surrounding this proposed sale."

The strike will impact Bord na Mona Recycling domestic waste collection services in Co. Wicklow, as well as in Wexford, Carlow, Dublin, Kildare, Laois, Limerick, Louth, Offaly, Meath, Tipperary and Westmeath.

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Grand Marshal John Keenan getting the Aughrim St. Patrick's Day parade underway.

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Progress made on tackling serious odour issues at Wicklow and Greystones wastewater facilities

Sinn Féin TD John Brady has welcomed progress in addressing the persistent and serious odour issues arising from the sewage treatment plant and wastewater facilities in Greystones and the Murrough in Wicklow Town. This follows a formal complaint made to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) by Deputy Brady regarding the foul and ongoing odours affecting residents and those who use local amenities in the area.

Deputy Brady welcomed the progress and stated "I welcome the progress that is being made in relation to the serious odours emanating from the wastewater facilities in Wicklow Town and Greystones. Unfortunately, it had to take an official complaint to the Environmental Protection Agency to force Uisce Eireann to finally start a process of finally addressing the serious issue.

"On foot of my complaint the EPA conducted

an audit of both the Greystones and Wicklow Town wastewater treatment plants on January 14th. As part of their findings, the EPA recommended that independent monitoring of both facilities be carried out to assess the extent of the problem and identify necessary corrective actions.

"The first stage of this process took place last week, with an odour abatement assessment now completed. This assessment marks an important

step in pinpointing the sources of the problem and determining the measures required to eliminate the persistent and unpleasant smells that have been affecting local communities for far too long. The second phase of this process is due to commence shortly, and upon its completion, a comprehensive report will be issued. This report will contain detailed recommendations aimed at tackling the odour issues in a meaningful and effective way.

"For far too long, residents in Greystones and Wicklow Town, particularly in the Murrough area, have had to endure persistent and unacceptable odours coming from these wastewater treatment plants. This is not just a nuisance - it has a real impact on people's quality of life, as well as on local businesses and the use of public amenities. The issue has been raised repeatedly, and I am glad to see that after the complaint was made to the EPA, concrete

steps are finally being taken to deal with the problem.

"The EPA's audit and subsequent recommendation for independent monitoring are crucial steps in identifying and resolving these issues. The first stage of the assessment has now taken place, and I welcome the progress being made. However, we need to ensure that this does not stop at assessment and reporting - action must be taken to put the necessary solu-



Deputy Brady at the Sewage Treatment Plant in Wicklow Town.

tions in place and ensure that these odours are eliminated once and for all.

"If there is a requirement to upgrade the odour abatement systems Uisce Eireann must ensure that the funding is in place and the work is done as a priority. I will

continue to closely monitor developments and stay in regular contact with the EPA

and Uisce Eireann to push for a lasting resolution. The people of Greystones and Wicklow Town deserve a clean and odour-free environment,

and I will keep fighting until that is achieved and will hold the authorities accountable and ensure that the necessary improvements are implemented without delay. I encourage residents to continue reporting any issues."

'Immediate action needed by Council to secure community centre in Hillview'

Sinn Féin representative Anthony Hill is calling on Wicklow County Council to take immediate action to secure the community centre in Hillview, Wicklow Town. The centre has suffered serious vandalism and criminal damage in recent months and has become completely unusable

"Once a thriving hub for the community, this centre provided a safe and welcoming space for various groups, including youth programs, parent, and toddler meet-ups, knit and stitch groups, and

summer camps. It played a crucial role in bringing people together, fostering community spirit, and supporting local initiatives - all facilitated by dedicated volunteers.

"Unfortunately, the

premises has now fallen into serious disrepair due to ongoing vandalism and criminal damage. The building has suffered severe flooding from a broken toilet, fire and roof damage, smashed win-

dows, and broken locks, leaving the doors open for further destruction. While the council has cleaned up the exterior, the inside remains in ruins and unusable, and unless it is properly secured, the damage will only continue.

"Along with my colleague John Brady TD, I have contacted Wicklow County Council to stress the urgency of this situation. The council must immediately secure the building to prevent further vandalism and ensure that it is protected from further deterioration.

"However, this cannot

be just a temporary measure. There must be a clear commitment from the council to carry out the necessary works to restore the premises so that it can once again serve as a much-needed community hub.

"I am committed to working with the local community to organise a cleanup, but we need the council to step up and take responsibility for securing and repairing the building. This is a vital resource for the area, and we cannot allow it to be lost due to inaction," Hill concluded.



Wicklow Town Sinn Féin representative Anthony Hill at the badly vandalised community centre in Hillview.

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Cyclists urged to participate in annual European fundraising cycle challenge

Irish Hospice Foundation has launched details of its IHF Cycle Challenge for 2025 and is urging cycling enthusiasts in Wicklow to sign up for this exciting annual event.

This is the largest in-person fundraiser in the Irish Hospice Foundation calendar and this year the cycle route goes from Munich to Milan, a 500 kms route taking in five countries over five days during the week-long trip. Participants will pedal through Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Liechtenstein and Italy taking in the best scenery that Europe has to offer. The event takes place from 20th-26th June 2025.

All elements of the trip, including flights, bike transfer, hotels and guides, are looked after by the organising committee, so participants can focus on enjoying the ride!

The IHF Cycle Challenge has been running since 2009 and many

cyclists return year-on-year for the event, but each year brings new faces too and all cyclists with a reasonable level of fitness are welcome to participate, including e-bike riders. Advanced cyclists will have the opportunity to take on some additional route challenges on certain legs of the trip. A comprehensive training guide is available for participants.

More than €2 million has been raised by this annual event since it started and it has helped to support a range of essential Irish Hospice Foundation programmes like Nurses for Nightcare, the Bereavement Support Line and the development of the recently launched Information and Support Line. Last year's event raised

more than €140,000 and the fundraising team has set an ambitious target for 2025, which is raised by participants achieving minimum sponsorship amounts from family, friends and supporters.

Places are limited and full details are available on this life-changing trip by contacting Cycle organiser Louise McCarron from Irish Hospice Foundation at (01) 679 3188 or by emailing louise.mccarron@hospicefoundation.ie.

You can also read more about the challenge and this year's route, or sign up online at <https://hospicefoundation.ie/get-involved/events/ihf-cycle-challenge/>



Issie Kane with the Arklow Baton Twirlers at the Arklow St. Patrick's Day parade.

Greystones Family Resource Centre table quiz raises €1,100

The Greystones Family Resource Centre has announced that its recent fundraising table quiz, held on Thursday, March 13th was a resounding success.

€1,100 was raised to support its building premises fund. The event saw enthusiastic participation from local residents, businesses, and community Gardaí, all coming together to support the Centre's initiatives aimed at enhancing the well-being of families and individuals in the Greystones area.

Nicola Lawless, Chairperson of the Greystones Family Resource Centre, expressed gratitude to all who contributed: "The success of this fundraising event is a testament to the generosity and community spirit of local people. The funds raised will play a crucial role in supporting the invaluable services provided by the Greystones Family Resource Centre. I commend everyone involved for their dedication and support."

The Greystones Family Resource Centre offers a range of services, including family support, counselling, play therapy, and community development initiatives. They cover a wide area taking in Greystones, Delgany, Newtown,

Kilcoole and Newcastle. The funds raised will directly contribute to the expansion of these essential services, ensuring that the Centre can continue to meet the growing needs of the community.

The Centre extends its heartfelt thanks to all participants, sponsors, and volunteers who made the event possible and looks forward to organising future events to engage and support the community. Some of the prizes donated were hand made specially for the occasion. The event took place in the Whale Theatre, with Cllr Stephen Stokes serving as Quizmaster.

Anyone seeking more information can visit www.greystonesfrc.ie to find out more. Nicola Lawless concluded: "We are indebted to our sponsors, there are too many to name, for their generous donations. We are also grateful to the Whale Theatre for hosting us. They have always been unwavering in their support of Greystones Family Resource Centre."



Rebecca Lowbridge, Andrew Kennedy, Eileen O'Mahony Bowe, Anne Waithira Burke, Cllr Stephen Stokes, Lynne O'Connor, Oscar O'Broin.



Jenny Louis Frauley, Lucina Byrne and Jackie Helena have signed up for the 'Your Finest Hour' fundraiser for Wicklow Hospice.

Wicklow hairdressers back unique fundraiser for Hospice care

These hairdressers are a cut above the rest after coming together to support a unique fundraiser for their local hospice.

Staff at Reflections Hair and Beauty salon in Kilcoole are handing over an hour of their pay next month in the 'Your Finest Hour For Hospice' fundraising drive, organised by Together for Hospice.

They are now encouraging employees right across Ireland to do the same.

"We are so fortunate to have Our Lady's

Hospice & Care Services, Wicklow Hospice on our doorstep - their work provides so much comfort, dignity and support to families at such difficult times," said salon manager, Lucina Byrne.

"We wanted to do something to show our solidarity and by donating just an hour of pay next month, other workers across Ireland, in

whatever sector, can make a huge difference."

Employers are asked to treat staff to something special such as an office takeaway, a well-being hour or simply an hour off work, and in exchange, employees are encouraged to donate an hour of their salary to hospice.

Employers can register for the initiative at finesthour.ie, where donations can also be made.

The 24 Hospices

nationwide that make up Together For Hospice need to raise approximately €20million each year. With the population over 65 set to triple over the next 30 years, demand for services continues to grow, and in 2023 alone, hospice and specialist palliative healthcare providers across Ireland cared for over 14,000 patients and made over 87,000 home-care visits. Every cent raised locally in Your Finest Hour For Hospice goes to local Hospices.

Raising awareness of Hidden Disability Parking in Bray

Hidden Disability Parking spaces have now been officially rolled out in Bray, following a sustained campaign led by Councillors Aoife Flynn Kennedy and Melanie Corrigan. The initiative, which was first proposed in 2021, marks a significant step forward in improving accessibility and inclusion for individuals living with non-visible disabilities.



Tánaiste Simon Harris with Cllr Aoife Flynn Kennedy.

On Friday, Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Simon Harris TD, joined both Councillors in Bray to help raise further awareness of the new parking facilities and to highlight the importance of inclusive infrastructure in our communities.

With one in five people in Ireland living with some form of disability 680% of whom live with a non-visible disability - the need for accessible public spaces has never been greater. Hidden Disability Parking provides strategically located spaces for individuals whose conditions may not qualify them for a Blue Badge, but who still require easier access to services and amenities.

Tánaiste Simon Harris

welcomed the initiative and commended the work of both councillors and community advocates.

"This is a brilliant example of local leadership delivering real change. The rollout of Hidden Disability Parking in Bray sends an important message that inclusion means thinking beyond the visible. I want to commend Cllr Aoife Flynn Kennedy and Cllr Melanie Corrigan for their continued advocacy and for ensuring that Bray is leading the way in recognising and responding to the needs of all members of our community."

Councillor Aoife Flynn Kennedy said: "Some people with a disability may not qualify for a

the spaces and leave them for those with hidden disabilities."

Councillor Melanie Corrigan added: "These spaces are for individuals and families with hidden conditions like autism, sensory disabilities, acquired brain injuries and other challenges. They may not have a disabled badge, but they do need to be able to park closer to facilities in order to safely access them."

The councillors also paid tribute to local resident and campaigner Bernadette Nolan McGrath, along with Tristan Casson-Rennie from The Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Team, Ireland & Northern Ireland, for their ongoing support.

Hidden Disability Parking spaces are now in place on Eglinton Road and in the Herbert Road Car Park. They are easily identifiable by their green colour and signage indicating that they are reserved for individuals with non-visible disabilities.

To learn more about hidden disabilities and the Sunflower initiative, visit: <https://hiddendisabilitiesstore.com/ie/>

Blue Badge, so these courtesy parking spaces provide a safe and accessible place to park. While the hidden disability spaces require paid parking, with the Pay and Display ticket machine located close to these spaces, we would ask the general public to respect

MASSIVE DEVELOPMENT FOR FLOOD ZONE

Continued from page 1

"From the old schools' road (which divides the schools and the Sea Gardens already developed for the lower lands closer to the river) down to that line of trees below the old club house (where Ballymore now have their site office) is a Flood Zone B, the second highest category of risk. It will obviously only flood when the lower Flood Zone A is filled to capacity. We are not advocating for a moment that a Flood Zone B is a safe place to build homes, and certainly not to build a child-care facility. However, it is safer than building on the ground that will certainly flood first, which is why we are asking for Flood Zone A, at a minimum, to be protected by being zoned as Open Space.

"The only permission Ballymore have for development on either Flood Zones A or B is for a Coastal Garden, ideal for a floodplain as it will recover quickly from flooding - unlike human bodies and unlike homes."

Regarding the latest site notice from Ballymore, the spokesperson said "Even half of what's being proposed would still be far too much to put in this enclosed space where the flood

waters finally come to rest when they have flowed through our streets and our homes. People are reacting to the 15-storey high building proposed, but that seems to me to be almost a distraction. A building 7 storeys high would still be too much to put on a Flood Zone A. What we should really be considering is where they are proposing to build, and the purpose of what they want to build there. For instance, I can understand why homes are needed - although we would still insist that they should be built in a safe place - but why in the name of God would you take up dangerous floodplain space to build a hotel and who in their right mind would suggest putting a child-care facility on enclosed low ground between the river and the sea?

"So let's not be distracted by what Ballymore say they want, and concentrate on what must not be allowed to happen at any cost. While it's extremely risky to build on a Flood Zone B, putting either private or public development on a Flood Zone A is playing Russian roulette with people's lives and homes. Our councillors must protect that land through matching Land Use to flood risk, on both legal and moral grounds."



Carol Byrne with MC Eileen Whelan at the St. Patrick's Day parade in Wicklow Town.

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Significant funding allocations for community projects

Significant funding allocations have been announced under the Community Centre Investment Funding (CCIF). The funding will support a range of essential community projects across the county, fostering economic, social, and cultural development.

Three projects in Wicklow will directly benefit from this vital funding including:

1. St. Patrick's Parish Church will receive €100,000 to fund essential hall and kitchen refurbishments, supporting the continued operation of this important community hub.

2. Aughrim Community Hall has been allocated €52,000 for the reparation of its leaking roof, ensuring the safety and functionality of the hall for community events and services.

3. Shillelagh People's Property CLG will receive €31,769 for the installation of new windows and the painting of the interiors. This investment will revitalise the space and improve the overall environment for local activities and gatherings.

Tánaiste Harris said: "I am delighted today to announce details of the successful projects under

the Community Centre Investment Fund 2024. I am particularly proud of the funding secured for St. Patrick's Parish Church in Greystones.

"The church has been a pillar of community and faith in Wicklow for generations. Making sure this historic site remains a thriving community amenity has been a top local priority for me.

"I have worked closely with Fine Gael local representatives especially Cllr Louise Gaskin Fenelon and community leaders to make this happen, and I am delighted to see this investment come to fruition.

"This funding will enhance and preserve an essential part of Wicklow's cultural heritage, ensuring that the community here in Greystones can continue to benefit from the services, events, and sense of community that St. Patrick's provides.

"Today, we are invest-

ing significant resources into important community centres. These will be transformational for our towns and villages in Wicklow. Our community centres bring people of all ages together, whether it be for sporting, educational or social occasions.

"They are vital for engaging with those who may find themselves marginalised and they give everyone in the community a great sense of belonging. I want to see us build, stronger, more vibrant communities, places that for so many people are a home from home. Our Community Centres are the cornerstone of community life in many towns, villages and cities around the country.

"I want to thank the communities who have worked hard to get this funding over the line as well as the Fine Gael Councillors in the County who work tire-



Tánaiste Simon Harris at St. Patrick's Church which will receive €100,000 to fund essential hall and kitchen refurbishments, supporting the continued operation of this important community hub.

lessly to deliver this funding on the ground."

Tánaiste Simon Harris added: "The continued investment in rural and urban communities to support local develop-

ment is of paramount importance to me in Government. Investing in infrastructure and community life was a key priority of mine in the campaign and I want to see

us deliver on that in Government, day in and day out.

"I want to see sustainable, resilient communities thrive and I am proud to see Wicklow's local

initiatives receiving the recognition and support they deserve. This funding will also enhance the county's capacity to provide critical services, and a greater quality of life for residents. These upgrades align with ongoing efforts to improve the social fabric and economic prosperity of Wicklow."

community activities,

Tánaiste discusses key veteran issues with Irish United Nations Veterans Association

Tánaiste and Minister for Defence, Simon Harris, recently met with representatives from the Irish United Nations Veterans Association (IUNVA) to discuss key issues affecting Irish veterans. Among those in attendance was IUNVA's National Welfare Officer, Viv Collins, a proud Wicklow native, whose tireless work on behalf of veterans was commended by the Tánaiste during the meeting.

Speaking after the meeting, the Tánaiste said: "I was honoured to meet with IUNVA today in my role as Minister for Defence, and especially pleased to welcome Wicklow's own Viv Collins, who has been an outstanding advocate for our veterans in Wicklow and across the country.

"IUNVA has provided vital support to those who have served on UN peacekeeping missions, and their work is invaluable to the veteran community.

"I was glad to be able to speak with members on IUNVA's financial support, capital projects, and

pension parity.

"I was keen to reaffirm Government's commitment to veterans, and glad to confirm that IUNVA's annual grant was recently increased to €40,000, with additional funding of €330,000 secured from the Dormant Accounts Fund for special projects.

"How we treat our defence veterans matter. This year I will establish an Office of Veteran Affairs to ensure a policy focus on this. Respecting those who serve, listening to their advice and experience is important.

"We also had the opportunity to discuss plans for a new Veterans Training Centre. I really welcomed IUNVA's input on the upcoming Office of Veterans Affairs, a key Government commitment designed to enhance support for former service members.

"IUNVA's dedication to veterans is commendable, and it was a privilege to engage with Viv Collins and his colleagues today. The Government remains committed to ensuring that all veterans receive the respect, recognition, and support they deserve."



Tánaiste Simon Harris meeting with representatives from the Irish United Nations Veterans Association (IUNVA).



Cllr Pat Kennedy with MC Tina Koumarios at the Rathdrum St. Patrick's Day parade.

BIFE Culinary Arts students to represent Ireland at European Championships

Bray Institute of Further Education (BIFE) is proud to announce that three of its talented Culinary Arts students - Morgan McGinty, Deacon Greene, and Conor Bradshaw - will represent Ireland at the prestigious European Culinary Championships in Latvia this week. The competition will bring together culinary students from across Europe, showcasing the best emerging talent in the field of culinary arts.

The BIFE students will compete in three different disciplines: Gourmet Butcher, Vegetarian Culinary Arts, and Professional Cookery. The competition will take place live, where they will face off against their peers from renowned culinary colleges

across Europe, displaying their skills and passion for the culinary arts.

Guiding them through this important journey is their class teacher, world-certified Master Chef Willie Rochford. Known for his extensive experience in international culinary competitions, Chef Rochford has previously led the Irish National and International Junior Chef teams to remarkable success, including a Silver medal at the Culinary Olympics and a Gold at the World Championships.

"We are incredibly proud of Morgan, Deacon, and Conor for being selected to represent Ireland on the international stage," said Chef Rochford. "Their hard work, dedication, and passion for cooking are evident, and I have no doubt they will make us proud in Latvia."

Bray Institute of Further Education wishes the students the best of luck as they prepare to compete and represent Ireland at this prestigious event. Their participation marks an exciting milestone for both the students and the Institution, further establishing BIFE's reputation as a leader in culinary education.



BIFE's Culinary Arts students with Master Chef Willie Rochford.



Jessica Jacobs with Jacob, Rosie and Brian Kelly at the St. Patrick's Day parade in Arklow.

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Increase in illegal dumping in Uplands

The environmental project, Pure (Protecting Uplands & Rural Environments), has recorded a 22% increase in illegal dumping in the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands when compared to 2023. In 2024 Pure removed 890 individual illegal dumping sites, with the collection of 146,580kg (146.580 tonnes) of illegally dumped waste from the remote, beautiful, and scenic, Wicklow/Dublin Uplands. This was a 22% increase when compared to 2023 when Pure removed 120,000kg (120 tonnes).

Ian Davis, Pure Manager, commented, "The Pure partnership approach, incorporating statutory and non-statutory organisations, and members of the public, has proven extremely successful in combating illegal dumping in the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands. However, we

were extremely busy in 2024 and in the first four months we removed 60,000kg of illegally dumped waste, which is an increase compared to previous years. Large illegal dumping sites, like the one outside Rathdrum, resulted in the removal of 8,000kg of waste and another site

located in the scenic Wicklow Mountains National Parks had 1,500kg of timber decking dumped. We also responded to several large scale illegal dumping incidents with many of the sites containing mixed waste including, cement blocks, timber, pallets, couches, sofas,

tables, beds, mattresses, cabinets, chairs, toys, clothes, carpets, presses, fridges, T.V.s, washing machines - the list is endless. Although we did see an increase in dumping recorded in 2024, it is worth noting that when you compare last year to 2008, which was our busiest year, when we removed 440 tonnes (440,000kg), 2024 represents a 67% reduction in illegal dumping in Wicklow/Dublin Uplands. We have made huge progress in reducing illegal dumping, but we know that we cannot become complacent, and it is vital that we continue to monitor the situation and ensure that we remove illegal dumping quickly from the landscape - because we know that, Dumping causes Dumping."

The Pure Truck is on the road every day, and since Pure was established in 2006, it has removed over 4,100,000kg (4,100 tonnes) of rubbish from over 15,700 illegal dumping sites in the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands, with the project processing over 16,900 reports/complaints. If you were to put all the rubbish that Pure has removed from the uplands into standard household rubbish bags, they would fill over 820,000 bags. If you

lined up all these bags on the road, they would stretch all the way from Dublin Airport to Mizen Head in Cork, and back again.

Pure has been recording and mapping every location and incident of illegal dumping in the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands since 2006 and they have built up a base-line-data of all illegal dumping activity in this region, the location of dumping, type of dumping, landowner,

and approximate amount of dumping, and for several years now they have been recording an annual reduction. The data collected by Pure is valuable information providing indicators into the nature and extent of illegal dumping in Wicklow/Dublin Uplands, and statistical evidence for all illegal dumping incidents in this region.

Pure utilises a multi-disciplined approach in combating illegal dumping, incorporating a number of educational initiatives, environment/community/heritage projects - The Pure Mile, public awareness campaigns, regional/national media campaigns, enforcement and preventative measures, GPS/GIS database to record all illegal dumping sites, and they also have a dedicated vehicle, the Pure Truck, which removes all illegal dumping from the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands. A new Pure Truck was purchased last year from funding provided by the Department of Environment, Climate, and Communications, and Pure secured funding from the department until the end of 2026.

In 2024 Pure celebrated 15 years of the Pure Mile and last year was their most successful year, with the initiative growing to over 3,500 volunteers. The Pure Mile started with just 5

miles and now there are over 1,000 miles (1,600km) of road, mountains, woodlands, valleys, forestries, upland amenities, car parks, pull-ins, and even some coastal areas. In 2024, Pure Mile groups collected over 4,000 bags of rubbish from the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands, with tonnes of illegal dumping and litter removed from the landscape, with over 2,000 individual and group litter picks/cleanups and events organised.

The Pure Mile is an environmental, community, heritage initiative, that encourages communities and groups living in rural areas of Wicklow, South Dublin, and Dun-Laoghaire, to adopt a mile of road, or miles of road, in their local area, or in the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands and organise litter picks, clean-ups, anti-dumping campaigns, research information about their local wildflowers, plants, trees, animals, and the built, cultural, and social heritage of an area. Thousands of Pure Mile volunteers, ranging from individuals to family groups, community groups, walking groups, hiking groups, running groups, cycling groups, schools, scouts, beavers, businesses, and organisations, have removed hundreds of tonnes of illegally dumped waste and thousands of bags of lit-

ter and rubbish from the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands. Pure provide all groups with Pure Mile signage, Pure Mile high-visibility vests, Pure Mile bags, gloves, litter pickers and they also remove all the rubbish collected by the groups. The success of the initiative further demonstrates the necessity and importance of Pure, and the need for continued collaboration and engagement to protect the Wicklow/Dublin upland environment.

Members of the public can report all incidents of illegal dumping in the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands to the Pure Office by emailing Pure at info@pureproject.ie or phone Pure on 0402 28662.

Pure is the first initiative of its kind in Ireland incorporating statutory and non-statutory organisations and stakeholders, including the Department of Environment, Climate, and Communications, Wicklow County Council, South Dublin County Council, Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council, Coillte, National Parks & Wildlife Service, and the Wicklow Uplands Council. This unique partnership initiative was established to combat illegal dumping in the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands and was officially launched in September 2006.



Illegal Dumping in the Wickow-Dublin Uplands.



Meeting with Pure Mile Group in the Wicklow Dublin Uplands.

Bray Soroptimists launch project on human trafficking

Soroptimist International Bray & District launched their National Project on Human Trafficking, 'In Hidden Sight, Modern Day Slavery', which took place on Thursday 20th March 2025, in Bray. The guest speakers were Superintendent Derek Maguire, Human Trafficking Investigation & Coordination Unit (HTICU), Ms Mia de Faoite, Training Lead, Ruhama and Mr Bill Abom, Co-Director Migrant Rights Centre Ireland (MRCI).

Superintendent Maguire gave an insight into the human trafficking business in Ireland, which can be for sexual, labour or criminal reasons. Statistics are stark: human trafficking victims climbed from 44% in 2021 to a shocking 67% in 2024. "Bray Soroptimists stated: "These people are in our local communities, for example in construction, car washes, car repair/parts, nail bars, and we are asked to look out for any signs that they may have been trafficked.

"Mia de Faoite has worked for many years in Ruhama, an Irish National NGO, which offers support to women impacted by prostitution, sexual exploitation and sex trafficking, working predominantly with women, but not exclusively. They provide a wide range of supports and have offices in Dublin, Limerick, Cork and Tullamore. In addition, they have launched several cam-

paigns to raise public awareness, and they advocate to influence public policy that will protect those affected by sexual exploitation.

"Mr Bill Abom of the Migrants Rights Centre gave an interesting presentation on this national organization which works to advance the rights of migrant workers and their families, who may be at risk of exploitation, social exclusion and discrimination. In 2024 they supported 66 people who reported severe labour exploitations, including 9 suspected trafficking situations.

"All three speakers emphasized ordinary citizens can help by reporting to the Gardai any activity or behaviour that may indicate trafficking or exploitation."

Please contact the Gardai by calling 999 or 112, or your local Garda Station, if you have been affected by this article.



Bray Soroptimist members in in The Parish Centre, Holy Redeemer, Bray, launching their new project focussed on the problem of human trafficking.

'Communities pay price for poor policing strategy'

Responding to plummeting Garda numbers in stations nationwide, Labour justice spokesperson Alan Kelly said until there's a serious effort to bring training and retention into the modern age, communities will pay the price.

Deputy Kelly said: "When it comes to an Garda Siochana this Government lack any sort of credibility. People across Ireland are telling us that they feel unsafe,

and all the expert opinion is that community policing is the way to address this. Despite plenty of bluster when it comes to Garda recruitment and retention, almost a quarter of stations

have fewer Gardaí, despite the small increase in overall numbers.

"Every community should know their local Garda and feel confident in their presence. This is

the first step to restoring security and peace of mind for families across the country. Public safety is too important for empty promises and political spin. If this Government are recruiting as many new Gardaí as they promise, we need to see a detailed geographical breakdown of where they will be.

"In the Programme for Government, Fianna Fail promise to increase the size of the force by 5,000 over the next five years. This is already a row back on the election commitment of between 5,000 to 6,000 new members as per Fianna Fail's manifesto.

"There's no doubt about the need to increase com-

munity policing. Figures published by the CSO earlier this month showed that crime in our communities is rising. To date, there has been no proactive response from the Justice Minister.

"The saying is true - prevention is the best cure. It is clear that an increase in community policing is

needed to tackle the rise in burglaries and related offences. Criminals are exploiting the lack of Garda presence, and ordinary people are paying the price.

"The Government have lowered fitness requirements, lowered educational requirements and trainees aren't even being

fully vetted, yet they still can't get enough people to join the Gardaí.

"This trend will continue unless they are paid better, have improved pensions, are supported with proper equipment and know that the Minister, this Government and the Garda Commissioner has their backs."

'If the Government wants to remove the Triple Lock, let's have a referendum'

The Sinn Fein MEP for Ireland South, Kathleen Funchion has called on the Government to hold a referendum on changing Ireland's policy of neutrality.

Speaking in a recent European Parliament debate in Strasbourg, MEP Funchion said: "As an MEP from a country that cherishes our neutrality and recognises the benefits it has brought to the world - I want to express my opposition to any backsliding when it comes to the neutrality of Ireland. Our country has a proud history of UN Mandated peacekeeping missions.

"Our neutrality has enabled us to maintain an independent foreign policy, and this is a strength that is valued,

and supported by the Irish people.

"It is therefore shameful that our Irish government would try to use this real emergency to end the triple lock policy, which is in place to protect our neutrality. The Triple Lock is a core component of Ireland's independent foreign policy and is enshrined in national declarations to the Irish people by governments in advance of a previous EU referendum.

"So, if the government wants to remove this protection, it should put it to the people. Let's have a referendum and let the people of Ireland decide."



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Two Wicklow artists showcase work at RHA's CA Collective Exhibition

Wicklow artists Joe Hallam from Enniskerry with his piece *The Four Seasons* and Brian Kennedy from Rathcoole with his piece *Pint Please Ian* proudly showcase their artwork at the Royal Hibernian Academy (RHA) as part of the CA Collective Exhibition, which officially opened on Thursday, 13th March.

The exhibition is hosted by Connections Arts Centre (CAC), a social enterprise championing inclusivity in the arts.

Now in its second year,

the exhibition welcomes 10 new artists, expanding the CA Collective to 27 talented members who identify as having an intellectual disability or

are from the neurodiverse community. This year, the work of 20 of these artists is on display at the RHA, showcasing a diverse range of artistic voices.

Open to the public until 20th April 2025, the exhibition celebrates inclusivity and the transformative power of art.

Organised by Conn-

ections Arts Centre (CAC), a social enterprise dedicated to promoting inclusivity for people with disabilities, the exhibition provides a professional platform for artists who have historically faced barriers to opportunities in the creative sector. The CA Collective is an extension of CAC's Connecting Artists Programme, which supports artists with disabilities through mentorship, education, and exhibitions.

This year's showcase features diverse artistic styles and perspectives, offering visitors a unique chance to engage with artwork that challenges perceptions and celebrates creativity without barriers.

Exhibiting artists include: Amy Begley, Alan Tarpey, Bradley Farrell, Brian Kennedy, Clement Yang, David Singleton, Jason Grace, Jennifer Humphreys, Jenny Stafford, Joe Hallam, Kristin Reynado Suniega, Matthew Sexton, Mark Buckley, Michael



Joe Hallam from Enniskerry.



Brian Kennedy from Rathcoole.

Hade, Niamh Eldridge-Barry, Peter Kehoe, Rachel Coen, Richard Hickey, Samuel Hilliard, Sarah McNulty, Thomas Higgins and Tomas Malone.

As part of the exhibition, featured artists will host discussions and live demonstrations, sharing insights into their creative

process and experiences as artists. After the conversations, visitors can also sign up for a private guided tour of the RHA to view and learn about the art on display in the gallery.

- Join Artist Tomas Malone on Monday, 31st March from 11.30 am - 12.30 pm.
- Join Artist Jennifer

Humphreys on Monday, 7th April, from 11.30 am - 12.30pm.

Admission is FREE, but booking is mandatory.

The CA Collective Exhibition is free to visit at the RHA. For more information or to make a booking, visit www.connectionsartscentre.ie.

Arts Office invites applications for one-to-one coaching sessions

Wicklow County Council's Arts Office is inviting applications for its Artists One-to-One Coaching Sessions. These sessions are designed to support personal, professional, and artistic growth by providing a safe and open environment for artists to explore their experiences, aspirations, and areas for development.

Participants will collaborate to identify goals, create informed and sustainable plans, and gain the confidence to implement their strategies.

The initiative is open to artists at any career level, aiming to energise and enhance the creative resilience of those seeking positive change and growth in their artistic journeys.

Past participants have praised the impact of the coaching sessions. One participant noted that the sessions "helped to clear away the fog to see where I am and how I might proceed." Another shared that the coaching "taught me how to set boundaries with my time, recognise my worth as an artist, and find a new voice within my work."

The panel of coaches includes seasoned professionals:

- Katherine Zeserson, a strategic advisor, coach, facilitator, artist, and educator
- Susan Coughlan, an independent facilitator, coach, and arts consultant
- Helen Meany, an arts writer, consultant, and coach;
- Paula Phelan, an arts consultant and founder of Traverso Coaching and Training Cllr Paul O'Brien, Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, stated that "the Artist One-to-One Coaching Sessions are hugely significant in building the confidence and capacity of artists and arts professionals in the county."

Emer O'Gorman, Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council, expressed her support for this artist support service, noting its positive impact on helping artists find direction, energy, and creative resilience, ultimately enhancing the overall quality of Wicklow's artistic community.

The coaching is provided free of charge, subsidized by Wicklow County Council and the Arts Council. To apply, please visit the Arts page at <https://www.wicklow.ie/Living/Services/Arts-Heritage-Archives/Arts>. The closing date for applications is 4pm on Monday, 7th April 2025.



Inga Gabrile in rehearsal for BIFE end-of-year showcase "CONNECT" which will showcase the talents and hard work of the Performing Arts Students from BIFE's Acting Course.



Katherine Zeserson, Artists Coach. Photo credit Katherine Zeserson.



Ciaran Tyrrell, Rory Kinsella and Josephine Byrne at the launch of the South Wicklow Drama Festival in Jim Byrne's, Carnew.

Harmonics Student Showcase

Whale Theatre, Sunday 30th March, 3pm (doors 2pm) Tickets €15 and available at www.whaletheatre.ie or call the booking office on 01 2010550.



Harmonics Music School is delighted to present their much anticipated student showcase.

Their talented and creative students will take to the stage, performing an array of music and song across many genres, for a fun filled afternoon!

This is a special opportunity for performers and spectators alike, to witness the wonderful community spirit and warmth of Harmonics Music School.

Dr. Strangelove co-adapted by Armando Iannucci, co-adapted and directed by Sean Foley Seven-time BAFTA Award-winner Steve Coogan (Alan Partridge, The Trip) plays four roles in the world premiere stage adaptation of Stanley Kubrick's comedy masterpiece Dr. Strangelove. When a rogue U.S. General triggers a nuclear attack, a surreal race takes place, seeing the Government and one eccentric scientist scramble to avert global destruction.

This explosively funny satire is led by a world-renowned creative team including Emmy Award-winner Armando Iannucci (The Thick of It, Veep) and Olivier Award-winner Sean Foley (The Upstart Crow, The Play What I Wrote).

Whale Theatre, Thursday 17th April 8pm (doors 7pm) Tickets €17.50 and available at www.whaletheatre.ie or call the booking office on 01 2010550.

'Girl Unknown: An exhibition by Éadaoin Glynn

Signal Arts Centre, Monday 31st March to Sunday 13th April

Girl Unknown is a solo exhibition of portraits by Éadaoin Glynn, created in response to her engagement with Limerick Museum's archival materials. Her research concentrated on over eight hundred glass plate negatives of anonymous women from the early 20th century, discovered by chance in a basement and donated to the archive in the 1990s. These fragile, often damaged plates are the only remaining traces of these women's existence. The identities of the subjects, photographer and the reason for the portraits remain unknown.



Through her engagement with the archival material, Glynn developed a process of repetition and layering that allowed her to connect with these women who have been erased from history. Her approach of distorting and reshaping the images enabled her to create portraits that move beyond representation, reimagining a new narrative for each subject.

Glynn's conceptual focus is on the interior lives of women, exploring hidden narratives that are often marginalised or silenced, stories that are both deeply personal and universally resonant. Her work occupies the space between abstraction and

figuration, where quiet, unspoken experiences are felt rather than described. Using a variety of materials, including paint, mixed media, collage and text, she both reveals and obscures the subject, much as women's interior lives are both visible and invisible in society. As her work moves fluidly between abstraction and figuration, the boundaries between the two become porous and expansive, creating a visual language that invites new ways of seeing and understanding.

Éadaoin Glynn is a Cork based visual artist who studied literature. Solo exhibitions include Girl Unknown, The

Limerick Museum [2024]; Translucence, ArtNetDir, Dublin [2024] and The Last Taboo, Studio 12, Backwater Artists Group, Cork [forthcoming 2026].

Glynn has exhibited internationally and nationally including RBSA Prize, Birmingham; BEEP Painting Biennial, Elysium Gallery, Swansea, Wales; The London Art Biennale; Sasse Museum of Art, L.A.; The James Joyce Centre, Dublin; Dlr LexIcon, Dublin; The People's Museum, Limerick; The Lavit Gallery, Cork; Uillinn West Cork Arts Centre; LHQ Gallery, Cork; The Courthouse Gallery, Ennistymon and The Outset Gallery, Galway.

St. Kevin's Community College Dunlavin alumni awarded Maynooth University Entrance Scholarships

The significant Leaving Certificate achievements of former St. Kevin's Community College, Dunlavin students, Anna Moran and Feargal Hennigan, have been acknowledged and celebrated by Maynooth University.

The first year students are two of over 70 Maynooth University Entrance Scholars, each having achieved 575 points or more in their Leaving Certificate examination. Feargal is studying the BA Bachelor of Arts degree, while Anna is studying the BSc Food Science and Human Nutrition degree.

The €1,000 Entrance Scholarship is awarded to incoming first year students, via the CAO, who have obtained 575 points or more in their Leaving Certificate.

President of Maynooth University, Professor Eeva Leinonen, presented each scholar with a bespoke piece of crystal, in recognition of their achievement, during the awards ceremony recently held on the campus. School representatives were presented with a plaque. Family members and guests were treated to an evening of music and refreshments.

Speaking about the event, Assistant Registrar and Director of Admissions, Ita McGuigan said: "We are delighted to celebrate with the Scholarship recipients, their family and schools, their outstanding achievement in the Leaving Certificate. Tonight, we had over 70 Scholars from more than 60 schools from all over Ireland in attendance, who chose to study at Maynooth University."

Maynooth University Open Days take place on Saturday April 12th and June 28th 2025. A range of free buses will run to the Open Day on April 12th. More information is available at www.mu.ie/open-days.



Former St. Kevin's Community College, Dunlavin students, Feargal Hennigan and Anna Moran who received Maynooth University Entrance Scholarships, each pictured with Maynooth University President Professor Eeva Leinonen.

Team from Dunlavin win LEGO League Award

Team 'TikTok Party' from St. Kevin's Community College Dunlavin won the Robot Design Prize at the FIRST LEGO League SUBMERGED tournament which took place on Monday 10th March in University College Dublin. The tournament was supported by Sage and hosted by the UCD Centre for Cyber Resilience Education.

St. Andrew's College Stillorgan will be sending two teams to the Ireland Finals next month as both Team 'BroBots' and Team 'Coral Coders' qualified.

Heats of the hands-on robotics and problem-solving programme take

place throughout Ireland, with teams of children, aged 10 to 16, learning to think creatively, like scientists and engineers.

'BroBots' took home the Champion's trophy, while Team 'Coral Coders' were Runners Up and also took

the Innovation Project Award. They were joined on the winner's podium by Team TikTok Party as well as Team 'Brickbusters' from The Teresian School (Donnybrook, Dublin) who had the highest score in the Robot Game, and

Team 'White Hot Chili Peppers' also from St. Andrew's College who won for their Core Values.

Team 'GCMN' from Gaelcholaiste Mhaigh Nuad (Maynooth) received a mention as Rising All Stars, Team

'Columba's Spikes' from St. Columba's College (Rathfarnham, Dublin) took the Breakthrough Award and Team 'Star Seekers' from Presentation Secondary School, Warrenmount (Dublin) received the Motivate Award.

The fun challenges involve a robot game and a research project, and this year's theme will see LEGO technology used to explore the layers of the ocean, bringing fresh ideas to the surface as students 'sea' into the future!

Teams will use technical and collaborative skills to explore life beneath the ocean waves in one of the planet's most complex ecosystems.

Celine Fitzgerald, Interim CEO of Research Ireland, commented: "We are delighted to continue our support of this competition through Research Ireland's Discover Programme as it strongly aligns with the programme's aims of encouraging participation in STEM and providing further access routes. By

challenging participants to explore the ocean and its ecosystems in creative and hands-on ways, this year's competition will lead teams to think just like engineers and scientists and build real-world skills in STEM."

At the core of the initiative is a friendly contest, designed to fuel the enthusiasm of the participating students, organisers say. The teams of students and their coaches take on an exciting journey involving research, problem-solving, coding and

engineering.

FIRST LEGO League participation is tailored to three age sections, from early years learning to Transition Year students, with robot games and activities suited to each level.

FIRST is an acronym for 'For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology', and FIRST LEGO League inspires young people to understand and shape the world they live in, in a more sustainable and inclusive way.



St. Patrick's National Primary School Bray pupils Vilma, Dzvonikova, Nell Kearney, Ariya Farrell and Sadhbh Dempsey with teachers and staff Julieann, Breda, Bea and Jill at the Bray St. Patrick's Day parade. Pic: Joe McQuillan.



Team TikTok Party from St. Kevin's, Dunlavin.

Five new special classes in Wicklow schools

209 new special education classes have been sanctioned by the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) for the upcoming 2025/2026 school year including five in Co. Wicklow.

County Wicklow will benefit from four new primary special education classes and one new post primary class. This positive development is set to improve access to education for children with additional needs across County Wicklow.

The schools that are set to benefit from new classes are: St Brigid's National School in Grey; St Mary's Junior School in Blessington; PADRAIG NFTA AVOCA in Arklow; Greystones Community National School in Greystones; St David's Holy Faith Secondary in Greystones.

Tánaiste Simon Harris said: "I am thrilled to see that 5 new special classes have been confirmed for the 2025/2026 school year in County Wicklow, including 3 in

my hometown of Greystones. This is a major development for families of children with additional needs.

"Ensuring we provide the resources in schools to cater for all students to reach their full potential is my number one priority in Government.

"These new classes will help ensure that students with special needs receive the tailored education they deserve. These new special schools will be confirmed in the coming months as the NCSE continues to engage intensively with school patron bodies.

"This effort is part of a broader goal to reach a total of 400 new special classes nationwide, which will further improve access to specialised education across the coun-

try. I look forward to engaging with schools across County Wicklow to see what more we can do to deliver for families and children with additional needs.

"Working with Fine Gael Councillors across the county we are working tirelessly to deliver as a team for the people we proudly represent."

The next step in the process is for schools to begin their admission processes for the upcoming school year.

"I am encouraging schools to move quickly with their admission processes and I know Minister Helen McEntee has asked the NCSE to collaborate with schools to ensure they are ready to offer places to students in the coming weeks."

New Classrooms opened at St. Patrick's National School

Tánaiste Simon Harris TD officially opened six new classrooms at St. Patrick's National School in Greystones on Friday, including two purpose-built classrooms for student with additional needs and four new classrooms for students.

Speaking at the opening, the Tánaiste commended the staff and especially Principal Rachel Harper for the tireless work in getting this across the line.

The expansion is a 'significant milestone' in the life of the school and the wider community.

Tánaiste Harris paid tribute to the leadership of Principal Rachel Harper and Chairperson of the Board of Management Canon David Mungavin, as well as to the staff, parents, and students whose commitment has made the development possible.

"At the heart of everything we do is the children of this school. Every decision we make must be about helping each and every child thrive, no matter their background or needs.

"For years I have been working with the school to make sure we delivered these additional and much needed classrooms.

"Ensuring we meet the needs of the learners is essential if we want every child to reach their full potential when it comes to education."

The Tánaiste also praised the school's holistic approach to learning, citing its involvement in sports, the arts, the Green Schools Programme, and mental health initiatives like the Amber Flag.

"The challenges facing our children today are evolving, from anxiety to the impacts of social media," he noted. "This school, under Principal Harper's leadership, is not waiting for change, it is driving it."

The Tánaiste emphasised that supporting children to reach their full potential requires more than just infrastructure. "It's about investing in

people - teachers, SNAs, parents, secretaries, and caretakers - and in the services that wrap around our schools to make them safe, nurturing spaces.

"I am deeply committed to making sure that all school sin Wicklow get the funding and resources they need and I will not rest until we provide these supports right across the county."

The event was attended by Local Fine Gael Councillor Louise Gaskin Fenelon, parents, students, and members of the school and wider Greystones community.



Tánaiste Simon Harris meeting with pupils of St. Patrick's National School where he opened new classrooms on Friday.



At the mock trial at Green Street Courthouse, Dublin 7 was Ciara O'Brien BL with Wicklow transition year student Maggie-Sue Morris who participated in The Bar of Ireland's Look into Law Transition Year Programme. Now in its tenth year, the Programme is welcoming 96 students from 96 schools encompassing 24 Deis schools spanning across 21 counties in Ireland. Since 2015, the Programme has continuously evolved to accommodate students from across the country and aims to offer Transition Year students a thorough understanding of the legal system, court proceedings, and the responsibilities of barristers. Picture Conor McCabe Photography.

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Arklow Active Retirement members enjoyed a successful day trip to Malahide Castle on 26th February. Next they will brush up on our local history in Arklow's Maritime Museum, Ferrybank, followed by a light lunch in Arklow Golf Club. Their Spring Break to Ballina, Co Mayo from 5th-9th May will cost 495 per person sharing, single room supplement is 30 per night. The price includes transport to and from Ballina, 4 nights Bed and Breakfast and Evening meal plus travel to some of the various tourist attractions in the county. Meanwhile back at the ranch, i.e. Arus Lorcáin, the Wicklow Sports and Recreational Partnership is continuing to encourage Active Retirement members along with members of the public to take part in the Activator Poles Programme on Thursday afternoons, 2:30pm - 3:30pm. The Annual Easter Bonnet competition will be held on 11th April. The Annual Line Dancing classes, for members only, starts 24th April and ends 29th May. New members still welcome. Annual subscription is 25 euro. Drop in any Friday between 11 and 12 to Arus Lorcáin. Pictured above are Arklow Active Retirement members with Aisling and Sinead of Wicklow Sports Partnership in Arus Lorcain, Arklow.

Honouring Wicklow's unsung heroes of Féile

John West, sponsors of the GAA's under-15 annual Féile Peile na nÓg (football) and Feile na nGael (camogie and hurling) competitions wants to honour Wicklow's 'unsung heroes' of Féile as part of its celebration of the 10-year anniversary of the partnership.

To mark the decade-long collaboration, it brought together parents with current and future stars at the launch in Croke Park of John West Féile 2025.

Féile veterans and John West Féile 2025 Ambassadors, inter-county players Aoife Donohue, Galway (camogie); Cork's Patrick Horgan (hurling), Niall Morgan, Tyrone (Gaelic football) and Dublin LGFA's Carla Rowe were joined by their parents as well as all four codes from Whitehall Colmcille GAA Club.

John West will be inviting past and present players to nominate and win prizes for their parents. The campaign will see activities in

SuperValu Stores and on Today FM's Weekend Breakfast with Alison Curtis in June.

In the 10-years of John West's sponsorship of Féile, the competition has grown to become one of the biggest underage sporting events in Europe. This year's John West Féile na nGael national division one finals will take place at Halo Tiles Wexford GAA Centre of Excellence in Ferns on Saturday, June 21st.

The 2025 John West Féile Peile na nÓg national division one finals will take place at the Derry GAA Centre of Excellence at Owenbeg a week later on Saturday, June 28th.

In 2024, over 400 teams, comprising 9,000 players competed in the

final stages alone. Feile na nGael has been in existence since 1971, while Féile Peile na nÓg will mark 43 years this year.

For a third year, John West will partner with SuperValu to promote John West Féile in stores across the country, as retailers continue to recognise the popularity of the competition.

Regional finals in all four codes for Division 2 and 3 sides will also take place on the second last Saturday in June (Féile na nGael) and the last Saturday of that month

(Féile Peile na nÓg), at venues nationwide.

Féile na nGael county competitions will be played over the month of April, with Féile Peile na nÓg county competitions taking place over the month of May.

Uachtaran CLG, Jarlath Burns, said John West Féile is an integral and very important part of the GAA calendar.

"It has nurtured a wonderful enthusiasm for our games and has been the making of many friendships and memories," he said.

"Generations have

experienced the joy of being a part of Féile na nGael and Féile Peile na nÓg. I look forward to seeing that tradition continue this year.

"Our thanks to John West for their support in the promotion of this competition and to the national organising committee for their work on John West Féile 2025."

Ladies Gaelic Football Association President, Trina Murray, highlighted John West Féile's emphasis on fun, friendship and participation.

"Players will make new friends and re-connect

with old friends. John West Féile will once again provide young players with lifelong memories."

Brian Molloy, Uachtaran of The Camogie Association, said the concept of John West Féile na nGael has thrived through the invaluable contribution of parents and coaches.

"I hope John West Féile 2025 will be a positive experience both on

and off the field for everyone involved and I would like to pay tribute to the volunteers who make such a valuable contribution to make it so special."



WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

Michael & Anna Higgins seek planning permission for a change of use of existing farm buildings to provide four self-catering holiday accommodation units.

The development will consist of a restoration and change of use to existing farm structures providing (2 No. Two Bed Units) and (2 No. One bed Units) alterations to farmyard enclosures to provide car parking / amenity areas. A 24PE packaged effluent disposal system with mechanical aeration and polishing filter to current EPA standards together with all associated site development works at Ballynacarrig, Brittas Bay, County Wicklow.

The planning application may be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy at the offices of Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Wicklow during its public opening hours and a submission or observation in relation to the application may be made to the authority in writing on payment of the prescribed fee within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the application.

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

We, Packaging Laundry Ltd., intend to apply for permission for development at a site, N11 South Point Business Park, Charvey Lane, Rathnew, Wicklow. The proposed development comprises amendments to the permission granted by Wicklow County Council under Planning Ref. 21558, comprising: The approved block which comprises of units 33 and 34 (c.1086 sq.m) to be removed and the approved block which comprises of units 30, 31 & 32 (c. 1,623 sq.m) to be amalgamation into one block to facilitate the provision of a single Industrial Unit (c. 2,285 sq.m) for use as a packaging laundry facility. The provision of an enclosed external yard (c. 831 sq.m), including a water tank and plant. The provision of Solar Panels at roof level. Minor amendments to the approved road layout. And, all associated site and drainage works to facilitate the development on a site of c.0.4Ha. The application relates to development, which comprises an activity requiring a waste licence from the Environmental Protection Agency (under the Waste Management Act 1996, as amended). The planning application may be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy, at the offices of Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Whitegates, Wicklow Town, A67 FW96, during its public opening hours. The planning application may be viewed online at www.wicklow.ie, under planning online enquiries. A submission or observation in relation to the application may be made in writing to the planning authority, on payment of the prescribed fee (€20.00) within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date the application is received by the planning authority.

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

Planning permission is sought by Tim and Emma Lennon for Construction of a new single-storey infill extension to the front, a storey-and-a-half extension to the rear, internal renovations, and all associated site works at Brookhaven, Lodge Lane, Lacken, Blessington, Co. Wicklow, W91 H673.

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.



Vinnie and Kali O'Flaherty with Marion Jameson at the St. Patrick's Day parade in Wicklow Town.

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Harris meets Wicklow-based DorteK during U.S. visit

Celebrating local innovation on the global stage

Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Simon Harris TD, has praised Wicklow-based company DorteK for its outstanding innovation and growth in the United States during a high-level meeting in Philadelphia over his St. Patrick's Day visit across the Atlantic.

Meeting with senior members of the DorteK U.S. team - Michael O'Rourke, U.S. Vice President of Operations, and Harry Rendler, U.S. Project Manager - the Tánaiste commended the company's progress in delivering cutting-edge hygienic door solutions to high-profile clients in the pharmaceutical and life sciences sectors across North America.

"I am so proud to see a homegrown company like DorteK making such a significant impact on a global scale," said Tánaiste Simon Harris.

"From their headquarters in Wicklow, DorteK has built an international reputation for precision engineering and sustainable innovation. Their work supports some of the most advanced medical and research facilities in

the world."

Founded in Wicklow and now supplying products to over 50 countries, DorteK specialises in hygienic doors for clean-room, pharmaceutical, and healthcare environments. Their recent projects in the U.S. include custom-designed door systems for the University of Pennsylvania's research laboratories and Spark Therapeutics' Gene Therapy Innovation Centre.



Tánaiste Simon Harris meeting with DorteK employees in Philadelphia.

Both initiatives involving close collaboration between DorteK's U.S. and Wicklow-based engineer-

ing teams. DorteK's success story is a testament to Wicklow's strength in advanced manufacturing and

innovation. The company has been present in the U.S. since 2016, and its American expansion has been strongly supported

by Enterprise Ireland, which also took part in the Philadelphia meeting. "With over 160 employees and roots firmly

planted in Wicklow, DorteK is a shining example of what local companies can achieve with vision, support, and a world-class team," Tánaiste Harris added.

"Their achievements are something the entire county can be proud of."

The meeting was part of the Tánaiste's wider visit to the U.S. to promote Irish business and deepen trade ties.



The Rathdrum Cancer Support team at the Rathdrum St. Patrick's Day parade.

CLASSIFIEDS

Gospel: Luke 21:34-36

"Be on your guard; don't immerse yourselves in a life of pleasure, drunkenness and worldly cares, lest that day catch you unaware, like a trap. For, like a snare, will that day come upon all the inhabitants of the earth. But watch at all times and pray, that you may be able to escape all that is going to happen and to stand before the son of Man"

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