



TURBINES
Page 3



SPRING CLEAN
Pages 10-11



DOMESTIC ABUSE
Page 12

Delivered to 44,500
homes & businesses

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

Tuesday 8th April 2025 First Floor, The Boulevard, Quinsborough Road, Bray. A98 R6D7. Tel: 01 - 2869111 E-mail: wicklowed@localtimes.ie www.wicklowtimes.net

'CRAZY PLAN MUST BE HALTED'

"The people of Bray and surrounding areas will be shocked to hear the devastating news that Herbert Road is to close permanently despite the expressed opposition of thousands of local residents. The closure is to allow for a bus lane to be put on the hard shoulder of the N11 between Loughlinstown and the Glen of the Downs," declared Independent councillor Joe Behan.

He continued "This crazy plan will cause massive traffic congestion on the remaining routes in and out of Bray, particularly the Killarney Road and the Southern Cross Road as well as blocking up the Main Street and Little Bray due to the knock on effects of losing one of the busiest exits and entrances into the town.

"When this plan was first announced a year ago, I held a public meeting in the Glenview Hotel which was attended by almost 400 people. The people who attended the meeting expressed outrage at the proposal and Wicklow County Council received thousands of objections to the plan.

"However, the views of the people have been

completely ignored and Wicklow County Council officials, supported by this Government, intend to push ahead with no consideration for the impact this closure will have on the daily lives of the people of Bray and North Wicklow.

"Councillors at the recent meeting of Bray Municipal District agreed unanimously to



Wicklow Minor Ladies Vice-Captain Aine Darcy, Team Captain Erin McMahon and Neasa McGillacuddy try on their new Skechers at the Skechers Bray store. See more on page 4.

Pic: Michael Kelly

Supporting the Community

Cllr. Stephen Stokes

Independent Councillor & Peace Commissioner Serving Charlesland, Delgany, Greystones, Kilcoole, Killadreenan & Newcastle

MONTHLY ADVICE CLINICS

Second Saturday of Each Month

Greystones

9.15am - 10am

Dr. Ryan Community
Centre

Newcastle

10.30am - 11.15am

Newcastle
Community
Centre

Delgany

12pm - 12.30pm

Wicklow Arms



stephenstokes101@gmail.com

An Independent Voice for the
Greystones Municipal District

Let's
Connect:



my proposal to request Wicklow County Council to pause any further work on this plan and to write to the Tanaiste, Simon Harris, and to the Minister for Transport requesting a review of the entire plan.

"The reaction of local people to the news has been anger and frustration that their views have been ignored and many people have said to me that they will not accept this closure under any circumstances.

"I warned the Council officials, at the recent Council meeting, that there would be massive opposition to this plan if they try to proceed with it. They listened but gave no indication that they would alter the plan.

"I sincerely hope that the powers that be, locally and nationally, sit up and take notice that the people of Bray

will not be pushed around and that they will go back to the drawing board and devise a plan which will work for all of the people who live and work in Bray and surrounding areas as well as those who use the N11 every day."

Sinn Fein TD John Brady and Councillor Dermot 'Daisy' O'Brien described as outrageous and illogical plans to proceed to close the Herbert Road junction from the N11.

Deputy Brady said "The confirmation that the proposal to close the Herbert Road access to and from the N11 is set to proceed completely disregards the views and needs of the people of Bray. Despite total opposition from the community, this deeply flawed plan is being pushed ahead, ignoring the clear and overwhelming rejection of it

by residents, businesses, and commuters.

"The so-called public

consultation process was nothing more than a box-ticking exercise.

Thousands of submissions were made as part
Continued on page 3

CHILL, THRILL OR GRILL!

YOUR ULTIMATE SUMMER GARDEN SETUP STARTS HERE WITH 10% OFF OUTDOOR PLANTS!

• One discount per customer with this flyer
• Available Kilquade store only.
• Code valid until 30th April 2025.

www.arboretum.ie

Irish trees in Irish place names

Greystones Archaeological And Historical Society's upcoming talk is by local man John McLoughlin and is entitled 'Irish Trees In Irish Place Names'. The talk will take place in the Killian Centre behind the Holy Rosary Church on 16th April at 7.30pm. The cost is €3 for members €5 for non members.

Soup & sandwiches

The next Soup & Sandwiches lunch in the Swann Hall, St.Patrick's Church, Greystones, will take place on Tuesday 15th April from 12:30pm to 2pm. Please come and bring your friends. Suggested donation for local charities of €7.

Active Retirement Laragh

Active Retirement Laragh has been very active in the last few months. Their lunch in Glenmalur Lodge will take place on 8th April. There are a few trips planned, the Sallynoggin Tea Dance on 23rd April and a visit to Festina Lente Enterprise, Bray on May 6th. The active retirement group meets every Tuesday morning from 10:45am - 12:15pm in the Brockagh Centre. They enjoy meeting for a chat with refreshments and light exercise each week. Workshops, daytrips and monthly lunches are throughout the year. New members are always welcome. If anyone would like to offer their services or share their skills with the group please contact them by calling Denise on 0404 45600, email laraghglendaloughara@gmail.com or drop in.

Art to Make you Smile

An exciting new kids art workshop will be starting soon in the Brockagh Resource Centre, Laragh. A fun unique art program for children. Storytelling, Confidence building, Professional Designer. They nurture imagination by following along drawing, painting, and lessons in Ireland. 25yrs Illustration/Design experience and 8 years teaching children. To find out more you can contact Niamh on 085 143 8844, Facebook: @Artzforkids, www.niamhdesignstudio.com or email info@artzforkids.ie.

The Old Dublin Society

Alyson Gavin Lysaght will present 'The High Anglican Church of St. John the Evangelist, Sandymount' which is celebrating its 175th anniversary this year, at 6pm on Wednesday April 9th 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. Back issue of the Dublin Historical Record will be on sale at this meeting.



Members of Sugarloaf Lions Club collecting the Best Social & Cultural Group Award from Cathaoirleach of Greystones Municipal District Tom Fortune and Parade Grand Marshal Kathleen Kelleher at the Greystones St. Patrick's Parade Awards Ceremony in Greystones Municipal District Offices last week.

Arboretum completes €4.5m redevelopment of Wicklow garden and retail centre

'Gold standard' sustainable technology at the heart of the renovation

Arboretum, the independent family-owned business that operates three garden and lifestyle centres in Carlow, Wicklow and Dublin, is completing a €4.5 million redevelopment of its centre in Kilquade, Co Wicklow, this week. The newly renovated, state-of-the-art 2,400 square metre garden centre will open on Friday 12th April creating 25 new jobs giving a total of 200 employees across the business.

The investment has transformed the garden and retail centre into a thoroughly modern, comfortable shopping and meeting space completely covered by a glass roof. The facility now features

indoor and outdoor plants and gardening equipment as well as health and wellness, fashion and food offerings and 'Rachel's Garden' café. The Doyle family invested heavily in sustainable technology - with a rain-water harvesting system to water plants and solar panel generated electricity for heat and light - future proofing the facility for generations to come.

Fergal Doyle, Arboretum co-owner and Chief Commercial Operator said "Our investment in Kilquade is a vote of confidence in our valued local community, our dedicated team and our loyal customers. Sincere thanks for their support during the redevelopment. We are thrilled to share this state-of-the-art facility with them and look forward to welcoming 25 additional staff members in the coming weeks and months."

"Our investment also reflects people's growing passion for gardening be it herbs on a windowsill or on a larger scale. Our expanding customer base appreciates how gardening adds

positively to biodiversity and sustainability, as well as their own physical and mental health.

"A key goal of our investment is future proofing the facility with sustainable technology for generations to come. Resource efficiency makes sense on a commercial level but it's also part of the Arboretum ethos; we're conscious of our responsibility to 'put our money where our mouth is' by investing in green technology," continued Fergal.

Barry Doyle, Arboretum co-owner and CEO, said, "This redevelopment allows us to offer a completely immersive gardening experience to our customers and visitors. As well as an extensive range of outdoor plants, shrubs and trees, our new expansive glass roofed facility will stock a wide array of indoor plants with 85% of

our stock coming from Irish growers. It also enables us to retail the full extent of our health and wellness, fashion and lifestyle offering. But we offer more than a retail experience at Arboretum Kilquade; it's a meeting point, somewhere to socialise with family and friends while enjoying the exhibition gardens or some lunch in Rachel's Garden café."

Arboretum Kilquade incorporates the 17 individually designed gardens of the National Garden Exhibition Centre, spanning six acres in total, freely accessible for visitors to walk through and enjoy. "We hope that local people and visitors really enjoy our beautiful gardens - everyone is welcome to come and spend time in them," continued Barry.

Arboretum worked

with a number of partners on the redevelopment including international garden centre specialist Rabensteiner, building contractor Cas-cade

Group, mechanical and electrical engineering consultancy Penston MEP and commercial energy efficiency delivery partners Vivid Edge.



COMHAIRLE CONTAE CHILL MHANTÁIN
WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

PUBLIC CONSULTATION DRAFT LITTER MANAGEMENT PLAN 2025-2028

Wicklow County Council are seeking submissions on its' draft Litter Management Plan 2025-2028. Further details are available on the Wicklow consultation hub where a copy of the draft plan can be viewed.

<https://www.wicklow.ie/Living/Services/Online-Consultation-Hub/Draft-Litter-Management-Plan-2025-2028>

Submissions should be made to eao@wicklowcoco.ie by 5.00pm on Friday the 25th Of April.

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Will towering turbines dominate the coast?

A major wind farm planning application has been lodged for Dublin Bay by German multinational energy company RWE According to Blue Ireland (a coalition of local environmental groups) the scale of this development would result in a continuous wall of turbines stretching from the Kish Lighthouse to Wicklow Town, significantly altering the Dublin and North Wicklow seascape.

Less visible, but even more critically important, are the impacts that this infrastructure would have under the water, in the sea and along the coast. The proposed development includes up to 50 wind turbines, each reaching a height of up to 309.6m, comparable to the height of the Eiffel Tower with a blade diameter of up to 278m. To envisage this 'sweep' think of the total lengths of the Aviva Stadium, Croke Park, and Wimbledon Centre Court combined. In contrast, existing local landmarks such as the Kish Lighthouse (31m), Poolbeg Chimneys (207m) and Bray Head (241m), the tallest landmark on the coast, are significantly smaller.

Dalkey Community Council, Killiney Bay Community Council, and Blue Ireland are hosting an information meeting on April 7th at 7:30 PM at the Royal Marine Hotel, Dun Laoghaire, to discuss RWE's planning application. The event is open to all, with booking available via Eventbrite. More details can be found at blueireland.org. Less visible, but even more critically important, are the impacts that this infrastructure would have under the water, in the sea and along the coast. The proposed development includes up to 50 wind turbines, each reaching a height of up to 309.6m, comparable to the height of the Eiffel Tower with a blade

diameter of up to 278m. To envisage this 'sweep' think of the total lengths of the Aviva Stadium, Croke Park, and Wimbledon Centre Court combined. In contrast, existing local landmarks such as the Kish Lighthouse (31m), Poolbeg Chimneys (207m) and Bray Head (241m), the tallest landmark on the coast, are significantly smaller. Dalkey Community Council, Killiney Bay Community Council, and Blue Ireland are hosting an information meeting on April 7th at 7:30 PM at the Royal Marine Hotel, Dun Laoghaire, to discuss RWE's planning application. Blue Ireland, is a coalition of local environmental groups from

around the coast, has been formed to raise awareness and safeguard Ireland's marine ecosystems and coastal communities as the government aims to accelerate nearshore wind energy developments. The group advocates for developments, such as the currently proposed Dublin Array wind farm, to be sited in environmentally appropriate locations, and in compliance with EU Environmental law. According to Blue Ireland: "Many members of the public remain unaware of this proposal and its potential impact. The community meeting aims to provide information and encourage discussion on an issue of major environmental and visual significance."



'CRAZY PLAN MUST BE HALTED'

Continued from page 1

of the process, all raising serious concerns about the impact of this closure. As part of this, I arranged a petition that gathered over 2,000 signatures from local people - real people who will be directly affected by this disastrous decision. This is an undeniable expression of total opposition to the closure of Herbert Road, a critical artery and one of just four access points in and out of the town. To close it is not just short-sighted - it is reckless and will have dire consequences for the people of Bray.

"Residents already know exactly what the impact of this closure will be because they have lived through it before. When Herbert Road was temporarily closed for several months to allow for pedestrian crossing upgrades, public lighting, and an improved road layout, the impact was immediate and severe. The closure brought absolute chaos to the area, adding huge amounts of time to people's journeys, and causing bottlenecks across the entire town. So, this is not just a localised issue - the disruption was felt right across Bray. If a temporary closure caused that level of gridlock, what do those behind this plan think will happen if the road is closed permanently? It is simply unworkable.

"Bray is already at breaking point when it comes to traffic congestion. Chronic delays are a daily reality for commuters, parents doing school runs, workers trying to get to their jobs, and businesses that rely on smooth transport access. The town is gridlocked during peak times, and this will only get worse in the coming years. The massive new development on the old Bray Golf Club lands will add hundreds, if not thousands, of additional cars onto the local roads. Instead of addressing this growing problem with real, long-term traffic solutions, the authorities are making a bad situation even worse by closing a key route that could help alleviate congestion.

"The suggestion that this will somehow enhance public transport is an insult to the intelligence of

local people. What this plan really does is allow a bus or two to speed down the hard shoulder every hour, while everyone else - residents, visitors, schoolgoers, workers, and commuters - remains stuck in worsening traffic. That is not a transport strategy. That is a recipe for disaster.

"This hare-brained idea must be removed from the plans immediately. It defies logic, it disregards public opinion, and it will make the already dire traffic situation in Bray even worse. I will be raising this issue in the Dail and demanding immediate intervention from the government before

it is too late. The Minister for Transport and Tanaiste Simon Harris must step in now and put an end to this reckless proposal. The people of Bray deserve better than this, and I will not stand by while their needs are ignored. I will fight this illogical decision all the way."

According to Sinn Féin Councillor and Bray Cathaoirleach Dermot 'Daisy' O'Brien "It feels like this proposal seeks to purposely close an artery into Bray as a means of prioritising bus journeys for people outside of Bray. It is very hard to reconcile the value of a decision like this, especially when over a thousand submissions and 4500 signatures on petitions expressed the strong opposition of the people of Bray during the consultation."

Social Democrats TD, Jennifer Whitmore also expressed concerns over the closure of Herbert Road.

"Councillors have been united in their concern over the closure of Herbert Road, they unanimously requested a reconsideration of this aspect of the scheme. Alternative solutions to the closure of Herbert Road were explored but ultimately dismissed due to reasons ranging from infrastructural requirements to spatial limitations.

"I am really worried to see that this is happening. Transport Infrastructure Ireland undertook a huge consultation regarding the Bus Corridor, to which thousands of people lodged their complaints. The question we have now is why was

this consultation even done if the opposition was not taken into account?

"We of course do not oppose the bus corridor, but there are issues with the closure of Herbert Road that must be addressed. The community's voice is crucial in these decisions, and we urge Transport Infrastructure Ireland to reconsider this aspect of the scheme. I firmly believe that any further action needs to be paused until an acceptable alternative solution is found," Deputy Whitmore concluded.

Tanaiste Simon Harris has also voiced strong opposition to the proposal by Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) to close the Herbert Road junction in Bray as part of its N11/M11 Bus Priority Interim Scheme.

In a statement the Tanaiste said: "I am both deeply disappointed and concerned about TII's decision to pursue the closure of the Herbert Road junction. Since this proposal was first announced, I, alongside my colleague and Fine Gael Councillor Melanie Corrigan, have consistently opposed these plans.

"In the two and a half years since, I can assure residents that my stance remains unchanged. If these recommendations go ahead, it will only worsen the already difficult traffic conditions in Bray. I want to reassure residents that I am doing everything in my power to persuade both TII and Wicklow County Council to reconsider these proposals."

Councillor Melanie Corrigan echoed the Tanaiste's concerns, stating: "My opposition to the proposed closure of the Herbert Road junction remains firm, and I can confirm that all councillors in the Bray Municipal District share this stance. Implementing these measures would be disastrous for Bray, further exacerbating the already serious traffic congestion issues in the town. I will continue to work closely with the Tanaiste and my colleagues in the Bray Municipal District to ensure that the publication of these recommendations is halted."



COMHAIRLE CHONTAE CHILL MHANTÁIN
WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL



Lár Bailte ar dTús
Town Centre First

**KILCOOLE HEALTH CHECK &
NEW TOWN TEAM INFORMATION EVENT**
Tuesday 15th April 2025 4.00pm to 7.00pm
Kilcoole Community Centre



A Town Health Check consultation, supported by Queen's University Belfast, will be held on 15th April between 4.00pm and 7.00pm to assess the economic, social, and physical condition of the town centre. This consultation will identify the town's strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement, focusing on aspects such as local businesses, infrastructure, public spaces, community facilities, and accessibility. The findings will inform future regeneration efforts and guide the Town Centre First initiative.

We encourage all members of the public and local businesses to attend at any time between 5pm and 8pm to share their views and experiences. Your input will help shape a town centre that is vibrant, attractive, and welcoming for work, living, and visiting. A Town Health Check Questionnaire is available via the attached QR code, and we look forward to your participation in both completing the questionnaire and attending the consultation.

Additionally, Wicklow County Council is establishing a Town Centre First Team in 2025, as part of the National Town Centre First policy. This team, supported by the Town Regeneration Officer (TRO), will be central to the delivery of a Town Centre First strategy and vision for Kilcoole. At the event, the TRO will present on the formation of the Town Team at 4pm, 5pm, and 5pm.

The Town Team will typically consist of representatives from local businesses, community groups, residents, tourism organizations, An Garda Síochána, charities, social enterprises, sports organizations, cultural groups, voluntary groups, chambers of commerce, retailers, developers, and educational institutions. They will play a vital role in implementing the Town Centre First strategy, ensuring the town's unique needs and characteristics are reflected in its development and revitalisation.

Your Town, Your Plan – Get Involved



Stepping up for Wicklow Minor Ladies 2025 Championship

The Wicklow Minor Ladies have received an incredible boost for their 2025 Championship campaign, thanks to the generous support of global footwear giant Skechers.

As a brand renowned for comfort, performance, and innovation, Skechers' backing is a game-changer for these young athletes, ensuring they have the resources and confidence to compete at the highest level. This partnership highlights Skechers' commitment to grassroots sports, reinforcing the importance of nurturing young talent and empowering the next generation of female athletes. Their support extends beyond financial

contributions, providing top-quality training gear, footwear, and essential equipment that will give the team a competitive edge. For the players, having a world-class brand like Skechers in their corner is both motivating and inspiring. It's not just about the gear - it's about the belief that a global powerhouse recognizes their potential and is willing to invest in their journey. This support fosters a sense of pride and determination among the squad as they prepare to take on the challenges of the 2025 Championship. Wicklow LGFA and the entire local community are immensely grateful for this backing, knowing it will have a lasting impact on the development of women's sport in the county. With Skechers Ireland behind them, the Wicklow Minor Ladies are ready for the 2025 season ahead! Wicklow Minor Ladies visited the Skechers store in Bray on the last weekend in March, where they were looked after amazingly well by the staff.



Wicklow Minor footballer Ava Stapleton tries out her new Skechers at the Skechers store in Bray.



Wicklow Minor Ladies Footballer Charlotte Doyle tries on her new Skechers at the Skechers Bray store.



The Wicklow Minor LGFA team pictured with Skechers manager Hollie McHugh and her team at the Skechers store in Bray

Civic reception held in Baltinglass for West Wicklow ladies' football and camogie teams

On Friday, 21st March, Baltinglass Municipal District held a Cathaoirleach's Civic Reception to honour the achievements of the Tinahely Ladies Senior Football Team, who won 10 Wicklow Senior Football Championships in a row, and the Knockanna Camogie Club, who secured the All-Ireland Junior A Title in 2024.

The event celebrated the remarkable achievement of both teams, recognising their success at County, Leinster and National level. Their fantastic skill levels and their commitment to GAA have led to their continued success in both codes over the years. The majority of players are dual players and represent both Tinahely LGFA and the Knockanna camogie club, which makes their achievements even more remarkable. The players' commitment to training and their strong team ethic has paved the way for them in achieving so much success over the last number of years, earning high praise for their performances along the way. Both teams continually demonstrate incredible sportsmanship and passion which makes them admired by all within the county and beyond. Their suc-

cess continues to bring a strong source of pride to their clubs and communities. The Civic Reception took place at O'Connor's Bar & Lounge in Tinahely in the presence of Cathaoirleach of Baltinglass Municipal District Cllr. Patsy Glennon, Brian Brennan TD and representatives from Wicklow County Council, both teams, and their wider supporting community. Cllr Patsy Glennon expressed his delight in hosting a civic reception in honour of both teams, highlighting that their achievements in recent years have been remarkable and inspirational. He stated that these players are sporting role models for children throughout the county and expressed hope that local kids will follow in the footsteps of these heroes for many years to come.



Cllr. Pat Kennedy, Sarah Byrne, Ciara Stokes and Cathaoirleach of Baltinglass Municipal District Cllr. Patsy Glennon. Pic: Joe Byrne.

OPEN EVENING

THIS Wed
9th April,
4pm to 5pm



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MISS OUT!!!**

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- KC** Fine Art Practice
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- DA** Graphic Design
- DD** Architecture Design & Technology
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- DI** Furniture Design & Carpentry/Joinery
- DC** Fashion & Textiles
- DJ** Furniture Design & Cabinet Making (Advanced)

MUSIC

- MI** DJ Techniques & Music Production
- MJ** Music Production
- MK** Music Performance
- MF** Sound Engineering

COMPUTING

- NA** Computer Software Development with AI
- NB** Computer Science
- NC** Computer Networks and Cyber Security
- ND** CompTIA A+

SPORT

- EA** Sport, Exercise & Fitness Instruction
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- JF** Pharmacy Retail Assistant
- JJ** Pharmacy Technician
- HU** Applied Ecology and Biodiversity Studies
- DK** Horticulture & Garden Design
- HV** Engineering Pre-University

BUSINESS

- JA** Business Management & Administration
- JC** Business Management - Advanced Certificate
- JD** Accounting Technician
- LD** Business Tourism Advanced Certificate
- SD** Legal Administration Pre-University Law
- SF** Medical Administration (Mornings Only)
- SE** IT & Office Administration (Mornings Only)
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Construction to begin on West Wicklow solar farm



The location of Threecastles solar farm.

Neoen, an independent producer of exclusively renewable energy, has provided notice to proceed under EPC (Engineering, Procurement and Construction) turnkey contracts to Omexom for the construction of the Threecastles solar plant and TLI Group for the onsite substation and grid connection route. This opens the process leading to the construction of the solar farm.

Threecastles solar farm, located near Blessington, will have a capacity of 21.7 MWp. It was successful in Ireland's RESS 2 auction in 2022 and will benefit from a CfD (Contract for Difference) mechanism valid until 2040. Threecastles will be Neoen's second solar farm to be constructed in County Wicklow, following the existing Millvale solar farm, operating south of Ashford, which was awarded at RESS 1 and the first ever ground mounted solar farm to be connected to the grid in the Republic of Ireland. Threecastles is expected to be commissioned in the course of 2026. The solar farm will then generate enough energy to power approximately 4,400 homes, preventing the emission of nearly 6,000 tonnes of CO₂ a year.

The vegetation maintenance of the power plant will be carried out through sheep grazing therefore

continuing agricultural practices on the land. Additionally, several measures will be implemented to improve the biodiversity on site: planting of trees and hedges, bird boxes, bug hotels and bio-diversity meadows. Last but not least, Neoen is committed to sharing benefits with the local community, through the creation of a Community Benefit Fund for the local area during the asset's lifetime.

Adding Threecastles solar farm takes Neoen's capacity in operation or under construction in Ireland to over 210 MW. This includes one solar farm (79 MWp) currently under construction, as well as three solar farms (totalling 58 MWp) and eight wind farms (totalling 53 MW) in operation. The construction start of Threecastles solar farm also follows Neoen being one of the main winners of the RESS 4 auction in September 2024, with

two new solar projects totalling 170 MWp.

Cliona Gormley, Senior Business Development Manager of Neoen Ireland, commented: "It is with great pride that we announce this major milestone for the Threecastles Solar Farm. We wish to send our sincere gratitude to all the stakeholders involved in the process, in particular to our project landowners for their support and partnership during the development journey. Solar technology is low lying, low impact and low maintenance, and provides a meaningful contribution to decarbonising our electricity supply here in Ireland. We also look forward to working with the local communities when we launch our Community Benefit Fund for the Project at the operations stage, to spread a positive impact for many years to come in this local area."

Native Woodland Trust collaborates with ReWild Wicklow

The Native Woodland Trust (NWT) recently hosted representatives from ReWild Wicklow's Site Monitoring and Maintenance subcommittee at its Laragh Nature Reserve. The meeting provided an opportunity to exchange knowledge and practical experience in native woodland restoration, with the aim of building a resource that can support landowners striving to enhance biodiversity in Co. Wicklow.

The Native Woodland Trust relies on dedicated volunteers across Ireland to help manage its 13 woodland nature reserves, and its Wicklow sites have

greatly benefited from the efforts of ReWild Wicklow volunteers. Their contributions have included planting 80 meters of hedgerow at the Laragh/Coill na

Luise reserve, establishing three tree enclosures, each containing 150 native trees, and assisting with ongoing tree maintenance a task the Trust refers to as

Tree L.C. (Tree Loving Care). Volunteers have also supported conservation work at the Trust's Blessington and Humphreystown reserves, demonstrating a strong commitment to native woodland restoration.

During the visit, key priorities were identified for 2025, including deer fence maintenance, as some fencing posts are nearing the end of their lifespan. Additional focus areas include deer monitoring and management, bracken control to aid sapling establishment,



and the gradual removal of tree shelters from trees that have outgrown them. Many of these actions relate to the significant impact of non-native Sika deer,

underscoring the challenges faced by landowners working to restore Ireland's woodlands. Through partnerships like this, the Native

Woodland Trust and ReWild Wicklow are strengthening efforts to protect and restore Ireland's native woodlands. The Trust continues to welcome volun-

teers who are interested in hands-on conservation and encourages participation in its ongoing efforts to preserve these vital habitats.

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Nature boost as three local groups receive grant support

Community Foundation Ireland and National Parks and Wildlife Service 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.

Making the announcement of support for the latest biodiversity projects,

Minister of State for Nature, Heritage and Biodiversity Christopher O'Sullivan TD said: "If we are to successfully tackle our national biodiversity crisis, we must all work together. This partnership between the National Parks and Wildlife Service and Community Foundation Ireland is a great example of how we can empower and support community organisations to learn about their local biodiversity and use that knowledge along with their creativity to come up with a plan which is unique to their area. I'm really impressed with the range of projects involved and excited to see the outcomes of their work."

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Wicklow house prices up 2.8pc in the past three months

The price of the average second-hand three-bed semi in County Wicklow has increased to €386,000, up 2.8pc from €375,600 in the last three months, according to a national survey by Real Estate Alliance.

Across the county, time taken to sell is currently five weeks, the Q1 REA Average House Price Index shows. Average prices in Blessington increased by 4pc to €390,000, with time to sell currently four weeks. Baltinglass prices increased this quarter to 1.9pc to €270,000, and time to sell in the area currently six weeks.

“Shortage of supply of second-hand three-beds is causing unexpected increased pricing, with a two-bed in Blessington delivering an exceptional result of €355,000,” said Simon Murphy of REA Murphy Baltinglass and Blessington. We have seen some recent unexpected instructions from landlords on long-standing rentals, with some private landlords also seeking to add to existing portfolios.

“The landlords selling now may be a natural progression, rather than indicative of a sentiment of landlords wanting to leave the market generally, which had been the case in recent market memory.”

The survey shows that across the county, 85pc of purchasers were first-time buyers, the highest reported in the country this quarter. The REA Average House Price Index concentrates on the sale price of Ireland's typical stock home, the three-bed semi, giving an accurate picture of the second-hand property market in towns and cities countrywide. The actual selling price of a three-bed, semi-detached house across the country rose by 2.5pc in the past three months to €338,847, and 10pc overall annually.

Three-bed semis in Dublin's suburbs are reaching sale agreed in days as a wave of mortgage approved buyers turn their focus from apartments to family homes, the survey has found.

Actual selling prices in Dublin city rose by 3pc in the last three months, and the average three-bed semi in the capital is now selling at €558,250 ñ a rise of almost €50,000 in the past year. Prices in the major cities outside the capital rose by an average of 3pc to €355,250 in the last three months ñ an annual rate of increase of 8pc. Homes in the country's large towns continue to show the biggest annual growth nationwide, 2.9pc this quarter and 13pc on last March to an average of €256,576.

The absence of new home building, and historically low supply has seen three bed semi-detached homes in parts of Donegal, Kerry, Mayo, Offaly and Roscommon increase by over 23pc in the past year. Homes in commuter counties rose by 1.9pc over the past three months to an average of €350,278, an annual rise of 9pc.

Applicants locked out of new Greystones houses

Cllr Stephen Stokes is calling on Wicklow County Council to expedite the allocation of the Cois Droichid social housing units in Greystones. Highlighting the pressing need for housing in the area, Cllr Stokes emphasised the importance of promptly providing these homes to eligible local families and individuals. Cllr Stokes has raised the issue in both Greystones District and full meetings of Wicklow County Council.

He stated: "The site has been locked up for months, with the houses seemingly complete. This development was meant to be completed in quarter 2 of 2024 by Cleary Doyle. Here we are almost a year later still waiting. The project has been beset with delays and mystery."

The Wicklow County Council housing list currently stands at around 4200 applications. The Cois Droichid estate is expected to deliver 41 units. Cllr Stephen Stokes added: "The completion of the Cois Droichid development would be a significant milestone in addressing the housing needs of our community. There is a particular shortage of homes in north-east Wicklow. This estate represents almost 1% of what is needed to clear the Wicklow County Council housing list. People regularly contact me about their housing situation. The time for action is now."

Cllr Stokes has been an active advocate for housing and infrastructure improvements within the Greystones Municipal District. However he has cited frustration with the continued delays. He noted: "There always seems to be an excuse for Cois Droichid being incomplete, whether it is snagging or paperwork. I am often left with more questions than answers. Meanwhile months pass with no delivery."

Cllr Stokes believes that it is imperative that these homes do not remain vacant and are allocated without delay to those on the housing waiting list. He is urging Wicklow County Council to prioritise the allocation process and collaborate closely with relevant agencies to facilitate a smooth transition for new residents. Cllr Stokes concluded: "Ensuring that these homes are occupied promptly not only provides much-needed housing but also strengthens our community. I am calling on the developer and Wicklow County Council to stop faffing around and allocate these homes to local families. Let's get it done."



Cllr Stephen Stokes at Cois Droichid.

‘National Planning Framework must be reformed to address housing emergency’

Independent Senator Aubrey McCarthy has urged the government to reform the National Planning Framework to boost the production of new accommodation.

Senator McCarthy, from Naas, County Kildare, and co-founder of Tiglin, a charity aiding those struggling with homelessness and addiction, made these remarks after Minister for Housing James Brown failed to provide clear timelines for housing targets.

Speaking in the Seanad, Senator McCarthy said “Recent data from the Central Statistics Office shows Ireland's population has grown by 8%, now exceeding 5.1 million. This demographic shift presents significant housing and infrastructure challenges.”

He added, “The NPF, launched in 2018 as part of Project Ireland 2040, aimed to guide population growth, development, and infrastructural investment over two decades.”

Senator McCarthy concluded by advocating for local planning authorities to have limited discretion to release additional housing on fully serviced Tier 1 lands, stating, “We must explore practical solutions to ease housing pressures while awaiting the NPF revision. This temporary measure would not undermine the NPF but would show the Government's responsive approach to immediate challenges.”



Senator Aubrey McCarthy. Photo by Annie Thompson.



IPB PRIDE OF PLACE COMPETITION 2025

Wicklow County Council invites expressions of interest from local community groups who wish to be nominated to the 2025 IPB Pride of Place Competition in association with Co-Operation Ireland.

This annual all-island competition is run in conjunction with local authorities and aims to recognise improvements made by local communities to create civic pride in their area.

The Pride of Place Competition celebrates the efforts and endeavours of communities throughout Ireland, to make their place the best place to live. The competition focus is about people coming together to shape, change and improve the daily lives of people in their communities.

There are thirteen categories this year under which communities can enter. They include:

1	Population 0 - 300	8	Community Youth Initiative
2	Population 300 - 1000	9	Inclusive Communities
3	Population 1001 - 2000	10	Community Wellbeing Initiative
4	Population 2001 – 5000	11	Community Tourism Initiative
5	Population over 5000	12	Age Friendly Communities
6	Creative Communities	13	Urban Neighbourhoods and Housing Estates
7	Climate Action and Biodiversity		

Based on expressions of interest received, Wicklow County Council will shortlist and nominate groups for Pride of Place 2025.

For information on previous category winners, visit IPB Pride of Place Awards <https://prideofplace.ie/>

How to Apply:
Application forms and guidelines are available from Wicklow County Council's website www.wicklow.ie
Applications should be emailed to prideofplace@wicklowcoco.ie by the deadline: **4:00pm Friday 25th April 2025.**
Late applications will not be accepted.
Phone: 0404 20208.



Successful meeting with NTA on local transport challenges

Timmins argues case for expanded and more regular services in Wicklow

Last Tuesday Deputy Edward Timmins held a meeting with the National Transport Authority (NTA) regarding local transport issues, which he described as successful.

Speaking following the meeting, Deputy Edward Timmins remarked "I had a very productive meeting with three members of the NTA management team covering rail, Dublin Bus and rural local link buses. I emphasised the need for expanded and more regular services here in Wicklow and outlined the population increases that have taken place, and are envisaged in the coming years."

Regarding the train to Wicklow Town, Deputy Edward Timmins outlined: "This project is now being accelerated. It has an investment of €56 to €80 million. A fleet of trains has been ordered, a deposit has been paid and the expected delivery of trains will take place in 2027 with service expected in 2028. They are being manufactured by Alstom in Katowice, Poland. The service will be hourly to Wicklow with a stop in Kilcoole. These trains will run all the way to Dublin. Additionally, there will be an increase in the service to Greystones from twice hourly to three times hourly."

On the bus service to Blessington, Deputy Edward Timmins said: "The plan is to run an hourly service from Ballymore via Blessington to



Edward Timmins TD.

Tallaght and an extra bus at peak times (known as the L44). This is planned for Spring of next year."

In relation to rural buses in Wicklow, Deputy Edward Timmins noted: "It is expected that the 132

service which serves West Wicklow will double in frequency to eight times per day. This is expected at the end of this month but may be in May. An announcement is usually made 10 days before commencement. The local link service from Baltinglass to Carlow will also happen but no date is available yet. I will keep constituents updated on this."

Deputy Edward Timmins added: "The Glendalough to Bray has received huge support in the public consultation and this will consist of five buses per day. I asked that Donard be included in plans as this village has lost out so far."

With regards to bus stops, Deputy Edward Timmins continued: "I raised a number of extra bus stop requirements including for the local link on the Naas road in Blessington and Baltinglass hospital."

Concluding Deputy Timmins pointed to positive news last week of roads funding: "We received good news last week of the funding of a park and ride at Hollywood cross something I have been lobbying for along with local councillors for the past few years. As a TD, proper transport links and infrastructure are a key priority for me."

Aontú to table motion on US tariffs this week

Aontú leader Peadar Toibin has called on the government to do more to ensure that Ireland has a negotiation platform within the EU to prevent damage to the Irish economy.

Speaking last week, Local Aontú advocate Ciarán Hogan said "Behind the current high drama going on in the Dáil regarding speaking rights, Aontú has been trying to address the biggest issue facing Ireland. With much talk of American President Donald Trump turning his brand of business negotiation toward the EU as he already has Canada and Mexico, many economists and government advisors are preparing for what could be the worst financial situation in a century and much worse than the 2008 crash. The EU has responded to the American Steel and aluminium tariffs by saying it would raise its levies on up to €26 Billion worth of US goods, including boats, motorbikes and bourbon."

"Locally in Wicklow we host many large companies that could downsize or pull out of the state completely. Some big

employers such as Servier Industries, Merck, MSD, Oriflame are 4 big pharma and cosmetic companies that could leave Wicklow. Donald Trump has explicitly stated that he wants these pharma companies to manufacture in the US despite Ireland doing a "Good job" of attracting these companies to base themselves here.

"For decades now this FF FG government has prioritised Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) over everything else. They haven't tried at all to support the native Irish economy, or the Small and Medium Business (SMB) sector. This has left us horribly exposed to trade war devastation. There is no reason not to have both, we can have international and national companies doing well here."

He continued "Beside direct loss of investment, a trade war would cripple the economy and shutter many other businesses not

directly involved.

"Many businesses rely on American tourist trade; the beautiful Powerscourt estate is a top employer in the county. And a huge number of Wicklow residents commute to Dublin to work in American tied companies that might soon relocate."

Deputy Toibin stated "It seems that the EU are not really aware of Ireland's needs in this battle. When the EU targeted US Bourbon as part of its retaliatory tariff threat, it put the Irish drinks industry in the sights of Trump. I have asked the Minister for Finance what contribution the Irish government has in the decisions by the EU to retaliate to the threatened US tariffs and the only answer the government can provide is that the EU is open to 'fine tuning' its response. In any collective response to escalate the trade war with the US, we know Ireland's bargaining strength will be minuscule

compared to that of Germany or France, and yet the government want to use the EU-wide approach to protect every Member State despite specific threats against the Irish economy.

"The Government needs to urgently outline its approach in the European Council to protect Irish jobs and the Irish economy and put Irish interests first within the EU."

Aontú will be using their Private Members Business slot this Wednesday to move a motion regarding Tariffs. The Aontú motion seeks the urgent reinstating of the Oireachtas Finance and Enterprise Committees which have not yet been set up due to the Speaking Rights row which has engulfed the Dáil in recent weeks. The party is also calling on the government to take a stronger and more direct role in negotiating with the US administration.



Jim Hoey presents the Adjudicators Award to Tommy Nolan of the Arklow RNLI at the Arklow St. Patrick's Day Parade Awards Night in the Bridge Hotel.



COMHAIRLE CHONTAE CHILL MHANTÁIN
WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL



Lár Bailte ar dTús
Town Centre First

RATHDRUM HEALTH CHECK & NEW TOWN TEAM INFORMATION EVENT

Monday 14th April 2025 5.00pm to 8.00pm
The Ann Devlin Annex, Rear of RDA Hall, A67YC 93.



A Town Health Check consultation, supported by Queen's University Belfast, will be held on 14th April between 5.00pm and 8.00pm to assess the economic, social, and physical condition of the town centre. This consultation will identify the town's strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement, focusing on aspects such as local businesses, infrastructure, public spaces, community facilities, and accessibility. The findings will inform future regeneration efforts and guide the Town Centre First initiative.

We encourage all members of the public and local businesses to attend at any time between 5pm and 8pm to share their views and experiences. Your input will help shape a town centre that is vibrant, attractive, and welcoming for work, living, and visiting. A Town Health Check Questionnaire is available via the attached QR code, and we look forward to your participation in both completing the questionnaire and attending the consultation.

Additionally, Wicklow County Council is establishing a Town Centre First Team in 2025, as part of the National Town Centre First policy. This team, supported by the Town Regeneration Officer (TRO), will be central to the delivery of a Town Centre First strategy and vision for Rathdrum. At the event, the TRO will present on the formation of the Town Team at 5pm, 6pm, and 7pm.

The Town Team will typically consist of representatives from local businesses, community groups, residents, tourism organizations, An Garda Síochána, charities, social enterprises, sports organizations, cultural groups, voluntary groups, chambers of commerce, retailers, developers, and educational institutions. They will play a vital role in implementing the Town Centre First strategy, ensuring the town's unique needs and characteristics are reflected in its development and revitalisation.

Your Town, Your Plan – Get Involved



National Spring Clean Month

Wicklow's Annual Spring Clean has arrived

Public urged to 'Think Before You Skip It' in new waste reduction campaign

MyWaste, Ireland's official guide to managing your waste, is launching a new public information campaign, 'Think Before You Skip It', aimed at maximising reuse and recycling whilst minimising waste sent for disposal during home clear-outs, DIY projects, and renovations.

The campaign responds to the challenges of using skips for materials that can either be reused or recycled, such as cardboard boxes and general household waste. These items are often incorrectly thrown into skips and mixed with construction and demolition debris.

With construction and demolition waste representing the largest waste stream in Ireland (8 million tonnes annually), and landfills nearing capacity, MyWaste, managed by the Regional Waste Management Planning Offices, is urging the public to adopt more circular practices. The 'Think Before You Skip It' campaign is encouraging all citizens, particularly DIY enthusiasts, renovators, and those moving home or doing a spring clean to prioritise reuse, repurposing, and proper waste segregation. As a result, waste generation is minimised, materials are kept in the loop at their highest value for as long as possible, and if it cannot be used, segregation can ensure better recycling or treatment.

MyWaste's Top Ten Tips for Organising Your Clear Out:

1. Plan: Break down the task into man-

ageable steps, focusing on one room or area at a time.

2. Equip: Gather essential supplies like boxes, bags, packing materials, and cleaning supplies.

3. Sort: Categorise items into Keep, Reuse, Donate, Sell, Recycle, and Dispose.

4. List: Create a list to track belongings and decluttering progress.

5. Donate/Sell: Arrange for pick-up or drop-off with charities or online platforms.

6. Clear: Remove larger items first, then smaller items and debris.

7. Recycle: If the clear out material contains WEEE, batteries, these can be recycled for free at your local Civic Amenity Site, & should not be placed in a skip.

8. Dispose: Responsibly recycle or dispose of unwanted items at civic amenity sites or through authorised waste collectors.

9. Consider a Skip (Wisely): If hiring a skip, make sure the skip provider is authorised

10. Document & Share: Take before-and-after photos of your clear-out and share your progress on social media using #Think-Before-YouSkipIt.

Now in its 26th year, An Taisce's Spring Clean initiative is once again inviting community groups, schools, and resident associations in Wicklow to participate. This campaign, known as Ireland's largest anti-litter initiative, is operated by the Environmental Education Unit of An Taisce in partnership with local authorities and is supported by the Department of Environment, Communications, and Climate Action. The Spring Clean runs throughout the entire month of April.

To support this initiative, Wicklow County Council has a dedicated team, the Spring Clean Team, which can provide litter pickers, bags, and gloves to groups in Wicklow. To request these supplies while stocks last, please email SpringClean@wicklowcoco.ie.

Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr. Paul O'Brien, commented: "It is always fantastic to see the strong community spirit and the ambition to make a positive contribution to the local environment from the volunteers who participate in An Taisce's National Spring Clean. The success of the campaign over the past 25 years has been remarkable, and I am optimistic that this year Wicklow will see a record number of people helping to make a positive impact in their local communities."

Theresa O'Brien, Director of Services for Climate, Environment, and Amenity, added: "We are proud to support the 26th National Spring Clean, which inspires individuals to come together and positively impact the biodiversity of their communities by collecting hundreds of tonnes of litter each year. We hope the 2024 campaign will achieve another year of record success!"

Many groups have already reached out to us, and we would like to thank them for their ongoing efforts to maintain litter-free areas throughout County Wicklow. Keeping our areas litter-free contributes to healthier freshwater and coastal waters, reduces marine pollution, and improves our recycling targets, among many other benefits.



Pictured at the launch today was Orion Cullen (5), Xanthe Cullen (2) celebrating 25 years of #Springclean with a chocolate cake. Photo credit: Keith Arkins.

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Pure Mile volunteers collect over 1,100 bags of litter

The environmental/community initiative, the Pure Mile, which encourages communities and groups to adopt a mile of road, or miles of road, and work with Pure organising litter picks and clean ups have removed over 1,100 bags of litter and rubbish from Wicklow/Dublin Uplands since last November.

Pure Mile litter picks are organised throughout the year and over 700 litter picks/clean-ups have already taken place resulting in the collection of over 1,100 bags of litter, rubbish, and dumping, from the Wicklow/Dublin upland environment, all by thousands of Pure Mile Volunteers. In some instances, clean-ups by Pure Mile groups, resulted in the collection of over 75 bags of rubbish, from one upland road. Pure Mile Groups were responsible for the collection of over 410 bags of litter in March. Apart from general litter, other discarded material dumped on the environment included, tyres, batteries, mattresses, radios, hovers, TV's, cables, piping, furniture, chairs, bedframes, building materials, plaster board, timber, carpets, lino, metal, flooring, toys, prams, buckets, bikes, and much more. Every Pure Mile clean-up makes a huge difference to the Wicklow/Dublin environment with Pure are emphasising that every litter pick event organised by Pure Mile Groups in the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands, regardless of the



Pure manager Ian Davis meeting with Pure Mile Group in the Wicklow Dublin Uplands.

amount of rubbish removed, has a positive impact on this unique landscape and environment. Pure Mile groups are also contacting Pure to report illegal dumping sites that they find on the landscape during their litter picks, and Pure are ensuring a swift removal of the dumping with the project receiving 238 reports so far this year.

Pure have also been working with Walking Groups, Hiking Groups, Cycling Groups, Running Groups, Businesses and Organisations, who have adopted areas in the Wicklow Mountains

National Park located in the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands. A number of litter picks and cleanups have already taken place this year and the groups are transforming this environmentally sensitive area, an area which attracts thousands of visitors annually, into a litter free zone. The success of the Pure Mile in the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands is evident when in 2024 Pure had to cancel litter pick events due to lack of litter on the environment. This reduction in litter is also a result of the success of the Deposit Return Scheme (DRS). The DRS was

introduced in February 2024 to tackle the problem of cans and plastic bottles littering our environment and many of the Pure Mile Groups have stated that it has made a noticeable difference.

The Pure Truck is on the road every day and in the first two months of 2025 it has already removed over 20 tonnes (20,000kg) of illegal dumping and rubbish from Wicklow/Dublin uplands. The Pure Mile Volunteers have been extremely busy cleaning up roads, verges, drains and ditches from the Wicklow/Dublin uplands.

There are now over 1,000 Pure Mile roads, mountains, woodlands, valleys, forestries, car parks, pull-ins, and upland amenities, involved in the 2025 Pure Mile Project, the largest number ever since the project began in 2010.

Ian Davis, manager of Pure commented, "The Pure Mile was established in 2010, and the project has grown from 5 miles to over 1,000 miles. We have seen an increase in people reconnecting with the area they live in, or in an area they recreate, and people are becoming much more aware of the amount of litter and rubbish on our roadside verges, hedges, and drains. The Pure Truck has been extremely busy collecting rubbish daily, ensuring that no Pure Mile bags are left on the landscape. It's amazing the amount of litter and rubbish the Pure Mile Volunteers are removing, and on behalf of Pure I would like to thank all of them and congratulate them for their dedication in Cleaning Up The



Pure Truck in the Wicklow Dublin Uplands.

Wicklow / Dublin Uplands."

Pure are continuing to support all of the Pure Mile Groups by organising further litter picks, clean-ups, anti-dumping initiatives, community projects, biodiversity and heritage projects, which will be ongoing throughout the year.

Pure provide all groups with Pure Mile signage, Pure Mile bags, Pure Mile high-vis vests, gloves, litter pickers, and the Pure

Truck removes all of the rubbish collected by the groups.

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.

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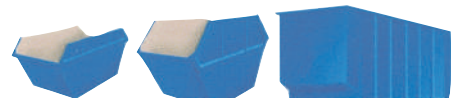
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www.wicklow.ie



National Spring Clean
An Taisce

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Email: nsc@antaisce.org
www.nationalspringclean.org



Wicklow Safe Haven launches to raise awareness of the problem of domestic abuse

‘Take the Plunge’ social media fundraising challenge underway. Sleep Out for Anu on May 3rd to raise funds

A new community based organisation which aims to raise awareness of the unacceptable scourge of domestic abuse has launched in County Wicklow. Volunteer run, Wicklow Safe Haven also plans to work to raise funds to support the fight against domestic abuse in the county.

Nationally last year there was a 9% increase in the number of cases of domestic abuse reported to An Garda Síochána, according to the Garda National Protective Services Bureau, bringing the total to 61,000. That represents an average of 167 cases every day across Ireland. In County Wicklow, 599 people applied for a domestic abuse order in 2023, up from 527 in 2022. In the first nine months of last year, 408 people had sought these protective orders in the county. Wicklow Town experienced a dramatic 61% increase in the number of domestic abuse orders sought between 2022 and 2023, jumping from 90 to 145, while Bray saw a 5.9% increase. Arklow District Court recorded a slight 1.7% decrease between 2022 and 2023.

“These are real lives and it could be someone you know,” said Paul Hennessy, Chairman of Wicklow Safe Haven. “It could be your sister or your brother, your niece

or your nephew, your mother or your father, a close friend or a work colleague. There is no excuse for physical, sexual, emotional, digital or financial abuse, or coercive control, all of which have devastating and long-lasting consequences for individuals and families. We need to break the silence around it.”

Wicklow Safe Haven plans to hold a series of fundraising events for registered charity, Anu, which is the outreach arm of Bray Women’s Refuge. A crucial safety net for women and men, Anu provides a wide range of support to help them to a safer and brighter future and to rebuild their lives. In 2023 it provided support to 407 people experiencing domestic abuse, 354 of whom were female and 53 male.

“Bray Women’s Refuge, including Anu Wicklow Domestic Violence Supports, our community support service delivered throughout County Wicklow in

an outreach capacity, are delighted to be to chosen recipients of donations received by the upcoming fundraising efforts initiated by Wicklow Safe Haven,” said Hayley Murphy, Outreach Coordinator at Anu Wicklow and Bray Women’s Refuge. “The organisation, a registered charity originally established in Bray in 1978, offers safe short term

refuge accommodation and support for women and children experiencing domestic violence, abuse, and/or coercive control and in crisis when it’s no longer safe to remain. In the community across Co Wicklow, support is delivered by Anu Wicklow Domestic Violence, the organisation’s outreach service.”

Wicklow Safe Haven is getting its fundraising drive underway with its “Take the Plunge” viral social media campaign, which challenges people to jump into cold water, call out four more people to do the same, film it, post the video to their social media accounts



Lizzie Sherwood-Smith (Youth Outreach Worker, Anu), Hayley Murphy (Outreach Coordinator, Anu), Maebh Ryan (WSH), Roisin Hennessy (WSH), Paul Hennessy (WSH), David Ryan (WSH), Shane Fagan (WSH), Iain Fisher (WSH), Hilary Fisher (WSH).

and then donate to Wicklow Safe Haven. It will also hold a fundraising Sleep Out in Wicklow town on May 3rd and raise awareness.

Wicklow Safe Haven is seeking the support of other grassroots community organisations across the county to help it with its fundraising and awareness efforts. These include local businesses,

sports and other clubs, schools and more. The hope is that by involving other community groups, more people will be encouraged to raise funds for Anu and replicate

Wicklow Safe Haven’s activity across the county. Anyone interested in donating can do so online at Wicklow Safe Haven’s iDonate page <https://www.idonate.ie/fundraiser/WicklowSafeHaven>.

To contact Wicklow Safe Haven or get more information on how you can help, visit www.idonate.ie/fundraiser/WicklowSafeHaven.

Call for action on domestic abuse

Jennie’s Law Campaign seeks public support for a Domestic Abuse Register in Ireland

The Jennie’s Law campaign is calling for urgent action to establish a Domestic Abuse Register in Ireland. The initiative seeks to create a publicly accessible register of convicted domestic abusers, empowering individuals to make informed decisions about their safety and protecting potential victims from repeat offenders.

Jennie’s Law is named in memory of Jennie Poole, whose tragic experience highlighted the urgent need for systemic change. Domestic abuse

survivors and advocates across the country are demanding that the Irish government implement stronger protections against repeat offenders by introducing this life-saving legislation.

repeat offenders accountable.

How the Public Can Help

The campaign is calling on people across Ireland to sign and share the petition at <https://bit.ly/JenniesLaw> and help spread the word. Supporters can also display campaign flyers, engage with their local representatives, and advocate for legislative action.

Jason Poole, Jennie’s brother and a key advocate for the campaign, is available for media interviews to discuss the urgent need for this legislation.

“Domestic abuse ruins lives, and too often, repeat offenders are free to move on to their next victim. Jennie’s Law is about protecting people from harm before it’s too late,” Jason said.

Why Jennie’s Law Matters

Currently, there is no mechanism for the public to access information about individuals convicted of domestic abuse. Survivors often only learn about an abuser’s past when it is too late. Jennie’s Law aims to prevent further harm by ensuring transparency and accountability.

Key objectives of Jennie’s Law include: A Domestic Abuse Register listing convicted abusers; Greater protections for survivors and at-risk individuals; Stronger judicial oversight to hold



Dicey O'Reilly presents Tammy Byrne of St. Vincent de Paul Arklow with the Tommy Hickson Shield for Best Window Display at the Arklow St. Patrick's Parade awards night in the Bridge Hotel.



COMHAIRLE CONTAE CHILL MHANTÁIN
WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

PUBLIC HEALTH (IRELAND) ACTS

Notice is hereby given that Wicklow County Council at a duly convened meeting held on Monday 2nd December 2024 adopted Part IV of the Public Health Acts Amendment Act 1890 for the regulation of places ordinarily used for public dancing or music or other public entertainment of the like for the County including all Municipal Districts, and that it shall come into operation on Wednesday 7th May 2025.

Theresa O'Brien,
Director of Services,
Climate, Environment, Recreation and Amenity.

'New harbour car park should be opened'

Cllr Stephen Stokes has called on Sensori Group Management and Sispar to immediately open the newly constructed car park at Greystones Harbour. He cited growing frustration among local residents and visitors over the ongoing lack of public access to the facility.

The new car park was built as part of the latest phase of the Greystones Harbour development, which has seen significant investment into the area's facilities. However, despite its completion, Sensori Management has yet to make the parking facility available to the public, causing mounting concerns over parking shortages, congestion, and accessibility issues. Cllr Stephen Stokes added: "I have written to Sensori Facilities Management who are

the dedicated management company to try to engage with them. I have even offered to meet with them. While I appreciate that they are seeking a commercial tenant for the adjacent building, they really should open the car park as a matter of priority. It's in the heart of the marina area and ready to go. Instead it is being left to gather weeds."

Concern has been raised that the closed car park is stifling local tourism. Local residents

and business owners have voiced their frustrations, particularly on busy weekends when parking demand surges. Cllr Stephen Stokes has urged Sensori Management to provide clear communication and to expedite the process of opening the car park. Cllr Stokes noted: "We have just had thousands of people enjoying themselves at the Greystones St. Patrick's Day Parade. Before we know it Greystones Plaza Market will hopefully be upon us for

another successful summer season. Parking in this area is at a premium. Yet we have an on site solution. This is an important issue for Greystones."

Cllr Stephen Stokes will continue to seek support from Wicklow County Council to address these types of challenges. He remains committed to advocating for improved facilities and better transparency regarding infrastructure projects across the Greystones Municipal District.



Cllr Stephen Stokes at Greystones Harbour.

Frustration mounts over Greystones Coast Guard Station project delays

Sinn Féin TD John Brady has expressed his deep frustration over the ongoing delays in the Greystones Coast Guard Station project at Greystones Harbour, which was granted planning permission by Wicklow County Council back in 2020.

Since then, the project has been plagued by a series of setbacks and false starts, causing growing frustration among Coast Guard personnel and local communities.

Speaking about the delays, Deputy Brady said: "The continued setbacks in developing the new Greystones Coast Guard station are simply unacceptable. This project was given planning permission by Wicklow County Council in 2020, but since then it has been repeatedly delayed, leaving our Coast Guard personnel forced to operate from a

facility that is not fit for purpose. Meanwhile, the local community has been left in the dark about when this crucial development will be completed.

"In the latest update from the Minister for Transport, he states that many of the challenges delaying the project have now been addressed. Despite a tendering process being pulled in 2023 for technical reasons, the Department of Transport has completed a new tendering process, which began in December 2024. Tenders were returned by 25th

March 2025 and are currently being assessed. The Office of Public Works (OPW) is expected to provide a tender assessment report and recommendation to the Department by the end of April 2025, with the aim of placing the construction contract with the preferred bidder shortly thereafter.

"The Minister's update also highlighted several factors he states contributed to delays, including what he states was the need for design revisions to achieve value for money, the requirement for a new planning application midway through the process, difficulties securing vacant possession of the site, and challenges in earlier procurement processes relating to competitiveness.

"While I recognise that some progress has been made in addressing these challenges, the history of delays leaves me sceptical about how quickly we can expect this project to move forward. The Coast Guard station is an essential piece of infrastructure for the safety and security of our coastal communities, and every delay only increases the vulnerability of our coastline.

"I will continue to apply pressure on both the Department of Transport and the Office of Public Works to ensure that this project moves to construction without any further hindrances. The people of Greystones and the surrounding areas deserve better, and it is vital that the construction of the Greystones Coast Guard Station is expedited for the safety of everyone."



Deputy John Brady at the site for the Coast Guard in Greystones Harbour.

2025 Greystones Municipal District / Wicklow Times

People of the Year Awards



The Awards will be presented in the Greystones Golf Club, Greystones on Thursday 15th May, 2025 at 8pm
Closing date for nominations is Friday 25th April

Tickets are available from Greystones Municipal District,
Tel: 01 2876694 or Email:
Kcoughla@wicklowcoco.ie / greystonesmd@wicklowcoco.ie
Ticket Price €35
www.wicklow.ie

CATEGORIES ARE:

- Sportsperson of the Year
- Civic Award
- Special Person of the Year
- Cultural Person of the Year
- Commercial Award
- Young Entrepreneur of the Year



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Young Roundwood filmmaker shortlisted in Ireland's Young Filmmaker of the Year Awards

Fresh International Film Festival rolls out the red carpet for Ireland's Young Filmmaker of the Year Awards 2025. Broadcast Live on YouTube on Thursday, April 10th. You can watch all the Shortlisted Films in advance from April 7th on the Fresh Film YouTube Channel

The countdown is on! In collaboration with Screen Ireland, The Arts Council, and Omniplex Cinema Group, the Fresh International Film Festival is thrilled to present the much-anticipated 2025 Ireland's Young Filmmaker of the Year Awards (IYFTYs). With the spotlight firmly on young cinematic talent, this year's event promises a thrilling blend of creativity, inspiration and a glimpse into the future of filmmaking. In the Junior category, James Byrne, age 12, from Roundwood, has been nominated for his film *The Struggles of Stop Motion*.

For the first time, the awards will be broadcast live on YouTube on Thursday, April 10, at 8pm, ensuring audiences worldwide can celebrate Ireland's brightest young filmmaking talent in real-time.

New hosts take centre stage. Two of Ireland's most exciting comedic talents are leading this year's celebrations: Justine Stafford and Hannah Mamalis. Known for her razor-sharp wit and viral comedy sketches, Justine has made waves in Irish media as a comedian, writer, and

content creator with over 100k followers. Critically acclaimed comedian, writer, and actor Hannah Mamalis brings her sharp wit and surreal humour to the stage. A regular on RTÉ, BBC, and major festivals, she's known for her unique storytelling and offbeat charm. Leading us through the evening, both on the red carpet and behind the scenes, is the dynamic and multi-talented actor and comedian Faye Shortt. Broadcast live from Omniplex Cinema, Rathmines, Dublin, this year's event will bring

audiences even closer to the action.

Jayne Foley, Artistic Director of Fresh Film, shared her excitement: "This year's festival is buzzing with energy. With a record-breaking number of entries, it's clear that young filmmakers are thriving. We're thrilled to be premiering the awards at 8 PM on YouTube, ensuring that young creatives, their families, and film lovers everywhere can join in the celebration like never before".

In its 29th year, the IYFTYs continue to be a beacon for aspiring film-

makers worldwide. Past participants include Oscar-nominated director Vincent Lambe (Detainment), acclaimed Irish filmmaker Dónal Foreman, and comedian and TV personality Justine Stafford, who now returns as a host!

Mark Anderson, Director of Omniplex Cinema Group, commented: "What a fantastic opportunity to celebrate young talent on the big screen. We are delighted to support Fresh Film in showcasing the creativity and ambition of young filmmakers. Cinema has

always been a place for storytelling, and it's inspiring to see the next generation share their voices on the big screen".

This year, the Fresh International Film Festival received a record-breaking number of submissions from young filmmakers across Ireland and beyond, showcasing incredible talent, imagination, and storytelling skills. The shortlisted films span across genres-from gripping dramas to thought-provoking documentaries and hilarious animated shorts, proving that the future of



Presenter and comedian Justine Stafford and young actor Isabelle Fennelly pictured at the announcement of the 2025 Ireland's Young Filmmaker of the Year Awards.

film is bright.

Fresh International Film Festival, and the IYFTYs, encourage young people to explore filmmaking as a career, learning the art of visual storytelling, understanding the filmmaking process from first draft to

final frame, and the sustainable career opportunities that exist both in front of and behind the camera, inspiring and building Ireland's future film, television and digital talent pool. The IYFTYs shortlist is a rich collection that showcases

the imagination, creativity, and skills of the world's future storytellers, and interest in the festival from 82 countries is a reflection of Ireland's ascendancy as a global hub for film, television, digital and creative industries.

Bray Musical Society presents Legally Blonde

*Mermaid Arts Centre, 9th - 12th April
7.30pm. €25 Full Price/ €22 Concession*

Bray Musical Society is proud to present their 2025 production, Legally Blonde!

This dazzling musical is based on the cult classic 2001 movie! Meet Elle Woods, a bubbly sorority girl who enrolls at Harvard Law School to win back her ex-boyfriend. Along the way, Elle builds new relationships, discovers her true potential and proves that being true to yourself never goes out of style. With catchy numbers like "Omigod You Guys," "So Much Better," and "Bend and Snap," Legally Blonde is a heartwarming journey of self-discovery and empowerment. Don't miss Bray Musical Society's vibrant performance, a must-see event for audiences of all ages!

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



Film at Mermaid: Cottontail

Monday 14th April, 8pm. €10 Full Price €8 Concession

As part of the Japanese Film Festival 2025, The Embassy of Japan in Ireland and access-CINEMA present Cottontail. Following the death of his wife Akiko, Kenzaburo finds a letter from her requesting that her ashes be scattered at Lake Windermere in England, a place of huge significance to her. Kenzaburo reluctantly allows his estranged son Toshi to tag along as they venture to the other side of the world to fulfil Akiko's final wish. Cottontail is a stunningly sensitive and understated film that provides a warm, rewarding viewing experience.

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



The Adam Nolan Quartet

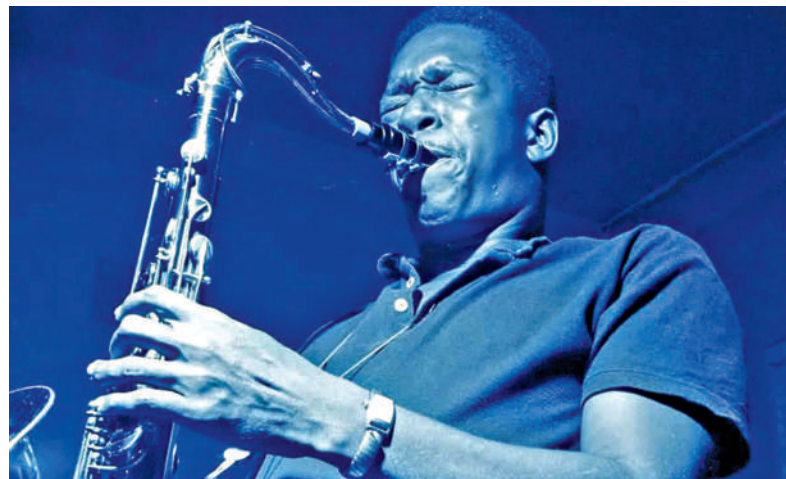
Courthouse Arts Centre, Sunday 20th April 8pm. Tickets €16/ €14

**Adam Nolan - Sax
Cormac Kenny - Piano
Derek Whyte - Double Bass
Christian Conefery - Drums**

The Courthouse welcomes The Adam Nolan Quartet playing the music of John Coltrane.

Prolific Irish Free Jazz Saxophonist Adam Nolan has released 18 albums to date and recently released a new album titled ARE U FREE with some of the finest American musicians on the NYC free jazz scene.

His philosophy is that each gig and recording session is a new experience and, along with this, has recently added spoken word and Rap into the sets mixing free jazz with hip hop and metal, giving an eclectic modern authentic style.



Bray's Youth Theatre stages 90s throwback horror comedy

Mr Sands Youth Theatre will host the European Premiere of *The Summer I Howled*, a horror comedy by award-winning American Playwright Rachel Bublitz on 23rd April at 3pm and 8pm at The Mermaid Arts Centre.

The play is their biggest show to date, with a cast and crew of 24 young people from diverse backgrounds working both on-stage and back-stage.

This production has been facilitated by a grant from As Darragh Did, who supports community clubs, groups, societies and projects which promote integration and inclusion.

About the Play

Another summer at Camp Gray Pine kicks off, and the Bunk 13 crew plan on it being their best summer yet! But on the first night of camp, one of them gets attacked by a wild animal in the woods, and starts to undergo some unnerving changes. On top of that, campers are going missing, and when they turn up, they're not quite themselves

anymore.

As the moon waxes and wanes, Bunk 13 begin to realise they might be trapped in the middle of a conflict of supernatural proportions.

Zita Monahan McGowan, Artistic Director at Mr. Sands Youth Theatre, said "The Summer I Howled is a supernatural comedy with lots of heart brought to life by the wonderful ensemble of Mr Sands Youth Theatre's young actors, production assistants and stage crew. I cannot wait for audiences in Bray to see the talent and hard work of all of our members in this fun and ambitious performance."

Casey Hallahan, Director of The Summer I Howled, said: "I'm so excited for Bray to see the incredible work our members have put into this play. It's a delightfully funny throwback to 90s era teen horror comedies,

and as a 90s kid myself it's been a treat seeing how this group of talented young people tackle it."

Andrew McGinley, founder of As Darragh Did, said: "As Darragh Did is thrilled to support Mr. Sands Youth Theatre in providing programming to young people interested in the arts. It personally means so much to me to see Darragh's legacy continued in projects like Mr. Sands Youth Theatre. Having seen Mr Sands' performance of Island Town in January, I have no doubt this upcoming play will be another fantastic showcase of talent, on and off the stage."

Rachel Bublitz, playwright of The Summer I Howled, said "I am thrilled to have the European premiere of The Summer I Howled with Mr. Sands Youth Theatre. When I start a new project, I start by



wondering what kind of play I wish would have existed when I was still acting. This play is absolutely chock full of characters I would have jumped to have the opportunity to bring to life. I hope

the young artists have as much fun bringing this show to life as I had writing it, because The Summer I Howled was an absolute joy to imagine and put to paper." Suitable for Ages 10+ .

Produced by special arrangement with YouthPLAYS. Tickets are €15/10 concession. Tickets for the event are limited, and can be bought at www.mermaidartscentre.ie or by phoning 01 272 4030.

Flyers for the show will soon be found around Bray and the wider area, and anyone who brings a flyer to the performance can avail of concession pricing on the day.

Conversation with an Artist

A Free Monthly Series hosted by The Greystones Arts Centre

The Greystones Arts Centre initiative is an exciting project founded by a group of local, diverse artists, writers and musicians, acutely aware of the lack of a dedicated, creative centre in the area. Their goal is to establish a multifunctional venue that provides a cultural hub for all ages in this fast-growing community.

The Greystones Arts Centre will:
• Offer studio, workshop and exhibition space.

• Provide a venue for literary and music events.
• Benefit local businesses.
• Promote a positive sense

of well-being while reinforcing our sense of community.

Meanwhile the group is

hosting events in and around Greystones such as their first popular series 'Conversation with an

Artist' at Greystones Library.

This is a FREE series of lively, monthly talks with local artists: writers, poets, sculptors, painters, photographers, illustrators and more. You can hear their stories, ask questions and

discover their inspirations. Places are limited so come early.

The next 'Conversation with an Artist' on Tuesday, April 1st, 4:00 - 5:00pm features Greystones painter Margaret Daly and visual artist David Whittredge.

Margaret takes her inspiration from the environment - landscape, foliage, flowers and plants as food, while her abstract work celebrates colour and light. She is a gradu-

ate of Fine Art and Painting at The National College of Art and Design.

David creates unique 3-dimensional works that combine painting and sculpture into stylized coral reef structures. Originally from America and now an Irish citizen, he is developing new work focused on climate awareness.

So, whether you're an artist or an arts lover, you can help to make the dream a reality.

For more information about the Greystones Arts Centre initiative and to contact the Committee, please email, greystonesarts@gmail.com

Greystones Arts Centre Committee: Michelle Owen (Chair), Angelica K. Bender, Frances Browner, Jack Clarke, Cllr. Orla Finn, Mary A. Kelly, Lynne Reece Loftus, Deirdre McKernan Crosby, Emma Jane Rushworth and David Whittredge.

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Opening Times

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Sun - Closed (Bank Hols 2.00pm - 5.30pm)

Church Road, Ballybrack, Co. Dublin



Wicklow artists get in the frame for the incognito art sale

Wicklow artists have once again shown what huge hearts they have in donating an array of uniquely special artworks for this year's incognito art sale in aid of the Jack and Jill Children's Foundation.

With incognito, the thrill is all in the anticipation, as the art buyer has no idea who the artist is behind their artwork until the sale is over.

A total of 40 artists from the county have come together to back the fundraising endeavour which enables 23 Wicklow families to continue to receive vital care and support from the Foundation for their children.

In what promises to be

the biggest and best incognito yet, among the artists to have lent their skills and talents this year are Zoe Mulvaney from Bray, Eamonn Heffernan from Dunlavin, Aya Salman from Roundwood, and Brenda Malley from Greystones.

They join such other luminaries to take part as fashion designers Don O'Neill, Helen Steele and Simone Rocha, creative director and professional dancer Arthur

Gourounlian, singer-songwriter Roisin Murphy, TV cook Donal Skehan, Olympian Sonia O'Sullivan, broadcasters Joe Duffy, Jenny Buckley and Maia Dunphy, and well-known professional artists Maser, William Murray and Thelma Mansfield.

Just Picture It!

This year sees the highly anticipated online art sale return to its real-world roots, with half the collection on display at the incognito Gallery Sale in Charlemont Square, Dublin 2. The other half will be exclusively available in the incognito Online Sale at www.incognito.ie, where both collections can now be viewed.

Art fans will also have an opportunity to preview the Gallery Sale collection on Wednesday and Thursday, April 9th & 10th and the sale itself takes place on Friday and Saturday, April 11th & 12th.

The Online Sale will take place on Wednesday, April 16th, from 8am, while all the artists behind the artworks will be revealed the following day.

With more than 3,500 postcard-size artworks up for grabs at a cost of €70 each, it will be a case of first-come, first-served, for the Gallery Sale, and fastest-finger-first for the Online Sale.

Watercolours, oils, pastels, acrylics, stained glass, and textiles, are among the mediums employed by the artists, while this year sees photography featuring in the art sale for the first time since 2021. Photography artworks will only be sold in the incognito

Gallery at Charlemont Square.

2025 marks the ninth year of the incognito art sale, which to date has raised over €1.2 million in funds to support vital in-home nursing and respite care provided by the Jack and Jill Children's Foundation.

Indeed, Jack and Jill currently provides nursing care and respite support to 420 families caring for children, up to the age of six, with severe learning disability often associated with complex medical needs, in communities across Ireland.

Best of Both Worlds

For incognito curator Lucinda Hall, this year's hybrid art sale in the virtual and real worlds will delight both artists and buyers alike: "With more postcards in our collection than ever before, we are so excited to go hybrid for incognito 2025. People love to see the art up close and personal, and there is no better feeling for an artist than to have their art on display in a gallery in the company of their peers and artistic idols! We can't wait to bring back the thrill of seeing hundreds of beautiful artworks so generously donated by our wonderful community of incognito artists on display in our gallery."

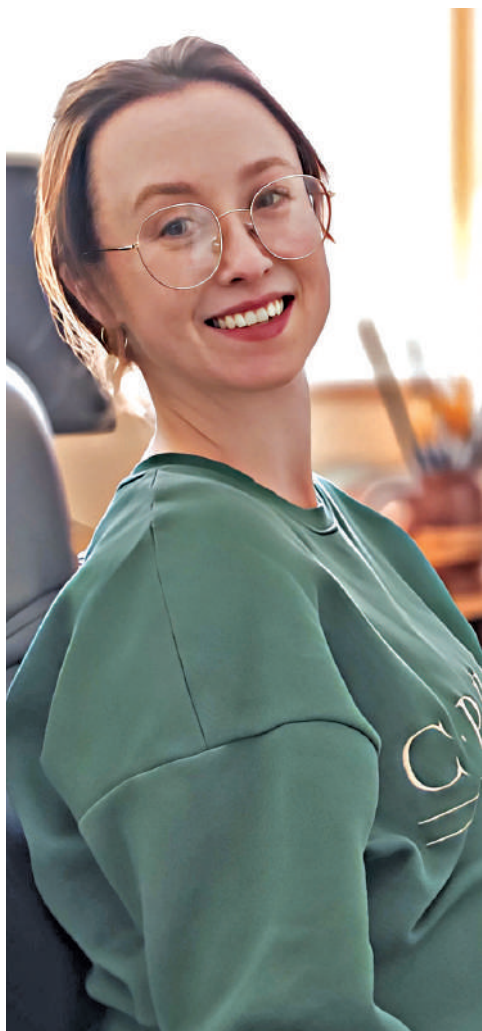
For Deirdre Walsh, CEO of the Jack and Jill Children's Foundation, each artwork sold will make a meaningful difference for Jack and Jill families: "Ultimately, it's Jack and Jill families who will benefit from this novel art sale and I cannot thank the art community enough for their incredible support. With incognito, people are not

only buying an original piece of art that they love, but for each artwork purchased they are also making a much-needed donation of €70 to the Jack and Jill Children's Foundation to fund vital in-home nursing and respite care for children across the nation. Now, that is something truly priceless."

For all the latest updates on the incognito 2025 art sale, check out www.incognito.ie or follow on @facebook.com/2025incognito or @instagram.com/jackandjillcf



One of the postcard artworks in this year's incognito mystery art sale. In aid of the Jack and Jill Children's Foundation, the identity of the artists behind the artworks is kept under wraps until after the sale closes.



Zoe Mulvaney from Bray is one of the artists taking part in this year's incognito mystery art sale.



Brenda Malley from Newtownmountkennedy is one of the artists taking part in this year's incognito mystery art sale.

Creating with Communities: ambitious new Arts Development Plan

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council has launched its Arts Development Plan 2024-2030, *Creating with Communities*, at a special music event at the Gathering Grounds in Kilternan. The plan sets out a vision for a vibrant and inclusive cultural life for everyone in the county, with a strong emphasis on local artists, community engagement, and accessibility.

The plan focuses on several key areas to support and develop the arts across Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown. A core aim is to make arts experiences more accessible within local communities. The plan prioritises supporting ambitious arts projects that connect people and places. Given demand, it is also planned to make the best use of our cultural spaces while exploring opportunities for new arts spaces.

An Cathaoirleach, Cllr Jim O'Leary, added: "We envision a county where artists and creatives are deeply valued, where our communities are actively engaged in the arts, and where the arts enrich the lives of everyone in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, every day. Our new arts development plan underscores the value of the arts in enriching daily life and fostering a sense of place and pride."

Creating with Communities is the result of extensive collaboration, led by the Council's Culture Strategic Policy Committee and drafted by the Arts Office. The plan's development involved a comprehensive public engagement process, ensuring that the voices of local artists and communities shaped its direction. This included specific consultations with children and young people, so that their needs and aspirations are reflected in the county's arts provision.

Frank Curran, Chief Executive of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, said: "This plan demonstrates our commitment to fostering a vibrant and inclusive cultural life for everyone in our county. *Creating with Communities* is a bold vision, shaped by the voices of our local communities, artists, children, and young people. It's a roadmap to a county where the arts thrive in every corner, enriching lives and connecting us all."



The Curious Case of the Irish Yeti

Whale Theatre, Saturday 12th & Sunday 13th April 2pm (doors 1.30pm) and 4.30pm (doors 4pm) each day. Tickets €12 and €10 and available at www.whaletheatre.ie or call the booking office on 01 2010550.

Mystery, Monsters, and Mayhem Await in "Molly Malone & Bram Stoker in The Curious Case Of The Irish Yeti" at the Whale Theatre.

It's an exciting and hilarious musical mystery adventure for young audiences and families alike!

Dublin, 1859: The city's beloved dogs are vanishing, and rumours swirl about a mysterious creature - the Irish Yeti. Could this strange beast really be behind the dwindling doggy population? When young Molly's own dog goes missing, she and her friends - Bram Stoker and the Sackville Street Spooks - embark on a daring quest to uncover the truth. With danger, laughter, songs, and a touch of the unexpected at every turn, this thrilling tale will keep audiences on the edge of their seats!

Adapted for the stage, from his own #1 Best Selling book, by the acclaimed Alan Nolan, recipient of the 2024 Children's Books Ireland Annual Award for his outstanding contribution to children's literature, "The Curious Case Of The Irish Yeti" is packed with music, humor, adventure, and unforgettable characters.

Don't miss this spellbinding theatrical experience at the Whale Theatre!

Cast & Creatives

CAST: Holly Byrne, Elaine Cullen, Sabrina-Rose, Katie Ryan, Oisín Twohig, Ronan Woods

Written by Alan Nolan

Directed by Paul Cullen

Produced by Ian Whelan

Music by D. Cullen & Sinead McConville

Costumes by Ciara Phelan

Stage Management by Eve Cullen & Caoimhe Devlin

Suitable for ages 6+
Running Time 70 Minutes



Songbird: Remembering Eva Cassidy

Whale Theatre, Friday 11th April 8pm (doors 7pm) Tickets €22.50 and available at www.whaletheatre.ie or call the booking office on 01 2010550.

Join Niamh Strong with her full band for a beautiful evening of songs, remembering one of the greatest female singers, Eva Cassidy.

Having first lifted a microphone to sing at the age of 9, Niamh Strong was born into a very musical family. Her father, Rob Strong, is a legendary blues singer, and her brother, Andrew Strong, starred as "Decco Cuff" from the movie, "The Commitments".

As a singer, Niamh has performed at many large festivals and venues throughout Europe, USA, Australia and Canada, which has given her the experience and courage to pursue her own dream to become a solo artist.

In March 2018 Niamh completed a new album dedicated to the songs of Eva Cassidy, titled "Niamh Strong Sing's Eva Cassidy". Now, Niamh is bringing the album to the stage, with an intimate performance at the Whale Theatre.



Scullion at the Courthouse

Courthouse Arts Centre, Friday 11th April 8pm €26/€24

The Courthouse Arts Centre is extremely pleased to be part of Scullion's Irish Tour with their latest album, recorded during the Covid lockdown.

No introduction is needed to these veterans of the Irish music scene. Formed in the mid-1970's, Scullion are revered and feted as one of Ireland's most innovative, original and brilliant live bands. Their latest record 'Time Has Made a Change in Me' (released September 2022) emphasises the band's musical curiosity and like all of their records, it breaks new ground.

James Joyce and Sufjan Stevens are woven into the DNA of this record with the inspirational music of Sonny Condell beating at the heart of it.

Recorded during the pandemic, this record is an uplifting and inspirational collection of songs for the head and heart, written to take to the highway, collapse distance and bring us back together in the halls, front rooms, back rooms and bar rooms of Ireland.

Robbie Overton, Philip King and Sonny Condell are back on the road, meeting old friends and new, bringing new music and their favourites from their back catalogue to venues all over the country.

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John Coogan and Angela Keogh at Rathdangan Drama Group's production of *Separate Beds* in Rathdangan Community Hall.

Wicklow entrepreneur among winners at \$200K M2D2 Challenge competition

Sports Impact Technologies, an Irish start-up founded by Wicklow (Kilmacanogue) entrepreneur Eoin Tuohy, was among the Awards winners announced at the conclusion of the University of Massachusetts Lowell's highly competitive \$200K M2D2 Challenge start-up competition.

Hosted by the University of Massachusetts' Medical Device Development (M2D2) Centre, the annual competition, which is now in its 14th year, is aimed at identifying and rewarding ground-breaking and disruptive start-up companies in the medical technology and biotechnology sectors from around the world.

Sports Impact Technologies, and another Irish start-up Lia Eyecare, were among only 15 start-ups from around the world selected for the final.

Following pitches to a panel of judges at the University of Massachusetts Lowell's iHub, Sports Impact Technologies was announced as winner of the 3rd place Award with in-kind support from Mintz and bene : studio, and Lia Eyecare was announced as winner of the M2D2 \$25K cash award.

Sports Impact Technologies is developing a compact, behind-the-ear wearable that detects head impacts in real-time. Using proprietary sensor technology, the wearable records linear and angular accelerations, transmitting data instantly to coaches, medical staff, or safety officials for immediate decision-making, reducing recovery times, and ensuring no concussion goes undetected.

Sports Impact Technologies is headquartered at NovaUCD in Dublin. Eoin Tuohy, CEO and founder, Sports Impact Technologies, said, "The M2D2 has been a great experience for us. We were delighted to be selected as a finalist and to then place 3rd and win two of the in-kind supports from Mintz and bene : studio was a wonderful bonus. We are delighted with the validation from the judges and the wider UMass Lowell community as we set our sights on the US."

In addition to the Award won by Sports Impact Technologies, Lia Eyecare, a joint University College Dublin (UCD) and University of Galway ophthalmology spin-out was announced as winner of the M2D2 \$25K cash award at the end of the competition.



Pictured (l-r) at the University of Massachusetts Lowell's iHub are; Ilsa Webeck, Vice-President of Commercialisation Strategy, Simbex and event MC; Eoin Tuohy, CEO and founder, Sports Impact Technologies and Professor Steven F. Tello, Associate Vice Chancellor for Entrepreneurship and Economic Development, and Co-Director, M2D2, University of Massachusetts Lowell. (Source: University of Massachusetts Lowell).

Tourism businesses in Ireland's Ancient East attend Meitheal

Meitheal, the largest and most important trade event for the Irish tourism industry, took place last week at the Gleneagle INEC in Killarney. Meitheal is Fáilte Ireland's annual flagship trade event, organised in partnership with Tourism Ireland, to provide Irish tourism businesses with the opportunity to sell directly to top international buyers and tour operators. This year marks the 50th anniversary of Irish tourism bodies hosting trade events to promote Ireland to influential overseas buyers.

Significant business deals are expected to be signed over two days as over 10,000 sales meetings are scheduled to take place between 389 Irish tourism providers and 55 international buyers and tour operators from 15 countries. The countries represented are Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Spain, Switzerland, the United Arab Emirates, Great Britain, and the USA.

The best of what is on offer in Ireland's Ancient East, Ireland's Hidden

Heartlands, the Wild Atlantic Way, and Dublin was showcased with the aim of being scheduled on the itineraries of the global tour operators. Key themes and trends interesting international buyers this year include multi-generational trips, small private tours, outdoor activities and immersive experiences that incorporate food and traditional craft making.

Director of Demand Development at Fáilte Ireland Niall Tracey said:

"For 50 years, tourism trade events have brought together the best of our local industry with international partners, creating lasting relationships that benefit our economy and showcase the unique beauty and culture of Ireland. For a small island, we have a fantastic legacy as a visitor destination with a huge amount to offer from world-class scenery, hospitality, activities, attractions, culture, heritage, and

food. With the significant investment in the tourism product in recent years, there are many new or improved attractions and experiences on offer all around Ireland that buyers will be learning about over the two days. I have no doubt they will leave Meitheal 2025 with many new additions to itineraries and countless reasons to sell Ireland to their clients."

Prior to Meitheal, international buyers have

been experiencing first-hand the tourism product of Ireland. Tourism experiences from across Ireland's Ancient East, Ireland's Hidden Heartlands, the Wild Atlantic Way, and Dublin were included on bespoke itineraries designed by Fáilte Ireland with the objective of showcasing the best of the Irish tourism offering and highlighting the unique holiday experience that awaits visitors to Ireland.



Pictured at the opening of Meitheal 2025 were Mary Houlihan, Fáilte Ireland, with Coleen Taylor and Emer O'Connell, Wicklow Gaol. Pic: Don MacMonagle.



WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

Edwin Johnson seeks outline permission for the construction of a single storey dwelling measuring approximately 150sqm, the construction of an approximately 45sqm garage/workshop building, the construction of a new entrance to the site, amendments to the existing farm entrance adjacent, construction of a new wastewater treatment system and well and all ancillary site works at Ballydonnell, Avoca, Co. Wicklow. The planning application may be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy at the offices of Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Wicklow during its public opening hours and a submission or observation in relation to the application may be made to the authority in writing on payment of the prescribed fee within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the application.

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

FULL PLANNING PERMISSION Sought for:
1. Proposed Change of Use of 1 of 4 No. Existing Astro Football Pitches to 1 No. Padel Court complete with Proposed Covered All Weather Enclosure. 3 No. Astro Football Pitches retained.
2. All ancillary site works at Shoreline Leisure, Bray Swimming Pool and Sports Centre, Southern Cross Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow. A98 F585. Signed: Bray Swimming Pool Sports and Leisure Centre Ltd T/A Shoreline Leisure Bray.
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.

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Please contact: 0404-67164

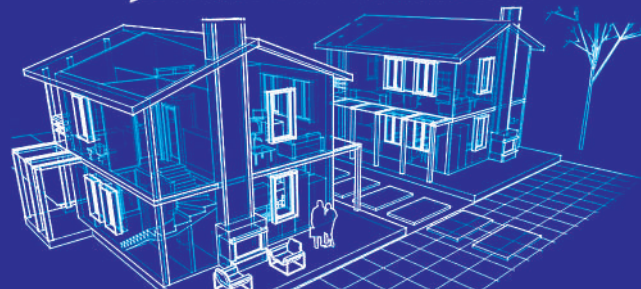
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Chambers Ireland call for measured response to US Tariffs

Speaking after the announcement of US tariffs, Ian Talbot, CEO of Chambers Ireland and Secretary General of ICC Ireland, has called for a focus on competitiveness and strategic trade engagement to mitigate any adverse economic impact.

"While the tariffs present immediate challenges, it is essential that Ireland and the EU respond with calm and resolve," said Talbot. "To navigate these challenges

effectively we should prioritise strategies that (a) enhance our competitiveness and (b) strengthen our trade engagement, rather than escalating tensions."

He emphasised that empowering businesses to sell goods and provide services in other markets remains critical to mitigating the impact of tariffs:

"Market access must now be a key focus, which means helping businesses understand the regulatory and logistical requirements they must address to succeed in trade. We need to utilise the advantages of the Single Market and our access to the UK market while continuing to diver-

sify into new international markets. Investment will be essential to ensure that businesses have the support to enter and expand in other markets.

With the right approach, this challenge can become a catalyst for progress. Both the Capital Markets Union and the Banking Union should be

progressed to improve access to finance for small businesses, support the green and digital transitions and strengthen our economic resilience. A referendum should also be held on the Unified Patent Court at the earliest possible opportunity.

Action in these areas will galvanise our com-

petitiveness and safeguard our long-term economic stability."

Talbot continued: "There are likely to be significantly different sectoral challenges arising from US policies and potential responses over the next few weeks. Government must closely monitor the impacts, par-

ticularly on SMEs, and consider measures to support viable businesses as they re-engineer their business models.

Finally, Government must pursue an urgent, relentless focus on the delivery of vital infrastructure. Delivering on what we can control has never been more vital."

BMW support Women's Golf in Ireland

Women's Golf continues to grow strongly in Ireland, especially in Wicklow, Kildare, Meath and Dublin. The growth in the East is reflected in the return of entrance levies - which had disappeared during and after Covid.

by Martin McCarthy

Ireland is helping to grow women's golf with Dun Laoghaire Golf Club having hosted the Curtis Cup (amateurs) in 2016, thanks to substantial support from Bray Golf Club

and Powerscourt Golf Club. Our hero, Leona Maguire starred in that event and remains one of the world's best female players.

Now, BMW Group

Ireland have announced a continued partnership with the KPMG Women's Irish Open. The company has signed a new two-year agreement as 'Official Car Partner' and

Premium Sponsor and builds on its 2024 inaugural partnership with Tournament partners, Forefront Sports.

The 2025 KPMG Women's Irish Open will

take place again from 3 to 6 July at Carton House, a Fairmont Hotel and Resort in Maynooth, Co. Kildare. This year's event boasts an increased prize fund of €450,000, promising to be the most competitive tournament yet with some of the best players in the world participating. This year's event will feature some of the top names in women's golf, including Leona Maguire, Georgia Hall, Annabel Dimmock, Lottie Woad, Madelene Sagström, and 2026 Solheim Cup captain, Anna Nordqvist - arguably the strongest field assembled across the Ladies European Tour this year.

To celebrate this announcement BMW Group Ireland is offering a unique opportunity for

Golf fans to play with Leona Maguire in the Pro-Am Competition on Wednesday 2 July. The prize includes a chance for a team of three (female or male) to play with Leona, plus an overnight stay and dinner at the Pro-Am reception at Carton House. Participants can find out more and enter at www.Discoverbmw.ie. Helen Westby, Managing Director of BMW Group Ireland, commented on the partnership: "Golf is at the heart of the BMW brand where Women's Golf is in a very exciting place. This partnership is a true reflection of BMW Group Ireland's drive to raise the profile of Women's Golf in Ireland and support Women's sport, we want to inspire the next generation of female golfers."



CLASSIFIEDS

Gospel: Matthew 5:38-42

You have heard that it was said: An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. But I tell you this: do not oppose evil with evil; if someone slaps you on your right cheek, turn and offer the other. If someone sues you in court for your shirt, give him your coat as well. If someone forces you to go one mile, go two miles with him. Give when asked, and do not turn your back on anyone who wants to borrow from you.

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. S.M.

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