



HERBERT ROAD
Page 7



FILM TARIFFS
Page 9



TRADE BRIEFING
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 13th May 2025 First Floor, The Boulevard, Quinsborough Road, Bray. A98 R6D7. Tel: 01 - 2869111 E-mail: wicklowed@localtimes.ie www.wicklowtimes.net

A JOB WELL DONE!

Wicklow County Council announced last Wednesday that it had successfully purchased a 21-acre beachfront parcel of land at Magheramore. The acquisition is being hailed as a victory for public access and an important step in protecting an environmentally sensitive and ecologically significant area.

This land, which offers panoramic views of the beach and the Irish Sea, was previously owned by the Columbian order of sisters before being sold multiple times.

Long celebrated for its natural beauty, clear waters and unspoiled surroundings, Magheramore Beach is a popular destination for residents and visitors alike. Magheramore Beach has also been featured in

numerous film and TV productions making it an integral part of the Wicklow coastline.

Wicklow County Council had previously attempted to secure public ownership of the land for beach access. They were unsuccessful bidders at the initial auction in 2021 and again at the auction held in March 2025. However, after the successful bidder decided not to proceed with the sale, the

Council was given the opportunity to intervene and complete the purchase of this important coastal amenity.

The acquisition of the land at Magheramore will guarantee continued access to the beloved beach. Furthermore, it is a step towards the County Development Plan objectives to protect the Special Area of Conservation and the National Heritage Area. Sinn Féin TD John



An Taoiseach Micheál Martin officially opening the Arklow Wastewater Treatment Plant on Friday, with Cllr Melanie Corrigan, Leas Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Minister for Local Government James Browne and Irish Water CEO Niall Gleeson. See page 6.

MARCH TO SAVE HERBERT ROAD

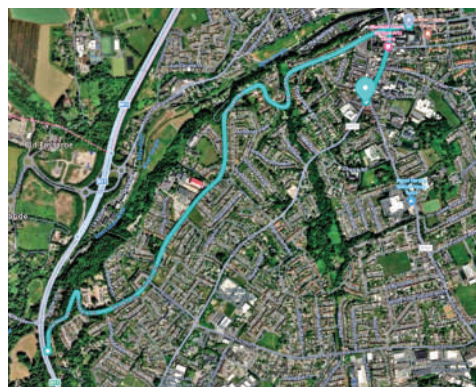
Tuesday May 13th at 17:00

Join your community on protecting access to Bray. Everyone is invited to this family friendly event.

Gather by Deerpark Motors N11 (A98 C1F2)

We will walk the entire length of Herbert Road to Bray Council Meeting. The march will pass; Deerpark Motors, Ashton Wood, Thornbrook, Richmond Park, Pemberton, Rectory Slopes, Kilbride Lane, Ardmore Wood, Kilarney Lane, Millers Wood, Kilarney Glen, Glenwood and King Edward estates, as well as Ardmore Studios, Holy Redeemer Church. We have invited Tániste Simon Harris and Wicklow CC Cathaoirleach, Paul O'Brien to attend and hear our concerns.

Consider road traffic; we will move off the road at points to cause minimal disruption.



Total walking time approx. 1 hour
Total distance approx. 3.9km

Brady said "I very warmly welcome the announcement that Wicklow County Council has successfully acquired the 21-acre site overlooking Magheramore Beach. This is a landmark moment for the people of Wicklow and for all who value access to our county's outstanding natural heritage. For many years, I have consistently called on the Council to secure this site and protect long-term access to what is undoubtedly one of the most beautiful and unspoiled beaches in the country. Magheramore has long been a much-loved amenity, attracting both locals and visitors, families and individuals, drawn to its clear waters, scenic beauty, and peaceful setting.

"That's why I was deeply disappointed when the Council missed out on previous

opportunities to purchase the site - first in 2021, and again earlier this year when it was sold at auction for over the guide price. I voiced my concerns at the time about the growing uncertainty around public access to the beach, particularly with the presence of gated entrances and the potential for private development.

"However, I want to commend Wicklow County Council for their persistence, their foresight, and their determination in ensuring that this time, they succeeded in securing the site for the public. The fact that the Council remained engaged and ready to act when the successful bidder ultimately did not proceed speaks volumes about their commitment to this issue and to the people of Wicklow.

"This is not just a victory for public access, it is a hugely important step in protecting an environmentally sensitive and ecologically significant area.

Continued on page 3

Kathleen Funchion MEP

Standing up for Ireland South in Europe



22 Upper Patrick Street,
Kilkenny R95 RF70

kathleen.funchion@europarl.europa.eu

0873281568

THE LEFT

Roundwood Historical Society

Roundwood Parish Hall, Tuesday 20th of May at 8.00 pm, Talk by Rob Goodbody, on the 'Stone Bridges of County Wicklow'. Local historian, Rob Goodbody is a founder member of the Industrial Heritage Association of Ireland, and has lectured widely and written many books and papers on antiquarian topics. His classic book, *Irish Stone Bridges - history and heritage* (Irish Academic Press 1991), covers the period from AD 1000 to 1830. In this illustrated talk, Rob will trace the history of the bridges of Co. Wicklow. While we drive over these bridges almost daily, we often don't notice them. Our surviving, Wicklow stone bridges, include some of high architectural quality and others very simple, but all with great character, contributing to the scenery of a river or railway. Admission is just €3 for members and €5 for non-members. Existing and New Members are Welcome.

Bray Cualann Historical Society

Brian White will present 'On the Buses - a history of public transport in North Wicklow' at 8 p.m. on Thursday May 15th in the Royal Hotel, Main Street, Bray. All are welcome - admission is €8 for non-members. Those wishing to join the Society can do so at this meeting.

Birdwatch Ireland

Tuesday May 13th at 18:45, BirdWatch Wicklow Branch AGM at Ashford Community & Heritage Centre (Eircode A67 DH34).

Tuesday May 13th at 19:30. A talk by Rob Gondola, Senior Science Officer with the Herpetological Society of Ireland, on amphibians and reptiles in Ireland. Ashford Community & Heritage Centre (Eircode A67 DH34). For public transport options see, TFI Journey Planner. Admission is free, a voluntary contribution to cover the cost of room hire would be appreciated.

Glendalough Community Excavations

Glendalough Community Excavations will return weekdays 23rd June-4th July 2025. If you have an interest in archaeology and Glendalough it is a fantastic experience.

"We regret we cannot offer places to those under 18 this year. Adult places (subject to availability) are available from fixed blocks of two or three days. No prior knowledge of excavation is required and we endeavour to accommodate people of all abilities. For information and details of application please email glendaloughheritageforum@gmail.com.

Supported by: UCD School of Archaeology, The Heritage Council, Wicklow County Council, Glendalough Heritage Forum, Wicklow Mountains National Park, OPW - Office of Public Works, Glendalough Visitor Centre, Wicklow Community Archaeology, UCD College of Social Sciences and Law, University College Dublin, National Monuments Service - Archaeology, National Museum of Ireland, Discovery Programme.

Fine Gael select new councillor



Last Tuesday night a selection convention was held by Fine Gael to fill the seat that Aoife Flynn Kennedy had vacated in Bray's East Ward. There were two contestants, Ned Whelan and Rebecca Molloy. Mr Whelan secured the seat by winning 21 votes to Rebecca's 9 votes. Pictured are Dermot McDermott Jnr (proposer), Matthew Carter (second), Laura Kiselova (PRO), Finn Moffat, and Ned Whelan.

Join Purple House's 2025 Cycle Challenge From Santander to Santiago. 4th - 10th July

Purple House Cancer Support has announced the 2025 Purple House Cycle Challenge, a unique opportunity for cycling enthusiasts to embark on an unforgettable journey while supporting families affected by cancer. This year's challenge will take place from July 4th to July 10th, 2025, covering the breathtaking route from Costa Verde, Santander to Santiago de Compostela in Spain.

All funds raised will provide vital support for families living with cancer. Families like Katie Boylan's. Katie was diagnosed with colon cancer at just 35 years old.

"I still remember the first time I rang the Purple House; I was crying so much I couldn't get the words out."

At times, Katie was too ill to come to Purple House. When initial chemotherapy did not work, she switched to a more aggressive weekly

chemo combined with radiotherapy every day for 6 weeks.

Her cancer spread to her liver and Katie learned it was stage 4. Thankfully, treatment and a surgery removed her cancer.

"I am also so grateful to everyone in Purple House for everything they did for me during the difficult time. If anyone is diagnosed with cancer, I would encourage them to call in and meet with the team as they really will support you in any way they can."

During these incredibly tough times, support from Purple House was always in the background for Katie when she needed it.

"I found it helped as a distraction from any ongoing health anxiety I've had since being diagnosed."

During her treatment, Katie accessed reflexology, acupuncture, counselling, weekly relaxation classes and creative writing class at Purple House.

None of which would have been possible without fundraising events like the Purple House cycle.

Natasha Quinn from Purple House said: "The Annual Purple House Cycle is a much-anticipated fundraising event in the Purple House calendar. It is the opportunity to take on the adven-

ture of a lifetime while raising vital funds for our cancer support services. Fundraisers like this are vital to our work and to ensure that nobody faces cancer alone."

Event Highlights

- Day 1 (July 4th): Arrival in the charming town of Santillana del Mar.
- Day 2 (July 5th): Scenic ride to Cangas de Onis (110km), with an optional climb to the iconic Lagos de Covadonga.
- Day 3 (July 6th): Coastal journey to Gijon (90km), featuring breathtaking views from Mirador del Fitu.
- Day 4 (July 7th): Explore historic towns like Aviles en route to Navia (124km).
- Day 5 (July 8th): Cycle inland to Lugo (125km) and experience the ancient Roman walls.
- Day 6 (July 9th): Conclude your journey with a ride to Santiago (110km), crossing the Camino trail and finishing at the iconic cathedral.
- Day 7 (July 10th): Depart from Santiago, enriched by unforgettable memories.

What's Included: Participants will enjoy six nights of accommodation in 3- and 4-star hotels, all meals, support from experienced cycling guides, snacks, and a fully equipped support vehicle. All bike transfers, set airport transfers,

and meticulously researched routes are included.

Registration: Register now at purplehouse.ie or call Natasha Quinn on 01-2866966. Places are limited, so early booking is advised.

Join the Journey: Cycling enthusiasts, adventurers, and supporters of this vital cause are encouraged to join the

2025 Purple House Cycle Challenge. Not only will you experience the adventure of a lifetime, but you'll also make a lasting impact on families in need of support. For more information, please contact: Natasha Quinn Purple House Cancer Support Centre Phone: 01-2866966 Email: info@purplehouse.ie



Katie Boylan and her dad, Paddy.

Benville Robinson LLP SOLICITORS

- Property
- Probate and Assisted Decision Making
- Commercial Litigation
- Medical Negligence
- Planning and Environmental
- General Litigation

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

Eilish Bradshaw
B.A., L.L.B., L.L.M.

Clare-Ann Temple L.L.B.
Ciarra O'Sullivan B.B.L.S., (Euro)

Hannah Stockwell-Quinn
B.C.L., L.L.M.

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

Seonadh Twomey
B.A., M.C.L., L.L.M.

24A Florence Road, Bray | Main Street, Newtownmountkennedy.
T: 01 276 1330 E: info@benvillierobinson.ie
www.benvillierobinson.ie

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

WICKLOW
LOCAL Times

is published by Wicklow Times,
First Floor, The Boulevard, Quinsborough Road, Bray. A98 R6D7. Tel: 01-2869111

Shay Fitzmaurice, Managing Editor - shay@localtimes.ie

Ian Colgan, News Editor - ian@localtimes.ie

Sales / General enquiries - info@localtimes.ie

A JOB WELL DONE!

Continued from page 1

"The land overlooking Magheramore Beach forms part of a wider Special Area of Conservation and National Heritage Area. Its protection is aligned with the goals set out in the County Development Plan, and I am proud to see those ambitions now being realised in a very real and tangible way.

"I want to sincerely thank all those within Wicklow County Council who have worked tirelessly and often behind the scenes to make this acquisition a reality. Their work deserves real recognition. This is a moment to celebrate what can be achieved when

public representatives, Council officials, and the community all stand together with a shared goal.

"I look forward to continuing to work constructively with the Council as plans are developed to manage this site in a way that protects its natural beauty and biodiversity while enhancing public access and enjoyment. Magheramore Beach is a treasure - and with this decision, we've taken a major step towards ensuring it remains so for generations to come."

Cllr Paul O'Brien, Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, stated, "On behalf of the elected members of Wicklow County Council

and particularly the six members of Wicklow Municipal District, we are delighted to welcome the purchase of the 21 acres of land at Magheramore by Wicklow County Council. This beach has long been associated with surfing and filming, serving as the backdrop for numerous TV productions including historical dramas such as Vikings and Camelot, the EastEnders spin-off series Redwater, and Amy Huberman's Finding Joy. In recent years the beach has also hosted the annual 'Strip & Dip', where brave swimmers venture into the waves to raise funds for cancer research."

Emer O'Gorman, Chief

Executive of Wicklow County Council, added, "We are delighted to confirm the signing of the agreement for the purchase of the lands at Magheramore. From the beginning, our aim has been to protect access to this beach and uphold the objectives of the County Development Plan."

Cllr Gail Dunne, Cathaoirleach of Wicklow Municipal District, noted, "This is fantastic news! The Council has secured continued access to an amenity that will be enjoyed by young people and families for generations to come. I want to take this opportunity to thank the officials for their efforts in securing the purchase of the land."

Brian Gleeson, Director of Finance for Wicklow County Council and Wicklow District Manager, commented, "Following a long and repeated bidding process, the Council was afforded the opportunity to purchase the land and we immediately acted on this to ensure a swift and efficient transfer of ownership. I also wish to acknowledge the strong community support that helped highlight the importance of preserving Magheramore Beach for public use."

Wicklow Social Democrats councillor Danny Alvey said "I am absolutely delighted that the bidder pulled out on the most recent sale for Magheramore and the Council were then given the opportunity to follow through on the bid they had made and have successfully purchased the land around the beach that was for sale.

"Magheramore beach is such a beautiful and iconic part of our Wicklow heritage and now its future has been secured. My family and I have swam there for generations and I have only recently started bringing my own young children there in the summer months. The thought of a new private owner of the road and land surrounding it being able to restrict access was



Magheramore beach.

unconscionable.

"I have been very vocal about this over the last few months, along with all our local Councillors in the Wicklow MD and TDs. The disastrous attempt by the last owner to try develop a luxury resort on this land was unthinkable. I had spoken with

our Executive team in the Council and I knew they agreed this access should remain public and were working hard behind the scenes to purchase the land. Thankfully now that work has come to fruition and I have been excited to share this news with

all the local community and people across Wicklow. So many people campaigned and made their voices heard about this, from petitions to Facebook groups and even a recent suggestion of the community doing their own crowd fundraiser."



Comfort
SINCE 1981
BED OUTLET

All the
LEADING BRANDS
at
OUTLET PRICES...

Deposit secures for 8 weeks
w: bedoutlet.ie

Tallaght Outlet
phone: 01-4940200

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

FREE PARKING

Ballybrack Outlet
phone: 01-2720788

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

FREE PARKING

Climate watchdog points to need for urgent change of course on data centres and LNG

The Climate Change Advisory Council's review of the electricity sector "confronts the inadequacy" of the recent CRU proposed decision on data centres and expresses "serious concerns" with Liquefied Natural Gas, Friends of the Earth have said.

Reacting to the report published on 29th April by the Climate Change Advisory Council, Friends of the Earth's Climate Policy Campaigner, Sean McLoughlin, said: "The message from the Council's review is

clear: we simply cannot afford to allow fossil-powered data centres and LNG to derail climate action. This report confronts the clear inadequacy of recent decisions on climate and energy security by both the

Government and the energy regulator.

"The review is critical of the recent CRU proposed decision on data centres noting that the CRU's contention that it cannot require emissions reductions leaves 'an open

door' for this polluting industry to ramp up its use of fossil fuels. It also recommends new data centre demand is entirely met by renewable generation given the risk of increasing pollution which will undermine

climate obligations. In light of this 'open door', the Council calls for the Government to strengthen the legal mandates of public bodies to ensure they act in accordance with climate objectives. Friends of the Earth is

calling on Government to halt the approval of new data centres until an appropriate policy regime in line with both these recommendations and with climate obligations is introduced.

"We also strongly welcome the Council's clear recommendation that the strategy of public bodies like Gas

Networks Ireland must be reformed to ensure full depreciation of fossil fuel regulatory assets by 2050 at the latest, specifically the gas distribution network in the context of a gas network transition plan."

Jerry Mac Evilly, Campaigns Director in Friends of the Earth stated: "The Government recently gave an initial greenlight to a polluting and expensive state-owned LNG terminal and has also left the door open to a dangerous commercial terminal in Kerry. However, the Advisory Council has raised their 'serious concerns' with emissions associated with a polluting LNG terminal. They

also note energy modelling which shows a significant phase out of fossil fuel use over the next 20 years which entails 'limited to no opportunity for new investments in fossil fuel systems'. We fully support the Council's position that ensuring energy security by driving renewables, demand reduction and energy efficiency is truly a 'no-regrets' approach.

"The Government must heed the repeated calls of the Council and civil society and prioritise the implementation of these recommendations to guarantee a faster and fairer transition away from fossil fuels."

To spray or not to spray



Think carefully and always consider the possibility to use pesticide alternatives

The number of pesticide exceedances in public drinking water supplies in Ireland has decreased significantly since 2017, by more than 50%. Despite these improvements, there was a small increase in the number of exceedances detected last year by Uisce Éireann's public water supply monitoring programme, with 66 exceedances detected in 2024 from over 34,000 analyses, compared to 52 exceedances in 2023.

While the overall compliance rate in County Wicklow remains very high, it is important that there are sustained efforts and vigilance by all stakeholders to protect drinking water quality.

The National Pesticides and Drinking Water Action Group (NPDWAG)

reminds users of herbicides and other pesticide products to always take account of the vulnerability of their local drinking water supplies when making decisions about possible use of pesticides and to be aware of how their actions could impact their community's drinking water.

Currently, there are several catchment areas prioritised for action, where Uisce Éireann has detected recurring pesticide exceedances from our monitoring programmes. These include Hacketstown, Co. Carlow, Greenmount, Co. Louth and Foynes Shannon Estuary, Co Limerick. Members of the NPDWAG and local catchment-based focus groups, established to coordinate targeted actions at a local level, are prioritising these areas for further work in 2025. Similar targeted action in recent years in areas such as Belturbet, Co. Cavan and Newport, Co. Mayo has been a success in eliminating pesticide exceedances in those water supplies.

Dr. Pat O'Sullivan,



Uisce Éireann's Drinking Water Compliance Senior Manager, emphasises the need for collective action: "Last year, we detected pesticide exceedances 66 times in 22 public drinking water supplies. A concerning trend is the number of exceedances outside the spraying season for certain plant protection products, particularly in winter. We would like to remind users to be mindful of water sources when using pesticides as 1 drop of pesticides can be detected in a stream up to 30km away."

Dr. Aidan Moody, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) and Chair of NPDWAG, highlights the need for stakeholders to continue to work together and stresses that an inte-

grated pest management approach must be followed, in which the potential to use alternative control methods is fully considered: "We all have a part to play in protecting drinking water quality. Users of pesticides must always consider the possibilities for alternative control methods in the first instance and if the application of pesticides is considered essential, make sure that they follow best practice measures to protect water quality. This approach is a win-win for water quality and biodiversity."

Uisce Éireann and the NPDWAG are urging farmers, greenkeepers, amenity users and domestic pesticide users to carefully evaluate the necessity

of using pesticides. Pesticides should only be applied when essential and after considering alternative methods. By minimising pesticide use, we can protect water quality and help to deliver wider environmental benefits. Leaving some areas unsprayed can allow native flowering plant species to thrive, which in turn supports a variety of insects, including bees and other important pollinators.

Farmers and other landholders dealing with the challenge of rushes should note and follow the DAFM guidance on the sustainable management of rushes. This approach is based on the concepts of containment or suppression and aims to minimise the use of pesticides.



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

EPA LICENCED FACILITY • ALL TRUCKS CARRY WASTE PERMITS

Recycled:

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

Also available:

- Granite • Pebble • Sand



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



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



Tel: 01 286 8119 Mobile: 087 664 1866
www.marrakeshltd.com

Wicklow has the most eco-friendly homes in Ireland, as high BER ratings jump 34%

The latest research by Switcher revealed Wicklow has the most eco-friendly homes in Ireland. As more households take advantage of government grants and prioritise warmer, more energy-efficient homes, Switcher's study 'Ireland's Greenest Homes' analyses and ranks the counties with the most sustainable houses in Ireland.

Wicklow earned the top spot as the county with the greenest homes in the country. It boasted the best recycling numbers and solar panel installations in 2024 and ranked second best for warmest homes and EV adoption.

In 2024, the county saw a 14% jump in solar panel installations, and a 34% increase in homes with BER ratings of B2 or higher.

Wicklow, Meath, Galway, Louth, Wexford, Cork, Kildare, Dublin, Kerry, and Mayo were the top ten counties with the most sustainable homes.

Though this year's study showed a 3% drop in recycling levels and a 24% decline in newly registered electric cars in 2024, there was a surge in households retrofitting their

homes and using cleaner, renewable energy.

Since last year's study, it was found that: The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) completed 53,985 home energy upgrades in 2024, an increase of 13% from 2023; 278,713 homes had a BER rating of B2 or above in 2024 - 33% - higher than in 2023; 256,517 tonnes of mixed dry recyclables were collected, which the EPA say was a 3% drop from the previous year; 17,458 new electric cars were registered in 2024, a 24% drop from the previous year.

Sligo took the top spot for homes using renewable energy. It had the highest number of SEAI heat pumps, a significant number of SEAI solar panel energy grants in 2023, and the

second-highest number of homes using solar power. The top five counties for homes using renewable energy included Sligo, Meath, Wexford, Tipperary and Kerry.

In 2024, the SEAI completed almost 54,000 home energy upgrades, up 13% year over year. Meath had the most SEAI property upgrades per 1,000 in 2024, followed closely by the counties of Louth and Wexford. The top five counties for homes receiving SEAI grants were Meath, Louth, Wexford, Mayo, and Galway. Carlow, Tipperary, Wexford and Meath saw the biggest increases in property upgrades in 2024, growing by 40% (or 220 upgrades), 30% (or 506 upgrades), 27% (or 501 upgrades), and 26% (or 560 upgrades), respectively.

Forty years of singing



Bray Choral Society Summer Concert 2024 in Holy Redeemer Church, Bray.

This year is Bray Choral Society's 40th year of singing!! The Society was founded in 1986 as a community choir & has welcomed people from all walks of life over the years. The choir currently has almost 100 members, mainly from Bray & surrounding areas, & has performed a wide range of works by both classical & modern composers. The Society is fortunate to still have three actively participating original founding members: Frank Kelly (musical director), Ann Murdiffe & Philippa Bridge.

Ann shares her memoir here:

I had reached the stage that young parents often arrive at, when they want to reconnect with themselves as adults. Having seen an advertisement for a choir in the Bray people under the Adult Education banner, I went to St. Killian's Community School to meet a Mr. Frank Kelly. This young enthusiastic music teacher wanted to set up a community choir & put on a performance of Handel's Messiah in December 1987. I had sung in choirs since I was 7 years old, so I thought this would be a nice night out where I could meet new people & sing some serious music.

I went along and met Frank & about 25 other people. We did a little singing, Frank spoke about the aims of the choir & Bray Choral Society came into being. After that first rehearsal I went every Tuesday night & I absolutely loved it. Soon, family & friends discovered that I was unavailable on Tuesday nights for anything outside of choir practice!

On a couple of occasions we sang after mass in Holy Redeemer & also in Christ Church Bray to advertise ourselves & look for new members. We practised Messiah every Tuesday until we were note perfect! Eventually the big night came & 33 members sang Handel's Messiah in St. Fergal's Church, Bray, in December 1987. After that we went from strength to strength. We sang in the NCH in 1992 - a marvellous achievement for such a young choir - & have been back there on many occasions.

We entered competitions & won quite a few. We travelled to Cork, Sligo, New Ross, Salzburg, Vienna, Brussels, to name but a few. It was very enjoyable & we had great fun.

The joy of singing together, learning new repertoire & performing for audiences is a rewarding aspect of choir membership. Although we sing a lot of classical choral music, we still enjoy a good knees up & sing song when we go out - so it's not all hard work. Over the years we have become one big family & although people have come & gone, we do keep in contact with one another. I have developed close bonds through shared experiences, rehearsals & performances & have made a lot of very true friends - I am indebted to them for their friendships.

The common denominator in all of this is our Musical Director, Frank Kelly, who is still our guiding light. His forward thinking & musical direction has always been the driving force. BCS has served the people of Bray as a source of cultural heritage, preserving musical traditions & passing them on to new generations, & underscores the significance of these long term commitments to music & the community.

To celebrate BCS's special year, we will be presenting 2 Gala Concerts this May: Sat 24th May in St. Andrew's Church, Westland Row, Dublin at 8 pm and Sun 25th May in Holy Redeemer Church, Main Street, Bray at 7.30 pm.



Choir rehearsal night - the early 1990's.



Ready to sing in Christ Church, Bray - c. 1990.



Frank Kelly conducting Bray Choral Society.

Celebrating its 40th season, Bray Choral Society presents

The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace

by Karl Jenkins. Musical Director Frank Kelly

The Creation Song of the Choir of Light
by Howard Goodall, commissioned by Bray Choral Society
plus popular movements from other choral favourites

Sunday May 25th
7:30pm

The Degani Sinfonia led by Alan Smale, with
The Con Tempo Quartet
Soloists: Jade Phoenix, Meté O'Reilly,
Anna-Helena MacLachlan
and Ben Russell

Holy Redeemer Church
Main Street, Bray

Tickets: €25
on Eventbrite or from choir members

Landmark Arklow Wastewater Treatment Plant officially opened

An Taoiseach Micheal Martin and the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, James Browne, have officially opened the new €139 million Arklow Wastewater Treatment Plant which has ended raw sewage discharge into the Avoca River and supports housing and commercial development opportunities.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) had identified Arklow as an area where untreated wastewater was released into the river, a practice that is no longer acceptable. This was one of 50 locations nationwide where raw sewage was being discharged into rivers, lakes and the sea

when Uisce Éireann was established in 2013. Since then, the utility has successfully eliminated 85% of these raw sewage discharges, with projects completed or underway at 41 of the 50 locations and plans to address the remaining nine locations.

The provision of a wastewater treatment

plant for Arklow had been subject to planning and legal delays since the 1990s. However, construction finally got underway in 2021, and Uisce Éireann has completed the works six months ahead of schedule and within budget.

Speaking at the opening event, An Taoiseach

Micheal Martin commended the Arklow plant: "The Government recognises the vital role of strategic infrastructure investment in meeting the country's demand for housing while also protecting and enhancing the environment. That's why we are committed to working with Uisce Éireann to bring forward essential projects like this plant in Arklow, which is currently capable of supporting a population of 24,000 but holds the potential to expand to 36,000."

The Arklow Wastewater Treatment Plant has been conferred with the Architectural Association of Ireland's highest honour, the Downes Medal, for what the AAI describes as 'outstanding architectural merit'.

Minister Browne praised the vision behind the plant, stating: "this facility has provided the community with an architecturally significant building that is garnering attention at home and abroad. It is protecting the river from raw sewage pollution, transforming it into an amenity for the community while also ensuring new homes can be built and new businesses can be set up allowing the town to prosper."

Uisce Éireann's CEO, Niall Gleeson welcomed Taoiseach Martin and Minister Browne to the plant. Pointing to the success of the Arklow Wastewater Treatment

Plant he said: "This project demonstrates our ability, in partnership with industry leaders such as Ward and Burke Construction, to deliver world-class infrastructure on time and within budget. It shows that Uisce Éireann can deliver solutions that support communities and align with the Government's housing targets. Uisce Éireann shares Government ambitions for new housing and is committed to doing its part through investment in strategic infrastructure developments."



Arklow Wastewater Treatment Plant.



Taoiseach Michael Martin meeting with local schoolchildren at the opening of the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

multimetals

Authorised Treatment Facility

Ferrous and Non-Ferrous Metals
Environmental Waste Solutions

recycling ltd.

ATTENTION COMMUNITY GROUPS

We collect your waste metal for free and pay you immediately

- Friendly, efficient service
- Responsible Work Culture
- Substantial Ferrous and Non-Ferrous Recycling Activities
- Providing Local Employment

Tel:

0404 64 934

WE ACCEPT ALL TYPES OF FERROUS AND NON-FERROUS PRODUCTS FROM:

- Resident Associations • Farmers
- Mechanical & Engineering Businesses
- Demolition • Factory Clearouts



12 Cyd. Builder



14 Cyd. Industrial



35 Cyd. Roll-On




TURN YOUR WASTE METAL INTO €€€€€

IMMEDIATE PAYMENT

The Murrough, Wicklow Town. Email: office@multimetals.ie

www.multimetals.ie

Maintenance to begin on Arklow Bank Wind Farm

GE Vernova, the owner and operator of the project, will begin maintenance on The Arklow Bank Offshore Wind Farm in the coming weeks. The maintenance activities are expected to take approximately six weeks, depending on weather and other factors.

In parallel, GE Vernova has filed proposals with the appropriate local authorities to decommission the wind farm, which has reached the end of its operating life. Anne-Marie Coyle, Asset Manager, Arklow Bank Wind Farm, GE Vernova Wind said, "We are carrying out maintenance activities the Arklow Bank Wind Farm required at this stage of the project. Separately, we are also taking steps to decommission the Arklow Bank Wind Farm now that it has reached the end of its operating life. We will work with the relevant officials to complete the decommissioning process in a timely and responsible manner."

The Arklow Bank wind farm was developed during the 1990s as an offshore wind demonstrator project and constructed during 2003-4.

The project is located on the long, narrow Arklow Bank which is 10km offshore and consists of seven wind turbines (each rated at 3.6MW totaling 25.2MW) which are interconnected by sub-sea cables.

The commissioning of this pioneering wind farm was celebrated with an opening ceremony in May 2005 that was attended by hundreds of people from the local community in addition to national and international interested parties.

The project has been serviced and managed by a dedicated local team, with technical support from GE Vernova's engineering group. A service and warehousing base was established in Arklow and key members of the team who started there back in 2003 are still working on the project today, helping to manage the transition towards decommissioning.

The wind turbines on the Arklow Bank have generated 1.29GWh of renewable energy during the operational life of the project. This equates

to the equivalent of 16,000 Irish homes per year powered by renewable energy generated thanks to the wind in the Irish Sea. The work by our local team has resulted in five direct and an estimated 20 indirect jobs over the life of the project. The project has also delivered meaningful economic development benefits with the company's estimated regional spend on small components, services and support activity being well over €1 million per year.

The GE Vernova team has begun engaging with the Maritime Area Regulatory Authority ('MARA') and will work closely with An Bord Pleanála (ABP) to agree the details of the decommissioning and removal works. Due to the typically harsh wind and wave regime during winter in the Irish Sea, GE Vernova aims to carry out these works during a spring or summer campaign.

€1.45m spend on Herbert Road closure plan condemned amid widespread local outrage

Sinn Féin TD John Brady, has hit out at the revelation that €1.45 million has been spent this year alone on the proposed N11/M11 bus priority interim scheme, which includes the deeply flawed and widely opposed plan to close Herbert Road in Bray.

Deputy Brady secured a debate in the Dail to raise serious concerns about the proposal and was given the €1.45 million figure by the Minister of State in the Department of Transport, Sean Canney, during the exchange. He described the decision to proceed with such a level of spending as 'completely illogical and disconnected from the needs and wishes of local people', and expressed alarm at the scale of public funding being allocated to a scheme overwhelmingly

rejected by the community and local representatives.

"The fact that €1.45 million has been spent this year on a proposal that has no community backing and lacks a credible rationale is completely unacceptable," said Deputy Brady.

"This figure doesn't just highlight poor judgment it shows a brazen disregard for public opinion and fiscal responsibility. The Herbert Road proposal has faced consistent local and vocal opposition from local residents, council-

lors, and businesses. Thousands of submissions have been made objecting to this illogical and nonsensical proposal - yet those voices have not been listened to. This latest financial revelation confirms the fears that vast public resources are being poured into a project that should never have been pursued in the first place.

"I brought the legitimate concerns of those residents and business owners into the Dail and expressed their serious concerns about the pro-

posal to close the Herbert Road and the fact that they have been ignored. I called on the Minister to agree to meet a delegation of those who will be directly impacted by this ludicrous proposal. I am now awaiting a reply from the Minister and will continue to keep the pressure on to ensure that he agrees to that meeting, listens to the people affected, and stops this crazy proposal in its tracks.

"This money could and should have been spent on real transport solutions that reflect the needs of

the people of Wicklow - improved infrastructure that enhances, not damages, our community. The traffic throughout Bray and on the N11 is often at gridlock, and with funding for major N11 upgrades pulled by the previous Minister for Transport, Eamon Ryan, this measure will do nothing to alleviate the problem."

Deputy Brady con-



John Brady TD at the Herbert Rd and N11 junction.

firmed he will continue to pursue the matter in the Dail and hold both TII and the Minister for Transport to account for what he has described as

an 'alarming and questionable expenditure of taxpayer money'.

"The people of Wicklow deserve transparency, accountability,

and most of all, common-sense decision-making. I will continue to oppose this illogical and damaging project every step of the way."

'Who is able to ram through Herbert Road closure against the people?'

March planned for Tuesday 13th May

Local Aontú representative Ciarán Hogan has organised a protest march for this Tuesday 13th May along the length of Herbert Road to the Bray Municipal District Council meeting. The march is in protest against the proposed Herbert Road junction closure in accordance with the N11 bus corridor scheme. The march will start at 17:00 by DeerPark Motors on Dargle Lane, and will be approximately 3km to the council meeting at Bray Town Hall above McDonalds.

It may however be futile as the bus corridor plan seems to be going ahead despite the unanimous objection from both Bray MD council, and the full Wicklow County Council. "Wicklow TDs John Brady and Tánaiste Simon Harris has spoken out against the plan, but still it seems to be going ahead. So who is it that is pushing this plan through against full public opinion?" said Mr Hogan.

Speaking to *Wicklow Times* Mr Hogan said "It

is baffling that the elected representatives of the people seem to be swept aside when unelected bureaucrats in NTA and other government offices decide on a plan. It mocks the principles of democracy and will of the people."

Aontú Leader Peadar Toibin mentioned that he will be attending the protest to support his Wicklow cumann, and again call out "idiotic and top-down planning that is a signature move of this government"

He said on the matter

"Time and time again this Government are doing things completely against the will of the people. Aontú are a grassroots party of the people on the ground who listen to their communities. I will be proud to join this march and to support the people of Bray and wider Wicklow who are not being listened to."

The N11 bus corridor plan seeks to place a dedicated bus lane on both Northbound and Southbound sides of the N11, which will mean

many of the smaller access roads will have to be shut completely. Closing of the Herbert road N11 exit will also put additional strain on the four other roads leading out of Bray; Upper Dargle, Southern Cross roundabout, Greystones Road, and Dublin Road. It's feared that the Herbert Road will be a cul-de-sac as far as Kilbride lane, which will massively affect commute times and property values there.

"There are very few if any benefits to Bray because of this closure. The bus lane will not have any stops for Bray and the extra pressure it puts on the other roads will add to an already dire situation for everyone travelling in or out of Bray.

"Why would anyone living in Bray want this? The ongoing campaign to stop this closure has taken hold of Bray with full community support and many residents associations organising protests and action against it. Now we need to know if people power has any affect. Can democracy or bureaucracy win out in modern Ireland?" concluded Mr.Hogan



Total walking time approx. 1 hour
Total distance approx. 3.9km

Gather by Deerpark Motors (A98 CIF2). The march will be along the entire length of Herbert Road to Bray Town Hall where the Bray Municipal District meeting is taking place. The march will pass Ashton Wood, Thornbrook, Richmond Park, Pemberton, Rectory Slopes, Kilbride Lane, Millers Wood, Killarney Glen, Glenwood and King Edward estates, as well as Ardmore Studios and the Holy Redeemer Church. March organisers say they aim to cause "minimal disruption" to road users.

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**



TICKETS ON SALE NOW



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



GREYSTONES
MUNICIPAL
DISTRICT
in association with

WICKLOW
Times
WE DELIVER!



Wicklow St. Patrick's Day Committee honoured at Cathaoirleach's reception

Wicklow Municipal District hosted a Cathaoirleach's Reception on Monday, 28th April, to honour the Wicklow St. Patrick's Day Committee, who organised the parade and festivities within just six weeks.



Mark Hogan, Anthony Hill, Carol Byrne and Arthur Williams of the Wicklow St. Patrick's Day Committee. Pic: Georgina Franey.

With the exception of Arthur Williams, all committee members were new recruits who came together to ensure that the County Town held a successful parade.

The members expressed their gratitude to the committee, which includes Carol Byrne, Mark Hogan, Anthony Hill, and Arthur Williams.

Brian Gleeson, the Wicklow Municipal District Manager, acknowledged the short timeframe and the challenges faced by the newly formed committee. He stated, "This committee was instrumental in ensuring that the parade continued in Wicklow Town, with a record number of participants. Your organisational skills and resilience are a testament to each of you."

Leas Cathaoirleach of Wicklow Municipal



Wicklow Municipal District Leas-Cathaoirleach, Graham Richmond and Carol Byrne, Chairperson of the Wicklow St. Patrick's Day Committee. Pic: Georgina Franey.

District Cllr. Graham Richmond, expressed his delight in presenting awards to the committee members, adding that it was a fantastic and fun parade. He praised

the foresight and commitment of District Administrator Georgina Franey, stating, "Each and every one of you should be proud of your achievements. I hope this

encourages more volunteers to join the committee. You are a group full of community spirit, which is evident in how well you interact, and we commend you for this."

Wicklow Town Team welcomes new volunteers

Wicklow Town Team is celebrating a highly successful Open Day held on Saturday, 3rd May, at the Assembly Hall in Wicklow Town. The event, aimed at providing information about the Town Team's work and recruiting new members, saw a fantastic turnout with over 50 people from the local community signing up to get involved.

Many of the new recruits expressed interest in joining the various working groups that drive the Town Team's initiatives. These groups focus on key areas such as Public Realm & Heritage,

Arts & Culture, Tourism & Hospitality, Website & Social Media, Environment / Sustainable Energy, and the East Coast Greenway.

The Wicklow Town Team is a co-ordinating body of local volunteers representing active stakeholders, community groups, the voluntary sector, and business organisations. They work collaboratively with the local Municipal Council with the shared mission of making Wicklow Town a better place to Live, Work, Shop, and Play. To date, the team has successfully secured over €1 million in funding for projects that have significantly enhanced the town.

Notable achievements of the Wicklow Town Team include the Wicklow Connectivity Project (encompassing the Town Murals, Mini Mural & Golly Trail), the popular Heritage Trail, the backlighting of historic and civic buildings, and the development of the Wicklow Town Website.

Current exciting pro-



Pascal Burke Chair and Myra Porter Vice Chair of Wicklow Town Team with some of the members of the local community who attended the Open Day on Saturday 3rd May.

jects underway include the East Coast Greenway, a Pump Bike Track on the Murrough, a new Pilgrim Walk to Glendalough, and plans to enhance the visual appeal and accessibility of the Black Castle area.

These impactful projects are made possible through the dedication of Wicklow Town Team members who work closely with the local Municipal Council and Wicklow County Council to secure funding for initiatives focused on improving the town's environment, promoting tourism, the arts, sport-ing/recreational develop-

ment, community development, and climate action and sustainable energy.

The Wicklow Town Team is actively seeking new volunteer members for their working groups and encourages anyone with a passion for their community to get involved.

"We were absolutely delighted with the response to our Open Day," said Pascal Burke, Chair of the Wicklow Town Team.

"To have over 50 people sign up to contribute their time and skills is truly inspiring. It clearly

demonstrates the strong community spirit that exists in Wicklow Town and the desire of people to actively shape its future. We are excited to welcome these new members and look forward to the fresh perspectives and energy they will bring to our working groups."

A meeting will be scheduled for the week commencing 19th May with the date and time to be confirmed with all those who expressed interest, along with current steering group members. This meeting will finalise the formation of the new working groups.



Pascal Burke and Cllr Graham Richmond with some volunteer members of the Environment Sustainable Energy Team at the Open Day in Wicklow Town Assembly Hall.

'Government must act to safeguard Wicklow's film industry amid US tariff threat'

Sinn Féin TD John Brady has called on the Irish Government - and particularly Tánaiste and local TD Simon Harris - to urgently intervene and provide clarity on the future of the Greystones Media Campus.

This follows recent statements by U.S. President Donald Trump proposing a 100% tariff on television productions made outside the United States, a development that could have serious implications for Ireland's film and television industry.

Home to two major film studios, Wicklow has been described as 'The Hollywood of Europe' and attracts many American productions which generate a lot of local employment and economic gain.

Wicklow has been the filming location of choice in recent years for major

productions by companies such as Disney and Netflix. Wicklow County Council has further incentivised filming in Wicklow by abolishing development levies for filmmakers in 2015.

Deputy Brady said "Wicklow is the beating heart of Ireland's film and television industry, with world-renowned facilities like Ardmore Studios in Bray and Ashford Studios in Ashford, our county has long been the cornerstone of Ireland's screen sector. These studios have hosted major international productions, contributing sig-

nificantly to the local and national economy.

"This announcement from Donald Trump is deeply alarming. If implemented, a 100% tariff on non-U.S. productions would undermine the viability of international investment in projects like the Greystones Media Campus and other productions. This is a potential hammer blow we simply cannot afford.

"While the proposal has not yet been implemented, even the threat of such a policy could have a chilling effect on investment in Irish-based productions,

particularly in County Wicklow, which is home to several major studios and has long been the epicentre of Ireland's screen industry.

"President Trump's comments risk creating uncertainty in an industry that contributes significantly to our local economy. Even the suggestion of such a tariff could deter production companies from committing to projects here. That's why it's essential the Irish government moves swiftly to reaffirm its support for this sector and, crucially, to ensure that the

Greystones Media Campus is not allowed to fade away.

"The development of the Greystones Media Campus was poised to build on the legacy Wicklow has, offering unprecedented opportunities for job creation and economic growth.

"In April 2022, U.S. property group Hackman Capital Partners, its studio operator affiliate, The MBS Group, and investment firm Square Mile Capital announced plans to open the Greystones Media Campus in 2024. The facility was set to be



The site of the Greystones Media Campus Greystones.

the largest in Ireland, and was to be developed as a joint venture with the Ireland Strategic Investment Fund (ISIF) and Capwell, an investment vehicle owned by the Sisk family. The €300 million project was expected to create 450 construction jobs and up to 1,500 permanent roles on its 44-acre site. However, progress has stalled, and the site remains inactive. This is deeply concerning,

especially considering the €24 million already invested by Irish taxpayers through ISIF."

Deputy Brady emphasised the need for government transparency and commitment: "Tánaiste Simon Harris, as a local TD, must break his silence on this issue. The government needs to reaffirm its support for the Greystones Media Campus and the broader Irish film and television industry. We

cannot afford to let this opportunity slip away, especially in the face of potential international trade barriers. The economic and cultural benefits of this project are too significant to ignore.

"We must get immediate government action to ensure the continuation and completion of the Greystones Media Campus, safeguarding the future of Ireland's creative industries."

Brady outlines key priorities as new PAC Chair

Speaking ahead of the first meeting of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC), newly elected Chairperson, John Brady TD, has set out his key priorities, stressing the critical role the committee plays in upholding fiscal discipline and political accountability in the management of public funds.

Deputy Brady said: "I am honoured to take on the role of Chair of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC). The PAC is a cornerstone of our parliamentary democracy, charged with the independent scrutiny of public spending and ensuring value for money for the taxpayer.

"At a time when public confidence in state institutions is under strain, the PAC must lead by example in delivering robust, fair, and transparent oversight of how public money is spent.

"My priorities in the months ahead reflect wider issues of state mismanagement and wasteful expenditure. One of the most pressing issues I intend to focus on is the ongoing

lack of transparency, spiralling costs, and increasing commercialisation surrounding the provision of accommodation for international protection applicants through IPAS centres. An entire industry has emerged around this model, with costs hitting €1 billion last year and projected to exceed €1.2 billion this year.

"Despite this, the government has shown no willingness to review the system. The PAC has a crucial role to play in scrutinising how these public contracts are awarded and whether they represent a responsible use of taxpayers' money. Another key area for examination is the continued delays and cost overruns at the National Children's Hospital.

"The Children's Hospital project, now projected to cost over €2.24 billion - more than triple its original budget of €650 million - raises serious concerns about governance and financial control. Equally, there are significant questions surrounding the performance and governance of Children's Health Ireland, which warrant thorough examination by this committee.

"We also need to look at the €6.7 million spent by the Arts Council on a failed IT system. That level of spending with no outcome demands serious scrutiny. Another issue which needs to be addressed is the issue of bogus-self employment. This is an issue that not only denies workers

their rights but also shifts an unfair financial burden onto the state. PAC must shine a light on how these practices are allowed to persist, and what it is costing the public purse.

"I am committed to leading the PAC with integrity and impartiality. Our first task will be to agree a clear and focused work plan. Under my chairmanship, this committee will carry out its work independently, constructively, and in the public interest. This is not about political point-scoring - it's about upholding the highest standards of accountability in public financial management. Every euro of public money must be spent wisely, fairly, and transparently."



John Brady TD.

Aontú discovers another scandal in healthcare

In a number of hospitals across the country there are consultants who are setting up their own private companies then redirecting some of the public patients to their private companies outside of the normal procurement procedures, The Dail heard last week.

Aontú submitted a parliamentary question that confirmed information they had received. Less than 12 months ago an internal audit found that €14.2 Million of private procedures happened outside of normal system rules.

Peadar Toibin talking outside the Dáil said "The health service in this state is in complete dysfunction; in one mid-land hospital there is a backlog of 960 biopsies which is incredible. These diagnosis delayed

means worse outcomes for the patients, some which might be fatal to some patients. We need a system so there is no conflict of interest between consultants on public pay and any private clinics there are

associated with. We need to make sure there are proper pay terms and condition so we can recruit and hold onto our healthcare staff."

Speaking locally Aontú representative Ciarán Hogan said "in Wicklow we carry the shame now of two previous health ministers who have overseen the complete collapse of the

health system here. Every week there is some scandal or failure that each should be a resigning issue. Ireland has a political tradition of failing upwards, and no accountability for mistakes and worsening outcomes. Thousands of patients lie on trolleys as there aren't hospital beds for them. Many more have to wait months for

results which could be life changing and the wait puts them in anxious limbo.

"We are losing more than half of our graduating doctors and nurses who emigrate to Australia, Canada or elsewhere because the pay and conditions here are atrocious in comparison.

"Minister for health Jennifer Carroll MacNeil

confirmed a probe is being launched by the office of the Chief internal auditor to verify how many public patients were transferred to private companies. Additionally the HSE CEO has issued instructions that all insourcing where existing staff are associated with a separate private practice must be paused. There is an effective

embargo on recruitment outside the HSE, which Deputy Toibin called for an immediate end.

"It seems that our Government has hundreds of millions of euro to spend on vanity projects, foreign aid, climate change, but can't manage to fund a decently and fairly operating national health service," concluded Mr Hogan.

Citizens Information

South Leinster Citizens Information Service/ Co. Wicklow

Please ring to find out our opening hours or log onto www.citizensinformation.ie

Bray CIC, 2 The Boulevard, Quinsboro Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow. Tel: 0818 07 6780; Email: bray@citinfo.ie

Arklow CIC, 73 Lower Main Street, Arklow, Co. Wicklow. Tel: 0818 07 6750; Email arklow@citinfo.ie

Alternatively, you can call the Citizens Information Phone Service on **0818 07 4000**, Monday to Friday, 9am-8pm or visit our website:

www.citizensinformation.ie

Frustrated Greystones residents petition for release of Cois Droichid housing scheme

Local residents in Greystones have expressed frustration at the ongoing delay in the release of the long-awaited Cois Droichid housing scheme by Wicklow County Council.

A door-to-door petition was collected from residents in the surrounding estates of Burnaby Avenue, Burnaby Court, Millbrook and Burnaby Lawns. Crucially they are seeking the urgent release of the homes to local people, who they believe must be given first priority. With the average wait for a social house now at 12-15 years, Cllr Stephen Stokes is backing their efforts to ensure that the homes are allocated efficiently to local applicants.

Cllr Stephen Stokes met with residents to receive the petition at the locked gates to Cois Droichid. He then submitted it to Wicklow County Council on their behalf. Cllr Stokes stated: "I would like to thank the residents for collating the petition. The Cois Droichid development represents not just homes, but hope for many

in our community. Every month of delay means more uncertainty for local families. We need clarity, transparency, and - most importantly - progress."

At the recent April 2025 meeting of Greystones Municipal District, Cllr Stephen Stokes pressed the matter further. He is concerned that Wicklow County Council may be going backwards on the project. At the March 2025 meeting, Councillors were advised that documentation had been submitted to the Building Control Section and that this process took 21 days to validate. The allocation of the houses was then ready to go as soon as the building control issues were sorted. At the April 2025 meeting, Councillors were advised that the Building Control Management System had been approved. However

it was then revealed that additional snagging would now take place.

Cllr Stephen Stokes has asked for a detailed list of the remaining issues, if the houses are not allocated by the May 2025 meeting of the Greystones Municipal District. Cllr Stokes added: "In all of my life I have never heard of the need for so much snagging. A year down the road and we are still talking about more snagging. I am starting to think that we are snagging the snagging."

Cllr Stephen Stokes has been vocal in his support for sustainable affordable and social housing availability across Charlesland, Delgany, Greystones, Kilcoole, Killadreenan and Newcastle. He said that the continued postponement was "deeply troubling" and a source of mounting anxiety for families



Cllr Stephen Stokes with local residents.

hoping to access much needed housing locally. Cllr Stokes noted: "There are about 4200 families on the housing list across County Wicklow. The Cois Droichid scheme in

Greystones represents almost 1% of what is needed to clear the backlog. The developer declared that it was meant to be completed in Q2 2024. Here we are still waiting in Q2 2025. I am

calling on the developer and Wicklow County Council to prioritise these homes."

The delay has sparked concern and disappointment in the local community, prompting residents

of neighbouring estates to formally petition the Council for answers and action. Cllr Stokes reaffirmed his commitment to advocating on behalf of local residents and pushing for a swift and trans-

parent resolution to the issue. Cllr Stokes concluded: "This is not just a procedural issue - it's about people's lives, security, and the future of our community. We must act decisively."

Funding announced for 55 new social homes in Wicklow

Major funding is being allocated to address the social housing needs across the country, including significant investments in Wicklow. 55 new social homes will receive funding under the announced allocation.

These homes are part of a larger initiative to build 1,325 homes across 82 projects nationwide between 2025 and 2027, with 575 homes due to be delivered this year alone.

These new homes will be delivered over the coming years, helping to tackle the housing challenges faced by local communities.

Speaking last week, the Tánaiste Simon Harris TD said: "The Government's commitment to new-build social housing is at the heart of tackling the housing issues faced by communities across the country and local communities

in Wicklow.

"We need to increase all types of housing supply and address the housing crisis from every angle. Wicklow is a key beneficiary of this ambitious plan, with 55 new homes slated for development in the coming years.

"This is a significant step in ensuring that all communities, including Wicklow, have access to safe, secure, and affordable housing.

"In addition I can confirm that €325 million is being allocated nationwide to the second-hand social housing acquisitions programme. This



Tánaiste Simon Harris.

funding will allow Wicklow County Council and other local authorities to acquire second-hand homes that can quickly be brought into social housing stock.

"This was a key priority

of mine during the General election and it is one we are now delivering on as a government. The initiative prioritises tenant-in-situ acquisitions, helping to prevent homelessness, while also supporting older persons, people with disabilities, and those transitioning from homelessness services. Every Day this government is committed to solving the Housing crisis.

"Fine Gael Ministers and I will continue to seek practical solutions to solve the housing crisis and ensure more people can afford to buy homes in the years ahead."

Progress made on bringing vacant properties back to life

New figures released show significant progress in tackling vacancy and dereliction across County Wicklow this year.

The Tánaiste Simon Harris TD has confirmed that 36 applications for the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant were received by Wicklow County Council in the first quarter of 2025. Of these, 22 applications have already been approved, with eight grants issued on completion of works. A total of €427,417 has been issued to property owners in Wicklow who have completed refurbishments and brought properties back into active use.

These applications have been made under the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant Scheme.

The Tánaiste said: "Housing is Fine Gael's number one priority in Government. I am determined to tackle housing from every angle possible and bringing vacant and derelict properties back to life is one of those ways.

"It's encouraging to see that many applications have been made in Wicklow but so much more needs to be done. Every vacant home we bring back into use helps tackle the housing challenges facing our county and makes better use of our existing infrastructure.

"I want to thank Wicklow County Council for their ongoing work to progress these applications quickly."

Nationally, over 12,400 applications have been received under the scheme to date, with over €112 million in grants already paid out to homeowners and renovators across the country.

Tánaiste Simon Harris added: "Addressing vacancy and dereliction is a key part of delivering housing in Wicklow. Through targeted support like the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant, we are not only providing new homes but also rejuvenating communities and protecting our towns and villages from decline."

The Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant, part of the Government's Housing for All strategy, provides up to €50,000 for the refurbishment of vacant properties and up to €70,000 for properties that are derelict. It is available to those who will occupy the property as their principal private residence or make it available for rent.

The Tánaiste encouraged anyone interested to contact Wicklow County Council's Vacant Homes Officer for further information.

Delgany community to benefit from facilities at former Carmelite site

Delgany Community Council has welcomed recent engagement with representatives of Lowick Homes regarding benefits for the community on the former Carmelite site in Delgany.

Both parties met recently on two occasions and are working towards a detailed agreement which will outline works to be done on the site to provide the local community with some badly needed facilities.

As per the original grant of planning permission, the former church will become a community centre.

The necessary works will be done by Lowick Homes to upgrade it to ensure that it is fully accessible, functional and energy efficient before it is handed over to the community.

Another aspect of the collaboration will see the expansion of the playground to include additional

pieces of play equipment. This will be a great facility for young families in the village.

Delgany Community Council initiated a Public Realm study in 2022 with funding provided by the Department of Rural and Community Development under the Government of Ireland's Town and Village Renewal Scheme (TVRS) 2020. The plan was shaped through a highly collaborative and inclusive process, involving residents, school children, business owners, as well as the elected members and officials of Wicklow County Council. Professional support was provided by The Paul Hogarth Company Landscape Architects and Urban

Designers. The plan was published in March 2023 and it highlights the unique opportunity for Delgany to collaborate with developers and the community to enhance and create public spaces and destinations.

The study is available at <https://delgany.online/delgany-public-realm>.

Paul Armstrong, chair of Delgany Community Council is very positive about the plans: "We are grateful to Lowick Homes for their collaboration on this exciting phase in the future of Delgany village. We look forward to seeing the plans become a reality. A Wicklow County Council audit of Community and Recreational facilities in the Greystones

Municipal District highlighted the lack of such facilities in Delgany. The audit was conducted in 2021 and showed that while Delgany had 20% of the population of the area it had just 3% of the facilities. The population of the village has increased significantly since 2021 but we still do not have a Community Centre in Delgany. We believe that the benefits to the community arising from this development will help to create a vibrant heart for our village."

WCC also recently announced works for Delgany Village's Chapel Road which will see upgraded footpaths, the addition of cycle track facilities and enhancements for vehicular traffic, which will involve the realignment and widening of Chapel Road which will also contribute to Delgany's infrastructure.

Delgany Community Council is composed of local representation from Delgany residents, Delgany Tidy Towns, and the Delgany Village businesses who work on a volunteer basis to benefit the local community, and will be organising as a formal legal entity to transition the ownership and oversight of this priceless community asset.

'Planning Framework delay preventing much-needed Wicklow house building'

Speaking in the Dail recently, Fine Gael TD Edward Timmins raised the issue of County Council building targets being impacted by the fact that the National Planning Framework has yet to be finalised.

"The national planning framework needs to be finalized," he said. "I have been raising this since I came here and, prior to that, in my time as a county councillor. Coincidentally, a first revision was published today. I hope it can be put through the Houses of the Oireachtas quickly.

"The delay so far is preventing much-needed house building because the current plan is based on outdated population figures and is preventing planning permission approvals. Recently, in Blessington, County Wicklow, planning for 335 houses, supported by Wicklow County Council, was refused by An Bord Pleanála because the town plan had not been updated. This update was not possible because the national planning framework had not been updated. Red tape stopped 335 houses in west Wicklow. This existing framework is based on the 2016 census, which is way out of date.

"In the County Wicklow development plan of 2022, on which I made 48 submissions, we had the bizarre situation where many towns had their residential zonings de-zoned at a time when we all knew there was a housing shortage. Additionally, the new framework needs to allow headroom, which was used previously in zoning guidelines to take account of the fact that many zoned lands are unlikely to be developed for a variety of reasons. It is really important that we have significant headroom in the new plan. Browsing through it today, there was no mention of headroom. I presume that percentage will follow, and I hope it will be a significant figure. The limiting of zoned land to exact population targets means that, in practice, there is not enough zoned land, thus preventing planning grants for much-needed housing. This restrictive and inflexible policy has led to much de-zoning in a time of housing shortage.

"The current targets for Wicklow are clearly way too low. For this year, they are 1,411 houses, dropping to 969 in 2028 and to 528 in 2029 and 2030. Clearly, that is not fit for purpose. From a national perspective, councils must be closely involved in the delivery of housing. Delivery must be micromanaged. These targets must be drilled down further, with monthly figures produced by all local authorities of actuals versus targets and explanations given. This is the only way to deliver large numbers of houses. The Minister must then meet the CEOs of the councils and the heads of planning quarterly. This method is exactly how a business would aim to achieve its target.

"Furthermore, I wish to make a suggestion on expired local area plans. Currently, if someone appeals planning permission that has been granted, An Bord Pleanála will refuse on the grounds that the local area plans are out of date. Will the Minister of State consider giving expired local area plans legal status or extending their lifetime to avoid such refusals until such time as they are updated? Because the



Edward Timmins TD.

challenge is the forward planning units in the county councils, the county councils will have to choose between updating local area plans or updating the county development plans. My suggestion could avoid that resource issue. In any case, the forward planning units need guidelines from the Minister. In Wicklow, some local area plans have expired and I am aware of the same issue in other counties including Kildare and Wexford. How long will this review of the local area plans in the county development plans take? Normally, this process takes nine months. Is there any way we can expedite this? The targets for each town should not be a cap as it currently operates."

Responding to Deputy Timmins, Minister of State at the Department of Health and at the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage Deputy Kieran O'Donnell said "Under Housing for All, the Government has committed to delivering 47,600 new-build social homes and 3,500 social homes through long-term leasing in the period 2022 to 2026. Our clear focus is to increase the stock of social housing through new-build projects delivered by local authorities and approved housing bodies, AHBs. The number of new-build social homes in the pipeline continues to remain strong year on year, with new construction projects getting under way regularly. The strongest national delivery of social housing since 1975 was recorded in 2023, when 11,939 new social homes were delivered by local authorities and AHBs, including 8,110 new-build homes, 1,829 acquisitions and 1,999 homes through leasing programmes. Altogether, between 2020 and 2023, some 39,185 social homes were delivered across build, acquisition and lease. The figures for 2024 are being finalised.

"On a quarterly basis, the Department publishes the social housing construction status report, which provides details of social housing developments and their location that have been completed, are under construction or are progressing through the various stages

of the design and tender processes. The most recent publication was for quarter 3 of 2024, while that for quarter 4 will be published shortly.

Recent years have witnessed significant demographic changes. The Government has acknowledged these evolving circumstances and is actively revising targets to reflect updated census information, market analysis and economic forecasting, to which the Deputy referred, in the context of the national planning framework.

"Under Housing for All, last year, the Government approved new national housing targets up to the year 2030. The aim is to deliver 303,000 homes in the period 2025 to 2030, equating to an annual average of 50,500 homes and building to 60,000 in 2030. The revised targets were informed by research and modelling by the Economic and Social Research Institute, ESRI, on population projections and long-run housing demand. The revised national housing targets will inform the revision to existing social and affordable housing targets at a local authority level.

"Following the publication of the revised national planning framework, which was brought to Cabinet this morning and approved by the Government, work will be undertaken to translate these revised national targets into specific local authority housing requirements for planning purposes and social and affordable targets will also be progressed at this stage. Once finalised, local authorities will integrate these revised targets into their respective housing strategies and development plans, ensuring they accurately reflect local needs and facilitate adequate land zoning and infrastructure planning. This process will be supported by explicit policy guidance and methodology provided by the Department to ensure consistency, transparency and effective implementation across all local authorities. The Minister, Deputy Browne, and the Minister of State, Deputy Cummins, want this done as speedily as possible. Directions will be issued to local authorities in this regard.

"Revised national level targets and local authority tenure-specific targets will be agreed in the context of the new national housing plan later in the year. It is essential that local authorities' targets align with their needs and ensure balanced regional development. The housing need and demand assessment, HNDA, and the summary of social housing assessment, SSHA, are the key tools in determining these targets. The HNDA provides evidence-based insights into housing needs across all tenures, analysing demographic trends, affordability data and housing stock pressures. This framework allows local authorities to make informed decisions about future housing requirements. Details of local authority and AHB delivery are set out in the housing delivery action plans prepared by each local authority. These plans have been published on each local authority's website."

Want to boost your IT skills & confidence?

Try our FREE IT and Business Administration training course

This course is designed to help you overcome challenges and achieve your career goals – whether this is returning to work or progressing to further education. It equips you with the IT and business admin skills, practical knowledge, and confidence to succeed!

- ◆ **Personalised Support:** Small classes ensure one-on-one help from experienced training instructors.
- ◆ **Real-World Skills:** Learn through practical projects and gain an industry-recognised QQI Level 5 qualification in Information Processing.
- ◆ **Supportive Environment:** Achieve the next step in your career in a positive, encouraging and supportive environment.

IT and Business Administration

QQI Level 5 – Information Processing – 5M2067

Through our individualised learning plans, hands-on projects, and industry-relevant training, you'll develop essential IT application skills, business principles, communication skills, and teamwork abilities. This allows you to learn and benefit from the skills you need for college and work in a fun and flexible environment with people of all ages. Make lifelong friendships and increase your confidence whilst also getting a leaving cert equivalent qualification and help getting to college or work. Small class sizes ensure lots of 1:1 support and help from training instructors, Carmel and Jackie.

Why this course is right for you

- ◆ This course is **free** and **fully funded** by the KWETB
- ◆ **Gain a Level 5 QQI qualification** in Information Processing
- ◆ **Training & qualifications** in Word Processing, Spreadsheets, Databases & PowerPoint
- ◆ **Improve your confidence** with modules in Teamwork & Communications
- ◆ **Small class sizes** and **Individual Training Plan**
- ◆ **Explore your career options** with quality work experience placements
- ◆ **Learn how to use social media platforms** as well as **Zoom** and **Microsoft Teams**
- ◆ **Learn study skills**
- ◆ **Maintain your current Social Protection payments**
- ◆ You can **start course when you are ready** at any time of the year
- ◆ **Job-seeking skills**

Who is eligible?

The course is open to a diverse range of people, aged over 16, who need extra support to help with progressing to further education or getting a job.

This includes people who have...

- ◆ Left school early and need more support for training
- ◆ Had a setback in life due to illness or injury
- ◆ Learning difficulties (inc. dyslexia, dyspraxia etc.)
- ◆ Social anxiety
- ◆ Mental health issues
- ◆ Recovered from addictions
- ◆ Physical disabilities
- ◆ Any other support need

Progression

This qualification opens doors to further education or exciting job opportunities across various industries.

Carmel Bennett
IT Training Instructor

087 192 2147
01 282 9643
carmel.bennett@nln.ie

Jackie Smith
IT Training Instructor

086 164 7954
01 282 9643
jackie.smith@nln.ie

National Learning Network, Beechwood Close, Boghall Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow, A98 DX86

www.nln.ie

Free life changing courses and supported training

QQI AWARD

BORD OIDEACHAIS AGUS OILÜNA
CHILL DARA AND CHILL MHAINTÁIN
KILDARE AND WICKLOW
EDUCATION AND TRAINING BOARD

Ready to take the next step?

Come to our **Open Day** at the Centre
Every Tuesday 10.30am to 12.30pm

"The supports are amazing!
The course helped me
develop the skills I needed
for further education and
land my current job."

Darren | Former Student

Local businesses participate in strategic trade briefing amid global uncertainty



Global trade expert Brian Murphy speaking at the LEO Wicklow Tariffs, Trade & Tactics briefing in The Grid, Greystones.

Local businesses from across County Wicklow turned out in strong numbers for the in-person morning briefing titled, 'Tariffs & Trade Tactics - What Every Business Needs to Know About Mitigating Risk'.

This event, hosted by Wicklow County Council through the Local Enterprise Office (LEO) on Friday, 2nd May, at The GRID, Charlesland, Greystones.

The event featured international trade expert Brian Murphy from Global Trade, who provided an insightful analysis of the political and economic forces driving recent changes in U.S. tariffs and their implications for Irish businesses. Attendees were particularly engaged in discussions about safeguarding profit margins, reducing risk exposure and identifying alternative export markets in response to shifting global dynamics.

Participants praised the session for its clarity and relevance, especially the real-world case studies and the interactive Q&A with Mr. Murphy, which offered practical tools for managing international trade risks and improving supply chain resilience. Mr. Murphy also highlighted some interesting business opportunities arising from the potential Tariffs also.

Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr. Paul O'Brien, commented: "The strong attendance at this event highlights the willingness among Wicklow's business community to stay ahead of global developments. We were pleased to facilitate such a valuable learning opportunity."

Emer O'Gorman, Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council, added: "It is essential for businesses to be proactive in mitigating external risks. We were delighted to welcome Brian Murphy and to support Wicklow's entrepreneurs with these forward-looking insights."

Vibeke Delahunt, Head of Enterprise at LEO Wicklow, said: "Helping businesses remain agile and competitive is central to our mission. This briefing provided attendees with real, actionable strategies they can take back into their businesses. Following the event, we are offering one to one clinics with Mr. Murphy for business owners looking to getting an insight how tariffs may impact their individual enterprises. The booking link to these free clinics is available at localenterprise.ie."

The event also offered networking opportunities over a light breakfast, encouraging connections among local business leaders and reinforcing



Anya Llewellyn and Lisa Cunningham at the LEO Wicklow Tariffs, Trade & Tactics Briefing in the Grid, Greystones.

the county's commitment to a globally aware enterprise culture.

LEO Wicklow are organising an Export Development Training Programme to assist

businesses with developing new export markets later this year. Anyone interested in participating can register their interest on www.localenterprise.ie.

Coverage of the session also featured on RTE, highlighting the regional significance of these global trade challenges and Wicklow's proactive response.



Deirdre Whelan and Melissa Carroll at the LEO Wicklow Tariffs, Trade & Tactics Briefing in the Grid, Greystones.



Cathaoirleach of Greystones Municipal District Cllr. Tom Fortune, Head of Enterprise, Local Enterprise Office Wicklow Vibeke Delahunt, Guest Speaker Brian Murphy (Global Trade), Cllr. Louise Baskin and Deputy Edward Timmins at the LEO Wicklow Tariffs, Trade & Tactics Briefing in The Grid, Greystones.



Sean Farmer, Damien Mulligan and Fiona Leonard at the LEO Wicklow Tariffs, Trade & Tactics Briefing in the Grid, Greystones.

Cancer Care at Work launched by Purple House and Core

88% of employees believe that a workplace cancer policy is important, but only 19% say their company has one, according to new research from marketing communications company Core, in partnership with Purple House Cancer Support.

The research, which gathered insights from 1,000 members of the general public, 85 employers across various sectors in Ireland, and employees who have experienced cancer in the workplace, also revealed that over seven in ten (73%) believe a cancer diagnosis negatively impacts career progression with over half (57%) of employees who have had cancer confirming this.

The research also shows that 91% of employers expressed a willingness to implement cancer support policies, yet fewer than one in five companies currently have one in place. Two thirds (67%) also said that the existence of a cancer support policy would influence their decision to work at a company.

To address this, Core and Purple House Cancer Support, the first ever

community-based cancer support centre in Ireland, have launched 'Cancer Care at Work', a framework which will enable employers and businesses to create a policy and support system for employees who receive a cancer diagnosis or are supporting a loved one undergoing treatment.

The research also identifies four key areas employees would like included in a workplace cancer policy:

1. Emotional Support: Counselling services, workplace culture pledges, and peer support groups were among the most sought-after supports and seen as highly feasible by employers

2. Physical Support: Flexible treatment accommodations, fitness & rehabilitation programmes, and nutritional support rank highly, but employees stress the need for

choice and autonomy in these supports

3. Education & Awareness: Training for people managers is one of the key supports that both employers and employees would like to have access to.

4. Financial Support: Employees highly value Private Health Insurance membership, health insurance upgrades, and financial counseling.

The research also revealed that:

- Half of adults would feel uncomfortable disclosing a diagnosis to an employer (49% of all adults with 13% not sure).

- On the upside, seven in ten feel their employers would be supportive (73%).

- Main concerns for those who had / have cancer and are working, centred around financial concerns, job security and recovery.

- 67% of Irish people say

that a set policy designed to support cancer patients would influence their decision to work there

- Only 25% of employers believe their management teams are adequately trained to handle a cancer diagnosis within the workforce, highlighting a lack of preparedness among employers which could result in a number of challenges for employees undergoing or recovering from treatment.

Nicola Gillen, Chief of Staff at Core, said: "With one in two people likely to receive a diagnosis in their lifetime, it is imperative that employers introduce policies that support employees undergoing a cancer diagnosis or treatment. This research confirms what many employees living with cancer already know - while workplaces want to help, the policies and structures simply aren't there, A



Core and Purple House Cancer Support, the first ever community-based cancer support centre in Ireland, have launched 'Cancer Care at Work', a framework which will enable employers and businesses to create a policy and support system for employees who receive a cancer diagnosis or are supporting a loved one undergoing treatment.

Cancer Care at Work Policy is not just a 'nice to have' - it is a business and human imperative. By asking employers to participate, we are breaking down any stigma associated with a cancer diagnosis and demonstrate that you can still have a fulfilling and valuable career when you have the right supports in place.

This collaboration with Purple House Cancer Support is very much a

passion project for me. I am a cancer survivor and felt truly supported by my colleagues in Core during my treatment and when I returned to work. As a result, it was important to me that we use our expertise in this area to effect change in the wider business community."

Conor O'Leary, Director of Operations at Purple House Cancer Support added: "At

Purple House, we have always been committed to providing comprehensive support to those affected by cancer. Our mission is to ensure that no one faces cancer alone, and today, we extend that mission into workplaces across the country. Cancer affects not only the individual but also their families, colleagues, and the broader community. The workplace is a significant part of this

community, and I hear this regularly in my work as a cancer counsellor in Purple House. It is crucial that we create an environment where those affected by cancer feel supported and understood. The time to act is now. Irish businesses must take meaningful steps to ensure that those diagnosed with cancer feel supported, valued, and empowered to remain in the workforce."

FREE Mind Body Medicine Course in Bray



A free 6-week Mind Body Medicine course is returning to Bray this May, offering participants a unique opportunity to explore simple yet powerful techniques for managing stress and anxiety.

Taking place every Friday from 16th May to 20th June 2025, the course runs from 9.30am to 11.30am at Villa Pacis, Bray (A98 D5Y2).

Delivered in a supportive group setting, the course introduces a range of practical tools such as breathing techniques, mindfulness, guided imagery, and gentle movement - all proven to help calm the mind and support emotional wellbeing.

One past participant shared:

"This course has shown me different meditation techniques to help with my anxiety and stress. I am definitely calmer after doing them and less fearful. I am so grateful to have had a place on this course."

Places are going fast, so early booking is strongly advised to avoid disappointment.

To find out more and book your place call Jennifer Jones on (083) 3936923.

24/7 ambulance cover for Baltinglass and Arklow

Continuous Ambulance Service to be Operational by Q3

Social Democrats TD Jennifer Whitmore, has confirmed that 24/7 ambulance coverage for both Baltinglass and Arklow will be operational by the third quarter of this year. This development addresses the previously existing 12-hour weekly gaps in both ambulance services and ensures continuous emergency medical support for the communities.

"Residents in Baltinglass and Arklow have faced significant risks due to the gaps in ambulance coverage. The National Ambulance Service's (NAS) confirmation that the 24/7 service will be operational this year is a crucial step towards ensuring the safety and well-being of our communities," Deputy Whitmore stated.

"Constituents have been coming to me over the years fearful because there has not been a full service being provided in Baltinglass and Arklow. At the moment, Baltinglass has 24-hour ambulance cover every day except Mondays when there is no cover in place between 7am and 7pm. In Arklow, this situation is mirrored, only the gap occurs on Tuesdays between 7am and 7pm," Deputy Whitmore explained.

The gaps in service stem from a decision in 2012 by the HSE to alter overtime operation requirements, moving from eight-hour to 12-hour shifts without increasing staff numbers. This left gaps in coverage, which have been exacerbated by the closure of Wexford Hospital, limiting the services it can provide. Baltinglass and Arklow have been relying on ambulance cover from other parts of the county, and indeed other parts of the country. This decision to alter shifts by the HSE was necessary in the economic environment of 2012, but the situation is different today. It is inconceivable that we would have two large towns in relying on ambulance services from other parts of the country to provide a service," Deputy Whitmore noted.

"The gaps in ambulance service were unacceptable and posed a real threat to community safety. It's great to see that the Government has finally taken action to fill these gaps," Deputy Whitmore added.

Men's Health and Wellbeing FREE 4 Week Programme



ADVICE, SKILLS & ACTIVITIES

From experienced professionals in your community



For men living in Greystones, Bray and surrounding north Wicklow areas
Places are limited so REGISTRATION is essential

Please call (01) 286 8266 or email info@bnwap.ie to book

Marking National Men's Health & Wellbeing week, with generous support from the HSE Health & Wellbeing fund, this programme is facilitated by Bray & North Wicklow Area Partnership's Social Prescribing Team



Wicklow native excels in All Ireland Scholarships Creative Writing Competition



Winner of the All Ireland Scholarships Alumni Creative Writing Competition EmerRose Kealy with competition judge and author Donal Ryan.

EmerRose Kealy from Tinahely has been selected as the overall winner of the 2025 All Ireland Scholarships Creative Writing Competition in the Prose Category for her short story *The Crown*.

She was presented with the Roger Downer Award by competition judge and renowned author Donal Ryan at a special awards ceremony in Adare Manor on Tuesday 29th of April.

Sponsored by JP McManus, the competition, now in its fifth year, is open to all members of the All-Ireland Scholarships Alumni Association. This year's competition focused on the short form written word (max 1000 words) with fiction, non-fiction, op-ed and poetry categories. A poetry category was added to the competition for the first time this year.

This year's stellar judging panel included Donal Ryan, Professor Eoin Devereux, Dr Emily Cullen and winner of the 2024 competition, Surnai Molloy. The judging process was chaired by Professor Sarah Moore Fitzgerald, Head of

Creative Writing at the University of Limerick.

EmerRose was awarded the All Ireland Scholarship in 2017 and went on to study Medicine in the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RSCI). She graduated from RCSI in May 2022 and is currently training to specialise as a GP with the Irish College of General Practitioners.

Speaking about the competition, EmerRose said: "I wanted to enter the All Ireland Scholarships Creative Writing Competition because I think it is a wonderful opportunity for All Ireland Scholarships Alumni to share ideas and showcase our varied talents and interests. I have admired the shortlisted entries in previous years and am honoured to have my piece featured as a winner in 2025."

The judges were impressed by EmerRose's winning piece, *The Crown* describing it as, "Wonderfully written and instantly engaging with an ability to conjure both poignantly and accurately the atmosphere of a hospice. An outstanding piece."

The All Ireland Scholarships, established by JP McManus in 2008, provide financial support to gifted students pursuing third-level education. Each year, 125 scholarships are awarded across the 32 counties of Ireland. Recipients receive €6,750 per annum in Ireland and £5,500 per annum in

Northern Ireland, covering the duration of their undergraduate studies. The third level educational scholarship is awarded to 125 of the highest achieving students per year, with a minimum of two students from each county.

'It has been a battle extraordinaire'

Ann Kennedy writes about her memoir launch - "an honour given by your very own, Mr. Fergus Finlay"

What a memorable memoir launch for the title, 'Unprotected'. It took place in Walters, Dun Laoghaire on the 29th April and was a warm and magnificent success. Fergus Finlay launched with great aplomb.

By Ann Kennedy

Fergus Finlay, Former CEO of Barnardo's, one time board member of the HSE and long-time columnist with the Irish Examiner is a man aware. A considerable worthy and delightful friend. We are not without strong minds on matters but this is the stuff of strong people usually intelligent and astute, with strong understanding of right from wrong.

"I have enormous respect and affection for her," he begins. This means a lot to me. He brings to everyone's attention my writing skills and urges people to read a particular essay about Mrs Archbold (without the i), "it is just wonderful prose and brings us back to some of the early revival writers. It marks Ann as anything but a miserable individual."

His sentiments were clearly spoken, both sisters struggle with pain and complexity and certainly never got needs met despite engaging with the CEO of the HSE Mr. Bernard Gloster for a year.

"The State had indeed let them down," he said, after his own personal investigation into our situation. It is clear I was not served at all well by the State and certainly there are questions on how this case was handled in finding sisters

fleeing to Greystones. Fergus humorously expressed the urgent need to 'get out of dodge'. Feelings are equally strong that change will not occur until I get home to where I belong.

Dodge was to be a resting place from the trauma of being shot at with guns in social housing back home and the HSE failing to act to secure safety for a very sick woman. Many can claim never to know of a seriously ill person left in danger and where team meetings express the social housing unsuitability. Surprisingly on file I found the social worker state in a one liner 'Ann has dementia'!

Finding this is the start of my creative drama for Fergus Finlay spoke with warmth, seriousness and candour, lifted me to the zone of Hollywood and felt that the book should be made into a film starring Angelina Jolie, followed by Merrill Streep, playing the older Ann. A fair bit of ribbing no doubt, a juxtaposition of the gravity alongside my love of life and upbeat strength in times of adversity. I had lost all sense of self, wellbeing both physically and psychologically. I became distraught and hopeless. My health deteriorated.

It is clear to all so much damage has been done in Dodge, I do need

to 'go home to die'. It is where I want to be. Now 72yrs of age, I mourn the loss of fifteen years. It has been a battle extraordinaire.

It is clear that caring for chronic disease and complexity in Wicklow is also complex for the community teams. Work overloads, lack of staff, lack of skills and trying to grasp the new way in Slaintecare straight after Covid added to the mix of mayhem. Similarly nationally there is no joined up thinking and no one talks to one another and so learning, cohesive decision making is never successful. Staff are moving rapidly and when they do, so too is lost 'the plan'. Pages of my HSE files are heavily redacted. I certainly may never see because these are buried in legal speak, where a corporate wellness is more important than a frail human being. This, the ongoing battle which was seen in the Farrelly report where protection of the institution was of far higher importance than that of the individual is now far too great for me and all I yearn for, is fun and peace. It is not too much to ask.

'Unprotected' was written to promote a discussion on how healthcare works for women and the need to have that dialogue of why some are treated very well and others

incredibly badly. I maintain women get the raw deal and healthcare provision can end up risky and dangerous. As I have personally experienced.

I believe this book is a testament to my strength, endurance and how the State feel absolutely ok even 'grand' in treating me in an atrocious way, they have been unkind and uncaring and placed me in fear, albeit terror, suffering with patchy clinical care and no clinical multi-disciplinary approach. Indeed no approach consistent with such a heavy disease burden. I attempt to live with chronic disease, medical rarity, profound deafness and chronic pain. Fergus spoke of his admiration of myself and my sister deciding to take up disability advocacy for the good of all who suffer equally and note how difficult that has had to be given our pain levels and complexity. He further comments that we made a huge impact on the world around us but it never made our life any better at all.

I contributed at the launch and spoke on my memoir. It was to detail a journey of misadventure, malpractice but also of my intrinsic love of life with a joyous sense of humour, love of nature and dogs and it is a skilfully woven piece of work. I recount my times during the infan-

cy of IADT and landing in London in the 70s to join the team of creatives who worked on the making of the iconic feature film *Watership Down*. Bright eyes were opened and the crew did something that I am profoundly grateful for in the decades ahead. I wrote to enlighten and offer the true version of my life, cause and effect and enormous struggle for which I should have been supported rather than beaten down. I now need to go home to Dun Laoghaire to rest and be afforded the life I deserve after State interference and poor management of a very sick and courageous woman. I need to go home.

Fergus also appreciates my art work which heads each chapter and rightly states I will be having a one man show at the Signal Arts Centre, Bray in July of this year.

To my utter shock, Fergus chose to read my introduction, a personal love letter to myself, he was so aware I never got one in the real world. I look at you and I always say 'hello' with confidence: 'I recognise you, I see and understand. No day is lost history but part of the web of my human soul. You belong to me, you have not gone and I have not pushed you aside. I remember as today the darkness, the losses, the pain and the



Ann Kennedy with Fergus Finlay at her book launch.

confusion. You grew each day, even at the time you never understood it as such. You were learning to grow up when others should have taught you the trade.'

Lia Mills, writer read this memoir: 'You are incredibly strong women to come through it so well

and still fighting.' Dr. Ralph de Vere White, Senior Advisor Emeritus, and Emeritus Distinguished professor of urology, USA, speaks for himself and his wife after reading the book: 'It is incredibly moving and leaves both of us with enormous admiration for how bravely you

have navigated a very difficult life. Both of us only wish it had been easier.'

'Unprotected, a memoir by Ann Kennedy' is stocked at Dubrury Books Dun Laoghaire Shopping Centre, Bridgestreet Books, Wicklow Town and at The Anne Sullivan Centre, Stillorgan.

Hollywood youth shine at No Name Club Talent Show

The spotlight shone on some of Ireland's brightest young performers as No Name's Got Talent 2025 took to the stage on Saturday, April 26th, at the Dean Crowe Theatre in Athlone.

Young people from unforgettable evening of music, dance, comedy and national, voluntary youth clubs across the country Hollywood, Co. Wicklow. organisation, provides came together for an more. Among them were No Name Club, a young people with a space



Liam, Mary and Dylan from the Hollywood club performed a comedy sketch.

to socialise in a fun, safe, and alcohol-free environment. The annual talent show is one of the No Name Club's biggest and most anticipated events and this year was no exception.

Isis Kindratowicz from No Name Club Hollywood was awarded the first-place Stage Award for her rendition of 'If Only'. The judges called her a 'powerhouse' and noted her amazing vocal ability. Liam, Mary and Dylan from the Hollywood club also performed a comedy sketch.

Judges praised both the variety and the standard of talent on display, and all participating clubs were recognised with trophies and awards. Speaking about the competition, Dr. Garrett Keenaghan, Chairperson, No Name Club said, "It's so heartening to see the talent on show from our young people. The level of effort, organisation and team work that we've seen here is just fantastic.



Isis Kindratowicz from No Name Club Hollywood was awarded the first-place Stage Award for her rendition of 'If Only'.

Congratulations to everyone involved."

No Name Club is a national, voluntary youth organisation that empowers young people aged 15 - 18 by providing a fun, safe environment

where they can socialise without the pressures of alcohol or drugs. Operating youth clubs across Ireland, No Name Club plays a vital role in helping teenagers build confidence and social

skills, while avoiding the risks associated with peer pressure. To find out more about establishing a No Name Club in your locality, or to locate your nearest club, visit /nonameclub.ie.

The BIFE Art and Design Graduate Exhibition 2025 returns on Tuesday 20th May

The BIFE Art and Design Graduate exhibition is an opportunity for the creative students achieving certificates and diplomas to showcase their works and processes.

Work on display comes from a variety of courses including Art Portfolio Preparation, Art Craft and Design, Creative Craft, Fine Art, Graphic Design, Fashion Design, Furniture Design, Architectural Design and Technology, and 3D Game Design.

The exhibition opens on Tuesday 20th of May with a reception in the college from 19.00-21.00.

The exhibition is open to the public from 10.00 - 16.00 Wednesday 21st May, 10.00-21.00 Thursday 22nd May and 10.00-13.00 Friday 23rd May.

BIFE offers influential courses to Art and Design students and aims to develop the necessary knowledge, commitment, and creative skill for students to engage in the many facets of the Art and Design World.

For further details see www.bife.ie.

Sugarloaf Sessions launched in Bray

Trad musicians from across the country travelled to Bray recently to attend and take part in the first ever Sugarloaf Sessions, an exciting new in real life learning experience designed for adult learners, powered by the TuneClub app.

Using the app, learners start their learning journey at home before bringing their skills to life in an immersive, in-person event with fellow musicians. The Sugarloaf Sessions was delivered by a team of expert tutors including Tim Doyle and Rachel Duffy. Dr. Liz Doherty, CEO of I Teach Trad, is advisor to the project, providing professional development training to the teaching team.

TuneClub is a groundbreaking music-learning platform that bridges structured online preparation with immersive real-world experiences. Through interactive learning pathways, AI-powered feedback, and vibrant community features, TuneClub empowers musicians to learn more effectively and connect with others worldwide. Creators leverage TuneClub's technology and support to monetise their music experiences - whether through local sessions, festivals, music tours, or masterclasses. The result is a phygital music ecosystem that expands the possibilities of music learning and participation.



Rachel Duffy, creator of the Sugarloaf Session, with Gabe Moynagh, founder of TuneClub, Cllr Dermot 'Daisy' O'Brien, Cathaoirleach of Bray Municipal District, and Tim Doyle, Creator of the Sugarloaf Sessions.



Rosie Callaghan.
AdvDip Hyp, HDip Ed



Imagine how you would feel if you could...

- Fit into your clothes more easily.
 - Free your mind in the process.
 - Feel good in yourself.
 - Calm your thoughts.
 - Love yourself more.
 - And...Feel ENOUGH
- ...HypnoSlim can get you back on your own team again...

Facebook page



Google reviews



www.weightlossclinic.ie

WhatsApp: 087 777 6711

Cabinteely, Dublin, A96 A0H4

Scott appointed Green Party Spokesperson for Children & Equality

Greystones Green Party councillor Lourda Scott has been appointed as the Green Party's new Spokesperson for Children and Equality.

Cllr Scott said: "I'm honoured to take on this new role and to continue supporting children and families across the Greystones district. This has been central to my work locally as a councillor, and I'm proud to bring that experience into national policy discussions. "There are serious challenges facing children and young people in Ireland today, from rising child poverty and unequal access to education, to growing waiting lists for

essential therapies. I will be calling on this Government for a joined-up approach across health, education and housing that puts the rights and wellbeing of children at the centre. One of the issues that commonly is raised to me is the lack of accessible, affordable childcare. In growing communities like Greystones and Kilcoole, parents are struggling to find suitable places, and long waiting lists are very common. This is placing enormous pressure on families and disproportionately impacting women's ability to return to the workforce. A well-funded public model of childcare is long overdue. We need to invest in a system that ensures fair pay and decent conditions for early years educators, while also delivering high-quality, affordable care for every child. On equality, we are also seeing increased polarisation in public debate. I have always championed inclusion and fairness in all areas of public life and will continue to do so. I



Cllr Lourda Scott.

want to help build a society where every person, regardless of their background, can access opportunities and thrive."



Samuel and Ruth Sheane with Aoife and Ella Von Metzradt at the Carysfort National School Summer Fete in Arklow.

Major expansion of tertiary degree pathways for students

Tánaiste Simon Harris has welcomed the announcement of a significant expansion in tertiary degree programmes for the 2025/2026 academic year, which will see nearly 40 degree courses offered through a unique partnership between Further Education and Training (FET) colleges and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

Simon Harris, who first launched the National Tertiary Office and the concept of tertiary degree pathways during his time as Minister for Further and Higher Education, said today's news marks a "hugely significant milestone in transforming access to higher education. "Tertiary Degrees are at their core about access and potential. I am so proud to see how the tertiary degree programme has grown from an idea to a reality, one that is now opening doors for thousands of students across Ireland and making their dreams

come true. When I first launched this, I was determined to ensure students' future would not be defined by the CAO points race. I could see the stress etched of young people's faces and the anxiety it caused their parents." The expanded programme allows students to begin their studies in local FET colleges and progress to university-level qualifications, without the traditional barrier of high Leaving Certificate points. "This is about creating a system where every learner can thrive. This is about making sure

that everyone gets to reach their full potential. I want to see young people who may not get the points for a specific course still get a route to become a nurse, an engineer, or a social worker. "It's about breaking down archaic barriers and ensuring that everyone has the chance to pursue their dream career. The initiative, first introduced in 2023 with 13 pilot programmes, has rapidly expanded due to strong demand and positive outcomes. The 2025/2026 academic year will offer new degrees in

critical fields such as Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Social Care, and ICT, addressing both student needs and national skills shortages." Simon Harris concluded: "The success and expansion of tertiary degrees prove that this model works. It's delivering opportunity and practical solutions to the challenges faced by students and our education system. I would like to encourage more students to visit the National Tertiary Office and see what courses are available for them."



Tánaiste Simon Harris TD.

Corrigan calls for transport link from Kilmacanogue to schools in Greystones

Cllr Melanie Corrigan is calling for a communal bus service to connect the children in Kilmacanogue with the three schools that they are attending in Greystones. She says this would help those children who can't attend the nearest schools in Bray due to a shortage of spaces, to access their schools in Greystones more easily.

Currently they are either being driven or have to get two buses to get to school. She is urging the Department of Transport's school transport system to facilitate this change. In previous years when parents applied under the Bus Éireann school transport scheme, they were told that the children were not attending the nearest schools so therefore did not qualify. Under the School transport Scheme review that was completed by the Department of Education The schools transport scheme report 2030 was published, this has recommended an expansion of the current eligibility criteria which would allow the children in Kilmacanogue to qualify. A phased implementation of the plan commenced in 2024 between the Department of Education and the Department of Transport with a view to expand the provision of transport and reduce the reliance over time on individual car trips for school journeys. "This approach and the provision of a school bus service from Kilmacanogue to access the three schools in Greystones would significantly improve the daily commute for these students in Kilmacanogue, making their journey to school more manageable and convenient, and taking cars off an already busy road," said Cllr Corrigan. Cllr Corrigan has been working with a group of parents in Kilmacanogue to raise this issue and get a bus service. This is part of a wider campaign Cllr Corrigan is working on to get a public bus service from Kilmacanogue to Greystones. "In 2024, a petition was set up with over 250 supporters looking for such a bus service. A lot of people from Kilmacanogue, a growing village, work, go to appointments, socialise and shop in Greystones and a bus service connecting the two areas is something the community want," she said. Cllr Corrigan has written to the Minister for education and contacted the Tánaiste Simon Harris and Edward Timmons TD for their support with this issue.



Cllr Melanie Corrigan.



Josie Cavanagh who took part in the Live Band Bash in the Royal Hotel in Arklow.

Temple Carrig wins top prize at Future Sparks School Impact Awards

Temple Carrig School Greystones was announced as the winner of the Judges Special Commendation Prize at the 2025 AIB Future Sparks School Impact Awards, winning €500 for the school. The school was recognised for its cross-curricular sustainability junior cycle project between Philosophy, Science, Geography and Maths.

The AIB Future Sparks School Impact Awards, celebrate schools making a positive impact on their community, centred on three key pillars of activity: Environmental, Social, and Financial. These pillars encompass a wide range of activities that contribute to the betterment of communities, including volunteering, fundraising, awareness campaigns, mentoring, peer education, skills-sharing, and environmental conservation.

The 2025 AIB Future Sparks School Impact Awards ceremony took place in Dublin's Croke Park on April 29th, having received a staggering 124 submissions from schools across the country.

The event was hosted by digital creator, presenter, and teacher John Sharpson, and participating schools across Ireland were celebrated for their amazing work contributing to the betterment of their communities.

Speaking about their win, Susan Andrews, teacher at Temple Carrig School Greystones, said: "I think it's great that the

students get recognition for all of the work that they've put in. It's important that students feel like their learning is actually impactful."

As part of AIB's commitment to sustainable communities, the AIB Future Sparks School Impact Awards provide a platform to showcase and reward the endeavours schools are undertaking to inspire and ignite positive change, such as fundraising, volunteering, activism, mentoring, and more.

Orlaith Ryan, Chief Customer Officer at AIB, said: "I want to congratulate all the winners of today's AIB Future Sparks School Impact Awards. We are delighted to celebrate the outstanding contributions made by schools and young people across Ireland through the AIB Future Sparks School Impact programme. These awards not only offer students a chance to engage in a new form of learning outside of the regular syllabus, but also inspire students to continue to make a positive impact on their local communities."



Students from Temple Carrig School Greystones, the winner of the Judges Special Commendation Prize at the 2025 AIB Future Sparks School Impact Awards.

Students and parents urged to apply for increased student grants

Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade and Minister for Defence, Simon Harris, has confirmed significant expansion of the Student Grant Scheme, set to take effect from the 2025/26 academic year.

He is encouraging students across Wicklow to apply for funding through Student Universal Support Ireland (SUSI).

He said: "The increase in student maintenance grants are a real and positive step forward for students and families in Wicklow and across the country. As the former Minister for Higher Education I am particularly passionate

about ensuring we remove any barriers to education especially financial ones.

"I am delighted that more students will now be able to benefit from financial support, thanks to higher income limits and increased thresholds. I am committed to cutting the cost of education and increasing student maintenance grants. These are essential measures to make

higher education more accessible for everyone. These improvements will directly impact students' lives and their parents' by helping to alleviate the pressure of costs, allowing them to focus on their studies rather than any undue financial stress."

Key updates to the scheme include:

- Increased Eligibility: More families will now qualify, with the income

limit raised to €115,000, allowing more students to access financial support.

- Higher Grant Amounts: The special rate of grant has increased from €26,200 to €27,400, in line with rises in social welfare rates.

- Increased Income Deductions: Students can now earn more during the holidays without it affecting their grant,

with the income deduction rising to €8,424.

- Expanded Eligibility: The scheme has been broadened to include students with certain immigration statuses, such as those under the

Regularisation Scheme.

"The cost of going to college is a challenge for many families, and these improvements are made to make sure we ease the financial burden on students. These

changes, which will come into effect in September, are a direct result of Budget 2025. I want to encourage all eligible students to apply. If you qualify, don't hesitate to visit the

SUSI website at www.susi.ie. The application process is now open for the 2025/26 academic year, and I strongly encourage students to check if they are eligible for support."



Congratulations to the students at Sacred Heart National School, Aughrim, who were recently presented with €2,000 worth of O'Neill's sports equipment by Byrne's Londis Aughrim as one of the five winners of Londis' nationwide competition to coincide with the airing of Ireland's Fittest Family on RTE One television, sponsored by Londis. Londis shoppers were simply asked to nominate their local Primary or Secondary School to be in with an opportunity to win the O'Neill's sports equipment. Students from Sacred Heart National School, Aughrim are pictured with members of the Byrne family: Siobhan Byrne; Theresa Byrne and Caoimhe Byrne along with Ann Marie Cullen Kenny, Assistant Manager Byrne's Londis Aughrim and P-draig Murphy, Principal, Sacred Heart National School, Aughrim.

Take WICKLOW TIMES with you...

WHEREVER you go

on your Phone, Laptop or Tablet!

- ✓ NO PASSWORDS
- ✓ NO PAYWALL
- ✓ NO PROBLEM!

PLUS access to over a year's worth of back issues!

www.wicklowtimes.net

or email info@localtimes.ie and we will email you a copy!

Timmins backs increased investment in Meals-on-Wheels

“Service must be designated as a 'core service' underpinned by legislation and proper funding”

Fine Gael Deputy Edward Timmins is calling for increased funding for the Meals-on-Wheels service following his attendance at an information day held by the National Meals-on-Wheels Network in Dublin on Wednesday 30th April.



Edward Timmins TD.

Speaking directly after the event, Deputy Timmins remarked: “I was delighted to attend the 'National Meals-on-Wheels Network Media and Information Day' this afternoon. As a TD, I'm committed to ensuring this crucial service is designated as a 'core service' underpinned by legislation and proper funding. I want to close gaps in the service so no older person in Ireland is never on a waiting list for food.”

On the service in Wicklow, Deputy Timmins commented: “Despite funding struggles, a superb volunteer-led service exists across Wicklow. But some providers aren't currently availing of HSE grants. I will be making contact with these providers to supply them with the relevant information to apply for the grants available.”

Deputy Timmins continued: “Older people must be fully supported to remain living in our local communities. I passionately believe older people in Wicklow must be able to live independently at home if that is their wish. I am proud that Budget 2025 was the largest ever budget for older persons services with almost €3 billion allocated including €12 million in additional funding for home support equating to 24 million hours to support 60,000 people.

But behind these huge numbers are real people and families who need ongoing practical support from services such as Meals-on-Wheels.

Various academic studies including 'Valuable Volunteers: The Importance of Meals on Wheels' to Rural Ageing illustrate the importance of this service in rural areas. Ultimately, the service is essential in both rural and urban areas.”

Deputy Timmins concluded: “I would like to see further practical measures to support older people in Wicklow's communities such as increased investment in the Meals-on-Wheels service to enhance capacity. I am particularly aware of older people who are housebound and will do everything to support our senior citizens in Wicklow as a TD for this county.”

New Antenatal Group in Bray empowers expectant parents

RECRUITMENT

GROUNDSMAN /GARDENER
Charleville Estate
Enniskerry, Co. Wicklow.

JOB DESCRIPTION:

- Gardener/Groundsman
- Full-time, Monday to Friday.

ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS:

- Garden machinery experience
- Ride on mower experience
- Chainsaw experience not essential
- Spraying course desirable but not essential
- Must have full driving licence.
- 2 /3 years' experience in similar role preferable.
- Chain saw desirable but not essential.

DUTIES:

- Grass cutting
- Hedge cutting
- Tree planting
- General garden maintenance

SALARY:

- Salary by negotiation.

Email CV to:
Charlevillerecruitment123@gmail.com
or post to: **Senior Admin, Charleville, Enniskerry, Co. Wicklow, A96V293.**

Expectant parents in Bray and the North Wicklow area are being invited to join a new Parenting Group, starting this July at Prince of Wales Terrace in Bray. The five-week course is open to people at all stages of pregnancy and uses the Solihull Antenatal approach, promoting the mental health and wellbeing of parents and children. It offers evidence-based, research-informed guidance on pregnancy, labour, birth, and early parenting.

The course, titled Understanding Pregnancy, Labour, Birth and Your Baby, is designed to help parents build a strong, connected relationship with their baby right from the start. Participants will gain the knowledge and confidence they need to navigate birth and early parenting, supported by practical tools and expert guidance.

Running every Tuesday morning from 1st July to 29th July, the course will take place from 10am to 12 noon, in a supportive and welcoming group setting.

“We're delighted to be offering this antenatal course as part of our ongoing work to support families in the community,” said Nadia Conroy, Course Facilitator. “It's about helping parents feel confident, informed, and ready to welcome their baby into a loving and nurturing environment.”

Places are limited and early booking is advised. To reserve a spot, contact Nadia on (083) 073 4929 or email nadiaconroy@bnwap.ie.

BNWAP is a community-focused organisation dedicated to supporting social inclusion and economic development in the Bray and North Wicklow area. Through various programmes, BNWAP works to empower individuals with the skills and opportunities needed to achieve sustainable employment and community engagement.



Maria and Niall Scully at the Carysfort National School Summer Fete in Arklow.

PLANNING

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

Rory O'Sullivan seeks permission for:
The Conversion of Existing Attic Space with the removal of existing hip roof section and creation of new gable wall with frosted window in same. Along with the introduction of rooflights on front and rear slopes of Existing dwelling at 15 Church Drive, Eden Gate, Delgany, Co. Wicklow. A63 EF85.
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

Audrey Malone seeks permission for:
Alterations to the existing dwelling including the incorporation of the existing balcony at first floor level into the interior of the dwelling along with the introduction of first floor windows in the southern elevation and frosted first floor windows in the northern elevation at 77 Applewood Heights, Greystones, Co. Wicklow. A63 E431.
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

Simon Moore seeks permission and retention permission for:
Permission for Single Storey extension to rear of existing dwelling along with Retention Permission for Rooflight on Front Slope of Existing Roof at 45 Waverly Avenue, Blacklion, Greystones, Co. Wicklow A63KW64.
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

Peter Ferris seeks permission for:
The Conversion of Existing Attic Space with the introduction of rooflights on front and rear slopes of Existing Roof at 5 Waverly Avenue, Blacklion, Greystones, Co. Wicklow A63 H522.
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

Jain Paul Njaliplackil seeks permission for:
The Conversion of Existing Attic Space with the introduction of rooflights on front and rear slopes of Existing dwelling at 72 Charlesland Wood, Charlesland, Greystones, Co. Wicklow. A63 XY73.
The planning application may be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy at the offices of Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Wicklow during its public opening hours and a submission or observation in relation to the application may be made to the authority in writing on payment of the prescribed fee within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the application.

ATTENTION

Architects, Planners & Builders

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

Call **01 286 9111** or email **pauline@localtimes.ie**

Wicklow EY Entrepreneur of the Year 2025 finalist revealed

Wicklow-based James Kelly of LMH Engineering Group has been revealed as a finalist in the 2025 EY Entrepreneur Of The Year Ireland programme. The entrepreneur will compete with the 23 other shortlisted entrepreneurs spanning a range of sectors including consumer, technology, media, health, life sciences, manufacturing and financial services. Collectively this group of world class business leaders are already generating annual revenues approaching €1 billion and employing over 4,000 people.

The finalists hail from across the island of Ireland and will compete across three categories - Emerging, Established and International - with a special Sustainability Award presented to the finalist who is making the biggest contribution towards environmental sustainability through their business. One overall winner will be selected as The EY Entrepreneur Of The Year 2025 at a gala awards ceremony which will take place in November.

James Kelly is competing in the Established category.

Roger Wallace, Partner Lead for EY Entrepreneur

Of The Year Ireland said: "This is the 28th year of the Entrepreneur of the Year programme on the island of Ireland, and with every year the bar is raised higher in terms of the quality of the impressive entrepreneurs that submitted nominations. I know that our judging panel had a seriously difficult job selecting our 24 incredible finalists.

"From well known and loved consumer brands to pioneering life science and technology businesses, and so much more in between, our finalists lead outstanding businesses creating opportunities and employment across Ireland. The creation of world class busi-

nesses from Ireland has never been more important and our 24 finalists are leading the way.

"Our finalists are exploring new markets and technologies to solve challenges and find solutions that will revolutionise their own industries, confirming Ireland's exceptional reputation as a centre of excellence for innovation and business. I am delighted to formally welcome this year's 24 finalists into the EY Entrepreneur Of The Year community and I look forward to working with them closely over the coming months."

This year's finalists have been shortlisted by

an independent judging panel of previous winners, chaired by Harry Hughes, CEO of Portwest and Chairperson of the EY Entrepreneur Of The Year Judging Panel who commented: "We were so impressed with the outstanding calibre of all of the nominations received for the programme this year. Selecting just 24 finalists was an incredibly challenging task but I am thrilled to congratulate this year's finalists and extend a very warm welcome into the EOY community. An immensely valuable experience now awaits each of them and I wish them every success as they embark on



Pictured at the announcement of the 2025 EY Entrepreneur Of The Year Finalists: (l-r) Eimear McCrann, Director, EY Entrepreneur Of The Year, Gareth Sheridan of Nutriband Inc, Laura Dowling of fab+ and Roger Wallace, Partner Lead, EY Entrepreneur Of The Year. Photograph: Naoise Cullhane.

this journey and join this extraordinary group of passionate, courageous individuals who are truly driving Irish entrepreneurship forward."

Since its inception, the EY Entrepreneur Of The

Year Ireland community has grown to a tight-knit network of more than 650 alumni who harness each other's wealth of experience, with three quarters (75%) conducting business with one another. Together,

the EOY alumni community generates revenues of €25bn, and employs more than 250,000 people across the island of Ireland.

The EY Entrepreneur Of The Year - Ireland programme is supported

by Premium Corporate Sponsor Julius Baer International, and Government sponsors, Enterprise Ireland and Invest Northern Ireland. For further information, please visit www.eoy.ie

Wicklow ranks 5th for business closures in 2025

A new study has revealed that Wicklow ranks fifth among the counties in Ireland with the highest rate of business closures so far this year. The research, conducted by business energy provider Procure.ie, analysed over 3,250 company closures since the start of 2025. By standardising the data per 100,000 people in each county, the study reveals where business activity is declining fastest and where companies are proving more resilient.

LOCAL BUSINESS
LOCAL BUSINESS
LOCAL BUSINESS

ALLSHADES BLINDS
• Roller • Vertical • Wood Venetian
• Pleated • Velux • Roman
Tel: 087 2201600
FACTORY: Unit 10, Block 1, Broomhall
Business Park, Rathnew. Tel: 0404 20344

According to the data, 81 businesses have closed in County Wicklow so far in 2025. When adjusted for population, this equates to 52 closures per 100,000 people, placing the county in the top 5 nationally.

While every county has felt the impact of rising costs and ongoing economic uncertainty, businesses in County Wicklow may be particularly affected by a combination of

factors - including limited access to support schemes, rising operational overheads, and shifting consumer behaviour. These pressures are being felt especially among SMEs and independent retailers, who often operate on tighter margins.

Counties With the Most Business Closures in Ireland

The top five counties

with the highest closure rates per 100,000 people are:

1. Dublin - 121.04
2. Louth - 60.8
3. Clare - 60.2
4. Meath - 55.7
5. Wicklow - 52.0

Dublin tops the national list with more than 1,000 business closures so far this year - highlighting that even the country's most economically active regions aren't immune to the pressures

faced by businesses today.

Counties With the Lowest Closure Rates

Meanwhile, the counties with the lowest closure rates are:

- * Mayo - 18.1
- * Kilkenny - 21.1
- * Offaly - 22.9
- * Cavan - 23.3
- * Laois - 23.9

These counties may be benefitting from smaller

commercial property costs, stronger local support networks, or slower but steadier economic growth - allowing businesses to operate with more stability.

The study highlights an increasing disparity between counties. While larger or commuter-heavy counties like Dublin, Meath, and Wicklow show higher closure rates, some smaller and more rural counties are managing to retain more of their local businesses.

For more information, visit: <https://www.procure.ie/irish-businesses-closing/>

Gospel: Matthew 13:44-52

The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure, hidden in a field. The one who finds it, buries it again; and so happy is he, that he goes and sells everything he has, in order to buy that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a trader who is looking for fine pearls. Once he has found a pearl of exceptional quality, he goes away, sells everything he has and buys it.

PRIORITY LANDSCAPING
Family run business since 1999

- Garden Maintenance / Landscaping
- Fencing
- Tree Felling
- Stump Removal
- Tree Surgery
- Patios
- Paving
- Driveways
- Walling

Mobile: 085 191 9465
FREEPHONE: 1800 911 645
Email: prioritylandscaping.ie@gmail.com
www.prioritylandscaping.ie

Contact Pat for a free, no obligation quote

MAC'S FISH
"Kilmore Quay's Finest"

We carry an array of fresh local fish from Kilmore Quay.

We are in Kilcoole and Blessington every Thursday and from 9.30am-2pm.

- In **Kilcoole** we are parked by the Circle K garage, near the church.
- In **Blessington** we are parked in the square, near the Lemon Tree (which is now closed)

KILCOOLE CHANGE OF DATE
Friday 1st of May we will be there instead of Thursday 9.30 - 2pm. If Funeral is on in car park - we will close until service ends as a mark of Respect.

MODERN ROOFING
Specialists In
Roofing Services

- ✓ New Roof Builds
- ✓ Slating & Tiling
- ✓ Roof Repairs
- ✓ Flat Roofs & much more...

Book Now

083 0880 473 www.modernroofingdublin.ie

Join Greystones Ladies Cricket Team for a FREE training session

Monday, May 12th, 19th & 26th. 6.30-8pm. Druids Glen. Age 11 to adult

Contact Liz: 087 931 4914

www.greystonescricket.com

O'BRIENS ROOFING & GUTTERING

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

Call Richard: 087 348 8516
www.obriensroofingandguttering.ie

DERMOT FORTUNE PAINTING & DECORATING
20 Years Experience

REASONABLE RATES NO JOB TOO BIG OR SMALL

FREE QUOTE ON: 086-8613651

HOME MAINTENANCE NO JOB TOO SMALL

- Painting • Decorating
- Flat Pack Assemble & Fitted
- Windows & Glass Repair & Replace
- Doors & Lock Repairs • Tiling • Carpentry

Call or Email Graeme 085 818 0713
Graemecallum1234@gmail.com

ANTO'S TREE SERVICES
Fully Insured Tree Surgeon

Pruning, Reductions and Removal

All Aspects of Tree Surgery

Tel: 087 610 9128



OPEN NIGHT

Thurs
22nd May
7-9pm

running concurrently with
**Art & Design
Exhibition**



bife BRAY INSTITUTE OF FURTHER EDUCATION

Dedicated • Professional • Passionate

BUS PICK-UPS
Throughout the college year from
Gorey, Arklow,
Wicklow and
Rathnew

New Tertiary Bachelors' Degrees available in Wicklow for 2025/2026 academic year

The following Tertiary Bachelors' Degrees are available in Wicklow for the first time this September:
Entry is **not** based on points, and there are no tuition fees for the first one to two years.

• Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Immersive Media Production

Commencing in Bray Institute of Further Education, with a seamless transition to IADT (Dun Laoghaire Campus).

• Bachelor of Business (Hons) in Business and Psychology

Commencing in Bray Institute of Further Education with a seamless transition to IADT (Dun Laoghaire Campus).

ART

- KA** Art Portfolio Preparation
- KB** Art, Craft & Design
- KC** Fine Art Practice
- KE** Creative Craft

DESIGN

- DA** Graphic Design
- DD** Architecture Design & Technology
- DN** Jewellery Making & Woodcraft
- 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
- EC** Personal Trainer, Strength & Conditioning
- ED** Soccer Coaching & Sports Management
- EF** Sports Injury & Massage Therapy / Pre-University Physiotherapy

ANIMAL CARE

- HA** Animal Care
- HI** Animal Care & Management Pre-University
- HJ** Animal Science Industry
- HX** Equine Studies

SOCIAL STUDIES & CHILDCARE

- OA** Special Needs Assistant (Primary & Post-Primary)
- OB** SNA & Disability Studies (Level 6)
- HD** Early Learning & Care / Childcare
- HE** Social Studies & Community Care

HAIR, BEAUTY & WELLNESS

- FJ** Professional Make Up & Hairstyling
- FF** Hairdressing - Junior Stylist
- FG** Hairdressing - Senior Stylist
- FH** Barbering
- FD** Nail Technician & Salon Administration

SCIENCE & ENGINEERING

- HS** Forensic Science - Pre-University
- HK** Science - Pre-University
- HZ** Food Science with Dietetics - Pre-University
- 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)
- JT** Digital Marketing and Entrepreneurship
- EE** Security & Pre-Garda
- JP** B.Bus (Hons) Business & Psychology

HOSPITALITY & TOURISM

- LA** Tourism, Reception & Event Management
- LH** Restaurant & Bar Management
- LC** Culinary Arts
- LE** Culinary Arts Advanced
- LG** Pastry, Baking & Barista
- LI** Hospitality & Business Management (Level 6)

ADULT LEAVING CERT

- RB** Adult Leaving Certificate

HEALTH

- HB** Nursing and Midwifery Studies - Pre-University
- HH** Healthcare Assistant
- HP** Occupational Therapy Assistant
- JK** Emergency Care Studies (Pre-paramedic, Fire & Ambulance)
- HL** Psychology in the Community (Advanced)

FILM & COMPUTER GAMING

- MA** TV & Film Production
- MB** TV & Film Production - Advanced
- ME** 3D Game Design
- MC** BA (Hons) Immersive Media Production Degree
- MG** Games Development

ACTING & DANCE

- PB** Acting for Stage & Screen Advanced
- PE** Dance Technique, Performance and Choreography - Advanced

ENGLISH LANGUAGE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

- XA** English Language and General Studies

APPRENTICESHIPS

- JG** Accounting Technician Apprenticeship

www.bife.ie

01 2829668
bifeenquiries@wicklowvec.ie

