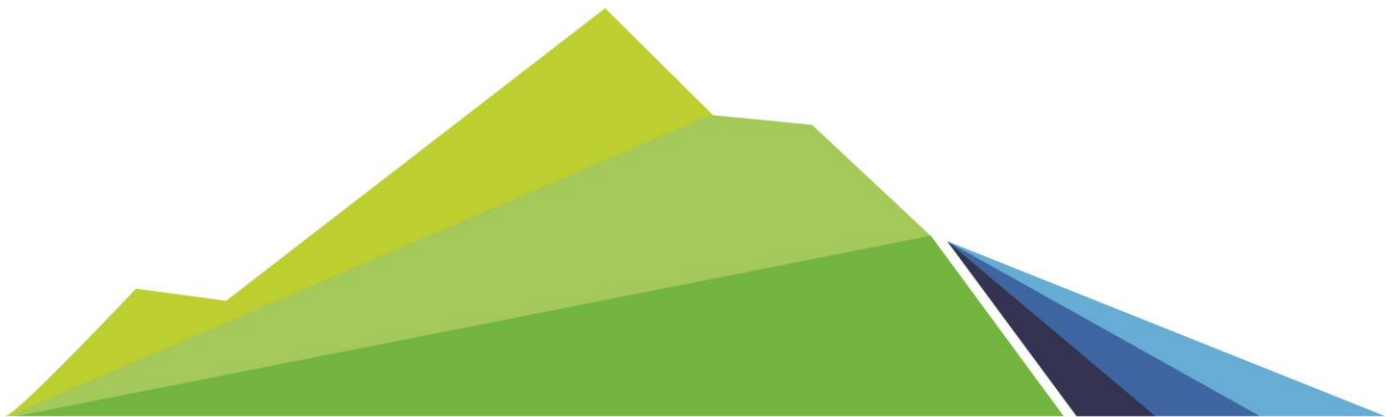




# Wicklow County Council Chief Executive's Monthly Report



W I C K L O W

---

E N D L E S S O P P O R T U N I T I E S



## Table of Contents

<b>HOUSING AND COMMUNITY .....</b>	<b>5</b>
1. <b><i>Social Housing Support.....</i></b>	<b>6</b>
2. <b><i>Allocation of Social Housing.....</i></b>	<b>6</b>
3. <b><i>Social Housing Stock .....</i></b>	<b>6</b>
4. <b><i>Casual vacancies/relets.....</i></b>	<b>7</b>
5. <b><i>Housing Supply – Programme of Delivery .....</i></b>	<b>7</b>
6. <b><i>Part V .....</i></b>	<b>8</b>
7. <b><i>PPP Social Housing Project.....</i></b>	<b>9</b>
8. <b><i>Home Improvement/Adaptation .....</i></b>	<b>10</b>
9. <b><i>Purchase Schemes .....</i></b>	<b>11</b>
10. <b><i>Addressing Homelessness .....</i></b>	<b>11</b>
11. <b><i>Traveller Accommodation .....</i></b>	<b>14</b>
12. <b><i>Energy Efficiency.....</i></b>	<b>15</b>
12. <b><i>Wicklow Community Call.....</i></b>	<b>16</b>
13. <b><i>Healthy Ireland .....</i></b>	<b>16</b>
14. <b><i>Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP).....</i></b>	<b>19</b>
15. <b><i>County Wicklow Public Participation Network (PPN):.....</i></b>	<b>19</b>
16. <b><i>Age Friendly Initiatives.....</i></b>	<b>19</b>
17. <b><i>Comhairle Na Nóg.....</i></b>	<b>20</b>
18. <b><i>Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS).....</i></b>	<b>20</b>
19. <b><i>Sports &amp; Recreation Partnership.....</i></b>	<b>20</b>
20. <b><i>County Wicklow Library Service.....</i></b>	<b>21</b>
<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE .....</b>	<b>26</b>
1. <b><i>Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) (Economic) .....</i></b>	<b>26</b>
Retail.....	26
Town Teams.....	26



Tourism Strategy and Marketing Plan 2018-2022 .....	30
Rural and Urban Regeneration Development Fund Grant Applications.....	32
Maritime .....	33
The Food and Beverage Strategy.....	35
<b>2. Local Enterprise Office (LEO) .....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>3. Planning and Development .....</b>	<b>39</b>
County Development Plan Review .....	39
Heritage .....	39
Wicklow Heritage & Biodiversity Plans.....	39
Planning Applications .....	40
Planning Enforcement.....	41
<b>4. Environmental Services.....</b>	<b>42</b>
Waste Management .....	42
Climate Action.....	42
Energy .....	43
Recycling Centres .....	44
Brittas Bay Carparks.....	44
Whitestown Remediation Project.....	45
Harbours and Ports.....	45
Pollution Control.....	45
Arklow Flood Relief Scheme .....	47
<b>5. Transportation, Water and Emergency Services .....</b>	<b>48</b>
Public lighting .....	48
Transportation Statistics (General) .....	49
Fire Service.....	52
Parking Income.....	56
<b>ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND FINANCIAL MATTERS .....</b>	<b>57</b>



<b>1. HR and Corporate Services</b> .....	<b>57</b>
Recruitment.....	57
Access to Information.....	58
Press Releases.....	58
Register of Electors.....	58
Communication.....	58
Customer Service Innovation Hub.....	59
<b>2. I.C.T.</b> .....	<b>60</b>
Response to Covid-19.....	60
IT Helpdesk.....	60
Domain Migration.....	60
GIS & Data Collection Systems.....	60
Customer Service Delivery.....	61
eServices.....	61
National Broadband Plan.....	61
<b>FINANCIAL</b> .....	<b>62</b>
Revenue Account.....	62
Cashflow/Overdraft.....	62
Capital Account.....	62
Commercial Rates, Rents and Loan Collections.....	63
General Municipal Allocation and Discretionary Fund 2020.....	63
Capital Investment Programme 2020-2022.....	64
Restart Grant Scheme.....	65



## This month:

**Town & Village Renewal Scheme** - A total of €567,083, for successful projects under the Town & Village Renewal Scheme has been announced for Wicklow, in the following locations:

- Annamoe
- Avoca
- Stratford
- Laragh
- Enniskerry

The funding will assist towns and villages to implement measures that can help them to respond to the challenges associated with COVID-19. It will benefit 147 towns and villages and will fund a wide and diverse range of projects nationwide including walkways, community parks, outdoor cinemas, cycleways as well as the regeneration of derelict buildings and enhancement works at tourism attractions and other important local amenities.

Funding has also been provided for the development of a number of remote working facilities in rural towns and villages. Successful projects will see the renovation and conversion of vacant buildings into digital hubs as well as adaptations to local community centres to provide for remote working and eLearning facilities.

**Annual Tidy Towns and Environmental Awards** - Wicklow County Council has announced the winners of its annual Tidy Towns and Environmental Awards.

It was a challenge for communities in Wicklow to keep projects going when COVID-19 restrictions limited opportunities to work together. Many projects had to stop and preparations for the summer Tidy Towns campaign were temporarily halted. Groups went online to organise their work, often working individually on projects and coming together to carry out planned projects outdoors when easing of restrictions allowed.

With more people out and about in their local communities over the last year, this led to many new volunteers requesting litter clean-up materials, revamping green areas on estates or undertaking a project to protect local biodiversity.

**Bray Climbs to 7<sup>th</sup> in Irish Business Against Litter League** - Bray has been assessed as being 'Clean to European Norms' in the latest Irish Business Against Litter League (IBAL).

Last year Bray was tied at 19<sup>th</sup> in the league but this year the town has risen to 7<sup>th</sup> overall.

An Tasice, who carry out the survey, commented: "Main Street, Bray Head, Bray Harbour, Sidminton Park, Car Park Strand Road, Killarney Road, Quinsboro Road and Bray Promenade were all very much deserving of the top litter grade – not only were they very good with regard to litter but they were all very well presented and maintained". Bray Municipal District works with established community groups such as the Tidy Towns and Bray Coastcare and congratulations must also be made to the contribution these groups make to the town.

## HOUSING AND COMMUNITY

### 1. Social Housing Support

	Dec 2020	Dec 2019
No. on list for Social Housing Support – (includes RAS and HAP) *	4,487	4,360
No. availing of Rental Assistance Scheme (RAS)	280	347
No. availing of Housing Assistance Payment (HAP)	2,144	1,662
No. in Long Term Leasing accommodation	15	10
No. in Short Term Leasing accommodation	23	11

Wicklow County Council completed a Social Housing Assessment of all approved housing applicants up to 10<sup>th</sup> April 2019 with the exception of RAS, HAP and social housing transfer applications, under S.21 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009.

### 2. Allocation of Social Housing

	Dec 2020	Dec 2019
Wicklow County Council (including Bray MD)	248	203
Approved Housing Bodies (including Bray MD)	4	117

### 3. Social Housing Stock

	Dec 2020	Dec 2019
Tenancies occupied	4,530	4,429
Total weekly rental accrual	€298,957	€303,271
Arrears	€2,247,824	€1,355,378

#### Fire Safety in Council Houses

A programme of providing smoke alarms, Co2 alarms, fire blankets and window restrictors is being rolled out to every tenant of Wicklow County Council. All tenants are requested to check their alarms and if they are not working or are missing, they can collect them from their local District office.

## 4. Casual vacancies/relets

Municipal District	Dec 2020	Self isolation units
Arklow	6	1
Baltinglass	6	2
Bray	1	1
Greystones	6	0
Wicklow	29	3

## 5. Housing Supply – Programme of Delivery

Schemes Completed	Units	Current Status	Part 8 Approval
O'Byrne Road, Bray	1	Completed and allocated	Yes
Old Library Arklow	7	Completed and allocated	Yes
Avondale Heights Rathdrum	20	Completed and allocated	Yes
Delany Park, Arklow (Phase 1)	17	Completed and allocated	Yes
16A Oak Drive, Blessington	1	Completed and allocated	Yes
Druids Brook, Kilcoole	2	Completed and allocated	Yes
Whitehall, Baltinglass	34	Completed and allocated	Yes
Farrenkelly Greystones Phase 2	24	Completed and allocated	Yes
Convent Lands	51	Completed and allocated	Yes
<b>Total</b>	<b>157</b>		
Schemes on Site	Units	Current Status	Part 8 Approval
Kilbride Lane Bray (Murphy's Lands)	42	23 completed. 19 anticipated Quarter 1 2021	Yes
FCA Hall Wicklow Town	8	Complete.	Yes
Kilmantan Place Bray	4	Complete.	Yes
Jameson Heights, Kilmacanogue	20	Complete	Yes
Rathnew RAPID BUILD	47	Completion anticipated Quarter 1 2021	Yes
Carnew RAPID BUILD	30	22 Complete. 8 anticipated Quarter 1 2021	Yes
Delany Park Arklow (Phase 2 + 3)	47	Completion anticipated Quarter 3 2021	Yes
Ashtown Lane, Wicklow	40	Completion anticipated Quarter 4 2021	Yes
Ard na Greine, Bray RAPID BUILD	31	Completion anticipated Quarter 4 2021	Yes
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>269</b>		
Pipeline Schemes	Units	Current Status	Part 8 Approval
Avondale Phase 2 RAPID BUILD	20	Site start anticipated Q1 2021	Yes
Greenhill Road Wicklow RAPID BUILD	36	Site start anticipated Q2 2021	Yes

Mountainview NTMK RAPID BUILD	26	Site start anticipated Q1 2021	Yes
Sheehan Court, Arklow	7	Site start anticipated Q2 2021	Yes.
Cedar Court Bray RAPID BUILD	14	Site start anticipated Q2 2021	Part 8 approved.
Three Trouts Greystones RAPID BUILD	40	Site start anticipated Q3 2021	Part 8 approved
Merrymeeting, Rathnew, Phase 2	21	Site start anticipated Q3 2021	Yes
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>213</b>		

## 6. Part V

### 2020 – PART V UNITS DUE FOR DELIVERY 2020

26 Part V units were delivered in 2020 Wicklow County Council delivered

Location	No. of Units	Due for Delivery	Method
Wicklow	1	Delivered 25/02/20	WCC
Rathdrum	3	Delivered 02/11/20	WCC
Wicklow Town	3	Delivered 30/06/20	WCC
Ashford	2	Delivered 15/10/20	CALF
Greystones	2	Delivered 14/08/20	WCC
Waverley	3	Delivered 09/12/20	WCC
Ashford	8	Delivered 30/7/20	CALF
Wicklow	4	Delivered 31/12/20	CALF

It is expected that 25 Part V units will be delivered in 2021 however this is subject to a number of factors including the duration and number of any Covid 19 lockdowns, including the current restrictions and how quickly the Developers can remobilise and complete units.

The Council nominated a number of Essential sites which included Part V's which are due to be completed by 28<sup>th</sup> February. This includes the following Part V units:

Location	No. of Units	Due for Delivery	Method
Enniskerry	2	28/02/2021	WCC
Wicklow	4	28/02/2021	WCC
Delgany	3	28/02/2021	WCC
Greystones	2	28/02/2021	WCC
Wicklow	3	28/02/2021	WCC



## Potential units

Wicklow County Council currently has agreements in place for 43 units in Delgany, Bray, Rathnew, Wicklow, Baltinglass, Dunlavin and Enniskerry with delivery ranging from 2021 -2023 – This includes the 14 units listed above. WCC is in negotiations for a further 32 units.

Wicklow County Council is currently holding discussions with a number of developers at preplanning and planning stage. There are over 100 Part V units with planning permission but it's difficult to determine whether they will all proceed or even on what timescale.

## Turnkey

Location	No. of Units	Due for Delivery	Method
Ballinaclash	2	Q2/Q3 2021	WCC
Tinahely	2	Q1 2021	WCC
Tinahely	1	Q2 2021	WCC

Negotiations are ongoing with a number of Developers and AHB's in relation to acquiring further Turnkey units.

Approval has recently been received from the Department in respect of 2 Turnkey units in Baltinglass. Units have not commenced construction.

Approval received from Dept. for 5 Turnkey units in Tinahely. 2 Purchased in October 2020 with a further 3 due in 2021 (listed above).

2 further Turnkey units under construction in Ballinaclash.

A new call for Turnkey units will be advertised early in the New Year.

## 7. PPP Social Housing Project

### [Bundle 1)

Development Site at Convent Lands, Wicklow for 51 Social Housing units commenced on site in March 2019 and is now completed and all units are occupied. The Department of Housing has dedicated €300 million towards delivery of housing through the public, private partnership model in the Rebuilding Ireland Action Plan. The Convent Lands site in Wicklow was included as a project in Bundle 1.

### Capital Advance Leasing Facility (CALF)

The Approved Housing Bodies are actively pursuing a number of potential CALF projects and are liaising closely with the Council on a regular basis. The members will be kept updated.



Acquisition by AHB of 38 turnkey units via CALF in Arklow was completed in Quarter 4 2020  
Construction ongoing on 40 units (including 4 Part V) via CALF Turnkey in Dunlavin.

Acquisition by AHB of 16 Turnkey units via CALF in Baltinglass with a further 40 units (including 4 Part V units) to be completed in 2021.

Construction ongoing on 28 units in Wicklow (including 3 Part V) due for delivery in 2021.

**Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS)** Wicklow County Council is continuing to support acquisitions under the Capital Assistance Scheme with Dublin Simon, Circle Housing, Ark Housing and Peter McVerry Trust.

**Expressions of Interest – Social Housing on Council lands** - A preferred proposal has been identified.

## 8. Home Improvement/Adaptation

### **Mobility Aid Grants / Housing Adaption Grants / Housing Aid for Older People**

- › Grant funding for private house - €1,899,714 (€1,211,189.61 spent) Delay due to Covid
- › Grant funding for social house - €472,271.64 (€595,710.77 spent)

An awareness campaign has been running on Social Media since August 2020, which has generated a significant increase in the level of enquiries and applications.

Letters were also sent to all GP's within Co Wicklow in August 2020 to raise awareness of scheme.

### **Housing for Older People - Age Friendly Schemes**

During recent works on Casual Vacancies/Relets, the Council fenced large sections of existing social housing gardens in order to provide infill housing. This resulted in 3 three infill sites to develop Age Friendly schemes in Greystones.

It is proposed to build small A rated units, specifically designed for the older tenant, which will be offered to eligible tenants in the local area, who wish to downsize.

The larger property will return to the council for reletting to a family, and the tenant will benefit from being able to remain in their community, in an age friendly designed home with high comfort and low utility costs.

Millbank, Mill Road	Stage 1 approved received Nov 2020, site survey carried out Dec 2020, preliminary design underway.
Castle Villas	Stage 1 approved received, site survey carried out Dec 2020, preliminary design underway.
Carraig Eden	Funding received for 14 age friendly apartments from the Dept. Procurement for architects for the draft Part 8 Drawings underway.

## 9. Purchase Schemes

### House Purchase Loans - Rebuilding Ireland

Received	Approved	Declined	Expired	With HA for FI	Incomplete/ineligible
383	115	158	41	32	37

### Tenant Purchase Scheme

	To date	Dec 2020
Applications Received	93	2
Completed	20	0
Declined	53	0
Ongoing	20	18

## 10. Addressing Homelessness

	@ 31/12/20	YTD	@ 31/12/2019
<b>No of New Presentations</b>	19	565	35
<b>No. of Repeat Presentations</b>	11	70	3
<b>No. of Families (Minimum 1 Adult + One Child)</b>	9	270	18
<b>No. of Adults Individuals (Single Adult, no children)</b>	19	361	46
<b>No. Of Couples (2 Adults, no children)</b>	0	20	
<b>No. of Children</b>	12	500	35
<b>NTQ/Asked to Leave/Landlord selling</b>	5	147	8
<b>Family Circumstances</b>	14	280	18
<b>Leaving Prison Hospital Care</b>	0	18	0
<b>Sofa Surfing</b>	2	60	5



<b>Rough Sleeping</b>	2	31	2
<b>Risk of Homeless</b>	10	65	Not recorded
<b>Staying with Family</b>	5	113	Not recorded
<b>Staying with Friends</b>	5	59	Not recorded
<b>Women's Refuge</b>	1	3	Not recorded
<b>Other*:(Emergency Accommodation/HAP Tenancies/LA Property/PRA)</b>	4	56	Not recorded
<b>Own Door Temporary Accommodation at 31/12/2020</b>			
Families	14		
Adults	32		
Children	35		
Single individual	4		

### Bed & Breakfast Accommodation - No. of Homeless Emergency Accommodation Placements & Duration @ 31 December, 2020

	No. of Households	No. of Adults	No. of Children	< 3 mths	3-6 mths	6-9 mths	9-12 mths	>12mths
<b>Household breakdown</b>	14	19	15	6	3	3	1	1

### Bed & Breakfast Accommodation - No. of Homeless Emergency Accommodation Placements & Duration @ 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2019

	No. of Households	No. of Adults	No. of Children	< 3 mths	3-6 mths	6-9 mths	9-12 mths	>12mths
<b>Household breakdown</b>	7	12	13	4	1	0	0	2

## COVID 19 UPDATE

The Homeless Team continues to provide key support by phone, working from both office and home. B&B proprietors currently retained by the Council are continuing to provide emergency accommodation for homeless clients. All Covid 19 protocols are in place in the facilities.

## Self Isolation Units

A number of vacant houses being refurbished for reletting have been kitted out in anticipation of the need for families to self isolate for the required period from emergency accommodation.



## **Homeless HAP**

The Homeless HAP Placefinder provides assistance in:

- seeking out potential properties suitable for households currently identified as homeless or at risk of homelessness;
- liaising with specific households to establish their specific needs;
- establishing relationships with local property agents and landlords; and,
- supporting those homeless households to (a) prevent the necessity to enter emergency accommodation or (b) to exit emergency accommodation and secure a tenancy.

To date, 306 households (238 families & 68 singles) have been assisted under the Homeless HAP Scheme in Wicklow County Council from the inception on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018 to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2020. (143 homeless cases, 161 prevention cases to date and 2 direct provision). 103 properties were sourced by WCC.

## **Addressing Homelessness in partnership with Approved Housing Bodies**

### **Homeless Supported Temporary Accommodation – Kilmantin Hill, Wicklow**

There are 11 clients supported in the Kilmantin Hill facility, operated by Dublin Simon, with regular transition by the clients to suitable, alternative accommodation.

### **Homeless Family Service – Fitzwilliam Road, Wicklow**

Following the advice that Sonas was withdrawing services from Wicklow, the operation of the facility at Fitzwilliam Road, Wicklow was tendered out to Approved Housing Bodies to operate and manage the facility as a Family Homeless Service.

Refurbishment works on the facility are substantially completed and it is anticipated that furnishings and fittings will be complete in early 2021.

The family service envisaged is a 6 month STA with key working support to enable families transition from homelessness into Homeless HAP or alternative longer term accommodation. The successful tenderer to operate the facility is Dublin Simon.

### **Homeless Supported Temporary Accommodation – San Remo, Bray**

A key focus of Wicklow County Council in addressing homelessness was to identify and provide a high supported, temporary accommodation unit in Bray/North Wicklow to address the accommodation and support needs of a particular homeless cohort. This cohort was identified from the presenting population and those currently known to and accessing homeless services in Bray/North Wicklow.



The acquisition and upgrade of a former nursing home in Bray has completed and the facility opened to clients in October. The facility, operated by Dublin Simon, incorporates a service model where there are a number of emergency/cold weather Beds (restricted during Covid) and Supported Temporary Accommodation Beds (STA) There is on site keyworking support linking in with clients. The Neighbourhood Liaison Committee is now operational and meets monthly.

## **Homeless Supported Accommodation - Carraig Eden, Greystones**

The Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government (DHPCLG) approved funding to upgrade the building to provide 35 ensuite bedrooms within the existing building, with associated kitchens and common areas, as well as the upgrade of Fire Protection.

The external painting, removal of the scaffolding and project is nearing completion.

## **Other Homeless Supported Accommodation**

Wicklow County Council owned properties in Wicklow, Bray and Arklow, leased to AHBs, provide 12 units of low to medium supported accommodation targeted to the particular support needs of the clients. There has been a significant number of move-ons from these properties, signalling the success of this model.

## **Housing First**

Housing First recognises that a stable home provides the basis for recovery in other areas. Peter McVerry Trust has been appointed as the Housing First Programme Implementer for the Mid East Region and Wicklow County Council is committed to working with them to achieve the targets identified in the programme. Properties will be provided by both Wicklow County Council and Peter McVerry Trust for the programme.

Wicklow County Council has, to date, successfully accommodated 5 clients under Housing First. Other clients proposed for Housing First have been assessed by the team and are availing of key support work pending finalisation of accommodation.

## **11. Traveller Accommodation**

### **Accommodation Programme at 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020**

Allocations	23
Temporary Covid allocations	3

## **Annual count of Traveller Families**

Wicklow County Council is required to undertake an annual count of Traveller families in Co. Wicklow at end November. The count in 2020 showed 275 Traveller families living in the County.



<b>Ballintekin – 3 houses</b>	Detailed design stage and tender documents completed, stage 3 with Dept Nov 2020 awaiting approval to go out to tender for a contractor in Q1
<b>Avondale Heights, Rathdrum – 3 houses</b>	Approval received for funding from Department, ongoing discussions with proposed tenants on draft design
<b>Barndarrig Group Housing scheme for 2 houses</b>	Revised stage 1 submitted to Dept for funding 21 <sup>st</sup> Dec 2020 awaiting approval
<b>DPG Woodview,</b>	Works due to commence on extension for disability

Further inspections on the fire safety on Halting sites were completed by members of the Housing section and the fire brigade in Bray. In addition electrical inspections including the installation of smoke alarms has been rolled out.

## Covid 19 Update

Wicklow County Council has put a number of arrangements in place to provide, among other things, services to previously un-serviced sites which will facilitate better sanitation and social distancing.

- Welfare facilities were provided at a number of unauthorised sites.
- Three families from unauthorised sites were provided with housing units.
- Hygiene packs were distributed to all authorised sites.

## 12. Energy Efficiency

**Solar Panel Carport** - The local energy supply contract has now been signed with Enerpower. The detailed design works for the project are expected to be completed in January, with the procurement process taking expected to take 8-10 weeks. It is envisaged site works will start in April 2021 and last for a duration of 9 weeks.

- Energy is to be supplied over a 20 year period at a fixed unit rate
- Enerpower are planning on installing additional EV Car Chargers with the system also.

### Energy Efficiency Fabric Upgrade Phase 1

- Lot 1 88 houses in Bray and Greystones – awaiting determination of Department regarding repointing of properties.
- Lot 2 90 houses in Arklow, Wicklow and West Wicklow commenced in December 2020 and all tenants have been contacted in this regard.

### Energy Efficiency Fabric Upgrade Phase 2

- Contractor has commenced on site on 20 properties in Wolfe Tone Square West, Bray, to be completed in late Q1 2021.
- Examining properties in West Wicklow/Glenealy for next tender.



## 12. Wicklow Community Call

The Community Call Helpline continues to operate from 9-5 Monday to Friday. There is a steady number of calls for requests mainly for information, shopping and delivery. The helpline also refers callers to befriending services when appropriate. There is strong evidence that the links have been established between those who need help and volunteers showing which demonstrates the resilience of communities in the county. The latest lockdown has understandably seen a reduction in the number of volunteers.

The Community Response Forum continues to meet fortnightly to co-ordinate the response to the COVID-19 pandemic and address any issues arising.

The Keep Well campaign is rolling out. A number of resources have been made available on [www.wicklow.ie](http://www.wicklow.ie) to address 'Staying Connected', 'Minding your Mood', 'Keeping Active', 'Eating Well' 'Getting Creative' and 'Your County'. The resources have been promoted through social media and conscious of those not online, we are using local radio, leaflets and recently Christmas cards were distributed with information regarding the helpline and the Keep Well campaign. Further actions are being developed to promote the campaign and helpline, to ensure that those who need help can access it.

## 13. Healthy Ireland

Wicklow County Council as part of the Governments Keep Well Campaign received an allocation of €67,225 to be split across three themes. The amounts and themes and are as follows:

- Your County - €20,168
- Switching Off/Being Creative - €30,251
- Staying Connected (Community Call) - €16,806

Allocation must be spent between January – March 2021. 90% of this funding €60,502.50 was credited to Wicklow County Council's account on the 18<sup>th</sup> December 2020 with the remaining 10% to be credited when Pobal receive and sign off on return regarding the funding.

Lists of actions that have been set out in budget template and have been submitted are listed below and will be happening over the next three months.

### Theme 1 Your County

We aim to harness the resources in County Wicklow, be they human resources, natural resources, community and recreational resources, to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to access these resources for their physical and mental well being – especially the more vulnerable groups such as the elderly. Wicklow County Council highlights the important role that individual and community resilience will play in contributing to our ongoing response to Covid-19 in the Garden County. Tips and information showing people of all ages how we can mind our own physical and mental health and wellbeing by adding healthy and helpful habits to our daily and weekly routines can be found on [www.wicklow.ie/wellbeing](http://www.wicklow.ie/wellbeing)

- Collaborative actions to address particular disadvantage as identified by community call helpline
- Technology to enable elderly to engage with the 'Keep Well' programme and connect with community/families/friends





- Promotion advertising and awareness of actions aimed at addressing isolation/need for practical supports of age friendly target group
- Measures to identify 'hard to reach' elderly
- Promotion/advertising to enable everyone – especially those most isolated to engage in the Keep Well campaign and address isolation or need for practical support

## Theme 2 Switching-Off and Being Creative

Switch-off and be creative this winter in Wicklow. Covid-19 has affected all our lives and fundamentally changed the way in which we socially interact, with long periods in 2020 where we cannot attend creative, sporting and recreational activity. We know that this is challenging for our wellbeing and can leave us with a sense of always being 'switched' on, or feeling low and isolated.

Your Local Authority has a range of new initiatives to help you switch off, get back to nature and relax this winter. Nourishing your body and mind as well as getting engaged in activities which distract and interest you, or encourage you to fire up your creative energy, can have a positive impact on your life, mood and connection to others.

We have opportunities to learn a musical instrument, concerts in communities and nursing homes, writing workshops, nature and heritage activities, Active Age Packs, and much more for all ages, all free and countywide, so 'Get Creative' this winter in Wicklow. See [www.wicklow.ie/wellbeing](http://www.wicklow.ie/wellbeing)

### Music and the Arts

1. Music Network - Deliver instruments and tuition, both group sessions and individual. To include piano, cello, violin, mandolin, voice, guitar, tin whistle & flute
2. "Festival in a Van" - music van will visit hospitals, nursing homes & hospice to provide concerts for residents. Successfully trialled in 6 local authorities to date

Winter Care Packs - 500 packs being distributed, with HSE consultation to those in most need. Age Friendly Older persons service info guide, exercise pack from Local Sports Partnership, info from Gardai, HSE, Healthy Ireland and others will feature

### Heritage & Nature

1. "My Place, My Heritage" - Irish Community Archive Network -(ICAN) project (part of national programme). Theme will be "Wells & Wellness" concentrating on wells in the local landscape
2. "Nature is Good for You" - 5 themes spread over 5 weeks, in association with East Coast Radio
3. "Nature on Your Doorstep" - encouraging public to engage with nature, when on their 5km walks - take & upload photographs

### Libraries & Outreach

1. "Doula to You"

Connecting expectant and new mothers who may be feeling isolated, focus will be on the mother.



## 2. Ukulele lessons

Introductory classes for the beginner. Participants will learn how to play the most common chords as well as a few tunes.

## 3. Yoga online

Encouraging public to experience yoga, this introductory course will include Chair, Hatha, Yin and Yoga Flow as well as some meditations.

4. Beginners Short Story Writing - In this workshop attendees will look at the key aspects of fiction writing, exploring the overlaps and distinct differences between flash fiction, the short story and the novel. They will look at the importance of language and imagery in the "short, short story" as well as the importance of character, plot, point of view, dialogue, conflict and setting in all three forms. With the aid of writing prompts, participants will have the chance to put into practice what they have learned, receiving feedback on their work in a fun and supportive environment

5. Family History Classes: Every person has a story worth knowing and keeping for posterity. These classes will focus on helping the public to use the library online resources to conduct their own search in order to complete their family tree.

## 6. Art Classes

This will consist of workshops where participants will be taught the basics of watercolour and create a finished painting.

## Folklore & Creativity

1. Storytelling & folklore - 6 classes

2. Lockdown Creative Home Workshops

## Healthy Eating & Tobacco Cessation

1. "Healthy Eating Made Easy" - 5/6 week nutrition programme. Can be run online, or in person. Participants will be empowered to make healthy, nutritious and economical food choices for themselves and their families.

2. Tobacco Cessation project

Online awareness of signposting people on their journey to quit smoking.

## Theme 3 Staying Connected

It is so important at a time like this to stay connected to friends, family and community. This could be for practical supports, like a shopping delivery when you need it; your vital medicines delivered to your door when you can't make it yourself; someone to walk your dog when you are keeping yourself safe. The Community Call Helpline (1800868399) and the website [www.wicklow.ie/wellbeing](http://www.wicklow.ie/wellbeing) is offering help and supports and a list of agencies that offer further supports for those feeling particularly lonely and isolated.



This is also a call to action to communities to find ways to support those most vulnerable to stay connected and make a plan to keep well. The important thing is to get that message out to everybody, that supports are there to build our resilience and mind our mood. We will get through this together by helping each other where and when we can.

“Ask for help if needed – offer help if you can”

- Community Call - Collaborative Community Response Forum (CRF) measures to enable engagement with 'Keep Well' theme and community call
- Community Call - Promotion/advertising/awareness of CRF collaborative measures to enable engagement with 'Keep Well' theme and community call
- Befriending Activities - Collaborative measures to animate and enable communities to take part in befriending services at community level
- Befriending Activities - Promotion/advertising/ awareness of collaborative measures to animate and enable communities to take part in befriending services at community level and raise awareness of service to individuals

## 14. Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP)

Bray Area Partnership and Co. Wicklow Partnership have finalised SICAP workplans for 2021. Priorities include; food poverty, digital divide, mental health, refugees/asylum seekers, substance misusers.

-Wicklow KPIs 2021: No. of disadvantaged individuals 757; No. of Local Community Groups: 38.

- End of Year Review of 2020 Programme is about to be undertaken by Wicklow LCDC. January 15<sup>th</sup> deadline is set for both Partnerships to ensure all data pertaining to last year's programme is uploaded to the IRIS online system, including an annual progress report and video case study.

## 15. County Wicklow Public Participation Network (PPN):

- Current membership: 357 community groups. 72 new groups joined in 2020.

- Ongoing participation in the Wicklow Community Response Forum (Covid 19) to highlight community issues/concerns and share information and supports.

- Wicklow PPN currently has 35 Representatives sitting across 18 Committees/Boards within the county. (A full list of the Committees and Reps are available on the PPN website)

- Resource Worker currently undertaking project to collate Wicklow PPN Rep experiences in engaging with Strategic Policy Committees.

## 16. Age Friendly Initiatives

500 winter care packs were delivered to those most isolated and vulnerable in the county. Very well received. 17 tablets were delivered to 7 participating nursing homes Wicklow in order to assist residents stay connected. The response has been extremely positive, funding for these was through Age Friendly Ireland and the HSE.



Training for setting up a Befriending service in Arklow has started with two sessions complete.

## 17. Comhairle Na Nóg

Funding was secured from DCYA for Comhairle na nÓg. Tablets were purchased for use in each Municipal District

## 18. Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS)

Wicklow has received approval for the following projects under M1 of ORIS 2020

Wicklow	Avondale Link	Trail development and enhancement	Avondale, Rathdrum,	€18,297.00
Wicklow	Tinahely Loops	Upgrade of trail.	Tinahely	€18,000.00
Wicklow	Stratford on Slaney Walks	Provision of three waymarked walking trails	Stratford Village	€17,640.00
Wicklow	Wicklow Long Distance/Multi Day Walks	Marketing and promotion	Countywide	€19,260.00
Wicklow	Brockagh Forest	Upgrade of mountain access route through Brockagh Forest providing access to open hillside at Brockagh Mountain, Mall Hill and Tonelagee	Brockagh Forest	€18,000.00
Wicklow	Sean Lenihan Extension	Extension of Sean Lenihan Way to link into Macreddin village	Macreddin Village	€19,080.00
Wicklow	Baravore Footbridge Replacement	Urgent repair work on footbridge which provides access to Glenmalure Valley	Baravore	€11,250.00
Wicklow Partnership	Wicklow Trail Digitising	Marketing and promotion	Throughout Wicklow	€17,640.00
Wicklow Partnership	Trail Usage Monitoring	Real time data on walker numbers	Across Co Wicklow	€19,080.00

## 19. Sports & Recreation Partnership

Sport Ireland Funding

Wicklow Sports partnership has been allocated the following funding from Sport Ireland for 2021;

- €323,883 in CORE Funding from Sport Ireland to cover staffing, Sport Ireland national programmes, education and training, Women in Sport initiatives and Wicklow specific activity programmes.
- €10,000 towards the Keeping Active theme of the 'Keep Well Campaign' a Resilience and Recovery 2020-2021 Plan for Living with COVID-19.



- €25,000 LSP Community Support Fund to support organisations with Covid-19 related costs and losses in 2020.

## Programmes

- Online Couch to 3K – 6 week programme, starting 11<sup>th</sup> January 2021, with weekly support and motivation. 130 participants have signed up.
- Online Couch to 5K – 6 week programme, starting 11<sup>th</sup> January 2021, with weekly support and motivation. 65 participants signed up.
- Online Men Only Fitcamp – 6 week programme every Wednesday & Friday facilitated by HD Fitness Blessington starting 13<sup>th</sup> January 2021. Places limited to 12.
- Online Intermediate Yoga – 5 week programme starting 12<sup>th</sup> January 2021 hosted by external tutor Louise Curran.
- Online Disability Inclusion Physical Activity for Adults – 6 week programme starting 19<sup>th</sup> January 2021 hosted by external tutor Lisa Redmond.
- Step Challenge for HSE Disability Day Services- Special Schools and Inclusive Sports Club teams – 4 Week virtual programme – starting 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021, with weekly support and t-shirt for participants who complete the challenge.
- Online 5K to 10K - 6 week programme, starting 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021, with weekly support and motivation.

## 20. County Wicklow Library Service

### Wicklow libraries during Level 5 Covid-19 Restrictions

A Home Delivery service of books and items has been introduced for Level 5 restrictions, which is very much appreciated by those served. A fortnightly rota has been established that serves all areas of the county. Emphasis is on those living alone, but can be a little more flexible where time allows. Books are delivered in sealed bags, to ensure safety.

#### Week 1

- Mon Bray / Enniskerry / Kilmacanogue
- Tue Greystones / Delgany / Kilcoole / Newcastle / Newtown
- Wed Wicklow / Rathnew / Ashford/ Glenealy
- Thur Arklow / Red Cross/ Barndarrig / Brittas bay
- Fri Blessington / Lacken / Valleymount / Hollywood

#### Week 2

- Mon Baltinglass / Stratford / Grangecon / Donaghmore / Donard / Dunlavin
- Tue Rathdrum / Annamoe / Laragh/ Roundwood
- Wed Aughrim / Ballinaclesh / Avoca / Ballycoog
- Thur Tinahely / Knockananna / Rathdangan / Kiltegan
- Fri Carnew / Shillelagh / Coolkenno / Ballyconnell

Wicklow online stats 2<sup>nd</sup> highest nationally



Active promoting of online services by library staff, on social media platforms, has been reflected in Wicklow having the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest online loans of e-audio and e-books per head of population (after Cork City), nationally in 2020, (as was the case in 2019).

E-borrowings (audio & e-book)	Wicklow Total	Wicklow Total Users	Loans per head of pop Wicklow	Loans per head of pop National
2019	35,365	3,304	0.25	0.16
2020	69,867	5,871	0.49	0.34

## Library Grants received in 2020

Wicklow County Council Library Service received grants totalling €2.144m in 2020. These included:

- Wicklow Library & Archives (URDF) €1.924m
- Wicklow Library & Archives (DRCD) €25k
- Baltinglass Courthouse / Library (RRDF) €50k
- (1)Small Capital Works Projects (DRCD) €100k
- Sensory Funding Projects (DRCD) €20k
- (2)Dormant Funds Account €20k
- Contribution to Shelton Abbey Library €6k

Included change orders on new Wicklow library, screens for Covid protection county wide & bicycle shelters

Library supports for marginalised, socially excluded and disadvantaged – including digital literacy supports and LGBTI projects

## County Wicklow Archives

Democracy and Change: The 1920 Local Elections in Ireland - New book compiled by the Local Government Archivists Group & the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage

The booklet is available to download as a pdf (English & Irish language versions) at <https://heritage.wicklowheritage.org/new-contributions/new-publication-marking-the-centenary-of-the-1920-local-elections> or a limited number of printed publications are also available. Please email [localgovernment@housing.gov.ie](mailto:localgovernment@housing.gov.ie) with your name and address should you wish to receive a printed booklet in the post.

## LECP Update

**Goal 1: Develop community capacity in disadvantaged communities and engage in urban and rural regeneration**

### Regeneration Funding Schemes:

#### Rural Regeneration Development Fund 2019/2020 (RRDF)

Area	Overview of Proposal	Funding Awarded
Baltinglass	Work ongoing on restoration of the Courthouse reuse as a library/Heritage and Digi-hub with outdoor event space  Public Realm enhancement, parking improvement, pedestrian crossings, ramps, boardwalk and riverside fencing	€2.7mn  (total cost €3,566,968)
Newtownmountkennedy	Consultants being appointed for Main St. Design; mobility /transport plan; community facilities	€357,750

Both projects are underway but progress has been affected by COVID-19 restrictions

### Town & Village 2020

This funding scheme supports economic and social development projects in towns and villages with a population of less than 10,000.

This year there are two elements to the Scheme.

#### 2020 Accelerated Measure

This measure aims to assist communities and local businesses in the delivery of projects that address the short term challenges of social and economic recovery following the COVID-19 emergency. The focus is on adapting to public health requirements, particularly social distancing.

Funding is available up to €25,000 - €40,000 in exceptional circumstances

#### 2020 Town and Village Main Scheme

Round 1 Accelerated		
Dunlavin	Shop Local campaign	Funded €4,500
Roundwood	Public realm	Funded €36000
Comm Centres	Adaptations for COVID measures for 10 centres	Funded €16,200

Round 2 Accelerated – August 14 <sup>th</sup>		
Enniskerry	Car parking improvements, new footpath, new public seating, signage & shopfront improvements	Funded €39,600
Ballinaclesh	Renovations to community centre	Funded €39,600
Laragh	Improvements to pedestrian movements; provision of safe pedestrian spaces and public awning	Funded €24,300
Tinahely	Tinahely Mens Shed building refurbishment after a fire	Funded €4,950
Baltinglass	Painting and planting scheme	Funded €9,000
App	App to encourage shop local – county wide	Funded €22,500
Round 3 Accelerated >10,000 – August 28 <sup>th</sup>		
Kilcoole	Age Friendly benches	Funded €18,000
BCPs	Fit out for BCP centres	Funded €40,000
Rathdrum	Age friendly benches and bus shelter	Funded €24,000
Round 3 Accelerated <10,000 – August 28 <sup>th</sup>		
Greystones 2020/MD	Footpath improvement around Burnaby Park	Funded €40,000
Arklow MD	Biodiversity project	Funded €35,550
Wicklow MD	Outdoor Shelter/awnings	Funded €40,000
Town & Village Main Scheme – September 30 <sup>th</sup>		
Stratford	Community shop/cafe/offices/living over the shop/playground	Funded €199,800
Laragh	BCP and remote working hub Brockagh	Funded €100,000
Enniskerry	Public realm enhancement	Funded €98,000
Avoca	Public realm and recreation facility works	Funded €68,455
Annamoe	Public realm enhancement	Funded €100,000

## CLAR 2020

Wicklow county council have successfully secured €60,000 for two projects under the Clar programme.

Knockananna Community Group and Asknagap secured funding for carparks

Goal 2: Promote Active Citizenship and Public Participation to improve governance, participation and enrich decision making



Age Friendly

Comhairle na nÓg

PPN

**Goal 3: Strategic Direction – Develop high quality integrated services, available to all communities, in particular, disadvantaged communities and vulnerable groups**

## 1. Healthy Wicklow Strategy

Round 3 of Programme is underway but implementation has slowed down because of COVID-19. An extension to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021 has been granted. €30,000 has been allocated to a number of groups under the Healthy Ireland Mental Health Small grants Scheme.

Under the Healthy Ireland Fund, Wicklow County Council has received €67,225 to help with the 'Keep Well' campaign. This is a national campaign, part of the government plan for 'Living with COVID-19' focused on 5 major themes:

- Keeping Active & Being Outdoors – even during winter it is important to help physical and mental health and wellbeing.
- Keeping in Contact – staying connected with people and addressing isolation as person-to-person connection is important to our wellbeing
- Switching Off and Being Creative - Switching Off and Being Creative or learning something new, getting back to nature and finding ways to relax
- Eating Well – by nourishing your mind and body we can positively impact our physical and mental wellbeing.
- Minding Your Mood – relaxation, mindfulness and asking for help if needed.

## 2. Migrant Integration Strategy

The DRAFT Migrant Integration Strategy has recently been completed and was presented to the LCDC. It will go to the full Council meeting in February.

**Goal 4: Develop a vibrant and innovative community and social enterprise sector**

Bray Area Partnership has teamed with Southside partnership and was successful in securing Dormant Accounts funding for a social enterprise support project. SEED, Social Enterprise Expansion and Development, provides both mentoring and training to Social Enterprises in the North Wicklow area.

County Wicklow Partnership's social enterprise project is providing support and training to social enterprises in the rest of the county. It also provides start-up funding through the LEADER Programme.

- A Rural Youth Online Social Enterprise Entrepreneurial Training Programme
- Covid 19 Training Support Programme for new and existing Social Enterprises in Co Wicklow



## Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure

### 1. Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) (Economic)

The Economic Development Unit of the Enterprise and Corporate Services Directorate is charged with implementing the economic actions in the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP).

#### Retail

##### **Bray Town Centre**

The reintroduction of Covid 19 Level 5 restrictions have further delayed this project, which had been progressing well. Arrangements will be made to remove the crane once the restrictions are lifted and the site can be remobilised.

#### Town Teams

Town Teams in Arklow, Blessington, Bray, Greystones and Wicklow continue to meet virtually where possible to progress various projects. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, meetings with a number of community groups and other various stakeholders have been postponed to later dates. This may reflect in the updates below.

##### **Arklow Town Team**

An overall plan for the Kynochs Park area has been drawn up and submitted to Arklow Municipal District to seek funding under the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme. The plan includes adventure/biodiversity trails, signage, a woodland playground, picnic area and a wildflower meadow.

Work has commenced on the design of the Visit Arklow website. A new destination branding strategy for Arklow has been designed and will be used in future marketing communications. The next stage of the project is to develop vibrant social media channels to help drive visitors on to the website and to book directly with local businesses. All businesses involved in the tourism and hospitality industries in Arklow and the surrounding hinterland were invited to submit details for a free listing on the website.



The Harbour to Headwaters project is moving into the design and production of the signage phase and the locations for each sign have been decided. The project also includes interactive online content which will link in with the East Wicklow Rivers Trust website. The project is progressing well and within the timeframe allocated.

## **Bray Town Team / Bray Reopening Committee**

The Bray Town Reopening Committee met on 13th January 2021 and discussed the current Level 5 restrictions and how they are affecting the town. Discussions took place with An Garda Síochána regarding Operation Fanacht and what Bray Municipal District can do to help at this time. Bray MD through our social media channels will be encouraging people to stay at home.

## **Blessington Town Team**

Due to current restrictions the meetings of Blessington Town Team are now being held on line;

- The Blessington Town Team and Baltinglass MD continue to work closely together on a number of initiatives to promote a Shop Local Campaign "Wonderful West Wicklow. It was decided to postpone the Customer Appreciation weekend and it was agreed to hold it in the lead up to Valentine's Day or Easter depending on the level of Covid – 19 restrictions at the time.
- Members expressed their appreciation for the volunteers who continue to deliver the Hello Neighbour Campaign.
- Blessington Tidy Towns are continuing to do clean ups and developing plan for 2021.
- Blessington and District Forum has applied under Community Enhancement Scheme for Age Friendly appropriate seating in the Town Centre and surrounding areas. This seating will compliment the seating being developed by Baltinglass MD.
- There was a detailed discussion on the development of Blessington Greenway and providing changing place facility in the interpretative centre for the Greenway.
- Members received an update on the activities of Blessington Access group and the 'Empowering Parents' seminar was delivered online over the course of three weeks with a good attendance at each of the sessions.



## **Greystones 2020**

Greystones 2020 are currently working with the harbour developers to install high quality panels in the Marina Village, reflecting the past history of Greystones and some of its prominent residents. The panels will initially be erected around the undeveloped section in the harbour, but will be relocated to various locations around the town eventually.

## **Wicklow Town Team**

Following on from the establishment of the reopening committee and the “Shop Local Support Wicklow” campaign the Members of Wicklow Municipal District in consultation with the Town Team and Wicklow Town & District Chamber of Commerce decided to continue with last year’s arrangement for the two hours free Christmas parking in all Pay and Display Parking areas in Wicklow town from the 1<sup>st</sup> December to the 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2021 inclusive with free parking provided at the Murrough and St Manntan’s Car Park for shop owners and their staff in order to free up spaces for their customers in the Abbey Street, Church Street Car Parks and the Main Street.

## **Temporary Closure of Main Street**

This year an initiative from the Town Team to trial a temporary closure of the Main Street from 12:00 to 17:00 on Sunday, 6<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> December 2020 was implemented and was successfully carried out with the assistance of volunteers, Wicklow MD staff and members of the Town Team. The closure helped to facilitate Social Distancing requirements to allow for safe Christmas Shopping within Wicklow Town.

## **Best Dressed Window**

Wicklow Municipal District together with the Wicklow Town Team, Wicklow Town & District Chamber of Commerce sponsored the Best Dressed Christmas Window Competition. The winner and runner-up received a Christmas Hamper and Wicklow Town Vouchers. This year the winners were decided on by members of the public by online voting on the Wicklow Town Facebook page.



## **Town Re-Opening Committees**

Following the success of the Bray Re-opening Committee, Wicklow County Council proposed the establishment of re-opening committees in each Municipal District – the purpose of these committees is to support businesses as they re-open and to encourage members of the community to support local business.

Membership of the Re-Opening Committees consists of the MD Cathaoirleach (Chair), MD Manager, MD Administrator, MD Engineer, Chair of the Town Team, Representative of the Chamber of Commerce and An Garda Síochána. A plenary town re-opening meeting will be held in February for Town Teams once arrangements for the lifting of the current Covid 19 restrictions are known.

### **Re-opening Business**

Outdoor tables and chairs licensing under section 254, to support social distancing for business to re-open has been extended to the end of March 2021.

## **Town and Village Funding**

Under the latest round of the Town and Village Renewal Scheme, €567,083 in funding was announced for projects across Wicklow. This funding will assist towns and villages to implement measures that can help them respond to the challenges associated with COVID-19. Under this latest round, the funding will be divided among five projects across the county. This includes projects in Annamoe, Avoca, Stratford, Laragh and also Enniskerry for public realm works that will include pedestrian access, the development of a community garden and remedial works to the village clock tower.

## **Love Wicklow, Shop Local Campaign**

The Love Wicklow, Shop Local campaign, launched by Wicklow County Council in December, aims to encourage Wicklow residents to support local business. The campaign was initially launched in December to promote local businesses for the Christmas period but will be given a further boost to coincide with Town Re-opening arrangements.

The Love Wicklow, Shop Local campaign supports individual town initiatives around the county and the Visit Wicklow and the Wicklow Naturally promotional campaigns.



## Tourism Strategy and Marketing Plan 2018-2022

### Tourism

The strategy sets out a number of challenging but achievable priorities along with a series of detailed actions to be implemented over the next 5 years

The Key Priorities are:

1. Develop New Accommodation
2. Develop Key Towns as Visitor Hubs
3. Develop a Masterplan for Glendalough
4. Grow Thematic Experiences
5. Market our County by Developing A Common Narrative

A Tourism Implementation Group has been established to oversee these actions and drive all sectors towards helping Wicklow achieve the target of €200m in tourism revenue by 2023.

Accommodation: The County Wicklow Accommodation working group engaged the services of a consultant to assist the Accommodation Working Group in preparing a dedicated study building on Failte Ireland's Accommodation Toolkit and contributing in terms of information and advice to the preparation of the related prospectus aimed at attracting the development of tourism accommodation in the County.

The draft report was circulated to the Accommodation Working Group for review in December and a final draft of the study has been now agreed. The next step is to develop a prospectus aimed at tourism providers to invest in County Wicklow.

Destination Town Funding: An application to Failte Ireland on behalf of Wicklow Town was made in respect of Destination Town Funding and funding has been awarded to develop visitor amenities in Wicklow Town.

Wicklow County Council are currently preparing tender documents seeking design and build options for the redevelopment of the Abbey Grounds and enhancements to the Church Hill area, on the approach to Wicklow Church of Ireland.



## Glendalough Masterplan and Wicklow Visitor Orientation Study

Faite Ireland, with its strategic partners OPW, NPWS and with Wicklow County Council is engaging with Consarc Consultants to develop a tourism master-plan for Glendalough and the Wicklow Mountains National Park and a Visitor Orientation Plan for County Wicklow. Consarc leads a multi-disciplinary team consisting of tourism, outdoor recreation, environmental, heritage, public realm, and traffic and parking consultants to develop the suite of plans. Stakeholder engagement is due to commence in early February and will be well publicised.

The stakeholder engagement will be conducted online initially until Covid 19 restrictions are lifted to allow in person meetings to take place. The stakeholder engagement will be aimed at understanding community and visitors needs, orientation, delivery of services, while addressing issues such as parking and congestion the development of new visitor facilities, dispersal of visitors across the County, and improvement and enhancement of popular visitor sites, all compatible with environmental, heritage and conservation objectives and compliance with statutory legislation and government policy.

New Visit Wicklow website: the new [visitwicklow.ie](https://visitwicklow.ie) website has been live since October 2020 and includes extended new functionality. Work is currently ongoing on enhancing the content and imagery of the site.

Wicklow Passport: The Wicklow Passport is aimed at encouraging locals and visitors to explore Wicklow have been introduced by the Wicklow Tourism Alliance. Passport holders can collect various Wicklow Stamps and discover the activities, attractions, and hospitality on offer across the county. Loosely based on the 'Camino Passport' in Spain, the Wicklow Passport is a series of stamps that can only be collected at the respective towns or villages represented on each stamp.

The Wicklow Passport now also has three new Ambassadors from Asia: <https://visitwicklow.ie/wicklow-passport-from-asia-to-wicklow-meet-wicklows-newest-ambassadors> and plans are now also in place to finalise five new stamps to be launched in spring for Kilcoole/Newcastle, Delgany/Kilmacanogue, Redcross/Brittis Bay and Carnew & Donard.

Plans are also in place for an extensive local and national campaign to promote The Wicklow Passport, with the campaign having received the support of Faite Ireland. The Wicklow Passport is ideal to reach the domestic market and bring visitors to Wicklow.



EcoTrail: EcoTrail Wicklow is scheduled to take place in September 2021. The main focus will be on the domestic market but working in partnership with Ecotrail International to plan for international promotion.

Covid 19: Failte Ireland, Wicklow County Council, LEO Wicklow are providing a range of supports and advice for tourism providers and are following all advice and guidelines set out by NPHET and the Government.

## Rural and Urban Regeneration Development Fund Grant Applications

There are currently three 2018 URDF projects underway; Arklow Historic Town Core, Wicklow Library and Fitzwilliam Square and the Bray Public Transport Bridge. URDF applications were also submitted in May 2020 for the Regeneration of the Arklow Quays, Bray Harbour Regeneration and the regeneration of Wicklow's Waterfront.

Arklow Historic Town Core: Tender was recently advertised on Etenders with a closing date of 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2021. The Tender assessment to appoint a contractor will be carried out once all submissions have been received.

Fitzwilliam Square Public Realm: This project is currently under construction (deemed essential works) and it is envisaged that works will be completed by the end of January 2021.

Bray Public Transport Bridge: it is the Councils intention to advertise the Part 8 for this project in Q1 of 2021. (The current planning permission would expire prior to the substantial completion of the bridge). Detailed design will continue and it is planned to go to tender for the construction of the bridge later this year.

Work is ongoing on the Baltinglass Town Centre Regeneration project which was awarded €2.7m in 2019 under the Rural Regeneration & Development Fund. The project focuses on two key elements; Restoration of the Courthouse with its reuse as a library/heritage centre and Digi-hub, with outdoor event space and public realm enhancements including parking improvement, pedestrian crossings, ramps, boardwalk and riverside fencing. ARUP Consultants have been appointed and it is currently at the design stage of project.

Wicklow County Council was awarded Category 2 funding of €357,750 in respect of Newtownmountkennedy for the design and plans for upgrades to the public realm, street landscaping, traffic management, public spaces and community facilities. The funding will be matched by a 25%





contribution from the Council's resources bringing the investment to over €500,000. This funding builds on the €150,000 that Newtownmountkennedy received in 2018 from the Town and Village Enhancement Scheme, which funded streetscape improvements in the town.

Wicklow County Council has acquired the old St Joseph's site in Rathdrum from the HSE. The development of the site will be at the core of the latest proposals for the regeneration of Rathdrum. The site is centrally located beside St Saviour's Church, adjacent to the Memorial Park and car park, with children's playground and adult gym nearby.

A Rural Regeneration Development Fund application (RRDF) was submitted to the Department of Rural and Community Development on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020 seeking funding for the development of a multi-use Community and Enterprise Centre at the site, increased connectivity through improved road and pedestrian access and enhancements to public realm. The proposed development will help to stimulate further growth in social, community and economic activities in the wider Rathdrum area.

It is a requirement of the current round of RRDF funding that all the necessary planning consents are in place by the end of February. The Part 8 for this development will be put before the members of Arklow Municipal District on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

## Maritime

Maritime Strategic Review for County Wicklow

The Strategic Review authored by Gavin Doherty Associates has identified ways in which the economic base of County Wicklow can be strengthened through its ports and harbours and has formulated recommendation for Wicklow County Council.

The review was endorsed by the Economic Development and Enterprise Support SPC in March 2020 and will be put before the Council at the earliest opportunity.

Key Recommendations:

- To maximise the Offshore Wind Opportunity
- To investigate the feasibility of a new harbour facility at Wicklow
- Aquaculture Support
- Marketing Strategy for County Wicklow as a Coastal Tourist Destination



The Strategic Review is at the core of the applications made for Climate Action and URDF funding.

## Offshore Wind Energy

Seven Offshore Projects have been designated Relevant Projects by the government and are in line to receive a valid grid connection offer. Six of these projects are in the Irish Sea with four off the coast of Wicklow.

- Dublin Array RWE (2 projects Bray and Kish Banks)
- Codling Wind Park Fred Olsen/EDF (2 projects, Codling I and Codling II)

The Development of the designated Relevant Projects is dependent on the enactment of the Marine Planning and Development Management Bill, 2020 expected in 2021.

- The expansion by SSE Renewables of the Arklow Bank wind Farm is proceeding under an extant consent process. The Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage had last October granted a foreshore licence to carry out site investigation works in an area off the coast at Arklow, however this has been challenged in the High Court by an environmental activist. Separately, the developer of the project SSE Renewables proposes to make an application to Wicklow County Council for the development of the offshore operations facility at Arklow Harbour. SSE plan to locate their sub-station at Avoca River Park.
- Codling Bank has appointed consultants to engage in the necessary environmental investigations in anticipation of being in a position to apply for the necessary planning consents
- Dublin Array has completed a non statutory public consultation process

## Key Milestones

- The anticipated enactment of the Marine Planning and Development Bill
- The Renewable Energy Support Scheme (RESS) Auction whereby the companies bid for a grid connection ( expected 2021)

The estimated value of each of the above projects is between €1 and €2 billion. In addition to the benefits provided to the community, including investment, employment, training and skills development, and the opportunity to develop Wicklow as a Centre of Excellence for Offshore Wind Energy, a mandatory



Community Benefit Fund must be provided by all RESS projects . This will be of significant value for the County Wicklow community.

Council officials are engaging with Enterprise Ireland and the educational bodies with regard to developing a business cluster and skills and training requirements.

Maritime Business Development Group: The next MBDG will take place on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

## The Food and Beverage Strategy

Wicklow County Council was awarded Leader funding for the implementation of the Food and Beverage Strategy.

Work for December slowed, as December days for delivery was broadly transferred into January and February. However, a series of activities took place:

- 1) Establishment of Wicklow Naturally as a Company Limited by Guarantee, with two initial directors. The company is able to use the name Wicklow Naturally, which also offers legal protection around the use of the name for commercial purposes – a significant benefit for the organisation.
- 2) Directors Training. A directors training programme was put together to outline the legal and executive responsibilities of the roles. As part of this programme, planning has taken place for 2021, with key events identified and agreed in principle and detailed plans and budget for each event. The training session was recorded and has been put on a secure YouTube site.
- 3) Director recruitment started, with a range of individuals being contacted. At present, there are 7 concrete expressions of interest, and it is likely that one or two others will also come forward.
- 4) Website and Social media training. A number of Wicklow Naturally members were trained on how to post to the website and social media accounts
- 5) A training session on applying for (and winning) Foodie Destinations Ireland was run for the group. This outlined what Foodie Destinations Ireland were looking for, the steps which would need to be taken, the characteristics of previous winning bids etc. This training was recorded and put on a secure YouTube site.
- 6) Preparation took place for a Wicklow Naturally group presentation to ALDI. The event was held on the 5<sup>th</sup> January..
- 7) Preparation of a final report on Wicklow Naturally has commenced (but will not be complete until the end of the contract).
- 8) Membership is sitting at 92 at present, although about 10 still need to submit the information for the website directory.

## 2. Local Enterprise Office (LEO)

LEO Objectives
<p>To foster an enterprise culture and stimulate enterprise at local level by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promotion of the enterprise message at local level.</li> <li>- Working with the relevant stakeholders in the county to foster entrepreneurship.</li> <li>- Delivering appropriate enterprise training and mentoring to entrepreneurs.</li> <li>- Providing funding options to entrepreneurs, early stage promoters and viable businesses to support growth and development of micro enterprises.</li> <li>- Developing a progression pathway for clients to Enterprise Ireland</li> <li>- Acting as a 'First Stop Shop' for business information and referral</li> </ul>

METRICS: Grants	HISTORICAL	TARGETS	YEAR TO DATE
	2019	2020	2020
Grants Approved (number/ value)			
- Measure 1	- 33/€888,954.62	- Meet Demand	- 28/€712,315
- Technical Assistance for Micro Exporters	- 8/€11,427	- Meet Demand	- 3/€3,850

NB: Ability to meet demand is influenced by the amount of funding allocated to the LEO

METRICS: Training/ Capacity Building	HISTORICAL	TARGETS	YEAR TO DATE
	2019	2020	2020
Total No. of All Programmes (Training/Networking/Events/Seminars)	53	55	58
Start Your Own Business Participant numbers (included in total training programmes)	73	75	90
Total No. of all Participants participating in above Programmes	832	800	1447
Women in Business Network Number of Meetings	6	6	10

METRICS: Business Advice & Mentoring	HISTORICAL	TARGETS	YEAR TO DATE
	2019	2020	2020
Number of new clients added to database *criteria have been amended for this metric	546	470*	1302
Number of One to One Business Advice meetings including Businesses assigned a mentor	458	440	761

METRICS: Student Enterprise Programmes	HISTORICAL	TARGETS	
Academic Year	2019/2020	2020/2021	Year to Date
No. of Secondary Student Participants	1121		962

METRICS: Irelands Best Young Entrepreneur	HISTORICAL	TARGETS	
Academic Year	2019	2020	Year to Date 2020
Number of Applications	57	Programme review	Programme review

Trading Online Voucher	HISTORICAL	TARGETS	
No of Trading Online Vouchers approved	2019	2020	Year to Date 2020
Trading Online Vouchers	39	No Limit	433

Lean For Micro Project	HISTORICAL	TARGETS	YEAR TO DATE
	2019	2020	2020
No. of Companies who have undertaken a Lean for Micro Assessment by a Lean Expert	11	11	9

## January 2021 Activities

- ✚ A dedicated team of Brexit Advisors are in place working with companies to continue to work with clients to help them adapt to new Brexit reality.
- ✚ 2 days of Brexit one to one mentoring clinics on January 12<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> are delivered with 12 client companies availing of the service.
- ✚ Prepare Your Business for Customs workshop scheduled for 26<sup>th</sup> January with 20 businesses registered to attend.
- ✚ A high level of demand for business advice clinics is being met by business advisors providing additional clinics which are run remotely
- ✚ Despite School closures the Student Enterprise Programme continues to be delivered remotely with online resources being provided to all participating Secondary Schools in Co.Wicklow.
- ✚ The November Network of Entrepreneurial Women network meeting will take place on 6<sup>th</sup> January via Zoom.



- ✦ Extremely high volume of applications for the Trading Online Voucher Scheme were received by the deadline of 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020 in order to avail of the 90% grant. The grant has now reverted to 50% from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021.
- ✦ Weekly newsletter is circulated to clients on supports, training courses, events and other relevant information.
- ✦ Social media and LEO website updates are carried out a number of times a week to raise awareness and promote the LEO supports.
- ✦ Payment claims for the Business Continuity Voucher Scheme are finalised.
- ✦ National LEO 'Look for Local' campaign is promoted and supported by LEO Wicklow.
- ✦ The Management Development Programme for managers continues MDP continues until the 11th of February 2021

## Training

Upcoming courses include the following:-

The Spring Summer 2021 training programme offers a combination of core training courses, digital marketing clinics and Covid Crisis related courses to LEO clients.

Upcoming courses/workshops for January/February 2021 include:-

- ✦ The first of 5 Start Your Own Business Courses for 2021 commenced on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> January.
- ✦ A two day Bookkeeping for Small Businesses course commenced on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> January and was booked out.
- ✦ A Trading Online Voucher Seminar took place on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2021 with 109 participants.
- ✦ Learn how to Rebuild & Grow Your Business in a Brexit and COVID World – this is a new course taking place over 4 sessions commencing on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> February.
- ✦ Additional Brexit one to one mentoring is scheduled for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> February to meet ongoing demand as all sessions in January were booked out.
- ✦ For those businesses who have availed of the Trading Online Voucher Scheme in the past an exciting new course is now on offer 'How to Maximise Your New Website' scheduled for Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> February.



## 3. Planning and Development

### County Development Plan Review

Notice to review the current County Development Plan 2016 - 2022 and prepare a new County Development Plan 2021 - 2027 was given on the 6th November 2019. Closing date for submissions was Friday 10th January 2020. 156 submissions were received. All of the submissions are available to view on the website: <https://www.wicklow.ie/Living/Services/Planning/Development-Plans-Strategies/National-Regional-County-Plans/Wicklow-County-Development-Plan-2021-2027/Issues-Paper>

The First Chief Executive's Report was issued to the Elected Members on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2020. This Report forms part of the statutory procedure for the review of the existing plan and the preparation of the new plan. Its purpose is to report on the outcome of the statutory consultation process and to set out the Chief Executive's opinion on the issues raised in the submissions received.

The report is available to view on the website: <https://www.wicklow.ie/Living/Services/Planning/Development-Plans-Strategies/National-Regional-County-Plans/Wicklow-County-Development-Plan-2021-2027/Stage-2>

Directions regarding the preparation of the Draft County Development Plan were discussed at the September Council meeting. The Forward Planning team is now in the process of preparing the Draft County Development Plan. When finalised, it will be issued to the Members for their consideration prior to going on public display in 2021.

### Heritage

#### Wicklow Heritage & Biodiversity Plans

- Brittas Bay Biodiversity Project - Programme of activities completed and recoupment made to NPWS under the National Biodiversity Action Plan fund. Invasive Species management undertaken with Wicklow MD staff Nov-Dec 2020.
- Production and distribution of, '*Garden Wildlife of Wicklow*' information poster produced Dec 2020 for distribution in Spring 2021
- Local Biodiversity Action Plans for towns and villages in County Wicklow: A joint action with County Wicklow Partnership supported by the LEADER programme. Due to commence Spring 2021.
- Wicklow Community Archaeology Project: A programme of activities complete and recoupment made.
- Our Wicklow Heritage Network: Ongoing co-ordination of this multi-platform website in 2020. This project was shortlisted for the Chamber Ireland Excellence in Local Government Award 2020.
- Community Monument Fund (CMF); Medieval Arklow project desktop research and interpretation focussing on Arklow's Ormonde Castle successfully completed and funding recouped.
- Creative Wicklow Plan: In 2020 three short films were produced under the 'River Liffey Stories' theme and six short films produced in partnership with LAWPRO under the 'Avoca River Stories' theme. These films are released online via dedicated social media platforms commencing in Dec 2020 and continuing in 2021.

- Protected Structures Grants: The Heritage Office co-ordinated the BHIS and HSF schemes in county Wicklow on behalf of Wicklow County Council Planning Section. €60000 was allocated under the Built Heritage Investment Scheme, €65,000 under the Historic Structures Fund. All projects were overseen, payments made to applicants and recoupment of funding drawn down.

## Planning Applications

A total of 101 valid applications were received during December, these include applications as follows:

Type of Development	Number Received
Individual Houses	23 (22 refer to rural Hse applications)
Housing Developments*	04
Agricultural Structures	03
Commercial	08
Other Developments**	63
Total	101

\* Large hsg Development

PRR 20/1277, 6 dwellings, Ballard, Ballinacash, Rathdrum – Pixier Homes Ltd

PRR 20/1296, 92 dwellings, Ballynerrin, Wicklow – Lusra Teo

PRR 20/1322 7 dwellings, Ballinacor West & East, Barndarraig – Rising Sons Ltd

\*\*Other Developments include, Porch/Sunroom, Extensions, finger sign post, Well, change of use, Hoarding, relocation of vehicular entrance, extend the appropriate period of permission, various amendments/modifications to previous planning permission, conversion, retention, boundary screen wall, attic conversion, reclamation of land, effluent treatment system & percolation area.

Decisions issued in respect of 85 applications in December, being:

Type of Development	Number of Decisions
Housing Developments	04
Individual Houses	21 (16 refer to a rural Hse)
Other Developments	59
Other Developments Requiring EIA	01
Total	85

In relation to decisions issued between January to December 2020, in comparison to the same period for 2019, the details are as follows:

	31/12/2020	31/12/2019
Total Number of decisions issued	898	949
Total Number of decisions to grant	789	801
% Grant Rate	88%	84%



## No. of Applications withdrawn

December 07 (4 refer to rural hse applications)

\*Withdrawals may not have been lodged in the month of December

## **Planning Enforcement**

### Enforcement

New Files	06
Advisory Letters	22
Warning Letters	03
Enforcement Notices	01
Legal files	02
Closed	11

### Circuit Court December:

- 11 Cases adjourned to next sitting
- 01 Cases resolved and struck out costs paid
- 01 Case Orders on Consent
- 01 Case Attachment & Committal Order issued by Court

### District Court:

- 1 Case adjourned

### Vacant Sites

- 25 no. sites now stand on the Register.
- 01 sites on appeal
- 01 appeal decided – confirm entry & demand levy
- 02 Section 12(4) Notices

### Derelict Sites

- 04 No. of sites on Register

### Short Term Letting

- 17 Applications for Registration received in 2020
- Total received to date: 37 (20 from 2019 and 17 from 2020)
- Total files from 2019 is 27
- Total files from 2020 is 69
- 3 complaints received in 2020
- 1 warning letter issued
- 4 properties from 2019 being investigated at present
- 52 properties from 2020 being investigated at present

## 4. Environmental Services

### Waste Management

No. of Complaints Opened	115
No. of Cases Closed, Resolved or Completed	154
No of Litter Fines Issued	10
No. of Waste Management Files Opened	1
No. of Warning Letters Issued	0
No. of Abandoned Car Notices Issued	7
No. of Burning Applications Granted	3
No. of Temporary Signs Granted	0
No. of Notices issued under Section 14 of the Waste Management Act	2
No. of fixed penalty notices issued	0
No. of files prepared for Court included in Court lists	45
Income – Litter	€3,270.00
Income – Waste Management	€2,405.00

### Climate Action

The Climate Action Team is currently made up as follows

Mary Cahill – Climate Action Officer  
Jim Callery A Environmental Awareness Officer  
Deirdre Burns Heritage Officer  
Pam O'Reilly Assistant Staff Officer

The last SPC for Climate Action and Biodiversity was held on 9<sup>th</sup> December via Teams and provided an update for the members on action items.

#### Priority Action items:

- EV Chargers will be installed at Shoreline Greystones, Main Street Blessington and the area office in Blessington in the coming weeks .
- A tree Policy to be drawn up for the County. UCD Landscape architecture department has been appointed to co-ordinate the tree management policy for Wicklow County Council - a draft policy document is expected by early 2021.
- Woodland Creation Project: All departments are asked to identify public lands which could be suitable for community woodlands. CARO will issue guidance on this project which is being funded by the DAFM. The Climate Action Officer is liaising with Teagasc advisor to appraise each identified site.
- The submission to Minister Harris for funding for the research project on Avoca Catchment was unsuccessful and we are following up on other possible funding streams for this project
- A Foamstream machine has been purchased from Furlong Equipment Ltd and will initially be deployed in the Bray Municipal District.
- A policy document is being drawn up on the use of Glyphosate by Wicklow County Council and will be submitted to the next SPC for approval.

- The roll out of the national training programme has commenced. Training for Wicklow County Council elected members and senior management is scheduled for 29<sup>th</sup> January 2021. The roll out of the training will continue for all staff throughout 2021.

## Energy

Wicklow County Council are working with 3 Counties Energy Agency to complete an application to the SEAI for BEC 2021 grant funding.

## SEC

- Covid 19 restrictions interrupted progress of Sustainable Energy Committees. Grant amended deadlines have been agreed with SEAI to allow for the continuation and completion of Energy Map Plans for Glenmalure, Laragh, NewtownmountKennedy, Greystones/Delgany. Work progressed on all four during December
- Glenmalure is now completed with final report approved and submitted to SEAI. A claim for grant payment has been made to SEAI.
- Laragh is also complete and due to be presented to the Community, Wicklow and Blessington have just started their Energy Map Plans holding their first meetings with consultants in early December which allows some work to continue off site in January. An online community engagement event is planned for Wicklow SEC on the 28<sup>th</sup> of January. Kilcoole and Enniskerry are the newest communities to join the programme.
- Following on from the webinar we have also been contacted by groups in Carnew and Kiltegan
- An online seminar was held on the 17<sup>th</sup> of November to promote the programme in Wicklow with SEAI mentors and 3CEA and had an audience of 50 participants.
- Environmental awareness
- The Relove fashion competition (a Wicklow County Council initiative) piloted successfully in 2019 in partnership with Meath, Westmeath and Dublin City Councils and the Rediscovery Centre in Ballymun was relaunched for 2020. Six more local authorities joined the competition, the focus is on producing wearable clothing, design and good use of skill with textiles will be strengthened in the competition to develop circularity skills among students in textiles and fashion. A good level of entries was achieved in Wicklow with 23 teams from six secondary schools. The delivery of a virtual final is planned for February 2021. Wicklow County Council received an Excellence in Local Government Award for this project.
- The Sustainable Development Goals mapping tool has been delivered with the map developed in house by our GIS Officer. An online seminar was held with the PPN to launch it publicly, with over 50 participants attending. Work is ongoing to promote its use and the wider engagement with the Sustainable Development Goals across the services of Wicklow County Council. A case study on the project has been written and submitted to CARO for distribution nationwide.
- A new tree grant has been developed to facilitate more planting of trees by local groups in County Wicklow. 21 applications were received with 18 approved for grant funding following consultation with the relevant Municipal Districts.
- The EPA put out a call for projects under the Local Authority Prevention Network, LAPN. An application for funding was submitted by Wicklow County Council. The project applied for is to develop composting solutions for the management of the high levels of grass production

which must be lifted when green space is being managed for pollinators. This project will help to facilitate Wicklow County Council's commitment to designate spaces for pollinators.

- The annual Tidy Towns, Estates and Environmental Awards were launched at the beginning of July and judged in August and September. Announcement of the results and payment to winners will be undertaken this month.
- Several projects were funded under the Anti-litter grant. Two were focused on schools. The first one providing a toolkit with storybooks, classroom activities and equipment to carry out litter picks in ten schools. Workshops on the theme of Leave No Trace were provided for 12 schools. An audio device messaging campaign has also been funded which is delivering three targeted anti-litter campaigns over twelve months on the subjects of Dumping at Bottle Banks, Dog Fouling and Keeping Blue Flag beaches litter free. The bottle bank campaign was undertaken first to correspond with peak usage over the Christmas period.
- The annual Christmas Decoration Competition was held as in school event this year. Twenty one schools participated with a prize given to each school to be awarded to the best in school. Schools were invited to send photos of their decorations in to WCC and some of these were shared on Wicklow's social media accounts in the run up to Christmas.
- Following on from the successful Stop Food Waste recipe campaign with Catherine Fulvio in July a new Christmas themed campaign was undertaken in December. A series of seven short videos were developed with Catherine Fulvio covering preparation for Christmas, the management of food at Christmas and using the leftovers. Wicklow worked with six other local authorities to fund and deliver the campaign. In Wicklow 64,000 people viewed the videos on social media with 41,000 watching for greater than three seconds, the time it takes for a message to be retained.

## Recycling Centres

- Recycling centres have been incredibly busy over the Christmas period. Overall for 2020 the amount of glass recycled increased from 3170 tonnes in 2019 to 4277 tonnes in 2020 a 32% increase and additional cost of €50,000 to the council. This is likely due to change of socialisation patterns caused by the closure of pubs and restaurants. Cardboard recycled increased by 16% for the first 10 months of the year but will likely be higher when the busy Christmas period is taken into account due to increased packaging from online shopping.
- An order has been placed for a new baler and conveyor for Wicklow Recycling Centre, the old baler was 40 years old and no longer fit for purpose. The new baler will be far easier to operate and will increase efficiency and safety at the centre.
- A new Welfare unit will be placed in Avoca Recycling Centre on 19<sup>th</sup> January resulting in significantly improved welfare facilities for the staff on the site.

## Brittas Bay Carparks

- Carparks in both Brittas Bay North and Brittas Bay South remain open to the public for free for the winter.
- Wicklow County Council are not in a position to provide toilets and bins service and ask that the public who use the beach would leave no trace of their visit and bring home their own litter.

Dog walking is allowed during the winter period and horse riding is also allowed during the day on week days and before 10am on weekends and bank holidays

- A number of small dumping issues continue to occur and the Environmental Wardens are monitoring the situation and following up on any evidence that is found

## Whitestown Remediation Project

Wicklow County Council have employed Fehily Timoney & Company to advise on the remediation of the site at Whitestown, in accordance with the judgments of Mr. Justice Humphreys.

- Draft remediation plan was lodged with Brownfield restoration Ireland Limited (BRIL) on 27<sup>th</sup> November. BRIL now have 3 months to make a submission on the draft plan.

## Harbours and Ports

### Harbours

- Boardwalk and Public Park part of the Greystones Harbour Development opened on the 14<sup>th</sup> December.
- Section 146B application for alterations to the harbour/marina mixed development recently submitted by Sispar Ltd to An Bord Pleanála on the 29/10/2020. By notice dated the 13/01/2021 the Board has invited submissions or observations to be made to it in respect of the plans and particulars submitted by Sispar Limited regarding the proposed alteration. Application is now on display in County Buildings and on the Wicklow County Council website.
- The Harbours Unit is currently compiling a preliminary list of projects in Wicklow and Arklow for funding under the 2021 DAFM programme.
- Proposed revised harbours dues are to go to Arklow and Wicklow Municipal District for consultation only. Copy attached to this report.

We intend commencing a review of the Wicklow and Arklow Bye-laws in late January 2021

### Greystones Harbour

The 16 acre linear park and boardwalk linking the Cliff Walk to the southern end of the Greystones Harbour opened in December 2020.

## Pollution Control

### Pollution Response & Investigation

- 5 Water pollution complaints were received and investigated.
- 2 Noise Pollution complaints were received and investigated.
- 2 Air pollution complaints were received and investigated.
- 1 Sewage complaints were received and investigated.

## Private Water Supplies

- Of the 12 Private water supplies monitored and 5 were found non-compliant with pH indicator parametric values.
- 2 were found non-compliant with microbiological parametric values. All 17 were compliant with the microbiological and chemical parameters.
- 1 group water scheme was found non-compliant with manganese indicator parameter and a Do not Consume notice is already in place based on health advice from the HSE.
- The water suppliers concerned were requested to take remedial action.
- 2 boil water notices were lifted from private water supplies after improvement works and obtaining compliant test results.
- 1 boil water notice was issued on a private water supply following receiving non-compliant microbiological and health advice from the HSE.

## Petrol Vapour Recovery Regulations

- 3 Petrol Vapour installations (Petrol Filling Stations) were inspected.

## Water Framework Directive National Monitoring Programme

- 2 Lakes were monitored involving 9 sample stations for checking compliance with environmental quality standards
- 8 Rivers were monitored at 8 stations involving 15 samples for compliance with environmental quality standards.

## Planning & Development

- 10 environmental reports on referred planning applications/consultations were completed concerned agricultural, commercial and forestry development.

## Well Grants

- 2 New Applications
- 4 Number of New Wells
- 7 Number of New Pumps
- 10 Treatment/Disinfection Equipment
- 19 Inspections in advance and after works.
- A revised water grant scheme is now in operation effective from date of issue of Departmental Circular. This financial assistance is towards the improvement of water supply which is not wholesome or clean or is not sufficient to meet the domestic needs of a household in the opinion of the Housing Authority.
- There are 3 categories of grant available for houses of 7 year and older, a 100% treatment grant of €1,000, rehabilitation grant for pumps/well protection of 85% cost up to €



3,000 and a new well grant of 85% of cost up to € 5,000. 3 quotations for each grant category of work are required from tax compliant contractors.

- The Department of Housing has recently confirmed that any non-compliance with the parameter limit value in Tables A, B and C of EU Drinking Water Regulations 2014 is eligible for consideration of a treatment grant of €1,000.

## Arklow Flood Relief Scheme

- The Office of Public Works (OPW) and Wicklow County Council have commissioned Byrne Looby PH McCarthy (BLP) and Arup to undertake engineering and environmental studies respectively to assess and develop a viable, cost effective and sustainable Flood Relief Scheme for the Avoca River, Arklow.
- The process of identifying a preferred scheme to address fluvial and coastal flooding in Arklow includes a detailed assessment of a range of flood risk management measures to determine their technical, economic, social and environmental viability.
- Following a detailed scheme options assessment process, the series of measures that will make up the emerging preferred flood relief scheme for the Avoca River, Arklow have now been identified.
- A number of changes in design have resulted in the need to update the Public realm drawings which has been carried out and was presented to the Arklow District Members on 5<sup>th</sup> of November 2020.
- An Environmental Impact Assessment Report is currently being prepared to submit to An Bord Pleanála.

## 5. Transportation, Water and Emergency Services

### Public lighting

	30th November 2020	7th December 2020	14th December 2020	21st December 2020	4th January 2021
Access Issues (Attended)	12	12	14	16	16
Cable Fault (Attend)	12	15	10	11	7
ESB Required (Attended)	40	30	32	31	32
Knock Down (Attended)	3	3	3	3	3
Materials required	2	2	2	2	3
No Supply	5	6	5	7	6
On Hold	19	19	19	18	19
Submitted	398	341	300	270	263
Traffic Management Required	4	4	11	12	13
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>495</b>	<b>432</b>	<b>396</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>362</b>
Percentage of lights not working	3.32%	2.90%	2.66%	2.48%	2.43%

	ARKLOW MD	BALTINGLASS MD	BRAY MD	GREYSTONES MD	WICKLOW MD	Grand Total
Access Issues (Attended)	3		8	2	5	18
Cable Fault (Attend)	1			5	1	7
ESB Required(Attended)	8	3	4	2	14	31
Knock Down (Attended)	1	1			1	3
Materials required	1		1		1	3
No Supply	1	4	1	1		7
On hold		1	14	2	2	19
Submitted	38	81	54	44	61	278
Traffic Management Required	10		1	1	3	15
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>381</b>
Percentage Not Working	2.16%	3.80%	2.51%	2.08%	2.46%	2.56%



## Transportation Statistics (General)

	Total 2019	Total 2020	November 2020	December 2020
<b>Solicitors Queries</b>	775	842	<b>104</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Road Closure Applications</b>	40	23	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Road Opening Licences</b>	1418	1279	<b>138</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>Abnormal Load Applications</b>	35	33	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>

**Winter Maintenance** programme commenced on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2020

Week Commencing	30/11/20	07/12/20	14/12/20	21/12/20	28/12/20	04/01/21
Total number of gritting nights	5	3	3	5	7	7
Total number of routes gritted	45	40	17	64	103	115*
Total estimate tonnage used	186	163	68	279	423	542*

### **M11/N11 Junction 4 to 14 Improvement Scheme**

On January 11<sup>th</sup> 2021 a briefing was held online with the Strategic Policy Committee of the Transportation Water and Emergency Services Directorate regarding a scheme update, the project team led by Arup presented the Bulletin Update to the committee members and answered questions. The update presented the progress to date of the scheme and detailed how a number of the corridors identified in the Stage 1 Assessment have been discontinued onto Stage 2 of the Assessment.

The scheme design consultants ARUP continue to progress the assessment of the emerging preferred corridor under the TII Project Management Guidelines and are confident that the announcement will be made by the end of Q2 2021. The project team continue to liaise with all the public and any interested party at [n11m11@arup.com](mailto:n11m11@arup.com)

### **M11/N11 Interim Bus Priority Project**

A progress meeting was held in November and a review of the feasibility report was undertaken, developments which have been made with the scheme and ARUP continue to move the project forward with the (NTA) committed to submitting the scheme as a proposal for the NDP Review which is currently underway. In order to support the next step in the project Arup are currently assessing the likely costs for the scheme along with the high level benefits in terms of journey time savings for bus services along the route.

## **N11 Kilmacanoge Parallel Service Road**

Construction work at Phase 1 in central median along southbound carriageway is nearing completion with the phase 1 surfacing works commenced on 18 Jan.

The switch to Phase 2 Traffic Management has also commenced on 18 Jan. Traffic is now being moved onto the new running lane and works will commence on construction of remaining utility diversions, service road traffic islands and all associated accommodation works.

Phase 2 works are currently expected to be complete at during Quarter 2 of 2021.

## **N81 Knockroe Bend Realignment**

The construction work commenced in August 2019 and the new alignment was opened to two way traffic on 24th July 2020. The main construction work was substantially completed at the end of October 2020.

Funding is available for Per Cent for Art Commission for the scheme; the Arts Officer is preparing a submission to TII for approval.

A Road Safety Audit at stage 3 was carried out on the 15th October 2020 and some additional safety barrier is required to address problems identified.

The temporary road works speed limit order has been extended to Friday 19th March 2020 to allow for completion of the project landscaping and additional works.

## **N81 Irishtown West, N81 Whitestown Lower, N81 Hangman's Bend and N81 Tuckmill Lower "N81 Four Studies"**

Wicklow County Council received approval from TII to progress the N81 Tuckmill Lower, N81 Hangman's Bend, N81 Whitestown Lower and N81 Irishtown West projects (the 'N81 Four Studies') in accordance with Phases 1 to 4 of the TII Project Management Guidelines (PMG).

Given the overlap between and close proximity of the four study areas it was agreed to assess the corridor for Phase 1 from north of Baltinglass to north of Irishtown West. The overall length of the corridor under consideration for the purpose of the feasibility study is approximately 12.8km.

A working draft of Feasibility Report (Phase 1) has been prepared and submitted by Kildare NRO for comment by WCC and TII.

## **Sustainable Transportation Measures Grant Schemes**

- **Bray Strand Road Cycle Scheme** – Shareridge Civil Engineering have commenced works on site. It is expected that the construction phase will last approximately 6 months.
- **Wicklow Port Access Road Pedestrian & Cycle Link Scheme** – Aecom Ireland Ltd. have been appointed consultants for the Scheme. They will commence the Design phase for the Scheme.

- **Arklow Transport Study** – Tenders have been received for Consultants to carry out the Arklow Transport Study. These are now being assessed and it is anticipated that Consultants will be in place to commence the study by the end of January 2021.
- **Bray Southern Cross Road Improvement Scheme** – JB Barry Transportation Ltd. have been appointed consultants for the Scheme. They will commence the Preliminary phase for the Scheme.
- **Upper Dargle Road Bus Priority Measures** – Tenders have been sought for Consultant Engineers to bring the scheme from Preliminary Design Stage through to Completion. The closing date for return of tenders is 27<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

### **Circular RW 09/2020 Climate Change Adaptation Allocations**

DTTAS has approved the carry forward funding of €100,000 into 2021 for the Barnamelia and Beechwood Park Schemes. Carry forward for the Ashford Bridge and Garrymore-Ballincarrig

Schemes was not approved, although DTTAS have advised that consideration will be given to the provision of additional funding in the 2021 allocation to cover these schemes.

### **Covid 19 Interim Mobility Measures**

Wicklow County Council received funding allocation of €950,000 for 30 projects involving works to facilitate changes to current street layouts to address social distancing and revised travel patterns.

Funding of €120,000 was approved for the Bray Head Cliff Walk in December 2020.

- **Progress to Date:**
  - 15 Schemes Complete
  - 10 Schemes under construction
  - 4 Schemes at design/planning stage
  - 2 Schemes discontinued

### **July 2020 Stimulus Package - Active Travel Measures**

The July 2020 Stimulus – Active Travel Measures Scheme will not be funded into 2021. However, a request has been made to the NTA for funding amounting to €678,969 to fund the completion of 9 schemes currently under construction.

- **Laragh/Glendalough Junction** - Construction works commenced on 19<sup>th</sup> September with works progressing well to improve access for visitors to the National Heritage Site in the townland of Brockagh at Glendalough. Works currently stood down in line with Government Restrictions associated with Covid-19 pandemic.
- **Ballinaclesh Junction:** Construction has started since early September 2020 and works are currently progressing well on both the new alignment section and drainage works in the townland of Corballis Lower. Works currently stood down in line with Government Restrictions associated with Covid-19 pandemic.

## Fire Service

### Operational Fire Statistics

	TOTAL	Bray	Greystones	Wicklow	Rathdrum	Arklow	Blessington	Dunlavin	Baltinglass	Carnew	Tinahely
Callsign		1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.8	1.9	2.1
<b>Two Stations Mobilised</b>											
Fire Domestic Persons Reported	2			1		1					
Fire Domestic	4	1	1					1	1		
Fire Caravan	0										
Road Traffic Collision (RTC)	15	1	2	4	2	3			1	1	1
Fire Vehicle (HGV /motorway)	8	2	2	2	2						
Hazardous Materials Incident	0										
Fire Industrial / Commercial	4	1	1	1	1						
Fire Barn / Shed	4		1	1	1			1			
Fire Alarm or CO <sub>2</sub> Activation	17	10	1	3	1				1		1
Fire Outdoor: Gorse / bushes	3	1		1			1				
Fire Chimney	13	4	2	2		1			2		2
Fire Small / bin / skip / bonfire	5	2	2		1						
Fire Vehicle	5	1			2	1					1
Flooding	0										
Trees Down, Make Scene Safe	2		1	1							
Ambulance Assist	17	8	5	2		2					
Garda Assist	5	1	1	1	1	1					
Electrical Incident	1		1								
Gas Leak	0										
River / Water Rescue	0										
Explosion	0										
Entrapment / Rescue / Lift	0										
Oil Spill / Road Hazard	0										
Animal Rescue	0										
Lock In / Lock Out	0										
False Alarm – Good Intent	0										
Malicious False Alarm	0										
<b>Mobilised into other County</b>	<b>7</b>					2	2	2		1	
<b>Times Stations mobilised</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>

There were **95 incidents** attended during the month of December 2020. Individual Fire Stations were mobilised on a total of **112 occasions** including 7 incidents in neighbouring counties.

The most common incident types during the month were: ambulance assists (15%), alarm activations (15%), RTCs (13%), Chimney fires (12%), Vehicle fires (12%).

Operational activity for the month December **was up 35% on the preceding month** (November 2020 – 83 mobilisations) which had uncharacteristically low numbers of incidents.

Activity for the month was down 15% on the equivalent month last year, (December 2019 – 131 mobilisations). There was a significant reduction in fires in buildings, down 77% (- 20) and a 140% increase in ambulance assists (+10).

## Sample Incidents (December 2020)

- 06/12/2020 Rathdrum and Wicklow extracted a casualty from a single vehicle RTC between Rathdrum and Glenealy.
- 07/12/2020 Rathdrum and Arklow were mobilised to a single car RTC where the vehicle had left the road and a female casualty was trapped in the car.
- 08/12/2020 Baltinglass and Dunlavin Fire Crews were mobilised to a derelict house fire in Stratford-on-Slaney.
- 16/12/2020 Tinahely and Carnew Crews attended a 2-vehicle RTC at Coolboy, 1 person injured.
- Christmas Day Greystones dealt with electrical incident.
  - Greystones dealt with a chimney fire.
  - Bray dealt with a chimney fire.

## Incidents mobilised outside county Wicklow (December 2020):

### Kildare (4-incidents)

- 10/12/20 Blessington Fire Crew were mobilised to support crews from Naas at a 3-vehicle RTC at Baltracey Cross, Punchestown, County Kildare.
- 19/12/20 Blessington Fire Crew were mobilised to a car fire at Glending, Newtownpark, County Kildare.
- 27/12/20 Dunlavin Fire Crew were mobilised to support crews from Athy and Carlow town at a single vehicle RTC at Hobartstown, Castledermot, County Kildare. Car on roof, one person trapped.
- 30/12/20 Dunlavin Fire Crew were mobilised to a chimney fire at Timolin, Ballytore, County Kildare.

### Wexford (3-incidents)

- 09/12/20 Arklow Fire Crew were mobilised to assist the ambulance service to force entry at Croghan View, Coolgreaney, County Wexford.
- 23/12/20 Arklow Fire Crew were mobilised to assist Gorey Fire Station at a 2-vehicle RTC at Perrymount, Inch, County Wexford.
- 31/12/20 Carnew Fire Crew were alerted to a carbon monoxide alarm activation at Kilcloran, Camolin, County Wexford.

## General

- Following the QQI Accredited Firefighter Recruit Course which took place in Bray from the 9<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> December 12 new firefighters have joined their local stations: Bray (4), Greystones (2), Arklow (2), Blessington (1), Dunlavin (1), and Carnew (2).
- Capital Funding from Central Government has been approved for the following projects:
  - New Baltinglass Fire Station
  - New Dunlavin Fire Station
  - New Fire Engine
  - 2 x New Water Tankers
- A contract has been awarded for the introduction of a new fire kit which will represent a significant increase in quality, protection and comfort for firefighters. It is also proposed to introduce a laundry contract to further enhance the health and safety of firefighters.
- There were weekly teleconferences of the Eastern Region MEM Steering Group attended by the CFO. There have been fortnightly meetings of the Eastern Region Working Group chaired by the CFO.
- Fire Crews across the county assisted with various Christmas events including transporting Santa Claus.

## Fire Prevention Statistics

Application type	Received	Deemed Invalid	Requested additional information	Inspections	Recommended Grant
Fire Safety Certificates	5		3		1
Regularisation Certificates					
FSC as part of 7 Day Notice					
Disability Access Certificates	3		2		4

Licensing	Received	Inspected	Request further info	No Objection letter	Not raising an objection
District	2	6		7	
Circuit				1	
Dangerous Substances Act					
Explosive Act					

## **Commencement Notices for December 2020:**

Commencement Notices Submitted: 22

- 9 Commencement Notices with Compliance Documents
- 1 Seven day Notice
- 9 Opt Out Declarations
- 3 Commencement Notices without Compliance Documents

### **Submission Statistics**

- 40 % of Commencement Notices - Opt Out
- 60 % of Commencement Notices Revised Information required & requested = 13 No. Commencement Notices (CN) of which
  - 5 are Opt Out (38%)
  - 1 Seven Day Notice (8%)
  - 5 are Compliance Documentation (38%)
  - 2 Without Compliance Documentation (16%)

**16 Valid** Commencement Notices

62 new build residential Units (9 of which are one off houses)

- Invalidated CNs for December = 0

- **Certificates of Completion processed in December 2020**

- 

- 9 New No. of CCC submitted
- 14 No. Valid
- 0 No. Invalid
- 

### **Submission Statistics**

- 14 No. Validated CCCs related to;
  - 7 No CCCs submitted in November 2020
  - 7 No CCCs submitted in December 2020
    - 11 Revised Info Requests
  - 78% => 11 No. @ Multi-Development site => 82 new residential units
  - 7% => 1 No. Schools
  - 15% => 2 Commercial Units Retail, Crèche etc.
- \*\*BCA not notified on completion of opt out developments

## **Points to note:**

22 Commencement Notices submitted and 14 Certificates of Completion Validated allowing for 82 new residential units.

Building Control inspections have also resulted in 4 enforcement cases being initiated. Section 11 Compliance Requests were issued.



Building Control carried out a joint inspection of 2 construction sites with Nation Building Control Office, in Wicklow Town and Greystones. NBCO noted the high volume of construction activity present in County Wicklow.

BCMS Closed for Christmas Period on 21<sup>st</sup> December so December was a 3 week month in terms of BCMS submissions.

## Parking Income

<b>Parking Income by Municipal District</b>	<b>EURO</b>
Bray Municipal District	<b>741,326</b>
Greystones Municipal District	<b>275,449</b>
Wicklow Municipal District	<b>246,995</b>
Arklow Municipal District	<b>136,160</b>
Parking Permits	<b>67,991</b>
Parking Fines	<b>309,792</b>
<b>Wicklow County Council</b>	<b>1,777,712</b>



## Organisational Development and Financial Matters

### 1. HR and Corporate Services

#### Recruitment

The following interviews were held in December

- Final interviews for Senior Staff Officer
- Desktop Short-listing for Administrative Officer
- 

#### Employee Numbers

	Q1 2020	Q2 2020	Q3 2020	Q4 2020
<b>Managerial/ Administrative</b>	292	294	293	292
<b>Professional/Technical</b>	105	104	105	108
<b>Outdoor</b>	321	320	324	323
<b>Temporary/ Seasonal</b>	62	55	31 (reduction relates to lifeguards)	31
<b>Non DOHPLG</b>	8	8	8	8
<b>Total</b>	788	781	761	762

	Q1 2019	Q2 2019	Q3 2019	Q4 2019
<b>Managerial/ Administrative</b>	280	272	280	285
<b>Professional/Technical</b>	104	98	103	102
<b>Outdoor</b>	316	318	318	318
<b>Temporary/ Seasonal</b>	65	88	6	62
<b>Non DOHPLG</b>	8	8	8	8
<b>Total</b>	773	784	771	775

(Excludes figures for Fire-fighters)

## Access to Information

### F.O.I. Requests

December 2020: 7	December 2019: 9
Jan - December 2020: 97	Jan - December 2019: 136

### Ombudsman Requests

December 2020	1
January to December 2020	25

December 2019	3
January to December 2019	28

## Press Releases

December 2020 – 12 Press Releases

## Register of Electors

The Franchise staff are continuing to work on database maintenance required to maintain the Register of Electors in advance of the Live Register. Letters are continuing to be issued to electors to establish as to whether or not they are still resident and the replies are being updated onto the Register or forwarded to other local authorities for registration at new addresses as required. We have issued approximately 1700 RFA forms to new estates and houses that have been sold in Wicklow since February 2020. However, there was a very low response rate to these forms for new voters to register or for existing voters to change their address. The Postal and Special Voters list will require some minor adjustments to be made prior to the Live Register publication date to cater for new residents in Nursing Homes.

We have also issued approximately 1750 letters to electors to establish Eircodes for those electors who had none. The majority of these letters were for West Wicklow. The response has been positive to date and we are aiming to have up to 98% of the County covered with Eircodes by the time the Live Register is published in February.

The 2021/2022 Live Register is on target for publication on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2021 in line with statutory regulations.

Due to the Covid 19 Emergency and restrictions there were no Fieldworkers carrying out work on the Draft Register of Electors for 2021/2022 which makes it even more imperative that electors check themselves that they are registered to vote.

## Communication

Communication has been a vital tool in our organisation, especially over the challenging last few months. Due to the need for us all to maintain social distancing alternative methods of holding and administrating meetings had to be introduced. Various technologies such as Microsoft Teams, Zoom and Cisco WebEx have been tested and deployed throughout the organisation, depending on the business need.

Our key objective is to ensure that there is clear, consistent and appropriate communication between Wicklow County Council and all Staff. Communication has been delivered through Microsoft Teams



and other technologies such as Zoom, as well as our traditional methods, such as e-mail and text alerts.

## Customer Service Innovation Hub

Customer Service Innovation hub			
2020 Quarter 4			
Communication	no.	Public Counters	Transactions
No. of phone calls	22584	Appointments	89
No. of e-mails	1698	General	240
No. of Elected Members Reps	156	Housing	151
CRM Cases	293	Motor taxation	1871
Social Housing Applications	133	Revenue	287



## 2. I.C.T.

### Response to Covid-19

The IT Department continue to support all the systems setup to respond to the additional business needs arising from the response to COVID19:

- Restart Grants – online form setup and backend Assendus & Agresso systems integration.
- Community Call Helpline
- Remote Working Requirements
- Government Networks
- Phone Systems – with integration of Avaya IP Office to personal and corporate mobiles so that all calls can be handled even if staff are working remotely
- Call Conferencing – both on corporate mobiles and using Teams & Zoom for video conferencing
- Communications and awareness
- Desktop policy has been reviewed to ensure business continuity is enhanced during Level 5 restrictions.
- Remote working licencing has increased in all business areas with ~300 WCC users now having the facility to work remotely using a combination of Citrix and Cisco

### IT Helpdesk

- The IT Helpdesk continues to streamline the workflow for the technical support team with an average of 36 tickets a day providing assistance for both inhouse and remote workers. A review is currently underway to analyse IT helpdesk tickets, responses and customer care systems.

### Domain Migration

- The domain migration and the mailbox migration project have been completed and all domain and email accounts have been migrated.
- Server migration is well underway and many servers have been migrated successfully. System upgrade to SQL2019 has taken place for some systems
- The team continue to upgrade all legacy operating systems to Windows 10 to ensure continued support from Microsoft.

### GIS & Data Collection Systems

A Summary of Progress regarding the Strategic Development Goals Application is currently being prepared and is to be examined by the Eastern and Midlands Climate Action Regional Office with a view to a nationwide rollout.

Development of CRM System automation continues, particularly for the new Customer Service Innovation Hub and the Covid Community Response Hub.

Draft maps have been prepared for the County Development Plan which are to be examined by the members for their input.

Parallel projects in Housing, Roads and Environmental Services departments are on-going and integration to CRM and GIS systems have being developed and rolled out.

Final versions of the GIS Departmental Viewers and Editors has been completed and expected to go live early 2021.



## Customer Service Delivery

- Support for the newly opened Customer Service Innovation Hub is ongoing with further improvements and enhancements implemented. The Customer Service project requires a high level of IT collaboration with both hardware and software elements integrated into the Hub.
- Work continues with the business process mapping and DPIA's are being carried out for each process as it arises.
- Avaya IP Office Phone System has been modified to integrate the Avaya Contact Centre Select Hardware Appliance and software. This has led to greater integration with call reporting systems and has improved customer service delivery.

## eServices

Wicklow.ie – pageviews for 2020 to date are over 1,459,825. This is a 1.35% YoY increase. A new Cookie Preferences system was introduced in October under GDPR. A communications group continues to manage and monitor on-line presence.

Social media accounts – followers to date

- o Facebook (Wicklow County Council) – 9,108 followers. This is a 47.45% YoY increase.
  - o Twitter (@WicklowCoCo) – 6,974 followers. This is a 14.33% YoY increase.
  - o Instagram (@WicklowCoCo) – 1,833 followers. This is a 102.32% YoY increase.
- During December, the Online Consultation Hub on Wicklow.ie had a number of open consultations in place. All staff continuously engage to improve on-line communication and information system. The following consultation items are in place:–
    - o Part 8 - Main Street, Improvement Works, Redcross Village
    - o Part 8 - Construction of a Community & Enterprise Centre, Rathdrum
    - o County Wicklow Screen Sector Strategy
    - o Kilmacanogue to Southern Cross Greenway – Part 2
  - Social media campaigns have continued over the last month. In December we focused on highlighting the National campaigns as part of the Level 5 lockdown and reshared allot of HSE resources.
    - o #KeepWell
    - o #OutdoorsForEveryone
    - o #CommunityCall
    - o #BeWinterReady
  - Local campaigns included the #LoveWicklowShopLocal and a Stop Food Waste video series with Chef Catherine Fulvio.
    - o The #StopFoodWaste videos reached 63.6k on Facebook with 41k 3 second video views.

## National Broadband Plan

National Broadband Ireland (NBI) is delivering on this commitment and is making significant progress. Surveying is the essential first step and network planning for Kilcoole & Blessington areas is already underway.

Broadband Connection Points (BCP) are being prioritised for early roll-out and will provide connectivity and support remote working and connected communities.

## FINANCIAL

### Revenue Account

REVENUE ACCOUNT							
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE SUMMARY BY SERVICE DIVISION AT 31st DECEMBER 2020							
	EXPENDITURE			INCOME			NET
	Actual Expenditure	Adopted Full Year Budget	% Budget Spent to Date	Actual Income	Adopted Full Year Budget	% Budget Spent to Date	Actual Expenditure / (Income)
	€	€	%	€	€	%	€
Housing and Building	24,433,941	24,541,664	100%	(30,200,287)	(30,692,854)	98%	(5,766,345)
Road Transport & Safety	23,072,495	23,611,358	98%	(15,119,754)	(16,493,380)	92%	7,952,741
Water Services	4,990,488	5,560,661	90%	(6,165,576)	(6,545,641)	94%	(1,175,089)
Development Management	27,758,124	11,242,546	247%	(22,969,928)	(6,144,652)	374%	4,788,196
Environmental Services	11,605,263	11,837,313	98%	(1,588,026)	(2,002,200)	79%	10,017,238
Recreation and Amenity	7,759,263	7,663,027	101%	(964,749)	(847,647)	114%	6,794,515
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	1,242,137	1,479,516	84%	(650,129)	(819,228)	79%	592,008
Miscellaneous Services	25,172,456	11,879,184	212%	(20,322,627)	(6,156,153)	330%	4,849,829
Central Management Charges	19,081,532	18,407,601	104%	(1,085,124)	(1,000,000)	109%	17,996,408
Local Government Fund				(13,720,320)	(13,720,320)	100%	(13,720,320)
Pension Levy				0	0		0
Commercial Rates				(32,009,800)	(31,950,795)	100%	(32,009,800)
	<b>145,115,700</b>	<b>116,222,870</b>	<b>125%</b>	<b>(144,796,319)</b>	<b>(116,372,870)</b>	<b>124%</b>	<b>319,381</b>

### Cashflow/Overdraft

Wicklow County Council manages its cashflow requirements on a daily basis and did not avail of its overdraft facility during the period 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020.

### Capital Account

CAPITAL ACCOUNT					
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE SUMMARY BY SERVICE DIVISION AT 31ST DECEMBER 2020					
	Opening Balance at 01/01/2020	Actual Expenditure	Actual Income	Transfers to/from Reserves	Closing Balance at 31/12/2020
	€	€	€	€	€
Housing and Building	17,913,607	62,469,943	(56,283,977)	(1,811,965)	22,287,608
Road Transport & Safety	(42,851,352)	16,308,245	(17,930,285)	(506,608)	(44,980,001)
Water Services	(10,670,498)	243,833	(1,069,888)	(15,000)	(11,511,553)
Development Management	(9,612,396)	1,607,151	(618,330)	(208,642)	(8,832,217)
Environmental Services	968,611	3,800,401	(2,867,160)	(489,375)	1,412,477
Recreation and Amenity	(914,062)	4,975,260	(4,849,025)	(190,250)	(978,077)
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	(885,558)	325,724	(188,491)	(288,750)	(1,037,076)
Miscellaneous Services	(14,326,148)	4,992,802	(3,430,517)	(1,777,216)	(14,541,079)
	<b>(60,377,798)</b>	<b>94,723,359</b>	<b>(87,237,673)</b>	<b>(5,287,806)</b>	<b>(58,179,917)</b>



## Commercial Rates, Rents and Loan Collections

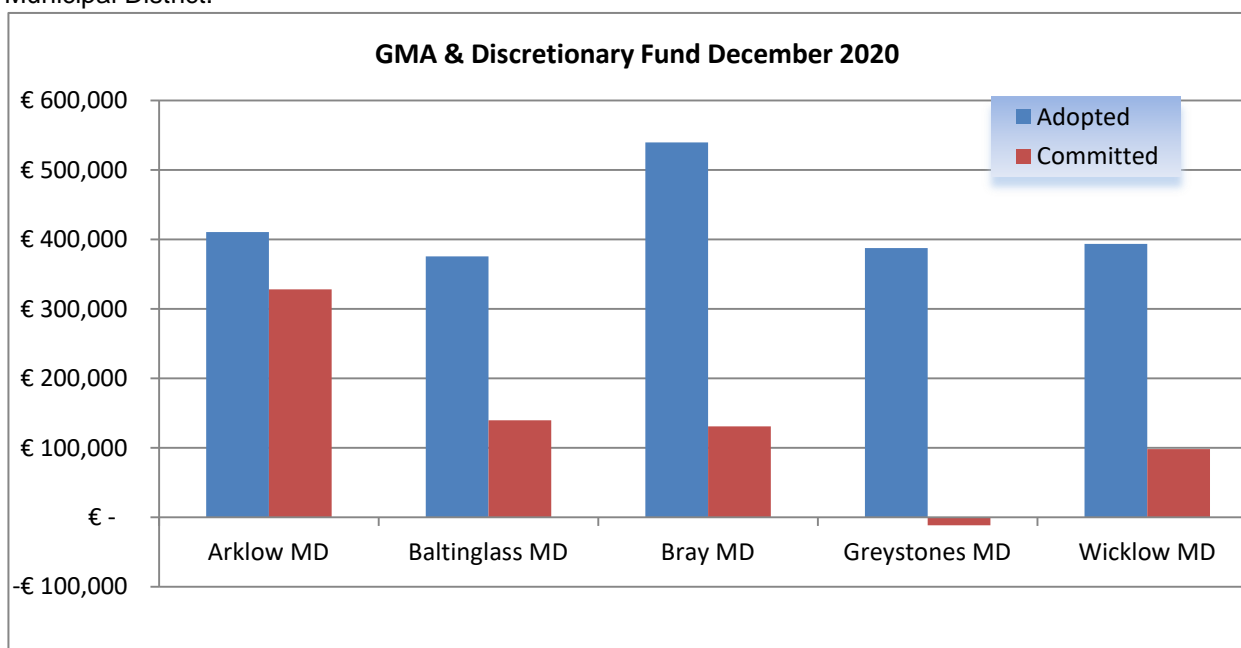
SUMMARY OF MAJOR COLLECTIONS AT 31st DECEMBER 2020										
Income Collection Area	Opening Balance 01/01/2020	Accrued	Vacancy Property Adjustments	Write Offs	Waivers	Total for Collection	Collected	Closing Arrears 31/12/2020	Specific Doubtful Arrears	% Collection
Rates	5,217,406	32,009,800	0	0	(13,332,813)	23,894,393	(17,635,957)	6,258,436	1,279,563	78%
Rents & Annuities	1,853,579	16,480,949	0	(1,639)	0	18,332,889	(15,597,182)	2,735,707	0	85%
Housing Loans	402,724	1,839,127	0	0	0	2,241,850	(1,807,696)	434,155	0	81%

Nine Month Rates Waiver: A 100% waiver of commercial rates was applied for a 9-month period from 27 March 2020 to 27 December 2020 to all ratepayers except a small number of categories. The waiver applied as a credit in lieu of rates for the 9-month period covered in 2020. The excluded categories are mainly utilities, banks, large supermarkets and corporates.

There is no application process required for this scheme. Wicklow County Council has automatically applied a 100% credit in lieu of commercial rates, for the nine-month period, to classes and categories of occupied rateable property where the occupying business is not in an excluded category. In the event a business qualified for the nine-month credit in lieu of rates and the business has already paid their full rates bill for 2020, their account will show a credit balance. A refund will be arranged by the Council if requested.

## General Municipal Allocation and Discretionary Fund 2020

Discretionary Budget 2020: €2,106,500. The graph and table below outline the discretionary budget for 2020 by Municipal District.



Municipal District	C/F from 2019	Adopted	Committed	Balance to Expend
	€	€	€	€
Arklow MD	52,813	410,500	380,856	82,457
Baltinglass MD	159,389	375,500	299,186	235,703
Bray MD	180,991	539,500	311,807	408,684
Greystones MD	165,252	387,500	154,020	398,732
Wicklow MD	205,713	393,500	303,704	295,509
<b>Total</b>	<b>764,158</b>	<b>2,106,500</b>	<b>1,449,572</b>	<b>1,421,086</b>

## Capital Investment Programme 2020-2022

The Capital Investment Programme 2020-2022 for Wicklow County Council which details proposed capital expenditure projects over the next 3 year period, subject to available funding, was approved by the Members at the Ordinary Council meeting of March 2<sup>nd</sup> 2020.

The table below outlines the proposed capital expenditure by programme group.

PROGRAMME GROUP	Proposed Expenditure			
	2020	2021	2022	Total
	€	€	€	€
HOUSING AND BUILDING	119,892,000	147,722,000	135,450,000	403,064,000
ROAD TRANSPORT & SAFETY	21,960,200	35,220,000	37,283,000	94,463,000
WATER SERVICES	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT – DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT	1,900,000	3,390,000	1,650,000	6,940,000
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	1,225,000	2,725,000	5,225,000	9,175,000
AGRICULTURE, EDUCATION, HEALTH & WELFARE	1,250,000	6,000,000	19,150,000	26,400,000
MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES	3,155,000	2,000,000	2,000,000	7,155,000
<b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>	<b>156,956,000</b>	<b>212,308,000</b>	<b>212,843,000</b>	<b>582,107,000</b>



## Restart Grant Scheme

The Restart Grant Scheme statistics in relation to applications approved and paid out up to the end of November are outlined in the table below. The Restart Grant Scheme is now closed.

<b>RESTART GRANT SCHEME</b>	<b>APPLICATIONS</b>	<b>VALUE</b>
APPLICATIONS APPROVED BUT NOT PAID	-	-
APPLICATIONS PAID	1,450	5,267,386
GRAND TOTAL	1,450	€5,267,386
RESTART GRANT PLUS SCHEME		
APPLICATIONS APPROVED BUT NOT PAID	-	-
APPLICATIONS PAID	1,511	10,629,897
GRAND TOTAL	1,511	€10,629,897
TOTAL APPROVED AND PAID	2,961	€15,897,283