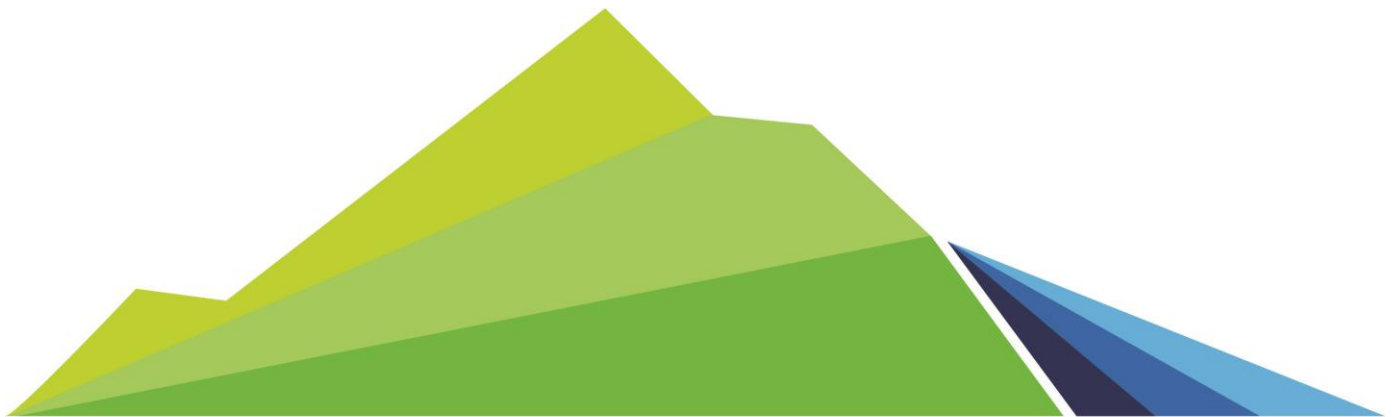




Wicklow County Council Chief Executive's Monthly Report



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

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY	7
1. Social Housing Support.....	7
2. Allocation of Social Housing.....	7
3. Social Housing Stock	7
4. Casual Vacancies/Relets	7
5. Housing Supply – Programme of Delivery	8
6. Part V	9
7. PPP Social Housing Project	10
8. Approved Housing Bodies	10
9. Home Improvement/Adaptation	10
10. Purchase Schemes	11
11. Addressing Homelessness	12
12. Traveller Accommodation	15
13. Energy Efficiency.....	15
14. Community, Cultural & Social Development.....	17
Community Awards Scheme 2021	17
County Wicklow Library Service.....	18
Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) Measure Three 2020 – Blueway Funding.....	18
Sports Capital Allocations Project – Applications Submitted.....	19
Blessington Lakes E-Greenway.....	19
Healthy Ireland/Healthy Wicklow	20
Lifting the Lid on Elder Abuse Webinar	21
Wicklow Public Participation Network (PPN):	22
Covid-19 Emergency Fund (Round 2).....	22
Wicklow Community Call	22
LECP Update March 2021.....	23



Town & Village 2020	23
CLÁR 2020	25
Age Friendly Programme	25
Comhairle na nÓg	25
County Wicklow PPN	25
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE	28
1. Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) (Economic)	28
Retail.....	28
Town Teams.....	28
Tourism.....	30
Rural and Urban Regeneration Development Fund Grant Applications.....	33
Maritime	33
Food and Beverage Strategy	35
Business Briefing	35
2. Local Enterprise Office (LEO)	37
3. Planning and Development	41
County Development Plan Review	41
Heritage	41
Planning Applications	42
Planning Enforcement.....	43
4. Environmental Services.....	44
Waste Management	44
Climate Action.....	44
Energy	45
SEC	45
Environmental Awareness.....	45
Brittas Bay Carparks.....	46



Life Guards.....	46
Whitestown Remediation Project.....	46
Harbours and Ports.....	46
Pollution Control.....	47
Arklow Flood Relief Scheme	48
5. <i>Transportation, Water & Emergency Services</i>.....	49
Public Lighting.....	49
Transportation Statistics (General)	50
Parking Income.....	52
Fire Service.....	53
ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND FINANCIAL MATTERS	56
1. <i>HR and Corporate Services</i>.....	56
Recruitment.....	56
Access to Information	57
Press Releases.....	57
Register of Electors.....	57
Communication	57
Customer Service Innovation Hub.....	58
2. <i>I.C.T.</i>.....	59
Response to COVID19	59
IT Helpdesk.....	59
Domain Migration.....	59
GIS & Data Collection Systems.....	59
Customer Service Delivery.....	60
eServices.....	60
3. <i>FINANCIAL</i>	61
Revenue Account	61



Cashflow/Overdraft..... 61

Capital Account..... 61

Commercial Rates, Rents and Loan Collections 62

General Municipal Allocation and Discretionary Fund 2020 62

Capital Investment Programme 2020-2022..... 62



This month:

1. **Wicklow County Council hosts 2021 Business Briefing** - The theme of “Town Centres and Tourism” was explored during the 2021 Business Briefing hosted by Wicklow County Council on Thursday, 25th March.

The virtual briefing was held as part of the Council's ongoing commitment to economic development and had participation from over 120 leading local and national businesspeople, along with representatives from key local and State agencies.

2. **Wicklow Allocated almost €500,000 for Blueway** - Wicklow's ambition to become the outdoors capital of the country took a further step closer with the latest round of funding under the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) which saw an allocation of almost €500,000 for a proposed Blueway running the length of the County from north [Bray](#) to south Arklow.

The timing of this latest funding announcement is opportune as it comes in the same week that the new Outdoor Recreation Strategy (2020 -2025) for the county is due to be launched. One of the key projects in the strategy is the development of the Blueway for which funding has now been announced.

This significant pot of money will be spent on:

- Improved water access
- Trailheads and trail links
- Marketing and signage

3. **€7.14m Funding announced for Bray Harbour Area Integrated Regeneration** - The harbour, its piers and adjacent lands are a major asset for Bray and this funding will facilitate an integrated scheme to develop the harbour and associated public realm works to provide a vibrant waterfront area with excellent connectivity between the promenade, the town centre the Dublin Road area and beyond.

The works will include:

- Review potential for harbour wall extension, dredging of the waterbody
- Amenity and Public Realm: Extend amenity areas, improve street lighting, paving, parking, cycle provision and sporting facilities
- Promenade Board Walk linking the Promenade with the harbour
- Relocation of boat storage to the north of the harbour.

4. **Funding of almost €2M secured for Ireland/Wales Tourist Project** - Celtic Routes is a partnership project between Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire County Councils and the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority in Wales and Wicklow, Wexford and Waterford City and County Councils in Ireland.

It is a branded collection of tourism experiences encouraging travellers to visit Ireland and Wales to discover the Celtic spirit by suggesting immersive and authentic experiences in West Wales and South East Ireland.



HOUSING AND COMMUNITY

1. Social Housing Support

	Feb 2021	Feb 2020
No. on list for Social Housing Support – (includes RAS and HAP) *	4,461	4,328
No. availing of Rental Assistance Scheme (RAS)	277	342
No. availing of Housing Assistance Payment (HAP)	2204	1746
No. in Long Term Leasing accommodation	15	10
No. in Short Term Leasing accommodation	26	12

2. Allocation of Social Housing

	Feb 2021	Feb 2020
Wicklow County Council (including Bray MD)	42	40
Approved Housing Bodies (including Bray MD)	1	59

3. Social Housing Stock

	Feb 2021	Feb 2020
Tenancies occupied	4,563	4,435
Total weekly rental accrual	300,020.72	302,678.70
Arrears	2,736,545.38	1,592,993.50

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	Feb2021	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
O'Byrne Road, Bray	1	Completed and allocated
Old Library Arklow	7	Completed and allocated
Avondale Heights Rathdrum	20	Completed and allocated
Delany Park, Arklow (Phase 1)	17	Completed and allocated
16A Oak Drive, Blessington	1	Completed and allocated
Druids Brook, Kilcoole	2	Completed and allocated
Whitehall, Baltinglass	34	Completed and allocated
Farrenkelly Greystones Phase 2	24	Completed and allocated
Convent Lands	51	Completed and allocated
Urban Villas (FCA Hall), Wicklow Town	8	Completed and allocated
Jameson Heights, Kilmacanogue	20	Completed and allocated
Kilmantan Place, Bray	4	Completed and allocated
Carnew Rapid Build	30	Completed and allocated
Total	219	
Schemes on Site	Units	Current Status
Kilbride Lane Bray (Murphy's Lands)	42	23 completed. 19 anticipated Quarter 1 2021
Rathnew RAPID BUILD	47	Completion anticipated Quarter 1 2021
Delany Park Arklow (Phase 2 + 3)	47	Completion anticipated Quarter 3 2021
Hawkstown Park (Ashtown Lane), Wicklow	40	Completion anticipated Quarter 4 2021
Ard na Greine, Bray RAPID BUILD	31	Completion anticipated Quarter 4 2021
TOTAL	207	
Pipeline Schemes	Units	Current Status
Avondale Phase 2 RAPID BUILD	20	Site start anticipated Q1 2021
Greenhill Road Wicklow RAPID BUILD	36	Site start anticipated Q2 2021
Mountainview NTMK RAPID BUILD	26	Site start anticipated Q1 2021
Sheehan Court, Arklow	7	Site start anticipated Q2 2021
Cedar Court Bray RAPID BUILD	14	Site start anticipated Q2 2021
Three Trouts Greystones RAPID BUILD	40	Site start anticipated Q3 2021
Merrymeeing, Rathnew, Phase 2	21	Site start anticipated Q3 2021
TOTAL	164	



6. Part V

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 then 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 28th February. This includes the following Part V units:

Location	No. of Units	Due for Delivery	Method
Enniskerry	2	Will complete early March 2021	WCC
Wicklow	4	Scheduled Q 2 2021	WCC
Delgany	3	Scheduled end March/early April 2021	WCC
Greystones	2	Scheduled Q 2 2021	WCC
Wicklow	3	Scheduled Q 2 2021	WCC

Following the government's decision to extend the period for designated essential sites, sites in the Arklow electoral area and the Bray electoral area were issued with letters from The Housing Agency. The designated essential sites deadline is now 30th April 2021.

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 potential 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
Ballinaclesh	2	Q2 2021	WCC
Tinahely	2	Snagging due shortly	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 was advertised in January. Closing date for submissions is 30th April 2021.
- Approval has recently been received from the Department in respect of 3 Turnkey units in Roundwood. Expected delivery is early 2022.

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.

8. Approved Housing Bodies

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.
- Construction ongoing on 28 units in Arklow.
- Acquisition by AHB of 16 Turnkey units via CALF in Baltinglass with a further 48 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.

9. Home Improvement/Adaptation

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

- › Grant funding for private house - €1,952,700 (€182,031.46 spent to date)
- › Grant funding for social house - €472,271.64 - 2020 budget (€129,041.65 spent to date)

MARCH 2021



167 open applications, of which 50 are 2021 applications (balance carried forward from 2020)

134 approvals on hand (including some carried forward from 2020)

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.

10. Purchase Schemes

House Purchase Loans - Rebuilding Ireland

Received	Approved	Declined	Expired	With HA for FI	Incomplete/ineligible
396	122	159	42	34	39

2016 Tenant Purchase Scheme

	To date	February 2021
Applications Received	280	4
Completed	53	0
Declined	185	0
Ongoing	42	42



11. Addressing Homelessness

	28/02/21	ytd	28/02/2020
No of New Presentations	34	65	36
No. of Repeat Presentations	5	13	0
No. of Families (Minimum 1 Adult + One Child)	14	24	17
No. of Individuals (Single Adult, no children)	23	53	17
No. Of Couples (2 Adults, no children)	2	2	2
No. of Children	21	41	29
NTQ/Asked to Leave/Landlord selling	2	3	11
Family Circumstances	18	34	15
Leaving Prison/Hospital Care	1	1	0
Mental Health	1	2	0
Risk of Homelessness	4	12	0
Arrears/Loss of Income	1	3	1
Addiction Issues	3	5	3
DV/DA	0	1	1
Medical Issues	1	3	0
Overcrowding	3	4	2
Unsuitable/Voluntarily Left	6	9	3
Rough Sleeping	3	6	4
Sofa Surfing	3	8	2
Staying with Family	13	20	8
Staying with Friends	4	5	7

Own Door Temporary Accommodation at 28/02/2021	
Families	13
Adults	32
Children	34
Single individual	4



Bed & Breakfast Accommodation - No. of Homeless Emergency Accommodation Placements & Duration @ 28 February, 2021

	No. of Households	No. of Adults	No. of Children	< 3 mths	3-6 mths	6-9 mths	9-12 mths	>12mths
Household breakdown	16	17	15	5	3	2	3	3

Bed & Breakfast Accommodation - No. of Homeless Emergency Accommodation Placements & Duration @ 28, Feb, 2020

	No. of Households	No. of Adults	No. of Children	< 3 mths	3-6 mths	6-9 mths	9-12 mths	>12mths
Household breakdown	13	17	14	8	-	2	1	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, 320 households (245 families & 75 singles) have been assisted under the Homeless HAP Scheme in Wicklow County Council from the inception on 1st October 2018 to 28th February, 2021. (145 homeless cases, 171 prevention cases to date and 4 direct provision). 105 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 bi 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 refurbishment is due to complete in March.

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 sourcing of accommodation.



12. Traveller Accommodation

Capital Programme

Ballintekin – 3 houses	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
Avondale Heights, Rathdrum – 3 houses	Approval received for funding from Department, ongoing discussions with proposed tenants on draft design
Barndarrig Group Housing scheme for 2 houses	Revised stage 1 submitted to Dept for funding 21 st Dec 2020 awaiting approval
DPG Woodview,	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.

13. 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.

MARCH 2021



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.



14. Community, Cultural & Social Development

Community Awards Scheme 2021

The annual Community Awards Scheme is now open for applications. The fund which is run by Wicklow County Council as part of its commitment to supporting local community development will be available as grant aid to successful community groups and local organisations wishing to undertake community projects in their area.

The maximum grant available is €500 per organisation for small projects and group running costs. Only one application per organisation will be considered.

The application form is available on Wicklow County Council's website www.Wicklow.ie. Any queries should be made to the Office of Community, Cultural & Social Development, Wicklow County Council, County Buildings, Wicklow at 0404/20208 or ccsdadmin@wicklowcoco.ie

The closing date for submission of applications is 4.00 p.m. on **Friday 23rd April, 2021**. Late applications will not be considered.

CLÁR (Ceantair Laga Árd-Riachtanais)

CLÁR is a targeted investment programme for rural areas that aims to provide funding for small infrastructural projects in rural areas that have experienced significant levels of de-population. The funding works in conjunction with local/Agency and other Departmental funding programmes and on the basis of locally identified priorities.

CLÁR Programme for 2021

The 2021 CLÁR programme is now open for applications with a ten per cent increase in funding, bringing the allocation for 2021 to €5.5 million.

The 2021 CLÁR programme will be delivered through four separate Measures as follows;

- Measure 1: Support for Schools/Community Safety Measure
- Measure 2: Outdoor Community Recreation Facilities
- Measure 3: Community Wellbeing Measure
 - (a) Community Gardens & Allotments
 - (b) Mobility and Cancer Care Transport

Measures 1, 2 and 3(a) are delivered through the Local Authorities (LAs) and the closing date for receipt of applications is Friday 07 May 2021.

Measure 3(b) Mobility and Cancer Care Transport – Applications due Friday 07 May 2021

Recognising the critical role that volunteer organisations play in the provision of vital services to vulnerable sectors of the community; and the level of interest in this particular funding stream, CLÁR 2021 once again sees the allocation of funding for Mobility and Cancer Care Transport support.

CLÁR Innovation Measure – Expressions of Interest due Friday 07 May 2021

This is a special measure which provides funding for innovative or pilot projects that address specific challenges faced by communities in CLÁR areas.

There are no changes to the CLÁR areas in Wicklow (seven townlands) for 2021.



County Wicklow Library Service

Seachtain na Gaeilge

Fáilte chuig Seachtain na Gaeilge a bhí ag rith ó 10ú-17ú de Mhárta i Leabharlann Comhairle Chill Mhantáin. Bhí scéalta do pháistí óga, ámhánaíocht, ceol na cruite agus a leithéid ar siúl gach lá! Bhí eachtraí éagsúla ag tarlú ins na bunscoileanna freisin.

Coimeád súil amach do “Giggles”, an fear grinn, agus é ag baint triail as scolaíocht bhaile. Bhí an t-údar Patricia Forde ag léamh a leabhar nua ‘An tÓileán Thiar’ i mbunscoileanna aitiúla, agus bhí an t-údar Carmel Uí Cheallaigh ag labhairt le daltaí i rang a cúig faoi Stair na hÉireann. Bigi linn!

Welcome to Seachtain na Gaeilge which ran between 10th and 17th March at Wicklow County Council Library Service. Every day there was something for you to enjoy from children’s stories, singing to harp playing.

“Giggles” the clown paid a virtual visit some of our primary schools. Also, Galway Author Patricia Forde paid a virtual visit a local primary school to discuss her book An tÓileán Thiar’ (To The Island) Carmel Kelly had a discussion with 5th class pupils on topics in Irish history in another local primary school.

Some of the above events also featured in local St. Patrick’s Day celebrations.

Tier 2 Community Resilience Programme

Virtual library based events under this programme are currently approaching completion. A wide range of programmes include:

- Ukulele lessons
 - Yoga classes
 - “Doula to You”, in association with Tusla, connects new and expectant mothers, giving them a discussion forum
 - Art classes
 - Creative writing
 - Family history talks
- Some courses are oversubscribed, while all are being very well attended, with positive feedback being reported.

Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) Measure Three 2020 – Blueway Funding

Wicklow’s ambition to become the outdoors capital of the country took a further step closer with the latest round of funding under the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) which saw an allocation of almost €500,000 for a proposed Blueway running the length of the County from north Bray to south Arklow.

MARCH 2021



The timing of this latest funding announcement is opportune as it came in the same week that the new Outdoor Recreation Strategy (2020 -2025) for the county was launched. One of the key projects in the strategy is the development of the Blueway.

This significant pot of money will be spent on:

- Improved water access
- Trailheads and trail links
- Marketing and signage

The Blueway projects overall budget is €554,820 with Wicklow County Council providing match funding of €55,482 and a grant of €499,338.

Sports Capital Allocations Project – Applications Submitted

Sports Capital Allocations Project	Cost of overall project	Amount of Funding sought	Amount of Match funding
Improving disability access door, installation of disabled access ladder to main pool and dual use gym equipment at Coral Leisure Wicklow Town	€68,758.71	€48,131.09	€20,627.62
Improving disability access at Coral Leisure Arklow	€28,999.25	€20,299.48	€8,697.77
Spectator fencing, associated works and equipment at Dr. Ryan Park, Greystones (includes tractor mower)	€60,427.50	€42,299.25	€18,128.25
Light up Arklow Running Track (flood lights)	€62,434.66	€43,704.26	€18,730.40
Totals	€220,620.12	€154,434.08	€66,184.04

Blessington Lakes E-Greenway

In June 2019 a funding amount of €5 million was allocated to the scheme by the Department of Transport. This funding allocation was based on an estimated project cost of €8.5 million.

AECOM Consultant Engineers were appointed by Wicklow County Council to bring the project through all the stages from design to construction. Several site walkovers for the entire route were carried out by the project team in 2020.

Through the process of route identification, the scope of works for the project was changed. These elements included some route change, new bridges, engineering works to construct the greenway may



incorporate some lake shore protections work, underpass, a new bound surface type and an increased width of the path. These project changes triggered the need to review the environmental reports undertaken to date.

As the project works/scope and legislation have changed since the previous Appropriate Assessment screening, which was carried out in 2015, AECOM conducted an Appropriate Assessment screening and which examined the potential adverse effects of the proposed project on Natura 2000 sites i.e. the Poulaphouca Special Protection Area. It was concluded that the project requires a Natura Impact Statement (NIS).

The NIS with the relevant planning documentation, which will include the following key documents will be submitted to An Bord Pleanála as the competent authority to make decisions on local authority developments under 177AE (relating to appropriate assessment (AA)) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended. It is proposed to submit this planning submission to An Bord Pleanála in early 2021.

Some Key Documents

- Ecological Impact Assessment
- Appropriate Assessment Screening
- Natura Impact Statement
- Archaeological Impact Assessment
- Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan
- Environment Impact Assessment Screening

Following the completion of all these reports, the Council are confident that the scheme is a robust scheme, with all environmental issues and planning concerns addressed, thus making it a high quality and deliverable project, which is ultimately the overall objective of Wicklow County Council. During early 2021, the council will further engage and consult with the public, local community groups and all stakeholders on the progression of this project.

With the construction phase of the project taking approximately eighteen months, the proposed completion date is in quarter two of 2023.

Healthy Ireland/Healthy Wicklow

Keep Well Campaign

Staying Connected & Minding Your Mood Theme

A free online webinar on the themes of 'Staying Connected and Minding Your Mood' was held on Wednesday, 24th March 2021 from 7-8.30pm.

We heard about great initiatives run by community groups & organisations in Wicklow that have helped people to stay connected and mind their mood and also learn about techniques to help ourselves stay connected and mind our mood. A great line up of speakers was organised for the webinar which included:

- Deirdre Whitfield – Wicklow County Council
- Leah Kinsella – County Wicklow Volunteer Centre
- Paul Brown - Social Prescriber for the County

MARCH 2021



- Ray Cullen - Talk to Tom
- Darren Shanahan - Foróige
- Grainne Quinn - Imaal Group Baltinglass
- Sam Bishop - Time Machine Project
- Alexandra Kelly - BAP Minding your Mood
- Ronan Mulhern - Cairdeas Clubhouse

Lifting the Lid on Elder Abuse Webinar

Muintir na Tíre in collaboration with the national safeguarding office of the HSE under the Keep Well Campaign hosted a webinar for community leaders on safeguarding, protecting and preventing elder abuse in our communities. This online event was on Thursday, 25th March at 7.30pm targeting the Eastern Region, with experts from the HSE, An Garda Síochána and Ulster Bank to help us understand the risks, recognise the signs, learn where we can get supports and consider what your community can do to Keep Safe and Well.

Sports Partnership Update March 2021

Training & Education

Date	Course	Location	No's
09/03/21	Safeguarding 1 – Child Protection	Online (sold out)	10/10
10/03/21	Safeguarding 1 – Child Protection	Online (sold out)	12/12
10/03/21	Safeguarding 1 – Child Protection	Online (sold out)	12/12
15/03/21	Sports Inclusion Disability Awareness Workshop	Online (spaces available)	10/14
24/03/21	Safeguarding 1 – Child Protection	Online (sold out)	12/12
30/03/21	Autism in Sport Workshop	Online (spaces available)	16/20

Programmes

- 6 week online 'Couch to 5K Walk/Run programme' commenced on the 8th March with a free t-shirt for all who complete the programme.
- 'Mobility & Stretch' online classes for over 55s started on Monday 15th March @ 2pm delivered by Siel Bleu. Contact wicklowisp@wicklowcoco.ie to register.
- Online 'Introduction to Pregnancy Yoga' programme will run every Tuesday for 4 weeks starting on the 16th March.
- Inclusive Dance, Chair Yoga and Fun Fitness classes for Young Adults with a Physical or Intellectual Disability continue through March as part of the National Keep Well Campaign. To book a place contact cjenkinson@wicklowcoco.ie

MARCH 2021



- In collaboration with the Great Place to Work Committee a series of lunchtime yoga sessions designed especially to target those back, neck and shoulder muscles that hold tension, particularly when working at your desk all day. Programme started Monday 22nd March for six sessions on Monday, Wednesday and Friday over 2 weeks.
- Inclusive Step Challenge – 40 participants from child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) Lucena Clinics in Wicklow and Bray are taking part in a 4 week step challenge. The inter agency competitiveness created a great motive for participation.
- Dance for Social Prescribing Day - In collaboration with Bray Area Partnership and County Wicklow Partnership, a dance class was organised to celebrate Social Prescribing Day on 18th March. 5 people attended.

Wicklow Public Participation Network (PPN):

- Collaborative project with Dept. Environment, Climate & Communications to run Community Climate Conversations to inform the National Climate Action Plan.
- Work with Dept. of Rural & Community Development to review and revise national Guidelines for new Local Economic & Community Plans.
- Development of training sessions in conjunction with WCC on (i) Local Authority Structures (ii) Effective Submissions (iii) Local Authority Budgeting. Sessions to be delivered as part of the national PPN Stakeholder Training course.
- New edition of Wicklow PPN E-Bulletin published and circulated – see details at <https://countywicklowppn.ie/county-wicklow-ppn-news/>

Covid-19 Emergency Fund (Round 2)

Wicklow County Council, in conjunction with Wicklow Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) is currently submissions under the COVID-19 Emergency Fund (Round 2). This is funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development, in recognition of the important role played by community and voluntary organisations across the country during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The aim of the fund is to assist groups:

- To **adapt their services and operations to fit the new COVID-19 reality**. Examples of measures supported could be adapting premises to allow for social distancing; offering on-line activities; providing social supports and friendly calls by phone etc.
- To **become more involved in the Government's 'Keep Well' campaign**. The grants are aimed at assisting participation in the campaign, in particular with the three themes: **staying connected, switching off and being creative, and minding your mood**. For more information on the Keep Well Campaign please go to www.wicklow.ie

A total fund of €51,290 is available overall. This will offer grants up to a maximum of €3,000 per project with a percentage of grants ring fenced for amounts of €1,000 or less. The applications have been assessed and payment of grants awarded will be made in the coming weeks.

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

MARCH 2021



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 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.

LECP Update March 2021

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 delayed on restoration of the Courthouse reuse as a library/Heritage and Digi-hub with outdoor event space as library service want to reapply for funding for a larger project. Consultants working on public Realm enhancement, parking improvement, pedestrian crossings, ramps, boardwalk and riverside fencing	€2.7mn (total cost €3,566,968)
Newtownmountkennedy	The tender process for consultants to be appointed for Main St. Design is nearly complete; 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.

In 2020 there are two elements to the Scheme.

1. 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.

2. 2020 Town and Village Main Scheme

Round 1 Accelerated		
Dunlavin	Shop Local campaign	Funded €4,500
Roundwood	Public realm	Funded €36,000
Comm Centres	Adaptations for COVID measures for 10 centres	Funded €16,200
Round 2 Accelerated – August 14 th		
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 th		
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 th		
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 th		
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

MARCH 2021



Avoca	Public realm and recreation facility works	Funded €68,455
Annamoe	Public realm enhancement	Funded €100,000

CLÁR 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 Programme

The Age Friendly programme is focusing on the Keep Well Campaign and the Community Call. 500 winter care packs were delivered to those most isolated and vulnerable in the county and were very well received. Tablets and laptops were delivered to participating nursing homes Wicklow in order to assist residents stay connected. Training for setting up a Befriending service in Arklow has started with two sessions complete.

Comhairle na nÓg

The Comhairle na nÓg, through the Coordinator, are taking part in the COVID-19 Community Response Forum, bringing the perspective of young people, and in the Keep Well campaign. Funding has been secured from DCYA to continue to support the Comhairle na nÓg and tablets and laptops were provided to help them to keep the youth council going during the COVID-19 restrictions.

County Wicklow PPN

- Collaborative project with Dept. Environment, Climate & Communications to run Community Climate Conversations to inform the National Climate Action Plan.
- Work with Dept. of Rural & Community Development to review and revise national Guidelines for new Local Economic & Community Plans.
- Development of training sessions in conjunction with WCC on (i) Local Authority Structures (ii) Effective Submissions (iii) Local Authority Budgeting. Sessions to be delivered as part of the national PPN Stakeholder Training course.
- New edition of Wicklow PPN E-Bulletin published and circulated – see details at <https://countywicklowppn.ie/county-wicklow-ppn-news/>

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 31st 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 April.

3. County Wicklow Food & Beverage Strategy – Wicklow Naturally

Report under economic update

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

Social Enterprise development and operation is being supported by Bray Area Partnership in the Bray and north Wicklow areas as follows:

- Working with existing and emerging enterprises locally to build the capacity and skills required to manage effectively and sustain trading. Over the past year a programme of supports has been provided involving access to a mentor for the individual social enterprise and participation in peer group training sessions and networking on relevant business development and day to day operational issues etc. This work has been supported by a combination of programmes resourcing such as the Training & Mentoring Supports for Social Enterprises Pilot grants scheme (DRCD/Dormant Accounts Fund) and SICAP. Delivering programme supports forms part of a collaborative undertaking involving BAP and Southside Partnership.
- Providing advice and guidance to social enterprises with respect to sourcing funding for expansion and development. A number of social enterprises locally were successful in grant applications submitted under the DRCD Small Capital Grants Scheme for social enterprises. BAP is administering the finding allocated under this scheme for enterprises in the Bray and north Wicklow areas.



- Establishing new social enterprises to provide services and employment opportunities for targeted communities. The Targeted Resourced Action Supporting Nurtured Activation (TRASNA) Initiative is a social enterprise proposal being researched with respect to supplying goods and services with ex-offenders being employed in the workforce. A feasibility and market research study will determine the scope and viability for the enterprise to be established. This work is also part of a collaborative effort involving BAP and Southside Partnership.
- Directly managing and operating deficient demand social enterprises for the provision of services and employment opportunities targeting marginalised communities. Over the years BAP has developed and operated social enterprises covering early years services; transport & care services and heating & upgrading works. The BAP Warmer Homes service is an example of such enterprises in the work carried out to retrofit insulation and reduce energy usage in welfare dependent fuel poverty households, connected to the SEAI Better Energy Warmer Homes Scheme.

Social Enterprise – Co Wicklow Partnership

- 11 projects have been supported in the following areas – (3) Analysis & Development Projects, (4) small services/ works projects, (4) large scale capital works projects. The value of which is **€747,280.56**
- Internal CWP Training and Mentoring Programmes have been supported under the current programme, of which the following activity has concluded or is underway -
 - Rural Youth Social Enterprise Climb Programme concluded in December 2020, with a competition for an award pot of €10,000 (funded by DRCD – Social Enterprise and SICAP). It unearthed in Wicklow 8 new social enterprises, 7 socially aware and developing social enterprises and 4 deciding their path was more in line with enterprise.
 - Rural Youth Social Enterprise Summit Social Training Videos - (in production currently) for release in Autumn 2021. These will be hosted on a branded Social Enterprise Platform for Co Wicklow. This platform was funded by DRCD (€4,900) and will include a launch event also funded by DRC (€2,500).
 - Covid 19 Social Enterprise Training and Mentoring Ascend Programme is currently underway with a total of 20 participants.
 - Eco Tourism - Wicklow Forest Bathing Training Programme – 10 to 12 participants will be trained in the art of Forest Bathing, outside first aid and social enterprise entrepreneurial business thinking.

- Total LEADER investment in Social Enterprise in Co Wicklow - € 984,243.59

- Grant aid for (4) Social Enterprises based in Co Wicklow was secured through the small capital grants award scheme - €36,475 from the Department of Rural and Community Development.



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

Due to Covid restrictions, the site remains closed. Negotiations with tenants are ongoing.

Town Teams

Town Teams in Arklow, Blessington, Bray, Greystones and Wicklow continue to meet virtually where possible to progress various projects. Activity, particularly engagement with stakeholder groups has been curtailed due to Covid restrictions.

Arklow Town Team

Arklow Town Team is delighted to announce they will receive €6,000 for a successful application submitted to the Heritage Council, Community Grants Scheme, to carry out a Measured Survey and Conservation Report on The Goods Store, Arklow Railway Station. It is the intention of the project team to bring this structure back to life with a view to working with the community and finding alternative uses that will sustain it in the future.

The Arklow Town Team International Women's Day 5/10km virtual challenge event took place from Monday 8th March to Sunday 14th March. The event was a great success. Arklow Town team would like to extend a huge thank you to all 259 participants around the country who signed up for the event. The custom made medals will be posted during the month of March. Thank you to Coral Leisure Centre, Cllr. Pat Fitzgerald, Cllr. Miriam Murphy and Sweeney Garage for sponsoring a prize for the event. Proceeds raised will go to Brays Women's Refuge and an Arklow Town Team Tourism project.

Bray Town Team / Bray Reopening Committee

Bray Town Reopening Committee has met and will be identifying actions that the Municipal District can implement when the businesses and town begins to reopen as restrictions are eased.



Blessington Town Team

At a recent meeting of Blessington Town Team the following items were considered:

- The Hello Neighbour campaign and supporting vulnerable people in community.
- A joint meeting of Blessington and Baltinglass Tidy Towns was held to discuss the issue of dog fouling; enforcement and changing mind-set were highlighted as ways of tackling issue. Social media campaign to be rolled out in a few weeks. It was noted that the majority of dog owners are responsible and it is a minority of irresponsible people that are impacting on the wider community by not cleaning up after their dogs.
- Blessington Tidy Towns and Blessington and District Forum have secured €15,000 for development of energy master plan in conjunction with Three Counties. An audit of a representative sample of twelve residential properties across the town, energy audit of two businesses will be carried out.
- Healthy Blessington projects are being rolled out in partnership with Wicklow Sports and Recreation Partnership.

Greystones 2020

Greystones 2020 are in the process of forming a company and renaming as Greystones Town Team. The members have been busy restructuring and reviewing their policies and membership to take account of local development, economic and other changes since they originally set up.

Having regard to a number of recent developments in Greystones, the committee are keen to maximise the benefits which may be derived from major new developments locally such as the proposed Greystones Media Campus and the off shore Codling Windfarm.

Wicklow Town Team

At the February monthly meeting of Wicklow Municipal District the Chairman of Wicklow Town Team gave an update to the members of all current activities/projects being undertaken by the town team in each of the sub groups which included:

- Tourism
- Greenway
- Park & Ride
- Commercial
- Digital
- Public Realm



- Youth Group

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 organised once arrangements for the lifting of the current Covid 19 restrictions are known.

Outdoor Dining

Application fees for use of public footpaths or spaces by local businesses during COVID-19 are being waived by Wicklow County Council for a further period to the end of August 2021. The Council is anxious to assist and support businesses in the recovery period arising out of the Pandemic. One of the measures that the Council is keen to support in the recovery is the use of public footpaths and/or public space for local businesses which may require the use of these spaces, particularly as outdoor seating areas while restrictions are ongoing. The Council is advising businesses that such activity can be permitted by our Planning Department under a Section 254 licence. The application form and further information is available on the Council's website: <https://www.wicklow.ie/Living/Services/Planning/Planning-Applications/Apply-for-Planning/Licence-Application-Section-254>

On 1st April Fáilte Ireland is launching guidelines on Outdoor Dining and Urban Animation at a seminar on “Re-imagining Urban Spaces - new schemes and inspiring ideas”. This is aimed at assisting the hospitality industry provides outdoor dining, where possible over the summer months.

Tourism

Tourism Strategy and Marketing Plan 2018-2022

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

MARCH 2021



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**.

Wicklow Passport:

Wicklow County Tourism Alliance is working on the production of a promotional video for the Wicklow Passport and has contracted In Good Company Ltd for the production and promotion of the video. The aim of the campaign launch is to reach national influencers.

New VisitWicklow.ie Website:

Wicklow County Tourism Alliance is currently developing strong editorial content for the website to help showcase and promote the various Wicklow Themes. Themes worked on include Wicklow Walks, Cycling in Wicklow, Wicklow Family Activities, Wicklow Gardens, Wicklow Foods and Flavours, etc. while communications are also ongoing with the members to update and enhance the information on the site.

Wicklow Outdoors:

The Co. Wicklow Recreation officer produced videos to showcase the various sections of the Wicklow Way. The first video / section is available at https://youtu.be/Bcxv5E_S908. Furthermore, the Wicklow Trails are being digitised and County Wicklow Tourism is currently looking at structuring the Wicklow Outdoors brand in partnership with Wicklow Partnership (Recreation's Officer) & Sports Partnership.

Celtic Routes Project:

Funding of €1,917,770 for the second phase of the Celtic Routes tourism project has been secured for Ireland / Wales's tourist project, Celtic Routes. This is a partnership project between Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire County Councils and the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority in Wales and Wicklow, Wexford and Waterford City and County Councils in Ireland. It is a branded collection of tourism experiences encouraging travelers to visit Ireland and Wales to discover the Celtic spirit by suggesting immersive and authentic experiences in West Wales and South East Ireland. A toolkit is available for businesses and destinations with guidance and ideas about how they can create their own Celtic experiences and contribute to the success of the project.



Accommodation: The County Wicklow Accommodation working group are progressing with planning the next steps in order to develop a prospectus aimed at tourism providers to invest in County Wicklow.

Destination Town Funding: An application to Fáilte Ireland on behalf of Wicklow Town was made in respect of Destination Town Funding and funding has been awarded to develop visitor amenities in the Abbey Grounds. Tender documents have been prepared and quotes sought, with a closing date of 31st March.

Ireland - County by County

Wicklow featured in a recently launched 'Ireland - County by County' travel series which will be extensively aired throughout the US television network. Featuring 10 counties, this exciting new television showcase the best of Ireland county by county to television audience's right across the United States.

The Wicklow episode follows Ciara Whelan as she discovers the incredible paintings at Russborough House; takes some unusual furry friends for a walk; hikes in the spectacular Glendalough National Park; enjoys some Wicklow Naturally produce at the stunning Killruddery House, and much more. Ciara also becomes a Wicklow Ambassador as she collects the various stamps for her Wicklow Passport.

Introduction to Sustainable Tourism

Sustainable tourism was the subject of a free Webinar held on Tuesday, 16th March 2021 organised by Wicklow County Council and Wicklow Tourism Alliance. The Webinar was aimed at helping Tourism Businesses in County Wicklow to start their journey to sustainability. Sustainable tourism practices will help Wicklow businesses to be more cost and operations efficient and offer a great opportunity for growth while reducing the impact on the environment. The webinar was set up to offer participants an understanding of sustainable tourism, how it can save money, reduce impact and improve reputation.

Glendalough Masterplan and Wicklow Visitor Orientation Study

A Visitor Experience and Management Masterplan for Glendalough and the Wicklow Mountains National Park has been commissioned by Fáilte Ireland, working with its strategic partners the Office of Public Works (OPW), National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) and Coillte along with the National Monuments Service and Wicklow County Council. The aim of the Masterplan is to improve the visitor experience in Co Wicklow and the consultant team, led by Consarc Design Group, are asking the public for their input into the project.

The Public Consultation period for the Masterplan for Glendalough and Wicklow Mountains National Park was extended to 26th March. Members of the community are encouraged to go on to Wicklow.ie or to pick up an information pack from McCoy's of Laragh in order to familiarise themselves with the issues and can complete the online questionnaire or simply respond via email.

Covid 19: Fáilte 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.

Bray Harbour Area Integrated Regeneration

Funding of €7.14m has been announced for the Bray Harbour Area Integrated Regeneration Project from the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) and this funding has the capacity to unlock the great potential of Bray Harbour and surrounding area. The harbour, its piers and adjacent lands are a major asset for Bray and this funding will facilitate an integrated scheme to develop the harbour and associated public realm works to provide a vibrant waterfront area with excellent connectivity between the promenade, the town centre the Dublin Road area and beyond.

Arklow Historic Town Core: The tender closed recently on eTenders and a Tender assessment to appoint a contractor will be carried out in the coming weeks.

Fitzwilliam Square Public Realm: This project is largely completed, with some minor outstanding works to be concluded, once Covid restrictions are eased.

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.

A Rural Regeneration Development Fund application (RRDF) was submitted to the Department of Rural and Community Development on 1st December 2020 seeking funding for the development of a multi-use Community and Enterprise Centre in Rathdrum. The Part 8 for this development was presented to the members of Arklow Municipal District on 10th February 2021 and was approved.

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.



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 under 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. SSER 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 Maritime Business Development Group meeting will take place over the summer. Due to Covid restrictions this meeting will be held remotely.

Food and Beverage Strategy

JB Associates Food and Beverage consultants concluded their involvement in the Food and Beverage Strategy for Co. Wicklow at the end of February 2021; although Jonathan Birnie has agreed to stay on in a voluntary capacity to assist with some aspects of the strategy. A consultant was engaged in March to manage the Wicklow Naturally social media and website content to maximise the brand to best effect.

A company limited by guarantee has been formed and is in the process of applying for funding for a Co-ordinator to continue to implement the strategy and to support the members of the Wicklow Naturally network.

Business Briefing

Wicklow County Council hosted its annual Business Briefing on 25th March 2021. Unlike previous years, this year's event was held online and was extremely successful with over 120 participants representing the wider business community throughout the county. The Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr. Pat Kennedy welcomed the guests and speakers. The Chief Executive delivered an update the various developments in County Wicklow, focussing on those of particular interest to the business community. The keynote speakers were Mr. David Fitzsimons, Crest Ireland and formerly of Retail Excellence Ireland, who spoke about reviving Town Centres; and Ruth Andrews, Chair of the Irish Tourism Industry Confederation (ITIC) and recent Chair of the Tourism Recovery Taskforce, who spoke about Tourism Recovery. The presentations were followed by a panel discussion, with questions submitted by the attendees and responses provided by the panel. MC for the event was Alan Shortt from Mediaskills, who kept the conversation flowing. This was the fifth annual Business Briefing and although

MARCH 2021



delivered in a different format was nonetheless informative and a key method of communication between Wicklow County Council and the business community



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"> - Promotion of the enterprise message at local level. - Working with the relevant stakeholders in the county to foster entrepreneurship. - Delivering appropriate enterprise training and mentoring to entrepreneurs. - Providing funding options to entrepreneurs, early stage promoters and viable businesses to support growth and development of micro enterprises. - Developing a progression pathway for clients to Enterprise Ireland - Acting as a 'First Stop Shop' for business information and referral

METRICS: Grants	HISTORICAL	TARGETS	YEAR TO DATE
	2020	2021	2021
Grants Approved (number/ value) - Measure 1 - Technical Assistance for Micro Exporters	- 27/€663,778.00 - 3/€3,850	- Meet Demand - Meet Demand	-9/€171,894.00 -0€0.00 (to date)
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
	2020	2021	2021
Total No. of All Programmes (Training/Networking/Events/Seminars)	64	60	11
Start Your Own Business Participant numbers (included in total training programmes)	75	75	15
Total No. of all Participants participating in above Programmes	1542	1000	170
Women in Business Network Number of Meetings	10	12	2

MARCH 2021



METRICS: Business Advice & Mentoring	HISTORICAL	TARGETS	YEAR TO DATE
	2020	2021	2021
Number of new clients added to database *criteria have been amended for this metric	1302	100	221
Number of One to One Business Advice meetings including Businesses assigned a mentor	803	600	149 (including Brexit mentoring)

METRICS: Student Enterprise Programmes	HISTORICAL	TARGETS	
Academic Year	2020/2021	2021/2022	Year to Date
No. of Secondary Student Participants	962	1000	962

METRICS: Irelands Best Young Entrepreneur	HISTORICAL	TARGETS	
Academic Year	2020	2021	Year to Date 2021
Number of Applications	Programme review	Programme review	Programme review

Trading Online Voucher	HISTORICAL	TARGETS	
No of Trading Online Vouchers approved	2020	2021	Year to Date 2021
Trading Online Vouchers	425	70	63

Lean For Micro Project	HISTORICAL	TARGETS	YEAR TO DATE
	2020	2021	2021
No. of Companies who have undertaken a Lean for Micro Assessment by a Lean Expert	8	11	9

Microfinance Ireland	HISTORICAL	TARGETS	YEAR TO DATE
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MARCH 2021



	2020	2021	2021
No. of Companies who have submitted a MFI loan application through the LEO	21	23	0

March 2021 Activities

Brexit / Customs one to one advice Clinics are ongoing with dedicated Advisor working with companies to help them adapt to new regulations following Brexit.

There continues to be a high level of demand for business advice clinics which are currently being run remotely. Additional Clinics are being provided to ensure that demand is being met.

The Student Enterprise Programme 2020/2021 culminated on March 23rd when the County Final was run virtually. A total of 962 students participated in the programme this year from 16 Schools across county Wicklow.

Joining Cathaoirleach Cllr Pat Kennedy, Chief Executive Frank Curran and Head of Enterprise Vibeke Delahunt, special guests at the awards ceremony included local celebrities Fionnuala McCormack and Hozier.

The Winning Team in the Senior Category is from East Glendalough School with their project Simple signposts and a team from Colaiste Craobh Abhann won in the Junior Category with their project . Both teams will proceed to represent Wicklow in the National Finals which will also be held virtually in May 2021.

The March Network of Entrepreneurial Women network meeting took place via Zoom on 3rd March.

Applications for the Trading Online Voucher Scheme continue to be submitted with 63 approved to date for 2021. The grant has now reverted to 50% from 1st 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.

MARCH 2021



Training

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

Local Enterprise Week took place 1st to 5th March during which the following events took place:-

- Digital Marketing Clinics – 6 Clients
- Start Your Own Business – 15 Clients
- Customs Mentoring Sessions – 6 Clients
- Customs Workshop – 11 participants
- Trading Online Voucher Seminar – 53 participants
- Lead Yourself, Lead Other, Lead Your Business – 20 participants.

9 businesses participated in a Business Planning and Accessing Finance Course on the 9th March.

2 LEO Wicklow clients took part in a Regional Food Starter Course on the 9th March arranged by Kilkenny LEO.

Customs Mentoring sessions Took place on 23rd March for 7 client companies. Instagram for business scheduled for 23rd March, SEO for Website scheduled for 25th March and Maximising Sales on Your Website & Social Media Channels on the 1st April are all fully booked.

Upcoming courses include the following:-

Due to demand an additional Start Your Own Business Course has been scheduled to commence 14th April for 10 mornings.



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-PlansStrategies/National-Regional-County-Plans/Wicklow-County-Development-Plan-2021-2027/IssuesPaper>

The First Chief Executive's Report was issued to the Elected Members on Friday 12th 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-RegionalCounty-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

- County Heritage Plan allocations received from The Heritage Council for the implementation of the County Wicklow Heritage Plan actions in 2021 (€30,000). Heritage Forum Meeting held 30th March.
- Know Your 5 K – Free online course to assist individuals to research their locality in county Wicklow over 5 sessions to commence in 6th April. The outcome from the training will promote engagement with Our Wicklow Heritage, the online community Heritage website for county Wicklow.
- Our Wicklow Heritage: One additional community heritage website launched as part of the OWH network on the theme of Rathdown Ancient Heritage, under the aegis of Greystones Tidy Towns. ICAN (national) meeting held 24/03
- Biodiversity Awareness programme: 'Spring into Nature' programme underway Feb – May, includes the production and free distribution of publications (Wicklow Wildlife posters and Gardening for Wildlife booklets and other Wicklow habitat guides) and the hosting of six free nature themed zoom evening talks (supported by the Healthy Ireland programme).
- Application for funding to implement Wicklow Biodiversity Action Plan submitted to the National Biodiversity Action Plan fund by 26th March
- 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. Expressions of interest submitted by 79 community groups.

MARCH 2021



- Community Monument Fund (CMF); This grant scheme is co-ordinated by the Heritage Officer on behalf of the National Monuments Service DHHLG. The scheme was advertised in early March, applications invited by 12th April, shortlisting to Dept by end of April
- Protected Structures Grants: The Heritage Office co-ordinated application to the BHIS and HSF schemes on behalf of Wicklow County Council Planning Section. €72,000 allocation available for county Wicklow under the BHIS in 2021. Assessments completed and shortlisted projects were forwarded to the Dept by end of Feb. Await outcome.

Planning Applications*

A total of 124 valid applications were received during February, these include applications as follows:

Type of Development	Number Received
Individual Houses	32 (29 refer to rural Hse applications)
Housing Developments*	01
Agricultural Structures	04
Commercial	05
Other Developments**	82
Total	124

* Large hsg Development 0

**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 66 applications in February, being:

Type of Development	Number of Decisions
Housing Developments	07
Individual Houses	16 (14 refer to a rural Hse)
Other Developments	41
Other Developments Requiring EIA	02
Total	66

In relation to decisions issued between Jan to Feb 2020, in comparison to the same period for 2021, the details are as follows:

	28/02/2020	28/02/2021
Total Number of decisions issued	145	156
Total Number of decisions to grant	122	132

MARCH 2021



% Grant Rate	84%	85%
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No. of Applications withdrawn

February 07 (06 refer to rural hse applications)

*Withdrawals may not have been lodged in the month of February.

Planning Enforcement

Enforcement

New Files	11
Advisory Letters	19
Warning Letters	17
Enforcement Notices	01
Legal files	01
Closed	14

Court Cases:

2 Cases listed High Court February both adjourned

Circuit Court Cases for March have been adjourned by Court Office

Vacant Sites

25 no. sites now stand on the Register.
Letters issuing pursuing outstanding levies

Derelict Sites

03 No. of sites on Register

Short Term Letting

- 08 Application for Registration received in 2021
- Total received to date: 45 (20 from 2019 and 17 from 2020 and 8 from 2021)
- Total files from 2019 is 27
- Total files from 2020 is 69
- Total files from 2021 is 11
- 03 complaints received in 2020
- 02 complaints received in 2021
- 08 warning letter issued
- 04 properties from 2019 being investigated at present
- 40 properties from 2020 being investigated at present
- 32 properties from 2021 being investigated at present
- UD files created from 2020 in 2021 is 8

4. Environmental Services

Waste Management

No. of Complaints Opened	188
No. of Cases Closed, Resolved or Completed	277
No of Litter Fines Issued	49
No. of Waste Management Files Opened	4
No. of Warning Letters Issued	5
No. of Abandoned Car Notices Issued	11
No. of Burning Applications Granted	8
No. of Temporary Signs Granted	0
No. of Notices issued under Section 14 of the Waste Management Act	9
No. of Notices issued under Section 55 of the Waste Management Act	0
No. of fixed penalty notices issued	0
No. of files prepared for Court included in Court lists	36
Income – Litter	€6,740.00
Income – Waste Management	€3,624.00

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

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 has been received and is currently being reviewed by officials.
- Woodland Creation Project: All departments were asked to identify public lands which could be suitable for community woodlands. CARO have issued 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. Three proposed parcels of land have been forwarded to Teagasc to carry out a desk top study on their suitability for the scheme.
- A Foamstream machine has been purchased from Furlong Equipment Ltd and will initially be deployed in the Bray Municipal District. – Training on the use of the machine has been delayed due to COVID restrictions. WCC is collaborating with Kidare County Council on research to alternatives to Glyphosate
- The role out of the national training programme has commenced and training will continue online for all staff throughout 2021.



Energy

BEC 1121 application has been approved and with the support of 3 Counties Energy. The project will progress via the energy team in 2021..

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 during December with audits in NewtownmountKennedy and Greystones/Delgany while only desk top desk top studies and data gathering continued in January.

Glenmalure is now completed with final report approved and submitted to SEAI. A claim for grant payment has been made to SEAI and payment received from SEAI in January. The committee is now focused on identifying projects to implement.

Laragh is also complete and due to be presented to the Community, once a final review is completed by the committee.

Wicklow Town and Blessington have both commenced the public engagement process. Blessington held an online public information webinar on the 16th of February.

Environmental Awareness

The Relove fashion competition final was held on the 22nd of February. An Instagram account has been used to announce finalists and each outfit for the final was filmed and shown on Instagram during February in the run up to the final. Lorraine Keane was a guest judge and the competition featured on Morning Ireland the day of the final.

The Sustainable Development Goals mapping tool has been delivered with the map developed in house by our GIS Officer. 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 presentation on the project was made to the Midlands region with CARO in January.

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.

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 vary 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 and into January moving to Dog fouling in February.



A proposal was made to local authorities in the CARO Eastern Midlands subregion to develop a joint Transition Year Climate Action programme to guide schools on engaging students in action at local level. All four local authorities have agreed to participate. A first draft of the programme is in preparation.

Work commenced with Wicklow Tourism to address sustainability in Wicklow's tourism sector. A webinar is planned and a meeting is planned with Wicklow Partnership and Community and Economic Development to discuss how we can support the sector.

Eight hundred trees were ordered from The Tree Council of Ireland for National Tree Week in March and the availability of the trees advertised through the PPN.

The PPN with the support of the Environment Awareness Office agreed to host one of 15 conversations on climate public consultations for PPN members to be held in March. The feedback from PPN members will feed in to the Climate Action Fund and the Climate Action Plan 2021 to 2030.

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

Life Guards

The bathing season runs from 1st of June to the 15th September as did Lifeguard Patrols. Recruitment of life guards has commenced and closing date for receipt of applications is Friday 26th March

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 27th November.

Submissions have been received from a number of consultees. These are presently being reviewed by the environmental consultants.

Harbours and Ports

Nine cargo vessels berthed in Wicklow Port during February 2020. All were single transactions with seven importing and two exporting commodities. The imports included logs, timber and explosives while the exported material consisted of scrap metal.



Wicklow County Council are in the process of submitting applications to the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine for funding under the Fishery Harbour & Coastal Infrastructure Development Programme 2021.

Pollution Control

Pollution Response & Investigation

- 3 Water pollution complaints received and investigated.
- 1 Air pollution complaints received and investigated.

Private Water Supplies

- Of the 6 Private water supplies monitored and 6 were found non-compliant with pH indicator parametric values.
- 1 boil water notice was issued on a private water supply following receiving non-compliant microbiological and health advice from the HSE.

Deco Paints and Solvent Regulations

- 1 Dry Cleaner and 2 Vehicle refinisher (car spraying) installations were inspected.
- 3 Paint Retailers inspected.

Solid Fuel Regulations

- 4 Inspections of Wholesalers/Retailers/Distributors

Petrol Vapour Recovery Regulations

- 14 Petrol Vapour installations (Petrol Filling Stations) inspected.

Water Framework Directive National Monitoring Programme

- 14 Lakes monitored involving for checking compliance with environmental quality standards
- 34 Rivers monitored at 8 stations involving for compliance with environmental quality standards.

Municipal Wastewater Treatment Plants – Ambient Monitoring

- 36 River/Lake samples taken and analysed upstream and downstream of discharges of public wastewater treatment plants

Septic Tank Inspections - National Inspection Plan

- 8 Septic tank inspections carried out.
- 4 compliant, 3 non-compliant
- 3 advisory notices issued to rectify the non-compliances.



Planning & Development

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

Well Grants

- 16 New Applications
- 1 Number of New Wells
- 8 Number of New Pumps
- 7 Treatment/Disinfection Equipment
- 20 Inspections in advance and after works.

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 5th of November 2020.
- A Public Information Session is currently underway (12th - 26th March 2021) and the Project Team are responding to the Public's comments on an update presentation, which was given to Arklow District Members on 10th of March 2021.
- An Environmental Impact Assessment Report is currently being finalised to submit to An Bord Pleanala.

5. Transportation, Water & Emergency Services

Public Lighting

	01/02/2021	08/02/2021	15/02/2021	22/02/2021	01/03/2021
Access Issues (Attended)	12	14	14	15	15
Cable Fault (Attend)	7	7	7	7	7
ESB Required (Attended)	30	21	21	21	21
Knock Down (Attended)	3	3	2	2	2
Materials required	3	3	3	3	3
No Supply	8	8	8	8	8
On Hold	23	23	25	25	25
Submitted	241	255	262	255	280
Traffic Management Required	11	11	10	9	10
TOTAL	338	345	352	345	371
Percentage of lights not working	2.27%	2.32%	2.36%	2.32%	2.49%

	Arklow MD	Baltinglass MD	Bray MD	Greystones MD	Wicklow MD	grand total
Access Issues (Attended)	5		4	1	5	15
Cable Fault (Attend)	1			5	1	7
ESB Required (Attended)	7	2	4	2	6	21
Knock Down (Attended)		1			1	2
Materials required	1		1		1	3
No Supply	1	4	1	2		8
On hold	2	1	16	4	2	25
Submitted	31	70	76	61	42	280
Traffic Management Required	6				4	10
Grand Total	54	78	102	75	62	371
Percentage Not Working	1.85%	3.29%	3.09%	2.74%	1.73%	2.49%

Transportation Statistics (General)

	Total 2020	Running total 2021	January 2021	February 2021
Solicitors Queries	842	135	64	71
Road Closure Applications	23	4	2	2
Road Opening Licences	1279	257	135	122
Abnormal Load Applications	33	6	2	4

Winter Maintenance programme commenced on 12th October 2020

Week Commencing	25/01/21	01/02/21	08/02/21	15/02/21	22/02/21	01/03/21
Total number of gritting nights	3	2	5	1	4	3
Total number of routes gritted	27	14	99	9	18	22
Total estimate tonnage used	107	61	452	39	97	89

M11/N11 Junction 4 to 14 Improvement Scheme

The project team met with the Sponsoring Agency Management Group to discuss a further Bulletin Update expected by the end of April. This will again provide more detail and progress of the scheme with the remaining corridors, but also the development of design in-line with the Stage 2 of the Phase 2 Project Appraisal process.

Environmental Surveys have recommenced on site, with field walkover surveys including Bat, Barn Owl, Hydro Surveys, Breeding Birds, to name but a few. Updates are on the project website regarding the surveys that are being undertaken. The scheme design consultants ARUP continue to progress the assessment of the emerging preferred corridor under TII Project Management Guidelines and are confident that the announcement will be made by the end of Q2 2021. The project team are continuing to meet virtually with the public and any interested groups. Contact to both the liaison and project team can be made at n11m11@arup.com

M11/N11 Interim Bus Priority Project

The Feasibility Report was completed at the beginning of March, it is currently under review by the NTA, TII and WCC. Wicklow County Council has written to TII requesting approval to progress the scheme to Phase 2 and Phase 3. The Interim Bus Priority Scheme will now be project managed by the Kildare National Roads Office. A further progress meeting is due to be held in April.



N11 Kilmacanogue Parallel Service Road

Construction work has continued through Covid level 5 restrictions as construction of critical transport infrastructure is permitted under the government measures.

The switch to Phase 2 Traffic Management was completed in the first week of February, with the mainline traffic travelling on the new running lane and the relocated Bus Stop is also in operation.

Accommodation works are ongoing, with advance works to the gantry bases for the service road. The construction of the concrete plinths to delineate the service road from the mainline traffic will commence when the accommodation works are complete.

N81 Knockroe Bend Realignment

The Knockroe Bend scheme is now complete, and the Road Works Speed Limit Order has ended. The default speed limit of 100kph now applies along this section of the N81. Funding is available for Per Cent for Art Commission for the scheme; the Arts Officer is preparing a submission to TII for approval.

N81 Irishtown West, N81 Whitestown Lower, N81 Hangman's Bend and N81 Tuckmill Lower

"N81 Four Studies"

Wicklow County Council recently requested 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') from Phase 1 Feasibility Report to Phase 2 Route Selection in accordance with Phases 1 to 4 of the TII Project Management Guidelines (PMG).

The design team in the Kildare NRO continue to progress the scheme with Route Selection (Phase 2) on behalf of Wicklow County Council.

N81 Pavement Capital Works

TII have allocated funding to resurface circa 4km south of Blessington.

N81 Capital Maintenance

TII have provided an allocation for resurfacing works at Ballinacrow Upper to Saundersgrove Hill and at Hollywood Lower.

Sustainable Transportation Measures Grant Schemes

- **Bray Strand Road Cycle Scheme** – Works are progressing on site. The attenuation system and interceptors have been installed. Paving works have commenced.
- **Wicklow Port Access Road Pedestrian & Cycle Link Scheme** – Aecom Ireland Ltd. have been appointed consultants for the Scheme. They have commenced the Design phase for the Scheme.
- **Arklow Transport Study** – Tenders have been received for Consultants to carry out the Arklow Transport Study. These have been assessed and we are in the process of appointing Consultants for the scheme.



- **Bray Southern Cross Road Improvement Scheme** – JB Barry Transportation Ltd. have been appointed consultants for the Scheme. They are currently preparing a Feasibility Study for the scheme.
 - **Bus Priority in Little Bray** – Tenders have been sought for Consultant Engineers to bring the scheme from Preliminary Design Stage through to Completion. Tenders are currently being assessed and it is anticipated that Consultants will be appointed in early April.
 - **Kilmacanogue to Bray Retail Park (Southern Cross Road)** – This scheme is now being funded by the NTA. Work is progressing on the Options Assessment for the route.
 - **NTA Covid Programme 2020 – Contractual Liability** – Works are progressing well on the schemes under this funding stream. A number of the schemes are progressing towards completion in the next month.
 - **NTA Stimulus Programme 2020 – Contractual Liability** – Works are progressing well on the schemes under this funding stream. The schemes at Blacklion Manor, Avoca footpaths and Hollywood village are now substantially completed with minor works remaining. A number of the remaining schemes are progressing towards completion in the next month.
- **Laragh/Glendalough Junction** - Construction works commenced on 19th September with works progressing well to improve access for visitors to the National Heritage Site in the townland of Brockagh at Glendalough. Works will recommence on this project on the 1st March 2021.
- **Ballinaclash 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 recommenced at this project on the 22nd February 2021.

Parking Income

Parking Income by Municipal District	EURO
Bray Municipal District	65,616
Greystones Municipal District	23,200
Wicklow Municipal District	21,560
Arklow Municipal District	11,505
Parking Permits	11,680
Parking Fines	39,780
Wicklow County Council	173,340

Fire Service

Operational Fire Statistics February 2021

	TOTAL	Bray	Greystones	Wicklow	Rathdrum	Arklow	Blessington	Dunlavin	Baitinglass	Carnew	Tinahely
Callsign		1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.8	1.9	2.1
Two Stations Mobilised											
Fire Domestic Persons Reported	4	1	2	1							
Fire Domestic	14	2	2	3	2	1	1	1		1	1
Fire Caravan	0										
Road Traffic Collision (RTC)	13	3	3	2	1	2*		1	1	1	1
Fire Vehicle (HGV /motorway)	0										
Hazardous Materials Incident	0										
Fire Industrial / Commercial	4		1	1				1	1		
Fire Barn / Shed	1		1								
Fire Alarm or CO ₂ Activation	9	5	3	1							
Fire Outdoor: Gorse / bushes	18	7	2	4	2		1	2			2**
Fire Chimney	8	1		1		2	1		2	1	
Fire Small / bin / skip / bonfire	12	2	3	4			3				
Fire Vehicle	3	1		1						1	
Flooding	3		3								
Trees Down, Make Scene Safe	3			1				2			
Ambulance Assist	8	1		1		1			5		
Garda Assist	0										
Electrical Incident	2			1					1		
Gas Leak	1	1									
River / Water Rescue	0										
Fire Oil / Petrol	0										
Explosion	0										
Entrapment / Rescue / Lift	0										
Oil Spill / Road Hazard	0										
Animal Rescue	1	1									
Lock In / Lock Out	0										
False Alarm – Good Intent	4			1	1				1		1
Malicious False Alarm	0										
Mobilised into other County	1					1					
Times Stations mobilised	109	25	20	22	6	5	6	7	11	4	3

* RTC, Arklow, 08/02/21, supported by Wexford crew from Gorey

** Gorse fire, 12/02/21, Tinahely supported by Hacketstown crew from Carlow

There were **92 incidents** attended during the month of February 2021. Individual Fire Stations were mobilised on a total of **109 occasions** including 1 incident in Wexford.

9 Fire Stations attended Domestic / House fires and 9 Fire Stations attended Road Traffic Collisions demonstrating the important contribution made by rural stations with the least number of incidents each month.

MARCH 2021



Operational activity for the month of February **was up 7% on the preceding month** (January 2021 – 102 mobilisations) and was the same as activity in the equivalent month in 2020. For the first 2 months of the year operational activity is up 11% which will be quantified in terms of cost at the end of the first pay quarter of the year.

Sample Incidents (February 2021)

- 04/02/2021 Tinahely and Carnew Fire Crews attended an RTC at Killaveny, Tinahely.
- 05/02/2021 Bray and Enniskerry Crews were mobilised to a single car RTC at Junction 7, N11, Northbound.
- 09/02/2021 Baltinglass and Dunlavin Crews were mobilised to an RTC involving an overturned van with one person trapped at Tuckmill on N81.
- 11/02/2021 Wicklow Town and Rathdrum Crews attended a domestic house fire on a farm on the outskirts of Rathdrum .
- 26/02/2021 Blessington and Dunlavin crews attended a house fire at Ballyfolan.

Incidents mobilised outside County Wicklow (February 2021):

Wexford (1-incident)

- 11/02/21 Arklow Crew were mobilised to a chimney fire at Scarnagh, Coolgreaney, County Wexford.

General

- Essential centralised training continued during the month:
 - Compartment Fire Behaviour Training (new entrants)
 - Compartment Fire Behaviour Training (refresher)
 - Breathing Apparatus Training (new entrants)

Fire Prevention Statistics February 2021

Application type	Received	Deemed Invalid	Requested additional information	Inspections	Recommended Grant
Fire Safety Certificates	5				6
Regularisation Certificates	3		2		1
FSC as part of 7 Day Notice					
Disability Access Certificates	3				5

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



Commencement Notices for February 2021:

Commencement Notices Submitted: 16

- 7 Commencement Notices with Compliance Documents
- 5 Opt Out Declarations
- 4 Commencement Notices without Compliance Documents
- 0 Seven day Notice

Submission Statistics

- 31 % of Commencement Notices - Opt Out
- 93 % of Commencement Notices Revised Information required & requested = 15 No. Commencement Notices (CN) of which
 - 7 are Compliance Documentation (56%)
 - 4 are Opt Out (26%)
 - 4 Without Compliance Documentation (26%)
 - 0 Seven Day Notice (0%)
- 2 Valid Commencement Notices
- 2 new build residential Units (0 of which are one off houses)
 - Invalidated CNs for January = 0

• **Certificates of Completion processed in February 2021**

- 9 New No. of CCC submitted
- 8 No. Validated
- 0 No. Invalid

Submission Statistics

8 No. Validated CCCs related to;

- 4 No CCCs submitted in January 2021
- 4 No CCCs submitted in February 2021
- 8 Revised Info Requests

**BCA not notified on completion of opt out developments

Points to note:

Non Essential construction sites closed from 8th January due to Level 5 Restrictions. NBCO guidelines requested that all users of BCMS take account of current Level 5 Restrictions before submission of Notices to BCMS. Building Control have continued to assess all Commencement Notices and Certificates of Completion submitted, however non-essential construction projects have been requested to amend Commencement Notice Date to reflect Level 5 restrictions in line with NBCO guidelines.

Building Control inspections have continued for Essential commenced and completed works.

Organisational Development and Financial Matters

1. HR and Corporate Services

Recruitment

The following interviews were held in February

- Administrative Officer
- Desktop shortlisting Clerical Officer
- Desktop shortlisting Assistant Staff Officer

Employee Numbers

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

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

(Excludes figures for Fire-fighters)



Access to Information

F.O.I. Requests

February 2021: 11	February 2020: 8
January – February 2021: 15	January – February 2020: 18

Ombudsman Requests

February 2021	0
January to February 2021	1

February 2020	7
January to February 2020	7

Press Releases

February 2021 – 8 Press Releases

Register of Electors

The 2021/2022 Live Register was published on 1st February 2021 in line with statutory regulations. Due to the ongoing Covid-19 Emergency we are limited in the number of areas we can distribute the Register to. The Register is available for inspection in each of the Municipal District Offices and at the Customer Service Hub in County Buildings. The Political Extract was generated and issued to all Council Members, TD's and Senator via email. They will also receive a pdf copy of the Register books themselves. All Reports and Returns regarding the Register of Electors has been returned to the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government. The total number of Electors on the 2021/2022 Live Register of Electors is 102,346 and there are 206 polling stations in Wicklow.

The Franchise staff will continue to strive for excellence on the Register of Electors database. We are continuing to accept applications from 18 year olds and new residents moving into the county in the event that an electoral event occurs and there is a requirement for a Supplement Register. We will continue to make contact with new housing developments and urban areas where new developments are coming on stream in an effort to get new residents register. The Special Voters list has been issued to each of the Nursing Homes in the County for their information along with application forms to register new residents. We have had discussions with Wicklow County Council's Older Person's Network Liasion Officer to highlight the option of Postal Votes for those elderly or vulnerable electors who may not wish to visit a polling station.

We will continue to work on areas where there is a lack of Eircodes. We have assisted the LGMA in their exercise to have other Local Authorities achieve similar Eircode coverage on their own Register of Electors.

We have an ongoing social media presence and have placed ads in print media encouraging electors to use www.checktheregister.ie to check that they are registered to vote. It is hoped that once Covid restrictions are lifted that we will be in a position to establish voter registration days in schools, shopping centres and libraries.'

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.

MARCH 2021



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.

St. Patricks Day – successful social media advertisement to promote the celebration of St. Patricks Day in a safe way within 5km. Posts were sent out over facebook, twitter and Instagram. #StPatricksDay #YourCouncil #StaySafe

Wicklow People - 12 months On! Campaign for Covid 19

Wicklow people launched a Campaign supplement on Wednesday 24th March, for to mark 12 months since the start of the pandemic. Wicklow County Council submitted a two page campaign to highlight the great work done by staff and the supports put in place over the last year to help and support our Community during Covid 19.

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 COVID19

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 & Small Business Assistance Scheme – Support for applications and backend systems integration continues.
- Community Call Helpline remains in place with support to the helpline staff
- Remote Working Requirements for staff of Wicklow County Council
- Blended model for return to work arrangements
- Government Networks
- Phone Systems
- Call Conferencing
- Communications and awareness
- Laptops procured and configured to support remote working for key staff in vital business areas.
- 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 in-house and remote workers.
- Examination of system upgrades potential is underway

Domain Migration

The domain migration and the mailbox migration project have been completed and all domain user and email accounts have been migrated.

Server migration is progressing along planned schedule.

GIS & Data Collection Systems

- The Draft County Development Plan has been completed and is currently being reviewed by the Members. Data quality and cleansing procedures are now being carried out on Draft Datasets.
- Training has commenced and additional features have been added to the GIS Departmental Viewers and Editors.
- The Tree Management Project, which is currently managed by the Climate Action Group, are in discussions with 3rd party vendors to procure information for the project.
- 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.
- Development of CRM System automation continues, particularly for the new Customer Service Innovation Hub and the Covid Community Response Hub.



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. The introduction of new Cookie Preferences in October under Data Protection will see a reduction in statistics going forward.

- 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.

- The Online Consultation Hub on Wicklow.ie continues to feature in enhanced consultation campaigns. These have included–
 - 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.



3. FINANCIAL

Revenue Account

Due to year-end adjustments that are currently being carried out as part of the 2020 Annual Financial Statement (AFS) process, we are not in a position to provide February 2021 expenditure figures in the normal format at this time. This situation will be regularised during the Quarter 1 period. The below table outlines the 2021 adopted budget by service division.

REVENUE ACCOUNT			
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE SUMMARY BUDGET ONLY BY SERVICE DIVISION			
	Expenditure	Income	NET
	Adopted Full Year Budget	Adopted Full Year Budget	Adopted Expenditure / (Income)
	€	€	€
Housing and Building	28,035,818	(33,580,464)	(5,544,646)
Road Transport & Safety	22,299,168	(15,497,938)	6,801,230
Water Services	5,823,666	(6,857,035)	(1,033,369)
Development Management	11,471,622	(6,226,652)	5,244,970
Environmental Services	11,897,222	(2,069,370)	9,827,852
Recreation and Amenity	7,946,046	(882,197)	7,063,849
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	1,496,632	(834,228)	662,404
Miscellaneous Services	10,447,823	(7,747,758)	2,700,065
Central Management Charges	19,212,563	(1,000,000)	18,212,563
Local Government Fund		(12,006,898)	(12,006,898)
Pension Levy		0	0
Commercial Rates		(32,078,021)	(32,078,021)
	118,630,560	(118,780,561)	(150,001)

Cashflow/Overdraft

Wicklow County Council manages its cashflow requirements on a daily basis and did not avail of its overdraft facility during the period 1st February 2021 to 28th February 2021.

Capital Account

CAPITAL ACCOUNT					
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE SUMMARY BY SERVICE DIVISION AT 28TH FEBRUARY 2021					
	Opening Balance at 01/01/2021	Actual Expenditure	Actual Income	Transfers to/from Reserves	Closing Balance at 28/02/2021
	€	€	€	€	€
Housing and Building	17,156,965	8,803,813	(5,992,415)	0	19,968,363
Road Transport & Safety	(45,155,246)	639,846	(1,727,295)	0	(46,242,696)
Water Services	(11,483,743)	26,905	(238,587)	0	(11,695,425)
Development Management	(9,769,618)	26,130	(272,279)	0	(10,015,767)
Environmental Services	1,648,468	(211,667)	(300,410)	32,915	1,169,307
Recreation and Amenity	(1,485,534)	(772,701)	(588,058)	0	(2,846,294)
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	(1,204,386)	2,023	0	0	(1,202,364)
Miscellaneous Services	(18,293,168)	(10,473)	53,983	1,444,650	(16,805,008)
	(68,586,263)	8,503,875	(9,065,060)	1,477,565	(67,669,883)



Commercial Rates, Rents and Loan Collections

SUMMARY OF MAJOR COLLECTIONS AT 28th FEBRUARY 2021										
Income Collection Area	Opening Balance 01/01/2021	Accrued	Vacancy Property Adjustments	Write Offs	Waivers	Total for Collection	Collected	Closing Arrears 28/02/2021	Specific Doubtful Arrears	% Collection
Rates										
Rents & Annuities	2,735,687	2,918,448	0	(16,695)	0	5,637,441	(2,399,883)	3,237,557	0	43%
Housing Loans										

NB The commercial rated figures will be populated after the 2020 rate demands are issued. The updated 2021 housing loan figures will be available in next month's report.

The rent collection percentage is below normal levels due to the carry forward of arrears at the start of the new financial year. This situation will be regularised over the course of the year.

General Municipal Allocation and Discretionary Fund 2020

The Discretionary Funding allocation for 2021 was decreased in line with the 2021 LPT rate reduction. The 2021 funding provision consists of mainly General Municipal Allocations used to support local groups and initiative etc. There was no public realm funding allocated this year, however unspent monies in this area from 2020 have been made available to Municipal Districts in 2021.

Capital Investment Programme 2020-2022

The Capital Investment Programme 2021-2023 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 Council meeting of March 1st 2021.

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

PROGRAMME GROUP	Expected Outlay				Proposed Funding				
	2021	2022	2023	TOTAL	Dev Charges ¹	Loan	Grant Aid ²	Other ³	TOTAL
	€	€	€	€	€	€	€	€	€
HOUSING AND BUILDING	149,460,000	148,060,000	147,760,000	445,280,000		30,000,000	360,740,000	54,540,000	445,280,000
ROAD TRANSPORT & SAFETY	33,009,134	16,435,578	14,227,500	63,672,212	11,045,290	7,795,000	41,907,749	2,924,173	63,672,212
WATER SERVICES	150,000	150,000	150,000	450,000			450,000		450,000
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT	2,340,000	8,178,000	6,300,000	16,818,000	1,097,800	-	10,114,200	5,606,000	16,818,000
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	1,250,000	4,010,000	11,775,000	17,035,000			16,210,000	825,000	17,035,000
RECREATION AND AMENITY	4,583,594	25,749,891	17,823,000	48,156,485	9,439,775	-	37,696,710	1,020,000	48,156,485
AGRICULTURAL, EDUCATION, HEALTH & WELFARE	1,150,000	25,320,000	27,062,946	53,532,946	4,647,869		43,837,209	5,047,869	53,532,946
MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES	1,950,000	2,200,000	2,200,000	6,350,000			2,325,000	4,025,000	6,350,000
OVERALL TOTAL	193,892,728	230,103,469	227,298,446	651,294,643	26,230,734	37,795,000	513,280,868	73,988,042	651,294,643