



Wicklow County Council Chief Executive's Monthly Report



W I C K L O W

ENDLESS OPPORTUNITIES



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This month:

Positive Results in National Satisfaction Survey

Wicklow County Council has emerged with impressive marks in a national Local Authority Satisfaction Survey.

The study, carried out by the National Oversight and Audit Commission (NOAC), found that Wicklow County Council scored higher than average with the public considering the Council is doing a good job.

The NOAC independently oversees the local government sector by reviewing the performance of Local Councils, monitors implementation of national local government policy and identifies opportunities for best practice.

The research carried out in February/March 2019 by IPSOS MRBI, included Wicklow County Council along with other comparative medium sized Local Authorities, comprised off over 3,200 citizens participating in face to face interviews.

Sod-Turned on €3 million Content-Creation Hub

The sod was turned on a new €3 million Content-Creation Enterprise Hub at the Wicklow County Campus in Clermont, Rathnew, on 17th September.

The Hub will provide 10,000sq ft of private and co-working spaces and aims to boost job creation in the sector and spin out services feeding into these industries..It is intended to support content creation and will complement the film industry, with a particular focus on businesses servicing productions happening in Ashford Studios and Ardmore Studios.

The Hub will also offer a collaborative social space, conference centre, podcast studio and screening facility along with access to a range of existing meeting rooms and training facilities on the larger Clermont campus.

Funding of €1.43m was secured under the Government's Regional Enterprise Development Fund. The remainder will be matched by Wicklow County Council.

New Community Monument Fund

Applications are being invited by Wicklow County Council for funds to help the conservation of local monuments.

The Community Monuments Fund will invest €900,000 nationally in our valuable archaeological heritage to help the owners and custodians of archaeological monuments to safeguard them into the future for the benefit of local communities and the visiting public.

Core aims of this new Fund are the conservation, maintenance, protection and promotion of local monuments and archaeological sites. It will have a number of funding streams aimed at enabling conservation works to be carried out on monuments which are deemed to be significant and in need of urgent support, encouraging access to monuments and improve their presentation and also to build resilience in monuments to enable them to withstand the effects of climate change.

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY

1. Social Housing Support

	Aug 2020	Aug 2019
No. on list for Social Housing Support – (includes RAS and HAP)	4519	4348
No. availing of Rental Assistance Scheme (RAS)	304	385
No. availing of Housing Assistance Payment (HAP)	1989	1505
No. in Long Term Leasing accommodation	15	8
No. in Short Term Leasing accommodation	17	10

2. Allocation of Social Housing

	Aug 2020	Aug 2019
Wicklow County Council	112	134
Approved Housing Bodies	14	14

3. Social Housing Stock

	August 2020	August 2019
Tenancies occupied	4516	4397
Total weekly rental accrual	€299,584.81	€299,764
Arrears	€2,173,969.83	€1,461,826

4. Casual Vacancies/Relets

44

	August 2020	Covid 19	Aug 2019
Municipal District			
Arklow	4	2	17
Baltinglass	13	2	22
Bray	4	2	8
Greystones	4	0	6
Wicklow	19	3	19

COVID 19 UPDATE

Relets for Self Isolation Units

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



5. Housing Supply – Programme of Delivery

COVID 19 UPDATE
The current pandemic has had a major effect on the programme.
Sites were closed for 7 weeks with 3 exceptions, which were allowed to re-open early (Convent Lands Wicklow, Farrenkelly Greystones and Whitehall Baltinglass. All sites are now open.
Progress is being monitored on site to establish any ongoing effects.

Social Housing Supply Programme

5 scheme completed 2019/2020	61 units
9 schemes currently on site in 2020	273 Units
further schemes to commence on site in 2020	<u>159 Units</u>
<u>TOTAL</u>	493 Units

SCHEMES COMPLETED	UNITS	CURRENT STATUS	PART 8 APPROVAL
O'Byrne Road, Bray	1	Completed and allocated	Yes
Old Library Arklow	7	Completed and allocated	Yes
Avondale Heights Rathdrum	20	Completed and allocated	Yes
Delany Park, Arklow (Phase 1)	17	Completed and allocated 2019	Yes
16A Oak Drive, Blessington	1	Completed and allocated 2019	Yes
Druids Brook, Kilcoole	2	Completed and allocated 2019	Yes
Whitehall, Baltinglass	34	Completed and allocated 2020	Yes
TOTAL	82		
SCHEMES ON SITE	UNITS	CURRENT STATUS (subject to change due to Covid 19 restrictions)	PART 8 APPROVAL
Kilbride Lane Bray (Murphy's Lands)	42	Completion anticipated October 2020	Yes
FCA Hall Wicklow Town	8	Completion anticipated Quarter 4 2020	Yes
Kilmantan Place Bray	4	Completion anticipated Quarter 1 2021	Yes
Farrenkelly Greystones Phase 2	24	Completed and allocated 2020	Yes
Jameson Heights, Kilmacanogue	20	Completion anticipated October 2020	Yes
Convent Lands	51	Completed and allocated 2020.	Yes
Rathnew RAPID BUILD	47	Completion anticipated October 2020	Yes
Carnew RAPID BUILD	30	Completion anticipated February 2021	Yes
Delany Park Arklow (Phase 2 + 3)	47	Completion anticipated July 2021	Yes
TOTAL	273		



PIPELINE SCHEMES	UNITS	CURRENT STATUS CURRENT STATUS (subject to change due to Covid 19 restrictions)	PART 8 APPROVAL
Avondale Phase 2 RAPID BUILD	20	Site start anticipated October 2020	Yes
Ard na Greine RAPID BUILD	30	Site start anticipated October 2020	Yes
Greenhill Road Wicklow RAPID BUILD	36	Site start anticipated December 2020	Yes
Ashtown Lane RAPID BUILD	40	Site start anticipated October 2020	Yes
Mountainview NTMK RAPID BUILD	26	Site start anticipated December 2020	Yes
Old Fire Station Arklow	7	Site start anticipated December 2020	Part 8 approval Arklow M.D. Required.
Cedar Court Bray RAPID BUILD	14	Site start anticipated February 2021	Part 8 approval by Bray M. D. required.
Three Trouts Greystones RAPID BUILD	40	Site start anticipated February 2021	Part 8 approval Gstones M.D.required
TOTAL	213		

6. Part V

2020 – Part V units due for Delivery 2020

Location	No. of Units	Due for Delivery	Method
Wicklow	1	Delivered 25/02/20	WCC
Rathdrum	3	Quarter 4	WCC
Wicklow Town	3	Delivered 30/06/20	WCC
Ashford	2	Quarter 4	CALF
Greystones	2	Quarter 14/08/2020	WCC
Dunlavin	4	Quarter 4	CALF
Ashford	8	Delivered 30/7/20	CALF
Wicklow	4	Quarter 4	CALF

Potential units

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

Turnkey

Location	No. of Units	Due for Delivery	Method
Wicklow	6	Delivered 02/04/20	WCC
Wicklow	2	Delivered 8/5/20	WCC
Wicklow	1	Quarter 3	WCC
Wicklow	2	Delivered 12/08/20	WCC
Wicklow	3	Delivered 07/07/20	WCC
Rathdrum	4	Delivered 17/6/20	CALF



- 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.
- Application with the Department for a further 5 units in Tinahely.

7. PPP Social Housing Project

[Bundle 1] - Scheme complete.

[Bundle 3] - Blessington/Burgage – Site included in Bundle 3.

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 due by Q4 2020.
- Acquisition by AHB of 8 (Part V) units via CALF in Ashford now completed and included in the Part V figures above. The remaining 4 units (2 turnkey and 2 Part V) due in early 2021.
- Construction ongoing on a 40 units (including 4 Part V) via CALF Turnkey in Dunlavin.

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

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

8. Housing Schemes Remediation

Glending, Blessington – Remediation

- **Stage 2 and Stage 3 Phase 3A – No 1 to No. 12 Glending Road** have been completed.
- **Stage 3 Phase 3B** – Glending phase 3b is complete as of 18th December 2018.
- **Phase 4** - works have commenced.

9. Home Improvement/Adaptation

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

› Grant funding for private house €1,899,714 (€526,682.85 spent to date)

Grant funding for social houses €425,044.48 Allocation from department
€ 47,277.00 Wicklow County Council 10% own resources
€472,271.64 Combined Total
€ 187,107.28 spent to date

SEPTEMBER 2020



House Purchase Loans - Rebuilding Ireland

Up to 31st July 2020

344 received
 98 Approvals
 147 Declined
 35 previously approved but now expired
 28 further information/with HA
 36 either incomplete/ineligible.

2016 Incremental Tenant Purchase Scheme July 2020

Received 20
 Declined 8
 Sold 4

10. Addressing Homelessness

Covid presentations - 0		
	31/08/20	31/08/19
No of Presentations	58	61
No. of Repeat Presentations	24	7
No. of Households (Families)	11	34
No. of Adults (Individuals)	42	30
No. of Children	51	71
NTQ/Asked to Leave/Landlord selling	12	24
Family Circumstances	36	21
Leaving Prison Hospital Care	0	0
Sofa Surfing	6	2
Rough Sleeping	2	3
Own Door Temporary Accommodation		
	31/08/20	31/08/19
Families	12	12
Adults	28	19
Children	30	26
Singles	0	3

Bed & Breakfast Accommodation - No. of Homeless Emergency Accommodation Placements & Duration @ 31 st August, 2020								
	No. of Households	No. of Adults	No. of Children	< 3mths	3-6 mths	6-9mths	9-12 mths	>12mths
Household breakdown	5	20	15	15	7	4	4	8

Bed & Breakfast Accommodation - No. of Homeless Emergency Accommodation Placements & Duration @ 31st August, 2019								
	No. of Households	No. of Adults	No. of Children	< 3 mths	3-6 mths	6-9 mths	9-12 mths	>12mths
Household breakdown	14	18	32	15	7	4	4	8

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.

Emergency Measures in the Public Interest (Covid-19) Act 2020

With effect from Friday, 27th March 2020, new emergency measures were introduced into law to protect tenants during the Covid-19 emergency period. In summary, a notice of termination cannot be served during the Covid-19 emergency period. All notices of terminations which were served before the emergency period are paused until end of June, and tenants in general cannot be obliged to leave their rented accommodation during this time.

The Mid East Region Homelessness Management Group has completed a brief analysis of the impact of the moratorium on evictions to date, on the extent of homelessness in the region and is recommending that the emergency measures pertaining to notice of terminations be extended, as a homeless preventive measure, with an exemption to be applied to termination notices that relate to rent arrears and/or anti-social behaviour.

Cold Weather Initiative

The Cold Weather Initiative, a partnership arrangement between the Council and the Dublin Simon Community, with the assistance of Five Loaves Homeless Services, opened on 14th November 2019, in Bray to provide emergency night shelter for homeless individuals.

Referral protocol is through Wicklow County Council, Dublin Simon, Five Loaves and the Gardaí.

COVID 19 UPDATE

A new operational model has commenced at the Cold Weather Initiative to endeavour to achieve the necessary health and safety standards around Covid 19 protocols. Opening hours have been extended with a corresponding increase in staffing resources. Sanitary facilities have been increased and extensive temporary modifications have been introduced to ensure separation of beds and provision of secure isolation unit.

Due to the high risk to clients if there should be Covid + cases reported in the CWI, the Council is finalising plans to relocate the residents to another, more suitable facility, where 24 hour accommodation will be provided and adequate self isolation facilities will be available.

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, 266 households (209 families & 57 singles) have been assisted under the Homeless HAP Scheme in Wicklow County Council from the inception on 1st October 2018 to 31st August, 2020. 127 homeless cases and 139 prevention cases to date. 89 properties were sourced by WCC.

COVID 19 UPDATE

The Homeless HAP Placefinder and the HAP team continue to progress cases. Key focus at present is on maintaining payments to landlords and reviewing differential rent of those clients who have reduced income during this time.

Sonas Facility, Wicklow - Transition to Family Homeless Hub.

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

The successful tenderer was Dublin Simon Community, who will be in a position to commence operations and management of the facility pending finalisation of the legal handover.

COVID 19 UPDATE

Refurbishment work is substantially complete on the facility, initially providing self isolation units for vulnerable clients during the current crisis.



Other Temporary Supported Accommodation

Wicklow County Council owned properties in Wicklow, Bray and Arklow, leased to AHBs, provide 22 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

With Housing First, the priority is to support a person who has experienced homelessness into permanent housing as quickly as possible, without any preconditions around sobriety or mental health treatment. Then continue working intensively with them on these issues once they are housed. 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 successfully accommodated 3 clients under Housing First. Other clients proposed for Housing First have been assessed by the team and are availing of key support work pending finalisation of accommodation.



11. Wicklow Community Call

The Community Call continues to respond to requests for help from the public during the COVID-19 crisis. The helpline is now housed in the CC&SD section in Wicklow County Council.

The Community Response Forum, chaired by the Chief Executive Frank Curran, continues to meet fortnightly to oversee the community response, to exchange updates and information and to co-ordinate and enable cooperation. The forum has a number of statutory bodies, community organisations and community groups at the table. In addition the forum has identified and responded to two particular issues that have emerged as result of COVID-19. These are food poverty and digital poverty.

12. Food Poverty Research

Food poverty has always been a feature of overall poverty but this issue was exacerbated by the COVID-19 shutdown and was highlighted as a problem through the Community Call Helpline. A subgroup has been set up under the umbrella of the County Wicklow Food and Beverage Strategy to look at the issue of food poverty and food sustainability. This group is conducting research at present, among responders and those at risk of experiencing food poverty in order to get an accurate picture of the issues involved and the most appropriate responses to them.

13. Digital Poverty

Digital equality is a theme of the County Wicklow Digital Strategy but like food poverty, has been highlighted recently. The Community Response Forum became aware that many crucial services are now being delivered online because of COVID-19 restrictions. However there has been a breakdown in access to these services by some because of a lack of digital equipment or Wi-Fi. Wicklow County Council, through the Community Response Forum, set up a fund aimed at enabling organisations to purchase vital equipment such as laptops and dongles that can be accessed by those in most need of them. The projects funded will achieve an impact in one or more of the following:

- Enabling on-line education, reskilling or training for disadvantaged groups
- Enabling online youth work/mental health interventions
- Support for vulnerable families
- Support for people with disabilities
- Support for those in Direct Provision
- Community outreach to vulnerable groups while social distancing
- Combating isolation for older people

Payments, totalling €44,900, have been made to the successful applicants under the Digital Poverty Grant Scheme.

14. Town and Village Renewal Scheme 2020

The following applications to the Town & Village Scheme Accelerated measure Round 2 were successfully funded:

Area	Project	Amount
Enniskerry	Public seating, signage and shop front improvements	€39,600
Ballinaclesh	Upgrade the community centre to enable social distancing	€39,600
Laragh	Public realm works to increase pedestrianisation	€24,300
Tinahely	Repair works to the recently fire-damaged Men's Shed	€4,950
Baltinglass	Streetscape painting scheme with 'Welcome' signage and planting	€22,500
Development of 'Shop Local' App	Development of App to enable 'Shop Local' initiatives to be rolled out in a number of villages	€9,000

A further round of applications was made at the end of August and another will be made at the end of September.

15. County Wicklow Library Services

Resumption of Library Services (Update)

In line with national guidance, the reintroduction of library services has been on a phased basis:

- May – “Click & Collect” service – where the public collected pre-ordered books and items from the library entrance
- June – Reopened for browsing in all 13 libraries
- July – Reintroduced access to library PCs
- Sept – Reintroduction of mobile library service

The final phase was introduced on September 21st, with the reintroduction of study space facilities. Patrons are now able to reserve a 2 hour time slot for study. Spaces have been reduced from what was previously the case, with social distancing ensured. They are further protected by the numerous screens which have been installed at all libraries, especially at study desks.



Quarantining of Stock

Wicklow County Council Library Service has decided that in the interests of ensuring public safety during Covid-19, we will continue to quarantine stock, until a vaccine is widely available. As it has been scientifically proven that the virus can live on plastic surfaces for 72 hours, all libraries quarantine stock, on return, for a 3 day period. Special containers have been purchased for each library, which enable stock to be stored away from the library floor. Quarantining is not mandatory, but this extra precaution is appreciated by the public and provides reassurance to all.

Increase in Usage

When the libraries reopened for browsing, on 22nd June, the public were initially very slow to return. However, our libraries have witnessed an incremental increase in visitor numbers, week on week. They are now at approximately 40% of visitor stats for the same period in 2019. Wicklow library usage stats are ahead of the national average, as all our libraries are open to the public to access, as previously. This is not the case in all local authorities, with some still insisting on the public accessing their libraries by prior appointment. In some libraries, protective screens have not yet been installed to enable the public use IT or study spaces, while approximately 20% of smaller libraries have not yet reopened.

16. Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP)

SICAP:

- SICAP mid-year review process has been successfully completed by both Partnerships in Q3.
- Mid-year reports of both Partnerships are now fully approved and Q4 funding payments can now be processed.
- Programme implementers continue to provide targeted supports across the county to disadvantaged communities.



17. County Wicklow Public Partnership Network (PPN):

- Membership currently stands at 340 members.
- Collaborative work is continuing between PPN Disability Awareness Group and WCC Disability & Inclusion Steering Committee.
- The PPN has been involved in the following submissions/consultations: WCC Local Property Tax Adjustment Factor; WCC Part 8 Cedar Court, Bray Apartments Construction
- Upcoming events: Online Meet the Elected Rep meetings.

18. Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership

ASD Camp

Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership partnered up with adventure.ie to run an event day Teen ASD Rock Climbing & Abseiling Event. The programme took place in Dalkey Quarry with 11 teenagers taking part. This was in conjunction with Triple A Alliance & Tusla.

1 Mile Swim Event

Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership is running a 1 Mile Swim Event in conjunction with Swim Ireland Sunday 20th September in Wicklow Harbour.

Bike Week 2020

Bike Week takes place 19th-27th September. Wicklow Sports and Recreation Partnership are running numerous workshops and events though out the week in conjunction with The Sports Room in Wicklow Town and HD Fitness in Blessington. For more information, please contact wicklowlsp@wicklowcoco.ie

European Week of Sport

European Week of Sport takes place 23rd – 30th September 2020. Wicklow Sports and Recreation Partnership are running numerous events thought out the week from Online Nutrition Talks with Daniel Davey, Virtual 5K walk/run to an Online Sunset Yoga to finish off the active week. For more information please contact wicklowlsp@wicklowcoco.ie

Katie Taylor Bursary

Katie Taylor Bursary is now open for applications. The closing date is 5.00 p.m. on Friday 2nd October 2020.

19. Community Enhancement Programme 2020

TRANCHE 1 – GENERAL FUND

The closing date for submission of applications was Friday 18th September 2020. Assessment of the applications is currently ongoing.



TRANCHE 2 – 2020 FUND FOR COMMUNITY CENTRES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The closing date for submission of applications is 5.00 p.m. on Thursday 15th October 2020.

The application form and guidelines have been circulated via email to the Members, all Wicklow Local Authority Staff and the PPN. Advertisements have been placed in the local papers and on the Wicklow County Council website. Any requests for application forms should be emailed to cep@wicklowcoco.ie or telephone 0404 20208.

20. Pride of Place Competition 2020

The Pride of Place competition 2020 judging was held by way of Zoom calls. The following groups were nominated under these four categories -

- Ashford Community and Heritage Centre – Community Tourism Initiative
- Arklow Meals on Wheels – Community Wellbeing Initiative
- Carnew Bia Abhaile – Creative Place Initiative
- County Wicklow Volunteer Centre – Youth Led Initiative

On the 17th to 19th of August, the Zoom calls were hosted by a Co-Operation Ireland representative, who introduced the judges, liaison officer and community/group representatives. The winners will be announced at a virtual event on the 30th of November 2020.

21. County Wicklow Arts Office

National Artist Development Initiative

The Arts Office has received new additional funding for a national artist development initiative which will see 31 artists, one from each local authority area, benefit from €320,000.00 in investment. The project will be managed by Wicklow Arts Office working with the Arts Council and the Association of Local Authority Arts Officers. Each artist will receive €8,000.00 as a bursary to develop their practice in one of four key ways. They will then benefit from additional networking, advisory, production, direction and wellness supports.

Culture Night 2020

Culture Night took place on 18th September in a re-imagined format. A small number of events took place outdoors and within NEPHET revised guidelines with appropriate COVID-19 stewarding. The remaining events took place in our recognised theatre venues with the revised capacity arrangements and online. This year's schedule featured predominantly Wicklow based artists with Joanna Kidney, Erica Devine, Alex Pectu, Fiachra Garvey, Jane Clarke, Olivia Fitzsimons, Phillip St John, Karen Gleeson and many others presenting work throughout the County. The events involved music, poetry, writing, theatre, comedy, performance and visual arts. Illustrator, Aga Grandovitz, has started work on a new 60 square foot mural at the Park and Ride in Greystones.



Artist Development

Additional investment under the Jobs Stimulus Package was received through Creative Ireland. This is for artist development and investment in heritage practitioners in the county. It will also involve the commissioning of new work and residencies. All of this will be in line with Covid-19 Guidelines.

Artists Connect Panel

The Artists Connect Artist Panel has been convening every three weeks and has now introduced, with support from Wicklow County Council, an artist network Zoom meet up. This will be hosted by a selected artist once a month and it is hoped that during this difficult time it will help artists network, reconnect and re-imagine their work for the immediate future.

Funding Clinics and Artist Salon Events

Funding Clinics and Artist Salon events will be held in October to support artists to access new funding measures coming on stream and to respond to collaborating with Covid-19.

Strategic Project Application

In September, the Strategic Project Application Round will be assessed for projects which will take place in 2021. The Scheme closed to applications in the first week in September and will be announced at the end of September. This will be worth €60,000.00 investment approximately.

Sculpture at Knockroe Bends N81

A sculptural installation will be commissioned under the new scheme for Knockroe Bends on the N81. With the road project almost at completion, site visits have taken place to identify a suitable location. The commission value from the scheme is approximately €50,000.00. It is hoped to add to this figure, given the scale of the site to result in a budget of approximately €75,000.00 overall.



Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure

1. Wicklow Economic Think Tank (CWETT) Action Plan 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). Many of the 142 actions listed in the LECP have come from the County Wicklow Economic Think Tank (CWETT) Action Plan. The CWETT which was initiated in 2013 was a collaborative project initiated by Wicklow County Council and involved the business community from across the county and the County Enterprise Board (now LEO Wicklow).

Retail

Bray Town Centre

The Oakmount site was closed for 3 months due to Covid 19 crisis.

Roof weathering works are progressing on the roofs of block 2 & 3. The roof structure for block one has been formed and the slating and weathering works have also commenced.

Lift installation is almost complete and the installation of the travelators and escalators is underway. Mechanical & electrical works are progressing throughout blocks 2 & 3 and both levels of the car park. All M&E works are ready to be installed in the stairwells. ESB and Gas Network Ireland have completed install and connection to the site.

The revised practical completion date is November 2020.

The letting of the units are progressing and there are a number of lettings at heads of agreement stage.

Town Teams

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

Arklow Town Team

Following on from the announcement of LEADER funding being granted to design and develop a new website to promote Arklow town and its environs, contracts have been signed and a sub-committee has been set up to drive this project.



A new destination branding strategy for Arklow is also being designed to coincide with this and will then be used for future marketing communications.

An application has been submitted for funding under the Community Heritage Grant Scheme 2020, to carry out a full survey on the The Goods Store, Arklow Railway Station building at Knockanrahan Lower. The survey will include a measured survey and conservation report, with a view to working with the community and finding alternative uses for the building that will sustain it in the future.

Funding was secured under the Community Enhancement Programme in 2019 for three new bus shelters. Tenders are being prepared at present to install the shelters and they will be located at Ferrybank Northbound, Knockmore Northbound and Rathdrum Southbound.

Arklow Town Team will hold its AGM on Wednesday 23rd September at 6.30pm.

Bray Town Team

The Bray Reopening Committee is a joint initiative with local stakeholders across the community, including members of Bray Chamber of Commerce, the Health Service Executive and An Garda Síochána to plan for a considered, responsible return to civic life which is vital to help to restart the local economy in the town. This is in line with the Government's phased roadmap for reopening the country socially and economically.

The Committee focused on understanding best practices, planning for protections and protocols that businesses and the community will need in place in order to feel confident about resuming activities, once the Covid-19 restrictions are lifted, while emphasising a message that as a society, we all have a collective responsibility to ensure that reopening proceeds smoothly and safely.

The Town Committee is currently liaising with An Garda Síochána to form a Business Watch Group in the Town.

Blessington Town Team

Blessington Town Team held their last meeting on Monday 14th September. At the meeting there was a discussion of the Bank of Ireland Begin Together Awards, Blessington Town Team had submitted an application for the 2020 awards highlighting the Hello Neighbour initiative in the population category 4,001 – 7,000 and were delighted to be shortlisted along with the town of Kinsale, Co. Cork in this category. The judging is to take place on Monday 21st September at 9.30 and the winners will be announced on Ireland AM in October. The Chairperson thanked all that had made the Hello Neighbour initiative a success especially the volunteers who freely gave of their time to support their neighbours and community. It exemplified the level of community spirit in Blessington and the surrounding areas. All members expressed their hope that Blessington Town Team would be successful in the competition. The meeting was updated on the activities of Blessington Tidy Towns who have been doing tremendous work around the town, it was noted that while the pandemic had curtailed their activities, they had focused on achieving a number of projects. There was a short discussion on parking in the town and what was required to improve the situation. Members were also updated on the difficulties facing businesses in the area and it was stressed the need to support local businesses and service providers and the continued

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role out of the Wonderful West Wicklow campaign. There was a discussion on the range of supports that are in place for businesses through the Local Enterprise Office and Failte Ireland.

Blessington and District Forum have created a page on their websites for businesses to register and provide information on the services they provide. This will facilitate the development of a business directory for the region in the future. The meeting was informed of the commitment given by the different Deputies to support the building of a swimming pool in West Wicklow. An application is being prepared to look for funding to undertake the detailed design of a swimming pool and multi use gaming area in Blessington. Members were updated on the work that has been undertaken to progress the development of a relief road for the town. The Chairperson outlined the importance of implementing the actions contained in Town Health Check and it was agreed to establish a subgroup to oversee the implementation of the actions.

Greystones 2020

Greystones 2020 have set up a subcommittee to organise a Christmas Festival online coupled with enhancing the streetscape for Christmas this year. As there will be no Christmas Gathering, Santa will arrive virtually and lots of ideas have been brought together to develop a fantastic programme of events. The team are in touch with local artists, video companies, workshop hosts, & actors to develop the idea further.

The #ThinklocalBuylocal campaign was very successful and the business pages have now over 390 businesses's listed on the www.greystones.ie website.

James Hennessy from Paul Hogarth Company will be giving a presentation to the Greystones District Councillors on the Greystones Public Realm Plan at the monthly meeting on the 29th September. This was commissioned by Greystones 2020 in conjunction With Wicklow County Council and LEADER funding. Plan can be viewed on <https://greystones.ie/greystones-public-realm-plan-2020>

Wicklow Town Team

Wicklow Town Team held their meeting on the 26th August. Funding has been requested for a feasibility study for a golf museum co-located with the Gaol. Sites have been identified for lecterns for the heritage walk. The website is performing very well and was popular with people looking for things to do in the local area during lockdown. The lectern for the Abbey Grounds is complete and the location for erection has been identified.

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 Town Team / Tourism recovery meeting was held in on 28th July 2020 with a number of ideas provided including identifying a number of 'visitor hotspots' around the County and setting up kiosks to get people to sign up to the 'Wicklow Passport' which will hopefully encourage people to visit other places in the County.

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

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

Accommodation: Fáilte Ireland has engaged Crowe Consultants to develop a Toolkit to help attract investment in accommodation. It is estimated that Wicklow requires an additional 175 Hotel Rooms over the next five years based on 4% growth, this is assuming that the additional 50 rooms that have extant planning permission are developed. The re-activation of the County Wicklow Accommodation working group is proposed for the end of July.



The County Wicklow Accommodation working group was re-activated at the end of July and met in the Brockagh Centre, Laragh. A number of ideas were raised and it is hoped to have a follow up meeting at the end of September.

A consultant has been appointed to assist the Accommodation Working Group to carry out a dedicated study building on Failte Ireland's Accommodation Toolkit and to contribute in terms of information and advice to the preparation of the related prospectus aimed at attracting the development of tourism accommodation in the County.

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

Key Towns as Visitor Hubs: Fáilte Ireland has announced an investment of €15.5 million available through local authorities to boost the attractiveness and tourism appeal of towns across the country. Funding of between €250,000 and €500,000 will be available to local authorities to develop towns in their area which have the potential to become a 'destination town' for tourists. The 'destination towns' will need to demonstrate their capacity and appeal to attract more international visitors to stay overnight.

Fáilte Ireland has set aside up to €500,000 in Destination Town Funding for County Wicklow; Wicklow County Council is working on an application for funding under this theme.

A Town Team / Tourism recovery meeting was held in July 2020 with a number of ideas provided including promoting the 'Wicklow Passport' to drive tourism in the County.

Glendalough Masterplan and Wicklow Visitor Orientation Study

Failte Ireland, with its strategic partners OPW, NPWS and with Wicklow County Council is engaging with Consarc Consultants to develop a tourism master-plan for Glendalough and the Wicklow Mountains National Park and a Visitor Orientation Plan for County Wicklow. Consarc lead a multi disciplinary team consisting of tourism, environmental, heritage, public realm, and traffic and parking consultants to develop the suite of plans. Stakeholder engagement is due to commence shortly.

Thematic Experiences

Tracks and Trails - Wicklow County Council have engaged the producers of Tracks and Trails to redevelop some of the existing programmes for use on the Wicklow.ie website and social media and also to develop shorter tracks and trails videos aimed at internet viewers, airlines and traditional media.



The Bray Head to the Great Sugarloaf Trail was launched via Facebook in July. Similarly the Tinahely Looped Walk will be launched in the coming weeks. It had been intended to hold an outdoor event to mark this launch; however recent additional Covid 19 restrictions make it less likely.

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

The Wicklow Passport can be purchased for €2 online at <http://visitwicklow.ie/passport>. Or can be collected free-of-charge from participating stamping locations, or through the Wicklow Libraries at Bray, Greystones, Arklow and Blessington. The list of stamping locations is available at <http://visitwicklow.ie/passport> by clicking on each icon.

The Wicklow Passport project was officially launched on the 20th of August. We achieved extensive online, radio and newspaper exposure over the following weeks. We currently count a network of 75 stamping locations through various businesses spread throughout the County. We have distributed more than 4000 Wicklow Passport through the Stamping Locations as well as through the libraries in Wicklow. Passports can be collected for free from any of the locations. The Wicklow Passport can be purchased for €2 from the visitwicklow.ie/passport portal, and over the first three weeks after the launch, more than 180 passports were mailed.

We are currently introducing a new stamp for Newtownmountkennedy which should be soon available from local businesses such as the Parkview Hotel, Wicklow Way Wine, Fisher's or the Druids Glen Resort.

Eco Trail: Unfortunately this year's Eco Trail edition has been cancelled due to Covid 19. It's obviously a huge disappointment but following from latest safety guidelines, it was impossible to safely run the event. There was very strong communication for the event though, with approximately 1550 registered runners, almost 500 more than last year. This shows the amazing interest that the event has generated for its second edition, and proves the viability of the event for the future. Furthermore, Ecotrail has generated an amazing level of interest for the destination and the sport here in Ireland and abroad.



It is intended to continue to use the Ecotrail platform to showcase our county as a fantastic outdoors destination.

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

Rural and Urban Regeneration Development Fund Grand Applications

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

Wicklow County Council was awarded Category 2 funding of €357,750 in respect of Newtownmountkennedy for the design and plans for upgrades to the public realm, street landscaping, traffic management, public spaces and community facilities. The funding will be matched by a 25% contribution from the Council's resources bringing the investment to over €500,000. This funding builds on the €150,000 that Newtownmountkennedy received in 2018 from the Town and Village Enhancement Scheme, which funded streetscape improvements in the town. The closing date for the latest round of RRDF funding is 1st December 2020, when an application in respect of Rathdrum will be submitted.

Climate Action

Climate Action Applications have also been submitted in respect of Wicklow and Arklow Harbours aimed at ensuring both harbours can benefit from development of the offshore wind energy industry.

The Wicklow harbour application was submitted to apply for funding to develop the physical infrastructure in Wicklow harbour in order to accommodate crew transfer vessels servicing the offshore wind sector.

Similarly the application in respect of Arklow is to facilitate servicing of the offshore wind industry and to investigate the possibility of developing enterprise units for small businesses engaged in marine activities. Offshore wind has a cross governmental mandate secured through the delivery of the Climate Action Plan targets of 3.5 GW of offshore wind by 2030.



Maritime

Maritime Strategic Review for County Wicklow

The Strategic Review will identify ways in which the economic base of County Wicklow could be strengthened through its ports and harbours and formulate recommendation for Wicklow County Council.

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 for Climate Action and URDF funding.

Maritime Business Development Group

An Aquaculture working group has been established to work with industry experts and investigate the proposal to restore natural oyster reefs off the coast of County Wicklow.

The MBDG held their last meeting on 23rd July 2020 at which a presentation was given to the group by a delegation from the Codling Wind Park.

FLAG Funding

Wicklow County Council has supported applications for FLAG funding in respect of the Native Oyster Reef Restoration project and also in respect of a Wreck Fishing proposal.

The Native Oyster Reef Restoration (NORRI) project is a plan to establish self-sustaining native oyster habitats in the Irish Sea, in collaboration where possible, with Wind Energy and Coastal Defence Development. A workshop is planned for the end of March to publicise this project.

The Wreck fishing FLAG is an application supported by the Maritime Business Development Group. It is a proposal aimed at surveying current wreck fishing sites and eventually attracting leisure type fishing in these areas.

Approval has been granted for funding in respect of the Wreck Fishing project and the project is underway.



Food and Beverage Strategy

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

Actions for September 2020

- Preparation for Wicklow Feast Food Month
- Organisation of events calendar for the full month
- Preparation of document on Terms of Reference for each subgroup
- Preparation of mapping document outlining each group, leadership, key actions
- Delivery of events during Wicklow Food Month
- Issuing of questionnaires on Food Poverty
- Issuing of questionnaires on the need for the Food incubation Centre
- Preparation of publicity material for Wicklow Food Month
- Application for legal status of Wicklow Naturally as a Company Limited by Guarantee

Progress to date:

- A range of subgroups meetings have been arranged / are being held.
- Local Food to local People Group was held on 30th July 2020.
- A document was produced outlining the range of options for legal status of Wicklow Naturally.
- It was agreed to form Wicklow Naturally as a Company Limited by Guarantee
- Membership (published and agreed to join) at 73
- 46 fully signed up members and published on website
- 27 agreed to join and in process of information gathering and website publication
- The website is being continually updated as new members are being added. Facebook now has 1,253 followers and 1,164 likes. Instagram has 649 followers and Twitter has 214 followers.
- Letters written to the PPN to identify businesses involved in the Food Poverty space.
- Mapping of food businesses will commence
- Questionnaires written to go to organisations involved in service delivery and recipients of the service
- To tell the Wicklow Story / Activity group meeting weekly throughout August; developing a food calendar
- Local Food to Local People group have met once to discuss, retailer membership, Wicklow Food month and Company promotion



- Food Incubation Centre discussions have taken place with a range of individuals. Additional hard evidence is needed and plans have been made for circulation of a questionnaire in September.

2. Local Enterprise Office (LEO)

LEO Objectives	
To foster an enterprise culture and stimulate enterprise at local level by:	
<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
	2019	2020	2020
Grants Approved (number/ value)			
- Measure 1	- 33/€888,954.62	- Meet Demand	- 22/€490,060.50
- Technical Assistance for Micro Exporters	- 8/€11,427	- Meet Demand	- 3/€4,812
NB: Ability to meet demand is influenced by the amount of funding allocated to the LEO			
METRICS: Training/ Capacity Building	HISTORICAL	TARGETS	YEAR TO DATE
	2019	2020	2020
Total No. of All Programmes (Training/Networking/Events/Seminars)	53	55	58
Start Your Own Business Participant numbers (included in total training programmes)	73	75	30
Total No. of all Participants participating in above Programmes	832	800	1092
Women in Business Network Number of Meetings	6	6	6

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METRICS: Business Advice & Mentoring	HISTORICAL	TARGETS	YEAR TO DATE
	2019	2020	2020
Number of new clients added to database *criteria have been amended for this metric	546	470*	972
Number of One to One Business Advice meetings including Businesses assigned a mentor	458	440	537

METRICS: Student Enterprise Programmes	HISTORICAL	TARGETS	
Academic Year	2018/2019	2019/2020	Year to Date
No. of Secondary Student Participants	1134	1100	1121

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

Trading Online Voucher	HISTORICAL	TARGETS	
No of Trading Online Vouchers approved	2019	2020	Year to Date 2020
Trading Online Vouchers	39	262	217

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



September 2020 Activities

- ✦ Schools are currently being recruited for the Student Enterprise Programme for school year 2020/2021. Cognisant of the restrictions and precautions outlined in national Covid 19 guidelines, online resources have been developed to help maximise participation with minimum physical interaction between pupils.
- ✦ A High Level of demand for business advice clinics is being met by business advisors providing additional clinics which are run remotely.
- ✦ Brexit Training: Customs training workshop on 15th September was fully booked with 25 participants. There was also a high level of demand for one to one individual customs mentoring sessions on the 23rd
- ✦ Work has commenced on the autumn winter training programme which will offer a combination of core training courses, Brexit supports and Covid Crisis related courses.
- ✦ Extremely high volume of applications for the Trading Online Voucher are being accepted and assessed depending on budgets being available.



3. Planning and Development

Forward Planning

Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midlands Regional Assembly 2019-2031 & Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan

The new Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Eastern and Midland Region (EMRA) came into effect on the 28th June 2019. This was subsequently subject to a Ministerial direction which was confirmed in January 2020. The final RSES and accompanying documentation is available at the following link: <https://emra.ie/final-rses/>

The requirement for a **Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP)** to be prepared for the Dublin metropolitan area as part of the RSES is set out in Project Ireland 2040 – National Planning Framework (NPF). The MASP provides a 12 to 20 year strategic planning and investment framework for the Dublin metropolitan area.

A MASP implementation group has been formed, with 'terms of reference' and governance structure agreed by the Regional Assembly in May 2020. The Implementation Group, whose function is to oversee progress on the implementation of the Dublin MASP, offers an opportunity for enhanced spatial coordination of land use planning and strategic infrastructure delivery in the Dublin metropolitan area. The Implementation Group will drive strategic housing, employment and regeneration opportunities that are identified in the MASP in tandem with the delivery of key public transport, enabling infrastructure and metropolitan scale amenities, in order to achieve targeted population and employment growth as set out in the accompanying RSES and NPF. The membership of the MASP Implementation group comprises representatives from each of the seven metropolitan local authorities, the Department of Housing Planning and Local Government (DHPLG) and key infrastructure, transport and enterprise agencies.

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. 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. Directions regarding the preparation of the Draft County Development Plan were discussed at the September Council meeting. The Forward Planning team are 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

Heritage & Biodiversity Plan Actions:

- Community Monument Fund announced 7th Sept. WCC invited to apply. HO co-ordinated public applications, closing date 17th Sept. Short listing of recommendations to National Monuments Service due by 22nd Sept. Final recoupment of successful projects 10th Nov.
- National Heritage Week (15th- 23 Aug) co-ordination of a programme that included 44 heritage projects for county Wicklow, mostly online with some limited events.
- Community Archaeology: Production of seven part podcast series and interactive publication for Preban graveyard. Produced x 3 videos for Glendalough Heritage Forum

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- Phase 2 County Swift Project complete.
- Our Wicklow Heritage Network: Ongoing co-ordination of multi platform website hosting County Wicklow Heritage and the following community heritage recording groups; Delgany Tidy Towns, Glens Of Lead, Medieval Bray Project, Glendalough Heritage Forum and, The Glen/ Donard.
- Together Apart Wicklow Stories 2020 Project: Ongoing for 2020.
- Brittas Bay Biodiversity Project: Mowing underway in Sept / voluntary sea buckthorn work days planned for Oct
- All Ireland Pollinator Plan: Each MD is provided with signs and undertakes to manage selected areas in a pollinator friendly manner (reduced mowing and removal of cuttings)
- Creative Wicklow project: additional films under theme of River Liffey Stories launched in Heritage Week

Protected Structures Grants: Funding allocations announced June DCHG. €60000 has been allocated to Wicklow projects under the Built Heritage Investment Scheme,. €35,000 has been allocated to St. Patrick's Church, Wicklow Town under the Historic Structures Fund. September progress report submitted.

Planning Applications

A total of 115 applications were received during August, these include applications as follows:

Type of Development	Number Received
Individual Houses	34
Housing Developments	09
Agricultural Structures	03
Commercial	04
Other Developments*	65
Total	115

*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 83 applications in August, being:

Type of Development	Number of Decisions
Housing Developments	6
Individual Houses	15
Other Developments	61
Other Developments Requiring EIA	1
Total	83

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

	31/08/2019	31/08/2020
Total Number of decisions issued	644	549
Total Number of decisions to grant	552	473

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% Grant Rate	86%	86%
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No. of Applications withdrawn

August 5

*Withdrawals may not have been lodged in the month of August

Planning Enforcement

Enforcement

New Files	20
Advisory Letters	42
Warning Letters	02
Enforcement Notices	03
Legal files	01
Closed	07

Courts

02 Cases listed for hearing in Circuit Court in September

Vacant Sites

26 no. sites now stand on the Register.
3 sites on appeal

Derelict Sites

04 No. of sites on Register

4. Environmental Services

Waste Management

No. of Complaints Opened	262
No. of Cases Closed, Resolved or Completed	261
No of Litter Fines Issued	17
No. of Waste Management Files Opened	1
No. of Warning Letters Issued	7
No. of Abandoned Car Notices Issued	20
No. of Burning Applications Granted	12
No. of Temporary Signs Granted	0
No. of Notices issued under Section 14 of the Waste Management Act	3
No. of fixed penalty notices issued	0
No. of files prepared for Court included in Court lists	60
Income – Litter	€2,750.00
Income – Waste Management	€1,503.33

Climate Action

An Implementation plan with actions from the Climate Adaptation Strategy and the Climate Charter are being developed by a task group of which M Cahill is a member. The draft Implementation Plan (guidance and templates for all LAs) will be submitted to environment committee of the CCMA for approval and rollout.

Pilot training for Climate Action Officers is being held in October and WCC County Council's Climate Action Officer will attend and will provide feedback to the CARO.

Priority Action items:

- Installation of EV Charging points in Greystones. 4 No. Chargers are proposed for Shoreline Greystones. There is a 6 week lead in time to delivery so installation is likely to happen early November 2020.
- Tree Policy to be drawn up for the County. Initial consultation underway and internal meeting on 9th June to progress this. – Three consultants were initially invited to tender to compile the Policy however none of the parties were interested in tendering – due to this a fourth consultant and UCD have been invited to tender. Awaiting submissions.
- Community Woodlands: All sections are asked to identify public lands which could be suitable for community woodlands. CARO will issue guidance on this project which is being funded by the DAFM.
- A submission has been made for funding of a research project by UCD and Trinity to look at nature based solutions for flood protection in the Upper Avoca Catchment. We await a response to the application for funding.



Environmental Awareness

A project to fund the collection, repair and shipping to Africa of old bikes is being funded under the Anti –Dumping Initiative. The Rotary Club, Bray is a partner in the project. The collection was held over two Saturdays in four locations including the recycling centres of Bray, Wicklow and Arklow and the Greystones Municipal District Office. Hundreds of bikes were donated exceeding the target set by the Rotary club of 200 bikes.

Wicklow County Council worked with Laois, Meath and Westmeath to develop an online version of the Stop Food Waste Challenge which was delivered by video on social media. Catherine Fulvio was the presenter for the four week series of videos which features some of her recipes as well as tips and advice on avoiding food waste. The first two videos were broadcast in July with the first video and the second two in August. 54,688 views of the posts were achieved with 14,433 following through to watching the videos.

The Relove fashion competition piloted successfully in 2019 in partnership with Meath, Westmeath and Dublin City Councils and the Rediscovery Centre in Ballymun was relaunched for 2020. Six more local authorities joined the competition a Wicklow County Council initiative, The focus is on producing wearable clothing design and good use of skill with textiles will be strengthened in the competition to develop circularity skills among students in textiles and fashion. Schools were notified about this year's competition so teachers can incorporate it into their planning for the year

Work has continued with the Wicklow PPN to explore the development of a mapping tool to record projects and actions that deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals. A first draft of the map was developed in house by the IT section. A seminar with the PPN is being planned for community groups in October which will introduce the Goals and the new mapping tool.

A new tree grant has been developed as a climate action to facilitate more planting of tree by local groups in County Wicklow. The grant was launched in August with a closing date for the 9th of October. The grant has attracted high levels of interest.

Funding was secured through the EPA's LAPN programme for a project to develop composting solutions for the management of the high levels of grass production which must be lifted when green space is being managed for pollinators. This project will help to facilitate Wicklow County Council's commitment to designate spaces for pollinators.

The annual Tidy Towns, Estates and Environmental Awards were launched at the beginning of July with a closing date set for the end of July for groups to submit applications. Judging was undertaken of entries.

Recycling Centres

A mattress amnesty was held in Bray Recycling Centre on 25th July 2020. This event allowed members of the public to bring up to 3 mattresses to the Recycling Centre for free on the day. This project was funded under the Anti-Dumping Initiative 2020 by the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment. A total of 604 mattresses were collected on the day. A further Mattress Amnesty will be held in Arklow in early September.

Lifeguards

The Lifeguard season finished on 31st August for Wicklow Harbour and Arklow. Lifeguards will be on duty at the Blue Flag beaches for the first two weekends of September; on Bray South Promenade, Greystones, Brittas Bay North and Brittas Bay South.

Lifeguards are present on these beaches from 11am to 7pm daily.



Caravan Park Season

Caravan Park owners were written to in March 2020 and informed not to open due to the Covid-19. Under the Government's accelerated roadmap to reopening Ireland, caravan parks reopened on June 29th. Applications have been received and all parks are being run in line with government guidelines.

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.

- Priority Geotechnical Limited completed site Investigation on Friday 13th September and factual report received in January 2020- results of the site investigation will inform the proposed remediation plan which is scheduled for completion in November 2020.
- Website is up and running and regular updates will be made to keep the Public and Members informed of progress.
- Environmental risk assessments as per EPA guidance document and a draft remediation plan are currently being carried out.

Harbours and Ports

Ten cargo vessels berthed in Wicklow Port during August 2020. Nine of the cargo vessels had a single transaction while one was a double transaction. The imports included logs and timber while the exports were scrap metal and pulp.

There were no Marine Notices issued in August.

Pollution Control

Pollution Response & Investigation

- 8 Water pollution complaints were received and investigated.
- 1 Noise Pollution complaints were received and investigated.
- 1 Air pollution complaints were received and under investigation.

Private Water Supplies

- Of the 23 Private water supplies monitored and 4 were found non-compliant with microbiological standards and 3 found non-compliant with chemical standards.
- The water suppliers concerned were requested to take remedial action and 2 boil water notices were issued.

Petrol Vapour Recovery Regulations

- 1 Dry Cleaner and 1 Vehicle refinisher (car spraying) installations were issued certificates of compliance.
- 1 Certificate of Registration under Petrol Vapour Regulations was issued.
- 1 Certificate of Testing under Petrol Vapour Regulations was issued.

Deco Paint and Dry Cleaner Regulations

- 1 Certificate of Registration under Petrol Vapour Regulations was issued.
- 1 Certificate of Testing under Petrol Vapour Regulations was issued.



Septic Tank Inspections - National Inspection Plan 2020

1 Septic tank inspection was carried out and found non-complaint and an advisory notice was issued to rectify the problem.

1 Advisory notice complied with to rectify problem with septic tank system.

Water Framework Directive National Monitoring Programme

6 Lakes were monitored involving 14 samples taken for checking compliance with environmental quality standards

10 Rivers were monitored at 28 stations involving 60 samples for compliance with environmental quality standards.

Water Framework Directive River Basin Management Plan

Pollution Control met with Local Authorities Water Programme Office Scientific Team to inform the selection of water bodies that require protection and restoration under River Basin Plan 2021-2027.

Executive Scientist to give presentation on progress/status of Wicklow's river water bodies to the forthcoming SPC and Council meetings.

Bathing Water Monitoring Programme

There are 6 designated bathing waters, 4 of which fly Blue Flags*, which will be monitored 10 times through the season until 15th September. Results for August are shown below. Poor results were obtained for Wicklow Harbour and South of Bray Harbour associated with rainfall events. 4 Bathing prohibition notices were issued upon HSE advice due to effect of rainfall events and damaged sewer in Bray in August.

Blue Flag & Designated	10/08/2020	17/08/2020	19/08/2020	24/08/2020	26/08/2020	31/08/2020	07/09/2020		
Bray South Prom	EXCELLENT	EXCELLENT	EXCELLENT	EXCELLENT	EXCELLENT*	EXCELLENT*	EXCELLENT		
Greystones South Beach	EXCELLENT	EXCELLENT		EXCELLENT			EXCELLENT		
Brittas Bay North	EXCELLENT	EXCELLENT		EXCELLENT			EXCELLENT		
Brittas Bay South	EXCELLENT	EXCELLENT		EXCELLENT			EXCELLENT		
Designated									
Clogga	EXCELLENT	EXCELLENT		EXCELLENT			EXCELLENT		
Siverstrand	EXCELLENT	EXCELLENT		EXCELLENT			EXCELLENT		
Non-Designated	17/08/2020	19/08/2020	24/08/2020	26/08/2020	31/08/2020	07/09/2020	10/09/2020	12/09/2020	
Bray South of Harbour	EXCELLENT	POOR*	EXCELLENT*	EXCELLENT*	EXCELLENT*	EXCELLENT			
Greystones The Cove	EXCELLENT		EXCELLENT			EXCELLENT			
Kilcoole	EXCELLENT		EXCELLENT			EXCELLENT			
The Murrough	EXCELLENT					EXCELLENT			
Wicklow Harbour	POOR*	EXCELLENT				GOOD	GOOD		
Wicklow Lifeboat Area**	POOR*	EXCELLENT				POOR*	GOOD*		
Arklow South Beach	EXCELLENT					EXCELLENT			
Arklow The Cove	EXCELLENT					EXCELLENT			

HSE Classification for Individual Samples per 100ml of sample:				
Parameter	Excellent	Good	Sufficient	Poor
E. coli	≤ 250	251 - 500	501 - 1000	>1000
Enterococci	≤ 100	101 - 200	201 - 250	>250

Bathing Prohibitions issued for Bray and Wicklow due to rainfall events and due damaged sewer in Bray.



Planning & Development

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

Well Grants

New Applications	18
Number of New Wells	2
Number of New Pumps	10
New Equipment (Filters etc.)	6

A revised water grant scheme is now in operation effective from date of issue of Departmental Circular. This financial assistance is towards the improvement of water supply which is not wholesome or clean or is not sufficient to meet the domestic needs of a household in the opinion of the Housing Authority.

There are 3 categories of grant available for houses of 7 year and older, a 100% treatment grant of €1,000, rehabilitation grant for pumps/well protection of 85% cost up to € 3,000 and a new well grant of 85% of cost up to € 5,000. 3 quotations for each grant category of work are required from tax compliant contractors.

The cost of sampling/testing the quality of the well where treatment is required may only be included under the treatment grant. The cost of testing the quantity of a well may be included under the new scheme.

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 presented to the Arklow District Members.

Following the confirmation of the preferred flood relief scheme an Environmental Impact Assessment Report will be prepared and submitted to An Bord Pleanála.



5. Transportation, Water and Emergency Services

Public Lighting

	13/7/20	22/7/20	27/7/20	31/7/20	31/8/20	
Access Issues (Attended)	15	10	11	12	12	
Cable Fault (Attend)	5	6	8	8	9	
ESB Required (Attended)	26	26	26	27	26	
Knock Down (Attended)	5	5	5	4	4	
Materials required	1	1	1	1	1	
No Supply	17	17	17	18	17	
On Hold	0	0	0	0	0	
Submitted	290	303	297	237	206	
Traffic Management Required	14	17	17	18	13	
Total	373	385	382	325	288	
Percentage of lights not working	2.53%	2.61%	2.59%	2.20%	1.95%	
	Arklow MD	Baltinglass MD	Bray MD	Greystones MD	Wicklow MD	Grand Total
Access Issues (Attended)		1	5	1	5	12
Cable Fault (Attend)			7	1	1	9
ESB Required(Attended)	8	1	3	1	13	26
Knock Down (Attended)	1					1
Materials required					1	1
No Supply		3	3	7	4	17
Submitted	29	67	31	27	52	206
Traffic Management Required	1		5	4	3	13
Grand Total	39	72	55	42	80	288
Percentage Not Working	1.34%	3.06%	1.69%	1.54%	2.28%	1.95%

Transportation Statistics (General)

	2019	Running Total 2020	July 2020	August 2020
Solicitors Queries	775	471	73	63
Road Closure Applications	40	16	1	3
Road Opening Licences	1418	784	119	104
Abnormal Load Applications	35	17	4	1

TII funded projects

N81 Knockroe Bend Realignment

The N81 Knockroe Bend Realignment project is located on the N81 south of Hollywood Cross and consists of the realignment of the N81 over a distance of 0.85km. The construction work commenced in August 2019 and the new alignment was opened to two way traffic on 24th July 2020. The overall construction work is expected to be completed during October 2020.

N11 Kilmacanoge Parallel Service Road

Phase 1 work in the median is currently nearing completion. Phase 1 involves the widening of the N11 into the central median on the southbound carriageway to provide an additional running lane. Progress has been slowed while working in the vicinity of an existing high pressure gas transmission main and other existing services.

Phase 2 will see the works switching to the verge side of the southbound carriageway, with traffic moving on to the new road surface, along with the construction of the Traffic Islands for the delineation of the Service Road. The construction of the concrete bases for the Gantries along the service road will be undertaken also during this phase.

It is anticipated that construction works will be complete by late 2020/early 2021.

N11/M11 Junction 4 to Junction 14 Improvement Scheme

Arup Consulting Engineers were appointed to progress the delivery of the N11/M11 Junction 4 to Junction 14 Improvement Scheme through Phases 1 to 4 of Transport Infrastructure Ireland's (TII) Project Management Guidelines (PMGs). The Outcome of Phase 1 Concept and Feasibility (Scheme Feasibility Report dated 28th November 2019) was that a strong justification for advancement of the project to Phase 2 existed. A number of feasible transportation measures meriting more rigorous assessment were identified, including road improvement options, demand management solutions and public transport alternatives.

Currently Arup are working on Phase 2 Options Selection which when completed should identify the preferred option, the announcement of the Emerging Preferred Corridor is estimated during Q4 2020. This date has been delayed due to the restrictions of access to the study area during March/April and part of May 2020. It is envisaged that an online Public Consultation Process will be conducted for the announcement of the Emerging Preferred Corridor during Q4 2020 and into Q1 2021.

Current active contracts are:

- Murphy Surveys :- Main Topographical Survey along the corridor options
- Roadplan Consulting Ltd:- Road Safety Audits along the corridor options
- GVA Donal O'Buachalla: Land and Property Valuation assessments

- Mc Cann Fitzgerald:- Legal Advice relating to Environmental Planning Law.
- Environmental Assessment including and topographical survey work for Phase 3 is also being progressed in tandem with the above.

Safety Improvement Schemes

Glendalough Junction - Ministerial Consent for Archaeological Assessment & Alignment Drawing complete. The extension of this Ministerial Consent for Construction has been granted. Site clearance works have commenced on site with construction works planned to start week commencing 21st September 2020.

Ballinaclesh Junction - Consultant has been appointed and layout agreed. Construction works commenced on Thursday 3rd September 2020 with excavation works to the new alignment progressing well.

Funding

Climate Change Adaptation

Wicklow County Council received an allocation of €378,000 for five schemes under **Circular RW 09/2020 Climate Change Adaptation Allocations** to carry out works at the following locations:

- Griffenstown, Dunlavin
- Beechwood Park, Kilcoole
- Garrymore, Ballinacarrig
- Barnamelia
- Vartry River, Ashford

Covid 19 Interim Mobility Measures

- Works to facilitate changes to current street layouts to address social distancing and revised travel patterns
- 30 Schemes were approved for County Wicklow - €950,000 allocated
- **Progress to Date:**
 - 9 Schemes Complete
 - 4 Schemes under construction
 - 2 Schemes at procurement stage
 - 15 Schemes at design/planning stage

July 2020 Stimulus Package - Active Travel Measures

Wicklow County Council received funding allocation of €3.34m for 25 projects to support Pedestrian and Cyclist movement and to enhance accessibility, works must be completed by 30 November 2020

- Wicklow Projects include:
 - Construction of cycleways
 - Construction of footpaths
 - Installation of Pedestrian crossings
 - Road resurfacing
 -

Surface Dressing 2020

Surface dressing was carried out at 46 different locations with an approximate overall length of 85 Kms across four Municipal Districts. Works commenced in late June 2020 and were completed on the 13th August 2020 in the following districts.

Baltinglass MD

Blessington Area – 7 projects approximately 10.5Km's– Completed between Thursday 25th June and Tuesday 30th June 2020.

Baltinglass/Tinahely Area – 6 Projects completed – approximately km (including 1.5km section of N81) – completed between 2nd July and 10th July respectively (Ballygobbin completed at end of works on 13th August).

Wicklow MD

19 Projects across the 3 General Service Supervisor areas approximately 33kms – completed between Monday 13th July and Tuesday 28th July.

Arklow MD

8 Projects completed approximately 21.5kms – Completed between Thursday 30th July 2020 and Friday 7th August.

Bray MD

6 Projects completed approximately 7kms – Completed between Monday 10th August and Wednesday 12th August 2020.

Parking Income

Parking Income by Municipal District	EURO
Bray Municipal District	483,200
Greystones Municipal District	179,019
Wicklow Municipal District	157,456
Arklow Municipal District	91,961
Parking Permits	44,916
Parking Fines	182,119
Wicklow County Council	1,138,671

Fire Service

	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	2	1	1								
Fire Domestic	1						1				
Fire Caravan	0										
Road Traffic Collision (RTC)	26	5	5	4	3	1	2	3	1	1	1
Fire Vehicle (HGV /motorway)	2	1	1								
Hazardous Materials Incident	0										
Fire Industrial / Commercial	0										
Fire Barn / Shed	0										
Fire Alarm or CO ₂ Activation	19	8	4	2			3	1	1		
Fire Outdoor: Gorse / bushes	7	5	1		1						
Fire Chimney	1										1
Fire Small / bin / skip / bonfire	3	1	2								
Fire Vehicle	6	1	2	1		2					
Flooding	0										
Trees Down, Make Scene Safe	9		3	1	1	1	2	1			
Ambulance Assist	13	4	2		1	4			1	1	
Garda Assist	1									1	
Electrical Incident	1								1		
Gas Leak	0										
River Rescue	4	1	1	1	1						
Fire Oil / Petrol	0										
Entrapment / Rescue / Lift	0										
Oil Spill / Road Hazard	0										
Animal Rescue	0										
Lock In / Lock Out	0										
False Alarm – Good Intent	0										
Malicious False Alarm	0										
Mobilised into other County	2						1	1			
Times Stations mobilised	97	27	22	9	7	8	9	6	4	3	2

There were **85 incidents** attended during the month of August 2020. Individual Fire Stations were mobilised on a total of **97 occasions** including 2 incidents in neighbouring counties.

Operational activity for the month August was similar to the preceding month (July 2020 – 101 mobilisations). Activity for the month was similar to the equivalent month last year, August 2019.

Sample Incidents (August 2020)

05/08/2020 Bray and Greystones Fire Crews attended a tragic incident at Powerscourt Waterfall.

20/08/2020 Storm Ellen resulted in fire crews from around the county being mobilised to remove fallen trees and other debris from roads.

20/08/2020 Rathdrum and Wicklow Town Fire Crews mobilised with Coastguard, Gardai and Ambulance Service when 2 teenage boys went missing on the river. Firefighters located the boys and returned them safely.

30/08/2020 Baltinglass Fire Crew assisted the ambulance service at Castleruddery following a serious fall from a horse. A helicopter was used to transport the patient to hospital.

Incidents mobilised outside county Wicklow (August 2020):

Kildare (2-incidents)

02/08/20 Dunlavin Fire Crew were mobilised to a Fire Alarm Activation in Kilcullen, County Kildare – false alarm.

06/08/20 Blessington Fire Crew were mobilised to a Fire Alarm Activation in Kiltel, County Kildare – false alarm.

General

- Following extensive research a specification for fire kit for firefighters was developed. This was advertised on the Government's eTenders website. Tenders have been received, sample kits provided and an assessment process is underway.
- Preparations were made for the forthcoming recruitment campaign, including an extensive social media campaign to heighten interest and increase application numbers.
- Plans are underway with other Fire Training Centres and the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management on the resumption of Fire-fighting Skills (Recruit), Breathing Apparatus Wearers and Officer Courses commencing September. Wicklow County Fire Service will have a major role to play in setting a standard national approach for this training.

Fire Prevention Statistics August 2020

Application type	Received	Deemed Invalid	Requested additional information	Inspections	Recommended Grant
Fire Safety Certificates	9		4		7
Regularisation Certificates	3		2	2	1
FSC as part of 7 Day Notice					
Disability Access Certificates	11		2		10
Licensing	Received	Inspected	Request further info	No Objection letter	Not raising an objection
District	39	15	3	1	
Circuit	1	1		1	
Dangerous Substances Act					

Building Control

Commencement Notices for August 2020:

26 Commencement Notices Submitted:

- 7 Commencement Notices with Compliance Documents
- 2 Seven day Notice
- 13 Opt Out Declarations
- 4 Commencement Notices without Compliance Documents

Submission Statistics

- 50 % of Commencement Notices - Opt Out
- 69 % of Commencement Notices Revised Information required & requested:
 - 18 No. Commencement Notices (CN) of which
 - 12 are Opt Out (66%)
 - 2 Seven Day Notice (11%)
 - 4 are Compliance Documentation (23%)
 - 0 Without Compliance Documentation (0%)
- 14 Valid Commencement Notices
 - 53 new build residential Units (13 of which are one off houses)
- Invalidated CNs for August = 0

Certificates of Completion processed in August 2020

- 11 New No. of CCC submitted
- 11 No. Valid
- 1 No. Invalid
- 11 No. Validated CCCs related to;
- 4 No CCCs submitted in July 2020
- 7 No CCCs submitted in August 2020

54% => 6 No. @ Multi-Development site => 65 new residential units
18% => 2 No. Schools
9% => 1 No. One off House
19% => Commercial Units Retail, Crèche etc.

**BCA not notified on completion of opt out developments

Points to note:

- Construction has started on 2 Primary Care Centres in Wicklow, Arklow and Rathdrum
- Building Control has seen an increase in Commencement Notice Applications for schools, which is to be expected at this time of year.
- Building Control has also seen an increase in Commencement Notices & Completion Certificates or Crèche Facilities in Wicklow. These Crèche Facilities are associated with Multi Unit housing developments

Organisational Development and Financial Matters

1. HR and Corporate Services

Recruitment

The following assessments were held in August:

- Permanent part-time and substitute School Traffic Wardens – Bray Municipal District

Employee Numbers

	Q3 2019	Q4 2019	Q1 2020	Q2 2020
Managerial/ Administrative	280	285	292	294
Professional/Technical	103	102	105	104
Outdoor	318	318	321	320
Temporary/ Seasonal	62	62	62	55
Non DOHPLG	8	8	8	8
Total	771	775	788	781

	Q3 2018	Q4 2018	Q1 2019	Q2 2019
Managerial/ Administrative	280	278	280	272
Professional/Technical	105	104	104	98
Outdoor	313	312	316	318
Temporary/ Seasonal	54	38	65	88
Non DOHPLG	8	8	8	8
Total	752	740	773	784

(Excludes figures for Fire-fighters)

Access to Information

F.O.I. Requests

August 2020	12
January to August 2020	67

August 2019	13
January to August 2019	95

Ombudsman Requests

August 2020	0
January to August 2020	17

August 2019	1
January to August 2019	11

Press Releases

August 2020 – 11 Press Releases

Register of Electors

The Franchise staff are continuing to work on database maintenance required to maintain the Register of Electors. Letters are continuing to be issued to electors to establish whether or not they are still resident at the address which they are registered to and the replies are being updated onto the Register or forwarded to other local authorities for registration at new addresses as required.

RFA forms are being issued to new estates and houses that have been sold in Wicklow since February 2020. Contact has also been made with Nursing Homes in the County to update their Disabled Special Voters List.

We have established a highly visible social and print media campaign to raise awareness of the upcoming 2021/2022 Draft Register of Electors and for those who wish to receive a postal vote from home on the grounds of ill health/cocooning due to Covid-19. We have contacted the Year Heads of all the 5th and 6th Year Classes in all the Secondary Schools in Wicklow to register students who will reach 18 on or before 15th February 2021.

Due to the Covid-19 Emergency and restrictions there will be no Fieldworkers carrying out work on the Draft Register of Electors for 2021/2022.

Refurbishment Works

Works are continuing in the County Buildings. New floors have been laid in the Foyer and in the Seminole room. Public toilets have been tiled and are now been fitted out with sanitary ware. The Seminole room has been refurbished. New kitchenette has been fitted opposite the Cathaoirleach's office. Roof above the kitchenette has been cut out for a new skylight.

New steel beams and new joist have been fitted in the Council chamber; area for 5 new skylights has been cut out of the roof. Work is continuing on insulating and repairing the roof area. Moston are beginning to work on the floor area in the Chamber.

Customer Service Innovation Hub

- New security glass has been fitted; new glass walls are now erected. We are at snag list stage and it is scheduled to be complete in the next few weeks.
- Some of the new furniture has been delivered.

Works are almost complete on the new Clinic Rooms (these are located where they old Planning/Environment and Housing counter was).

Completion date for the full project including the Council Chamber is scheduled for December. Holding the first Council meeting there in January (if Covid 19 restrictions are lifted).



Communication

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

Our key objective is to ensure that there is clear, consistent and appropriate communication between Wicklow County Council and all Staff. Communication has been delivered through Microsoft Teams and other technologies such as Zoom, as well as our traditional methods, such as e-mail and text alerts.

The **Quality Customer Service Network** invited us to submit an Excellence in Customer Service Case Studies at the beginning of September; this gave us an opportunity to showcase the innovation initiatives we have delivered in Wicklow, over the last few months, carried out by the hard work of our colleagues. The focus was based on service delivery in our community, such as: Improving services for our customers; Making services more accessible and Innovation through digital and people.

The following Case Studies were submitted:

WCC Submissions
Community Call response team
Library Home schooling assistance
Wicklow keeping active – Couch to 3km
Face Mask loops

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 – online form setup and backend Assendus & Agresso systems integration.
- Community Call Helpline
- Remote Working Requirements
- Return to work desk arrangements
- Government Networks
- Phone Systems
- Call Conferencing
- Communications and awareness

IT Helpdesk

- The IT Helpdesk continues to streamline the workflow for the technical support team with an average of 36 tickets a day.

Domain Migration

- The domain migration and the mailbox migration projects are progressing well. 99% of email accounts have been migrated.
- Retention policies have been amended for mailboxes and we are encouraging staff to Cryoserver to access archived emails in a bid to reduce mailbox sizes.
- The team continue to upgrade all legacy operating systems to Windows 10 to ensure continued support from Microsoft.

GIS & Data Collection Systems

- Initial development of the Strategic Development Goals have been mapped as part of the Climate and Biodiversity Action.
- Development of CRM System automation.
- Data analysis underway for the upcoming County Development Plan.
- 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.

Customer Service Delivery

- Work continues with the business process mapping and DPIA's are being carried out for each process as it arises.
- Plans are underway to build upon the existing Avaya IP Office Phone System to integrate the Avaya Contact Centre Select Hardware Appliance and software.



eServices

- Wicklow.ie – pageviews for 2020 to date are 1,084,112.
- Social media accounts – followers to date
 - Facebook (Wicklow County Council) – 7,980 followers.
 - Twitter (@WicklowCoCo) – 6,808 followers.
 - Instagram (@WicklowCoCo) – 1,573 followers.
- During August, the Online Consultation Hub on Wicklow.ie had the following items up for consultation –
 - ReStart Grant Plus.
 - Local Property Tax 2020
 - Part 8 - 41 Residential Units Charlesland, Greystones
 - Part 8 - 14 Apartments Cedar Court, Schools Road, Ballymorris, Bray
- Stop Food Waste online challenge with Catherine Fulvio - Facebook campaign (run in conjunction with Meath County Council, Laois County Council, Westmeath County Council and Wicklow County Council).
 - A series of four videos hosted by Award Winning Chef, Catherine Fulvio followed each week by a live Q&A hosted by Stop Food Waste.
 - Metrics for Wicklow County Council's Facebook account
 - Impressions – (how many times posts (including video posts) showed up in people's newsfeeds) – **142,800**
 - Reach – (how many people were reached. People need to hear about a campaign message between 9 to 18 times for it to have a significant impact on them.) – **52,051**
 - 3 Second Video Views – **50,031**
 - 10 second views – (at 10 seconds people have increased brand awareness, increased purchase intent and will remember seeing the video thumbnail for up to 30 days.) – **14,433**



3. FINANCIAL

Revenue Account

REVENUE ACCOUNT							
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE SUMMARY BY SERVICE DIVISION AT 31st AUGUST 2020							
	EXPENDITURE			INCOME			NET
	Actual Expenditure	Adopted Full Year Budget	% Budget Spent to Date	Actual Income	Adopted Full Year Budget	% Budget Spent to Date	Actual Expenditure / (Income)
	€	€	%	€	€	%	€
Housing and Building	14,757,669	24,541,664	60%	(18,466,064)	(30,692,854)	60%	(3,708,395)
Road Transport & Safety	11,339,624	23,611,358	48%	(5,396,642)	(16,493,380)	33%	5,942,982
Water Services	3,274,601	5,560,661	59%	(4,084,865)	(6,545,641)	62%	(810,264)
Development Management	10,732,573	11,242,546	95%	(7,548,461)	(6,144,652)	123%	3,184,112
Environmental Services	7,158,002	11,837,313	60%	(744,117)	(2,002,200)	37%	6,413,885
Recreation and Amenity	4,760,686	7,663,027	62%	(339,935)	(847,647)	40%	4,420,751
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	792,186	1,479,516	54%	(344,443)	(819,228)	42%	447,744
Miscellaneous Services	7,718,706	11,879,184	65%	(4,203,221)	(6,156,153)	68%	3,515,485
Central Management Charges	12,071,894	18,407,601	66%	(705,117)	(1,000,000)	71%	11,366,776
Local Government Fund				(9,146,880)	(13,720,320)	67%	(9,146,880)
Pension Levy				0	0		0
Commercial Rates				(21,339,867)	(31,950,795)	67%	(21,339,867)
	72,605,940	116,222,870	62%	(72,319,612)	(116,372,870)	62%	286,329

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 August 2020 to 31st August 2020.

Capital Account

CAPITAL ACCOUNT					
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE SUMMARY BY SERVICE DIVISION AT 31st AUGUST 2020					
	Opening Balance at 01/01/2020	Actual Expenditure	Actual Income	Transfers to/from Reserves	Closing Balance at 31/08/2020
	€	€	€	€	€
	Housing and Building	19,000,508	34,730,256	(36,835,384)	(1,066,465)
Road Transport & Safety	(42,851,352)	7,733,739	(8,175,752)	(309,858)	(43,603,224)
Water Services	(10,670,498)	178,019	(516,275)	(10,000)	(11,018,754)
Development Management	(9,612,396)	1,254,341	(596,436)	(133,642)	(9,088,134)
Environmental Services	968,611	2,577,641	(1,737,948)	(326,250)	1,482,054
Recreation and Amenity	(914,062)	2,475,741	(2,498,211)	(141,000)	(1,077,533)
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	(885,558)	26,663	0	(152,500)	(1,011,396)
Miscellaneous Services	(15,413,049)	3,094,129	(2,157,943)	(841,170)	(15,318,034)
	(60,377,798)	52,070,527	(52,517,950)	(2,980,885)	(63,806,105)

Commercial Rates, Rents and Loan Collections

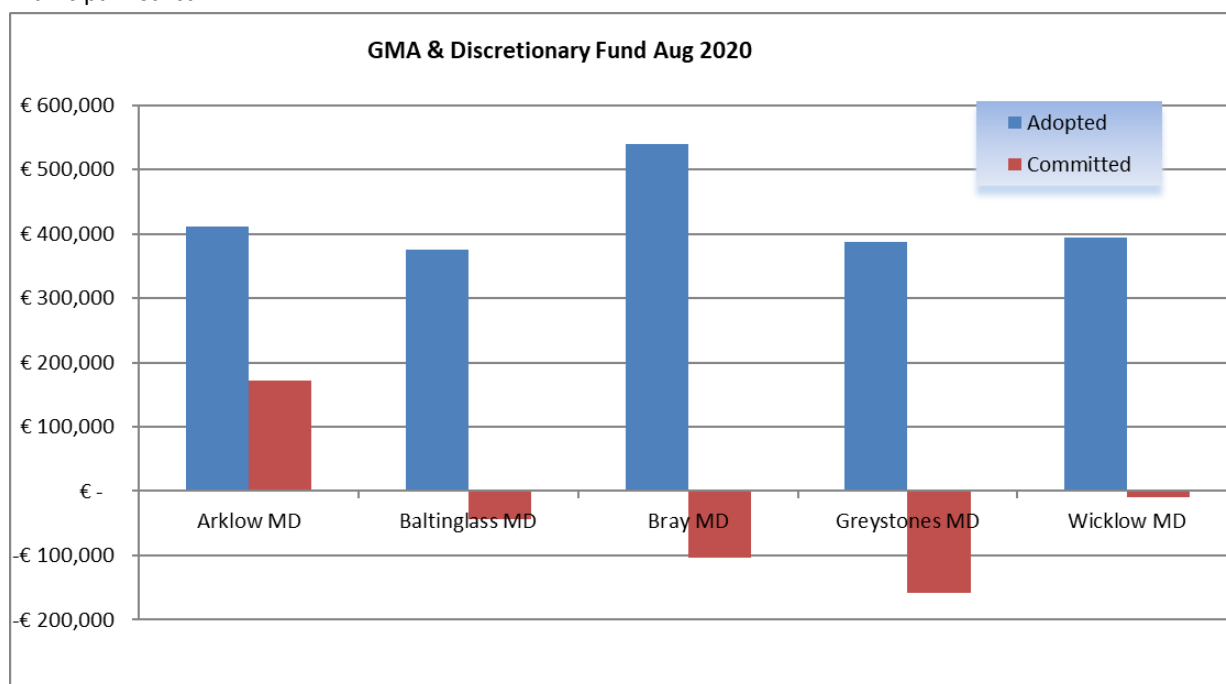
SUMMARY OF MAJOR COLLECTIONS AT 31st AUGUST 2020										
Income Collection Area	Opening Balance 01/01/2020	Accrued	Vacancy Property Adjustments	Write Offs	Waivers	Total for Collection	Collected	Closing Arrears 31/07/2020	Specific Doubtful Arrears	% Collection
Rates	5,217,406	32,009,800	0	0	0	37,227,206	(13,517,084)	23,710,122	1,523,146	38%
Rents & Annuities	1,853,579	11,122,157	0	2,383	0	12,978,118	(10,302,413)	2,675,705	0	79%
Housing Loans	402,724	916,557	0	0	0	1,319,280	(1,223,027)	96,253	0	93%

Six Month Rates Waiver: A 100% waiver of commercial rates will be applied for a 6-month period from 27 March 2020 to 27 September 2020 to all ratepayers except a small number of categories. The waiver will be applied as a credit in lieu of rates for the 6-month period covered in 2020. The excluded categories are mainly utilities, banks, large supermarkets and corporates.

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

General Municipal Allocation and Discretionary Fund 2020

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



Municipal District	C/F from 2019	Adopted	Committed	Balance to Expend
	€	€	€	€
Arklow MD	52,813	410,500	223,808	239,505
Baltinglass MD	159,389	375,500	115,830	419,059
Bray MD	180,991	539,500	76,898	643,593
Greystones MD	165,252	387,500	6,172	546,580
Wicklow MD	205,713	393,500	195,732	403,481
Total	764,158	2,106,500	618,440	2,252,218

Capital Investment Programme 2020-2022

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

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

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