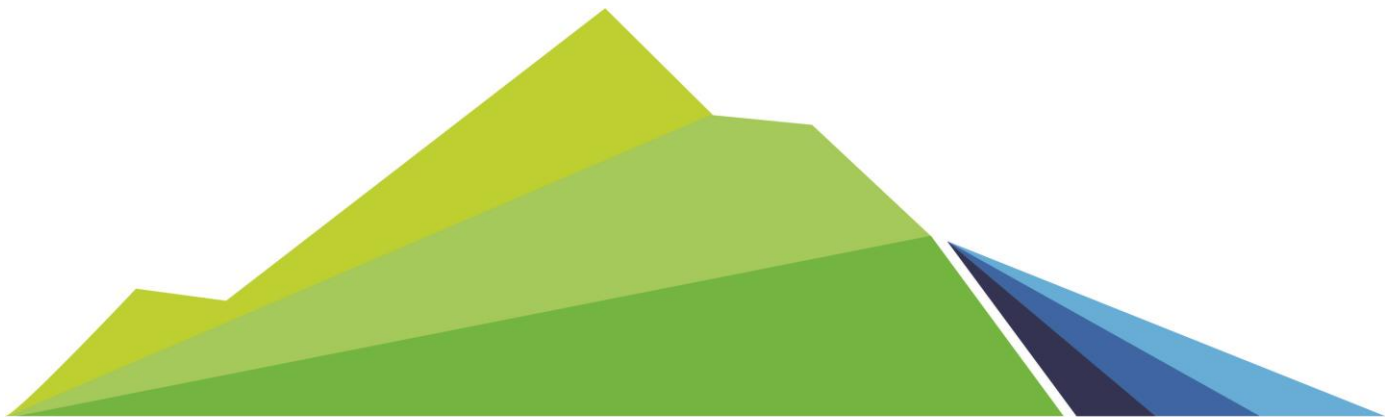




# Wicklow County Council Chief Executive's Monthly Report



W I C K L O W

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## **This month:**

### **TWO NEW PLAYGROUNDS OPENED; LARAGH AND ROUNDWOOD**

Two new playgrounds were opened in County Wicklow this June, one in Laragh and the second in Roundwood. The playground in Laragh nestles in the grounds of the Brockagh Resource Centre and the second in Roundwood, beside the Roundwood and District Athletics track. Both playgrounds have been eagerly anticipated and long sought after. The potential for a playground in Roundwood first came to the attention of Wicklow County Council in 2012 while Laragh did not have to wait as long, as 2017 was the first time a playground was mentioned. Both playgrounds were funded by Wicklow County Council, Community Cultural and Social Development section and much welcomed by the community and elected members who anticipate that these playgrounds will bring lots of joy and magic into the lives of younger members of both communities

### **€950,000 NTA FUNDING FOR INTERIM MOBILITY PROJECTS**

Wicklow County Council submitted some 30 interim mobility projects totally €950,000 to the NTA to fund projects throughout the five municipal districts to assist the re-opening of towns and villages as we move through the various re-opening phases of the Roadmap for Reopening Society and business.

The funding covers proposals submitted for the following MDs:

- Baltinglass MD - approved €265K
- Arklow MD - approved €295K
- Bray MD - approved €55K
- Greystones MD - approved €315K
- Wicklow MD - approved €20K

### **TOWN REOPENING COMMITTEES SET UP IN ALL FIVE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT AREAS**

Town reopening committees have been set up in each municipal district launching campaigns to restart the local economy. The committees will work in partnership for a set period of time, with local stakeholders to plan to help restart the local economy in our towns.

A wide range of resources are available throughout the districts to support local business as COVID-1-restrictions begin to ease and to highlight the range of supports available from the Local Enterprise Office (LEO) and the restart grant. Promotion Campaigns include

- 'Think local, buy local' campaigns
- Ground markings to implement queuing measures to encourage social distancing
- Changes to parking and pedestrian facilities
- 'Positivity Stones' to promote well-being and mental health

In addition, to assist local businesses expedite the required consent for use of public spaces for seating and tables, and social distancing measures; the Council has introduced a fast track licence application procedure for the above usage of public space only. All fees will be waived for a period of three months, application forms can be downloaded from [Wicklow.ie](http://Wicklow.ie) and submitted online with a site location map attached to [plandev@wicklowcoco.ie](mailto:plandev@wicklowcoco.ie)

## HOUSING AND COMMUNITY

### 1. Social Housing Support

	<b>May 2020</b>	<b>May 2019</b>
No. on list for Social Housing Support – (includes RAS and HAP)	4425	4230
No. availing of Rental Assistance Scheme (RAS)	324	404
No. availing of Housing Assistance Payment (HAP)	1899	1244
No. in Long Term Leasing accommodation	10	8
No. in Short Term Leasing accommodation	15	10

### 2. Allocation of Social Housing

	<b>May 2020</b>	<b>May 2019</b>
<i>Wicklow County Council (including Bray MD)</i>	24	54
Approved Housing Bodies	2	5

### 3. Social Housing Stock

	<b>May 2020</b>	<b>May 2019</b>
Tenancies occupied	4463	4338
Total weekly rental accrual	€296,401.00	€237,168.01
Arrears	€2,104,192.95	€1,066,844.89

### 4. Casual Vacancies/Relets

52

	<b>May 2020</b>	<b>Covid 19</b>	<b>May 2019</b>
<b>Municipal District</b>			
Arklow	10	3	13
Baltinglass	10	2	21
Bray	6	2	9
Greystones	2	0	8
Wicklow	24	3	14

#### COVID 19 UPDATE

##### Relets for Self-Isolation Units

A number of vacant houses being refurbished for re-letting 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>
<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>	<b>493 Units</b>

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
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>82</b>		
SCHEMES ON SITE	UNITS	CURRENT STATUS (subject to change due to Covid 19 restrictions)	PART 8 APPROVAL
Whitehall, Baltinglass RAPID BUILD	27	Completion anticipated May 2020 .	Yes
Kilbride Lane Bray (Murphy's Lands)	42	Completion anticipated October 2020	Yes
FCA Hall Wicklow Town	8	Completion anticipated January 2021	Yes
Kilmantan Place Bray	4	Completion anticipated January 2021	Yes
Farrenkelly Greystones Phase 2	24	Completion anticipated June 2020	Yes
Jameson Heights, Kilmacanogue	20	Completion anticipated October 2020	Yes
Convent Lands	51	Completion anticipated August 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
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>273</b>		



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 September 2020	Yes
Greenhill Road Wicklow RAPID BUILD	36	Site start anticipated October 2020	Yes
Ashtown Lane RAPID BUILD	40	Site start anticipated September 2020	Yes
Mountainview NTMK RAPID BUILD	26	Site start anticipated November 2020	Yes
Old Fire Station Arklow	7	Site start anticipated November 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
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>213</b>		

## 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 2/3	WCC
Wicklow Town	3	Quarter 2	WCC
Rathnew	3	Quarter 2/3	WCC
Greystones	2	Quarter 2/3	WCC
Dunlavin	4	Quarter2/3	CALF
Ashford	8	Quarter 3	CALF
Wicklow	4	Quarter 2/3	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	3	Q2/2020	WCC
Wicklow	5	Q2/Q3 2020	WCC
Rathdrum	4	Q2Q3 2020	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]

Development Site at Convent Lands, Wicklow for 51 Social Housing units commenced on site in March 2019. The project is progressing well and is currently due for completion in June 2020.. The Department of Housing has dedicated €300 million towards delivery of housing through the public, private partnership model in the Rebuilding Ireland Action Plan. The Convent Lands site in Wicklow has been included as a project in Bundle 1.

Nominations for allocations have been advised to the Approved Housing Body operating the scheme.

### 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 due by Q4 2020. A further 4 units (2 turnkey and 2 Part V) due in 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 €1,768,217 in 2019 no budget for 2020 yet (€316,319.24) spent to date)

› › Grant funding for social house € 500,000 in 2019, no budget for 2020 yet (€ 99,443.48) spent to date)

### House Purchase Loans – Rebuilding Ireland

#### Up to 31/05/2020

- 331 received up to 31/05/2020
- 111 approvals
- 132 declined
- 21 previously approved but approved
- 41 further information/with HA
- 26 either incomplete, ineligible

#### May 2019

- 75 received to 31/05/2019
- 9 approvals
- 9 declined
- 5 further info/with HA

### 2016 Incremental Tenant Purchase Scheme

#### May 2020

- 80 applications to 31/05/2020
- 4 sale completed
- 14 declined
- 62 remaining various stages – incomplete, with L.A., withdrawn.

#### May 2019

- 21 applications to 31/05/2019
- 1 sale completed
- 2 declined

## 10. Addressing Homelessness

	31/05/2020	31/05/2019
Covid Presentations	27	0
No of Presentations	66	64
No. of Repeat Presentations	3	4
No. of Households (Families)	34	31
No. of Adults (Individuals)	32	36
No. of Children	58	61
NTQ/Asked to Leave/Landlord selling	6	19
Family Circumstances	40	14
Leaving Prison Hospital Care	2	0
Sofa Surfing	5	9
Rough Sleeping	1	6



Own Door Temporary Accommodation	31/05/2020	31/05/2019
Families	14	12
Adults	24	18
Children	32	30
Singles	8	3

Bed & Breakfast Accommodation - No. of Homeless Emergency Accommodation Placements & Duration @ 31 <sup>st</sup> May, 2020								
	No. of Households	No. of Adults	No. of Children	< 3 mths	3-6 mths	6-9 mths	9-12 mths	>12 mths
Household breakdown	6	19	17	2	1	1	1	1
<i>Children Only</i>				8	2	2	3	2

Bed & Breakfast Accommodation - No. of Homeless Emergency Accommodation Placements & Duration @ 30 <sup>th</sup> April, 2019								
	No. of Households	No. of Adults	No. of Children	< 3 mths	3-6 mths	6-9 mths	9-12 mths	>12 mths
Household breakdown	8	16	14	4	1	1	0	2
<i>Children Only</i>				7	2	1	0	4

**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, 27<sup>th</sup> 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 14<sup>th</sup> 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 Gardai.

### **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 -solation 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, 238 households (183 families & 55 singles) have been assisted under the Homeless HAP Scheme in Wicklow County Council from the inception on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018 to 31<sup>st</sup> May, 2020.

118 homeless cases and 120 prevention cases to date. 80 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. Community Cultural & Social Development

### Wicklow Community Call

The Wicklow Community Call Centre transferred operations from Arklow Library to Wicklow County Buildings on 30<sup>th</sup> May. The revised hours are now 9 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. seven days a week. The Call Centre is now staffed by CCSD staff. The centre was set up with a special Helpline and dedicated email and is available to elderly and vulnerable people and those who are cocooning who need urgent assistance at this time.

### County Wicklow Arts Office

#### **Wicklow Arts Strategy – Growing the Arts in Wicklow 2020 – 2025**

The Arts Strategy which had been endorsed by the SPC went to the Council Meeting and was adopted in April 2020. The Strategy is currently at design stage and should be available for download by the end of June 2020. Limited copies will be printed due to the difficulty in circulating physical documents as a result of Covid-19 however a larger print run can be done in mid-2021 if required. The landscape has been fundamentally altered for Local Authority Service delivery and public interaction. The Strategy may require a review statement considering the impact of Covid-19. It will be more possible to ascertain what will be required if the budgetary context for 2021 is clearer.

#### **Artists Connect**

Artists Connect is an artist development initiative of Wicklow County Council with the purpose of supporting artists across all art forms that are living in or are from the county, to connect, share information and learn from each other. Artist Connects runs events such as Artist Salons co-hosted with Outpost Studios, and The Funding Clinic held earlier this year. Events are developed with the support of an Artist Panel which is made up of artists Philip St John (playwright), Sinead O’Loughlin (filmmaker), Paul Gaffney (visual artist) Karen Gleeson (dance), Joanna Kidney (visual artist), and Olivia Fitzsimons (writer), as well as Jenny Sherwin (Arts Office), Niamh O’Donnell (Mermaid Arts Centre), and Susan Coughlan (independent facilitator).

The Arts Office is committed to developing initiatives under the Artists Connect framework throughout the lifetime of the Arts Strategy Growing the Arts in County Wicklow 2020- 2025. The programme is at a really early stage and, while plans have been impacted by Covid-19.

The panel has developed a resource document outlining some of the resources they are using which may be supportive of other artists and their practice at this challenging time. We are all dealing with change and discovering new things that help us to adapt and to cope. We hope that this document may be of some assistance.

[https://www.wicklow.ie/Portals/0/Documents/Arts%20Heritage%20&%20Archives/Arts/Artist%20Connect\\_RESOURCES.pdf](https://www.wicklow.ie/Portals/0/Documents/Arts%20Heritage%20&%20Archives/Arts/Artist%20Connect_RESOURCES.pdf)

## **Cruinniú na nÓg (Creative Ireland)**

Cruinniú na nÓg – the new national day for creativity for children and young people under the Creative Ireland Programme was this year organised at lightning speed as first we were cancelled due to Covid-19 and then with a week to programme we were virtual! Wicklow County Council's Arts, Heritage and Library Services were delighted to roll out a programme of workshops, events and competitions for young people which were accessed by approximately 1,600 children and young people.

The entries for the Heritage Bake Off judged by Catherine Fulvio, Singer Songwriter, Writing, Film and Upcycling projects were amazing. We have all details and the work of the young people still available on [www.wicklow.ie/cruinniu](http://www.wicklow.ie/cruinniu)

In addition we worked with children who would be most vulnerable in normal circumstances but whose life is extremely challenging during Covid-19. The Women's Refuge had a virtual workshop in making Dream Catchers with Artists Michelle Hall and received creativity packs for every child in the centre for the months of May and June. We also worked with Barnardos and Mary Rose to circulate creativity packs with books and crafts suitable for children from 0-14 years. Each child gets to keep their own pack. The Barnardos Teams will work with the children in their gardens as part of their continuing Covid-19 access programme.

## **Artist Clinics**

Under the Artists Connect banner we will deliver a number of artist clinics via Zoom and in late autumn with physical distance in place to support the artists in our county to adapt and re-imagine their practice in light of the Covid-19 pandemic. The arts have been acknowledged by the Government as being decimated by the impact of Covid-19 as with many other sectors. Rebuilding will require a range of investment supports including developing capacity in terms of health and safety, new requirements for distancing for performance, financial measures and psychological / networking supports.

In order to respond to this in Wicklow we have developed a range of measures to date subject to further investment these could be increased.

## **Artists Connect Clinics**

The Artists Panel as well as artists who have received bursary supports from WCC for 2020 will be convened for a number of development sessions from June – August

## **Events**

There will be two physically distanced events in September and October:

- 1: The 'artist and the venue in a post Covid-19 context'
- 2: Community engagement and artist collaboration now – what does it look like, how can it work





**Visual Artist Clinics** – a series of visual artist clinics will be offered by Wicklow County Council and Visual Artists Ireland the national resource organisations for visual artists. This will specifically address support measures for visual artists in the county.

### **Strategic Projects**

The five Strategic Projects which were selected for 2020 were paused as a result of Covid-19. The two film projects were able to substantially continue as they were a lot of writing and research funded through the programmes. The remaining projects will be completed once it is safe to do so. A total of 60,000.00 was awarded for these measures.

The call for Strategic Projects in 2020 will be announced in June with a July closing date. The funding context for 2021 is unknown, it is proposed that applications are sought and will be subject to funding in 2021 with an announcement only possible on the selected works after the ratification of the Council's 2021 budget in November 2020.

### **Way with Words**

The Way with Words Arts and Library Service initiative for 2020 had audiences in Blessington and Arklow Libraries and its outreach centres for in excess of 1,000 people. This audience included adults and children who took part in readings, workshops and author visits.

Poet Colm Keegan was in residence in Glenart College in Arklow and there was outreach in West Wicklow Schools, the Autism Unit in Dunlavin Scoil Nioclais Naofa as well as Baltinglass Hospital.

**The Choral Development Programme** began the Mouthful Residency – an A Capella Vocal Group from the UK who will be in residence in Wicklow from 2020 until the completion of the Creative Ireland Programme in 2022. They have been involved with choirs young and old, professional development for choir leaders and performance events throughout County Wicklow. In response to Covid-19 this has been adapted online, and there is a new song project for choirs in Wicklow involving the production of new commissions for Covid-19 with choirs all over Wicklow taking part. This work will be captured digitally and put up on YouTube channels when developed.

**The Choral Website** for County Wicklow is also almost near completion and will be a really useful resource particularly at this time.

**Heritage Measures – The Heritage, Genealogy and Library Services of WCC** have collaborated to collect 'Our Stories – Together Apart' in response to Covid – 19 as well as co-ordinating a craft and photography project. These will be archived for generations to come.

**Heritage Measures 2** – The Heritage Officer will commission a new video in the Our Liffey Stories Project which will be available at the end of 2020. In addition there are plans for an extended archaeology project in 2021.

**The Heritage Officer, Genealogy and Arts Services** will collaborate to produce an exhibition which can travel through the Library Services for the Decade of Commemorations. A series of historic essays were commissioned in 2020 in relation to World War I and County Wicklow. These will be adapted to tell the story widely in Wicklow.



## **Mermaid Arts Centre**

Mermaid Arts Centre is currently recruiting for the position of Artistic Director with a closing date of July 2<sup>nd</sup>. Niamh O'Donnell has been appointed as the incoming Director of Poetry Ireland the national resource organisation for poetry – a very prestigious role. We wish her well in her new role and acknowledge the huge development that she achieved within Mermaid Arts Centre during that time. Interviews for the position will be held in July with the announcement of the new appointment expected in August. Mermaid will re-open in line with the Government roadmap for cultural centres and the NPHEG Guidelines in relation to Covid-19. As with all venues, finances, audience and staff capacity will be stretched, however Mermaid has a comprehensive and tight plan to re-open and is cautiously optimistic about the future.

## **Arts Council Covid-19 Response**

The Arts Council received an additional 20 of the 25 million euro Covid-19 arts sector supports unveiled by Government earlier this week. Five million euro will go to the reopening of the National Cultural Institutions. The 20 million euro will be distributed by the Arts Council and it will make a decision on how this will be achieved following a report from its new Covid-19 advisory group at the end of June. For more information on this see:

<https://www.rte.ie/news/politics/2020/0616/1147757-arts-funding/>

Early in the Covid-19 pandemic when it was clear the immediate finances of artists were decimated with many unable to claim the Covid-19 income relief, the Arts Council announced a €1 million fund to enable artists to make new and original art during the COVID-19 crisis.

The scheme, called the Arts Council COVID-19 Crisis Response Award, is designed to support the creation of new artistic work and its dissemination online for the public benefit. The award is open to anyone who can demonstrate a track record of professional practice as an artist, with no restriction on the type or form of art that can be created, whether new writing; new music; readings; music performances; performance of short monologues or dramas; visual art such as painting, photography or sculpture; sound art; presentation of art films or documentaries; or online collaborations.

Dublin received the highest number of awards with 42% the next highest counties where artists were successful were WICKLOW and Wexford.

For more on the Arts Council's Covid-19 expert advisory group see:

<http://www.artscouncil.ie/News/Arts-Council-establishes-Advisory-Group-to-help-address-Covid-19-crisis-in-arts-sector/>

## County Wicklow Library Services

### Reopening of Libraries

All library staff returned to their work place on 2<sup>nd</sup> June, having been working from home and on Wicklow County Council's Community Call programme since the end of March.

Libraries were listed in Phase 2 of the government's Road Map, with a phased reopening planned from 8<sup>th</sup> June onwards. Emphasis is on ensuring safe compliance with regulations for both staff and public. This is being carried out with direct consultation with LGMA + Wicklow County Council management and library staff. The national model looked at initially providing a "click and collect" model, where the public pre-order stock and collect it from the library door, without having access to the library building. Since early May, however, quotations have been sought for installation of protective screens for staff and public, in preparation for re-opening. PPE, including gloves, washable masks, visors, hand sanitiser and spray was also sourced. 240+ screens were installed across the library network by early June, ensuring staff knew they would be returning to a safe environment. Senior library staff met ahead of this to plan the resumption of services and get the message out to all their staff.

### Early resumption of libraries opening for public browsing

LGMA Libraries Development has kept in constant communication, regarding developments nationally and internationally, on resumption of services. Communication has been both ways, with local authorities keeping LGMA abreast of their preparedness for re-opening. In this regard, with the acceleration of the national Roadmap, the LGMA requested if some local authorities could resume opening to the public on a "browse" basis ahead of the originally projected date of 29<sup>th</sup> June. Wicklow County Council has been in a position to oblige, and now plans to reopen its five full time libraries on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> June. It is proposed to open the remaining eight libraries on 29<sup>th</sup> June. The other local authorities that will be opening ahead of 29<sup>th</sup> June are Cork County, Donegal, Kildare, Louth and Wexford.

The Wicklow County Council Health & Safety Officer has visited each of the five libraries and spoken with staff at each location. Members of staff have had the opportunity to ask any questions and address concerns they may have.

### Service to people cocooning

On resumption of library services, it was decided that a delivery service should be provided directly to people cocooning. A rota has been designed, which ensures a fortnightly delivery service is available to vulnerable people and those cocooning, throughout the county

### Capital projects update

On site construction works of Wicklow library and archives is scheduled for completion at the end of 2020, with a likely opening in early spring. The only loss in time has been the 2 month closure for construction workers from March to May. OCM architects and their team have worked with contractors and sub-contractors to ensure a minimal loss of time.

Rathdrum library details are progressing to conclusion. A final list of requirements has been forwarded to the developers. Signing of a lease, with a view to purchase, is imminent



Architects, De Blacam and Meagher have been awarded the tender for development of Baltinglass courthouse Fire safety and Disability Access have been dealt with. Drawings are currently being produced for the development of the project.

## County Wicklow Archives Office

### Wicklow burial records now online:

We are delighted to announce that Wicklow County Archives & Genealogy service have added over 34,000 burial records to their database at [www.rootsireland.ie/wicklow](http://www.rootsireland.ie/wicklow). Most are extracted from County Wicklow's Church of Ireland parish registers, but three are from the county's Roman Catholic parishes. (Roman Catholic parishes usually only kept baptism and marriage registers).

### Henry Grattan Podcast

Supported by the Wicklow County Archives Service in association with the Bray Cualann Historical Society. To mark the bicentenary of Grattan's passing and to reassess his often misunderstood legacy, join History Ireland editor Tommy Graham for an online Hedge School, with David Dickson, Patrick Geoghegan, Sylvie Kleinman and Tim Murtagh. This podcast is now available on [Spotify](#), [Apple](#) and [History Ireland Hedgeschools](#) or wherever you get your podcasts!

Born in Dublin's Fishamble Street in 1746, but resident for most of his life in Tinnehinch, near Enniskerry, County Wicklow, Henry Grattan was the most noted, and certainly the most eloquent, of the eighteenth-century opposition 'patriots' in the Irish Parliament. He reached the height of his popularity with the concession of 'legislative independence' in 1782. Nineteenth-century constitutional nationalists would later refer to this, until its dissolution by the Act of Union in 1800, as 'Grattan's Parliament', despite his almost permanent position on its opposition benches. In truth its 'independence' was a sham, and its inability to reform itself or grant Catholic Emancipation led to the polarisation of the 1790s and the bloody rebellion of 1798. By now a marginal figure, he spoke eloquently, but in vain, against the subsequent Act of Union. Less well known is his return to Parliament, this time in Westminster, in 1805, where he served until his death on 4 June 1820.

## Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP)

### SICAP:

SICAP Programmes in Co. Wicklow are continuing to provide supports to disadvantaged individuals, voluntary groups and communities during Covid 19 via telephone, email and video conferencing

Partnerships are preparing for upcoming SICAP mid-year review.

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

Ongoing participation in Local Authority Community Support Response to Covid 19 Forum

Working with PPN Disability sub-group to lobby for disability rights and promote inclusion

Presentations to Irish Environmental Network online seminars highlighting Wicklow Vision for Community Wellbeing



Policies/Strategies/Submission work: Laragh Glendalough domestic energy survey; Killincarrig Village Improvement Scheme; Part 8 Pontoon South Quay Wicklow; Part 8 Storage Facilities for Fishers at South Quay Arklow; Part 8 3 Units Ballintekin; Part 8 Blackhill Road Glenealy; Part 8 Abbeylands Arklow.

## Town and Village Renewal Scheme 2020

The Town and Village Renewal Scheme is now open. This funding scheme supports economic and social development projects in towns and villages with a population of less than 10,000.

This year there are two elements to the Scheme.

### 2020 Accelerated Measure

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

Interested groups should complete the Expression of Interest form which can be accessed from the link below, or by emailing [townandvillage@wicklowcoco.ie](mailto:townandvillage@wicklowcoco.ie). There are two rounds to this fund. The second round will be advertised in July. Therefore completed Expression of Interest forms should be returned no later than **4pm Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2020**

This scheme will support the economic and social development and recovery of towns and villages, and any emerging challenges associated with COVID-19. Examples are:

- Projects involving public realm improvements
- Enhancement of town and village amenities especially where this aids the economic/social recovery of the area
- Projects that stimulate local enterprise or social enterprise

Please read the 2020 Scheme Outline for more details of eligibility.

Interested groups should complete the Expression of Interest form which can be accessed from the link below, or by emailing [townandvillage@wicklowcoco.ie](mailto:townandvillage@wicklowcoco.ie). Completed Expression of Interest forms should be returned no later than **4pm on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2020.**

All Expression of Interest applications will be assessed and if successful will be developed to a more detailed application to the Department of Rural and Community Development.

For any further queries please email [townandvillage@wicklowcoco.ie](mailto:townandvillage@wicklowcoco.ie).

All related documents are available on [www.wicklow.ie](http://www.wicklow.ie)

## Playgrounds

Two new playgrounds were officially opened in Laragh and Roundwood on the 15<sup>th</sup> June 2020 by the Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Councillor Irene Winters.



## Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership

### Couch to 3K

Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership is facilitating another online couch to 3k programme starting on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> June. This is a six week programme with weekly updates and a free t-shirt for all who complete the course and applicants can sign up via Eventbrite or by emailing [wicklowlsp@wicklowcoco.ie](mailto:wicklowlsp@wicklowcoco.ie)

### Inclusive Couch To 2K

The Inclusive Couch to 2K started on 1<sup>st</sup> June with eight U18's with either an Intellectual Disability or on the Autism Spectrum, signing up. This programme consisted of 3 activities each week along with a parent or carer also participating. All who complete the programme will also receive a free T-shirt.

## 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 Florentine site was closed for 3 months due to Covid 19 crisis and only reopened on 18th May 2020. The management team of the main contractor and design teams have been operating from the site.

It is envisaged that the site will be operating with 80 staff on site from next week. Oakmount are currently working on a revised work programme and all the sub contractors and supply chain operators are feeding into this programme. When this is finalised Oakmount will be in contact with the council.

The letting of the units are progressing with a number of lettings at heads of agreement. Further information will issue on the Council monthly updates.

#### 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

Four new Town Team projects have been recommended for approval for funding by LEADER. These projects include:-

**River Tourism – Harbour to Headwaters project.** The project plan is to map the Avoca River from Glenmalure to Arklow and to install educational panels of aqua life of the river and the wildlife on the river bank with a view to linking to a website at a later stage and an information platform to river conservation.

##### SEA-nanagins Seafood Festival

**Visit Arklow** – Web Design and Development



**Flower Irrigation System – Arklow 19 Arches Bridge** - Installation of a sustainable irrigation system for winter and summer pollinator friendly planters on 19 Arches Bridge. The bridge is the leading landmark of Arklow town with a unique and long history. It is the longest multi arched bridge in Ireland and the only bridge in town linking the Main St with traffic from Dublin over the wide Avoca river estuary.

### **Blessington Town Team**

Due to the Covid – 19 pandemic there has been no meeting of Blessington Town Team recently. The Blessington Town Team Covid - 19 Community Response group continue to support the most vulnerable in our community in these difficult times. The Town Team welcomes the phased reopening of services and facilities in the area including Blessington Greenway, Playground and car parks. Blessington Town Team is looking forward to engaging with all the relevant stakeholders to progressing the variety of projects which were identified in the Blessington Health Check.

### **Bray Town Team**

A small committee has formed called the Town Reopening Committee. The Committee is keen to work closely with the local business community, to find new and innovative ways to keep everyone safe in this 'new normal'. As part of this consultation process, we are asking businesses if they have any ideas to submit them. Standardised Temporary Ground Graphics will be issued in order to help businesses implement queuing measures to encourage social distancing. The committee consists of the Cathaoirleach of Bray Municipal District, staff from Bray Municipal District, Bray Chamber of Commerce, the HSE and An Garda Síochána.

### **Greystones 2020**

Greystones 2020 are continuing to work on strategies to promote encourage and facilitate business locally, including updating of website Gresytone.ie to include links to all the business supports available. In addition to website will provide up to date information on local businesses in the district as they re-open. Greystones 2020 hope to present the recently completed Public Realm Plan to the members of Greystones Municipal District as soon as current restrictions allow.

### **Wicklow Town Team**

Following the request for students to submit audio visual entries for consideration and inclusion in the Wicklow Town Heritage Trail one very appropriate and excellent poem was submitted along with a PowerPoint of visuals depicting the sites mentioned in the poem. The winner will receive a well-deserved €50 Town voucher. Content material for the information boards is being gathered and is well under way with the help of local historian John Finlay.

### **Town RE-Opening Committees**

Following the success of the Bray Re-opening Committee, Wicklow County Council proposes 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.





It is proposed that membership of the Re-Opening Committees will consist of MD Cathaoirleach (Chair), MD Manager, MD Administrator, MD Engineer, Chair of the Town Team, Representative of the Chamber of Commerce and An Garda Síochána.

## 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:

Develop New Accommodation

Develop Key Towns as Visitor Hubs

Develop a Masterplan for Glendalough

Grow Thematic Experiences

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.

**Destination Town Funding** - An application to Fáilte Ireland on behalf of Wicklow Town has been made in respect of Destination Town Funding. If successful this could result in funding of over €500k in respect of development of tourism amenities in the town.

### Glendalough Masterplan and Wicklow Visitor Orientation Study

Fáilte Ireland, with its strategic partners OPW, NPWS and with Wicklow County Council advertised for consultants to develop tourism Masterplan for Glendalough and a Visitor Orientation Plan for County Wicklow. Twelve expressions of interest have been received and these will be assessed by the evaluation committee on 25th June 2020.

### 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 clips aimed at internet viewers, airlines and traditional media.



The new trails include the Bray Head to Sugarloaf Trail and the Tinahely Looped Walk. The original launch due to be held in April was cancelled. A new virtual launch date will be announced shortly.

**Wicklow Passport:** Featuring stamps designed representing attractions, towns and villages when a visitor obtains 15 stamps they will qualify for a certificate as a Wicklow Ambassador

**Eco Trail:** The Eco Trail is the largest Trail Running Event in Ireland and takes place on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2020

**Covid-19:** some visitor attractions such as gardens were able to reopen on 18<sup>th</sup> May; other businesses may not be in a position to open this year. Failte Ireland, Wicklow County Council, LEO Wicklow are providing a range of supports and advice for tourism providers.

## Rural and Urban Regeneration Development Fund Grant Applications

There are currently three 2018 URDF projects underway; Arklow Historic Town Core, Wicklow Library and Fitzwilliam Square and the Bray Public Transport Bridge.

URDF applications were also submitted in May 2020 for the Regeneration of the Arklow Quays, Bray Harbour Regeneration and the regeneration of Wicklow's Waterfront.

With regard to the RRDF applications, Wicklow County Council is awaiting the results of applications submitted in February 2020 in respect of Blessington, Newtownmountkennedy and Rathdrum.

A new round of RRDF funding has been announced with a closing date 1st December 2020.

## 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

### Offshore Wind

SSE has announced the location of its Operations and Maintenance Facility for Arklow Bank Wind Park - it will be located at Arklow South Dock this will result in;

80+ direct jobs created over a 25 to 30 year lifecycle

100 Indirect jobs opportunities in supply chain, logistics, hospitality.



Multi Million Investment in Local Community

Potential for County Wicklow to develop as a Centre of Excellence for the Offshore Renewable Energy Sector

Education, training, innovation and skills opportunities

Opportunities to partner with local colleges and ETBs

Synergy with Data Centres

## **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.

## **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.

A decision on these FLAG funding applications is expected in the coming weeks.



## Food and Beverage Strategy

The working groups established under Wicklow Food Strategy continue to meet on Zoom and have made excellent progress under a number of themes:

Tell the Wicklow Food Story

Develop a Signature Dish

Bringing Local Food to Local People Food Poverty

Business Supports including a feasibility study for a Food Hub

Wicklow Naturally and some of the producers will be featured on Nationwide in the Autumn. It is proposed to reschedule the launch of the Wicklow Naturally Brand for September

## 1. Local Enterprise Office (LEO)

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

METRICS: Grants	HISTORICAL	TARGETS	YEAR TO DATE
	2019	2020	2020
<b>Grants Approved (number/ value)</b> - Measure 1 - Technical Assistance for Micro Exporters	- 33/€888,954.62 - 8/€11,427	- Meet Demand - Meet Demand	- 6/€137,197.00 - 1: €1,350
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	38
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	926
Women in Business Network Number of Meetings	6	6	3

<b>METRICS: Business Advice &amp; Mentoring</b>	<b>HISTORICAL</b>	<b>TARGETS</b>	<b>YEAR TO DATE</b>
	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2020</b>
Number of new clients added to database *criteria have been amended for this metric	546	470*	634
Number of One to One Business Advice meetings including Businesses assigned a mentor	458	440	285

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

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

<b>Trading Online Voucher</b>	<b>HISTORICAL</b>	<b>TARGETS</b>	
<b>No of Trading Online Vouchers approved</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>Year to Date 2020</b>
Trading Online Vouchers	39	170	113

<b>Lean For Micro Project</b>	<b>HISTORICAL</b>	<b>TARGETS</b>	<b>YEAR TO DATE</b>
	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2020</b>
No. of Companies who have undertaken a Lean for Micro Assessment by a Lean Expert	11	11	8

## Training

During June training continued to be delivered online via Zoom with excellent participation from businesses on the following courses:

Course	Date of Course	Registration Numbers
Digital Marketing Clinics	8 <sup>th</sup> June	7/7
Effective & Practical Human Resource Management	9 <sup>th</sup> June	15/15
Trading Online Seminar	16 <sup>th</sup> June	125/300

Preparations are underway for the Autumn Winter 2020 Training Programme.

## **June 2020 Activities**

- ✦ The regional food academy programme to help food businesses get onto retail shelves is open for applications in May. Wicklow food businesses are being encouraged to apply.
- ✦ On Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June the 'Network of Entrepreneurial Women' meeting was held virtually, via Zoom. These meetings will be held via video call on a monthly basis till the end of 2020.
- ✦ A review of the Student Enterprise Programme for school year 2020/2021 is currently underway by the Local Enterprise Office Network nationally. At National level and locally in LEO Wicklow, everybody is committed to making the programme available to secondary schools for the coming school year (albeit in a much revised format which is cognisant of restrictions and precautions around the spread of Covid 19).
- ✦ The Business Continuity Voucher Scheme closed on 15th May. LEO Wicklow received close to 300 applications from local businesses from all sectors seeking support through the scheme. All applicants have been contacted and supports arranged, the financial administration and reporting element of new support will be processed over next couple of months.
- ✦ 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.
- ✦ A high level of calls, emails and enquiries continue to come in, in relation to the changes around the Trading Online Voucher scheme, appointments for business advice clinics, mentoring requests, Microfinance Ireland enquiries and other supports due to the impact of the COVID lockdown on business performance.
- ✦ Extremely high volume of applications for the Trading Online Voucher are being accepted and assessed depending on budgets being available.

## 2. 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 12<sup>th</sup> June 2020. This Report forms part of the statutory procedure for the review of the existing plan and the preparation of the new plan. Its purpose is to report on the outcome of the statutory consultation process and to set out the Chief Executive's opinion on the issues raised in the submissions received. The Members, following consideration of the report, may issue directions to the Chief Executive regarding the preparation of the Draft Development Plan.

### Heritage

#### **Heritage & Biodiversity Plan Actions:**

- Phase 2 County Swift Project underway. Community engagement with Tidy Towns groups and individuals being asked to report sightings within 5km . New nesting boxes and callers installed in county buildings and at Dunlavin library.
- Our Wicklow Heritage launched: A new community heritage 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.
- National Biodiversity Week 18<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> May online biodiversity promotion programme.
- Gardening for Biodiversity Publication: Local Authority Heritage Officer publication made freely available as an online resource and via hard copy
- Together Apart Wicklow Stories 2020 Project launched: A campaign which will use the heritage website to curate a people's community heritage archive of life in Wicklow in 2020.





**Protected Structures Grants:** Funding allocations announced on 10<sup>th</sup> June by 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.

## Planning Applications

A total of 102 applications were received during May, these include applications as follows:

Type of Development	Number Received
Individual Houses	27
Housing Developments	06
Agricultural Structures	01
Commercial	06
Other Developments*	62
<b>Total</b>	<b>102</b>

\*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 24 applications in May, being:

Type of Development	Number of Decisions
Housing Developments	0
Individual Houses	2
Other Developments	22
Other Developments Requiring EIA	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>

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

	31/05/2019	31/05/2020
Total Number of decisions issued	422	291
Total Number of decisions to grant	354	251
% Grant Rate	84%	86%

## No. of Applications withdrawn

May 16

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



## Planning Enforcement

### Enforcement

New Files	11
Advisory Letters	13
Warning Letters	07
Enforcement Notices	00
Legal files	00
Closed	09

### Courts

06 Cases listed for hearing in Circuit Court in June  
01 Case listed for mention in High Court

### Vacant Sites

25 no. sites now stand on the Register.  
4 sites on appeal

### Derelict Sites

04 No. of sites on Register  
02 Section 23 Demands issued

## 3. Environmental Services

### Waste Management

No. of Complaints Opened	<b>288</b>
No. of Cases Closed, Resolved or Completed	<b>157</b>
No of Litter Fines Issued	<b>50</b>
No. of Waste Management Files Opened	<b>0</b>
No. of Warning Letters Issued	<b>10</b>
No. of Abandoned Car Notices Issued	<b>1</b>
No. of Burning Applications Granted	<b>12</b>
No. of Temporary Signs Granted	<b>0</b>
No. of Notices issued under Section 14 of the Waste Management Act	<b>9</b>
No. of files prepared for Court included in Court lists	<b>56</b>
Income – Litter	<b>€2,580.00</b>
Income – Waste Management	<b>€1,290.00</b>

### Climate Action

Climate Action Charter signed in December 2019. First SPC of Climate Action and Biodiversity SPC held 4<sup>th</sup> December 2019. Second SPC, which was an update for members was held on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2020. Directors have submitted champions to represent their directorate on the Climate Action Team to Climate Action Officer. Implementation plan with actions from the Climate Adaptation Strategy and the Climate Charter 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. All training, which is being rolled out through the CARO has been put on hold. Kilkenny Co Co, as a partner of the CARO, tendered for training for CEs and Cllrs pre-COVID and they received 15 submissions. This competition has been cancelled and will be retendered when restrictions are lifted.

#### Priority Action items:

- Installation of EV Charging points in Greystones. Considering the pros and cons of a pilot scheme to install a number of chargers in South Beach Car Park, near the council offices.
- Tree Policy to be drawn up for the County. Initial consultation underway and internal meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> June to progress this.
- 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.
- LIFE2020 funding application for Sustainable Flood Protection in the Upper Avoca Catchment. Awaiting response from County Wicklow Partnership on whether they are willing, and have the resources, to be involved in the management of this application.
- 

A Climate and Biodiversity Action SPC was held on 6<sup>th</sup> May to update the members on on-going items and a further meeting will take place via Microsoft Teams on 16<sup>th</sup> July



## Environmental Awareness

National Spring Clean was rescheduled due to Covid 19 with a June relaunch for the campaign. Collections for cleanup events when requested were still undertaken but groups were asked not to organise further public events.

Work was undertaken on this years Relove fashion competition piloted successfully in 2019 in partnership with Meath, Westmeath and Dublin City Councils and the Rediscovery Centre in Ballymun. Six more local authorities will join the competition a Wicklow County Council initiative, The focus 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. It is hoped to launch the competition earlier this year as schools can encourage students to work from home on the development of their projects.

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 project to fund the collection, repair and shipping to Africa of old bikes is to be funded under the Anti –Dumping Initiative. The Rotary Club, Bray is a partner in the project.

A new tree grant is being developed as a climate action to facilitate more planting of tree by local groups in County Wicklow.

Social Media was used to raise awareness on a range of Covid 19 related waste issues including littering of PPE, a spike in illegal dumping and problems with dumping at bottle bank sites.

## Recycling Centres

Wicklow's 5 Recycling Centres are now working at almost normal capacity; some reductions remain in opening hours to facilitate additional cleaning of the centres. Social distancing markings have been painted on the ground and in buildings. Glass collections at bottle banks increased by 53% in April and 58% in May. Collections have been increased by the contractor Glassco but there remain some issues with bottle banks being full

### Anti-Dumping Initiative 2020

WCC was granted approval for 5 projects under the Anti-Dumping Initiative 2020. Total value of the approvals is €54,495. The projects approved are:

1. **Tackling the increased dumping at bottle banks during the Covid-19 lockdown restrictions. Value €6,045**

This project will use CCTV to identify people/cars dumping at particular bottle banks that have seen a significant amount of dumping during the current lockdown.

2. **Mattress amnesty – Bray. Value €24,500**

There have been a significant number of mattresses dumped throughout the county this year. This project will provide an outlet for the public in the north of the county.

3. **Mattress Amnesty – Arklow. Value €17,100**

This project will provide an outlet for the public in the south of the county.



#### 4. Preventing dumping at Charity Shops. Value €4,200

Dumping outside charity shops is an issue on the rise in each of the towns. This project will purchase CCTV cameras that WCC can deploy outside any charity shop where dumping is an issue.

#### 5. Bikes for Africa. Value €6,650

WCC is working with the Rotary Club of Bray to collect, repair and ship bikes to Africa in County Wicklow. Bikes that have been dumped or abandoned will be gathered by WCC and given to the Rotary Club. The Rotary Club will repair these and ship them to Gambia.

The regional waste office in Dublin is planning environmental waste awareness campaigns for the region.

### Lifeguards

The Lifeguard season commenced on the 1st June. Lifeguards are present on Bray South Promenade, Greystones, Wicklow Harbour, Brittas Bay North, Brittas Bay South and Arklow. Lifeguards are present on these beaches from 11am to 7pm daily.

### Dog Licences

The total amount of dogs licenced in County Wicklow during the month of May 2020 was 274, with 96 being renewed through Licence.ie. Reminders continue to be issued by An Post. For the month of May 191 dog licence reminders were issued. These relate to renewals which are due in June 2020.

### Caravan Park Season

Caravan Park owners were written to in March 2020 and informed not to open due the Covid-19. Under the Government's accelerated roadmap to reopening Ireland, caravan parks are now due to reopen at the end of the month on June 29th. Applications can now be processed to ensure smooth opening of these parks.

### 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 13<sup>th</sup> 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.

### Ports and Harbours

8 cargo vessels berthed in Wicklow Port during May 2020 all were single transactions of 7 imports and 1 export.

Two Marine Notice were issued.

The following grants were awarded to Wicklow County Council by the DAFM on the 19<sup>th</sup> May 2020.



Location	Project Description	Harbour Development Scheme (100% Project Cost) €	Marine Leisure & Marine Tourism (100% Project Cost) €	Maximum DAFM Portion of Project Cost 2020 (75%) €
North & South Piers Arklow	Installation of new LED sectored light with a range of 9 miles on the North Pier. Installation of Solar Marine Grade 15Watt lights to act as indicating/leading lights along the North Pier. Installation on the South Pier of an MSM sectored LED lighting and associated cabling.	60,000		45,000
Packet Pier	Supply and installation of a new heavy duty 50 tonne mooring bollard capable of accepting multiple mooring lines, variations in tidal levels and steep mooring angles at the Packet Pier. In addition, three 7.5/10 tonne mooring bollards would be installed at locations on the Packet Pier.	70,000		52,500
North & South Quay, Wicklow	Upgrading of existing and installation of new ladders with handrails along the North and South Quay	45,000		33,750
East Pier, Wicklow	Minor refurbishment/ improvement works at East Pier		82,500	61,875
Wicklow & Arklow Harbours	Erection of signage around the harbours and piers in order to improve awareness and safety for all harbour users.		30,000	22,500

Part 8 Public Consultation commenced on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2020 for the following projects

- **Installation of a floating pontoon and associated services at South Quay, Wicklow Town**
- **The construction of 14 storage units, for active registered fishers (under license agreement), with internal dimensions of approximately 35 sq metres and associated site works including provision for connection to services and two concrete slab work areas approximately of 8 metres by 4 metres at the Inner Harbour / Dock, Off South Quay, Arklow Harbour, Co. Wicklow**



## Pollution Control

### Pollution Response & Investigation

- 8 Water pollution complaints were received and investigated.
- 11 Air Pollution complaints were received and investigated.
- 3 Noise Pollution complaints were received and investigated.

### Private Water Supplies

This monitoring programme was suspended due to Covid -19. It will soon be resumed as business re-open in line with phased national plan.

### Deco Paints and Solvent Regulations

- 2 Vehicle refinisher (car spraying) installation was assessed and issued with certificate of compliance.
- 7 Vehicle refinisher (car spraying) installations were issued reminder letter to apply for certificate of compliance renewal before expiry of current certificates to ensure continuity of compliant operations.

### Septic Tank Inspections - National Inspection Plan 2020

This inspection programme was suspended due to Covid 19.

### Licensed Effluent Discharges to Waters/Sewer

This monitoring programme was suspended due to Covid -19. It will soon be resumed as business re-open in line with phased national plan.

### Water Framework Directive National Monitoring Programme

This monitoring programme has resumed May.

- 2 Lakes were monitored involving 9 samples were taken for analysis for the purposes of WFD/River Management Plan.
- 34 Rivers were monitored involving 82 samples for analysis for the purposes of the WFD/River Management Plan.

Catchment assessments continued in upper Vartry Catchment - Vartry-10 where risks and impacts on water quality were identified.

### Bathing Water Monitoring Programme

The bathing water season commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> June and preseason samples were taken on 25<sup>th</sup> May.

There are 6 identified bathing waters, 4 of which fly Blue Flags, and 5 other bathing areas along the Wicklow Coastline which will be monitored 10 times through the season until 15<sup>th</sup> September.

Blue Flag: Bray South Promenade, Greystones South, Brittas Bay North, Brittas Bay South.



Identified: All 4 above, Silver Strand and Clogga.

Non-Identified: South of Bray Harbour, Kilcoole, The Murrrough, Wicklow Harbour, Arklow South.

The bathing water quality was excellent at all but one beaches on 25<sup>th</sup> May.

The pre-season bathing water quality at Bray South Promenade was poor and in accordance with HSE advice a bathing notice prohibition was put in place on 27<sup>th</sup> May when the result became available. The bathing water was re-sampled on 27<sup>th</sup> May and the bathing prohibition was lifted on 29<sup>th</sup> May when the bathing water quality returned to excellent. Historic foul water connections to surface water drainage are the likely cause. The Council will consult with Irish Water with a view to finding an appropriate solution.

## Planning & Development

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

## Well Grants

- New Applications 3
- Provisional Approvals 7
- Grants provided 21
- Number of New Wells 1
- Number of New Pumps 17
- New Equipment (Filters etc.) 26

## 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 is presently being done expected completion: in the next few weeks . Possible disposal options for the dredge material are currently being investigated.

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

Initial meeting with the foreshore section of the Department of Housing Planning and Local Government has taken place.



## 5. Transportation, Water & Emergency Services

### Public Lighting

	27 <sup>th</sup> April 2020	5 <sup>th</sup> May 2020	11 <sup>th</sup> May 2020	18 <sup>th</sup> May 2020	25 <sup>th</sup> May 2020	2 <sup>nd</sup> June 2020
Access Issues (Attended)	16	17	16	16	16	14
Cable Fault (Attend)	1	0	0	0	0	1
ESB Required (Attended)	37	37	37	37	32	31
Knock Down (Attended)	5	6	6	6	6	5
Materials required	2	2	2	2	2	2
No Supply	19	19	19	19	19	18
On Hold	0	0	0	0	0	0
Submitted	241	241	266	230	257	233
Traffic Management Required	15	15	16	16	20	20
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>362</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>324</b>
Percentage of lights not working	2.28%	2.28%	2.45%	2.21%	2.38%	2.19%

	ARKLOW MD	BALTINGLASS MD	BRAY MD	GREYSTONE S MD	WICKLOW MD	Grand Total
Access Issues (Attended)		1	9		4	14
Cable Fault (Attend)		1				1
ESB Required (Attended)	2		3		31	37
Knock Down (Attended)	1		2	1	1	5
Materials required			1		1	2
No Supply		3	4	7	4	18
Submitted	38	69	46	19	61	233
Traffic Management Required	3		11	3	3	20
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>324</b>
<b>Percentage Not Working</b>	<b>1.51%</b>	<b>3.10%</b>	<b>2.37%</b>	<b>1.10%</b>	<b>2.85%</b>	<b>2.19%</b>



## Transportation Statistics (General)

	2019	Running Total 2020	April 2020	May 2020
<b>Solicitors Queries</b>	775	237	44	41
<b>Road Closure Applications</b>	40	12	3	0
<b>Road Opening Licences</b>	1418	347	35	
Abnormal Load Applications	35	7	2 14 quarterly 2 yearly	1

## TII funded projects

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

Site Surveys and Field Walk over works recommenced on Monday 18th of May, these include:

Topographical Survey work along each of the Corridor Options

Biodiversity surveys for each of the specialist areas

Road Safety Audit Stage F along the Corridor Options

NPWS assessing the Glen of the Downs and extents of the Natura 2000 site.

The Arup Design Team are progressing the Preferred Options Assessment Report. Tenders awarded/to be awarded include: RoadPlan as Road Safety Auditors for all stages of the project, and the pending appointment of Property and Land Valuation Consultancy Services for Phases 2 through to 4.

### **N11 Kilmacanoge Parallel Service Road**

Construction work recommenced on Monday, 18 May following the Covid-19 shutdown.

Phase 1 of the works involves the widening of the N11 into the central median on the southbound carriageway to provide an additional running lane. Phase 1 excavation work is currently underway in the median.

Progress has been slowed while working in the vicinity of an existing high pressure gas transmission main.

Phase 1 works are expected to be complete at the end of August with works then switching the verge side of the southbound carriageway.

## Operational Fire Statistics

	TOTAL	Bray	Greystones	Wicklow	Rathdrum	Arklow	Blessington	Dunlavin	Baltinglass	Carnew	Tinahely
Callsign		1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.8	1.9	2.1
<b>Two Stations Mobilised</b>											
Fire Domestic Persons Reported	0										
Fire Domestic	7	1	1	1		1	1			1	1
Fire Caravan	0										
Road Traffic Collision (RTC)	6			2	1	1	1	1			
Fire Vehicle (HGV /motorway)	0										
Hazardous Materials Incident	0										
Fire Industrial / Commercial	4	1	1	1	1						
Fire Barn / Shed	5			1		1	1			1	1
<b>Single Station Mobilised</b>											
Fire Alarm or CO <sub>2</sub> Activation	11	3	2	4	1		1				
Fire Outdoor: Gorse / bushes	49	18	13	5	6	1	2	2			2
Fire Chimney	6	1	1	1		2			1		
Fire Small / bin / skip / bonfire	25	8	5	4	2	3		1	2		
Fire Vehicle	2			2							
Flooding	0										
Trees Down, Make Scene Safe	1			1							
Ambulance Assist	11	2	1	4	1	1	1			1	
Garda Assist	0										
Electrical Incident	0										
Gas Leak	1	1									
River Rescue	0										
Fire Oil / Petrol	1			1							
Entrapment / Rescue / Lift	1				1						
Oil Spill / Road Hazard	0										
Animal Rescue	0										
<b>Mobilised into other County</b>	<b>3</b>						1	1	1		
<b>Times Stations mobilised</b>	<b>133</b>										

There were **122 incidents** attended during the month of May 2020. Individual Fire Stations were mobilised on a total of **133 occasions**. On no occasion during the month did an Incident Commander request an additional crew above what has been predetermined for the incident type to deal with the incident.

Operational activity for the month May was **up 32% on the preceding month** (April 2020 – 101 mobilisations) due mainly to an increase in gorse fire (+16), bin / rubbish fires (+8) and ambulance assists (+9). **Activity for the month was the same as the equivalent month, May 2019.**

## Sample Incidents (May 2020)

- 08/05/2020 Arklow and Wicklow Town Fire Crews were mobilised to a 2-car RTC on the Wexford Road, Arklow.
- 11/05/2020 Rathdrum Fire Crew responded to Garryduff to an entrapment incident.
- 11/05/2020 Blessington Fire Crew responded to a house regarding medical attention
- 13/05/2020 Arklow Fire Crew supported by Wicklow Town attended a domestic fire at Father Redmond Park. Fire in bedroom
- 21/05/2020 Blessington and Dunlavin Fire Crews were mobilised to a single car RTC, overturned with 4 occupants.

## Incidents mobilised outside county Wicklow (May 2019):

### Kildare (2-incidents)

- 15/05/20 Dunlavin Fire Crew were mobilised to a chimney fire at Calverstown, Kilcullen, County Kildare.
- 24/05/20 Blessington Fire Crew were mobilised to an outdoor fire at Glending Forest, Newtownpark, County Kildare.

### Carlow (1-incident)

- 20/05/20 Baltinglass Fire Crew and Water Tanker were mobilised to support Hacketstown Fire Station at a truck fire (silage harvester) Rathduffbeg near Knockananna, County Carlow.

## Incidents where Wicklow Fire Crews were supported by neighbouring counties (May 2019):

### Kildare (1-incident)

- 16/05/20 Naas Fire Crew supported Blessington at a domestic fire at Sroughan on the east of the lakes.

## General

- The month was dominated by gorse fires and other outdoor fires (74 incidents) which accounted for 56% of all operational activity.
- Firefighter Jason Keogh (Carnew) received a lot of media coverage for his development, production and free distribution to front line workers of plastic clips to attach the loops of facemasks behind the head, making wearing them more comfortable.
- Station Officer Derek Ryan (Dunlavin) completed over 600 deliveries to vulnerable members of his local community since the introduction of restrictions.
- Wicklow Fire Service Twitter Account added 50 new followers during the month bringing the overall figure to 1,452.

- Planning for the re-introduction of statutory / mandatory refresher training took place during the month.
- Weekly training at station level resumed during the month based on a risk assessed need and new procedures to safeguard health and safety.
- All station were assessed for compliance with Covid-19 requirements, all fire-fighters were given an induction on health and safety requirements and procedures including all relevant LA-SOGs and will continue on each drill night to be briefed.
- The Fire Service was involved 5 weekly tele-conferences, totalling more than 20 in the month:
  1. Wicklow County Council Crisis Management Team meetings
  2. Eastern Region MEM Steering Group meetings
  3. Eastern Region MEM Working Group meetings
  4. Eastern Region Local Authority MEM meetings
  5. Regional Body Holding Sub Group meetings
  6. TWES Directorate meetings (Wicklow County Council)

## Fire Prevention Statistics

Application type	Received	Deemed Invalid	Requested additional information	Inspections	Recommended Grant
Fire Safety Certificates	4	1	6		7
Regularisation Certificates			1	1	1
FSC as part of 7 Day Notice					
Disability Access Certificates	2	1	1		6

Licensing	Received	Inspected	Request further info	No Objection letter	Not raising an objection
District	6				
Circuit					

## Parking Income

Parking Income by Municipal District	EURO
Bray Municipal District	261,763
Greystones Municipal District	95,512
Wicklow Municipal District	83,171
Arklow Municipal District	55,033
Parking Permits	25,881
Parking Fines	101,953
<b>WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL</b>	<b>623,313</b>

## Building Control

### Commencement Notices for May 2020:

28 Commencement Notices Submitted:

- 4 Commencement Notices with Compliance Documents
- 0 Seven day Notice
- 23 Opt Out Declarations
- 1 Commencement Notices without Compliance Documents

### Submission Statistics

- 82% of Commencement Notices - Opt Out
- Revised Information required & requested:
  - 17 No. Commencement Notices (CN) of which
    - 13 are Opt Out (76%)
    - 4 are Compliance Documentation (24%)
- 20 **Valid** Commencement Notices
  - 8 new build residential Units (all of which are One off Houses)

- Certificates of Completion processed in May 2020

- 8 No. of CCC submitted
- 6 No. Valid
- 0 No. Invalid

6 No. Validated CCCs related to;

- 1 No CCCs submitted in May 2020
- 5 No CCCs submitted in April 2020

100% => 6 No. @ Multi-Development site => 50 new residential units

\*\*BCA not notified on completion of opt out developments

\*\* Construction sites reopened on 18th May 2020.

## Organisational Development and Financial Matters

### 1. Recruitment

The following assessments were held in May

- Temporary driver-velocity patcher
- Temporary driver-bitumen sprayer

All other scheduled interviews were postponed as a result of COVID-19.

### Employee Numbers

	Q2 2019	Q3 2019	Q4 2019	Q1 2020
Managerial/ Administrative	272	280	285	292
Professional/ Technical	98	103	102	105
Outdoor	318	318	318	321
Temporary/ Seasonal	88	62	62	62
Non DOHPLG	8	8	8	8
Total	784	771	775	788

(Excludes figures for Fire-fighters).

	Q2 2018	Q3 2018	Q4 2018	Q1 2019
Managerial/ Administrative	263	280	278	280
Professional/ Technical	105	105	104	104
Outdoor	306	313	312	316
Temporary/ Seasonal	79	54	38	65
Non DOHPLG	8	8	8	8
Total	761	752	740	773

### 2. Access to Information

#### No. of F.O.I. Requests

May 2020	7
January to May 2020	40

May 2019	14
January to May 2019	66

#### No. of Ombudsman Requests

May 2020	2
January to May 2020	14

May 2019	1
January to May 2019	8

### 3. Press Releases

May 2020 – 17 Press Releases

## 4. Register of Electors

The Franchise staff continue to work on database maintenance required to maintain the Register of Electors. Letters are continuing to be issued to electors to establish as to whether or not they are still resident at the address which they are registered and the replies are being updated onto the Register or forwarded to other local authorities for registration at new addresses as required. Contact is also being made with Nursing Homes in the County to update their Disabled Special Voters List. It is hoped that when Covid-19 Restrictions are lifted that we can continue with our planned engagement with the Older Persons Network with a view to contacting electors who are still living at home but unable to visit a Polling Station for health or mobility reasons that they can be granted a Disabled Postal Vote.

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.

## 5. Refurbishment works

Moston construction returned to site on the 18<sup>th</sup> of May, 2020. They have appointed a Covid-19 compliance officer who is on site at all times to ensure necessary restrictions and PPE are in place.

The Council Chamber has been completely stripped back to the concrete walls, ceiling and floor removed. The wall for the new extension to the Chamber has been erected; the new entrance has been reconfigured – leading directly to the new ‘break out area’ (previously the Wurzburg room). New AHU (air conditioning units) have been installed on the ceiling. Wurzburg room has been stripped out and entrance wall demolished. Public toilets have been reconfigured and enlarged for accessibility. The Cathaoirleach meeting room has been reconfigured to allow for the new interview room.

### **Customer Service Innovation Hub**

- Design of the hub has been slightly modified to comply with restrictions of Covid-19 – glass panels are now included in the design.
- IT hardware has been ordered for the Hub – using laptops and docking stations for all the staff to future proof for remote working or flexible working conditions if necessary.

All internal walls at the old Reception area and the Planning counter have been demolished and cleared.

**Phase 1** of the refurbishment – the New Customer Service Innovation hub is scheduled to be completed mid-end of August.

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.

Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> of July was #YourCouncilDay, an initiative to promote the range of services and great work done by staff throughout Wicklow county council.

The LGMA enlisted their PR Partners MediaConsult to work with local authorities to help promote their initiatives on Wednesday. Here in Wicklow we submitted 8 great initiatives:

- **Community Call Response team** – the team in Arklow supporting all our citizens during Covid 19.
- **Home Schooling Assistance** - Wicklow County Library Service has provided two valuable online supports for children to provide extra back-up with their literacy, *TTRS or Touch, Type, Read and Spell* and *Lexia*
- **Dunlavin Delivery Service** - Derek Ryan of Dunlavin Fire Brigade with the permission of Wicklow Co Co Fire Service set up and runs a delivery service in his fire response area, covering the villages, Dunlavin, Donard, Grangecon, and surrounding areas. Delivering vital medication and grocery supplies to-date, over 540 deliveries have been made.
- **Together Apart** - A new initiative from Wicklow County Council set up to create a “People’s Archive” to capture and share photos, stories and experiences of Wicklow life at the current time.
- **Wicklow Keeping Active** - Wicklow Sports Partnerships created innovated ways to promote health and well-being at home, such as videos and booklets across Social media with exercises such as Chair Yoga.
- **Face Mask Loops** - Fire-fighter Jason Keogh, Carnew Fire Station noticed face masks which loop around the ears can become uncomfortable after time. He developed a clip to connect the loops behind the head. He uses his 3D printer to make them and supplies them free to health care workers and fire-fighters around the country.
- **Bray Positivity Stones** - “Positivity Stones” which aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing are being used to drive home this important message on Bray beach.
- **Keep Wicklow Talking** - Wicklow Community Response Forum has launched this campaign to Keep Wicklow Talking to reduce the feeling of loneliness and isolation during the pandemic.

MediaConsult were very impressed with the variety and innovation of our Wicklow submissions, and have included some of them in the National advertising Campaign.

## 6. I.C.T. Report

### 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
- 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 32 tickets a day.

### Domain Migration

- The domain migration project is progressing, and mailbox migration has started. The team are also in the process of upgrading all legacy operating systems to Windows 10 to ensure continued support from Microsoft. Alongside this process we are also upgrading antivirus, Microsoft Office and all other ancillary software packages. This process can take up to 6 hours per pc and due to current circumstances, this is an ideal time to complete the process with minimal impact on users although some disruption can be anticipated. The processes are running concurrently to minimise that disruption.

### GIS & Data Collection Systems

- 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 594,918.
- Social media accounts – followers to date



- Facebook ([Wicklow County Council](#)) – 7,145 followers.
- Twitter ([@WicklowCoCo](#)) – 6,557 followers.
- Instagram ([@WicklowCoCo](#)) – 1,251 followers.

The Social media platforms have been one of the main channels for communications during the COVID-19 pandemic. Collectively a total of 434 posts were published to the 3 main channels in May. Alongside this, the Library Service, Bray Municipal District, Civil Defence and Local Sports Partnership have been very active.

- During May, the Online Consultation Hub on [Wicklow.ie](#) had the following items up for consultation –
  - Part 8, 3 Units in Ballintekin (re-advertised);
  - Part 8, Back Street, Hudson's Square, (Abbeylands), Arklow, Co. Wicklow;
  - Part 8 - Blackhill Road, Glenealy;
  - Part 8 - Pontoon South Quay, Wicklow;
  - Part 8 - Storage Facilities for Fishers at South Quay, Arklow;
  - Killincarrig Village Improvement Scheme
  - Commercial Rates Deferral 2020
  - ReStart Grants.

## FINANCIAL

### 1. Revenue Account

REVENUE ACCOUNT							
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE SUMMARY BY SERVICE DIVISION AT 31ST MAY 2020							
	EXPENDITURE			INCOME			NET
	Actual Expenditure	Adopted Full Year Budget	% Budget Spent to date	Actual income	Adopted Full Year Budget	% Budget Spent to date	
	€	€	%	€	€	%	€
A - Housing and Building	8,564,321	24,541,664	35	(10,947,458)	(30,692,854)	36	(2,383,137)
B - Road Transport & Safety	6,613,998	23,611,358	28	(1,943,295)	(16,493,380)	12	4,670,703
C - Water Services	2,077,126	5,560,661	37	(2,458,236)	(6,545,641)	38	(381,110)
D - Development Management	4,248,425	11,242,546	38	(2,941,734)	(6,144,652)	48	1,306,691
E - Environmental Services	3,898,982	11,837,313	33	(451,336)	(2,002,200)	23	3,447,646
F - Recreation and Amenity	2,745,572	7,663,027	36	(795,084)	(847,647)	94	1,950,488
G - Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	484,781	1,479,516	33	(181,236)	(819,228)	22	303,545
H - Miscellaneous Services	4,680,450	11,879,184	39	(1,490,991)	(6,156,153)	24	3,189,459
J - Central Management Charges	7,099,404	18,407,602	39	(435,321)	(1,000,000)	44	6,664,083
LG - Local Government Fund				(5,716,800)	(13,720,230)	42	(5,716,800)
PL - Pension Levy				-			-
RA - Commercial Rates				(13,312,831)	(31,950,795)	42	(13,312,831)
	<b>40,413,059</b>	<b>116,222,871</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>40,674,322</b>	<b>116,372,780</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>(261,263)</b>

### 2. Cashflow/Overdraft

Wicklow County Council manages its cashflow requirements on a daily basis and did not avail of its overdraft facility during the period 1<sup>st</sup> May 2019 to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2019.

### 3. Capital Account

CAPITAL ACCOUNT					
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE SUMMARY BY SERVICE DIVISION AT 31ST MAY 2020					
	Opening Balance at 01/01/2020	Actual Expenditure	Actual Income	Transfers To/From Reserves	Closing Balance at 31/05/2020
	€	€	€	€	€
Housing and Building	19,000,508	23,866,602	(22,894,425)	(320,965)	19,651,720
Road Transport & Safety	(42,851,352)	4,163,884	(6,070,706)	(113,108)	(44,871,282)
Water Services	(10,670,498)	80,468	(323,794)	(5,000)	(10,918,824)
Development Management	(9,612,396)	657,777	(26,135)	(58,642)	(9,039,396)
Environmental Services	968,611	1,354,918	(1,030,263)	(163,125)	1,130,141
Recreation and Amenity	(914,062)	1,861,819	(959,017)	(79,750)	(91,010)
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	(885,558)	(61,621)	0	(76,250)	(1,023,429)
Miscellaneous Services	(15,413,049)	1,845,435	(1,538,149)	44,840	(15,060,923)
	<b>(60,377,796)</b>	<b>33,769,282</b>	<b>(32,842,489)</b>	<b>(772,000)</b>	<b>(60,223,003)</b>



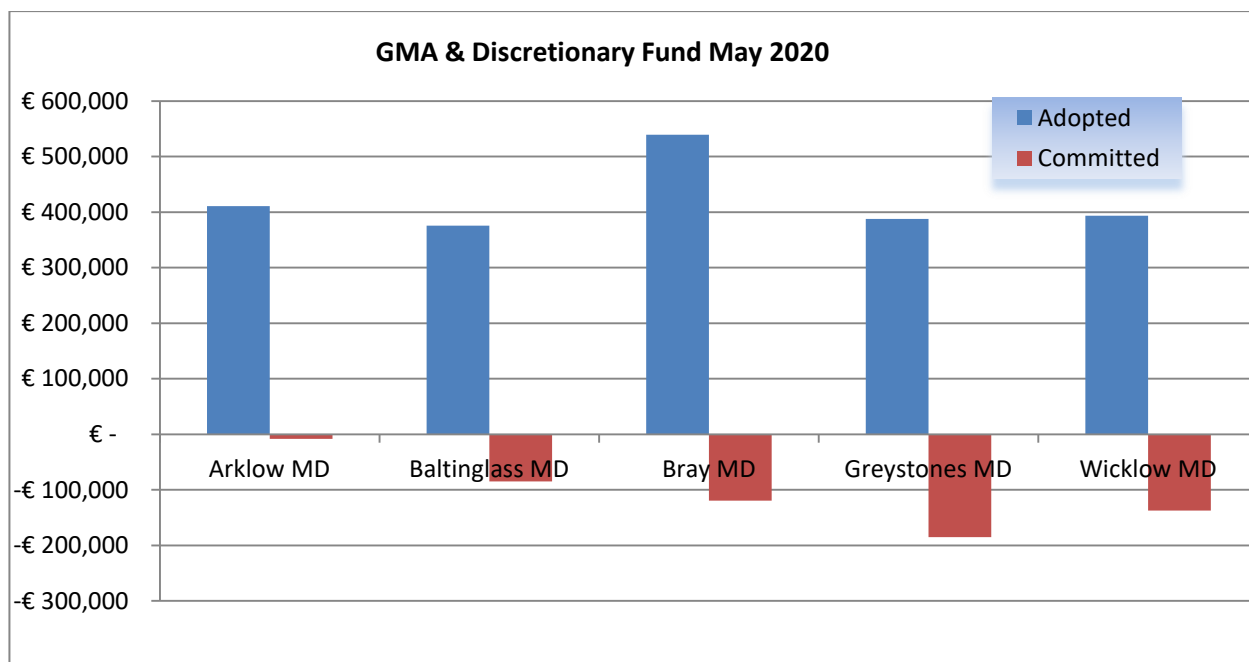
## 4. Commercial Rates, Rents and Loan Collections

SUMMARY OF MAJOR COLLECTIONS AT 31TH MAY 2020									
Income Collection Area	Opening Balance 01/01/2020	Accrued	Vacancy Property Adjustments	Write Offs	Total for Collection	Collected	Closing Arrears 30/04/2020	Specific Doubtful Arrears	% Collection
Rates *	5,217,406	32,009,800			37,227,206	(6,445,718)	30,781,488		18%
Rents & Annuities	1,853,579	7,032,809		(2,383)	8,888,771	(6,286,127)	2,602,644		71%
Housing Loans *	402,724	472,202			874,926	(763,817)	111,109		87%

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

## 5. General Municipal Allocation and Discretionary Fund 2019

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	44,696	418,617
Baltinglass MD	159,389	375,500	74,856	460,033
Bray MD	180,991	539,500	61,582	658,909
Greystones MD	165,252	387,500	(19,881)	572,633
Wicklow MD	205,713	393,500	68,460	530,753
<b>Total</b>	<b>764,158</b>	<b>2,106,500</b>	<b>229,713</b>	<b>2,640,945</b>

## 6. Capital Investment Programme 2020-2022

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

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

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