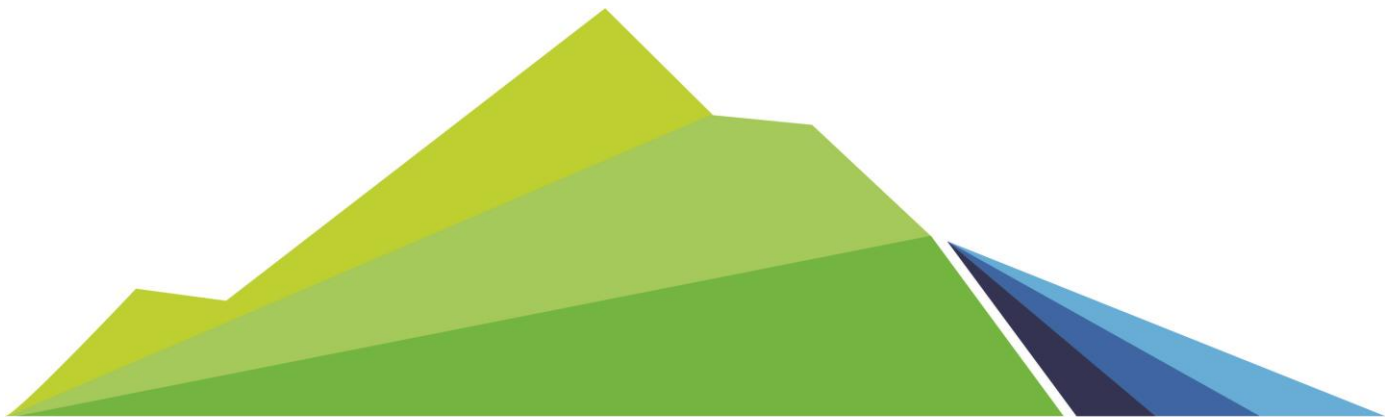




Wicklow County Council Chief Executive's Monthly Report



W I C K L O W

ENDLESS OPPORTUNITIES



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This month:

Restart Grant Plus Launched To Help Businesses Reopen & Get People Back to Work -

Applications to the Restart Grant Plus Scheme which gives financial aid to businesses to help them reopen, have opened in County Wicklow. The Restart Grant Plus is a key part of the government's July €7.4bn Stimulus package designed to stimulate a jobs-led recovery and build economic confidence while continuing to manage the impact of Covid-19.

Key changes to the Restart Grant Plus Scheme include:

- **€300m additional funding** in addition to €250m previously committed
- **Grant amount has increased substantially.** Minimum grant is now €4,000 and maximum is €25,000. Previous grant amounts were €2,000 and €10,000 respectively
- **Medium sized companies now eligible** Companies with up to 250 employees can now apply (previously the grant was for companies with less than 50 employees)
- **Increased eligibility** Non-rateable B&Bs, sports clubs with commercial activities and trading charity shops are now eligible

€3.3 million Allocated by the NTA for Cycling & Walking Projects under the July Jobs Stimulus

Plan - Wicklow has been allocated funding totalling some €3.342m covering 25 projects supporting pedestrian and cyclist movement and to enhance accessibility in towns and villages by the National Transport Authority.

The funding is to support local authorities' response to Covid-19 challenges and assist in equipping local communities and businesses with improved walking and cycling infrastructure. The funding will also allow for changes to traffic management arrangements to facilitate the reallocation of overall road space to improve facilities and safety for pedestrians and cyclists.

Rural Rejuvenation and Development Fund – Newtownmountkennedy is to get an investment of nearly €500,000 The project is being led by Wicklow County Council and will design upgrades to the public realm, street landscaping, traffic management, public spaces and community facilities.

Wicklow Gaol Wins Trip Advisor Award - Wicklow's Historic Gaol has won a prestigious 2020 Trip Advisor Travellers' Choice - Best of the Best award.

Wicklow Gaol is now rated in the top 10 per cent of attractions worldwide. Prior to this Wicklow's Historic Gaol had received five consecutive Certificate Excellence awards from Trip Advisor.

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY

1. Social Housing Support

	July 2020	July 2019
No. on list for Social Housing Support – (includes RAS and HAP)	4478	4300
No. availing of Rental Assistance Scheme (RAS)	316	390
No. availing of Housing Assistance Payment (HAP)	1960	1420
No. in Long Term Leasing accommodation	11	8
No. in Short Term Leasing accommodation	16	10

2. Allocation of Social Housing

	July 2020	July 2019
Wicklow County Council	100	124
Approved Housing Bodies	14	14

3. Social Housing Stock

	July 2020	July 2019
Tenancies occupied	4516	4367
Total weekly rental accrual	€301,006.41	€238,292
Arrears	€2,179,285.51	€1,114,376

4. Casual Vacancies/Relets

46

	July 2020 Covid 19	July 2019
Municipal District		
Arklow	10 2	16
Baltinglass	13 2	20
Bray	6 2	8
Greystones	2 0	6
Wicklow	15 3	16

COVID 19 UPDATE

Relets for Self Isolation Units

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



5. Housing Supply – Programme of Delivery

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

Social Housing Supply Programme

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

SCHEMES COMPLETED	UNITS	CURRENT STATUS	PART 8 APPROVAL
O'Byrne Road, Bray	1	Completed and allocated	Yes
Old Library Arklow	7	Completed and allocated	Yes
Avondale Heights Rathdrum	20	Completed and allocated	Yes
Delany Park, Arklow (Phase 1)	17	Completed and allocated 2019	Yes
16A Oak Drive, Blessington	1	Completed and allocated 2019	Yes
Druids Brook, Kilcoole	2	Completed and allocated 2019	Yes
Whitehall, Baltinglass	34	Completed and allocated 2020	Yes
TOTAL	82		
SCHEMES ON SITE	UNITS	CURRENT STATUS (subject to change due to Covid 19 restrictions)	PART 8 APPROVAL
Whitehall, Baltinglass RAPID BUILD	27	Complete	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	Complete	Yes
Jameson Heights, Kilmacanogue	20	Completion anticipated October 2020	Yes
Convent Lands	51	21 units complete, balance August 20.	Yes
Rathnew RAPID BUILD	47	Completion anticipated October 2020	Yes
Carnew RAPID BUILD	30	Completion anticipated February 2021	Yes
Delany Park Arklow (Phase 2 + 3)	47	Completion anticipated July 2021	Yes
TOTAL	273		



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

6. Part V

2020 – Part V units due for Delivery 2020

Location	No. of Units	Due for Delivery	Method
Wicklow	1	Delivered 25/02/20	WCC
Rathdrum	3	Quarter 2/3	WCC
Wicklow Town	3	Delivered 30/06/20	WCC
Rathnew	3	Quarter 2/3	WCC
Greystones	2	Quarter 2/3	WCC
Dunlavin	4	Quarter 2/3	CALF
Ashford	8	Delivered 30/7/20	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	2	Delivered 8/5/20	WCC
Wicklow	1	Quarter 3	WCC
Wicklow	2	Q 3	WCC
Rathdrum	4	Delivered 17/6/20	CALF

- Negotiations are ongoing with a number of Developers and AHB's in relation to acquiring further Turnkey units
- Approval has recently been received from the Department in respect of 2 Turnkey units in Baltinglass.
- Application with the Department for a further 5 units in Tinahely.

7. PPP Social Housing Project

[Bundle 1)

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 31st July 2020

344 received

98 Approvals

147 Declined

35 previously approved but now expired

28 further information/with HA

36 either incomplete/ineligible.

2016 Incremental Tenant Purchase Scheme

July 2020

Received 20

Declined 8

Sold 4

10. Addressing Homelessness

Addressing Homelessness	31/07/2020	31/07/2019
Covid presentations	12	
No of Presentations	53	45
No. of Repeat Presentations	14	2
No. of Households (Families)	22	27
No. of Adults (Individuals)	62	22
No. of Children	40	52
NTQ/Asked to Leave/Landlord selling	5	16
Family Circumstances	42	17
Leaving Prison Hospital Care	1	4
Sofa Surfing	5	4
Rough Sleeping	4	2
Own Door Temporary Accommodation	30/06/2020	30/06/2019
Families	12	12
Adults	19	17



Children	26	26
Singles	6	3

Bed & Breakfast Accommodation - No. of Homeless Emergency Accommodation Placements & Duration @ 30 th June, 2020								
	No. of Households	No. of Adults	No. of Children	< 3 mths	3-6 mths	6-9 mths	9-12 mths	>12mths
Household breakdown	5	8	15	2	1	1	0	1
Children Only				7	3	2	0	3

Bed & Breakfast Accommodation - No. of Homeless Emergency Accommodation Placements & Duration @ 30 th June, 2019								
	No. of Households	No. of Adults	No. of Children	< 3 mths	3-6 mths	6-9 mths	9-12 mths	>12mths
Household breakdown	7	9	14	2	1	2	1	1
Children Only				5	2	3	1	3

COVID 19 UPDATE

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

Self Isolation Units

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

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

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

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



Cold Weather Initiative

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

Referral protocol is through Wicklow County Council, Dublin Simon, Five Loaves and the 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 isolation facilities will be available.

Homeless HAP

The Homeless HAP Placefinder provides assistance in:

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

To date, 256 households (200 families & 56 singles) have been assisted under the Homeless HAP Scheme in Wicklow County Council from the inception on 1st October 2018 to 31st July, 2020.

123 homeless cases and 133 prevention cases to date. 85 properties were sourced by WCC.

COVID 19 UPDATE

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



Sonas Facility, Wicklow - Transition to Family Homeless Hub.

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

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

COVID 19 UPDATE

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

Other Temporary Supported Accommodation

Wicklow County Council owned properties in Wicklow, Bray and Arklow, leased to AHBs, provide 22 units of low to medium supported accommodation targeted to the particular support needs of the clients. There has been a significant number of move ons from these properties, signalling the success of this model.

Housing First

With Housing First, the priority is to support a person who has experienced homelessness into permanent housing as quickly as possible, without any preconditions around sobriety or mental health treatment. Then continue working intensively with them on these issues once they are housed. Housing First recognises that a stable home provides the basis for recovery in other areas.

Peter McVerry Trust has been appointed as the Housing First Programme Implementer for the Mid East Region and Wicklow County Council is committed to working with them to achieve the targets identified in the programme. Properties will be provided by both Wicklow County Council and Peter McVerry Trust for the programme.

Wicklow County Council has successfully accommodated 3 clients under Housing First. Other clients proposed for Housing First have been assessed by the team and are availing of key support work pending finalisation of accommodation.



11. Wicklow Community Call

The Community Call continues to respond to requests for help from the public during the COVID-19 crisis, though the number of calls has decreased over the last few weeks. The helpline is now housed in the CC&SD section in Wicklow County Council.

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

12. Food Poverty Research

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

13. Digital Poverty Scheme

€44,900 has awarded, by Wicklow County Council, to applicants under the Digital Poverty Grant Scheme.

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

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

TOWN AND VILLAGE RENEWAL SCHEME 2020

The following applications to the Town & Village Scheme Accelerated measure Round 1 were successfully funded.

Area	Project	Amount
Countywide	The provision of equipment for 10 community centres to enable them to resume services	€16,000
Dunlavin	A shop local campaign for Dunlavin village	€4,445
Roundwood	Pedestrianisation and safety measures in the village	€36,000

- A further four rounds of applications will be made in August and September.

14. County Wicklow Library Services

Capital Projects Update

Wicklow Library and Archives is on target to be completed in 2020. Allowing for furniture fit out and stock, early Spring 2021 is a realistic opening date. The project, when completed, will be circa €6m, with €4m of this being grant aided from DRCD and URDF. The possibility of sourcing further URDF grants is being explored.

Rathdrum library lease is currently being finalised. During the initial 2 year lease period, there will be an option for Wicklow County Council to purchase for a set price of €400,000. It is anticipated that construction will be completed by early summer 2021.

Baltinglass courthouse and library is currently out to tender for initial investigative works on the building. The vision is for the adult library to be relocated in a tiered design in the current courtroom. The project is one of three approved for Baltinglass under RRDF grants. Grant aid of €600,000 was approved towards this element. The possibility of sourcing further RRDF grants is being explored for the project.

Resumption of Library Services

All of Wicklow County Council's 13 libraries had reopened to the public before the end of June. Throughout late May and early June, there was a gradual reintroduction of services. Allowing public access to library PCs was reintroduced in July. Like in other areas of society, the public have been slow to return to libraries. This is reflected, nationally.

The national issue figure for July is 469,097, down considerably from 1,155,941 in July 2019. This is just a little over 40% of last year's figure. Wicklow's stats are at 46% of those of 2019.

Wicklow accounts for 4.1% of the national total the July 2020 figure. This time last year we accounted for 3.5% of the national total. (Wicklow's population of 142,425 is 3% of national population of 4,761,865)

Despite the low total, statistics show Wicklow has nearly doubled our issues between June and July. With resumption of Saturday opening at the end of August, it is anticipated that a significant increase will occur in the coming months.



Branch	Jun-19	Jul-19	Jun-20	Jul-20 (to date)
Arklow	3697	5744	1233	2,808
Aughrim	253	340	105	104
Ballywaltrim	1206	1368	403	895
Baltinglass	1170	1606	419	507
Blessington	4022	5824	1185	2,412
Bray	5898	7988	2231	3,723
Carnew	511	493	153	267
Dunlavin	402	620	181	381
Enniskerry	629	647	217	342
Greystones	6661	9574	1864	3993
HQ	61	7	29	30
Mobile*	1039	786	31	673
Rathdrum	575	539	187	378
Tinahely	553	522	209	261
Wicklow	3201	4483	1025	1845
Total	29878	40541	9472	18,619

*The mobile library is currently off the road, but a door to door service is being provided from library HQ. This is a combination of delivering books to villages on the Mobile Library route + door to door drop of books to people self-isolating, as identified by branch library staff. It is anticipated that the Mobile Library will resume in September.

Wicklow Decade of Centenaries – Historians’ Project to launch in Heritage Week 15th – 23rd August 2020:

The Wicklow County Archives Service gratefully honours the work of County Wicklow's historians who serve their communities in documenting our county's history and heritage. This Wicklow Decade of Centenaries project features articles from 12 Wicklow historians working across the county, describing this tumultuous period in our history and capturing local information and human stories for generations to come. The Wicklow Decade of Centenaries project will also include podcasts of these historians from History Ireland Hedge schools, an exhibition and a county publication in the coming months. Enjoy these articles on Our Wicklow Heritage - <https://wicklowheritage.org/>. This project is supported by the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht under the Decade of Centenaries 2012-2023 initiative and Wicklow County Council.



15. Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP)

- SICAP programme implementers continue to provide targeted supports across the county to disadvantaged communities
- SICAP mid-year review process currently underway to be completed by September

16. County Wicklow Public Partnership Network (PPN):

- Consultations/Submissions: WCC Local Property Tax; Arklow Back in Business; Delgany Traffic Management; Comhairle na nÓg Executive; All Ireland Pollinator Plan; Consultation for Remote Working; 1991 Childcare Act amendments; WCC Tree Management Strategy
- Work with WCC Environmental Officer to develop online facility to promote local Sustainable Development Goal achievements
- Support WCC Food Strategy, Food Poverty Sub Group
- Development of disability awareness training

17. Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership

Men on the Move

Wicklow Sports and Recreation Partnership are hosting an eight week men on the move programme at Arklow Running Track which commenced on 11th August 2020. This programme will take place two mornings a week, Tuesday and Thursday at 10am. For more information please contact wicklowlsp@wicklowcoco.ie

Dance Camp

A dance camp organised by Wicklow Sports and Recreation Partnership took place on the 5th and 7th August 2020 for the children of Rathmore Direct Provision Centre. 25 children took part in this camp on both days.

European Week of Sport

Wicklow Sports and Recreation Partnership received €4,000 in funding from Sport Ireland for European Week of Sport which will be held and have events running on 23rd – 30th September 2020.

Healthy Ireland County Coordinator

A County Co-ordinator has been appointed in respect of the Healthy Ireland Programme and will take up duty on 31st August 2020.

COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAMME 2020 – TRANCHE 2 COMMUNITY CENTRES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Joe O'Brien TD, Minister of State for Community Development and Charities at the Department of Rural and Community Development, announced details of €5m funding for community centres and facilities under the July stimulus package on 10th August 2020. The funding will be provided under the **Community Enhancement Programme**, and is in addition to €2m provided under that programme earlier this year. This €5m funding will provide capital grants to help improve community centres, and other community buildings and facilities. This €5m funding will be administered through existing structures that are in place under the Department's Community Enhancement Programme. Funding will be allocated to each Local Authority area, and the Local Community Development Committee will administer the programme in each area. Wicklow has been allocated €150,438. The closing date for submission of applications is 5.00 p.m. on Thursday 15th October 2020.

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

18. Blessington eGreenway

As part of the investment and rejuvenation initiatives into Blessington and its environs, Wicklow County Council (WCC) will construct a 42.4 km greenway around the lakes of Blessington. The main route is a loop of 28.7 km around the Blessington lakes and the remaining 13.7 km will include links to nearby villages Vallemount, Ballyknockan & Lacken and spurs to Russborough House and Tulfarris Hotel & Golf Resort. This project will consist of walking and cycling trails, mostly through forest and woodlands adjacent to the shoreline of Poulaphouca Reservoir – more commonly referred to as the Blessington Lakes.

The greenway will link into the existing 6.5km trail to the south of Blessington Town which links the town with the Palladian Mansion at Russborough House. The lands on which the Greenway will be constructed are in the ownership of the ESB. A licence agreement between WCC and the ESB will be put in place to construct and operate the Greenway on these lands.

It is envisaged that the overall cost of this project will be in the region of €10 million, with funding of the sum of €5 million from the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport and WCC contributing the remaining balance. The project will see significant job creation in the area as it is estimated that for every €1m of tourism revenue supports 27 jobs in the locality. In addition, it will cater for the growing tourist market for outdoor activities for both local residents and tourists alike. The Greenway development is an exciting and distinctive project for County Wicklow and the region and will become Ireland's first "E" destination.



Status

In October 2019, WCC appointed consultants, Aecom Ireland Ltd to progress the scheme to detail design stage. Over the last few months, site walkovers have been carried out by WCC and ESB personnel for most of the proposed 42.4 km route. An indicative route map of the greenway is attached.

It was originally proposed that the surface type of the greenway would consist of crushed stone. The proposal is to upgrade the surface type to tarmac, making for a more durable and smoother surface for cycling. With this change and other additional works required, it will be necessary to carry out further surveys and reports including an appropriate assessment screening report, an environmental report and an Ecological Report for a new planning submission. During the preparation of these reports and planning submission WCC will proceed with a 5km pilot section between Vallemount and Ballyknockan villages. This 5km pilot phase will check how construction is managed and its impacts on the locality.

Next Steps to progress the project

- The completion of the site walkovers with WCC and ESB personnel, which are scheduled for the end of August 2020.
- A tree felling licence application to the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
- Construction of the Pilot Section (Vallemount to Ballyknockan length 5km). It is hoped that construction works could start in November / December 2020.
- The consultants Aecom will continue with the detail design of the following elements of the scheme
 - The remainder of the route (23km)
 - New Bridges
 - 5 existing car parks to be extended (including new macadam surface, lighting, toilets, electric charging points)
 - Phase 1 (Pilot) Vallemount to Ballyknockan - macadam surface.
 - Existing trail; Blessington to Burgage, to be up upgraded and widened with macadam surface.
 - Existing but unused Tunnel connection to Russborough to be upgraded
 - Links to nearby villages Vallemount, Ballyknockan & Lacken, Tulfarris Hotel and Russborough House
- Further surveys and reports including an appropriate assessment screening report, an environmental report and an Ecological Report for a new planning submission. These reports will include further assessment of the archaeology, biodiversity, ecology, water, landscape, visual, hydrology, and cultural heritage of this project.
- Public consultation with local landowners and community.



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

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

Lift installation is almost 80% complete and the installation of the travelators and escalators is scheduled to commence in the next 10 days. Mechanical & electrical works are progressing throughout blocks 2 & 3 and both levels of the car park. All M&E works are ready to be installed in the stairwells. Handrails for the stair cores have been agreed and fabrication has now commenced.

ESB and Gas Network Ireland have completed install and connection to the site.

The revised practical completion date is November 2020.

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

Arklow Town Team has been granted funding by LEADER for the following projects:-

1. **SEAnanagins Seafood Festival** which is proposed to take place in conjunction with the World Shore Angling Championships in 2021. Events will include cookery demonstrations with local seafood, seaside themed workshops, beach activities and live entertainment. The festival will promote and attract visitors to the town.



2. Visit Arklow –To design and develop a new website specifically to promote Arklow Town and its environs.

Arklow Town Team, Arklow Chamber of Commerce and Wicklow County Council are fully committed to supporting the local business community in getting back up and running.

Blessington Town Team

The next meeting is scheduled to take place on 7th September 2020. The COVID 19 committee response group volunteers continue to provide support and assistance to potentially vulnerable neighbours.

The Blessington reopening committee continues to support the Wonderful West Wicklow campaign, to support local businesses and service providers.

Bray Town Team

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

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

Topics the Reopening Committee considered included:

- Looking at workable solutions so that businesses can reopen safely from queuing in public spaces, delivery times to waste collection times
- Temporary changes in the town centre to make it safer and more spacious for pedestrians to encourage social distancing including looking at the feasibility of widening pavements, pedestrianised zones, putting up new signage, setting down two-metre marker dots to provide a 'visual guide', removal of some on-street parking, the introduction of one-way systems, relocating bus stops and the removal of street furniture
- Business and public consultation
- A comprehensive communication strategy
- 'Shop Local First' marketing campaign
- Robust cleaning and maintenance regime

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- Promote positive mental health and wellbeing

Greystones 2020

The Think Local Buy Local campaign launched by Greystones 2020 has been a huge success. Over 350 businesses have now been listed on the Greystones.ie website. The WhatsApp group has seen a wide range of support and information been shared together.

The statistics for interactions since the **#ThinkLocalBuyLocal** campaign launched on June 24th to July 23rd are as follows:

- Twitter - 50k
- Facebook - 46.3k
- Instagram - 22.7k
- Video content - 597
- Website - Visits: 3.6k / Page views: 8k
- **Overall combined total = 131.2k**

Since the **#ThinkLocalBuyLocal** campaign was launched back on June 24th, the first 30 days have achieved 39.96% of the total reach to date.

We will continue with our increased social engagement and will include:

1. Sharing important HSE and Government - **#StaySafe** guidelines.
2. Highlight what Greystones 2020 are doing to help stabilise the local economy.
3. Highlight all relevant supports available in the Business Hub on the website
4. Help promote and support all types of enterprise by showcasing local businesses

Culture Night:

Greystones will host a drive in movie in the Park & Ride as part of culture night in conjunction with the Greystones MD and Wicklow Arts Office on Friday 18th September.

Christmas Lights:

Due to the burden already placed on business' over the past months, Greystones 2020 are exploring alternative ways to ensure that the funding is available for Christmas Lights in the town and are already working on a plan to ensure the town will be lit up as normal for the switching on ceremony on Saturday 21st November.

Wicklow Town Team

Wicklow Town Team held their meeting on the 15th July 2020 and a number of issues were discussed which included the Greenway, Parking in Wicklow Town, Heritage Trail, Illumination of Historical Sites and Leader funding applications. The Team are working on advancing these projects to completion. The next meeting of the Town Team is scheduled for 26th August 2020.



Town Re-opening Committees

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

Membership of the Re-Opening Committees consists of the MD Cathaoirleach (Chair), MD Manager, MD Administrator, MD Engineer, Chair of the Town Team, Representative of the Chamber of Commerce and An Garda Síochána.

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

Tourism

Tourism Strategy and Marketing Plan 2018-2022

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

The Key Priorities are:

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

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

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



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

Destination Town Funding - An application to Failte 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.

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

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

Glendalough Masterplan and Wicklow Visitor Orientation Study

Failte Ireland, with its strategic partners OPW, NPWS with Wicklow County Council advertised for consultants to develop tourism Masterplan for Glendalough and the Wicklow Mountains National Park and a Visitor Orientation Plan for County Wicklow. Consarc consultants have been appointed.

Thematic Experiences

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

Rural and Urban Regeneration Development Fund 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 was awarded funding to develop the public realm in Newtownmountkennedy. 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

Maritime Strategic Review for County Wicklow

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

Key Recommendations:

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

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

Maritime Business Development Group

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

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



FLAG Funding

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

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

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

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

Food and Beverage Strategy

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

Progress to date:

- The Wicklow Naturally Brand has been established
- WicklowNaturally.ie website has been developed
- 70 Producers have been signed up
- A draft strategy for the development of a Food Hub has been prepared this is due to be followed up by a survey of food producers
- The formal launch of Wicklow Naturally will be held on 6th October, (subject to Covid 19 restrictions)
- A range of promotional events, tastings etc has been planned for October under the banner October Feast, however this is under review in the light of current restrictions.



2. Local Enterprise Office (LEO)

Applications to the Restart Grant Plus Scheme which gives financial aid to businesses to help them reopen, have opened in County Wicklow. The Restart Grant Plus is a key part of the government's July €7.4bn Stimulus package designed to stimulate a jobs-led recovery and build economic confidence while continuing to manage the impact of Covid-19.

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

METRICS: Grants	HISTORICAL	TARGETS	YEAR TO DATE
	2019	2020	2020
Grants Approved (number/ value)			
- Measure 1	- 33/€888,954.62	- Meet Demand	- 16/€301,961
- Technical Assistance for Micro Exporters	- 8/€11,427	- Meet Demand	- 4/€4,812
NB: Ability to meet demand is influenced by the amount of funding allocated to the LEO			

METRICS: Training/ Capacity Building	HISTORICAL	TARGETS	YEAR TO DATE
	2019	2020	2020
Total No. of All Programmes (Training/Networking/Events/Seminars)	53	55	50
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	5

METRICS: Business Advice & Mentoring	HISTORICAL	TARGETS	YEAR TO DATE
	2019	2020	2020
Number of new clients added to database *criteria have been amended for this metric	546	470*	868
Number of One to One Business Advice meetings including Businesses assigned a mentor	458	440	463

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

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

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

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



August 2020 Activities

- ✦ 4 Wicklow Food companies have been offered places on the regional food academy programme with the workshops beginning in September 2020
- ✦ The Student Enterprise Programme for school year 2020/2021 is currently scheduled to take place in schools whilst cognisant of the restrictions and precautions outlined in national Covid 19 guidelines. The role of coordinator for the programme was advertised on etenders in recent week and an appointment will be made following a review of submissions. Options with regard to a virtual programme are also being developed.
- ✦ A High Level of demand for business advice clinics is being met by business advisors providing additional clinics which are run remotely.
- ✦ Work has commenced on the autumn winter training programme which will offer a combination of core training courses, Brexit supports and Covid Crisis related courses.
- ✦ Extremely high volume of applications for the Trading Online Voucher are being accepted and assessed depending on budgets being available.



3. Planning and Development

Forward Planning

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

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

<https://emra.ie/final-rses/>

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

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

The membership of the MASP Implementation group comprises representatives from each of the seven metropolitan local authorities, the Department of Housing Planning and Local Government (DHPLG) and key infrastructure, transport and enterprise agencies.

County Development Plan Review

Notice to review the current County Development Plan 2016 - 2022 and prepare a new County Development Plan 2021 - 2027 was given on the 6th November 2019.

Closing date for submissions was Friday 10th January 2020.

156 submissions were received. All of the submissions are available to view on the website.

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

The Members, following consideration of the report, may issue directions to the Chief Executive regarding the preparation of the Draft Development Plan.

There is an item on the agenda for the September meeting to consider the First Chief Executive's Report prepared under Section 11 (4) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) regarding the review of the County Development Plan and to consider any directions regarding the preparation of the Draft County Development Plan 2021 – 2027 proposed by the members under Section 11(4)(d) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)



Heritage

Heritage & Biodiversity Plan Actions:

- Community Archaeology: Production of podcasts, interactive publications and videos for Preban and Glendalough to be launched as part of National Heritage Week (15th- 23 Aug).
- Co-ordination of a county programme of Heritage Projects for National Heritage Week
- Phase 2 County Swift Project underway. Community engagement with Tidy Towns groups and individuals being asked to report sightings. New nesting boxes and callers installed in county buildings, Arklow MD offices, Wicklow and at Dunlavin libraries.
- Our Wicklow Heritage Network: Co-ordination of meetings and training with National Museum. Ongoing content to 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.
- 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: A campaign which uses the heritage website to curate a people's community heritage archive of life in Wicklow in 2020.
- Brittas Bay Biodiversity Project: Survey work ongoing in June/July
- All Ireland Pollinator Plan: Each MD is provided with signs and undertakes to manage selected areas in a pollinator friendly manner (reduced mowing and removal of cuttings)
- Creative Wicklow project: additional films under theme of River Liffey Stories to be launched in Heritage Week

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

Planning Applications

A total of 123 applications were received during July, these include applications as follows:

Type of Development	Number Received
Individual Houses	37
Housing Developments	06
Agricultural Structures	08
Commercial	02
Other Developments*	70
Total	116

*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.

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Decisions issued in respect of 119 applications in July, being:

Type of Development	Number of Decisions
Housing Developments	6
Individual Houses	27
Other Developments	86
Other Developments Requiring EIA	0
Total	119

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

	31/07/2019	31/07/2020
Total Number of decisions issued	578	466
Total Number of decisions to grant	491	403
% Grant Rate	85%	86%

No. of Applications withdrawn

July 6

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

Planning Enforcement

Enforcement

New Files 29
Advisory Letters 29
Warning Letters 18
Enforcement Notices 09
Legal files 02
Closed 14

Courts

1 Case listed for hearing Circuit Court adjourned to County Registrar's call over in September
Next County Registrar's call over 7/9/2020

Vacant Sites

26 no. sites now stand on the Register.
1 appeal decided – Section 18 confirm entry and levy
4 Current appeals outstanding

Derelict Sites

04 No. of sites on Register

4. Environmental Services

Waste Management

No. of Complaints Opened	305
No. of Cases Closed, Resolved or Completed	159
No of Litter Fines Issued	36
No. of Waste Management Files Opened	3
No. of Warning Letters Issued	3
No. of Abandoned Car Notices Issued	10
No. of Burning Applications Granted	13
No. of Temporary Signs Granted	0
No. of Notices issued under Section 14 of the Waste Management Act	16
No. of fixed penalty notices issued	0
No. of files prepared for Court included in Court lists	48
Income – Litter	€9,000.00
Income – Waste Management	€16,388.69

Climate Action

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

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

Priority Action items:

- Installation of EV Charging points in Greystones. 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 9th June to progress this. – Three consultants were invited to tender to compile the Policy however none of the parties were interested in tendering – alternative options are now being considered
- 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.

Environmental Awareness

Environmental Services continued to support National Spring Clean after it was rescheduled due to Covid 19. Clean up kit was provided to participating groups and collections organised for the bagged litter.

The Relove fashion competition piloted successfully in 2019 in partnership with Meath, Westmeath and Dublin City Councils and the Rediscovery Centre in Ballymun was relaunched for 2020. Six more local authorities joined the competition which is a Wicklow County Council initiative, The focus is on producing wearable clothing design



and good use of skill with textiles will be strengthened in the competition to develop circularity skills among students in textiles and fashion. Schools were notified about this year's competition so teachers can incorporate it into their planning for the year

Work has continued with the Wicklow PPN to explore the development of a mapping tool to record projects and actions that deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals. A first draft of the map was developed inhouse by the IT section.

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. Planning for the August event commenced. Bike repair workshops with the Rediscovery Centre are also planned.

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

Wicklow County Council worked with Laois, Meath and Westmeath to develop an online version of the Stop Food Waste Challenge which was delivered by video on social media. Catherine Fulvio was the presenter for the four week series of videos which features some of her recipes as well as tips and advice on avoiding food waste. The first two videos were broadcast in July with the first video achieving over 10,000 views.

The EPA put out a call for projects under the Local Authority Prevention Network, LAPN. Two applications for funding were submitted by Wicklow County Council. The first was a project to develop composting solutions for the management of the high levels of grass production which must be lifted when green space is being managed for pollinators. This project will help to facilitate Wicklow County Council's commitment to designate spaces for pollinators. The second project is a joint initiative with six regional local authorities to undertake a campaign to facilitate and promote sale of recycled paints produced by the Rediscovery Centre in Ballymun. The project aims to establish localised collection points for recycled paint purchased online and provide a social media campaign to promote the product. Wicklow is the lead local authority for the project.

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

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.

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.

Caravan Park Season

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

Whitestown Remediation Project

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

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

Harbours and Ports

Eleven cargo vessels berthed in Wicklow Port during July 2020. Nine were importing forestry products five with timber and four with logs. Two ships exported scrap metal.

There was one marine notice in July.

Contracts were awarded for the following:

- Supply and installation of navigation lights on the North and South Piers, Arklow.
- Supply and installation of new fenders and railings on the East Pier, Wicklow.
- Supply and installation of new ladders on the North and South Quays, Wicklow.

A request for quotations was sought for the provision of solar powered LED lighting on the East Pier, Wicklow.

The Wicklow County Council Roads Direct Labour Crew have commenced resurfacing works on the East Pier.



Pollution Control

Pollution Response & Investigation

- 4 Water pollution complaints were received and investigated.
- 1 Noise Pollution complaints were received and investigated.

Private Water Supplies

- 8 Private water supplies to caravan parks were monitored and were found compliant with microbiological standards.
- 8 Private water supplies to caravan parks were monitored and 1 was found non-compliant with chemical standards and water supplier requested to take remedial action.
- 1 Boil Water Notice was lifted from a Private Drinking Water Supply after remedial action had been taken and satisfactory water quality sample results obtained.

Deco Paints and Solvent Regulations

- 5 Dry Cleaner and 5 Vehicle refinisher (car spraying) installations were inspected.

Septic Tank Inspections - National Inspection Plan 2020

- 5 Septic tank inspections were carried out – 2 compliant, 3 non-compliant and 3 advisory notices were issued to rectify the non-compliances.

Water Framework Directive National Monitoring Programme

- 6 Lakes were monitored involving 14 samples taken for checking compliance with environmental quality standards
- 14 Rivers were monitored at 19 station involving 121 samples for compliance with environmental quality standards.

Bathing Water Monitoring Programme

There are 6 designated bathing waters, 4 of which fly Blue Flags*, which will be monitored 10 times through the season until 15th September. Results for July are shown below. Poor results were obtained for Clogga Beach and Wicklow Harbour Lifeboat Area on 27th July associated with rainfall events and bathing prohibition notices were issued upon HSE advice on 29th July. Subsequent sampling returned excellent results and the prohibition notices were lifted on 31th July.



Blue Flag & Designated	01/07/2020	13/07/2020	27/07/2020	29/07/2020
Bray South Prom		EXCELLENT	EXCELLENT	
Greystones South Beach		EXCELLENT	EXCELLENT	
Brittas Bay North	EXCELLENT	EXCELLENT	EXCELLENT	
Brittas Bay South		EXCELLENT	EXCELLENT	
Designated				
Clogga		EXCELLENT	POOR*	EXCELLENT
Siverstrand		EXCELLENT	GOOD	
Non-Designated	13/07/2020	27/07/2020	29/07/2020	30/07/2020
Bray South of Harbour	EXCELLENT	EXCELLENT		
Greystones The Cove		EXCELLENT		
Kilcoole	EXCELLENT	EXCELLENT		
The Murrugh	EXCELLENT	EXCELLENT		
Wicklow Harbour Bathing Area	EXCELLENT	EXCELLENT		
Wicklow Lifeboat Area**	EXCELLENT	POOR*	EXCELLENT	
Arklow South Beach	EXCELLENT	GOOD		EXCELLENT
Arklow The Cove	EXCELLENT	EXCELLENT		
HSE Classification for Individual Samples per 100ml of sample:				
Parameter	Excellent	Good	Sufficient	Poor
E. coli	≤ 250	251 - 500	501 - 1000	>1000
Intestinal Enterococci	≤ 100	101 - 200	201 -250	>250
*Bathing Prohibition Issued				
**Not a Bathing Area				

Planning & Development

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

Well Grants

- New Applications 11
- Number of New Wells 1
- Number of New Pumps 8
- New Equipment (Filters etc.) 15

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

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

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



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 Pleanála.

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

	29/6/20	7/7/20	13/7/20	22/7/20	27/7/20	31/7/20
Access Issues (Attended)	15	15	15	10	11	12
Cable Fault (Attend)	5	5	5	6	8	8
ESB Required (Attended)	26	26	26	26	26	27
Knock Down (Attended)	5	5	5	5	5	4
Materials required	1	1	1	1	1	1
No Supply	17	17	17	17	17	18
On Hold	0	0	0	0	0	0
Submitted	211	261	290	303	297	237
Traffic Management Required	16	12	14	17	17	18
TOTAL	296	324	373	385	382	325
Percentage of lights not working	2.00%	2.32%	2.53%	2.61%	2.59%	2.20%
	Arklow MD	Baltinglass MD	Bray MD	Greystones MD	Wicklow MD	Grand Total
Access Issues (Attended)		1	4	2	5	12
Cable Fault (Attend)			7	1		8
ESB Required(Attended)	2	1	3	1	20	27
Knock Down (Attended)	1		1	1	1	4
Materials required					1	1
No Supply		3	3	7	5	18
Submitted	33	105	21	13	65	237
Traffic Management Required	3		5	3	7	18
Grand Total	39	110	44	28	104	325
Percentage Not Working	1.34%	4.67%	1.35%	1.02%	2.96%	2.20%

Transportation Statistics (General)

	2019	Running Total 2020	June 2020	July 2020
Solicitors Queries	775	408	57	73
Road Closure Applications	40	13	0	1
Road Opening Licences	1418	680	121	119
Abnormal Load Applications	35	16	4	4

TII funded projects

N81 Knockroe Bend Realignment Scheme

Traffic is now diverted onto the new alignment of the N81 at Knockroe Bend Realignment and scheme is progressing.

There are still traffic lights at the north end of the project to enable the last part of the tie-in to be constructed. Speed limits are still in place until completion of the works.

Car Parks

Two new car parks have been opened during Covid 19 at Laragh and Luggala which are improving accessibility and amenities in our beautiful county to allow the public to avail of parking.

Laragh car park is beside the GAA grounds in Laragh- opening hours 8.00 a.m. to 8.00 p.m. all week

Luggala car park - opening hours at weekends only from 9.00 a.m.

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, Biodiversity and Road Safety Audit Stage F.

The Arup Design Team are progressing the Preferred Options Assessment Report. Tenders awarded recently include: the appointment of GVA Donal O'Buachalla as Property and Land Valuation Consultancy Services for Phases 2 through to 4.

N11 Kilmacanoge Parallel Service Road

Surfacing works commenced on August 4th along the southbound carriageway to enable the switching of traffic onto the new lane as part of Phase 2 Traffic Management and Phase 2 Construction Works.

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

Road Schemes

Blessington Greenway - Alignment of trial section completed, with Tree Felling License to be submitted by ESB for trial. Remainder of route to be agreed with ESB.

Glendalough Junction - Ministerial Consent for Archaeological Assessment & Alignment Drawing complete. This project will be progressing to Ministerial Consent for Construction.

Ballinaclesh Junction - Consultant has been appointed and layout agreed. Ongoing progression.



Bray Public Transport Bridge – Ground Investigation Works underway (originally delayed due to COVID 19). Detailed design proceeding through consultants.

Arklow Courthouse Refurbishment - Refurbishment works anticipate completion date Quarter three.

Arklow Public Realm – Ground Investigation completed. Detailed design and tender document preparation ongoing.

Fitzwilliam Square - Phase 1 Monument Area "65% complete, boundary wall and railing complete, paving within monument area commenced, soft landscaping commenced, planter walls ongoing.

Phase 2 Church Street Upper "70% complete, paving and kerbing ongoing.

Phase 3 Church Street Lower "10% complete, services installed.

Phase 4 Bridge Street 10% complete services installed.

Baltinglass Town Centre Plan – Arup appointed as Consultants. Aim to construct playground/river walk element in 2020.

Delgany / Blacklion Road Improvements - Detailed design finalised.

Blessington Inner Relief Road – Progression of scheme ongoing. Section 85 agreement will be required with Kildare County Council.

Arklow to Shillelagh Greenway - Consultant engaged to undertake the bridge design, flood risk assessment, planning report to accompany the NIS planning submission to An Bord Pleanala.

Strand Road Aquarium & Putland Road - Detailed Design Completed. Tender process complete, with contract to be awarded over the coming weeks.

Kilmacanogue to N11 / Southern Cross Greenway - EIA and Archaeological survey commenced. GI/Topo surveys due to commence shortly, pending site access.

Framework for Traffic Management N11 Fassaroe - Draft finding report and recommendations completed.

Swan River Greenway - Constraints Study & Options Report completed. Community Engagement not possible over recent months due to COVID 19, Working Group to be formed and workshops to be organised once safe to do so under Covid-19 restrictions.

WPAR to Wicklow Train Station - Documents completed to procure consultant. Tender to issue once NTA Framework in place.

Water Services

In 2020 Wicklow County Council staff continued to provide Water and Wastewater Services under the current Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Irish Water.

Covid 19:

All staff in the Water Services Department, technical, outdoor and administrative staff continued to work throughout the Covid 19 period and whilst some non-essential work was put on hold during this period, there was no interruption to supply and services throughout the crisis. Full operational services across water and wastewater have now been restored.

Upgrading Projects:

Throughout 2020 upgrading works continued across Water Services. The current projects in progress include:

- Back yards Kindlestown and Upper Grattan Park.
- Replacement of 2.1m water main in Ashford.
- With €450k allocated to pressure management between now and the end of the year.

Sustainability:

Sustainability continues to be a key concern of both Wicklow County Council and Irish Water, with Wicklow County Council staff playing a key role in locating and managing leaks throughout the county. Under the Find & Fix Project, Wicklow County Council staff has carried out repairs saving 3.8 mega litres of water per day in 2020.



Key Performance Indicators (KPI's):

Under the Annual Service Plan with Irish Water, Wicklow County Council continued to be scored on Key Performance Indicators. The 2019 overall score was 87.1%. In 2020 the KPI performance score for Quarter 1 was 93.9% and for Quarter 2 was 95.5%. This reflects the excellent performance of Wicklow County Council staff across all pillars within the Annual Service plan. The overall score for Wicklow County Council is comprised of a range of KPI scores over the year, including:

- A score of 100% was achieved for microbiological compliance in the drinking water supply.
- A score of 99% was achieved for chemical compliance in the drinking water supply.
- A score of 100% was achieved for the number of compliant assessments taken at Waste Water Treatment Plants meeting mandatory UWWTD effluent quality standards.
- A score of 92% was achieved for the notification of interruptions.
- A Score of 97% was achieved for a timely response to Workflow Queries.
- A Score of 99% was achieved for Financial – Operations Expenditure Control.

Fire Service

Operational Fire Statistics

	TOTAL	Bray	Greystones	Wicklow	Rathdrum	Arklow	Blessington	Dunlavin	Baitinglass	Carnew	Tinahely
Callsign		1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.8	1.9	2.1
Two Stations Mobilised											
Fire Domestic Persons Reported	2			1	1						
Fire Domestic	16	2	4	3				1	1	2	3
Fire Caravan	1	1									
Road Traffic Collision (RTC)	24	2	5	7	6	4					
Fire Vehicle (HGV /motorway)	4	1	1	1		1					
Hazardous Materials Incident	0										
Fire Industrial / Commercial	6	1	1	1		1		1	1		
Fire Barn / Shed	0										
Fire Alarm or CO ₂ Activation	9	2	3	3		1					
Fire Outdoor: Gorse / bushes	8	2	2	3	1						
Fire Chimney	1						1				
Fire Small / bin / skip / bonfire	6	1	2	1	1	1					
Fire Vehicle	6	1	2	2	1						
Flooding	0										
Trees Down, Make Scene Safe	0										
Ambulance Assist	8	1		4		1				2	
Garda Assist	0										
Electrical Incident	2	1			1						
Gas Leak	0										
River Rescue	0										
Fire Oil / Petrol	0										
Entrapment / Rescue / Lift	1	1									
Oil Spill / Road Hazard	2	1	1								
Animal Rescue	0										
Lock In / Lock Out	1			1							
False Alarm – Good Intent	2	1	1								
Malicious False Alarm	0										
Mobilised into other County	2					1		1			
Times Stations mobilised	101	18	22	27	11	10	1	3	2	4	3

There were **72 incidents** attended during the month of July 2020. Fire Stations were mobilised on a total of **101 occasions** including 2 incidents in neighbouring counties.

Operational activity for the month of July was **similar to the preceding month** (June 2020 – 101 mobilisations). **Activity for the month was down 14% on the equivalent month last year, July 2019.** This was due mainly to a decrease in alarm activations and outdoor fires.

Sample Incidents (July 2020)

01/07/2020 Rathdrum and Wicklow Town crews attended an RTC in Ballinaclesh. 2 casualties taken by ambulance.

AUGUST 2020



- 07/07/2020 Baltinglass and Dunlavin crews attended a domestic fire in the Glen of Imaal.
- 13/07/2020 Tinahely and Carnew crews were mobilised to a house fire on Mangan's Lane, Tinahely. Empty house extensively damaged by fire.
- 13/07/2020 Arklow and Wicklow Town crews were mobilised to an RTC south of Brittas Bay. Head on collision between car and motorbike.
- 17/07/2020 Arklow and Wicklow Town crews were mobilised to an RTC in Arklow Town. Single car had struck and damaged railway bridge.
- 25/07/2020 Wicklow Town and Rathdrum crews were mobilised to an RTC at the bridge in Rathdrum. There was one fatality.
- 26/07/2020 Bray and Greystones crews attended a domestic fire in Albert Walk, Bray. One casualty removed by ambulance from the scene.

Incidents mobilised outside county Wicklow (July 2019):

Kildare (1-incident)

- 31/07/20 Dunlavin Fire Crew were mobilised to a Fire Alarm Activation in Kilcullen, County Kildare – false alarm.

Wexford (1-incident)

- 13/07/20 Arklow Fire Crew were mobilised to support Gorey Fire Station at a suspected vehicle fire near Inch in County Wexford.

General

Firefighter Jason Keogh (Carnew) received national 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. Firefighters in Greystones also provided a similar service.

All stations have received the latest guidance from Wicklow County Council in relation to Covid-19 and each station has been assessed, ongoing measures are in place to ensure compliance.

All stations have resumed Weekly On-Station Training. It is also used to update members on a weekly basis if additional guidance or protocols have been issued.

Plans are underway with other Fire Training Centers and the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management on the resumption of Fire-fighting Skills (Recruit), Breathing Apparatus Wearers and Officer Courses commencing August/September. Wicklow County Fire Service will have a major role to play in setting a standard national approach for this training.

Fire Prevention Statistics July 2020

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

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

General

The National Building Control Office is further developing the Building Control Management System (BCMS) to allow Fire Safety Certificates to be submitted on-line. Fire Officers are being trained on the system and the launch is expected in the coming months.

Fire Officers have registered with the Court Services online e-Licensing system (CSOL) which will allow those applying for licences to do so on-line. It is expected to be launched in the coming months.

Building Control

<u>Commencement Notices (CN)</u>	
CN with Compliance Documentation	14
7Day Notice	1
Opt Out CN	23
CN without Compliance Documentation	4
Total notices received	42
Status on July Commencement Notice Submissions	
Valid	33
Invalid	3
On Revised Information (R.I.) as at 15 th August	6
	42

<u>Certificates of Compliance on Completion</u>	
Pre-Notification CCC received in July	2
Standard CCC received	11
Total	13
Status on July C.C.C. Submissions	
Validated (submitted July & validated July)	8
Total CCCs Validated (in July)	12
Invalid Submissions	0
Revised Information Requests (July Submissions)	7
July Site Inspections	14

Parking Income

Parking Income by Municipal District	EURO
Bray Municipal District	396,290
Greystones Municipal District	147,029
Wicklow Municipal District	124,970
Arklow Municipal District	73,281
Parking Permits	37,196
Parking Fines	149,579
Wicklow County Council	928,346

Civil Defence

12th August 2020

- At approximately 1840hrs a member of the public requested Civil Defence assistance through Garda to use drone to find a horse that was believed to have fallen into an inaccessible area.
- Drone unit and vehicles arrived on scene at approximately 2000hrs.
- Drone was launched and horse was located via thermal imaging camera at the bottom of a very steep gully in thick brush and swamp/marsh/water which looked very inaccessible by foot. Footage of horse showed that the animal was still alive.
- Call made to try and access horse with a vet on foot, Incident Support Vehicle and team called to assist.
- After an hour of trying to gain access to horse on foot it was determined only way to access the horse was via ropes from the top of the field.
- Due to fading light and no rope equipment CDO contacted 999 and requested assistance from Coast Guard with rope unit.
- Coast arrived on scene at approximately 2230hrs.
- Vertical access systems were set up by Coast Guard rescue team, drone team using thermal imaging was used to direct vet and rope access team to injured horse.
- Horse was Euthanised and both teams packed up equipment.
- At approximately 0100hrs Field debrief conducted between Civil Defence and Coast Guard.





14th August 2020

- Wicklow Civil Defence took delivery of New Ford Ranger from Civil defence HQ in Roscrea adding to the units vehicle response capability.



20th August 2020

- Wicklow Civil Defence requested to respond to assist with reports of 3 persons in the water in Rathdrum by Coast Guard, Dublin Civil Defence and Kildare Civil Defence also requested to assist.
- Persons located before Civil Defence Units Arrival to assist other responding units.

Organisational Development and Financial Matters

1. HR & Corporate Services

Recruitment

The following assessments were held in July:

- Healthy Ireland County Co-Ordinator
- Library Assistant
- Executive Engineer

Employee Numbers

	Q3 2019	Q4 2019	Q1 2020	Q2 2020
Managerial/ Administrative	280	285	292	299
Professional/Technical	103	102	105	103
Outdoor	318	318	321	321
Temporary/ Seasonal	62	62	62	57
Non DOHPLG	8	8	8	8
Total	771	775	788	788

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

(Excludes figures for Fire-fighters)

Access to Information

No. of F.O.I. Requests

July 2020	9
January to July 2020	55

July 2019	6
January to July 2019	82

No. of Ombudsman Requests

July 2020	0
January to July 2020	16

July 2019	2
January to July 2019	10

Press Releases

July 2020 – 18 Press Releases

Register of Electors

The Franchise staff are continuing to work on database maintenance required to maintain the Register of Electors. Letters are continuing to be issued to electors to establish whether 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.

RFA forms are also being issued to new estates that have come on stream since February 2020. Contact has also been made with Nursing Homes in the County to update their Disabled Special Voters List. It is hoped that when Covid-19 restrictions are lifted, 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, to be issued with a Disabled Postal Vote. We are also looking at the feasibility of contacting year heads in schools to register students who will reach 18 on or before 15th February 2021 taking Covid-19 restrictions and regulations into account.

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

Refurbishment Works

Works are continuing in the County Buildings –

- New floors are currently being laid in the foyer area.
- Public toilets are being tiled and fitted over the next few weeks.
- Painting is ongoing in the area.
- Works have commenced refurbishing the Seminole room.

Customer Service Innovation Hub

- New security glass is due to be fitted next week on the main Counter of the hub.
- Works have commenced to refurbish the Planning/Environment and Housing counter areas.

Phase 1 of the refurbishment:

- The New Customer Service Innovation hub is scheduled to be completed towards the end of August/beg of September.
- 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.

Submissions for Chambers Ireland ‘*The Excellence in Local Government Awards 2020*’, is completed. We were delighted with the opportunity to showcase best practice in our local Authority and to recognise the skills, hard work, innovation and enthusiasm of our staff here in Wicklow. The following 10 innovation initiatives were submitted:

WCC Submissions	
Wicklow Goal Gates of hell	Community Call response team
Library Home schooling assistance	Together apart
Our Wicklow heritage	Wicklow keeping active
Wicklow Life 1919-1923	Face Mask loops
Wicklow Naturally (food and Beverage network)	Bray Positivity stones

2. I.C.T.

Response to COVID19

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

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

IT Helpdesk

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



Domain Migration

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

GIS & Data Collection Systems

- Initial development of the Strategic Development Goals have been mapped as part of the Climate and Biodiversity Action.
- Development of CRM System automation.
- Data analysis underway for the upcoming County Development Plan.
- Parallel projects in Housing, Roads and Environmental Services departments are on-going and integration to CRM and GIS systems have being developed and rolled out.

Customer Service Delivery

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

eServices

- Wicklow.ie – pageviews for 2020 to date are 1,000,176.
- Social media accounts – followers to date
 - Facebook (Wicklow County Council) – 7,836 followers.
 - Twitter (@WicklowCoCo) – 6,769 followers.
 - Instagram (@WicklowCoCo) – 1,532 followers.

#YourCouncilDay 2020 Twitter Campaign

- Our social engagement reach for #YourCouncilDay on 1st July 2020 was 79.5k compared to 49k in 2019.
- June's social engagement reach was 191.4k for 30 days in comparison #YourCouncilDay achieved 41.5% reach in one day.
- We shared 162 posts on July 1st, 2020 - 124 profile visits, 114 website clicks, 158 retweets.
- Total reach was 96.5k, it includes additional reach of the campaign up to July 2nd, 2020.
- Top posts included the:
 - *Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council welcomes you all to #YourCouncilDay here in #Wicklow. Join in and share your stories using #YourCouncilDay @LASIreland @BrayTCouncil @WicklowLibs @FireWicklow @Wicklow_News*
 - *Wicklow County Council supports Mermaid Arts Centre each year investing in County Wicklow Arts Centre, we are delighted to see them reopen and look forward to attending soon. #YourCouncilDay #wicklowartsoffice #Wicklow @mermaidarts*
 - *Did you know that access to Lime Kiln Beach is prohibited on the Wicklow Cliff Walk from August to April to protect the Grey Seal pups that are born there every year #YourCouncilDay #Wicklow @LASIreland*



- *Firefighter Jason Keogh's innovation and unique approach to solving an issue with face masks for healthcare workers has been hailed as an example of how local authorities embraced the challenges of the COVID-19 crisis. <http://ow.ly/Shxj50AmgnW> #YourCouncilDay @LASireland*
- Current follower audience size is 6,637 + 1,034 on last year.
- So far July 2020's Twitter reach is 108.8k
- Overall #YourCouncilDay hashtag had a potential reach of 4.9m.
- Overall Nationally there were 6,072 tweets
- **After @LASireland, @WicklowCoCo was the most active user and the most original tweeter.**

- During June, 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.



3. FINANCIAL

Revenue Account

REVENUE ACCOUNT							
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE SUMMARY BY SERVICE DIVISION AT 31st JULY 2020							
	EXPENDITURE			INCOME			NET
	Actual Expenditure	Adopted Full Year Budget	% Budget Spent to Date	Actual Income	Adopted Full Year Budget	% Budget Spent to Date	Actual Expenditure / (Income)
	€	€	%	€	€	%	€
Housing and Building	12,678,279	24,541,664	52%	(16,059,614)	(30,692,854)	52%	(3,381,335)
Road Transport & Safety	9,469,711	23,611,358	40%	(4,346,961)	(16,493,380)	26%	5,122,750
Water Services	2,828,590	5,560,661	51%	(3,449,961)	(6,545,641)	53%	(621,371)
Development Management	9,513,395	11,242,546	85%	(6,735,518)	(6,144,652)	110%	2,777,877
Environmental Services	6,228,395	11,837,313	53%	(636,679)	(2,002,200)	32%	5,591,716
Recreation and Amenity	4,269,614	7,663,027	56%	(327,505)	(847,647)	39%	3,942,108
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	750,334	1,479,516	51%	(285,138)	(819,228)	35%	465,196
Miscellaneous Services	6,766,193	11,879,184	57%	(3,748,790)	(6,156,153)	61%	3,017,403
Central Management Charges	10,741,105	18,407,601	58%	(629,396)	(1,000,000)	63%	10,111,708
Local Government Fund				(8,003,520)	(13,720,320)	58%	(8,003,520)
Pension Levy				0	0		0
Commercial Rates				(18,672,383)	(31,950,795)	58%	(18,672,383)
	63,245,615	116,222,870	54%	(62,895,466)	(116,372,870)	54%	350,149

Cashflow/Overdraft

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

Capital Account

CAPITAL ACCOUNT					
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE SUMMARY BY SERVICE DIVISION AT 31st JULY 2020					
	Opening Balance at 01/01/2020	Actual Expenditure	Actual Income	Transfers to/from Reserves	Closing Balance at 31/07/2020
	€	€	€	€	€
Housing and Building	19,000,508	31,298,840	(31,458,954)	(1,066,465)	17,773,929
Road Transport & Safety	(42,851,352)	7,139,665	(7,470,742)	(309,858)	(43,492,287)
Water Services	(10,670,498)	95,762	(471,894)	(10,000)	(11,056,630)
Development Management	(9,612,396)	1,240,497	(201,989)	(133,642)	(8,707,531)
Environmental Services	968,611	1,890,600	(1,490,610)	(326,250)	1,042,350
Recreation and Amenity	(914,062)	2,429,436	(1,477,818)	(141,000)	(103,444)
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	(885,558)	(30,471)	0	(152,500)	(1,068,530)
Miscellaneous Services	(15,413,049)	3,093,962	(2,157,943)	(841,170)	(15,318,201)
	(60,377,798)	47,158,290	(44,729,951)	(2,980,885)	(60,930,344)

Commercial Rates, Rents and Loan Collections

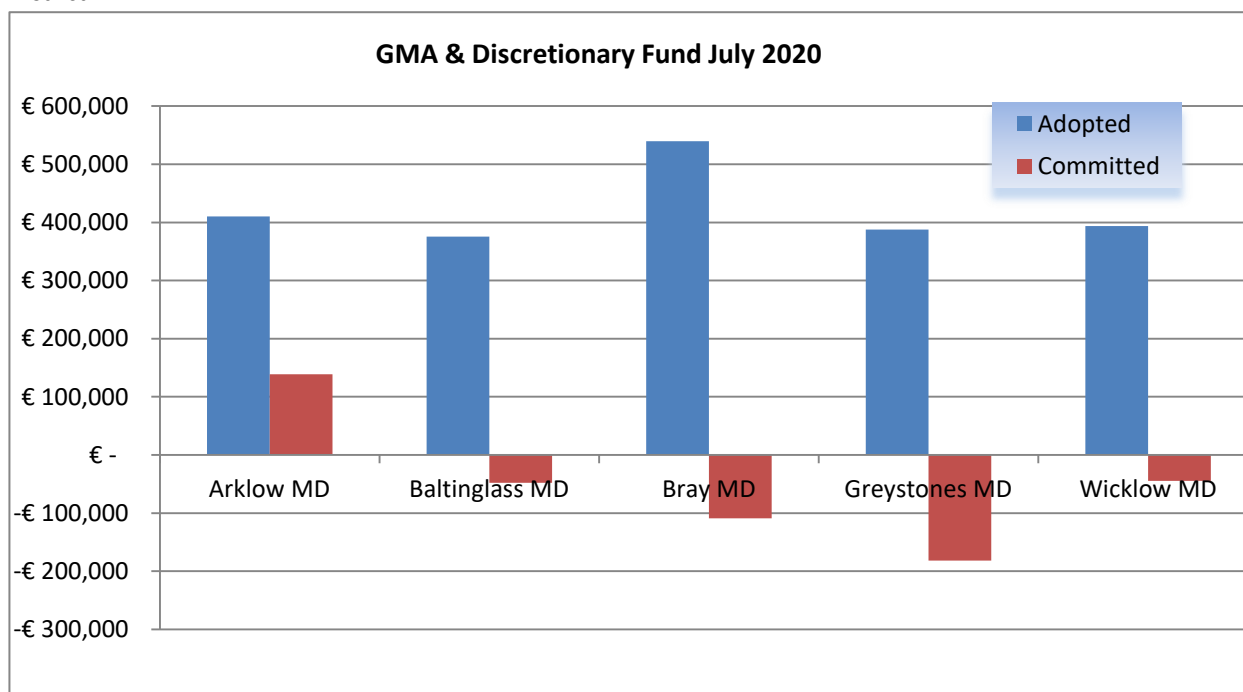
SUMMARY OF MAJOR COLLECTIONS AT 31st JULY 2020										
Income Collection Area	Opening Balance 01/01/2020	Accrued	Vacancy Property Adjustment	Write Offs	Waivers	Total for Collection	Collected	Closing Arrears 31/07/2020	Specific Doubtful Arrears	% Collection
Rates	5,217,406	32,009,800	0	0	0	37,227,206	(13,161,610)	24,065,596	1,523,788	37%
Rents & Annuities	1,853,579	9,867,223	0	2,383	0	11,723,185	(9,039,987)	2,683,198	0	77%
Housing Loans	402,724	915,007	0	0	0	1,317,731	(1,055,375)	262,356	0	80%

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

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

General Municipal Allocation and Discretionary Fund 2020

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



Municipal District	C/F from 2019	Adopted	Committed	Balance to Expend
	€	€	€	€
Arklow MD	52,813	410,500	191,799	271,514
Baltinglass MD	159,389	375,500	111,362	423,527
Bray MD	180,991	539,500	71,765	648,726
Greystones MD	165,252	387,500	-	569,087
Wicklow MD	205,713	393,500	161,066	438,147
Total	764,158	2,106,500	519,658	2,351,000

Capital Investment Programme 2020-2022

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

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

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