

W I C K L O W

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ENDLESS OPPORTUNITIES

# **Wicklow County Council**

## **Annual Report**

### **2024**



# Wicklow County Council

## Annual Report 2024

**VISION STATEMENT AND CORE VALUES:** Wicklow County Council's Corporate Plan sets out the core values within which the organisation operates.

### VISION – WICKLOW A COUNTY OF ENDLESS OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL

*To actively protect the PLANET, promoting inclusion wellbeing and quality of life for all PEOPLE, and to make Wicklow the best PLACE to live, work, visit and grow older.*

#### Strategic Theme 1 - PLACE

*To strengthen and sustain Wicklow as a vibrant County, by delivering key infrastructure, supporting economic growth and innovation, shaping our towns and villages through proper planning and sustainable development. To create quality public realm that is accessible and contributes to people's health, happiness and wellbeing.*

#### Strategic Theme 2 - PLANET

*To deliver climate resilient and regenerative biodiversity actions and maximise renewable energy opportunities in the County. Incorporate the sustainable development goals into our business strategies and support communities and business to deliver on climate change targets in a fair and equitable way thereby protecting our environment now and for future generations.*

#### Strategic Theme 3 – PEOPLE

*To develop and strengthen communities by promoting an inclusive, accessible, creative, welcoming and safe natural sustainable environment. To improve the health and quality of life for everyone in County Wicklow by leading, guiding and developing recreational facilities to promote social, health and economic benefit meeting the changing needs of the people of County Wicklow*

#### Organisational Development

*To strengthen and develop staff to effectively respond to the changing needs of our organisation and the evolving environment in which we operate to deliver the most accessible and best possible service in the most efficient manner .*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Cathaoirleach's Message</b>	<b>Page 5</b>
<b>Chief Executive's Foreword</b>	<b>Page 6</b>
<b>Wicklow County Council Councillors</b>	<b>Page 7</b>
<b>Management Team</b>	<b>Page 11</b>
<b>Climate, Environment, Recreation &amp; Amenity Directorate</b>	<b>Page 13</b>
<b>Transportation &amp; Infrastructure Delivery Directorate</b>	<b>Page 51</b>
<b>Planning, Economic Development Directorate</b>	<b>Page 60</b>
<b>Social Development (Housing &amp; Community) Directorate</b>	<b>Page 79</b>
<b>Organisational Development (H.R. &amp; Corporate)</b>	<b>Page 149</b>
<b>Finance, Water &amp; Information Systems Directorate</b>	<b>Page 158</b>
<b>Arklow Municipal District</b>	<b>Page 161</b>
<b>Baltinglass Municipal District</b>	<b>Page 166</b>
<b>Bray Municipal District</b>	<b>Page 175</b>
<b>Greystones Municipal District</b>	<b>Page 182</b>
<b>Wicklow Municipal District</b>	<b>Page 187</b>
<b>Public Sector Duty</b>	<b>Page 199</b>
<b>Financial Statement</b>	<b>Page 202</b>
<b>Performance Indicators – January – December 2024</b>	<b>Page 217</b>





As Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council I am delighted to introduce the Annual Report for the year 2024. This report outlines the very many and varied activities of Wicklow County Council across all services. Wicklow County Council provides and funds a broad range of services including; housing, roads, playgrounds, libraries, fire stations, sports facilities, arts centres, recycling centres, as well as serving as a platform for local democracy.

During 2024 we also celebrated our strong partnership with other communities, marking the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Partnership Agreement between the City of Würzburg, Bray Town and Wicklow County. This successful partnership has flourished over the years, bringing our communities together through arts, culture, sport and education.

Reaching out the younger members of our county, in December 2024, Wicklow County Council hosted its second Youth Climate Conference, allowing local youth to engage with policymakers at both local and national levels on climate issues. This initiative responded to a direct request from the young people of County Wicklow for more engagement. With over 400 secondary students in attendance, the conference aimed to raise awareness about the impact of climate change on socio-economic development, environmental sustainability, and biodiversity.

While more than 250 Transition Year students from three schools in County Wicklow attended a Road Safety event organised by

County Wicklow Road Safety Working Together Committee, as part of an ongoing education awareness campaign.

During 2024 the Council worked to improve the health and quality of life for everyone in the County by developing and supporting recreational facilities, meeting the changing needs of the community through the delivery of

- Bray Skatepark
- Upgraded trail at Russborough House & Garden, Blessington
- Abbeylane, Arklow protection and enhancement works

While the community recognition fund delivered €694,300 to 7 community projects across the County and a record number, 78 clubs, received financial support through Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership Club Development Grant Scheme for 2024.

I would like to pay tribute to my fellow Elected Members and to thank them for their co-operation and assistance to me during the year, particularly the members of the Corporate Policy Group and each of the Strategic Policy Groups who were instrumental in contributing to the policy and decision making forum affecting the entire Council.

I would also like to take the opportunity to record my appreciation to Chief Executive, Emer O’Gorman and to the entire staff of Wicklow County Council for the manner in which they assisted me in the performance of my role as Cathaoirleach.

**COUNCILLOR PAUL O'BRIEN**  
**CATHAOIRLEACH**  
**WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL**



It gives me great pleasure as Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council to welcome the publication of the 2024 Annual Report and to highlight a number of achievements over the last 12 months which are further contained within this report.

Wicklow County Council was honoured with the prestigious 'Council of the Year Award' for 2024 at the All Ireland Community and Council Awards. This award acknowledged and celebrated the outstanding work and commitment of both staff and communities across the County.

Wicklow County Council Corporate Plan 2024-2029 was adopted in December 2024. This plan sets out the Council's strategic direction and organisational goals over the next five year period. Focusing on three key themes, People, Place and Planet in order to deliver our vision 'Wicklow a County of endless opportunities for all'

We are dedicated to driving economic and community development while adhering to the principles of sustainable development, social inclusion, human rights, equality and accessibility for all. Throughout 2024, we delivered efficient, effective and value for money services. .

In 2024 Wicklow County Council, launched the [#ChooseWicklow](#) campaign, promoting the county as the ideal place to live and work. To compliment this campaign, we expanded our suite of enterprise hubs with the addition of a seventh hub - The GRID, Greystones.

In line with our response to the rapidly evolving challenges posed by climate change and biodiversity loss, Wicklow County Council was pleased to announce that it has achieved certification for ISO 50001 Energy Management in 2024. This marked a significant milestone in our commitment to energy efficiency and sustainable

practices. The international standard ISO 50001 outlines the requirements for establishing, implementing, maintaining, and improving an energy management system.

In connection to this, Bray Fire Station was officially launched as Wicklow County Council's first fully decarbonised building.

New housing delivered under the build and supply programme included Liam Kavanagh Park, Wicklow Town, Ballard Shillelagh and Merrymeeting, Rathnew.

June 2024 saw the local elections take place. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the previous members of the Council, and welcome and thank the newly elected members, for their ongoing co-operation, support and their commitment to serve the people of County Wicklow

I also commend the Members of the Strategic Policy Committees, the Corporate Policy Group, and the LCDC and also acknowledge all the work that is carried out at Municipal District Level and by the various other hardworking committees.

I would especially like to thank the Cathaoirleach, Councillor Aoife Flynn Kennedy for her commitment and co-operation in the delivery of the Council's high level goals in 2024. I would like to commend and thank the entire staff of Wicklow County Council for their continued hard work and contribution to the delivery of high quality service to the public during 2024.

I am confident that the work of the Council and the progress achieved will enhance the quality of life for the people of Wicklow.

**EMER O'GORMAN**  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE**  
**WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL**

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## MANAGEMENT TEAM

Ms. Emer O’Gorman



Chief Executive

Ms. Leonora Earls



Director of Services  
Planning, Economic & Rural  
Development

Mr. Michael Nicholson



Director of Services  
Social Development (Housing &  
Community)

Mr. Joe Lane



Director of Services

Ms. Lorraine Gallagher



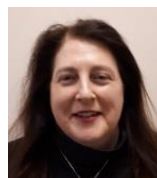
Director of Services  
Organisational Development (H.R. &  
Corporate)

Mr. Marc Devereux



T/Director of Services  
Emergency Response

Ms. Dorothy Kennedy



Law Agent

Ms. Emer O’Donovan



Head of Information Systems



Mr. Brian Gleeson



Director of Services  
Finance, Water & Information  
Systems

Ms. Theresa O'Brien



T/Director of Services  
Transportation & Infrastructure  
Delivery

## CLIMATE, ENVIRONMENT, RECREATION & AMENITY

Climate Action, Biodiversity, Environment,  
Energy, Marine, Recreation & Amenity  
Strategic Policy Committee

### Cathaoirleach

Cllr. Erika Doyle

### Wicklow County Council

Cllr. Dermot O'Brien

Cllr. Peir Leonard

Cllr. Lourda Scott

Cllr. Jason Mulhall

Cllr. Danny Alvey

### Outside Agencies

Environment and Conservation – East  
Wicklow - Justin Ivory

Environment and Conservation – West  
Wicklow – Emma Smith

Agriculture/Farming Community - Tom  
Byrne

Business/ Commercial – Anthony Ardee

An Comhairle Na n'Og – Kate Dolan

Community/Voluntary – Austin Baines

Construction Industry Federation –  
Michael Storan

### Director of Services

Theresa O'Brien

### Senior Executive Officer

Michael McNamara

### Senior Engineer

Mary Cahill

The Climate Action, Biodiversity,  
Environment, Energy, Marine, Recreation  
& Amenity SPC met twice times during  
2024

Other functions in the section are:

Climate & Biodiversity Action  
Environmental Awareness

Sustainable Energy

Waste Management

Harbours & Ports

Pollution Control

Veterinary Services

Control of Dogs

Control of Horses

Caravan Parks

Burial Grounds

Casual Trading

Water Safety

Wicklow Sports Partnership

Outdoor Recreation

Archives & Genealogy

Wicklow County Arts Office

County Wicklow Libraries

### Goal

"To protect and enhance the natural  
environment of County Wicklow in  
accordance with the principles of  
sustainable and balanced development, in  
partnership with all sections of the  
community, having regard to national and  
EU policies and programmes.

### Climate Action Plan

Wicklow County Councils Climate Action  
Plan was adopted by the members at an

Ordinary Meeting on the 8<sup>th</sup> January 2025. The Plan will provide a roadmap for taking decisive action to transition to a lower carbon and more climate resilient future for the citizens of County Wicklow. The plan is shaped by the national objective to deliver transformative climate action, making it real at local level in the process. Our action plan commits both the Elected Members and the Executive of the Council to achieving the national targets set for the public sector emission reduction. This will be achieved through 112 Actions for the County to be delivered across the following five themes:



The plan contains robust structures and processes for ongoing monitoring and reporting through quarterly progress reports to the Climate Action, Biodiversity, Environment, Energy, Marine, Recreation & Amenity Strategic Policy Committee and Annual Progress Reports presented to the Full Council and published on the council website.



Climate Action will remain as a standing item on Corporate Policy Group meetings, Senior Management Team meetings and will be incorporated into policy development within all Strategic Policy

Committees. Climate and Biodiversity Action will remain a key item and as a standing item within the Climate Action, Biodiversity, Environment, Energy, Marine, Recreation and Amenity Strategic Policy Committee. Our Climate Action Plan will assist in the development of future Development and Local Area Plans. A Climate Action Committee will help to steer Climate Action which will be supported by the Climate Action Team and Energy Team in the delivery, budgeting and monitoring of climate actions throughout the organization.

## Arklow Decarbonisation Zone

Our Climate Action Plan consists of an addition of 23 Actions allocated specifically to Arklow. Actions include investigating district heating opportunities, the development of an anaerobic digestion plant and hydrogen production within the Decarbonisation Zone. An Arklow Climate Action Forum was launched during the Councils Climate Action Week to help bring community groups and local interested groups together to explore Biodiversity, Renewable Energy, Transport and Innovative ways in order to make Arklow become more climate resilient.



## Community Climate Action Programme

Wicklow County Council and The Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications allocated a total of €646,000 to 20 community groups across the county under the Community Climate Action Programme. The main objective of this programme is to empower communities to take climate action and to foster the development of low-carbon, sustainable communities, contributing to national climate and energy targets. The funded projects include initiatives such as the installation of renewable energy systems, the development of community gardens, installation of EV chargers, bike racks, water refill stations, composting facilities, lighting upgrades and rainwater harvesting systems.

## Coastal Erosion

Our Climate Action Plan has stated that the County will have an increased frequency and intensity of Coastal Erosion. Recent storm weather events have all impacted greatly on our coastline. In order to help our coastline adapt to these changes the council have engaged with a number of projects to protect our coastline. The East Coast Railway Infrastructure Protection Project is currently under design in order to deliver the necessary enhanced coastal protection to the existing railway infrastructure. The council are part of a working group lead by Irish Rail address and implement protection of the existing railway and coastal infrastructure between Dublin to Wicklow.

The council has also received funding from the OPW and appointed Malachy Walsh & Co Ltd consultants to carry out a Coastal Erosion Risk Management Study

for Brittas Bay and Ennereilly Beaches. A second Coastal Erosion Risk Management Study has also received funding from Arklow North Beach to the County Wexford boundary.

In 2019 the council initiated a Brittas Bay Biodiversity Project, Actions taken to date include conservation management reports, trailing of mowing regimes, grazing trials, monitoring, botanical surveys, community workshops and removal of sea buckthorn with volunteers. The focus is to restore the biodiversity of this SAC and build its resilience to the impacts of climate. The most recent publication is the "Conservation Management Actions and recommended Prescriptions at Brittas Bay Dunes 2024-2028".



**SEAI Sustainable Energy Communities**



Wicklow now has 11 SECs partnered with Wicklow County Council. Greystones was shortlisted for an SEAI award in 2024 for its solar meitheal. Other SECs in the county are exploring replicating the project. Arklow SEC undertook an insulation meitheal, the first of its kind in the country. Carnew Community Care and Wicklow Town SEC were both successful with applications for funding under the CCAF with projects to upgrade community buildings.

## Community Engagement – Youth Climate Conference

A Youth Climate Action Conference was held in partnership with Codling in East Glendalough Secondary School in Wicklow where Over 400 secondary school students attended, titled *Our Climate Our Future*. The event was organised by a committee of sixteen transition year students with support from Codling Wind Park and Wicklow County Council. Students from eight various secondary schools attended from Greystones, Kilcoole, and Wicklow.



**Climate Action Week**

The Council hosted / supported a successful Climate Action Week in October, featuring over 36 events across the county. These events align with several of the 135 actions outlined in Councils Climate Action Plan. The week covered a range of climate related topics including the Need for Climate Action, Carbon footprint, Offshore Wind Renewable Energy, Energy Saving Walk in Clinics, Retrofitting, Biodiversity Enhancement, Agricultural Supports, Anaerobic Digestion, Sustainable living, Active Travel, Fast Fashion, Reuse & Repair, Nature Based Drainage and Rain Water Management Solutions, Circular Economy and Food Waste.



## Sustainable Development Goals Week

The council supported or hosted a total of 48 events to mark Ireland's third Sustainable Development Goals Week which took place in September. The SDGs work towards ambitions such as an end to poverty, access to decent work, sustainable consumption, protection of nature, better health and wellbeing, universal access to education, gender equality, climate action, and peaceful societies.

Events included a Tidy Towns Workshop, Newcastle, Kilcoole and Greystones Climate Action Forum, Bike Repair &

Workshops, Big Beach Clean with Clean Coasts, Sustainable sewing & life skills in several libraries and Gardening courses for Biodiversity and Climate Change.



## Environmental Awareness

Wicklow County Council continues to support the An Taisce Green Schools programme. Over 108 Primary schools and Secondary schools were active in 2024 within the county. A total of 22 schools were awarded a green flag in 2024. The council fund and support complimentary programme to Green Schools.

In March 2024, the council held our Annual Sustainable Development Awards night. A total of 70 Awards were awarded to various tidy towns groups, community groups, resident associations and schools. The awards include Tidy Main Streets Awards and Tidy Estates..

The council implement waste prevention fund initiatives through schemes like Relove Fashion, Rubbish Film Festival, Brown bin caddy campaign at Tinahely Show, PPN roadshow events and Bray Area Partnership Climate Action event.

In the annual Relove Fashion initiative, six secondary schools from Wicklow registered in 2024. Students participated

by designing a one-of-a-kind sustainable fashion piece in which a student from Loreto Bray achieved the overall winner.

Transition year students from 10 Wicklow schools took part in the 2024 Rubbish Film Festival, during which each schools learns how to make a short film on waste reduction. The EA office supports this initiative and also judges the entries.

With the aim of promoting active travel and the circular economy, 8 Bike Repair Workshops were run throughout the county in autumn 2024. The courses were led by an instructor from Bray Wheelers Cycling Club and were open to all.

Our annual tree planting grant was awarded to 11 community groups and resident associations. A total of 800 native and non-natives trees handed out as part of National Tree Week to 35 groups within the County.

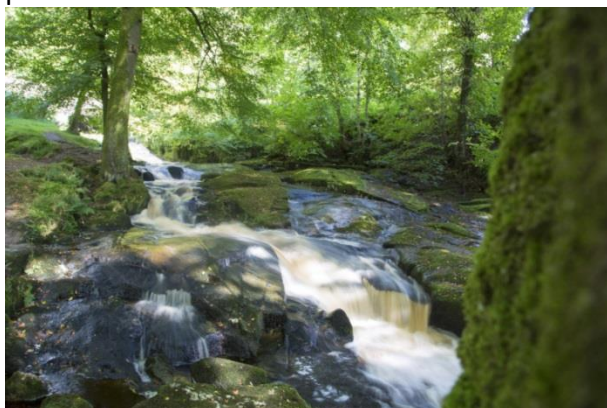
## Water & Wastewater Quality – Pollution Control & Enforcement

Wicklow County Council monitored drinking water and natural waters and wastewater and controlled pollution in accordance with legislation and EU regulations. Wicklow County Council also continued to monitor public drinking water and public wastewater behalf of Uisce Eireann.

## Laboratory Services & Pollution Control

The laboratory services and pollution team were active in a range of areas to promote, protect and improve the quality of our environment and water resources in County Wicklow. The team plan and

RMCEI (recommended minimum criteria for environmental inspections) formed the basis of prioritizing the work activities such as monitoring, complaint investigation, assessment and enforcement, as guided by departmental plan and committed resources.



Wicklow County Council continued to participate on the regional management and operational committees and engage with the Environmental Protection Agency, LA Water Programmes Offices, Community Groups and other stakeholders tasked with the implementation of the River Basin Management Plan for Ireland -The Water Action Plan 2024 which was signed by the Minister in 2024.



The monitoring of drinking water, river and lakes, and emissions to air and water and investigation of complaints continued during 2024.

## Air Quality

A total of 8 new air quality complaints were received and investigated in 2024 and 10 existing complaints were closed.

A total of 40 inspections of retailers under the Solid Fuel Regulations 2022 were carried out in the fuel burning season. 10 solid fuel samples were taken for analysis.

Wicklow County Council installed an air quality monitor at Arklow (a Decarbonisation Zone) monitoring PM2.5 and PM10 levels as a Climate Action. Reviews of data from the three monitors in County Wicklow (Bray and Greystones operated by EPA and Arklow operated by WCC) regularly indicate that air quality is good.

## Noise

A total of 12 new noise complaints were received and investigated in 2024 and 20 existing complaints were closed.

## Natural Waters

100% of planned sampling of rivers and lakes were monitored with 393 river and 97 lake samples taken. The Council worked on 27 engagement activities in 2024. This included public water quality talks such as briefing the IFA Wicklow on water quality, engaging with LAWPRO on desk studies and issues in PAAs, responding to public water quality queries etc.



## Agriculture

39 farm inspections were carried out in 2024 to check on farm practices to prevent water pollution. The review and approval process of Nutrient Management Plans for bio-solids focused on spread-land maps, buffer restrictions, soil type, soil quality, soil nutrient status, local topography, watercourses and the vulnerability of the groundwater.

## Wastewater Discharges

Wicklow County Council carried out 55 septic tank inspections in the required risk zones in 2024 with a compliance rate of 58% with 73% non-compliances closed out in the same year. The public are encouraged to inspect and maintain their septic tanks regularly.

Wicklow County Council carried out 60 inspections of wastewater treatment plant serving businesses such as hotels, caravans and commercial operation in 2024 with 40% requested to take corrective actions.

## Private Drinking Water

The Council continued to monitor the 117 private supplies in operation, ranging from B&B's, Hotels, Schools, Caravan Parks, Golf Clubs, Cafe's, and Crèches, and these details are recorded in our Private Drinking Water Supply Register. Where the quality did not meet the standards, the suppliers were issued with advisory letters to address the issues and notices to protect consumer's health.

## Bathing Waters

There are six designated bathing waters in county Wicklow. The monitoring of these beaches including three blue flag beaches at Greystones, Brittas Bay North, and Brittas Bay South, and many other commonly used bathing areas continued in 2024. 117 samples of bathing waters were taken and 32 samples of river flowing into bathing water were also taken. The bathing water monitoring results are displayed at the beaches and on the [beaches.ie](https://beaches.ie) website through the bathing water season which runs from 1st June to 15<sup>th</sup> September each year. The bathing water quality at the six identified bathing waters and eight other bathing areas was predominantly excellent in 2024 although there were periods when the water quality was lower, due to rainfall events, which necessitated the placing of notices to protect the health of bathers, on some bathing waters during the season.

## Blue Flag Beaches



Wicklow County Council retained the Blue Flag award in three beaches in 2024: Brittas Bay South, Brittas Bay North & Greystones South Beach. The Blue Flag is

one of the world's most recognised symbols of cleanliness and quality. In order to qualify for the Blue Flag, a series of stringent environmental, educational and safety criteria must be reached.

### Waste Enforcement

The Waste Management Section is dedicated to enforcing Waste Management legislation within County Wicklow. The Team investigate waste and litter complaints and take enforcement action where deemed necessary. Inspections are carried out in varying sectors including WEEE and battery Inspections, farm plastics, waste permitted facilities, C&D waste and inspections in relation to the extractive industry with a view to determining compliance with waste management legislation.

### Waste Enforcement

Local Authority Waste Enforcement Measures Grant Scheme – Funding - €208,544.00 for expenditure on the engagement of four full time dedicated Waste Enforcement Officers.

### 2023 Waste Management Statistics

No of Complaints received 2024	1670
No of Waste Warning Letters Issued	111
No of Section 14 Directions Issued to occupiers who failed to keep their property free from waste	120
No of Section 18 Notices issued directing that information be given to the Council in respect of Waste Issues	11
No of Abandoned Vehicle Notices Issued	135
No of Fixed Payment Notices Issued under the Waste Permit Collection Regulations	19

No of Litter Fines Issued	93
No of Waste Management Files Opened for various breaches of the Waste Management Act 1996, e.g., mismanagement and/or illegal storage of waste, illegal dumping etc	44
Fines issued under the Segregation, Storage and Presentation of Household and Commercial Waste By-Laws 2018	7
Court Hearings under the Litter Pollution Act 1997, as amended	15
Court Hearings under the Waste Management Act 1996, as amended	25



### Anti-Dumping Initiative

Last year the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications made funding available through the Waste Enforcement Regional Lead Authorities (WERLA) to support projects through the Anti-Dumping Initiative (ADI).

The aim of the ADI is to fund projects which tackle problems using a collaborative approach involving local authorities and communities to eradicate litter blackspots and increase awareness of best practices in litter and waste management and minimisation. In summary, the focus of the ADI is on prevention, abatement, education and enforcement of anti-litter initiatives.

Wicklow County Council successfully submitted a number of proposals for funding under this initiative which included a bulky waste collection, a Plastic Bottle Awareness Scheme via the provision of Water Refill Stations and an Environmental Awareness Campaign Across Multiple Media.

Separate to the ADI's a hazardous waste collection was also carried out in partnership with the Regional Waste Management Planning Office

## PURE (Protecting Uplands & Rural Environments)

The Pure (Protecting Upland & Rural Environments) Project is an environmental partnership project which incorporates statutory and non-statutory organisations including Wicklow County Council, South Dublin County Council, Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council Coillte, National Parks & Wildlife Service and the Wicklow Uplands Council.

The Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) provides financial assistance to support the Pure Project in respect of litter pollution.

The Pure Project is operated by Wicklow Uplands Council with assistance from Wicklow County Council, as the lead local authority involved in the project.

The Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications funded the purchase of new truck which came into service during 2024.



## Recycling Facilities

In addition to the five recycling centres, there are 41 standalone bottle bank locations throughout the County that collect Glass, Drink Cans and Food Cans. The tonnages collected at the recycling centres and bring banks are set out below.

Product Category	Total Recycling Centres Tonnes (UOS)	Bottle Banks Tonnes (UOS)
Glass	1,078.98	2,422.73
Aluminium Cans	29.71	33.99
Steel Cans	47.51	34.96
Cardboard & Paper Products	1,298.74	
Mixed Plastic Bottles / Containers	107.77	
WEEE - Electrical	734.20	
WEEE - FL Tubes & Blubs	4.40	
Batteries - All Types	33.30	
Paint	178.68	
Engine Oil (Shown as 1,000 litres)	16.58	
Other Hazardous Water	4.12	
Scrap Metal	275.89	
Polystyrene	11.73	
Plate Glass	48.62	
Cooking Oil - Shown as 1,000 litres	9.88	
Textiles	203.39	64.33
Total	4,083.50	2,556.01
Total - Non liquids	4,057.04	2,556.01
Total - Liquids	26.46	-

## Whitestown Remediation Project

The draft remediation plan was presented to the court and was approved in part. The process to develop the Tender Documents for Landfill Capacity and the Main Contract commenced in Q4 2023.

## Avoca Mines Remediation Project

The Council worked in Partnership with DECC to advance the Remediation of the Avoca Mines project. The work primarily involved making the mines sites safe, by replacing fencing and making safe access to locations that require sampling and monitoring, and is covered by a grant agreement with the Department.

## Arklow Flood Relief Scheme

Planning approval and CPO was granted by An Bord Pleanála in July 2022 for the scheme. WCC appointed a lead consultant (Ayesa) in December 2023, to develop and implement the Flood Relief Scheme for Arklow. The design team (Ayesa) are currently developing the detailed design for the project. A considerable amount of data is required to complete the detailed design which includes topographical/utility surveys, geophysical surveys & site investigation works. WCC have appointed all contractors required for the completion of the design stage works. The site Investigation works which includes archaeological testing and monitoring is now complete within the Marsh area and the streets of Arklow. 2025 will see the completion of the design stage and the appointment of the main contractor for the Flood Relief Scheme.

## Burial Grounds

There are 34 active and 40 closed burial grounds under the control of Wicklow County Council.

Wicklow County Council employs part time Burial Ground Registrars responsible for the sale of plots and the recording of interments at each of the active burial grounds.

The Burial Ground Registrars also maintain the relevant records for the burial grounds, liaise with undertakers and families and some partake in voluntary maintenance and upkeep of burial grounds.

Each Municipal District is responsible for the maintenance of the burial grounds within their district.

## Columbarium Wall

Columbarium Walls provide a suitable resting place within a cemetery for the placing of cremated remains. The wall is divided into niches with a front panel

A Columbarium Wall was constructed in St. Gabriel's Cemetery, Arklow in 2023.

## Harbours and Ports

A Bed-Levelling campaign was completed in Wicklow Harbour during the Summer of 2024 increasing the average depth of the shipping channel from 2.3m Chart Datum to 3.1m Chart Datum.

A Harbour Infrastructure Needs Scoping Study for both Wicklow and Arklow Harbours was completed in 2024.

The East Pier Lighthouse in Wicklow Harbour was stripped back to bare masonry and a marine grade paint applied uncovering the original stone blockwork surrounding the door in the process, ensuring the preservation of the lighthouse for many years to come.

The waste storage areas at both Wicklow Port and Arklow Harbour underwent comprehensive refurbishment. At WicklowPort, new fencing was installed, while a new concrete pad was poured at Arklow Harbour. These upgrades enhance the functionality, security and efficiency of the waste management facilities at both locations.

Wickow County Council was pleased to support the SSE Renewables Round Ireland Yacht Race, held in June 2024. A big thank you to our dedicated Harbours

Team and Wicklow Municipal District Staff who worked around the clock to ensure Wicklow Harbour was in pristine condition for the start of the race.

## Shipping Movements / Cargo Statistics

83 ships visited Wicklow Port in 2024 for import/export activities.



## Veterinary Services

The Service contract with Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) continued throughout 2024 with ongoing supervision of low throughput abattoirs and meat manufacturing premises (14 in total)

Ante & post-mortem inspections; hygiene inspections & audits; animal welfare; microbiological sampling (food, water & swabs); chemical analysis (sulphites,

nitrites, allergens & speciation); veterinary medicine residue analysis all continued throughout 2024.

## Dog Control

The Council continued its Service Level Agreement with the ISPCA for the operation of the pound and implementation of the Control of Dogs legislation under SLA

Dog Pound at Wicklow SPCA site in Ballygannonmore, Rathdrum

2 Dog Wardens & 1 part-time Kennel Assistant

Charge for 2023 - €189,683

Statistics 2024	
Surrendered	8
Stray	147
Reclaimed by owner	57
Rehomed	23
Transferred to Animal Welfare Groups	65
PTS	18
Died of natural causes	0
Dog Licences Issued	7751
On the spot fines	91
Reports of Aggressive behaviour by dog	83
Report of Livestock worrying	8



During 2024 Wicklow County Council continued to participate in the Wicklow Multi-Agency Animal Welfare Forum.

#### Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership



#### Overview

Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership was established in 2008, **and is funded and supported by Sport Ireland.**

Representatives from a variety of Agencies, Organisations and Community Groups involved in sport, physical activity, outdoor recreation, and community development make up the **Committee** of Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership.

Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership is advised by a Steering committee that consists of members from the following agencies:

Wicklow County Council, Elected Representatives, County Wicklow Partnership, Children & Young Peoples Services Committee, HSE, Gardaí, KWETB, Wicklow Uplands Council, Healthy Ireland, County Wicklow Network for Older People, NGB Representative, Leisure Providers & the PPN.

The main functions of Wicklow Sports & Recreation include: -

#### Information provision

Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership is involved in the co-ordination of local sports information, initiating research, compiling a sports directory and database, identifying needs and resources to form the basis of local planning, and establishing a consultative sports forum.

#### Education & Training

Wicklow Sports & Recreation provides opportunities for education and training at a local level, including generic training courses in areas such as Safeguarding, First Aid and Active Leadership, while also supporting the delivery of sports specific courses in conjunction with National Governing Bodies of Sport.

#### Implementation

Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership implements a range of national programmes to encourage participation in Sport, Physical Activity & Recreation. Programmes are delivered in areas such as Sports Development, Community Sport and Physical Activity, Schools Sport, Youth Sport and Sport Inclusion. Wicklow Sports and Recreation Partnership will also implement sports programmes in the context of the National Physical Activity Plan, The National Sports Policy, and other relevant Strategic documents.

#### Funding Received 2024

CORE Funding Received:

€426,937

Dormant Account Funding Received:

€98,500

Participation Nation Funding Received:

€105,000

Outdoor Swimming Infrastructure:

€15,000

## Actions undertaken in 2024

Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership continued their Governance journey to maintain compliance with the Sport Ireland Governance code throughout 2023. It is now a requirement to have 40% female representation on sports partnership committees and boards. Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership is well placed with 57% female representation on the committee.

## Club Development Grants

Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership administered €80,000 worth of small club grants to clubs throughout Wicklow, funded by Sport Ireland.

## Katie Taylor Bursary

Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership administers the Katie Taylor Bursary Award that is open to third level students in 1<sup>st</sup> year of college who are excelling in their Sporting career.

## Women in Sport Week

A series of events were organised throughout the county for Women in Sport Week:

Teenage Girl Skating Programme

Orienteering Teacher Training

Women in Sport Walks in Bray and Tinahely

Women in Sport Badminton in Arklow

Women in Sport Pilates in Hollywood

Kickboxing Taster Sessions

Coaching Teenage Girls Workshop



## Physical Activity for Health Pilot

Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership, as part of the Physical Activity for Health pilot programme have provided extensive opportunities for people living with Chronic Conditions to become active, these have included:

Strength and Balance Programmes

Prime Time of Life Programmes

Walk and Talk

Aqua Aerobics for those with Chronic Pain and Arthritis

Aqua Aerobics for people with Parkinsons

Tai Chi for Asthmatics

Forever Fit Women

Chair Yoga for Neuro Conditions

Siel Bleu Classes

Activator Programmes



## Plans

Three draft recreation and sports plans have been drafted for 3 areas in Wicklow:

### Rathdrum

### Hawkstown Road

### Brides Head

The development of a Wicklow Outdoor Recreation Plan began in November 2024, in line with the National Outdoor Recreation Policy.

Summer Camp activity in the IPAS centres funded by CYPSC

In conjunction with the LAIT (Local Authority Integration Team) the sports partnership coordinated summer camp activity for children and young people within the IPAS centres throughout the county.

Activities including Cúl Camps, Basketball Camps, Soccer Camps, Dance Camps and Shoreline Multi Sport Camps were scheduled for the following sites;

### The Grand, Wicklow Town

### Tynte House, Dunlavin

### Dunlavin Lodge

### Rathmore

### Kippure

### The Esplanade

### The Avon

## Bike Week 2024 - May 11th to 19th

Bike Week 2024 in Wicklow was a celebration of inclusivity and accessibility, featuring a wide variety of events catering to individuals of all ages and abilities. A significant part of this inclusivity was reflected in the 11 Learn to Cycle

programmes run across six locations in Wicklow, providing children with essential cycling skills. Mountain E-Bike tours in Balinastoe Woods granted more people the ability to enjoy mountain biking, regardless of their experience or fitness level.

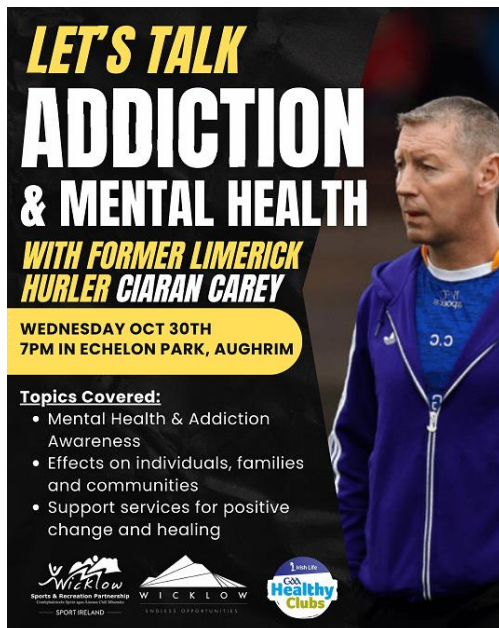
The Blessington Bike Week festival embodied this ethos, offering Learn to Cycle and Balance Bike Taster sessions while featured Blessington's first StreetVelodrome. The StreetVelodrome races, in particular, stood out, bringing the excitement of competitive cycling to a wide audience and proving to be a highlight of the week.

In a move to enhance accessibility, this year's festival extended the free bike promotion to seven days in Blessington, enabling residents and visitors to explore the beauty of the area on two wheels. Additionally, a partnership with Bolt provided a day of free rides on city bikes in Bray, further promoting cycling as a sustainable and accessible mode of transport.



### East Coast Drug and Alcohol Taskforce

In October Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership hosted a Drugs and mental health talk with Ciaran Carey. Almost 30 GAA clubs were represented from all over Wicklow.



**HER Outdoors Week** HER Outdoors Week aims to celebrate and encourage more females to engage in outdoor physical activities, showcasing the wide range of opportunities available in Wicklow.

Her Outdoors Week in Wicklow will run from the 12th to the 18th of August, featuring a variety of activities like scenic walks, social runs, water-based adventures such as surfing, SUP, and kayaking, as well as orienteering, a 3x3 social basketball tournament, and specialised fitness activities like Activator Poles walking.

A key highlight of the week was the Her Outdoors Beach Festival at Greystones

South Beach on Thursday, 15th August, from 5 PM to 8 PM, offering drop-in activities including beach Volleyball, beach rugby 7s, beach tug of war, beach tennis and Olympic Handball and other water-sport activities.

### Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS)

The Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme is part of the Government's Action Plan for Rural Development and provides funding for the development of new outdoor recreational infrastructure or the necessary maintenance, enhancement, or promotion of existing outdoor recreational infrastructure in Ireland. The scheme seeks to support those sporting and recreational pursuits based on use of the resources of the countryside that contribute to healthy active lifestyles and the economic and tourism potential of the area for both local communities and tourist visitors alike.

Projects applications are accepted annually from Local Authorities, Local Development Companies and/or State Bodies under the scheme, with Match funding provided by them.

The funding available from the Dept. of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) includes:

- Measure 1 - small scale projects requiring funding of up to €30,000.
- Measure 2 - medium scale projects with funding of up to €200,000.
- Measure 3 - large scale projects seeking funding of up to €500,000.
- Project Development Measure (PDM) funding of up to €50,000 for development costs for strategic large-scale projects.

Current Projects under development amount to funding in the region of €3.5m with 23 projects at different stages of completion and some large scale projects due completion in early 2025:

Roundwood Recreation Project – Provision of a recreational area with natural wooden play structures and a cycling circuit for children, with upgraded trails and parking facilities.

The Sugarloaf Repair Scheme – Path upgrade with drainage works, stone pitching at upper trail, native tree planting and upgraded signage and parking facilities.

New projects commencing in 2024:

Lugnaquilla Recreation Plan  
Bray Head Sustainable Recreation Plan  
Hollywood Play Area  
Wicklow Way Resurface (Glencree)  
Knockree Bridge  
Knockamunnion-Stranahely Bridges  
Three Wells & Cushbawn Link  
Wicklow Uplands rebranding to Sugarloaf Way  
Baravore, Glenmalure  
Three Trouts Bridge, Delgany  
Tinahely Loop trail

## **Wicklow Coast Blueway Project**

The Wicklow Coast Blueway is a Wicklow County Council initiative that will recognise, develop and promote the many rowing, swimming, sailing and kayaking opportunities along the Wicklow Coast. This Measure 3 large scale ORIS project expenditure focuses on: improved water access, trailheads and trail links, marketing and signage. Public consultations were conducted to assess

the uses, strengths, and deficits of the offerings of its beaches and coastal

facilities. Currently in the final stage of the formal accreditation as a Blueway by Fáilte Ireland and Sport Ireland, the Wicklow Coast Blueway includes the maritime activity nodes of Bray, Greystones, Kilcoole, Wicklow Town, Brittas Bay and Arklow. New recreation facilities have been added and include:

*Greystones* – Accessible boardwalk installed at South Beach.

*Brittas Bay* – Accessible toilet, upgraded toilets, new larger water tank and new outdoor shower facilities. Car park upgrade.

*Wicklow Harbour area*: upgraded path and toilet facilities. New outdoor showers installed.

*Arklow* – New path completed at South Beach. Cove area - planters with shrubs installed along the Roadstone site fence by the car park. Installation of a changing screen with seating area, bike shelter and replacement of picnic benches to be completed in early 2025.

Blueway promotion and links have commenced during 2024, with a timetable of events and activity providers listed on their website. Information boards and Blueway accredited signage will be installed at all 6 nodes in early 2025, followed by the formal Blueway accreditation and its official opening.

## **Glenmalure Recreation Area**



**Sugarloaf Repair Project**



**Kilmacanogue Nature trail**



**North Wicklow trails**



**Red Kite Loop Natural Play Area**





## Archives

Wicklow County Archives Service holds a unique collection of Wicklow records documenting the administration of the County and the people's interaction with these administrations. They offer a rich social and cultural research resource for the family and local historian, as well as academics and researchers of wide and varying interests. Earliest records date from the 17<sup>th</sup> century, offering a snapshot of Wicklow life in the mid-1600s. The County Archives also holds the records of the Grand Jury, the precursor of the

County Council, as well as the Boards of Guardians of the Poor Law Unions, Boards of Health, Rural District Councils, Town and County Councils as well as private collections of family, estate and business records.

## Genealogy Service

The County Archives offers a genealogy research service, researching and advising those with Wicklow roots, and promoting County Wicklow as a key destination to those on the "roots trail". The Archives' parish records database establishes family lines and documents family connections with the history and landscape of County Wicklow. The County Archives is a member of the Irish Family History Foundation and [www.rootsireland.ie](http://www.rootsireland.ie).

## Archives & Genealogy Programme 2024

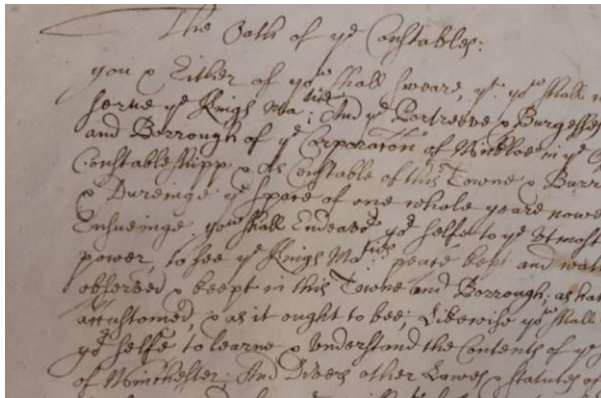
### Digitisation projects

Two projects were completed in 2024. County Wicklow Valuation books (1887-1892) and the Wicklow Borough Corporation minute book (1662-1707). Both collections are now digitised and accessible on [Wicklow.ie](http://Wicklow.ie). Digitised and online to date on the Council's website are: Wicklow Grand Jury Records; Wicklow County Council Minute Books; Arklow, Bray and Wicklow UDC Minutes; County Wicklow Workhouse Records and Rathdrum Board of Guardians minutes. The County Archives' digitisation programme was a finalist in the Ireland eGovernment Awards 2024 in the Open Data category.

### Conservation Programme

Programme of archives conservation continues with repairs and conservation

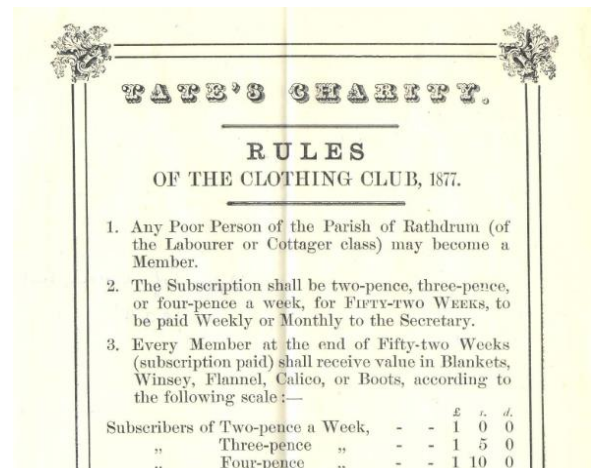
of the County Archive's oldest collection, the Wicklow Borough Corporation Minute Books which date from the 1600s.



### Schools Programme

As part of the Archives Service schools programme, the archivist welcomes school groups to visit and explore the collections. The Archives has developed a Schools Resource Pack in line with the senior cycle history curriculum: *Wicklow Archives Guide to the Leaving Certificate History Research*, including a suite of digital resources for teachers and students. The archivist also continued to visit and present these resources to Wicklow secondary schools in 2024.

### Special projects: Heritage Council Stewardship Fund 2024



*John Tate's Charity Archive Collection* was a special archives project completed in 2024 with the support of the Heritage Council. This project features an exhibition, archival catalogue and digital resources. Founded as a bequest in the will of John Tate of Glenmalur in 1787, the charity's records were donated to the County Archives by the board of trustees. Remarkably, the charity is still in operation, providing assistance to third-level students through interest-free loans. Former trustees of the charity include Charles Stewart Parnell and other well-known families, such as the Hayes family, who originally built Avondale, the Actons of Kilmacurragh and the Guinness family.

### Special projects: Irish Community Archives Network – Our Wicklow Heritage

The online community archives network [wicklowheritage.org](http://wicklowheritage.org) is Wicklow County Council's partnership project with the National Museum of Ireland and the Heritage Council. The Wicklow network is a shared project of the Heritage, Archives

and Local Studies services. The network expanded in 2024 with new Wicklow community groups joining from Blessington, Roundwood, Wicklow and Tinahely. The new sites were launched in Roundwood in December 2024, bringing the total number of groups on the Wicklow ICAN network to ten, as well as the county site, which is managed by the Heritage, Local Studies and Archives services of Wicklow County Council.



### Events: Wicklow's Famine Commemoration at Coollattin House

The Archives Service organised an event at Coollattin House to mark National Famine Commemoration Day on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2024. The National Famine Commemoration Committee was first established in 2008 and is chaired by the Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media. Coollattin House was the Irish residence of the Earls Fitzwilliam who owned 85 thousand acres of land mainly in Co Wicklow and the Fitzwilliams assisted over 1000 people to emigrate to Canada during and after the Famine. The commemoration event was supported by historians Kevin and Eleanor

Lee and a dedicated group of local volunteers and was kindly hosted by the owners of Coollattin House. The programme of events included addresses by Leas Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Councillor Gail Dunne and Cathaoirleach of Baltinglass Municipal District Councillor Edward Timmins as well as an historical lecture, exhibition and music.

### Events: Cruinniú na nÓg 2024

Creative writing and illustration workshops with author Carmel Kelly and illustrator Jimmy Burns in Wicklow Archives. The children learned about writing and drawing a book for young readers, based on the new children's book *Wicklow Gaol: Three Centuries of Incredible Irish History*. This publication was developed by the Archives as part of Wicklow County Council's *Decade of Centenaries* programme and distributed to all Wicklow libraries and primary schools both in English agus as Gaelige. The Archives also supported two rounds of the popular workshops to school children in libraries in each MD in 2024.

### Events: Heritage Week 2024

County Archives presented exhibitions in Tinahely and Carnew libraries on the War of Independence and on the Civil War.

Local historian Therese Hicks presented a talk in Wicklow Library on the Archives' Wicklow Borough Corporation minute



book project. Dating from 1662, the minute book is one of the earliest items in the County Archives and is written in old “secretary hand”. Making it accessible for the first time, Hicks transcribed it for the Archives into modern English and this transcription and supporting resources are now on Wicklow.ie. The minute book opens a door into the world of Wicklow Town as it developed in the 17th and 18th centuries, detailing the proceedings of the meetings of the town burgesses. Available on [wicklowheritage.org](http://wicklowheritage.org)

### Records Management

The Archives Service supports the implementation of the Council’s records management programme with reference to the LGMA’s retention schedules for local authority records.

### Committees/Networks

**County Wicklow Heritage Forum** – to implement the actions of the 2017-22 Wicklow Heritage Plan and develop the new Heritage Plan for 2025-2029.

**Wicklow Culture team** implementing Wicklow Culture and Creativity Strategy 2023-2027

**Local Authority Archivists & Record Managers (LGARM)** – Developing strategic plan for Local Authority Archives. Marking the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Local Government (Ireland) Act, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage collaborated with LGARM to produce a publication on county council archives, charting the evolution of local authorities and the services they provide.

Engaging with the National Archives subgroup **National Centre for Research and Remembrance** (NCCR) regarding the Birth and Information Tracing Act 2022 and Mother and Baby Institutions Payment Scheme Act 2023. Irish Family History Foundation; go to [rootsireland.ie](http://rootsireland.ie)

### Wicklow County Arts Office

County Wicklow has a rich artistic and cultural tradition with a range of vibrant and creative activities taking place in the visual arts, music, theatre, literature, sculpture, socially engaged arts, youth arts, community arts and festivals. Wicklow County Council’s Arts Programme is designed to nurture and develop this rich tradition and to ensure that the Arts are made accessible to all in the county.

### Annual Arts Act Funding Scheme

The Artist Award, the Artist & Community Collaboration Award and the Arts Festival Award Schemes target artistic practice in all disciplines by people and groups that are from or based in County Wicklow. In 2024, funding in the amount of €112,164 was made available to support these schemes.

### Artist Award

The objective of this Artist Award is to assist artists in development their practice and to make a significant contribution to

the professional life of artists from, or living in, County Wicklow. Fifteen successful applicants received a combined total of €50,064 funding in 2024.

## (2) Arts Festival Award

Applications were received to support high quality programmes by local, national, and international artists presented within County Wicklow. The predominant art form presented within the festivals was music. Other events included dance and storytelling. The five successful festival applicants received a combined funding in the amount of €43,600 in 2024.

## (3) Artist & Community Collaboration Award

The objective of this Artist & Community Collaboration Award is to support artists and community groups to realize an arts project or programme to support their artistic development. Applications were accepted for a research and development phase of a new initiative or for the production/ implementation of a new arts project or programme. Four projects were selected for 2024 with total funding in the amount of €18,500.

## Strategic Projects Awards

The Strategic Projects Awards Scheme is designed to support the development of new work and delivery of new high-quality projects in Wicklow by both residents of

County Wicklow and those from outside the county. The ten projects selected for delivery in 2024 were as follows:

**Aine Stapleton:** creation of a short film delving into the vibrant dance history of Monte Verità, a pivotal site in the early evolution of modern dance

**Brian Murphy:** a youth collaboration to produce a Wicklow based 5 episode web series film 'Perdu' conceived by Paul Flynn.

**Signal Arts Centre:** deliver 'Art at the Kitchen Table', a programme which supports older people or people confined to their living space to make art in their own homes.

**Grace O'Malley:** develop and workshop a script for a new play centred on Una O'Higgins O'Malley's life story and search for reconciliation

**Kate Strain:** commission ten Wicklow-based artists to undertake the creative documentation of Kunstverein Aughrim's ambitious 2024 artistic programme

**Robert Manson:** write, produce and direct a feature length experimental art documentary about the deconstruction of 500 year old Ballyrogan House.

**West Wicklow Chamber Music Festival:** develop the capacity and expand the reach of the festival's education and outreach programme.

**Eamon Sweeney:** development with collaborators of a new musical titled 'Night-Light'.

**Aisling Ennis:** working with collaborators to explore the potential of lecture-recital Fairy Harp: Ceol Sí within the context of early years / younger audiences. Concert

performance for children in every Co. Wicklow library.

**Eoin O'Malley:** programme a community wheel painting event 'TRACKS'. 'Mark Making' will be executed not by pencil, brush or hand held tool but by wheels. TRACKS will reach out across all ages and abilities

The appointment of artists to this Scheme works one year in advance. The total investment for projects delivered in 2024 was €102,555.



Photo by Freddie Greenhall

Artist Eoin O'Malley at his wheel painting event TRACKS in Baltinglass 2024

## Public Art

The Per Cent for Art Scheme is a government funded programme whereby an additional fund of up to 1% of the cost of publicly funded infrastructure of building, can be applied for by the client (typically a local authority, school, hospital, the National Roads Authority, the OPW) to commission original, site and context specific works of art. The fund is available across all government departments and supports the

commissioning of artists and artworks across all contemporary art forms.

Tenders were invited in late 2022 for proposals for the commissioning of a public artwork installation for the Knockroe Bends on the N81. Stage 1 of the assessment of applications took place in January 2023, Stage 2 assessments were completed in February 2023 with the successful applicant being selected. Stage 3 of the project is underway.

## Creative Places Baltinglass

Following a successful application led by the Arts Office in partnership with local community development organisations in Baltinglass and West Wicklow in 2022, the people of Baltinglass continued to benefit from an investment programme, awarded by the Arts Council, to develop and sustain new creative opportunities for all age groups until June 2025.

Creative Places is an opportunity for locations which had not benefitted from sustained arts investment in the past, to build local arts programmes which will benefit the people of the community. Programmes are designed with an inclusive, socially engaged approach to build upon the existing local cultural strengths, led by community participation and ideas, and supported by artists.

In 2024, Creative Places Baltinglass delivered a range of events and initiatives including: artist gatherings, community choir sessions, artist residencies, special

Cruinniú na nÓg and Culture Night programmes. Four artists were awarded funding under the 2024 'Seed Funding Scheme'.

Wicklow County Council's Art Office and the Coordinator will continue to enable the Baltinglass community to engage in conversations aimed at exploring and planning a range of creative and participatory projects for local people to take part in and enjoy in 2025.



### Culture Night

Wicklow County Arts Office commissioned, collaborated and supported an exciting programme of events and activities in over 14 locations across the County Wicklow to celebrate Culture Night in 2024.

With an estimated 3,500 people in attendance across all 30 events, the Wicklow County programme featured a diverse range of events and happenings purposefully selected to open pathways to creativity. The Wicklow Culture Night programme regularly featured in local press and radio in the lead up to the event day 20th September 2024.



Culture Night at 'The Colour Club' Arklow

### Coaching & Mentoring

The Arts Office provided the opportunity to thirteen selected Wicklow based artists to avail of One-to-One personalized coaching/mentoring sessions with one of four experienced professional coaches. This service was designed to foster personal, professional, and artistic growth; the sessions provide a secure and open environment for artists to explore their experiences, aspirations, and potential areas for development. Through this collaborative journey, participants could identify goals, create informed and sustainable plans, and gain the confidence to realize their strategies.

The opportunity was open to artists at any career level, the initiative being aimed at providing direction, energy, and creative resilience for those seeking positive change and growth in their artistic journey.

A funding clinic for artists/community groups interested in applying for the Artist Awards or the Artist & Community Collaboration Award schemes was held in

January 2025, presented by Marianne O’Kane Boal.

A ‘Festival’ clinic presented by professional coach Helen Meany, was also provided for those involved in the programming /production of County Wicklow based small arts festivals.

Under the Irish Writers Centre, National Mentorship programme 2024, Wicklow Arts Office funded two bursaries for County Wicklow based writers in the amount of €3,000.

Under the Theatre Forum ‘Artists Gathering 2024’, Wicklow Arts Office funded two bursaries for Wicklow based artists in the amount of €800. Total funding for 2024 coaching /mentoring/ clinics /bursaries: €23,334.

## Creative Ireland

The Creative Ireland Programme is guided by a vision that every person in Ireland will have the opportunity to realize their full creative potential. It is a five year all-of-Government initiative that places creativity at the center of public policy. In 2023, Wicklow County Council’s Arts Office launched the Wicklow Culture and Creativity Strategy for 2023-2027. The investment by Creative Ireland in Wicklow County Council Arts Office programmes for 2024 was €253,000.

Arts Office programmes funded through Creative Ireland funding:

## Cruinniú na nÓg

Cruinniú na nÓg, the national day of free creativity for children and young people, returned to County Wicklow on Saturday 15th June 2024. Wicklow County Council’s Arts Office programmed more than 40 activities, events, and workshops in nine locations across County Wicklow including: Arklow, Blessington, Baltinglass, Bray, Dunlavin, Greystones, Rathdrum, Tinahely and Wicklow Town.

Wicklow County Council’s Arts Office partnered with Wicklow Library Services, Mermaid Arts Centre, The Whale Theatre, Tinahely Courthouse Arts Centre, Arklow Music and Arts, along with Community Groups and Wicklow Artists to devise a dynamic programme which engaged an estimated 1,500 children and young people in County Wicklow.



Face painting workshop as part of Cruinniú na nÓg, Baltinglass, 2024

## The Wicklow Music Teaching Residency

The fourth edition of Wicklow Music Teaching Residency, a partnership between the Wicklow County Arts Office and Music Network concluded in April 2024. The focus of the project is to



encourage residents of County Wicklow aged 55 and over to return to playing an instrument and share the joy of group music-making. Participants received free one-to-one and group tuition with relevant musicians on a variety of musical instruments under the guidance of the 'Rossana Trio' comprising renowned musicians Mark Redmond (uilleann pipes, whistle, and flute), Lynda O'Connor (violin/fiddle) and Robbie Walsh (bodhrán). Instruments were provided where needed for the duration of the project. Based in Wicklow County Campus, Clermont, for its duration the Residency received 39 applications for 15 places on the programme. The selected participants were from across Co. Wicklow including Arklow, Ballynerrin, Wicklow Town, Roundwood, Glenealy, Kilpedder, Delgany, Bray, Enniskerry and Greystones.



**SESSION 55**

'Session 55' – A traditional Irish Music Group that formed following their participation in the Music Teaching Residency for the over 55's.

## Creative Wicklow Grants

In 2024, Wicklow County Council's Culture Team invited applications under the Creative Wicklow Grant Scheme. This scheme was put in place to support Wicklow County Council's role in the delivery of the Creative Ireland Programme.

Applications were invited from not-for-profit organizations, local community groups, arts, heritage and cultural groups, venues, and societies. Applications by individuals had to be in partnership with a community, cultural or heritage group. Fourteen applications were selected to receive funding.

## Choral Activation

In 2023, Wicklow County Council's Arts Office launched the 'Sing in Wicklow' website and the 'Sing in Wicklow' funding Award.

The 'Sing in Wicklow' website provide a base for all Wicklow choirs to help promote their work, events, achievements, and recruitment drives for new members and to support a countywide choral network.

The 'Sing in Wicklow Award' supports choirs across the County to participate in workshops and choir competitions, facilitate inter-choir collaborations (such as performances, peer-learning and networking), recruitment of new members, and purchase essential equipment and instruments. A total of 14 applications were received in 2024 of which 6 were successful.



'Voices of Bray' community choir

### Wicklow Sings Festival

The Wicklow Sings Festival took place on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2024 in Greystones and brought together many of the best choirs in County Wicklow, boasting voices from over 300 people from all corners of the county. This is a pivotal event in the Wicklow Arts event calendar, bringing together passionate singers and concert goers from across Wicklow to celebrate choral music. Supporting 'Wicklow Sings Festival' fulfills a key priority in Wicklow's Culture & Creativity Strategy 2023 – 2027 thanks to Creative Ireland funding.

### Bray Library Afterschool Comic Club

The Bray Library Afterschool Comic Club is a weekly event for children aged 9-12 with diagnosed or suspected Dyslexia. The project has been developed in response to findings from Dyslexia Association of Ireland research that parents of children with Dyslexia have identified as a priority - the need for self-esteem developing activities.

The pilot project ran in 2022 and received highly positive feedback from the schools involved. The success of the pilot saw a second iteration rolled out in 2023 which was extended county-wide for Children's

Book Festival through a 'zine' workbook produced with assistance from Teen Comic Club that contains some of the drawing prompts enjoyed by the groups. The third project in the series was deployed in 2024.

The aim of the project is to encourage a regular creative practice of self-expression among the participants, as well as to develop a community of peers with shared experience of neurodivergence.



Participants at the Afterschool's Comic Club

### Mobile Music Machine - Covid Care Concerts

Mobile Music Machine

'Covid Care Concerts' was an initiative created by acclaimed Irish cellist Gerald Peregrine. The project was initially conceived in response to the many social and economic challenges created by Covid-19. Wicklow County Council first piloted the Covid Care Concerts 2020.

The 2024 concert series consisted of 20 concerts performed in five residential care home facilities across County Wicklow between April and October 2024.

Each concert showcased a different group of renowned classical musicians and singers performing and presenting a new programme of music. The performance line-up included singers Mary Coughlan, and Niamh Kavanagh; cellist, Gerald Peregrine; Dermot Dunne, Accordion; Vincent Lynch, Piano; soprano Sandra Oman; Simon Morgan, Baritone.



**Mobile Music Machine performance, Wicklow,**

### Rathdrum Placemaking

In September 2024, Music Generation was commissioned to manage and deliver an inclusive music & poetry residency for the children/ youth from three Rathdrum primary schools.

The Residency was designed to provide participants with access to professional music and creative experiences in the classroom. The focus on the work was on participation and inclusion, exploring how the children felt connected to place. It provided a quality learning experience to help students foster an appreciation of music writing and performance, learn new skills and make new connections. This

was an inclusive, classroom based opportunity.

The project will culminate in a vibrant celebration at Cruinniú na nÓg in 2025, showcasing the school children's collective creativity.

### Dargle Days Project

In 2024, funded by Wicklow Arts Office under the Festival Awards Scheme, the Shaking Bog Festival of Art & Nature commissioned a short film 'Dargle Days', a poetic portrait of the Dargle Valley, tracing it from Bray Harbour, across the M11 to Enniskerry, up to the Wicklow uplands beyond Glencree.

The Dargle Days Project is a collaboration between the Shaking Bog Festival and Alan Gilsenan of Yellow Asylum Films and uses the film 'Dargle Days' as a starting point of a programme of events to engage local Wicklow communities with their environment, its history, folklore and nature. The project aims to heighten public awareness of history, as well as instill a deeper appreciation of local folklore, shared heritage, biodiversity and the natural world. This series of events teaches and encourages fresh approaches to consideration, understanding and appreciation of our local environment and community with fresh eyes, suggesting simple techniques to enable a more intimate engagement with the world around us. It focuses on our sense of place and our sense of identity - both individually and collectively.

The project consists of a multi-disciplinary programme of events which will take

place in the Bray/ Enniskerry area and its environs, embracing the whole community, across all social strata and involve the participation of a wide range of diverse communities.

## Story Trails

Story Trails is a collaborative project by Wicklow Library Service and Wicklow Arts Office. The aim is to provide children and their families an opportunity to read a picture book and enjoy being outdoors at the same time.

The story trails are designed to bring children's books to life, placing illustrated versions of 'The Lonely Beast' series of stories by Irish Author Chris Judge page by page in unique locations for all to enjoy.

The stories are printed on metal plates and in 2024 these stories were rotated so that the communities of Vartry in Roundwood, Greystones and Baltinglass had progression in the story series. The trails were also updated with some maintenance to make them more secure and aesthetically pleasing.

## Library Service

Wicklow County Council Library Service provides a wide range of services and facilities, across its 13-branch library network. The mobile library also visits 32 locations on a fortnightly basis. In addition to borrowing & lending books, DVDs, talking books and music CDs, the following services are available:

- Online stock, such as e-books, e-magazines, downloadable audio books, e-newspapers from across the world, e-languages and self-learning courses

- Classroom Sets

- Public computers

- Wi Fi for the public to use their laptops, tablets or devices

- Online catalogue of all 330 libraries in Ireland

- Twice weekly request service delivery and collection of stock from those 330 libraries – directly to each branch

All above is free, and there are no longer any library fines for overdue items.

## Statistical Returns

In 2024, Wicklow's library saw more visitors than in 2023, with a total of 613,574 visits. This means that over 25% of the local population became members of the library that year, bringing the service closer to its goal of reaching 30% membership.

Wicklow libraries are in the top three in the country in terms of library visits, items issued and Borrowbox issues per head of population.

These figures have been achieved due to Wicklow County Council's continued commitment to libraries coupled with staff buy in to attractive programming that makes each library a valued space in the community.



## "Library Without Walls" – Taking Knowledge Beyond Our Doors

Library outreach is more than just extending services—it's about breaking down walls and bringing the library into the heart of the community. It's about stepping outside our buildings, listening to people's needs, and meeting them where they are. It's not just about offering books; it's about starting conversations, building connections, and ensuring that everyone, no matter their circumstances, has access to knowledge, resources, and support. Outreach means looking outside the walls of the library for ways to provide

services to those who are unable to come to the library, or to those who are unserved or underserved.

By actively engaging with marginalised and isolated groups, we ensure the equitable delivery of library services to all who need them. Our outreach efforts also focus on securing funding opportunities and targeting underserved communities, including minority groups, older people experiencing isolation, migrants, members of the Travelling community, unemployed individuals, and people with disabilities. Through strategic partnerships, funding initiatives, and tailored programs, we are committed to making Wicklow Library Service an inclusive resource for lifelong learning, digital literacy, and social connection for all.

In 2024, Wicklow Library Service continued to expand beyond traditional spaces, reaching non-users and ensuring that our facilities are inclusive, accessible, and responsive to community needs. Through strategic funding and collaboration, we have successfully introduced new initiatives that enhance digital literacy, accessibility, and community engagement.

## Enhancing Accessibility with Dormant Accounts Fund (DAF) Support





Wicklow Library Service successfully secured €13,494.57 in funding from the Dormant Accounts Fund (DAF) in June, 2024. The Fund focused on providing assistive technologies and furniture to help people with disabilities and other marginalised groups access library services.



With this funding, Wicklow Library Service introduced a range of specialist equipment to create a more welcoming and user-friendly environment for all members of the community, including visually impaired patrons, elderly users, individuals with physical disabilities, and other marginalised groups. The new equipment includes visually impaired keyboards and trackball mice, improving digital accessibility; ergonomic height-adjustable desks and chairs, creating comfortable and accessible reading and study spaces; and Age-Friendly trolleys for all branches, which have received excellent feedback from patrons.

These enhancements have transformed our libraries into more inclusive community hubs, ensuring that everyone, regardless of ability, can fully participate in library services.

## **Expanding Digital Literacy through Collaboration and Funding Opportunities**

In addition to improving physical accessibility, Wicklow Library Service successfully secured €21,000 in funding from the Adult Literacy for Life (ALL) Collaboration and Innovation Fund in July 2024. Wicklow Library Service acted as Lead Partner in a very successful collaboration with Kildare Wicklow Education and Training Board (KWETB) to roll out our DigiLit programme (one-to-one digital skills clinics in Arklow, Blessington, Greystones, and Wicklow Town libraries). The project took place over an eight week period from September to December last year. This initiative was highly successful, with 230 participants taking part in digital skills training over the four locations, empowering individuals to, develop essential digital literacy skills, gain confidence in using technology and online resources, and access library services more effectively in an increasingly digital world.

By improving accessibility and digital literacy, our library service continues to break down barriers and reach non-users who may have previously struggled to engage with our facilities. Through targeted outreach, innovative funding

initiatives, and strong community partnerships, we are bringing the library beyond its walls and ensuring that all members of our community can access the resources and supports they need. As we move forward, we remain committed to expanding our outreach efforts, developing new partnerships, and continuing to adapt to the changing needs of our diverse communities.

## Community Engagement and Library Outreach

In 2024, Wicklow Library Service strengthened its outreach efforts to ensure accessibility and engagement with underserved communities.

Our Mobile Library Service continued to provide vital access to books and resources for schools and residents in rural and socially isolated areas. It served as a lifeline for those without access to a physical library. The Mobile library participated in key community outreach events in 2024 such as the Shelton Abbey Prison Open Day and the Tihanely Agricultural Show.

Community Information Sessions were delivered by the Outreach Librarian to organisations such as Citizens Information Office in Bray, Bray Area Partnership, County Wicklow Partnership, and Ukrainian Hubs in Bray and Wicklow, increasing awareness of library services and strengthening community connections.

Throughout 2024, Wicklow Library Service hosted information stalls at Ballywaltrim Community Centre, Little Bray Community Centre, and Little Flower Hall offering visitors details on library services, resources, events, and activities available across our branch network. Attending these community fairs also provided library staff with valuable opportunities to connect with other organisations and support groups, strengthening partnerships and enhancing community engagement.

Wicklow Library Service participated in the Public Participation Network (PPN) Roadshow, held across five Municipal Districts during Social Inclusion Week in October, 2024. The Roadshow brought together over 90 community services, providing a platform for networking, collaboration, and showcasing the wide range of supports available to the community.



Migrant language support initiatives: In June 2024, Wicklow Town library welcomed a large group of over 30 ESOL (English for speakers of other languages) students and their tutors from the local

Adult Education Centre. The students were given a tour of the library and its services, followed by tea, coffee, and refreshments. The visit was very successful and helped to foster engagement and community connection. As a result of this, more visits are planned for 2025. Also in June, a group of 14 members of the Ukrainian Hub in Bray and their support workers visited Bray Library for a tour and a talk about library services.



English conversation groups were expanded across our library branch network, providing vital support for language development, integration, and social inclusion, ensuring that migrants feel welcomed and empowered to engage with their local library services.



These initiatives reflect the library's ongoing commitment to outreach, accessibility, and lifelong learning, ensuring that library services reach and support all members of the community.

## Library of Sanctuary Recognition for all 13 Wicklow Library Branches

In 2024 Wicklow Library was awarded Library of Sanctuary Recognition for its efforts in creating a safe, welcoming space for everyone. This recognition highlights the hard work of the library team in providing more than just books. The library is a community hub where people from all backgrounds can find support, resources, and a sense of belonging.



## Road to the Fleadh 2024

In 2024, Wicklow Libraries played a pivotal role in the lead-up to the Leinster Fleadh Cheoil, which took place in Wicklow Town from July 12th to 14th. To celebrate and promote traditional Irish music, song, and dance, the libraries including the mobile



library hosted a series of events under the banner "Road to the Fleadh."

These events featured performances by students from various Wicklow Comhaltas branches, offering the community a preview of the talent that would be showcased during the Fleadh. For instance, Rathdrum Library hosted a session that welcomed the Leinster Fleadh to Wicklow, encouraging attendees to participate in the upcoming festivities.



The collaboration between Wicklow Libraries and the Leinster Fleadh underscored the importance of cultural engagement and the promotion of Ireland's rich musical heritage. By hosting these events, the libraries not only provided a platform for local musicians but also fostered a deeper connection between the community and the traditional arts.

The success of these initiatives highlighted the vital role that libraries play in cultural

preservation and community engagement, ensuring that the spirit of the Fleadh was felt throughout the year.



## **Invitation to Aras an Uachtarán for Library Staff Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> June for Bloomsday**

Bloomsday, 16 June 1904, is the date immortalised in James Joyce's 1922 novel *Ulysses* and named after the book's protagonist Leopold Bloom.

Each year, the President and Sabina commence their series of summer Garden Parties with a special event to celebrate the work of James Joyce.

The importance of libraries and promoting reading was a key theme of this year's event, with attendees including, amongst others, library staff from across the country.

A contingent of 13 staff from Wicklow Libraries attended the garden party at Áras an Uachtaráin.

The Garden Party itself was a truly memorable occasion with President Higgins, speaking from the heart about literature, librarians, books, reading and Joyce of course – his speech will forever

be remembered and appreciated by librarians the length and breadth of the country.



Exercises, creating opportunities for people to connect with their bodies, minds, and communities.



One notable component of the initiative took place in Bray Library during September and October, where 24 participants engaged in a series of two-week exercise taster courses. These sessions were led by a local personal trainer whose excellent people skills resulted in helping individuals developing a routine they could continue outside of the library setting.

## Healthy Ireland at Your Library



In 2024, Healthy Ireland at Your Library held 23 events across various libraries, with a strong focus on physical health and wellbeing. This initiative, aligned with national goals of keeping active and fostering positive mental health, offered a diverse range of exercise sessions, from Boxercise and Chair Yoga to Resistance



The core goal of these events was to encourage long-term healthy habits, and the feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Participants reported not only improvements in their physical fitness but also a greater sense of community. This



aligns perfectly with the Age Friendly goals of Respect & Social Inclusion and Stay Healthy and Active, which highlight the importance of community connection and active living.

### **Seachtain na Gaeilge**

Seachtain na Gaeilge 2024 took place in Wicklow Libraries from March 9th to 15th, celebrating Irish language and culture. The week featured a variety of events, including bilingual Marine Biology workshops by Anyone4science, a Q&A on Wicklow Gaol by author Carmel Kelly, and a bilingual music workshop at Enniskerry library. Other events included Irish Storytime with Geraldine Lynch and local Gaelscoil pupils, a pop-up Gaeltacht, and musical sessions by Comhaltas Bray. Tinahely library hosted a bilingual workshop on Irish myths and legends, and Wicklow library staff led bilingual activities and Irish-themed groups. A poetry and art competition across Wicklow schools, with over 500 bookmark entries and nearly 100 poems, was a great success. We look forward to next year's celebration in March 2025

### **Local Studies**

Wicklow County Library Local Studies Service is a reference and research facility dedicated to collecting, preserving, and making available material related to all aspects of modern and historic county Wicklow. The Local Studies collection covers a diverse range of topics documenting the activities of individuals, organisations, and businesses in County

Wicklow, as well as aspects relating to the topography, geography, flora, and fauna of the county. It is a significant information provider and plays a significant role in the cultural remit of Wicklow County Council Library Service. The service facilitates and promotes research, lifelong learning and provides a leisure dimension for the community.

The Local Studies Service has made significant strides in 2024, expanding its outreach efforts, supporting historical research, and enhancing access to heritage resources through digitisation and community engagement initiatives. As the service continues to evolve, it remains a vital resource for residents, researchers, and the wider Irish diaspora, fostering a deeper connection to Wicklow's rich historical and cultural legacy.

### **Outreach**

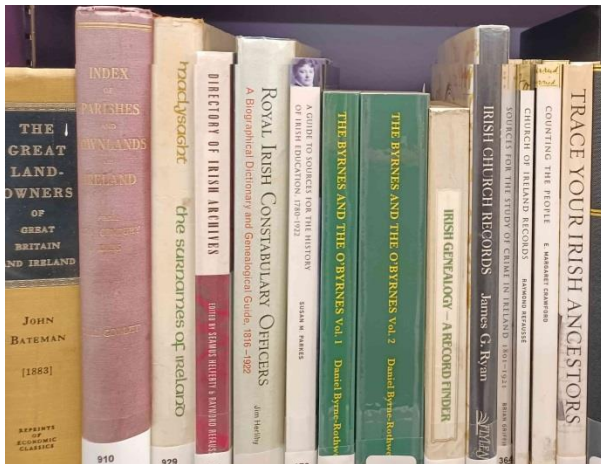
The Local Studies (LS) service continues its commitment to cultural vitality, wellbeing, and identity through its various events, including an annual local history talk programme. Running from October to April at the Wicklow Town Library branch, this programme remains highly popular, attracting over 400 attendees in 2024.

### **Queries:**

Throughout 2024, the service handled over 470 queries received via email, phone, and in-person visits to the library. This service remains a crucial resource for researchers, students, and community members seeking historical information about County Wicklow.

## Genealogy and Family History Service

A key function of the LS service is assisting with genealogy and family history research. The service provides public access to both physical and digital resources and offers digital skills training through genealogy workshops and events. This support is particularly valuable to the local community and members of the Irish diaspora from Canada, Australia, and the United States, who visit Wicklow to trace their ancestral roots.



### Family history resources in the Local Studies Collection

A significant milestone in 2024 was the launch of the first genealogy workshop, which trained a group of eight individuals over a four-week period. This initiative not only enabled participants to conduct family history research but also contributed to improving digital literacy skills.

## Schools Programme

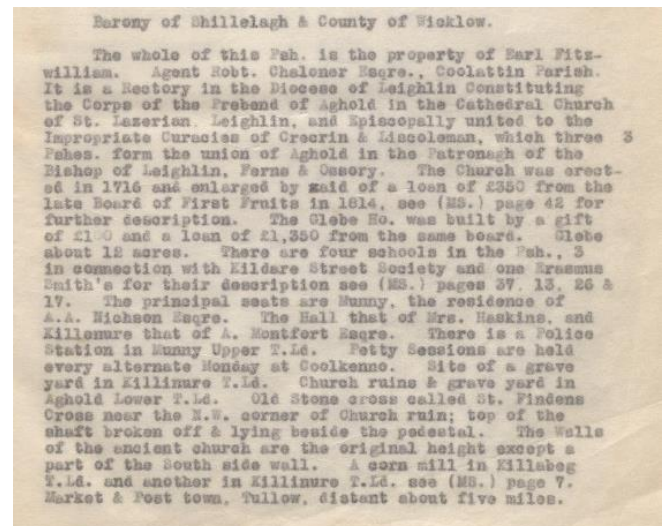
The LS service maintains a popular Schools Programme, which includes hosting class visits to the library and engaging with local schools to promote the collection

and services. In 2024, a total of eight class visits were facilitated.

Additionally, the service supports students by providing access to a wide range of resources for class assignments and projects. Over 1,000 Local Study CBA history packs were distributed to all secondary schools across the county in 2024, reinforcing the service's role in supporting historical education.

## Digitisation Projects

The LS service continues to enhance the conservation and accessibility of its collection through digitisation efforts. A major achievement in 2024 was the digitisation of the 1838 Ordnance Survey Name Books. These historical documents, which provide valuable insights into place names and building names from the first edition Ordnance Survey mapping of the mid-19th century, are an invaluable resource for historians and geographers.



### Extract from the OS 1838 Ordnance Survey Name Books

## Collection Development

The Local Studies Collection plays a crucial role in the preservation of local heritage, supporting research and promoting cultural and community identity. There are currently 8,000 items in the collection which includes books, microfilm, newspapers, journals, maps, postcards and photographs. 178 items were added to the local studies collection and online catalogue in 2024.

## iCAN (Irish Community Archive Network)

In collaboration with the Heritage Office and County Archive, the LS service manages the digital community archive 'Our Wicklow Heritage.' This platform is part of the wider award-winning ICAN initiative, which supports local communities in preserving and sharing their heritage.

A highlight of 2024 was the induction of five new community heritage recording groups into the Irish Community Archive Network during a special launch event held in Roundwood on December 9th. This expansion brought the total number of Wicklow-based groups within ICAN to eleven, further strengthening community engagement in heritage preservation.

## Participation in the Wicklow Heritage Forum

The Local Studies Librarian represents the Wicklow County Council Library Service on the Wicklow Heritage Forum. This group oversees the implementation of actions outlined in the County Wicklow Heritage Plan, ensuring the continued preservation and promotion of the county's rich cultural and historical heritage.



## TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY

### Strategic Policy Committee

Membership of the Transportation, Infrastructure Delivery & Emergency Services Strategic Policy Committee consists of six County Councillors along with six members from sectoral interest groups. The Strategic Policy Committee holds regular meetings throughout the year at which both national and local policy are discussed.

### Cathaoirleach

Councillor Stephen Stokes

### Wicklow County Council

Councillor Pat Fitzgerald  
Councillor Joe Behan  
Councillor Shane Langrell  
Councillor Orla Finn  
Councillor Danny Alvey

### Outside Agencies

### Trade Unions

Ian McGahon

### Environment/Conservation/PPN

Éanna Gallagher

### Agriculture/Farming Community

Mary Catherine Murphy

### Development/Construction

Tomás Peare

### Business Commercial

Matthew Hudson

### Social Inclusion

Vacant

### Director of Services

Joe Lane  
Transportation & Infrastructure Delivery

### Senior Executive Officer

Linda Healy

### Senior Engineers

Michael Flynn  
John Bowes

### Administrative Officer

Mark O'Neill

### Health and Safety

The Directorate is committed to ensuring adherence to the principles of Safety, Health and Welfare at work. In this regard, plans and policies have been and are continuing to be developed and updated to improve our health and safety procedures. Extensive training programmes are provided for staff continually to ensure compliance with construction and safety regulations. Ancillary & Local Safety Statements are reviewed and updated on a regular basis. The implementation of good health and safety practices across Transportation & Infrastructure Delivery Services remains a priority to the health and safety of our employees.

## Road Safety Promotion and Education

The County Wicklow Road Safety Together Committee consists of members of the Gardaí, Fire Service, Road Safety Authority, Transport Infrastructure Ireland and officials of Wicklow County Council. Four meetings are held each year. The District Engineer from each Municipal District attends on rotation basis.

During 2024 the committee completed the County Wicklow Road Safety Plan 2022 -2030 in accordance with the RSA's National Strategy.

The main objective of the Road Safety Plan is to reduce the number of casualties on County Wicklow's roads and to provide focus on making Wicklow a safer county for both motorists and pedestrians through Education, Enforcement, Engineering and Evaluation.

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

Phases 1 – 4 of the project commenced in November 2018 in accordance with the Transport Infrastructure Ireland Project Management Guidelines.

The N11/M11 Scheme aims to improve safety, accessibility and journey time reliability along this strategic route. The primary objective of the project is to deliver enhanced multimodal transport links for the south east corridor.

The Option Selection report was published on the project website [www.n11m11.ie](http://www.n11m11.ie) in December 2021. The publication followed the review of submissions received during public display in 2021.

Phase 3 Design and Environmental Evaluation was due to commence in Q1 2022. However, the scheme was suspended for 2022 pending the provision of funding.

## N11 Interim Bus Priority Scheme

The Bus Priority Interim Scheme seeks to achieve the early delivery of bus priority measures between Loughlinstown Roundabout and Junction 9 (Glenview) in advance of the Junction 4 to Junction 14 scheme.

A second non-statutory public consultation on the emerging preferred option took place from Sept to Nov 2023 that included a display event in the Glenview Hotel.

Information is available to view on the Bus Priority Interim Scheme project website [www.n11m11bpis.ie](http://www.n11m11bpis.ie). This website will provide up to date information on the progress of the scheme.

## N11/M11 Strategic Bus Based Park & Ride

Proposals for strategic bus-based Park and Ride facilities are being developed along the N11/M11 at Junction 6 (Fassaroe), Junction 11 (Kilpedder) and Junction 16 (Ashford).

## National Secondary N81

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

Following the completion of Phase 1 feasibility studies, Wicklow County Council



will now look to progress the following two projects:

N81 Whitestown Lower Project; and  
N81 Hangman's Bend and Tuckmill Project.

Phases 2 – 4 of the projects commenced in early 2023 in accordance with the Transport Infrastructure Ireland Project Management Guidelines.

The Phase 2 Options Selection progressed in 2024. A non-statutory public consultation on the route corridor options took place in March and April 2024 and included a display event in the Inis Fail Germaines in Baltinglass.

Further information is available on the project website [www.N81whitestownandtuckmill.ie](http://www.N81whitestownandtuckmill.ie).

## N81 Hollywood Cross

A traffic calming and road safety improvement scheme is being progressed for the N81 at Hollywood Cross. The provision of bus stops is included as part of this scheme.

The Design Report (Phase 3) was approved by Transport Infrastructure Ireland in April 2024. The Elected Members of Baltinglass Municipal District voted, in May 2024, to approve the Chief Executive's recommendation for the scheme to proceed. The Detailed Design and Contract Documents (Phase 5) are being prepared for tendering and construction.

## Non National Road Maintenance and Improvement

Maintenance works on Non National Roads in 2024 were carried out by both direct labour units of the five Municipal Districts and by roads contractors.

## Surface Dressing Programme

Our crew carried out road maintenance works on over 71 kms of 41 regional and local roads.



Phoenix chipper on local road

## Restoration Improvement Overlays

Municipal Districts planned, procured and carried out works at 84 roads, regional and local. These covered 366,000 m<sup>2</sup> or 72km of roads.

## Former national Roads

Work was completed by our NNR-NTA direct labour crew at 2 sections of the former N11, north and south of Arklow. New surfacing, footpaths, lighting and cycle tracks were installed.

## Invasive Species treatment

The register of locations continued to be updated and monitored. No treatment works were undertaken in 2024.

## Specific Improvement Projects

Works at the Vallemount-Wicklow Gap junction were completed. The junction opened in early 2024.

## Community Involvement Schemes

2 roads projects were completed in this Programme. The total length of both schemes is 13km.

## Bridge Rehabilitation Programme

The Bridges crew worked on 13 bridges in 2024. There were varying degrees of work undertaken. Most work was rebuilding of damaged parapets and installation of rubbing strips.



Carrigeenduff Bridge

Further inspections and designs with Consultants were undertaken at 3 bridges.



Milltown Lane Bridge

## Machinery Yard

On-going repair and maintenance of a large fleet continues as a priority.

Vehicle replacement continued with the order for 4 new large trucks after a tender process in November.

## Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project (PLEEP):

KLS ASD Joint venture are the works contractor for the PLEEP contract. Initial Surveys of the existing public lighting network have been completed. A total of 4,051 lights are due for upgrade to energy efficient LEDs, of which 680 lights have been upgraded.

## Public Lighting Maintenance:

The previous public contractor served notice to quit and left the Irish market in July 2024. A new maintenance contractor, Killaree Lighting Services, was appointed following a tendering process.

## Speed Limits

New default limits were proposed by the Government for rural local roads. The proposed changes necessitated an amendment to the Speed Limit Bye-Laws of 2023. Following a public consultation period the amendment was passed with a commencement date of 1<sup>st</sup> December. The statutory change in the rural local road default speed limit commenced 7<sup>th</sup> February 2025 having initially being proposed for November 2024. Signage and poles for the implantation of the change were procured.

## Noise Action Plan 2024-2028:

The Environmental Noise Directive (END) requires local authorities to draw-up plans of action which will include measures to 'address priorities which may be identified by the exceeding of any relevant limit value or by other criteria chosen by the Member State and apply in particular to the most important areas as established by strategic noise mapping'.

The noise action plan used Strategic Noise Maps to identify priority areas and measures to help mitigate and manage noise from the relevant human activities contributing to the noise levels at those locations.

A draft Noise Action Plan was prepared and put out to stakeholder and public consultation in September and October 2024. The Noise Action Plan was screened for both Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA). The screenings concluded that both an SEA and a Stage 2 AA were not required.

The final Wicklow Noise Action Plan 2024-2028 has been published.

## National Transport Authority Funding

Each year, Wicklow County Council receives funding from the National Transport Authority's Sustainable Transport Measures Programme towards a variety of projects. The 2024 allocation of €8.5m in funding, allowed Wicklow County Council to progress as well as introduce new projects across the County.

Travel projects will aim to improve transport options for those choosing alternatives to the private car, with the creation and development of segregated cycle lanes and widened footpaths, public realm improvements and new pedestrian crossings.

Projects which received funding from the National Transport Authority in 2024 included:

- Bray DART Interchange - Bus Terminus Improvements
- Active Travel Bridge (Wicklow Train Station to Port Access Route)
- Wicklow Port Access Road Pedestrian & Cycle Link
- Bray Bridge footbridges and tie ins
- Local Transport Plans – Arklow, Greystones & Wicklow Rathnew
- Active Travel Pathfinder: Wicklow Town
- Delgany Village to Mill Road Active Travel Elements
- Blessington Main St to Deerpark Active Travel Scheme
- Greystones Active Travel - Pathfinder project
- Convent Road Active Travel Scheme
- Ballyguilemore Active Travel facilities
- Arklow South Active Travel Improvements
- Killincarrig Village Enhancement Scheme
- Safe Routes to School Projects (8 projects)



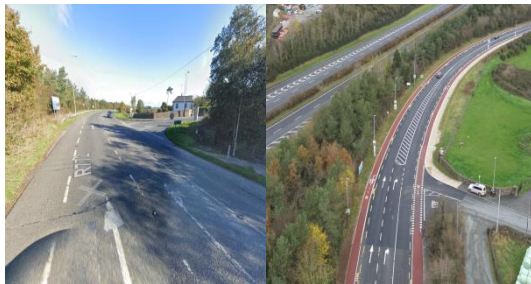
Baltinglass Active Travel River Crossing Study  
 Ashford to New Developments (Urban) Footpath  
 Kilcoole Road Footpath  
 Bus Stop Enhancement Programme



Ballyguilemore Active Travel facilities (Before and after)

## **Completed Active Travel Projects in 2024**

Arklow South Pedestrian and Cycle Scheme  
 SRTS – Scoil Niocláis Naofa Dunlavin  
 SRTS – St. John's NS Arklow  
 SRTS – St.'s Michael & Peter NS  
 SRTS – St. Kevin's NS Greystones  
 Greystones Active Travel – Phase 2 –  
 Traffic Management Upgrade Church Road



Arklow South Pedestrian and Cycle Scheme (Before and After)



Completed SRTS (Left) St. John's N.S. (Right) Scoil Niocláis Naofa Dunlavin. (Bottom) SS Michael & Peter JS

## **Other projects in design or construction phase during 2024**

Bray Dart Interchange  
 Greystones Active Travel – Phase 1 –  
 Charlesland Roundabouts  
 Kilcoole Road Footpaths  
 Killincarrig Village – Enhancement Scheme  
 SRTS – Gaelscoil na gCloch Liath  
 SRTS – Greystones Educate Together  
 SRTS – Kimacanogue NS  
 SRTS – Templecarrig Greystones  
 Convent Road Active Travel Scheme  
 Bray Bridge Footbridges and tie-ins  
 Delgany Village to Mill Road Active Travel Elements  
 Active Travel Pathfinder – Wicklow Town  
 Blessington Main St to Deerpark  
 Active Travel Bridge – PAR Wicklow Pathfinder

## **Part 8 documents were advertised for 2 schemes, with both completed.**

Wicklow Port Access Road Link Scheme,  
 Wicklow Town and the Rockey Road Improvement Scheme, Wicklow.

Section 38 approval was sought for 1 scheme, with approval successfully obtained.

Safe Routes to School and Traffic Calming Scheme – Scoil Niocláis Naofa, Dunlavin

Other Active Travel Highlights –  
 Minister of Transport Eamon Ryan TD, was in Bray in May 2024 to mark the commencement of works for a transformative new Transport Hub in Bray which will bring together better facilities for buses and taxis, as well as walking and cycling infrastructure, all connected to the (Daly) train station.



Bray Dart Interchange sod turning – May 2024

A significant €3.8million of funding was allocated in 2024 by the National Transport Authority to the Wicklow County Council project, which demonstrates the importance of the scheme within the county this year. Works progressed very well on the scheme in 2024 including installation of a new drainage system, pedestrian crossings, services, paving and landscaping. The project is expected to be completed in April 2025.

## Housing Supply – Programme of Delivery

Wicklow County Council continued to deliver under its Housing Delivery Programme in 2024. In all, 220 units of social housing were delivered in 2024, with proposed delivery of 209 in 2025. These included Merrymeeting Phase 2 (21 units), Ballynerrin (10 units), Cois Droichid (41 units), and Shillelagh (20 units).



Merrymeeting Phase 2 (21 units)



Ballynerrin (10 units)



Cois Droichid (41 units)



Shillelagh (20 units)

Affordable Housing  
Greenhill Road - 36 houses  
35 sold  
1 House remaining – portal reopened  
November 2024 – House to be offered  
January 2025



## Aldborough Manor Baltinglass – 22 Houses

WCC were successful in selling 11 units the remaining 11 were returned to the Developer for sale.

6 sales closed in December 2024 with the remainder 5 to close in early 2025



Aldborough Manor

## Rathnew – 44 Units Mixed Development

44 units offered and accepted

Sales to close early 2025



Rathnew

## Vacant Homes Scheme

There are now 20 CPOs completed or underway on long term vacant houses around the county.

## Croí Cónaithe (Towns, Cities and Rural) – Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant

The Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant is a payment you can get if you are turning a vacant house or building into your permanent home or a rental property. The grant applies to qualifying vacant properties in cities, towns, villages and rural parts of the country.

A grant of up to €70,000 is available.

As at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024 there have been 182 applications with 80 approved, 42 withdrawn and the rest in progress.

## Part V

Wicklow County Council liaised closely with Agents and Developers in respect of Part V requirements. Some Part V units are delivered through CALF in partnership with Approved Housing Bodies and some directly to the Council. 97 Part V units were delivered in 2024 through a combination of LA acquisition and CALF.

## Turnkey

The Council continued to actively seek and encourage the provision of social housing via the mechanism of turnkey development. Wicklow County Council delivered 6 no. Local Authority Turnkey units and 17 CALF Turnkey units in 2024.

## Housing for Older People - Age Friendly Schemes

Kilcoole Health Centre - 4 no 1 bed apartments	Completed September 2024
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## Traveller Accommodation

Significant progress was made on the Capital Programme in 2024 as follows:

Ballintесkin: - 3 houses - works completed on site in December 2023.

Rathdrum: 3 houses Avondale Heights – works commenced on site in late 2023 and completion date is March 2025.

Barndarrig: – A revised application has been submitted to the Department for approval.

## PLANNING ECONOMIC AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

### Economic and Rural Development

#### Strategic Policy Committee

##### Chair

Cllr. Tom Fortune

##### Councillors

Cllr. Tom Fortune

Cllr. Louise Fenelon Gaskin

Cllr. Avril Cronin

Cllr. Ian Neary

Cllr. Peir Leonard

Cllr. Aoife Flynn Kennedy

#### Outside Agencies

Mr. Huw O'Toole,

Environment/Conservation

Mr. Chris Fox, Agriculture/Farming  
Community

Mr. T.J. Foley, Development Construction

Mr. Gerry Ginty, Business Commercial

Ms. Margaret Coughlan, Trade Union

Mr. Killian McGreal, Business West  
Wicklow

Ms. Jean Ryan Kinsella, Social Inclusion

#### Enterprise and Economic Development

County Wicklow is a great place to live, visit, work, and do business in. As one of the most rapidly growing counties in Ireland, Wicklow has unlimited business potential, which can be seen through the significant expansion and development the County has undergone in recent years. Strategically located less than one hour from Dublin, with easy access to the M50, national motorways, Dublin Port and airport, the County has many benefits to

offer by way of idyllic location, infrastructural development, proximity to universities and other third level institutions.

The Economic Development team is responsible for the promotion and marketing of County Wicklow and its towns as a location for enterprise and job creation. It promotes and assists in the development of enterprise hubs and acquires land to facilitate employment and commercial development. The unit plays a pivotal role in the economic development of the County and is committed to growing a further education base in conjunction with SETU and KWETB at Wicklow County Campus, Clermont College, Rathnew in line with the County Wicklow Skills Strategy.

The Council works closely with other development agencies such as the IDA, Enterprise Ireland and the Wicklow Local Enterprise Office (LEO) and maintains and broadens links with potential industrial / commercial developers / promoters to achieve job creation and economic growth. It promotes County Wicklow as a premier film location through Screen Wicklow.

#### Development of Enterprise Hubs

The Council in partnership with national and local development agencies and in conjunction with local chambers of commerce works closely with existing enterprise hubs in County Wicklow.

The Wicklow Enterprise Centre/Business Park comprises 74,000 sq. ft. of enterprise space providing a complete turnkey facility to existing and new developing businesses. In this centrally located

Wicklow facility there is a wide range of workspace units in sizes from 180 sq. ft. up to 5,000 sq. ft. along with hi-spec office accommodation, training facilities and conference room.

The Arklow Business and Enterprise Centre ABEC is a community initiative set up to provide workspace for new embryo and small expanding businesses together with a range of support facilities. The centre offers approx. 30,000 sq. ft. of workspace consisting of small/medium sized production units and offices which facilitates over 34 businesses.

In addition ABEC partnered with Wicklow County Council to develop the Courthouse as enterprise space.

Wicklow County Council opened the GRID (Greystones Regional Enterprise District) in October 2024.



The GRID is a 14,381 sq. ft. building extending over two floors with the capacity to accommodate approx. 46 units together with parking for 46 cars, EV charging points and bicycle spaces.



The building has been created to excel in sustainable credentials, is A3 rated and LEED Certified and offers premium serviced office space close to all amenities in Greystones.



Wicklow County Council developed and launched a marketing plan, #ChooseWicklow, in 2024 to market remote working hubs and broadband connection points in County Wicklow. This was funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme and provides a county level framework to complement the National Hub Network and provide a strategic direction for the development and marketing of current BCPs/Remote Working Hubs both nationally and internationally. The #ChooseWicklow campaign will continue into 2025.





## Sites for Enterprise/Employment/Amenity uses

Wicklow County Council has invested some €1.3m on the development of Avondale Business Park, Rathdrum including essential infrastructure on the site including roads, roundabout, utility ducts and pipes, fencing, entrance pillars and gateway.

The Economic Development unit has commenced a marketing drive and is engaging with businesses that have expressed an interest in locating to the Business Park, and the Council will continue to push forward with its plans for the development of the site into the future.

The Council has some varying size landbanks at a number of other locations throughout the County including Rathnew, Baltinglass, Dunlavin,

Greystones, Arklow, Blessington and Ashford. The Council will work with all relevant stakeholders to develop these lands in a strategic and sustainable manner.

The former Bank of Ireland building in Carnew, which has been purchased by Wicklow County Council, will be used as a remote working hub following refurbishment. Design plans are progressing through the Part 8 planning process.



The Abbey Grounds is currently under construction by the Wicklow Municipal District as an amenity for Wicklow residents through Destination Towns funding provided by Fáilte Ireland.

The redevelopment is nearing completion and will include converting the existing Coach House for use as a Café/Retail/Exhibition space and public toilets, installing an outdoor amphitheatre arrangement to provide for public performance events, a new pedestrian access, pathways for improved accessibility and public seating.

## Economic Development Unit

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). LECPs detail how Local Authorities will support economic and community development in their areas.

The new Wicklow Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2024 – 2029 sets out, for a six-year period, the objectives and actions needed to promote and support the economic development and the local and community development of County Wicklow, both directly and in partnership with other economic and community development stakeholders.

Five High Level Goals have been identified incorporating Community, Climate Action and Economic Development.

## Networking & Collaboration with Other Agencies

During 2024 the Economic Development Unit met with representatives of Fáilte Ireland, Enterprise Ireland, the IDA, along with other agencies engaged in economic development. Formal and informal networking continues with the local businesses, Chambers of Commerce and Town Teams to promote and develop business and develop job opportunities in County Wicklow.

## Food Strategy

Extensive work was done through the Wicklow Naturally network in 2024. Those included the following:

Commissioning of a professional social media coordinator and content creator to produce a series of high quality videos and photos. Those were shared strategically

on social media to increase the awareness of the local producers, places to eat and drink and the various Wicklow Naturally events.

Wicklow Naturally was present at the Tinahely Show at the 'Best of Wicklow' tent.

The annual October Feast Festival was held over three weeks attracting some 1900 people at more than 30 participating events. One key event included Vision for Venison. This event was organised in partnership with Wicklow Climate Action, and with the objective to increase awareness of the sustainable meat source that represents venison.



## Skills Taskforce

Wicklow County Council established a Skills Taskforce in 2022 with the aim of creating an opportunities for professionals and stakeholders to help facilitate the

development and delivery of training and education to meet the skills needs of County Wicklow into the future.

The Skills Strategy launched in 2024 with film, food, renewables, and tourism identified as key drivers of economic development in the county. The focus of the Taskforce turned to implementation of the Strategy's actions following the launch.

This Strategy is viewed as a catalyst for active collaboration and co-operation between all participating stakeholders in skills development and training and has members representing the Film, Food, Renewable Energy, and Tourism sectors, as well as the Education Sector, Training and Development sectors. The Taskforce is supported by Wicklow County Council staff.

## ORE Network

The Offshore Renewable Energy Network was established by Wicklow County Council in late 2022 as an industry led network focused on building capacity to maximise the potential business opportunities for Wicklow that the offshore renewable energy industry will present.

The sector will require supporting infrastructure and a steady supply of highly skilled workers with a wide range of training and educational skills.



The group met regularly in 2024 to discuss skills and training, ports and infrastructure, and industry and the supply chain, and held an information and networking event in October that included participation from each of the companies who will operate offshore wind projects off the coast of County Wicklow. It is estimated that the lifetime spend in delivering 3.5 GW by 2030 is €17.9 billion.

## Glendalough Masterplan and Wicklow Visitor Orientation Study

A steering group, chaired by the Chief Executive, has been established to drive progress on the new Glendalough Masterplan. A Working Group has also been set up to engage with the local community and look at priority actions for the lifetime of the plan.

2024 was Year One into implementation of the strategic 7 – 10 year plan. Some improvements already implemented included the following:

- Formation of the Glendalough Partnership.

- Strategic collaboration of the critical stakeholders operating in the area.

Tender for All Ability Trail from Laragh to Upper Lake is complete, with consultant due to be appointed early in 2025. Preparatory work being carried out for a Conservation Management Plan. Improvements to parking and traffic management during summer 2024 were widely welcomed. Preparations underway for continued implementation of actions contained in the VEMMP.

## Tourism

### Networking Event

Wicklow County Council organised its first annual Tourism Networking Event in early February 2024. The event was attended by more than 100 people representing a wide variety of tourism related trade, services and organisations.



### PR Campaign

Wicklow County Council contracted with a PR Agency to help promote Destination Wicklow. The campaign started in May 2024 and ran until the end of September. The campaign focussed on the Wicklow Passport, and included features on local and national media (print, online, radio and TV).



### Digital Promotion

The various VisitWicklow online platforms have performed well this year. The visitwicklow.ie website recorded around 500k users; the Facebook page has 35.6k followers and had a reach 426k; The Instagram account recorded the sharpest growth in 2024 with a total of 14.6k followers for a reach of 70k.

### EcoTrail

Almost 1500 people participated at EcoTrail Wicklow 2024. 67 different nationalities were represented at the event, with 22 of those travelling to Wicklow from abroad.

### Christmas Shopping Campaign

Shop Local for Christmas was heavily advertised through local media. That same message was also pushed online through the various social media accounts.

### Best Wicklow Golf Holes Videos

In order to help promote Wicklow as the amazing golf destination that it is, the Council commissioned the production of nine short videos on some of Wicklow's best golf holes. The videos will be used in



2025 and beyond to help showcase the diversity and quality of the golf offering here in Wicklow.



## Wicklow Outdoors Videos

There were more people engaging in outdoor activities in Wicklow than any other county in Ireland. With the objective of increasing awareness that Wicklow is one of Ireland's best outdoors destinations, the Council commissioned the production of action packed videos featuring a variety of activities such as Kayaking, Stand Up Paddle Boarding, Hiking, Trail Running, Equestrian, Mountain Biking and Sea Swimming. Those videos will be made available to the local tourism trade and shared nationally and internationally to showcase the amazing outdoor recreation area that is Wicklow.

## Wicklow Gaol

Wicklow County Council commissioned a Strategic Report for Wicklow Gaol. The objective of the report is to review the current operations, suggest opportunities for growth and help to actively plan for the future development of Wicklow Gaol as Wicklow town's premier tourism attraction. The report is expected to be completed in early 2025.

The Council has also commissioned a Conservation Management Plan, with a view to preserving this historic structure. This report is expected to be completed in the second quarter of 2025.



## Town Regeneration Office

The Town Regeneration Office was established in February 2023. It is currently staffed by a Town Regeneration Officer (TRO) with administrative support, and additional resources are set to be added in 2025. The office's primary responsibility is to implement the Town Centre First Policy.

The Town Centre First policy puts town centres at the heart of decision making and aims to create town centres that function as viable, vibrant and attractive locations for people to live, work and visit, while also functioning as the service, social, cultural and recreational hub for the local community. The policy is aligned with the National Planning Framework and Our Rural Future.

## Town Centre First Masterplans

Irish towns face significant challenges and opportunities that require a coordinated, comprehensive response. The Town Centre First Policy supports towns of all



sizes in becoming sustainable, vibrant hubs that meet the demands of the 21st century. The policy empowers local communities and businesses, in collaboration with Local Authorities, to develop Town Centre First Masterplans that build on their unique strengths and assets.

A plan-led approach is crucial, and these plans will also align with the objectives of statutory development plans and local area plans relevant to each town.

## Blessington Masterplan

Blessington is a pathfinder town and is the first in the county to receive funding for a Town Centre First Masterplan. The masterplan, issued in November 2023, is providing Blessington with a clear framework to positively develop the town now and into the future. Based on an extensive consultation process, there are 8 themed areas to the plan:

- Strategic Transport Assessment
- Urban Design Framework
- Placemaking Projects
- Activating the Town Centre
- Supporting Community Amenity
- Town Centre Green Space Network
- Supporting Local Business
- Improving Accommodation Offer

Wicklow County Council is collaborating closely with local community groups, retailers, and the Blessington Town Team to deliver the masterplan's objectives.

## Newtownmountkennedy Masterplan

Newtownmountkennedy is one of 26 towns selected nationally under Phase 2 of the Town Centre First Plan initiative.

The town will receive €30,000 in funding to support the development of its own Town Centre First Plan, aimed at guiding the revitalization and sustainable development of the town centre, transforming it into a vibrant and thriving hub for the community. The funding is provided under the **Town Centre First Measure 2 Suite of Supports**.

Following the establishment of the Newtownmountkennedy Town Team in November 2024, the Town Regeneration Officer (TRO), in collaboration with the Town Team, has drafted and issued the tender document for the creation of the Town Centre First Plan that is expected to be completed in 2025.



Pictured in the photo are members of the Newtownmountkennedy Town Team formed in 2024.

## Town Teams

A Town Team is a group of active people from different sectors within a town or village, such as business, community, culture, and heritage. Town Teams have been active in Wicklow since 2016, with teams in Wicklow, Arklow, Greystones, and Blessington. The addition of a team in Newtownmountkennedy in 2024 brings the total to five Town Teams in County

Wicklow. These teams organize events and create projects to improve their town centers and enhance the quality of life for residents, workers and visitors.

In 2025 the TRO is aiming to establish a further four Town Teams in Baltinglass, Bray, Kilcoole and Rathdrum.

### Funding Streams & Projects

The Town Centre First Policy is supported by a number of funding schemes, mainly the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF), the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) and the Town Centre First Town Team Support Fund as well as a number of smaller schemes.

Under **Measure 1 of the Town Centre First Town Team Support Fund**, each of the towns—Baltinglass, Rathdrum, and Kilcoole—has been awarded €10,000. This funding will be used to create Health Checks for each town, establishing a baseline to monitor and guide the future development of their town centers. Local community members and business owners will be encouraged to share their experiences and opinions, contributing to the shaping of town centers that are more attractive places to live, work, and visit. Queen’s University of Belfast has won the competition to produce the Health Checks, with work set to begin in March 2025.

Two projects have been approved for funding under **Town Centre First Measure 3 Suite of Supports**:

Blessington – Project will create plans to develop a high quality public space in the Market Square. Project will commission professional services to carry out a

predevelopment exploration of the Market Square as a de-risking exercise for the construction phase if the project was successful in a later funding application.

Wicklow Town - Project will engage a supplier/contractor to complete a comprehensive design plan aimed at improving of public lands surrounding the Black Castle in Wicklow Town and assessing the structure and condition of the Castle.

Both projects are to be completed in 2025.

Wicklow County Council was awarded €725,000 from the Department of Rural and Community Development under **Town & Village Renewal Scheme 2023** for the following three projects:

Kirikee - Renovation of the community centre, including roof, windows, ceilings, and walls.

Lacken - Renovation of the old schoolhouse to serve as a community centre with a café, community shop, and small heritage section.

Wicklow Town - Development of a best-in-class BMX pump track at Murrough for all ages and abilities

All three projects are to be completed in 2025.

There are a number of RRDF and URDF projects. In 2023 Wicklow County Council set up a steering group for the advancement of the **URDF & RRDF** projects.

### URDF

Work continued on implementing the projects for which successful funding was secured under the URDF including:

Bray Public Transport Bridge – under review

Bray Harbour Improvements - A revised business case was submitted in December 2024. A tender brief is being prepared for engineering consultancy services, including detailed designs, environmental reports, and an application to An Bord Pleanála.

**URDF Call 3** is supporting the tackling of long term vacant and derelict properties. Wicklow will receive €2.5 million to assist long term vacancy and dereliction. Four properties had been chosen, two in Arklow and two in Wicklow. The two properties identified in Wicklow have since had refurbishment works commenced on them by their owners and are no longer available for purchase. Two further properties are now to be identified and this process has commenced. An additional property has been identified in Arklow and approval has been received from the department to start the process of acquiring this property.

## RRDF

Work on the Baltinglass Town Centre Regeneration project, which was awarded €2.7 million under the RRDF, continued throughout 2024. The project faced significant challenges, but plans are in place to appoint a contractor and begin the public realm works in 2025.

Wicklow County Council was awarded €357,750 for Newtownmountkenedy to fund the design and planning of upgrades

to the public realm, street landscaping, traffic management, public spaces, and community facilities. This funding builds on the €150,000 received in 2018 through the Town and Village Enhancement Scheme, which supported streetscape improvements in the town. The current works are still in the design stage and will be integrated into the Town Centre First (TCF) Masterplan.

Wicklow County Council was awarded just over €1 million in funding for Blessington. This will be used for the regeneration of Blessington Town Centre, guided by the TCF Masterplan. The funding will support the development of plans for public realm works and the redevelopment of a derelict property to create an eHub and Visitor Centre.

## Screen Wicklow

Screen Wicklow, (formerly known as The County Wicklow Film Commission) is the longest established film commission in Ireland, committed to attracting audio-visual production into the county.

Funded by Wicklow County Council, Screen Wicklow is based in Clermont House, Wicklow County Campus, but represents the whole county.

The main objective of the Screen Wicklow is to market and promote the county as a film location for any kind of audio-visual or content creation production ranging from feature film to commercial, short film, television production, gaming, animation or music promo. The film office assists any project regardless of the size of the budget with the aim of bringing economic benefits to County Wicklow.

As a secondary objective, Screen Wicklow is committed to maximise the tourism spin off of film activity.

In 2024 County Wicklow once again experienced very high levels of production activity. Over 700 shooting days were recorded containing a mixture of all types of audio-visual production. The financial benefit from audiovisual productions tends to be higher from feature films than from television.

The County was used by a large number of international and national feature film and television productions. Feature films, high end television productions and numerous commercials that used Wicklow locations include:- TV series 'Small Town Big Story' starring Christina Hendricks, the award-winning 'Bad Sisters' (Season 2) and 'Wednesday' (Season 2), feature films '500 Miles' and 'Finnegan's Foursome', and advertisements for Vodafone and Aldi among many others.

Services on offer to any of these productions include location scouting, local knowledge and advice, assistance and location suggestions through personalised web brochures, liaison with Local Authorities personnel and local communities.

Establishing the appropriate infrastructure and supports to attract and sustain the film making industry in County Wicklow requires a collaborative approach, facilitated and supported by Wicklow County Council. Such an approach will enable the County to realise the potential value from film making directly plus film tourism, accommodation services and other support services.

## Mid East Regional Enterprise Plan, The Local Economic Community Plan and the Skills Strategy

The above mentioned plans and strategies all recognize the importance of the audio visual sector to the local economy and contain a number of actions around enterprise space development such as Clermont Screen Hub. In terms of Skills training and attracting talent into the sector to allow for further growth, The Film and TV Crew Academy East provided a large number of training programmes, work placements and networking events. The County Wicklow Screen Sector Development Strategy continues to guide action in the areas of developing film tourism, a new website and supporting local talent through the provision of two Short Film Bursaries of €15,000 each.

## Wicklow County Campus, Clermont College, Rathnew, Co. Wicklow

Wicklow County Campus in Rathnew is an exceptional asset to the County and continues to be developed by Wicklow County Council to be a Centre of Excellence in Enterprise, Education and Innovation in County Wicklow and to act as a catalyst for Economic Development in the County. The Clermont Campus is an impressive 55 acre facility. The buildings comprise offices, meeting rooms, a conference and exhibition venue, lecture rooms, I.T. rooms, a college library. Clermont House accommodates the Local Enterprise Office Wicklow, Teagasc and Screen Wicklow.

A strong partnership is in place with the national and local development agencies

such as the IDA, EI, the Local Enterprise Office, County Wicklow Partnership and the Chambers of Commerce to achieve the vision and to create a high-quality environment for a thriving business quarter on the campus.

## Wicklow County Campus and the South Eastern Technological University (SETU)

Wicklow County Council in conjunction with SETU is providing a range of online part-time Lifelong Learning Education and Training Courses. In 2024 there were approximately 400 students registered with Wicklow County Campus for part-time evening courses and this figure is expected to grow considerably over the lifetime of the plan for the campus with the introduction of new academic programmes.

The meeting and training rooms on the campus remain a popular venue for the community and other agencies to host their training events. There was considerable footfall throughout the campus, as well as a good amount of filming, throughout the space available for rent on the campus. The meeting room rental income assists with vital upkeep, improvement and maintenance of the historic Clermont House, gardens and grounds.

The main objectives of hosting these events are to promote the overall concept of Wicklow County Campus and to bring the Campus to the notice of the general public

## Actions Undertaken in 2024

In 2024 Wicklow County Council undertook a range of projects on the Campus, including:

Restoration of the service buildings facing Clermont Screen Hub thereby securing them for future use.

Award of contract to remove and manage invasive species throughout the campus. Prepare for procurement for roof replacement of Clermont House in 2025. Planting of wildflower meadows to improve biodiversity

## Development of a Content Creation Enterprise Hub: Clermont Screen Hub

Clermont Screen Hub was officially launched by Aoife Kennedy, Cathaoirleach in October 2023. The Hub comprises of a new 2-storey building linked to the refurbished courtyard cottages, conference facilities in the former school chapel and administrative offices in a section of former dormitory at second floor level in the school block. The facility will provide approximately 10,000 sq. ft of private and co-working spaces in a dynamic and synergetic environment for creative/media cross-fertilisation. The Hub offers specialised and customised, sector specific business supports that drive start-ups and economic growth.

The Hub construction is financed by Wicklow County Council and is supported under the Department Enterprise, Trade & Employment's Regional Enterprise Development Fund administered by Enterprise Ireland.

The development of this remote working hub is one of main objectives in the Mid-East regional Enterprise Plan.



## Local Enterprise Office

### Mission Statement:

The aim of Local Enterprise Office Wicklow is to promote entrepreneurship, foster business start-ups and develop existing micro and small businesses to drive job creation and to provide high quality supports for business ideas in County Wicklow.

The Local Enterprise Offices serve as a “first-stop shop” to provide support and services to start, grow and develop micro and small businesses in each local area. The Local Enterprise Office is strategically charged with stimulating economic activity at county level through the development of indigenous enterprise potential in the county.

The key focus of the Local Enterprise Offices is to maximise opportunities for job creation and retention, attained through:

- Creating and raising local enterprise awareness and developing an enterprise culture and community-based enterprise activity;
- Providing a single/first point of contact service to the business community - providing business advice, direction and signposting, business counselling and mentoring;
- Providing support to private sector and community initiatives to secure the establishment and/or expansion of commercially viable micro-enterprise projects;
- Providing comprehensive pre-and post-start-up supports to new and expanding micro-enterprises;

Influencing the allocation of resources for micro-enterprise from EU, private and public funding sources

Promoting the general economic development of their areas.

The following supports and services are offered through the Local Enterprise Office:

### Supports for micro business include:

Information Provision

Supports for business networks including Network for women business owners (NEW)

One to one Business Advice clinics

Assignment of mentors to companies

Financial support to boost sales via Trading Online Vouchers (this support was wound up end 2024).

Technical Assistance Grants towards new market development

Exhibitions & trade shows

Access to Microfinance Ireland loans

Student Enterprise Programme

Business and IT skills training programmes & Seminars

Leadership and management capability programmes, such as Lean for Micro and the Management Development Programme for Owner / Managers.

Grant funding for eligible companies

The Network of LEOs (31) design and develop a number of programmes that are implemented by all the LEOs across the country.

These include:

Student Enterprise Awards

National Enterprise Awards to showcase local business excellence

Showcase, the international trade fair for the crafts industry in the RDS

Food Academy, a specialised training programme for food producers run together with Musgraves.

A LEO marquee showcasing LEO clients at the National Ploughing Championships Local Enterprise Week with training and events for clients at all levels of business growth.

Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur programme

The LEO Wicklow also has a role to play in the formulation of local economic development plans for the County, aimed at maximising the opportunities for enterprise and capitalising on the features in the County that offer sustainable competitive advantage. A number of the actions contained in the Mid East Regional Enterprise Plan are driven by the LEO.

## Impacts in 2024:

### 2024 Metrics:

22 portfolio Grant Applications approved valued at € 671,740.

124 Trading Online Vouchers approved, valued at € 240,000.

Green for Business: 20 clients approved.

Digital for Business: 7 clients approved.

17 companies participated in the Lean for Business programme.

5 portfolio client was transferred to Enterprise Ireland.

1 Company was approved an IP Start Grant.

54 Owner/Managers participated in the Owner/Manager Development Programmes.

Craig and Catherine Brady of Brady's Coffee: Winner of the South East Regional Award at National Enterprise Awards 2024.

Delivered one to one business advisory

meetings to 578 entrepreneurs.

Assigned a mentor to 76 companies.

Provided business and business IT skills training to 1223 participants across all 87 training workshops, specialised clinics and events and seminars.

Provided Start Your Own Business training to 145 individuals.

Assisted 12 businesses to apply for MicroFinance Ireland funding.

## Priorities for 2025:

Assist First Time Exporters (Export Development Programme and mentoring)

Addressing the Productivity Challenge (Lean for Micro support)

Digital Transformation (Digital for Business and Grow Digital Voucher)

Sustainability supports through Green for Business and the Energy Efficiency Grant.

Innovation (Innovation supports and programme)

Owner Management Development Programmes

Specific supports for the Food, Content Creation and Renewable Energy Sectors

Ongoing strategic alignment with EI

Support portfolio companies

Over 10 employee business supports.

Maximise the opportunities for entrepreneurs from National programmes and new initiatives at local and regional level.

Provide progression pathways for client companies to access Enterprise Ireland services and supports.

Provide a suite of capability building supports while focusing on Innovation, Financial capability, Productivity, Export, and Competitiveness thus adding value and bringing benefits to business and increase productivity.

Support employment creation in the county through investment in eligible

businesses.

Support economic development aimed at job creation in the County.

### Mid-East Regional Enterprise Plan 2021-2024

County Wicklow and the East Coast Region are at the heart of the screen content sector and the international opportunity, with an existing internationally recognised screen industry. Wicklow County Council's objective to develop a Content Creation Enterprise Hub is one of a number of objectives in the Regional Enterprise Plan 2024. Other objectives include the development of a Crew Hub for the East Coast to further strengthen the screen sector cluster in the Mid-East and to develop a network of remote working hubs throughout the region. These would include the Clermont Enterprise Hub, the Baltinglass Hub and the Arklow Courthouse Hub.

### Mid-East Regional Enterprise Plan 2024 Strategic Objectives and Actions

<b>Strategic Objective 1: Position the Mid-East as the primary location for the development of the agri food hubs</b>
<b>Action 1:</b> The completion of the Boyne Valley Food Hub (Phase 1) and the development of the Digital Innovation Smart Agri Hub (Phase 2)
<b>Action 2:</b> The development of the Athy Food, Drink and Skills Innovation Hub
<b>Action 3:</b> The development of an incubation food development hub in County Wicklow
<b>Action 4:</b> The creation of the Boyne Valley

Culinary Centre of Excellence
<b>Strategic Objective 2: Develop the Mid-East as a hub for the screen content creation sector</b>
<b>Action 1:</b> Develop and operate a Content Creation Enterprise Hub at Wicklow County Campus, Rathnew
<b>Action 2:</b> Collaborate with strategic stakeholders to establish a Crew Development Hub to develop and nurture new and diverse talent from across the region
<b>Action 3:</b> Implement the Wicklow Screen Sector Development Strategy to support the growth of the industry across the region
<b>Strategic Objective 3: Enable the development and expansion of equine businesses across the Mid-East</b>
<b>Action 1:</b> Establish the first National Equine Innovation Centre in Ireland
<b>Action 2:</b> The development of programmes and training to support the growth of the equine sector
<b>Action 3:</b> Conduct a feasibility study to examine the expansion of the National Equine Innovation Centre
<b>Strategic Objective 4: Develop key projects that facilitates the job creation opportunities that result in the transition to a low carbon economy</b>
<b>Action 1:</b> Conduct a feasibility study for the development of a regional green technology enterprise hub that facilitates the creation of a green cluster of companies
<b>Action 2:</b> The development of a Green investment and enterprise zone in Allenwood, County Kildare

<b>Action 3:</b> The establishment of Marine Education, Training and Enterprise facilities to drive job creation in the Mid-East
<b>Action 4:</b> The creation of a circular economy cluster for the Mid-East
<b>Strategic Objective 5: Support the continued development of a positive enterprise ecosystem in the Mid-East</b>
<b>Action 1:</b> Deliver upon multi stakeholder initiatives that will support the competitiveness of Start Ups, SMEs and microbusiness across the region
<b>Action 2:</b> Commission a regional strategy that will adopt an evidence-based approach to co-working hub and innovation space development and investment for the Mid-East

## Planning & Rural Development Strategic Policy Committee

### Cathaoirleach

Cllr. Patsy Glennon

### Wicklow County Council

Cllr. Sylvester Bourke  
Cllr. Gail Dunne  
Cllr. Malachai Duddy  
Cllr. Peter Stapleton  
Cllr. Pat Mahon

## Outside Agencies

Development/Construction - Jim Wood  
Agriculture/Farming Community - Michael Byrne  
Environment/Conservation - Tessa Stewart  
Business/Commercial - Conor McCarthy  
Community/Voluntary – Paul Armstrong

## Director of Services

Leonora Earls

## Senior Planner

Sorcha Walsh

## Senior Engineer

Fergal Keogh

The Planning & Rural Development SPC met twice in 2024.

## Functions Include:

Preparation of County Development Plan and Local Area Plans  
Monitoring of the effectiveness of policies of Development Plan  
Development Management  
Planning Enforcement (Unauthorized Development and Compliance)  
Heritage & Biodiversity  
Vacant Sites  
Derelict Sites  
Enforcement of the Short Term letting Regulations

## Goal

“To provide for proper and effective planning, balancing the need for sustainable development, the rights of individuals, the protection of the



environment and the social and economic needs of each area”



## Development Management

Development Management is the general term used to describe the functions relating to the processing of planning applications, up to and including any appeals to An Bord Pleanála.

Year	No. of Applications
2012	939
2013	987
2014	1,285
2015	1,361
2016	1,465
2017	1,544
2018	1,156
2019	1,122
2020	1,118
2021	1,370
2022	1,207
2023	1,108
2024	1,063

## ePlanning

The ePlanning system went live in 2023. In 2024 63% of applications have been received online.

## Other functions in the Development Management section are:

Large scale residential developments  
Pre-planning  
Third party submissions  
Compliance  
Appeals  
Collection of development contributions  
Section 5 referrals  
Taking in charge of estates

## Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028

The Wicklow County Development Plan (WCDP) 2022-2028 was adopted on 12 September 2022 and came into effect on 23 October 2022.

Healthy Place-making, Climate Action and Economic Opportunity are the three overarching cross-cutting themes that inform and shape all aspects of the plan. The plan also includes the Core Strategy and the Settlement Strategy for the County. The plan also includes the Town Plans for the following settlements: - Baltinglass, Newtownmountkennedy, Rathdrum, Ashford, Aughrim, Carnew, Dunlavin, Tinahely, Avoca, Donard, Newcastle, Roundwood, Shillelagh and Laragh-Glendalough.

## Variations to the County Development Plan

There were three variations proposed to the WCDP during 2024:

Proposed Variation No. 2 (Wicklow Town - Rathnew Local Area Plan), Proposed Variation No. 3 (Blessington Local Area

Plan), Proposed Variation No. 4 (Greystones/Delgany & Kilcoole Local Area Plan). The purpose of the variations is to ensure consistency between the WCDP and those Local Area Plans. The proposed variations will go before the elected Members in 2025.

## Local Area Plans

There are five Local Area Plans in Wicklow for the following settlements

Wicklow Town – Rathnew  
Blessington  
Greystones – Delgany & Kilcoole  
Arklow & Environs  
Bray Municipal District

All five Local Area Plans are currently under review.

## Residential Zoned Land Tax

The aim of the tax is to activate and bring forward the development of housing on lands which are suitably zoned and serviced, as indicated on maps that are published by the local authority.

Wicklow County Council published and invited submissions on the Annual Draft RZLT maps for 2025 on 1st February 2024 as provided for under Sections 653C and 653D of Part 22A of the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997 (as introduced by the Finance Act 2021 and as amended by Finance (No. 2) Act 2023).

As provided for by Section 653E of Part 22A of the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997 (as introduced by the Finance Act 2021 and as amended by Finance (No. 2) Act 2023), Wicklow County Council assessed

any submissions received and arrived at a determination in each case.

Said determinations specify where lands, or parts of lands, should be included or excluded from the final RZLT map as defined by Section 653K of Part 22A of the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997 (as introduced by the Finance Act 2021 and as amended by Finance (No. 2) Act 2023) and the reasons thereto.

The Final RZLT 2025 maps were published on 31 January 2025.

## Heritage

### County Heritage Plan review;

Co-ordination of review and public consultation process. Draft Plan agreed by WCC Nov 2024.

Co-ordination of meetings for Wicklow Heritage Forum: 4 in 2024

### County Heritage Plan Programme (CHP):

€57,000 from Heritage Council  
Glendalough Community Excavation and Outreach  
Creation of Community Archaeologist Part Time Service  
Our Wicklow Heritage communications programme  
Wicklow's Military Road Podcast series produced (due to be broadcast April 2025)  
Co-ordination of Heritage Week events programme- 100+ events  
Co-ordination of Wicklow groups in Irish Community of Archive Networks- five new groups added in 2024.  
Baltinglass and the Prehistoric Hillforts of Ireland: A new publication by authors

James O Driscoll, Alan Hawkes and William O Brien and supported by Wicklow County Council launched in Baltinglass in December

## Archaeology:

Community Monuments Fund CMF 2024  
 €202,000  
 Drumgoff Barracks – Works +  
 Conservation Plan  
 Kilmacanogue Church (Old) conservation  
 Plan  
 St. Kevin's Church Hollywood-  
 conservation plan  
 Mullinacuff Medieval Church-  
 consolidation works

## Built Heritage Capital Funds (Architecture):

Funding of €101,000 allocated to 16 projects under the Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS) 2024. Four projects managed under Historic Structures Fund (HSF); Coollattin House €171,000; Clermont House €171,000; Former Post Office, Shillelagh €20,000 and Vernacular house at Rosebank, Avoca €10,000.

Advertisement of **2025 BHIS & HSF** schemes, co-ordination and assessment of applications.

## SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (HOUSING & COMMUNITY)

### HOUSING SERVICES

#### Strategic Policy Committee

##### January – June 2024

##### Cathaoirleach

Cllr. John Snell

##### Wicklow County Council

Cllr. Tommy Annesley  
Cllr. Paul O'Brien  
Cllr. Stephen Stokes  
Cllr. Aoife Flynn Kennedy  
Cllr. Mick Ryan

##### Outside Agencies

##### Trade Unions

Awaiting nomination

##### Disadvantaged

Mark Hennessy Dublin Simon

##### Business/Commercial

Paddy Mordaunt

##### Community

Mary Ann Parsons  
Paul Armstrong

##### Wicklow Travellers Group

Aoibhinn McCloy

##### July – December 2024

##### Cathaoirleach

Cllr. Graham Richmond

##### Wicklow County Council

Cllr. Mark Barry  
Cllr. Paul O'Brien  
Cllr. Gerry O'Neill  
Cllr. Peter Stapleton  
Cllr. Gail Dunne

##### Outside Agencies

##### Trade Unions

John Douglas

##### Homeless Sector

Emma McMillen Simon Community

##### Social Inclusion

Kathleen Kelleher

##### Business/Commercial

Awaiting Nomination

##### Community/Voluntary

Cici Zheng

##### Environment Conservation

Awaiting Nomination

##### Development Construction (CIF)

Awaiting Nomination

##### Director of Services

Michael Nicholson

##### Senior Executive Officer

Theresa O'Brien (until June 2024)  
Caroline Fox (from June 2024)

##### Senior Engineers

Helena Fallon (until March 2024)



Seán Keane (Acting until October 2024)  
Pat Clarke (From November 2024)

## Housing Services

Housing Management  
Social Inclusion

The Housing Strategic Policy Committee met on 4 occasions in 2024 and focused on a number of key areas including:

Housing priorities and work programme for 2024 including future housing supply and management

Maintenance and Management of housing stock

Annual Housing Needs Assessment

Cost rental Scheme

Private Rented Inspections

Traveller Accommodation

Tenant in Situ

Ukrainian Response (up to September 2024)

Approved Housing Bodies collaboration

Mid-East homeless Action Plan 2024 - 2026

Housing For All

Policy on sale of Local Authority properties in need on significant refurbishment.

Draft Anti-Social Behaviour Policy Presented.

## Housing Stock Management

The total 2024 budget for Housing Stock management was €7,569,094.00.

Housing Maintenance and Repairs budget was €2,617,162.00. These maintenance and repairs works were carried out by a mixture of Municipal District staff, Housing Direct Labour staff and sub-contractors. Works associated with plumbing, electrical issues, roof repairs, etc. forms part of these maintenance and repairs.

Relets/Voids Programme had a total budget of €4,951,932.00. These works were managed by Municipal Districts and Housing Central staff. 99 units were fully completed under this programme in 2024.



14 Emmet Place Carnew 2024

Our planned maintenance, heating servicing central heating provision budget in 2024 was €1,385,300.

Central heating upgrades were provided in a number of houses, while the servicing and maintenance of central heating systems continued throughout 2024. In 2024 Housing Maintenance started a new air to water heat pump servicing and maintenance programme. Phase 1 includes Mitsubishi heat pumps across the County.

## Energy Efficiency Fabric Upgrade Phase 1 and 2

Works continued on the Energy Efficiency Fabric Upgrade programme during 2024 with 91 properties given approval to a value

of approximately €4,000,000 for energy efficiency fabric upgrade works.



Monastery Grove retrofit upgrade.

### Housing Allocations

Wicklow County Council allocates houses in accordance with the Scheme of Letting Priorities adopted by the Members and approved by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government. Any person in need of housing and unable to obtain it from their own resources may be included on the Council's Housing Waiting List, subject to compliance with eligibility criteria. A Housing Needs Assessment is carried out annually to ascertain an accurate number of persons seeking housing in County Wicklow

At 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024 there was a total of 4,203 persons on the Wicklow County Council's social housing waiting list.

A total of 171 houses were allocated during 2024 with a further 105 households nominated and housed with Approved Housing Bodies throughout the county.

### House Purchases

The Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage like previous years, have devolved arrangements through the Local Authorities to focus on acquiring properties where a tenant in receipt of social housing supports, including Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) and Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS), and has received a Notice of Termination (NOT) due to the landlord's intention to sell the property. A total of 12 house purchases closed, with a further 6 in conveyancing at the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024.



(109 Knockmore, Arklow – Closed June 2024)

### Other Housing Options

In terms of other housing options, Wicklow County Council continued to promote a broad range of additional housing options to those in need of housing throughout 2024.

### Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS)

The total number of RAS properties at 31st December 2024 was 174, broken down as follows:

98 RAS properties

76 CAS/RAS properties (Capital Assistance Scheme)

### Housing Assistance Payment (HAP)

A total of 1,351 households were availing of HAP rental support at 31st December 2024.

### Social Housing Leasing

Properties are leased from the private sector and used to accommodate households from local authority waiting lists. Leased properties will be allocated schemes to tenants in accordance with the local authority's allocations.

### Mortgage to Rent

The Mortgage to Rent (MTR) scheme is a scheme to help homeowners who are at risk of losing their homes due to mortgage arrears. It lets homeowners in mortgage difficulty switch from owning their home to renting their home as social housing tenants. At 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2024 there are 101 families availing of the Mortgage to Rent Scheme.

### Local Authority Home Loan

27 applicants were given approval in Principle in 2024.

### Housing Grants

Wicklow County Council continued to fund grants under the terms of the Housing

Adaption Grants, Housing Aid for Older People Grants and Mobility Aid Grant.

In 2024, 769 grants were received /processed with approvals totaling over €3.8m issued in grant funding for private and social houses.

Housing adaptation works include modifications to make a home more accessible and comfortable for individuals with disabilities or specific needs. This can involve installing ramps, widening doorways, and adding handrails or grab bars in bathrooms, adding stair lifts, or fitting specialized equipment such as walk-in showers or raised toilets. These changes are designed to improve mobility, safety, and independence for residents.

112 adaptation works were carried out on council's house across the county in 2024.

### Co. Wicklow Strategic Plan for Housing People with a Disability

The Housing and Disability Steering Group has prepared the new draft Co. Wicklow Strategic Plan for Housing People with Disability 2022-2027. The Implementation plan for Housing People with a disability was launched on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2023.

Workshops are taking place nationwide facilitated by the housing agency regarding the implementation plan.

Once the workshop takes place the local plan will be updated to take account of the implementation plan's targets and goals.

### Housing for Older People - Age Friendly /Disability Schemes



Scheme	Status
Castle Villas - Two 2 bed properties	Completed and allocated in 2024
Kilcoole Health Centre - 4 no 1 bed apartments	Completed and allocated in 2024
1A Mill Road – 4 No. 1 and 2 bed houses	Design completed 2024 to go to tender for construction.
5A Rednagh Road – Disability Unit	Commenced on site 2024 , completion expected Q2 2025



Scheme in Kilcoole completed 2024.

### Inspections

Private Rental inspection continued in 2024 to ensure our landlords meet the minimum rental standards. Housing carried out 496 inspections of private rental accommodation in 2024 with HAP and RAS tenants.

From this, 43 improvement notices and 11 prohibition notices were served in 2024.

### Tenant Purchase Scheme

During 2024, a further 10 tenants completed purchase under the Tenant Purchase Scheme.

### Estate Development

Estate Development Grants were allocated through the Municipal Districts to Residents Associations within the districts.

### Management - Tenant Liaison/Sustainment

A new strengthened tenancy sustainment team was established in 2023. There are now 4 tenancy sustainment officers in the County (3 in Wicklow County and 1 in Bray MD area). Their main focus will be as follows:

- Regularisation of Tenancies – own door emergency
- Housing First Tenancies
- Addressing minor anti-social issues/disputes
- Arrears
- Transfers
- Permissions to Reside
- Succession Tenancies
- Nursing Home Transitions
- Older Persons Grants/Adaptions
- Supporting Residents
- Associations/Identifying funding/Initiatives to improve Social Housing Estates
- Utilising Community Centres/spaces within social housing estates to improve social outcomes for tenants and their children.
- Pre-Tenancy Courses
- Provide a caring, positive, responsive and customer driven service to our Tenants.

Sign up of new Tenants.  
Transfer inspections  
Return of keys

### Housing Rents

As of 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024, there are 5030 tenanted units.

As of 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024, there were arrears amounting to **€3,078,907.92** outstanding.

The Rents Team are actively engaging with tenants in arrears to endeavour to alleviate high rent arrears.

### Traveller Accommodation

Wicklow County Council is required to undertake an annual count of Traveller families in November of each year - the count in 2024 showed 296 Traveller families living in the County.

Under the Traveller Accommodation Programme, 13 allocations were made to Traveller households in 2024.



Housing allocated Shillelagh 2024

Ongoing inspections on the fire safety on Halting sites were carried out by members of the Housing section and Wicklow fire

service and improvements were made as per recommendations.

Progress was made on the Capital Programme in 2024 as follows:

- Ballintесkin - 3 houses - job was completed and allocated January 2024
- Rathdrum: 3 houses Avondale Heights –works commenced on site in late 2023 and progressed through 2024, completion date is March 2025.
- Barndarrig – 3-unit group housing scheme part of 20-unit development. Design development in 2024, Part 8 expected in 2025.
- Vale Road Arklow- 2 units prelim. design commenced in 2024.

The members of the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee (LTACC) met 5 times in 2024. The LTACC subgroup meets on a more regular basis to discuss individual cases and particular issues that may arise. The new Traveller Accommodation Plan 2024 – 2029 was adopted.

Implementation of the objectives under the new plan to commence to ensure the accommodation needs of Travellers living in Co. Wicklow was met.

This included planning for the provision of standard housing, group housing, rural houses and temporary/emergency sites.

### Homelessness

The prevention of homelessness continued to be a key focus in 2024. The homeless team provided advice and support to homeless persons or those at risk of homelessness. Emergency accommodation

was provided by the Council, where necessary, following a full assessment of need.

311 new cases (families/individuals) presented as homeless during 2024. As at the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024 - 22 families were in emergency accommodation with a further 18 families in “own front door” accommodation.

### Homeless HAP

The Homeless HAP Placefinder provides assistance in:

seeking out potential properties suitable for households currently identified as homeless or at risk of homelessness.

liaising with specific households to establish their specific needs.

establishing relationships with local property agents and landlords.

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, 597 households (418 families & 179 singles) have been assisted under the Homeless HAP Scheme in Wicklow County Council from the inception on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024. (238 homeless cases, 332 prevention cases to date and 27 direct provision). 152 properties were sourced by WCC.

### Partnership Approach – working with Approved Housing Bodies

In order to target specific cohorts of vulnerable people at risk of or experiencing homelessness, and those who need

supported accommodation, Wicklow County Council continued to work with a number of Approved Housing Bodies to deliver accommodation to individuals with support needs. This housing-led approach ensures a sustainable solution to homelessness in individuals who are initially hard to reach and ultimately have tenancy sustainment issues.

The Council operates the management of these properties through either Service Level Agreements, or License Agreements and Leases. These units provide wraparound, supported accommodation for vulnerable individuals using the Housing First model. This housing led approach to combating homelessness is enshrined in Housing for All Ireland and is a commitment in the Mid-East Region Homelessness Action Plan for Kildare, Meath and Wicklow.

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

In partnership with the Dublin Simon Community, the Council continued to provide a supported accommodation facility at Kilmantin Hill in Wicklow Town, for people experiencing homelessness. Eleven individuals are accommodated in medium support, transitional units at the facility. A number of move-ons to own door accommodation occurred in 2024. Engagement with the persons in the facility continues on an ongoing basis with a view to providing support into more long term accommodation.

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

San Remo, operated by Dublin Simon, incorporates a service model where there are a number of emergency/cold weather Beds and Supported Temporary Accommodation Beds (STA), on site key working support link in with clients.

### Homeless Supported Temporary Accommodation – Carraig Eden, Greystones

This facility comprising of 35 ensuite bedrooms provides supported temporary accommodation to individuals who have successfully exited addiction and are now working to exit homelessness.

### Homeless Family Service Facility, Wicklow

Dublin Simon is engaged by Wicklow County Council to operate and manage the facility at Fitzwilliam Road, Wicklow as a Family Homeless Service. The building comprises of 3 x 1 bed units 2 x 2 bed units and 2 x 3 bed units – Eleven families have now transitioned or are in the process of transitioning to a permanent home and the resulting vacancies are in the process of being occupied with families experiencing or in danger of homelessness.

It is envisaged that families will avail of the service for circa 6-month STA (Supported Temporary Accommodation) with key working support to enable the transition of families from homelessness into Homeless HAP or alternative longer-term accommodation.

### Other Homeless Supported Accommodation

Wicklow County Council own properties in Wicklow, Bray and Greystones and have

them leased to AHBs, and are providing units of low to medium supported accommodation targeted to the particular support needs of the clients.

### Housing First

Housing First recognises that a stable home provides the basis for recovery in other areas.

Peter McVerry Trust was appointed as the Housing First Programme Implementer for the Mid-East Region and Wicklow County Council continued to work with them to achieve the targets identified in the programme. A number of clients continue to be assessed for the Housing First programme.

### Homelessness and Mental Health

A Mental Health forum was established by Wicklow County Council with representatives from the HSE, Wicklow County Council and HAIL (AHB for Mental Health). Wicklow County Council co-fund a Tenancy Sustainment Officer to deal with clients at risk of homelessness due to enduring Mental Health and this position was filled in 2020. A second sustainment officer was recruited in 2023. The initiative continued in 2024 with the tenancy sustainment officer sitting on the Homeless Action Team and also meeting regularly with staff of the housing section. Regular meetings are held with senior housing staff and the mental health teams of both CHO6 and CHO7.

### Health and Safety

Wicklow County Council's Health and Safety Policy has been established to ensure that in so far as is reasonably practicable, everyone who works for or on behalf of Wicklow County Council does so in the safest and healthiest conditions possible. The Housing Directorate has embedded this Health and Safety Policy as being applicable to all Wicklow County Council operations within the Housing Section. The organisation's policies and procedures for health and safety are constantly reviewed

in line with best practices, legislative changes and national initiatives.

Safety audits and safety inspections of contractors and direct labour sites are carried out periodically by technical staff.

Health and Safety Induction Training is communicated to all new members of staff. Continual training programs are provided for staff to ensure compliance with construction and safety regulations.

## COMMUNITY SERVICES

### Strategic Policy Committee

#### January – June 2024

#### Cathaoirleach

Cllr. Vincent Blake

#### Wicklow County Council

Cllr. John Mullen  
Cllr. Melanie Corrigan  
Cllr. Anne Ferris  
Cllr. Miriam Murphy  
Cllr. Gail Dunne

#### Outside Agencies

#### **Business/Commercial**

Irene Sweeney

#### **Community/Voluntary**

Mai Quaid

#### **Community/Voluntary**

Colm Moules

#### **Social Inclusion**

Niamh Wogan

#### **Environment Conservation**

Lynda Stopford

#### July – December 2024

#### Cathaoirleach

Cllr. Caroline Winstanley

#### Wicklow County Council

Cllr. Warren O'Toole  
Cllr. Melanie Corrigan  
Cllr. John Snell  
Cllr. Miriam Murphy  
Cllr. Pat Kennedy  
Cllr. Aoife Flynn Kennedy

#### Outside Agencies

#### **Business/Commercial**

Irene Sweeney

#### **Community/Voluntary**

Mai Quaid

#### **Community/Voluntary**

Colm Moules

#### **Social Inclusion**

Niamh Wogan

#### **Environment Conservation**

Awaiting Nomination

#### Senior Executive Officer



Caroline Fox (Acting until June 2024)  
Máire Halvey (Acting from June 2024)

## Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)

The purpose of this committee is to develop, co-ordinate and implement a coherent and integrated approach to local and community development.

### The functions of the LCDC

To prepare and adopt the community elements of a 6-year economic and community plan. To implement, or to arrange for the implementation of the community elements of the Plan. To undertake a review of the community elements of the Plan at least once within the 6-year period.

To monitor and review on an ongoing basis the implementation of the community elements of the Plan, including performance against any benchmarks or indicators of performance.

To seek to ensure effectiveness, consistency, co-ordination, and avoidance of duplication between the local and community development programmes.

To pursue the co-ordination generally of all local and community development programmes within the functional area of the Committee, to optimise resources for the benefit of local communities in that area and improve the efficiency with which publicly funded local and community development resources are used.

To consider and adopt a statement in respect of the economic elements of a draft of the Plan prepared by the local authority.

The Committee may enter into an agreement in writing with a public authority, local development or community development body, or other person for the carrying out of those functions by such an authority, body, or person which the

Committee considers appropriate to be carried out.

### Local Economic and Community Plan 2024 - 2029

The LECP is the framework for many operational and other plans in the County.

The plan:

Agrees priorities for the area.

Agrees agency roles in addressing these priorities. Places onus on parent bodies of agencies at local level to enable them to respond to plan.

### Monitoring the LECP

An Advisory Committee was originally set up to develop the LECP and ensure integration of both elements of the plan. The Advisory Committee has agreed to continue in place to monitor the implementation of the plan. The members of the Advisory Committee come from both the LCDC and the Local Authority.

They are:

<b>Cllr. Melanie Corrigan</b>	<b>Chair LCDC</b>
<b>Cllr. Tom Fortune</b>	<b>Chair Economic Development &amp; Enterprise Strategic Policy Committee (SPC)</b>
<b>Michael Nicholson</b>	<b>Chief Officer LCDC</b>
<b>Lorraine Gallagher</b>	<b>Director of Services, Organisational Development</b>
<b>Vibeke Delahunt</b>	<b>Local Enterprise Office</b>
<b>Susan Nichols</b>	<b>SEO Economic Development &amp; Enterprise</b>
<b>Stephen Clarke</b>	<b>Town Regeneration Officer, Organisational Development</b>

There are many shared objectives between the community and the economic elements of the LECP and for the most part community and

economic development are interlinked. In recognition of that, and of the fact that the plan is not static but dynamic and adaptable to new developments, the integrated element of the LECP is achieved through continuous dialogue and co-ordination. This is achieved through regular meetings of the Advisory Committee. Through the planning and reporting process at these meetings, information is shared and linkages between actions are drawn leading to co-ordination and integration where possible and where appropriate and on an on-going basis.

## Regional

The Regional Assemblies' role in the LECP process is set out under Section 66c of the Local Government Act 2001, in particular Section 66c 2(c) and 3(c) which states that the consideration of an LECP by the Regional Assembly shall relate to its consistency with (i) the core strategy and the objectives of the development plan of the local authority concerned, (ii) any Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy or, as appropriate, Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs) that may apply, and (iii) between the economic and community elements of the Plan. County Wicklow LCDC has anticipated the development of the Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy and will review the LCDC to ensure alignment. The LCDC and County Wicklow Partnership (CWP) worked closely together on the development of the Local Development Strategy (LDS) for the LEADER Programme 2023 - 2027. The priorities of the LEADER programme are social inclusion, the green economy and economic and community development. The LDS strongly reflects some of the relevant goals and objectives of the LECP.

**The five combined High-Level Goals of the LECP are:**

HG1. Climate Action
HG2. Enterprise, Innovation and Creativity
HG3. A Connected County

HG4. Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Just Transition
HG5. Health, Resilience and Well Being

## Implementation

HLG4. Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Just Transition	<p>4.1 Support the diversity of groups in our society including integration of minority groups.</p> <p>4.2 Implement community development principles of inclusion, equality and meaningful engagement of marginalised groups</p> <p>4.3 Implement a fair and inclusive approach to climate action through a just transition model</p> <p>4.4 Address gaps in service delivery in the county</p> <p>4.5 Address the issue of supported services for those experiencing domestic, sexual and gender-based violence.</p> <p>4.6 Support the adoption of the Public Sector Duty Act for service delivery</p>	HLG5. Health Resilience and Well Being	<p>5.1 Drive the environmental, economic and social regeneration of County Wicklow's towns and villages and their hinterlands</p> <p>5.2 Strengthen and sustain a strong civil society with actively engaged and connected communities</p> <p>5.3 Support the provision of community, sport and recreational infrastructure for communities</p> <p>5.4 Improve the health and quality of life of all, with a focus on the social determinants of health impacting on at risk communities</p> <p>5.5 Support the wellbeing of our children and young people</p> <p>5.6 Improve the safety of our communities through the JPCs and safety measures in the public realm</p> <p>5.7 Support the well-being and quality of life of our ageing population</p> <p>5.8 Continue to provide the strategic direction for service delivery in the county</p>
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			including but not limited to SICAP and LEADER
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A number of programmes contribute to the achievement of these goals and a number of agencies are involved in the integration of these actions.

The LEADER and SICAP Programmes are central to building capacity of communities. In addition, several development funding schemes were announced by the Department of Rural and Community Development:

Town & Village Scheme

CLÁR

Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme

Urban Regeneration & Development Fund

Community Enhancement Programme

Community Enhancement Programme (Community Activities Fund)

Rural Regeneration & Development Fund

## Funding Received 2024

Funding Schemes 2024	Funding Received 2023
Town & Village Schemes	€720,000
CLÁR	€241,783
Healthy Ireland Initiatives	€100,000
Sláintecare Healthy Communities	€209,000
Local Enhancement Programme	€176,338
Community Recognition Fund 2024	€1,584,550

## 2024 Highlights

Strategy	Status
Healthy Wicklow Strategy	Each Local Authority has developed a 3-year Local Strategy for Healthy Ireland Fund 2023-2025.
County Wicklow Food & Beverage Strategy (Integrated action with Economic Development and Enterprise Support SPC)	The County Wicklow Food and Beverage Strategy launched at a food showcase event, the 'Feast from the East' in April 2019. The strategy is being implemented by the Committee along with Birnie and Associates Ltd. funded equally between Wicklow County Council and County Wicklow Partnership. Progress underway on the following goals: Development of Wicklow Food Story Development of Wicklow Food and Beverage Branding Creation of a key messaging plan Creation of a food activity calendar Creation of a website Delivery of business networking events Food Poverty and Sustainability

County Wicklow Partnership and Bray Area Partnership have taken the lead with this goal and are rolling out training and support programmers for a number of social enterprises in the county.

The LCDC also continue to work with other agencies to ensure alignment with the LECP and the strategies, plans and policies of the other agencies. These include:

LEADER  
SICAP

The Children and Young People Services Committee  
 Comhairle na nÓg  
 County Wicklow Age Friendly Programme  
 County Wicklow Older People's Council  
 Disability Inclusion Steering Committee (DISC)  
 Healthy Ireland  
 Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme  
 The Joint Policing Committee  
 The Public Participation Network  
 The HSE / National Office for Suicide Prevention  
**LEADER**

## LEADER PROGRAMME 2023 - 2027 THEMES AND SUB THEMES

Theme 1: Economic Development and Job Creation	Theme 2: Rural Infrastructure and Social Inclusion	Theme 3: Sustainable Development and Climate change Mitigation and Adoption
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Green Economy</li> <li>Agricultural Diversification</li> <li>Rural Tourism &amp; Recreation</li> <li>Enterprise Development</li> <li>Rural Food Production</li> <li>Social, Community &amp; Co-operative Enterprises</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rural Infrastructure</li> <li>Accessible Services</li> <li>Optimising Digital Connectivity</li> <li>Rural Youth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sustainable Development of Rural Environment</li> <li>Climate Change Capacity Building</li> <li>Climate Change Mitigation and Adoption</li> </ul>

The LCDC is the Local Action Group (LAG) for the LEADER Programme in the county and hold the LAG meetings separate from the LCDC meetings. County Wicklow Partnership is the implementing body for the programme. The Local Authority is the lead financial partner for LEADER in County Wicklow with responsibility for the programme both administratively and financially.

On October 27th, 2022, Minister Humphreys announced the new €180 million LEADER Programme for 2023-2027, with Wicklow receiving an allocation of €5.3 million. The Wicklow LEADER Programme 2023-2027 was officially launched on June 19th, 2024, at Ballybeg House in Tinahely. In 2024, seven LAG meetings and three Evaluation Committee Meetings took

place. By December 31st, 2024, County Wicklow Partnership had received 112 expressions of interest for the new programme, with ten projects advancing and receiving approval from the Local Action Group (LAG).



Wicklow County Council is the host of Co. Wicklow Comhairle na nÓg. 20 local schools and youth groups are involved in Comhairle na nÓg and it has a very positive profile across the County as a structure that amplifies the voice of young people.

In 2024, the members of Wicklow Comhairle undertook projects across a number of key areas:

**Drug Awareness:** The members presented findings from their 'Drugs Attitudes' survey to a conference in Wicklow, along with stakeholders involved in drugs treatment, education, and other related provision.

**Mental Health:** The members created targeted content to support youth mental health and delivered events around mental health to local schools.

**Ukrainian Response:** The members maintained positive communication channels with the Local Authority through participation on structures around the Ukrainian response activities.

Wicklow Comhairle na nÓg members continue to undertake projects to enable young people to have a voice on the services, policies, and issues that affect them in their local area.





## County Wicklow Age Friendly Strategy 2023-27

### Action 3.8 Appoint Healthy Age Friendly Homes Co-Ordinator & Rollout Wicklow Programme

The programme aims to support older people to live in their home for as long as possible. It was rolled out in Wicklow County Council in January 2024.

The programme's ambition is based on four key objectives:

1. Enable older people to continue to live in their homes, or in a home more suited to their needs
2. Live with a sense of independence and autonomy
3. Feel part of, and be part of, their community
4. Support the avoidance of early or premature admission to long-term residential care

The County Wicklow coordinator, Marion Van der Wel, is carrying out at least seven visits per week arranging supports for participants such as fall detectors, housing adaptation supports from Care & Repair, Housing Adaptations and linking with Community Services.

The programme accepts referrals from a variety of sources including from:

1. The older person themselves
2. Family and friends
3. Elected Representatives
4. Local Authority Staff
5. Public Health Nurses, GP's and Occupational Therapists
6. Community Organisations

Since the commencement of the Healthy Age Friendly Homes Programme in Wicklow, the level of interest in the programme has been greater than anticipated. Consequently, a large number of referrals to the programme in Wicklow have been received, and the waiting times to be seen by the Local Coordinator are longer than originally forecast.

Since her appointment to her role in January, Local Coordinator for Wicklow, Marion Van der Wel, has been conducting home assessments on a weekly basis to our programme participants. As part of her role, Marion offers a wide range of supports to our participants, including but not limited to, arranging fall detector personal alarms, helping with housing adaptation grants, organising Care and Repair services, linking-in with community services, signposting the older person to health services etc.

The programme has gone from strength-to-strength in Wicklow since its inception. The 2024 projected targets for the programme in Wicklow have been exceeded, which demonstrates the success of the programme, and is a testament to the concerted collaborative efforts of the Local Coordinator and Wicklow Local Authority Staff.



## Age Friendly Programme

In line with our National commitment to the World Health Organization's global Age Friendly Cities and Communities Programme, Wicklow County Council is committed to future proofing County Wicklow for the changing demographics of our aging population and making County Wicklow a great place to live and grow older.

Ireland's National Age-Friendly Cities and Counties Programmes is part of this worldwide initiative which aims to make sure that as we age, we can all:

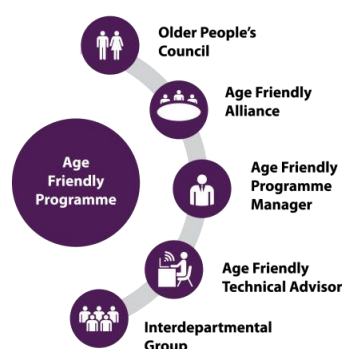
- Have a real say in what happens in our own lives and what happens in the areas in which we live.
- Enjoy good health, good services, and live in a safe environment.
- Participate fully in everything that is going on in our communities, cities and counties.

The Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme provides a structure so that Local Authorities can take a lead on changing thinking about ageing and how services are planned and delivered. Through this model, Local Authorities bring together older people, service providers and businesses in an Alliance that really works and which:

- Enables older people to live active and healthy lives, remaining in their own homes for as long as possible
- Enhances service delivery without increasing expenditure

- Brings about valued improvements in the quality of life for everybody in the community

The Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme offers a proven way of bringing diverse organisations, groups, services, and businesses together to streamline their work, with the needs and interests of older people at their heart.



## Age Friendly Strategy 2023-2027

The development of the new Age Friendly Strategy 2023- 2027 was a priority for the Wicklow Age Friendly County Alliance in 2022. The stakeholder and public consultation process was conducted early in the year and the findings were presented to a joint meeting of the Age Friendly Alliance and the Older People's Council on 1<sup>st</sup> June.

Following consultations with individual members of the Wicklow Age Friendly County Alliance and other stakeholders, over 70 actions were identified, defined and categorised under the 8 WHO High Level themes. The lead partner and support partners identified in the Action Plan, which underpins the new strategy, have all committed to delivering on these actions over the next 5 years. The full text of the strategy document was agreed by the Wicklow Age Friendly County Alliance, on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2022, and subsequently presented to the SPC and full County Council on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2023 and adopted as presented. Mary Butler, TD, Minister for Health and Older People formally launched the

new strategy at County Buildings on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2023.

The strategy document can be downloaded at:

[www.wicklow.ie/Living/Services/Community/Age-Friendly-Wicklow](http://www.wicklow.ie/Living/Services/Community/Age-Friendly-Wicklow)



## County Wicklow Older People's Council

The CWOPC are a representative body for older people in Wicklow.

The monthly meetings of the OPC Executive recommenced for 2024 from 17<sup>th</sup> February to agree a workplan for 2024 and a recruitment plan for new members. Three members of the OPC Executive attend all Alliance meetings to represent the voice of older people in County Wicklow. The AGM of the wider OPC was held on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2024.



## Older People's Council – National Convention

The 2024 The National Convention of Older People's Councils was hosted by Age Friendly Ireland and Kilkenny County Council, in Kilkenny on 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> May 2024. The theme for the convention was 'Ageing with Independence'. The delegation from each county included the Age Friendly Programme Manager and 3 OPC members, including the chair of the OPC.

## Disability Inclusion Steering Committee (DISC)

The purpose of DISC is to achieve a multi departmental approach to making the services provided by Wicklow County Council accessible to all citizens in the county.

Funding was received from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability Integration and Youth to support disability services in the County made through the Disability Participation and Awareness Fund. This funding will assist the Council in making Wicklow more inclusive and welcoming for people with all disabilities.

A "Make Way Day" meeting was held on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July 2024. "Make way Day" is a programme that will be piloted to make people aware of the difficulties people with disabilities face when people park their cars on footpaths obstructing people with disabilities to pass by freely. This initiative took place in September 2024.

The Sunflower Lanyard Programme aims to easily identify people with hidden disabilities. This Programme was rolled out in Wicklow County Council. Members of the Customer Care Unit currently wear these Lanyards so that a person with a hidden disability can identify which member of staff they need to talk to.

## Wicklow Train Station Walkability

Wicklow Station has been nominated as the first train station within the County to receive Age Friendly Status. A Committee has been formed,

and a Walkability Audit took place on the 16th of October 2024 where people from the Irish Wheelchair Association, Members from the Older Peoples Council and members from Wicklow County Council took part. They were given a toolkit to use on the walk up to the station and around the station and they took notes of any issues that they came across. After the Walkability the Committee went back to County Hall to discuss their findings. A report of all the findings was issued and work will commence in 2025.



## Community Awards 2024

The Community Awards Scheme for 2024 had an overall fund of €72,250 and awards were granted in respect of Community Grant/Merit Awards and Community Social Innovation Awards.

Over 230 Community Groups, Clubs and Voluntary Organisations benefitted under the Wicklow County Council Community Grants Award Scheme in 2024.

## Local Enhancement Programme 2024

The Local Enhancement Programme for 2024 was announced by the Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphries T.D. and Minister of State with Responsibility for Community Development and Charities, Joe

O'Brien T.D. on the 6th of December 2023. This scheme had a total budget of €6m, with €176,338.11 being allocated to Wicklow County Council.

This funding, which is administered via the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC), provided capital supports essential for the many small community groups and organisations, particularly those who serve disadvantaged areas in rural and urban areas. There was a particular focus on small capital works/improvements, and the purchase of equipment for community use.

A portion of the fund was reserved for Women's groups in recognition of the growing number of Women's Sheds, Groups and Networks across the country. €29,389.69 of the total amount allocated to Wicklow County Council was ring-fenced for women's groups.

A total of 179 groups were awarded grants (149 main fund and 26 women's group fund). An Taoiseach Simon Harris announced the successful projects in Co. Wicklow on 21st May 2024, at an Awards Ceremony held in the Tramway Theatre, Blessington.





## Co-operation Ireland All-Island Pride of Place Awards 2024

Two Community groups from Wicklow were successful at the National Pride of Place Competition 2024, which took place in the Hillgrove Hotel, Co. Monaghan, on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> November. These annual awards are known as the Oscars for community groups, and they highlight the tremendous work being done by community groups all over the island of Ireland.

Tearmann Community Garden, Baltinglass, won gold in the Inclusive Communities category, and Tinahely Community Recycling Centre won silver in the category for Creative Communities.

Sponsored by IPB Insurance, the Pride of Place competition was initiated 22 years ago in association with Co-operation Ireland to acknowledge the invaluable work undertaken by

volunteers and those involved in local community development.



Patricia Norton from Tearmann Community, Baltinglass, accepts their gold award.



Dave Murray from Tinahely Community Recycling Centre accepts their silver award.

## Community Recognition Fund

The Community Recognition Fund launched in 2023 and aims to support the development of community infrastructure and facilities for the entire community, in recognition of the contribution being made by communities across the country in welcoming and hosting significant numbers of arrivals from Ukraine and other countries.

Wicklow received €1,680,887 from the 2023 fund. The following seven successful projects from this fund progressed throughout 2024, with most completed or near completion.

	Project Description
Bray	Internal works including electrical upgrade,



Community Centre	painting, flooring and heating system improvement works
	External works including windows and doors replacement, safe removal of asbestos, exterior painting,
	Other works will include accessible lift, protected stairway works, insulation upgrade, landscaping and signage
Baltinglass Community Park	Riverside Walking Path
	New Playground
	MUGA Refurbishment
Bray Parish Centre	Internal works including electrical upgrade, painting and fittings
Wicklow Town Placemaking Project	Refurbishment of Assembly Hall (total area 2,000 sq. ft) to include new heating system, Internal painting, insulation, install 3 phases, refurbish kitchen, toilets and meeting room areas. Make universally accessible
	Installation of universally accessible outdoor community gym facility along the Murrough, in order to extend upon and complement the existing community facilities present.
	Improvements to the seafront promenade linking Wicklow Harbour to the existing Murrough community facilities and beyond to the Murrough coastal walk.
Arklow Playing Pitch	Groundworks and surfacing works
	Multi use pitch and fencing
	Landscaping
Rathdrum Community Park	Groundworks, Fencing, Gates
	Landscaping, large planters and benches
Greystones Community Park	Boules/pétanque playing ground
	Landscaping and Community Placemaking

On 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2024, The Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD, announced €16.5 million to deliver 185 community projects across the country. Wicklow received funding of €1,584,550 from the 2024 scheme.

The major investment will support a diverse range of projects such as upgrades to sports facilities, community centres, parks, walking trails and playgrounds. As part of the initiative, funding

is provided to support the purchase of buildings and vehicles for community use.

The first application window for 2024 opened in April. Wicklow is set to receive funding for the below projects from this phase:

Wick low	Dunlavin	Dunlavin GAA Club	Develop ment of multi-use games area	€144,000
Wick low	Dunlavin	Imaal Hall Committee	Facilities Upgrade	€60,800
Wick low	Newtownmount Kennedy	Newtown GAA	Developme nt of a Walkway	€10,000
Wick low	Arklow	Arklow Town Team	Upgrade to St. Peter's Place Playground	€13,500
Wick low	Bray	Bray Area Partnership	Purchase of new vehicle	€50,000
Wick low	Rathdrum	Rathdrum Playground Committee	Park Placemaking Project	€54,500

A final phase of applications ran in late 2024. The assessment process is underway to be returned to the Department of Rural and Community Development by 28<sup>th</sup> February 2025.

## Social Inclusion Unit

Social Inclusion Unit (SIU) continued to support anti-poverty and social inclusion initiatives throughout 2024. Over that period, it:

Monitored the implementation of the Department of Rural and Community Development's Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP) throughout Co. Wicklow.

Represented social inclusion issues on the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC).

Supported ongoing development and operation of the Co. Wicklow Public Participation Network (PPN).

Participated on regional and national committees, networks, and structures.

## Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP) 2024-2028

This national programme funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development and the EU European Social Fund (ESF) continued to be successfully delivered in Co. Wicklow by the local development companies of Bray & North Wicklow Area Partnership for the Bray and Greystones Municipal District Areas (Lot 15-1) and Co. Wicklow Partnership for the Arklow, Wicklow and Baltinglass Municipal District Areas (Lot 15-2). In 2024 this programme was worth over €2 million to the county. SICAP focuses on empowering and enabling the county's most disadvantaged communities and individuals to improve their life opportunities, outcomes, and local environment.

In 2024, Bray & North Wicklow Area Partnership supported 28 Local Community Organisations and 542 disadvantaged individuals, while Co. Wicklow Partnership supported 17 Community Organisations and 581 disadvantaged individuals. Wicklow Local Community Development Committee (LCDC), in conjunction with Wicklow County Council, continued to oversee, monitor and manage the performance of the local development companies in delivering this programme. The LCDC was greatly assisted in this task by the SICAP Sub-group.

## County Wicklow Public Participation Network (PPN)

Co. Wicklow Public Participation Network continued to facilitate public engagement, community networking, information exchange and community participation throughout the

county and acted as the conduit through which Wicklow County Council connected with community, social inclusion, and environmental groups. Throughout 2024 Wicklow PPN also participated in a wide variety of public consultations and policy submissions at local, regional, and national level.

At end of 2024, Wicklow PPN had in place 43 Representatives sitting across 18 Committees/Boards within the county and local authority including Strategic Policy Committees and Joint Policing Committees. (A full list of Committees and Representatives is available on the Wicklow PPN website [www.countywicklowppn.ie](http://www.countywicklowppn.ie)).

## Activity Performance Indicator 2024

- Y2: Groups associated with the Public Participation Network (PPN)
- A. Number of organisations included in the County Register at 31/12/2024 = 481
  - B. Number of organisations that registered for the first time in 2024 = 56
  - C. Number of organisations (registered in 2024) that opted to be part of the Social Inclusion College within the PPN = 10
  - D. Total number of groups in the Social Inclusion College = 84



Healthy Ireland

Healthy Ireland's Vision

A Healthy Ireland where everyone can enjoy physical and mental health and wellbeing to their full potential, where wellbeing is valued and supported at every level of society and is everyone's responsibility.

Healthy Ireland Fund allocation	€75,000
Period Poverty	€25,000

The four goals of Healthy Ireland are:

**Goal 1: Increase the proportion of people who are healthy at all stages of life.**

**Goal 2: Reduce health inequalities.**

**Goal 3: Protect the public from threats to health and wellbeing.**

**Goal 4: Create an environment where every individual and sector of society can play their part in achieving a Healthy Ireland.**

As part of the Healthy Ireland Fund Round 4 application process, Local Authorities were required to select outcome indicators from the Healthy Ireland Outcomes Framework Indicator Set.

The two outcomes that were chosen for Wicklow were:

Increase in individual's level of positive mental health as per the Energy and Vitality Index.

Decrease in % of those at risk of poverty and basic deprivation.

A targeted approach was required to ensure a clear focus on supporting the health and wellbeing of disadvantaged groups and communities in Wicklow to address health inequalities. The Pobal HP Deprivation Index was used to identify areas of disadvantage to very disadvantaged across the County.

Healthy Wicklow Programme Round 4 2024 received an allocation of €100,000 in total, broken down as follows:

Income	Amount
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Healthy Ireland Fund allocation breakdown:

Action	Initiatives
1: Active Community Pilot Project	Areas of disadvantage in County i.e. Tinahely/Carnew/Shillelagh & Rathnew Non-clinical activities used as a means of positively influencing physical and mental health & wellbeing. 2574 participants have engaged in the project in 2024.
2: Wicklow Travellers Group	Education/Training Workshops Provision of Physical Activities. As a result of the Healthy Ireland Funding, 50 young Traveller children attended the Wicklow Traveller Group summer projects, 20 Traveller women attended St. Brigid's Holy Well in Louth & over 50 males took part in the annual Thomas Murphy memorial soccer tournament. 4 new youth groups have been established including a new sensory group for children with additional needs.
3: Bray Area Partnership	Approval for employment of community food coordinator for Wicklow. Aisling Kirwan is now in situ since May 2024 and a food poverty awareness campaign has commenced for the County. The first Food for Thought event took place in Arklow Library on

	17 <sup>th</sup> October 2024 and a networking group has been established for the area to work on actions at a local level.
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Food for Thought event, Arklow Library on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2024

## Period Poverty Initiative

The Healthy Ireland Coordinator and Sláintecare Local Development Officer submitted an expression of interest application for period poverty funding.

Due to its success an additional €25,000 was allocated for 2024.

Facilities/services reached in 2024 include:

13 libraries across the County continue to be provided for and stocked with period products.

Direct Provision - Kippure, Esplanade & Slaney Court.

Public toilets in Wicklow County Council, Arklow, Wicklow and Bray Municipal Districts.

Connect Youth Service Little Bray & Ballywaltrim, INTREO Bray, Little Bray Family Resource Centre, Family Resource Centre Oldcourt Bray, Ballywaltrim Community Centre, and Little Bray Community Centre.

Wicklow Child & Family Project, Crosscare, Arklow Springboard and West Wicklow Youth Project.

Saoirse Domestic Violence Service Outreach & Prevention West Wicklow

Homeless services - Simon Emergency accommodation in Bray, Simon Family accommodation in Wicklow Town and 5 Loaves. Forty sporting organisations have now engaged in the project for the provision of products in their facilities and changing rooms.

School Home Liaison Officers have also made contact to participate in the project targeting the schools and vulnerable families under their remit.



## Sláintecare Healthy Communities

Sláintecare is Ireland's strategic initiative aimed at transforming the health and social care system to provide equitable access to services based on need, rather than the ability to pay. For the residents of Bray, this means a focus on delivering the right care, in the right place, at the right time, ensuring that everyone can access comprehensive health services without financial barriers.

As Bray is a disadvantaged community, Sláintecare's initiatives are designed to tackle the social determinants of health by offering accessible services and fostering community development. The goal is to empower the individuals of Bray to make healthier lifestyle choices, thereby reducing health disparities and promoting overall wellbeing.

Looking ahead to 2024 and 2025, The WCC Sláintecare's focus includes the continued implementation of the Healthy Communities Programme, with an emphasis on expanding

services and strengthening community engagement. Additionally, the establishment of four new Regional Health Areas is planned for March 2025, aiming to improve clinical governance, accountability, and the integration of community and acute services. These developments are expected to enhance the delivery of health and social care services in Bray and other regions, ensuring that care is more responsive to local needs.

By advancing these initiatives, Sláintecare seeks to create a more equitable and effective healthcare system for all residents of Bray, particularly those in disadvantaged communities.

#### Achievements in 2024:

**1. Children's Health and Wellbeing Hub:** 75,000 of the SHC Seed Funding went exclusively to the establishment of the new Children's Wellness Hub in Little Bray. This dedicated hub will focus on the health and wellbeing of children and families in Bray and will offer various services, including play therapy and family engagement programs, to support the mental and emotional development of our younger residents. This project is currently on going.

#### 2. Play Therapy and Family Engagement

**Services:** Recognizing the importance of early intervention, The Bray Family Resource and Development Centre, The Marian Centre and The Bray Travellers Project will be introducing play therapy sessions aimed at helping children under 12 and their families. These family engagement services and play therapy sessions will aim at understanding issues such as trauma, poverty, education, behavior and much more, to help us understand and support children's development.

**3. Bray Travellers Project Funding:** In 2024, Bray was selected as one of five areas to receive funding under the Traveller Health Initiative. This funding, totaling €132,000 over two years,

supports the employment of a part-time Housing Accommodation Officer with the Bray Traveller Community Development Group. The project aims to improve living conditions, facilitate access to mental health services, and build partnerships with local organizations to foster trust and integration within the community.

**4. Community Health Networks:** The Bray Integrated Care Hub has been instrumental in delivering a range of specialist services for chronic diseases and older persons within the community. General Practitioners (GPs) in Bray can refer patients directly for pulmonary testing, reducing waiting times and allowing residents to receive essential care closer to home. The Sláintecare Healthy Communities area in Wicklow is Bray, and within that are the target populations are areas of disadvantage and vulnerable populations. Since the launch of the programme, the funding received from 2022-2024 has achieved the following:

Enhancement Fund for capital projects 2022	€250,000
Seed Fund 2022 – 2024	€225,000
Promotion budget	€8,000
Inflation increases	€5,627
Genio Funding	€134,000
Healthy Ireland Economic Development	€20,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>€642,627</b>

Other funding projects ongoing in 2025 for SHC WCC are as follows:



Pre and Post Evaluation of Play Therapy and Family Engagement Services by Mary Immaculate College	€33,866.21
Healthy Ireland Economic Development of Bray Research	€20,000
Genio Trust Funding for Bray Travellers project for Housing Officer	€134,000

Play Therapy Resources 2023	€4000	Complete
Bray Children's Wellbeing Hub 2024	€75,000	In development
Bray Children's Wellbeing Hub 2025	75,000	In development

All the €225,000 Seed Fund received to date has either been spent on projects or is committed to Seed Fund projects for 2024/2025.

Seed Fund Projects 2023-2025		
Project	Cost	Status
Little Bray Community Enhancement Feasibility Study 2023/2024	€65,525	Completed
Little Bray Family Resource Centre Garden Project 2023-2025	€47,000	Ongoing- Money has been sent to BFRDP
Trauma Project – focused on two areas, early years services and the Traveller Community 2024	€12,000	Completed
CARA – Care and Repair Service, Bray Area Partnership 2024	€12,000	Complete
Period Poverty Project – in partnership with Health	€5,627	Complete

## Local Community Safety Partnership (LCSP)

In line with the Policing, Security and Community Safety Act 2024, a new Local Community Safety Partnership will be established in each Local Authority area, to replace the existing Joint Policing Committees. The LCSP will bring all services and the community together at local authority level to serve as a forum for discussion and decisions on community priorities. It will give local people a stronger voice to identify and tackle community safety issues.

The membership of the Local Community Safety Partnership will include residents; community representatives, including representatives of youth, new communities and the voluntary sector; business and education representatives; relevant public services in the area, including HSE, Tusla, AGS, the local authority; and elected members.

Wicklow County Council invited expressions of interest for consideration to the appointment as Chairperson of the LCSP in July 2024. The Chairperson will be responsible for the leadership of the LCSP and ensuring its effectiveness in all aspects of its role. They will also lead the work of the Community Safety Coordinator and Administrator who will be appointed in each local authority. The recruitment process for these roles commenced in late 2024 and it is endeavored that the new partnership will be rolled out in early 2025.

## Local Community Safety Partnership – Structure



## ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (H.R & CORPORATE)

‘To strengthen and develop staff to effectively respond to the changing needs of our organisation and the evolving environment in which we operate to deliver the best possible service in the most efficient manner’.

To provide a healthy and safe working environment and to ensure as far as reasonably practicable the Safety, Health and Welfare at work of all employees.

Provide the highest quality of support to our Elected Members.

Develop and improve our customer services to provide relevant, appropriate and accessible services that meet the needs of our diverse population, Elected Members and stakeholders.

Effectively and inspiringly communicate with the citizens and staff of County Wicklow.

To support the work of the Wicklow County Council Audit Committee.

To adhere to the highest standard of conduct, governance, integrity, transparency and accountability.

Create a culture of continuous learning to develop the capacity and capability of the organisation.

To comply with the statutory obligation to eliminate discrimination and promote equality and protect human rights under Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014.

To contribute to energy efficiency improvements and carbon reduction targets in compliance with national targets by 2030.

As lead authority support the local authorities in the Mid-East Kildare, Louth, Wicklow and Meath in the delivery of SEAI Pathfinder Projects.

Be an employer of choice and build a workforce of the future through flexibility and strengthening capacity within our staff.

Create a fair, supportive and healthy working environment ensuring the wellbeing of all our staff.

### Audit Committee

The Wicklow County Council Audit Committee was initially established in 2007 under Section V of the Local Government (Business Improvement Districts) Act 2005. Following the May 2019 local elections, the Audit Committee was re-established. Up to June the membership of the committee comprises:

Mr. Tom Gregan, Chairman  
Mr. Noel Geraghty, Vice Chairman  
Ms. Mary Savage  
Cllr. Gerry Walsh (From October 2022)  
Cllr. Edward Timmons

From July the committee comprises of:

Dr. Philip Byrne, Chair  
Ms. Emma McKernan  
Mr. Michael Sargent  
Cllr. Louise Fenelon Gaskin  
Cllr. Edward Timmins (to November 2024)

The functions of the Audit Committee are prescribed in Section 59 of the Local Government Act 2014 and include:

To review the financial and budgetary reporting practices and procedures within the Local Authority

To foster the development of best practice in the performance by the Local Authority of its internal audit function

To review any audited financial statement, Auditor's Report or Auditor's Special Report in relation to the Local Authority and assess any actions taken within that authority by its Chief Executive in response to such a statement or report and report its findings to the Authority

To assess and promote efficiency and value for money with respect to the Local Authorities performance of its functions

To review systems that are operated by the Local Authority for the management of risks

To review the findings and recommendations of the National Oversight & Audit Committee (NOAC) and the response of the Chief Executive to these and take further action as appropriate.

As part of the reporting process, the Audit Committee presented its Annual Report for 2024 to the Wicklow County Council in February 2025. In the report, the Committee welcomed the receipt of reports on the following assignments during the year:

- Audit of Grant payments
- Audit of Waste permits
- SICAP – Bray Area Partnership - 2023
- SICAP – County Wicklow Partnership - 2023
- Public Spending Code Quality Assurance Report 2023
- Motor Tax Office stock-take

In the report, the Committee also advised of the following adhoc reviews carried out during the year:

- Cash count in Motor Tax Office
- Prompt payment interest
- Refundable deposits

In accordance with the Local Government (Financial Procedures & Audit) Regulations 2014 the Local Government Auditor was invited to address the Committee. This annual meeting is a constructive opportunity for the Committee to exchange views with the Local Government Auditor on a wide range of issues and for the Local Government Auditor to discuss his statutory audit report on the Council's Annual Financial Statement.

### Wicklow County Council Joint Policing Committee

The Wicklow County Council Joint Policing Committee held one (hybrid) meeting in 2024 on 6<sup>th</sup> February and one public meeting in Blessington.

Section 36(2)(c) of the Garda Síochána Act provides that the function of a joint policing committee is, inter alia, to 'arrange and host public meetings concerning matters affecting the policing of the local authority's administrative area.' One public meeting was held in 2024 on the 23<sup>rd</sup> April in Blessington which had good attendance and engagement from the public.

The Wicklow County Council Joint Policing Committee has been replaced by the Local Community Safety Partnership. No meetings were held in 2024.



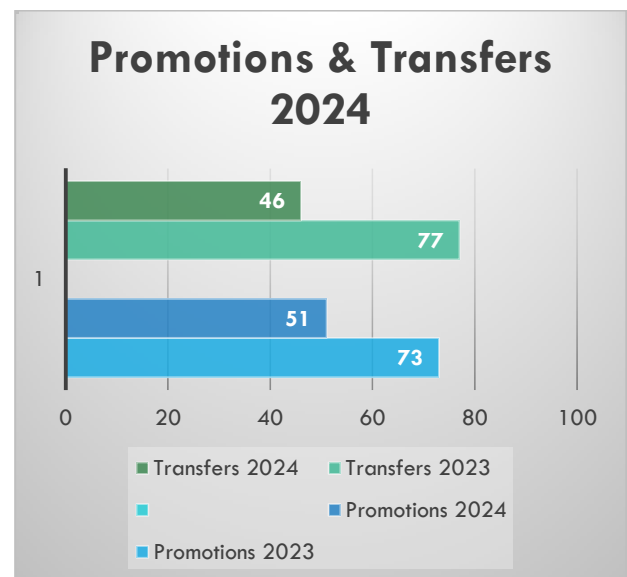
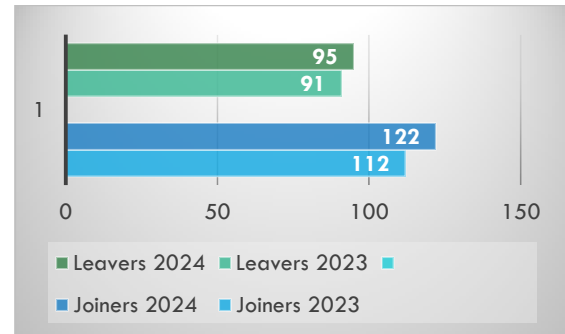
## Human Resources

### Human Resources

The Core function of Wicklow County Council's Human Resource department is to plan and deliver the organisational workforce requirements in a timely manner to support the delivery of service and our corporate goals. Workforce Management is a critical function carried out by the Human Resources Department, the objective of the Workforce Plan is to enable effective and efficient service delivery with adequate staffing resources within the financial resources available, in 2024, 61 Competitions were administered.

HR support good governance and promote a positive working environment, through the implementation of Council policies and procedures. HR recognise the importance of staff well-being and make provision for flexible work arrangements and deliver statutory and non-statutory leave arrangements which create a positive work environment to improve work life balance, including: The Shorter Working Year Scheme, Maternity Leave Scheme, Parental Leave Scheme, Paternity Leave, New Parent Leave, Work Sharing, Blended working arrangements, Career Breaks, Carer's Leave, Exam leave and Travel Pass Schemes together with Force Majeure

leave, Bereavement Leave and the Cycle to Work Scheme.



### Members Expenses

Cathaoirleach Annual Allowance	€30,000
Leas-Cathaoirleach Annual Allowance	€6,000
SPC Annual Allowance	€30,000
Annual	€1,163,121.37



Representational Allowance	
Councillors Annual Allowance	€240,758.47
Foreign Conferences	€0.00

## Health and Safety

Wicklow County Council subscribes to a dynamic and interactive Health and Safety process. Accordingly the Health and Safety Office avails of every opportunity to reflect these principles in terms of consultation, training and the development of a comprehensive Health and Safety Management System.

Training is provided throughout the year on a proactive basis. Training provided includes: Safe Pass, Safety Awareness, City & Guilds Chainsaw, Confined Spaces Entry, Abrasive Wheels, Manual Handling, Construction Skills Certification Scheme (C.S.C.S.), First Aid, and Safe System of Work Plans amongst others.

Policies and procedures in Wicklow County Council are constantly being reviewed in line with new best practices, legislative changes and national initiatives. Staff participation in the process is encouraged and the input of the Safety Representatives is valued.

## GDPR

Wicklow County Council is fully committed to compliance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) & the Data Protection Act 2018.

The legislation also gives Data Subjects the right to access their personal data on request and have their personal data amended if found to be incorrect.

Wicklow County Council received a total of 6 subject access requests during 2024.

## Freedom of Information

The Freedom of Information Act, 2014 came into effect on the 14th October, 2014. This Act abolished the requirement to pay a fee when making a request. The Freedom of Information Acts assert the right of members of the public to obtain access to official information to the greatest extent possible consistent with the public interest and the right to privacy of individuals.

The Act established three new statutory rights:

- A legal right for each person to access information held by public bodies;
- A legal right for each person to have official information relating to himself or herself amended when it is incomplete, incorrect or misleading; and
- A legal right to obtain reasons for decision affecting oneself.

Wicklow County Council received a total of 118 requests during 2024. A disclosure log detailing all non-personal freedom of information requests can be viewed on the Council's website: [www.wicklow.ie](http://www.wicklow.ie).

## Register of Electors

Wicklow County Council, in line with the Electoral Act 1992 to 2023, adopted a Polling Scheme for County Wicklow on the 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2024. The scheme took account of the Boundary Commission Report which created the two constituencies of Wicklow and Wicklow-Wexford.

The addition of the online registration facility and the implementation of a single live "rolling register" under the Electoral Reform Act 2022 has provided for a fundamental strengthening of the Electoral system and processes.

Wicklow County Council strives to ensure that every opportunity is provided to all qualified persons to be included in the Register of Electors.

Online registration under

[www.checktheregister.ie](http://www.checktheregister.ie) has created a more streamlined, effective and inclusive way for electors to register or update their details. This facilitates the democratic process at election and voting events, ensuring their voice is heard.

The number of Electors currently on the Register of Electors for Wicklow at the time of this report is 114,153.

## Training and Development

Wicklow County Council recognises that training and development assists staff and elected members to realise their full potential and can lead to greater organisational performance and job satisfaction and therefore is committed to ensuring that every member of staff has the opportunity and support available to them.

Staff members also regularly attend seminars and conferences directly related to their area of work and expertise.

The Council also encourages and assists staff to undertake relevant further education at all stages of their career.

## Ombudsman

Any person who feels that he/she has been unfairly treated or is not satisfied with a decision on a complaint by the local authority may contact the Office of the Ombudsman. By law the Ombudsman can investigate complaints about any of the local authority's administrative actions or procedures as well as delays or inaction in your dealings with the local authority. The Ombudsman provides a free, impartial and independent dispute resolution service.

The Ombudsman referred 23 complaints to Wicklow County Council in 2024.

## Communications

Since its establishment in April 2024, the communication team has operated under the Organisation Development directive.

As a relatively new department, the communication team has focused on enhancing both internal and external interactions within the organisation. Their goal is to build strong, clear, and effective lines of communication across all departments and stakeholders, while also managing Wicklow County Council's public image. Comprised of professionals with diverse expertise in public relations, digital marketing, content creation, and strategic communications, the team aims to ensure that all messaging is consistent, accurate, and resonates with the intended audience.

Collaboration and adaptability are central to the team's approach. By working closely with Senior Management Team and other departments, the communication team ensures that all messaging aligns with the organisation's broader objectives. Whether responding to a crisis, launching a new initiative, or supporting a community outreach programme, the communication team is involved in every step of the process, providing guidance and strategic insights.

The team's primary focus is on crafting and maintaining a brand voice that aligns with Wicklow County Council's vision, mission, and values. Through social media, press releases, and media outreach, the team has strengthened relationships with journalists, local radio stations, and other external partners. These efforts have resulted in more consistent media coverage that is not only informative but also engages target audiences, building trust within the industry and the community.

In just a few months, the department released various protocol and guidance documents. This includes a comprehensive 'Social Media Best Practice Guide,' which sets clear guidelines for external digital communications. This guide ensures consistent messaging, improves clarity, and enhances the overall quality of communications directed at our external audience. It serves as a valuable resource for team members and stakeholders, aligning everyone with the department's vision and standards.

Alongside the Best Practice Guide, the department has unveiled a new Wicklow County Council logo, signalling the start of a more streamlined and cohesive communication strategy. The logo symbolises our commitment to innovation and professionalism, making a noticeable impact on the organisation's public identity.

One of the department's most important tasks has been establishing a press protocol procedure, which has been shared with all staff to ensure a cohesive approach to external media relations and any events we host. We have also implemented a new system to track all media interactions, both incoming and outgoing. This system ensures that every piece of communication is monitored, analysed, and can be reviewed to improve future messaging efforts. It not only helps maintain accountability but also provides valuable data on media trends and the overall effectiveness of our communication channels.

Looking ahead, the Communication Department is focused on playing an instrumental role in the organisation's success by further strengthening communication with both internal and external audiences and crafting a robust communication strategy for the coming year. Our primary goal is to build on the work done in the first year, refine our messaging, and develop more targeted campaigns that resonate with our audiences. With this clear vision and a strong foundation, the department is poised for continued growth and

success in enhancing the organisation's communication efforts.

## Customer Services Innovation Hub

The Wicklow County Council Customer Service Strategy outlines our commitment to providing excellent customer service in a professional, timely, and inclusive manner. Our guiding principles centre on a citizen-centric approach to service delivery.

We have a dedicated and trained customer service team located at the Customer Services Innovation Hub at County Buildings in Wicklow, which offers central services for customer inquiries. Elected Members are supported in their representational role through a dedicated phone line and email for submitting representations on behalf of their constituents, with a goal of responding within a specified timeframe.

We also strive to continuously improve access to online services for the public. Additionally, we aim to act as a one stop shop for customers, including cash receipting and motor tax facilities. A new 'Cash Handling Policy' was adopted by the Senior Management Team on the 23rd July 2024.

## Oifig na Gaeilge

Oifig na Gaeilge seeks to sustain and advance the use of Irish in County Wicklow and to ensure Wicklow County Council meets its Irish language obligations. Oifig na Gaeilge facilitates and supports the implementation of the Official Languages Acts and related legislation within Wicklow County Council. This includes informing staff of language obligations, managing translation provision, providing linguistic and place-name advice, and ensuring certain publications, digital content, forms, advertisements etc. are available in both official languages.

## 2024 Highlights

Progress under Official Languages Act and Irish Language Legislation

Approach adopted to meet Irish language advertising targets laid down in Section 10(A) of the Official Languages Act 2021.

Staff skills survey conducted in November 2024 to identify staff competent in Irish and interest in Irish language training.

Support during Local Elections on dedicated phone messaging for the visually impaired.

Range of publications and content produced bilingually in line with the Official Languages Act and our Language Scheme.

Compliance support provided by Oifig na Gaeilge to multiple areas across Mayo County Council including Economic Development, Social and Cultural, Organisational Development, Communications, Municipal Districts and others.

## Mid-East Energy Unit

The Mid East Energy Unit (MEEU) is a collaborative partnership between the four local authorities of Wicklow (lead authority), Meath, Louth and Kildare. The Energy Unit was formed to progress and deliver agreed public sector energy efficiency and carbon reduction targets, in partnership with SEAI and the support of CODEMA.



Figure 1: Louth County Council signing service level agreement with Wicklow County Council as the lead authority joining the Mid-East Energy Unit. Pictured (l to r) Lorraine Gallagher DOS

WCC, Emer O’Gorman Chief Executive WCC, Joan Martin Chief Executive LCC and Joe McGuinness DOS LCC.

## Energy Unit progress in 2024

The Mid-East Energy Unit Steering Group held 4 quarterly meetings in 2024

Framework of Energy Performance Contractors established to develop EPC projects across the region

District Heating feasibility studies commenced across the region

Naas

Drogeda/Duleek

Arklow Decarbonised Zone

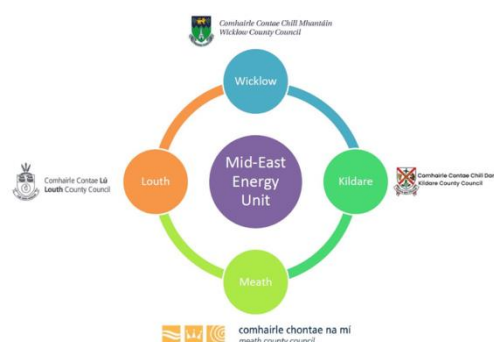
Dundalk Decarbonised Zone

Maynooth Decarbonised Zone

Regular meetings and site visits held with Energy Officers from Meath, Kildare, Louth & Wicklow through the technical working group meetings

Progressing energy projects across the region for 2024/2025+ with support from SEAI Pathfinder

SEAI Pathfinder financial drawdown to support contribution to energy projects and energy advisory supports for the region.



## Energy Office

The Energy Office in Wicklow County Council has advanced a number of energy projects and developed an energy management systems in 2024.

Energy Office Progress in 2024

Wicklow County Council were awarded ISO 50001 Energy Management in September 2024 following an external auditing process Leading the Arklow Decarbonised Zone district heating study.

The Energy Office is currently working with its energy partners MEEU & CODEMA to develop a pipeline of projects to reach the 2030 targets. Targeting large energy users across the council's building stock.

Ongoing communications with Coral Leisure & Shoreline Leisure, addressing the challenge of decarbonising the leisure centres.

Progressing decarbonised projects for 2025 to meet 2030 targets

Updating Energy Elephant to include all energy users profile and building stock

## Projects Completed in 2024;

Bray Fire Station – Air Source Heat Pumps, Window and Appliance bay door replacement

Bray MD Civic Office – Air Source Heat Pump

Arklow MD - Solar Photovoltaic System

Civil Defence HQ Greystones – Air Source Heat Pump & Solar PV

Blessington Fire Station – Air Source Heat Pump, Fabric Upgrades & Solar PV

The Energy office collaborates with all sections of the council and supports the development of other energy efficiency works such as;

Bray Courthouse – Energy Efficiency Works

Wicklow Fire Station – Energy Efficiency Upgrades

Arklow Depot – Solar PV System

Arklow Recycling Centre – Solar PV System

## Energy Performance

The 2023 SEAI Annual Report on Public Sector Energy Performance outlines the status of all public bodies' energy performance. Wicklow are currently at 28.4% towards the 2030 50% target for energy efficiency and 26.6% towards the 2030

51% target of absolute reduction in energy related greenhouse gas emissions.

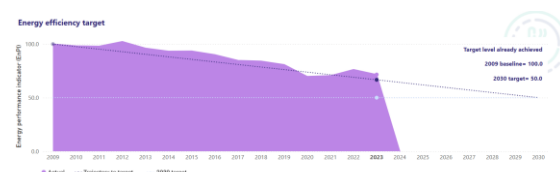


Figure 2: Energy Efficiency Targets (28.4%)

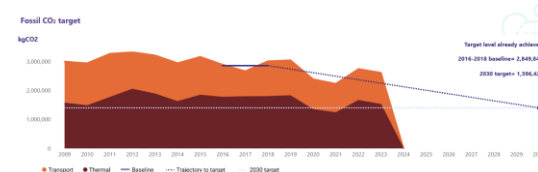


Figure 3: CO2 Heating and Transport (8.2%)

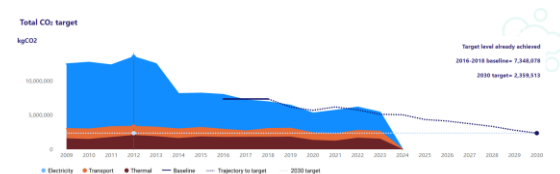


Figure 4: Total CO2 Target (26.6%)

## Case Study: Bray Fire Station



Figure 5: Relaunch of Bray Fire Station decarbonisation works. Pictured (LtoR) Cathaoirleach Cllr. Paul O'Brien alongside Taoiseach Simon Harris and Leas Cathaoirleach of Bray Municipal District Cllr. Erika Doyle.

	Annual Energy (kWh)	Annual Costs (€)	Annual CO <sub>2</sub> (kg)
Before project	452,053	€68,337	98,000
After project	92,824	€25,062	28,000
Savings (%)	359,229 (79%)	€43,275 (63%)	70,000 (71%)



Figure 6: New Heat Pump and window replacement



Figure 7: New appliance bay doors

## FINANCE, WATER & INFORMATION SYSTEMS

### Information Systems

The Information Systems Section is responsible for the maintenance and support of Wicklow County Council's Information and Communication Technology (ICT) infrastructure, including the Council's business systems, server infrastructure, data network and computing devices.

Over the past year, the Section has continued to enhance the Council's ICT infrastructure, supporting systems and security posture. Cyber threats are an ever-increasing risk and maintaining the security of all ICT systems and infrastructure is of paramount importance and will continue to be a priority in 2025.

#### Key achievements for 2024 include:

Provision of ICT Support for Staff and Councillors  
The ICT service desk responded to 10,000+ ICT helpdesk tickets from staff and Councillors.  
Support was provided for the provision and maintenance of laptops, PCs, mobile phones and tablets for staff and Councillors.  
ICT assistance was provided at hybrid Council meetings.  
A new managed print service was successfully rolled out across multiple council locations for all staff.

#### ICT Infrastructure

Enhanced the Council's Infrastructure to improve performance, reliability and security.  
Enhanced data security and protection policies and supporting processes.

Enhanced network performance and protection from external and internal threats.

Monitored and upgraded wide area network sites and equipment.

Ran tenders and procured hardware and software.

### Applications

Supported business critical applications across the Council.

Supported a 'digital first' culture.

Enhanced technologies to support a productive blended working environment.

Stabilised and consolidated existing office productivity software and started preparing for the delivery of a modern, secure, and collaborative ICT environment.

Upgraded the Housing system with maintenance and enhanced security releases.

Supported the Housing Department in the initial stage of the adoption of an enhanced Housing asset management project.

Supported the Fire Department with their enhanced payroll systems.

Continued engagement with and support of Regional & National ICT projects and initiatives.

### Geographical Information Systems (GIS)

Promoted innovation and transparency through the publication of Open Data.

GIS played a crucial role in supporting the RZLT initiative, which aims to identify and assess residential-zoned land subject to taxation. By leveraging GIS technology, the GIS Team provided accurate spatial analysis, mapping, and data validation to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements. Our work helped streamline the identification of eligible land parcels and facilitated informed decision-making for stakeholders.

In response to growing data needs and system performance improvements, we successfully managed a large-scale server migration. This project involved transitioning critical GIS and data management services to a new, more robust infrastructure, ensuring increased reliability, enhanced security, and improved system scalability. The migration minimised downtime and future-proofed our operational capabilities.

GIS provided support for the development of Local Area Plans across multiple key locations, including Wicklow/Rathnew, Bray, Blessington, Greystones, and Arklow. Through advanced spatial analysis, mapping, and public consultation support, we facilitated evidence-based planning and policy formulation. These plans will guide sustainable development, zoning decisions, and infrastructure projects within each area.

To enhance public engagement and streamline feedback collection, we developed GIS-driven Consultation Hubs for various planning and policy projects. These online platforms enabled interactive mapping, document access, and public submissions, making community participation more accessible and transparent. Our efforts ensured that stakeholders could easily visualise and provide input on proposed developments, ultimately improving decision-making processes.

As part of our efforts to support biodiversity and heritage preservation, we developed GIS applications for tracking barn owl habitats and historic graveyards. These applications provide spatial data to aid conservation efforts, ensuring that critical wildlife areas and heritage sites are properly documented and monitored. By integrating these datasets with existing planning tools, we have enhanced environmental and cultural resource management.

## Broadband Officer

Championed the use of technologies and innovation to ensure we are more agile in our use of technologies so that we deliver more customer-driven innovative services.

Supported the implementation of the National Digital Strategy, Harnessing Digital and the Local Government Digital and ICT Strategy, *Digital Local Government: Working for Everyone*.

Investigated how new technologies can help to build a resilient workforce that supports business requirements and a sustainable service delivery in an increasingly digital world.

Acted as single point of contact for engagement with the Department and telecommunications operators in the delivery of telecommunications infrastructure, including the National Broadband Plan (NBP), in Wicklow.

Attended all relevant Broadband related meetings as required by the Council and actively coordinated, supported and delivered on the requirements of the various Council substructures set up to assist in the delivery of the NBP.

## Water and Wastewater Water Services

In June 2022, the Framework for the Future Delivery of Water Services was published following an engagement process facilitated by the WRC between the Government Departments, Uisce Éireann, the CCMA, the LGMA and Unions. The Framework sets out the process for the Local Authority's withdrawal from water services by the end of 2026

A new Master Co-operation Agreement (MCA) to replace the existing Service Level Agreement (SLA) was signed on 5th May 2023 and remains effective until 31st December 2026. Moreover, with effect from 6<sup>th</sup> September 2023, Uisce Éireann has full accountability for the delivery of water services, including drinking water

networks, wastewater networks, sewerage treatment plants, water treatment plants and pumping stations, as well as the management and direction of Local Authority water services staff. A Support Services Agreement was also signed by Wicklow County Council and Uisce Éireann in September 2024 in line with the provisions of the Master Co-operation Agreement.

## ARKLOW MUNICIPAL DISTRICT



### Assistant Staff Officer:

Lorraine Hayes

### Clerical Officers:

Catherine McCord

Pauline Myler

Monika Fox

Sinead Kelly

### Contact Details:

Arklow Municipal District Offices,  
Castle Park,  
Arklow,  
Co. Wicklow.

Telephone: 0402 42700

Email: [arklowmd@wicklowcoco.ie](mailto:arklowmd@wicklowcoco.ie)

Website: [www.wicklow.ie](http://www.wicklow.ie)

Area: 48,380 hectares

Population: 26,185

Arklow Municipal District (AMD) covers 26% of roads in County Wicklow (598 KM) being the second highest District in the County. AMD includes Arklow town, Aughrim, Rathdrum, Avoca, Redcross, Ballinaclash, Glenmalure and Annacurra.

The offices are open to the public from 9.00 – to 4.00 pm each day and queries are dealt with in relation to housing applications, housing repairs, roads etc. Cash receipting also takes place in AMD for housing rent, rates, parking fines, leases etc.

### District Meetings:

The Members of Arklow Municipal District hold their District Meetings in “The McElheron Chamber” on the second Wednesday of each month at 3.30pm, with the exception of August when there is no meeting. The schedule of meetings is approved at each Annual Meeting.

### District Members:

Cathaoirleach: Pat Kennedy (FF)

Leas-Cathaoirleach: Peir Leonard (IND)

### Council Members:

Councillor Pat Fitzgerald (FF)

Councillor Sylvester Bourke (FG)

Councillor Miriam Murphy (IND)

Councillor Warren O’Toole (SF)

### Municipal District Staff:

#### District Manager:

Leonora Earls

#### District Administrator:

Alvina Brehony

#### District Engineer:

Avril Hill

#### Executive Engineer:

Damien Byrne

#### Technician:

Stephen Pearce-Howes



Arklow Municipal District is represented by its elected representatives on the following Strategic Policy Committees:-

Economic Development and Enterprise Support – Councillor Peir Leonard

Community Cultural and Social Development – Councillor Pat Kennedy and Councillor Warren O’Toole.

Transportation Infrastructure Delivery and Emergency Services – Councillor Pat Fitzgerald  
Planning and Rural Development – Councillor Sylvester Bourke,

Economic Development & Enterprise – Councillor Pat Kennedy

Climate Action , Biodiversity, Environment Energy, Marine Recreation and Amenity – Councillor Peir Leonard

## Community Sector:

Number of Press Releases issued 2024 = 3  
Estate Development Grants were awarded to fifteen successful Residents Associations to help in the upkeep of the green areas of the various Wicklow County Council housing estates throughout the District. A total sum of €10,000 was awarded to them.

Awarding of Festival Funding to 16 Festival Committees.

Number of Roundabouts in Sponsorship Agreements = 8

## Arklow Community CCTV

Arklow Community CCTV system is a great benefit to the town. It is a valuable policing tool and creates a safe environment. 35 requests for footage were received in 2024.

## Retail / Business Sector:

### Pay Parking

Wicklow County Council continued to operate a pay parking scheme for Arklow Town which includes:-

Free parking between 9.00am and 10.00 am each morning.

15 minutes official grace period in order to purchase a ticket at any time of the day.

Arklow Town continues to offer free parking throughout the town on Saturdays and Sundays.

Paying for parking in Arklow is faster and easier with Parking Tag. The cashless parking solution allows motorists to park by phone in the town and extend their parking without returning to their vehicle. All parking machines were updated to take both cash and card payments.

Free parking was provided in Council owned carparks in Arklow town during the Christmas period.

2 free annual parking permits for businesses whose rates are up to date.

## Arklow Running Track:

Arklow Running Track has been enhanced with extra lighting following receipt of grant of €43,704 awarded under the Sports Capital Equipment Programme. Arklow Municipal District has carried out additional upgrades of the facility during 2024.

## Events:

The Cathaoirleach Award took place in June 2024 to celebrate and acknowledge the achievements of the Breen brothers on their remarkable achievement in the World’s toughest rowing race.  
EU Event – A collaboration between AMD and Arklow Library to celebrate and Ireland’s membership of EU and promote the impending European Election. School children took part in an

election themed quiz with prizes for the schools and individuals taking part.

AMD welcomed over thirty school children from Wurzburg to visit the Chamber and AMD offices.

A small gift was presented to each student to remember their visit.

In September the Friends of Firefighters USA in partnership with the National retained Firefighter Association of Ireland had a charity bike ride through Ireland in aid of Aoibheann's pink tie charity. We assisted with a reception at Arklow Fire Station and presented each cyclist with a small goody bag to help them on their journey. Restoration and Protection works to the Abbey Wall and laneway was unveiled in December 2024.

Facilitated the Arklow Christmas Festival.

## Restoration Improvement:

Over 12km of roads were overlaid in 2024 in Arklow Municipal District

R-752 Ballybeg - Rathnew

L-2190 Coolgreany Road

L-6139 Ballyshane - Cappagh

L-5155 Tullylusk to Kilmacoo

L-2196 Ballykillageer

L-6181 Tigroney to Knockanree

L-6168 Cronemore to Coolaflake

L-6675 Crone upper to Chapel

L-6175 Oghill Upper to Kilpatrick

## Restoration Maintenance:

22km of roads were surface dressed in 2024 in Arklow Municipal District.

L-6150 & L-6129 Iron Bridge to Aughavannagh

L-2128 Pidge's Gate to Aughavannagh

L-6182 Knocknamohill to Ballymorris

L-6149 Castlehoward to Kingston

L-6149 Castlehoward to Kingston

L-5153 Castlehoward to Sroughmore

L-2144 Mill Road

L-61983 & L-61981 Tomaniern Lower

## Former National Roads:

Resurfacing works were completed on the R-772, Arklow South to complement the newly constructed footpath and cycleways approaching Arklow Town.

## Local Improvement Schemes:

Two Local Improvement scheme were completed in the District in 2024, these were located at Kilpipe and Ballinabarney.

## Low-Cost Safety Improvement Works

Safety barriers were installed on the L-755 Rathdrum to Laragh Road and the L-752 Woodenbridge to Avoca Road.

## Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience:

Climate Adaptation and Resilience works were completed on the L-6195 at Knockmiller to reconstruct a stone wall adjacent to the road.

## Infrastructure Projects within Arklow Municipal District:

The columbarium wall has been finished in St. Gabriel's Cemetery.

Works were carried out in St. Gabriel's Cemetery to create 76 new plots.

Beech Road footpath is fully completed.

Footpaths were replaced in Templeraíne Heights.

New planters were installed at the Bridge in Rathdrum.

New footpath was installed in Rathdrum from Kingsbrook to Centre Road.

A bus shelter was installed in Aughrim

A new multi-use games area was constructed at Seaview Avenue

A new park space was constructed on the Fair Green in Rathdrum in association with Rathdrum Development Association.

Lighting has been installed at the Running track at Seaview Avenue

New benches have been installed in Tinakilly.

New Heritage signs have been installed across the towns and villages of the District.

Re-design and overlay of Castlepark car-park in Arklow with extra spaces and a dedicated "Hidden Disability Space"

New water fountain at Seaview Avenue.



## Town Team Initiatives:

The mission of Arklow Town Team is to contribute to the improvement in the quality of life for people living in Arklow and enhance the attractiveness of the Town as a place in which to live, work, visit and invest.

The Flower Basket Scheme continued in 2024. A total number of 125 baskets were purchased. Local businesses and Arklow MD kindly sponsored the flower baskets this year. The scheme enhances and improves the image of the Main Street.

Arklow Town Team received sign posts designed and printed by AMD to ask dog owners to clean up after their dogs. These were strategically placed around the town.

An open day was held in Bridgewater Shopping Centre this event was to both promote and recruit new members to the team.

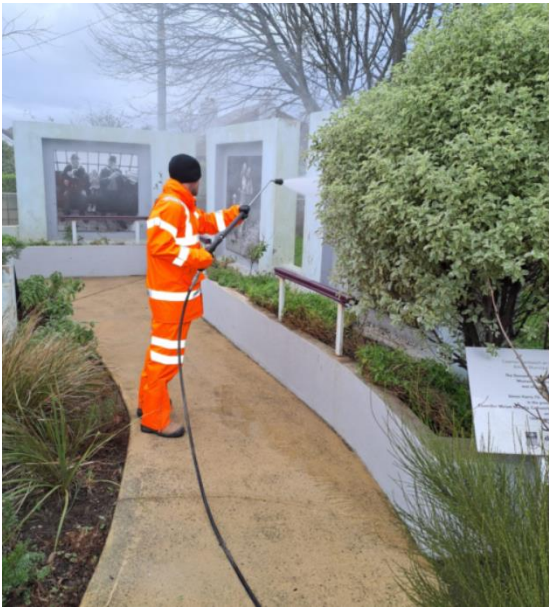
The Town Team in conjunction with Arklow Tidy Towns took part in the annual An Taisce spring clean. There were starting points at Aughrim, Arklow and Avoca with all groups meeting up in The Woodenbridge Hotel for refreshments.

A very successful Halloween Festival took place at The Coral Leisure Centre with music, face-painting, fancy dress, refreshments and lots of prizes.

## Tidy Towns Committees:

There are 5 active Tidy Town Committees in Arklow MD – Arklow, Aughrim, Clean up Aughrim, Rathdrum, Avoca and Ballycoog.

Arklow Municipal District acknowledges that the great effort by teams of volunteers around the District who work hand in hand with Council staff. This effort is reflected in the continued successes achieved in the IBAL and the Tidy Towns competitions. 2024 was a particularly successful year with all areas improving on their marks from 2023.



Abbey lane 1



Abbey lane 2



Abbey lane 3



Abbey lane 4



Abbey lane 5



Abbey lane 6

## BALTINGLASS MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

### District Members

#### Cathaoirleach:

Councillor Patsy Glennon (FF)

#### Leas-Cathaoirleach:

Councillor Avril Cronin (FG)

#### Members:

Councillor Gerry O'Neill (IND)  
Councillor Peter Stapleton (FG)  
Councillor Jason Mulhall (IND)  
Councillor Pat Mahon (FG)

### Municipal District Staff

#### District Manager:

Theresa O'Brien

#### District Engineer:

Patrick Byrne

#### Tinahely Area Engineer:

Dermot Graham

#### District Administrator:

Liam Cullen

#### Technician:

Denis Jones

#### Assistant Staff Officers:

Lisa McDermott (Blessington Area Office)  
Catherine Byrne (Tinahely Area Office)

#### Clerical Officers:

Ann Marie Butler (Tinahely Area Office)  
Christina Brophy (Blessington Area Office)  
Margaret Doyle (Blessington Area Office)  
Patrick Burke (Blessington Area Office)

#### District Offices:

##### Blessington Area Office:

Address: Civic Offices,  
Blessington Business Park  
Blessington  
Co. Wicklow  
W91 RTV0

Telephone No: 045 891222

Email: [baltinglassmd@wicklowcoco.ie](mailto:baltinglassmd@wicklowcoco.ie)

Website: [www.wicklow.ie](http://www.wicklow.ie)

##### Tinahely Area Office:

Address: Council Offices  
Coolruss  
Tinahely  
Co. Wicklow  
Y14 AY19

Telephone No: 0402 38174

Email: [baltinglassmd@wicklowcoco.ie](mailto:baltinglassmd@wicklowcoco.ie)

Website: [www.wicklow.ie](http://www.wicklow.ie)

### District Meetings

Monthly Meetings are held at 10.30 a.m. on the fourth Monday of each month (third Monday if the fourth Monday is a public holiday) at 10.30 a.m. – no meeting in August. Meetings are usually



held in Civic Offices in Blessington. The schedule of meetings is approved at each Annual Meeting.

## General

Baltinglass Municipal District includes the towns of Baltinglass, Blessington, Carnew and the villages of Coolboy, Dunlavin, Donard, Knockananna, Tinahely, Manor Kilbride and Shillelagh. The population of the Municipal District is 25,267 (18%). Baltinglass Municipal District covers 45% (352 square miles) of the area of Wicklow and 40% (943 km) of the county's roads.

Baltinglass Municipal District has two Area Offices in Blessington and Tinahely – Public Counters are open to the Public from 9.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. and from 2.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m., Monday to Friday. The Motor Tax Office is open in Blessington Civic Offices on Tuesdays from 9.00 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. and from 2.00 p.m. to 3.30 p.m. and provides a valuable service to the local area.

## Strategic Policy Committees:

Community and Social Development –N/A  
Housing & Corporate Estate Gerry O'Neill & Peter Stapleton

Transportation Infrastructure & Delivery of Emergency Services– N/A

Planning Development and Environment –  
Councillor Patsy Glennon, Councillor Pat Mahon & Councillor Peter Stapleton.

Economic Development and Enterprise Support –  
Councillor Avril Cronin.

Climate and Biodiversity – Councillor Jason Mulhall

The regular functions that the District provided included local authority housing maintenance and repair, road maintenance and improvement, street cleaning, outdoor maintenance and grass cutting, drain clearing, maintenance of burial grounds, school traffic warden services, public

convenience maintenance and maintenance of playgrounds.

Wicklow County Council was allocated additional funding by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport towards the development of the Blessington Greenway. Baltinglass Municipal District is looking forward to working with the different sections of Wicklow County Council to bring this exciting project to fruition.

Members of staff continued to work with Tidy Towns groups in the District. The efforts of the many volunteers whose hard work and dedication was reflected in the success of local villages and towns in the Irish Business Against Litter (IBAL) and the Wicklow County Council Tidy Towns, Estates and Environmental Awards.

Estate Development Grants were awarded to nineteen successful Residents Associations to help in the upkeep of the green areas of the various Wicklow County Council housing estates throughout the District.

The Elected Members of Baltinglass Municipal District provided Discretionary Funding to various projects:

## Footpath Works:

### R756 Hollywood Footpath

Proposed new footpath to link GAA playing fields to Hollywood Village with public lighting, drainage and fencing along the R756. This project was completed in 2024 and included ducting, groundworks, drainage works, kerbing, PL lighting, a pedestrian crossing and surfacing.

### L4284 Grange Con Village Footpath

Proposed new footpath to link school to Grange Con Village. The project was completed in 2024.

The scheme included surfacing, kerbing, public lighting and a pedestrian crossing.

## Zebra Crossing Baltinglass

A new pedestrian crossing point was installed at the junction of the N81/ R747 Baltinglass.

## Specific Improvement Grants:

### Junction improvement at Lockstown Vallemount

Specific Safety Improvement Grant scheme at R-756/R 758 Junction improvement at Lockstown Vallemount. The works included realignment of an existing road and new junction construction, removing the existing boundary ditch/hedge to facilitate the new road construction works and required sightlines at the junction. Drainage and signage were also installed as part of the scheme.

### Drainage Improvement Works:

The annual Wicklow County Council allocation from the department for Drainage Grant Works projects was allocated to the following schemes in 2024.

Drainage works at R758 Vallemount  
Drainage works at L8314 Randlestown

### 2024 Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience Works

One Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience Works project was completed in the Baltinglass MD for 2024. The scheme was located at L8318 Kilcoagh Donard

## N81 Works

### N81 Minor Works Projects

WCC have looked for TII approval / funding for a number of minor drainage and surfacing works on the N81 in 2024. Drainage & maintenance works have been submitted on the TII Geo-App for approval. Approval has been provided for a minor drainage scheme at Tinode on the N81. This project was completed October 2024.

### N81 Category B Projects.

WCC looked for TII approval for minor surfacing works on the N81 at the start of 2024. Sites were identified at Crosschapel Junction, Naas Road Junction, Blessington Main Street and Mullycagh. These projects were completed in May 2024.

### N81 Cleaning of Pipelines and Gullies

The annual cleaning of pipelines and gullies using a Vac tanker unit was completed on a section of N81 North of Blessington to South Dublin County Border in September 2024.

### N81 2024 Pavement Capital Works N81 Tuckmill to Saundergrove

TII have carried out testing and design analysis on a section of N81 from North of Baltinglass to Castleruddery Lower. Analysis of results indicated that a section of N81 needs to be resurfaced North of Tuckmill Cross and this be part of a Pavement Capital Works Scheme in 2024. This scheme was completed in May 2024.

### N81 Hollywood Bus stop facilities and traffic calming

DBFL" Options and Feasibility Report" has been approved by TII Road Safety Section & DBFL are working on progressing the final Design package. This project received Part 8 approval in May 2024. Consultants are currently working on

detailed design. I have attended a number of design meetings during November. Local landowners have been contacted and a site investigation was carried out in November. We would hope that procurement for this project can be completed in early 2025.

## N81 Blessington South Traffic Calming

TII have provided funding to access feasibility of a future traffic calming safety scheme and progress possible design works in 2023 on the N81 south of Blessington. National Roads Staff within Wicklow County Council have made a formal submission of the Blessington Gateway - Type B Road Safety Improvement Scheme. This includes the letter to TII Road Safety, the Feasibility Report and the Funding Request to progress the scheme through to construction. TII Road Safety Section have approved the "Options & Feasibility Report" for the Blessington site. TII have provided approval for Wicklow County Council to start a tender process to appoint a design consultant. It is estimated that this tender process will be completed in early 2025 and Wicklow County Council would hope to have a design consultant to progress this project in place for early 2025.

## N81 Tuckmill Lower, Hangman's Bend, Whitestown Lower and Irishtown West - Feasibility Report

TII are currently carrying out a study on a section of N81 from North of Baltinglass to Annalecky Junction on N81. TII have allocated funding in 2024 to access feasibility of any future projects and progress a possible design works.

A public consultation process is required to progress this scheme. An overview of the scheme will be presented to Local Councillors before the proposed public consultation. The first part of the proposed public consultation will include, presentation of the constraints study area and

short list of options, in-person information events, letters to landowners along the route and invite comments on constraints and the options. An overview of the scheme was presented to Local Councillors at March meeting of Baltinglass MD.

Following the information received following the first public consultation, TII are currently carrying out an assessment to select preferred options for the project. A Briefing in advance of a non-statutory public consultation on the Emerging Preferred Option for the N81 Whitestown Lower Project and the N81 Hangman's Bend and Tuckmill Project will be included on the agenda for January 2025 Baltinglass Municipal District Meeting.

## Baltinglass Roads Programme 2024

A 3 year road improvement programme was in place for years 2022 – 2024 inclusive. The following road improvement projects were completed in Baltinglass MD in 2024

Blessington Area Restoration improvement Schemes

Road Number	Scheme Location	Schedule
L 8860	Rathballylong	Complete
L 8354	Lockstown Lower	Complete
L83691	Lugnagun	Complete
L 83611	Humphreystown	Complete
L 4303	Grange Con Lower	Complete
L 8306	Griffenstown	Complete
L 4307	Dunlavin upper	Complete
L 8325	Leitrim	Complete
L 8329	Knicken	Complete
L 8318	Kilcoagh Lane	Complete

L 8262	Ballinguile	Complete
L 8762	Cranareen	Complete
L 4372	Knockieran Upper	Complete
L97564	Sandyhills	Complete
L8340	Tober	Complete
L 97565	Friar Hill Lane	Complete
L83292	Knockandarragh Lane	Complete

## Tinahely Area Restoration Improvement Schemes

Road Number	Scheme Location	Schedule
L7715	Coolroe Road	Complete
L7246	Knockatomcoyle Road	Complete
L7226	Ballingate Lower	Complete
L7228	Union Road	Complete
L7270	Englishtown	Complete
L7771	Killalish Lane	Complete
L7210	Rathbane	Complete
L71421	Peilows Lane	Complete
L7729	Croneyhorn lower	Complete

## Blessington Area RM (Surface Dressing) Schemes

Road Number	Scheme Location	Schedule
R759	Kilbride	Complete
R758	Valleymount	Complete
L 8325	Knockanarrigan	Complete
L 8265	Knockanarrigan	Complete
L 8332	Studfield	Complete
L 8321	Randalstown	Complete
L 8400	Ballynure	Complete
L 8304	Whitehills	Complete

## Tinahely Area RM (Surface Dressing) Schemes

Road Number	Scheme Location	Schedule
R725	Cronelea Shillelagh	Completed 1 <sup>st</sup> August 2024
R746	Croneyhorn	Completed 1 <sup>st</sup> August 2024
L3216	Coolboy Shillelagh to	Completed 6 <sup>th</sup> August 2024
L7266	Graigie Kiltegan to	Completed 29 <sup>th</sup> July 2024
L7133	Knockananna to Moyne	Completed 26 <sup>th</sup> July 2024
L7256	Old Kiltegan	Completed 29 <sup>th</sup> July 2024
L7277	Holdenstown	Completed 29 <sup>th</sup> July 2024

## Community Involvement Schemes (CIS)

The annual Wicklow County Council allocation from the department for CIS projects has been received (€330,300) and a decision has been made in relation to the schemes which will progress in 2023. One scheme (Furlong's Lane, Ballynultagh, Tinahely) in the Tinahely area of Baltinglass MD commenced on site today. There are currently 3 active applications for CIS projects within the Baltinglass MD and two of these have been tendered to assess the cost of these schemes, and engagement with residents is ongoing in relation to progressing these three schemes.

## Local Improvement Schemes (LIS)

The annual Wicklow County Council allocation from the department for LIS projects has been received (€1,279,015) for 2024. The two District Engineers have submitted a list of schemes to the Roads Section for possible completion in 2024

under the programme and one scheme is proposed under the priority list (Deerpark to Coolattin, Shillelagh) and three schemes under the secondary list in the programme for 2024. Preparation and procurement of the priority scheme is completed in advance of the main Paving contractor.

## Blessington Inner Relief Road

The Inner Relief road is a partially completed distributor road, which is designed to provide a town centre 'by-pass' from a new roundabout adjacent to the existing entrance to Roadstone on the north side of the town, to a point on the N81 south of the town centre. The objective in the current Blessington Local Area Plan is to facilitate the completion of the inner relief road.

To date, this road is complete between the Naas Road and the Blessington Industrial Estate junction (opposite the Maxol petrol station) and between the N81 south of the town and the Kilmalum Road and was delivered as part of a number of private developments that were granted permission by Wicklow County Council.

The section of road to be constructed lies between the roundabout on the R410 Naas Road and Roundabout on the L8364 Kilmalum Road. The proposed route alignment would bring the road through a corridor already provided for when planning was granted by Kildare County Council for Blessington Manor, It should be noted that this portion of land is now in the ownership of Wicklow County Council. The remainder of the route is located on Greenfield sites.

It should be noted that the majority of this section of road lies within the functional area of Kildare County Council and Wicklow County Council have entered into an agreement pursuant to Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act, 2001 providing for the execution of such works.

## Funding Secured for Baltinglass Municipal District

### RRDF

#### Blessington

Blessington has been awarded just over €1.1m funding under the Rural Regeneration Development Fund (RRDF). This will be used for a major regeneration of Blessington Town Centre and related projects.

The funding was announced by Government as part of a €21.5m programme of support for 27 landmark regeneration projects in rural communities across the country.

It will be utilised for the regeneration of Blessington Town Centre, the development of plans for public realm works, the redevelopment of derelict property to create an eHub and a Visitor Centre

This strategic funding along with the planned completion of the Blessington Inner Relief Road and the funding for the Blessington Lakes eGreenway will help achieve Wicklow County Council's long-term vision for Blessington and enhance the Blessington as a place to visit.

#### Carnew

To do design, cost and planning for the refurbishment of the old Bank of Ireland building (BAM purchase) to become a remote working hub - €49,999.50

#### Blessington Community Centre

To kit-out a vacant building in the town centre in order to create a community and youth space ensuring functionality for a wide range of uses including a small tech space - €36,000



## Blessington Greenway/Russborough

Parklands and House Trail

Enhancement of the trails within Russborough

Parklands - €178,380, work completed in 2024

## Other Projects:

### Baltinglass Town Park

The refurbishment of Baltinglass Town Park was carried out in 2024, the works included the following

Installation of a new state of the art playground

2 kilometres of resurfaced paths

2 new outdoor games tables

Tree planting

## Christmas Lights

Contributory funding for Christmas Lights was provided to a number of community groups around the Baltinglass Municipal District. The aim of the scheme is to support the excellent work being done around the Municipal by community groups.

## Festival Funding

Contributory funding for festivals held within the District was provided to various community groups around the Baltinglass Municipal District. The aim of the funding is to support groups holding social and cultural events within their local communities.

## Blessington Town Team

Baltinglass Municipal District works closely with Blessington Town Team to make Blessington a better place to work, shop, socialise and live in. The Town Team has six key working groups as follows;

Tidy Towns and Public Realm

Planning and Infrastructure

Business

Tourism

Culture and Heritage

Projects

In December 2021, Blessington - the fifth largest town in Wicklow - was selected as one of 26 towns to develop a Town Centre First (TCF) Plan. Town Centre First is the Government policy strategy to support the rejuvenation of Irish rural town centres and halt their decline. The initiative is a key part of Our Rural Future – the Government’s ambitious five-year strategy designed to reimagine and revitalise Rural Ireland and is backed up by the Town Centre First Policy, a co-ordinated, whole-of government approach to regenerate and revitalise Irish towns and villages

Baltinglass Municipal District is a member of the Blessington Access Group and is working with all members on the implementation of the Blessington Street Route Accessibility Audit which was completed by Universal Access.

## Blessington CCTV

Wicklow County Council has successfully completed the implementation of a community-based CCTV system for Blessington town. The new system is now fully operational. Funding for the project has been provided for by Wicklow County Council with an additional funding grant of €40,000 coming from the Department of Justice and Equality. The project was initiated through Blessington Town Team and Blessington and District Forum and has been progressed and managed by Baltinglass Municipal District. The new system will operate in partnership with the local Gardaí and will be used to assist in the general policing of the area. The CCTV system will also act as a deterrent for anti-social behaviour and public order offences. The system will assist the Gardaí in the identification of offenders and assist as evidence in prosecutions. This project will keep our citizens safe and serve not only the needs of An Garda Síochána but also enhance the citizen

safety experience from a Wicklow Local Authority perspective. The CCTV programme is part of a programme of development which will see Blessington town become a centre of recreation as well as a safe place to live, work and shop in.

## Baltinglass CCTV

Work on the Baltinglass CCTV project is ongoing. Funding for the project has been provided for by Wicklow County Council with an additional funding grant of €40,000 sought from the Department of Justice and Equality in 2024. Preliminary locations for cameras have been identified and will be confirmed following a public consultation process. This project will contribute to public safety in Baltinglass and also enhance the public safety experience from a Wicklow Local Authority perspective thus encouraging people to visit the town for both business and leisure purposes.

## Community Recognition Fund

Baltinglass MD received a total of €354,800 from the Government's Community Recognition Fund. Projects funded included  
Purchase of Carnew Community Development land - €150,000  
Development of a multi-use games area in Dunlavin €144,00  
Upgrade works in Imaal Hall, Dunlavin €60,800

## Events

Baltinglass Municipal District continued its support for the Coollattin Canadian Connection, the O'Neill City Nebraska twinning project, and Castel Maggiore twinning project all of which continues to develop strong community relationships between Wicklow and the respective towns and cities in Canada, USA and Italy

Baltinglass Municipal District supported many local social and cultural and fundraising events

including Blessington Open Door care, Valkeymount Men's shed, Tinahely Men's shed, Blessington History Society and Carnew community groups & Tinahely community groups & Tearmann Gardens Baltinglass

## Tidy Towns

Baltinglass Municipal District continues to support and develop strong links with the various local Tidy Towns groups within the District, recognising the invaluable contribution that these groups make to their local communities

## Pride of Place Awards.

Baltinglass Municipal District were again successful in The National Pride of Place Awards, with Tearman Gardens, Baltinglass being awarded Gold in the inclusive communities category and Tinahely recycling centre runners up in their category

## Active Travel Measures

Provision of cycle facilities and footpath improvement works from Blessington Main Street to Deerpark Roundabout.

This project is currently at Phase 2 - Concept and Options. Consultants are developing options for provision of cycle facilities and footpath improvement works.

## Old Ballymore Road Blessington

Consultants are currently developing a draft Project Appraisal Report and draft Preliminary Design Report to explore the possibility of provision of cycle facilities and footpath improvement works along Old Ballymore Road, Blessington.

## Baltinglass Active Travel River Crossing Study

Active travel funding has been provided to assess the design feasibility of a future pedestrian bridge crossing on the River Slaney. Funding in 2024 to be used to appoint a Consultant to progress a possible design. Staff within Wicklow County Council are currently reviewing an options report for this project.

Rural Development Fund (RRDF). Baltinglass town centre work

Public realm and streetscape works within Baltinglass town centre have started in March 2024. Funding was awarded in 2019 under the Rural Development Fund (RDF).

The project will involve the re-allocation of road space, the laying of new high-quality paving and kerbs along the footpaths, enhanced lighting provision, tree planting and landscaping as well as associated drainage works, installation of ducting and the undergrounding of overhead cables.

## BRAY MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

### District Members

Cathaoirleach:

Councillor Melanie Corrigan (until June 2024)

Councillor Dermot O'Brien (from June 2024)

Leas-Cathaoirleach:

Councillor Rory O'Connor (until June 2024)

Councillor Erika Doyle (from June 2024)

Members:

Councillor Joe Behan (IND)

Councillor Melanie Corrigan (FG)

Councillor Erika Doyle (GP)

Councillor Anne Ferris (LAB) (until June 2024)

Councillor Aoife Flynn Kennedy (FG)

Councillor Mick Ryan (SF), (until June 2024)

Councillor Dermot O'Brien (SF)

Councillor Rory O'Connor (IND) (until June 2024)

Councillor Caroline Winstanley (SD) (from June 2024)

Councillor Malachi Duddy (IND) (from June 2024)

### Municipal District Staff:

Director of Services:

Lorraine Gallagher

District Administrator:

Garvan Hickey

District Engineer:

Liam Bourke

Executive Engineer:

Stephen Fox

Executive Engineer:

John Malan

Executive Engineer:

Jed McDermott (from July 2024)

Technician:

Dominic Gillian (until July 2024)

Contact Details:

Address: Civic Offices  
Main Street

Bray  
Co Wicklow

Telephone No: 01 2744900

E-mail: [braymd@wicklowcoco.ie](mailto:braymd@wicklowcoco.ie)

Population: 32600

Bray Municipal District covers 180km of roads in County Wicklow.

The offices of the Municipal District are situated on Bray Main Street, Civic Centre.

The offices are open 9am - 1pm and 2pm - 5pm Monday to Friday (excl bank holidays). The cash desk counter is open Mon – Fri 9am – 1pm and 2pm – 4pm and the motor tax counter is open Tues – Thurs 10.30am – 2pm.

### District Meetings

The members of Bray Municipal District hold their district meetings on the first Tuesday of each month (unless there is a Bank Holiday and then it is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday) at 6.30pm with the exception of August when there is no meeting. The schedule of meetings is approved at each Annual Meeting.

### Restoration Improvement Works Completed in 2024

Road No.	Road Location
L-19543	Seapoint Court

L5807, L5808 L19533	St Cronan's, Greenpark, Fairgreen
L-10029	Wurzburg Road
L-19698	Heatherwood
R-766	Meath Road south of Sidmonton Ave
L19684	Roselawn Drive
L19644	Cuala Road
L2047	Old Connaught Ave
R761	Bray Town Hall Main Street Vevay Road
R761	Vevay Rd - Church Rd
R761	Vevay Rd near Putland Road
L-10281	Ballynamudagh Road
L-1019	Glencormic - N11
	Monestary Road

## Drainage Works completed in 2024

Locations
Loreto Avenue – Kingsmill Road
Bridge Road
Ballyross (Culvert Repair)
Glencormack
Quill Road
Meath Road
Loreto Avenue
Cuala Road
Scalp Garage
Callery Station and Callery upper

## Restoration Maintenance Works Completed in 2024

Road No.	Road location
L-1019	Glencormack
L-55211 & L-55212	Berryfield Lane

## Climate Adaptation Works

Climate Adaptation funded works were carried out at the R755 at Ballyremon and Calary Station to relieve the regular flooding on the road. These works have performed satisfactorily during heavy rains to date.

## Footpaths

A €100,000 budget allocation from development levies was allocated in 2024. Two contracts were awarded and one that included the Rocky Valley Road New Path Extension was completed in November. Rocky Valley Road new path extension was completed in 2024 and footway works at Strand Road.

## Hidden Disability Parking Bays

Three hidden disability parking bays were installed in April. They are located beside blue badge disabled parking bays at Eglinton Road, Novara Avenue and the Herbert Road Car Park. They are easily identified by their green colour and adjoining sign highlighting that they are for hidden disabilities. These spaces are for individuals and families with hidden conditions who wouldn't have a disabled badge, but would need to be able to park nearer to facilities.

## Ballywaltrim Recreational Field Masterplan

A non-statutory public consultation open day took place the 13<sup>th</sup> March at the Ballywaltrim



Community Centre and was very well attended. A Master plan for the development of Ballywaltrim Recreational Area was developed following extensive consultation and was adopted by the members of Bray Municipal District in May 2024.

## Bray Skate Park

Bray Skate Park was officially opened on the 7<sup>th</sup> November 2024. The Council worked with local stakeholders including members of the local skateboarding community to identify a suitable site for such a facility. The location of the park in Ballywaltrim will further enhance and add to the existing sports facilities in the area.



## Futsal & Basketball Courts

The former courts located at Giltspur Heights were under-utilised and had been the subject of vandalism over the past number of years. A proposal was developed to reinstate the court fencing and redevelop the tennis courts as 2 No. 3x3 basketball courts and 1No. Futsal Court. The 3x3 basketball courts are the first such facilities in the Municipal District, the Futsal Court is second such court.



## Kilmacanogue Marsh

The Kilmacanogue Marsh Trail was officially opened in May. The transformation of the Kilmacanogue Marsh from a no-go area to a community asset could not have been achieved without the community initiative and support to drive it on. Funding for the initial works on clearing the heavy vegetation to open up the pond and clear a pedestrian access route, was through the National Biodiversity Action Plan with the assistance of Heritage Officer, Wicklow County Council, and ecologist Alan Lauder, who also provided the information for the information board on the site. Subsequent funding was provided by ORIS to develop the trail. This work was carried out in 2023 by the Bray Municipal District crew based in Enniskerry and the scheme was finally completed in 2024 with the installation of the information board and bench.



The refurbishment / replacement of benches in James Connelly Square was completed in 2024. Funding for this was provided by the elected members of Bray Municipal District from their 2024 discretionary budget.



## Bog Meadow Playground

Works commenced for the playground at Bog Meadow, Enniskerry with the sod turning taking place in March. The playground committee was formed back in 2019 and have worked closely with Bray Municipal District and Wicklow County Council to bring it to fruition. The amenity will have inclusive equipment and use as much natural structural timber components as possible to blend in with the surroundings of the Bog Meadow.



## Defibrillators

Seven Estates in Bray were presented with defibrillators by the Bray MD Elected Members at a presentation in April. The purchase of the defibrillators was made possible by an allocation of €10,000 by the elected members of Bray Municipal District from their 2024 discretionary budget. The defibrillators will be installed and maintained by the respective estate development committees.

A defibrillator was also installed in Bray Civic Offices.

## Bench refurbishment/replacement

## Seafront Seatbacks

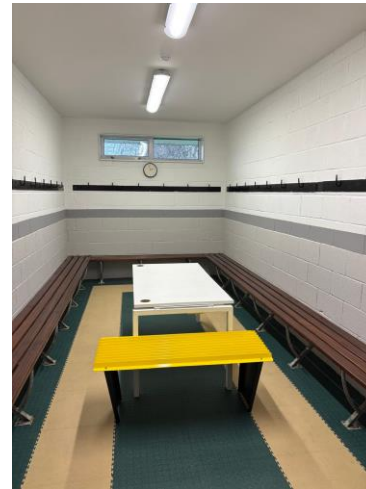
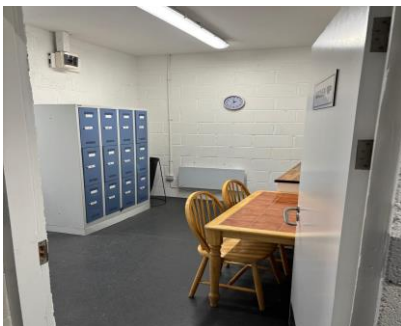


The Bray M.D. members allocated some of their discretionary expenditure to paint the Victorian seatbacks on the seafront. This funding facilitated completion of the painting of the Victorian seatbacks south of Finnbees Coffee shop and completion of the three year project.



## Peoples Park Pavilion

The Bray M.D. members allocated some of their discretionary expenditure for an extensive refurbishment at the Peoples Park Pavillion (changing rooms), works carried out included an internal refresh of the building, lighting upgrades, flooring & painting of the interior.



## In-road disability parking bay sensors

The piloting of in-road disability parking bay sensors for a 12-month period was agreed by Bray Municipal District members and commenced in September 2023 on a pilot basis and were rolled out on three contract in 2024.

The in-road sensors detect if the parking bay is occupied and users are able to see which disabled parking bays are occupied and which are free. The user can then use Google maps, or a similar mapping app, to direct them to the parking bay.

## Twinning

Twinning helps to develop a better understanding of other nationalities and cultures. In addition to educational, cultural and sporting exchanges, partnerships with international communities have led to lifelong friendships, to business exchanges and commercial opportunities.

Bray is twinned with:

Würzburg, Germany  
Dublin California  
Bègles, France

## Delegation from Würzburg, Germany

Bray Municipal District were delighted to welcome a delegation from its twinned city - Würzburg, Germany. The 1st November 2024 marked the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Partnership Agreement between the City of Würzburg, Bray and County Wicklow. This has been a very successful partnership which has grown from strength to strength over the years, bringing our communities together through arts, culture, sport and education.

The delegation of over forty citizens of Würzburg, led by Bürgermeisterin, Stadt Würzburg, Judith Roth-Jörg and Matthias Fleckenstein, Deutsch-Irische Gesellschaft, Würzburg and Stadt Würzburg Council Members and Officials visited Wicklow from 30th October to 3rd of November and participated in a programme of events hosted by Wicklow County Council, the Irish German Society of County Wicklow and Bray Municipal District. On their arrival to Bray on the Wednesday evening the delegation got to enjoy some local hospitality in the Harbour Bar, Bray where there was an opportunity to renew old acquaintances and make new friends.

A warm welcome was extended to the visiting delegation by the Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr Paul O'Brien and Cathaoirleach of Bray Municipal District, Cllr Dermot O'Brien.

Wicklow County Council took the opportunity of showcasing some of the county's tourist attractions with a tour on Thursday morning including a visit to Wicklow Farmhouse Cheese and learn about the cheese making and challenges facing a business in County Wicklow.

The visiting delegation also met with the Senior Management Team of Wicklow County Council where the Deputy Chief Executive, Michael Nicholson, gave the delegates an overview of the

strategic projects the Council is involved in, followed by presentations from various Wicklow Council staff.

On Friday 1st November there was an official reaffirming of the partnership agreement between Stadt Würzburg and Bray and County Wicklow in Bray Town Hall which was attended by elected representatives, members of the Irish German Society and members of the community. Following which delegates got the opportunity to visit St. Killian's school, Bray Men's Shed and the Carlisle Grounds.

That evening there was an official dinner in Greystones Golf Club to mark the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Partnership Agreement.

The visit concluded on the Sunday morning with the delegates attending a mass in St. Kilian's Church Blacklion, Greystones.



## Civic Reception for Olympians

The Cathaoirleach of Bray Municipal District, Cllr. Dermot O'Brien and the members of Bray Municipal District held a Cathaoirleach's reception in November to honour and celebrate the achievements of Lara Gillespie and Daina Moorehouse in the 2024 Paris Olympics.



The Cathaoirleach of Bray Municipal District, Cllr. Melanie Corrigan and the members of Bray Municipal District held a Cathaoirleach's reception in February to honour and celebrate the tremendous work being done by the three

First Responder groups across Bray Municipal District; Bray Community First Responder Group, Enniskerry Community First Responder Group and Kilmacanogue Community First Responder Group. Cathaoirleach of Bray Municipal District, Cllr Melanie Corrigan, thanked the first responder groups for their "unfailing commitment in putting people first and acknowledged the impact of first responders on many people lives

## Events

Bray Municipal District continues to support events such as the Bray Air Display, St Patrick's Festival and Christmas in Bray.

## Civic Reception for First Responders





## GREYSTONES MUNICIPAL DISTRICT



### District Members

#### Cathaoirleach:

Councillor Tom Fortune (IND)

#### Leas-Cathaoirleach:

Councillor Lourda Scott (GP)

#### Members:

Councillor Mark Barry (SD)

Councillor Louise Fenelon Gaskin (FG)

Councillor Orla Finn (IND)

Councillor Stephen Stokes (IND)



### District Staff

#### District Manager:

Marc Devereux (since August 2024)

Michael Nicholson (up to July 2024)

#### District Engineer:

Ruairí O'Hanlon

#### District Administrator:

Tawnia Kearns

#### Executive Engineer:

John McGee

#### Assistant Staff Officer

Arel Kavanagh

#### Executive Technician:

Neil Kiernan

#### Clerical Officers

Kay Coughlan

Lily Davis

Andrea Egan

Philippa O'Connor

### Outdoor Team:

Geystones MD has an Outdoor Crew of 16 staff members, which consists of an Area Supervisor, Drivers, Craft Workers, General Operatives and a cleaner. There is also a team of 7 School Wardens who work part time/substitute at locations in Greystones and Kilcoole.

### Contact Details:

**Address:** Civic Offices, Mill Road,  
Greystones, Co. Wicklow, A63 TX86

**Telephone No:** 01 – 2876694

#### Email:

[greystonesmd@wicklowcoco.ie](mailto:greystonesmd@wicklowcoco.ie)

#### Website:

[www.wicklow.ie](http://www.wicklow.ie)

The office of Greystones Municipal District is open to the public from 9am to 1pm and 2pm to 5pm, Monday to Thursday (excluding bank holidays) and from 9am to 4pm on Fridays.

Greystones Municipal District covers the areas of Greystones, Delgany, Kilcoole, Newcastle and Killadreenan, with a population of 27,588 (census figures 2022, ex. Killadreenan), which equates to 18% of the county population. The district covers 6.5% of roads in Co. Wicklow (64,840 KM). The number of social housing stock in the district is in excess of 730.

Council Meetings are held at the Civic Offices, on the last Tuesday of each month at 7.30pm, except during the month of August when there is no meeting.

The monthly meetings of the Municipal District provided lively discussions throughout 2024 on a variety of issues, and received presentations /deputations from the following groups: Greystones Family Resource Centre, WCC Environmental Services Section, WCC Housing Section, Farrankelly Close Residents Association, Go Ahead Ireland and Friends of the Cliff Walk Group.

The work of the district is wide and varied and includes the following:

- Social housing maintenance
- Road, footpath and cycle lane maintenance and improvement schemes
- Maintenance and enhancement of outdoor recreational areas; parks, playgrounds, open public spaces
- Street cleaning and waste management
- Provision and maintenance of public toilets
- Maintenance and upkeep of cemeteries
- Coordinate work schedules and damage caused by storms and floods

## Estate Development Grants

A total sum of €10,000 was awarded to social housing estates throughout the district to assist in the upkeep and maintenance of the estate

which benefit all residents and the wider community.

## Department of Transport Tourism and Sport Funded Schemes

**Restoration Improvement Schemes - GMD**  
allocation for 2024: €984,445

R761	Kilcoole Road, Knockroe	190,000	Commenced
R762	Church Road, Greystones	150,000	Complete
R762	Mill Road	25,000	Complete
L1027	Chapel Road	45,000	Contract Awarded
L97616	Crowe Abbey	80,000	Complete
L50552	Bus Loop, Newcastle	15,000	Complete
L12125-0,1,2,3	Burnaby Heights	128,957.93	Complete

**Footpath Renewal Works - GMD allocation**  
in 2024: €100,000

1. Redford Park
2. Portland Road
3. Jack & Jill Hill, Kilcoole
4. Bus Loop Road, Newcastle



effectively to prevent recurrence of flooding of properties in Redford and Rathdown Park.

New stream culvert installed on the L-5050, Church Rd, Newcastle.

New gulley and gulley repairs at various locations completed throughout the district in 2024 also.

## Outdoor Recreation Improvement Scheme

– GMD allocation in 2024: €198,000

Three Trout Stream pedestrian/cyclist foot bridge

## Other works carried out in the district include the following:

Realignment works along R761 Kilcoole Road between Glenbrook Park and Archers Wood  
New revised speed limits signs erected throughout the district following the speed limits review

St Crispins Park. As part of the biodiversity plan and anti-dumping initiative circa €7,000 of plants, Berberis and Pyracantha, are being planted.



## Drainage Works - GMD allocation for 2024: €48,455

Gully replacement programme was completed on Victoria Road, Trafalgar Road and Mill Road, Greystones.

New manhole on stream culvert in Rathdown Park. Unknown location of culvert found and two new manholes placed on it. This will allow for further surveying and locating of the culvert. This will assist in ensuring the culvert is working

Level access provided from South Beach car park to the South Beach Boardwalk at the southern arch.



Cliff Walk Diversion route signage erected.  
Benches installed at 'The Sand Pit' Killincarrig.  
Extra Greystones Way signage erected following the construction of Eastmount.  
Improvements to road signage and road marking on Burnaby Mill Rd at Greystones Community College.  
Signalised crossing on the R761 at Three Trout Bridge has been made live and operational.  
Community recognition fund works in Burnaby Park commenced September 2024  
Pétanque Court installed  
New benches, including a bespoke bench at the flagpole  
New flagpole installed  
Additional chess tables  
Paving around fountain being redone  
R774 Farrankelly Rd – open joints sealed, all gullies cleaned out, line markings redone

## Parking

Up to 430 free parking spaces are provided for commuters, business owners and visitors at the Greystones Park & Ride Car Park, located off Mill Road, which is just a short walk to Church Road, South Beach and the train station. In addition, there is Pay & Display parking throughout Greystones, both on street, and in car parks at La Touche Car Park, South Beach Car Park and Trafalgar Road Car Park.

## Discretionary Funds

Funding was provided to the following Tidy Towns Groups in 2024:

Greystones Tidy Town  
Delgany Tidy Town  
Kilcoole Tidy Town  
Newcastle Tidy Town

Festivals supported throughout the District in 2024:

St Patrick's Day Parade Greystones  
Irish Goa Day  
Picnic in the Park  
Christmas Lights in Greystones  
Christmas Lights in Kilcoole  
Christmas Lights in Newcastle  
Kilcoole Music Festival





Additional Big belly bins were installed at locations in Greystones, Newcastle, Delgany and Kilcoole from Members discretionary budget.

Spring clean ups were supported by the MD with the provision of bags, gloves and litter pickers and the collections of full bags.

South Beach Greystones retained its Blue Flag status in 2024 as a result of compliance with a set of stringent criteria from bathing water quality to environmental management and education, as well as safety and services, including the provision of life guards at South Beach for the summer months.

Additional temporary public conveniences were provided for the summer months at South Beach Car Park.

Greystones Municipal District continues to support the retail and business sector by facilitating free parking on the four Saturdays in the run up to Christmas.

Greystones continue to support the Greystones Town Team and collaborate and assist them with the initiatives they undertake, including participating and attendance at monthly meetings and at capacity building workshops organised by the Town Regeneration Office.

emerged with cultural, sporting and educational exchanges over the years. There is also active participation in the festivals celebrated by both Greystones and Holyhead, across the Irish Sea.



## Twinning

Greystones is twinned with Holyhead, North Wales since 2012 and continues to welcome delegates and visitors annually to Greystones. Great relationships have developed through the council and introductions and partnerships have



## WICKLOW MUNICIPAL DISTRICT



### Cathaoirleach:

Councillor Gail Dunne (FF)

### Leas-Cathaoirleach:

Councillor Graham Richmond (FG)

### Elected Members:

Councillor John Snell (IND)  
Councillor Paul O'Brien (LAB)  
Councillor Shane Langrell (FG)  
Councillor Danny Alvey (SD)

### Municipal District Staff:

#### District Manager

Brian Gleeson

#### District Engineer

Pat Clarke

#### District Administrator

Georgina Franey

#### Executive Engineer's

Alan Martin  
John Dalton

#### Executive Technician

Lee Cullen

#### Assistant Staff Officer

Róisín Carroll

#### Clerical Officers

Sinead Turner  
Jessica Doyle  
Irene Kinsella

### Contact Details:

Address: Wicklow Municipal District  
Town Hall  
Market Square  
Wicklow Town  
Co. Wicklow A67 YO18

Telephone: 0404-20173

Email: [wicklowmd@wicklowcoco.ie](mailto:wicklowmd@wicklowcoco.ie)

Website: [www.wicklow.ie](http://www.wicklow.ie)

Wicklow Municipal District covers an area of 43,240 hectares which includes the County Town of Wicklow, Rathnew, Ashford, Roundwood, Glenealy, Laragh, Glendalough and Newtownmountkennedy.

The offices of the Wicklow Municipal District are situated in the Town Hall, Market Square, Wicklow Town and are open to the public from 9.00a.m. to 1.00p.m. and 2.00p.m. to 5.00p.m.



The regular functions that the District provides include local authority house maintenance, road maintenance and improvement, street cleaning, maintenance of parks and open spaces, operation & maintenance of Brittas Bay North & South Beaches and car parks, drain clearing, maintenance of burial grounds, public convenience maintenance and maintenance of playgrounds.

In addition to the general maintenance works in the district, the Wicklow Municipal District has responsibility for over 500 kilometers of road and the repair and the maintenance of almost 1,200 local authority houses in the district. 1,010 housing repairs were completed in the year.

The population of Wicklow Town census 2022 was 12,957 and the overall population of the Municipal District is 32,537 which accounts for more than 21% of the population of the County.

### District Meetings

The Members of Wicklow Municipal District hold their meetings on the fourth Monday of each month (third Monday if the fourth Monday is a public holiday) at

3:00 p.m. with the exception of August when there is no meeting held.

Wicklow Municipal District Members are represented on the following Strategic Policy Committees:

Housing – Cllr Graham Richmond, Cllr Paul O’Brien & Cllr Gail Dunne

Transportation, Infrastructure Delivery & Emergency Services – Cllr Shane Langrell & Cllr Danny Alvey

Community & Social Development – Cllr John Snell

Climate Action, Biodiversity, Environment, Energy, Marine, Recreation & Amenity – Cllr Danny Alvey

Planning & Rural Development – Cllr Gail Dunne

Wicklow Municipal District Members are also represented on the following:

Corporate Policy Group – Cllr Graham Richmond & Cllr Paul O’Brien

Wicklow Local Sports Partnership – Cllr Paul O’Brien

Clermont Enterprise Hub CLG – Cllr John Snell

Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee (LTACC) – Cllr Graham Richmond

East Coast Regional Drugs Task Force – Cllr Shane Langrell

Wicklow Tourism Alliance – Cllr Danny Alvey

Ballynagran Community Liaison Committee – Cllr John Snell & Cllr Gail Dunne

Wicklow Enterprise Park – Cllr Graham Richmond & Cllr Gail Dunne

Disability Steering Committee – Cllr Danny Alvey

Wicklow Heritage Forum – Cllr John Snell  
Kildare Wicklow Education Training Board (KWETB) – Cllr Paul O’Brien

Local Community Development  
Committee (LCDC) – Cllr John Snell  
County Wicklow Partnership – Cllr Graham  
Richmond  
Local Authority Members Association  
(LAMA) – Cllr Shane Langrell

## Roads and Infrastructure Projects

In addition to general maintenance works in the district the following road improvement and surface dressing projects were completed during the year.

In advance of some of these projects considerable drainage works were completed. Other drainage works were complete in areas prone to flood.

### Restoration Improvements

Barnbawn (Aghowle Upper)  
Knockafrumpa  
Slaughter Hill (Newtown to Roundwood road)  
Fort Road  
Brockagh  
Callow Hill  
Prospect to Ballyduff Cross Roads  
Milltown Lane

### Restoration Maintenance (Surface Dressing)

Glenealy Road R762  
Knockrobin Estate road  
Djouce to Calary  
Brockagh, Wicklow Gap  
Stoney Pass Road  
Powers Avenue  
Carrigower  
Laragh to Rathdrum Road  
Wicklow Heather to R755  
Ballyguile Road

## Drainage Projects

Milltown Lane  
Knockafrumpa Lane  
Conlon's Hill, Newtownmountkennedy  
Slaughter Hill, Newtownmountkennedy  
Glenealy Road  
Barnbawn

## Safety Improvement Works

Upgrade of crossing point at St Laurence O'Toole's National School, ramp surfacing completed and barriers installed at crossing point.

Upgrade of road markings on R755/ R756 between Wicklow Gap and Djouce with approx. 17km of centre line completed plus 6km of edge markings.

Periodic School Signage has been installed at a number of locations in the District including St Laurence O'Toole's National School and Nuns Cross.

New ramps were installed on the approach to the Greenhill/Convent Road Junction in the interest of safety.

Ramp re-installed on the Dunbur Road and at Flannery's shop to reduce vehicle speeds in the area.

Installation of new pedestrian crossing on the Dunbur Road at Dunbur Park.

Tightening of radii of junction for Dunbur Park also completed, along with new footpaths and tactile paving.

Pedestrian crossing at Mountainview in Newtownmountkennedy.

Installation of a footpath in Laragh Village (along by the old post office) completed.

Pedestrian crossing at the Brockagh Centre installed.

New pedestrian crossing at Moneystown completed.

Solar powered vehicle activated signage at Blainroe Cross Roads; Wicklow Hospice, Magheramore; Ballinahinch, Ashford; Killiskey Cross roads, Ashford; Laragh, Roudnwood and Rathnew.

Footpath linking St Ernan's and St Brigid's Terrace on the R772 has been completed.



Safety works at St Laurence O'Toole National School, Roundwood



Road markings on Wicklow Gap

## Local Improvement Scheme

Two completed including at Raheen

## NTA Active Travel

Footpath to GAA club in Wicklow



## Other Projects funded from the Members 2024 Discretionary Budget:

Roundwood: two ramps from Playground to GAA Club.

Rathnew: resurfacing of the Old Village.

Newtownmountkennedy: Kilmullen traffic calming and new sign.

Fund to repair footpaths in MD: Footpaths upgrade works at St Patricks Road and Glebemount estate is complete.

Wicklow Seafront Toilets and outdoor showers: refurbishment is completed and new doors installed on toilets.

All salt boxes have been distributed around the District.

The Members set aside a further fund to cover the cost of providing defibrillators to groups and estates across the district.





Resurfacing and road marking at Old Village, Rathnew

## Promotion of Interests of Local Community

### Tidy Towns

Wicklow Municipal District Members support the 7 Tidy Towns Committees in Wicklow Town, Roundwood, Ashford, Newtownmountkennedy, Laragh, Glenealy and Rathnew each year by contributing €11,000 from their discretionary fund.



Volunteers with Newtownmountkennedy Tidy Towns plant fruit trees at Newtown GAA grounds in February 2024. The community group started a 'dispersed community orchard' across the town



In conjunction with Wicklow Tidy Towns, Wicklow MD installed drinking water fountains at pedestrian bridge and at the Murrough

### Brittas Bay

Upgrade works to hugely increase the water capacity to reduce water shortages during the summer season. Upgrade to toilet facilities as part of project.



Brittas Bay beach

### Twinning

The Eichenzell Twinning delegation returned to take part in the 2024 St Patrick's Day parade. A large number of members of the Twinning Committee also attended.



The “jumelage” from Montigny invited Wicklow Municipal District and the twinning committee to their much loved Christmas Markets. While celebrating the twinning of both towns, this unique opportunity provided an ideal platform for Wicklow to showcase our finest craft and culinary offerings to the French audience.

The products of 17 outstanding local producers representing Made in Wicklow and Wicklow Naturally were proudly displayed at the market. The stand was expertly manned by staff from Wicklow Municipal District, the twinning committee of Wicklow Municipal District and the LEADER team. A looping video, featuring breath-taking imagery of Wicklow’s landscapes and the remarkable stories of its craftspeople and food producers, enchanted attendees and offered a window into the charm and beauty of County Wicklow. This multimedia showcase played a key role in sharing the story of Wicklow with an international audience, leaving a lasting impression of the county’s charm, creativity, and rich heritage. From handcrafted gifts to locally sourced delicacies, the Wicklow display stand, stood out as a testament to this. The event also proved to be a commercial success, with sales strong. Beyond the financial benefits, the atmosphere was one of joy and camaraderie, as connections were forged, cultures celebrated and return plans of the crafting community of Montigny to come enjoy and experience a crafting workshop in June 2025 in Wicklow.

The visit to Montigny was more than just an opportunity to sell products; it was a celebration of community, culture, and shared purpose - a shining example of

what can be achieved when people come together under a twinning experience.



Manning the stall: staff from Wicklow MD and LEADER with members of the twinning committee



Wicklow stall at the Montigny Christmas Markets

## The Round Ireland Yacht Race

**The 2024 Round Ireland Yacht Race was organised by Wicklow Sailing Club and SSE Renewables and supported by Wicklow Municipal District. It is the second longest race in the Royal Ocean Racing Club calendar and first race took place in 1980 with only thirteen boats. Since then, held biennially, the fleet has grown steadily, attracting a record 64 entrants from all over the world.**



The event has evolved into a weekend festival of family fun, music, funfair for the whole community.

## Wicklow Pride Parade

Wicklow Town hosts the only Pride Parade in the County and this is supported by the Members discretionary funding. Over 5,000 people flooded the streets as it proved a resounding success, bringing together a vibrant and diverse crowd to celebrate love, acceptance, and unity. After the parade, the fun continued at the Black Castle, where a fantastic lineup of entertainment, advocacy, food and activities awaited festival-goers of all ages. Wicklow Municipal District also sponsored the best window display for retailers.



## Estate Development Grants

A total sum of €10,000 was awarded to housing estates throughout the district to

assist in the upkeep and maintenance of the estate to benefit all residents and the wider community.

## Duck Feeder

Wicklow Town became the first area in the East of the Country that has installed a solar duck feeder. Wicklow Tidy Towns in conjunction with Wicklow Municipal District and former local Cllr. Mary Kavanagh introduced a new community initiative on Bachelors Walk that supplies healthy food for ducks and swans. This area, beside the River Vartry, is synonymous with feeding the ducks and swans.

A local business is engaged to supply the feed while Wicklow Tidy Towns team refill the feed and are responsible for the unit. In doing so, the Tidy Towns also receive a portion of the monies paid for the feed, to progress and deliver more projects in the town.

As well as putting in the concrete base for the unit, Wicklow Municipal District also created a feeding platform. Railings have been erected on the platform to allow the public to use the platform for feeding the ducks and swans safely.





## Wicklow Courthouse Projectors

In an effort to encourage people to continue along the Main Street area and up towards Market Square, Wicklow Municipal District purchased 3 new projectors to project themes onto the Courthouse in Wicklow Town. The theme is interchangeable for various seasons and holidays. The displays are bright, colourful and have lit up the Market Square.



## Leinster Fleadh 2024

Wicklow Town was lucky enough to host the 2024 Leinster Fleadh for the first time since 2009. The Members of Wicklow Municipal District and Wicklow County Council were proud to provide funding and support the Leinster Fleadh. The Fleadh was organised by Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann to aid in the promotion

and preservation of traditional Irish music, song and dance, as well as the Irish language.

While the Comhaltas Wicklow committee were enthused to host the cultural competition for over 2,000 competitors, they turned it into a much bigger opportunity to showcase Wicklow Town and county while also bringing the festival to the local community.

Following a presentation from Comhaltas Wicklow, the Elected Members of Wicklow Municipal District were keen to lend their support and immediately approved €15,000 from their discretionary fund to support the event. The Members and Executive of Wicklow County Council matched this funding with a further €15,000.

Over 5,000 local people and tourists came down to dance the night away in a safe and fun environment. And this was discussed for weeks after as to “what a great weekend it was”.

While this is a hugely important cultural event, it was also a great boost for local tourism and the local economy.



## Retail/Business



## Christmas Lights

The Wicklow Municipal District provided the annual contribution of €20,000 towards Wicklow Town Christmas Lights. 2024 also saw the Wicklow MD Members contribute an additional €6,500 from their Discretionary Fund to Rathnew, Roundwood, Ashford, Laragh, Glenealy, Annamoe and Newtownmountkennedy.



Christmas Lights at Laragh

Wicklow Municipal District and the Wicklow & District Chamber of Commerce work closely together to promote the Shop Local campaign Wicklow Town, particularly during the Christmas season. The MD are proud to support the Best Dressed Window Competition for the festive shopfront displays. The Members also approved two hours free parking in all carpark for the festive season.



Kellys Fruit & Veg, winners of the 2024 Best Dressed Festive Window Display

## Parking

Free parking is available in Wicklow Town between the hours of 9.00am and 10.00am and thereafter there is a 15 minutes courtesy period to allow the customer to purchase a parking ticket. The District helps to support the commercial and retail sector by providing 2 hours free parking on a Saturday and free all day on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

## Town Team

**Mission Statement:** Make Wicklow Town a better place to live, work and play.

### **The Wicklow Murals – South Quay Connectivity Project**

The connectivity project was a joint collaboration between Wicklow Municipal District and Wicklow Town Team to improve, enhance and revitalise the network of laneways between Main Street and South Quay.

The committee expanded the project the project during 2024 to include additional mural's at the Sailing Club and New Street.

Further enhancement works were carried out to the area around the Wicklow Heron sculpture.

The Mini-murals trail and the Wicklow Golliger (Golly) trail was completed for a younger audience.



The 2024 achievements of the Wicklow Town Team also included the following:

#### Tourism Group

Weekly guided walking tours are now provided in Wicklow Town on the completed Heritage Trail. As well as it being an attraction for tourists and residents alike it is also proving a history of Wicklow to the local Primary and Post Primary Schools in the town.

Other walking routes are being explored by the team including a Pilgrim Walk.

#### Sustainable Energy

The SEC held the second Energy Awareness Day in June 2024 showcasing innovative ideas, products, and technologies that promote energy efficiency and environmental sustainability.

#### General

Wicklow Municipal District commissioned new iron gates and a new cross for Three Mile Water cemetery.



New ornate lighting heads were installed along the Mall and Market Square.

The Office of Public Works completed works along promenade area. While this was not a project directly managed by Wicklow MD, the MD worked with the OPW to assist the project to a positive completion.

Glendalough Upper Car Park – bin stores were added for aesthetic reasons and to clean up the area. Line marking of car park was also completed.

Newtownmountkennedy – Streetscape Enhancement Project works were completed. New bins (mixture of compactor and larger big belly bins) have been installed in response to complaints on litter issues. Additional street furniture such as benches, bollards and planters has been erected to further enhance the appearance of Newtown.

#### Compactor Bins

Compactor bins have been installed in Glendalough, Laragh and Roundwood to promote a cleaner environment but also to increase efficiency from an operational point of view. These bins have smart technology built into them and will communicate back to base when full and require emptying. Efficiency of big belly



bins has increased from 12% at year start (2024) to 38% at year end.

## The Assembly Hall

Extensive refurbishment works were carried to the Assembly Hall. The works included a new heating system, a meeting room upstairs, a new kitchen, new toilets and storage facilities. Internal and external works were also carried out to improve the visual appeal of the building to encourage a wider community usage.



Renovated multi-use hall



New meeting room

## Abbey Gardens

Following receipt of funding Destination Town from Fáilte Ireland Wicklow Municipal District are progressing has

engaged a multidisciplinary team to prepare high quality design proposals for the Abbey Grounds incorporating the public open space surrounding the extant Friary ruins and the redevelopment of the former Coach House. The aim of the project is to enhance this key open space in order to maximize its function as a public amenity and heritage asset.



## Filming

Wicklow Municipal District has been chosen as a popular location for filming in 2024 namely:



The Mayfair Witches filming at Fitzwilliam Square, Wicklow Town

Title	Type	Location
Dead and Buried	Series	Veha Site, The Murrough
Bad Sisters (Season 2)	Series	Brittas Bay North
Wednesday (Season 2)	Series	Clermont House
Mayfair Witches	Series	Fitzwilliam Square
Finnegans Foursome	Film	Sally Gap, Glenmacnass
Harry Wild (Season 4)	Series	Nun's Cross, Ashford
Tis the Season to be Irish	Film	Travelahawk Beach
AIB	Commercial	Main Street, Wicklow
The Rainmaker	Series	North Pier, Wicklow
Corked	Series	Black Castle, East Pier, The Murrough
500 Miles	Film	Clermont
4 Kids Walk into a Bank	Film	North Quay, Murrough, Bond Street

## **The Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty**

### **Introduction:**

In accordance with Section 42 of the 2014 Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act ('the Act'), the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty (referred to as 'the Duty') requires Public Bodies, such as Wicklow County Council, to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity, and protect human rights, for employees, service users, elected members and policy beneficiaries, across all their function areas.

Public Bodies, in order to give effect to the Duty, must undertake the three steps outlined below:

- **Step 1. Assess:** Undertake an assessment of the equality and human rights issues facing the identified groups for the Duty and to make that assessment publicly available.
- **Step 2. Address:** Identify and communicate the plans, policies and actions being taken or proposed, to address the issues identified in the assessment, in the plans, policies, programmes and services of the public body.
- **Step 3. Report:** Report annually on developments and achievements in implementing the Duty.

### **Laying a Solid Foundation to Achieve Steps 1, 2 and 3:**

To enable the commencement of the three steps outlined above, in February 2023 Wicklow County Council set up a cross-organisational Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty Working Group which engaged in extensive training with regard to understanding and implementing the Duty.

### **Work Done, Ongoing and Planned – Past is Prologue:**

#### **Step 1 (Assess):**

This Working Group conducted an assessment of the equality and human rights issues facing the identified groups for the Duty, i.e. groups covered by nine protected grounds under equality legislation, groups covered on the grounds of socio-economic status and rights holders under relevant human rights instruments, with particular focus on issues that have relevance to Wicklow County Council's functions of Service Provision, Employment, Policy-Making and Corporate Matters.

The assessment was compiled from an evidence base of current equality and human rights research and reports from relevant Irish sources.

Wicklow County Council's '*Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty Implementation Plan*' (referred to as 'the Implementation Plan'), resulted from the work of this group and includes the evidence base, as an Evidence Book, in its appendices.

The Implementation Plan was developed in accordance with the guidance issued by the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission, namely, 'Implementing the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty') and was approved by Wicklow County Council's Senior Management Team on the 9<sup>th</sup> of January 2024. The Implementation Plan is accessible on Wicklow County Council's Website – [www.wicklow.ie](http://www.wicklow.ie).

As provided in the Implementation Plan, Wicklow County Council took a values-led approach to implementing the Duty which is framed by our equality and human rights values statement, (which resulted from the assessment), given below:

Dignity, Diversity, Participation, Autonomy and Social Justice.

These five interlinked values motivate our ambitions for equality and human rights under the Duty. In order to enable the implementation of the Duty the Implementation Plan identifies and outlines the leadership, skills, awareness, consultation and communication that are required.

### **Step 2 (Address):**

The Working Group identified Priority Initiatives for the implementation of the Duty which are both provided and outlined in the Implementation Plan. These are that:

- The review and further development of a new Staff Charter, Customer Charter, and Customer Service Action Plan will include implementation of Step 2 (Address) of the Duty.
- The preparation of the next Team Plan for Wicklow County Council's Libraries and of the next Team Plan for Recreation and Amenity will include implementation of Step 2 (Address) of the Duty in order to both lead and provide a model for all subsequent Team Plans in the following year.
- The preparation for future Corporate Plans will give consideration as to how the Duty is to be addressed and to be implemented in the process.

The enabling steps necessary to achieve the Priority Initiatives were also identified and outlined in the Implementation Plan. These are:

- Communication of the Implementation Plan, once fully approved, to all parts of the organisation.
- Reconvening the Duty Working Group and expanding it, if required.
- Providing training for those responsible for Step 2 of the Duty in relation to the priority initiatives.

To facilitate and support the ongoing implementation of the Duty, a hyperlink to the Implementation Plan will be provided in all future Corporate Plans and the Implementation Plan provides that the Annual Service Delivery Plans which flow from the Corporate Plan will include steps to progress the ongoing implementation of the Duty, tagging actions under the high level goals for implementation of Step 2 (Address) of the Duty, and including actions to address the prioritised equality and human rights issues.

The Team Plans that result will involve implementation of Step 2 (Address) of the Duty in order to include actions to address the equality and human rights issues identified as relevant and of priority for the area covered by the plan.

Wicklow County Council recognises that the requirement to integrate the Duty in strategic plans and annual reports means that it is an ongoing obligation that must be monitored, reviewed, and developed in each strategic planning cycle. To enable this, each year, key moments for implementing Step 2 of the Duty are identified in the Annual Plan for the Duty (contained in the Implementation Plan), in terms of development and review processes in regard to policies, plans, services and programmes. These key moments include, but are not limited to the development and review of:

- The County Development Plan.
- Human Resources Plans and Policies.
- Corporate Management Systems such as PMDS.
- Service Design, Development and Delivery Plans and Policies.
- Plans and Strategies, such as those relating to our Library Service, the Leisure and Sports Plan, our Arts Strategy, our Age Friendly Strategy and our Climate Action Plan.
- Multi-Agency Plans and Strategies, such as the Local Economic and Community Plan.
- Procurement Procedures, with a view to passing on the Duty to contractors, in a manner that reflects their scale and functions.
- Grant Aid Systems, with a view to passing on the Duty to beneficiaries, in a manner that reflects their scale and functions.

### **Step 3 (Report):**

Under Step 3 and as provided in the Implementation Plan, our next Annual Report will include a report on the progress and achievements in implementing the Duty, based on a report prepared by the reconvened Duty Working Group. This group will organise or support a reflection process on this report with a view to:

- Celebrating success.
- Strengthening the process for implementing the Duty.
- Strengthening the plans, policies, and actions to address the equality and human rights issues as assessed.

Thus, with Step 1 complete, Step 2 will commence shortly and the report as outlined in Step 3 will be provided in the next Annual Report.

Progress on the related goals from the Corporate Plan are reported in the Annual Service Delivery Plan.



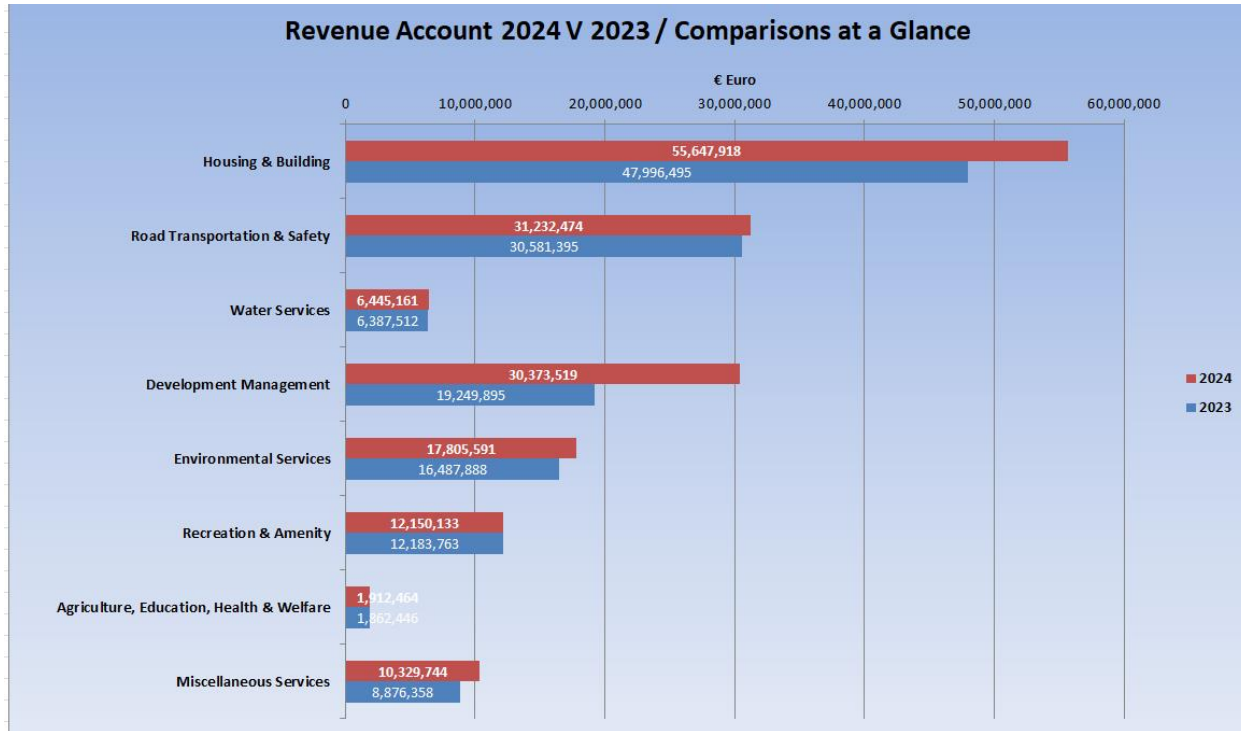
## FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2024

Financial Statement				
The Income and Expenditure Statement summarises all revenue related receipts and expenditure. It shows the surplus/deficit for the year.				
Income And Expenditure Account Statement For The Year Ended 31st December 2024				
Expenditure By Programme Group	Gross Expenditure 2024	Income 2024	Net Expenditure 2024	Net Expenditure 2023
	€	€	€	€
Housing & Building	55,647,918	54,050,119	1,597,799	903,736
Road Transportation & Safety	31,232,474	20,096,237	11,136,237	11,332,322
Water Services	6,445,161	6,009,204	435,957	255,115
Development Management	30,373,519	22,333,950	8,039,569	7,951,283
Environmental Services	17,805,591	4,128,164	13,677,427	13,847,213
Recreation & Amenity	12,150,133	1,400,242	10,749,891	10,691,508
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	1,912,464	1,005,842	906,622	987,150
Miscellaneous Services	10,329,744	13,744,059	(3,414,315 )	(4,353,642 )
Total Expenditure/Income	165,897,003	122,767,816		
Net Cost Of Divisions to be funded from Rates and Local Government Fund			43,129,187	41,584,685
Rates			31,390,927	31,047,298
Local Property Tax			16,880,701	13,821,572
Surplus/(Deficit) for year before Transfers			5,142,441	3,284,185
Transfers From/(To) Reserves			(4,541,770 )	(2,943,246 )
Overall Surplus/(Deficit) for Year			600,671	340,938
General Reserve @ 1st January			(597,890 )	(938,828 )

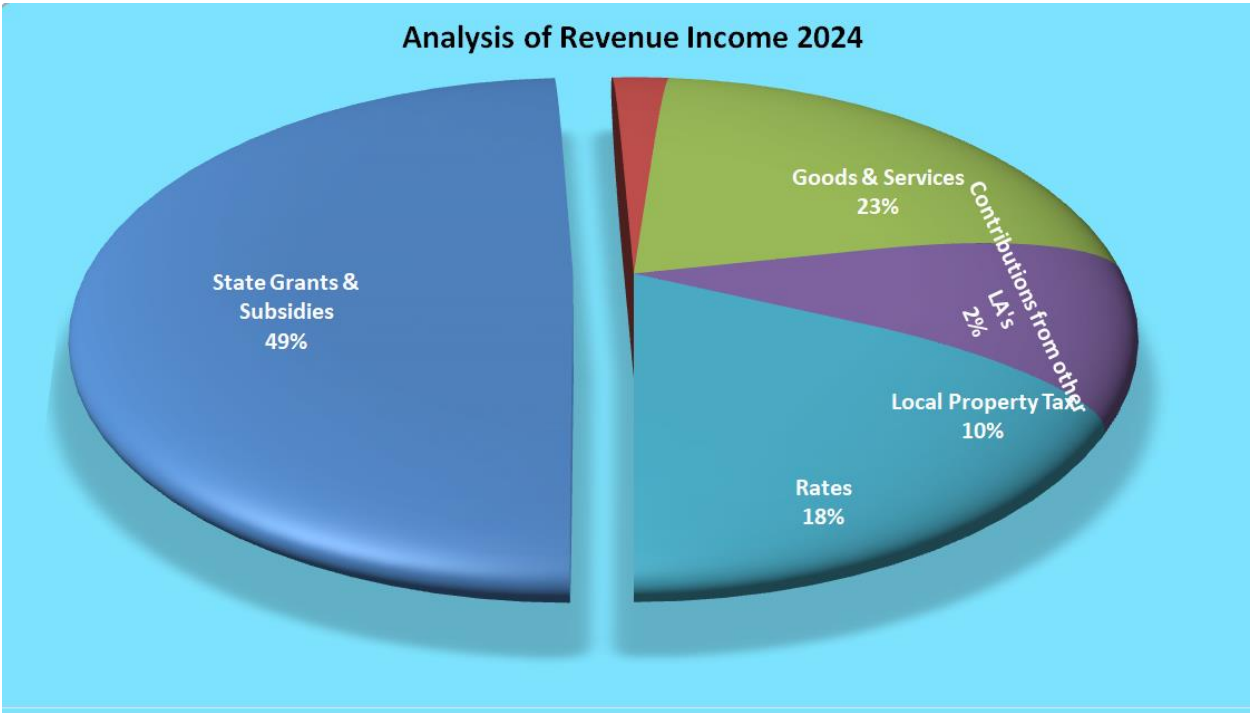
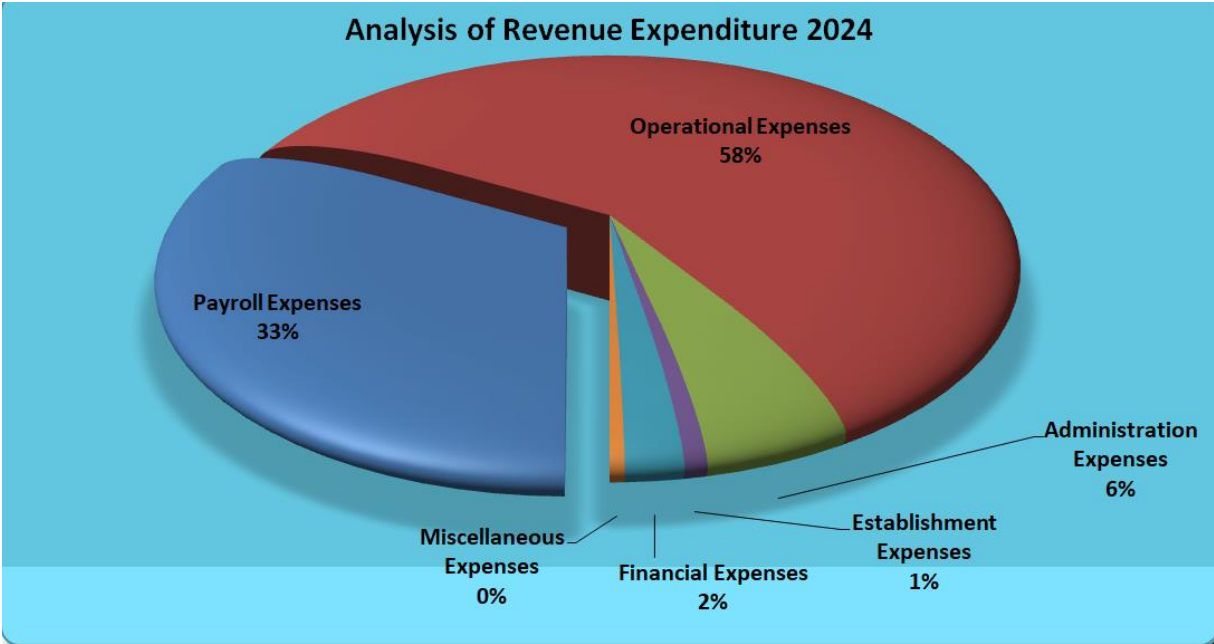
General Reserve @ 31st December	2,782	(597,890 )
<b>Capital Account Statement of Balances</b>		
	2024	2023
	€	€
Housing & Building	(12,210,356 )	(13,566,712 )
Road Transportation & Safety	36,985,832	41,551,755
Water Services	6,760,795	6,530,052
Development Incentives & Control	58,018,087	32,037,828
Environmental Protection	(4,260,881 )	936,699
Recreation & Amenity	(1,466,601 )	2,144,873
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	2,069,769	2,046,613
Miscellaneous	10,918,102	10,410,645
<b>Total</b>	<b>96,814,747</b>	<b>82,091,754</b>
<b>Balance Sheet For The Year Ended 31st December 2024</b>		
	2024	2023
	€	€
<b>Fixed Assets</b>		
Operational	1,321,655,595	1,283,039,863
Infrastructural	1,547,729,354	1,548,597,847
Community	22,609,760	18,943,387
Non-Operational	220,010	220,010
	<b>2,892,214,719</b>	<b>2,850,801,108</b>
Work In Progress And Preliminary Expenses	84,027,607	91,942,249
Long Term Debtors	141,746,824	133,577,918
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Stock		
Trade Debtors And Prepayments	52,188,826	40,014,711
Bank Investments	87,346,313	69,043,480
Cash at Bank	13,906,642	27,763,822
Cash in Transit	400	400
	<b>153,442,181</b>	<b>136,822,413</b>
<b>Current Liabilities</b>		

Bank Overdraft		
Creditors & Accruals	33,509,982	35,674,162
Finance Leases		
	33,509,982	35,674,162
Net Current Assets/(Liabilities)	119,932,199	101,148,251
Creditors ( Amounts greater than one year)		
Loans Payable	55,353,006	58,332,925
Finance Leases	-	-
Refundable Deposits	27,491,097	24,980,477
Other	107,762,692	97,627,818
	190,606,795	180,941,219
Net Assets / (Liabilities)	3,047,314,554	2,996,528,307
Represented By		
Capitalisation	2,892,214,719	2,850,801,108
Income WIP	79,365,155	88,296,319
General Revenue Reserve	2,782	(597,890 )
Other Specific Reserves		
Other Balances	75,731,899	58,028,770
Total Reserves	3,047,314,555	2,996,528,307

## Revenue Account 2024 V 2023 / Comparisons at a Glance



	2023	2024
Miscellaneous Services	8,876,358	10,329,744
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	1,862,446	1,912,464
Recreation & Amenity	12,183,763	12,150,133
Environmental Services	16,487,888	17,805,591
Development Management	19,249,895	30,373,519
Water Services	6,387,512	6,445,161
Road Transportation & Safety	30,581,395	31,232,474
Housing & Building	47,996,495	55,647,918
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>143,625,511</b>	<b>165,897,003</b>





<b>Revenue Income</b>	<b>2024</b>
<b>Analysis of Revenue Income</b>	<b>€</b>
State Grants & Subsidies	84,234,216
Contributions from other LA's	3,379,291
Goods & Services	35,154,309
Local Property Tax	16,880,701
Rates	31,390,927
<b>Total Revenue Income</b>	<b>171,039,445</b>
<b>Revenue Expenditure</b>	<b>2024</b>
<b>Analysis of Revenue Expenditure</b>	<b>€</b>
Payroll Expenses	54,733,489
Operational Expenses	95,788,111
Administration Expenses	9,338,706
Establishment Expenses	1,439,481
Financial Expenses	3,666,032
Miscellaneous Expenses	931,182
<b>Total Revenue Expenditure</b>	<b>165,897,003</b>

## Rev Expenditure

<b>Housing &amp; Building</b>	55,647,918
<b>Road Transportation &amp; Safety</b>	31,232,474
<b>Water Services</b>	6,445,161
<b>Development Management</b>	30,373,519
<b>Environmental Services</b>	17,805,591
<b>Recreation &amp; Amenity</b>	12,150,133
<b>Ag, Educ, Health &amp; Welfare</b>	1,912,464
<b>Miscellaneous Services</b>	10,329,744

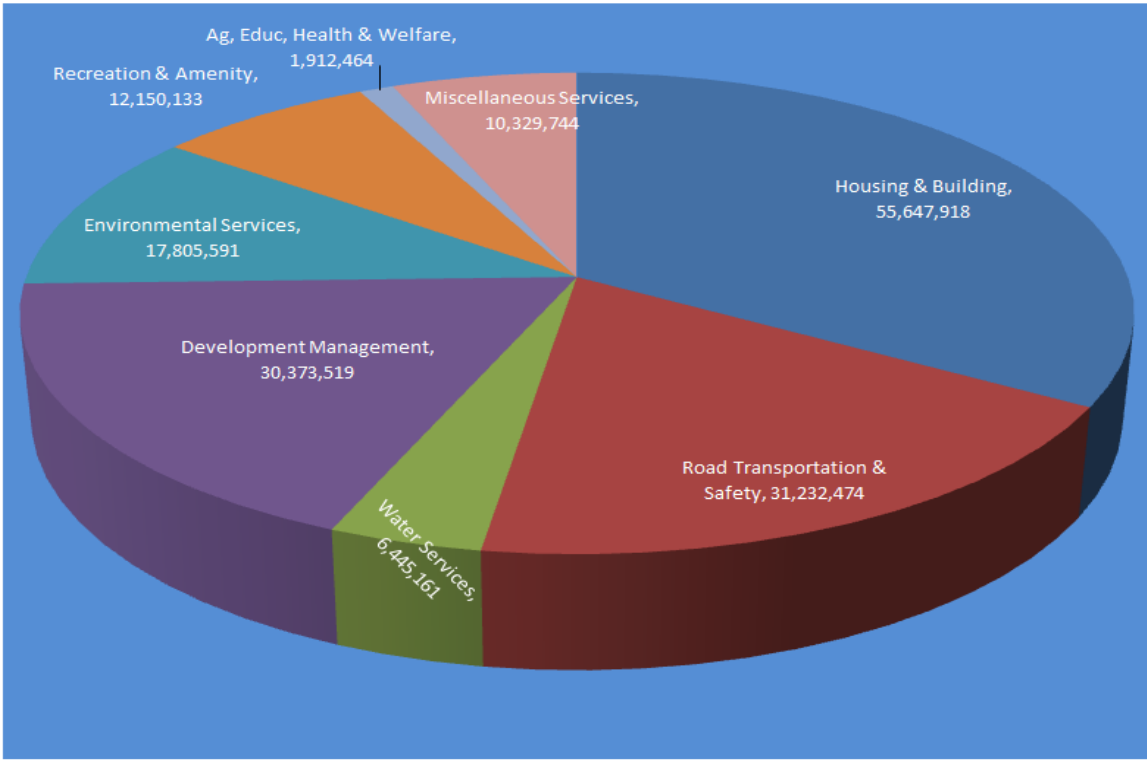
165,897,003

## Rev Income

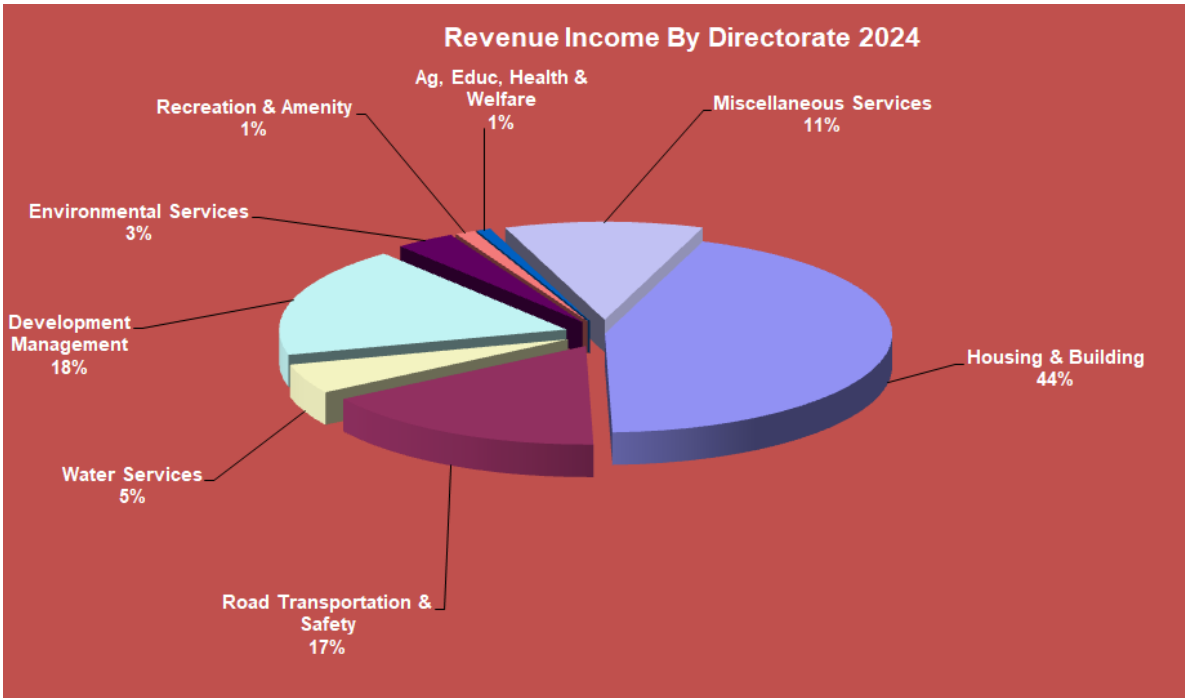
<b>Housing &amp; Building</b>	54,050,119
<b>Road Transportation &amp; Safety</b>	20,096,237
<b>Water Services</b>	6,009,204
<b>Development Management</b>	22,333,950
<b>Environmental Services</b>	4,128,164
<b>Recreation &amp; Amenity</b>	1,400,242
<b>Ag, Educ, Health &amp; Welfare</b>	1,005,842
<b>Miscellaneous Services</b>	13,744,059

122,767,817

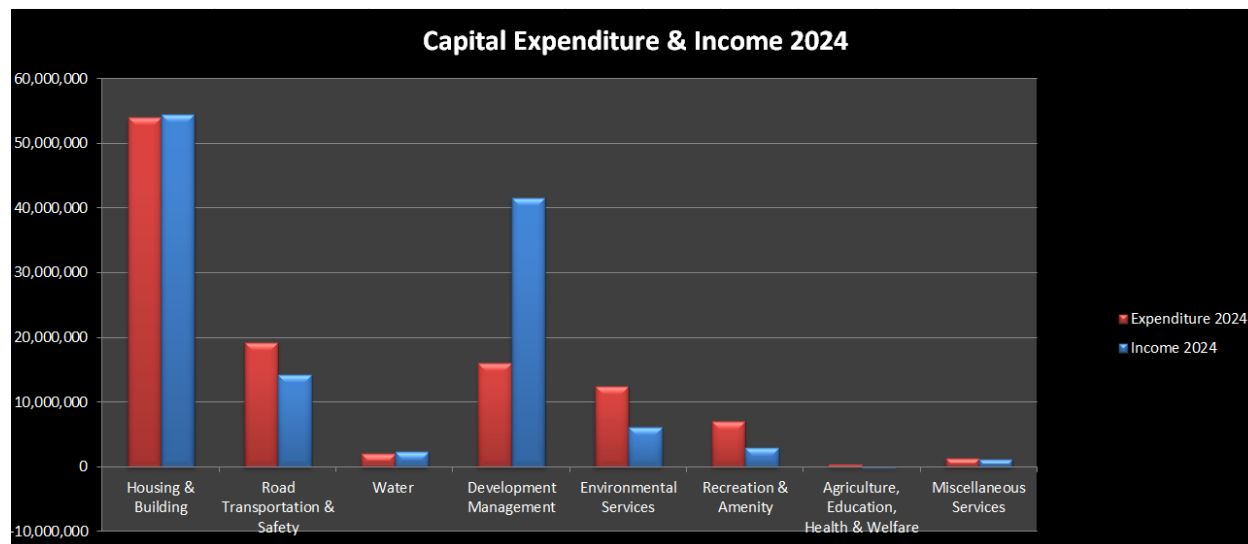
Revenue Expenditure by Directorate 2024



Revenue Income By Directorate 2024



	Expenditure 2024	Income 2024
Housing & Building	53,971,864	54,491,262
Road Transportation & Safety	19,188,957	14,267,747
Water	2,018,511	2,311,254
Development Management	16,077,843	41,526,601
Environmental Services	12,429,275	6,166,485
Recreation & Amenity	6,979,431	2,923,166
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	388,013	(76,397 )
Miscellaneous Services	1,361,526	1,214,206
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>112,415,420</b>	<b>122,824,325</b>



**WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL**  
**STATEMENT OF INTERNAL FINANCIAL CONTROL (SIFC)**

**Introduction**

I, Emer O’Gorman, Chief Executive (CE) of Wicklow County Council am responsible for the annual financial statement (AFS), prepared by the Director of Finance, in accordance with the accounting code of practice issued by the Minister under section 107 of the Local Government Act, 2001.

I certify that the unaudited financial statements of Wicklow County Council for the year ended 31 December 2024, are in agreement with the books of account and have been prepared in accordance with the accounting requirements of the Minister of Housing Local Government and Heritage.

The AFS is subject to external audit, by an auditor of the Local Government Audit Service, whose purpose is to form an independent opinion of the accounts and state whether the annual financial statement presents *fairly the financial position* of the local authority and of its income and expenditure for the period in question, and whether the transactions of the local authority under which they purport to have been carried out.

The AFS reports on the day-to-day activity of Wicklow County Council in the form of the Statement of Comprehensive Income & Expenditure, summarised by Division. The Statement of Financial Position outlines the Wicklow County Council overall financial position as of the 31st of December 2024.

The *Statement of Comprehensive Income* represents expenditure and income on the day-to-day running of the Wicklow County Council.

The key sources of income for Wicklow County Council are as follows:

	Current Year €	Previous Year €
Goods & Services	35,154,309	36,026,796
Contributions from other LAs	3,379,291	2,330,778
Grants & Subsidies	84,234,216	63,683,492
Rates	31,390,927	31,047,298
Local Property Tax	16,880,701	13,821,572

Activity on the Income and Expenditure account for 2024 is as follows:

Income in 2024 has increased by c.€24m versus prior year. This is mainly from Government Grants in the areas of Housing and Buildings and Development Management.

	Current Year €	Previous Year €
Income	171,039,444	146,909,936
Expenditure	(165,897,003)	(143,625,751)
Transfers to Capital	(4,541,770)	(2,943,246)
Surplus/(Deficit) for	660,671	340,938
Opening Revenue Reserve	(597,890)	(938,828)
Closing Revenue Reserve	2,782	(597,890)

The outturn in the revenue account for 2024 shows a surplus of €661k including transfers to reserves. This has eliminated the deficit in the Revenue Account reserve, which now has a closing surplus of €2,782.

The *Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet)* represents the closing financial position of the council at year-end, together with comparative year figures as appropriate.

The statement includes assets and liabilities as follows:

- Assets both recently constructed/purchased and historical assets
- Work in progress and preliminary schemes- mainly roads and housing
- Long Term Debtors – housing loans
- Current Assets- including Stock, Debtors, Cash at bank
- Current and long term liabilities- mortgage and non-mortgage loan borrowings
- Various Reserves/Balances

The Net Assets Wicklow County Council at the end of 2024 total €3,047m and are as follows:

	Current Year €	Previous Year €
<b>Fixed Assets</b>	<b>2,892,214,719</b>	<b>2,850,801,108</b>
<b>Works in Progress</b>	<b>84,027,607</b>	<b>91,942,249</b>
<b>Long Term debtors</b>	<b>141,746,824</b>	<b>133,577,918</b>
<b>Current Assets</b>	<b>153,442,181</b>	<b>136,822,413</b>
<b>Current Liabilities</b>	<b>33,509,982</b>	<b>35,674,162</b>
<b>Net Current Assets/ (Liabilities)</b>	<b>119,932,199</b>	<b>101,148,251</b>
<b>Creditors (Amounts greater than 1 year)</b>	<b>190,606,795</b>	<b>180,941,219</b>
<b>Net Assets/(Liabilities)</b>	<b>3,047,314,554</b>	<b>2,996,528,307</b>



**A Statement of Funds Flow** was introduced as part of AFS 2011. While the guidance of International Accounting Standard 7 Statement of Cash Flows has been followed, the business of local authorities is substantially different to most private sector organisations and therefore some minor changes to the format have been agreed to ensure the data displayed is meaningful and useful within the local government sector.

### **System of Internal Financial Controls**

As CE of Wicklow County Council, I acknowledge my responsibility for ensuring that an effective system of internal financial control is maintained and operated by the Wicklow County Council. This responsibility is exercised in the context of the resources available to Wicklow County Council. Also, any system of internal financial control can provide only reasonable and not absolute assurance that assets are safeguarded, transactions authorised and properly recorded, and that material errors or irregularities are either prevented or would be detected in a timely manner. Maintaining the system of internal financial controls is a continuous process and the system and its effectiveness are kept under ongoing review.

### **Financial control environment**

As CE of Wicklow County Council, I confirm that a financial control environment containing the following elements is in place:

- Financial responsibilities have been assigned at management level with corresponding accountability.
- Reporting arrangements have been established at all levels where responsibility for financial management has been assigned.
- Formal procedures have been established for reporting significant control failures and ensuring appropriate corrective action.
- There is an Audit Committee which as part of its work programme regularly review the internal financial control system.
- Procedures for key business processes have been documented.
- There are systems in place to safeguard the assets.

### **Administrative Controls and Management Reporting**

As CE of Wicklow County Council, I confirm that a framework of administrative procedures and regular management reporting is in place including segregation of duties and a system of delegation and accountability and, in particular, that:

- procedures for key business processes have been documented
- there are systems aimed at ensuring the security of the ICT systems
- there are systems in place to safeguard the assets of the local authority and
- there are appropriate capital investment control guidelines and formal project management disciplines in operation.

### **Procurement compliance**

Wicklow County Council ensures that there is an appropriate and ongoing focus on good practice in tendering and purchasing and that procedures are in place to ensure compliance with all relevant procurement guidelines.

**Internal audit and Audit Committee**

As Chief Executive, I can confirm that Wicklow County Council has an internal audit function with appropriately trained personnel, which operates in accordance with a written charter. Its work is informed by analysis of the financial risks to which Wicklow County Council is exposed and its annual internal audit plans are based on this analysis. I am satisfied that there are procedures in place to ensure that the reports of the internal audit function are followed up.

I can confirm that Wicklow County Council has an effective audit committee which carries out an annual effectiveness review of their activities. I can also confirm that an Audit Committee is in place in accordance with the requirements of Section 122 of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended).

The statutory functions of audit committees as set out in section 59 and 60 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 are as follows:

- I. to review financial and budgetary reporting practices and procedures within the local authority that has established it;
- II. to foster the development of best practice in the performance by the local authority of its internal audit function;
- III. to review any audited financial statement, auditor's report or auditor's special report in relation to the local authority and assess any actions taken within that authority by its chief executive in response to such a statement or report and to report to that authority on its findings;
- IV. to assess and promote efficiency and value for money with respect to the local authority's performance of its functions; and
- V. to review systems that are operated by the local authority for the management of risks.

I recognise that the audit committee plays a crucial role in the governance framework of local authorities, particularly in the context of increased public sector accountability. They have an independent role in advising the Council on financial reporting processes, internal control, risk management and audit matters as part of the systematic review of the control environment and governance procedures of the local authority.

I acknowledge the Audit Committee's role in the risk management process and in the continuing review of the control environment and governance procedures in Wicklow County Council.

**Risk and control framework**

Wicklow County Council has implemented a risk management system which identifies and reports key risks and the management actions being taken to address and, to the extent possible, mitigate those risks.

A corporate risk register is in place which identifies the key risks and evaluates and grades them according to their significance. The register is reviewed and updated by the Management Team on a regular basis. There is also a risk register in place for each service division and these are also reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

The outcome of these assessments is used to plan and allocate resources to ensure risks are managed to an acceptable level. The risk register details the controls and actions needed to mitigate risks and responsibilities for the operation of controls are assigned to specific staff.

As Chief Executive, I confirm that key risks and related controls have been identified and processes have been put in place to monitor the operation of those key controls and report any identified deficiencies.



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**Chief Executive**

**Dated: 9<sup>th</sup> June 2025**

## Wicklow County Council Governance Statement

### Purpose

The purpose of this governance statement is to provide relevant information on the governance structures and governance arrangements within the local authority including on council, committees, senior management and related areas. It demonstrates our commitment to effective governance, recognises key legislative and good governance requirements and affirms the Council's compliance with the Local Government Code of Governance obligations.

### Good Governance

Fundamentally, good governance in the local government sector and wider public sector is about delivering priorities, achieving objectives, behaving with integrity and acting in the public interest, in ways that are consistent with legal, regulatory and government policy obligations. Governance refers to the framework of rules, relationships, systems and processes by which the local authority is directed, controlled and held to account and whereby authority within an organisation is exercised and maintained. It encompasses authority, accountability, stewardship and leadership, direction and control.

### Good Governance Principles

**CORE PRINCIPLE 1** - Good governance means focusing on the purpose of the authority, on outcomes that deliver sustainable economic, community and wider societal benefits and on implementing a vision for the local authority.

**CORE PRINCIPLE 2** - Good governance means promoting and demonstrating public service values through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour.

**CORE PRINCIPLE 3** - Good governance means members and officials working together to achieve a common purpose within a framework of clearly defined functions and roles.

**CORE PRINCIPLE 4** - Good governance means developing the organisational capacity and the leadership capability and competencies of members and officials to operate effectively and fulfil the purpose of the organization.

**CORE PRINCIPLE 5** - Good governance means taking well-informed and transparent decisions and managing risks and performance.


**CORE PRINCIPLE 6** - Good governance means engaging openly and comprehensively with local people, citizens and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability.

**CORE PRINCIPLE 7** - Good governance means actively contributing to the furtherance and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by delivering on the priorities and actions within the Climate Action Plan and the provisions of the Climate Act.


## Our Commitment to Good Governance

As the Cathaoirleach/Mayor and Chief Executive of the council, and on behalf of the elected members, management and staff we confirm that;

1. We apply the governance principles as the fundamental bedrock and philosophy on how we operate as a governing body and as an executive.
2. The Local Government Code of Governance is being implemented and the extent to which the Council is in compliance with the Code is being reviewed and assessed.
3. The Statement of Internal Financial Control is submitted by the Chief Executive to the Elected Members and to the Audit Committee. The Audit Committee reviews the SIFC and provides an assurance on an annual basis to the Elected Members. Mechanisms are available to the Audit Committee to notify the Elected Members of any issues that arise outside of the normal annual reporting.
4. Compliance with legal and regulatory obligations are acknowledged and adhered to.
5. There is clarity of roles and responsibilities based on the reserved and executive functions and based on committee terms of reference.
6. Codes of Conduct and ethics declarations for members and employees are in place.
7. Procedures are in place for the making of protected disclosures in accordance with section 21(1) of the Protected Disclosures Act 2014 and confirmation that the annual report required under section 22(1) of the Act has been published.
8. The Council and Committees review their own performance on a periodic basis.
9. We have instituted appropriate governance oversight arrangements in respect of subsidiary, associated and related companies.
10. As part of our commitment to effective oversight and accountability, we have developed and continue to enhance our overall assurance framework utilising external and internal assurance sources to ensure good performance as part of our governance culture.

  
Cathaoirleach

Date: 9<sup>th</sup> June 2025

  
Chief Executive

Date: 9<sup>th</sup> June 2025



## PERFORMANCE INDICATORS JANUARY – DECEMBER 2024

### Performance Indicators

01/01/2024 - 31/12/2024 (Annual)

Wicklow County Council

Topic	Indicator	Value	Comment
Housing: H1, H2 & H4 Approved	A. Number of dwellings in the ownership of the local authority at 01/01/2024	5145	
	B. Number of dwellings added to the local authority owned stock during 2024 (whether constructed or acquired)	186	
	C. Number of local authority owned dwellings sold in 2024	10	
	D. Number of local authority owned dwellings demolished in 2024	0	
	E. Number of dwellings in the ownership of the local authority at 31/12/2024	5321	
	F. Number of local authority owned dwellings planned for demolition under a DHLGH approved scheme at 31/12/2024	0	
	A. The percentage of the total number of local authority owned dwellings that were vacant on 31/12/2024	2.24 %	
	The number of dwellings within their overall stock that were not tenanted on 31/12/2024	119	
	A. Expenditure during 2024 on the maintenance of local authority housing compiled from 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024, divided by the no. of dwellings in the local authority stock at 31/12/2024, i.e. the H1E less H1F indicator figure	€1816.95	
	Expenditure on maintenance of local authority stock compiled from 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024, including planned	€9667987.38	

Housing: H3 & H5 Approved	maintenance and expenditure that qualified for grants, such as Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) grants for energy efficient retro-fitting works but excluding expenditure on vacant properties and expenditure under approved major refurbishment schemes (i.e. approved Regeneration or under the Remedial Works Schemes).		
	PI 2023: H1E. Number of Dwellings In Ownership at 31/12/2023	5145	
	Cross-Check H1A with PI 2023 H1E	<b>H1A Matches 2023 H1E</b>	Wicklow County Council returned a total of 19 SHIP Acquisitions for 2024. The number of acquisitions does not compare with the DHLGHs published data of 17. We have been unable to verify with the DHLGH the reason for the discrepancy. The end of year return to the Department was 19.
	A. The time taken from the date of vacation of a dwelling to the date in 2024 when the dwelling is re-tenanted, averaged across all dwellings re-let during 2024	<b>48.32 wk</b>	
	B. The cost expended on getting the dwellings re-tenanted in 2024, averaged across all dwellings re-let in 2024	<b>€41240.86</b>	
	The number of dwellings that were re-tenanted on any date in 2024 (but excluding all those that had been vacant due to an estate-wide refurbishment scheme)	127	
	The number of weeks from the date of vacation to the date the dwelling is re-tenanted	6136.71 wk	
	Total expenditure on works necessary to enable re-letting of the dwellings	€5237588.68	
	A. Total number of registered tenancies in the LA area at 31 December 2024	6108	
	B. Number of rented dwellings inspected in 2024	455	
	C. Percentage of inspected dwellings in 2024 not compliant with the Standards Regulations	99.77 %	
	D. Number of dwellings deemed compliant in 2024 (including	85	

Housing: H6 Approved	those originally deemed non-compliant)		
	E. The number of inspections (including reinspections) undertaken by the local authority in 2024	496	
	A. Number of adult individuals in emergency accommodation that are long-term (i.e. 6 months or more within the previous year) homeless as a percentage of the total number of homeless adult individuals in emergency accommodation at the end of 2024	64.71 %	
	The number of adult individuals classified as homeless and in emergency accommodation on the night of 31 December 2024 as recorded on the PASS system	68	
Housing: H7 Approved	The number out of those individuals who, on 31/12/2024, had been in emergency accommodation for 6 months continuously, or for 6 months cumulatively within the previous 12 months	44	
	A. (1) Total number of houses retrofitted between 01/01/2024 and 31/12/2024 under the Social Housing Retrofit Programme	85	
	A. (2) Number of houses that achieved a BER rating of B2 or above between 01/01/2024 and 31/12/2024 under the Social Housing Retrofit Programme	73	
	A. (3) Number of heat pumps installed in those houses between 01/01/2024 and 31/12/2024 under the Social Housing Retrofit Programme	79	
Roads: R1, R2 & R4	B. Total annual energy savings in MWh from houses retrofitted between 01/01/2024 and 31/12/2024 under the Social Housing Retrofit Programme	1098.0 MWh	
	C. Total carbon emission reduction tCo2 from houses retrofitted between 01/01/2024 and 31/12/2024 under the Social Housing Retrofit Programme	304.8	
	A. (a) The percentage of Regional roads that received a PSCI		

Approved	rating in the 24 month period prior to 31/12/2024		
	A. (b) The percentage of Local Primary roads that received a PSCI rating in the 24 month period prior to 31/12/2024	98.80 %	
	A. (c) The percentage of Local Secondary roads that received a PSCI rating in the 24 month period prior to 31/12/2024	98.64 %	
	A. (d) The percentage of Local Tertiary roads that received a PSCI rating in the 60 month period prior to 31/12/2024	94.76 %	
	B. (a.1) The percentage length of Regional roads that received a PSCI rating of 1-4 in the 24 month period prior to 31/12/2024		
	B. (a.2) The percentage length of Regional roads that received a PSCI rating of 5-6 in the 24 month period prior to 31/12/2024		
	B. (a.3) The percentage length of Regional roads that received a PSCI rating of 7-8 in the 24 month period prior to 31/12/2024		
	B. (a.4) The percentage length of Regional roads that received a PSCI rating of 9-10 in the 24 month period prior to 31/12/2024		
	B. (b.1) The percentage length of Local Primary roads that received a PSCI rating of 1-4 in the 24 month period prior to 31/12/2024	0.12 %	
	B. (b.2) The percentage length of Local Primary roads that received a PSCI rating of 5-6 in the 24 month period prior to 31/12/2024	13.77 %	
	B. (b.3) The percentage length of Local Primary roads that received a PSCI rating of 7-8 in the 24 month period prior to 31/12/2024	47.33 %	
	B. (b.4) The percentage length of Local Primary roads that received a PSCI rating of 9-10 in the 24 month period prior to 31/12/2024	37.58 %	
	B. (c.1) The percentage length of Local Secondary roads that received a PSCI rating of 1-4 in the 24 month period prior to 31/12/2024	3.06 %	
	B. (c.2) The percentage length of Local Secondary roads that received a PSCI rating of 5-6 in the 24 month period prior to 31/12/2024	22.89 %	

B. (c.3) The percentage length of Local Secondary roads that received a PSCI rating of 7-8 in the 24 month period prior to 31/12/2024	38.75 %	
B. (c.4) The percentage length of Local Secondary roads that received a PSCI rating of 9-10 in the 24 month period prior to 31/12/2024	33.94 %	
B. (d.1) The percentage length of Local Tertiary roads that received a PSCI rating of 1-4 in the 60 month period prior to 31/12/2024	4.23 %	
B. (d.2) The percentage length of Local Tertiary roads that received a PSCI rating of 5-6 in the 60 month period prior to 31/12/2024	15.61 %	
B. (d.3) The percentage length of Local Tertiary roads that received a PSCI rating of 7-8 in the 60 month period prior to 31/12/2024	47.13 %	
B. (d.4) The percentage length of Local Tertiary roads that received a PSCI rating of 9-10 in the 60 month period prior to 31/12/2024	27.79 %	
A.1 Kilometres of regional road strengthened during 2024	7.6 km	
A.2 The amount expended on regional roads strengthening work during 2024	€2656064.53	
A.3 The average unit cost of regional road strengthening works per square metre (€/m2)	€49.76	
B.1 Kilometres of regional road resealed during 2024	18.0 km	
B.2 The amount expended on regional road resealing work during 2024	€623552.58	
B.3 The average unit cost of regional road resealing works per square metre (€/m2)	€5.49	
C.1 Kilometres of local road strengthened during 2024	71.0 km	
C2. The amount expended on local road strengthening work during 2024	€7675203.77	
C.3 The average unit cost of local road strengthening works per	€22.04	



	square metre (€/m2)		
	D.1 Kilometres of local road resealed during 2024	54.0 km	
	D.2 The amount expended on local road resealing work during 2024	€1262713.68	
	D.3 The average unit cost of local road resealing works per square metre (€/m2)	€4.64	
	A. Total number of T2, T2 <sup>1</sup> , T3, T4s issued by the local authority between 01/01/2024 and 31/12/2024	1118	
	B. Total number of T5 notifications received from licence holders between 01/01/2024 and 31/12/2024	1222	
	C. Percentage of licences that have been reviewed by the local authority prior to entering the Guarantee Period	76.00 %	
	D. Percentage of licences that have been subject of an inspection prior to entering the Guarantee Period	16.00 %	
<b>Motor Tax: R3</b> Approved	A. The percentage of motor tax transactions which were dealt with online (i.e. transaction is processed and the tax disc is issued) in 2024	88.09 %	
<b>Water: W1 &amp; W2</b> Approved	Percentage of drinking water in private schemes in compliance with statutory requirements		
	The number of registered schemes monitored by each local authority as a percentage of total schemes registered	100 %	
	How many local authority registered schemes were monitored in 2024	117	
	Total number of registered schemes in 2024	117	
<b>Waste: E1</b> Approved	A. The number of households which availed of a 3-bin service offered by a licensed operator at 31/12/2024		
	B. The percentage of households within the local authority that the number at A represents		

<b>Environmental Pollution: E2</b> Approved	A. Total number of pollution cases in respect of which a complaint was made during 2024	1788	
	A. Number of pollution cases closed from 01/01/2024 to 31/12/2024	2099	
	A. Total number of pollution cases on hands at 31/12/2024	138	
	The opening number of pollution cases carried forward from the year end 2023	449	
	(PI 2023 Return) Total number of pollution cases on hand at 31/12/2023	449	
	Cross-check opening no. cases carried forward from 2023 with PI 2023 cases on hand at EOY	<b>Opening Cases matches the 2023 no. of cases on hand</b>	
<b>Litter Pollution: E3</b> Approved	A1. The percentage of the area within the local authority that when surveyed in 2024 was unpolluted or litter free	9 %	
	A2. The percentage of the area within the local authority that when surveyed in 2024 was slightly polluted	70 %	
	A3. The percentage of the area within the local authority that when surveyed in 2024 was moderately polluted	15 %	
	A4. The percentage of the area within the local authority that when surveyed in 2024 was significantly polluted	5 %	
	A5. The percentage of the area within the local authority that when surveyed in 2024 was grossly polluted	0 %	
<b>Green Flag Status: E4</b> Approved	A. The percentage of schools that have been awarded/renewed green flag status in the two years to 31 December 2024	37.96 %	
	Schools which attained a Green Flag for the first time in 2024	3	
	Schools which renewed their Green Flag in 2024	18	
	Schools which held a Green Flag from 2023 and therefore do not require renewal until 2025	20	

<b>Energy Efficiency: E5</b> Approved	A. The cumulative percentage of energy savings achieved by 31/12/2024 relative to baseline year (2009)		
<b>Public Lighting: E6</b> Approved	A. Total annual consumption of the public lighting system	4501.84 MWh	
	B. Average wattage of each public light	69.79 W	
	C. Percentage of the total system that LED lights represent	68.75 %	
	Number of LED lights in the public lighting system	10777	
	Number of non-LED lights in the public lighting system	4899	
<b>Climate Change: E7</b> Approved	1 a) Does the local authority have a designated (FTE) Climate Action Coordinator?	Yes	
	1 b) Does the local authority have a designated (FTE) Climate Action Officer?	Yes	
	2. Does the local authority have a climate action team?	Yes	
<b>Planning: P1</b> Approved	A. Buildings inspected as a percentage of new buildings notified to the local authority	17.67 %	Increase in volume of new buildings notified for commencement in 2024. In 2023, 1115 buildings were notified for commencement whereas there was 1834 new buildings in 2024.
	Total number of new buildings notified to the local authority i.e. buildings where a valid Commencement Notice was served in the period 01/01/2024 to 31/12/2024 by a builder or developer on the local authority	1834	
	Number of new buildings notified to the local authority in 2024 that were the subject of at least one on-site inspection during 2024 undertaken by the local authority	324	
<b>Planning: P2 &amp; P3</b>	A. Number of local authority planning decisions which were the	118	

Approved	subject of an appeal to An Bord Pleanála that were determined by the Board on any date in 2024		
	B. Percentage of the determinations at A which confirmed (either with or without variation of the plan) the decision made by the local authority	80.51 %	
	Number of determinations confirming the local authority's decision (either with or without variation)	95	
	A. Total number of planning cases referred to or initiated by the local authority in the period 01/01/2024 to 31/12/2024 that were investigated	120	
	B. Total number of investigated cases that were closed during 2024	159	
	C. Percentage of the cases at B that were dismissed as trivial, minor or without foundation or were closed because statute barred or an exempted development	29.56 %	
	D. Percentage of the cases at B that were resolved to the local authority's satisfaction through negotiations	5.66 %	
	E. Percentage of the cases at B that were closed due to enforcement proceedings	64.78 %	
	F. Total number of planning cases being investigated as at 31/12/2024	342	
	Number of cases at B that were dismissed as trivial, minor or without foundation or were closed because statute barred or an exempted development	47	
	Number of cases at B that were resolved to the local authority's satisfaction through negotiations	9	
	Number of cases at B that were closed due to enforcement proceedings	103	
Planning: P4 & P5 Approved	A. The 2024 Annual Financial Statement (AFS) Programme D data divided by the population of the local authority area per the 2022 Census	€33.01	

	AFS Programme D data consisting of D01 - Forward Planning, D02 - Development Management, D03 - Enforcement (inclusive of the relevant Programme D proportion of the central management charge) for 2024	€5143961	
	A. The percentage of applications for fire safety certificates received in 2024 that were decided (granted or refused) within two months of their receipt	81.25 %	
	B. The percentage of applications for fire safety certificates received in 2024 that were decided (granted or refused) within an extended period agreed with the applicant	17.50 %	
	The total number of applications for fire safety certificates received in 2024 that were not withdrawn by the applicant	80	
	The number of applications for fire safety certificates received in 2024 that were decided (granted or refused) within two months of the date of receipt of the application	65	
	The number of applications for fire safety certificates received in 2024 that were decided (granted or refused) within an agreed extended time period	14	
Fire Service: F1 Approved	A. The Annual Financial Statement (AFS) Programme E expenditure data for 2024 divided by the population of the local authority area per the 2022 Census figures for the population served by the fire authority as per the Risk Based Approach Phase One reports	€49.97	
	AFS Programme E expenditure data consisting of E11 - Operation of Fire Service and E12 - Fire Prevention for 2024	€7788223	
Fire Service: F2 & F3 Approved	A. Average time taken, in minutes, to mobilise fire brigades in Full-Time Stations in respect of fire		N/a
	B. Average time taken, in minutes, to mobilise fire brigades in Part-Time Stations (retained fire service) in respect of fire	5.36 min	
	C. Average time taken, in minutes, to mobilise fire brigades in Full-Time Stations in respect of all other (non-fire) emergency		N/a



incidents		
D. Average time taken, in minutes, to mobilise fire brigades in Part-Time Stations (retained fire service) in respect of all other (non-fire) emergency incidents	6.02 min	
A. Percentage of cases in respect of fire in which first attendance at scene is within 10 minutes	39.17 %	
B. Percentage of cases in respect of fire in which first attendance at the scene is after 10 minutes but within 20 minutes	53.33 %	
C. Percentage of cases in respect of fire in which first attendance at the scene is after 20 minutes	7.50 %	
D. Percentage of cases in respect of all other emergency incidents in which first attendance at the scene is within 10 minutes	30.60 %	
E. Percentage of cases in respect of all other emergency incidents in which first attendance at the scene is after 10 minutes but within 20 minutes	56.28 %	
F. Percentage of cases in respect of all other emergency incidents in which first attendance at the scene is after 20 minutes	13.11 %	
Total number of call-outs in respect of fires from 01/01/2024 to 31/12/2024	600	
Number of these fire cases where first fire tender attendance at the scene is within 10 minutes	235	
Number of these fire cases in which first fire tender attendance at the scene is after 10 minutes but within 20 minutes	320	
Number of these fire cases in which first fire tender attendance at the scene is after 20 minutes	45	
Total number of call-outs in respect of all other emergency incidents (i.e. not including fire) from 01/01/2024 to 31/12/2024	366	
Number of these non-fire cases in which first fire tender attendance at the scene is within 10 minutes	112	
Number of these non-fire cases in which first fire tender	206	

Library Service: L1 Approved	attendance at the scene is after 10 minutes but within 20 minutes		
	Number of these non-fire cases in which first fire tender attendance at the scene is after 20 minutes	48	
	A. Number of visits to libraries per head of population for the local authority area per the 2022 Census	3.94	
	B. Number of items issued to library borrowers in the year	669567	
	C. Library active members per head of population	0.26	
Library Service: L2 Approved	D. Number of registered library members in the year	32224	
	Number of visits to its libraries from 01/01/2024 to 31/12/2024 per automatic counters if used	613574	
	A. The Annual Financial Statement (AFS) Programme F data for 2024 divided by the population of the local authority area per the 2022 Census	€38.62	
	B. The annual per capita expenditure on collections over the period 01/01/2024 to 31/12/2024	€1.84	The expenditure on new stock includes newspapers and magazines in addition to books and audio items. Just to note that Wicklow County Library purchase other items for circulation such as blood pressure monitors, C-pens, Acorn tablets and sensory toys. These items have not been included as stock.
	A. AFS Programme F data consisting of F02 - Operation of Library and Archival Service (inclusive of the relevant proportion of the central management charge for Programme F) for 2024	€6018303	
Youth and Community: Y1 & Y2	B. The annual expenditure on new stock acquired by the library in the year	€286763.74	
Youth and Community: Y1 & Y2	A. Percentage of local schools involved in the local Youth Council/Comhairle na nÓg scheme	0 %	WCC endeavoured on a number of occasions to fill the

Approved			Co-ordinator role. Role is since filled.
	Total number of second level schools in the local authority area at 31/12/2024	25	
	Number of second level schools in the local authority area from which representatives attended the local Comhairle na nÓg AGM held in 2024	0	
	A. The number of organisations included in the County Register at 31/12/2024 and the proportion of those organisations that opted to be part of the Social Inclusion College within the PPN	17.46	
	Total number of organisations included in the County Register (maintained in accordance with section 128 of the Local Government Act 2001) for the local authority area as at 31/12/2024	481	
	Total number of those organisations that registered for the first time in 2024	56	
	Number of organisations that opted to join the Social Inclusion Electoral College on whatever date they registered for the PPN	84	
Corporate: C1, C2, C4 & C5 Approved			
	A. The wholtime equivalent staffing number as at 31 December 2024	751.19	
	A. Percentage of paid working days lost to sickness absence through medically certified leave in 2024	3.59 %	
	B. Percentage of paid working days lost to sickness absence through self-certified leave in 2024	0.40 %	
	Total number of working days lost to sickness absence through medically certified leave in 2024	6567 day	
	Total number of working days lost to sickness absence through self-certified leave in 2024	701.5 day	
	Number of unpaid working days lost to sickness absence included within the total of self-certified sick leave days in 2024	12.5 day	
	Number of unpaid working days lost to sickness absence included within the total of medically certified sick leave days in	450 day	

Corporate: C3 Approved	2024		
	If any staff are on long-term sick leave (i.e. a continuous period of more than 4 weeks), include a text note of the number of staff on long-term sick leave	53 staff on long-term sick leave.	
	A. All ICT expenditure in the period from 01/01/2024 to 31/12/2024, divided by the WTE no.	€5220.81	
	Total ICT expenditure in 2024	€3921822.26	
	A. All ICT expenditure calculated in C4 as a proportion of Revenue expenditure	2.36	
	Total Revenue expenditure from 01/01/2024 to 31/12/2024 before transfers to or from reserves	165897003	
	A. The per capita total page views of the local authority's websites in 2024	7.38	Matamo analytics were purchased in March 2024 for www.wicklow.ie. In addition please note that the websites under the control of WCC have now increased and include wicklow.ie, visitwicklow.ie, wicklowisp.ie & heritage.wicklowheritage.org
	B. The per capita total number of followers at end 2024 of the local authority's social media accounts (if any)	0.99	
	The cumulative total page views of all websites operated by the local authority for the period from 01/01/2024 to 31/12/2024 obtained from a page tagging on-site web analytics service or equivalent	1150794	
	The total number of social media users who, at 31/12/2024, were following the local authority on any social media sites	154629	
	The number of social media accounts operated by the local authority	43	
	Indicate if there was a change to the cookie policies on the local authority sites and the date this came into effect	The cookie policy was updated at the start of October 2022.	

**Finance: M1 to M4**  
**Approved**

A. Cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2020 in the Revenue Account from the Income & Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	€-1646264
B. Cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2021 in the Revenue Account from the Income & Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	€-1288068
C. Cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2022 in the Revenue Account from the Income & Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	€-938828
D. Cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2023 in the Revenue Account from the Income & Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	€-597890
E. Cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2024 in the Revenue Account from the Income & Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	€2782
F. Cumulative surplus or deficit at 31/12/2024 as a percentage of Total Income in 2024 from the Income and Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	0.00 %
G. Revenue expenditure per capita in 2024	€1064.46
H. Revenue expenditure per capita in 2024 excluding significant out of county/shared service expenditure	
The 2024 Total Income figure from the Income and Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	€171039444
The 2024 Total Expenditure figure from the Income and Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	€165897003
The 2024 Revenue expenditure excluding county/shared service expenditure for the service providers of HAP, MyPay, DRHE and Dublin Fire Services and is only applicable to Dublin City, Laois and Limerick	
A. (a) Collection level of Rates in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2020	70.0 %



A. (b) Collection level of Rent & Annuities in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2020	85.0 %	
A. (c) Collection level of Housing Loans in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2020	80.0 %	
B. (a) Collection level of Rates in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2021	83.0 %	
B. (b) Collection level of Rent & Annuities in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2021	85.0 %	
B. (c) Collection level of Housing Loans in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2021	83.0 %	
C. (a) Collection level of Rates in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2022	88.0 %	
C. (b) Collection level of Rent & Annuities in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2022	84.0 %	
C. (c) Collection level of Housing Loans in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2022	84.0 %	
D. (a) Collection level of Rates in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2023	91.0 %	
D. (b) Collection level of Rent & Annuities in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2023	83.0 %	
D. (c) Collection level of Housing Loans in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2023	90.0 %	
E. (a) Collection level of Rates in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2024	93 %	
E. (b) Collection level of Rent & Annuities in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2024	84 %	
E. (c) Collection level of Housing Loans in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2024	80 %	
E. (d) Collection level of HAP SSC for 2024		
A. Per capita total cost of settled claims for 2024	<b>€3.47</b>	
IPB Insurance: Number of notified claims for 2024	90	
IPB Insurance: Number of settled claims for 2024	71	
IPB Insurance: Total cost of settled claims for 2024	€540134.61	
Total cost of claims settled under excess for 2024		N/a

	Self-insured: Number of notified claims for 2024		
	Self-insured: Number of settled claims for 2024		
	Self-insured: Total cost of settled claims for 2024		
	A. Overall central management charge as a percentage of total expenditure on revenue account	14.22 %	
	B. Total payroll costs as a percentage of revenue expenditure	32.99 %	
	Overall central management charge from the Local Authority FMS and defined in the Annual Budget	€23586656	
	Total payroll costs from Appendix 1 of the AFS for 2024 (including Salaries, Wages and Pensions)	€54733489	
Economic Development: J1 to J5 Approved	A. The number of jobs created with assistance from the Local Enterprise Office during the period 01/01/2024 to 31/12/2024 per 100,000 of population	-1.28	
	The number of jobs created with assistance from the Local Enterprise Office during the period 01/01/2024 to 31/12/2024	-2.0	
	A. The number of trading online voucher applications approved by the Local Enterprise Office in 2024 per 100,000 of population	76.35	
	B. The number of trading online vouchers that were drawn down in 2024 per 100,000 of population	17.97	
	The number of trading online voucher applications approved by the Local Enterprise Office in 2024	119	
	The number of those trading online vouchers that were drawn down in 2024	28	
	A. The number of participants who received mentoring during the period 01/01/2024 to 31/12/2024 per 100,000 of population	363.81	
	The number of participants who received mentoring during the period 01/01/2024 to 31/12/2024	567	
	A. Does the local authority have a current tourism strategy?	Yes	
	B. Does the local authority have a designated Tourism Officer?	Yes	

	The spend on local economic development by the local authority in 2024 per head of population	€178.68	
	The spend on local economic development by the local authority in 2024	€27846684	

## Conferences attended by Wicklow County Council Members in 2024

January - December 2024							
Circular LG 07/2023							
Name	Conference Name	Date	Venue	Conference Cost	Travel/Subs	Total Paid	Total per Councillor to December 2024
<b>Cllr. Warren O'Toole</b>							
<b>Cllr. Vincent Blake</b>	LAMA Conference	19th & 20th January 2024	Abbey Hotel, Donegal	€160	€612.62	<b>€772.62</b>	
	Suck Valley Way Conference	13th & 14th March 2024	Hannons Hotel, Roscommon	€140	€538.43	<b>€678.43</b>	
	AILG Module 2	23rd March 2024	Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone	€85	€307.28	<b>€392.28</b>	<b>€1,843.33</b>
<b>Cllr. Joe Behan</b>							
<b>Cllr. Sylvester Bourke</b>							
<b>Cllr. Shay Cullen</b>	LAMA Conference	19th & 20th January 2024	Abbey Hotel, Donegal	€160	€616.47	<b>€776.47</b>	<b>€776.47</b>
<b>Cllr. Gail Dunne</b>	LAMA Conference	19th & 20th January 2024	Abbey Hotel, Donegal	160.00	626.83	<b>786.83</b>	
	AILG Conference	11th & 12th September 2024	Hillgrove Hotel, Monaghan	170.00	541.85	<b>711.85</b>	<b>€1,498.68</b>
<b>Cllr. Pat Fitzgerald</b>							
<b>Cllr. Tom Fortune</b>							
<b>Cllr. Shane Langrell</b>	AILG Autumn Conference	11th & 12th September	Hillgrove Hotel, Monaghan	170	534.59	<b>704.59</b>	

		2024					
	LAMA Autumn Seminar	17th & 18th October 2024	Newgrange Hotel, Navan	170	448.58	<b>618.58</b>	<b>1323.17</b>
Cllr. Pat Kennedy							
Cllr. Orla Finn							
Cllr. Miriam Murphy							
Cllr. Dermot O'Brien							
Cllr. Gerry O'Neill							
Cllr. John Snell							
Cllr. Edward Timmons							
Cllr. Gerry Walsh	AILG Training Module 1	27th January 2024	Greenhills Hotel, Limerick	85.00	€352.64	<b>437.64</b>	<b>€437.64</b>
Cllr. Danny Alvey							
Cllr. Melanie Corrigan							
Cllr. Mark Barry							
Cllr. Avril Cronin							
Cllr. Anne Ferris	LAMA Conference	19th & 20th January 2024	Abbey Hotel, Donegal Town	€160	€598.86	<b>€758.86</b>	<b>€758.86</b>
Cllr. Aoife Flynn Kennedy							
Cllr. Patsy Glennon	LAMA Conference	19th & 20th January 2024	Abbey Hotel, Donegal Town	€160	€607.60	<b>€767.60</b>	
	AILG Annual Conference	14th February 2024	Arklow Bay Hotel, Arklow	€170	€62.18	<b>€232.18</b>	
	AILG Module 2	23rd March 2024	Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone	€85	€303.52	<b>€388.52</b>	
	AILG Autumn Seminar	11th & 12th September 2024	Hillgrove Hotel, Monaghan	€170	523.20	<b>€693.20</b>	<b>2081.50</b>
Cllr. Peir Leonard							



Cllr. Malachai Duddy							
Cllr. Peter Stapleton							
Cllr. Paul O'Brien	LAMA Conference	19th & 20th January 2024	Abbey Hotel, Donegal Town	€160	€577.90	<b>€737.90</b>	
	AILG Autumn Seminar	11th & 12th September 2024	Hillgrove Hotel, Monaghan	€170	€517.29	<b>€687.29</b>	
	Celtic Conferences	22nd to 24th November 2024	O'Donovan's Hotel, Clonakilty	€130	€827.88	<b>€957.88</b>	<b>€2,383.07</b>
Cllr. Ian Neary							
Cllr. Lourda Scott							
Cllr. Stephen Stokes							
Cllr. Erika Doyle							
Cllr. Jason Mulhall	AILG Induction Training	11th July 2024	Mullingar	85.00	62.70	<b>147.70</b>	
	AILG Overview of Planning System	28th September 2024	Tullamore	85.00	67.30	<b>152.30</b>	<b>300.00</b>
Cllr. Louise Fenelon Gaskin							
Cllr. Caroline Winstanley							
Cllr. Graham Richmond							
Cllr. Shane Langrell	AILG Autumn Seminar	11th & 12th September 2024	Hillgrove Hotel, Monaghan	170.00	532.59	<b>702.59</b>	<b>702.59</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,675.00</b>	<b>8,727.72</b>	<b>11,402.72</b>	<b>11,402.72</b>

## Wicklow County Council Members appointed to Committees and other bodies 2024

Committee/ Other Body	Name	Amount Paid 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2024
Eastern and Midlands Regional Authority	Cllr. Gerry O'Neill	Nil
	Cllr. Avril Cronin	€596.78
	Cllr. P. Glennon	
Regional Health Forum (Dublin – Mid Leinster)	Cllr. Caroline Winstanley	
	Cllr. Gerry O'Neill	Nil
	Cllr. Patsy Glennon	
	Cllr. Joe Behan	€144.36
Local Authority Members Association	Cllr. Shane Langrell	€1,272.13
Association of Irish Local Government (AILG)	Cllr. A. Cronin	
	Cllr. Joe Behan	
	Cllr. P. Kennedy	
Bray Area Partnership	Cllr. Aoife Flynn Kennedy	
	Cllr. Orla Finn	Nil
	Cllr. Caroline Winstanley	Nil
Board of Wicklow Enterprise Park CLG	Cllr. Gail Dunne	
	Cllr. Graham Richmond	
Board of Mermaid, County Wicklow Arts Centre	Cllr. Aoife Flynn Kennedy	
	Cllr. Melanie Corrigan	Nil
	Cllr. Mark Barry	

Arklow Business Enterprise Park (ABEC) CLG	Cathaoirleach of Arklow MD Ex Officio Cllr. Pat Kennedy	
Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurance Ltd.	Cllr. Gerry O'Neill	Nil
Kildare Wicklow Education Training Board	Cllr. Aoife Flynn Kennedy	
	Cllr. Tom Fortune	
	Cllr. Paul O'Brien	
	Cllr. John Snell	
	Cllr. Louise Fenelon Gaskin	Nil
East Coast Regional Drugs Task Force	Cllr. Peir Leonard	
	Cllr. Louise Fenelon Gaskin	
	Cllr. Shane Langrell	