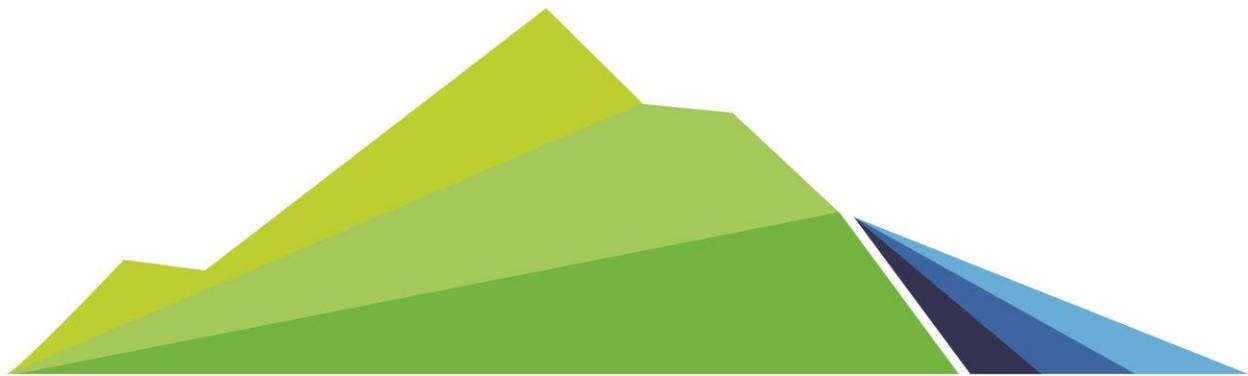


# Wicklow County Council Chief Executive's Monthly Report



W I C K L O W

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E N D L E S S O P P O R T U N I T I E S



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## **This month:**

### **Fisheries Pontoon installed at Arklow Harbour**

Wicklow County Council, in collaboration with renewable energy company SSE Renewables, has delivered a long awaited €400,000 commercial pontoon along the South Quay within Arklow Harbour South Dock.

This new infrastructure was funded by the Department of Agriculture Food and Marine under the Brexit Adjustment: Local Authority Marine Infrastructure (BALAMI) Scheme 2022-2023, with significant partnership funding through the SSE Renewables Arklow Bank Wind Park 2 Fisheries Fund.

The new structure, which consists of approximately 90 linear metres by 2m wide of heavy-duty pontoon running parallel to the existing Quay wall, with heavy-duty fingers extending perpendicular from the main structure will significantly improve, capacity, accessibility, safety and working conditions.

### **Sustainable Coffee Cup Initiative**

The Blessington community has taken a significant step towards a circular economy with the introduction of a sustainable coffee cup initiative.

Led by 2GoCup in partnership with Blessington Tidy Towns and Wicklow County Council, this endeavour aims to reduce single-use plastic waste while fostering collaboration between local businesses and the community.

Participating outlets have united to integrate reusable cups into their daily operations, offering customers an eco-conscious alternative to single-use plastics. These reusable cups, designed for multiple uses, can be conveniently picked up or dropped off at any of these four outlets.

After each use, the cups undergo thorough cleaning, ensuring their reusability. Customers are given the choice to opt for a fresh cup or receive a refund of the initial deposit paid, emphasizing the sustainable cycle of this initiative.

This initiative not only adheres to environmental best practices but also strengthens community bonds, emphasizing the shared goal of preserving the town's natural beauty and resources.

## Housing & Community

### 1. Housing

	December 2023	December 2022
No. on list for Social Housing Support – (includes RAS & HAP)*	4520	4575
No. availing of Rental Assistance Scheme (RAS)	182	191
No. availing of Housing Assistance Payment	1474	2670
No. in Long Term Leasing Accommodation	23	22
No. in Short Term Leasing Accommodation	28	32

#### Allocation of Social Housing

	December 2022	December 2023
Wicklow County Council	03	10
Approved Housing Bodies	50	13

#### Social Housing Stock

	December 2023	December 2022
Tenancies occupied	4902	4802
Total weekly rental accrual	324,536.40	314,244.98
Arrears	3,038,902.00	2,836,127.79

MD	Completed in 2023	In progress	Not started	Completed but not yet tenanted	Vacant
Arklow	18 (0)	9 (+1)	7 (+3)	0	16 (+4)
Baltinglass	27 (0)	13 (+4)	7 (-1)	7 (0)	27 (+3)
Bray	62 (0)	11 (0)	30 (0)	21 (0)	62 (0)
Greystones	10 (0)	5 (-1)	0 (-1)	1 (+1)	6 (-1)
Wicklow	23 (+1)	10 (0)	33 (+2)	0 (0)	43 (+2)
	140 (+1)	48(+5)	77 (+3)	29 (+1)	154 (+8)
Total vacancy as % of Total Stock (total vacancy + occupied tenancies)	3.1% (+0.2%)				Figures in brackets indicate change on last month

## Housing Maintenance – Boiler Maintenance

Due to the withdrawal of a large Gas boiler maintenance contractor from our Framework we sourced alternative contractors via [www.supplygov.ie](http://www.supplygov.ie). Meanwhile, planned replacement of our aging gas and oil boiler fleet has been continuing. 125 oil and gas boilers had been replaced before the end of Dec 2023 around the county using Planned Maintenance funding from the Dept of Housing, Heritage and Local Government. Our initial allocation from the Dept in April 2023 was €173,000 but we had successfully claimed and recouped €265,000 by the end of 2023. A further €165,000 which was incurred in 2023 will be claimed in early 2024.

## Housing Supply – Programme of Delivery

<b>Schemes Recently Completed</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Current Status</b>
Ard na Greine, Bray	31	Completed and allocated
Delany Park Arklow (Phase 2 + 3)	47	Completed and allocated
Hawkstown Park (Ashtown Lane), Wicklow Design & Build	40	Completed and allocated
Mountainview, NTMK Design & Build	22	Completed and allocated
Sheehan Court Arklow	7	Completed and allocated
Avondale Phase 2 Design & Build	20	Completed and allocated
Cedar Court Bray Design & Build	14	Completed
Greenhills Road (Affordable)	36	Completed
<b>Schemes on Site</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Current Status</b>
Cois Droichead, Greystones	41	Completion anticipated Q1 2024
Ballard Shillelagh	20	Completion anticipated Q1 2024
Lugduff Tinahely	20	Contractor on site
Merrymeeing Rathnew Phase 2	21	Construction on going
Liam Kavanagh Park Ballynerrin	10	On site completion anticipated Q1 2024
<b>Pipeline Schemes</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Current Status</b>
Merrymeeing, Rathnew, Phase 3	7	About to commence Section 179a
Fassaroe, Bray	15	Preparing tender documents
Burgage More Blessington	106	Part of PPP bundle 3 with NDFA. Tender stage
Lott Lane, Kilcoole	75	Tenders being analysed
Rehills, Bray	80	PPP bundle 5
Burnaby, Greystones	75	PPP Bundle 5
Ballinahinch Ashford	25	Section 179a withdrawn
Tinahask, Arklow	75	Design stage.
Sheephouse Arklow	30	Design Stage

## Part V

Wicklow County Council delivered 27 no. Local Authority Part V units and 41 CALF Part V units in 2023, listed below:

Location	No. of Units	Due for Delivery	Method
Rathnew	3	3 Delivered Q1 2023	WCC
Delgany	3	Delivered June 2023	WCC
Rathdrum	3	Delivered Q3 2023	WCC
Rathdrum	7	Delivered May 2023	WCC
Greystones	1	Delivered Q1 2023	WCC
Bray	1	Delivered Q2 2023	WCC
Delgany	3	Delivered May 2023	WCC
Greystones	1	Delivered Q1 2023	WCC
Rathnew	1	Delivered Q4 2023	WCC
Bray	4	Delivered Q2 2023	WCC
Bray	2	18 Delivered, 2 Units delivered June 2023	CALF
Rathdrum	6	Delivered Q4 2023	CALF
Arklow	16	Delivered Q3 2023	CALF
Ashford	4	Delivered Q4 2023	CALF
Ashford	8	Delivered Q4 2023	CALF
Blessington	5	Delivered Q4 2023	CALF

Location	No. of Units	Due for Delivery	Method
Bray	1	Delivery due Q1 2024	CALF
Delgany	1	Delivery due Q1 2024	WCC
Rathnew	2	Delivery due Q1 2024	WCC
Greystones	8	Delivery due Q1 2024	WCC

## Potential units

Wicklow County Council currently has agreements in place for units in Delgany, Rathnew, Rathdrum, Roundwood, Newtownmountkennedy, Blessington, Baltinglass, Dunlavin and Wicklow with delivery ranging from 2024-2026. This includes the units listed above. WCC is in negotiations in respect of over 100 further units with delivery dates yet to be confirmed.

Wicklow County Council is currently holding discussions with a number of developers at preplanning and planning stage. There are over 100 potential Part V units with planning permission but it's difficult to determine whether they will all proceed or even on what timescale.

## Turnkey

Wicklow County Council delivered 13 no. Local Authority Turnkey units and 286 CALF Turnkey units in 2023, listed below:

Location	No. of Units	Due for Delivery	Method
Rathdum	13	Delivered Q1 2023	WCC
Bray	78	Delivered June 2023	CALF
Rathdrum	30	Delivered Q4 2023	CALF
Arklow	32	Delivered Q4 2023	CALF
Blessington	41	Delivered Q4 2023	CALF
Ashford	51	Delivered Q3 2023	CALF
Ashford	54	Delivered Q4 2023	CALF

Location	No. of Units	Due for Delivery	Method
Bray	17	Delivery Due Q1 2024	CALF

- Negotiations are on-going with a number of Developers and AHB's in relation to acquiring further Turnkey units.

### Capital Advance Leasing Facility (CALF)

The Approved Housing Bodies are actively pursuing a number of potential CALF projects and are liaising closely with the Council on a regular basis. The members will be kept updated. Approved Housing Bodies also make applications for CALF acquisitions to address a particular housing need. To date 6 units have been delivered in the following areas:

CALF Acquisitions 2023	No. of Units	Delivery Schedule	Scheme
Bray	2	Delivered Q1 2023	CALF
Blessington	1	Delivered Q1 2023	CALF
Bray	3	Delivered Q3 2023	CALF

**Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS)** Wicklow County Council is continuing to support acquisitions under the Capital Assistance Scheme with Dublin Simon, Circle Housing, Ark Housing and Peter McVerry Trust etc. To date, 9 units have been delivered in the following areas:

CAS Acquisitions 2023	No. of Units	Delivery Schedule	Scheme
Blessington	1	Delivered Q2 2023	CAS
Arklow	1	Delivered Q2 2023	CAS
Newtownmountkennedy	1	Delivered Q2 2023	CAS
Bray	1	Delivered Q3 2023	CAS
Greystones	1	Delivered Q3 2023	CAS
Bray	1	Delivered Q4 2023	CAS
Blessington	1	Delivered Q4 2023	CAS
Wicklow Town	1	Delivered Q4 2023	CAS
Arklow	1	Delivered Q4 2023	CAS

## Expressions of Interest – Social Housing on Council lands

### Parnell Road (Central Garage site)

Tuath have submitted the revised CAS application and it is currently being assessed. The Department had some queries which have been responded to.

### Kilbride Lodge and Sutton Villas

All land registration issues have now been resolved. Respond are in the process of appointing a project manager.

### Infill Sites

- Knockroe – Two 4 bed fully accessible homes in progress - expected completion date Q4 2023
- 5a Rednagh Rd – One 4 bed house – Part 8 to commence shortly

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

› Grant funding for private house - €2,352,438.16 - €2,018,212.96 spent to date

› Grant funding for social house - €818,793.00 - € 691,694.96 spent to date

2023 – 69 open applications (Also have some additional grants open from 2022 due to contractor delays)

2023 - 180 approvals (Also have some additional grants open from 2022 due to contractor delays)

2023 – 269 applications paid and closed

Year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Number of Grants Received/Processed	249	216	266	327	281	456

### 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 and workshops are taking place nationwide facilitated by the housing agency regarding the implementation plan. This workshop will take place at the next HDSG meeting to be held in January 2024. 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 Schemes

Millbank, Mill Road – 2 x 2 bed properties	Completed and ready for allocation
Castle Villas - Two 2 bed properties	Contractor on site - expected completion date November 2023
Carrig Eden - 14 units x 1 bed age friendly units	Part 8 complete – design team is being procured at present
Kilcoole Health Centre - 4 no 1 bed apartments	Contractor on site - expected completion date September 2024

## Vacant Homes Scheme

Compulsory Purchase Orders on long term vacant houses around the county.

8 Sycamore Drive, Newtownmountkennedy	<b>House allocated and tenant in situ.</b>
5 Ashwood, Roundwood	<b>House allocated and tenant in situ.</b>
33 Connolly Street, Arklow	<b>House allocated and tenant in situ.</b>
100 Wicklow Heights, Wicklow Town	<b>House allocated.</b>
2 Lakeview Grove, Wicklow Town	<b>House allocated.</b>
18 Delgany Glen, Greystones	<b>House allocated.</b>
30 South Green, Arklow	Refurbishment to start shortly.
5 Priory Way, Delgany	Refurbishment to start shortly.
6 Ashleigh, Ashford	Refurbishment to start shortly.
114 Hillside, Greystones	Refurbishment to start shortly.
41 Kilgarron Park, Enniskerry	Refurbishment to start shortly.
108 Charnwood, Bray	Notice to Enter served July 2023.
10 Liam Mellows Avenue, Arklow	Compensation now agreed.
88 Wicklow Heights, Wicklow Town	Compensation now agreed.
53 South Green, Arklow	Compensation now agreed.
53A South Green, Arklow	Compensation now agreed.
2 Harbour Road (“Merdenville”), Arklow	Compensation now agreed.
36 Wheatfield Bray	CPO published March 2023. Currently engaging with owner with a view to purchase by agreement.
27 Wolfe Tone Square South, Bray.	Negotiations under way
1 further CPOs (further house in Bray and Wicklow Town) to be published.	

Further long-term vacant properties are currently being identified for future batches of CPOs

## 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.

If the refurbishment costs exceed the standard grant of up to €50,000, a top-up grant amount of up to €20,000 is available.

To qualify for the grant, applicants must:

- have proof of ownership or evidence of active negotiations to buy the property (that is, confirmation of engagement from the estate agent or owner of the property) where you are seeking approval in principle for a grant.
- live in the property as your principal private residence or make it available for rent.
- have proof that the property has been vacant for at least 2 years and that it was built up to and including 2007.

Number of Applications	78
Applications in progress/information requested	18
Applications finalised	53
Applications paid	3
Applications withdrawn	4



**KIERSEY WALKER & ASSOCIATES**  
AUCTIONEERS - ESTATE AGENTS - VALUERS  
 BUILDING ENERGY RATING (BER) ASSESSORS

Ref. 827

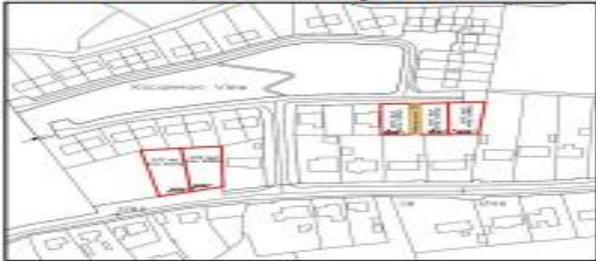
**For Sale**

**READY TO BUILD SCHEME**

**5 Serviced Sites for New Homes**

**@**

**Kilcommon, Tinahely, Co. Wicklow.**



**Five serviced sites within a short distance of Tinahely town centre situated on the Tinahely to Shillelagh Road. These sites are subject to planning permission and proposed purchaser must qualify for the Ready to Build Scheme. For further information please see [Application Form](#) and [FAQ's](#).**

<b>Site No. 1</b> – 0.217 acre (0.088 ha)	<b>Site No. 3</b> – 0.121 acre (0.049 ha)
<b>Site No. 2</b> – 0.200 acre (0.081 ha)	<b>Site No. 4</b> – 0.117 acre (0.047 ha)
	<b>Site No. 5</b> – 0.140 acre (0.057 ha)

**Guide Price:**     **Site No.'s 1 & 2 – €50,000**  
                                  **Site No.'s 3, 4 & 5 – €35,000**

Riverside Business Centre, Tinahely, County Wicklow  
 Tel: 0402 38899 | Email: [info@kwa.ie](mailto:info@kwa.ie)  
<http://www.kwa.ie>  
A.M Kiersey Limited: C.R.D. reg no: 409002, VAT, reg no. G429002V. PSRA Registration No: 001217



## Derelict Properties

The following four derelict properties have been approved for sale:

Property	Progress
Croneynhorn	Sale approved by the members a the June meeting held on 12/06/2023 – final stages in progress
Killacloran	Valuation done, application being progressed
Rednagh Rd	Sale approved by the members a the June meeting held on 12/06/2023 – final stages in progress
Borkhill	No interested parties

## Affordable Housing update

### **Greenhill Road – 36 Houses**

- 32 sold
- 3 nearing completion
- 1 (house that flooded) will be ready to be offered in the next 2 weeks

### **Aldborough Manor Baltinglass – 22 Houses**

- 58 applied
- 22 offered
- 8 accepted so far.

### **Rathnew – 44 houses**

- To be advertised within the next month.

Wicklow County Council also has plans for further developments throughout the county.

### **Local Authority Home loans up to December 2023**

Received	Approved in principle
63	16

### **2016 Tenant (Incremental) Purchase Scheme**

	To date	December 2023
Applications Received	414	4
Completed	101	0
Declined	280	0
Ongoing	15	15

## Homeless figures for December 2023

<b>Addressing Homelessness</b>			
	<b>As at 31/12/2023</b>	<b>Year To Date</b>	<b>As at 31/12/2022</b>
<b>No of New Presentations</b>	19	331	16
<b>No. of Repeat Presentations</b>	2	20	0
<b>No. of Families (Minimum 1 Adult + One Child)</b>	2	126	5
<b>No. of Individuals (Single Adult, no children)</b>	19	193	11
<b>No. Of Couples (2 Adults, no children)</b>	1	21	0
<b>No. of Children</b>	8	250	11
<b>NTQ/Asked to Leave/Landlord selling</b>	4	95	6
<b>Family Circumstances</b>	5	105	8
<b>Leaving Prison/Hospital Care</b>	0	19	0
<b>Mental Health</b>	1	30	1
<b>Risk of Homelessness</b>	13	103	1
<b>Arrears/Loss of Income</b>	0	6	1
<b>Addiction Issues</b>	5	45	1
<b>DV/DA</b>	0	21	0
<b>Medical Issues</b>	1	18	0
<b>Overcrowding</b>	2	41	1
<b>Unsuitable/Voluntarily Left</b>	1	20	3
<b>ASB:</b>	0	7	1
<b>Rough Sleeping*</b>	4	35	1
<b>Sofa Surfing*</b>	3	39	1
<b>Staying with Family*</b>	4	78	4
<b>Staying with Friends*</b>	2	16	0

\*(Recorded as a Consequence of Homelessness as opposed to a Reason for Homelessness)

<b>Own Door Temporary Accommodation at 31/12/23</b>	
Families	21
Adults	29
Children	51
Single individual	2

Bed & Breakfast Accommodation - No. of Homeless Emergency Accommodation Placements & Duration @ 31/12/2023								
	No. of Households	No. of Adults	No. of Children	< 3 mths	3-6 mths	6-9 mths	9-12 mths	>12mths
Household breakdown	22	27	21	4	10	5	4	3
Bed & Breakfast Accommodation - No. of Homeless Emergency Accommodation Placements & Duration @ 31/12/22								
	No. of Households	No. of Adults	No. of Children	< 3 mths	3-6 mths	6-9 mths	9-12 mths	>12mths
Household breakdown	21	26	21	3	8	3	3	4

### Report dated up to the 31/12/2023:

The Homeless HAP Place finder provides assistance in:

- seeking out potential properties suitable for households currently identified as homeless or at risk of homelessness;
- liaising with specific households to establish their specific needs;
- establishing relationships with local property agents and landlords; and,
- supporting those homeless households to (a) prevent the necessity to enter emergency accommodation or (b) to exit emergency accommodation and secure a tenancy.
- To date, 498 households (353 families & 140 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 2023**. (210 homeless cases, 274 prevention cases to date and 13 direct provision). 133 properties were sourced by WCC.

### Addressing Homelessness in partnership with Approved Housing Bodies

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

Kilmantain Hill has 11 rooms to support persons either homeless, exiting a higher support facility or in danger of becoming homeless.

There are 10 clients supported in the Kilmantin Hill facility, operated by Dublin Simon, with continuing transition by the clients to suitable, alternative accommodation at the moment.

A report is being undertaken at present to cost the refurbishment of the current rooms with a few to making them all ensutie – more details will be available over the coming months.

## **Homeless Family Service – Fitzwilliam Road, Wicklow**

Dublin Simon are 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 family's transition from homelessness into Homeless HAP or alternative longer term accommodation.

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

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

CWI (Cold Weather Initiative) beds are now in operation in San Remo and will continue until April 2024.

The Neighbourhood Liaison Committee is now operational and meets monthly.

Bi- monthly meetings are held with Dublin Simon and Wicklow County Council staff

## **Homeless Supported Accommodation - Carraig Eden, Greystones**

The facility providing 35 ensuite bedrooms with associated kitchens and common areas is fully operational. Wicklow County Council run an in-reach service with the clients to support them as they continue their journey into more permanent accommodation.

## **Other Homeless Supported Accommodation**

Wicklow County Council owned properties in Wicklow, Bray and Greystones, leased to AHBs, provide 12 units of low to medium supported accommodation targeted to the particular support needs of the clients. Six of these persons living in shared accommodation have now successfully moved into their forever homes and this in turn create space to move further people out of homelessness.

A homeless outreach service has been rolled out in Bray and is proving very successful

## **Housing First**

Peter McVerry Trust has been appointed as the Housing First Programme Implementer for the Mid-East Region. Wicklow County Council is committed to working with them and has now reached and surpassed the targets identified in the programme. Housing first recognises that a stable home provides the basis for recovery in other areas.

Properties will be provided by both Wicklow County Council and Peter McVerry Trust for the implementation of the programme.

Wicklow County Council has, to date, successfully accommodated 19 clients under Housing First and it is hoped that at least one further allocation will take place before the end of 2023. Other clients proposed for Housing First have been assessed by the team and are availing of key support work pending finalisation of sourcing of accommodation – the main issue facing this programme is the availability of one bed units in suitable locations with easy access to services etc.



## JANUARY 2024



- WCC are working through a list of pledged properties within the County and matching families accordingly. As of the 30<sup>h</sup> January we will have housed 250 number displaced Ukrainian people into pledged stand-alone Offer a Home properties  
Larger buildings and vacant units are also being identified and explored as potential options for medium to long term accommodation.
- The Community Response Forum continues to meet on a regular basis.

## 2. Community

### Local Enhancement Programme 2024

The Local Enhancement Programme 2024 (LEP) opened for applications on 22<sup>nd</sup> January.

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 has a total budget of €6m, with €176,338.11 being allocated to Wicklow County Council.

This funding will provide capital supports essential for the many small community groups and organisations, particularly those who serve disadvantaged areas in rural and urban areas. There will be a particular focus on small capital works/improvements, and the purchase of equipment for community use.

Minister Humphries noted that €1m of the fund has been reserved for Women's groups in recognition of the fact that there is a growing number of Women's Sheds, Groups and Networks across the country.

**Wicklow County Council LEP Allocation: €146,948.43**

**Wicklow County Council Women's Group Allocation: €29,389.69**

**Wicklow County Council Total Allocation: €176,338.11**

Wicklow Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) is responsible for allocating funding for this scheme. Applications should relate to one or more key priority areas identified in their LCDC's Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) in order to be eligible for consideration.

Applications for funding can be made under this Programme to County Wicklow LCDC by **4.00 p.m. on Friday 8th March 2024.**

Application Forms & Women's Groups Application forms and guidelines are available from Wicklow County Council's website.

### Fáilte Ireland

We are pleased to confirm that Wicklow County Council will receive **€13,000** under the Fáilte Ireland Regional Festivals and Participative Events Funding Scheme 2024.

The Regional Festivals and Participative Events Programme is aimed at festivals and participative events that fit into one of the following categories:

- General festivals (i.e., literary, historic, traditional culture or family focused).
- Arts, Music & Theatre.
- Food & Drink.
- Sports & Outdoors.
- Business & Education

Wicklow County Council are working to ensure that these funds are spent on those festivals and participative events that best drive the economic contribution of tourism.

## **Wicklow Arts Office**

### **Creative Places Baltinglass**

#### Creative Places Baltinglass: Artist Coaching and Mentoring

Six West Wicklow artists and creative practitioners were selected in December 2023 to participate in the coaching and mentoring development programme. The programme is due to commence early February 2024, and will be facilitated by coaching specialists Paula Phelan and Katherine Zeserson over a nine-week period.

#### Creative Places Baltinglass: Jazz Token

On 8th December 2023, Creative Places Baltinglass welcomed fifty-five people to the first event in the 'Sitting Room Sessions' series. This entertaining and relaxed evening of easy-listening jazz classics featured a three-piece band comprising Christy Stapleton (drums), Rory Adams (piano and vocals) and Frank Gallagher (guitar and vocals).

#### Creative Places Baltinglass: Baltinglass Sings - Open Rehearsal

On 13th December 2023, 'Baltinglass Sings', a community singing group with over fifty participants led by Paula Phelan, welcomed over two hundred people to an open rehearsal in Germaine's, Baltinglass. Featuring a performance and sing-along the evening of seasonal music, song, mince pies, tea and chats was the perfect way to mark the end of the Arts Office 2023 programme.

### **Applications for 2024 Arts Act Funding Schemes**

On Friday, 1st December 2023, the application window opened for the 2024 Arts Act Funding Schemes. Designed to support artists, communities, arts festivals, arts participation and art form development across County Wicklow, the Arts Office offered a new application support service from Wednesday, 10th January to Friday, 9th February 2024, which offered artists, communities, and festival organisers the opportunity to engage in a 30-minute consultation to pose questions and seek advice from Síle Stewart, Arts Services Coordinator.

### **Film Bursary**

The Arts Office, in collaboration with Screen Wicklow have identified that artists and film makers in County Wicklow would benefit from being able to access a specific annual Film Bursary. Following an initial stake holder meeting in December 2023, the Arts Office has commissioned research by Brian O'Regan of Arts Leaders Association to examine the sector in Wicklow, collate case studies from existing film funding mechanisms offered by local authorities nationally, and propose a plan featuring funding strategies reflecting the film community's needs in Wicklow. This research will be supported by the work already undertaken as part of County Wicklow Screen Sector Development Strategy 2022 – 2026. The Arts Office is looking forward to collaborating with John Powderly and his team on the delivery of this project. This research will be part funding by Creative Ireland.

## **Upcoming**

### **Wicklow Artist Salon**

The Wicklow Artist Salon returned for 2024 with the first event taking place on Tuesday 6th February in the Mermaid Arts Centre, Bray.

With the theme of '*Flow*', this session focussed on 'creative flow', what it is and its effects from a neurochemical perspective. The line-up included:

- Visual artist and executive coach Theresa Nanigian explored these questions and suggested how we might access this enormously powerful state in our work and life.
- Dancer and body-based creative practitioner Joan Davis explored embodiment and creative flow.
- Emma Matthews, from 'Minding Creative minds', talked about stress, what it is, the effects of stress on 'flow', how to recognise it and what we can do to reduce stress.
- Acclaimed poet and playwright Colm Keegan will read from his work and share his experience of '*flow*' both as an artist and facilitator.

## **Creative Places Baltinglass**

### **Creative Places Baltinglass: Seed Funding Clinic and Artists' Gathering**

A Seed Funding Scheme 2024 Applications Clinic combined with Baltinglass Artist's Gathering will take place on Thursday, the 15th of February, at 7.30 pm in Horan's in Baltinglass to offer the potential applicants an opportunity to ask any relevant questions and network with their local peers.

## **Wicklow Story Trail**

Wicklow County Council's Culture Team spearheaded by Wicklow Library Service, in collaboration with Wicklow Arts Office, is delighted to announce the rotation of the three outdoor Story Trails. Located in Burnaby Park, Greystones, Roundwood and Tearmann Community Garden in Baltinglass, the story trails are designed to bring children's books to life placing illustrated versions of four books in the Beast series by Irish author Chris Judge, page by page in unique locations for all to enjoy.

## **Bray Library Comic Book**

The Bray Library Comic Book project returned on 11th January thanks to continued funding support from Creative Ireland. Project coordinator, Vita Coleman, will deliver twenty-four sessions over six months, with a break for summer. During this break, participants will be welcome to visit the library, use the comic club materials but there will be no outside facilitators. Each month there will be sessions led by an artist for project planning, and sessions overseen by library staff for the group to work on their projects independently. The art sessions will be with local comic book artist Elida Maiques.

## **Blessington Greenway**

Planning documents were submitted to An Bord Pleanála under Section 177AE of the Planning and Development Act, with a deadline of 4th March 2022.

On 16<sup>th</sup> March 2023, Wicklow County Council received a request for further information (RFI) from An Bord Pleanála. The Board had sought a response to this RFI request by the 8<sup>th</sup> of June 2023. However, due to the significant information sought by ABP, an extension to the 29<sup>th</sup> of January 2024 was granted by ABP.

WCC staff, in conjunction with Aecom, the consultants, are continuing to prepare a full comprehensive response to this RFI to meet this deadline.

**Community Recognition Fund**

The following seven projects are progressing, with completion dates estimated in quarter three 2024.

	<b>Project Description</b>
<b>Bray Community Centre</b>	Internal works including electrical upgrade, 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
<b>Baltinglass Community Park</b>	Riverside Walking Path
	New Playground
	MUGA Refurbishment
<b>Bray Parish Centre</b>	Internal works including electrical upgrade, painting and fittings
<b>Wicklow Town Placemaking Project</b>	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.
<b>Arklow Playing Pitch</b>	Groundworks and surfacing works
	Multi use pitch and fencing
	Landscaping
<b>Rathdrum Community Park</b>	Groundworks, Fencing, Gates
	Landscaping, large planters and benches
<b>Greystones Community Park</b>	Boules/pétanque playing ground
	Landscaping and Community Placemaking

**Project Development Measure (PDM) 2023**

Funding was approved under the Project Development Measure of the 2023 Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme:

**Annex 1 - List of Successful Projects - Project Development Measure**

<b>Project Reference</b>	<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Funding Approved</b>
OR423WW01	Lugnaquilla Recreation Plan	€45,000.00
OR423WW02	Bray Head Sustainable Recreation Plan	€45,000.00

**Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme**

The Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) supports the development of new outdoor recreational infrastructure and the necessary repair, enhancement, or promotion of existing outdoor recreation infrastructure in countryside areas across Ireland. The Scheme is funded under “Our Rural Future” which specifically prioritises the growing outdoor activity tourism sector as part of a long-term vision for a vibrant and sustainable rural Ireland.

There are two large Measure 3 projects which will commence in 2024 -

Roundwood Recreation Area – Part VIII CE Report submitted. This planning was granted on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2023. It is envisaged that these works will commence in quarter 2 2024.

The Sugarloaf Repair Scheme – Part VIII submissions being received. CE Report to follow in February which will be submitted to the members of Bray Municipal District.

The table below is a list of current projects which are being progressed and were funded under the ORIS funding stream:

<b>ORIS Project</b>	<b>Present Position</b>
North Wicklow Trails	New connection almost completed linking the Sugar Loaf to the Vartry Trails. Signage to be added.
Clogherna Access, Glenmalure	Works to improve surface and increase traffic safety at the Clogherna access to Baravore Bridge, Glenmalure. The car park has been upgraded and the access works are still being carried out. Project extension requested to April 2024.
Avonmore Kayak Project	This project is near completion. An extension until March 2024 has been requested from the Department. Railings are being fitted at Rathdrum bridge and privacy screens are now in place at the Meetings of The Waters in Avoca.
Kilmacanogue Nature Trail	Completed. Enhanced links between Wicklow Uplands and the Sugarloaf Way. New signage being added.
Cliff Walk Protection Scheme	This project is paused briefly to allow finalising the purchase of third-party land.
Sugarloaf Repair	Work on this project is scheduled to commence soon.
Three Trout Route Project Developments	At project design stage with two new bridges to be installed. Project extension requested to March 2024.
Ballyboy Equestrian Trail	Completed with new signage being added.
Miner's Way	Upgrading and resurfacing completed with new signage being added.
Glen Turn Cliff Walk	Completed and new signage added.
Red Kite Loop Wild Play Area, Avoca	Play structures have been identified and design is currently under way. Project extension to May 2024 granted by the Department.
Wicklow Uplands	Project nearly completed with a second airlifting of surface materials to the sensitive site in the Wicklow Uplands now scheduled. Project extension requested to March 2024.

Russborough Parklands and House Trail	Upgrading of existing walking trails and installation of a cycle hub. Project is being completed in liaison with landowners.
Coolkenno Equestrian Trail	The aim of this project is to construct an 8km equestrian trail and associated access points.
Roundwood Recreation Area	This multi-use family facility project will include the provision of a bike hub, natural play area, way-marking and information boards. Part VIII process commenced on 18 <sup>th</sup> October 2023 and a report is being submitted by the Planning section. The closing date for submissions was 1 <sup>st</sup> December, with the Chief Executive Report to issue to the Wicklow Municipal District members prior to the 18 <sup>th</sup> of December MD meeting.
Jubilee Loop and Avonmore Way link 2021 Scheme	Accessibility improvement works will be tendered shortly for this project.

## **Coastal Blueway**

This is a very ambitious large project to obtain Blueway accreditation along the Co. Wicklow coastline in Bray, Greystones, Brittas Bay, Wicklow and Arklow.

A new boardwalk is installed at Greystones South Beach which will make the beach more accessible to all individuals including those with varying degrees of ability. An upgrade of existing facilities is taking place in Brittas Bay along with new information boards in conjunction with the guidance of the Heritage Officer. The Cove area, Arklow, subject to a land agreement, will see bicycle stands installed, privacy screens for changing built, planting and cleaning of graffiti on the rock armour. Information boards and Blueway accredited signage will be placed at each of the locations to guide visitors.

## **Wicklow Outdoor Recreation Committee (WORC)**

The WORC meeting took place on the 25<sup>th</sup> of January 2024 to continue to delivery and progress the County Wicklow Outdoor Recreation Strategy 2020- 2025. Additional funding of €30k was allocated in budget 2024 to support the Strategy.

## **Local Authority Integration Team (LAIT)**

The Local Authority Integration Team (LAIT) is now established in Co Wicklow and operating since 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2024. It consists of an Integration Support Coordinator, two Integration Support Workers and one Administrative Support Officer.

Current objectives are: engage stakeholders, establish the New Communities Response Network, assist in development of SOPs, assess gaps and needs, seek additional funding. DCEDIY Objective: enable the above populations to live independently in the community.

The team will play an important role in the overall integration strategy for the Council and the focus will be on the following cohorts of people:

- Applicants for International Protection (IP Applicants)
- Those with Refugee, Subsidiary Protection, or Permission to Remain status.
- Programme Refugees
- Beneficiaries of temporary Accommodation (BOTPs)

While the LAITs are not expected to be responsible for the creation or management of the Local Migrant Integration strategies, they will be a key player in the delivery of those strategies.

## **Large Scale Sport Infrastructure Scheme (LSSIF)**

Catherine Martin T.D., Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, and Thomas Byrne T.D., Minister of State for Sport and Physical Education, on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023) announced “Top Up” grant allocations to existing projects under the LSSIF.

The first allocations under the LSSIF were announced in January 2020 with €86.4 million subsequently awarded to 33 different projects. This additional funding amounts to a total of €37.6 million with 27 individual projects benefitting, bringing the total awarded to date to Large Scale Sport Infrastructure funded projects to €124 million.

Two Wicklow projects will benefit from this additional funding, Wicklow Swimming Pool and Leisure Centre receiving an additional sum of €932,423, bring the total funding for this project to €1,796,600 and the Charlesland Athletics Track Scheme funding will increase by €126,390 with a total funding amount €436,032 for this project. It is anticipated that both projects will commence in quarter two 2024.



Healthy  
Wicklow



Sláintecare.  
Healthy  
Communities

## **Healthy Wicklow**

### **Walk and Talk Rathnew**

This six-week tutor led walk and talk programme commenced in Rathnew on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January. Fifteen participants registered for this programme.

### **Buggyfit Rathnew**

As part of the active community action, a new 6-week Buggyfit programme started in Rathnew on the 11<sup>th</sup> of January. This exercise programme enables new mothers include physical activity into their schedule and to interact with other mothers in the area.



### **Kids Zumba**

A new 6-week kids Zumba programme started in Tinahely Community Hall on the 17<sup>th</sup> of January.

### **Intergenerational Community Drumming Workshop**

A 4-week programme began in Carnew Community Care Centre on 17<sup>th</sup> January. Community Drumming breaks down barriers, and cuts through age and cultural differences. It is particularly physically beneficial for the elderly as each participant drums with ease and participates at whatever level they can #, with no

pressure to perform. It improves social, emotional and communication skills. Whatever the age, moving to the beat of the drum improves coordination, balance, and spatial awareness.



## **Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership**

### **Funding**

Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership have received the following funding allocations for 2024:

- CORE Funding of €426,937 to fund staffing, marketing, and programme delivery.
- Dormant Account Funding of €197,000 to deliver;
  - Community Sports Hub in Arklow & Rathdrum
  - HER Moves Teenage Girls programme – Active Girl Guide
  - Disability Inclusion Capital
  - Urban Outdoor Recreation Cycling Programme in Bray
  - Volunteer Support
  - Youth Leadership Support

**Below are the Community Programmes in operation since January 2024**

<b><u>Activity</u></b>	<b><u>Venue</u></b>	<b><u>When</u></b>	<b><u>Comments</u></b>
<b>Walk n Talk Programme</b>	Rathnew	8 <sup>th</sup> January for 6 weeks	
<b>Buggyfit</b>	Rathnew	11 <sup>th</sup> January for 6 weeks	
<b>Strength and Conditioning class for beginners</b>	Arklow	15 <sup>th</sup> January for 6 weeks	
<b>Buggy Buddy Pilates</b>	Baltinglass	15 <sup>th</sup> January for 6 weeks	
<b>Walk n Talk Programme</b>	Rathdrum	17 <sup>th</sup> January for 6 weeks	
<b>Shuttle Time Badminton Teacher Training</b>	Arklow	17 <sup>th</sup> January	Targeting primary school teachers in Co.Wicklow
<b>Beginner Racquetball Coaching</b>	Arklow	30 <sup>th</sup> January for 6 weeks	
<b>iCoach Girls programme (Continuation)</b>	Arklow	17 <sup>th</sup> January	Targeting inactive girls

## Training & Education

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Venue</u>	<u>When</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Sports First Aid	Bray Wheelers	9 <sup>th</sup> December 2023	9 Attendees
Safeguarding 1	Online	23 <sup>rd</sup> Jan	Sold Out

## Katie Taylor Bursary

The Wicklow County Council funded Katie Taylor Bursary for first year college students closed for applications on 1<sup>st</sup> Feb 2024.

## County Wicklow Library Service



## The Year Ahead – Wicklow County Council Library Service

Wicklow County Council Library Serviced finished 2023 on a high in terms of countable statistics. Our library membership at the end of December stood at 33,730, our visits were 601,235, the highest in the country, exceeding 2019 pre pandemic numbers by 4% and our loans at 390,669 items were the highest in the country per head of population.

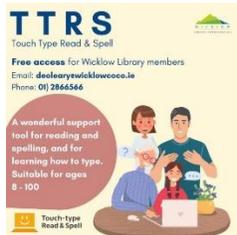
As we embark on 2024, our primary goal is to extend the joy of reading and learning to an even wider audience, aiming to grow our membership to 30% of the population.

In our commitment to nurturing the love of reading from the very beginning, we are excited to announce that all children aged 0-3 who join our library will receive a complimentary bedtime picture book and to encourage people of all ages to read for fun and social contact, we will be looking at expanding the number and type of book clubs we have on offer. In February, we eagerly anticipate the upcoming celebration of reading, 'Ireland reads,' where we will join in this national initiative with activities and reading recommendations, culminating in Ireland reads day on February 25<sup>th</sup>.

Our community can access a range of supports to help with literacy to include digital literacy. Looking to go online? Want to video call Grandchildren? Want an easy-to-use Camera? Love crosswords and puzzles? The Acorn Age-Friendly Tablet makes doing all of these things much more accessible. The Acorn is age-friendly technology at its best.



TTRS or Touch, Type, Read and Spell is another invaluable resource to improve and support literacy. If you think your child or student could benefit from access to TTRS - a multi-sensory typing course recommended for those with dyslexia or dyspraxia - then get in touch with and avail of one of our free licences.



If you or someone you know has a hidden disability, this will be of interest. Wicklow County became the first County Council in Ireland to recognise the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower lanyard across all its public offices and libraries in 2023. Just drop in and you can pick one up, no questions asked, invaluable way of letting people know that you may need extra attention or understanding.



New year, new goals? Why not try an online course? A library membership provides access to Universal Class, an online continuing education service offering over 400 educational and leisure courses to library members. Users can enrol in up to five courses and have six months in which to complete them.



Wicklow libraries extend a warm welcome to new communities, offering our libraries as safe spaces for exploration and discovery. We are committed to providing a sanctuary for all as we work towards achieving "Library of Sanctuary" status early in 2024. Additionally, the implementation of "My Open Libraries" ensures accessibility for the public from 8 am until 10.00 pm daily in Arklow and Wicklow Town, making books, newspapers, magazines, and PC access available to all, irrespective of their schedules.

We care about the menstrual needs of our community. Sanitary products are available free in the public toilets of all Wicklow County Libraries.



Are you curious about your energy usage? The Home Energy kit is available to borrow at all public libraries, just pop in and borrow.



In alignment with national initiatives, we are proud to participate in "Healthy Ireland at Your Library," promoting the well-being of our community through knowledge and resources.

With these exciting initiatives, we are confident that our libraries will continue to serve as vibrant hubs of learning, creativity, and community building.

## **New Library for Ballywaltrim and other Library news**

Wicklow County Council Library Service is delighted to be announcing that the new library for Ballywaltrim is scheduled to commence in the summer of 2024. The project focuses on demolishing the existing small branch library at the rear of its Ballywaltrim HQ building in Bray, paving the way for a transformative redesign of the facility which will include a round reading room, illuminated from the top by clerestory windows and much more. We will keep you informed of progress as the project goes through the various stages.

Baltinglass Library is due for a major refurbishment which will see the old courthouse now housing the adult library and a transformed children's library, this project is for commencement in the near future.

Wicklow County Council have acquired the space over the existing library in Blessington and plan to provide additional space for library events, study spaces, an exhibition space and art studio space for public use.

## **Made in Wicklow – series of crafting workshops**

This amazing opportunity is financially supported by the Transitional LEADER Rural Development Programme and implemented in all libraries by Wicklow Craft Foundation. This series coincides with the launch of the Made in Wicklow Craft Trail, scheduled to launch in Powerscourt on St. Bridget's Day 1<sup>st</sup> February. The series of workshops has succeeded so far in bringing a fantastic opportunity to people to

## JANUARY 2024



get taster sessions in arrange of crafts including bookmaking, felting, woodworking, pottery, weaving and more.



*Pottery Baltinglass, Library Felting Dunlavin, Jewellery Making, Carnew Library*

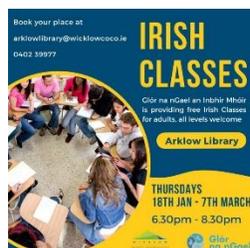
### LIBRARY ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS ACROSS THE COUNTY

#### Arklow Library

Come to Arklow Library on the last Thursday of the month from 10 am for All Kinds of Amazing. This is a welcoming group for families and caregivers of children with additional needs. The library is wheelchair and buggy-friendly, so bring along a cuppa and come in for a chat.

Storytime at Arklow Library is every Wednesday at 10 o'clock. This is a fun, lively session with stories, songs and a simple craft.

Free Irish Classes for adults, hosted by Glór na nGael an Inbhir Mhóir, all levels welcome. Held in Arklow Library on Thursdays, from 18th of January to March 7th, at 6.30 pm.



#### Aughrim Library

Being so small can be a disadvantage when it comes to facilitating activities in Aughrim Library but nevertheless, we do plan to arrange some events to happen in the Pavilion until the dream of a new library becomes a reality. Recently, a woodworking workshop with Jana Factor took place at the Pavilion and 6 people engaged in a beginner's session as part of the Made in Wicklow Crafting project running in all libraries during January.

#### Ballywaltrim Library

'Going to the Pictures in the 1950s and 60s': the title of this nostalgic local history talk by local historian Jim Scannell took place on 17<sup>th</sup> of January. Jim shared stories about the experience of cinema-going in this period in the North Wicklow area.

Children will have fun and develop their logical thinking skills playing with our Duplo Lego (18 months+); Magformers, Jamanga and Giant Connect-4 (3 years+) kits. Every Saturday from 10-11.30. This is a pleasant opportunity to meet other parents and for children aged 18 months plus to socialise.



Parents can bring their babies to the Library every Monday and Friday from 10.30 am for their magical tummy time experience. Using the lights and sounds from our 'Magic Table' that are projected onto the floor, this is a wonderful sensory and interactive experience for your little bundles. Suitable for newborns and babies who haven't started to crawl yet.

English Language Conversation Group for non-native speakers recommenced on 17<sup>th</sup> January. This is held every Wednesday morning from 11.30 - 12.30 in Ballywaltrim Library. This is an informal group meeting and provides a great opportunity for non-native speakers to improve their conversational skills.



## Baltinglass Library

English Language Conversation group takes place every Tuesday evening at 6.30 pm – a sociable way to practice English language conversation skills and meet others. We are always looking for volunteers to help with this programme – all you need to do is chat away and listen.

## Blessington Library

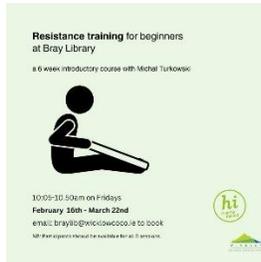
Apart from the normal Book Clubs/Poetry/Storytimes Blessington had Rógaire Dubh, a Traditional Irish Music Group from Kilbride & Lakeside Band on Tuesday January 30<sup>th</sup>.



Blessington library also have a group of parents and their children who are Home Schooling who meet every Tuesday morning at 10.00am

## Bray Library

Bray Library and Healthy Ireland are delighted to announce a new 6-week introduction to Resistance Training that will take place on Friday mornings from 16<sup>th</sup> Feb - 22<sup>nd</sup> March. Resistance Training is a strength-building exercise that increases bone density and improves mobility and balance. Over this six-week course, personal trainer Michal Turkowski will support participants to build a regular resistance training practice using resistance bands and body weight.



Bray Library also has a range of book clubs – some of which have room for new members:

Junior Book Club - 3.15pm, second Monday of the month, accepting new members.

Crime Book Club - 7pm, second Tuesday of the month, accepting new members.

Michael's Book Club - 11am, second Weds of the month, accepting new members.

Ruth's Book Club - 11am, last Weds of the month - full.

Literary Fiction Book Club - 7pm, last Thursday of the month - accepting new members.

## Dunlavin Library

Dunlavin Library is delighted to now have free weekly crafting and painting sessions for adults on Wednesdays at 12 noon. All welcome, please keep an eye on social media for each weekly event.

## Enniskerry Library

In early January, a Lego Workshop, drawing in a crowd of 18 children along with their parents took place. This was a valuable opportunity for children in the locality to enjoy playing and constructing with Lego while getting to know each other.

Enniskerry Library hosted a local history talk, on the 7th of February, presented by Bill Nelson, a retired aviation engineer. Bill described the events surrounding the accident. This was a story of resilience, perseverance and the will to survive.



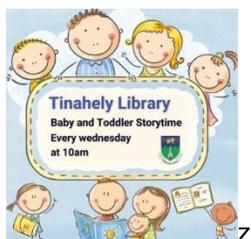
## Greystones Library

Participants discovered the art of sustainable sewing with Tamara at Greystones Library on the upcoming Saturday January 13th, January 20th, and February 10<sup>th</sup>. The principles of sustainability in sewing were explored as Tamara guided participants through the process of making garments last longer, repairing tears, and crafting your own unique items. These hands-on sessions empower attendees with practical skills that contribute to reducing waste and promoting a more sustainable lifestyle.



## Tinahely Library

Baby & toddler Storytime for all babies and toddlers up to 3 years happens every Wednesday in Tinahely, all welcome and very relaxing, fun event.



Tinahely library hosted Bookmaking with Nicola Faull, an artist based in Wicklow, who specialises in book making, mixed media collage, and gel printing. Nicola presented a workshop in the library at Tinahely on Friday January 25<sup>th</sup>. This event was part of the Made in Wicklow: Craft Workshop series taking place in various Wicklow Libraries throughout the month of January 2024.

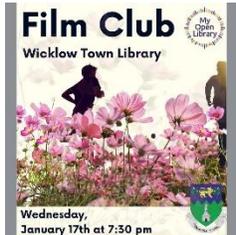


## Wicklow Town Library

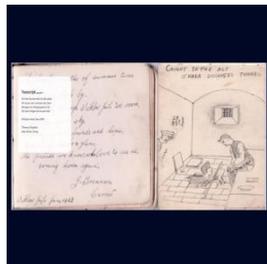
Young Adult - Writing Workshop will begin on 15<sup>th</sup> February on Thursdays from 6:30 - 8:00pm. Whether you've never written before or have a work in progress this is perfect for anyone interested in practicing and developing writing skills and techniques.

Keep an eye out for the films showing monthly at the Film Club in Wicklow Town – the poster will always be cryptic to add to the fun, this is due to our film licencing requirements but rest assured, it will always be

a lovely experience and a bit of a surprise! The only requirement is that filmgoers are members of the library and must have “My Open Library” activated on their membership card. This is a requirement of the library in order to be on the premises after normal working hours. Please contact Wicklow library about joining in the days beforehand as a tour and health and safety checklist needs to be completed.



Researching your Family Tree with genealogist Claire Bradley was held in Wicklow Town Library, January 25<sup>th</sup>. This genealogy workshop guided through how to research your family history using any stories or records that you have already, exploring the online resources available such as the Census, civil, church, and burial records. The workshop will also include a demonstration of genealogy sites such as the Census, Irishgenealogy.ie, Findmypast, & the British Newspaper Archive.



On Friday 2nd February, Harpist Aisling Ennis performed a series of harp/storytelling sessions for Wicklow babies and their mums. Aisling is a wonderful harpist and babies and adults will always enjoy her concerts.

## Mobile Library

Our Mobile Library got off to a rocky start in 2024 with a major electrical fault requiring urgent attention. However, all is well now again and the mobile is traversing the hills and valleys of our Garden County.

Check here for up-to-date timetable and route details on the Council's website.

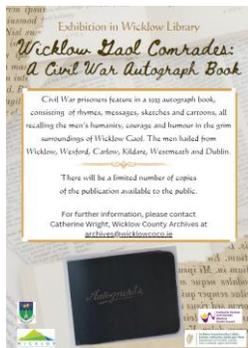


## Archives

Exhibition of *Wicklow Gaol Comrades: A Civil War Autograph Book* took place in Wicklow Library for the month of January.

*Wicklow Gaol Comrades: A Civil War Autograph Book* is a collaboration of the Wicklow and Wexford County Council Archive services. This project by historian Aaron O' Maonaigh, tells the stories of the men held in Wicklow Gaol during the Civil War and consists of a publication, exhibition, and video. The prisoners feature in a 1923 autograph book, which was donated to Wexford County Archives many years ago. It consists of rhymes, messages, sketches, and cartoons, all recalling the men's humanity, courage, and humour in the grim surroundings of Wicklow Gaol, where they faced an uncertain future. The men hailed from Wicklow, Wexford, Carlow, Kildare, Westmeath, and Dublin. As part of the project, relatives of the prisoners were traced, and we thank them for their invaluable contributions to the publication, video, and exhibition.

This project was one of several Decade of Centenary projects by the Wicklow County Archives service, which is located at Wicklow Library in Wicklow Town. Supported by Wicklow and Wexford County Councils and the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport, and Media under their Decade of Centenaries funding.



## Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP):

Contracts have been signed with the two successful tenderers of the new SICAP 2024-2028+ programme, namely Bray Area Partnership and Co. Wicklow Partnership. Both companies have begun implementing the programme on the ground supporting Wicklow's most disadvantaged groups and communities.

Both Partnerships have also recently completed all aspects of their 2023 End of Year Reports which have been submitted to the LCDC for review and final approval by end February 2024.

## Co. Wicklow Public Participation Network (PPN):

Consultations: Proposed amendments to the Access to Information on the Environment (AIE) Regulations 2007-2018, Irish Garden Bird Survey, National Social Enterprise Policy, Parentingsupport.ie Website - Review & Redevelopment, National Mental Health Recovery & Engagement Office Valuing the contribution of Service Users, Family Members and Carers.

## JANUARY 2024



Funding Opportunities/Competitions: Community Climate Action Fund, Community Monuments Fund 2024, 2024 Arts Act Funding, 2023 Parent Peer Support Fund, Built Heritage Funding Grant Schemes, Movement for Good, Trinity School of Education/Leavers Climate Action Project, Climate Emergency Fund.

Total member groups as of end 2023: 422 local community groups throughout Co. Wicklow.

See [www.countywicklowppn.ie](http://www.countywicklowppn.ie) and Wicklow PPN Facebook page for further information on above and more.

## Economic Development, Planning, and Infrastructure

### 1. Economic Development

The Local Economic and Community Plan Framework (LECP) was approved by the elected members of Wicklow County Council and the first two-year implementation plan is finalised.

#### Town Regeneration

##### **Blessington Town Centre First Masterplan**

Blessington is a pathfinder town and is the first to receive funding for a Town Centre First Masterplan. The masterplan will provide Blessington with a clear framework to positively develop the town now and into the future.

The draft masterplan has been received and is with the Planning Department and Town Regeneration Office for observations and corrections.

##### **Blessington Town Team**

Blessington Town Team has begun the planning process for the implementation of the Town Centre First Masterplan in conjunction with Wicklow County Council. The plan contains eight key themes under which a number of placemaking projects can be developed.

##### **Arklow Town Team**

At a recent meeting of Arklow Town Team the following projects were discussed:

**Town Team Rejuvenation** – An open day will be held in January at Bridgewater Shopping Centre to raise awareness of the work of the Town Team and hopefully attract new members. It is intended to reach out to businesses, community groups, and schools in the area to invite them to come along.

**Nollaig Na mBán** – This was another very successful event which was held in the Woodenbridge Hotel and raised the profile of the Town Team in a positive way. The funds raised at this year's event went to the Talk to Tom charity.

**Harbour to Headwater** – With work on-going to extend the information available on the website, the Town Team were delighted to learn that the project has been shortlisted for the LAMA awards for 2024. The project is included in the category Best Trail/Waterway in Ireland.

## **Bray Town Team**

Discussions are continuing on the future establishment of a Bray Town Team.

## **Greystones Town Team**

The first meeting of 2024 for the Greystones Town Team CLG took place on 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2024. Updates were given from all sub-groups. It was agreed that the areas of Communication & Events will now be a split responsibility under two separate leads due to larger demand on the resources of these groups.

The team held very successful Christmas events and continue to plan for events for the year, including St. Patricks Day. The town team have established a working group focusing on youth, sport, and wellness, which will enhance community engagement as well as the work of the town team.

Greystones Town Team is working with LEADER on funding a number of sustainability and public realm projects. These include improved beach and sea swimming amenities; climate action training projects; walking trails; and neighbourhood events.

## **Wicklow Town Team**

**The Wicklow Murals** – South Quay Connectivity Project: the bronze wire Wicklow Heron sculpture has been erected at South Quay (beside the Scouts Hall) overlooking the river.

A corten fabricated steel ship has been mounted to the wall on the side of the Town Hall which leads to the port area. This will be softly lit from behind to ensure it will not impact on wildlife.

**Sustainable Energy Community** - Applications for the Community Climate Action Plan opened in mid-December. The SEC is looking at elements in relation to the retrofit of the Pastoral Centre. Applications for the Solar for Schools initiative has opened. The SEC has emailed all schools in the town offering their assistance.

**Pump Track** – The Town Team continue to work on enhancements to amenities such as the pump track on the Murrough.

## **Rural and Urban Regeneration Development Fund Grant Applications**

### **Steering Group for the Progression of URDF and RRDF Projects**

The Chief Executive has established an interdisciplinary team for the progression of Wicklow County Council's URDF (Urban Regeneration and Development Projects) and RRDF (Rural Regeneration and Development Projects) projects. The group will meet monthly to streamline the advancement of RRDF and URDF projects along with a working sub group that will meet fortnightly and report to the steering group. This is a significant step in setting up the structures for town regeneration in the County. These groups continue to meet regularly for discussions on updates.

**Blessington RRDF:** Blessington has been awarded over €1m funding under the Rural Regeneration Development Fund (RRDF) to be used for the regeneration of Blessington Town Centre, the development of plans for public realm works, the redevelopment of a vacant/derelict property to create an eHub and a Visitor Centre for the forthcoming Blessington Lakes eGreenway.

**Baltinglass RRDF:** The costings for Baltinglass Gateway to Southwest Wicklow have come in over budget on both the public realm and the Courthouse refurbishment. The proposals have been revised and the necessary technical plans are complete in order for the works to commence. Works on the Public Park and playground are underway. Drawdown payment for the Baltinglass project has been received from the DHLG&H in the past few weeks.

**Newtownmountkennedy RRDF:** The project is under review at present due to revisions necessary to the public realm, due to contested issues regarding the design of the public realm. Following the necessary revisions it is hoped that agreement will be reached, the plans will be signed off and submitted for Category 1 funding. Drawdown payment for the Newtownmountkennedy project has been received from the DHLG&H in the past few weeks

### **URDF: Urban Regeneration Development Fund**

**URDF Call 3:** The URDF announced that Wicklow will receive €2.5 million to assist long term vacancy and dereliction. Four properties have been chosen (two in Arklow and two in Wicklow) and the process has commenced in acquiring these properties. An information gathering notice has been published on a number of the properties seeking information to be directed to the Council.

DHLG&H have stated that funding is available to identify more properties based on residential capacity, town centre location, and whether they are located close to a URDF supported project.

A Call 4 Funding is expected to be announced in early 2024. More vacant properties will be sought in Q1 2024 in both Wicklow MD and Arklow MD.

**Bray Harbour Improvements:** A tender will be issued when the URDF funding has been confirmed for the next phase of the project. A business case has been sent to DHLG&H and a tender brief is being prepared for the procurement of engineering consultancy services to produce detailed designs, environmental reports and an application to An Bord Pleanala for the proposed works.

## Tourism

**Press Releases and Articles:** During the month of January, communication has been focused on New Year's resolutions and outdoor challenges for 2023.

**Social Media Campaign:** From October until the end of December, Wicklow County Council ran an extensive online promotional campaign promoting Hallowe'en and mid-term, Christmas in Wicklow, and the Wicklow Passport. The campaign achieved tremendous reach and engagement.

**Wicklow Passport:** The Wicklow Passport is currently being redesigned. The new design will add additional pages to the passport, which will allow visitors to collect more stamps. The idea is to allow participating stamping locations to develop and use their own stamps as part of the Wicklow Passport.

**EcoTrail Wicklow:** EcoTrail Wicklow was featured in over seven pages of one of the most popular trail running magazines (Nature Trail). The magazine enjoys a print run of 20,000 copies and extensive online readership in France. As we launch the 2024 EcoTrail Wicklow campaign, the feature offers a tremendous exposure to the French trail running market.

**New Website:** The visitwicklow.ie website has enjoyed a facelift with some needed upgrades and added functionalities including a new layout for the homepage with enhanced imagery, search bar, and special focus on news and events.

**Cycling in Wicklow:** To help promote Wicklow as a fantastic road cycling destination, thirty scenic routes around the county have been identified and digitised. The various routes are spread around the County and are designed to attract family cycles to elite athletes from around the world.

**SnapSea Database:** Wicklow County Council has set up a new online platform to host all tourism related images. The platform makes it much easier to locate and use the images.

**Tourism Ireland:** Tourism Ireland held its annual marketing launch in Dublin on the 9<sup>th</sup> January. This was a great opportunity to get insights on international promotions, find new opportunities for Wicklow and meet up with representatives from the various international markets.

## Abbey Grounds, Wicklow

A detailed design of the Abbey Grounds has been completed.

The architect and structural engineers have almost completed the tender drawings and tender package for the Coach House refurbishment. This tender will be issued within the coming weeks.

The detailed design for the amphitheatre and park area is being finalised. This will issue as a separate contract due to the nature of the works. A proposal for the lighting design for the amphitheatre and park area has also been commissioned.

Site Compound (A) preparatory works began before Christmas, with the archaeologist on site during these works as part of National Monuments Services (NMS) agreement. As part of this agreement, site fencing has been installed around sensitive areas of the site to protect the ground from vehicle damage.

Site Compound (B) preparatory works for compound make up will begin mid-February. A new construction entrance is being provided onto Wentworth Place to provide direct access to the lower area of the grounds. A security gate will also be provided to the site entrance.

Discussions with the parish priest are at an advanced stage in providing a new entrance and extended turning bay to the parochial house.

Ancillary items such as connection agreements are being progressed with utility providers. Survey works of existing abbey ruins being progressed as part of NMS agreement also.

### **Wicklow County Campus Masterplan**

Wicklow County Council will use the Masterplan to act as a catalyst for economic development in the county and attract investment and further development. The Wicklow County Campus Masterplan has been delivered and the contract with MOLA has now concluded.

### **Special Projects**

**Greystones Enterprise Hub:** The purchase of the Enterprise Space in Greystones has completed and work is underway to prepare for fitting-out the building. Discussions are ongoing with Cushman and Wakefield to fit-out, market, and manage the newly purchased Greystones Enterprise Centre.

**Sites on Mill Road, Greystones:** Progress on the Mill Road sites is on hold pending PRA confirmation of site registration.

**Carnew Remote Working Hub:** A tender has been advertised for the design of the former Bank of Ireland building in Carnew for the provision of a remote working hub and ancillary facilities.

**Marketing Plan:** MarketingCoach have been awarded the contract to develop a Marketing Plan for County Wicklow, highlighting the availability of Remote Working Hubs and Broadband Connection Points.

### **Offshore Renewable Energy**

The Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE) Network continues to meet regularly and engage with the offshore renewable energy companies who are developing proposals off the coast of County Wicklow.

### **Skills Strategy**

The Draft Skills Strategy has been presented to the Skills Taskforce and is under final review. It is expected to launch early in 2024.

### **Food and Beverage Strategy**

Work continues on the development of an Action Plan to achieve objectives set out in the Wicklow Food and Beverage Strategy.

## JANUARY 2024



**Wicklow Naturally:** A survey was sent to the members of Wicklow Naturally to seek feedback on achievements over the past few years and help the team define objectives for the future of the brand.

### **Regional Enterprise Innovation Scoping Scheme (REISS)**

A Priming Grant of €199,600 was awarded to Clermont Enterprise Hub CLG from Enterprise Ireland's Regional Enterprise Innovation Scoping Scheme (REISS) for the provision of Design Services for a Food Incubation Development Hub at Wicklow County Campus.

**Local Enterprise Office**

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

<b>METRICS: Grants</b>	<b>HISTORICAL</b>	<b>TARGETS</b>	<b>YEAR TO DATE</b>
	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2024</b>
<b>Grants Approved (number/ value)</b> - Measure 1 - Technical Assistance for Micro Exporters	- 28/ € 672,873 4/ € 6,541	42 Combined	-
NB: Ability to meet demand is influenced by the amount of funding allocated to the LEO			

<b>METRICS: Training/ Capacity Building</b>	<b>HISTORICAL</b>	<b>TARGETS</b>	<b>YEAR TO DATE</b>
	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2024</b>
Total number of participants at Management Development type programmes.	31	60	-
Start Your Own Business Participant numbers (included in total training programmes)	73 / 7 programmes	120	15
Total No. of all Participants participating in training Programmes and events (all programmes except SYOB and MDP)	757	1200	-
Women in Business Network Number of Meetings	30	20	-

<b>METRICS: Business Advice &amp; Mentoring</b>	<b>HISTORICAL</b>	<b>TARGETS</b>	<b>YEAR TO DATE</b>
	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2024</b>
Number of new clients added to database. *Criteria have been amended for this metric	581	500	16
Number of One-to-One Business Advice meetings including Businesses assigned a mentor	528	390	27

<b>METRICS: Student Enterprise Programmes</b>	<b>HISTORICAL</b>	<b>TARGETS</b>	
<b>Academic Year</b>	<b>2021/2023</b>	<b>2023/2024</b>	<b>Year to Date 23-24</b>
No. of Secondary Student Participants	1028	1100	1358

<b>METRICS: Client Transfers to Enterprise Ireland</b>	<b>HISTORICAL</b>	<b>TARGETS</b>	
<b>No of transfers</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>Year to Date 2024</b>
Number of transfers	5	5	-

<b>Trading Online Voucher</b>	<b>HISTORICAL</b>	<b>TARGETS</b>	
<b>No of Trading Online Vouchers approved</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>Year to Date 2024</b>
Trading Online Vouchers	81	38 (meet demand)	0

<b>Lean, Green &amp; Digital Start for Micro Projects</b>	<b>HISTORICAL</b>	<b>TARGETS</b>	<b>YEAR TO DATE</b>
	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2024</b>
No. of Companies who have undertaken a Lean for Business Assessment by a Lean Expert	11	15	-
No. of Companies who have undertaken a Green for Business Assessment by a Green Expert	5	17	-
No. of Companies who have undertaken a Digital for Business Assessment by a Digital Expert	1	6	-
Energy Efficiency Grant	-	12	-

<b>Microfinance Ireland</b>	<b>HISTORICAL</b>	<b>TARGETS</b>	<b>YEAR TO DATE</b>
	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2024</b>
No. of Companies who have submitted an MFI loan application through the LEO	6	11	!

## **December 2023 Events:**

- Export Development Programme commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> November with 8 Wicklow based participants. This is a 2-month programme of 6 workshops and a number of one to one mentor sessions which will culminate in each participant having an Export Strategy for their business to start their internationalisation journey.
- Owner Manager Development Programme concluded on 14<sup>th</sup> Dec 2023. 17 participants completed the Programme.

## **January 2024 Activities**

- Social media and LEO website updates are carried out several times a week to raise awareness and promote the LEO supports.
- Business Advice Clinics continue to run 3 days per week to provide advice to those individuals hoping to start a business and to assist existing businesses grow and develop.

### **Business Skills and IT skills Training Programme**

The training programme for Spring 2024 has been scheduled. Courses are open for bookings through our online portal on [www.localenterprise.ie/wicklow](http://www.localenterprise.ie/wicklow).

## **2. Planning & Development**

### **Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028**

**Healthy Placemaking, 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.

The Wicklow County Development Plan 2022 – 2028 is available to view here –

<https://www.wicklow.ie/Living/Services/Planning/Development-Plans-Strategies/National-Regional-CountyPlans/Wicklow-County-Development-Plan-2022-2028/Stage-7>

### **Variation No. 1 to the CDP (Rathdrum Town Plan)**

Variation No. 1 to the County Development Plan was adopted and came into effect on 06 November 2023. The variation is in relation to Rathdrum Town Plan and has rezoned 0.81ha of land at Ballygannon, Rathdrum, from 'RN – New Residential' to 'OS2 – Passive Open Space' and amended the written text of the Rathdrum Town Plan to reflect the changes consequent from the rezoning.

The Variation process and the Wicklow County Development Plan as varied is available to view here -

<https://www.wicklow.ie/Living/Services/Planning/Development-Plans-Strategies/National-Regional-CountyPlans/Wicklow-County-Development-Plan-2022-2028/Variation-to-the-County-Development-Plan-2022-2028>

### **Local Area Plans**

There are 5 Local Area Plans in Wicklow for the following settlements – 'Bray Municipal District', 'Wicklow Town - Rathnew', 'Greystones – Delgany & Kilcoole', 'Arklow & Environs' and 'Blessington'. We are in the pre-draft stage for preparing a new plan for 'Wicklow Town - Rathnew', 'Greystones – Delgany & Kilcoole' and 'Blessington'.

### **Wicklow Town – Rathnew Local Area Plan**

Pre-draft consultation closed for the new Wicklow Town - Rathnew Local Area Plan closed on 28 September 2023 with 84 submissions received. A well-attended public information day was held on 14 September 2023. All valid submissions have been reviewed and are available online. The submissions are being considered and a draft plan is being prepared. Once the draft plan is prepared it will go out on public consultation for 6 weeks with submissions invited from everyone.

The Wicklow Town - Rathnew Local Area Plan pre-draft process is available to view here -

<https://www.wicklow.ie/Living/Services/Planning/Development-Plans-Strategies/Local-Area-Town-Settlement-Plans/Wicklow-Town-Rathnew/Wicklow-Town-Rathnew-Local-Area-Plan>

## **Greystones – Delgany & Kilcoole Local Area Plan**

We have commenced the review of the existing plan and preparing a new Local Area Plan for the settlements of 'Greystones-Delgany' & 'Kilcoole'. An online consultation portal has been created for this pre-draft stage. The closing date for submissions is 31 January 2024. Public open days are scheduled for the Greystones MD office and Kilcoole community centre in January 2024.

The Greystones – Delgany & Kilcoole Local Area Plan pre-draft process and the consultation portal is available to view here -

<https://www.wicklow.ie/Living/Services/Planning/Development-Plans-Strategies/Local-Area-Town-Settlement-Plans/Greystones-Delgany/Greystones-Delgany-Kilcoole-Local-Area-Plan>

## **Blessington Local Area Plan**

The team are at the data gathering and surveying stage and are in the process of preparing the online consultation web portal for the pre-draft consultations for Blessington. It is intended to start pre-draft plan public consultation for Blessington in Q1 2024.

Consultants have been appointed to carry out the SEA and AA for the three LAPs and they are continuing to work on the SEA/ AA work. All other studies / assessments are intended at this time to be carried out in-house.

The current LAP's for these three settlements, as well as the Arklow and Environs LAP and Bray MD LAP are available to view here

<https://www.wicklow.ie/Living/Services/Planning/Development-Plans-Strategies/Local-Area-Town-Settlement-Plans>

## **RZLT – Residential Zoned Land Tax**

The RZLT is a tax aimed at activating serviced and residentially zoned land for housing. Local authorities are responsible for identifying the land that is liable to pay the RZLT. The final RZLT 2024 maps were published on 01 December 2023. The Minister has advised that the first liability date for the tax is proposed to be deferred from 1st February 2024 to 1st February 2025. The RZLT maps will be updated annually.

All relevant information and the final RZLT 2024 maps are available to view here –

<https://www.wicklow.ie/Living/Services/Planning/Residential-Zoned-Land-Tax>

## **Vacant Site Levy**

This programme is still ongoing and is affected by the proposed deferral of the RZLT. As liability to the RZLT is now proposed to be deferred for one year, it is considered appropriate to maintain provisions in legislation for the management and continued charging of the vacant site levy in respect of land which is identified on the register. This will continue to

facilitate imminent placements on the register, conclusion of appeals and to facilitate the issuing of demands in relation to the levy for the period to the end of 2024. This will ensure that the use of the levy as an active land management measure will continue until the RZLT is in effect.

More information can be found online at the following link

<https://www.wicklow.ie/Living/Services/Planning/Derelict-Vacant-Sites/Vacant-Sites>

## Heritage & Biodiversity Office

**County Heritage Plan (CHP):** All 2023 projects complete and grant funding recouped. County Heritage Plan programme 2024 for application to The Heritage Council is in preparation, due by early Feb

**National Biodiversity Action Plan Funded projects:** All 2023 projects complete and grant funding recouped. Biodiversity action programme 2024 in preparation, due by early Feb.

**Brittas Bay Biodiversity Project :** Invasive species (Sea Buckthorn) control undertaken in mid Jan at North Beach in line with Conservation Management Plan for Brittas Bay. Community/ Volunteer Sea Buckthorn removal event planned for 27<sup>th</sup> Jan at South Beach to control spread of this invasive species and raise awareness generally of the biodiversity of this council owned coastal area.

**Archaeology:** Community Monuments Fund- CMF 2024 has been advertised and applications invited from the public. Wicklow County Council project applications are also being prepared. Deadline for public applications is 30<sup>th</sup> Jan. Assessment and applications for county Wicklow to be forwarded to National Monuments Service by 14<sup>th</sup> Feb.

**Built Heritage Capital Funds (Architecture):** Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS) and Historic Structures Fund (HSF) 2024 have been advertised and invitations invited. Deadline for applications to WCC is 19<sup>th</sup> Jan, all projects to be assessed and funding proposals to be submitted to Department by 2<sup>nd</sup> Feb.

## Development Management

### Planning Applications

Total valid applications received	To 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2023	To 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2022	% difference
Received (Valid)	1452	1421	2.2%

A total of 91 valid applications were received during December as follows:

Type of Development	31 <sup>st</sup> December 2023 Number Received
Individual Houses	19 (18 refer to a rural house)
Housing Developments*	03
Agricultural Structures	06
Commercial	08

Other Developments**	55
<b>Total</b>	91

\*\*Other Developments include, Porch/Sunroom, Extensions, finger sign post, Well, change of use, Hoarding, relocation of vehicular entrance, extend the appropriate period of permission, various amendments/modifications to previous planning permission, conversion, retention, boundary screen wall, attic conversion, reclamation of land, effluent treatment system & percolation area.

**Large Housing Developments**

PRR23/914, Cedarbrick Retail Developments Ltd., Mariners Point, Greenhills Road, Wicklow – 56 no. residential units

Decisions issued in respect of 83 applications in December 2023

Type of Development	Number of Decisions
Housing Developments	01
Individual Houses	00
Other Developments	81
Other Developments Requiring EIA	1
<b>Total</b>	83

Decisions issued between January to December 2023, in comparison to the same period for 2022:

	31/12/2022	31/12/2023
Total Number of decisions issued	1037	1008
Total Number of decisions to grant	857	842
% Grant Rate	83%	83%
No of applications withdrawn		14 (05 refer to rural house)

**Applications Lodged with An Bord Pleanala**

**Strategic Housing Development**

ABP-313229-22 – Lands at Coolagad, Greystones (586 Units) Members Meeting 27/4/2022, CE report forwarded 30/5/2022

ABP-313314-22 – Lands at Fassaroe and Monastery, Bray (650 Units) Members Meeting 10/5/2022, CE forwarded 07/06/2022 – ABP unable to determine within the 16 weeks statutory timeframe.

ABP-313442-22 – Lands at the former Heiton Buckley site on Castle Street, Bray, (139 Units) Members Meeting 10/05/2022, CE report forwarded 22/06/2022

ABP-314686-22 Lands at former Bray Golf Club Lands, Off Ravenswell Road and Dublin Road, Bray, Co. Dublin and Co. Wicklow, (586 Units), Members meeting 4<sup>th</sup> October 2022, CE report submitted 21/11/2022

### **Strategic Infrastructure Development**

An Bord Pleanála has received an application for approval under section 182A(1) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended -ABP-310090-21- Proposed development will comprise the onshore grid infrastructure including 220kV export cable circuits and fibre optic cables, new 220kV GIS substation at Shelton Abbey and overhead line connection and all associated ancillary works. In the townlands of Johnstown North, Johnstown South, Seabank, Ballymoney, Killiniskyduff, Templerainy, Coolboy, Kilbride, Shelton Abbey, Ballyraine Lower and Ballyraine Middle, in Co. Wicklow – approved with conditions 27/5/2023.

An Bord Pleanála has received an application for permission under section 37E of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended -ABP-309991-21 - Development and operation of an inert landfill facility to backfill the existing quarry to original ground level; progressive restoration of the backfilled quarry to longterm grassland/scrub habitat: establishment and operation of a construction and demolition waste recovery facility; installation and operation of a soil washing plant and all associated site works at Ballinclare and Carrigmore townlands, Kilbride, Co. Wicklow – Decision, refuse permission under section 37G of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, 27/09/2023.

An Bord Pleanála has received an application for proposed development primarily comprising of the provision of a new 110 KV substation with Gas Insulator Switchgear (GIS) technology and two 110kV underground transmission cables (connecting to existing 220kV overhead lines to the northwest of the proposed substation) along with associated and ancillary works at Bogland, Kish, Cooladangan, Ballintombay, Ballyroonaun and Ballynattin, Co. Wicklow – ABP approved proposed development subject to 15 conditions 30/11/2023.

### **Substitute Consent**

An Bord Pleanála has received an application for substitute consent for the remainder of the development on lands at Ashford, Co. Wicklow - ABP-312283-21 refers.

An Bord Pleanála has received an application for substitute consent for development that consists of a sand/gravel extraction pit including extraction areas, processing areas, stockpiling areas and ancillary works (circa 23.7 hectares). The development also includes a sand/gravel washing/screening plant & buildings comprising workshop/machinery shed, tools storage container, pump – house, 2 no. portable office buildings, 1 no. portable office/canteen/WC, Sand processing plant electrical control room, 3 no. storage containers, sand processing plant electrical control room, 3 no. storage containers, sand processing plant control cabin, banded oil storage tanks, diesel generator container &

electrical substation (all totalling circa 376sqm) The application is accompanied by a remedial EIAR and remedial NIS. Lands at Ballinabarney North & Bolagh Lower, Redcorss, Co. Wicklow.

## EPlanning

The ePlanning system went live on 17<sup>th</sup> April 2023 with applications being submitted online almost immediately. Since going live 50.62% of applications have been received online. The month of September showed for the first time online applications exceeding hard copy applications at 53.03%, and October increased to 55.73%, November was an even 50%, and the month of December saw 62.4% of applications received through the eplanning system.

There has been a mix of application types received including:

- One off houses/extensions
- 26 apartments in Bray
- 68 dwellings in Rathnew
- 7 new houses in Greystones
- Coastal defence works and commercial units
- 12 residential apartments in bray
- Installation of an aircraft noise monitoring terminal at Roundwood
- Change of use of Boswell House Ancillary Building and The Stables to 7 apartments providing short stay residential accommodation
- Construction of 131 parking spaces which includes 24 electrical charging points at Templerainey, Arklow
- Construction of 30 no. dwellings, Wicklow Town
- 397sqm industrial unit in Kilcoole
- Erect 14,500m<sup>2</sup> of photovoltaic panels, Arklow
- Large Scale Residential Development – 352 residential units, Tinakilly, Rathnew
- Erecting a 21m high multi-user monopole structure together with antennas, dishes & associated telecommunications equipment, Delgany
- Construction in 2 phases of three storey split level school building at Loreto Secondary School, Bray.
- The installation of 3,492sqm of solar photovoltaic (PV) panels on ground mounted frames on an agricultural plot within the existing complex at Shelton Abbey Open Prison, Arklow.
- Development at Kilmacurragh House (A Protected Structure), stabilisation and restoration of the building exterior, reinstatement of the natural slate roof of the Original house and South Wing and other works at Kilmacurragh House.
- Proposed new housing development consisting of 46 residential units at Kilcoole, Co. wicklow.
- Light Industrial/Warehousing development of 3,219.17sqm, consisting of 12 units, at Rathdrum, Co. Wicklow.
- Construction of 6 new houses in Blacklion, Greystones
- New development consisting of 12 residential units in Roundwood.
- Change of use of existing vacant building comprising ground floor retail unit, and first & second floor office/commercial unit to a proposed tourism guest house accommodation of 17 guest bedrooms over the ground floor in Bray, Co. Wicklow

**Planning Enforcement**

New Files	3
Advisory Letters	23
Warning Letters	2
Enforcement Notices	0
Legal Files	0
Closed	11

**Vacant Sites**

Municipal District	No. of Sites on Register
Arklow	7
Baltinglass	1
Bray	2
Greystones	4
Wicklow	6

01 sites on appeal to ABP – Section 9 (Notice of Entry)

02 sites on appeal to ABP - Section 18 (Demand Levy)

**Derelict Sites**

Municipal District	No sites on Register
Baltinglass	2

**Short Term Letting – 01/10/23 – 31/12/23**

Applications received for Registration in October 2023	2
Complaints received in October 2023	0
Warning Letters issued in October 2023	0
Enforcement Notices issued in October 2023	0
Legal proceedings in October 2023	0
Files under investigation as of 31/12/2023	57

### 3. Environment

#### Litter/Waste Management

<b>LITTER/WASTE ENFORCEMENT</b>	
No. of Complaints Created	73
No. of Cases Closed, Resolved or Completed	61
No of Litter Fines Issued	4
No. of Waste Management Files Opened	1
No. of Warning Letters Issued	4
No of Abandoned Car Notices Issued	3
No. of Burning Applications Granted	0
No. of Temporary Signs Granted	0
No. of Notices Issued under Section 14 of the Waste Management Act	6
No. of Notices Issued under Section 18 of the Waste Management Act	0
No. of Notices Issued under Section 55 of the Waste Management Act	0
No. of Fixed Penalty Notices issued	0
No. of files prepared for Court and included in Court Lists	16
No. of Cases in Court under the Litter Pollution Act	0
No. of Cases in Court under the Waste Management Act	2
Income - Litter	€1,080.00
Income - Waste Management	€0

#### Climate Action Plan

The Climate Action Plan was adopted by the Members at the Ordinary Meeting on the 08th January 2024. The adopted Plan has been circulated to members and TD's. The plan is currently being translated into Irish by MeasMedia.

#### Community Climate Action Programme

Funding of €646,000 allocated to Wicklow. This programme was formally launched on the 6th December with Communication campaign and Grant Application Pack. There is ongoing engagement with various communities.

#### Climate Adaptation

##### Coastal Erosion

Wicklow County Council continues to reduce and manage the risk of flooding in developed areas by cooperating with other agencies in implementing government policy in respect of the management of Coastal and Fluvial Flood Risk and Coastal Erosion Risk.

It is a priority of Wicklow County Council to work in conjunction with Irish Rail on the East Coast Coastal Erosion Study (ECRIPP East Coast Railway Infrastructure Protection Project) and seek funding from OPW as appropriate.

Wicklow County Council has received funding from the OPW and appointed Malachy Walsh & Co Ltd consultants (subject to no legal challenges) to carry out a Coastal Erosion Risk Management Study for Brittas Bay and Ennereilly Beaches.

Applications for funding from the OPW under Minor Works are also being progressed for the following:

- Arklow North Beach (OPW have indicated that WCC can apply for funding for a Coastal Erosion Risk Management Study, This has been lodged with the OPW)
- Greystones North Beach (Funding submitted to OPW, May be covered by ECRIPP)

### **Mid-East Energy Unit**

- Mid-East Energy Unit Steering Group meeting scheduled for early February
- ISO 50001 10 day training completed for the 3 local authorities
- Draft appraisal reports compiled by CODEMA to inform the pilot project for swimming pool energy upgrades issued to 3 LA's
- Ongoing energy review and collaboration with Wicklow, Kildare and Meath Energy Officers. Monitoring and Reporting review now completed for Kildare, Meath and Wicklow.
- Fortnightly meetings held with Energy Officers (Meath, Kildare & Wicklow), technical working group meetings also ongoing.
- Collation of energy projects across the region for 2024/2025 with support from SEAI Pathfinder
- Supporting the 3 LA's in completing the SEAI Buildings Register
- First SEAI Pathfinder financial drawdown to support contribution to Codema and energy projects

### **Wicklow County Council Energy**

- A Wicklow Energy Team meeting was convened in November, the energy team outlined the current status of ISO 50001, challenges faced, planned energy projects and the council's Significant Energy Users to the team
- SEAI ISO 50001 - Wicklow County Council has signed up to the SEAI ISO 50001 Accelerator Programme, a year-long programme which will allow the Council to apply for ISO 50001 accreditation
- Working with appointed ISO mentor on action plan. Currently tendering for 3 year certification process.
- The Energy Office is currently working with its energy partners CODEMA to develop a pipeline of projects to reach our 2030 targets. Targeting large energy users across the council's building stock.
- Ongoing communications with Coral Leisure & Shoreline Leisure, addressing challenge of decarbonising the swimming pools.
- Tender issued for the decarbonising project for Bray Fire Station, tender process currently ongoing
- Updating Energy Elephant to include all energy users profile and building stock
- Tender issued for Bray MD Office for Heat Pump installation through Supply Gov
- BER and Energy Appraisal report currently in progress for County Buildings

**Environmental Awareness**

- Completion of processing of annual tree grant applications, and 17 groups will receive payments of up to 500euro to plant native trees and hedgerows.
- AEAO attending Bray partnership lunch to discuss future collaborations, 04.12.23.
- AEAO facilitated the launch of the 2GoCup scheme in Blessington. Four outlets have joined the scheme. The Cathaoirleach of Wicklow CC attended, 14.12.23. Press release issued.
- AEAO gave a talk on the CAP as part of a climate cafe series, being launched by the Mermaid Arts Centre in Bray, 15.12.23.
- The annual Christmas decoration competition was run in Dec., and was a big success, as always. Over 60 entries from more than 20 schools around the county were received. An award ceremony was held in County Buildings on the evening of the 20th. It was very well attended, and prizes were presented by WCC CEO and Cathaoirleach. Press release issued.

**Harbours and Ports**

**Harbour Projects**

The projects below were funded by the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine under the Brexit Adjustment Local Authority Marine Infrastructure Scheme 2022-2023 (BALAMI). The scheme ended in December 2023 and all monies were drawn down.

<b>Arklow Harbour</b>	<b>Grant Available</b>	<b>Project Update</b>
Inner Harbour Arklow pontoon	€286,355	Pontoon with 16 berths has been installed for Fishers. Water and electricity will be connected in the coming weeks
South Quay Arklow Storage facilities	€391,025	The construction of 14 storage huts for fishers and harbour users. Expected completion by end January
Arklow Harbour welfare facilities	€100,000.00	A unit consisting of Toilet and shower facilities for harbour users has been installed. Some civil and commissioning works remain to be completed.
Wicklow Harbour Navigation aids	€47,500	Repair and refurbishment of the East Pier Lighthouse. The lighthouse will also be repainted in the coming months.
South Quay Wicklow Harbour pontoon	€48,450	Installation is complete. Water and electricity to be connected in the coming weeks.
North Quay, Wicklow - additional quay space	€120,000.00	Works are underway to be completed mid-December

Wicklow Harbour - concrete works	€140,782	Works completed on surface of Packet Pier. Concrete pumped into West (new) Pier to repair damage under water level. Project Completed.
Wicklow - welfare facilities	€ 75,788.87	A unit consisting of Toilet and shower facilities for harbour users has been installed. Some civil and commissioning works remain to be completed.

**Wicklow Harbour – Cargo Movements**

**Harbour Movements**

Month / Year	Ships	Single (Import or Export)	Double (Import & Export)	Transactions	Imports	Exports
Jan-23	7	4	3	10	7	3
Feb-23	9	6	3	12	7	5
Mar-23	7	5	2	9	6	3
Apr-23	7	6	1	8	6	2
May-23	7	5	2	9	6	3
Jun-23	5	4	1	6	4	2
Jul-23	8	4	4	11	7	4
Aug-23	8	7	1	9	8	4

Sep-23	8	4	4	12	8	4
Oct 23	9	7	2	11	7	4
Nov 23	8	6	2	10	0	0
Dec	5	3	2	7	0	0
<b>2023 Total</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>34</b>

**Pollution Control**

**Pollution Response & Investigation**

- 5 Water pollution complaints received and investigated.
- 7 Water pollution complaints closed.
- 1 Noise pollution complaints received and investigated.
- 2 Noise pollution complaints closed.
- 1 Air pollution complaints received and investigated.
- 1 Air pollution complaints closed.

**Municipal Wastewater Treatment Plants – Ambient Monitoring**

- 4 River/Lake samples taken upstream and downstream of wastewater discharges of municipal wastewater treatment plants.

**Good Agricultural Practice Inspections**

- 3 Inspections of farms carried out for adherence to good agricultural practice.
- 2 Inspection of farm carried out on foot of pollution complaint.

**Private Water Supplies**

- 2 Private water supplies monitored deemed compliant with drinking water limits
- 1 Private water supplies monitored deemed non-compliant with drinking water limits
- 1 Boil water/Do not consume restrictions placed on private water supplies
- 4 Boil water /Do not consume restrictions lifted from private water supplies after remedial actions and compliant verification testing were undertaken.

**Water Framework Directive National Monitoring Programme**

- 2 Lakes monitored for checking compliance with environmental quality standards
- 9 Rivers monitored for compliance with environmental quality standards.

## **Well Grants**

- 9 New Water Grant applications received
- 3 New Well granted
- 5 New Pumps granted
- 7 Water Treatment/Disinfection Equipment Units granted
- 15 Inspections in advance/completion of works

## **Petrol Vapour Recovery Regulations**

- 0 Stage II Petrol Vapour Recovery pump installation issued with certificate of testing.
- 1 Stage I Petrol Vapour Recovery underground tank applications assessed.
- 3 Stage II Petrol Vapour Recovery pump installation was inspected.
- 1 Stage I Petrol Vapour Recovery underground tank was inspected.

## **Deco Paint Solvent Regulations**

- 0 Vehicle refinisher installations inspected.
- 0 Vehicle refinisher installations issued with certificate of compliance.
- 0 Paint retailers inspected
- 0 Vehicle refinisher installations issued with letter.
- 0 Dry Cleaner installations inspected
- 1 Dry Cleaner installations issued with certificate of compliance.

## **Solid Fuels Regulations**

- 14 Inspections of wholesalers, retailers and distributors of solids fuels.
- 0 information campaign conducted.

## **Planning & Development**

- 11 environmental reports on referred planning applications/consultations were completed concerning agricultural, commercial and forestry development.
- 0 compliance checks on conditions relating to existing permissions

## **Control of Dogs**

### **Dog Licences**

221 dog licence reminders were sent out in December 2023.

A total of 244 dog licences were purchased in December 2023, of which 231 were annual licences and 13 were lifetime licences. 112 of the total licences purchased were purchased on-line.

A total of 5064 dog licences were purchased in 2023, 4721 being annual licences and 343 being lifetime licences.

A new dog warden commenced employment with the ISPCA on 3rd January 2024. There are currently two dog wardens attached to Wicklow Dog Pound, Sharpshill.

### **Blue Flags**

Applications have been submitted to An Taisce for renewal of blue flags at Brittas Bay North & South and Greystones South. Closing date for this application was 30<sup>th</sup> November.

## Green Coast Awards

The Green Coast Award recognises beaches for their clean environment, excellent water quality, natural beauty and effective and appropriate management to ensure the protection of the natural environment.

Green Coast Award sites are exceptional places to visit and enjoy our rich coastal heritage and diversity.

An important aspect of the Green Coast Awards is the involvement of Clean Coasts Groups of which there are currently over 1800 comprised of tens of thousands of volunteers nationwide.

These volunteers participate in community clean-ups and in cooperation with Local Authorities help sensitively manage their local beaches throughout the year.

### **To be considered for the award, beach applicant sites should be:**

- Managed carefully and in close consultation with conservation organisations to account for their environmentally sensitive nature as part of a management plan.
- Cleaned of litter sensitively, without removing natural debris such as driftwood and seaweed.
- Assessed for the visual impact on the surrounding landscape of facilities and signs that may be present on the beach.

The award, which is operated by An Taisce's Environmental Education unit with the support of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and Fáilte Ireland, encourages community involvement through the setting up of Clean Coasts Groups.

Clean Coasts Groups formulate their own aims, objectives and activities to clean up and protect their adopted stretch of coastline with the support of An Taisce's Coastal Programmes Officers.

Applications for a Green Coast Award are made to an Taisce and include the completion of an application form, a beach management plan and the submission of water quality sample results.

An application has been submitted for a Green Coast award at Arklow beach to An Taisce by Arklow Coast Care.

The application was facilitated by Wicklow County Council.

Results for both the Blue Flag and Green Coast Award will not be advised by An Taisce until May 2024.

Wicklow County Council intends to promote the Green Coast Award throughout the coastal districts in 2024, commencing with Greystones in January.

Active Clean Coast Groups interested in applying for a Green Coast award should engage with the Environmental Services section in Wicklow County Council, should they wish to pursue this award from an Taisce.

## Projects Office

### **Whitestown Remediation Project**

The draft remediation plan has been presented to the court and has been approved in part. Preparation of the tender documents is on hold pending Court hearing.

### **Avoca Mines Remediation Project**

The Council is working in Partnership with DECC to advance the Remediation of the Avoca Mines project. Currently, this work primarily involves making the mines sites safe, by replacing fencing and making safe access to locations that require sampling and monitoring.

### **Arklow Flood Relief Scheme**

Planning Application and CPO has been approved by An Bord Pleanála. Approval has been received from OPW to move onto the next stage and appoint Byrne Looby Partners Ltd to carry out the detailed design and tender stage of the project. Contract signing will take place in December 2023.

A tender has been published for an archaeological underwater survey.

## Transportation, Water & Emergency Services

### 1. Transportation

#### Public Lighting Maintenance

A new PL maintenance contract is in place, with a contract length of one year with a maximum two possible annual extensions.

Please find attached the latest update on the outstanding public faults. The total number of faults currently outstanding stands at **412 – 2.68%** of total stock of 15,345. Please note that some of these faults are dependent on ESB attendance and co-operation and we are currently drawing up a program with the ESB to repair these faults. For your information below is a comparison on the number of outstanding faults over the previous weeks.

Status	ARKLOW MD	BALTINGLASS MD	BRAY MD	GREYSTONES MD	WICKLOW MD	Grand Total
Access Issues (Attended)	5	4	5	2	2	18
Cable Fault (Attended)	2	1	3	1	4	11
ESB Interface Required	2	2	12	4	4	24
ESB Required (Attended)	17	16	6	16	13	68
Knock Down (Attended)			1			1
Materials Required	1	3	4		1	9
No Supply		1	1	1		3
On Hold	16	4	11	6	8	45
Submitted	52	44	58	35	31	220
TMR	4	2	1		2	9
Tree Cutting Required	1	1	1		1	4
<b>Grand Total</b>	100	78	103	65	66	412
<b>Percentage Not Working</b>	3.29%	3.22%	3.05%	2.32%	1.79%	2.68%

Date	08/01/2024	15/01/2024	22/01/2024
Access Issues (Attended)	15	17	18
Cable Fault (Attended)	11	11	11
ESB Interface Required	24	24	24
ESB Required (Attended)	66	67	68
Knock Down (Attended)	0	0	1
Materials Required	10	10	9
No Supply	3	3	3
On Hold	30	45	45
Submitted	279	217	220
Traffic Management Required	8	9	9
Tree Cutting Required	4	4	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>407</b>	<b>412</b>
<b>PERCENTAGE NOT WORKING</b>	<b>2.93%</b>	<b>2.65%</b>	<b>2.68%</b>

**Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project (PLEEP)**

The survey element of the above project commenced in November in Arklow MD, initial surveys have been completed in Arklow, Baltinglass and Bray MDs and surveys are ongoing in Greystones & Wicklow MDs. This is the initial phase of the project, and the fitting of lanterns will follow on in due course.

**Periodic Speed Limits**

PWS Signs Ltd. has commenced on the erection of poles for the signage. The signage is due to be put up commencing month end.

**Parking Income**

Parking Income by Municipal District	EURO
Bray Municipal District	<b>1,045,822</b>
Greystones Municipal District	<b>303,918</b>
Wicklow Municipal District	<b>398,641</b>
Arklow Municipal District	<b>225,565</b>
Parking Permits	<b>101,170</b>
Parking Fines	<b>482,366</b>
<b>Wicklow County Council</b>	<b>2,557,483</b>

**Transportation Statistics**

	Total 2021	Total 2022	Total 2023	November 2023	December 2023
<b>Solicitors Queries</b>	923	838	1026	92	62
<b>Road closure applications</b>	53	78	42	1	2
<b>Road Opening licences</b>	1575	1414	1956	120	89

<b>Abnormal Load applications</b>	54	60	54	7	3
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**M11N11 Junction 4 to 14 Improvement Scheme**

The Option Selection report was published along with Bulletin #11 on the project website [www.n11m11.ie](http://www.n11m11.ie) on 14 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. The scheme is currently suspended as no funding was provided to continue during 2022 or 2023. The Wicklow County Council project team are continuing to meet with the public and any interested parties.

**M11N11 Bus Priority Interim Scheme**

The BPIS seeks to achieve the early delivery of bus priority measures in advance of the main scheme between Loughlinstown Roundabout and Junction 9 (Glenview). The scheme is currently at the Options Selection phase (Phase 2 of TII’s Project Management Guidelines).

A non-statutory public display on the emerging preferred options for sections A and C took place in November 2022. Following further analysis, an emerging preferred option for the provision of bus priority measures between Junction 6 (Fassaroe) and Junction 8 (Kilmacanogue) was identified. A Public Display event was held in the Glenview Hotel on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2023. The display presented the overall emerging preferred option for the BPIS between Loughlinstown Roundabout and Junction 9 (Glenview). The public display documents are available to view on the project website [www.n11m11bpis.ie](http://www.n11m11bpis.ie). The deadline for receipt of submissions on the emerging preferred option was extended by 3 weeks to the 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2023. The Project Team are now considering all submissions received.

**N11 Parallel Service Road at Kilmacanogue**

A noise assessment for the 7 no residential properties to the east of the new Parallel Service Road Scheme was carried out during April and May 2022. The options review and design commenced in March 2023 following confirmation of funding from TII. Site investigation works were completed in November 2023. This information has been reviewed by the Design Team and the final design option is being prepared.

**N81 Knockroe Bend Realignment**

Tenders for a Per-Cent Art Feature are being procured by the Arts Office. The preferred feature has been selected pending the completion of the final assessment stage.

**N81 Irishtown West, Whitestown Lower, Hangman’s Bend and Tuckmill Lower “N81 Four Studies”**

Following completion of Phase 1 feasibility studies (The N81 Four Studies – Feasibility Report), Wicklow County Council are now progressing the following two projects:

- N81 Whitestown Lower Project; and
- N81 Hangman’s Bend and Tuckmill Project.

The Phase 2 Options Selection work is currently progressing under TII’s Project Management Guidelines.

**N81 Pavement Capital Works**

Resurfacing works of 1km of the N81 between Tuckmill and Saundersgrove is now expected to be carried out in Q1 2024.

**N81 Rural Traffic Calming & Bus Stop at Hollywood**

The Feasibility and Options report was finalised and approved by TII in November 2023. TII have also approved funding to proceed with the design phase in accordance with TII Standards. Wicklow County Council will now progress this project to the design phase to be followed by any necessary statutory approvals process.

**Park & Ride/Share at Hollywood**

A feasibility report, funded by the Baltinglass Municipal District was prepared and submitted to TII in Oct 2021. This report considered an option for parking accessed from the N81. TII subsequently provided funding to further examine the feasibility and options.

TII have indicated that they do not support the proposed additional access to the N81. As a result, the option for a parking facility accessed from the N81 has been discounted from the current scheme. A way forward is to consider suitable parking locations, that can be accessed from the regional/local road network.

## **N81 Blessington Gateway Project**

The Feasibility and Options report was finalised and approved by TII in October 2023. TII have also approved funding to proceed with the design phase in accordance with TII Standards. Wicklow County Council will now progress this project to the design phase to be followed by any necessary statutory approvals process.

## **N11/M11 Park & Ride Facilities**

Proposals for bus-based Park & Ride facilities are being progressed adjacent to the N11/M11 at Junctions 6 (Fassaroe), Junction 11 (Kilpedder) and Junction 16 (Ashford/Rathnew).

A part 8 for the Park and Ride at Junction 6 Fassaroe commenced on Wednesday 23rd August 2023 with plans and documents on public display until Wednesday 20th September 2023. Submissions or observations were accepted on or before 12 noon on Wednesday 4th October 2023. The Chief Executive's report was presented to the full meeting of Wicklow County Council on the 6<sup>th</sup> November 2023 where it was passed following a vote by Councillors.

## **Arklow Public Realm**

The Parade Ground Public Realm works have reached a significant milestone, with substantial completion and successful snagging. Following a meeting with DoHLGH, Project Completion Reports were submitted with additional funding requested in December 2023.

## **Arklow to Shillelagh Greenway**

After the successful non-statutory public consultation, we are currently reviewing submissions received as part of the public consultation process. We are in the final stages of Phase 2 Options Selection, which will determine the preferred route for the Greenway with landowner consultation ongoing. Following this, we will proceed to Phase 3, involving Design and Environmental Evaluation.

## **Baltinglass Town Centre Plan**

The consultants are actively engaged in preparing documents for the delivery of a revised tender package for the town centre works, focusing on a reduced scope. Simultaneously, they are conducting a value engineering exercise specifically targeted at this aspect of the project. The objective is to bring the scheme within the budget limits currently in place. Reduced scope town centre works presented at Baltinglass Municipal District meeting. Final tender package issued by Arup. The direct labour crew have met regarding the undergrounding of utilities to de-risk project. Setting out of services by direct labour crew has been carried out. Meeting took place with ESB, Eir, Enerveo to check provisions for utilities Arup to make design changes to advance undergrounding. Arup issued drawings for undergrounding element of works for review.

## **Blessington Inner Relief Road**

The current focus of the project is on the detailed design phase, including the preparation of associated documents such as the Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) documentation. These efforts are crucial to advance the scheme towards obtaining statutory approval. Given the potential impact of the project on the Poulaphuca Special Protection Area (SPA), it is necessary to prepare a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) to assess and document any potential effects on the SPA. Once the detailed design and associated documents, including the NIS, are completed, the project will proceed to seek statutory approval from An Bord Pleanála.

## **Wicklow County Council Compulsory Purchase (Chapel Road Pedestrian and Cycle Infrastructure Improvement Scheme) No. 1 Order 2021**

The CPO Notice to Treat was issued on all landowners in October 2023. There is active engagement between Wicklow Roads Project staff and landowners who are part of the CPO, with landowner meetings taking place on November and December and January. Our project valuer is engaging with valuers and homeowners as part of the CPO process. Consultants are making steady progress in the detailed design phase and are currently focused on preparing the tender documents for the construction phase which are anticipated to be issued in early 2024. Simultaneously, we are in the process of developing tender documents for the appointment of a consultant to oversee the works during the construction phase.

## **Wicklow Greystones Greenway**

Wicklow County Council has recently engaged consultants Atkins for the project and their work is already in progress, focusing on data gathering. Additionally, the consultants are actively organizing detailed environmental surveys, which will play a vital role in shaping the route options and conducting constraint studies.

In April, a productive meeting took place with Irish Rail concerning the East Coast Rail Infrastructure Protection Project. During this meeting, an agreement was reached to facilitate the sharing of environmental data, fostering collaboration between the involved parties.

Meeting with the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) took place in June. The meeting provided an opportunity to engage with the NPWS and discuss important aspects related to the project.

Atkins and Irish Rail consultants Jacobs are in communication regarding environmental surveys with a further joint meeting taking place in late August. A Constraints Report has been finalised, Landownership maps are being completed and Draft Stage 1 Route Corridor Assessment has been issued from Atkins. Draft public consultation material is being developed. An Independent agronomist appointed for the scheme. A meeting with IR has been requested as the IR coastal protection project will have a major impact on the preferred greenway route corridor.

## **Blessington eGreenway**

Under Section 177AE of the Planning and Development Act, we have formally submitted our planning documents to An Bord Pleanála. Given the need to conduct comprehensive additional surveys and generate a substantial volume of supporting material, An Bord Pleanála granted an extension to the submission deadline, now set for January 2024. We are currently in the process of finalising the reports, documents, and drawing responses, and will be submitted to An Bord Pleanála before the January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024, deadline.

## **Active Travel Updates – December**

### **Completed Projects**

#### **Kilcoole Road Pedestrian and Cycle Improvements (Greystones MD)**

Provision of 500m of new footpath and 500m of cycle track along the R-761.

### **Projects Under Construction**

#### **Ballyguilemore Active Travel Facilities (Wicklow MD)**

Provision of new pedestrian facilities and road safety improvements along the Ballyguilemore Road between Carrig View and the entrance to the proposed new St. Patricks GAA Pitch. The scheme includes for new footpaths and road widening works. Construction works commenced in January 2024.

#### **Arklow North Cycle and Pedestrian Scheme (Arklow MD)**

The construction of cycle and pedestrian facilities on the R-772 Dublin Road. The scheme involves construction of a footpath and segregated cycle facilities on the R-772 between the M11 Junction 11. The works are substantially complete, with high-friction surfacing and line marking works to be completed in the coming weeks when the weather permits (Dry weather conditions are required).

#### **Arklow South Cycle and Pedestrian Scheme (Arklow MD)**

Provision of 2.8km of segregated cycle track along the R-772 Wexford Road, Arklow between Knockmore Roundabout and M11 Junction 21. The scheme will also construct 1.4km approx. of pedestrian footpath. Works continue to progress, with drainage and utility works now complete on the northbound carriageway. Accommodation works have commenced on the northbound carriageway. Preparations will begin for slipform kerbing on the northbound carriageway.

#### **Safe Routes to Schools: St. Kevin's National School, Greystones (Greystones MD)**

Provide infrastructure for schools to increase walking and cycling as the preferred travel mode where possible and improve safety at front of schools. Front of school implementation works are substantially completed. Waiting on ESB power disconnection for signage. High friction surfacing has been completed. Remaining signage to be installed once available.

#### **Safe Routes to Schools: St. Johns Senior National School, Arklow (Arklow MD)**

Provide infrastructure for schools to increase walking and cycling as the preferred travel mode where possible and improve safety at front of schools. Front of school implementation works are substantially completed. High Friction Surfacing (HFS) will be completed once weather permits most probably spring 2024 subject to funding.

## **Safe Routes to Schools: SS Michael and Peter Junior School (Arklow MD)**

Proposals to improve road safety and make the areas adjacent to the schools safer, so that children can be encouraged and facilitated to walk and cycle to the schools safely. Construction works are substantially completed. High Friction Surfacing (HFS) will be completed once weather permits most probably spring 2024 subject to funding. **Project Updates**

## **Bray Dart Interchange (Bray MD)**

New plaza and public transport interchange in front of Bray DART station, with revised car parking, set down and taxi rank arrangements. Drainage laid across the level crossing by Irish Rail contractor. David Walsh Civil Engineering appointed as contractor. ER and RE appointed. Works are expected to start in February 2024.

## **Wicklow Active Travel Pathfinder Project (Wicklow MD)**

The project scope has been changed and will focus on the provision of high quality pedestrian and cycle facilities along R750 from Wicklow Town Car Park and along Station Road. It will also include the provision of a new pedestrian and Cycle Bridge linking Station Road to Wicklow Town relief Road. Feasibility report and Baseline Assessment have been completed. Work has commenced on the Preliminary Design.

## **Greystones Active Travel - Pathfinder Project (Greystones MD)**

Provision of new and improved pedestrian and cycle links to Greystones Train Station. The spine route extends from Greystones Marina to Shoreline Sports Centre. The project will include improved pedestrian and cycle crossings along the Charlesland Dual Carriageway. Design of pedestrian crossings on Charlesland Dual Carriageway agreed with NTA. Rapid Build Options Report for the main spine route approved and work has commenced on the Preliminary Design. Tenders have been sought for the provision of traffic signals. Works are expected to start in Q2 2024.

## **Killincarrig Village Enhancement Scheme (Greystones MD)**

Provision of improved pedestrian facilities and public realm improvements. Part 8 report was presented to Members at the Greystones MD Meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> December and Members voted for the project to proceed.

## **Convent Road (Greystones MD)**

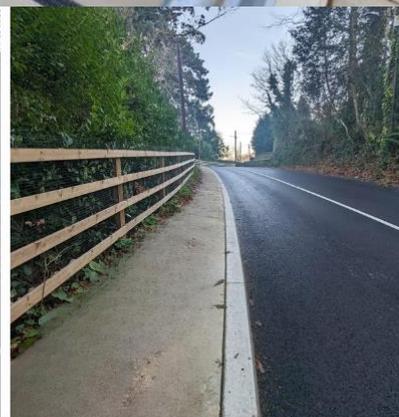
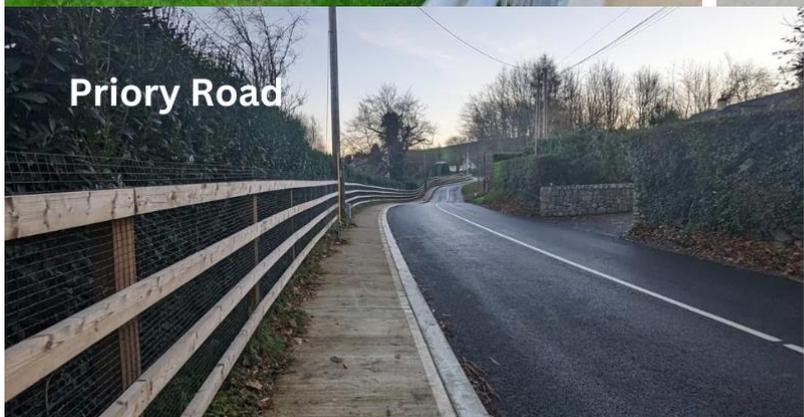
Design and implementation of safety and accessibility improvements on Convent Road. Work to commence on preliminary design. Options assessment complete. Meeting held with Council Members to present to preferred option. Meeting was also held with DCC and local business and community groups to go through the design and discuss their concerns. Part 8 report to be prepared.

## **2023 Summary of Progress**

- Over €7.5 million expenditure claimed from the National Transport Authority
- 8 Projects Completed
  - Ashford to New Developments
  - Kilcoole Road Pedestrian & Cycle Improvements
  - Priors Road Footpath
  - Glenart Footpath Link
  - Valley Heights Footpath
  - Dunlavin Footpath
  - Deputy's Pass Footpath
  - Arklow North Pedestrian & Cycle Improvements
- Within the Completed projects:
  - 930m of existing footpaths improved and/or upgraded
  - 2,300m of new footpaths constructed
  - 80m of traffic free shared cycle and pedestrian track
  - 2,500m of new segregated cycle facilities
- 4 projects substantially complete
  - Bellevue Hill
  - Safe Routes to Schools, St. Kevin's NS, Greystones
  - Safe Routes to Schools, SS Michael and Peter, Arklow
  - Safe Routes to Schools, St. John's SNS, Arklow

- 27 other Active Travel projects at various stage of the design process

Imagery of some completed schemes





**Bridge Rehabilitation (Local and Regional Roads)**

During January, the Bridges crew has completed repair and maintenance works at 2 bridges and another 1 has commenced in recent days.

A meeting has taken place with Consultants to progress work at Carrigmore Bridge.

**Machinery Yard**

Works continue on the maintenance of council vehicles, plant, and machinery.

Winter maintenance gritters have been calibrated in recent days.

The Consultant has submitted the licence application for Dangerous Substances (oil, fuel, etc.).  
Fitters have been trained and are starting to use ProWork to digitise maintenance reports for vehicles.  
Fleet management draft report has been issued for comments and will be finalised in the coming weeks.  
OGP frameworks for PPE and Tyres have been commenced this month. 2 more to follow in February.

## Winter Maintenance

Approx ½ way through the season.

18 call outs since December 7th until Jan 26th. Of these, 8 were double runs.

1200 tonnes of salt have been collected so far this season over 2 orders.

Changeover from salt to brine will commence in 2024. 1 new brine/salt gritter has been purchased.

Remaining equipment to be procured.

## Fire Service

### Operational Fire Statistics December 2023

There were **99 incidents** attended during the month of December 2023. Due to laid down procedures to mobilise two stations to potentially serious incident types, individual Fire Stations were mobilised on a total of **125 occasions** including **12** mobilisations in other counties. On no occasion did an incident commander request additional resources over what was prescribed in the Pre-Determined Attendance.

Operational activity for the month of December 2023 **decreased by 7% (-10 mobilisations) on the preceding month** (November 2023: 135 mobilisations). Incident types which decreased included Domestic Fires, vehicle fires, small fires in urban areas. There were increased in the following incident types, RTCs, trees down, false alarms.

33% of mobilisations across the county were to RTCs, 7% of mobilisations were to fires in buildings, 10% were to alarm activations, 8% to vehicle fires, and 8% were to ambulance assist incidents.

Operational activity for the month of December 2023 **was down 3% (-4 mobilisations) on the equivalent month in 2022** (December 2022, 129 mobilisations). Incident types that increased included RTC's, vehicle fires, trees down and false alarms. Incident types that decreased included small fires in urban areas.

### **Sample Incidents (December 2023)**

- 02/12/2023 Baltinglass and Dunlavin crews attended a single vehicle RTC with 3 casualties on the N81 north of Blessington.
- 03/12/2023 Arklow crew supported other agencies at a water rescue at Arklow harbour.
- 05/12/2023 Baltinglass and Dunlavin crews attended a single car RTC near Kiltegan. Car on roof with 2 casualties trapped.
- 05/12/2023 Wicklow Town and Rathdrum crews attended a single car RTC at Ballybeg. Car on side with 3 casualties trapped.
- 13/12/2023 Bray and Greystones crews attended a fire in a bedroom at Wyndham Park, Bray.
- 18/12/2023 Tinahely and Rathdrum crews attended a single vehicle RTC near Aughrim.
- 22/12/2023 Blessington crew support by Naas attended a single vehicle high speed RTC on the N81.

### **Incidents in County Kildare (8-incidents total):**

- 04/12/2023 Blessington crew support crews from Naas at a Domestic Fire in Ballymore Eustace.
- 08/12/2023 Dunlavin crew supported crews from Newbridge and Naas at a Domestic Fire in Calverstown.
- 08/12/2023 Blessington crew attended a 2-car RTC at Forenaughts, Naas.
- 09/12/2023 Dunlavin crew attended trees down at Calverstown.
- 12/12/2023 Dunlavin crew supported a crew from Athy at a Domestic Fire in Narraghmore.
- 13/12/2023 Dunlavin crew attended an alarm activation at Kennycourt Stud Farm.
- 21/12/2023 Dunlavin crew attended a car fire in Ballytore.
- 26/12/2023 Dunlavin crew attended an ambulance assist at Kilgowan.

**Incidents in County Wexford (4-incidents total):**

- 05/12/2023 Tinahely crew supported crews from Gorey at a Domestic Fire in Gorey – false alarm.
- 12/12/2023 Arklow crew supported the Gorey crew at a Domestic Fire in Gorey.
- 21/12/2023 Carnew crew attended a chimney fire in Craanford.
- 24/12/2023 Arklow crew supported Gorey crew at a Domestic Fire at Davidstown. Washing machine on fire.

**Fire Prevention Statistics November 2023**

**Fire Safety Certificates (FSCs), Disability Access Certificates (DACs)**

<b>Application type</b>	<b>Received</b>	<b>Deemed Invalid, refused or withdrawn</b>	<b>Requested additional information</b>	<b>Inspections</b>	<b>Recommended for Grant</b>
FSCs	7	0	1	0	5
Revised FSCs	0	0	0	0	0
FSC 7-Day Notice	1	0	0	0	0
Regularisation FSCs	2	0	0	0	0
DACs	4	0	0	0	9
Revised DACs	0	0	0	0	1
Dispensations / Relaxations	0	0	0	0	0

The Chief Fire Officer was forwarded correspondence in relation to 34 planning files during the month of December 2023.

The Chief Fire Officer made recommendations in relation to 27 of these files.

<b>Licensing</b>	<b>Received</b>	<b>Inspected</b>	<b>Request further info</b>	<b>Letter / Licence Issued</b>	<b>No objection entered on Courts on-line Service</b>
District	8	9	0	4	8
Circuit	1	0	0	0	3
Dangerous Substances Act	0	1	4	0	0
Explosive Act	0	0	0	0	0

**Building Control Statistics**

**Commencement Notices for December 2023:**

Commencement Notices Submitted: 11

- 7 Commencement Notices with Compliance Documents
- 2 Opt Out Declarations
- 0 Commencement Notices without Compliance Documents
- 2 Seven Day Notice

**Submission Statistics**

- 18 % of Commencement Notices - Opt Out

- 72 % of Commencement Notices Revised Information required & requested = 8 No. Commencement Notices (CN) of which
  - 6 are Compliance Documentation (75%)
  - 0 are Opt Out (0%)
  - 0 Without Compliance Documentation (0%)
  - 2 Seven Day Notice (25%)
- 8 Valid Commencement Notices
- 91 new build residential Units and additional 21 Apartments
- 1 Non Res new builds
- Invalidated CNs for December = 0

### **Certificates of Completion processed in December 2023**

- 20 New No. of CCC submitted
- 13 Required Revised Information
- 28 No. Validated
- 0 No. Invalid
- 42 new Residential units
- 4 Non Res. Builds

### **Submission Statistics**

28 No. Validated CCCs related to;

- 20 No. CCCs submitted in December 2023
- 6 No. CCCs submitted in November 2023
- 2 No. CCCs submitted in October 2023

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

91 new residential houses and 21 apartments were notified to LA for Commencement & 42 newly completed residential units plus 4 non-residential units were submitted, assessed and validated in December. BER certificates for all newly completed units were requested & submitted to Building Control as per S.I. No. 243/2012 - European Union (Energy Performance of Buildings) Regulations 2012.

Building Control continued with site inspections in December to identify non-compliances with Building Regs onsite and 2 Section 11 Compliance Requests were issued.

Revised Information requests were high in December for both Commencement Notices and Certificates of Compliance on Completion, 72% of Commencement Notice submissions & 65% of Certificate of Compliance on Completion submissions required revised information. It should be further noted that some Opt Out Submissions are requiring 2 to 3 Revised information requests which results in submissions being assessed 2 to 3 times to ensure compliance prior to commencement.

Opt Out submissions are both extensions and single unit dwellings, generally from BCMS users who are unfamiliar with both BCMS and Building Regulations which leads to Building Control resources being directed to resolving both administration and technical issues with Opt-Out Submissions. Wicklow Building Control continues to perform rigorous assessment of submissions at commencement stage and onsite presence during construction. These methods remain the best way to promote compliance with Building Regs.

### **Civil Defence**

#### **Emergency Response – Flooding Kilcronee, Bray**

Civil Defence volunteers responded to reports of a home being threatened by risk of Flooding, personnel and equipment were deployed to divert the water away from the houses through use of sandbags, a total of 120 sandbags and combination of 36 hours ratified the threat.

#### **New Equipment - SRK525 Boat**

Civil Defence have taken delivery of a new boat to support their sonar operations while also acting as a platform for providing assistance

## Organisational Development & Financial Matters

### 1. HR & Corporate Services

The following interviews were held in December 2023:

- Civil Defence Officer
- Retained Station Officer Greystones

#### Employee Numbers

Employee Numbers	Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023
Managerial/Administrative	304	316	318	319
Professional/Technical	131	134	143	150
Outdoor	260	260	263	265
Temporary/Seasonal	35	68 *	64	43
Non DoHPLG	5	5	5	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>735</b>	<b>783</b>	<b>793</b>	<b>782</b>

\* Increase due to lifeguards (lifeguards retained for 1<sup>st</sup> week of Q3)

#### Freedom of Information

December 2023: 3	December 2022: 7
January – December 2023: 105	January – December 2022: 85

#### Ombudsman Requests

December 2023: 1	December 2022: 1
January – December 2023: 29	January – December 2022: 36

#### Press Releases

December 2023 – 10

#### Register of Electors

Online applications via [www.checktheregister.ie](http://www.checktheregister.ie) continue to be received and processed daily. The numbers of applications have increased significantly since the announcement of the date of the referendum.

We are continuing with our weekly social media campaign in tandem with the Electoral Commission’s social, print and out of home media campaign. Print media adverts are appearing in all local papers between 23<sup>rd</sup> January and 7<sup>th</sup> February

encouraging voters to check their registration details or register for first time. Voting register forms have been issued to all libraries and council offices.

The Boundary Commission Report was issued at the end of August 2023.

**Customer Service Innovation Hub**

<b>Customer Service Innovation Hub</b>			
<b>2023 - December</b>			
<b>Communication</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Public Counters</b>	<b>No.</b>
No. of Phone Calls received to 0404 20100	6,364	Motor Taxation transactions in County Buildings	1,195
No. of Customer Service Emails received	870	Revenue Transactions	1,061
No. of Elected Members / Deputy Representatives Received	104	Housing Counter Visits	210

Total in person visits for December 2023 – 1,041



**All-Ireland Community & Council Awards 2024**

- 21 projects were nominated by Wicklow County Council under 15 categories
- 10 projects have been shortlisted for awards in 9 categories

## 2. I.C.T.

### Operations

- The IT Helpdesk continues to streamline the workflow for the technical support team with an average of 50 tickets a day this month, providing assistance for both in-house and remote workers.
- Evaluating MPS tenders.

### GIS & Systems Analysis

- Updates were made to the RZLT viewer based on new requirements from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. This involved adding CSO urban areas to determine new lands in scope.
- A site test was undertaken to survey headstones/plots in a particular cemetery. An automated script was also tested to populate the surveyed GIS data with details from the Cemetery Register.
- Data extraction and post processing for the five Local Area Plans was completed and the resultant datasets forwarded to the relevant stakeholders.
- A Transport Study for Wicklow Town is in development which involves defining project objectives, collecting diverse data using GIS and conducting spatial analysis to understand traffic patterns.
- New OSi MapGenie basemap REST Service has been updated on all Planning GIS applications.

### Infrastructure

- Ongoing upgrades of WAN connections at remote sites by Wicklow County Council aim to optimize performance and cost-effectiveness.

### 3. Finance

#### Revenue Account

DRAFT REVENUE ACCOUNT							
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE SUMMARY BY SERVICE DIVISION AT 31ST DECEMBER 2023							
	EXPENDITURE			INCOME			NET
	Actual Expenditure	Adopted Full Year Budget	% Budget Spent to Date	Actual Income	Adopted Full Year Budget	% Budget Spent to Date	Actual Expenditure / (Income)
	€	€	%	€	€	%	€
Housing and Building	42,036,580	42,194,421	100%	(46,471,880)	(46,575,078)	100%	(4,435,300)
Road Transport & Safety	26,883,560	24,371,150	110%	(19,538,730)	(16,722,878)	117%	7,344,830
Water Services	4,972,551	5,649,853	88%	(5,832,411)	(6,606,528)	88%	(859,859)
Development Management	16,766,353	14,288,049	117%	(11,200,028)	(8,574,520)	131%	5,566,326
Environmental Services	13,961,298	13,559,916	103%	(2,787,273)	(2,628,049)	106%	11,174,025
Recreation and Amenity	9,269,671	8,984,450	103%	(1,326,741)	(1,085,428)	122%	7,942,929
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	1,938,079	2,106,287	92%	(928,441)	(1,049,228)	88%	1,009,637
Miscellaneous Services	10,758,292	9,728,355	111%	(14,762,131)	(13,260,436)	111%	(4,003,839)
Central Management Charges	21,850,747	21,746,281	100%	(1,052,790)	(1,050,000)	100%	20,797,957
Local Government Fund				(13,821,571)	(13,821,571)	100%	(13,821,571)
Commercial Rates				(31,005,632)	(31,405,046)	99%	(31,005,632)
	<b>148,437,131</b>	<b>142,628,762</b>	<b>104%</b>	<b>(148,727,627)</b>	<b>(142,778,762)</b>	<b>104%</b>	<b>(290,496)</b>

#### Cashflow/Overdraft

Wicklow County Council manages its cashflow requirements on a daily basis and did not avail of its overdraft facility during the period 1st December 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023.

#### Capital Account

CAPITAL ACCOUNT					
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE SUMMARY BY SERVICE DIVISION AT 31ST DECEMBER 2023					
	Opening Balance at 01/01/2023	Actual Expenditure	Actual Income	Transfers to/from Reserves	Closing Balance at 31/12/2023
	€	€	€	€	€
Housing and Building	17,814,239	99,303,359	(95,972,115)	(616,035)	20,529,449
Road Transport & Safety	(37,383,838)	11,590,402	(11,223,224)	(613,860)	(37,630,519)
Water Services	(13,023,496)	219,312	1,365,266	(192,640)	(11,631,558)
Development Management	(26,681,391)	5,860,988	(15,337,653)	(721,326)	(36,879,382)
Environmental Services	276,031	4,501,987	(5,088,994)	(735,000)	(1,045,976)
Recreation and Amenity	(2,034,378)	3,305,762	(1,589,101)	(362,587)	(680,304)
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	(2,040,366)	1,703,035	(1,309,153)	(413,174)	(2,059,657)
Miscellaneous Services	(10,515,300)	(2,510,176)	(1,123,322)	2,061,381	(12,087,417)
	<b>(73,588,498)</b>	<b>123,974,668</b>	<b>(130,278,294)</b>	<b>(1,593,240)</b>	<b>(81,485,365)</b>

**Commercial Rates, Rents and Loan Collections**

SUMMARY OF MAJOR COLLECTIONS AT 31ST DECEMBER 2023										
Income Collection Area	Opening Balance 01/01/2023	Accrued	Vacancy Property Adjustments	Write Offs	Waivers	Total for Collection	Collected	Closing Arrears 31/12/2023	Specific Doubtful Arrears	% Collection
<b>Rates</b>	4,598,635	31,540,051	(32,122)	(526,200)	(756,317)	34,824,047	(29,903,039)	4,921,009	330,835	87%
<b>Rents &amp; Annuities</b>	3,281,584	17,474,032	0	(31,918)	0	20,723,698	(17,289,455)	3,434,243	0	83%
<b>Housing Loans</b>	440,112	2,410,067	0	0	0	2,850,180	(2,554,489)	295,691	0	90%

**NB** Rates accrual represents full year accruals while rents and loans are accruals year to date. The rates collection, rent collection and housing loan collection percentages are below normal levels due to the carry forward of arrears at the start of the new financial year. This situation will be regularised over the course of the year.

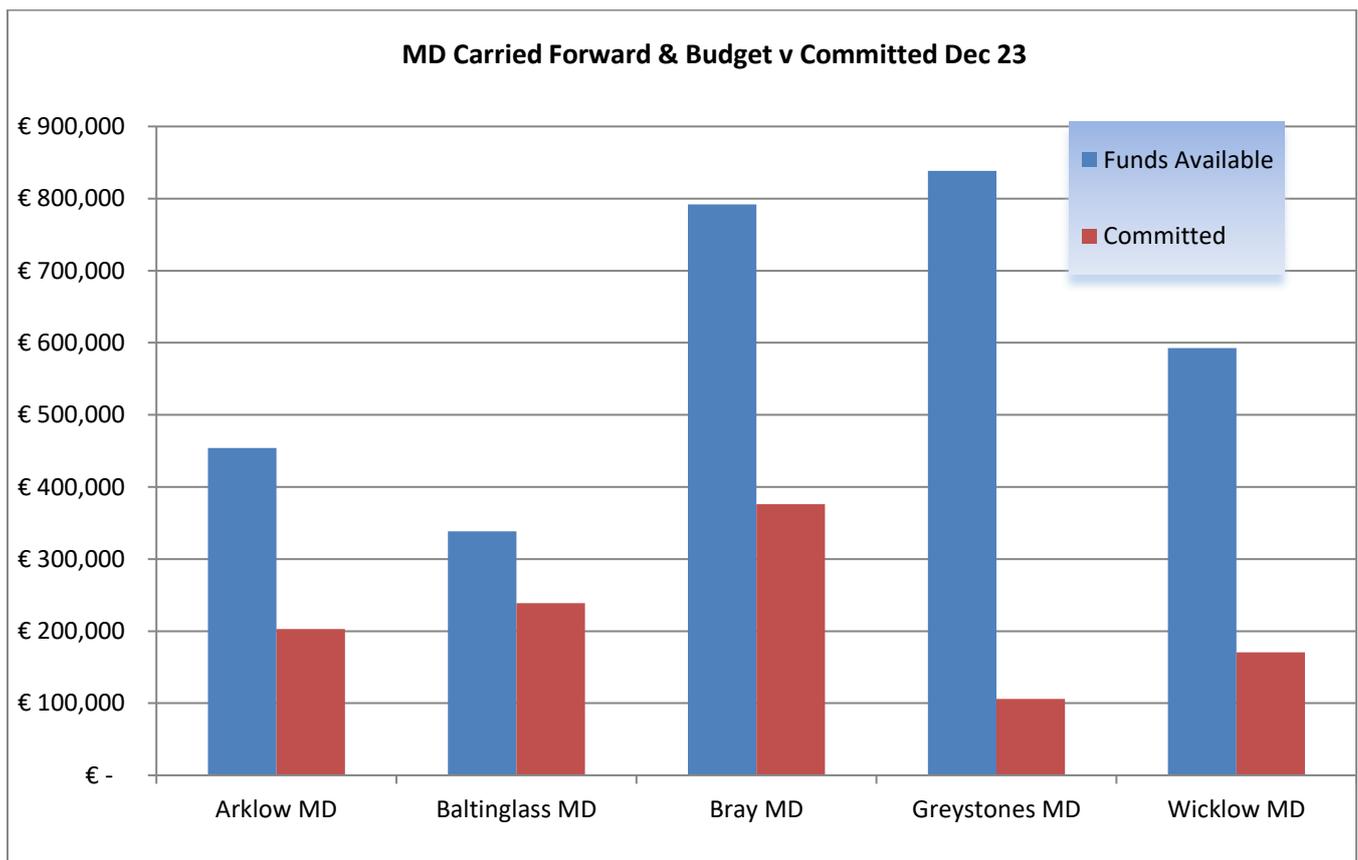
**General Municipal Allocation and Discretionary Fund 2023**

The decision taken by Members at the LPT meeting on October 10<sup>th</sup> 2022 to maintain the LPT basic rate increase at 6% resulted in an additional €1,110,384 in the Revenue Budget for 2023. This money was ring-fenced for Discretionary Funding in the Municipal Districts. The total Municipal District’s General Municipal Allocation funding for 2023 is set out below:

Description	Arklow	Baltinglass	Bray	Greystones	Wicklow	Total
Town Twinning	6,000	6,000	10,000	6,000	6,000	34,000
Economic Development and Promotion	28,000	10,000	9,500	10,000	9,000	66,500
Christmas Festival	20,000	10,000	20,000	10,000	20,000	80,000
Festivals / Other	5,000	10,000	32,000	10,000	5,000	62,000
Civic Receptions	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	10,000
Discretionary Funding	208,197	208,197	353,278	208,197	208,197	1,186,066
<b>Total</b>	<b>269,197</b>	<b>246,197</b>	<b>426,778</b>	<b>246,197</b>	<b>250,197</b>	<b>1,438,566</b>

Municipal District carried forward allocation and budget '23 and expenditure for 2023 is as follows:

Municipal District	C/F from 2022	Adopted Budget 2023	Funds available to MD	Committed	Balance to Expend
	€	€	€	€	€
Arklow MD	184,779	269,197	453,976	202,768	251,208
Baltinglass MD	92,215	246,197	338,412	238,719	99,693
Bray MD	365,206	426,778	791,984	375,978	416,006
Greystones MD	592,012	246,197	838,209	105,801	732,408
Wicklow MD	342,471	250,197	592,668	170,419	422,249
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,576,683</b>	<b>1,438,566</b>	<b>3,015,249</b>	<b>1,093,685</b>	<b>1,921,564</b>



**Capital Investment Programme 2023-2025**

The Capital Investment Programme 2023-2025 for Wicklow County Council details proposed capital expenditure projects over the next 3 year period, subject to available funding, was noted by the Members at the Council meeting of April 3<sup>rd</sup> 2023. The table below outlines the proposed capital expenditure by programme group.

PROGRAMME GROUP	Expected Outlay				Proposed Funding				
	2023	2024	2025	TOTAL	Dev Charges <sup>1</sup>	Loan	Grant Aid <sup>2</sup>	Other <sup>3</sup>	TOTAL
	€	€	€	€	€	€	€	€	€
HOUSING AND BUILDING	131,973,000	111,600,000	110,500,000	354,073,000	-	30,000,000	317,055,000	7,018,000	354,073,000
ROAD TRANSPORT & SAFETY	22,234,170	50,280,424	55,097,634	127,612,228	28,687,388	7,000,000	83,774,840	8,150,000	127,612,228
WATER SERVICES	100,000	100,000	100,000	300,000	-	-	300,000	-	300,000
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT	13,400,000	2,650,000	2,935,000	18,985,000	1,400,000	-	11,870,000	5,715,000	18,985,000
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	5,630,000	18,200,000	29,350,000	53,180,000	-	-	42,630,000	10,550,000	53,180,000
RECREATION AND AMENITY	9,420,327	10,297,355	13,975,000	33,692,682	13,370,536	-	19,522,146	800,000	33,692,682
AGRICULTURAL, EDUCATION, HEALTH & WELFARE	3,375,000	12,772,000	18,300,000	34,447,000	1,781,250	-	29,229,650	3,436,100	34,447,000
MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES	800,000	400,000	400,000	1,600,000	-	-	-	1,600,000	1,600,000
<b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>	<b>186,932,497</b>	<b>206,299,779</b>	<b>230,657,634</b>	<b>623,889,910</b>	<b>45,239,174</b>	<b>37,000,000</b>	<b>504,381,636</b>	<b>37,269,100</b>	<b>623,889,910</b>

Capital Funded Projects

Project Scheme	Project Name	Project Cost	Match Funding
NRGF	Blessington Greenway	€15,000,000	€0
URDF	Arklow Historic Town Core	€3,134,684	€783,671
URDF	Wicklow Town - Library and Fitzwilliam Square	7,034,879	€2,407,470
URDF	Bray Public Transport Bridge	€8,600,000	€1,000,000
URDF	Bray Harbour Area Integrated Regeneration	€9,520,000	€2,380,000
RRDF 2019	Blueprint for Baltinglass	€3,566,968	€891,742
RRDF 2020	Placemaking Newtownmountkennedy	€477,000	€119,250
REDF	Wicklow County Campus - Content Creation Hub	€4,500,000	€2,700,000
REISS (REDF)	Wicklow Naturally Food Incubation and Innovation Centre	€249,500	€49,900
Fáilte Ireland Destination Towns	Abbey Grounds Wicklow Town	€1,000,000	€500,000
Fáilte Ireland Outdoor Dining Scheme	Market Square Wicklow Town	€119,000	€19,000
Community CCTV Scheme	Greystones CCTV	€115,000	€75,000
Community CCTV Scheme	Blessington CCTV	€115,000	€75,000
WCC	Mill Road, Greystones Masterplan	€50,000	€50,000
Sports Capital Programme	Charlesland All Weather Pitch Refurbishment	€52,500	€2,750
Sports Capital Programme	Coral Wicklow	€68,759	€20,628
Sports Capital Programme	Coral Arklow	€28,999	€8,700
Sports Capital Programme	Arklow Running Track	€62,434	€18,730
Sports Capital Programme	Dr. Ryan Park	€45,320	€13,596
LSSIS	Wicklow Swimming Pool	€2,443,654	€1,579,477
LSSIS	Charlesland Running Track	€411,674	€123,502
Dormant Accounts Action Plan 2022	Wicklow Libraries	€26,500	€2,650
T&V 2018	Blessington	€100,000	€20,000
T&V 2018	Wicklow	€150,000	€30,000
T&V 2019	Dunlavin	€26,216	€2,623
T&V 2019	Coolkenno	€30,000	€3,000
T&V 2019	Aughrim	€119,500	€17,925
T&V 2019	Redcross	€100,000	€20,000
T&V 2019	Delgany	€37,000	€3,700
T&V 2020 (Accelerated)	Bundled	€28,000	€2,800
T&V 2020 (Accelerated)	Dunlavin	€4,950	€495
T&V 2020 (Accelerated)	Roundwood	€40,000	€4,000
T&V 2020 (Accelerated)	Ballinaclash	€44,000	€4,400
T&V 2020 (Accelerated)	Enniskerry	€44,000	€4,400
T&V 2020 (Accelerated)	Laragh	€27,000	€2,700
T&V 2020 (Accelerated)	Tinahely	€5,500	€550
T&V 2020 (Accelerated)	Baltinglass	€10,000	€1,000
T&V 2020 (Accelerated)	Arklow	€39,500	€3,950
T&V 2020 (Accelerated)	Wicklow	€44,444	€4,444
T&V 2020 (Accelerated)	Greystones	€44,444	€4,444
T&V 2020 (Accelerated)	Rathdrum	€27,000	€2,700
T&V 2020 (Accelerated)	Broadband Connection Points	€44,444	€4,444
T&V 2020 (Accelerated)	Kilcoole	20,000	2,000
T&V 2020 Main	Stratford	€200,000	€22,222
T&V 2020 Main	Avoca	€100,000	€11,111
T&V 2020 Main	Enniskerry	€100,000	€11,111
T&V 2020 Main	Annamoe	€100,000	€11,111
T&V 2021	Ballinaclash	€70,000	€7,000
T&V 2021	Donard	€29,000	€2,900
T&V 2021	Wicklow	€245,931	€24,593
T&V 2022 PMD	Carnew	€55,555.00	€5,555
T&V 2022 PMD	Kiltegan	€55,555.00	€5,555
T&V 2022	Ashford - GAA Wall	€127,000.00	€12,700
T&V 2022	Blessington - Community Space	€20,000.00	€2,000
T&V 2022	Kilcoole - Stakepark	€277,777.00	€27,777
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>€58,988,686</b>	<b>€13,104,276</b>

Project Scheme	Project Name	Project Cost	Match Funding
CLAR 2019	Rathcoyle NS	€55,556	€2,778
CLAR 2019	Knockananna	€46,000	€3,000
CLAR 2021	Knockananna community allotment	€10,830	€1,083
CLAR 2021	Askanagap	€55,557	€5,557
CLAR 2021	Knockananna	€27,514	€2,501
CLAR 2022	Kilpipe	€18,000	€1,800
CLAR 2022	Askinagap - Boundary Wall	€50,000	€5,000
CLAR 2022	Askinagap - Carpark	€50,000	€5,000
CLAR 2022	Knockanna - Pitch	€20,000	€2,000
ORIS 2018	Avonmore Way Link Bridge	€460,000	€91,000
ORIS 2018	Vartry Reservoir Walks & Car Park	€165,157	€33,031
ORIS 2018	St. Kevin's Way	€200,000	€40,000
ORIS 2018	The Spinc	€160,000	€30,000
ORIS 2019	Wicklow Way Infrastructure Enhancement	€25,000	€5,000
ORIS 2019	Baltinglass Road Cycle Trails	€11,000	€2,200
ORIS 2019	North Wicklow Trails Network Development	€240,700	€108,140
ORIS Measure 1 2020	Avondale Avonmore	€20,330	€2,033
ORIS Measure 1 2020	Trail Digitising	€19,600	€1,960
ORIS Measure 1 2020	Tinahely	€20,000	€2,000
ORIS Measure 1 2020	Stratford	€20,000	€2,000
ORIS Measure 1 2020	Long Distance Video	€21,400	€2,140
ORIS Measure 1 2020	Brockagh Mountain Access	€11,100	€1,110
ORIS Measure 1 2020	People Counters	€22,000	€2,200
ORIS Measure 1 2020	Sean Lenihan	€21,200	€2,120
ORIS Measure 1 2020	Glenmalure Bridge	€12,500	€1,250
ORIS Measure 3 2020	Bright light Blueway	€754,820	€205,482
ORIS 2021 Measure 1	Kilmacanogue Nature Trail	€20,000	€2,000
ORIS 2021 Measure 1	Lacken Mass Path	€18,000	€1,800
ORIS 2021 Measure 1	Kilcoole Mass Path	€13,000	€1,300
ORIS 2021 Measure 1	Avonmore Kayak Project	€16,500	€1,650
ORIS 2021 Measure 1	Age Friendly Triobikes for older people	€23,160	€3,160
ORIS 2021 Measure 1	Keadeen Access	€13,500	€1,350
ORIS 2021 Project Development	Three Trout Route	€27,000	€3,000
ORIS 2021 Measure 3	The Sugarloaf Repair	€500,000	€50,000
ORIS 2021 Measure 2	Jubilee Loop and Avonmore Way link	€180,000	€18,000
ORIS 2021 Measure 2	Cliff Walk Protection Scheme	€220,000	€22,000
ORIS 2022 M1	Avonmore Way Clara Vale	€33,000	€3,300
ORIS 2022 M1	Ballyboy Equestrian Trail	€33,000	€3,300
ORIS 2022 M1	Glen Turn Cliff Walk Airlift	€33,300	€3,600
ORIS 2022 M1	Miners Way Ballinafunshogue	€28,000	€2,800
ORIS 2022 M1	Red Kite Loop Play Area	€33,000	€3,300
ORIS 2022 M1	West Wicklow Access Points	€33,000	€3,300
ORIS 2022 M1	Wicklow Uplands Airlift	€33,000	€3,300
ORIS 2022 M1	Aughrim Heritage Access to Stoneworks	€30,000	€3,000
ORIS 2022 M1	Devil's Glen river Walk Extension	€30,000	€3,000
ORIS 2022 M1	Oakwood Ballinagee Trail Upgrade	€30,000	€3,000
ORIS 2022 M2	Blessington Greenway Link to Russborough	€198,200	€19,820
ORIS 2022 M2	Glenmalure Riverside Walk & Recreation Area	€133,100	€13,310
ORIS 2022 M2	Coolkenno Equestrian Trail	€220,000	€22,000
ORIS 2022 M3	Roundwood Recreation Area	€550,000	€55,000
	<b>Total to date</b>	<b>€63,955,710</b>	<b>€13,910,951</b>