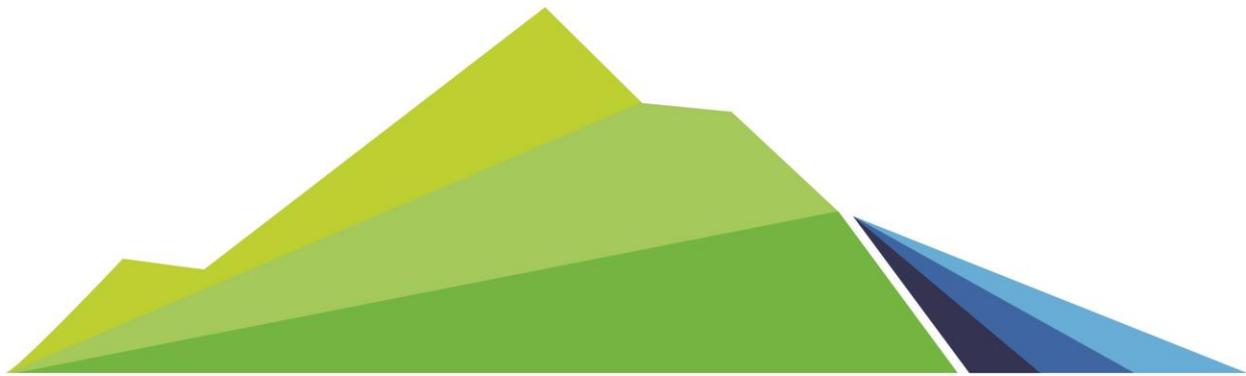


# Wicklow County Council Chief Executive's Monthly Report



W I C K L O W

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**This month:**

**Funding Boost for Built Heritage in County Wicklow**

Wicklow County Council welcomes the recent announcement of €472,000 for funding for built heritage in County Wicklow through the Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS) and the Historic Structure Fund (HSF) 2024.

A total allocation of €101,000 has been approved for 16 projects in Wicklow under the BHIS fund following initial assessment and shortlisting by Wicklow County Council.

Additionally, four projects are set to benefit from funding under the HSF as follows: €171,000 for Coolattin House, €171 for Clermont House, Rathnew, €20,000 for former Post Office, Shillelagh and €10,000 to Rosebank, Avoca under the vernacular buildings scheme.

Projects to be funded include a mix of privately and publicly owned buildings, churches, houses, historic landscape features and monuments and will support essential conservation and repairs.

This year's BHIS includes awards to 16 local historic structures, including: Christchurch, Bray; Russborough, Blessington; Nuns Cross Church of Ireland; Valleymount House; Darraghville, Kilcoole; Church of Ascension Ballinure, Claremont Terrace, Bray; Nature's Gold, Killincarrig; Old Bolting Mill, Newtownmountkennedy; St Matthews Church, Newtownmountkennedy; Royal Marine Terrace, Bray; Gamekeepers Lodge, Coolattin; Dawn Cottage, Ballinahinch; Creech Barrow, Delgany.

**Tidy Town, Estates & Sustainable Development Awards**

Wicklow County Council hosted its annual Tidy Towns, Estates and Sustainable Development Awards at Clermont House, Rathnew, on March 4<sup>th</sup>. The event recognised the outstanding efforts of Tidy Towns groups, residents associations, schools, and businesses dedicated to advancing sustainability initiatives within our towns and communities.

In the national competition, Arklow stood out for again securing the highest marks in the county, and Lacken was honoured with the Endeavour Award. This year marked a significant achievement for towns across the county, with Wicklow Town and Greystones also receiving coveted gold medals at the national level in 2023.

Schools receiving awards in 2023 included Scoil Mhaire Realt na Mara in Brittas Bay, with St. Mary's College in Arklow, Wicklow's Educate Together and St. Fergal's and Kilcommon National Schools. These schools are lauded for their commitment to environmental stewardship and the exploration of biodiversity.

Finally, the tireless work of exceptional individuals was spotlighted through the Local Champion and Youth Champion Awards received by Aidan Doyle (Tinahely); Una Roe (Bray); Frank Coyne (Greystones); Paul Butler (Blessington); Anne Martin (Newtownmountkennedy) and Leah Mulhall (Blessington).

## Social Development (Housing & Community)

### Housing

	February 2024	February 2023
No. on list for Social Housing Support – (includes RAS & HAP) *	4061	4505
No. availing of Rental Assistance Scheme (RAS)	187	191
No. availing of Housing Assistance Payment	1420	1607
No. in Long Term Leasing Accommodation	22	23
No. in Short Term Leasing Accommodation	25	33

### Allocation of Social Housing

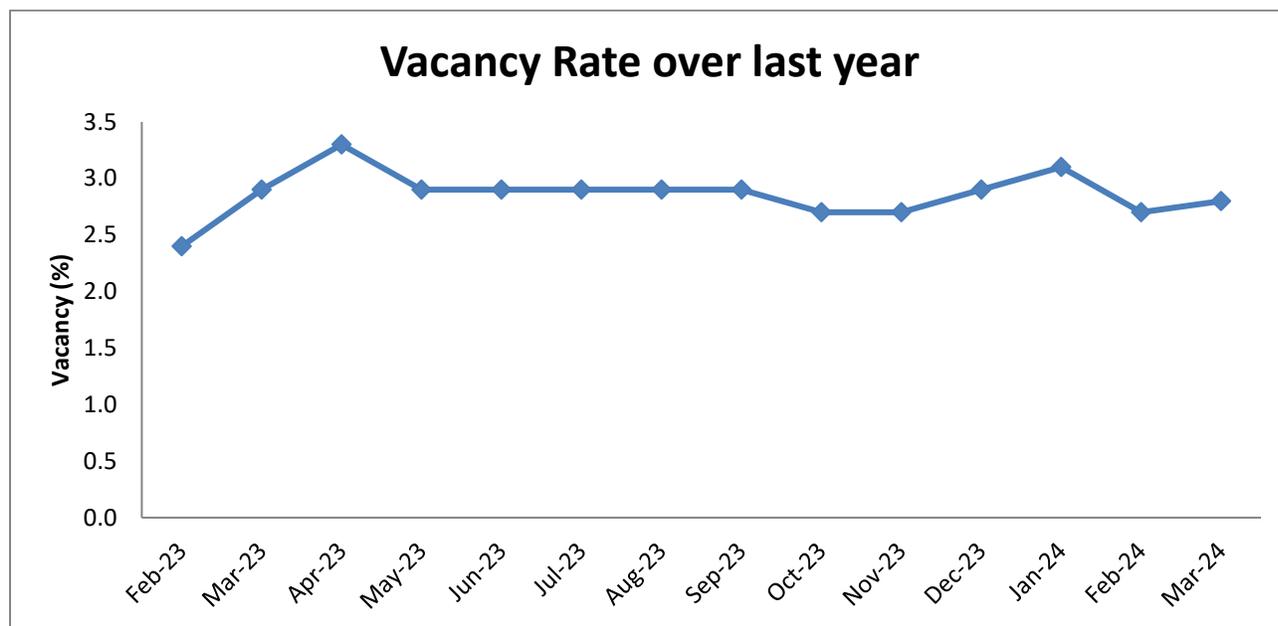
	February 2024	February 2023
Wicklow County Council	9	10
Approved Housing Bodies	23	32

### Social Housing Stock

	February 2024	February 2023
Tenancies Occupied	4905	4797
Total Weekly Rent Accrual	€326,199.60	€315,011.58
Arrears	€3,138,362.75	€3,133,385.32

### Re-Let's/Voids

MD	Completed in 2024	In Progress	Not Started	Completed but not yet tenanted	Vacant
Arklow	2	11 (0)	7 (-2)	1 (0)	19 (-1)
Baltinglass	4	12 (-2)	6 (+3)	6 (-2)	24 (-1)
Bray	0	7 (+3)	33 (+4)	12 (+2)	52 (+9)
Greystones	0	4 (-1)	0 (0)	1 (+1)	5 (0)
Wicklow	7	16 (-3)	25 (-5)	1 (0)	42 (-8)
<b>2024 Totals</b>	<b>13 (+10)</b>	<b>50 (+3)</b>	<b>71 (0)</b>	<b>21 (+2)</b>	<b>142 (+5)</b>
<b>2023 Totals</b>	<b>140</b>				
<b>Total Vacancy as % of Total Stock (Total Vacancy + Occupied Tenancies)</b>	<b>2.8% (+ 0.1%)</b>	<b>Figures in brackets indication change on last month</b>			



**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 were replaced before the end of December 2023 around the county using Planned Maintenance funding from the Department of Housing, Heritage and Local Government. Our initial allocation from the Department in April 2023 was €173,000, however 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.

**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. Nine units were delivered in 2023.

CAS Acquisitions 2024	No. of Units	Delivery Schedule	Scheme
Bray	1	Delivered February 2024	CAS

**Mobility Aid Grants / Housing Adaptation Grants / Housing for Older People**

	2023 Budget	Amount Spent as of February 2024
Grant Funding for Private Housing	€2,352,438.16	€537,380.46
Grant Funding for Social Housing	€818,793.00	€32,042.85

**2024 Overview**

- 36 Open Applications
- 29 Approvals (Plus 164 from 2023)
- 71 Applications Paid and Closed

Year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
<b>Number of Grants Received/Processed</b>	249	216	266	327	281	456	65

**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 took place at the January meeting of the HDSG. A schedule of meetings for the group has been set for 2024 in order to implement the plan's targets and goals.

<b>Addressing Homelessness</b>			
	<b>As at 29/02/2024</b>	<b>Year To Date</b>	<b>As at 28/02/2023</b>
<b>No of New Presentations</b>	22	48	36
<b>No. of Repeat Presentations</b>	0	0	0
<b>No. of Families (Minimum 1 Adult + One Child)</b>	7	13	12
<b>No. of Individuals (Single Adult, no children)</b>	14	31	24
<b>No. Of Couples (2 Adults, no children)</b>	1	3	0
<b>No. of Children</b>	12	18	20
<b>NTQ/Asked to Leave/Landlord selling</b>	5	13	12
<b>Family Circumstances</b>	9	20	14
<b>Leaving Prison/Hospital Care</b>	2	4	1
<b>Mental Health</b>	1	6	2
<b>Risk of Homelessness</b>	9	16	2
<b>Arrears/Loss of Income</b>	1	2	0
<b>Addiction Issues</b>	3	6	6
<b>DV/DA</b>	1	2	3
<b>Medical Issues</b>	0	1	0
<b>Overcrowding</b>	1	3	1
<b>Unsuitable/Voluntarily Left</b>	3	10	4
<b>ASB:</b>	0	0	3
<b>Rough Sleeping*</b>	2	5	0

<b>Sofa Surfing*</b>	1	4	6
<b>Staying with Family*</b>	7	12	11
<b>Staying with Friends*</b>	2	2	1

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

<b>Own Door Temporary Accommodation at 28/02/23</b>	
Families	17
Adults	31
Children	52
Single individual	2

<b>Bed &amp; Breakfast Accommodation - No. of Homeless Emergency Accommodation Placements &amp; Duration @ 28/02/23</b>								
	No. of Households	No. of Adults	No. of Children	< 3 mths	3-6 mths	6-9 mths	9-12 mths	>12mths
<b>Household breakdown</b>	20	24	19	3	3	9	2	2

<b>Bed &amp; Breakfast Accommodation - No. of Homeless Emergency Accommodation Placements &amp; Duration @ 28/02/24</b>								
	No. of Households	No. of Adults	No. of Children	< 3 mths	3-6 mths	6-9 mths	9-12 mths	>12mths
<b>Household breakdown</b>	22	25	24	11	4	3	1	4

**Homeless HAP Place Finder**

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, 521 households (364 families & 151 singles) have been assisted under the Homeless HAP Scheme in Wicklow County Council from the inception on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018 to 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024. (213 homeless cases, 291 prevention cases to date and 16 direct provision). 136 properties were sourced by WCC.

## **Addressing Homelessness in Partnership with Approved Housing Bodies**

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

Kilmantin 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. There is continuous transition by the clients to suitable alternative accommodation.

A report is being undertaken at present to cost the refurbishment of the current rooms with a view to making them all ensuite. 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 three 1-bed units, two 2-bed units, and two 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-months STA (Supported Temporary Accommodation) with key working support to enable families to 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 and incorporates a service model whereby 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 currently 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**

This facility provides 35 ensuite bedrooms with associated kitchens and common areas and 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 Approved Housing Bodies, 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 created 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 18 clients under Housing First. Other clients proposed for Housing First have been assessed by the team and are availing of key support work pending finalisation of sourcing of accommodation. The main issue facing this programme is the availability of 1-bed units in suitable locations with easy access to required services.

### **Homeless Action Plan 2024 – 2026**

The plan is currently being updated and was passed at the last Housing and Corporate Estate SPC held in February. This will be an item on the agenda for the April meeting of the full Council.

### **Youth Homeless Strategy 2023-2025**

- Three-year strategy published 9<sup>th</sup> November 2022
- Focus on ending homelessness for young people aged 18-24 through:
  - Prevention of young people from entering homelessness
  - Improving the experience for young people accessing emergency accommodation
  - To assist young people exiting homelessness
- Multitude of stakeholders all with vital roles in addressing fundamental issues

### **Ukrainian Response**

As of 13<sup>th</sup> March 2024, the number of Ukrainian Displaced Persons in emergency type accommodation is 1,801 (although we know that there are considerably more in the County)

This number is broken down as follows –

- Arklow MD 266 No.
- Baltinglass MD 370 No.
- Bray MD 767 No.
- Greystones MD 199 No.
- Wicklow MD 199 No.

Wicklow County Council are currently assessing all Displaced Ukrainians persons in the County in order to identify their accommodation needs, as well linking them in with all the relevant services and supports within the community.

**MARCH 2024**



Wicklow County Council are working through a list of pledged properties within the County and matching families accordingly. As of 13<sup>th</sup> March, Wicklow County Council will have housed 258 number displaced Ukrainian people into pledged stand-alone 'Offer a Home' properties with the County.

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.

## Community

### **Community Awards Scheme 2024**

The Community Awards Scheme 2024 is open for applications. As part of its commitment to supporting local community development, Wicklow County Council operates an annual Community Award Scheme. The fund for 2024 will be available as grant aid to successful community groups and local organisations wishing to undertake community projects in their area. There is a maximum grant amount of €500 per organisation for small projects and group running costs. Only one application per group will be considered. The closing date for receipt of applications is Friday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

### **Local Enhancement Programme 2024**

The Local Enhancement Programme for 2024 closed for applications on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2024. The scheme was announced by Minister for Rural and Community Development and Minister of State with Responsibility for Community Development and Charities on the 6<sup>th</sup> of December 2023. €176,338.11 was allocated to Wicklow County Council, €29,389.69 of which 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.

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.

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. Assessment of grant applications will be underway in the coming weeks.

### **County Wicklow Age Friendly Programme**

#### **County Wicklow Age Friendly Strategy 2023-27**

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

Healthy Age Friendly Homes (HAFH) Programme is a support coordination programme that aims to enable older people to age in place and reduce the need to transfer to long-term residential care. The Programme is a collaboration between the Department of Health and the Department of Housing and Local Government. It is funded by the Department of Health and operated by Meath County Council, on behalf of all Local Authorities.

The service is designed to enable older people to remain living in their own home for longer. The local coordinator undertakes home visits to older people living in the community, where a needs assessment is carried out, looking at four key areas of supports: housing, health, community/social supports, and technology. Home visits from the local co-coordinator are available to anyone aged 65+ years. The rollout of the programme commenced in January 2024.

Meanwhile referrals for the service can be registered with National Office at 046 924 8899 or via email: [healthyagefriendlyhomes@meathcoco.ie](mailto:healthyagefriendlyhomes@meathcoco.ie)

### **Older People's Council, Executive Group - Meetings and Representation**

The Older People's Council (OPC) Executive Group had a meeting via zoom on the 26<sup>th</sup> February 2024.

OPC Executive is planning for wider engagement with older people across the county and recruitment of more members of the OPC this year.

### **Age Friendly Ireland Committee**

The Age Friendly Ireland team met for a planning workshop on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> of February 2024 and Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2024 in the Headfort Arms, Kells, Co. Meath.



### **Healthy Wicklow**

Under the key performance indicator, a decrease in the percentage of those at risk of poverty and basic deprivation, a County Wicklow Food Coordinator position has been approved under the Healthy Ireland Fund Round 4. The County Wicklow Food Coordinator will be responsible for the overall coordination of Food Partnership activity in County Wicklow. Bray Area Partnership has been awarded the hosting agency for this position which has now been advertised. Closing date for applications was Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> March.

### **Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP):**

Bray Area Partnership and Co. Wicklow Partnership are currently submitting SICAP Annual Workplans 2024 for review and assessment by Wicklow LCDC and Pobal. The SICAP Programme Managers will present these plans to the next meeting of the LCDC on March 27<sup>th</sup> where the plans will be put forward for approval.

Service Level Agreements now signed between Wicklow County Council and Bray Area Partnership with Club Enclave Bray and separately with Greystones Family Resource Centre to commence upcoming new LGBTI+ projects under Dormant Accounts Funding.

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

Wicklow PPN and Co. Wicklow Partnership to host International Women's Day event to raise awareness of coercive control and provide information on supports available.

Upcoming consultations: Wicklow Traveller Accommodation Programme 2025 – 2029; Blessington Local Area Plan.

Wicklow PPN to attend Tidy Towns & Sustainable Development Awards on March 4<sup>th</sup>.

Wicklow PPN 2024 Workplan currently being completed in conjunction with members and Secretariat.

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

# Planning, Economic & Rural Development

## Planning and Development

### **Wicklow County Development Plan (CDP) 2022-2028**

**Healthy Place-making, Climate Action** and **Economic Opportunity** are the three overarching cross-cutting themes that inform and shape all aspects of the plan. The plan also includes the Core Strategy and the Settlement Strategy for the County.

The plan also includes the **Town Plans** for the following settlements: - Baltinglass, Newtownmountkennedy, Rathdrum, Ashford, Aghrim, Carnew, Dunlavin, Tinahely, Avoca, Donard, Newcastle, Roundwood, Shillelagh and Laragh-Glendalough.

The Wicklow County Development Plan 2022 – 2028 as altered 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>

### **Variation No. 2 to the CDP (Wicklow Town -Rathnew Local Area Plan)**

Variation No. 2 to the County Development Plan is currently being prepared alongside the Wicklow Town – Rathnew Local Area Plan. This variation will include any changes consequent to the CDP on foot of the adoption of the LAP and will include the LAP Land Use Zoning Map being incorporated into the CDP.

### **Local Area Plans (LAP)**

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'.

### **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 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. It is hoped that the draft plan will commence display in Q3 2024. Consultants have been appointed to carry out the SEA and AA for the LAP and they are continuing to work on the SEA/ AA work.

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 was 31 January 2024. 115 submission have been received. Two well-attended public open days were held in Kilcoole and in Greystones in January 2024. All valid submissions have been reviewed and 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. It is hoped that the draft plan will commence display in Q3/Q4 2024. Consultants have been appointed to carry out the SEA and AA for the LAP and they are continuing to work on the SEA/ AA work.

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**

We have commenced the review of the existing plan and preparing a new Local Area Plan for Blessington. An online consultation portal has been created for this pre-draft stage. Pre-draft plan public consultation commenced on 21 February 2024 and will run until 01 April 2024. A well-attended public open day was held in Blessington on 01 March 2024. Consultants have been appointed to carry out the SEA and AA for the LAP and they are continuing to work on the SEA/ AA. The Blessington 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/Blessington/Blessington-Local-Area-Plan>

### **Arklow and Environs Local Area Plan**

We have commenced the review of the existing plan and preparing a new Local Area Plan for Arklow and Environs. Consultants have been appointed to carry out the SEA and AA for the LAP and they are continuing to work on the SEA/ AA. All other studies / assessments are intended at this time to be carried out in-house. Pre-draft plan public consultation for the LAP commenced on 01 March 2024 and will run until 02 April 2024. A public consultation day will be held in Arklow on 15 March 2024.

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

### **Bray Municipal District Local Area Plan (including Enniskerry and Kilmacanogue)**

Work has commenced on the review of the Bray Municipal District Local Area Plan. Consultants have been appointed to carry out the SEA and AA for the LAP 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 for these Bray is available to view here

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

### **Residential Zoned Land Tax (RZLT)**

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 RZLT maps are updated annually.

The Final RZLT 2023 maps were published on 01 December 2023.

The Draft RZLT 2024 maps were published on 01 February 2024, with general submissions invited on the draft maps up to **01 April 2024**. Submissions requesting a variation of the zoning of land are invited up to **31 May 2024**.

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.

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):** 2024 applications to The Heritage Council have been submitted under the following thematic areas; Landscape People & Place; Wicklow Community Archaeology Projects: Heritage Recording & Surveying; Consultation and Planning. Awaiting outcome.

**Wicklow Heritage Forum Meeting:** Scheduled for 12<sup>th</sup> March Clermont Campus.

**Irish Community Archive Network (iCAN)** – Our Wicklow Heritage network group meeting took place 27<sup>th</sup> Feb in Roundwood. Representatives from WCC Heritage Services (Heritage Office, Archives, Local Studies Library), National Museum of Ireland, Wicklow Community Archaeology Service (WCAS), 6 existing community groups plus 5 new groups in attendance.

**National Biodiversity Action Plan Funded projects:** Biodiversity action programme 2024 funding applications were submitted 9<sup>th</sup> Feb under the following thematic areas; Biodiversity enhancement projects within council owned properties; Conservation measures in Natura 2000 sites; Habitat mapping & recording; Mapping and treatment of Invasive Alien Species; Public Awareness raising & engagement. Awaiting outcome.

**Archaeology:** Community Monuments Fund- CMF 2024. Fifteen funding applications for Private and Council owned projects were prepared and submitted by 14<sup>th</sup> February to National Monuments Service under Streams 1, 2 & 3. Awaiting outcome.

**Built Heritage Capital Funds (Architecture):** Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS) and Historic Structures Fund (HSF) 2024 applications assessed and shortlists submitted to Department by 9<sup>nd</sup> Feb funding deadline. Sixteen projects recommended for County allocation of €101,000 under BHIS and five projects shortlisted under HSF. Awaiting outcome.

**Development Management**

**Planning Applications**

Total valid applications received	To 29 <sup>th</sup> February 2024	To 28 <sup>th</sup> February 2023	% difference
Received (Valid)	156	164	

A total of 97 valid applications were received during February as follows:

<b>Type of Development</b>	<b>29<sup>th</sup> February 2024 - Number Received 6</b>
Individual Houses	17 (15 refer to a rural house)
Housing Developments*	06
Agricultural Structures	04
Commercial	07
Other Developments**	63
<b>Total</b>	<b>97</b>

\*\*Other Developments include, Porch/Sunroom, Extensions, finger signpost, 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**

PRR24/84, Knockinver Limited, site at Upper Main Street, Arklow, Co. Wicklow – 99 residential units

Decisions issued in respect of 81 applications in February 2024

<b>Type of Development</b>	<b>Number of Decisions</b>
Housing Developments	01
Individual Houses	00
Other Developments	80
Other Developments Requiring EIA	00
<b>Total</b>	<b>81</b>

Decisions issued between January to February 2024, in comparison to the same period for 2023:

	<b>28/01/2023</b>	<b>29/02/2024</b>
Total Number of decisions issued	155	153
Total Number of decisions to grant	127	133
% Grant Rate	82%	87%
No of applications withdrawn		12 (03 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, Ballyrairie Lower and Ballyrairie 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, bunded 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 2024 and from that date to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024 50.62% of planning applications were received online.

For the month of February 2024, a total of 119 planning applications were received of which 38.66% were hard copy applications and **61.34% were received online.**

From 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024 to 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024 a total of 208 applications were received of which 44.23% were hard copy applications and **55.77% were online applications.**

Due to the complexities of larger applications, it has been necessary to request one hard copy for larger multi-unit developments.

There has been a mix of application types received including:

- One off houses/extensions
- Construction of general purpose shed to house stables, feed and fodder, a roofed manure pit in Enniskerry.
- Construction of 10 no. houses, Donard
- 10 year planning permission for part demolition, extension, reconfiguration, and refurbishment of an existing production and manufacturing facility at Tinahely.
- Construction of 6 new houses at Blacklion, Greystones.

## Planning Enforcement

New Files	11
Advisory Letters	29
Warning Letters	9
Enforcement Notices	5
Legal Files	0
Closed	10

## Short Term Letting – 01/02/2014 – 29/02/2024

Applications received for Registration in February 2024	5
Complaints received in February 2024	0
Warning Letters issued in February 2024	1
Enforcement Notices issued in February 2024	0
Legal proceedings in February 2024	0
Files under investigation as of 29/02/2024	64

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

**Derelict Sites**

Municipal District	No sites on Register
Baltinglass	2

## Economic & Rural Development

### Town Regeneration

#### Town Centre First Masterplans

**Blessington** is a pathfinder town and is the first to receive funding for a Town Centre First Masterplan. The masterplan has been launched nationally and will provide Blessington with a clear framework to positively develop the town now and into the future. The implementation of the TCF plan is at the planning stage. RRDF funding will fund the redesign of the Main Street and Market Square and bring those projects to a shovel ready stage where they can be submitted for funding for Category 1 RRDF.

On the 28<sup>th</sup> February the Minister for Rural and Community Development Heather Humphreys TD launched the first ever Town Centre Plans for 26 towns across the country. The launch was held in Adare, Co Limerick and was attended by the TRO, Blessington District Administrator and a member of Blessington Town Team.

**Newtownmountkennedy** has been announced under Phase 2 as one of the next 26 towns approved to develop Town Centre First Plans. Funding support of €30,000.00 will be given to each of these 26 towns to help with completion of a comprehensive town plan. Further funding of €10,000.00 is being given to Local Authorities to establish three new town teams or to build up existing teams. An application has been forwarded to the Department on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024 for Baltinglass, Rathdrum, Kilcoole and Shillelagh.

### 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 subgroup 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 fortnightly and monthly 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.

Application for further funding on this project was made to the Department on the 7<sup>th</sup> February 2024.

**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.

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

**URDF Call 3:** The URDF announced recently 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.

**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 Pleanála for the proposed works.

### **Tourism**

Wicklow County Council Tourism Office continues to promote County Wicklow as a destination not only to domestic visitors but also on the international market using a range of tools and activities including:

**St. Patrick's Day Promotions:** During the month of March, focus is being given to the upcoming St. Patrick's Day celebrations promoting the various parades happening around Wicklow. Focus is also given to the many locations and attractions of Christian heritage in Wicklow including St Patrick's landing in Wicklow Town.

**Irish Wish Film Locations:** Starring Hollywood star Lindsey Lohan, the Irish Wish movie was mostly shot in Wicklow at locations such as Killruddery, Lough Tay, Powerscourt and Hollywood. Extensive exposure is given to those locations to coincide with the international release on Netflix.

**Easter Events:** Wicklow Tourism is promoting many events over the Easter Holidays with egg hunts, family fun days and many outdoor events over the two weeks. Promotion has already started with Easter starting in March this year.

**Wicklow on French Radio:** Tourism Ireland in France invited Wicklow to feature on Lyon Premiere, a strong local radio station in France's third largest city. As part of the St Patrick's celebrations, the French office is very keen to promote direct flights with Lyon.

**Wicklow Passport:** The Wicklow Passport has been redesigned. The new design adds 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.

### **Abbey Grounds, Wicklow**

A detailed design of the Abbey Grounds has been completed to date. The Architect and Structural engineers are almost complete on the tender drawings and tender package for the Coach House refurbishment. A tender request for the refurbishment of the coach house has been published on eTenders with a closing date of 5<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

The detailed designs for the Amphitheatre and Park area are being finalised. These works will be issued 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.

### **Glendalough Masterplan and Wicklow Visitor Orientation Study**

Following on from the launch of the Glendalough and Wicklow Mountains National Park Visitor Experience and Management Masterplan, work has begun on the implementation of the Plan. A Steering Group has been established, which is chaired by the Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council.

A Working Group comprising representatives from all stakeholders has also been formed and has commenced work on short term actions for 2024, along with longer term actions also. As community consultation and participation is a central tenet of the masterplan, a Local Advisory Group will be established to keep the local community informed and ensure their input to the process.

### **Special Projects**

**Greystones Enterprise Hub:** Property Management Contracts have been signed between Greystones Enterprise Hub CLG and Cushman and Wakefield for the fit-out, marketing, and management of the centre. A Concept Proposal for funding has been submitted to Enterprise Ireland under the Smart Regions Enterprise Innovation Fund.

**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 issued for the design of the former Bank of Ireland building in Carnew for the provision of a remote working hub and ancillary facilities. An evaluation of the tender responses has taken place a contract will be awarded in March. A timeframe of 12 months has been given for design, costing (to include estimate construction costs and fit-out costs), and Part VIII if required.

**Marketing Plan:** MarketingCoach were awarded the contract to develop a Marketing Plan for County Wicklow, highlighting the availability of Remote Working Hubs and Broadband Connection Points. Engagement with stakeholders is complete and presentation of the draft marketing plan is expected shortly.

### **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. A plan for 2024 based around three work-streams (skills, ports/harbours, and supply chain) has been agreed.

### **Skills Strategy**

The Draft Skills Strategy for County Wicklow is under final review. It is expected to launch early in Q2 of 2024. The Skills Taskforce is established and continues to be central to the preparation of the draft plan. Once launched, the work of the Taskforce will turn to implementing the plan.

### **Food and Beverage Strategy**

**Wicklow Naturally** - The 2024 Wicklow Naturally Action Plan to achieve objectives set out in the Wicklow Food and Beverage Strategy has been prepared and agreed by the board.

The role of the coordinator post for Wicklow Naturally has been advertised and it is anticipated that interviews will be held before the end of March.

An application has been made to the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine for grant funding to support Destination Wicklow, a project focussing on telling the story of Wicklow Naturally members and their products.

Wicklow Naturally membership is continuing to grow with food and beverage producers from all areas of County Wicklow.

Local Enterprise Office

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

<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	2 3
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.	40	60	26
Start Your Own Business Participant numbers (included in total training programmes)	73 / 7 programmes	120	16
Total No. of all Participants participating in training Programmes and events (all programmes except SYOB and MDP)	757	1020	135
Women in Business Network Number of Meetings	30	20	5

<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	88

Number of One-to-One Business Advice meetings including Businesses assigned a mentor	528	390	104
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METRICS: Student Enterprise Programmes	HISTORICAL	TARGETS	
Academic Year	2021/2023	2023/2024	Year to Date 23-24
No. of Secondary Student Participants	1028	1100	1358

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

Trading Online Voucher	HISTORICAL	TARGETS	
No of Trading Online Vouchers approved	2023	2024	Year to Date 2024
Trading Online Vouchers	81	38 (meet demand)	11

Lean, Green & Digital Start for Micro Projects	HISTORICAL	TARGETS	YEAR TO DATE
	2023	2024	2024
No. of Companies who have undertaken a Lean for Business Assessment by a Lean Expert	11	15	4
No. of Companies who have undertaken a Green for Business Assessment by a Green Expert	5	17	3
No. of Companies who have undertaken a Digital for Business Assessment by a Digital Expert	1	6	1
Energy Efficiency Grant	-	12	-

Microfinance Ireland	HISTORICAL	TARGETS	YEAR TO DATE
	2023	2024	2024
No. of Companies who have submitted an MFI loan application through the LEO	6	11	1

**February 2024 Events:**

- LEO staff attended the launch of the Wicklow Craft Trail, organised by County Wicklow Partnership LEADER fund, and held in Powerscourt House on 1<sup>st</sup> February. Many LEO craft clients exhibited at this event.
- The Student Enterprise programme was held on 27<sup>th</sup> Feb, with 43 teams and 114 students competing. The winner will now go on to represent Wicklow in the National Final in May

**March 2024 Activities:**

- 'Local Enterprise Week', a national LEO celebration of local enterprise, full of events and business workshops takes place from 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> March 2024
- Export Development Programme is commencing on 6<sup>th</sup> March in Clermont House for 6 weeks, we have 10 ambitious companies who want to internationalise/ scale up registered for the programme.

**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).

Training completed in February includes:

- Digital Marketing Clinics
- Using Canva for Businesses; Beginners
- Effective use of Social Media for your business
- Content Creation & Copyright
- 

Training scheduled for March includes:

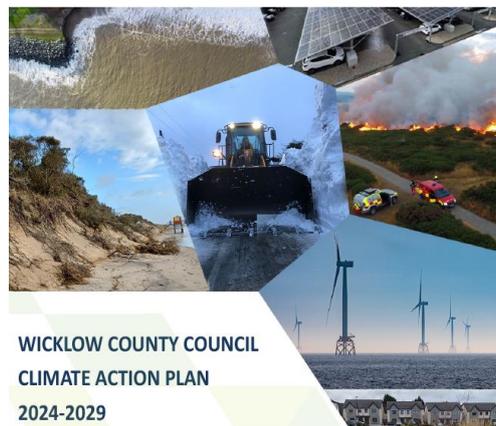
- Legalities of Staff Employment
- Website Bootcamp: Search Engine Optimisation
- Start Your Own Business

## Climate, Environment, Recreation & Amenity

### Climate Action

#### Climate Action Plan

The Adopted Climate Action Plan was launched at the Climate and Biodiversity Action SPC on the 22<sup>nd</sup> February and was published on the Council Website



Cross Departmental Committee Structures are currently under review in order to deliver and monitor the Actions of the Plan.

#### Community Climate Action Programme

Funding of €646,000 was allocated to Wicklow, with closing date of 6<sup>th</sup> March for Expressions of Interest. The Community Climate Action Officer will commence reviewing the applications in March.

An Evaluation Committee is being set up.

#### Climate Adaptation

##### Coastal Erosion

The East Coast Railway (ECRIPP) consultant engineers have requested to make a presentation to the Members at the Ordinary Meeting to be held in April 2024, in relation to the coastal protection works from Bray Head to Wicklow.



Members of the Climate Action Team are meeting Malachy Walsh and Partners in relation to Brittas Bay and Ennereilly on 6<sup>th</sup> March.

Seabank to Kilmichael Point - An application has been lodged to the OPW for funding and this project has been tendered on etenders.

Greystones North Beach - Funding submitted to OPW, May be covered by ECRIPP

### **Climate Mitigation**

The Council is considering extending the Bolt eBike scheme to Greystones MD and a meeting is scheduled to take place in March to discuss further.



**Environmental Awareness**

- The Tidy Towns awards have been judged and awards finalised. Awards are allocated in multiple categories and a ceremony took place on 4<sup>th</sup> March.



- Green School Assessments are ongoing.
- The PPN is hosting an event on 23<sup>rd</sup> March – ‘Meet the Climate Action Team’
- The Council’s Climate Action Team will hold a tree planting demonstration to show those interested how to give a tree the best start in a long, healthy life. This will take place on Sunday, 10<sup>th</sup> March at 11 am, at Wicklow County Campus, Clermont House, Rathnew.

**Litter/Waste Management**

<b>LITTER/WASTE ENFORCEMENT</b>	
No. of Complaints Created	171
No. of Cases Closed, Resolved or Completed	147
No of Litter Fines Issued	5
No. of Waste Management Files Opened	1
No. of Warning Letters Issued	5
No of Abandoned Car Notices Issued	23
No. of Temporary Signs Granted	1
No. of Notices Issued under Section 14 of the Waste Management Act	14
No. of files prepared for Court and included in Court Lists	28
No. of Cases in Court during the month under the Litter Pollution Act	1
No. of Cases in Court during the month under the Waste Management Act *	7

*\*7 cases were listed for hearing during the month of February. 4 cases were listed for mention cases were adjourned, with one of the adjournments for one month only, to allow the defendant further time to clean up. In the final case, the defendant was convicted. A fine of €750 was imposed and costs of €550 awarded to Wicklow County Council.*

**Biodiversity Office**

The Biodiversity Officer attended Wicklow Barn Owl Group meeting, to plan for the coming year.



A plan is being developed to improve the management of Mill Lane and Dr Ryan Park for biodiversity whilst also creating education and amenity areas for local communities.

Local Biodiversity Action Fund (LBAF) Scheme - One application has been submitted to the Heritage Council funding scheme in the sum of €23,000, for development of the Local Biodiversity Action Plan, and six project applications have been submitted to the LBAF fund (Total 120k). Funding decisions are expected in March.

The Biodiversity Officer joined the Cultural Team panel for Creative Wicklow Grant and attended the first meeting.

The members of the Climate and Biodiversity Action SPC received a comprehensive presentation on the role of the Biodiversity Officer, the Local Biodiversity Action Fund, the Country Biodiversity Forum and the development of the County Biodiversity Action Plan

**Harbours and Ports**

**Wicklow Harbour Dredging**

A draft licence has been issued to carry out bed-levelling in Wicklow Port. This will ensure appropriate depths are available for shipping for the next 2 years while the council awaits a licence for a full maintenance dredging of the harbour.

**Harbours CCTV and security**

A review of CCTV and access control is underway in both Wicklow and Arklow harbour to improve security of the International Ship and Port Security Area as well as security for individual vessels berthed in the harbours.

**Arklow Harbour**

Works continue on the completion of the 14 Fishers storage huts in Arklow. These will be advertised by way of request for expressions of interest in the coming weeks.

	<b>Ships</b>	<b>Single (Import or Export)</b>	<b>Double (Import &amp; Export)</b>	<b>Transactions</b>	<b>Imports</b>	<b>Exports</b>
Jan-24	7	5	2	9	7	2
Feb-24	6	7	1	7	5	2

## **Pollution Control**

### **Pollution Response & Investigation**

- 3 Water pollution complaints received and investigated.
- 0 Water pollution complaints closed.
- 1 Noise pollution complaints received and investigated.
- 0 Noise pollution complaints closed.
- 0 Air pollution complaints received and investigated.
- 0 Air pollution complaints closed.

### **Private Water Supplies**

- 1 Drinking Water Monitoring Plan for 117 Regulated Private Water Supplies in preparation.

### **Water Framework Directive National Monitoring Programme**

- 7 Lakes monitored for checking compliance with environmental quality standards
- 51 Rivers monitored for compliance with environmental quality standards.



### **Water Framework Directive River Management Engagement and Investigations**

- 3 Catchment engagement activities were undertaken.

### **Septic Tank Inspections - National Inspection Plan 2022-2026**

- 1 Inspection Plan prepared
- 19 Inspection of domestic wastewater treatment systems carried out and found compliant with advisory notice.

### **Good Agricultural Practice Inspections**

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

### **Well Grants**

7 New Water Grant applications received

- 6 New Well granted
- 8 New Pumps granted
- 21 Water Treatment/Disinfection Equipment Units granted
- 12 inspections in advance/completion of works

### **Petrol Vapour Recovery**

- 3 Installation inspected
- 0 Installation issued with Certificate of Testing
- 0 Stage Ib applications assessed
- 3 Stage Ib Installations Inspections.

### **Deco Paint Solvent Regulations**

- 0 Dry cleaner Installations issued with Certificates of Compliance.

### **Smokeless Coal Regulations**

- 4 Wholesalers/distributors/retailers inspected.

### **Licensed Effluent Discharges to Waters/Sewer**

- 11 licensed wastewater discharges to waters were monitored and deemed compliant.
- 1 licensed wastewater discharges to waters were monitored and 2 deemed non-compliant.

### **Municipal Wastewater Treatment Plants – Ambient Monitoring**

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

### **Planning & Development**

- 5 environmental reports on referred planning applications/consultations were completed concerning agricultural development.
- 2 environmental reports on referred planning applications/consultations were completed concerning commercial development.

- 3 environmental reports on referred planning applications/consultations were completed concerning housing development.
- 0 environmental reports on compliance with planning permission conditions were completed.

## **Control of Dogs**

### **Dogs**

A total of 1,077 licences were renewed in February 2024. 54% of these licences were purchased on line (579 licences). This is a marked increase on 2023, in which only 314 licences were renewed. The dog wardens have been carrying out patrols in a number of locations in the county, and advertising the location where they will visit, which has contributed to the increase in purchase of licenses.

### **Lambing season**

The annual campaign has commenced, reminding the public to ensure their dogs are under control during the lambing season. Reminders are being broadcast on East Coast Radio a number of times per day



### **Blue Flags**

Applications have been submitted to An Taisce for renewal of blue flags at Brittas Bay North & South and Greystones South. Wicklow County Council continues to liaise with An Taisce on any matters arising.



## Projects Office

### Whitestown Remediation Project

The draft remediation plan has been presented to the court and has been approved in part. Tender Documents for the Outlets for Material excavated from the site and also for the main contractor are presently being prepared.

### 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. Byrne Looby Partners Ltd., (now known as Ayesa) has been appointed to carry out the detailed design and tender stage of the project. Site Investigation and Archaeological Investigations will be carried out in 2024.

### Wicklow Co. Library Service

2024 kicked off very positively in our libraries. A total of 40,224 items were issued across the library network and despite snowy weather, a very healthy footfall is evident in all 13 libraries.

The Storytrail featuring the lonely Beast, previously at Baltinglass, has now migrated to Burnaby Park in Greystones and a new story installed, the library and arts office are very grateful to the staff from WCC who carried out the install. You can track the Beast's journey at both the Tearmann Community Garden in Baltinglass and Burnaby Park. Meanwhile, plans are underway to introduce a fresh storytrail in Roundwood and add two more trails in the near future. Keep an eye out for updates on these exciting developments!



There is good news for members of our new communities as we have acquired some

Please note that joining your local library has never been easier – anyone wishing to join can attend the branch that suits best or join online here <https://wicklow.spydus.ie/cgi-bin/spydus.exe/MSGTRN/WPAC/JOIN>

To keep informed about events and activities and other news, please keep an eye and follow our social media platforms of Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/WicklowLibraries> and Instagram <https://www.threads.net/@wicklowlibraries>

We have good news for our new communities as we have started to acquire keyboards in different alphabets. Our main branches now have Cyrillic and Arabic keyboards available for using while visiting the library. These can be borrowed at the library desk with a library card.





**CYRILLIC KEYBOARD AVAILABLE**  
Just ask a member of staff to use this on one of our PCs

**НА КОМП'ЮТЕРАХ Є КЛАВІАТУРА КИРИЛИЦЕЮ (УКРАЇНСЬКІ ЛІТЕРИ)**  
Зверніться до нашого співробітника.



**НА КОМП'ЮТЕРАХ ЕСТЬ КЛАВИАТУРА КИРИЛЛИЦЕЙ**  
Обратитесь к нашему сотруднику.

### Mobile Library

During March, a change of staff on the mobile library takes place. The current librarian, Karen, bids a fond farewell to her patrons and moves to new pastures in Bray Library while Robert moves from Bray library to take over the Mobile Library. We wish them both well in their new roles.

### Healthy Ireland at your Library

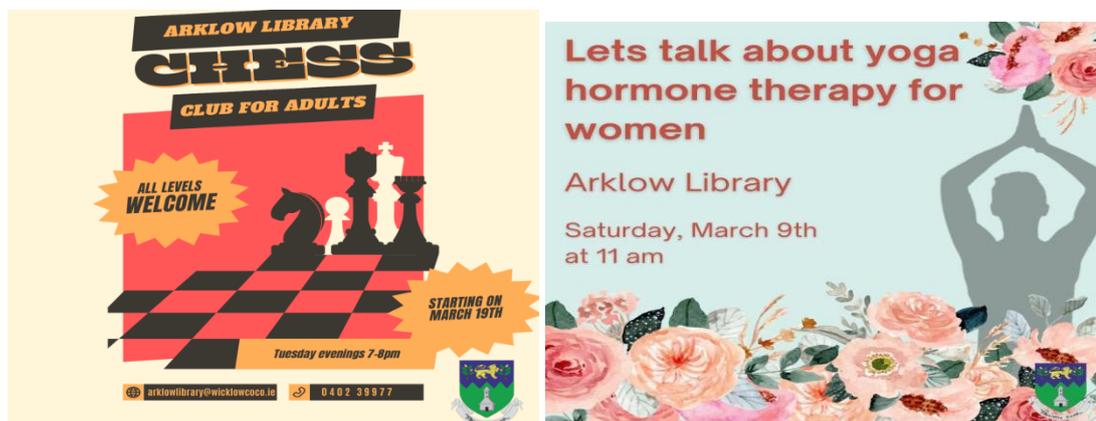
Healthy Ireland continues to be a key area of focus at our libraries. Blessington Library kicks off April with a Mindfulness Session on Monday 4th, led by Sian Keary. On Thursday 14th, a talk on Eating Disorders will be held by a representative from the support group Bodywhys.

Wicklow Library introduces Chair Yoga with Louise starting March 13th until April 24th. In April, Wicklow Library also offers a Resistance Training 6-Week Introductory Course with Michal Turkowski, starting April 5th and running until May 3rd.

### Arklow Library

For the month of March, Arklow Library has a diverse array of events and activities catering to various age groups and interests. Arklow Library invites everyone to participate in these events

The month kicks off with a lively celebration of World Book Day on Thursday, March 7th. Staff and customers alike are encouraged to dress up as their favourite book characters and join in the fun-filled treasure hunt from 3:00pm to 6:00pm. Irish Astronomy Week is celebrated with the "Shooting the Stars" event on Tuesday, March 12th, from 7:00pm to 8:00pm. Led by astrophotography expert Laurynas Zubrickas, attendees will learn the skill of capturing stunning images of the night sky.



On Saturday, March 9th, at 11:00am, women are invited to explore the benefits of Yoga Hormone Therapy for menstruation or menopause.

A Blueway Project Consultation Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 14th, at 7:00pm. This is an opportunity for the community to voice their opinions and learn more about the upcoming project.

Seachtain na Gaeilge festivities continue on Friday, March 15th, with "The Great Irish Animal Word Search" from 3:00pm to 5:00pm. Participants are encouraged to wear green while enjoying Gaelic storytime sessions throughout the week.

Grow Mental Health Support Service delivers a talk on Saturday, March 23rd, from 11:00am to 1:00pm. This session provides insights into peer support groups and their benefits for emotional well-being. Booking is essential.

An Easter Egg Hunt is set for Thursday, March 28th, at 3:00pm, offering a day of stories, crafts, and festive fun. A sensory-friendly version of the event is also scheduled for Tuesday, March 26th.



Weekly events include Baby Sing-Along Sessions on Thursdays at 10:00am, Family Fun Day every Saturday from 12:00pm onwards, Lego Club on the 2nd of March from 3:00pm to 4:00pm, and Chess Clubs for both kids and adults on Saturdays and Tuesdays respectively.

Writers' Group gathers on Tuesdays, March 12th & 26th, from 6:30pm to 8:00pm, offering a supportive environment for creative expression.

Other regular events include Mini Movies on Fridays at 4:00pm, Toddler Storytime & Craft on Wednesdays at 10:00am, Irish Conversation Circle on Tuesdays at 7:00pm, Book Clubs on selected dates, and the Adult Knitters' Group on Thursdays from 6:30pm to 8:30pm.

Additionally, an English Conversation Group meets every Thursday at 7:00pm, providing a platform for improving English-speaking skills.

Arklow Library invites everyone to participate in these enriching events and foster a sense of community, learning, and creativity throughout March.

### **Ballywaltrim Library**

In March, Ballywaltrim library is buzzing with activities for everyone. Engineers Week kicks things off with a Robotics and AI workshop designed specifically for 9-11 year olds. Led by local Engineer Damian Leonard, kids get hands-on with robots and learn about circuits in a fun and interactive way. These workshops are always a hit and tend to fill up fast across all our branches.

As part of Seachtain na Gaeilge, the library will host a bilingual Marine Biology Workshop in collaboration with pupils from Bray School Project, courtesy of 'Anyone4science'. Later on, there's a special "Plan-It-Play" workshop where participants can learn about toy life cycles from a scientist and then create their own new toys from old ones with the help of an artist. It's a chance for kids to get creative and learn about sustainability at the same time.

To celebrate Mother's Day, there's an art and craft event for children. Additionally, the library teams up with the local Eolas Day Service to offer art workshops for Sunbeam clients every Tuesday throughout March. These workshops always end with an exhibition of the artwork created, giving participants a chance to showcase their talents.



### Baltinglass Library

At Baltinglass Library, the spirit of community engagement and creative expression continues to thrive.



The English Language Conversation provides a useful opportunity for social connection with our new communities, people from places such as Syria, Albania, Ukraine and Africa meet every Tuesday evening at 6:30 pm where volunteers from the community generously support this group, welcoming adults and older teens seeking to practice their English conversational skills in a relaxed and supportive environment. Volunteers always welcome so do call Baltinglass Library if interested.

On Friday afternoons and Saturday mornings, Olha, the resident craft tutor, provides art and craft workshops that have seen a surge in attendance week after week. The overwhelming feedback from attendees underscores the value of these workshops as not just a chance to create, but also as a space for social interaction and personal fulfilment.



Excitingly, Olha's ambitions extend beyond the current workshops, as she plans to introduce creative activities for children in the near future.

Meanwhile, the Creative Writing group convenes every Saturday morning, offering budding writers a supportive community to share and refine their literary works.

### **Blessington Library**

Blessington Library continues to promote *Healthy Ireland at your Library*, offering this month two events for adults; Mindfulness with Sian on Monday 4th of March and a talk "Supporting a person with an eating disorder" by Bodywhys (the national voluntary organisation supporting people affected by eating disorder) on Thursday 14th of March at 7 pm.

International Women's Day will be celebrated hosting a workshop on emotional mastery and self-leadership for women changemakers by Aliz Merlics, empowering women in our Community on Thursday 7th March at 6 pm.

On Saturday March 9 at 2.30 pm, we will mark Seachtain na Gailge with Carmel Stephen. There will be a bilingual storytelling and crafting session for children and their families

We will celebrate the cultural significance of St. Patrick's Day providing a fun and creative craft afternoon for children 8+ run by library staff on Wednesday 13th of March at 3.30 pm

Staff at Blessington Library welcomes classes from St. Mary's National School, Blessington Educate Together and Blessington No. 1 NS on a weekly basis. The library also supports home-schooling families who have a weekly meet up in the library where they exchange information and support each other.

Blessington Library provides a range of recurring events also such as books clubs for adults and children and writing and poetry meetings. Weekly story time for babies and children followed by play beneath our interactive Tovertafel, is really popular with carers and parents and of course their babies and toddlers! Saturday story time sessions accommodate families providing an opportunity for working parents and busy families to participate in library activities.

## Mindfulness with Sian

### Blessington library



Monday 4th March at 11.30 am

**Booking required**  
Ask at the desk, call (045) 891 740  
blessingtonlib@wicklowcoco.ie

at Your Library

## BODYWHYS

The Eating Disorders Association of Ireland

### Supporting a person with an Eating Disorder

In this talk from Bodywhys , you will learn

- What an eating disorder
- How to support someone if they have an eating disorder
- What treatment options and supports are available

Thursday 14th March at 7 pm

Blessington Library  
No booking required

## International Womens Day Workshop

with Aliz Merlics



Blessington Library  
Thursday 7th March at 6 pm

International Women's Day

## Blessington Library

### St. Patrick's Day Arts & Crafts

Wednesday 13th March at 3.30 pm

Children 8+

**Booking required**

Ask at the desk, call (045) 891 740  
blessingtonlib@wicklowcoco.ie

### Bray Library

March is a busy month in Bray Library!

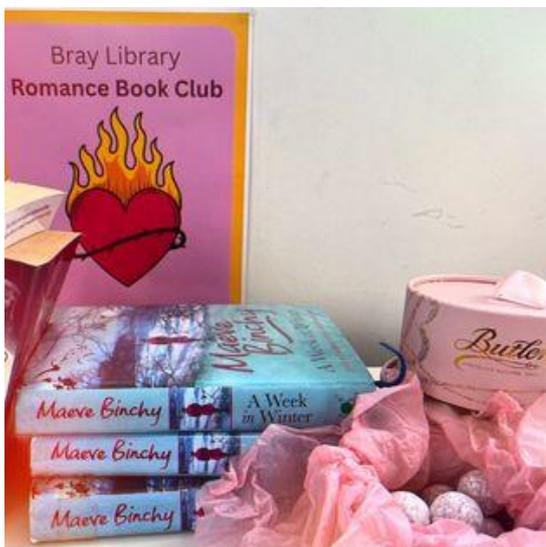
The highly popular Resistance Training sessions wind up at the end of the month, with special guest Aisling Ennis coming to play harp music for the group's final meditation together. This has proven to be a tremendous success with testimonials aplenty from attendees, all saying how much they enjoy the class and the instructor – the snow didn't even dampen their enthusiasm.

A Romance Book Club begins this month in Bray, and members will be reading a Week in Winter by Maeve Binchy as their first book.

Bray Library will be a polling centre for the referenda on 8th of March and will celebrate Seachtain na Gaeilge the following day with a few tunes from our local Comhtas group at 11am. Stories and Songs as Ghaeilge will take place the following Tuesday at 10am.

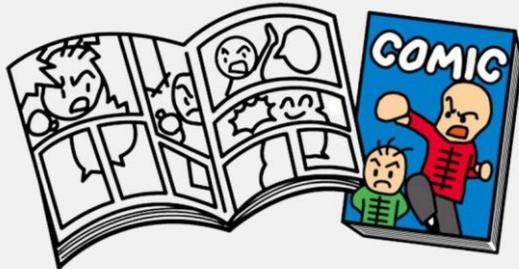
Staff are very excited to welcome back Plan It Play to host art and science workshops on the 25th of March, where families will learn about plastic, and the circular economy and make new toys from old and broken ones. Our partnership with local secondary school NWETSS continues with our Transition Year Junior Juries book club, and their visit to our branch as part of their drive to have every member of their school community join the local library this year. Bray Library will also host an exhibition of posters designed by the students to encourage joining our library.

In the midst of all this activity are 5 weekly class visits, 5 monthly book clubs, 2 weekly comic clubs, 2 weekly story times and STEAM Saturday which takes place from 10-12.30pm every Saturday.



### Afterschool Comic Club

4th - 6th class.



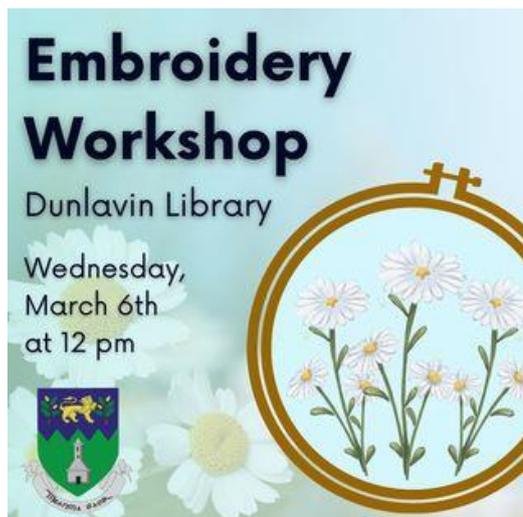
- Thursday afternoons at 3.30pm
- Term time only
- Email: [braylib@wicklowcoco.ie](mailto:braylib@wicklowcoco.ie) to book



### Dunlavin Library

For the past three months, Dunlavin library has been hosting a weekly art and craft session, drawing eager participants from the local community.

Led by the talented Olha, hailing from Ukraine, these sessions have become a highlight for many, offering a range of creative pursuits. Skills such as crochet, embroidery, flower making, watercolour, quilling and acrylic painting are there to be enjoyed, there's something for everyone to discover and master. These sessions are free of charge and all materials are provided so do call Maura at 045 401100 or email [mgreene@wicklowcoco.ie](mailto:mgreene@wicklowcoco.ie) to book a place.



### Enniskerry Library

Two groups of Girl guides were welcomed to the library on March 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> to work on their book lover badges.

Seachtain na Gaeilge is being celebrated in Enniskerry library with a bi-lingual event by the Mobile Music School on Tuesday, March 12<sup>th</sup> and with a performance by the junior members of Bray Comhaltas Junior Fleadh Ceoil group on Wednesday, March 13<sup>th</sup>.

A Creative Ireland Art and Science workshop takes place on Saturday March 24<sup>th</sup>.

Regular monthly bookclubs continue in the library including a Murder, Mystery Thriller bookclub on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month for adults, a general bookclub on 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of the month and a children's bookclub on 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of the month, focusing on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and climate issues.

The regular knitting club continues on Wednesday evenings throughout the month, check out the little teddy bears recently created!



### **Greystones Library**

March is set to bring a fantastic selection of events to Greystones Library, promising something for everyone in the community.

Commencing the month, Astronomy Week takes centre stage with a captivating presentation titled "From Your Garden to the Stars," featuring Alex Labunskij. Scheduled for March 14th at 7 PM, attendees will embark on an exploration of radio astronomy fields.

On March 25th the library hosts Sustainable Sewing for Children, an engaging workshop led by Barbara. Due to its popularity, securing a spot for your child is essential for this extended session.

Kilcoole's Coláiste Chraobh Abhainn recently initiated its first book club at the library, fostering meaningful connections between education and the importance of reading for enjoyment as well as connection.

Prepare for the upcoming St. Patrick's Day festivities on March 15th with traditional tunes courtesy of the local Comhaltas from 11.00 to 11.30 am.

Craft enthusiasts won't want to miss the gathering of our Crafters on March 28th, promising a day of creativity and inspiration.

Greystones Library facilitates regular book clubs catering to teens, children, and adults alike, aiming to have an offer for all book club enthusiasts. Additionally, our youngest patrons have the opportunity to have fun in regular story and rhyme sessions tailored to their age group.



**Rathdrum Library**

Every Friday morning, parents and caregivers are invited to a Baby & Toddler Storytime. From 10 to 10:30, entertaining stories and rhymes are tailored specifically for our littlest listeners aged 0 to 3 years old.

The excitement doesn't stop there. On the first and third Saturdays of each month from 11 to 11:30, children aged 3 to 5 enjoy Storytime and then, from 11:45 to 12:15, it's time for 6 to 8-year-olds to enjoy the pleasure of being read to.

Good news also for Rathdrum Library as this month, they are to take delivery of some new sensory equipment including a little sensory house which is bound to entertain small children at dedicated times.

For the adults, the Adult Book Club meets from 7 to 8:15 PM, providing a space for lively discussions and shared love for literature.

Looking to explore outer space? Come along to Rathdrum Library on March 13th from 6:30 to 8:00 PM for an enlightening talk by Irish Astronomy.

Connections with schools is very important to all libraries and Rathdrum plays it's part - every Tuesday, Rathdrum library welcomes four class visits from the Boy's N.S., nurturing young minds and encouraging a lifelong passion for learning. Additionally, every Thursday, staff is delighted to host class visits from Our Lady's Girls N.S.

And let's not forget about the thriving connection with Avondale C.C., where every Tuesday from 4 to 5 PM, students come to the library and lead paired reading sessions with students from Avondale.

**Tinahely Library**

World Book Day is being celebrated with children being encouraged to review and vote for their favourite book with draws taking place in World Book Day and prizes for winners of each age category.

A Seachtain na Gaeilge storytime takes place in the library on Wednesday, March 13<sup>th</sup> with invited class groups from local schools. In addition, two St. Patrick's Day arts & crafts sessions will take place on Wednesday March 13<sup>th</sup>.

Two Easter-themed arts & crafts sessions will take place in the library on the afternoon of Thursday, March 28<sup>th</sup>.

Regular Baby & toddler story times continue on Wednesday mornings throughout the month.



## **Wicklow Library**

March brings a plethora of events and activities at Wicklow Library. This is the exciting line-up for the month ahead, catering to diverse interests and age groups.

Every Thursday morning join us for "Comhrá agus Ceol," a blend of conversation and music for children in our community room, starting at 10:45 am.

For those in our community with visual impairments, the Wicklow Partially Sighted Group meets monthly in our Community Room. This month's meeting is scheduled for March 4th at 12:30 pm, providing a supportive space for mutual assistance and advice. Our commitment to health and wellness continues with HSE Pulmonary Rehab Classes on March 5th and 7th at 1:30 pm. These classes are designed to support clients with breathing difficulties and are part of an ongoing program running throughout February and March. March also sees the return of La Leche League on March 6th at 10:00 am, offering free information and support to breastfeeding mothers and their families.

Sandra Quinn leads our LEGO Club for children with autism every Saturday morning from 10:00 am to 11:30 am, fostering creativity and social interaction in a supportive setting.

Book lovers can look forward to Lyndsy's book club meeting on March 14th from 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm, providing a platform for lively discussions and literary exploration.

Literature enthusiasts won't want to miss our Young Adult Book Club meeting on February 10<sup>th</sup> and Lyndsy's book club meeting on March 14th from 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm.

Join Storytime on Saturday mornings at 11:00 am, as well as Baby and Toddler Story Rhyme Time on Mondays at 10:45 am and, providing engaging experiences for our youngest library visitors.

Wicklow Library staff is delighted to host exhibitions by talented artists Mandy Jackson and Brooke Petersen throughout March, showcasing their inspiring works.

Wicklow Library Chess Club for children takes place every Tuesday evening from 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm.

Knitting and Crochet enthusiasts are invited to join our groups on Monday mornings at 11:00 am and Tuesday evenings at 7:00 pm, where creativity flourishes in a supportive community setting.

Wicklow Library is pleased to offer Citizen Information appointments every Thursday, providing essential services and support locally. Appointments can be booked for 20-minute slots via Teams, eliminating the need for travel to Arklow or Bray.

Film enthusiasts won't want to miss Wicklow Film Club on March 20th, hosted by Mary Kavanagh, offering an evening of cinematic delights. Membership is required for My Open Library access.

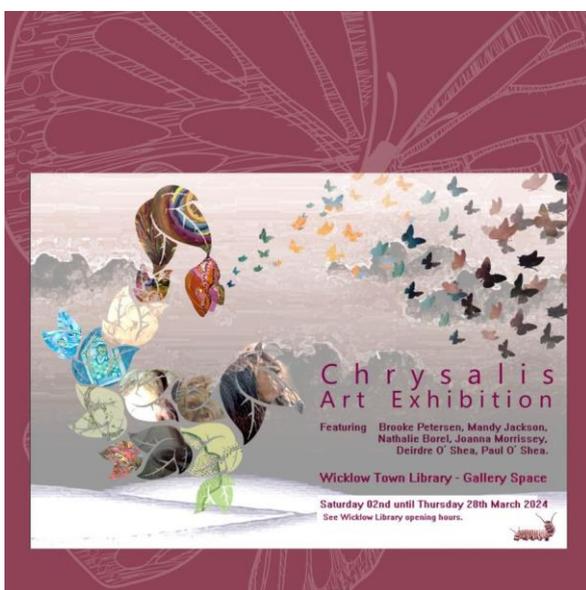
For aspiring writers, our Fighting Words workshop on March 5th promises creativity and writing fun for school classes, starting at 10:15 am.

Transition Year students from East Glendalough kickstart TY Tech on March 12th, offering support for digital device use in the community.

Delve into local history with a captivating talk on "The Arklow Question" and sectarian disturbances on March 7th at 7:00 pm.

For those seeking moments of peace and tranquility, meditation classes are offered on March 9th and 23rd at 12:30 pm, providing a serene space for inner reflection and Chair Yoga classes on March 13th, 20th, and 27th at 10:00 am – (these are fully booked)

Finally, immerse yourself in the beauty of the Irish language with Irish Conversation on March 23rd at 3:00 pm. Failte isteach!



**Resistance Training** for beginners  
at Wicklow Town Library  
with Michał Turkowski



Fridays at 10.15 am  
April 5th - May 10th  
All equipment supplied



**Heartfulness  
Meditation  
& Relaxation**

Join us in  
Wicklow Town  
Library  
Exhibition  
Space (Top  
Floor)

Saturday 9th and 23rd of March  
Time : 12:30 - 13:30



Learn how to relax and meditate



All aged 18 + are welcome  
Free of charge



## Archives & Genealogy Service

### Decade of Centenaries

A new young persons' publication *Wicklow Gaol: Three Centuries of Incredible Irish History* has been developed as part of Wicklow County Council's *Decade of Centenaries* programme, supported by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport & Media. The book has been distributed to all Wicklow library branches and each County Wicklow primary school has received a classroom set both in English agus as Gaelige. The author Carmel Ui Cheallaigh and illustrator Jimmy Burns have presented workshops in the libraries of each MD, with more to follow due to popular demand.

### Collections management

Installation of cataloguing software *Axiell Collections*. The County Wicklow Archivist continues cataloguing the County Wicklow collections using the new software and each collection listed will be published to Wicklow.ie.

#### *New collections*

The estate papers of the Actons of Kilmacurragh dating from the 1660s. The Actons acquired the Kilmacurragh estate during the 17<sup>th</sup> century and developed the famous arboretum in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, now operated by the OPW. In 2021 the OPW announced funding of €5.45 million for structural work at Kilmacurragh House. A catalogue for this collection is now completed, in preparation for an exhibition to coincide with the refurbishment of Kilmacurragh House.

### Outreach

#### *Special projects*

Arklow Street Preachers project based on our glass plate negatives collection of late 19<sup>th</sup> century images of these events in Arklow. Phase one completed – digitisation of the images. Phase two ongoing - collaboration with historian Pat Power and the Arklow Maritime Museum on a publication and exhibition. Editor appointed.

#### Funding application

Application submitted by the Archives Service under the Heritage Council's *Heritage Stewardship grants scheme 2024* for a project on the *Tate Charity Trust* collection (1787-1990): To produce a descriptive catalogue, exhibition and online resources. In 1787 John Tate of Glenmalure bequeathed his lands of 895 acres to the parishioners of Rathdrum. Tate vested the property into the hands of five named Trustees and they along with their successors administered the Charity known as *John Tate's Charity*, with the capital gained from this estate down through the years of its existence up to the present day. This project will enable us to make accessible to researchers this incredible collection both through a descriptive list and also through interpretation in terms of the exhibition and articles, promoting to as wide an audience as possible.

#### *Digitisation programme*

Two projects are now complete: Minute books of the Rathdrum Boards of Guardians 1839 – 1921 funded by Creative Ireland. Wicklow Valuation Records 1887-1892– a valuable substitute for the pre-1901 census records destroyed in the

fire at the Public Record Office, Dublin Four Courts in 1922. Both collections feature the new AI-powered technology *Transkribus* rendering hand-written records machine-readable and searchable for the first time. Soon to be uploaded to Wicklow.ie – additional storage space has been secured.

Irish Community Archives Network (ICAN) – new Wicklow groups added:

*Our Wicklow Heritage* online community archives network is Wicklow County Council's partnership project with the National Museum of Ireland and the Heritage Council. The Wicklow network is administered through a collaboration between the Heritage, Archives and Local Studies services of Wicklow County Council. The network is expanding with new Wicklow community groups coming on board – official announcement to follow.

#### *Education programme*



County Archives resources developed for the Leaving Cert History Research Study Report are available on the [www.wicklow.ie](http://www.wicklow.ie) website. School visits by the County Archives to continue.

#### *Mother and Baby Institutions Payment Scheme Act 2023*

Wicklow County Archives is developing a protocol with the Department of Children around records research and accessing records to provide the Department with documentary evidence for claimants to the scheme, in relation to time spent in the Wicklow County Home. Scheme to commence in March 202

### **Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership**

#### **Rathdrum Sports Hub**

##### Table Tennis Roadshow Rathdrum Primary Schools

The table tennis roadshow in Rathdrum took place on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> February in Rathdrum Girl's school, St Saviours and Rathdrum Boys National School. Jing Yi Graham from Table Tennis Ireland delivered introductory skill sessions in each school. 155 students in total took part in this initiative.

Wicklow Sports and Recreation Partnership gave 30 Table Tennis @ Home packs to the three primary schools in Rathdrum. Each pack included 2 bats, balls, a pop-up net and a 6-week video skills programme. The packs allow primary school children in Rathdrum continue table tennis in their classrooms.

### Walk n Talk Rathdrum

Walking leader Michael Keegan delivered a free 6 week walk n talk morning time programme to 10 participants. Each week the group enjoyed different scenic walks around Rathdrum. The walks included Avonmore, Avondale, Clara Vale and the Jubilee walk.

### **Arklow Sports Hub**

#### Beginner Racquetball Coaching in Coral Leisure Arklow

A 6-week introductory racquetball course was delivered by racquetball coach Adam Neary to 8 adults in Coral Leisure Arklow. The programme focussed on building a solid foundation of skills and an understanding of the game. These sessions offered an accessible and enjoyable pathway for individuals new to the sport.

### **Women in Sport**

#### Women's Try Tennis programme at Wicklow Tennis Club

Wicklow Sports and Recreation Partnership are collaborating with Tennis Ireland to deliver an 8 week try tennis programme to 24 women. The 10-week introductory programme started on 22<sup>nd</sup> February and takes place on Thursday mornings in Wicklow Tennis Club. Tennis Ireland Licensed coach Ella Tindale delivers the weekly sessions. This dynamic and engaging initiative is designed to introduce women of all ages and fitness levels to tennis.

### **Marathon kids**

#### Marathon kids programme 2024

The Marathon Kids 8-week programme started on 26<sup>th</sup> February. There are 600 students registered from 11 primary schools from County Wicklow. The schools include Blessington no.1 School, Donard NS, Gaelscoil Na Lochanna, Jonathan Swift NS, Moneystown NS, Scoil Chaoimhin Naofa, Scoil Naomh Iosaf, Scoil Nioclais Naofa, St Joseph's National School Vallemount, St Laurence O'Toole NS and St Marys SNS Blessington. Each student will run 26.2 miles over the 8 weeks. The students perform four running session each week as well as learning about the positive impact physical activity has on their lives.

### **Age & Opportunity Funding**

#### Walk & Talk with Activator Poles

A free, six – week activator poles tutor led programme taking place Wednesday mornings in Aughrim Community Centre with the Aughrim Active Retirement Group. This programme is both indoors and outdoors with a focus on flexibility, strength and improve cardiovascular fitness.

#### Pickleball for People 55+

A free, instructor led pickleball programme aimed at people aged 55+.

This programme is taking place once a week, Friday evenings for people ages 55+. Pickleball is a dynamic and engaging sport that combines elements of tennis, badminton, and ping-pong. Pickleball is played on a court with a net, pickleball involves two to four players using paddles to hit a perforated plastic ball over the net.



### **HSE Seed Funding - Chronic Condition Programmes**

#### Aqua Aerobics for Parkinsons

A free, six-week Aqua Aerobics Programme for People living with Parkinsons. Aqua Aerobics for Parkinsons is an excellent way of increasing participants stamina, especially when experiencing joint pain and having weak bones. The programme is starting Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> March at 11am – 12pm in Druids Glen Hotel. The programme will be delivered by a Druids Glen leisure staff member.

#### Tai Chi for Asthmatics

A free, eight-week Tai Chi Programme aimed at asthmatics. This programme will help increase flexibility and strength and improve cardiovascular fitness. Tai Chi promotes strength and mobility in the joints, improves balance and releases fatigue. It strengthens the immune system, improves sleep, and increases vitality. The programme is taking place in Shoreline Leisure, Bray at 10.30am – 11.30am and will be delivered by a tai chi teacher Patricia Cronnelly.

#### Walk & Talk Bray

A free, 10-week walking teacher led programme. Taking place twice a week, Wednesday, and Friday mornings at 11.30am. Walking is a safe and effective form of exercise for nearly everyone. This programme will help increase flexibility and strength and improve cardiovascular fitness. This programme is for those living with asthma and other respiratory conditions.

### **Chronic Conditions - Upcoming Programmes:**

Phase 4 Cardiac Rehabilitation (referral only) – Shoreline Leisure, Bray and Shoreline leisure, Greystones. Start date TBC.

**Upcoming Programmes:**

Women in sport week 4<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> March  
 Roller skating for teenage girls in Shoreline Leisure Greystones

Training & Education

<b><u>Activity</u></b>	<b><u>Venue</u></b>	<b><u>Date</u></b>
<b>Safeguarding 1</b>	3 Hours Online	6 <sup>th</sup> February
<b>Safeguarding 2</b>	3 Hours Online	20 <sup>th</sup> February
<b>Safeguarding 3</b>	3 Hours Online	5 <sup>th</sup> March
<b>Safeguarding 1</b>	3 Hours Online	26 <sup>th</sup> March
<b>Sports First Aid</b>	Wicklow Tennis Club	23 <sup>rd</sup> March

**Wicklow Arts Office**

**2024 Arts Act Funding Schemes**

Applications have been received for the three schemes under the 2024 Arts Act Funding. The assessment process is underway, and results will be made available once adjudication is completed.

- Artist Award – 76 Applications
- Artist & Community Collaboration Award – 10 Applications
- Arts Festival Award - 11 Applications

Arts Act Funding support artists, communities, arts festivals, arts participation and art form development across County Wicklow.

**IWC National Mentoring Programme 2024**

The Irish Writers Centre (IWC) offers over 30 mentorships each year. Writers receive sustained creative and professional mentoring from an acclaimed Irish writer of their choosing. Writers living in all thirty-two counties are eligible to apply. Accepted genres/forms include literary fiction, creative non-fiction, children's / young adult fiction, and poetry.

Two mentorships will be available to County Wicklow writers. This initiative is supported by Wicklow County Arts Office and the Arts Council.

The application deadline is now closed with over 400 applications having been received by the scheme nationally. IWC will select the two successful candidates who will be notified in early June.

### **Theatre Forum Sligo Gathering - Wicklow County Council Artist Bursaries**

In conjunction with Theatre Forum, Wicklow County Arts Office are offering two bursaries for arts based practitioners living in County Wicklow to attend the Theatre Forum Gathering in Sligo on 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> May 2024. The event will see artists, arts workers and arts organisation people from arts centres and production companies, festivals and funders congregate in Sligo for two days of conversation, provocation, and inspiration.

Open for applications from 11<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

Link for applications: <https://forms.gle/g5XJZUnWUo76DYHt6>

### **Creative Places Baltinglass: Baltinglass Artists Gathering**

Creative Places Baltinglass is hosting the next Baltinglass Artists Gathering on Monday, 11<sup>th</sup> March at 7.30 pm, in Horan's, Baltinglass.

In combination with the 2024 Seed Funding Scheme Clinic, this event is for Baltinglass and West Wicklow artists to provide an opportunity to ask questions and network with their local peers. It will also feature some of the successful awardees of the 2023 Scheme who will share both their experiences of the grant and their recommendations.

The event is free, but booking is required.

### **Creative Places Baltinglass: Sitting Room Session No.3**

Creative Places Baltinglass invites residents from the Lalor Centre and Baltinglass Community Hospital alongside their families to a great afternoon of music, performance and storytelling to mark the St Patrick's Day weekend. Taking place on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2024, these performances will feature talented professionals and entertainers including:

- Jim Maher, Seannacháí & Bodhrán
- Bernie Hanley, Button accordion
- Maureen O'Reilly, Concertina
- Michael Tubridy, Flute & tin whistle

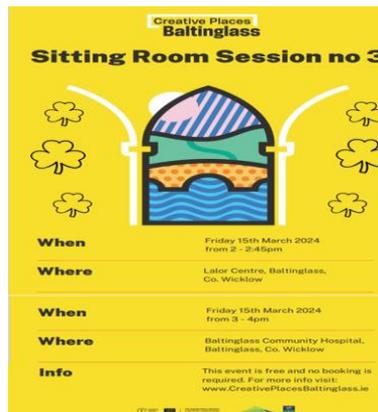
These accessible events will take place at the following times and venues:

2.00pm - 2.45pm at the Lalor Centre Baltinglass

3.00pm - 4.00pm at Baltinglass Community Hospital

The programme of events has been curated and produced by Vincent Gethings on behalf of Creative Places Baltinglass and is supported by the Lalor Centre and Baltinglass Community Hospital.

The event is free, and booking is not required.



**Artist one-to-one Coaching**

Designed to cater for a range of artists at different career stages, successful applicants will work individually with four experienced coaches from the arts and cultural sector.

To take part, applicants must submit an expression of interest through an online application process. Successful applicants will receive three one-to-one coaching sessions between April and September 2024 to support thinking processes, prioritisation and goal orientation for 2024.

Deadline for receipt of applications: Tuesday, 19<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at 4pm.

**Creative Wicklow Grant Scheme**

This scheme has been put in place to support Wicklow County Council’s role in delivering the Creative Ireland Programme. The fund is open to not-for-profit organisations, local community groups, arts, heritage, biodiversity and cultural groups, venues and societies.

Activities that effectively capture and showcase the richness of County Wicklow’s arts, culture, creativity, heritage, nature, biodiversity, and history are welcomed. Applications by individuals must be in partnership with local community, arts, heritage, biodiversity and cultural groups.

Grants of between €1,000 and €3,000 will be allocated to projects that communicate and celebrate aspects of Wicklow People and Place in creative and innovative ways.

Deadline for receipt of applications: Tuesday, 19<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at 4pm.

**Creative Places Baltinglass: Seed Funding Scheme 2024 announced**

Creative Places Baltinglass invites applications from artists of all disciplines based in Baltinglass and West Wicklow under the Seed Funding Scheme 2024.

This fund seeks to support high-quality applications featuring innovative ways to increase engagement between people, arts, culture, heritage, climate action, biodiversity and creativity. The scheme is open to Baltinglass and West Wicklow artists and local community arts, heritage, biodiversity and cultural groups.

One award of €5,000 and three awards of €2,000 will be made with a total fund of €11,000 to be allocated under this round.

Deadline for receipt of applications: Monday, 25th March, at 4 pm.



### **Visual Artists Ireland - Café: Curators Talk with Dermot Browne**

Wicklow Arts Office in collaboration with Visual Artist Ireland will host an online Curators Talk with Dermot Browne on Wednesday 10th April from 6:30pm.

Dermot will deliver a talk on how he plans and curates exhibitions with insights into building artist and curator relationships and strong exhibitions.

The event is free, but booking is required.

### **Greystones and Baltinglass receive new instalments of the Story Trail**

Wicklow County Library Services in collaboration with the Wicklow Arts Office, funded by Creative Ireland have brought two new stories from 'The Beast' children's storybook series to Greystones and Baltinglass. This rotation was delivered as a part of the already existing Story Trail structure, which is being developed further this year.

Baltinglass Community Garden received "The Brave Beast" and the Burnaby Park in Greystones welcomed "The Baby Beast" just in time to celebrate the World Book Day.



# Transportation, Infrastructure Delivery & Emergency Services

## 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 **340 – 2.22%** of total stock of 15,345. Please note that some of these faults are dependent on ESB attendance and co-operation and we ongoing liaison with the ESB to repair these faults. For your information below is a comparison on the number of outstanding faults over the previous weeks. The public lighting maintenance contractor has trained an additional electrician to allow for works to lighting infrastructure on the ESB network, this should improve the speed of overall fault repairs.

Status	ARKLOW MD	BALTINGLASS MD	BRAY MD	GREYSTONES MD	WICKLOW MD	Grand Total
Access Issues (Attended)	4	2	4	2		12
Cable Fault (Attended)	1	1	3		1	6
ESB Interface Required			1	1		2
ESB Required (Attended)	16	13	6	14	15	64
Knock Down (Attended)						0
Materials Required		4	5	1	1	11
No Supply		1	1	1		3
On Hold	5	5	13	5	4	32
Submitted	34	29	51	35	47	196
TMR	5		2	1		8
Tree Cutting Required	1	1	3		1	6
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>340</b>
<b>Percentage Not Working</b>	<b>2.17%</b>	<b>2.31%</b>	<b>2.63%</b>	<b>2.14%</b>	<b>1.87%</b>	<b>2.22%</b>

Date	12/02/2024	19/02/2024	26/02/2024	04/03/2024
Access Issues (Attended)	19	16	16	11
Cable Fault (Attended)	11	13	13	12
ESB Interface Required	0	0	1	1
ESB Required (Attended)	64	64	64	63
Knock Down (Attended)	0	0	0	0
Materials Required	10	10	10	10
No Supply	3	3	3	3
On Hold	21	21	21	21
Submitted	218	215	206	208
Traffic Management Required	9	7	6	6
Tree Cutting Required	5	5	5	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>354</b>	<b>345</b>	<b>340</b>
<b>PERCENTAGE NOT WORKING</b>	<b>2.35%</b>	<b>2.31%</b>	<b>2.25%</b>	<b>2.22%</b>

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

The initial survey element of the above project has been completed; lights that require traffic management to survey are currently being programmed. This is the initial phase of the project, and the design and fitting of lanterns will follow on in due course.

**Periodic Speed Limits**

PWS Signs Ltd. has commenced on the erection of the signage for the periodic speed limits at schools with 31 signs erected to date. All signs are expected to be completed by Easter, with snagging to follow.

**Transportation Statistics**

	Total 2022	Total 2023	Total 2024	January 2024	February 2024
<b>Solicitors Queries</b>	838	1026	173	84	89
<b>Road closure applications</b>	78	42	13	9	4
<b>Road Opening licences</b>	1414	1956	296	159	137
<b>Abnormal Load applications</b>	60	54	12	4	8

**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 is provided. 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 (Glenvue). 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.

A further non-statutory public display event was held in the Glenview Hotel in September 2023 that 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).

A significant negative response was received during the public consultation to the proposed closure of the N11 access to the Herbert Road.

Further environmental studies and traffic analysis have now been completed on elements of the emerging preferred option. As a result, further consideration is now being given to the preferred options at J8 Kilmacanogue, J7 Bray south (including Herbert Road access) and J6 Fassaroe (including the R117 access). Due to the complexities involved, the design development between J6 and J8 will continue into Phase 3 (Design and Environmental Evaluation).

### **N11 Parallel Service Road at Kilmacanogue**

A noise assessment 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 with direct consultation with the affected residents.

### **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. A non-statutory Public Display event on the Route Options will take place in the Inis Fail Germaines, Main Street, Baltinglass, on Wednesday 27th March 2024 between the hours of 14:00 and 20:00. The public display documents will also be available to view on the project website [www.N81whitestownandtuckmill.ie](http://www.N81whitestownandtuckmill.ie) with submissions accepted from Wednesday 27th March 2024 to Friday 26th April 2024.

### **N81 Pavement Capital Works**

Advance drainage works have been completed and the resurfacing works of 1km of the N81 between Tuckmill and Saundersgrove are now expected to commence in April 2024.

### **N81 Hollywood Cross Rural Traffic Calming Road Safety Improvement Scheme (RSIS)**

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. The design phase is currently progressing and will be followed by a 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, which 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 Strategic Bus 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).

The Chief Executive's report, that followed the part 8 public consultation for the park and ride at Junction 6 Fassaroe, 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.

The design for the Bus Park & Rides at Junction 11 (Kilpedder) and Junction 16 (Ashford/Rathnew) are being progressed in conjunction with the NTA Park & Ride.

### **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**

Enabling works started in Baltinglass in mid-February with the WCC Direct Labour crew commencing site investigation works to aid in derisking the project. 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.

### **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 Q2 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. Further meetings took place in February with Irish Rail to help progress the project. 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.

The project will be presented at the Council April meeting with a 4 week public consultation taking place from April – May including two public events in Greystones and Wicklow.

### **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 – March**

### **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 are progressing well on site, with embankment construction works now commenced on the western side. Applications have been submitted to the ESB for the relocation of an existing ESB pole and a public lighting connection.

#### **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. Surfacing works are ongoing on the southbound carriageway, and accommodation works are ongoing on the northbound carriageway. Preparation works have commenced for the slip form 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 connection for signage. High friction surfacing has been completed. Remaining signage to be installed once available. Footpath connection from Church Lane at design stage. Consultation to be undertaken with school and local residents.

#### **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. Design works on the permeability link have been ongoing. Clearance works have been carried out and ground investigations completed.

#### **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. The remaining signage has been installed on Castle Park and St. Mary's Rd.

### **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. David Walsh Civil Engineering has commenced works on site. The first phase involved the installation of drainage between the station and the promenade and is expected to be completed in May. The second phase involves drainage, service installation, lighting, footpath and road reconstruction on Quinsborough Road

Following a revision of the design, David Walsh Civil Engineering commenced ground works in Mid-February near the Promenade. An updated programme of works has been provided for all phases of the project.

#### **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. Traffic surveys have been completed and work has commenced on the preliminary design for the route.

#### **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. Baseline assessment required by Department of Transport as part of Pathfinder. Design of pedestrian crossings on Charlesland Dual Carriageway agreed with NTA. Tender documents are being prepared for contractor to carry out the construction works at the roundabouts on Charlesland Dual Carriageway. Rapid Build Options Report for the spine route has been approved by NTA and work has commenced on the preliminary design for the spine route.

#### **Kilcoole Road Footpath (Greystones MD)**

Footpath to be constructed linking Greystones to Kilcoole. Meeting held with landowner to discuss accommodation works. Currently working on the design for the works. We will need to run a tender for this project and then appoint a Contractor. It is hoped to begin construction in Q3 this year.

#### **Convent Road Active Travel Scheme (Greystones MD)**

Design and implementation of One-Way system on Convent Road with pedestrian and cycle improvements. Preliminary design has been prepared and work is to start to prepare Part 8 documents.

#### **Safe Routes to Schools Programme – Round Two Schools**

Greystones MD - Gaelscoil na gCloch Liath, Greystones Educate Together, Temple Carrig School  
Bray MD - Kilmacanogue NS, Baltinglass MD - Scoil Niocláis Naofa. We have received delivery plans from An Taisce for these Round 2 schools, with feedback provided. We have commenced in-house on the preliminary designs for these schools.

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

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

#### **Machinery Yard**

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

Wicklow County Council took delivery of a new Roadmaster Velocity Patching machine which will assist with road maintenance around the county.

The latest addition to Wicklow County Council's Road Maintenance fleet, which will be deployed across county Wicklow's road network, introduces a comprehensive and modern approach to road maintenance. The new machine complements an existing fleet of two older velocity patchers.

The velocity patcher is a one-person operated machine that delivers a computer calibrated mixture of aggregate and binder directly into a pothole or road defect under high velocity, ensuring a cost effective, reliable solution to problematic road maintenance issues.

As part of the hand-over and training process Wicklow County Council will trial a new performance-based carbon calculator with the new machine. The data collected will be used as a case study to demonstrate best practice in carbon management.

The cost of the velocity patcher, manufactured by Archway Products Ltd, was partially funded by a grant from the Department of Transport

**Winter Maintenance**

More than ½ way through the season.  
 10 call outs since February 19<sup>th</sup> up until 18<sup>th</sup> March 2024

**Parking Income**

<b>Parking Income by Municipal District</b>	<b>EURO</b>
Bray Municipal District	<b>141,426</b>
Greystones Municipal District	<b>41,997</b>
Wicklow Municipal District	<b>54,365</b>
Arklow Municipal District	<b>26,143</b>
Parking Permits	<b>24,627</b>
Parking Fines	<b>92,515</b>
<b>Wicklow County Council</b>	<b>381,072</b>

## Infrastructure Delivery

### Affordable Housing

#### Greenhill Road – 36 Houses

- 34 sold
- 1 nearing completion
- 1 works being finalised in preparation for sale.

#### Aldbrough Manor Baltinglass – 22 Houses – Phase 1

- 58 applied
- 29 Eligible
- 29 offered
- 6 accepted

#### Phase 2

The Scheme was re-advertised on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> February in both the Wicklow People and Irish Independent. Portal to be opened on the 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024 until the 17<sup>th</sup> April 2024 for applications to be submitted.

#### Rathnew – 43 houses

- Finalising details to be advertised shortly.

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

### 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 and allocated
Greenhills Road (Affordable)	36	Completed
<b>Schemes on Site</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Current Status</b>
Cois Droichead, Greystones	41	Completion anticipated Q2 2024
Ballard Shillelagh	20	Completion anticipated Q2 2024
Lugduff Tinahely	20	Contractor on site
Merrymeeting 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>
Merrymeeting, Rathnew, Phase 3	7	About to commence Section 179a
Fassaroe, Bray	13	Preparing tender documents

Burgage More Blessington	106	Part of PPP bundle 3 with NDFA.Tender stage
Lott Lane, Kilcoole	75	To be re-tendered
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

**Traveller accommodation**

**Capital Programme**

<b>Ballintestock – 3 houses</b>	Houses allocated
<b>Avondale Heights, Rathdrum – 3 houses</b>	Contractor on site completion date Nov 2024
<b>Barndarrig Group Housing scheme for 3 houses</b>	Due to change in the family circumstances – new site selection is being investigated

Fire safety annual checks on Halting sites for 2022 have been carried out and the 2023 have commenced.

**Energy Efficiency**

**Energy Efficiency Fabric Upgrade Phase 2**

All 71 properties given approval for energy efficiency fabric upgrade works in 2022 have been completed and it is hoped to complete 90 before the end of 2024.

**Part V**

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

The following units are due during 2024:

Location	No. of Units	Due for Delivery	Method
Bray	1	Delivery due Q1 2024	CALF
Dunlavin	3	Delivery due Q2 2024	WCC
Delgany	1	Delivery due Q1 2024	WCC
Rathnew	2	Delivery due Q1 2024	WCC
Greystones	8	Delivery due Q1 2024	WCC
Wicklow	3	Delivery due Q1 2024	WCC
Rathdrum	2	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. The following units are due during 2024:

Location	No. of Units	Due for Delivery	Method
Bray	17	Delivery Due Q1 2024	CALF
Greystones	5	Delivery Due Q2 2024	WCC
Baltinglass	2	Delivery Due Q3 2024	WCC
Arklow	3	Delivery Due Q3 2024	WCC

- 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. 6 units delivered in 2023.

CALF Acquisitions 2024	No. of Units	Delivery Schedule	Scheme
Bray	2	Delivered February 2024	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. 9 units delivered in 2023.

CAS Acquisitions 2024	No. of Units	Delivery Schedule	Scheme
Bray	1	Delivered February 2024	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 - snagging being carried out.
- 5a Rednagh Rd – One 4 bed house – Section 179A to commence shortly.

**Housing for Older People - Age Friendly Schemes**

Millbank, Mill Road – 2 x 2 bed properties	Allocated
Castle Villas - Two 2 bed properties	Ready for allocation
Carrig Eden - 14 units x 1 bed age friendly units	Part 8 complete – design team procured
Kilcoole Health Centre - 4 no 1 bed apartments	Contact on site - expected completion date Q2 2024

**Vacant Homes Scheme**

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

2 Lakeview Grove, Wicklow Town	Tenant in situ.
100 Wicklow Heights, Wicklow Town	Tenant in situ.
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 near completion.
108 Charnwood, Bray	Contracts for Sale have issued.
10 Liam Mellows Avenue, Arklow	Vesting Order Lodged February 2024.
88 Wicklow Heights, Wicklow Town	Pending registration in the PRAI.
53 South Green, Arklow	Purchase completed February 2024.
53A South Green, Arklow	Purchase completed February 2024.
2 Harbour Road (“Merdenville”), Arklow	Purchase completed February 2024.
36 Wheatfield Bray	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	89
Applications in progress/information requested	15
Applications finalised	58
Applications paid	3
Applications pending execution of Legal Deed of Charge.	7
Applications withdrawn	6



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

Ref. 827

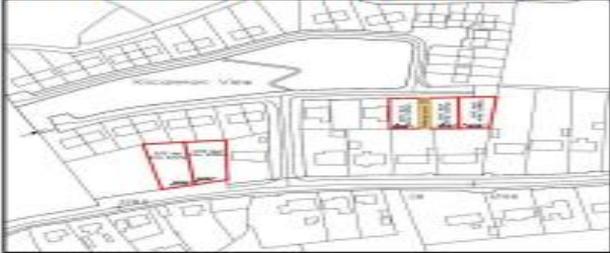
## For Sale

### 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](#).**

Site No. 1 – 0.217 acre (0.088 ha)	Site No. 3 – 0.121 acre (0.049 ha)
Site No. 2 – 0.200 acre (0.081 ha)	Site No. 4 – 0.117 acre (0.047 ha)
	Site No. 5 – 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: 6429002V, PSRA Registration No: 001217



• Number of Sites	5
Number of applications	3

### Derelict Properties

The following four derelict properties have been approved for sale:

Property	Progress
Cronehorn	Sale approved by the members at 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 at the June meeting held on 12/06/2023 – final stages in progress
Borkhill	No interested parties

### Affordable Housing information as at the 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024

#### Greenhill Road – 36 Houses

- 34 sold
- 1 nearing completion
- 1 works being finalised in preparation for sale.

**Aldborough Manor Baltinglass – 22 Houses – Phase 1**

- 58 applied
- 29 Eligible
- 29 offered
- 6 accepted

**Phase 2**

The Scheme was re-advertised on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> February in both the Wicklow People and Irish Independent. Portal to be opened on the 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024 until the 17<sup>th</sup> April 2024 for applications to be submitted.

**Rathnew – 43 houses**

- Finalising details to be advertised shortly.

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

## Emergency Services

### Operational Fire Statistics February 2024

There were **77 incidents** attended during the month of February 2024. Due to laid down procedures to mobilise two stations to potentially serious incident types, individual Fire Stations were mobilised on a total of **95 occasions** including **6** 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 February 2024 **decreased by 28% (-37 mobilisations) on the preceding month** (January 2024: 132 mobilisations). While there was an increase in incidents which were genuine false alarms (+6), a range of other incident types decreased, house fires (-10 mobilisations), vehicle fires (-8), chimney fires (-7), incidents in other counties (-7).

Operational activity for the month of February 2024 **decreased by 27% (-35 mobilisations) on the equivalent month in 2023** (February 2023, 130 mobilisations). Year on year RTCs increased by 10 mobilisations but there was a decrease in many incident types most notably malicious fires in urban areas (-17), incidents in other counties (-10) and gorse fires (-5).

#### Incidents in County Kildare (2-incidents total) examples:

- 01/02/2024            Dunlavin crew supported crews from Naas at a 2-car RTC at Junction 2, M9, southbound.
- 26/02/2024            Dunlavin attended a chimney fire at Bullhill, Narraghmore.

#### Incidents in County Wexford (1-incidents total) examples:

- 12/02/2024            Arklow crew were mobilised to a fire alarm activation in Castletown.

### **General Update**

Work has progressed on the design of the two new fire stations (Baltinglass and Dunlavin). The preliminary designs have been completed. Permission is awaited from the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management (NDFEM) to proceed to Part 8 Planning Application.

### Fire Prevention Statistics February 2024

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

Application type	Received	Deemed Invalid, refused or withdrawn	Requested additional information	Inspections	Recommended for Grant
FSCs	12	1			6
Revised FSCs	2				
FSC 7-Day Notice	5	1			2
Regularisation FSCs					
DACs	6				4
Revised DACs	1				1
Dispensations / Relaxations					

The Chief Fire Officer was forwarded correspondence in relation to 26 planning files during the month of February 2024.

The Chief Fire Officer made recommendations in relation to 25 of these files.

Licensing	Received	Inspected	Request further info	Letter / Licence Issued	No objection entered on Courts on-line Service
District					
Circuit					
Dangerous Substances Act	0	1	2	1	0
Explosive Act					

**Building Control Statistics February 2024**

**Commencement Notices for February 2024:**

Commencement Notices Submitted: 45

- 10 Commencement Notices with Compliance Documents
- 27 Opt Out Declarations
- 6 Commencement Notices without Compliance Documents
- 2 Seven Day Notice

**Submission Statistics**

- 60 % of Commencement Notices - Opt Out
- 62 % of Commencement Notices Revised Information required & requested = 28 No. Commencement Notices (CN) of which

08 with Compliance Documentation (28%)

18 are Opt Out (62%)

1 Without Compliance Documentation (3%)

2 Seven Day Notice (7%)

- 40 Valid Commencement Notices

- 121 new build residential Units and additional 2 Apartments

- 5 Non Res new builds

- Invalidated CNs for February = 1

• **Certificates of Completion processed in February 2024**

- 15 New No. of CCC submitted
- 10 Required Revised Information
- 17 No. Validated

- 0 No. Invalid
- 21 new Residential units
- 3 Non Res. Builds

### **Submission Statistics**

17 No. Validated CCCs related to;

14 No. CCCs submitted in February 2024

3 No. CCCs submitted in January 2024

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

121 new residential houses and 2 apartments were notified to LA for Commencement & 21 newly completed residential units plus 3 non-residential units were submitted, assessed and validated in February. There has been an increase in both Commencement Notice and Certificate of Compliance on Completion submissions compared to the same period in 2023. The Temporary Waiver in respect of Development Contributions is believed to be leading the urgency in submitting Commencement Notices prior to April 2024.

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 February to identify non-compliances with Building Regs onsite and 2 Section 11 Compliance Requests were issued.

Revised Information requests remained high in February for both Commencement Notices and Certificates of Compliance on Completion, 64% of Commencement Notice submissions & 66% 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**

#### **Community Assistance**

- Providing Medical Cover for the Biking Blitz mountain bike event over 1 day in the Ballinastoe Wood, Wicklow. 13 Volunteers, 117 hours.
- Station visit by Delgany Scouts, displaying equipment and demonstrating lifesaving skills such as water safety and CPR 14 Volunteers 42 hours.
- Providing Medical Cover for the Wicklow Hospice half marathon and 10k run around Avondale forest park. 12 Volunteers 90 hours

## Organisational Development (HR & Corporate)

### Recruitment

The following interviews were held in February 2024:

- Communications Officer
- Digital Communications Officer
- Library Assistant
- Assistant Civil Defence Officer

### 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

February 2024: 19	February 2023: 8
January – February 2024: 42	January – February 2023: 17

### Ombudsman Requests

February 2024: 3	February 2023: 3
January– February 2024: 3	January – February 2023: 6

### Press Releases

February 2024 - 11

### Register of Electors

Online applications via [www.checktheregister.ie](http://www.checktheregister.ie) continue to be received and processed daily. All valid applications received by the closing date of the 20<sup>th</sup> February 2024 were processed and added to the Balancing List Register. Following the closing date, there are a large number of applications received to register to vote or update details in advance of the Local and EU Elections and these continue to be processed day.

The turnout of 51.37% for the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2024 Referendum was the highest turnout in the country giving credence to the accuracy of the Register of Electors in Wicklow.

Upon confirmation of the date for the local and EU elections in June, we will be re-commencing our weekly social media campaign in tandem with any proposed Electoral Commission’s social, print and out of home media campaign.

The Boundary Commission Report was issued at the end of August 2023 and preparatory works are ongoing on the Polling Scheme following the issue of this report.

**Customer Service Innovation Hub**

Customer Service Innovation Hub			
2024 - February			
Communication	No.	Public Counters	No.
No. of Phone Calls received to 0404 20100	9,832	Motor Taxation transactions in County Buildings	1,977
No. of Customer Service Emails received	200	Revenue Transactions	1,375
No. of Elected Members / Deputy Representatives Received	90	Housing Counter Visits	586

Total in person visits for February 2024 – 1,873

**Communications**

Wicklow County Council was crowned ‘Council of the Year’ in Ireland in the Community and Council Awards in collaboration with the Local Authority Members Association (LAMA) on the 17<sup>th</sup> February 2024.



The fantastic accolade for the County came as Wicklow County Council was also shortlisted in 10 categories on the night.

- Best Trail / Waterway in Ireland – Arklow Harbour to Headwater
- Most Inclusive Project - Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Lanyard
- Best Energy Smart Initiative – Bray Bolt EBike Scheme
- National Impact Award – Tiglin Rise at the Cove / It Takes a Village
- Best Mental Health – Bray Library Comic Club
- Community Volunteer of the Year – Paula Boland
- Best Business Working with the Community – Elavon Supporting our Communities
- Best Enterprise & Start-Up Hub – Clermont Screen Hub
- Best Micro Start Up - Farmteam

# Finance, Water & Information Systems

## Finance

### Revenue Account

Due to year-end adjustments that are currently being carried out as part of the 2023 Annual Financial Statement (AFS) process, we are not in a position to provide February 2024 expenditure figures in the normal format at this time. This situation will be regularised during the Quarter 1 period following the completion of the 2023 AFS. The below table outlines the 2024 adopted budget by service division.

REVENUE ACCOUNT			
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE SUMMARY BY SERVICE DIVISION AT 29TH FEBRUARY 2024			
	Expenditure	Income	NET
	Adopted Full Year Budget	Adopted Full Year Budget	Adopted Expenditure / (Income)
	€	€	€
Housing and Building	53,458,479	(57,560,824)	(4,102,345)
Road Transport & Safety	25,608,536	(18,366,119)	7,242,417
Water Services	4,809,015	(5,729,978)	(920,963)
Development Management	15,877,727	(10,024,717)	5,853,010
Environmental Services	15,632,861	(4,087,049)	11,545,812
Recreation and Amenity	9,440,065	(1,079,718)	8,360,347
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	2,283,534	(1,104,228)	1,179,306
Miscellaneous Services	9,997,953	(13,219,706)	(3,221,753)
Central Management Charges	22,890,755	(1,050,000)	21,840,755
Local Government Fund		(16,880,701)	(16,880,701)
Commercial Rates		(31,045,885)	(31,045,885)
	<b>159,998,925</b>	<b>(160,148,925)</b>	<b>(150,000)</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 1<sup>st</sup> February 2024 to 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024.

### Capital Account

CAPITAL ACCOUNT					
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE SUMMARY BY SERVICE DIVISION AT 29TH FEBRUARY 2024					
	Opening Balance at 01/01/2024	Actual Expenditure	Actual Income	Transfers to/from Reserves	Closing Balance at 29/02/2024
	€	€	€	€	€
Housing and Building	19,509,778	9,365,800	(10,832,221)	0	18,043,357
Road Transport & Safety	(37,660,159)	1,156,943	(396,370)	0	(36,899,586)
Water Services	(11,676,417)	54,814	(45,795)	0	(11,667,398)
Development Management	(36,870,534)	62,413	(2,076,718)	0	(38,884,838)
Environmental Services	(936,699)	448,982	(91,100)	0	(578,817)
Recreation and Amenity	(977,576)	500,198	(240,222)	0	(717,601)
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	(2,046,613)	18,221	0	0	(2,028,391)
Miscellaneous Services	(10,438,673)	(2,230,991)	(7,000)	1,912,812	(10,763,852)
	<b>(81,096,893)</b>	<b>9,376,380</b>	<b>(13,689,426)</b>	<b>1,912,812</b>	<b>(83,497,127)</b>

**Commercial Rates, Rents and Loan Collections**

SUMMARY OF MAJOR COLLECTIONS AT 29TH FEBRUARY 2024										
Income Collection Area	Opening Balance 01/01/2024	Accrued	Vacancy Property Adjustments	Write Offs	Waivers	Total for Collection	Collected	Closing Arrears 29/02/2024	Specific Doubtful Arrears	% Collection
Rates	3,456,866	31,320,124	0	0	0	34,776,990	(3,184,012)	31,592,978	675,174	9%
Rents & Annuities	3,434,905	3,067,374	0	(5,105)	0	6,497,174	(2,963,810)	3,533,363	0	46%
Housing Loans	295,691	209,866	0	0	0	505,556	(227,062)	278,494	0	45%

**NB:** The 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 2024**

The decision taken by Members at the LPT meeting on October 9th 2023 to maintain the LPT basic rate increase at 6% generated circa €1.2m which was ring-fenced for discretionary funding within the 5 Municipal Districts to implement important public realm projects. The total Municipal District’s General Municipal Allocation funding for 2024 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	7,000	9,500	10,000	9,000	63,500
Festivals / Other	25,000	20,000	52,000	20,000	25,000	142,000
Civic Receptions	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	10,000
Discretionary Funding	223,028	223,028	367,370	223,028	223,028	1,259,482
<b>Total</b>	<b>284,028</b>	<b>258,028</b>	<b>440,870</b>	<b>261,028</b>	<b>265,028</b>	<b>1,508,982</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)	Ballinaclesh	€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	Ballinaclesh	€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	Coolkeno 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>

## Information Systems

### 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.

### GIS & Systems Analysis

- Both the Arklow LAP Consultation Hub and Blessington Consultation Hub are now live. These platforms will serve as a centralised space for community engagement and feedback gathering, enhancing communication between stakeholders and the organisation.
- Migration of Mapinfo Tab Files to new ESRI Geodatabase. The process of migrating Mapinfo tab files to the new ESRI Geodatabase has been initiated. This migration will facilitate smoother data management and analysis within the organisation, leveraging the advanced capabilities of ESRI's geospatial technology.
- Development of Planning Application Monitoring Viewer: Work is underway on the Planning Application Monitoring Viewer, an essential tool for tracking and managing planning applications. This viewer will provide comprehensive insights and facilitate efficient decision-making processes within the planning department.
- Receipt of Tailte data: Additional Tailte data, including Land Cover, Digital Terrain Model (DTM), and Orthophotography, has been received. This valuable dataset will enrich our spatial analysis capabilities and support various projects across departments.
- A number of meetings with the Department of Communication regarding EIRCODE API was held to discuss the retirement of the API and future options.
- Finalised the development of a Dog Fouling Detection app which is now currently in use by the Litter Wardens

### Infrastructure

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