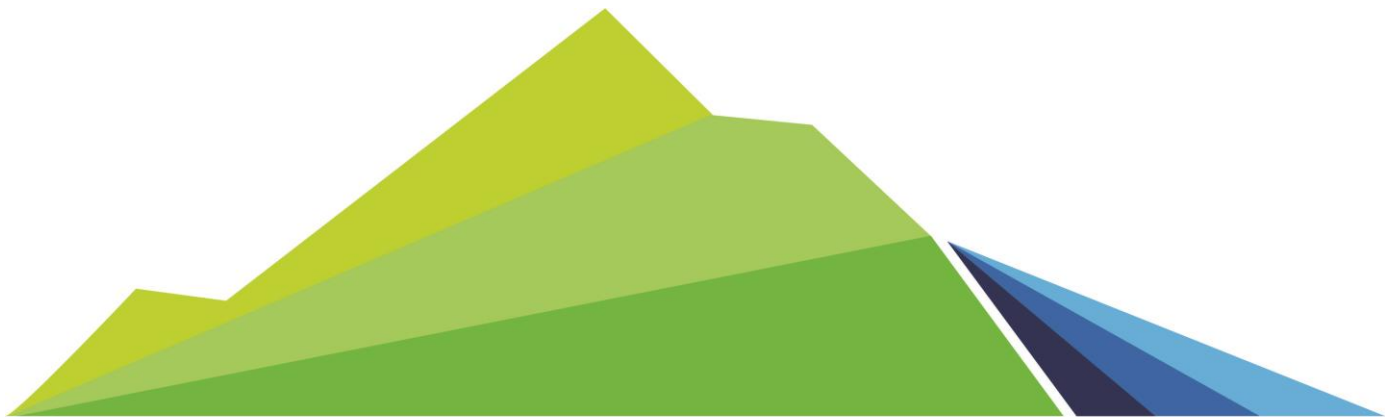




Wicklow County Council Chief Executive's Monthly Report



W I C K L O W

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This month:

Funding Awarded for Playground in Arklow - The playground at Seaview Avenue in Arklow will be refurbished thanks to a grant from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth under the Capital Grant Scheme for Play and recreation.

Arklow Municipal District has been awarded €14,466.25 following a successful application submitted to the Department. The purpose of the scheme is to fund new play and recreation facilities and/or the refurbishment of existing play and recreation facilities.

Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership Launch Arklow Community Sports Hub - Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership has launched Arklow Sports Hub at Coral Leisure Centre in Arklow. The Hub, which was launched on 26th May, will be a centre for recreation and physical activity for the area.

This is part of an investment of over €150,000 in physical activity equipment, programmes and training and education in the area over the next five years. The project being rolled out by Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership, is supported by Sport Ireland as part of their Community Sports Hub initiative and funded through dormant accounts.

Age Friendly Parking for Greystones - Age Friendly car parking spaces have been introduced in the Greystones Municipal District area.

These car spaces are reserved for older people who are identified in the County Wicklow Age Friendly strategy as those aged over 55 years.

The spaces are clearly marked out and signposted. Age Friendly parking spaces are similar to mother and baby car parking spaces in supermarkets and they are subject to normal parking fees. Motorists are asked to respect these courtesy spaces and leave them free for older people in the community who may need them.

County Wicklow to feature on RTE's Tracks & Trails TV Series

"Tracks & Trails", which is back for a 9th series on RTE TV will feature two scenic routes in County Wicklow.

Walk 1: Tinahely - In the first trail presenter Pól O'Conghaile, walks a long, hilly loop on the Tinahely Way,

The woods are a flat and family friendly, walk among ancient oaks. This is a special area of conservation rich in wildlife, flora and fauna.

Walk 2: Bray – Sugarloaf - This walk starts at Bray promenade, on a less-travelled route, to the peak at Bray Head. This trail is a mixture of path, trail and steps. From the top, Bray Head has some spectacular views across Dublin, Wicklow and across to Wales on occasion.

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY

1. Social Housing Support

	April 2021	April 2020
No. on list for Social Housing Support – (includes RAS and HAP) *	4,477	4,395
No. availing of Rental Assistance Scheme (RAS)	274	326
No. availing of Housing Assistance Payment (HAP)	2,264	1,850
No. in Long Term Leasing accommodation	16	10
No. in Short Term Leasing accommodation	29	14

2. Allocation of Social Housing

	April 2021	April 2020
Wicklow County Council (including Bray MD)	20	32
Approved Housing Bodies (including Bray MD)	2	1

3. Social Housing Stock

	April 2021	April 2020
Tenancies occupied	4,570	4,471
Total weekly rental accrual	300,519.	299,589
Arrears	2,830,692	2,021,242

4. Casual Vacancies/Relets

Municipal District	April 2021	Self isolation units
Arklow	6	1
Baltinglass	6	2
Bray	1	1
Greystones	6	0
Wicklow	29	3

5. Housing Supply – Programme of Delivery

Schemes Completed	Units	Current Status
O'Byrne Road, Bray	1	Completed and allocated
Old Library Arklow	7	Completed and allocated
Avondale Heights Rathdrum	20	Completed and allocated
Delany Park, Arklow (Phase 1)	17	Completed and allocated
16A Oak Drive, Blessington	1	Completed and allocated
Druids Brook, Kilcoole	2	Completed and allocated
Whitehall, Baltinglass	34	Completed and allocated
Farrenkelly Greystones Phase 2	24	Completed and allocated
Convent Lands	51	Completed and allocated
Urban Villas (FCA Hall), Wicklow Town	8	Completed and allocated
Jameson Heights, Kilmacanogue	20	Completed and allocated
Kilmantan Place, Bray	4	Completed and allocated
Carnew Rapid Build	30	Completed and allocated
Total	219	
Schemes on Site	Units	Current Status
Kilbride Lane Bray (Murphy's Lands)	42	23 completed. 19 anticipated Quarter 2 2021
Rathnew RAPID BUILD	47	Completed
Delany Park Arklow (Phase 2 + 3)	47	Completion anticipated Quarter 4 2021
Hawkstown Park (Ashtown Lane), Wicklow	40	Completion anticipated Quarter 1 2022
Ard na Greine, Bray RAPID BUILD	31	Completion anticipated Quarter 1 2022
Mountainview, NTMK RAPID BUILD	26	Completion anticipated Quarter 1 2022
TOTAL	207	
Pipeline Schemes	Units	Current Status
Avondale Phase 2 RAPID BUILD	20	Site start anticipated Q2 2021
Greenhill Road Wicklow RAPID BUILD	36	Site start anticipated Q2 2021
Sheehan Court, Arklow	7	Site start anticipated Q2 2021
Cedar Court Bray RAPID BUILD	14	Site start anticipated Q3 2021
Three Trouts Greystones RAPID BUILD	40	Site start anticipated Q4 2021
Merrymeeing, Rathnew, Phase 2	21	Site start anticipated Q4 2021
TOTAL	164	



2021

It is expected that 25 Part V units will be delivered in 2021 however this is subject to a number of factors including the duration and number of any Covid 19 lockdowns, including the current restrictions and then how quickly the Developers can remobilise and complete units.

The Council nominated a number of Essential sites which included Part V's which are due to be completed shortly. This includes the following Part V units:

Location	No. of Units	Due for Delivery	Method
Enniskerry	2	Completed end March 2021	WCC
Wicklow	4	Scheduled Q 2 2021	WCC
Greystones	2	Scheduled Q 2 2021	WCC
Wicklow	3	Scheduled Q 2 2021	WCC

Following the government's decision to extend the period for designated essential sites, sites in the Arklow electoral area and the Bray electoral area were issued with letters from The Housing Agency. The designated essential sites deadline is now 30th April 2021. The Government announced that construction of residential buildings would re-commence on the 12th April.

Potential units

Wicklow County Council currently has agreements in place for 43 units in Delgany, Bray, Rathnew, Wicklow, Baltinglass, Dunlavin and Enniskerry with delivery ranging from 2021-2023 – This includes the 14 units listed above. WCC is in negotiations in respect of over 50 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

Location	No. of Units	Due for Delivery	Method
Ballinaclesh	2	Q2 2021	WCC
Tinahely	2	Completed Q1	WCC
Tinahely	1	Q2 2021	WCC

- Negotiations are ongoing with a number of Developers and AHB's in relation to acquiring further Turnkey units.
- Approval has recently been received from the Department in respect of 2 Turnkey units in Baltinglass. Units have not commenced construction.
- Approval received from Dept. for 5 Turnkey units in Tinahely. 2 Purchased in October 2020 2 purchase in Quarter 1 2021 with 1 further unit due in Quarter 2 2021 (listed above).



- 2 further Turnkey units at snagging stage in Ballinaclesh.
- A new call for Turnkey units was advertised in January. Closing date for submissions is 30th April 2021.
- Approval has recently been received from the Department in respect of 3 Turnkey units in Roundwood. Expected delivery is 2022.

6. PPP Social Housing Project

[Bundle 1]

Development Site at Convent Lands, Wicklow for 51 Social Housing units commenced on site in March 2019 and is now completed and all units are occupied. The Department of Housing has dedicated €300 million towards delivery of housing through the public, private partnership model in the Rebuilding Ireland Action Plan. The Convent Lands site in Wicklow was included as a project in Bundle 1.

Capital Advance Leasing Facility (CALF)

The Approved Housing Bodies are actively pursuing a number of potential CALF projects and are liaising closely with the Council on a regular basis. The members will be kept updated.

- Acquisition by AHB of 38 turnkey units via CALF in Arklow was completed in Quarter 4 2020
- Construction ongoing on 40 units (including 4 Part V) via CALF Turnkey in Dunlavin.
- Construction ongoing on 28 units in Arklow.
- Acquisition by AHB of 16 Turnkey units via CALF in Baltinglass with a further 48 units (including 4 Part V units and 8 CAS units) to be completed in 2021.
- Construction ongoing on 28 units in Wicklow (including 3 Part V) due for delivery in 2021.

Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS) Wicklow County Council is continuing to support acquisitions under the Capital Assistance Scheme with Dublin Simon, Circle Housing, Ark Housing and Peter McVerry Trust.

Expressions of Interest – Social Housing on Council lands - A preferred proposal has been identified.

7. Home Improvement/Adaptation

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

› Grant funding for private house - €1,952,700 (€431,437.67 spent to date)

› Grant funding for social house - €472,271.64 - 2020 budget (€140,811.03 spent to date)

167 open applications, of which 50 are 2021 applications (balance carried forward from 2020)

134 approvals on hand (including some carried forward from 2020)

Co. Wicklow Strategic Plan for Housing People with a Disability



The Housing and Disability Steering Group is currently preparing the new Co. Wicklow Strategic Plan for Housing People with a Disability 2022-2027.

Housing for Older People - Age Friendly Schemes

During recent works on Casual Vacancies/Relets, the Council fenced large sections of existing social housing gardens this resulted in three infill sites to develop Age Friendly schemes in Greystones. It is proposed to build small A rated units, specifically designed for the older tenant, which will be offered to eligible tenants in the local area, who wish to downsize. The larger property will return to the council for reletting to a family, and the tenant will benefit from being able to remain in their community, in an age friendly designed home with high comfort and low utility costs.

Millbank, Mill Road	Part 8 advertised
Castle Villas	Commencing Part 8
Carraig Eden 14	Architect has been procured and is working on the proposed Part 8 drawings.- stage 2 underway for submission to the Department for approval to go to Part 8

Vacant Homes Scheme

There are now 5 CPOs underway on long term vacant houses around the county.

- 30 South Green – went to An Bord Pleanála – no submissions- CPO order confirmed by WCC but property likely to be acquired by agreement.
- 108 Charnwood Bray – oral hearing with ABP likely – possibility of acquiring by agreement also.
- 5 Ashwood Roundwood
- 33 Connolly Street Arklow
- 10 Liam Mellows Avenue Arklow

Last 3 to be published in May

Further long term vacant properties have been identified for the next batch of CPOs.

Housing Maintenance - Heating Upgrade Programme

C. 50 gas and oil boilers have been replaced in Council housing stock in 2021 at a cost of over €100,000 54 were replaced in 2020.

New oil / gas heating has been installed in 20 houses so far this year with a further 10 pending.

8. Purchase Schemes

Rebuilding Ireland Homeloan

Received	Approved	Declined	Expired	With HA for FI	Incomplete/ineligible
403	123	159	42	40	39

2016 Tenant (Incremental) Purchase Scheme

	To date	April 2021
Applications Received	290	80
Completed	56	4
Declined	197	14
Ongoing	37	62

9. Addressing Homelessness

	As at 30/04/21	Year To Date	As at 30/04/2020
No of New Presentations	47	154	69
No. of Repeat Presentations	1	19	0
No. of Families (Minimum 1 Adult + One Child)	18	37	22
No. of Individuals (Single Adult, no children)	28	85	45
No. Of Couples (2 Adults, no children)	1	4	1
No. of Children	33	61	45
NTQ/Asked to Leave/Landlord selling	1	13	7
Family Circumstances	25	53	32
Leaving Prison/Hospital Care	1	3	7
Mental Health	0	2	0
Risk of Homelessness	8	18	3
Arrears/Loss of Income	4	7	0
Addiction Issues	3	5	2
DV/DA	1	2	2
Medical Issues	0	4	4
Overcrowding	2	6	7
Unsuitable/Voluntarily Left	3	12	0
ASB:	0	1	3
Rough Sleeping*	3	9	1



Sofa Surfing*	2	16	14
Staying with Family*	14	30	7
Staying with Friends*	1	8	6

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

Own Door Temporary Accommodation at 30/04/2021	
Families	14
Adults	34
Children	36
Single individual	3

Bed & Breakfast Accommodation - No. of Homeless Emergency Accommodation Placements & Duration @ 30/04/2021								
	No. of Households	No. of Adults	No. of Children	< 3 mths	3-6 mths	6-9 mths	9-12 mths	>12mths
Household breakdown	14	16	15	3	7	2	1	1
Bed & Breakfast Accommodation - No. of Homeless Emergency Accommodation Placements & Duration @ 30/04/2020								
	No. of Households	No. of Adults	No. of Children	< 3 mths	3-6 mths	6-9 mths	9-12 mths	>12mths
Household breakdown	14	15	14	7	2	0	2	3

COVID 19 UPDATE

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

Self Isolation Units

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

Homeless HAP

The Homeless HAP Placefinder provides assistance in:



- seeking out potential properties suitable for households currently identified as homeless or at risk of homelessness;
- liaising with specific households to establish their specific needs;
- establishing relationships with local property agents and landlords; and,
- supporting those homeless households to (a) prevent the necessity to enter emergency accommodation or (b) to exit emergency accommodation and secure a tenancy.
- To date, 329 households (250 families & 79 singles) have been assisted under the Homeless HAP Scheme in Wicklow County Council from the inception on 1st October 2018 to 30th April 2021. (149 homeless cases, 176 prevention cases to date and 4 direct provision). 108 properties were sourced by WCC.

Addressing Homelessness in partnership with Approved Housing Bodies

Homeless Supported Temporary Accommodation – Kilmantin Hill, Wicklow

There are 11 clients supported in the Kilmantin Hill facility, operated by Dublin Simon, with regular transition by the clients to suitable, alternative accommodation.

Homeless Family Service – Fitzwilliam Road, Wicklow

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

Refurbishment works on the facility are substantially completed and it is anticipated that furnishings and fittings will be complete in quarter 2 2021.

The family service envisaged is a 6 month STA(Supported Temporary Accommodation) with key working support to enable family's transition from homelessness into Homeless HAP or alternative longer term accommodation. The successful tenderer to operate the facility is Dublin Simon.

Homeless Supported Temporary Accommodation – San Remo, Bray

A key focus of Wicklow County Council in addressing homelessness was to identify and provide a high supported, temporary accommodation unit in Bray/North Wicklow to address the accommodation and support needs of a particular homeless cohort. This cohort was identified from the presenting population and those currently known to and accessing homeless services in Bray/North Wicklow.

The acquisition and upgrade of a former nursing home in Bray has completed and the facility opened to clients in October. The facility, operated by Dublin Simon, incorporates a service model where there are a number of emergency/cold weather Beds (restricted during Covid) and Supported Temporary Accommodation Beds (STA) There is on site keyworking support linking in with clients.

The Neighbourhood Liaison Committee is now operational and meets monthly.

Homeless Supported Accommodation - Carraig Eden, Greystones

The Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government (DHPCLG) approved funding to upgrade the building to provide 35 ensuite bedrooms within the existing building, with associated kitchens and common areas, as well as the upgrade of Fire Protection.



The refurbishment completed in March.

Other Homeless Supported Accommodation

Wicklow County Council owned properties in Wicklow, Bray and Arklow, leased to AHBs, provide 12 units of low to medium supported accommodation targeted to the particular support needs of the clients. There has been a significant number of move ons from these properties, signalling the success of this model.

Housing First

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

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

Wicklow County Council has, to date, successfully accommodated 5 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.

10. Traveller accommodation

Capital Programme

Ballintekin – 3 houses	Detailed design stage and tender documents completed, stage 3 with Dept Nov 2020, awaiting approval to go out to tender for a contractor in Q2
Avondale Heights, Rathdrum – 4 houses	Approval received for funding from Department, ongoing discussions with proposed tenants on draft design
Barndarrig Group Housing scheme for 2 houses	Revised Stage 1 approval received March 2021. Survey of utilities in the area has commenced.
DPG Woodview,	Works nearing completion on this extension
Ballintekin,	Stage 1 for a disability extension has now gone to Department for approval.

Further inspections on the fire safety on Halting sites were completed by members of the Housing section and the fire brigade in Bray. In addition electrical inspections including the installation of smoke alarms has been rolled out.

Covid 19 Update

Wicklow County Council has put a number of arrangements in place to provide, among other things, services to previously un-serviced sites which will facilitate better sanitation and social distancing.

Welfare facilities were provided at a number of unauthorised sites.

Three families from unauthorised sites were provided with housing units.

Hygiene packs were distributed to all authorised sites and further facilities provided in March.



11. Energy Efficiency

Solar Panel Carport - The local energy supply contract has now been signed with Enerpower. The detailed design works for the project are complete, with the procurement process expected to take 8-10 weeks. It is envisaged site works will start in June/July 2021 and last for a duration of 9 weeks.

Energy is to be supplied over a 20 year period at a fixed unit rate

Enerpower are planning on installing additional EV Car Chargers with the system also.

Energy Efficiency Fabric Upgrade Phase 1

Lot 1 88 houses in Bray and Greystones – awaiting determination of Department regarding repointing of properties.

Lot 2 90 houses in Arklow, Wicklow and West Wicklow commenced in December 2020 and all tenants have been contacted in this regard.

Energy Efficiency Fabric Upgrade Phase 2

Contractor has commenced on site on 20 properties in Wolfe Tone Square West, Bray, to be completed in late Q1 2021.

Examining properties in West Wicklow/Glencaly for next tender.



12. Community, Cultural & Social Development

Community Enhancement Programme 2021

Wicklow Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) is inviting applications from community and voluntary groups and not-for-profit organisations for small scale capital projects that will enhance community facilities for individuals and communities that are impacted by disadvantage. The Community Enhancement Programme (CEP) is funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development.

Projects that will be funded under this scheme include capital projects that comply with the objectives of County Wicklow's Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) for the development of community facilities with small grants for repairs and renovations or costs associated with reopening of a facility post COVID-19 or the sustainability of the facility, including costs such as utility bills, etc.

There are two parts to this funding scheme:

1. Grants up to a maximum of €1,000 for small grassroots community projects that address disadvantage and fulfil the objectives of the LECP.
2. Larger grants greater than €1,000 for projects that can clearly demonstrate that they address disadvantage and fulfil the objectives of the LECP.

Applications for funding can now be made under this Programme to County Wicklow LCDC by 4.00 p.m. on Friday 2nd July 2021. Application Forms are available on the Council's website www.wicklow.ie or from Community, Cultural & Social Development, Wicklow County Council, Whitegates, Wicklow Town, A67 FW96 - telephone 0404 20208 or email cep@wicklowcoco.ie

Town & Village – Announcement of Funding Scheme to Revitalise Towns and Villages

Following on from the announcement by Minister Humphreys of the launch of the 2021 Town and Village Renewal Scheme, Wicklow County Council is delighted to announce that the scheme is open for applications in the county.

The Town and Village Scheme objectives are being refocused to align with commitments within 'Our Rural Future – Rural Development Policy 2021-2025'. The 2021 Scheme will prioritise the objectives of this policy such as tackling vacancy in towns and villages, remote working and supporting town centre living. Other projects which will be welcomed include regeneration projects that support active and vibrant town or village centres, upgrading shopfronts and street facades, and green spaces and parks, etc.

The measures that will be supported by the 2021 Town and Village Renewal Scheme include (but are not limited to):

- Tackling dereliction in town centres
- Turning vacant properties into remote working and multi-use community spaces
- Investing in town centre living
- Investing in amenities to make town centre living more attractive
- Upgrading and improving shop fronts and streetscapes on Main Streets
- Projects that support and enhance the night time economy and add vibrancy to town centres



Grant Levels:

For the 2021 Scheme, the minimum grant which is available is €20,000. The maximum level of grant funding available is being raised to €500,000 in respect of one application from each Local Authority. A maximum of €250,000 will apply in respect of 2 applications and €100,000 in respect of 4 applications. **2 applications must** be in respect of Towns/Villages that have not previously received funding under the Standard Town & Village Renewal Scheme

Project Development Measure:

A new Project Development Measure (up to €50,000) is being introduced this year. This Measure is being introduced on a trial basis in order to put in place the preparation work needed to progress to a full project.

How to apply:

As in previous years, in order to apply, community groups must fill out an Expression of Interest form which should be submitted to Wicklow County Council. Selection of projects is a competitive process. 8 Expressions of Interest will be selected by the local authority for development into detailed applications to be submitted to the Department. All Expressions of Interest will be assessed based on the priorities contained in the Scheme Outlines (available on www.wicklow.ie). The closing date for receipt of Expressions of Interest is Friday 4th June at 4pm. Expressions of Interest forms should be emailed to townandvillage@wicklowcoco.ie

All relevant guidelines and application forms are available on www.wicklow.ie. All queries should be emailed to townandvillage@wicklowcoco.ie

Announcement of the Connected Hubs Fund

This call is intended to develop and leverage the capacity and quality of **existing remote working facilities & Broadband Connection Points (BCPs)** in support of the National Hub Network initiative. The total indicative funding available for the Connected Hubs Call is €5 million. The fund will provide grants from €10,000, up to €250,000 for multi-hub applications.

Applicants must be BCPs or existing hubs which provide, or will provide, remote working facilities and can demonstrate they have been in operation for 6 months (NB: this 6 months requirement does not apply to BCPs).

Projects funded through this call must be completed before the end of 2021 and applications must demonstrate credible project timelines to this effect or they will be deemed ineligible.

It is a requirement that funded applicants must commit to membership of the National Hub Network for a minimum of 3 years and must also complete the National Hub Survey which is available [here](#). The application scheme is restricted to existing Remote Working hubs and Broadband Connection Points. These will be contacted by Wicklow County Council and invited to apply.

Announcement of the Rural Regeneration Development Fund Category 2

The Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD, on May 12th, announced the third call for Category 2 applications to the €1 billion Rural Regeneration and Development Fund.



This Fund will support landmark regeneration projects across the country that will breathe new life into rural towns and villages.

This fund is for projects that will drive economic growth and footfall, combat dereliction, regenerate town centre and heritage buildings, develop pedestrian zones and outdoor spaces and make rural towns more attractive places to live, work and raise a family.

There will also be a strong focus on developing remote working facilities such as digital and enterprise communities, as well as e-learning, cultural and community spaces.

The Rural Regeneration and Development Fund is a key component of Our Rural Future – the Government’s ambitious five year policy for Rural Ireland. The €1 billion Fund is also part of the Department’s Rural Development Investment Programme, which is funded under Project Ireland 2040.

Projects that will be funded under Category 2 are those that require significant development before they reach the stage of being shovel ready.

The RRDF is being developed and coordinated by an inter-departmental team of Wicklow County Council.

CLÁR Programme for 2021 – Closing date for Applications

The CLÁR programme was advertised with a deadline of 7th May 2021. Following consultations with relevant local groups a total of 7 applications were put forward to the department with total project costs totalling just over €191,000. It is anticipated that news of successful projects will be received by end June or early July.

Community Awards Scheme 2021

The annual Community Awards Scheme closed for application on Friday 23rd April, 2021 and recipients have been notified. The amount of funding was €100,000 and payment of grants will commence in June.

County Wicklow Archives & Genealogy Service

Wicklow Archives featured in Centenary Event marking the burning of the Custom House on 25 May 2021. In the 18th and 19th centuries, the Grand Jury was ‘most important local body in rural Ireland’. Its records are a unique source for Irish local history, social change and genealogy. While many Grand Jury records were destroyed during the 1916–1923 period, vital collections still survive at local level across Ireland, where they are preserved by Local Archive services. The showcase reveals how the Grand Jury’s decisions impacted directly on daily life, enforcing the law at the local level, collecting taxation and deciding where it would be spent. Grand Juries did more than build roads, bridges, courthouses and prisons. They paid for orphaned children to be boarded-out, escorted convicts for transportation, and produced very early and highly detailed maps of their districts. Professor Virginia Crossman, author of Local Government in Nineteenth-Century Ireland, will discuss the significance of the Grand Jury records for historical research. The showcase will also visit – virtually – the reading rooms of three Local Archive services across the country, in Counties Wicklow, Donegal and Offaly, bringing you into contact with these fascinating records.



Speakers included Professor Virginia Crossman (Emerita, Oxford Brookes), Catherine Wright (Wicklow County Archives & Genealogy Service), Niamh Brennan (Donegal Archives), Lisa Shortall (Offaly Archives), Brian Gurrin and David Brown (Beyond 2022 Project).

County Wicklow Library Service

Libraries Reopen

All of Wicklow County Council's 13 branch libraries reopened to the public on 10th May 2021. The mobile library is also back on the road, resuming its normal routes. There has been a great reaction from the public, who especially appreciate that they can access the buildings. It had been originally flagged that the service would be "click and collect" at first, but the "browse and borrow" facility gives means a much more meaningful service can be provided.

Below gives a flavour of reaction from some of the libraries as to how business is progressing:

"Thankfully all going well, we were busy on Tuesday, Wednesday and very busy on Friday. The new hours are going down well with the patrons so remains to be seen if it makes much of a difference. The children's section is busier than it was last time, but still not up to normal footfall yet.

Patrons are very happy with the new stock and delighted to be able to come in and pick for themselves" (Baltinglass)

"Our footfall is a good bit higher this time around: 1309 last week compared to 1010 mid-July. Our first week open last June was far less, but this could be to do with going from being completely closed to almost fully open without click and collect in between this time around. We are having virtually no issues around mask usage, which is great. Everyone is delighted that the public bathroom is open, and the printing being off works particularly well here as we have a print shop around the corner. Printing and photocopying was causing lots of congestion in the branch previously. As Mark said, quarantine is very time-heavy and also physically demanding on top of Newsread. The gazebos are fantastic - we put ours up as a trial run today and it provided shelter to some passers-by during the heavy rain". (Bray)

"Definitely busier since I opened up last Tuesday. Today has been the first "normal" day I think. A bit of a mad rush last week to return and borrow" (Aughrim)

Vaccination Centre, Greystones

A number of library staff have made themselves available for providing "volunteer" cover at the Covid-19 Vaccination Centre at Shoreline, Greystones. They have committed to working there one day per week, until August, if required. All are reporting a very positive experience and appreciate making a direct contribution to what will be part of our national history. If/when sufficient numbers from Wicklow Volunteer Centre come on board, library staff will step aside, but they are available until August, if required.

Capital Programme Progress – Wicklow & Rathdrum

Construction resumed at Wicklow library on 10th May. It is anticipated that work will be completed there by mid-late July, ensuring preparation for opening can then commence. An opening date of late August is anticipated.

Rathdrum library construction work has been ongoing. A handover date of early–mid July is anticipated. Furniture tender has been completed and has now been ordered. It is planned that furniture & shelving installation will occur from 19th-30th July. Allowing for shelving of stock and fit out, an opening in mid-August is likely.



Healthy Ireland

Healthy Ireland Strategic Action Plan 2021 – 2025

The Healthy Ireland Strategic Action Plan 2021 – 2025 was published on 11th May 2021 and provides a clear roadmap of how we as a society can continue to work together to bring about good health, access to services, healthy environments, and the promotion of resilience and to ensure that everyone, can enjoy physical and mental, health and wellbeing, to their full potential. The newly published Healthy Ireland Strategic Action Plan will build on the work and progress made to date and focus on the remaining years of the Healthy Ireland Framework from 2021 – 2025.

See <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/441c8-healthy-ireland-strategic-action-plan-2021-2025/>

Healthy Ireland Wicklow Action 3 – Bray Area Partnership

A 6 week online walking programme took place as part of the Healthy Wicklow funded Bray Area Partnership Social Prescribing action. 15 participants took part altogether in this very successful programme which included 7 from Sunbeam House Services. Everyone that completed the programme received a Healthy Wicklow high viz vest and wrist pedometer.

Healthy Wicklow Action 5 – Physical Activity 4 All

Courses ran include:

Inclusive Fitness Training – 19th April - 26 people participated
Autism in Sport – 10th May – 8 people participated
Inclusive Fitness Training 24th May – 2 people so far have registered

Community Mental Health Fund Small Grant Scheme

Through an application process, Holy Rosary Outdoor Classroom was one of the approved projects which were allocated €2,500 through funding from the Community Mental Health Fund Small Grant Scheme under Healthy Ireland Round 3. When doing the groundworks a raised platform was uncovered which the school will also be able to use as an amphitheatre. This new addition to the school now facilitates daily classes, benefitting the 475 students that attend Holy Rosary and teachers alike. A lot of work has gone into this very worthy project over the last few months to support the key national policy in the development of spaces and places for health and wellbeing.

County Wicklow Sports and Recreation Partnership

Training & Education

Date	Course	Location	No's
08/05/21	Sports First Aid	Online (sold out)	12/12
10/05/21	Autism in Sport Workshop	Online	11/20
11/05/21	Safeguarding 1 – Child Protection	Online (sold out)	12/12
24/05/21	Cara – Inclusive Fitness Training	Online (spaces available)	13/20
25/05/21	Safeguarding 1 – Child Protection	Online	12/12



		(sold out)	
25/05/2021	Cycle Right – Learn to Cycle for People with a Disability – Tutor Training	Online (sold out)	10/10

Funding

Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership has been awarded €1,600 from the HSE for specific programme funding to support and continue to keep our communities active.

Programmes

- 8 week 'Free Men on the Move' programme is open to men of all ages and abilities within Wicklow. The programme consists of two evenings a week Monday and Wednesday @ 7.15 – 8pm beginning on the 17th May and all sessions are at your own pace and from the comfort of your own home.
- 4 week 'Online Intro to Pregnancy Yoga' will commence on the Monday 17th May @ 7.30pm. This programme is suitable for 12+ weeks pregnant and costs €20 and place are limited.
- A Traveller women's 'Dance Fit' programme will start on the 20th May @ 6.30pm and will continue for 6 weeks.
- A basketball teacher training workshop took place on the 10th May in conjunction with Basketball Ireland with 14 schools signed up and 51 teachers taking part in the training. Schools that participated were provided with a net bag of basketballs for the future development and promotion of basketball within their schools.
- 20 LCA students from St Kevin's Community School in Dunlavin are participating in a 4 week 'Get Active Programme', which is funded in collaboration with the Sports Partnership and CYPSC. HD Fitness is delivering the programme face to face and consists of Boxercise, Pilates, HIIT & Bootcamp activities.
- Inclusive zoom classes for Young Adults with a Disability continued in May with Dance, Chair Yoga and Fun Fitness. Participants join from home and their HSE day care setting.
- WSRP created 14 individual sports bags which were distributed to Syrian families with the help of Respond, the agency in Ireland giving community support to Syrian families under the Irish Refugee Protection Programme. These sports bags were funded by the KeepWell campaign in collaboration with CYPSC and Healthy Wicklow.
- Online Yoga for adolescent children in collaboration with Lucena Clinic Wicklow. 12 participants for an 8 week programme over May and June.

Arklow Sports Hub

Arklow Sports Hub Teqball Table & Basketball hoops have now been installed and are located near Coral Leisure, Arklow. This is part of our Community Sports Hub in Arklow, funded through Sport Ireland Dormant Accounts with more additions to be made over the coming months.

Wicklow Public Participation Network (PPN):

Membership now 370 community groups.

Submissions currently being made by local PPN and WCC to PPN national annual report 2020.

Funding Opportunities/Competitions: Creative Climate Action Fund; Arts & Disability Connect Funding; Circular Economy Innovation Grant; Dormant Accounts for People with Disabilities; WCC Community Grants; CSP Support Fund; Outdoor Recreation Facilities; Transitional LEADER Funding



Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP)

31st May signifies end of 2021 mid-year review period. Each Partnership working towards 15th June deadline to ensure all data and documentation uploaded to IRIS.

SICAP Sub-group will assess all data and ensure mid-year review formally approved by LCDC by 30th July.

Topics and themes for SICAP case studies 2021 currently being developed by both Partnerships.

Age Friendly Initiatives

A Consultant is being appointed to prepare the new Age Friendly Strategy.

A digital newsletter is being prepared to distribute in late May for older people.

Wicklow Community Call

The Community Call Helpline continues to operate from 9-5 Monday to Friday. There is a steady number of calls for requests mainly for information, shopping and delivery. The helpline also refers callers to befriending services when appropriate. There is strong evidence that the links have been established between those who need help and volunteers showing which demonstrates the resilience of communities in the county. The Community Response Forum continues to meet fortnightly to co-ordinate the response to the COVID-19 pandemic and address any issues arising.

LECP Update

Goal 1: Develop community capacity in disadvantaged communities and engage in urban and rural regeneration

Regeneration Funding Schemes:

Rural Regeneration Development Fund 2019/2020 (RRDF)

Area	Overview of Proposal	Funding Awarded
Baltinglass	Work ongoing on restoration of the Courthouse reuse as a library/Heritage and Digi-hub with outdoor event space Consultants working on public Realm enhancement, parking improvement, pedestrian crossings, ramps, boardwalk and riverside fencing	€2.7mn (total cost €3,566,968)
Newtownmountkennedy	Consultants being appointed for Main St. Design; mobility /transport plan; community facilities	€357,750

Both projects are underway but progress has been affected by COVID-19 restrictions

Town & Village 2020



This funding scheme supports economic and social development projects in towns and villages with a population of less than 10,000.

This year there are two elements to the Scheme.

1. 2020 Accelerated Measure

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

Funding is available up to €25,000 - €40,000 in exceptional circumstances

2. 2020 Town and Village Main Scheme

Round 1 Accelerated		
Dunlavin	Shop Local campaign	Funded €4,500
Roundwood	Public realm	Funded €36,000
Community Centres	Adaptations for COVID measures for 10 centres	Funded €16,200
Round 2 Accelerated – August 14 th		
Enniskerry	Car parking improvements, new footpath, new public seating, signage & shopfront improvements	Funded €39,600
Ballinaclesh	Renovations to community centre	Funded €39,600
Laragh	Improvements to pedestrian movements; provision of safe pedestrian spaces and public awning	Funded €24,300
Tinahely	Tinahely Men's Shed building refurbishment after a fire	Funded €4,950
Baltinglass	Painting and planting scheme	Funded €9,000
App	App to encourage shop local – county wide	Funded €22,500
Round 3 Accelerated >10,000 – August 28 th		
Kilcoole	Age Friendly benches	Funded €18,000
BCPs	Fit out for BCP centres	Funded €40,000
Rathdrum	Age friendly benches and bus shelter	Funded €24,000
Round 3 Accelerated <10,000 – August 28 th		
Greystones 2020/MD	Footpath improvement around Burnaby Park	Funded €40,000
Arklow MD	Biodiversity project	Funded €35,550
Wicklow MD	Outdoor Shelter/awnings	Funded €40,000



Town & Village Main Scheme – September 30 th		
Stratford	Community shop/cafe/offices/living over the shop/playground	Funded €199,800
Laragh	BCP and remote working hub Brockagh	Funded €100,000
Enniskerry	Public realm enhancement	Funded €98,000
Avoca	Public realm and recreation facility works	Funded €68,455
Annamoe	Public realm enhancement	Funded €100,000

CLÁR 2020

Wicklow county council have successfully secured €60,000 for two projects under the CLÁR programme.

Knockananna Community Group and Asknagap secured funding for carparks

Goal 2: Promote Active Citizenship and Public Participation to improve governance, participation and enrich decision making

Age Friendly Programme

The Age Friendly programme is focusing on the Keep Well Campaign and the Community Call. 500 winter care packs were delivered to those most isolated and vulnerable in the county and were very well received. 17 tablets were delivered to 7 participating nursing homes Wicklow in order to assist residents stay connected. Funding for these was through Age Friendly Ireland and the HSE. Training for setting up a Befriending service in Arklow has started with two sessions complete.

Comhairle na nÓg

The Comhairle na nÓg, through the Coordinator, are taking part in the COVID-19 Community Response Forum, bringing the perspective of young people.

Funding has been secured from DCYA to continue to support the Comhairle na nÓg. Tablets were purchased for use by the Comhairle in each Municipal District, to help them to keep the youth council going during the COVID-19 restrictions.

Public Participation Network (PPN)

Membership now 370 community groups.

Submissions currently being made by local PPN and WCC to PPN national annual report 2020.

Funding Opportunities/Competitions: Creative Climate Action Fund; Arts & Disability Connect Funding; Circular Economy Innovation Grant; Dormant Accounts for People with Disabilities; WCC Community Grants; CSP Support Fund; Outdoor Recreation Facilities; Transitional LEADER Funding

Goal 3: Strategic Direction – Develop high quality integrated services, available to all communities, in particular, disadvantaged communities and vulnerable groups

1. Healthy Wicklow Strategy



Round 3 of Programme is underway but implementation has slowed down because of COVID-19. An extension to 31st December 2021 has been granted. €30,000 has been allocated to a number of groups under the Healthy Ireland Mental Health Small grants Scheme.

Under the Healthy Ireland Fund, Wicklow County Council has received €67,225 to help with the 'Keep Well' campaign. This is a national campaign, part of the government plan for 'Living with COVID-19' focused on 5 major themes:

- Keeping Active & Being Outdoors – even during winter it is important to help physical and mental health and wellbeing.
- Keeping in Contact – staying connected with people and addressing isolation as person-to-person connection is important to our wellbeing
- Switching Off and Being Creative - Switching Off and Being Creative or learning something new, getting back to nature and finding ways to relax
- Eating Well – by nourishing your mind and body we can positively impact our physical and mental wellbeing.
- Minding Your Mood – relaxation, mindfulness and asking for help if needed.

2. Migrant Integration Strategy

The DRAFT Migrant Integration Strategy has recently been completed and was presented to the LCDC. It will go to the full Council meeting in February.

3. County Wicklow Food & Beverage Strategy – Wicklow Naturally

Wicklow County Council was awarded Leader funding for the implementation of the Food and Beverage Strategy. Consultants were appointed in 2019 for 2020 and proceeded to roll out the Food and Beverage Strategy in spite of the challenges presented by Covid 19. The consultants are on hand until the end of February and are available thereafter to assist with various aspects of the project.

Highlights of the Programme

- The creation of a Wicklow Food and Beverage brand Wicklow Naturally and the establishment of a network of 100 members consisting of producers, the hospitality trade, retailers and service providers.
- The creation of a website and associated social media
- Producer events (pre lockdown)
- Production of labelling and promotional material
- Launch of the Wicklow signatures dishes – featured on Nationwide
- Participation in a US PBS TV network – Ireland County by County.
- Engagement with food writers
- Engagement with the Aldi Grow programme
- Development of a business plan for a food incubation hub
- Formation of a company limited by guarantee
- Participated in the “Love Local” campaign

Food Poverty and Food Sustainability



- Stage 1 of the mapping initiative for Food Poverty Initiative is complete. A coordination plan is being drawn up and an activity calendar for 2021 is planned.

October Feast

- Approximately 35 events were held in October, the online events were tremendously successful resulting in 1,227,909 engaging with the website or social media during the course of the month.
- Events included
- Food demonstrations
- Foraging Tours
- Meet the Maker events
- Demonstration videos

Next Steps

Preparing an application for funding for 2021 for the administration of the company and the development of the brand, representation at events etc.

Goal 4: Develop a vibrant and innovative community and social enterprise sector

Bray Area Partnership has teamed with Southside partnership and was successful in securing Dormant Accounts funding for a social enterprise support project. SEED, Social Enterprise Expansion and Development, provides both mentoring and training to Social Enterprises in the North Wicklow area. County Wicklow Partnership's social enterprise project is providing support and training to social enterprises in the rest of the county. It also provides start-up funding through the LEADER Programme.

- A Rural Youth Online Social Enterprise Entrepreneurial Training Programme
- Covid 19 Training Support Programme for new and existing Social Enterprises in Co Wicklow.



Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure

1. Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) (Economic)

The Economic Development Unit of the Enterprise and Corporate Services Directorate is charged with implementing the economic actions in the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP).

Retail

Bray Central

While Bray Central has been closed in line with Government guidelines, Oakmount, the developer, are committed to achieving practical completion as early as possible. Negotiations continue with potential tenants.

Town Teams

Town Teams in Arklow, Blessington, Bray, Greystones and Wicklow continue to meet virtually where possible to progress various projects. Activity, particularly engagement with stakeholder groups has been curtailed due to Covid restrictions.

Arklow Town Team

Arklow Town Team are delighted that the hugely popular flower baskets will once again decorate the town this summer. The baskets are due to be put in place in June and this has been made possible through the kind sponsorship of €4,000 received from local businesses who were not affected by Covid restrictions.

Arklow Town Team have been working on a new brand for Arklow to promote the town and everything it has to offer to visitors, citizens and businesses. The new logo will be launched in the coming weeks along with an exciting new website; Visit Arklow.

Bray Town Team / Bray Reopening Committee

Bray Town Reopening Committee are due to meet in the coming weeks to look at measures to help promote shopping local as businesses reopen.



Blessington Town Team

Blessington Town Team continue to meet virtually on a monthly basis to progress projects in the area. The Blessington Access Group and Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly launched the Blessington Accessibility Audit Report on the 21st April.

Greystones Town Team

Greystones Town Team is in the process of forming a company limited by guarantee. Company Directors, Secretary and Members have been appointed and Greystones 2020 will be formally dissolved once the new CLG is in place.

The Town Team has established the following sub committees

Finance Sub- Committee/Secretariat

Events, PR, Digital and Sports

Business/Retail and economic development

Arts/ Culture/Tourism/infrastructure/Heritage

Public Realm/Tidy Towns

In the meantime the interim Chairperson and Vice Chairperson and committee members are reaching out to the local community to strengthen the membership of the new town team.

Wicklow Town Team

Wicklow Town Team meet regularly to progress a number of projects including the Heritage Walk, Community Power Scheme/Sustainable Energy Community, East Coast Greenway/Coastal Route and the proposed development of a Youth Theatre.

Most recently the Town Team has been engaged in working with the County Council on a number of funding applications which will be of great benefit to the town, if successful.

The lighting of historic buildings and the development of the heritage trail is nearing completion.



Wicklow Town Team is currently reviewing its membership to ensure a proper succession and to provide for a young, vibrant and solid structure going forward.

Town RE-Opening Committees

Following the success of the Bray Re-opening Committee, Wicklow County Council proposed the establishment of re-opening committees in each Municipal District – the purpose of these committees is to support businesses as they re-open and to encourage members of the community to support local business. Membership of the Re-Opening Committees consists of the MD Cathaoirleach (Chair), MD Manager, MD Administrator, MD Engineer, Chair of the Town Team, Representative of the Chamber of Commerce and An Garda Síochána.

Town re-opening meetings have been held in Bray, Arklow, Wicklow, Greystones and Blessington. The meetings considered the actions being taken by each of the Municipal Districts to enhance the re-opening of our towns and gained valuable input from An Garda Síochána and representatives of the business community. A campaign to encourage people to continue to shop local and support local businesses was discussed and will be rolled out in the coming weeks.

Outdoor Dining

Application fees for use of public footpaths or spaces by local businesses during COVID-19 are being waived by Wicklow County Council for a further period to the end of August 2021. The Council is anxious to assist and support businesses in the recovery period arising out of the pandemic. One of the measures that the Council is keen to support in the recovery is the use of public footpaths and/or public space for local businesses which may require the use of these spaces, particularly as outdoor seating areas while restrictions are ongoing. The Council is advising businesses that such activity can be permitted by our Planning Department under a Section 254 licence. The application form and further information is available on the Wicklow County Council website: <https://www.wicklow.ie/Living/Services/Planning/Planning-Applications/Apply-for-Planning/Licence-Application-Section-254>

Applications for funding under the Outdoor Seating and Accessories for Tourism and Hospitality Business Scheme opened on the 12th April and will remain open until 30th September 2021.

Faillte Ireland in partnership with local authorities across the country is working to assist town centre hospitality businesses to increase their outdoor seating capacity while providing a safe environment for shoppers and diners. The key aim of the scheme is to provide support to individual hospitality and



tourism businesses towards the cost of equipment to provide additional outdoor seating and facilitate individual businesses to increase their outdoor dining capacity for the summer of 2021.

In order to place furniture in public places, applicants must firstly have applied for and been granted a Section 254 licence by Wicklow County Council. The Section 254 licence fee has been waived for table and chair street furniture applications in 2021.

Outdoor Dining Enhancement Scheme and Urban Animation Scheme

Faite Ireland has launched two new funding schemes for local authorities to enhance the outdoor dining experience in the county and to animate the urban areas in towns. Applications which have been worked on in collaboration with the Municipal Districts and Town Teams are being prepared under the Urban Animation Scheme, with applications already submitted under the Outdoor Dining Enhancement Scheme.

Tourism

Tourism Strategy and Marketing Plan 2018-2022

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

The Key Priorities are:

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

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

Wicklow Passport:

Wicklow County Tourism Alliance has launched the Wicklow Passport for 2021. The launch is complemented by a social media campaign and hopes to raise awareness of Wicklow as a staycation destination. The objective for 2021 is to grow the number of Stamping Locations around the County and encourage as many visitors as possible.

New VisitWicklow.ie Website:



Wicklow County Tourism Alliance is currently developing strong editorial content for the website to help showcase and promote the various Wicklow Themes. Themes worked on include Wicklow Walks, Cycling in Wicklow, Wicklow Family Activities, Wicklow Gardens, Wicklow Foods and Flavours, etc. while communications are also ongoing with the members to update and enhance the information on the site.

Wicklow Outdoors:

Digitisation of the Wicklow Walks are being finalised, with updates to the visitwicklow.ie website. Initially the Wicklow Way will be focussed on to coincide with the release of the Wicklow Way videos being produced by Wicklow's Recreation Officer. Over the next few months, this will be extended to include some of lesser known walks around the County.

Tracks & Trails

County Wicklow is to feature in the second episode of RTÉ's Tracks & Trails which will be broadcast on Friday 4th June at 7 p.m. This programme has been sponsored by Wicklow County Council and Wicklow Tourism have had input into the development of the programme which will feature 2 walks .

In the first trail presenter, Pól O'Conghaile, walks a long, hilly loop on the **Tinahely Way**, checking out nearby Tomnafinnogue Woods, en route. Walk 2 starts by ascending **Bray Head and travelling via Belmont Demesne** towards the Little Sugarloaf and Kilmacanogue.

This programme is an excellent opportunity to promote Wicklow Outdoors and the hospitality and accommodation on offer in the area of each of these very different trails.

Celtic Routes Project:

Funding of €1,917,770 for the second phase of the Celtic Routes tourism project has been secured for Ireland / Wales's tourist project, Celtic Routes. T

This is a partnership project between Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire County Councils and the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority in Wales and Wicklow, Wexford and Waterford City and County Councils in Ireland. It is a branded collection of tourism experiences encouraging travelers to visit Ireland and Wales to discover the Celtic spirit by suggesting immersive and authentic experiences in West Wales and South East Ireland. A toolkit is available for businesses and destinations with guidance and ideas about how they can create their own Celtic experiences and contribute to the success of the project.



The Celtic Route Partnership project has released an online platform to access the database of imagery that has been produced over the past year. The imagery has been used to support the extensive promotional campaign that is undergoing, including high quality and high resolution photos and videos.

Accommodation: The County Wicklow Accommodation working group are progressing with planning the next steps in order to develop a prospectus aimed at tourism providers to invest in County Wicklow.

Destination Town Funding: An application to Fáilte Ireland on behalf of Wicklow Town was made in respect of Destination Town Funding and funding has been awarded to develop visitor amenities in the Abbey Grounds. Mosart, a local architect team who specialise in architecture, landscape and urban design, have been appointed to design the Abbey Grounds project with a view to increasing visitor numbers to Wicklow while maintaining this important oasis at the heart of Wicklow town.

Glendalough Masterplan and Wicklow Visitor Orientation Study

A Visitor Experience and Management Masterplan for Glendalough and the Wicklow Mountains National Park has been commissioned by Fáilte Ireland, working with its strategic partners the Office of Public Works (OPW), National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) and Coillte along with the National Monuments Service and Wicklow County Council. The aim of the Masterplan is to improve the visitor experience in Co Wicklow and the consultant team, led by Consarc Design Group, are asking the public for their input into the project.

The Public Consultation period for the Masterplan for Glendalough and Wicklow Mountains National Park has now ended with feedback being presented to the Glendalough Local Advisory Committee. The consultants are preparing a draft masterplan; this will be presented to the Steering Committee at the end of June.

In the short term, additional car parking is to be provided at Laragh and Pier Gates Luggala, with an electronic traffic management system (ITS) to be introduced and the toilets at the Council owned car park to be upgraded.

Tourism Recovery Taskforce

In 2020 a Tourism Recovery Taskforce was established by Fáilte Ireland – this Taskforce is chaired by the Chief Executive and Brian O’Flynn of Ireland’s Ancient East. Four key objectives have been agreed:

Project 1: Wicklow Outdoors

Project 2: Wicklow Passport



Project 3: Family Market

Project 4: New Wicklow Experiences - maximising the potential of Wicklow Naturally to link food experiences with the outdoors and adventure experiences and emerging film tourism opportunities

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

Rural and Urban Regeneration Development Fund Grant Applications

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

Bray Harbour Area Integrated Regeneration

Funding of €7.14m has been announced for the Bray Harbour Area Integrated Regeneration Project from the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) and this funding has the capacity to unlock the great potential of Bray Harbour and surrounding area. The harbour, its piers and adjacent lands are a major asset for Bray and this funding will facilitate an integrated scheme to develop the harbour and associated public realm works to provide a vibrant waterfront area with excellent connectivity between the promenade, the town centre the Dublin Road area and beyond.

Works continue, subject to Covid restrictions, on URDF funded projects for Arklow's Historic Town Core, Fitzwilliam Square Public Realm in Wicklow and Bray Public Transport Bridge.

The next call for applications under the Rural Regeneration Development Fund (RRDF) has been announced with possible projects being assessed and prepared for application.

Maritime

Maritime Strategic Review for County Wicklow

The Strategic Review authored by Gavin Doherty Associates has identified ways in which the economic base of County Wicklow can be strengthened through its ports and harbours and has formulated recommendation for Wicklow County Council. The review was endorsed by the Economic Development and Enterprise Support SPC in March 2020.

Key Recommendations:

- To maximise the Offshore Wind Opportunity



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

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

Offshore Wind Energy

Seven Offshore Projects have been designated Relevant Projects by the government and are in line to receive a valid grid connection offer. Six of these projects are in the Irish Sea with four off the coast of Wicklow:

- Dublin Array RWE (2 projects Bray and Kish Banks)
- Codling Wind Park Fred Olsen/EDF (2 projects, Codling I and Codling II)

The Development of the designated Relevant Projects is dependent on the enactment of the Marine Planning and Development Management Bill, 2020 expected in 2021.

Arklow Bank

SSE Renewables has submitted a planning application to An Bord Pleanála for the development of the landfall for two offshore export circuits underground high voltage connections, a new substation and transmission compound. A 220kV overhead power line connection from Shelton Abbey to the transmission network.

SSER is planning to make its application to Wicklow County Council in respect of the O&M base at Arklow within the coming weeks.

Codling Wind Park

The Codling Wind Park has published its Onshore Infrastructure Scoping Report which covers the land based elements of the Codling Wind Park project, such as the point at which the cables will come ashore (landfall), the routing of onshore cabling and any electricity substation(s) that may be required to connect the project to the national grid. It also describes how the operations and maintenance base for the project, which will be located at a port along the east coast, may be considered in the EIA.

Dublin Array has completed a non-statutory public consultation process

Key Milestones



- The anticipated enactment of the Marine Planning and Development Bill
- The Renewable Energy Support Scheme (RESS) Auction whereby the companies bid for a grid connection (expected 2021)

The estimated value of each of the above projects is between €1 and €2 billion. In addition to the benefits provided to the community, including investment, employment, training and skills development, and the opportunity to develop Wicklow as a Centre of Excellence for Offshore Wind Energy, a mandatory Community Benefit Fund must be provided by all RESS projects . This will be of significant value for the County Wicklow community.

Council officials are engaging with Enterprise Ireland and the educational bodies with regard to developing a business cluster and skills and training requirements.

Maritime Business Development Group

The next Maritime Business Development Group meeting will take place over the summer. Due to Covid restrictions this meeting will be held remotely.

Food and Beverage Strategy

Wicklow Naturally CLG meets on a monthly basis and are working on a number of key projects including accessing funding for a Co-ordinator position, planning a social media strategy, improving website content, producing a newsletter on progress to date and increasing membership.

County Wicklow Partnership is preparing tenders for a Food and Beverage Co-ordinator role for Wicklow Naturally and a tender for the supply of event costs for the period 2021 - 2023 in support of Wicklow Naturally's Promotional Activities Plan. Funding of €220,000 will be applied for via the LEADER Food Programme for both tenders. If successful funding of 75% will be awarded, Wicklow Naturally will contribute 10% from subscriptions It is hoped that Wicklow County Council will contribute €50,000 over a two year period.

A large number of events in the calendar such as Bloom and the National Ploughing Championships have been cancelled; it is proposed to run October Feast again this year with a mix of virtual and "in person" events. This event was run virtually in 2020 and had a good participation rate.



2. Local Enterprise Office

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

METRICS: Grants	HISTORICAL	TARGETS	YEAR TO DATE
	2020	2021	2021
Grants Approved (number/ value) - Measure 1 - Technical Assistance for Micro Exporters	- 27/€663,778.00 - 3/€3,850	- Meet Demand - Meet Demand	-15/ €297,254 -2 / €3.150 (to date)
NB: Ability to meet demand is influenced by the amount of funding allocated to the LEO			
METRICS: Training/ Capacity Building	HISTORICAL	TARGETS	YEAR TO DATE
	2020	2021	2021
Total No. of All Programmes (Training/Networking/Events/Seminars)	64	60	40
Start Your Own Business Participant numbers (included in total training programmes)	75	75	44
Total No. of all Participants participating in above Programmes	1542	1000	430
Women in Business Network Number of Meetings	10	12	4



METRICS: Business Advice & Mentoring	HISTORICAL	TARGETS	YEAR TO DATE
	2020	2021	2021
Number of new clients added to database *criteria have been amended for this metric	1302	100	370
Number of One to One Business Advice meetings including Businesses assigned a mentor	803	600	214 (including Brexit mentoring)

METRICS: Student Enterprise Programmes	HISTORICAL	TARGETS	
Academic Year	2020/2021	2021/2022	Year to Date
No. of Secondary Student Participants	962	1000	962

METRICS: Irelands Best Young Entrepreneur	HISTORICAL	TARGETS	
Academic Year	2020	2021	Year to Date 2021
Number of Applications	Programme review	Programme review	Programme review

Trading Online Voucher	HISTORICAL	TARGETS	
No of Trading Online Vouchers approved	2020	2021	Year to Date 2021
Trading Online Vouchers	430	70	86

Lean For Micro Project	HISTORICAL	TARGETS	YEAR TO DATE
	2020	2021	2021
No. of Companies who have undertaken a Lean for Micro Assessment by a Lean Expert	8	11	9

Microfinance Ireland	HISTORICAL	TARGETS	YEAR TO DATE
	2020	2021	2021
No. of Companies who have submitted a MFI loan application through the LEO	21	23	2



May 2021 Activities

- ✚ The Network of Entrepreneurial Women network meeting took place via Zoom on 5th May
- ✚ The Lean for Micro Programme has nine companies participating and the programme is currently mid way.
- ✚ The LEO is continuing to help clients work through their customs queries with one to one advice monthly Customs Clinics ongoing with a dedicated advisor helping companies adapt to new regulations following Brexit.
- ✚ There continues to be a high level of demand for business advice clinics which are currently being run remotely. Additional Clinics are being provided to ensure that demand is being met.
- ✚ Weekly newsletter is circulated to clients on supports, training courses, events and other relevant information.
- ✚ Social media and LEO website updates are carried out a number of times a week to raise awareness and promote the LEO supports.
- ✚ Applications for the Trading Online Voucher Scheme continue to be submitted with 86 approved to date for 2021. The grant has now reverted to 50% from 1st January 2021.
- ✚ Look for Local campaign in weekly newsletter to support re-opening of businesses.
- ✚ Two local Secondary Schools represented Wicklow at the National Final of the Student Enterprise Programme which was held virtually from Croke Park on Friday 14th May. Students from Colaiste Craobh Abhann represented the county in the junior competition while East Glendalough School represented Wicklow in the senior competition.

Training

The Spring Summer 2021 training programme offers a combination of core training courses, digital marketing clinics for LEO clients.

Courses that have taken place in the last month include:

- ✚ Northern Ireland: Gateway of opportunity to exporting workshop took place on 12th May with 13 participants.
- ✚ Business Planning and Accessing Finance was held on 18th May for 18 businesses.
- ✚ Customs Mentoring sessions took place on 26th May for 7 client companies
- ✚ A Start Your Own Business course commenced on the 6th May and was fully booked with 15 participants.
- ✚ TOV Seminar held on the 20th May with 110 persons registered for same.

Upcoming courses include the following:-

- ✚ Digital Marketing Clinics taking place on 1st June for 7 businesses.
- ✚ Customs Mentoring sessions scheduled for 30th June for 7 client companies.
- ✚ Energising Retail through re-opening on 27th May.
- ✚ Telling Your Food Story (Tips on free PR, food styling & photography)



3. Planning and Development

County Development Plan Review

Notice to review the current County Development Plan 2016 - 2022 and prepare a new County Development Plan 2021 - 2027 was given on the 6th November 2019. Closing date for submissions was Friday 10th January 2020. 156 submissions were received.

All of the submissions are available to view on the website:

<https://www.wicklow.ie/Living/Services/Planning/Development-PlansStrategies/National-Regional-County-Plans/Wicklow-County-Development-Plan-2021-2027/IssuesPaper>

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

The report is available to view on the website:

<https://www.wicklow.ie/Living/Services/Planning/Development-Plans-Strategies/National-RegionalCounty-Plans/Wicklow-County-Development-Plan-2021-2027/Stage-2>

The Proposed Draft County Development Plan was issued to the members on 16th March 2021 - The proposed draft shall be deemed to be the draft development plan, unless, within 8 weeks of the submission of the draft development to the Members, the Planning Authority, by resolution, amends that draft development plan. At Council meetings held on the 10th and 17th May, the Members voted to amend the proposed draft plan.

The draft Plan as amended by the Members and associated environmental reports will go on public display on the 4th June for 12 weeks. The Draft Plan and associated documents will be available to view and download from the consultation portal Friday 04 June 2021 to Monday 16 August 2021. Submissions or observations regarding the Draft Plan and the associated Environmental Report will be invited from the public and interested bodies.

Wicklow Heritage & Biodiversity Plans

- Historic Structure Fund (HSF): Two successful projects announced for funding in county Wicklow; Killruddery Clocktower repairs approved for €50,000 and Conservation works to the 'weir' at Russborough House approved for €50,000
- Heritage Council Community Heritage Grants: Five successful projects announced for County Wicklow; Arklow Maritime Museum (€2,800); Irish Landmark Trust – Wicklow Head Lighthouse (€12,000); Glendalough Heritage Forum (€9,900); Russborough House (€15,000); Arklow Town Team – The Goods Store (€6,000)
- Funding allocations confirmed on 14th May for Wicklow Biodiversity Action (€29,950) under the National Biodiversity Action Plan fund by 26th March. Three actions approved to improve conservation management of council owned properties at Brittas Bay, selected historic graveyards and at Kilmacanogue marsh.
- Biodiversity Awareness programme: 'Spring into Nature' programme running Feb – May, includes the production and free distribution of publications (Wicklow Wildlife posters and Gardening for Wildlife booklets and other Wicklow habitat guides) and the hosting of free nature themed zoom evening talks (supported by the Healthy Ireland programme).



- National Biodiversity Week 15th-23rd May; Wicklow Rivers – Ecology and Connectivity online event held on 18th May to highlight current and upcoming Wicklow County Council activities in partnership with Inland Fisheries Ireland and East Wicklow Rivers Trust regarding biodiversity enhancement in river systems. 20th May lunchtime workshop held on Summer Wildflowers and citizen science with National Biodiversity Data Centre.
- Wicklow Swift Project underway: co-ordinator in place to liaise with groups, nest boxes to be distributed to suitable locations
- Our Wicklow Heritage: ‘Daoine agus Áit – Connecting our communities’ postcard project underway in partnership with National Museum of Ireland, Clare and Galway county council’s heritage offices.
- County Heritage Plan allocations received from The Heritage Council for the implementation of the County Wicklow Heritage Plan actions in 2021. Next Wicklow Heritage Forum Meeting 26th May.
- Community Monument Fund (CMF). Nine applications were submitted to National Monuments Service for county Wicklow on 30th April

Planning Applications

A total of 141 valid applications were received during April, these include applications as follows:

Type of Development	Number Received
Individual Houses	31 (26 refer to rural House applications)
Housing Developments*	05
Agricultural Structures	02
Commercial	04
Other Developments**	99
Total	141

* Large hsg Development

PRR 21/436 Papaver Ltd, 26 no. dwellings, Killmacullagh, Main Street, Newtownmountkennedy

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

Decisions issued in respect of 108 applications in April, being:

Type of Development	Number of Decisions
<i>Housing Developments</i>	<i>06</i>
<i>Individual Houses</i>	<i>19</i> <i>(18 refer to a rural Hse)</i>
<i>Other Developments</i>	<i>82</i>
<i>Other Developments Requiring EIA</i>	<i>01</i>
Total	108



In relation to decisions issued between January to April 2020, in comparison to the same period for 2021, the details are as follows:

	30/04/2020	30/04/2021
<i>Total Number of decisions issued</i>	272	355
<i>Total Number of decisions to grant</i>	233	308
<i>% Grant Rate</i>	86%	87%

No. of Applications withdrawn

April - 9 (4 refer to rural house applications)

*Withdrawals may not have been lodged in the month of April.

Planning Enforcement

- New Files 23
- Advisory Letters 13
- Warning Letters 07
- Enforcement Notices 01
- Legal files 02
- Closed 08

Court Cases:

- 2 Cases listed in the Circuit Court adjourned by Courts due to current restrictions.
- 10 Cases listed for hearing in May in the Circuit Court
- 1 Case listed in the High Court in May

Vacant Sites

- 24 sites on Register
- 1 site removed from Register
- 1 Section 7 Notice of Intent
- 1 Section 10(2) Notice – Removal from Register
- 3 Section 15 Notices – Demand for Levy served
- €927.50 levies received

Derelict Sites

- 2 sites on Register
- 1 Section 23 Notice – Demand or levy (Site in Baltinglass)



Short Term Letting:

The short term letting team is in place.

- 17 Applications for Registration received in 2021.
- Total received to date: 55 (20 from 2019 and 18 from 2020 and 17 from 2021)
- Total files from 2019 is 27.
- Total files from 2020 is 69.
- Total files from 2021 is 35.
- 3 complaints received in 2020.
- 2 complaints received in 2021.
- 8 warning letters issued
- 4 properties from 2019 being investigated at present.
- 38 properties from 2020 being investigated at present.
- 14 properties from 2021 being investigated at present.
- UD files created from 2020 in 2021 is 8.
- UD files created from 2021 is 1.

4. Environmental Services

Waste Management

No. of Complaints Created	244
No. of Cases Closed, Resolved or Completed	256
No of Litter Fines Issued	10
No. of Waste Management Files Opened	3
No. of Warning Letters Issued	4
No of Abandoned Car Notices Issued	8
No. of Burning Applications Granted	20
No. of Temporary Signs Granted	0
No. of Notices Issued under Section 14 of the Waste Management Act	5
No. of Notices Issued under Section 55 of the Waste Management Act	0
No. of Fixed Penalty Notices issued	2
No. of files prepared for Court and included in Court Lists	55
No. of Cases in Court under the Litter Pollution Act.	1
Income - Litter	€900.00
Income- Waste Management	€5,426.00

Whitestown Remediation Project

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

- Draft remediation plan was lodged with Brownfield restoration Ireland Limited (BRIL) on 27th November.
- Following the receipt of submissions from a number of prescribed bodies, the High Court instructed WCC to incorporate the requests contained in the submissions into the draft plan and to commence surveys required for an Appropriate Assessment.

Climate Action

Priority Action items:

- EV Chargers will be installed at the area office in Blessington in the coming weeks .The charging point at Shoreline Greystones has been delayed on health and safety grounds due to the operation of the Vaccination Centre. The charging point at Main Street Blessington has also been delayed due to lead in time for a new ESB connection.
- A tree Policy is being drawn up for the County. UCD Landscape architecture department has been appointed to co-ordinate the tree management policy for Wicklow County Council - a draft policy document has been received and is currently being reviewed and this will be out for public consultation in the coming weeks

- A Foamstream machine has been purchased from Furlong Equipment Ltd and will initially be deployed in the Bray Municipal District. – the purchase of a trailer for transportation of the machine and training on the use of the machine has been delayed due to COVID restrictions.
- The roll out of the Climate Action Awareness national training programme has commenced and training will continue online for all staff throughout 2021.

Energy

BEC 1121 application as set out below have been approved and with the support of 3 Counties Energy agency all projects are being progressed. .

Location	Project
Clermont	Heating Controls
	PV Panel
Wicklow Town Hall	PV Panel
	Lighting Upgrade
	Windows/Doors Upgrade
Bray Civic Offices	PV Panel
	Heating Controls
	Lighting Upgrade
Bray Depot	PV Panel
	Lighting Upgrade
Tinahely Area Office and Fire Station	Lighting Upgrade
	Insulation Upgrade
	Insulation Upgrade
	PV Panel
Greystones Library	Lighting Upgrade
	Windows/Doors Upgrade
Arklow Fire Station	Insulation Upgrade (attic)
	Lighting Upgrade
	Insulation Upgrade (walls)
Coral LC Wicklow	Heat Pump Upgrade
County Buildings	BMS
	Windows/Doors Upgrade
7 No. EV Chargers.	EV Chargers - Double Socket

Sustainable Energy Committees

Covid 19 restrictions interrupted progress of Sustainable Energy Committees. Grant amended deadlines have been agreed with SEAI to allow for the continuation and completion of Energy Map Plans, EMPs for Newtownmountkennedy, Greystones/Delgany, Wicklow and Blessington. Desktop work only has been undertaken in the last few months.

Glenmalure has completed its EMP. The committee is now focused on identifying projects to implement.



Laragh Energy Master Plan is also complete and has been presented to the Community. Once a final review is completed by the committee the grant will be processed.

A new application for a grant to undertake an Energy Master Plan was submitted by Enniskerry SEC. The grant application has been processed and a grant agreement signed between Wicklow County Council and SEAI.

A new SEC group was formed in Arklow in April. Work is progressing on an application for an EMP.

Decarbonisation Zone

Research was undertaken in April on the selection of a decarbonisation zone. The largest town in each municipal district was assessed on potential for decarbonisation themes and actions. Laragh and Glomalure were also assessed as they both have active SEC groups. A submission was also received by Newtown 2050 to consider a combined zone incorporating nine towns. This application was assessed looking at the for core towns of Newtownmountkennedy, Kilcoole, Kilpedder and Newcastle.

Arklow was selected as the pilot decarbonisation zone. The proposal was submitted to the DECC at the end of April.

Work has commenced with the town. A meeting was held with the municipal district. A presentation to the Town Team is programmed. Support has been given to the Arklow SEC group to help gather data. A place making training is proposed for summer to create a shared vision for the town. The Irish Architects Foundation has a competition open called Reimagine Place with winning towns given a place making consultation. An entry for Arklow decarbonisation zone was submitted. Work will need to be undertaken on the completion of an implementation plan by Q4 of 2021. Key actions will include establishing a baseline for carbon emissions in the town and researching projects and their funding.

Environmental Awareness

- Work was undertaken on planning the Relove Fashion competition for the next school year with plans to launch it this month. A web based portal is being developed for entries to increase the interaction with schools via technology and make the process easier in managing a multi- local authority participation.
- A Transition Year Climate Action programme to guide schools on engaging students in action at local level is being developed. Partners in the project are Kildare, Meath and Louth local authorities and the CARO office. The programme contains modules on Energy, Active Travel, Biodiversity, the Circular Economy, Water, Rivers, Food, Trees, Advocacy, Business and Air Quality. A first draft has been prepared. We are currently exploring opportunities to link up with the GAA Future Leaders programme.
- An application for funding under the Anti-dumping initiative was submitted for a Bikes for Africa project. This years project if funded will involve a permanent storage container for bikes suitable for reuse by school students in Africa. The storage unit will be place in Arklow recycling centre with bikes then transported to Shelton Abbey open prison for repair before sending them to Africa. This project is a collaboration with the Rotary Clubs of Bray and Wicklow.



- Wicklow County Council is working with eight other local authorities to develop a series of short videos on dog fouling for use on social media. The campaign will include six animated video each of which shows the impact dog fouling has on others using a variety of scenarios. We will seek matching gifs which can be shared by residents associations more easily on Whats app groups and will serve as reminders of the main campaign. Quotes are currently being sought for the project.
- A motion sensed audio device campaign is currently being used on rotation in popular dog walking locations to remind dog walker to pick up after their dog. New solar powered LED signage is being purchased to test out in the five municipal districts. Rolls of bags have been purchased to be distributed to dog walkers as a means of engaging them in conversation about dog fouling.
- The EPA put out a call for projects under the Local Authority Prevention Network, LAPN. An application for funding was submitted by Wicklow County Council. The project applied for is to develop composting solutions for the management of the high levels of grass production which must be lifted when green space is being managed for pollinators. This project will help to facilitate Wicklow County Council's commitment to designate spaces for pollinators.
- Several projects were funded under the Anti-litter grant. Two were focused on schools. The first one providing a toolkit with storybooks, classroom activities and equipment to vary out litter picks in ten schools. Workshops on the theme of Leave No Trace were provided for 12 schools.
- Green Flag renewal visits, virtual meetings and talks, virtual tours of the recycling centre have been undertaken since schools reopened. Numbers applying for the Green flag in 2021 are well down with nine schools to date confirming renewal.
- National Spring Clean has had its busiest year to date with request coming in for clean-up kit from the beginning of the year. There is increased volunteer activity. The campaign has recently been extended for the summer month with funding to An Taisce by the DECC. The DECC is currently undertaking a consultation with local authorities prior to launching a new Anti-litter Infrastructure capital support scheme which aims to address increasing litter levels generated by outdoor dining. Data and information is being gathered from the municipal districts to respond to a request for information from the DECC.

Blue Flag Beaches

Wicklow County Council has retained their 4 Blue Flags at beaches at Bray South Promenade, Greystones, Brittas Bay North and Brittas Bay South. This was announced on the 25th May 2021. Beach bye-laws will be in place for these Blue Flag Beaches from 1st June 2021 with regard to dogs and horses.

Brittas Bay Carparks

Carparks in both Brittas Bay North and Brittas Bay South are now open for the summer season and charging is now in force. Bin collections are in place and toilet facilities are open.

Lifeguards

The bathing season runs from 1st of June to the 15th September as do Lifeguard Patrols. Lifeguards have been appointed and will commence shortly. There will be lifeguards in Bray, Greystones, Wicklow Harbour, Brittas Bay North and South and Arklow.

Dog Licences

Reminders continue to be issued for all registered dogs in County Wicklow. In the month of April 367 reminders were sent. A total of 365 licences were issued/renewed in April. These reminders would have been sent out in March. Of the 365 licences issued 200 were issued on line through Licences.ie.

Caravan Parks

In line with Covid-19 regulations caravan parks which have regular long term summer residents and those whose caravans are classified as “second homes” were permitted to reopen on May 10th. Parks which have more transient visitors can open from 2nd June. Applications have been posted to all sites and their licences are currently being issued.

Harbours and Ports

Activity at Wicklow Port for April

2020	Ships	Single (Import or Export)	Double (Import or Export)	Transactions	Imports	Exports
Jan	3	3	0	3		
Feb	4	4	0	4		
Mar	9	8	1	10		
April	9	8	1	10		

2021	Ships	Single (Import or Export)	Double (Import or Export)	Transactions	Imports	Exports
Jan	9	9	0	9	7	2
Feb	9	9	0	9	7	2
Mar	11	11	0	9	9	2
April	11	11	0	11	8	3

2021 Fishery Harbour and Coastal Infrastructure Development Programme

Wicklow County Council has received the following allocation from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine DAFM for 2021 under the Harbour Development and Marine & Leisure Programmes.

Harbour Development Programme

Location	Funding Allocation	Total Estimated Project Value	Project Name/Description
Arklow	45,000	60,000	Repair and replacement of fendering at Arklow Harbour
Wicklow	52,500	70,000	Repaving section of quay and associated improvements at South Quay, Wicklow
Arklow	33,750	45,000	Ladder replacement programme at Arklow Harbour

Marine & Leisure Programme

Location	Funding Allocation	Total Estimated Project Value	Project Name/Description
Arklow	26,250	35,000	Upgrading of slipway at the inner dock in order to improve accessibility/safety
Greystones	24,000	32,000	Safety, accessibility and amenity works at Public Harbour, Greystones
Wicklow	22,500	30,000	Repairs and safety measures at the Slipways, Wicklow Harbour

Pollution Control

Bathing Water Monitoring Programme

The bathing water season will commence on 1st June and pre-season samples will be taken on 24th May. There are 6 identified bathing waters, 4 of which fly Blue Flags along the Wicklow Coastline which will be monitored 10 times through the season until 15th September. There are also 8 other bathing/sea waters monitored less frequently in the period.

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

Identified: South Promenade, Greystones South, Brittas Bay North, Brittas Bay South, Silver Strand and Clogga.

Non-Identified: South of Bray Harbour, Kilcoole, The Murrough, Wicklow Harbour(2), Arklow South, The Cove Greystones and The Cove Arklow.

The Municipal District Areas, Environment and Environmental Awareness Offices operate programmes to maintain, inform and educate us about the rich natural heritage of our beaches.

The recently published EPA Bathing Water Report 2020 classified the identified bathing waters; Bray South Promenade, Greystones South, Brittas Bay North, Brittas Bay South at Excellent and Silver Strand as Good.

The non-identified bathing waters; South of Bray Harbour, Kilcoole, The Murrough and Arklow South were assessed as likely being of highest quality with Wicklow Harbour unfortunately falling to below the minimum standard due to the influence of diminished river quality after periods of heavy rainfall.



Wicklow County Council are asking people who swim at beaches, lakes and rivers to tell them if they think they should maintain existing designated bathing waters designations or give a new official bathing area designation to areas that are commonly used for swimming, but not identified at the moment. The period for receipt of submissions via is opened until 17th June.

Pollution Response & Investigation

- 13 Water pollution complaints received and investigated.
- 1 Air pollution complaints received and investigated.
- 1 Noise pollution complaints received and investigated.

Private Water Supplies

- Of the 20 Private water supplies monitored and 3 were found non-compliant with pH indicator parametric values.
- 2 boil water notices were placed on private water supply due to microbiological non-compliances and health advice from the HSE.
- Deco Paints and Solvent Regulations
- 2 Vehicle refinisher (car spraying) installations were inspected.
- 1 Paint retailer was inspected for compliant products.
- Solid Fuel Regulations
- 8 Inspections of Wholesalers/Retailers/Distributors were carried out

Water Framework Directive National Monitoring Programme

- 14 Lakes monitored involving for checking compliance with environmental quality standards
- 34 Rivers monitored involving 187 samples for compliance with environmental quality standards.

Water Framework Directive River Basin Management Plan

- 7 Catchment activity/engagements/consultations
- Presentation given to WCC Roads Department on protecting our water when working on road drainage and flood protection works.
- Road GIS updated show locations of Priority Area and High Status water bodies to facilitate consultation between the Roads Department and the LA Water Programme Office.
- Presentation given on water quality for Avoca River; Harbour to Headwaters Project Video.
- Continued liaison with East Wicklow Rivers Trust with fish barrier projects.
- Examined Ballyduff River with Community Water Officer from LAWPRO with a view to inclusion in the fish barrier removal project
- Updated LAWPRO (ME region) on our progress with desk studies and investigations in deteriorating WBs, Protecting WBs & LAWPRO Referrals
- Review of commencement notices for housing developments in order to highlight to developers before site works commence importance of appropriate measures in construction management plans to protect water quality primarily from siltation and to promote biodiversity measures.
- Reviewed EPA biological quality rating for river i.e. Q-values 2019 (HA 9, 12 & 14) & 2020 (HA10) for Wicklow to highlight recent improvers and deteriorations and plan accordingly.
- Liaised between Community Waters Officer and Irish Water to facilitated virtual tour of WTP & WWTP in Tinahely for local schools as part of Derry Bubbles Project.



- Presentation given to SEROC on Wicklow's Agri Planning experience and meeting of DHELG - Nitrates Expert Group.
- Reviewed the quality of rivers upstream and downstream of the Irish Waters wastewater treatment plants in 2020 and informed Irish Water of those impacting wastewater in the County.

Municipal Wastewater Treatment Plants – Ambient Monitoring

- 31 River/Lake samples taken and analysed upstream and downstream of discharges of public wastewater treatment plants

Septic Tank Inspections - National Inspection Plan 2020

- 8 inspections of domestic waste water treatment systems were carried out.
- 4 domestic waste water treatment systems were found non-complaint and advisory notices were issued for improvement.

Licensed Effluent Discharges to Waters/Sewer

- 3 licensed wastewater discharges self-monitoring reports were reviewed.

Planning & Development

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

Well Grants

Number of New Applications	16
Number of New Wells Granted	1
Number of New Pumps Granted	8
Number of New Equipment (Filters etc.)Granted	20
Number of Inspections in advance/after works	37



Arklow Flood Relief Scheme

The Office of Public Works (OPW) and Wicklow County Council have commissioned Byrne Looby PH McCarthy (BLP) and Arup to undertake engineering and environmental studies respectively to assess and develop a viable, cost effective and sustainable Flood Relief Scheme for the Avoca River, Arklow.

The process of identifying a preferred scheme to address fluvial and coastal flooding in Arklow includes a detailed assessment of a range of flood risk management measures to determine their technical, economic, social and environmental viability.

Following a detailed scheme options assessment process, the series of measures that will make up the emerging preferred flood relief scheme for the Avoca River, Arklow have now been identified. A number of changes in design were implemented, taking into account outcomes from consultation.

An update presentation was given to Arklow District Members on 10th of March 2021 and a Public Information Session was completed (12th - 26th March 2021) and the Project Team are responding to the Public's comments

The Compulsory Purchase Order was signed by the Chief Executive and nominated member on the 25th of May 2021,

The Environmental Impact Statement and application to An Bord Pleanala will be submitted to An Bord Pleanala on the 31st of May 2021

5. Transportation, Water & Emergency Services

Public Lighting

	6th April 2021	12th April 2021	19th April 2021	26th April 2021	5th May 2021
Access Issues (Attended)	15	15	15	18	16
Cable Fault (Attend)	8	3	3	3	2
ESB Required (Attended)	23	23	23	23	26
Knock Down (Attended)	3	3	3	3	3
Materials required	4	4	4	4	4
No Supply	5	4	4	4	3
On Hold	27	15	15	16	17
Submitted	262	262	216	168	141
Traffic Management Required	12	15	16	17	10
TOTAL	359	344	299	256	222
Percentage of lights not working	2.41%	2.31%	2.01%	1.72%	1.49%

Status	ARKLOW MD	BALTINGLASS MD	BRAY MD	GREYSTONES MD	WICKLOW MD	Grand Total
Access Issues (Attended)	3		8	2	3	16
Cable Fault (Attend)	1				1	2
ESB Required (Attended)	9	3	5	3	6	26
Knock Down (Attended)		1	1		1	3
Materials required	1	1	1		1	4
No Supply		1		2		3
On Hold	4	1	3	5	4	17
Submitted	26	33	42	25	15	141
TMR	5				5	10
Grand Total	49	40	60	37	36	222
Percentage Not Working	1.68%	1.69%	1.82%	1.35%	1.01%	1.49%

Parking Income

Parking Income by Municipal District	EURO
Bray Municipal District	163,222
Greystones Municipal District	52,987
Wicklow Municipal District	46,904
Arklow Municipal District	29,348
Parking Permits	21,505
Parking Fines	93,054
Wicklow County Council	407,020

Transportation Statistics (General)

	Total 2020	Running total 2021	March 2021	April 2021
Solicitors Queries	842	276	69	72
Road Closure Applications	23	7	3	0
Road Opening Licences	1279	646	267	122
Abnormal Load Applications	33	13	3	4

Winter Maintenance programme commenced on 12th October 2020 and finished on the 7th May 2021 and below are the statistics for the 2020/2021 season.

	TOTAL
Total number of gritting nights	75
Total number of routes gritted	685
Total estimate tonnage used	2,939

M11/N11 Junction 4 to 14 Improvement Scheme

A Bulletin Update Number 8 will be published at the beginning of June, this will inform the public of the possible Transport Scenarios within the remaining corridors. This provides further detail on progress on the scheme with the retained corridors and the development of design in-line with Stage 2 of the Phase 2 Project Appraisal process.

Environmental Surveys are continuing on site, with field walkover surveys including Bat, Barn Owl, Hydro Surveys, Breeding Birds, to name but a few. Updates on the surveys that are being undertaken



can be found on the project website www.n11m11.ie. The scheme design consultants ARUP continue to progress the assessment of the emerging preferred corridor under TII Project Management Guidelines and are confident that the announcement on the preferred option will be made in the coming months. The project team, and the Land Liaison team are responding to queries from the public and are continuing to meet virtually with the public and any interested groups. Contact to both the liaison and project team can be made through the project website and also <mailto:dmforde@wicklowcoco.ie> and <mailto:n11m11@arup.com>

M11/N11 Interim Bus Priority Project

Wicklow County Council received approval from TII to progress the scheme to Phase 2 (Options Selection) and Phase 3 (Design and Environmental Evaluation) of the TII Project Management Guidelines. Arup are progressing the scheme in Phase 2 and development of Bus Corridor Options along the N11. The Interim Bus Scheme will be coordinated by Wicklow County Council and will be supported by a Project Management team from Regional National Roads Office based in Kildare. This scheme will run separately to the main N11/M11 scheme in order to promote an earlier delivery timeframe.

N11 Kilmacanogue Parallel Service Road

The majority of Phase 1 works in the median are complete and Phase 2 works along the hard-shoulder/verge are currently under construction.

The reinforced concrete base for Gantry 03 is complete and the temporary works and excavation for Gantry 02 has commenced.

Accommodation works are progressing. Footpath construction is ongoing in stages in order that access to businesses and residents is maintained throughout.

The construction of the concrete plinths to delineate the service road from the mainline traffic along with a foul sewer diversion (between junction 7 and Kilmacanogue) will commence following the switch to Phase 3 that is planned for June 2021.

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

The Phase 1 (Feasibility Report) for the N81 Tuckmill Lower, Hangman's Bend, Whitestown Lower and Irishtown West projects (the 'N81 Four Studies') has been submitted to TII.

Wicklow County Council has requested approval from TII to progress the scheme to Phase 2 (Route Selection) in accordance with the TII Project Management Guidelines (PMG).

N81 Pavement Capital Works

TII have allocated funding to resurface circa 4km south of Blessington.

Tenders for the works have been received and the award of the contract is imminent.

N81 Capital Maintenance

TII have provided an allocation for resurfacing works at Ballinacrow Upper to Saundersgrove Hill and at Hollywood Lower.



The tender process for these works has been completed and a contractor has been appointed.

The works are scheduled for completion over the summer months.

Sustainable Transportation Measures Grant Schemes

Bray Strand Road Cycle Route - Construction has been progressing well. Paving works have commenced on the eastern side of the Road. It is expected that the works will be completed in early July.

Wicklow Port Access Road Pedestrian & Cycle Link Scheme – Aecom Consulting Engineers have commenced work on the Options Assessment for the project.

Bus Priority Little Bray – DBFL Consulting Engineers have been appointed Consulting Engineers for the project and an inception meeting is due to take place in the coming days.

Greystones Transport Study – Tenders have been received for Consultants to manage this study. The Tender Assessment is underway and it is expected that Consultants will be appointed in June.

Southern Cross Road Improvement Scheme – A Feasibility Study has been carried out for the project. GPR and Topographical surveys have been completed along the route.

Arklow Transport Study - DBFL Consulting Engineers have been appointed Consulting Engineers for the project and an inception meeting is due to take place in the coming weeks.

NTA Active Travel 2021 – There are 13 schemes listed under the Active Travel 2021 programme with overall funding allocation of €1.517M. Gateway approval submissions have been made to the NTA for 5 of the schemes with further submissions anticipated during May 2021. Construction Works have commenced 3 of the schemes during April 2021 with further schemes to start in the coming weeks.

Laragh/Glendalough Junction - Construction works commenced on 19th September with works progressing well to improve access for visitors to the National Heritage Site in the townland of Brockagh at Glendalough. The works are nearing completion with full construction works now almost completed.



Glendalough junction

Ballinaclesh Junction: Construction has started since early September 2020 and works are currently progressing well on both the new alignment section and drainage works in the townland of Corballis Lower. The works are nearing completion with full construction works to be completed in the coming weeks.

Fire Services

Operational Fire Statistics April 2021

	TOTAL	Bray	Greystones	Wicklow	Rathdrum	Arklow	Blessington	Dunlavin	Baltinglass	Carnew	Tinahely
Callsign		1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.8	1.9	2.1
Two Stations Mobilised											
Fire Domestic Persons Reported	0										
Fire Domestic	10	4	4							1	1
Fire Caravan	0										
Road Traffic Collision (RTC)	14	2	2	4	2	2	1*	1			
Fire Vehicle (HGV /motorway)	2			1	1						
Hazardous Materials Incident	0										
Fire Industrial / Commercial	2	1	1								
Fire Barn / Shed / Prefab	2			1	1						
Fire Alarm or CO ₂ Activation	8	1	2	2				2			1
Fire Outdoor: Gorse / bushes	47	10	12	5	3	4	8	3	1		1
Fire Chimney	9	4	2	2	1						
Fire Small / bin / skip / bonfire	27	10	4	5	2	3	1	1	1		
Fire Vehicle	6			2	1	2				1	
Flooding	0										
Trees Down, Make Scene Safe	0										
Ambulance Assist	7		1	4		1					1
Garda Assist	1	1									
Electrical Incident	1	1									
Gas Leak	0										
River / Water Rescue	1	1									
Fire Oil / Petrol	0										

Explosion	0										
Entrapment / Rescue / Lift	6	2	2	1		1					
Oil Spill / Road Hazard	0										
Animal Rescue	0										
Lock In / Lock Out	3	1		1		1					
False Alarm – Good Intent	0										
Malicious False Alarm	1	1									
Mobilised into other County	12					4	1	2	2	3	
Times Stations mobilised	159	39	30	28	11	18	10	9	4	5	4

* Blessington crew were supported by Naas Fire Station

There were **144 incidents** attended during the month of April 2021. Individual Fire Stations were mobilised on a total of **159 occasions** including 12 incidents in other counties. On 4 occasions during the month an Incident Commander requested an additional crew above what has been predetermined for the incident type to deal with the incident. 3 were for large gorse fires and on the other occasion additional resources were required at an entrapment.

Operational activity for the month of April **was up 26% on the preceding month** (March 2021 – 126 mobilisations). This is accounted for mainly by an increase in RTC's, gorse fires (up from 31 to 47) and small fires set maliciously (up from 16 to 27).

Statistics: Operational activity for the month of April 2021 **was up 56% on the equivalent month in 2020** (April 2020 – 101 mobilisations). This is accounted for mainly by a large increase in RTC's (up from 2 to 7), gorse fires (up from 33 to 47) and small fires set maliciously (up from 17 to 27).

Sample Incidents (April 2021)

- 01/04/2021 Blessington Crew supported by Naas Fire Station attended a 2 car RTC (one on roof) at Crosscool Harbour, 2 casualties treated by ambulance service.
- 03/04/2021 Tinahely and Carnew Crews attended a domestic fire at Rosnastraw – cooker fire, contained and extinguished, no injuries reported.
- 09/04/2021 Wicklow Town and Rathdrum Crews attended a 3-car RTC at Junction 18, southbound, M11.
- 18/04/2021 Greystones and Bray Crews attended a domestic fire at Kilmacanogue – bedroom fire contained and extinguished, no injuries reported.
- 21/04/2021 Bray and Greystones Crews attended a fire in an industrial premises at Saint Columcille Terrace, Bray.
- 24/04/2021 Rathdrum and Dunlavin Crews attended a serious RTC between a car and a motorbike on the Wicklow Gap road. Road was closed and motorcyclist was taken to hospital by ambulance.

Incidents mobilised outside County Wicklow (April 2021):

Kildare (4-incident) – examples:

- 15/04/21 Blessington Crew supported Naas Fire Station at a bus fire at Punchestown, County Kildare.



- 23/04/21 Dunlavin and Baltinglass Crews supported Naas and Newbridge Fire Stations at an industrial fire in Brannockstown, County Kildare.

Wexford (6-incident) – example:

- 19/04/21 Arklow and Carnew Crews assisted Gorey Fire Station at a derelict house fire at Castletown, County Wexford.

General

- Wicklow Fire Service ran an intensive 5-day QQI accredited Compartment Fire Behaviour Course in Hacketstown for 9 recently recruited firefighters. The training builds on the skills developed as new Breathing Apparatus wearers to ensure the competence to enter structural fires.
- Wicklow Fire Service ran 4 x 1-day Compartment Fire Behaviour Training Courses for 32 existing firefighters. Refresher training is mandated nationally and required to ensure competence is being maintained to national standards.
- Wicklow Fire Service ran 2 x 2-day Breathing Apparatus training for 25 existing firefighters in Bray. Refresher training is mandated nationally and required to ensure competence is being maintained to national standards.
- Wicklow Fire Service instructors supported the Air Corps in the delivery of a 2-day Breathing Apparatus refresher course for Air Corps students in the Bray Training Centre.

Fire Prevention Statistics April 2021

Application type	Received	Deemed Invalid	Requested additional information	Inspections	Recommended Grant
Fire Safety Certificates	7		8		3
Disability Access Certificates	7		2		8

Building Control

Commencement Notices for April 2021:

Commencement Notices Submitted: 72

- 18 Commencement Notices with Compliance Documents
- 43 Opt Out Declarations
- 8 Commencement Notices without Compliance Documents
- 3 Seven day Notice

Submission Statistics

- 60 % of Commencement Notices - Opt Out



- 83 % of Commencement Notices Revised Information required & requested = 60 No. Commencement Notices (CN) of which
 - 15 are Compliance Documentation (25%)
 - 37 are Opt Out (61%)
 - 5 Without Compliance Documentation (9%)
 - 3 Seven Day Notice (5%)
- 66 Valid Commencement Notices
- 315 new build residential Units (43 of which are one off houses)
- Invalidated CNs for April = 0

Certificates of Completion processed in April 2021

- 12 New No. of CCC submitted
- 12 No. Validated
- 0 No. Invalid

Submission Statistics

12 No. Validated CCCs related to;

- 3 No CCCs submitted in February 2021
- 4 No CCCs submitted in March 2021
- 5 No CCC submitted in April 2021

6 Revised Info Requests

**BCA not notified on completion of opt out developments

Points to note:

Following lifting of covid restrictions, housing construction opened in April, a substantial increase in submissions to BCMS were noted. S.I. 156/2021 allowed for all Valid Commencement Notice from December 2020 to remain valid and to commence on site. This has led to 344 new units commencing on site from April 2021.

Over 80% of submissions require revised Information to be submitted

Building Control inspections have continued for Risk Rated 3 & 4 units in accordance with Building Control Framework Document 2016.

Organisational Development and Financial Matters

1. HR and Corporate Services

Recruitment

The following interviews were held in April:

- Final Interviews – General Operative
- Final Interviews - Assistant Staff Officer

Employee Numbers

	Q2 2020	Q3 2020	Q4 2020	Q1 2021
Managerial/ Administrative	294	293	292	296
Professional/Technical	104	105	108	123
Outdoor	320	324	323	268
Temporary/ Seasonal	55	31 (reduction relates to lifeguards)	31	51
Non DOHPLG	8	8	8	8
Total	781	761	762	746

	Q2 2019	Q3 2019	Q4 2019	Q1 2020 292
Managerial/ Administrative	272	280	285	105
Professional/Technical	98	103	102	321
Outdoor	318	318	318	62
Temporary/ Seasonal	88	6	62	8
Non DOHPLG	8	8	8	788
Total	784	771	775	

(Excludes figures for Fire-fighters)



Access to Information

F.O.I. Requests

April 2021: 10	April 2020: 6
January – April 2021: 28	January – April 2020: 33

Ombudsman Requests

April 2021	1
January to April 2021	4

April 2020	3
January to April 2020	12

Press Releases

April 2021 – 12 Press Releases

Register of Electors

The 2021/2022 Live Register was published on 1st February 2021 in line with statutory regulations. Due to the ongoing Covid-19 Emergency we are limited in the number of areas we can distribute the Register to. The Register is available for inspection in each of the Municipal District Offices and at the Customer Service Hub in County Buildings. The Political Extract was generated and issued to all Council Members, TD's and Senator via email. The total number of Electors on the 2021/2022 Live Register of Electors is 102,346 and there are 206 polling stations in Wicklow.

The Franchise staff will continue to strive for excellence on the Register of Electors database. We are continuing to accept applications from 18 year olds and new residents moving into the county in the event that an electoral event occurs and there is a requirement for a Supplement Register. We will continue to make contact with new housing developments and urban areas where new developments are coming on stream in an effort to get new residents register. The Special Voters list has been issued to each of the Nursing Homes in the County which we are now updating with new residents.

We will continue to work on areas where there is a lack of Eircodes and dates of birth. Wicklow Co Co are now one of the lead authorities in Eircode coverage on their register with over 99% of the electorate having an Eircode attached to their Register of Electors entry. We are continuing to assist the LGMA in their exercise to have other Local Authorities achieve similar Eircode coverage on their own Register of Electors.

We have an ongoing social media presence encouraging electors to use www.checktheregister.ie to check that they are registered to vote. It is hoped that once Covid restrictions are lifted that we will be in a position to establish voter registration days in schools, shopping centres and libraries.

Communication

Communication has been a vital tool in our organisation, especially over the challenging last few months. Due to the need for us all to maintain social distancing alternative methods of holding and administrating meetings had to be introduced. Various technologies such as Microsoft Teams, Zoom and Cisco WebEx have been tested and deployed throughout the organisation, depending on the business need.



Our key objective is to ensure that there is clear, consistent and appropriate communication between Wicklow County Council and all Staff. Communication has been delivered through Microsoft Teams and other technologies such as Zoom, as well as our traditional methods, such as e-mail and text alerts.

Wicklow County Council have submitted 9 submissions to Chambers Ireland for 'The Excellence in Local Government Awards 2021', this gives us the opportunity to showcase best practice in our local Authority and to recognise the skills, hard work, innovation and enthusiasm of our staff here in Wicklow.

Submissions are as follows:

Category	Title
Best Practices in Community Engagement	'Include Me' Visibility Campaign
Commemorations and Centenaries	Wicklow and the War of Independence: The Historians' Project
Disability Services	Inclusive Online Easter Camp
Enhancing the Urban Environment	Fitzwilliam Square upgrade and street improvement
Health & Wellbeing	Virtual Couch to 3K- Walk to Jog Programme
Promoting Economic Development	Arklow Courthouse & Enterprise Hub
Supporting Sustainable Communities	Lead Partner for Sustainable Energy Communities Energy Master Plans
Sustainable Environment	Mapping Delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals in Wicklow
Local Authority Innovation	Customer Service Innovation Hub

#YourCouncilDay 2021

This year's #YourCouncilDay 2021 will take place on **Thursday 1st of July**.

Your Council Day gives us the opportunity to showcase the fantastic work and achievements that have taken place here in Wicklow. This year, Your Council Day will have a particular focus on the people behind the essential services, and the role they play in the social and economic recovery of the country post-pandemic. Your Council Day will be an opportunity to talk about the value of the work those working in local authorities do.

The campaign will be staged primarily on social media channels and we want to encourage all hootsuite users to post content throughout the day using the hashtag **#YourCouncilDay**.

Content can include projects & schemes carried out throughout Wicklow, promoting all types of initiatives such as Street widening; Blue flag beaches; litter campaigns; library facilities; our lifeguards; supporting National campaigns etc..... The List is ENDLESS! Start to think now about the kind of content you might post on the day. Please start gathering images, video, stories, etc. The campaign will be focused on local authority staff, so content can include photos of staff working in the Community providing all the vital services to Wicklow.

Customer Service Innovation Hub

2021 - Quarter 1			
Communication	No.	Public Counters	Transactions
No. of Phone Calls	43,053	Motor Taxation	1,019
No. of Emails	6,200	Revenue	479
No. of Elected Members	451	Housing	9
CRM Cases	2,052	Social Housing Applications	301



2. I.C.T.

Response to COVID19

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

- Small Business Assistance Scheme – Support for applications and backend systems integration continues.
- Community Call Helpline remains in place with support to the helpline staff
- Remote Working Requirements for staff of Wicklow County Council
- Blended model for return to work arrangements
- Government Networks
- Phone Systems
- Call Conferencing
- Communications and awareness
- Laptops procured and configured to support remote working for key staff in vital business areas.
- Remote working licencing has increased in all business areas with ~300 WCC users now having the facility to work remotely using a combination of Citrix and Cisco

IT Helpdesk

- The IT Helpdesk continues to streamline the workflow for the technical support team with an average of 30 tickets a day, providing assistance for both in-house and remote workers.
- Examination of system upgrades potential is underway

Domain Migration

- Server migration is progressing along planned schedule.

GIS & Data Collection Systems

- Development of an online consultation portal for the County Development Plan CDP 2021 – 2027 has commenced
- Testing of an Eircode validator has commenced with integration into a number of applications.
- Data quality and cleansing procedures are now being carried out on Draft Datasets with a view to create an online portal of the maps.
- Training has commenced and additional features have been added to the GIS Departmental Viewers and Editors.
- The Tree Management Project, which is currently managed by the Climate Action Group, is in discussions with 3rd party vendors to procure information for the project.
- Parallel projects in Housing, Roads and Environmental Services departments are on-going and integration to CRM and GIS systems have being developed and rolled out.
- Development of CRM System automation continues. The month of May saw the roll out of new automation software in Arklow Municipal District, Baltinglass Municipal District, and the Environment Section. The latest software developments have focused on improving remote working capabilities for Environmental Enforcement Officers and roads crews.



Customer Service Delivery

- Support for the Customer Service Innovation Hub is ongoing with further improvements and enhancements implemented. The Customer Service project requires a high level of IT collaboration with both hardware and software elements integrated into the Hub.
- Work continues with the business process mapping and DPIA's are being carried out for each process as it arises.
- Avaya IP Office Phone System has been modified to integrate the Avaya Contact Centre Select Hardware Appliance and software. This has led to greater integration with call reporting systems and has improved customer service delivery.

eServices

Wicklow.ie – pageviews from May 1st 2020 to April 31st 2021 were 1,496,147. This indicates an increase in pageviews of 3.45% compared the same period last year, the introduction of new Cookie Preferences in October under Data Protection had seen a small reduction in pageview statistics but this has started to flatten out since the end of October.

- Social media accounts – followers to date
 - Facebook (Wicklow County Council) – 9604 followers. This is an increase of 496 followers or 5.44% on the previous month.
 - Twitter (@WicklowCoCo) – 7,106 followers. This is an increase of 132 followers or 1.82% on the previous month.
 - Instagram (@WicklowCoCo) – 2,126 followers. This is an increase of 129 followers or 6.45% on the previous month.
- The Online Consultation Hub on Wicklow.ie continues to feature in enhanced consultation campaigns. These have included–
 - Part 8 Age Friendly Semi Detached Houses 12 Mill Bank Killincarrig Greystones
 - Part 8 Age Friendly Detached Houses 10 Castlevillas Killincarrig Greystones
 - Part 8 – site located at junction of Upper Dargle Road and Sutton Road, Bray
 - Part 8 - Enniskerry Village Renewal
 - Outdoor Seating & Accessories for Tourism & Hospitality Businesses
- Social media campaigns have continued over the last month.
 - #KeepWell
 - #OutdoorsForEveryone
 - #CommunityCall



FINANCIAL

Revenue Account

REVENUE ACCOUNT							
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE SUMMARY BY SERVICE DIVISION AT 30TH APRIL 2021							
	EXPENDITURE			INCOME			NET
	Actual Expenditure	Adopted Full Year Budget	% Budget Spent to Date	Actual Income	Adopted Full Year Budget	% Budget Spent to Date	Actual Expenditure / (Income)
	€	€	%	€	€	%	€
Housing and Building	7,406,038	28,035,818	26%	(9,008,313)	(33,580,464)	27%	(1,602,275)
Road Transport & Safety	5,913,127	22,299,168	27%	(2,729,132)	(15,497,938)	18%	3,183,996
Water Services	1,709,284	5,823,666	29%	(1,746,515)	(6,857,035)	25%	(37,231)
Development Management	4,801,185	11,471,622	42%	(3,231,969)	(6,226,652)	52%	1,569,216
Environmental Services	3,409,154	11,897,222	29%	(553,093)	(2,069,370)	27%	2,856,061
Recreation and Amenity	2,136,808	7,946,046	27%	(339,598)	(882,197)	38%	1,797,210
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	461,087	1,496,632	31%	(215,754)	(834,228)	26%	245,333
Miscellaneous Services	5,759,519	10,447,823	55%	(4,834,773)	(7,747,758)	62%	924,746
Central Management Charges	6,128,718	19,212,563	32%	(331,750)	(1,000,000)	33%	5,796,968
Local Government Fund				(4,002,299)	(12,006,898)	33%	(4,002,299)
Pension Levy				0	0		0
Commercial Rates				(10,688,648)	(32,078,021)	33%	(10,688,648)
	37,724,922	118,630,560	32%	(37,681,845)	(118,780,561)	32%	43,077

Cashflow/Overdraft

Wicklow County Council manages its cashflow requirements on a daily basis and did not avail of its overdraft facility during the period 1st April 2021 to 30th April 2021.

Capital Account

CAPITAL ACCOUNT					
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE SUMMARY BY SERVICE DIVISION AT 30TH APRIL 2021					
	Opening Balance at 01/01/2021	Actual Expenditure	Actual Income	Transfers to/from Reserves	Closing Balance at 30/04/2021
	€	€	€	€	€
Housing and Building	17,611,344	16,935,677	(19,049,303)	(178,250)	15,319,468
Road Transport & Safety	(44,050,309)	2,708,853	(2,594,741)	(125,000)	(44,061,196)
Water Services	(11,018,071)	87,819	(343,277)	(5,000)	(11,278,528)
Development Management	(8,802,936)	366,729	(133,134)	(250,000)	(8,819,340)
Environmental Services	1,504,016	67,299	(522,422)	(140,210)	908,683
Recreation and Amenity	(1,312,600)	544,680	(874,436)	(59,250)	(1,701,606)
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	(1,234,386)	15,436	0	(76,250)	(1,295,201)
Miscellaneous Services	(16,085,971)	1,266,690	(1,868,572)	657,069	(16,030,784)
	(63,388,913)	21,993,184	(25,385,884)	(176,891)	(66,958,505)

Commercial Rates, Rents and Loan Collections

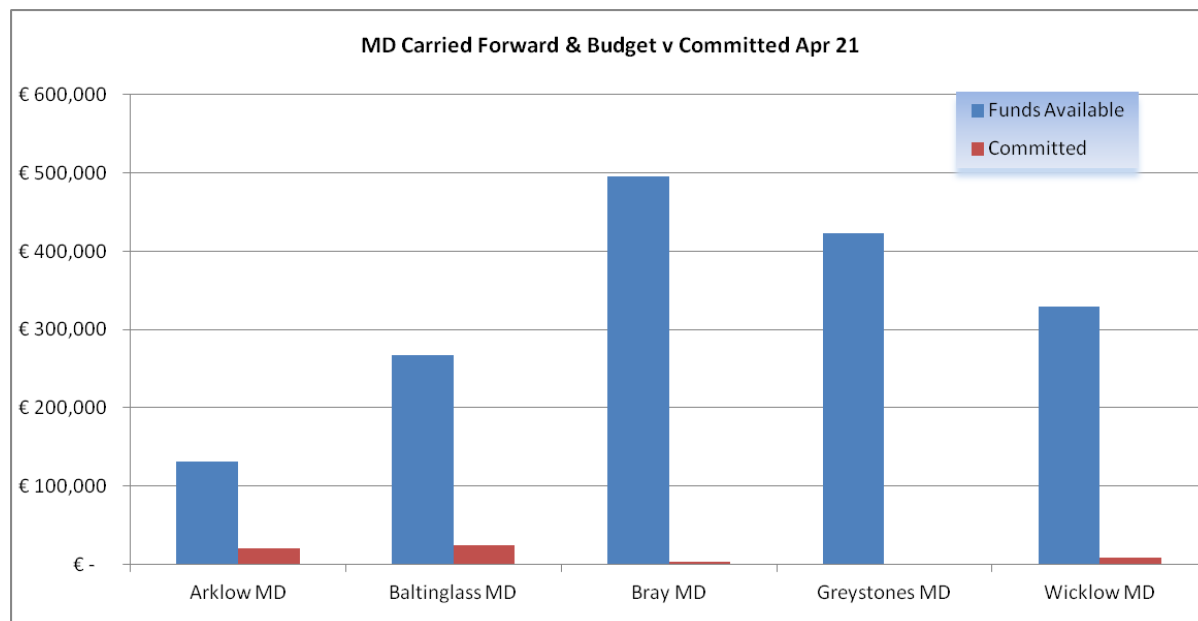


SUMMARY OF MAJOR COLLECTIONS AT 30TH APRIL 2021										
Income Collection Area	Opening Balance 01/01/2021	Accrued	Vacancy Property Adjustments	Write Offs	Waivers	Total for Collection	Collected	Closing Arrears 30/04/2021	Specific Doubtful Arrears	% Collection
Rates	8,194,672	32,065,945	(4,567)	0	(2,405,694)	37,850,356	(6,093,991)	31,756,366	2,098,266	17%
Rents & Annuities	2,735,687	5,778,138	0	(16,695)	0	8,497,130	(5,248,925)	3,248,205	0	62%
Housing Loans	446,214	493,609	0	0	0	939,824	(674,495)	265,328	0	72%

Six Month Rates Waiver: A waiver of commercial rates was applied to specified businesses in April for the first quarter of 2021. This 3-month waiver has modified criteria and accordingly is a separate, standalone waiver scheme to the previous 2020 scheme. This waiver is being extended to cover the second quarter of 2021 and will be applied in due course. There is no application process required for this scheme. Wicklow County Council will automatically apply a 100% credit in lieu of commercial rates, for the two 3-month periods, to eligible properties.

General Municipal Allocation and Discretionary Fund 2021

The Discretionary Funding allocation for 2021 was decreased in line with the 2021 LPT rate reduction. The 2021 funding provision consists of mainly General Municipal Allocations used to support local groups and initiative etc. There was no public realm funding allocated this year, however unspent monies in this area from 2020 have been made available to Municipal Districts in 2021. Due to the Level 5 Covid restrictions in place it has not been possible to carry out public realm works to date in 2021.





Municipal District	C/F from 2020	Adopted Budget 2021	Funds available to MD	Committed	Balance to Expend
	€	€	€	€	€
Arklow MD	76,907	54,000	130,907	20,218	110,689
Baltinglass MD	245,041	22,000	267,041	24,687	242,354
Bray MD	433,456	62,500	495,956	2,716	493,240
Greystones MD	392,553	31,000	423,553	80	423,473
Wicklow MD	296,693	33,000	329,693	8,910	320,783
Total	1,444,650	202,500	1,647,150	56,611	1,590,539

Capital Investment Programme 2020-2022

The Capital Investment Programme 2021-2023 for Wicklow County Council which details proposed capital expenditure projects over the next 3 year period, subject to available funding, was approved by the Members at the Council meeting of March 1st 2021.

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

PROGRAMME GROUP	Expected Outlay				Proposed Funding				
	2021	2022	2023	TOTAL	Dev Charges ¹	Loan	Grant Aid ²	Other ³	TOTAL
	€	€	€	€	€	€	€	€	€
HOUSING AND BUILDING	149,460,000	148,060,000	147,760,000	445,280,000		30,000,000	360,740,000	54,540,000	445,280,000
ROAD TRANSPORT & SAFETY	33,009,134	16,435,578	14,227,500	63,672,212	11,045,290	7,795,000	41,907,749	2,924,173	63,672,212
WATER SERVICES	150,000	150,000	150,000	450,000			450,000		450,000
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT	2,340,000	8,178,000	6,300,000	16,818,000	1,097,800	-	10,114,200	5,606,000	16,818,000
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	1,250,000	4,010,000	11,775,000	17,035,000			16,210,000	825,000	17,035,000
RECREATION AND AMENITY	4,583,594	25,749,891	17,823,000	48,156,485	9,439,775	-	37,696,710	1,020,000	48,156,485
AGRICULTURAL, EDUCATION, HEALTH & WELFARE	1,150,000	25,320,000	27,062,946	53,532,946	4,647,869		43,837,209	5,047,869	53,532,946
MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES	1,950,000	2,200,000	2,200,000	6,350,000			2,325,000	4,025,000	6,350,000
OVERALL TOTAL	193,892,728	230,103,469	227,298,446	651,294,643	26,230,734	37,795,000	513,280,868	73,988,042	651,294,643