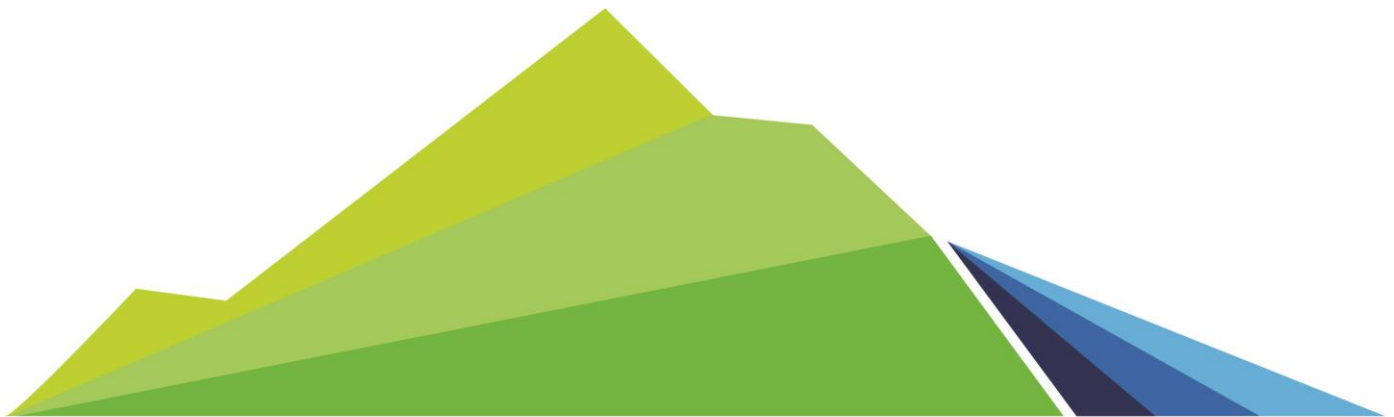




# Wicklow County Council Chief Executive's Monthly Report



W I C K L O W

ENDLESS OPPORTUNITIES



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## **This month:**

### **Active Travel Investment Grants**

Wicklow County Council welcomes €9 million in Active Travel Investment Grants for our County.

This 2022 allocation provides for approximately 58 projects throughout the county - making walking and cycling in our villages and towns safe and sustainable. The Active Travel Scheme promotes awareness and uptake of travelling with a purpose, using your own energy by means of walking or cycling. Wicklow County Council are committed to investing in these projects and connecting our communities.

Wicklow County Council will continue to liaise with our NTA partners to deliver on this ambitious programme throughout 2022.

### **Grant Allocations for National Roads**

Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) has issued details of 2022 grant allocations for national roads to Wicklow County Council. The total allocated funding for 2022 maintenance and improvement works on national roads in County Wicklow amounts to €2,958,526.

The N11M11 Junction 4 to Junction 14 Improvement Scheme concluded Phase 2 Options Selection in 2021 and was due to proceed with Phase 3 Design and Environmental Evaluation in 2022. Progress to Phase 4 Statutory Processes was anticipated in early 2023. A grant allocation in the region of €3m has been spent on N11M11 Junction 4 to Junction 14 Main Improvement Scheme to date.

In addition, Transport Infrastructure Ireland became the Approving Authority for Greenways as of 20 September 2021, a role previously performed by the Department of Transport. Accordingly, a separate allocation is being provided by TII for funding of Greenways in 2022 in the amount €5.35m specifically for Blessington and Greystones to Wicklow Greenways projects.

### **€1 million in funding for Blessington**

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

This strategic funding along with the planned completion of the Blessington Inner Relief Road and the funding for the Blessington Lakes eGreenway will help achieve Wicklow County Council's long-term vision for Blessington and enhance the Blessington as a place to visit.

Combined with the proposals for developing a Masterplan for Blessington, this project will add to the quality of life of the entire community by optimising digital connectivity, supporting employment and skills, and enhancing the public realm in line with the objectives that underpin "Our Rural Future" Ireland's Rural Development policy.

## HOUSING AND COMMUNITY

### 1. Social Housing Support

	December 2021	December 2020
No. on list for Social Housing Support – (includes RAS & HAP)*	4499	4,487
No. availing of Rental Assistance Scheme (RAS)	246	280
No. availing of Housing Assistance Payment	2467	2144
No. in Long Term Leasing Accommodation	19	15
No. in Short Term Leasing Accommodation	30	23

### 2. Allocation of Social Housing

	December 2021	December 2020
Wicklow County Council	04	248
Approved Housing Bodies	0	04

### 3. Social Housing Stock

3. Social Housing Stock	December 2021	December 2020
Tenancies occupied	4,654	4,530
Total weekly rental accrual	303,162.86	298,957.52
Arrears	2,407,723.57	2,247,823.56

### 4. 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
Rathnew RAPID BUILD	47	Completed and allocated
Kilbride Court (Bray)	42	Completed and allocated
Total	308	
<b>Schemes on Site</b>	<b>units</b>	<b>CURRENT STATUS</b>
Delany Park Arklow (Phase 2 + 3)	47	Completion anticipated Quarter 4 2021 (37) Q1 2022 (10)
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
Greenhill Road Wicklow RAPID BUILD	36	Completion anticipated Q3 2022
Sheehan Court	7	Completion anticipated Q3 2022
Avondale Phase 2 RAPID BUILD	20	Completion anticipated Q4 2022
TOTAL	207	
<b>Pipeline Schemes</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Current Status</b>
Lugduff Tinahely	20	Part V111 to be lodged Feb 2022
Cedar Court Bray RAPID BUILD	14	Site start anticipated Q1 2022
Three Trouts Greystones RAPID BUILD	41	Site start anticipated Q3 2022
Merrymeeting, Rathnew, Phase 2	21	Site start anticipated Q1 2022
Ballard Shillelagh	20	Site start anticipated Q2 2022
Burgage More Blessington	106	Part of PPP bundle 3 with NDFA. Part 8 advertised November 2021 closing date Monday 17 <sup>th</sup> January
Lott Lane, Kilcoole	75	Stage 1 approval received, stage 2 application prepared.
TOTAL	297	



## 2021

It is expected that 21 Part V units will be delivered in 2021 however this is subject to a number of factors including the duration and number of any further 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 Q1 2022	WCC
Greystones	2	Scheduled Q1 2022	WCC
Wicklow	3	Scheduled Q2 2022	CALF
Delgany	3	Completed May 2021	WCC
Baltinglass	1	Completed 2021	WCC
Dunlavin	4	Completed 2021	WCC
Rathdrum	5	Scheduled Q1 2022	WCC
Delgany	1	Scheduled Q1 2022	WCC
Bray	7	Completed November 2021	LEASE
Delgany	4	Completed November 2021	WCC

## 2022

It is likely that 3 Part V units and 4 Turnkey units will be delivered early in 2022

### 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 25 units listed above. WCC is in negotiations in respect of over 90 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	Completed Q2 2021	WCC
Tinahely	2	Completed Q1 2021	WCC
Tinahely	1	Q1 2022	WCC

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





- Approval was been received from the Department in respect of 2 Turnkey units in Baltinglass. Units have not commenced construction and the Developer now wishes to discuss further.
- Approval has recently been received from the Department in respect of 3 Turnkey units in Roundwood. Expected delivery is 2022.
- Approval recently been received from the Department for 13 turnkey units in Rathdrum.

## **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.

- Construction completed on 40 units (including 4 Part V) via CALF Turnkey in Dunlavin and the units have now been allocated
- 15 units in Arklow acquired by AHB in November 2021 construction ongoing on remaining 13 units due for delivery in Q2 2021.
- 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) completed in 2021 units have been allocated.
- Construction ongoing on 28 units in Wicklow (including 3 Part V) due for delivery in 2022.

**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.

## **HOME IMPROVEMENT/ADAPTATION**

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

- › Grant funding for private house - €1,952,700 (€1,722,620.38 spent to date)
- › Grant funding for social house - €1,168.200 (€729,396.01 spent to date)

Many of the approved applicants are experiencing delays in having the works carried out due to Covid and the inevitable back logs it has caused for contractors.

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

The Housing and Disability Steering Group has prepared the new draft Co. Wicklow Strategic Plan for Housing People with Disability 2022-2027. The National Housing Strategy for Disable People 2022 – 2027 will be launched in mid January 2022

### **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 - Two 2 bed properties	Detailed design underway
Castle Villas - Two 2 bed properties	Detailed design underway
Carraig Eden - 14 age friendly 1 bed apartments	Stage 2 underway for submission to the Department for approval to go to Part 8 Part 8 to be advertised early January 2022
Kilcoole Health Centre 4 no 1 bed apartments	Detailed design underway.

## Vacant Homes Scheme

There are now 10 CPOs underway on long term vacant houses around the county.

### Oral Hearings

- 108 Charnwood, Bray – Determination by An Bord Pleanála was due on 30<sup>th</sup> November following oral hearing on 17<sup>th</sup> August 2021. ABP subsequently informed the Council that a decision would be further delayed and as of 13<sup>th</sup> Jan 2022 no decision had been reached.
- 6 Ashleigh, Ashford – objection submitted to An Bord Pleanála – this will result in an Oral Hearing by remote means on 8<sup>th</sup> of February 2022.

Negotiations are also ongoing to purchase some of the houses currently under CPO, by agreement.

Purchases of 3 further vacant houses should close within the first 2 months of 2022.

Further long term vacant properties have been identified for future batches of CPOs.

There were 2 reports relating to Co Wicklow on [www.vacanthomes.ie](http://www.vacanthomes.ie) in Dec 2021 and 8 already in Jan 2022 - most of which were already known to us and are being investigated.

### Infill Sites

- Two 3 bed semi-detached properties are currently being constructed at Blackhills.

## Housing Maintenance - Heating Upgrade Programme

Gas & Oil heating offer letters for 2022 will be sent out to tenants shortly. The adopted budget for 2022 is €236,000. Gas & oil boiler maintenance contracts are due for renewal and will be procured through [www.Supplygov.ie](http://www.Supplygov.ie) in the coming weeks.

## 5. Purchase Schemes

### Rebuilding Ireland Homeloans 2021

Received	Approved in principle
77	30

## 2016 Tenant (Incremental) Purchase Scheme

	To date	December 2021
Applications Received	343	1
Completed	82	1
Declined	231	5
Ongoing	30	30

## 6. Addressing Homelessness

Homeless figures for December 2021

Addressing Homelessness			
	As at 31/12/2021	Year To Date	As at 31/12/2020
<b>No of New Presentations</b>	13	345	19
<b>No. of Repeat Presentations</b>	3	56	11
<b>No. of Families (Minimum 1 Adult + One-Child)</b>	7	147	9
<b>No. of Individuals (Single Adult, no children)</b>	9	241	19
<b>No. Of Couples (2 Adults, no children)</b>	0	16	0
<b>No. of Children</b>	12	259	12
<b>NTQ/Asked to Leave/Landlord selling</b>	4	67	5
<b>Family Circumstances</b>	6	156	14
<b>Leaving Prison/Hospital Care</b>	0	8	0
<b>Mental Health</b>	0	9	0
<b>Risk of Homelessness</b>	1	46	1
<b>Arrears/Loss of Income</b>	0	16	4
<b>Addiction Issues</b>	3	30	1
<b>DV/DA</b>	0	15	2
<b>Medical Issues</b>	0	8	0



<b>Overcrowding</b>	0	19	0
<b>Unsuitable/Voluntarily Left</b>	2	28	1
<b>ASB:</b>	0	4	2
<b>Rough Sleeping*</b>	1	29	2
<b>Sofa Surfing*</b>	1	32	2
<b>Staying with Family*</b>	2	94	5
<b>Staying with Friends*</b>	4	33	5

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

<b>Own Door Temporary Accommodation at 31/12/2021</b>	
Families	20
Adults	38
Children	53
Single individual	2

<b>Bed &amp; Breakfast Accommodation - No. of Homeless Emergency Accommodation Placements &amp; Duration @ 31/12/2021</b>								
	<b>No. of Households</b>	<b>No. of Adults</b>	<b>No. of Children</b>	<b>&lt; 3 mths</b>	<b>3-6 mths</b>	<b>6-9 mths</b>	<b>9-12 mths</b>	<b>&gt;12mths</b>
<b>Household breakdown</b>	15	18	9	7	5	0	3	1
<b>Bed &amp; Breakfast Accommodation - No. of Homeless Emergency Accommodation Placements &amp; Duration @ 31/12/2020</b>								
	<b>No. of Households</b>	<b>No. of Adults</b>	<b>No. of Children</b>	<b>&lt; 3 mths</b>	<b>3-6 mths</b>	<b>6-9 mths</b>	<b>9-12 mths</b>	<b>&gt;12mths</b>
<b>Household breakdown</b>	14	19	15	6	3	3	1	1

## COVID 19

The Homeless Team continues to provide key support by phone and email - Bed and Breakfast properties currently retained by Wicklow County Council are continuing to provide emergency accommodation for homeless clients –All Covid 19 protocols are in place in these facilities

## Homeless HAP

The Homeless HAP Place finder provides assistance in:



- seeking out potential properties suitable for households currently identified as homeless or at risk of homelessness;
- liaising with specific households to establish their specific needs;
- establishing relationships with local property agents and landlords; and,
- supporting those homeless households to (a) prevent the necessity to enter emergency accommodation or (b) to exit emergency accommodation and secure a tenancy.
- To date, 372 households (277 families & 95 singles) have been assisted under the Homeless HAP Scheme in Wicklow County Council from the inception on 1<sup>st</sup> October, 2018 to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2021. (164 homeless cases, 201 prevention cases to date and 7 direct provision). 116 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 continuing transition by the clients to suitable, alternative accommodation.

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

Dublin Simon have been engaged by Wicklow County Council to operate and manage the facility at Fitzwilliam Road, Wicklow as a Family Homeless Service. The building comprises of 3 x 1 bed units 2 x 2 bed units and 2 x 3 bed units - Refurbishment works and snagging are now complete. Assessments are underway for the first number of families who will be accommodated in the hub and it is hoped move in's will happen in the next 10 days

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

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

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.

San Remo opened to clients in October 2020. 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 key working 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 facility is fully operational. Wicklow County Council are making arrangements with the AHB to run an in-reach service with the clients in the service to support them as they continue their journey into more permanent accommodation.

## Other Homeless Supported Accommodation

Wicklow County Council owned properties in Wicklow, Bray and Arklow, leased to AHBs, provide 12 units of low to medium supported accommodation targeted to the particular support needs of the clients. There continues to be a 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 9 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.

## 7. Traveller accommodation

### Capital Programme

<b>Ballinteskinn – 3 houses</b>	All residents who were on the proposed site have been rehoused. Tender has been advertised.
<b>Avondale Heights, Rathdrum – 4 houses</b>	Approval received for funding from Department, – part VIII advertised on 3 <sup>rd</sup> November with a closing date for receipt of submissions 17 <sup>th</sup> December 2021. CE report to be presented to the members of Arklow MD at their February meeting
<b>Bardarrig Group Housing scheme for 2 houses</b>	Revised Stage 1 approval received March 2021. Survey of utilities in the area complete, preliminary design underway.
<b>Ballinteskinn,</b>	Stage 1 for a disability extension has now been approved – discussions underway with tenant regarding decanting of Bay.

Fire safety on Halting sites were completed by members of the Housing section in October 2021 and further inspections will be carried out in 2022.

### 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.



## 8. Energy Efficiency

**Solar Panel Carport** – Solar carpark complete and commissioning underway.

### **Energy Efficiency Fabric Upgrade Phase 1**

This phase includes units in Bray, Greystones Arklow, Wicklow and West Wicklow – delays in completing works due to construction inflation during COVID.

### **Energy Efficiency Fabric Upgrade Phase 2**

Works nearly complete on 57 properties in West Wicklow and Rathdrum

Additional BERs and suitability inspections being carried out on properties listed as being down for fabric upgrades in 2022. Framework for fabric upgrade works is underway.



## 9. Community, Cultural & Social Development

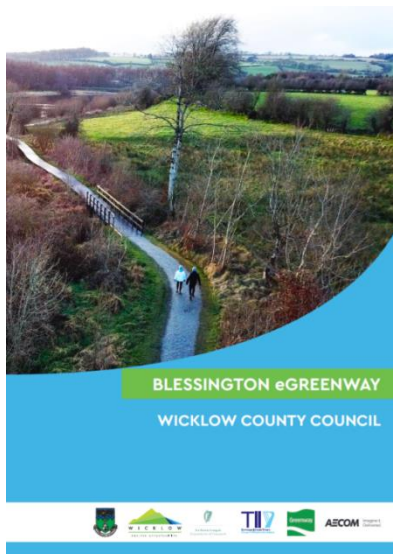


New strategy being prepared, at consultation phase with Alliance and OPC and going out to general public for consultation including online surveys – new national template for strategy coming down the line early next year, strategy will be finalised towards last quarter of 2022

Rathcoran Estate, Baltinglass - First Age Friendly Lifetime Community – 4 stage process for this has started with an implementation steering committee to be established after a resident's association is formed.

Avondale House, Rathdrum - First Age Friendly Tourist Destination – process to start shortly.

### Blessington eGreenway



Under Section 177 AE of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended); a planning submission for this project was lodged to An Bord Pleanála on the 14<sup>th</sup> January 2022. The planning documents for this planning submission will go on public display from 20<sup>th</sup> January 2022 to 4<sup>th</sup> March 2022. Submissions or observations with respect to the proposed development may be made to An Bord Pleanála not later than 4<sup>th</sup> March 2022 at 5.30 pm. The Proposed Development will cover approximately 33 km and involve the provision and upgrading of a greenway mostly through forest and woodlands adjacent to the shoreline of the Blessington Lake/Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA. With the construction phase of the project taking approximately eighteen months, the proposed completion date is in quarter four of 2023.







The Comhairle na nÓg, through the Coordinator, launched A Mental Health Campaign - this came out of their training course with Lust for Life during Mid Term. They'll be producing their own Podcast called 'it's not taboo to talk' which will focus on youth mental health and they'll have a website to go with it.

The Youth Attitudes towards Drugs Online Survey was promoted far and wide throughout the County. From this survey a report is to be produced to inform works happening in drugs prevention and education in County Wicklow.



## **Community Activities Fund (CAF) under the Community Enhancement Programme (CEP)**

The Community Activities Fund is funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development. Funding is available for capital projects that comply with the objectives of County Wicklow's Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) for the development of community facilities such as community centres, men's and women's sheds, parish halls and youth centres, with small grants for running costs such as utility or insurance bills, as well as with improvements to their facilities, to carry out necessary repairs and to purchase equipment such as tables and chairs, tools and signage, laptops and printers, lawnmowers, canopies and training equipment.

Applications are invited from community and voluntary groups and not-for-profit organisations for small scale capital projects that will support community groups impacted by COVID-19, particularly those in disadvantaged areas.

The closing date for submission of applications for funding is 4.00 p.m. on Monday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2022. Application Forms are available from the Council's website [www.wicklow.ie](http://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](mailto:cep@wicklowcoco.ie)

## **County Wicklow Library Services**

### **Statistics**

Wicklow County Council's libraries have despite restrictions continued to punch above its weight nationally in 2021.



Jan – Dec 2021	Issues	Renewals	Circulations
Wicklow	214,086	47,125	261,211
National	4,938,286	1,177,729	6,116,015

Stats for both unique items borrowed and inclusion of renewals shows Wicklow at 4.3% of the national stats, despite Wicklow having only 3% of the national population.

## School Avoidance Talk for Parents

Bray Library began the New Year with a well-attended zoom talk on Addressing School Avoidance with Tara Kelly, of New Authority Parenting. Twenty nine families logged in on a Wednesday evening, as Tara used her years of experience and research to help guide families through the process of de-escalation. Children with strong bonds to their families and communities are most likely to return to school, and this is the goal emphasised in Tara's approach. Feedback was effusive, with half an hour of question and answer at the end of the presentation. Those attending indicated a real need for further talks, and our next talk with Tara on addressing anxiety in children is currently being planned.

## Rathdrum gets ready for opening of new Library

Having served their final customers of 2021 at the library at 11 Gilbert Row in December, Rathdrum is now on the cusp of opening its brand new library.

The new library, at the Market Square development will be Wicklow County Council's flagship small library, although at 160 sq. metres, it will be 4 times the size of the Gilbert's Row building.

Installation of furniture and shelving of stock is now taking place, the new sign is up and the plan is to officially open towards the end of January 2022.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Round of First5 Little Library Bags



This significant initiative was launched in June with the first rollout of "First5 Little Library Bags" to all local authority library services. The aim of this project is to develop an ongoing link between early learning and care service and their local library to encourage a love of books and reading among young children.

The second tranche of First5 library bags each contain five story books and other reading resources for children. All items have been selected by the LGMA. Pre-schools, after school services and registered childminders all over the county will be contacted to call to their local library to collect their Library Bags.

## Tips for Lowering Cholesterol

The Cholesterol Lowering Top 10 took place online on the 2nd December. This Zoom talk looked at what people can do to lower cholesterol – the foods to reduce and also the foods to add into the diet. High blood pressure and general heart health also featured with plenty of tips on diet and exercise to ensure optimum cardiac health.

### **Junior Explorer Nature Walk in Lord's Wood, Baltinglass**



Junior and Senior Infant classes and their teachers from Stratford Lodge School joined library staff and Environmentalist, Patrick Hunt for a very pleasant walk in Lord's Wood, Baltinglass recently. The beautiful day meant that the children had plenty of time to explore the interesting wildlife and flora which included a flock of goldcrest and amazing leaves and unusual fungi.

### **STEM Family Activity at Wicklow and Ballywaltrim Libraries**

Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics STEM are now part of the library offer in **Wicklow** and **Ballywaltrim** libraries. Family pods with children aged 3+ may ask at the desk for access to a set of magformers and then sit and play together. Parents or guardians are encouraged to engage with their children and also enjoy the experience. These magnetic shapes lend themselves really well to creative play and encourages engineering skills as children build houses, towers and much more as they explore science, technology, engineering and maths.

### **Parents Plus Special Needs Programme, Blessington**

This 6 week course commenced in Blessington Library last November. This course is facilitated by Tusla and is specifically for those parenting an adolescent with an intellectual disability, providing support and an opportunity to meet other parents. Three sessions have taken place and were well attended, the final three sessions have been postponed until 2022 due to Pandemic restrictions.

### **Climate S.O.S. with Wicklow County Council Library Service and SEAI**

In May 2021, Wicklow County Council Library Service received 90 English copies of Climate S.O.S. This book, published by the SEAI, is an enlightening fiction story, aimed at primary school aged children. The books are also available in the Irish language.

Every primary school in Co. Wicklow was offered a classroom set of the book, for a 3 week loan period. The response was phenomenal, and a database of schools has been set up.

To date, (November 2021), 12 schools have had the classroom set of books. The books are picked up by the teacher at their local branch.



When schools were finished with the book, they were asked if they were interested in completing a survey which had been compiled by Wicklow County Council Library Service. This survey was very well received and is now used by the SEAI in order to measure the reach of the books.

More books are set to be delivered shortly, so libraries are looking forward to reaching more schools in 2022.

## County Wicklow Archives and Genealogy Services

### New podcast: Robert Barton - forgotten man of the Irish revolution

Of the five plenipotentiaries who signed the Anglo-Irish Treaty on 6 December 1921 most attention has been focused on the motivations and actions of Michael Collins and Arthur Griffith—and on ‘the plenipotentiary who wasn’t’, Eamon de Valera. But what about the other three—Eamon Duggan, George Gavan Duffy and Robert Barton, particularly the latter, the only one who later took an anti-Treaty position. To find out more about this republican Protestant landlord from Wicklow join *History Ireland* editor, Tommy Graham in discussion with John Dorney, Joan Kavanagh, Chris Lawlor, and Catherine Wright at: <https://heritage.wicklowheritage.org/category/topics/wicklow-the-war-of-independence/wicklow-decade-of-centenaries-podcasts>



This podcast is supported by Wicklow County Council’s Archives Service and the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media under the Decade of Centenaries 2012-2023 Initiative.

### Disability & Inclusion Steering

### Committee (DISC)

Funding of €75,000 was secured from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability Integration and Youth to support disability services in the county for 3 No. applications through the Disability Participation and Awareness Fund.



### Cool Dudes Programme

The cool dude programme was developed to educate children the importance of a healthy diet and to help improve the nutritional knowledge, attitudes and behaviour of young people. The programme takes place over 5 weeks and targets 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> class students. St Joseph’s National School are starting their 5 week



Programme on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2022, Kilbride National School commencing on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2022 and Lacken National School starting on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2022.

### Winter Wellness Walks

Due to the success of the series of Winter Wellness Walks in Rathdrum in December, two further walks will be taking place on 24<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> January in Tomnafinogue Wood, Tinahely. Each walk will be 3km – 5km in duration and are physically, socially and mentally beneficial. The experience will be inclusive to help people relax in the outdoors and experience an activity in a group. Each walk will be led by poet Jane Clarke and musician James Mahon.

### Playful Activity Pack Rathdrum

In collaboration with Wicklow Local Sports & Recreation Partnership and Carol Coad a playful activity pack was purchased for the new library in Rathdrum. The aim of this initiative is to loan out to the community for different events for active outdoor use.

### Active Kids Programme

A 4 week all-inclusive active kid's programme is commencing on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2022 in Moneystown National School Roundwood. Each session will focus on the basic fundamental movement skills and will eliminate standing around, turn taking or queueing. By the end of the Programme teachers will have a full resource of activities to implement with the children making it sustainable and something that the school can continue through PE, movement breaks or as an extra activity.

### Urban Outdoor Trail Walking Initiative

East Glendalough School will be starting their 3 week introduction to Trail Walking Program on the 21<sup>st</sup> January.



### Operation Transformation Nationwide Walk



This year Operation Transformation Nationwide Walk is going virtual throughout the county. The walk is taking place Sunday 16th January. By registering participants are entered into a draw to win one of our "Activity Packs". This pack includes: water bottle, hat, neck buff and a gym/swim/outdoor recreation activity voucher.



## Couch to 3K



**Couch to 3K**

Starting Monday 17th January

FREE 6 Week Online Programme

T-shirt for all who complete the programme & entered into a draw to win a Fitbit Sense

To register click on the Eventbrite Link provided

Logos: SPORT IRELAND, Wicklow County & Borough Council, hi healthy Ireland, WICKLOW

Starting the New Year with a Community based Couch to 3K programme which has a great reach across the whole of County Wicklow, bringing together people who want to get from walking to running. This 6 week virtual programme enables them to participate in any area with weekly check-in, programmes and tips to keep motivated to exercise. On completion of this programme participants will receive a #ActiveWicklow t-shirt and also be entered in a draw to win a Fitbit Sense.

## Ascend Women's Dance Programme

A six week Dance Programme in collaboration with Ascend, starting Monday 17<sup>th</sup> January in Spotlight Studios, Wicklow Town. This programme is for eight women who have recently moved to Wicklow Town from Afghanistan.

## Ascend Women's Swim Programme

A six week Swim Programme in collaboration with Ascend, starting Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> January in Coral Leisure Wicklow Town. This programme is for eight women who have recently moved to Wicklow Town from Afghanistan. Each participant will receive an 'Activity Pack' consisting of swim hat, swim goggles and a water bottle.

## Ascend Women's Gym Programme

A six week Gym Programme in collaboration with Ascend, starting Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> January in Coral Leisure Wicklow Town. This programme is for eight women who have recently moved to Wicklow Town from Afghanistan.

## Courses

Safeguarding 1	17 <sup>th</sup> January	Zoom Shillelagh Pony Club
Safeguarding 1	18 <sup>th</sup> January	Zoom Shillelagh Pony Club
Safeguarding 1	22 <sup>nd</sup> January	Zoom Arklow Geraldine's GAA
Safeguarding 1	24 <sup>th</sup> January	Zoom – FULL
Safeguarding 2	1 <sup>st</sup> February	Zoom
Safeguarding 1	8 <sup>th</sup> February	Zoom



Sports First Aid	12 <sup>th</sup> February	Spotlight Studio's, Wicklow Town
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## Lacken NS – Cycle Right Learn to Cycle – Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Units

The Children of 2 of the 4 ASD Units took part in a Cycle Right Learn to Cycle Programme. The 12 pupils were provided with a 6 week programme over November and December with 6 children successfully learning to cycle where they were not able to before. The other 6 children have developed skills including balance which will help them achieve independent cycling in the near future.

## Online Exercise classes for Children & Teenagers with a Physical or Intellectual Disability

**Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership**  
**INCLUSIVE ONLINE EXERCISE PROGRAMME - 5 WEEKS**  
 FOR CHILDREN AND TEENS WITH A PHYSICAL OR INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

 <b>Dance with Zoe</b> Mondays @4:30pm for 30 mins Starting 17th January 2022	 <b>Fun Fitness with Lisa</b> Thursdays @4:30pm for 30 mins Starting 20th January 2022	 <b>Yoga with Jo</b> Saturdays @10:00am for 30 mins Starting 22nd January 2022
Contact Clara, cjenkinson@wicklowcoco.ie, (0404) 20129 to book		

LET'S GET BACK TO SPORT  
 Wicklow  
 WICKLOW  
 INCLUSIVE OPPORTUNITIES

Starting on 17<sup>th</sup> January, children and teenagers can register for a 5 week programme covering, Yoga, Dance and Fun Fitness delivered each week for 30 minutes over 3 classes for the length of the programme.

## Online Exercise classes for Adults with a Physical or Intellectual Disability

**Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership**  
**FOR YOUNG ADULTS WITH A PHYSICAL OR INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY**  
**INCLUSIVE ONLINE EXERCISE PROGRAMME 5 WEEKS**

 <b>Yoga with Jo</b> Mondays @12:30pm for 45 mins Starting 17th January 2022	 <b>Fun Fitness with Lisa</b> Tuesdays @12:30pm for 45 mins Starting 18th January 2022	 <b>Dance with Zoe</b> Fridays @10:00am for 45 mins Starting 21st January 2022
Contact Clara, cjenkinson@wicklowcoco.ie, (0404) 20129 to book		

LET'S GET BACK TO SPORT  
 Wicklow  
 WICKLOW  
 INCLUSIVE OPPORTUNITIES

Targeting clients of HSE Day Care Services, this programme runs over 5 weeks starting on 17<sup>th</sup> January. The daytime exercise classes will include, Yoga, Dance and Fun Fitness delivered each week for 45 minutes over 3 classes for the length of the programme. This gives the participant the opportunity to get the support of their care workers and not further burdening parents or carers with an activity to complete at home.



## OUTDOOR RECREATION INFRASTRUCTURE SCHEME (ORIS)

Project Scheme Year and Measure	Project Name	Project Cost	Match Funding from WCC	Brief description
ORIS 2021- M2	Cliff Walk Protection 2021 Scheme	€220,000	€22,000	Introduction of a 2KM reroute to protect a section of eroded coastline along the Greystones to bray Cliff walk. Works will include signage enhancement and planting of natural habitat.
ORIS 2021- M2	Jubilee Loop and Avonmore Way link 2021 Scheme	€180,000	€18,000	Upgrade of the route from Laragh to Clara Vale to include an access ramp at Samuel Hayes Bridge ensuring accessibility to all.
ORIS 2021- Project Development	Three Trout Route 2021 Scheme	€50,000	€5,000	A feasibility study to investigate several stream crossings required to complete the Three trout route.
ORIS 2021- M3	The Sugar Loaf Repair 2021 Scheme	€500,000	€50,000	The Sugarloaf repair project will entail manual stone pitching of an ascent and descent route

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

Annual Plans 2022: New countywide Social Inclusion and Community Activation work plans for 2022 submitted by Bray Area Partnership and Co. Wicklow Partnership on January 14<sup>th</sup> to be now reviewed and assessed by the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC).

2021 End of Year Reports submitted on 24th January by both Programme Implementers. These to also be assessed by the LCDC and formally approved by end February.

### PPN:

Disability: Funding has been received to engage a consultant to develop a guide for community groups/service providers in how to be more inclusive of people with disabilities. This project has the support of WCC's Disability & Inclusion Committee.

Consultations: Wicklow Age Friendly Survey; Swan River Greenway; Newtownmountkennedy Community & Work Study; Wicklow Comhairle na Nog Youth & Drugs; Draft River Basin Management Plan; Draft NTA Transport Strategy for GDA; Connecting Ireland -Rural Transport.





Funding Opportunities/Competitions: Wicklow Garda Youth Awards; Arklow Windbank Fund; Community Activities Fund; Community Water Development Fund; Irish Youth Foundation Skills & Employment Fund; Kick Start Round 3 Fund; PayPal Giving Fund; Communities Climate Action Programme; EU Horizon Programme.

## LECP Update

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

### Town & Village Funding Scheme to Revitalise Towns and Villages 2021

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.

#### 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

#### Town and Village Applications Submitted July 2021

Town/Village	Project
Kiltegan	Transform a derelict vacant site into a multi-purpose community facility. The project aims to purchase the site and renovate the existing building to rehouse the community shop and café, provide community space, rehouse the CE scheme and provide a remote working hub.
Lacken	Refurbish a town centre building into a community shop, café and remote working hub. The project aims to maximise opportunity for economic benefit from the Blessington Greenway and from walkers and cyclists. It also aims to develop a heritage hub and a community space to create a resilient and socially cohesive community, using the Smart Village Model
Wicklow	This is a place making project to reconnect Wicklow centre to the port area by reanimating and revitalising the network of laneways with creative lighting, murals, riverside seating with canopy and park let planting
Hollywood	Place making project to create a quality and environmentally friendly public space. This project aims to transform an underutilised space which is close to



	woodland so lends itself to a natural approach to designing a pocket park with associated walkway and car parking.
Ballinaclash	Renovate the community hall to revitalise the village by providing access to remote working facilities and community activities to the community and possible new residents. This includes the replacing a dividing wall with a movable divider, fit out of remote working space and insulation works to the building
Coolboy	A place making project to improve public space in Coolboy and maximise social and economic benefits to the area. It will rejuvenate the village green by resurfacing and upgrading existing paths to make them more accessible and age friendly and reconnect a small underused annex area. It will also see the addition of picnic benches, a bandstand and an area of planting and landscaping, improving the biodiversity of the area.
Donard	Rejuvenation of community hall to develop a community café and to provide remote working spaces.

## Announcement of the Rural Regeneration Development Fund Category 2

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

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.

### RRDF Applications Submitted July 2021

Town/Village	Project
South West Wicklow – Shillelagh, Tinahely, Carnew  This was not funded but will be resubmitted in the future	Reimagining South West Wicklow  1. Maximise all opportunities for the area, arising from significant planned infrastructural investment and development of the Arklow to Shillelagh Greenway. 2. Revitalise Rural Towns in Southwest Wicklow to become vibrant sustainable SMART centres of commerce and attractive places to work, live and recreate in harmony with the natural environment 3. Maximise all economic & social opportunities arising from the Coollattin Footprint in line with the Irelands Ancient East brand 4. Maximise economic, social and environmental benefits from the critical mass of 'National Walking Loop Trails' already developed in the area.
Blessington	Regeneration of Blessington Renovation of the town centre and public space and significant development works to Russborough House to enhance visitor



This received funding – see below	experience and maximise economic opportunities arising from the Blessington Greenway development.
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Blessington has been awarded just over €1m funding under the Rural Regeneration Development Fund (RRDF). This will be used for a major regeneration of Blessington Town Centre and related projects.

It will be utilised for the regeneration of Blessington Town Centre, the development of plans for public realm works, the redevelopment of derelict property to create an eHub and a Visitor Centre for the forthcoming Blessington Lakes eGreenway.

This strategic funding along with the planned completion of the Blessington Inner Relief Road and the funding for the Blessington Lakes eGreenway will help achieve Wicklow County Council’s long-term vision for Blessington and enhance the Blessington as a place to visit.

Blessington also received €100,000 for development a Masterplan. Combined, these projects will add to the quality of life of the entire community by optimising digital connectivity, supporting employment and skills and enhancing the public realm in line with the objectives that underpin “Our Rural Future” Ireland’s Rural Development policy.

## CLAR 2021 – funded projects

Area	Project	Funding
Askanagap	Astro turf	50,000
Knockananna	MUGA floodlights	22,510.13
Knockananna	Community garden	9,747

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 are underway but implementation has slowed down because of COVID-19. An extension to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021 has been granted.

Planning has begun for Round 4 of the programme for Q2 2022

## 2. Slaintecare Healthy Communities Programme

The Slaintecare Healthy Communities Programme is a new initiative led by Slaintecare and Healthy Ireland in partnership with Wicklow Local Community Development Committee and other local stakeholders. The goal of the programme is to improve the long term health and wellbeing of people living in the most disadvantaged communities in Ireland. The programme is based in the Bray are of Wicklow. This is a holistic approach to health and wellbeing incorporating the physical and social determinants of health, that is, the conditions in which people are born, grow, work, live and age, and the wider set of forces and systems that shape the conditions of daily life. The programme will implement targeted initiatives to tackle these



challenges from within these communities. This will be achieved through the provision of dedicated services to build sustainable improvements in the health and wellbeing of all those living in those communities.

A local implementation team will be formed in each area led by a SHCP Local Development Officer to be employed by Wicklow County Council.

### **3. County Wicklow Food & Beverage Strategy – Food Poverty and Sustainability**

The County Wicklow Food & Beverage Strategy contains aims and objectives to tackle food poverty and food sustainability in the county. This is a long term issue but was highlighted through the work of the Community Response Forum during the COVID-19 pandemic.

A subgroup has been formed to work on this issue. Research has already been undertaken to establish the extent and nature of food poverty and the responses to this. Further research is now ongoing with a view to the development of a working plan going forward.

#### **LECP**

Guidelines for the preparation of the new Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) were launched recently. The new revised guidelines build on the lessons learned from the current LECP cycle, as well as reflecting the needs of communities as we emerge from the Pandemic. The new approach to the process, with a Framework LECP coupled with Implementation Plans covering a shorter period, will ensure LECPs are more agile and allow for emerging needs.

The LCDC and Wicklow County Council are beginning the process of developing the new LECP based on three elements: evidence, national policies and strategies and consultation.



## 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).

New guidelines have been launched for the preparation of LECPs. LECPs detail how Local Authorities will support economic and community development in their areas over the next six years. The new guidelines will assist with the development of the plans for local areas, with a key focus on sustainability, consultation and engagement with local communities and business.

The guidelines will require the Council to consider housing needs when formulating both the economic and community elements of the LECPs. The guidelines are timely as the current LECP finishes in 2022. The new plan will take account of lessons learned and the changing needs of communities, climate action and sustainability among other things. The guidelines reinforce the important role of communities in determining the needs and priorities of their local area.

### Retail

#### Bray Central

All the main construction work associated with the Shell and Core are near completion. Form work within the basement area is complete. Small elements of snag works are ongoing. Some additional form work relating to bases for ticket machines and plant items have been poured. All the line painting within the basement car park has now been fully complete. The reinstatement of the public paving on the Main Street is 90% complete and all the scaffolding on the Main Street has been removed.

The design associated to the main super structure above ground has been completed. Preparation for practical completion is ongoing. All members of the design team are involved in regular meetings to ensure that practical completion is achieved at the end of January.

The last few elements of the façade works on Main Street are underway and are expected to be completed by January 14<sup>th</sup>. Stone cladding has been completed on site on Block 2 and Block 3 and is scheduled to be completed in the coming weeks on Block 1. All roofing works are near completion. The last remaining items of work relate to small areas sections of roof areas on Block 1 and 2. These works are ongoing and relate to small snag items.



Hard landscaping works are approximately 95% complete. These works are ongoing and are scheduled to be completed by January 21<sup>st</sup>.

## **Bray Outdoor Performance Space**

A presentation of this project was made to the Elected Members of Bray Municipal District in December 2021. A grant of €250,000 has been awarded to Wicklow County Council. The tender for design architect services for this scheme was advertised in January 2022. The Council will now undertake consultation with relevant stakeholders.

## **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.

Under the Government Policy, Town Centres First, the establishment of town teams is encouraged and we are likely to see more town teams in situ over the coming years.

Most Town Teams in Wicklow have been operating since 2018. It is considered timely to carry out a review of the town teams and with this in mind, Wicklow County Council has appointed Mr Allen McAdam of MCA Consulting to conduct the review. It is proposed to present the results of the review at a plenary meeting of all the town teams to be held in early 2022.

## **Masterplans for Town Centres under 10,000 population**

Blessington has been awarded funding of €100,000 to develop a Master Plan for the town. This will also allow plans for projects identified as part of the drive to become e-greenway ready to be advanced.

Wicklow County Council had nominated three towns for the scheme: Blessington, Rathdrum and Newtownmountkennedy. Eligible towns are those with a maximum population of 10,000. The towns nominated had to be in a position to immediately engage with the Town Centre First process and act as demonstrators for other areas. Nominated towns were also required to have a Town Team or similar group in place and have already completed a background analysis phase such as a town centre health check and to be in a position to proceed to develop a Masterplan.



This initiative is a key part of Our Rural Future – the Government’s ambitious five-year strategy designed to reimagine and revitalise Rural Ireland. It is also linked to the Government’s ‘Housing for All’ strategy and the forthcoming ‘Town Centre First Policy’ which will be announced in the coming weeks.

Wicklow County Council will now work closely with local community groups, retailers and members of the Town Team in devising and delivering on the objectives of the Masterplan building on the very comprehensive Health Check carried out by Future Analytics.

### **Arklow Town Team**

Arklow leads the way with the first “Pride” Crossing in the Republic of Ireland. Following a successful application under the Streetscape Enhancement Scheme the crossing was installed. Arklow Town Team and Arklow Municipal District are very proud to show their support for the members of the LGBTQ+ community through the installation of a “Pride” crossing on Arklow Main Street. We hope that this project will highlight to those passing through the Main Street area that the community in Arklow and its environs is an inclusive one where everyone is treated equally.

The Arklow Town Team is working on a new exciting Arklow Pottery project. The project aims to collate the stories of Arklow Pottery and to create an immersive and interactive website which brings the history and heritage associated with the Pottery to life again. This resource is intended to complement the Arklow Pottery Museum and Heritage Centre when it is up and running in the future.

Elements of the Project:

- Responsive website to include a catalogue of Arklow Pottery pieces from each era, where people could interact with each other and upload their own collections.
- Video production including interviews with surviving Pottery workers, via an experienced facilitator/interviewer, who will tell stories of their experiences and the social history of Arklow at the time.
- Professional Photographer to take new images of speciality pieces of Arklow Pottery and to enhance old photos.
- Coordinator to manage the project including running social media pages, maintaining the website and running some periodic offline events such as an Annual Arklow Pottery Fair and reviving the Arklow Pottery Festival.
- Shop element on the site where local potters could sell a selection of their products and could showcase and sell an item of 'new' Arklow pottery

Other projects that are also progressing well are Harbour to Headwaters River Tourism Project and the Glenart College Community Garden project.

The Town Team are also considering potential future projects to benefit the town.



## **Bray Town Team / Bray Town Recovery Team**

Terms of reference were issued to the Bray MD Members in 2021. The Cathaoirleach is reviewing these and will be examining the best way forward.

## **Blessington Town Team**

Blessington Town Team welcomes the news of the most recent funding announcement of just over €1m under the Rural Regeneration Development Fund (RRDF). Combined with the €100,000 funding for developing a Masterplan for Blessington, this project will add to the quality of life of the entire community by optimising digital connectivity, supporting employment and skills and enhancing the public realm in line with the objectives that underpin “Our Rural Future” Ireland’s Rural Development policy.

## **Greystones Town Team**

Greystones Town Team is working to maximise the benefit to Greystones of winning the LivCom award for most liveable community. The Town Team will be holding its AGM in February and the official launch of Greystones town team will take place shortly.

## **Wicklow Town Team**

Stage 1 funding of €350,000 towards the Greystones to Wicklow Greenway from Transport Infrastructure Ireland was announced in December. The coastal route is approximately 20km long, through a Special Area of Conservation and due to the sensitivity of the environment and the unique biodiversity of the area great care will need to be taken to ensure that there is no disturbance to habitats, bird species and other features of wildlife interest. The key element of the Coastal Route will be recognition, protection and appreciation. It will be expected that the tendering process to procure Consultants to progress the project will commence early in 2022.

To mark International Day for Persons with Disabilities the Wicklow Town Team Backlighting project allowed the Billy Byrne Monument on Market Square and St. Patrick’s Church to be lit up in purple in support of this campaign.

## **Streetscapes**

Wicklow County Council has been allocated €320,000 in Streetscape funding under the Department of Rural and Community Development Town and Village Streetscape Scheme.





Six towns/villages in the County have been selected to participate in the Streetscape and Shopfront Enhancement scheme. The areas selected are Arklow, Baltinglass, Blessington, Enniskerry, Kilcoole and Wicklow Town.

The Streetscape Enhancement Initiative is a key part of the Government's 'Our Rural Future' and is designed to make our rural towns and villages more attractive colourful and vibrant places to live, work and visit.

Types of projects funded include: refurbishment of traditional shop fronts, artwork, murals, lighting, planting etc. 99 applications were received and approved under this measure the date for completion of works has been extended to 11<sup>th</sup> February. The initial application and promotion and development of the scheme was handled by Enterprise and Corporate Services. The awarding of grants and drawdown of funds is handled by Community Cultural and Social Development.

## 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

### **Tourism Work-Group:**

A hybrid meeting was held at Powerscourt Distillery with the Tourism-Work Group which comprised of some of the largest tourism businesses in the County (Hotels, large attractions, etc). Objectives of the meeting; to get some feedback on the season and assess the current situation and to present the various activities Wicklow Tourism and County Council are working on and planning. Those included: website and social media activities, Wicklow Passport updates, Failte Ireland support to attract influencers and organise itineraries, Wicklow Outdoor opportunities especially around EcoTrail and Golf, Wicklow Naturally, Celtic Routes Project, Tourism Information Points, Film Tourism and Sustainable Tourism.



## **Wicklow Passport:**

There are now five display units branded Wicklow Passport. Those small units are being displayed around the County and hopefully beyond, to help promote the Wicklow Passport. The display units will rotate around the County and be displayed at various locations at key attractions and accommodations providers. A view to bringing these display units to trade shows such as the Holiday World Shows in Belfast, Cork and Dublin are being considered.

## **EcoTrail Wicklow:**

The third edition of EcoTrail Wicklow will take place on Saturday September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Registrations for the event are now open, and the video of the 2021 race was widely featured online along with a dedicated Press Release. The video can be watched on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/Yhpi1WnrxE>. Further info on EcoTrail can be found at <http://wicklow.ecotrail.com>.

## **Accessible Glendalough Blog:**

Late last summer, a trip to Glendalough was organised to experience how accessible Glendalough was. From that experience a blog entry showcasing how our tour went has been created. The participants their feedback, relevant to their level of disability. The blog can be found at: <https://visitwicklow.ie/accessible-day-visit-glendalough/>.

The feedback from this initiative was very well received, and there are plans to schedule further 'Accessibility themed' experience over the next few months.

**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 with Mosart consultant's appointed to lead the design process. A planning application to enhance and redevelop the Abbey Grounds, Wicklow, into the Abbey Gardens and event space was passed unanimously by the members of Wicklow Municipal District at their meeting held on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> December 2021. The procurement process for detailed design and construction has begun.

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

This is a Fáilte Ireland funded project led by FI with strategic partners NPWS, OPW, Coillte and WCC. The Plan covers visitor attractions and activities available in the area and the first stage of stakeholder engagement has been completed. .



The consultants team are now engaging with some of the key landowners to assess the feasibility of developing additional off road trails between Laragh and Glendalough and provision of additional parking. The process has identified a number of issues: congestion at key sites, concerns over security, capacity and quality of car parking and visitor services, issues with local access, and erosion and degradation of the environment.

Visitor Experience Hubs have been identified around the county where there is a particular focus of visitor attractions. Development of these hubs will build capacity, help disperse visitors across the county, encouraging longer stays and greater investment in the area. The team is developing detailed plans for walking, mountain biking, off road family cycling.

Measures have been taken this year to introduce additional temporary parking and to use traffic counters to improve parking management and signage. Toilet facilities have been upgraded.

The consultants have prepared the draft masterplan and this was presented to members of the Laragh/Glendalough Community on the 27th October 2021 and to the members of at the Ordinary Meeting of Wicklow County Council on the 6<sup>th</sup> December 2021.

Next Steps: Further Consultation, Strategic Environmental Assessment and Economic Appraisal.

## **Outdoor Dining**

Fáilte Ireland earlier this year announced funding for Outdoor Dining:

Part One of the Scheme - Outdoor Seating and Accessories - supports individual hospitality businesses with grants of up to €4,000 for seating, tables and outdoor accessories. This scheme which is fully funded by Fáilte Ireland is administered by the Local Authorities. Where the tables and chairs are located in a public space, the business must apply for a Section 254 licence, if the equipment is located on private property, planning permission may be required.

This scheme provided funding of almost €410,000 to 121 businesses throughout Wicklow with the scheme now closed and all businesses receiving their grant.

All Local Authorities were invited to apply to Fáilte Ireland for funding under Part Two - Local Authority Weatherproofing & Outdoor Dining Enhancement Scheme - to develop streets and public spaces to facilitate outdoor dining in urban tourism centres, enabling access to outdoor seating for extended periods throughout the year.



Wicklow County Council applied for and was awarded funding for Outdoor Dining and Weatherproofing for Market Square in Wicklow Town (€119,000) and Abbey Lane in Arklow (€81,000). Works have commenced on the Wicklow project with five of the seven canopies/umbrellas installed and some wiring to be completed. The final two will be installed at the Gaol and works should start shortly.

## Rural and Urban Regeneration Development Fund Grant Applications

Blessington has been awarded just over €1m funding under the Rural Regeneration Development Fund (RRDF). This will be used for a major regeneration of Blessington Town Centre and related projects. It will be utilised for the regeneration of Blessington Town Centre, the development of plans for public realm works, the redevelopment of derelict property to create an eHub and a Visitor Centre for the forthcoming Blessington Lakes eGreenway. This strategic funding along with the planned completion of the Blessington Inner Relief Road and the funding for the Blessington Lakes eGreenway will help achieve Wicklow County Council's long-term vision for Blessington and enhance the Blessington as a place to visit. Combined with the proposals for developing a Masterplan for Blessington, this project will add to the quality of life of the entire community by optimising digital connectivity, supporting employment and skills and enhancing the public realm in line with the objectives that underpin "Our Rural Future" Ireland's Rural Development policy.

A call was announced for cat 1 proposals with a closing date for applications on the 29<sup>th</sup> April 2022.

## URDF: Urban Regeneration Development Fund

The Wicklow Town URDF Project for the development of the library at the old Ulster Bank Building and the redevelopment of Fitzwilliam Square has been completed. Total cost for the development of the Library was €6 million, with €3 million funded via the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage URDF and €1 million from the Department of Rural and Community Development. €2 million matched funding was committed by Wicklow County Council.

The €2m Fitzwilliam Square refurbishment project, funded by an amount of €1.5m under the Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government URDF scheme, has created a multi-functional space, improving accessibility and enhancing the presentation and public realm of the Town Centre at Fitzwilliam Square. A new outdoor venue for community events, performances and exhibitions, and outdoor dining is now available. The Halpin monument which was concealed is now made more visible and contributes to tourism and the town's maritime heritage. The newly created space is also now responding to the recent health



and safety challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and will go towards helping to support the recovery of the tourism and hospitality sector.

Part 1 of the Arklow URDF Project the refurbishment of the Courthouse and the development of an Enterprise Space in the former Town Council offices. Part 2 of the project the public realm works are currently underway.

## 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.

RPS made a presentation recently to the Bray MD Members on Bray Harbour Improvement Feasibility Study. RPS are currently in the process of finalising the Feasibility Report to include the additional Civic Space work that Bray MD wished to include as part of this project. When the feasibility report issues to the Council, the RPS team will make some recommendations regarding the best course of action for the next phase of the project.

## Maritime

The area of offshore renewable energy is rapidly evolving. Due to the number of projects proposed off the coast of Wicklow it is important that the County engages with the process to enable the community of Wicklow to benefit from the opportunities arising while mitigating against any likely impacts that any offshore renewable project will have.

Key milestones have been

The Offshore Renewable Energy Support Scheme Consultation. Wicklow County Council made a submission strongly supporting the case for the funds created as a result of the offshore renewable energy projects to be managed and distributed locally rather than centrally.

The adoption of the Maritime Area Planning (MAP) Act 2021 aimed at harnessing Ireland's offshore wind potential while protecting our marine environment

One of the elements of the MAP is the creation of a new maritime consent process (MAP)



Under the special transition provisions in the MAP Act, the Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications will have the responsibility for assessing and granting MACs for a first phase (Phase One) of offshore projects, which satisfy the definition of “relevant maritime usage” under the Act (the Relevant Projects).

The relevant projects of interest to Wicklow include the Codling Wind Park and the Dublin Array

Applications for MACs from these projects will open this year and will mark an important step towards reaching our 2030 targets.

A consultation process on the Offshore Renewable Energy Maritime Area Consent (MAC) Assessment for Phase One has opened and will run until 16<sup>th</sup> February.

The purpose of the consultation is to:

- Set out the proposed approach to MAC assessment for Relevant Projects
- Provide important information on various aspects of the new MAC regime for Relevant Projects
- Invite feedback from interested stakeholders on the proposed approach to the assessment of Phase One MAC applications

Details available here: <https://www.gov.ie/en/consultation/1f918-offshore-renewable-energy-maritime-area-consent-mac-assessment-for-phase-one-projects/>

## Food and Beverage Strategy

Funding of €175,000 has been secured via the LEADER Food Programme for a Food and Beverage Co-ordinator role for Wicklow Naturally CLG and a tender for the supply of event costs for the period 2021 - 2023 in support of Wicklow Naturally's Promotional Activities Plan. Wicklow Naturally will contribute 5% from subscriptions and it is proposed that Wicklow County Council will contribute €35,000 over the two year life of the project.

Wicklow Naturally hosted a stall at this years 'Gifted', Ireland's premier Craft and Design Fair in the RDS along with a stall at Russborough House and Park Christmas market in December promoting members produce and it was great to see the interest in food and drink from County Wicklow. Wicklow Naturally has also increased their network of members throughout 2021 to add to the array of County Wicklow produce.

Wicklow Naturally, Wicklow County Council, the Wicklow Local Enterprise Office and Sustainable Tourism Ireland have come together to offer an online conference to explore opportunities in the circular economy

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for food producers on the 3<sup>rd</sup> February from 10am to 3pm. The conference will look at how these businesses can improve their business model and processes to become more efficient and create more sustainable opportunities. For further information on the conference, businesses or members of the public can contact the Environmental Awareness Office of Wicklow County Council by email on [eao@wicklowcoco.ie](mailto:eao@wicklowcoco.ie)



## 2. Local Enterprise Office

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

<b>METRICS: Grants</b>	<b>HISTORICAL</b>	<b>TARGETS</b>	<b>YEAR TO DATE</b>
	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2022</b>
<b>Grants Approved (number/ value)</b> - Measure 1 - Technical Assistance for Micro Exporters	- 32/ €627,045 -4 / €6,594 (to date)	- Meet Demand - Meet Demand	
NB: Ability to meet demand is influenced by the amount of funding allocated to the LEO			

<b>METRICS: Training/ Capacity Building</b>	<b>HISTORICAL</b>	<b>TARGETS</b>	<b>YEAR TO DATE</b>
	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2022</b>
Total No. of All Programmes (Training/Networking/Events/Seminars)	71	64	28
Start Your Own Business Participant numbers (included in total training programmes)	119	75	15
Total No. of all Participants participating in above Programmes	893	900	75
Women in Business Network Number of Meetings	11	10	

<b>METRICS: Business Advice &amp; Mentoring</b>	<b>HISTORICAL</b>	<b>TARGETS</b>	<b>YEAR TO DATE</b>
	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2022</b>
Number of new clients added to database *criteria have been amended for this metric	756	750	-
Number of One to One Business Advice meetings including Businesses assigned a mentor and Brexit 1-1	485	500	12





<b>METRICS: Student Enterprise Programmes</b>	<b>HISTORICAL</b>	<b>TARGETS</b>	
<b>Academic Year</b>	<b>2021/2022</b>	<b>2022/2023</b>	<b>Year to Date</b>
No. of Secondary Student Participants	953	1000	Recruitment ongoing

<b>METRICS: Irelands Best Young Entrepreneur</b>	<b>HISTORICAL</b>	<b>TARGETS</b>	
<b>Academic Year</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>Year to Date 2022</b>
Number of Applications	Programme review	Programme review	Programme review

<b>Trading Online Voucher</b>	<b>HISTORICAL</b>	<b>TARGETS</b>	
<b>No of Trading Online Vouchers approved</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>Year to Date 2022</b>
Trading Online Vouchers	135 Total value: € 279,127.40	70 Depending on budget and demand	5

<b>Lean For Micro Project</b>	<b>HISTORICAL</b>	<b>TARGETS</b>	<b>YEAR TO DATE</b>
	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2022</b>
No. of Companies who have undertaken a Lean for Micro Assessment by a Lean Expert	9	11	

<b>Microfinance Ireland</b>	<b>HISTORICAL</b>	<b>TARGETS</b>	<b>YEAR TO DATE</b>
	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2022</b>
No. of Companies who have submitted a MFI loan application through the LEO	7	10	



## December 2021 / January 2022 Activities

- F fortnightly newsletter continues to be circulated to the LEO client database outlining 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.
- A number of new training programmes have been introduced for the Food and Beverage sector for 2022: For those contemplating starting a business in food and beverage there is a start your own food business course and for established businesses we have developed a series of workshops to help businesses identify new routes to markets looking at food service and online channels as well as looking at the opportunity presented by the discounters, this will be coupled with individual mentoring for selected clients.
- The 'Stimulus' and 'Lean for Micro' consultancy programmes have concluded for 2021, having assisted 39 high-potential LEO client businesses.
- The Owner Manager Development Programme is proceeding well, with 21 participants.

## Business Skills and IT skills Training Programme

The SpringSummer 2022 business skills training programme is underway with courses now open for bookings through our online portal on [www.localenterprise.ie/wicklow](http://www.localenterprise.ie/wicklow).

### Business Skills Training Courses recently held:-

- ✚ Start Your Own Business Course – 18<sup>th</sup> January 2022 – (Full participation of 15 persons).
- ✚ Trading Online Voucher Seminar – 20<sup>th</sup> January 2022 – (60 persons registered)

### Business Skills Training Courses available for bookings on our website include:-

- ✚ Increasing Traffic to Your Website: SEO for Beginners 26<sup>th</sup> January
- ✚ Bookkeeping for Small Businesses (2 day course) 8<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> February
- ✚ Pathways to Growth for your Food or Beverage Business Workshop 8<sup>th</sup> February
- ✚ Maximising Sales on your Website & Social Media Channels 9<sup>th</sup> February
- ✚ Start Your Own Food Business – the Essentials 9<sup>th</sup> February
- ✚ Cashflow Management 17<sup>th</sup> February



## 3. Planning and Development

### County Development Plan Review

The consultation period for the draft County Development Plan 2021-2027 ended on 30<sup>th</sup> of August 2021. Over 300 submissions were received. The Chief Executive prepared the Report under Section 12(4) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) on the submissions made to the Draft County Development Plan and this was issued to the Elected Members. Workshops will be scheduled in January 2022.

### Wicklow Heritage & Biodiversity Office

Community Monument Fund (CMF). Wicklow County council received a funding allocation of €65,000 for Wicklow archaeology projects under the CMF 2021 from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. The seven successful projects are as follows; Baltinglass Hillforts, an assessment of archaeological significance; Whitfield Graveyard access improvements; Wicklow Town Community Archaeology Initiative; Dunganstown Castle conservation advice, Kilbride archaeological investigations, Arklow Castle conservation report and the development of Conservation Management Plans for historic graveyards (Ballymacroghue, Mullinacuffe and Whitefield). All projects are complete.

Protected Structures Grants - . There were two successful projects under Historic Structure Fund (HSF); Killrudeery Clock tower repairs approved for €50,000 and Conservation works to the 'weir' at Russborough House approved for €50,000. The total allocation for County Wicklow was €72,000 which was distributed to 8 different applicants. All projects under both schemes are now complete.

County Heritage Plan programme - The 2021 programme of actions are complete.

Digital Upskilling course for individuals involved in community heritage projects and activities took place from 22<sup>nd</sup> October – end October. This free course was run over seven online workshops co-funded by the Heritage Council and Wicklow County Council through the County Heritage Plan.

Wicklow Biodiversity Action Funding of €29,950 was allocated under the National Biodiversity Action Plan fund based on application submitted by Heritage Officer. Three projects were undertaken to enhance conservation management of council owned properties, 1 at Brittas Bay, 2 at selected historic graveyards and 3 at Kilmacanogue marsh. All projects are now complete.

Biodiversity Awareness programme: Coastwatch community workshop held in Wicklow Town 29<sup>th</sup> Sept. Heritage Office is co-ordinating this volunteer citizen science survey for County Wicklow. Programme of nature themed zoom evening/ lunchtime talks (8 in total) held in partnership with Wicklow Library Service held from Feb- July. Other activities include production and free distribution of publications (Wicklow Wildlife posters and Gardening for Wildlife booklets and other Wicklow habitat guides)

### Development Management

#### Planning Applications

Total valid applications received	31st Dec. 2020	31st Dec. 2021	% Increase
Received (Valid)	1118	1370	22%

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A total of 140 valid applications were received during December as follows:

Type of Development	31st Dec. 2021 Number Received
Individual Houses	40 (36 refer to rural house applications)
Housing Developments*	10
Agricultural Structures	01
Commercial	13
Other Developments**	76
<b>Total</b>	<b>140</b>

\* Large housing development

21/1453, Marina Quarter Limited, 96 Units - Phase 1,, Kilruddery Demesne East & West, Southern Cross Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow

21/1501, Marina Quarter Limited, 34 Units - Phase 2, Kilruddery Demesne East & West, Southern Cross Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow

21/1533, Cairn Homes Properties Ltd, 74 No. dwellings, Cookstown, Cookstown Road, Enniskerry, Co. Wicklow

21/1536, Ronan O'Caoimh, 81 Units, Ashtown Lane, Hawkstown Lower, Wicklow

21/1541, Brookhampton Ltd, 56 Units, West of Main Street, Kilcoole, Co. Wicklow

21/1560 Enniskill SPV Limited, 22 Units, Oakfield Cottage and lands to rear of 1-10 Kilgarron Hill, Enniskerry, Co. Wicklow

\*\*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 73 applications in December, being:

Type of Development	Number of Decisions
Housing Developments	03
Individual Houses	20 ( 19 refer to a rural house)
Other Developments	50
Other Developments Requiring EIA	00
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>

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

	31/12/2020	31/12/2021
Total Number of decisions issued	911	1116
Total Number of decisions to grant	802	958
% Grant Rate	88%	86%
No of applications withdrawn		12



## Applications lodged with An Bord Pleanála

### Strategic Housing Development

ABP-305558-21, Kilgarron Hill, Parknasilloge, Enniskerry (219 Units), Members meeting 11/1/21, CE report to be forwarded to ABP by 17/2/22

ABP-312020-21, Lands at Bray Head House (179 Units) Members meeting 7/12, CE report due by 26/1/22

ABP-311181-21, Former Bray Golf Club Lands, (591 Units) Members meeting 7/9, CE report forwarded to ABP 14/10 - ABP refused permission for Block A and Block B and granted permission for the remainder of the development.

### Strategic Infrastructure Development

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

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

### Substitute Consent

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

### E-Planning Project

The commencement of the roll out of the ePlanning system is scheduled in Wicklow for Q1 2022. The project will include the following elements:

- Standardised naming/structure of all documentation in Local Authorities and An Bord Pleanála.
- Web Portal through which all electronic planning applications and all correspondence regarding same would pass.
- All submissions can be made on-line for both planning application and part VIII applications.
- Fees will be paid online by means of card payment or EFT.
- Part VIII applications for all Local Authorities would be submitted and stored centrally.
- Referrals to all prescribed bodies and the receipt of their submissions would be electronic.
- Electronic transfer of planning files to An Bord Pleanála following an appeal.

The e-Planning system will provide a better service to the public. It will allow agents to build their applications before submission, and will reduce the printing, copying and scanning of documentation. It

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will also facilitate electronic interaction between Local Authorities, An Bord Pleanála and prescribed bodies.

## Planning Enforcement

### Derelict Sites

New Files	6
Advisory Letters	24
Warning Letters	12
Enforcement Notices	1
Legal Files	0
Closed	26

### Court Cases

District Court	1 Case adjourned to May 2022
Circuit Court	1 Case adjourned to May 2022
	12 Cases listed for January 2022
High Court	2 Cases adjourned for mention in February 2022

### Vacant Sites

Municipal District	26 No. Sites on Register
Arklow	7
Baltinglass	2
Bray	4
Greystones	5
Wicklow	8

1 Notice of Entry Notice

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

2 sites on appeal to ABP - Section 18

2 sites on appeal to Valuation Tribunal

€17,237.50 levies received to end December 2021

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## Derelict Sites

Municipal District	3 No sites on Register
Wicklow	1
Baltinglass	1
Bray	1

## Short Term Letting

Applications for Registration received	112
Warning Letters issued	26
Enforcement Notices issued	5
Under Investigation	53
UD files created	23

The recent Government strategy 'Housing for All' has announced new regulations in this regard, with revised regulatory controls requiring the registration of short term and holiday lets with Failte Ireland. Responsibility for enforcement with the new registration requirements will lie with the Residential Tenancies Board, the Local Authority will continue to address illegal or unauthorised structures or changes of use.



## 4. Environmental Services

### Waste Management

#### Litter/Waste Enforcement

No. of Complaints Created	96
No. of Cases Closed, Resolved or Completed	112
No of Litter Fines Issued	9
No. of Waste Management Files Opened	5
No. of Warning Letters Issued	1
No of Abandoned Car Notices Issued	3
No. of Burning Applications Granted	3
No. of Temporary Signs Granted	0
No. of Notices Issued under Section 14 of the Waste Management Act	0
No. of Notices Issued under Section 18 of the Waste Management Act	0
No. of Notices Issued under Section 55 of the Waste Management Act	0
No. of Fixed Penalty Notices issued	3
No. of files prepared for Court and included in Court Lists	40
No. of Cases in Court under the Litter Pollution Act	2
No. of Cases in Court under the Waste Management Act	4
Income - Litter	€700.00
Income- Waste Management	€3,300

A significant number of court cases were taken in recent months with successful outcomes, sending a clear message from Wicklow County Council in this regard.

#### 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 27<sup>th</sup> November 2020.

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.

Surveys of the qualifying interests, as agreed with NPWS, were completed in December and results are being collated into report form.

## **Recycling Centres**

A review of all of the Recycling Centres in line with the National Review document recently published on the DECC website is underway to assess how these Civic Amenities are operating with respect to both the service provided and VFM.

Ark Housing opened their newly renovated Charity shop at Bray Recycling Centre. The book stand formerly in the Recycling centre will now be located in the charity shop and managed by Ark Housing with books available for a nominal donation.

A tender has been published to set up a Multi-Party Framework for Civil and Structural Engineer-Led Integrated Design Team Consultancy Services for various projects established in the next 4 years with the replacement of the Asbestos Roof in Bray Recycling Centre and general refurbishment of the centre.

Arrangements were put in place to carry out shredding of Christmas trees in 10 locations around the county in early January.

## **Climate Action**

### **Climate Action Plan 2021 – Securing Our Future**

The Climate Action Plan, which was launched on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2021, is an ambitious plan to put Ireland on a more sustainable path, cutting emissions and creating a cleaner, greener economy and society

The Climate Action Plan follows the Climate Act 2021, which commits Ireland to a legally binding target of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions no later than 2050, and a reduction of 51% by 2030. These targets are a key pillar of the Programme for Government.



The plan sets out 475 separate actions to halve Ireland's greenhouse emissions by 2030, including extensive offshore wind power, retrofitting 500,000 homes and putting a million electric vehicles on the roads.

The public sector will lead by example and halve emissions by 2030. Green Teams will be established in every public sector body. No new fossil fuel heating systems will be installed in public buildings after 2023, except in very limited exceptional circumstances. All new fleet purchases will be electric from 2023, where such vehicles are available.

A new National Retrofit Plan will drive demand and make retrofitting more affordable whilst there are increased targets for district heating and the public sector, and strengthening building standards for all buildings.

Just transition principles are embedded in the plan, including the principles that people need to be equipped with the skills to benefit from changes and that costs need to be shared. A Just Transition Commission will be established.

All increases in carbon tax receipts are earmarked for targeted social protection measures, an expansion of retrofitting, particularly for social and low-income homes, and agri-environmental projects.

### **Wicklow Climate Action**

The Tree Management Policy was passed by the CABA SPC on 9<sup>th</sup> December to go to the full Council on 10<sup>th</sup> January.

RPS Consulting Engineers is progressing the base line carbon footprint study for the Arklow Decarbonisation Zone. A draft Implementation Plan is expected by the end of Q1.

Electric Vehicle Chargers (4No.) at Shoreline Greystones have been commissioned and are in operation. We are awaiting an upgrade to the power supply to the new chargers at Blessington Main Street. This was due to be carried out by ESB Networks at the end of December but has been delayed due to Storm Barra.

The Climate Action Officer is coordinating an input from a number of departments to develop a strategy for the Council on the rollout of EV Chargers in the public domain and also transitioning fleet to EVs.



## Environmental Awareness

- The annual Christmas decoration competition for primary schools was held. As with last year it was promoted as an in-school activity with a prize being offered for each participating school. No county awards were held as a Covid prevention measure. Twenty primary schools participated in the competition this year.
- Discussions were held with the PPN network on opportunities to seek funding under the Climate Action Fund which has a theme of Climate Education, Capacity Building and Learning by Doing. It was agreed that a project to assist SECs who have completed energy master plans would be beneficial. A group including PPNs, SEAI county mentors and the three local authorities of Wicklow, Meath and Kildare are working to develop an application for funding with Irish Rural Link who will be lead partner for the application. If successful, the project will work with the Energy Bureau being established for the three local authorities.
- Funding has been awarded by the EPA for two LAPN projects this year. The first project for which funding was granted will be for a Wicklow Naturally webinar on the circular economy for food producers. This project will be delivered in collaboration with the Wicklow LEO, highlighting the Green for Micro programme. Work has commenced on developing content on the circular economy for the Wicklow Naturally website. The webinar has been scheduled for February the 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- A second project will link to the Bikes for Africa project and involve delivery of workshops on bicycle repair in the three larger recycling centres and a video animation to promote extending the life of bicycles through good maintenance. Workshops will target both adult and youth participation.
- An LAPN project to provide training on composting has now been completed with training provided in Hollywood, Blessington, Grangecon and Newtownmountkennedy. Advice was also given to Clermont campus. The project was extended in December to include Loreto College in Bray.
- Judging has been completed in the annual Tidy Town, Estates and sustainable development awards. This year the awards referenced the sustainable development goals.
- The annual Tree Grant was advertised with a closing date for the 8<sup>th</sup> of October. Grants of up to 75% are provided for trees planted. Twenty nine applicants were successful in being awarded a grant to plant native trees with funding provided for 4,700 trees in total. Municipal districts were consulted on suitability of sites selected by communities. Four groups had completed planting by the end of the year with most delaying planting events due to Covid.
- Wicklow County Council is one of three local authorities involved in an EPA funded pilot on separate collection of textiles which will test different approaches for improving the collection



of textiles. Donegal and Clare will test new collection systems while Wicklow will use a communications campaign to increase use of existing textile disposal options. The communications campaign will target one town, for which we will use Arklow, focusing on the charity shops in the town and the recycling centre.

- 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. Matching gifs will be developed which can be shared by residents associations more easily on Whats app groups and will serve as reminders of the main campaign. The videos are currently in production.
- Eleven teams from County Wicklow successfully completed entries for this year Relove Fashion Competition which offers students the opportunity to develop skills in developing a circular economy approach to textiles and fashion.

## Sustainable Energy Committees

Work continues on the Energy Map Plans, EMPs for Enniskerry, Greystones/Delgany, Wicklow and Blessington. Greystones/Delgany and Wicklow are almost complete.

Newtownmountkenedy, Glenmalure and Laragh have completed their Energy Master Plans (EMP) in November.

High Park in Kiltegan has just commenced working on its EMP with consultants.

The Arklow SEC received grant approval for EMP funding in December.

## Dog Licences

During the month of November 2021, 287 reminders were sent to owners of dogs whose licences expire-during the month or early December. A total of 348 annual dog licences were renewed and 21 Lifetime licences were issued in November.



## Harbours and Ports

### Activity at Wicklow Port

Month / Year	Ships	Single (Import or Export)	Double (Import & Export)	Transactions	Imports	Exports
Jan-21	9	9	0	9	7	2
Feb-21	9	9	0	9	7	2
Mar-21	11	11	0	9	9	2
Apr-21	11	11	0	11	8	3
May-21	8	8	0	8	8	0
Jun-21	11	10	1	12	9	3
Jul-21	12	12	0	12	10	2
Aug-21	9	9	0	9	9	0
Sep-21	8	7	1	9	8	1
Oct-21	6	6	0	6	4	2
Nov-21	6	4	2	8	5	3
Dec-21	7	6	1	7	5	2
2021 Total	107	102	5	109	89	22
2020 Total	91	88	7	102		
2019 Total	116	89	27	143		

## Pollution Control

### Pollution Response & Investigation

2 Water pollution complaints received and investigated.

8 Noise pollution complaints received and investigated.

1 Sewage pollution complaint received and investigated.

### Water Framework Directive National Monitoring Programme

12 Lakes monitored for checking compliance with environmental quality standards

8 Rivers monitored involving 21 samples for compliance with environmental quality standards.

### Water Framework Directive River Management Engagement and Investigative

The New Draft River Management Plan for 2022-2027 2021 has been published and submissions on the content of plan are invited.

2 Catchment engagement activities were undertaken.

# JANUARY 2022



## **Petrol Vapour Recovery Regulations**

1 Petrol vapour installation was certified.

## **Deco Paint Solvent Regulations**

1 Vehicle Refinisher Installations was inspected.

1 Vehicle Refinisher Installations was certified.

2 Advisory letters were issued to Vehicle Refinisher Installations.

1 Dry cleaner Installations was inspected.

## **Smokeless Coal Regulations**

9 inspections of wholesalers, distributors and retailers were carried out

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

New National Inspection Plan issued in December 2021.

44 Inspections assigned to Wicklow for 2022 with 55 per annum thereafter.

Prioritized area for inspections where risk to private wells and surface water is high.

Greater emphasis on public awareness

Submission made highlighting resource constraints

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

2 self-monitored licensed wastewater discharges to sewers/waters were reviewed.

## **Bathing Water Monitoring Programme**

EPA has assigned the classification of bathing water quality for 6 identified bathing waters based on monitoring data set 2018-2021.

Excellent: Greystones South, Silver strand, Brittas Bay North and Brittas Bay South, Clogga.

Good: Bray South.

Award of Blue Flag requires excellent quality classification.

## **Planning & Development**

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

# JANUARY 2022



## Well Grants

Number of New Applications	12
Number of New Wells Granted	1
Number of New Pumps Granted	12
Number of New Equipment (Filters etc.)Granted	20
Number of Inspections in advance/after works	25

## Arklow & Avoca Flood Relief Schemes

The Compulsory Purchase Order was signed by the Chief Executive and nominated member on the 25<sup>th</sup> of May 2021 and the Environmental Impact Statement and application to An Bord Pleanala was submitted to An Bord Pleanala on the 31<sup>st</sup> of May 2021

An Bord Pleanala has advised that Oral Hearing will take place in January 2022

Wicklow County Council has been working with the Law Department and the OPW in reviewing the submissions in order to prepare for the Oral Hearing

There were 21 submissions on the Planning Application and 9 submissions to the CPO, which are currently being considered.



## 5. Transportation, Water & Emergency Services

### Public Lighting

The total number of faults currently outstanding stands at **357**. Please note that some of these faults are dependent on ESB attendance and co-operation.

For your information below is a comparison on the number of outstanding faults to same period in the previous three years.

Year	2022	2021	2020	2019
Date	10/01/2022	11/01/2021	13/01/2020	07/01/2019
No. of Outstanding Faults	<b>357</b>	<b>381</b>	<b>594</b>	<b>343</b>
Difference		24	237	-14

	29th November 2021	6th December 2021	14th December 2021	10 <sup>th</sup> January 2022
<b>Access Issues (Attended)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Cable Fault (Attend)</b>	2	2	2	2
<b>ESB Required (Attended)</b>	23	20	21	21
<b>Knock Down (Attended)</b>	3	3	3	3
<b>Materials required</b>	3	3	3	3
<b>No Supply</b>	10	11	11	11
<b>On Hold</b>	11	13	14	14
<b>Submitted</b>	254	268	285	280
<b>Traffic Management Required</b>	13	13	12	15
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>357</b>
<b>Percentage of lights not working</b>	<b>2.19%</b>	<b>2.29%</b>	<b>2.39%</b>	<b>2.38%</b>

Status	ARKLOW MD	BALTINGLASS MD	BRAY MD	GREYSTONES MD	WICKLOW MD	Grand Total
<b>Access Issues (Attended)</b>		2	3	1	2	<b>8</b>
<b>Cable Fault (Attend)</b>	1				1	<b>2</b>





<b>ESB Required (Attended)</b>	6		4	3	8	<b>21</b>
<b>Knock Down (Attended)</b>		1	1		1	<b>3</b>
<b>Materials required</b>	1	1	1			<b>3</b>
<b>No Supply</b>	1	4	2	4		<b>11</b>
<b>On Hold</b>			5	3	6	<b>14</b>
<b>Submitted</b>	15	76	87	53	49	<b>280</b>
<b>TMR</b>	1	3	5	5	1	<b>15</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>357</b>

## Transportation Statistics (General)

	Total 2020	Running total 2021	November	December
Solicitors Queries	842	923	74	53
Road Closure Applications	23	53	3	7
Road Opening Licences	1279	1575	110	73
Abnormal Load Applications	33	54	5	1

### M11N11 Junction 4 to 14 Improvement Scheme

TII have allocated no funding in 2022 to progress Junction 4 to 14 Improvement Scheme and this scheme is now effectively paused. Wicklow County Council will continue to work with Partners TII and Department to highlight need for this important scheme to continue.

The scheme progressed through Phase 2 Option Selection with the announcement of the preferred route in August 2021, this cumulated with presentations to both Wicklow County Council and Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council elected members and TD's. During September a non-statutory public display of the preferred option was undertaken and both the project team with the land liaison team were available for consultation during a period of 6 weeks. The final Option Selection report was published on December 14<sup>th</sup>, and the project website was updated to include information for the Bus Priority Interim Scheme.

**M11N11 Bus Priority Interim Scheme** – The scheme progressed with the development of the Phase 2 (Options Selection) and Phase 3 (Design and Environmental Evaluation) during 2021. The Section 85 was agreed by both Wicklow County Council and Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County. An Interim Bulletin update was published in December for the scheme and the website was launched also. In 2022 the scheme will progress with its detailed design

**N11 Parallel Service Road at Kilmacanogue** - Substantial completion of the scheme was in September 2021. Snagging of outstanding works continued until the end of 2021. The road works speed limit order was lifted on 01 October 2021, with the exception of the Parallel Service Road which will retain the RWSLO of 50km/h. The speed limit of 60km/h included in the current bye-laws will apply on the N11 mainline. It is intended to amend this bye-law to allow a 100km/h speed limit as intended by the Part 8 for the scheme, a review of the speed limits for county Wicklow is currently being undertaken.



**N81 Knockroe Bend Realignment** – The scheme was completed in 2021, with the defect remediation works carried out in December.

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

Following the completion of the Phase 1 (Feasibility Report) for the N81 Tuckmill Lower, Hangman’s Bend, Whitestown Lower and Irishtown West projects (the ‘N81 Four Studies’), 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 Energy Reducing Public Lighting** – Airtricity completed the retrofitting of Energy Reducing public lighting at two sites along the N81, Hollywood Junction and Lambs Junction. Funding was allocated by TII for this project.

**URDF**

**Arklow HTC: Sub - Project Parade Ground Public Realm:**

2021 - Scheme under construction.

**Bray Sustainable Transport Bridge:**

2021 - Part VIII application for the above project went out on public consultation the 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2021, closing date was the 6<sup>th</sup> September 2021. An Bord Pleanála recommended that Wicklow Council suspend a decision on the Part 8 on the 30<sup>th</sup> August 2021 until such time that the Board determines if a EIAR is required for the above project. It should be noted that Wicklow County Council had already determined that an EIAR is not required.

A decision on whether an EIAR is required will be made by the Board on or before the 4<sup>th</sup> February 2022 and following determination a decision will be made in relation to detailed design.

**RRDF**

**Making Baltinglass Hub for South West Wicklow:**

2021 - Arup was appointed consultant on scheme and a tender package for construction issued in December.

**Blueprint for Blessington:**

2021 – A successful application was made under RRDF for project funding for design, planning and building purchase. Documents are being prepared for procurement of consultants for the masterplan.

**Newtownmountkennedy Town Centre Refurbishment Scheme / ‘Placemaking at Newtownmountkennedy’:**

Plans are following completion of public consultations and preliminary design, work is underway to prepare and lodge Part VIII documents for the scheme.

**Wicklow County Council Compulsory Purchase Chapel Road Pedestrian and Cyclist Infrastructure Improvement Scheme) No.1 Order, 2021**

An Bord Pleanála intends to determine the application for confirmation of this CPO on or before the 10<sup>th</sup> February 2022. Following decision it is intended that detail design and tender preparation will commence.

**Blessington Inner Relief Road:**



Preliminary ecological and aborist surveys for preferred route have been identified and designed, and landowners have been contacted. Ground investigation work to commence in January and detailed ecological surveys to be completed in end of Quarter 1 2022.

### **Arklow Shillelagh Greenway:**

2021 - Route has been identified, ecological surveys are completed Landowners have been informed of decision to acquire necessary lands by Compulsory Purchase Order. NIS and planning documents are being prepared.

### **Wicklow Greystones Greenway:**

2021 - Feasibility Report complete with emerging preferred route identified. Additional funding of €350,000 has been secured to undertake ecological surveys and prepare planning documents for the scheme.

### **Blessington Greenway:**

Route has been identified and letters of consent have been received from landowners Planning documents under Section 177AE of the Planning and Development Act were lodged with An Bord Pleanála for approval on 14th January 2022.

**Cunningham's Corner & Sallys Bridge** – Specific improvement grant project to continue in 2022

**Bridge Works** - Approximately 18 bridge rehabilitation projects varying in size and scale to be completed in 2022 with some bridge works being also funded through the Climate Adaption

**Winter Maintenance** – Very mild Christmas period – very little gritting over past month – 19 Grit nights to end of 2021 with 151 routes gritted in total

**Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project (LED retro-fit scheme)** – Eastern Region Works Contract project tender assessment board meeting have reviewed tender and awaiting decision on contract for the region.

**Speed Limit Review** - A county wide review of speed limits has commenced. Elected members, the Garda and a range of stakeholders are being contacted in advance of the preparation of a draft review document.

# JANUARY 2022



## Operational Fire Statistics December 2021

	Total stations	Bray	Greystones	Wicklow	Rathdrum	Arklow	Blessington	Dunlavin	Baltinglass	Carnew	Tinahely
Call sign		1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.8	1.9	2.1
<b>Two Stations Mobilised</b>											
Fire Domestic Persons Reported	2	1	1								
Fire Domestic	10	3	3	2	1	1					
Fire Caravan	0										
Road Traffic Collision (RTC)	36	6	6	7	6	1	2	2	2	2	2
Fire Alarm or CO <sub>2</sub> Activation	14	3	6	3	1	1					
Fire Outdoor: Gorse / bushes	3	1	1	1							
Fire Chimney	16	3	1	6		4					2
Fire Small / bin / skip / bonfire	8		3	3	1	1					
Fire Vehicle	3	2		1							
Flooding	11	2		1	1	1		1	2	2	1
Trees Down, Make Scene Safe	17		9	1	3	1	2				1
Ambulance Assist / Medical Assist	13	3	3	1	1	1	1			1	2
Electrical Incident	3	1	1			1					
River / Water Rescue	2			1		1					
Entrapment / Rescue / Lift	2			1	1						
Oil Spill / Road Hazard	3		1			1	1				
Animal Rescue	1	1									
Lock In / Lock Out	1					1					
False Alarm – Good Intent	11	4	4	2	1						
<b>Mobilised into other County</b>	<b>9</b>					3	1	1		4	

# JANUARY 2022



<b>Times Stations mobilised</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>
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There were **137 incidents** attended during the month of December 2021. Individual Fire Stations were mobilised on a total of **165 occasions** including 9 incidents in other counties.

Operational activity for the month of December **increased by 30% from the preceding month** (November 2021 – 127 mobilisations). This can be attributed to 11 flooding incidents on Christmas Day, 17 trees down, incidents on 7<sup>th</sup> December due to Storm Barra, an increase in ambulance assists (up from 8 to 13) an increase in false alarm “good intent” incidents (up from 2 to 11) and chimney fires (up from 3 to 16). There was a reduction in alarm activations (down from 25 to 14) and bonfires (down 18 to 8).

Operational activity for the month of December 2021 **was up 47% on the equivalent month in 2020** (December 2020 – 112 mobilisations). Most of the increase can be accounted for by strict COVID restrictions in 2020 and incidents related to severe weather events (trees down on 7<sup>th</sup> December and flooding on 25<sup>th</sup> December). Eliminating the weather event incidents activity levels are back close to 2019 levels.

## Sample Incidents (December 2021)

- 05/12/2021 Baltinglass and Dunlavin fire crews responded to an overturned car with casualty on the N81 near Stratford.
- 06/12/2021 Rathdrum and Arklow fire crews attended an RTC at Ballyraine involving a car leaving the road and striking a tree.
- 07/12/2021 There were 17 incidents of trees down (or similar) across the county, some involving vehicles and a caravan. 3 casualties were taken to hospital.
- 18/12/2021 Tinahely and Carnew crews attended an RTC at Deerpark where a vehicle had left the road trapping the occupant. The casualty was extracted successfully.
- 25/12/2021 There were 12 separate flooding incidents across the county on Christmas Day in areas such as, Shillelagh, Enniskerry, Dunlavin, Baltinglass, Rathdrum, Ashford and Kilmacanogue. 2 houses were affected and a number of businesses in Baltinglass.
- 27/12/2021 The only RTC in Wicklow that involved a fatality in 2021 occurred on the M11 when there was an incident involving a car and a bus.

## Incidents in County Kildare (2-incident):

- 10/12/2021 Blessington fire crew supported crews from Naas at an RTC near Glending.
- 27/12/2021 Dunlavin fire crew attended an alarm activation in Ballyshannon, Kilcullen.

## Incidents in County Wexford (6-incidents):

- 05/12/2021 Carnew crew attended an ambulance assist at Crannford, Gorey.
- 21/12/2021 Arklow crew supported crews from Gorey at an RTC at Borleagh, Inch,.
- 25/12/2021 Arklow and Carnew crews assisted crews from Gorey at flooding incidents on the M11 near Junction 23.
- 25/12/2021 Arklow crew assisted crews from Gorey at flooding at Brooklyn Court in Gorey.
- 25/12/2021 Carnew crew attended an ambulance assist at Boleyaun, Inch.
- 26/12/2021 Carnew crew assisted crew from Bunclody at an RTC at Coolmela, Clonegal.

## General

# JANUARY 2022



- A 2-day Emergency Medical First Responder course was run for 6 students in Blessington.
- Cork City Fire Brigade undertook a 1-week consolidation training course in Bray Fire Station for new recruits.
- Wicklow County Fire Service undertook a joint project with Baltinglass Tidy Towns to have a mural painted on the side wall of the Fire Station depicting local sites of significant historical and archaeological interest.

## Fire Prevention Statistics December 2021

Application type	Received	Deemed Invalid	Requested additional information	Inspections	Recommended Grant
Fire Safety Certificates	9		4		6
Regularisation Certificates	1		1		
Disability Access Certificates	6				2

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

## **Commencement Notices for Dec 2021:**

Commencement Notices Submitted: 16

- 2 Commencement Notices with Compliance Documents
- 6 Opt Out Declarations
- 3 Commencement Notices without Compliance Documents
- 5 Seven day Notice

### **Submission Statistics**

- 37 % of Commencement Notices - Opt Out
- 75 % of Commencement Notices Revised Information required & requested = 12 No. Commencement Notices (CN) of which
  - 2 are Compliance Documentation (17%)
  - 5 are Opt Out (42%)
  - 1 Without Compliance Documentation (8%)
  - 4 Seven Day Notice (33%)

# JANUARY 2022



- 10 Valid Commencement Notices
- 79 new build residential Units (in 63 new apartments)
- Invalidated CNs for November = 1
- **Certificates of Completion processed in December 2021**
  - 17 New No. of CCC submitted
  - 28 No. Validated
  - 0 No. Invalid

## **Submission Statistics**

28 No. Validated CCCs related to;

11 No CCCs submitted in November 2021

17 No CCCs submitted in December 2021

10 Revised Info Requests from December

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

Submissions of Certificate of Compliance on Completion have increased in November and December as demand for completion and closing of private dwellings prior to Christmas rose. All CCC's submitted in late November and December were validated excluding one CCC, where an extension of time was requested due to unforeseeable delays onsite.

Revised Information requests remain high as volume of Opt Outs in Wicklow is also on average between 50% to 60% each month. Opt Out submissions are generally from BCMS users who are unfamiliar with both BCMS and Building Regulations which leads to Building Control resources being directed to resolving both administration and technical issues with Opt Out Submissions.



## Organisational Development and Financial Matters

### 1. HR and Corporate Services

#### Recruitment

The following interviews were held in December:

- Clerical Officers – Permanent & Temporary
- Arts Services Coordinator (Grade V)
- Slaintecare Local Community Development Officer (Grade VI)
- Interim Chief Executive (Confined)
- School Wardens – Bray MD

#### Employee Numbers

	Q1 2021	Q2 2021	Q3 2021	Q4 2021*
<b>Employee Numbers</b>				
<b>Managerial/Administrative</b>	296	297	304	302
<b>Professional/Technical</b>	123	118	121	122
<b>Outdoor</b>	268	264	261	263
<b>Temporary/Seasonal</b>	51	71 (increase relates to lifeguards)	49 (reduction relates to lifeguards)	53
<b>Non DOHPLG</b>	8	8	8	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>746</b>	<b>758</b>	<b>743</b>	<b>748</b>

(\*Draft figures prior to final quarterly return)



# JANUARY 2022



## Access to Information

### F.O.I. Requests

December 2021: 7	December 2020: 7
Jan - December 2021: 94	Jan - December 2020: 97

### Ombudsman Requests

December 2021	1
January to December 2021	26

December 2020	1
January to December 2020	25

## Press Releases

December 2021 – 12 Press Releases

## Register of Electors

The Franchise Section are currently making final preparations to produce the 2022/2023 Live Register of Electors on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2022 which will come into force on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2022.

The Franchise staff will continue to strive for excellence and accuracy 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.

Once the Live Register is published we will be in contact with Nursing Homes with a view to updating the Disabled Special Voters List. It is hoped that when Covid Restrictions ease we can resume visiting Secondary Schools throughout the County with a view to getting 18 year olds registered to vote.

Work is ongoing and continuous throughout the year where is a lack of Eircodes and dates of birth. Wicklow Co Co are in the top 3 of local 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. Work is also progressing and the Wicklow County Council Franchise Section have significant input into, the new Electoral Register Modernisation Process with staff members forming part of the Department Committee on this process. The Franchise Section are also in the early stages of assisting the LGMA in developing an updated version of the current register database system with regular MS Team Meetings and discussions on this project. It is hoped to begin testing and troubleshooting this new system in late Spring 2022 with Wicklow being one of the two lead authorities on this project which in turn will be rolled out to other Councils as the year progresses'.



## Customer Service Hub

<b>2021 – Quarter 4</b>			
<b>Communication</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Public Counters</b>	<b>Transactions</b>
No. of Phone Calls	26,607	Motor Taxation	3,666
No. of Emails	2,788	Revenue	640
No. of Elected Members Emails	398	Social Housing Applications	92
CRM Cases	2,413		

### Further Updates:

- New Soft Call centre phone system launched
- A-D Caller Initiative launched on 3rd of Dec in Customer Service to mark International Day of Persons with Disabilities



## 2. I.C.T.

### IT Helpdesk

- The IT Helpdesk continues to streamline the workflow for the technical support team with an average of 24 tickets a day in December, providing assistance for both in-house and remote workers.
- Examination of system upgrades potential is underway.
- The upgrade of PC's in libraries and general offices continues and due to complete by end Q1 2022

### Domain Migration

- Server migration is now complete.

### Implementation of ePlanning

- Systems and Project Plan in Place to rollout ePlanning

### GIS & Systems Analysis

- Arklow Decarbonisation Zone data collection exercise has concluded with additional data transferred to consultants.
- Development of an interactive walking trails portal is ongoing. An additional mobile element is currently in development.
- Review of the draft County Development Plan has begun with a view to its publication.
- Migration of inhouse datasets to the cloud environment has been completed and have been amalgamated into their various applications.

### Business Systems/Applications Development

- Arklow Municipal District's Road's Section is collaborating with the inhouse Applications Development Team, to design and develop a new generation of "Smart" mobile data collection applications.
- The Applications' Team, in collaboration with the H&S Team, successfully designed and rolled out an online bookings system which facilitated the distribution of the flu vaccine to local authority staff.

### Customer Service Delivery

- Support for the Customer Service Innovation Hub is ongoing. 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 January 1st, 2020, to December 31st, 2021, were 1,442,640 This indicates a decrease of 1.18% in unique pageviews compared the same period the previous year.

- Social media accounts – followers to date

- o Facebook (Wicklow County Council) – 19,642 followers. This is an increase of 189 followers or 1.8% on the previous month.



- o Twitter (@WicklowCoCo) – 7506 followers. This is an increase of 56 followers or .75% on the previous month.
  
- o Instagram (@WicklowCoCo) – 2598 followers. This is an increase of 86 followers or 3.5% on the previous month.
  
- The Online Consultation Hub on Wicklow.ie continues to feature in enhanced consultation campaigns. These have included–
  - o Part 8 - To Construct 14 one-bedroom age friendly apartments over three storeys with associated works at 1 Marine Road
  - o Part 8 - To construct 106 residential units and crèche and all associated works at Burgage More, Blessington, Co. Wicklow
  - o Swan River Greenway and Old court Connectivity Scheme
  - o Age Friendly Survey
  - o Part 8 – 4 No. Group Housing Units at Avondale Heights, Rathdrum, Co. Wicklow
  
- Social media campaigns have continued over the last month.
  - o #KeepWell
  - o #OutdoorsForEveryone

## **Response to COVID-19**

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

- 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.
- Community Call Helpline remains in place with support to the helpline staff



## 3. FINANCIAL

### Revenue Account

REVENUE ACCOUNT							
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE SUMMARY BY SERVICE DIVISION AT 31ST DECEMBER 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	29,311,826	28,035,818	105%	(33,403,873)	(33,580,464)	99%	(4,092,047)
Road Transport & Safety	24,816,494	22,299,168	111%	(17,491,871)	(15,497,938)	113%	7,324,623
Water Services	5,295,745	5,823,666	91%	(6,329,679)	(6,857,035)	92%	(1,033,934)
Development Management	14,686,258	11,471,622	128%	(9,754,846)	(6,226,652)	157%	4,931,412
Environmental Services	12,181,078	11,897,222	102%	(2,461,730)	(2,069,370)	119%	9,719,348
Recreation and Amenity	8,078,903	7,946,046	102%	(1,290,404)	(882,197)	146%	6,788,499
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	1,518,736	1,496,632	101%	(848,747)	(834,228)	102%	669,989
Miscellaneous Services	19,313,246	10,447,823	185%	(17,993,241)	(7,747,758)	232%	1,320,005
Central Management Charges	19,351,678	19,212,563	101%	(1,039,715)	(1,000,000)	104%	18,311,963
Local Government Fund				(12,006,898)	(12,006,898)	100%	(12,006,898)
Pension Levy				0	0		0
Commercial Rates				(32,065,945)	(32,078,021)	100%	(32,065,945)
	<b>134,553,963</b>	<b>118,630,560</b>	<b>113%</b>	<b>(134,686,949)</b>	<b>(118,780,561)</b>	<b>113%</b>	<b>(132,985)</b>

### Cashflow/Overdraft

Wicklow County Council manages its cashflow requirements on a daily basis and did not avail of its overdraft facility during the period 1<sup>st</sup> December 2021 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021.

### Capital Account

CAPITAL ACCOUNT					
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE SUMMARY BY SERVICE DIVISION AT 31ST DECEMBER 2021					
	Opening Balance at 01/01/2021	Actual Expenditure	Actual Income	Transfers to/from Reserves	Closing Balance at 31/12/2021
	€	€	€	€	€
	Housing and Building	17,611,344	65,838,696	(72,897,898)	(534,750)
Road Transport & Safety	(44,050,309)	17,779,723	(19,722,581)	(97,917)	(46,091,083)
Water Services	(11,018,071)	312,976	(1,741,306)	(15,000)	(12,461,401)
Development Management	(8,802,936)	1,315,837	(1,436,540)	(1,060,308)	(9,983,947)
Environmental Services	1,504,016	3,734,423	(3,820,901)	(519,375)	898,162
Recreation and Amenity	(1,312,600)	3,450,935	(3,461,698)	(127,892)	(1,451,255)
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	(1,234,386)	321,263	(178,964)	(191,993)	(1,284,081)
Miscellaneous Services	(16,085,971)	1,774,708	(8,373,294)	(1,147,207)	(23,831,764)
	<b>(63,388,913)</b>	<b>94,528,559</b>	<b>(111,633,181)</b>	<b>(3,694,442)</b>	<b>(84,187,978)</b>



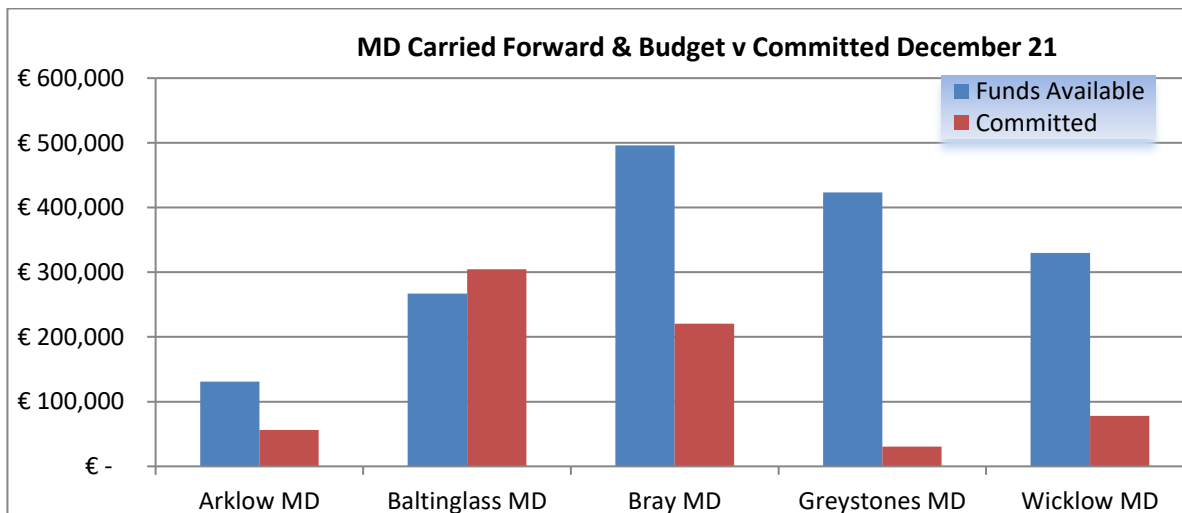
## Commercial Rates, Rents and Loan Collections

SUMMARY OF MAJOR COLLECTIONS AT 31ST DECEMBER 2021										
Income Collection Area	Opening Balance 01/01/2021	Accrued	Vacancy Property Adjustments	Write Offs	Waivers	Total for Collection	Collected	Closing Arrears 31/10/2021	Specific Doubtful Arrears	% Collection
Rates	8,194,672	32,065,945	2,110	4,710	(8,576,495)	31,690,943	(23,766,255)	7,924,688	0	75%
Rents & Annuities	2,735,687	16,731,158	0	(57,460)	0	19,409,386	(16,585,366)	2,824,020	0	85%
Housing Loans	446,214	2,105,014	0	0	0	2,551,229	(2,105,058)	446,170	0	83%

**Twelve Month Rates Waiver:** A waiver of commercial rates was applied to specified businesses for the first, second and third quarters of 2021. A further waiver was applied for Q4 2021 and was targeted at the hospitality, arts and certain tourism sectors. There was no application process required for this scheme. Wicklow County Council automatically applied a 100% credit in lieu of commercial rates for the quarters to eligible properties.

## General Municipal Allocation and Discretionary Fund 2021 and 2022

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 in 2021, however unspent monies in this area from 2020 have been made available to Municipal Districts. The Level 5 Covid restrictions on construction which were in place up to May 4<sup>th</sup> prevented any public realm works being carried out up to that date.





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	56,109	74,798
Baltinglass MD	245,041	22,000	267,041	304,483	- 37,442
Bray MD	433,456	62,500	495,956	220,669	275,287
Greystones MD	392,553	31,000	423,553	30,479	393,074
Wicklow MD	296,693	33,000	329,693	78,110	251,583
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,444,650</b>	<b>202,500</b>	<b>1,647,150</b>	<b>689,850</b>	<b>957,300</b>

The decision taken by Members at the LPT meeting on July 27<sup>th</sup> 2021 to raise the LPT basic rate by 6% resulted in an additional €1,043,460 in the Revenue Budget for 2022. This money was ring-fenced for Discretionary Funding in the Municipal Districts. The total Municipal District's General Municipal Allocation funding for 2022 is set out below:

Description	Arklow	Baltinglass	Bray	Greystones	Wicklow	Total
Town Twinning	6,000	3,000	10,000	6,000	6,000	31,000
Economic Development and Promotion	28,000	7,000	9,500	10,000	13,000	67,500
Christmas Festival	20,000	10,000	20,000	10,000	20,000	80,000
Festivals / Other	5,000	4,000	32,000	10,000	5,000	56,000
Civic Receptions	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	10,000
Discretionary Funding	195,649	195,649	260,865	195,649	195,649	1,043,460
<b>Total</b>	<b>256,649</b>	<b>221,649</b>	<b>334,365</b>	<b>233,649</b>	<b>241,649</b>	<b>1,287,960</b>

## Capital Investment Programme 2020-2022

The Capital Investment Programme 2021-2023 for Wicklow County Council 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 1<sup>st</sup> 2021. The table below outlines the proposed capital expenditure by programme group.



PROGRAMME GROUP	Expected Outlay				Proposed Funding				
	2021	2022	2023	TOTAL	Dev Charges <sup>1</sup>	Loan	Grant Aid <sup>2</sup>	Other <sup>3</sup>	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
<b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>	<b>193,892,728</b>	<b>230,103,469</b>	<b>227,298,446</b>	<b>651,294,643</b>	<b>26,230,734</b>	<b>37,795,000</b>	<b>513,280,868</b>	<b>73,988,042</b>	<b>651,294,643</b>





Project Scheme	Project Name	Project Cost	Match Funding
NRGF	Blessington Greenway	€15,000,000	€0
URDF	Arklow Historic Town Core	€3,134,684	€783,671
URDF	Wicklow Town - Library and Fitzwilliam Square	7,034,879	€2,407,470
URDF	Bray Public Transport Bridge	€8,600,000	€1,000,000
URDF	Bray Harbour Area Integrated Regeneration	€9,520,000	€2,380,000
RRDF 2019	Blueprint for Baltinglass	€3,566,968	€891,742
RRDF 2020	Placemaking Newtownmountkennedy	€477,000	€119,250
REDF	Wicklow County Campus - Content Creation Hub	€3,500,000	€2,000,000
Fáilte Ireland Destination Towns	Abbey Grounds Wicklow Town	€620,000	€120,000
Fáilte Ireland Outdoor Dining Scheme	Market Square Wicklow Town	€119,000	€19,000
Community CCTV Scheme	Greystones CCTV	€115,000	€75,000
Community CCTV Scheme	Blessington CCTV	€115,000	€75,000
WCC	Mill Road, Greystones Masterplan	€50,000	€50,000
ORIS 2018	Avonmore Way Link Bridge	€490,000	€98,000
ORIS 2018	Vartry Reservoir Walks & Car Park	€197,131	€39,426
ORIS 2018	St. Kevin's Way	€200,000	€40,000
ORIS 2018	The Spinc	€200,000	€50,400
ORIS 2019	Wicklow Way Infrastructure Enhancement	€25,000	€5,000
ORIS 2019	Baltinglass Road Cycle Trails	€11,000	€2,200
ORIS 2019	North Wicklow Trails Network Development	€310,700	€38,140
ORIS Measure 1 2020	Avondale Avonmore	€20,330	€2,033
ORIS Measure 1 2020	Trail Digitising	€19,600	€1,960
ORIS Measure 1 2020	Tinahely	€20,000	€2,000
ORIS Measure 1 2020	Stratford	€20,000	€2,000
ORIS Measure 1 2020	Long Distance Video	€21,400	€2,140
ORIS Measure 1 2020	Brockagh Mountain Access	€11,100	€1,110
ORIS Measure 1 2020	People Counters	€22,000	€2,200
ORIS Measure 1 2020	Sean Lenihan	€21,200	€2,120
ORIS Measure 1 2020	Glenmalure Bridge	€12,500	€1,250
ORIS Measure 3 2020	Bright light Blueway	€554,820	€55,482
Sports Capital Programme	Charlesland All Weather Pitch Refurbishment -	€59,271	€5,927
LSSIS	Wicklow Swimming Pool	€1,646,052	€493,816
LSSIS	Charlesland Running Track	€411,674	€123,502
CLAR 2019	Rathcoyle NS	€55,556	€2,778
CLAR 2019	Knockananna	€46,000	€3,000
CLAR 2021	Knockananna community allotment	€10,830	€1,083
CLAR 2021	Askanagap	€55,557	€5,557
CLAR 2021	Knockananna	€27,514	€2,501



Project Scheme	Project Name	Project Cost	Match Funding
T&V 2018	Blessington	€100,000	€20,000
T&V 2018	Wicklow	€150,000	€30,000
T&V 2019	Dunlavin	€26,216	€2,623
T&V 2019	Coolkenno	€30,000	€3,000
T&V 2019	Aughrim	€119,500	€17,925
T&V 2019	Redcross	€100,000	€20,000
T&V 2019	Delgany	€37,000	€3,700
T&V 2020 (Accelerated)	Bundled	€28,000	€2,800
T&V 2020 (Accelerated)	Dunlavin	€4,950	€495
T&V 2020 (Accelerated)	Roundwood	€40,000	€4,000
T&V 2020 (Accelerated)	Ballinaclesh	€44,000	€4,400
T&V 2020 (Accelerated)	Enniskerry	€44,000	€4,400
T&V 2020 (Accelerated)	Laragh	€27,000	€2,700
T&V 2020 (Accelerated)	Tinahely	€5,500	€550
T&V 2020 (Accelerated)	Baltinglass	€10,000	€1,000
T&V 2020 (Accelerated)	Arklow	€39,500	€3,950
T&V 2020 (Accelerated)	Wicklow	€44,444	€4,444
T&V 2020 (Accelerated)	Greystones	€44,444	€4,444
T&V 2020 (Accelerated)	Rathdrum	€27,000	€2,700
T&V 2020 (Accelerated)	Broadband Connection Points	€44,444	€4,444
T&V 2020 (Accelerated)	Kilcoole	20,000	2,000
T&V 2020 Main	Stratford	€200,000	€22,222
T&V 2020 Main	Avoca	€100,000	€11,111
T&V 2020 Main	Enniskerry	€100,000	€11,111
T&V 2020 Main	Annamoe	€100,000	€11,111
ORIS 2021 Measure 1	Kilmacanogue Nature Trail	€20,000	€18,000
ORIS 2021 Measure 1	Lacken Mass Path	€18,000	€16,200
ORIS 2021 Measure 1	Kilcoole Mass Path	€13,000	€11,700
ORIS 2021 Measure 1	Avonmore Kayak Project	€16,500	€14,850
ORIS 2021 Measure 1	Age Friendly Triobikes for older people	€23,160	€20,000
ORIS 2021 Measure 1	Keadeen Access	€13,500	€12,150
ORIS 2021 Project Development	Three Trout Route	€50,000	€45,000
ORIS 2021 Measure 3	The Sugarloaf Repair	€500,000	€450,000
ORIS 2021 Measure 2	Jubilee Loop and Avonmore Way link	€180,000	€162,000
ORIS 2021 Measure 2	Cliff Walk Protection Scheme	€220,000	€198,000
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>€58,861,924</b>	<b>€12,047,787</b>