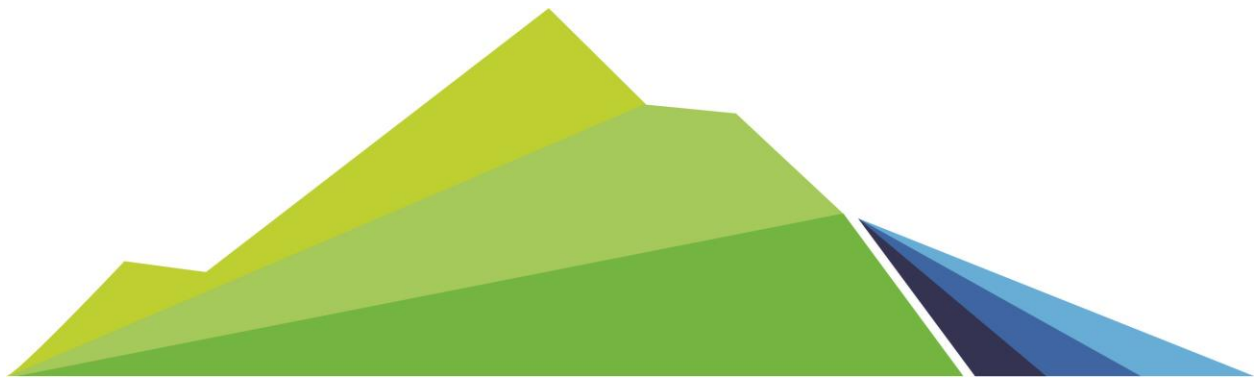


Wicklow County Council Chief Executive's Monthly Report



W I C K L O W

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This month:

Council of the Year

Wicklow County Council has been crowned 'Council of the Year' in Ireland in prestigious national awards.

Council of the Year recognises a local council which has gone above and beyond for the people of the community. It must have developed and be continuing to develop a range of innovative projects and initiatives which improve and enhance the social, environmental, cultural and economic aspects of community lives.

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

Wicklow was judged to be Council of the Year in the awards which were presented in a special ceremony in the Royal Dublin Convention Centre in Dublin on 17th February.

Now in its 18th year, the award scheme hosted by LAMA (Local Authority Members Association) and IPB Insurance, recognises and celebrates communities and the country's 31 local authorities working together.

Local Enterprise Week 2024

Small businesses and budding entrepreneurs will have the opportunity to sample a range of events aimed at helping them to start or grow their business as part of this year's **Local Enterprise Week** in Wicklow.

The initiative of Local Enterprise Offices nationwide, supported by Enterprise Ireland and the local authorities, takes place from the 4th to 8th March.

A range of events open to all across County Wicklow will focus on Green for Business, Sustainability, Digital for Business, Exporting and Start up Business Advice clinics.

The two National Spotlight events are open to everyone and can be accessed online. The first, "Understanding and leveraging future trends for your business" on Wednesday, 6th March, looks at what are the trends that will be emerging in the short and long term and how they will affect business. The session will also delve into how you can adapt and leverage these trends for business success.

The second spotlight event focuses on the area of sustainability. The "Sustainability imperative for business success" session on Thursday, 7th March, will look at how sustainability is becoming a bigger and bigger factor in business survival and success. Headlined by renowned broadcaster and science and environment expert, Liz Bonnin, it will show how the small changes in your business can make a big impact and most importantly how you can start.

Each of the 31 Local Enterprise Offices will be running a full programme of events in their area that will tackle a variety of areas relevant to small businesses and starting up. The events are open to all from budding entrepreneurs to established businesses and gives them the opportunity to get expert advice on key areas of business from financial skills, raising funds, exporting and boosting your business online to future trends such as sustainability and digitalization.

Housing & Community

Housing

	January 2024	January 2023
No. on list for Social Housing Support – (includes RAS & HAP)*	4531	4505
No. availing of Rental Assistance Scheme (RAS)	181	193
No. availing of Housing Assistance Payment	1431	2704
No. in Long Term Leasing Accommodation	22	22
No. in Short Term Leasing Accommodation	27	32

Allocation of Social Housing

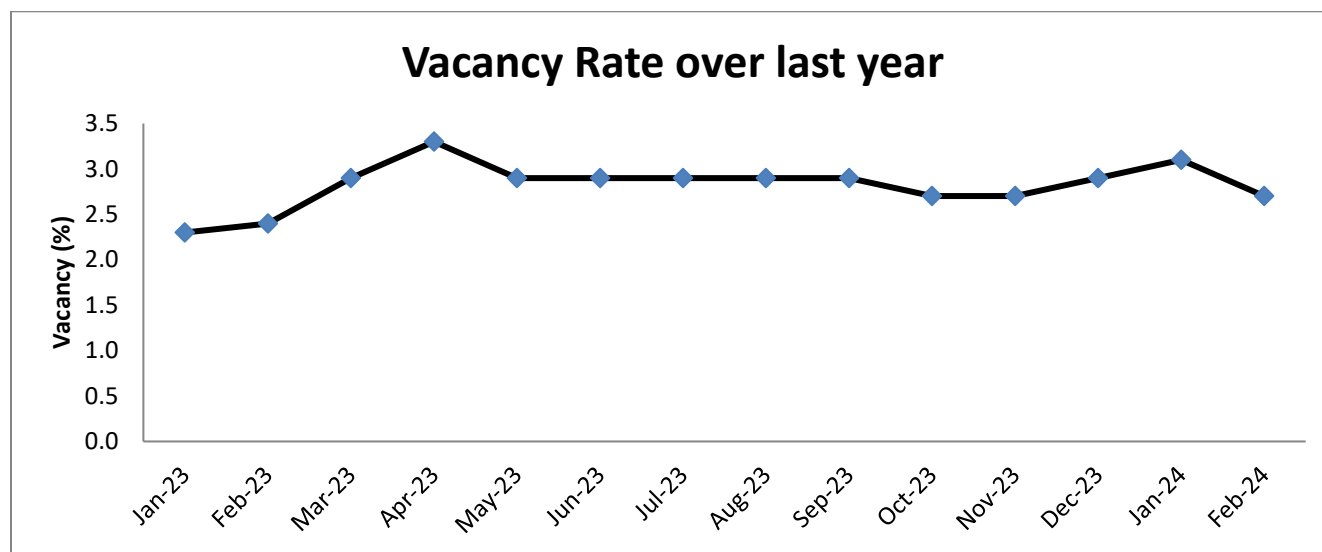
	January 2023	January 2024
Wicklow County Council	05	09
Approved Housing Bodies	75	19

Social Housing Stock

	January 2024	January 2023
Tenancies occupied	4906	4796
Total weekly rental accrual	325,402.95	325,148.28
Arrears	3,254,269.67	2,786,049.90

MD	Completed in 2024	In progress	Not started	Completed but not yet tenanted	Vacant
Arklow	0	11 (+2)	9 (+2)	0 (0)	20 (+4)
Baltinglass	1	14 (+1)	3 (-4)	8 (+1)	25 (-2)
Bray	0	4 (-7)	29 (-1)	10 (-11)	43 (-19)
Greystones	0	5 (0)	0 (0)	0 (-1)	5 (-1)
Wicklow	2	13 (+3)	30 (-3)	1 (+1)	44 (+1)
2024 Totals	3	47 (-1)	71 (-6)	19 (-10)	137 (-17)
2023 Total	140				
Total vacancy as % of Total Stock (total vacancy + occupied tenancies)	2.7% (-0.4%)				

Figures in brackets indicate change on last month



Housing Maintenance – Boiler Maintenance

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

Housing Supply – Programme of Delivery

Schemes Recently Completed	UNITS	CURRENT STATUS
Ard na Greine, Bray	31	Completed and allocated
Delany Park Arklow (Phase 2 + 3)	47	Completed and allocated
Hawkstown Park (Ashtown Lane), Wicklow Design & Build	40	Completed and allocated
Mountainview, NTMK Design & Build	22	Completed and allocated
Sheehan Court Arklow	7	Completed and allocated
Avondale Phase 2 Design & Build	20	Completed and allocated
Cedar Court Bray Design & Build	14	Completed
Greenhills Road (Affordable	36	Completed
Schemes on Site	Units	Current Status
Cois Droichead, Greystones	41	Completion anticipated Q1 2024
Ballard Shillelagh	20	Completion anticipated Q1 2024
Lugduff Tinahely	20	Contractor on site
Merrymeeing Rathnew Phase 2	21	Construction on going

Liam Kavanagh Park Ballynerrin	10	On site completion anticipated Q1 2024
Pipeline Schemes	Units	Current Status
Merrymeeing, Rathnew, Phase 3	7	About to commence Section 179a
Fassaroe, Bray	15	Preparing tender documents
Burgage More Blessington	106	Part of PPP bundle 3 with NDFA. Tender stage
Lott Lane, Kilcoole	75	To be re-tendered
Rehills, Bray	80	PPP bundle 5
Burnaby, Greystones	75	PPP Bundle 5
Ballinahinch Ashford	25	Section 179a withdrawn
Tinahask, Arklow	75	Design stage.
Sheephouse Arklow	30	Design Stage

Part V

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

The following units are due during 2024:

Location	No. of Units	Due for Delivery	Method
Bray	1	Delivery due Q1 2024	CALF
Dunlavin	3	Delivery due Q1 2024	CALF
Delgany	1	Delivery due Q1 2024	WCC
Rathnew	2	Delivery due Q1 2024	WCC
Greystones	8	Delivery due Q1 2024	WCC
Wicklow	3	Delivery due Q1 2024	WCC
Rathdrum	2	Delivery due Q1 2024	WCC

Potential units

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

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

Turnkey

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

The following units are due during 2024:

Location	No. of Units	Due for Delivery	Method
Bray	17	Delivery Due Q1 2024	CALF
Dunlavin	7	Delivery Due Q1 2024	CALF
Greystones	5	Delivery Due Q1 2024	WCC
Baltinglass	2	Delivery Due Q3 2024	WCC
Arklow	3	Delivery Due Q3 2024	WCC

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

Capital Advance Leasing Facility (CALF)

The Approved Housing Bodies are actively pursuing a number of potential CALF projects and are liaising closely with the Council on a regular basis. The members will be kept updated. Approved Housing Bodies also make applications for CALF acquisitions to address a particular housing need. 6 units delivered in 2023.

CALF Acquisitions 2024	No. of Units	Delivery Schedule	Scheme
Bray	3	Delivered February 2024	CALF

Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS) Wicklow County Council is continuing to support acquisitions under the Capital Assistance Scheme with Dublin Simon, Circle Housing, Ark Housing and Peter McVerry Trust etc. 9 units delivered in 2023.

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

Expressions of Interest – Social Housing on Council lands

Parnell Road (Central Garage site)

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

Kilbride Lodge and Sutton Villas

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

Infill Sites

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

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

› Grant funding for private house - €2,352,438.16 (2023 budget) - €299,120.97 spent to date

› Grant funding for social house - €818,793.00 (2023 budget) - € 29,839.79 spent to date

2024 – 90 open applications

2024 - 13 approvals (Plus 173 from 2023)

2024 – 50 applications paid and closed

Year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Number of Grants Received/Processed	249	216	266	327	281	456	30

Co. Wicklow Strategic Plan for Housing People with a Disability

The Housing and Disability Steering Group has prepared the new draft Co. Wicklow Strategic Plan for Housing People with Disability 2022-2027. The Implementation plan for Housing People with a disability was launched on 22nd June and workshops are taking place nationwide facilitated by the housing agency regarding the implementation plan. This workshop took place at the January meeting of the HDSG. A schedule of meeting for the group have been set for 2024 in order to implement the plan's targets and goals

Housing for Older People - Age Friendly Schemes

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

Vacant Homes Scheme

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

8 Sycamore Drive, Newtownmountkennedy	House allocated and tenant in situ.
5 Ashwood, Roundwood	House allocated and tenant in situ.
33 Connolly Street, Arklow	House allocated and tenant in situ.
100 Wicklow Heights, Wicklow Town	House allocated.
2 Lakeview Grove, Wicklow Town	House allocated.
18 Delgany Glen, Greystones	House allocated.

30 South Green, Arklow	Refurbishment to start shortly.
5 Priory Way, Delgany	Refurbishment to start shortly.
6 Ashleigh, Ashford	Refurbishment to start shortly.
114 Hillside, Greystones	Refurbishment to start shortly.
41 Kilgarron Park, Enniskerry	Refurbishment to start shortly.
108 Charnwood, Bray	Contracts for Sale are to issue shortly
10 Liam Mellows Avenue, Arklow	Compensation now agreed.
88 Wicklow Heights, Wicklow Town	Pending registration in the PRAI.
53 South Green, Arklow	Contract for Sale nearly complete.
53A South Green, Arklow	Contract for Sale hearily complete.
2 Harbour Road (“Merdenville”), Arklow	Compensation now agreed.
36 Wheatfield Bray	CPO published March 2023. Currently engaging with owner with a view to purchase by agreement.
27 Wolfe Tone Square South, Bray.	Negotiations under way
1 further CPOs (further house in Bray and Wicklow Town) to be published.	

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

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

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


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

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

To qualify for the grant, applicants must:

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

• Number of Applications	80
Applications in progress/information requested	18
Applications finalised	50
Applications paid	2
Applications pending execution of Legal Deed of Charge.	5
Applications withdrawn	5



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

Ref. 827


For Sale

READY TO BUILD SCHEME

5 Serviced Sites for New Homes

@

Kilcommon, Tinahely, Co. Wicklow.




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

<p>Site No. 1 – 0.217 acre (0.088 ha)</p> <p>Site No. 2 – 0.200 acre (0.081 ha)</p>	<p>Site No. 3 – 0.121 acre (0.049 ha)</p> <p>Site No. 4 – 0.117 acre (0.047 ha)</p> <p>Site No. 5 – 0.140 acre (0.057 ha)</p>
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Guide Price: **Site No.'s 1 & 2 - €50,000**
 Site No.'s 3, 4 & 5 - €35,000

Riverside Business Centre, Tinahely, County Wicklow
 Tel: 0402 38899 | Email: info@kwa.ie
<http://www.kwa.ie>
A.M Kiersey Limited: C.R.D. reg no: 409002, VAT. reg no: 6629002V. PSRA Registration No: 001217



Number of Sites	5
Number of applications	3

Derelict Properties

The following four derelict properties have been approved for sale:

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

FEBRUARY 2024



Affordable Housing update

Greenhill Road – 36 Houses

- 33 sold
- 2 nearing completion
- 1 (house that flooded) will be ready to offer in the coming weeks

Aldborough Manor Baltinglass – 22 Houses

- 58 applied
- 29 Eligible
- 29 offered
- 7 accepted

The Scheme will be readvertised.

Rathnew – 44 houses

- To be advertised within the next month.

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

Local Authority Home loans up to January 2024

Received	Approved in principle
4	5

2016 Tenant (Incremental) Purchase Scheme

	To date	January 2023
Applications Received	418	2
Completed	109	0
Declined	280	0
Ongoing	15	15

Homeless figures for January 2024

Addressing Homelessness			
	As at 31/01/2024	Year To Date	As at 31/01/2023
No of New Presentations	26	26	38
No. of Repeat Presentations	0	0	0

No. of Families (Minimum 1 Adult + One Child)	6	6	21
No. of Individuals (Single Adult, no children)	17	17	17
No. Of Couples (2 Adults, no children)	2	2	0
No. of Children	6	6	37
NTQ/Asked to Leave/Landlord selling	8	8	13
Family Circumstances	11	11	12
Leaving Prison/Hospital Care	2	2	1
Mental Health	5	5	3
Risk of Homelessness	7	7	1
Arrears/Loss of Income	1	1	2
Addiction Issues	3	3	1
DV/DA	1	1	3
Medical Issues	1	1	1
Overcrowding	2	2	2
Unsuitable/Voluntarily Left	7	7	9
ASB:	0	0	1
Rough Sleeping*	3	3	3
Sofa Surfing*	3	3	6
Staying with Family*	5	5	6
Staying with Friends*	0	0	1

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

Own Door Temporary Accommodation at 31/01/24	
Families	16
Adults	28
Children	49
Single individual	2

Bed & Breakfast Accommodation - No. of Homeless Emergency Accommodation Placements & Duration @ 31/01/23								
	No. of Households	No. of Adults	No. of Children	< 3 mths	3-6 mths	6-9 mths	9-12 mths	>12mths
Household breakdown	22	27	22	4	8	3	3	4
Bed & Breakfast Accommodation - No. of Homeless Emergency Accommodation Placements & Duration @ 31/01/24								
	No. of Households	No. of Adults	No. of Children	< 3 mths	3-6 mths	6-9 mths	9-12 mths	>12mths

Household breakdown	18	22	21	9	4	4	1	3
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Homeless Hap Place Finder

The Homeless HAP Place finder provides assistance in:

- seeking out potential properties suitable for households currently identified as homeless or at risk of homelessness;
- liaising with specific households to establish their specific needs;
- establishing relationships with local property agents and landlords; and,
- supporting those homeless households to (a) prevent the necessity to enter emergency accommodation or (b) to exit emergency accommodation and secure a tenancy.
- To date, 510 households (359 families & 145 singles) have been assisted under the Homeless HAP Scheme in Wicklow County Council from the inception on 1st October, 2018 to 31st January 2024. (212 homeless cases, 282 prevention cases to date and 15 direct provision). 135 properties were sourced by WCC.

Addressing Homelessness in partnership with Approved Housing Bodies

Homeless Supported Temporary Accommodation – Kilmantin Hill, Wicklow

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

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

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

Homeless Family Service – Fitzwilliam Road, Wicklow

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

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

Homeless Supported Temporary Accommodation – San Remo, Bray

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

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

The Neighbourhood Liaison Committee is now operational and meets monthly.

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

Homeless Supported Accommodation - Carraig Eden, Greystones

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

Other Homeless Supported Accommodation

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

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

Housing First

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

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

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

Homeless Action Plan 2024 – 2026

The plan is currently being updated and will be presented to the Housing and Corporate Estate SPC at their February meeting and to the full Council at the April meeting.

Youth Homeless Strategy 2023-2025

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

Traveller accommodation

Capital Programme

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

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

Energy Efficiency

Energy Efficiency Fabric Upgrade Phase 2

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

Ukrainian Response

- As of 13^h February the numbers of Ukrainians Displaced Persons in emergency type accommodation is 1,783 (although we know that there are considerably more in the County)

This number is broken down as follows –

- Arklow MD 248 No.
 - Baltinglass MD 370 No.
 - Bray MD 767 No.
 - Greystones MD 199 No.
 - Wicklow MD 199 No.
- WCC are currently assessing all Displaced Ukrainians persons in the County in order to identify their accommodation needs as well linking them in with all the relevant services and supports within the community.
 - WCC are working through a list of pledged properties within the County and matching families accordingly. As of the 30^h January we will have housed 250 number displaced Ukrainian people into pledged stand-alone Offer a Home properties
Larger buildings and vacant units are also being identified and explored as potential options for medium to long term accommodation.
 - The Community Response Forum continues to meet on a regular basis.

Community

County Wicklow Age Friendly Programme

[County Wicklow Age Friendly Strategy 2023-27](#)

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

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

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

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

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

The Older People's Council (OPC) Executive Group will meet on the 28th of February 2024.

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

Age Friendly Ireland Committee

The Age Friendly Ireland team will meet for a planning workshop scheduled for Thursday 22nd of February 2024 and Friday 23rd February 2024 in the Headfort Arms, Kells, Co. Meath.

CLÁR Funding Scheme

Rathdrum Cancer Support (€44,034) and Wicklow Irish Community Rapid Response (€50,000) were awarded funding under the CLÁR Funding Scheme (Measure 2: Mobility, Cancer Care and Community First Responders Transport). In total, Minister Humphreys announced over €2 million for 37 Vehicles for Mobility, Cancer Care and Community First Responders throughout the Country.

On 1st December by Minister Humphreys announced the first round of successful applications, under Measure 1 of the CLÁR 2023 scheme, for rural sports facilities Knockanna GAA were successful in securing funding of €50,000 toward the cost of resurfacing the car park and a walkway around the pitch, to improve community accessibility.

On 12th January 2024 Minister Humphreys announced a further 152 successful applications under Measure 1 of the CLÁR 2023 scheme. Two County Wicklow projects were amongst the successful applications.

Askanagap Community Hall secured funding of €50,000 towards the renovation of the hall and Ballymanus Community Field secured funding of €26,865 to upgrade the lighting at the field.

Town & Village Renewal Scheme 2023

Closing date for submissions of Expressions of Interest in the Town and Village Renewal Scheme 2023 was 5th October 2023. The TVRS23 Projects Assessment and Selection Panel, met in Wicklow County Council, on Tuesday 10th October, to determine which projects will be selected by Wicklow County Council for submission to the Department for Rural and Community Development this year.

All Expressions of Interest were assessed based on the eligibility criteria and priorities contained in the 2023 Town and Village Renewal Scheme Outline. The panel selected 5 projects for development into an application for grant funding. These were submitted to DRCD on 10th Nov 2023.

Wicklow County Council awaits the announcement, by Minister Humphreys, of the successful applicants.

Disability and Inclusion Steering Committee

Wicklow's first Disability and Inclusion Strategy has been launched, with Wicklow County Council's Disability and Inclusion Steering Committee (DISC) working towards the development of the strategy since it was established in 2020.

The strategy outlines how Wicklow County Council and its partners intend to make the services they provide equitable and accessible to all. It aims to ensure that persons with a disability have an equal opportunity to pursue their ambitions, realise their potential and live fulfilling lives. Individual actions are aligned to the United Nations Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities throughout the document.

Wicklow Arts Office

2024 Strategic Projects Award Scheme Recipients Announced

Wicklow County Arts Office announced the 10 recipients of the 11th edition of the Strategic Projects Award Scheme.

Open to a diverse range of applicants, including artists, national resource organisations, individual curators, and artist collectives, this year's scheme featured two funding streams and welcomed participants from various arts disciplines.

Funded by Arts Council and Creative Ireland, the annual Strategic Project Award Scheme recipients for 2024 are:

- Aine Stapleton
- Aisling Ennis
- Brian Murphy
- Eamon Sweeney
- Eoin O'Malley
- Grace O'Malley
- Kate Strain
- Robert Manson
- Signal Arts Centre
- West Wicklow Chamber Music Festival

2024 Arts Act Funding application deadline

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

Applications are currently being accepted under three schemes:

- Artist Award
- Artist & Community Collaboration Award
- Arts Festival Award

This year the Arts Office offered a new application support service from Wednesday, 10th January to Friday, 9th February 2024. With over 50 artists participating, the application support service offered artists, communities, and festival organisers the opportunity to engage in a 30-minute consultation to pose questions and seek advice from Síle Stewart, Arts Services Coordinator. The deadline to apply was 16th February.

Creative Places Baltinglass: Sitting Room Session #2: 'Home'

Creative Places Baltinglass and local musician and producer Mark Caplice presented a night of original music featuring three artists, Pádraig McGrath, One Night in August, and Amy Barrett in Horan's in Baltinglass, on Friday, 23rd February at 7pm.

IWC National Mentoring Programme 2024

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

Two mentorships will be available for County Wicklow writers and this initiative is supported by Wicklow County Arts Office and the Arts Council. The deadline to apply was 2nd March.

Artist one-to-one Coaching Returns

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

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

The deadline to apply is Tuesday, 19th March 2024 at 4pm.

Creative Wicklow Grant Scheme Announced

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

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

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

The deadline to apply is Tuesday, 19th March 2024 at 4pm.

Blessington Greenway

Planning documents were submitted to An Bord Pleanála under Section 177AE of the Planning and Development Act. On 16th March 2023, Wicklow County Council received a request for further information (RFI) from An Bord Pleanála. The Board had sought a response to this RFI request by the 8th of June 2023. However, due to the significant information sought by ABP, an extension to the 29th of January 2024 was granted by ABP.

On Friday 26th January 2024, Wicklow County Council submitted a full comprehensive response to this RFI to meet the deadline.

Community Recognition Fund

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

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

Greystones Community Park	Boules/pétanque playing ground
	Landscaping and Community Placemaking

Pride of Place 2024

The new 2024 Pride of Place brochure will issue in March 2024, including new categories for this year’s nominations. The 5 Wicklow MD’s have been notified and they can submit suggestions of voluntary organisations in their area for nominations. The selection process will commence once submissions are received from the MD’s.

Coastal Blueway

Following meetings with Irish Leisure Consultants (ILC), we are developing a timeline for the project over the next few months, with online consultations taking place in the next few weeks and in-person meetings in Wicklow due to take place from mid-March.

Wicklow Outdoor Recreation Committee (WORC)

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

Wicklow Way Partnership

A meeting of the Wicklow Way Partnership took place on the 6th February 2024 where a MOU was signed by all parties and updates were given on the new Wicklow Way logo and a formal maintenance structure for the trail.

The Wicklow Way is Ireland’s oldest long-distance trail, established in 1981 and now attracting many visitors from both home and abroad to its 132km of trail that stretch from Marlay Park in South County Dublin to Clonegal in County Carlow, passing across lands owned by Coillte, the National Parks and Wildlife Service, private landowners and roads managed by the local authority.

Over the last number of years there has been a steady improvement in the quality of the trail with works carried out under the Walks Scheme, by Coillte, NPWS, the Dublin Mountains Partnership and Mountain Meitheal. Despite this work, there has been a lack of coordinated management and regular monitoring and has lacked a focussed approach to delivering improvements in a strategic fashion. A key conclusion of the Review of National Trails suggested that trails need to be managed as an integrated entity and, therefore, require a representative management structure with shared commitment. To address this important issue, the ad hoc group agree to the establishment, by way of a Memorandum of Understanding, The Wicklow Way Partnership or WWP.

The overall objective of the Wicklow Way Partnership is to bring together all those organisations who have some part to play in the management and improvement of the trail and who currently contribute resources to the trails management, to develop an integrated plan and management structure for the trail.

All WWP partners: Wicklow Co Co, Coillte, Mountain Meitheal, County Wicklow Partnership, National Parks and Wildlife Service and Dublin Mountains Partnership shall commit to support the partnership for a five

year period to be reviewed in June 2028. Mountain Meitheal will contribute an approximate 200 hours of labour and will provide expertise and training support to agreed projects. The other partners will each contribute €5,000 per year to the maintenance fund.

Project Development Measure (PDM) 2023

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

OR423WW01 Lugnaquilla Recreation Plan €45,000.00

Quotation requests were sought from six companies based in Co Wicklow to provide a Feasibility study into management of Recreation on Lugnaquilla. The deadline for submission of quotations was Monday 12th February 2024.

Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme

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

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

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

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

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

ORIS Project	Present Position
North Wicklow Trails	New connection almost completed linking the Sugar Loaf to the Vartry Trails. Signage to be added.
Clogherna Access, Glenmalure	Works to improve surface and increase traffic safety at the Clogherna access to Baravore Bridge, Glenmalure. The car park has been upgraded and the access works are still being carried out. Project extension requested to April 2024.
Avonmore Kayak Project	This project is near completion. An extension until March 2024 has been requested from the Department. Railings are being fitted at Rathdrum bridge and privacy screens are now in place at the Meetings of The Waters in Avoca.
Kilmacanogue Nature Trail	Completed. Enhanced links between Wicklow Uplands and the Sugarloaf Way. New signage being added.
Cliff Walk Protection Scheme	This project is paused briefly to allow finalising the purchase of third-party land.
Sugarloaf Repair	Work on this project is scheduled to commence soon.

Three Trout Route Project Developments	At project design stage with two new bridges to be installed. Project extension requested to March 2024.
Ballyboy Equestrian Trail	Completed with new signage being added.
Miner's Way	Upgrading and resurfacing completed with new signage being added.
Glen Turn Cliff Walk	Completed and new signage added.
Red Kite Loop Wild Play Area, Avoca	Play structures have been identified and design is currently under way. Project extension to May 2024 granted by the Department.
Wicklow Uplands	Project nearly completed with a second airlifting of surface materials to the sensitive site in the Wicklow Uplands now scheduled. Project extension requested to March 2024.
Russborough Parklands and House Trail	Upgrading of existing walking trails and installation of a cycle hub. Project is being completed in liaison with landowners.
Coolkenno Equestrian Trail	The aim of this project is to construct an 8km equestrian trail and associated access points.



Healthy Wicklow

Activators in Care trainers' workshop – this one-day workshop will take place in Carnew Community Care Centre on Friday 9th February. 12 participants will complete this workshop which will provide training to staff in a care setting and will enable them to lead activity sessions with older people with balance concerns or mobility issues.

Pickleball programme – two Pickleball programmes come to Tinahely Community Hall for the first time. Both commenced on 24th February - one targeting children 10 – 15 years, and the other for adults.

Knockananna physical activity programme – started in Knockananna Community Hall and continues every Friday growing in numbers each week.

Wicklow Travellers Group - In February, the WTG Boy's youth group are planning on using Healthy Ireland funding to rent the Rathnew AFC Hall for 6 weeks of indoor football. It is proposed that 10-12 young Traveller males between the ages of 11-14 years will partake in the activity. The aim is to build their strength and endurance, encourage team building and to support both their physical and mental health. They will be provided with fruit, water, and other healthy snacks.

Period Poverty Initiative – has really gathered momentum across the County. We have now targeted sports clubs where there has been huge engagement to provide free period products to sporting female facilities. This month alone the below clubs will benefit from the period poverty project:

- Tinahely GAA Club
- Eire Og Camogie Club
- Knockananna Camogie Club
- Hollywood GAA
- Stratford GAA
- Dunlavin GAA
- Wicklow Rovers



Sláintecare Healthy Communities

The Traveller Community Trauma Project is underway this month. Two-day in-person Trauma Training aimed specifically for Travellers was provided under SHC Seed Fund. In attendance were the Bray Traveller Community Development Group and a host of community stakeholders and partners including the Bray Community Gardaí, Bray Community Addiction Team, Bray drugs Task Force, HSE Traveller Mental Health Officer, Bray Sports Promotion Unit, St Fergal's School Liaison Worker, Bray Youth Service, and the Fassaroe Resource Centre. The training went very well, and feedback from all was very positive.



Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership

Club Development Grants

Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership have opened the 2024 Club development small grant scheme. The maximum amount available to each club is €1,500. The closing date is 20th March.

Get Going Get Rowing Programme

The get going get rowing programme gives secondary students the opportunity to give rowing a try in school during their PE timetable. Rowing Ireland coaches attended three secondary schools in Arklow: St Marys College, Glenart College and Arklow CBS. The coaches delivered a 4-to-6-week rowing programme to 250 students approx. On conclusion of the programme, Wicklow Sports and Recreation Partnership and Rowing Ireland organised a rowing blitz for the schools participating in the programme in Coral Leisure Arklow.

Shuttletime Teacher Training

Badminton Ireland in conjunction with Wicklow Sports and Recreation Partnership held teacher training for primary schools in County Wicklow. Teachers attended the training from Lacken National School, St Catherine Special School, Greystones Educate Together and Scoil Chulann Bray.

Beginners' Strength and Conditioning

Fifteen people attended beginners' strength and conditioning classes with Jenny Fortune in Coral Leisure Arklow on Monday mornings for a 6-week programme. The class is designed to increase strength, enhance cardiovascular health, and improve posture, flexibility, and mobility.

Buggy Buddies Pilates Baltinglass

Fourteen women along with their babies attended the 6-week buggy buddies Pilates class in Baltinglass Badminton Hall. The tutor, John Kenny worked on mobility, flexibility, pelvic floor, and core work. This class provided a platform for new mums in the area to get to know each other.

Social Volleyball

A six-week Social Volleyball Programme in partnership with Volleyball Ireland is taking place Sunday mornings at 10am in Gaelscoil Chill Mhantáin. Lina Dzurnak from Volleyball Ireland is leading the programme. Participants are shown the basic volleyball skills, drills rules, and mini games.

HSE Seed Funding - Chronic Condition Programmes

Strength & Balance Programme

The Strength & Balance Programme is aimed at people who are keen to falling and struggle with balance and mobility, taking place on Tuesday mornings at 11am in Shoreline Leisure Greystones, delivered by two Shoreline Leisure staff.

Aqua Aerobics for People with Chronic Pain

The Aqua Aerobic for People with Chronic Pain is aimed at people with chronic pain such as: arthritis or back pain. This programme is taking place on Monday mornings at 12pm in Shoreline Leisure, Bray with a staff member delivering.

Upcoming Programmes:

- Aqua Aerobics for People with Parkinsons – starting Tuesday 12th March at 11am in Druids Glen Hotel
- Phase 4 Cardiac Rehabilitation (referral only) – starting in March, start date TBC. Shoreline Leisure, Bray

Introduction Physical Activity Programme

This programme is in conjunction with the Occupational Therapist in the HSE in Arklow. The programme is for people in the mental health service's in Arklow. An eight-week programme, taking place in Coral Leisure, Arklow. Participants are introduced to the gym surrounding and how to use the gym machines. Our tutor Tom Thornton is delivering this programme.

Age & Opportunity Funding

Walking Football for 55+

A five-week Walking Football Programme for people aged 55+ started on 21st February in Wicklow Rovers FC.

Training & Education

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Venue</u>	<u>Date</u>
Safeguarding 1	3 Hours Online	11 th January
Safeguarding 1	Roundwood Athletic Club	11 th January
Safeguarding 1	3 Hours Online	30 th January
Safeguarding 1	3 Hours Online	6 th February

County Wicklow Library Service



Ireland Reads 2024

Throughout February, libraries throughout county Wicklow are took part in Ireland Reads, a national campaign to get the whole country reading in the lead up to a National Day of Reading on February 24th. The campaign asked everyone to 'Get lost in a good book' on "Ireland Reads Day". Campaign partners and libraries all over the country ran 'Ireland Reads' initiatives and events throughout the month of February.

Libraries have teamed up with publishers, booksellers, authors, and others for the campaign which is part of the government's Healthy Ireland programme and aims to celebrate reading and all the benefits it can have for wellbeing and enjoyment.

The *Ireland Reads* website also offers book recommendations suited to a person's interests and the time they have available. There are more than 1,500 recommendations from librarians all around the country for all interests and reading levels.

A website user can simply enter their favourite type of book and how long they would like to read each day and the website will offer the perfect book suggestion and work out how long it will take to complete – so you can set yourself a challenge if you're finding it hard to get back to reading. People can also recommend a book to a friend through the website.



Libraries of Sanctuary

As a service we have pledged to be Libraries of Sanctuary. This venture underscores the library's dedication to fostering a sense of belonging and support for individuals from diverse backgrounds, including refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants. To date, we have announced our intention with a press release (Dec. 2023) and put together a portfolio of events, services and activities we provide, to underpin this pledge.

The 'Library of Sanctuary' initiative, a part of the wider 'Places of Sanctuary Ireland' movement, aims to recognise and celebrate libraries that go the extra mile in embracing diversity and promoting inclusion within their communities. To support staff on this initiative, we had a training webinar with Dr Rachel Hoare in late January. The presentation: **Working with asylum seekers and refugees** explored the work Rachel does with TUSLA in relation to unaccompanied minors and the Centre for Forced Migration Studies in TCD.

We have also been in contact with Meadhbh Quinn, co-ordinator of our newly formed Local Authority Integration Team, and feel there is much we can collaborate on. We are keen to support Meadhbh and her team and look forward to working with them. Achieving 'Library of Sanctuary' status is our goal but it is not the end. It will involve continuing efforts, and a focus that the programmes we already have cater to the needs of diverse populations. It will inform our planning for the future and commitment to creating a space that is welcoming and inclusive for all visitors.

Made in Wicklow – series of crafting workshops

This amazing opportunity is financially supported by the Transitional LEADER Rural Development Programme and implemented in all libraries by Wicklow Craft Foundation. This series coincided with the launch of the Made in Wicklow Craft Trail and launched in Powerscourt on St. Bridget's Day 1st February. The series of workshops has succeeded so far in bringing a fantastic opportunity to people to get taster sessions in arrange of crafts including bookmaking, felting, woodworking, pottery, weaving and more.



Aisling Ennis – 'The Harp Concert Series' returns for young audiences.

Aisling Ennis is a Wicklow based harpist who performed a fairy inspired recital in every Wicklow County library branch last October. Aisling returned to our libraries with a special version for young audiences in February. This has so far included inviting a local school class to the library (Tinahely), connecting with home school hubs (Arklow Library), baby music sessions (Wicklow Town), and small intimate story time sessions in Aughrim and Carnew libraries, as well as a toddler story time session in Bray library. This project has been funded by the Arts Council and Wicklow County Arts office through the Strategic Projects Award Scheme.



Local History Talks and Events

Local History Talk: Junkers plane crash in the Wicklow Mountain

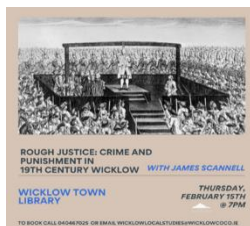
This Library local history talk by Bill Nelson, a retired Aviation Engineer, took place in Enniskerry Library on Wednesday 7th February. Members of the Wednesday Book Club joined the talk after reading the book based on the incident, 'When Our Plane Hit the Mountain', by Suzanne Barnes.

Bill gave a most engaging and entertaining talk about the Junkers 52 plane that crashed in the Wicklow Mountains in 1946 and had a piece of the fuselage from the plane on show, which was retrieved from the mountain in 1952. Junkers plane crash talk also took place in Blessington Library on 15th of February.



Local History Talk: Rough Justice Crime and Punishment

Local History Talk 'Rough Justice' took place at Wicklow Town Library' on 15th February. From the latter half of the 18th century until the Act of Union in 1800, over 220 crimes were punishable by death. While this number declined to a mere 10 by 1820, sentencing remained severe. Following from his successful 'Rough Justice' talks in Dublin last year, historian James Scannell used Wicklow criminal reports from the 1860s to demonstrate that, while rehabilitation of offenders evolved during this time, this was limited. His talk showed that sentencing of Wicklow offenders for minor offences remained, in many cases, out of proportion to the nature of the offence.



Local History Workshop: Researching your Family Tree

This workshop took place in Ballywaltrim Library on 10th February and was well attended. Claire Bradley is a professional Irish genealogist working with both traditional paper records and genetic genealogy. She holds a Certificate in Genealogy from University College Dublin and a Masters Degree in History of the

Family from the University of Limerick. Wicklow Libraries has an array of available subscription sites that you can use in all their branches and the local archives.

Local History Talk: ‘The History of Enniskerry and District’ with Brian White

Brian provided lots of gems of information about forgotten events and people from Enniskerry and the surrounding districts on 16th February. His talk included lots of unseen photographs and paintings. He has so much information that this talk was Part 1, and he is already planning a Part 2 talk at a later date.



Local History Talks: Carmel Kelly talks on Wicklow Gaol

Wicklow Gaol Workshop with author Carmel Kelly and illustrator Jimmy Burns took place in Arklow Library on Tuesday 20th February for local primary schools. On 23rd February, Carmel gave a talk on Wicklow Gaol for 4th, 5th and 6th class in Baltinglass Library.

St Brigid’s Day Celebrations

Thursday 1st February marked the 1500th anniversary of St Brigid’s passing. St Brigid’s Cross making workshops and book displays took place in our branches across the county.

Exhibitions

Arklow Library: The 402 Art Collective celebrated our right to expression and reflect on the human experience with a new exhibition, ‘For Shame,’ which launched in Arklow Library on Tuesday, February 13th. Running until February 29th, the exhibition showcased seven local visual artists, Eleanor O’Reilly, Irene Plazewska, James Burke, Nadia Ramoutar, Niki Keane, Pauline Merry, and Sean Redmond.



Wicklow Town Library: Martin Henneberg was the artist exhibiting in Wicklow Library for February. Martin’s work explores a mix between realism and abstract. The exhibition, entitled ‘People’, consists of large portraits of famous people, Bowie, Mandela, and Bob Marley.

Upcoming Exhibitions

Wicklow Town Library: Mandy Jackson and Brooke Petersen will be exhibiting in Wicklow Town library in March. This will be a Mixed media Exhibition entitled 'Chrysalis'.

LIBRARY ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS ACROSS THE COUNTY

Arklow Library

Storytime at Arklow Library is every Wednesday at 10am. This is a fun, lively session with stories, songs, and a simple craft. A free event with no booking required. All welcome - no-one is too young!

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

Healthy Ireland at your Library: World Cancer Day Event
Arklow Library hosted a very important talk on Thursday 1st February for World Cancer Day. This event featured experts presented on how we can reduce the risk of bowel and lung cancer, what the early signs of these cancers are, and how to act early.

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

Arklow Library is holding a weekly conversation session in English every Thursday at 7 p.m. It is a mixed international group, where anyone can improve their English-speaking skills. All adults are welcome.

Chess club every Saturday from 3-4pm for Children ages 7-12.



Ballywaltrim Library

From mid-January, Ballywaltrim library hosted a series of crafting events, notably "Paper Bookmaking" with Nicola Faull; Clay Pottery with Rose Clever Cow and Willow Weaving with Aoife Patterson. All events were sold out and attendee's feedback was excellent.

A Local History Talk given by historian James Scannell on the theme of "Going to the Cinema in the 50's and 60's in Ireland" was well attended, James will be back with further local history talks in the near future.

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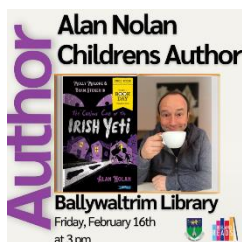
English Language Conversation Group for non-native speakers began again every Wednesday morning from 11.30 – 12.30 from Wednesday, January 17th. This is an informal group meeting and provides a great opportunity for non-native speakers to improve their conversational skills.

Our Age Action IT classes for seniors continue every Friday, with one-to-one tuition for attendees.

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

To celebrate Ireland Reads in February, Ballywaltrim library hosted local children's author, Alan Nolan, who will read from his new book "The Curious Case of the Irish Yeti". The children were entertained at this event by Alan's illustration demonstrations.

Also in February, Ballywaltrim library commenced our STEM Saturday sessions for children, encouraging children from 18 months to 12 years of age to develop their future science/engineering logical thinking skills via fun games such as Duplo Lego, Giant Connect-4 and Jamanga – large attendances and great feedback have resulted and we hope to expand this service over the coming year.



Baltinglass Library

An Origami Rose Workshop took place in Baltinglass Library on Friday 9th February.

This is an example of one of the many crafting experiences available to adults in Baltinglass library, something different for all interests on Fridays and Saturdays. Keep an eye on social media for further information.

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

Weekly conversational English Group for learners takes place in the library every Tuesday night.

Blessington Library

Valentine's Day Arts and Crafts in Blessington Library for children aged 7+ took place on Wednesday, February 14th.



Baby book and Tummy time with Twinkle Kids (as part of Ireland Reads) on Wednesday 21st February.



Bingo for children 6-9 years/10-12 years (Thursday 15th February)



Bray Library

Book Clubs:

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

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

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

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

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

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

New Romance Book Club coming in March!

Healthy Ireland at your library: Resistance Training for beginners

Bray Library and Healthy Ireland are delighted to announce a new 6-week introduction to Resistance Training that will take place on Friday mornings from 16th Feb -22nd March.

Resistance Training is a strength-building exercise that increases bone density and improves mobility and balance. Over this six-week course, personal trainer Michal Turkowski will support participants to build a regular resistance training practice using resistance bands and body weight. All equipment supplied.



Highly sought after spots in Bray Library's Afterschool Comic Club have become available! The club meets at 3.30pm every Thursday, 4th - 6th class students, term time only.



Dunlavin Library

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

On Friday 7th February, we held a Felt Heart Workshop for adults. An Origami Rose Workshop took place on Wednesday 14th February.



Enniskerry Library

Fancy starting a new creative hobby? Come along to Enniskerry Library on Wednesdays @6.45pm. All ages are welcome; bring along 4mm needles and your favourite wool. Beginners knitting class for adults and children will resume on Wednesday 28th February.

Story Time runs every Saturday morning @ 10.

Adult Chess Club takes place every Tuesday @11am. New members welcome.

Book Clubs:

Murder, Mystery, Thriller Book Club – usually meet on the second Tuesday of the month at 11am. The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 12th March.
The Wednesday Book Club meet on the first Wednesday of the month at 6pm
The SDG Junior Book Club usually meet on the first Friday of the month at 3pm. New members welcome.

Greystones Library

Sustainable Sewing with Tamara took place in Greystones library over three Saturdays beginning on 13th January and finishing on Saturday 10th February. Participants got to join this creative and eco-conscious workshop and discover the art of sustainable sewing. Tamara guided the participants through the process of making garments last longer, repairing tears, and crafting your own unique items. These hands-on sessions aimed to empower attendees with practical skills that contribute to reducing waste and promoting a more sustainable lifestyle.

For Ireland Reads, we collaborated with Creative Ireland and welcomed Edel Coffey in conversation with local author Olivia Fitzsimons. The event was held in Greystones Library on 22nd February.



Also, as part of Ireland Reads celebrations, author Oisin Blennerhassett gave a talk to 6th class children from Greystones Community National School on 23rd February.

Coming up in March for Irish Astronomy Week, Greystones Library is delighted to welcome Alex Labunskij on Thursday 14th March at 7, for an "out of this world" talk on radio astronomy fields. This can be easily used to monitor and record solar flares, measure sunrise/sunsets and even detect strong Gamma Ray Bursts. It would be of particular interest to experienced and novices alike, of all ages. However, Alex would welcome secondary school students as they can set up and run their own project in their school.



Rathdrum Library

Baby and Toddler story time takes place every Friday morning from 10-10.30 with Ana.

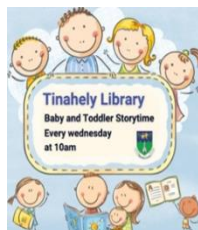
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On the first and third Saturday of the Month, the library hosts a story time from 11-11.30am for children aged 2-5 years and from 11.45 to 12.15 for children aged 6-8 years.
Book Club for adults meets on the first Wednesday of the month from 7-8.15.

Tinahely Library

Baby & toddler story time for all babies and toddlers up to 3 years takes place every Wednesday in Tinahely library at 10am. All welcome to this very relaxing, fun event.



Healthy Ireland at your Library: Autism Support Session.

On 22nd February in Tinahely Library, Sorcha Rice (Occupational Therapist) focussed on a general autism support session which included (feeding, sleep, holidays, routines, sensory support, and classroom support).

For Ireland Reads day on Saturday 24th Feb, Tinahely Library held a story time for children aged 3-6 years.

Wicklow Town Library

Young Adult - Writing Workshop

Whether you've never written before or have a work in progress, this is perfect for anyone interested in practicing and developing writing skills and techniques. Thursdays from 15th February from 6:30 - 8:00 PM



Film Club:

Keep an eye out for the films showing monthly at the Film Club in Wicklow Town – the poster will always be cryptic to add to the fun, this is due to our film licencing requirements but rest assured, it will always be a lovely experience and a bit of a surprise! The only requirement is that filmgoers are members of the library and must have “My Open Library” activated on their membership card. This is a requirement of the library in order to be on the premises after normal working hours. Please contact Wicklow library about

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joining in the days beforehand as a tour and health and safety checklist needs to be completed. Email: filmclubwicklow@gmail.com to reserve a seat.

Comhra agus Ceol every Thursday morning at 10.45am (conversation and music for children in the community room).

Wicklow Partially Sighted Group meets monthly in the Community Room to help and advice each other. The last meeting was February 6th @12.30.

HSE Pulmonary Rehab Classes. Pulmonary rehabilitation classes for clients with breathing difficulties. Eight classes are running throughout February and March. February 6/8/13/20/22/27. March 5/ and 7th @ 1:30pm.

LEGO Club for children with autism with Sandra Quinn on Saturday morning's from 10 am to 12pm

Knitting and Crochet group meet on Monday morning at 11am and Tuesday evenings at 7pm.

Storytime on Saturday mornings at 11am and Baby and Toddler story rhyme time on Mondays at 10:45am.

Every Tuesday evening from 6-7 we will be running the Wicklow Library Chess Club for children. It is growing every week!

Citizen Information. The public can book an appointment with Citizen Information rather than having to travel to Arklow or Bray. Library staff provide all technical help required. There are 4 appointments of 20 minutes every Thursday. The meeting is held over Microsoft Teams.

Fighting Words workshop Feb 27th - School classes will attend Fighting Words workshops for creativity and writing fun.

Mobile Library

Our Mobile Library has been off the road due to electrical issues. This is urgently being resolved and we hope to be back on the road very soon. In the meantime, patrons can contact any branch library for assistance with account related issues, book renewals or ordering items.

The Mobile has some new classes joining their routes this month including 1st Class from St Joseph's National School in Vallemount; Combined 5th and 6th class from another St Joseph's in Glenealy; and a new school joining the route as we welcome Shillelagh No.1 National school. Check the website for an up to date timetable and route details.



County Wicklow Archives & Geneology Service

Collections management & outreach

The Archives Service installed new archival cataloguing software *Axiell Collections* to document and describe each of the County Wicklow local government and private collections, to be published on a phased basis to Wicklow.ie.

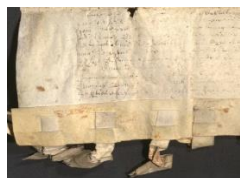
The estate papers of the Actons of Kilmacurragh dating from the 1660s. The Actons acquired the Kilmacurragh estate during the 17th century and developed the famous arboretum in the 19th century, now operated by the OPW. In 2021 the OPW announced funding of €5.45 million for structural work at Kilmacurragh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

Arklow Street Preachers project based on our glass plate negatives collection of late 19th century images of these events in Arklow. Reverend Hallows, Church of Ireland minister, caused scandal and riots in the 1890s by preaching on the streets of Arklow. Phase one now completed – digitisation of the images. Phase two begun - collaboration with historian Pat Power and the Arklow Maritime Museum on a publication and exhibition.

Digitisation programme

The minute books of the Rathdrum Boards of Guardians 1839 – 1921 funded by Creative Ireland. Soon to be available on Wicklow.ie.

New digitisation project now completed – the late 19th century Valuation Revision Books of County Wicklow – a valuable substitute for the pre-1901 census records destroyed in the fire at the Public Record Office, Dublin Four Courts in 1922. These volumes show changes in ownership of land and dwellings in late 19th century Wicklow, documenting family succession and emigration. Both collections feature the new AI-powered technology *Transkribus* rendering hand-written records machine-readable and searchable for the first time.



Detail from Acton deed, dated 1660 (Actons of Kilmacurragh collection / Wicklow County Archives Service).

Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP):

Assessment and approval of the 2023 End of Year reports is underway for both Partnerships. Once finalised, March 2024 funding will be released for the continued implementation of SICAP in both Lot areas.

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Bray Area Partnership were successful in application to Dormant Accounts under the LGBTI+ funding stream. Two new LGBTI+ projects will be developed in conjunction with Club Enclave Bray and Greystones Family Resource Centre.

Co. Wicklow Public Participation Network (PPN):

PPN Membership: 430 Member groups, 6 new members welcomed in January.

Consultations: Greystones-Delgany & Kilcoole Local Area Plan; Wicklow Traveller Accommodation Programme 2025 – 2029.

Service Level Agreement and Memorandum of Association for 2024 between Wicklow PPN and Wicklow County Council currently being finalised.

See www.countywicklowppn.ie and Wicklow PPN Facebook page for further information on above and more.

Economic Development, Planning, and Infrastructure

Economic Development

Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP)

The Local Economic and Community Plan Framework (LECP) was approved by the elected members of Wicklow County Council and the first two-year implementation plan has been finalised. The Co. Wicklow LCDC will oversee the implementation of the community elements of the plan, while the SPC for Economic Development and Enterprise Support will oversee the economic implementation. Progress reports on the LECP will be received at each meeting of the LCDC and the EDES SPC. Monitoring and reporting will be overseen by the LECP Advisory Group.

Town Regeneration

A suite of funding supports for town teams has been announced by the Department of Rural & Community Development.

- a) Town Team Support Fund: up to €10,000 each for three towns in each eligible local authority area to support the establishment and/or development of town teams where they are not already well established
- b) Town Centre First Plans: Funding of €30,000 in each eligible local authority area to support the development of a TCF plan in a rural town
- c) Project Development Measure: This measure will assist local authorities to contribute to a pipeline of significant, well developed projects by providing funding of €50,000 each to support two projects.

Please note these supports from DRCD only target rural towns with a population of under 10,000 people, therefore Town Teams in an area with a population of over 10,000 are not eligible. This is an issue for Co. Wicklow with 4 out of 5 town teams in an area with a population of over 10,000.

Town Teams

Wicklow Town Team

The Town Team are currently examining proposals for 2024 projects.

Pilgrim Walk: A new route (not over private lands) has now been decided and approval is sought from Carol Coad, County Wicklow Partnership regarding the funding approval for the new route.

Assembly Hall: refurbishment works are due to commence on 4th March 2024.

Sustainable Energy Community: the SEC are organising a third Energy Awareness Day on 15th June 2024.

Arklow Town Team

Town Team Rejuvenation – The Town Team held an open day on the 20th January in Bridgewater Shopping Centre. It was a great opportunity to showcase the projects completed by Arklow Town Team. The event was well supported with quite a number of people stopping by to find out further information. A number of expressions of interest forms were received which will be assessed.

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

Blessington Town Team

Blessington is a pathfinder town and is the first to receive funding for a Town Centre First Masterplan. The Masterplan will provide Blessington with a clear framework to positively develop the town now and into the future. The final plan will be launched at a national event at the end of February.

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

Bray Town Team

Discussions are continuing on the future of Bray Town Team.

Rural and Urban Regeneration Development Fund Grant Applications

Steering Group for the Progression of URDF and RRDF Projects

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

RRDF Rural Regeneration Development Fund

specifically,RRDF: Blessington has been awarded over €1m funding under the Rural Regeneration Development Fund (RRDF CAT 2) for the purpose of the regeneration of Blessington Town Centre,

specifically the development of plans for public realm works and the development of a vacant/derelict property to create an eHub and a Visitor Centre for the forthcoming Blessington Lakes eGreenway.

Baltinglass RRDF: The costings for the Baltinglass RRDF project (Making Baltinglass a Hub for Southwest Wicklow) have come in over budget on both the public realm and the Courthouse refurbishment. The proposals have been revised and the necessary technical plans are complete in order for the works to commence. Works on the Public Park and playground are underway. In addition a new submission has been made to Dept. Rural & Community Development under the RRDF (5th Call) for further funding to achieve more of the aims of the original project. A decision should be received on this in Q2 2024.

Newtownmountkennedy RRDF: The project is under review at present due to revisions necessary to the public realm, as there are contested issues regarding the design of the public realm. Following the necessary revisions, it is hoped that agreement will be reached, the plans will be signed off and submitted for Category 1 funding.

URDF: Urban Regeneration Development Fund

URDF Call 3: The URDF announced recently that Wicklow will receive €2.5 million to assist long term vacancy and dereliction. Four properties have been chosen (two in Arklow and two in Wicklow) and the process has commenced in acquiring these properties. An information gathering notice has been published on a number of the properties seeking information to be directed to the Council. DHLG&H have stated that funding is available to identify more properties based on residential capacity, town centre location, and whether they are located close to a URDF supported project. More vacant properties will be sought in both Wicklow MD and Arklow MD

In early 2024 it is expected that the Minister will be announcing a Call 4 Funding for URDF proposals.

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

Tourism

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

Press Releases and Articles: During the month of February, communication focussed on Valentine's Day, featuring unforgettable activities for Two, and top romantic locations for a Wicklow marriage proposal. Articles also featured Wicklow's latest Ambassadors.

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

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

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

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

Networking & Workshop Event - Wicklow County Council in partnership with Wicklow Tourism Alliance organised a networking and workshop event on Thursday, 8th February at Beyond the Trees, Avondale. The event was attended by more than 100 participants including local tourism businesses and organisations representing various sectors of the tourism trade in Wicklow.

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

Abbey Grounds, Wicklow

A detailed design of the Abbey Grounds has been completed to date. The Architect and Structural engineers are almost complete on the tender drawings and tender package for the Coach House refurbishment. This tender is to be issued within the coming weeks through Etenders.

The detailed design for the Amphitheatre and Park area are being finalised. These works will be issued as a separate contract due to the nature of the works. A proposal for the lighting design for the Amphitheatre and Park area has also been commissioned. WCC have received an extension from Failte Ireland until the end of May 2024 for completion of the project.

Glendalough Masterplan and Wicklow Visitor Orientation Study

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

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

Special Projects

Greystones Enterprise Centre: The purchase of the Enterprise Space in Greystones has completed and work is underway to prepare for fitting-out the building. Property Management Contracts have been signed between Greystones Enterprise Hub CLG and Cushman and Wakefield for the fit-out, market, and management of the centre.

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

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

Marketing Plan: MarketingCoach have been awarded the contract to develop a Marketing Plan for County Wicklow, highlighting the availability of Remote Working Hubs and Broadband Connection Points. Work is currently underway with engagement sought from numerous stakeholders.

Offshore Renewable Energy

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

Skills Strategy

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

Food and Beverage Strategy

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

Wicklow Naturally - The 2024 Wicklow Naturally Action Plan has been prepared and agreed by the board.

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The team is finalising the various reports to claim the last LEADER funds from the previous campaign. The job description for the new coordinator is under review and the position will be advertised in the coming weeks.

Regional Enterprise Innovation Scoping Scheme (REISS)

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

Local Enterprise Office

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

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

METRICS: Training/ Capacity Building	HISTORICAL	TARGETS	YEAR TO DATE
	2023	2024	2024
Total number of participants at Management Development type programmes.	40	60	-
Start Your Own Business Participant numbers (included in total training programmes)	73 / 7 programmes	120	15
Total No. of all Participants participating in training Programmes and events (all programmes except SYOB and MDP)	757	1020	50
Women in Business Network Number of Meetings	30	20	2

METRICS: Business Advice & Mentoring	HISTORICAL	TARGETS	YEAR TO DATE
	2023	2024	2024
Number of new clients added to database. *Criteria have been amended for this metric	581	500	44

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Number of One-to-One Business Advice meetings including Businesses assigned a mentor	528	390	51
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METRICS: Student Enterprise Programmes	HISTORICAL	TARGETS	
Academic Year	2021/2023	2023/2024	Year to Date 23-24
No. of Secondary Student Participants	1028	1100	1358

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

Trading Online Voucher	HISTORICAL	TARGETS	
No of Trading Online Vouchers approved	2023	2024	Year to Date 2024
Trading Online Vouchers	81	38 (meet demand)	8

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

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

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January 2024 Events:

February 2024 Activities

- Social media and LEO website updates are carried out several times a week to raise awareness and promote the LEO supports.
- Business Advice Clinics continue to run 3 days per week to provide advice to those individuals hoping to start a business and to assist existing businesses grow and develop.
- Local Enterprise Week: a schedule of events for Local Enterprise Week, 4-8 March 2024, has been organised and promotion of events has commenced.
- The Student Enterprise Programme continues throughout 20 Secondary schools in County Wicklow. This programme will culminate in a County Final Award day scheduled for 27th February at Clermont House, Wicklow County Campus.

Business Skills and IT skills Training Programme

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

Training held in February included;

- Using Canva for Beginners
- Effective Use of Social-Media for your Business
- Content Creation & Copyright

Planning & Development

Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Local Area Plans

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

Wicklow Town – Rathnew Local Area Plan

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

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

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

Greystones – Delgany & Kilcoole Local Area Plan

We have commenced the review of the existing plan and preparing a new Local Area Plan for the settlements of 'Greystones-Delgany' & 'Kilcoole'. An online consultation portal has been created for this pre-draft stage. The closing date for submissions was 31 January 2024. Over 100 submission have been received. Well attended public open days were held in Kilcoole and in Greystones in January 2024.

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

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

Blessington Local Area Plan

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

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

Arklow and Environs Local Area Plan and Bray Municipal District Local Area Plan

Work has commenced on the review of the Arklow and Environs Local Area Plan and Bray Municipal District Local Area Plan. Consultants have been appointed to carry out the Strategic Environmental Assessment and the Appropriate Assessment. Pre-draft consultations for the draft Local Area Plans will be held in mid 2024.

The current LAP's for these five settlements are available to view here

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

RZLT – Residential Zoned Land Tax

The RZLT is a tax aimed at activating serviced and residentially zoned land for housing. Local authorities are responsible for identifying the land that is liable to pay the RZLT. The RZLT maps are updated annually.

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

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

The Minister has advised that the first liability date for the tax is proposed to be deferred from 1st February 2024 to 1st February 2025.

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

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

Vacant Site Levy

This programme is still ongoing and is affected by the proposed deferral of the RZLT. As liability to the RZLT is now proposed to be deferred for one year, it is considered appropriate to maintain provisions in legislation for the management and continued charging of the vacant site levy in respect of land which is identified on the register. This will continue to facilitate imminent placements on the register, conclusion of appeals and to facilitate the issuing of demands in relation to the levy for the period to the end of 2024. This will ensure that the use of the levy as an active land management measure will continue until the RZLT is in effect.

More information can be found online at the following link

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

Heritage & Biodiversity Office

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

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

Archaeology: Community Monuments Fund- CMF 2024. Funding applications for Private and Council owned projects are in preparation, to be submitted as by 14th February to National Monuments Service. Maximum of 15 projects in total can be submitted under Streams 1, 2 & 3.

Built Heritage Capital Funds (Architecture): Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS) and Historic Structures Fund (HSF) 2024 applications under review. County allocation of €101,000 under BHIS and shortlisted HSF projects to be submitted to Department by 9nd Feb funding deadline

Irish Community Archive Network (iCAN) – Our Wicklow Heritage network group meeting scheduled for 27th Feb in Roundwood

Development Management

Planning Applications

Total valid applications received	To 31 st January 2024	To 31 st January 2023	% difference
Received (Valid)	67	68	

A total of 67 valid applications were received during January as follows:

Type of Development	31 st January 2024 Number Received
Individual Houses	07 (06 refer to a rural house)
Housing Developments*	02
Agricultural Structures	02
Commercial	06
Other Developments**	50
Total	67

**Other Developments include, Porch/Sunroom, Extensions, finger signpost, Well, change of use, Hoarding, relocation of vehicular entrance, extend the appropriate period of permission, various amendments/modifications to previous

planning permission, conversion, retention, boundary screen wall, attic conversion, reclamation of land, effluent treatment system & percolation area.

Large Housing Developments

PRR24/46, Avonvard Ltd, site at Vevay Road and Boghall Road (former Dell site), Bray, Co. Wicklow – 178 apartments & Childcare facility

Decisions issued in respect of 72 applications in January 2024

Type of Development	Number of Decisions
Housing Developments	02
Individual Houses	00
Other Developments	70
Other Developments Requiring EIA	00
Total	72

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

	31/01/2023	31/01/2024
Total Number of decisions issued	73	72
Total Number of decisions to grant	61	59
% Grant Rate	84%	82%
No of applications withdrawn		07 (06 refer to rural house)

Applications Lodged with An Bord Pleanala

Strategic Housing Development

- ABP-313229-22 – Lands at Coolagad, Greystones (586 Units) Members Meeting 27/4/2022, CE report forwarded 30/5/2022
- ABP-313314-22 – Lands at Fassaroe and Monastery, Bray (650 Units) Members Meeting 10/5/2022, CE forwarded 07/06/2022 – ABP unable to determine within the 16 weeks statutory timeframe.
- ABP-313442-22 – Lands at the former Heiton Buckley site on Castle Street, Bray, (139 Units) Members Meeting 10/05/2022, CE report forwarded 22/06/2022
- ABP-314686-22 Lands at former Bray Golf Club Lands, Off Ravenswell Road and Dublin Road, Bray, Co. Dublin and Co. Wicklow, (586 Units), Members meeting 4th October 2022, CE report submitted 21/11/2022

Strategic Infrastructure Development

An Bord Pleanala has received an application for approval under section 182A(1) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended -ABP-310090-21- Proposed development will comprise the onshore grid infrastructure including

220kV export cable circuits and fibre optic cables, new 220kV GIS substation at Shelton Abbey and overhead line connection and all associated ancillary works. In the townlands of Johnstown North, Johnstown South, Seabank, Ballymoney, Killiniskyduff, Templerainy, Coolboy, Kilbride, Shelton Abbey, Ballyraine Lower and Ballyraine Middle, in Co. Wicklow – approved with conditions 27/5/2023.

An Bord Pleanala 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 associates site works at Ballinclare and Carrigmore townlands, Kilbride, Co. Wicklow – Decision, refuse permission under section 37G of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, 27/09/2023.

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

Substitute Consent

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

An Bord Pleanala has received an application for substitute consent for development that consists of a sand/gravel extraction pit including extraction areas, processing areas, stockpiling areas and ancillary works (circa 23.7 hectares). The development also includes a sand/gravel washing/screening plant & buildings comprising workshop/machinery shed, tools storage container, pump – house, 2 no. portable office buildings, 1 no. portable office/canteen/WC, Sand processing plant electrical control room, 3 no. storage containers, sand processing plant electrical control room, 3 no. storage containers, sand processing plant control cabin, bunded oil storage tanks, diesel generator container & electrical substation (all totalling circa 376sqm) The application is accompanied by a remedial EIAR and remedial NIS. Lands at Ballinabarney North & Bolagh Lower, Redcorss, Co. Wicklow.

EPlanning

The ePlanning system went live on 17th April 2024 and from that date to 31st December 2024 50.62% of planning applications were received online.

For the month of January 2024 a total of 89 planning applications were received of which 51.69% were hard copy applications and **48.31% were received online**.

There was a mix of applications received online during this period, including the following:

- Number of new one off dwellings

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- Number of extensions to dwellings
- Erection of four off-grid, low impacted and sustainable camping cabins in Rathdrum.

Planning Enforcement

January 2024

New Files	9
Advisory Letters	37
Warning Letters	5
Enforcement Notices	1
Legal Files	0
Closed	19

Vacant Sites

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

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

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

Derelict Sites

Municipal District	No sites on Register
Baltinglass	2

Short Term Letting – 01/10/24 – 31/01/24

Applications received for Registration in December 2024	17
Complaints received in January 2024	0
Warning Letters issued in January 2024	0
Enforcement Notices issued in January 2024	0
Legal proceedings in January 2024	0
Files under investigation as of 31/01/2024	53

Environment

Litter/Waste Management

LITTER/WASTE ENFORCEMENT	
No. of Complaints Created	190
No. of Cases Closed, Resolved or Completed	481
No of Litter Fines Issued	12
No. of Waste Management Files Opened	4
No. of Warning Letters Issued	11
No of Abandoned Car Notices Issued	12
No. of Burning Applications Granted	0
No. of Temporary Signs Granted	0
No. of Notices Issued under Section 14 of the Waste Management Act	17
No. of Notices Issued under Section 18 of the Waste Management Act	0
No. of Notices Issued under Section 55 of the Waste Management Act	0
No. of Fixed Penalty Notices issued	0
No. of files prepared for Court and included in Court Lists	20
No. of Cases in Court under the Litter Pollution Act	1
No. of Leaflet Drops	3
Income - Litter	€900.00
Income- Waste Management	€2,030.44

Climate Action

Update on posts for the Climate Action Team

- Biodiversity Officer Appointed (Hannah O’Kelly)
- Environment Awareness Officer (Due to start 26th February)
- Assistant Environment Awareness Officer (Vacant)

Climate Action Plan

The Climate Action Plan was adopted by the Members at the Ordinary Meeting on the 08th January 2024. The adopted Plan has been circulated to members and TD’s and has been uploaded onto the Council website. The plan has been translated into Irish. The Plan will be launched at the CABA SPC on the 22nd February.

Community Climate Action Programme

Funding of €646,000 allocated to Wicklow. This programme was formally launched on the 6th December with Communication campaign and Grant Application Pack. There is ongoing engagement with various communities through Drop In Clinics, Social Media, and various meetings. The closing date is the 6th March for Expressions of Interest.

Climate Adaptation

Coastal Erosion

- Wicklow County Council continues to reduce and manage the risk of flooding in developed areas by cooperating with other agencies in implementing government policy in respect of the management of Coastal and Fluvial Flood Risk and Coastal Erosion Risk.
- It is a priority of Wicklow County Council to work in conjunction with Irish Rail on the East Coast Coastal Erosion Study (ECRIPP East Coast Railway Infrastructure Protection Project) and seek funding from OPW as appropriate.
- Wicklow County Council has received funding from the OPW and appointed Malachy Walsh & Co Ltd consultants to carry out a Coastal Erosion Risk Management Study for Brittas Bay and Ennereilly Beaches.
- Applications for funding from the OPW under Minor Works have also been submitted for the following:
 - Seabank to Kilmichael Point (OPW have indicated that WCC can apply for funding for a Coastal Erosion Risk Management Study, This has been lodged with the OPW)
 - Greystones North Beach (Funding submitted to OPW, May be covered by ECRIPP)
 - The Seabank to Kilmichael Point Coastal Erosion Risk Management Study has been tendered on etenders.

Environmental Awareness

- Tidy Towns awards have been judged and awards are being finalised. Awards are allocated in multiple categories and a ceremony will be planned for early 2024 to present these awards.
- Green School Assessments are commencing in February

Mid-East Energy Unit

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

Wicklow County Council Energy

- A Wicklow Energy Team meeting was convened in November, the energy team outlined the current status of ISO 50001, challenges faced, planned energy projects and the council's Significant Energy Users to the team
- ISO 50001 - Wicklow County Council has completed the SEAI ISO 50001 Accelerator Programme, a year-long programme to prepare for ISO accreditation. WCC have appointed NSAI as external auditors for this accreditation process.
- The Energy Office is currently working with its energy partners CODEMA to develop a pipeline of projects to reach our 2030 targets. Targeting large energy users across the council's building stock.
- Ongoing communications with Coral Leisure & Shoreline Leisure, addressing challenge of decarbonising the swimming pools.
- Tender issued for the decarbonising project for Bray Fire Station, tender process complete, works currently ongoing
- Updating Energy Elephant to include all energy users profile and building stock
- Tender issued for Bray MD Office for Heat Pump installation through Supply Gov
- BER and Energy Appraisal report currently in progress for County Buildings

Environmental Awareness

- The Tidy Towns and Sustainable Development Awards will be held in Monday the 4th of March at Clermont Campus at 6.00pm. Awards will be presented to Tidy Towns groups, residents associations, community groups schools and businesses covering main streets, estate management, and sustainable development themes including climate action, waste prevention, water, biodiversity and energy.
- Tree grants have been paid out to 18 successful applicants under the annual tree grant.
- National Tree Week occurs from the 3rd to the 10th of March. One thousand trees will be distributed to community groups in the county. A talk on tree planting will be held in Clermont campus.
- Green flag renewal visits have been undertaken or are planned with 9 schools to date.
- The National Spring Clean campaign has been launched with 36 registrations to date in County Wicklow.
- Four teams from schools have entered the Relove Fashion competition this year with the final due to take place on March the 21st at the Rediscovery Centre in Ballymun.

Harbours and Ports

Wicklow Harbour Dredging

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

Harbours CCTV and Security

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

Arklow Harbour

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



Wicklow Harbour – Cargo Movements

Harbour Movements

Month / Year	Ships	Single (Import or Export)	Double (Import & Export)	Transactions	Imports	Exports
Jan-24	7	5	2	9	7	2

Pollution Control

Pollution Response & Investigation

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

Private Water Supplies

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

Water Framework Directive National Monitoring Programme

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

Water Framework Directive River Management Engagement and Investigations

- 1 Catchment engagement activities was undertaken.

Septic Tank Inspections - National Inspection Plan 2022-2026

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

Good Agricultural Practice Inspections

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

Well Grants

- 7 New Water Grant application received.
- 3 New Well granted.
- 6 New Pumps granted.
- 3 Water Treatment/Disinfection Equipment Units granted.
- 19 inspections in advance/completion of works

Petrol Vapour Recovery

- 2 Installation inspected
- 1 Installation issued with Certificate of Testing
- 3 Stage 1b applications assessed
- 3 Stage 1b Installations Inspections.

Deco Paint Solvent Regulations

- 3 Dry cleaner Installations issued with Certificates of Compliance.

Smokeless Coal Regulations

- 13 Wholesalers/distributors/retailers inspected.

Licensed Effluent Discharges to Waters/Sewer

- 12 licensed wastewater discharges to waters were monitored and deemed compliant.
- 9 licensed wastewater discharges to waters were monitored and 2 deemed non-compliant.

Municipal Wastewater Treatment Plants – Ambient Monitoring

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

Planning & Development

- 5 environmental reports on referred planning applications/consultations were completed concerning agricultural development.
- 2 environmental reports on referred planning applications/consultations were completed concerning commercial development.
- 2 environmental reports on referred planning applications/consultations were completed concerning housing development.
- 1 environmental report on compliance with planning permission conditions were completed.

Control of Dogs

A total of 812 general dog licences were issued in January 2024 and 43 lifetime licences. 460 of these licences were purchased on-line. Dog wardens carried out patrols in Arklow during the month of January, and this may have resulted in the large number of renewals. In January 2023 a total of 20 licences were renewed in the post office in Arklow, in January 2024 this increased to 476. Dog wardens will be carrying out patrols in a number of locations in the coming weeks.

Blue Flags

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

Green Coast Awards

At the January meeting of Greystones MD, the members were addressed in relation to Green Coast Awards and how local groups can get involved with the ultimate aim of applying for a Green Flag.

Projects Office

Whitestown Remediation Project

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

Avoca Mines Remediation Project

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

Arklow Flood Relief Scheme

Planning Application and CPO has been approved by An Bord Pleanála. Byrne Looby Partners Ltd., now known as Ayesa have been appointed to carry out the detailed design and tender stage of the project. Site Investigation and Archaeological Investigations will be carried out in 2024.

Transportation, Water & Emergency Services

Transportation

Parking Income

Parking Income by Municipal District	EURO
Bray Municipal District	49,222
Greystones Municipal District	18,808
Wicklow Municipal District	19,138
Arklow Municipal District	11,409
Parking Permits	15,120
Parking Fines	43,025
Wicklow County Council	156,721

Public Lighting Maintenance

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

Please find attached the latest update on the outstanding public faults. The total number of faults currently outstanding stands at **360 – 2.35%** of total stock of 15,345. Please note that some of these faults are dependent on ESB attendance and co-operation and we ongoing liaison with the ESB to repair these faults. For your information below is a comparison on the number of outstanding faults over the previous weeks.

Status	ARKLOW MD	BALTINGLASS MD	BRAY MD	GREYSTONES MD	WICKLOW MD	Grand Total
Access Issues (Attended)	4	4	8	1	2	19
Cable Fault (Attended)	3	1	2	2	3	11
ESB Interface Required						0
ESB Required (Attended)	17	14	5	15	13	64
Knock Down (Attended)						0
Materials Required		3	5	1	1	10
No Supply		1	1	1		3
On Hold	1	5	7	4	4	21
Submitted	28	47	67	37	39	218
TMR	4	3	1		1	9

Tree Cutting Required	1	1	2		1	5
Grand Total	58	79	98	61	64	360
Percentage Not Working	1.91%	3.26%	2.90%	2.17%	1.73%	2.35%

Date	29/01/2024	07/02/2024	12/01/2024
Access Issues (Attended)	20	19	19
Cable Fault (Attended)	8	11	11
ESB Interface Required	23	0	0
ESB Required (Attended)	64	64	64
Knock Down (Attended)	1	0	0
Materials Required	9	10	10
No Supply	3	3	3
On Hold	29	21	21
Submitted	183	190	218
Traffic Management Required	9	9	9
Tree Cutting Required	4	5	5
TOTAL	353	332	360
PERCENTAGE NOT WORKING	2.30%	2.16%	2.35%

Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project (PLEEP)

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

Periodic Speed Limits

PWS Signs Ltd. has commenced on the erection of the signage for the periodic speed limits at schools.

Transportation Statistics

	Total 2022	Total 2023	January 2024
Solicitors Queries	838	1026	84
Road closure applications	78	42	9
Road Opening licences	1414	1956	159
Abnormal Load applications	60	54	4

M11N11 Junction 4 to 14 Improvement Scheme

The Option Selection report was published along with Bulletin #11 on the project website www.n11m11.ie on 14 December 2021. The publication followed the review of submissions received during public display in 2021. Phase 3 Design and Environmental Evaluation was due to commence in Q1 2022. The scheme is currently suspended as no funding was provided to continue during 2022 or 2023. The Wicklow County Council project team are continuing to meet with the public and any interested parties.

M11N11 Bus Priority Interim Scheme

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

A non-statutory public display on the emerging preferred options for sections A and C took place in November 2022.

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

N11 Parallel Service Road at Kilmacanogue

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

N81 Knockroe Bend Realignment

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

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

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

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

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

N81 Pavement Capital Works

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

N81 Rural Traffic Calming & Bus Stop at Hollywood

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

Park & Ride/Share at Hollywood

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

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

N81 Blessington Gateway Project

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

N11/M11 Park & Ride Facilities

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

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

Arklow Public Realm

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

Arklow to Shillelagh Greenway

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

Baltinglass Town Centre Plan

Enabling works started in Baltinglass in mid-February with the WCC Direct Labour crew commencing site investigation works to aid in de-risking the project. The consultants are actively engaged in preparing documents for the delivery of a revised tender package for the town centre works, focusing on a reduced scope.

Blessington Inner Relief Road

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

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

The CPO Notice to Treat was issued on all landowners in October 2023. There is active engagement between Wicklow Roads Project staff and landowners who are part of the CPO, with landowner meetings taking place on November and December and January. Our project valuer is engaging with valuers and homeowners as part of the CPO process. Consultants are making steady progress in the detailed design phase and are currently focused on preparing the tender

documents for the construction phase which are anticipated to be issued in early 2024. Simultaneously, we are in the process of developing tender documents for the appointment of a consultant to oversee the works during the construction phase.

Wicklow Greystones Greenway

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

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

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

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

Blessington eGreenway

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

Active Travel Updates – February

NTA 2024 Funding Allocation

On Wednesday 7th February, the Department of Transport announced the National Transport Authority funding allocations for Active Travel projects nationwide. In total, €290m has been allocated for walking and cycling infrastructure. Wicklow County Council was allocated €8.5 million for 2023, across 28 projects.

1. Bray DART Interchange - Bus Terminus Improvements
2. Active Travel Bridge Wicklow Train Station to Port Access Route - Pathfinder
3. R761 Bray Bridge active travel improvements
4. Arklow Local Transport Plan
5. Greystones Local Transport Plan
6. Delgany Village to Mill Road Active Travel Elements
7. Wicklow Town Active Travel - Pathfinder project
8. Blessington Main St to Deerpark Active Travel Scheme

9. Greystones Active Travel - Pathfinder project
10. Convent Road Active Travel Scheme
11. Ballyguilemore Active Travel facilities
12. Arklow South Active Travel Improvements
13. Killincarrig Village Enhancement Scheme
14. SRTS round 1: SS Michael and Peter Junior School, Arklow
15. SRTS round 1: St Kevin's National School, Greystones
16. SRTS round 1: St. John's Senior National School, Arklow
17. SRTS round 2: Gaelscoil na gCloch Liath
18. SRTS round 2: Greystones Educate Together
19. SRTS round 2: Kilmacanogue NS, Kilmacanogue, Co. Wicklow
20. SRTS round 2: Scoil Niocláis Naofa, Dunlavin
21. SRTS round 2: Temple Carrig School, Greystones
22. Wicklow Rathnew Local Transport Plan
23. Baltinglass Active Travel River Crossing Study
24. Active Travel - Arklow North Cycle & Pedestrian Improvements
25. Ashford to New Developments (Urban) Footpath
26. Kilcoole Road Footpath
27. Active Travel Staff Costs
28. Active Travel promotional costs

Projects Under Construction

Ballyguilemore Active Travel Facilities (Wicklow MD)

Provision of new pedestrian facilities and road safety improvements along the Ballyguilemore Road between Carrig View and the entrance to the proposed new St. Patricks GAA Pitch. The scheme includes for new footpaths and road widening works. Construction works commenced in January 2024. Tree removal works have been completed along the eastern verge, and drainage works have been completed along the western verge. Embankment construction works will commence along the eastern edge of the road in the coming weeks.

Arklow North Cycle and Pedestrian Scheme (Arklow MD)

The construction of cycle and pedestrian facilities on the R-772 Dublin Road. The scheme involves construction of a footpath and segregated cycle facilities on the R-772 between the M11 Junction 11. The construction works are now complete. The public lighting will be energised by the ESB in the coming weeks.

Arklow South Cycle and Pedestrian Scheme (Arklow MD)

Provision of 2.8km of segregated cycle track along the R-772 Wexford Road, Arklow between Knockmore Roundabout and M11 Junction 21. The scheme will also construct 1.4km approx. of pedestrian footpath. Accommodation works are in progress at four residential properties on the northbound carriageway. Preparations works have commenced for slipform kerbing works on the northbound carriageway and a Contractor will be procured to complete the kerbing works next month.

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

Provide infrastructure for schools to increase walking and cycling as the preferred travel mode where possible and improve safety at front of schools. Front of school implementation works are substantially completed. Waiting on ESB power connection for signage. High friction surfacing has been completed. Remaining signage to be installed once available. Footpath connection from Church Lane at design stage. Consultation to be undertaken with school and local residents.

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

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

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

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

Project Updates

Bray Dart Interchange (Bray MD)

New plaza and public transport interchange in front of Bray DART station, with revised car parking, set down and taxi rank arrangements. Drainage laid across the level crossing by Irish Rail contractor. David Walsh Civil Engineering appointed as contractor. Works scheduled to start week commencing 19th February. Phase 1 will consist of drainage works on Quinsborough Road and the Promenade.

Wicklow Active Travel Pathfinder Project (Wicklow MD)

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

Greystones Active Travel - Pathfinder Project (Greystones MD)

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

Bridge Rehabilitation (Local and Regional Roads)

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

Machinery Yard

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

The Consultant has submitted the licence application for Dangerous Substances (oil, fuel, etc.).

Fitters are now using ProWork to do maintenance reports for vehicles.

Delivery of new velocity patcher in February and training to be undertaken in the coming weeks.

Winter Maintenance

More than ½ way through the season.

7 call outs since Jan 26th until February 18th. Of these, 0 were double runs.

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

Measurement of existing salt levels undertaken and currently being assessed.

Fire Service

Operational Fire Statistics January 2024

There were **106 incidents** attended during the month of January 2024. Due to laid down procedures to mobilise two stations to potentially serious incident types, individual Fire Stations were mobilised on a total of **132 occasions** including **13** mobilisations in other counties. On no occasion did an incident commander request additional resources over what was prescribed in the Pre-Determined Attendance.

Operational activity for the month of January 2024 **increased by 6% (+7 mobilisations) on the preceding month** (December 2024: 125 mobilisations).

Operational activity for the month of January 2024 **was similar (+3 mobilisations) on the equivalent month in 2023** (January 2023, 122 mobilisations).

Sample Incidents (January 2024)

- 04/01/2024 Wicklow Town and Rathdrum crews attended a fire in an apartment block under construction in Ashford.
- 07/01/2024 Greystones and Wicklow town crews attended an RTC in Newtownmountkennedy between a car and a bus.
- 11/01/2024 Greystones and Wicklow town crews attended a single car RTC in Newtownmountkennedy near the cemetery requiring a complex extrication.
- 16/01/2024 Dunlavin and Baltinglass crews attended a domestic house fire at Griffinstown Glen.
- 20/01/2024 Tinahely and Carnew crews attended a high speed RTC at Lugduff involving 3 casualties.

Incidents in County Kildare (8-incidents total) examples:

- 07/01/2024 Blessington crew supported units from Dublin Fire Brigade and from Naas and Newbridge at a long duration fire at an industrial site in Killeel.
- 13/01/2024 Blessington and Dunlavin Crews attended a single vehicle RTC with crews from Newbridge at Yellowbogcommon, Athy.
- 18/01/2024 Dunlavin crew attended an alarm activation in Kilcullen.
- 19/01/2024 Blessington crew supported Naas at an RTC where a car had struck a tree in Naas.
- 29/01/2024 Baltinglass crew supported crews from Carlow at a single vehicle RTC near Castledermot.

Incidents in County Wexford (3-incidents total) examples:

- 08/01/2024 Arklow crew attended a car fire in Killinierin.
- 14/01/2024 Carnew and Tinahely crews attended a 2-car RTC with 2 casualties in Askamore.

Fire Prevention Statistics January 2024

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

Application type	Received	Deemed Invalid, refused or withdrawn	Requested additional information	Inspections	Recommended for Grant
FSCs	9	1	4		6
Revised FSCs	1				0
FSC 7-Day Notice	3		3		4
Regularisation FSCs	0		1		3
DACs	0		4		7
Revised DACs	0		0		0
Dispensations / Relaxations	1		0		0

The Chief Fire Officer was forwarded correspondence in relation to 13 planning files during the month of January 2024.

The Chief Fire Officer made recommendations in relation to all 13 of these files.

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

Building Control

Building Control Statistics January 2024

Commencement Notices for January 2024:

Commencement Notices Submitted: 48

- 12 Commencement Notices with Compliance Documents
- 28 Opt Out Declarations
- 3 Commencement Notices without Compliance Documents
- 5 Seven Day Notice

Submission Statistics

- 58 % of Commencement Notices - Opt Out
- 79 % of Commencement Notices Revised Information required & requested = 38 No. Commencement Notices (CN) of which

11 with Compliance Documentation (29%)

24 are Opt Out (63%)

1 Without Compliance Documentation (3%)

2 Seven Day Notice (5%)

- 24 Valid Commencement Notices

- 97 new build residential Units and additional 19 Apartments

- 11 Non Res new builds

- Invalidated CNs for January = 1

- **Certificates of Completion processed in January 2024**

- 19 New No. of CCC submitted
- 12 Required Revised Information
- 18 No. Validated
- 0 No. Invalid
- 69 new Residential units
- 8 Non Res. Builds

Submission Statistics

18 No. Validated CCCs related to;

16 No. CCCs submitted in January 2024

2 No. CCCs submitted in December 2023

**BCA not notified on completion of opt out developments

97 new residential houses and 19 apartments were notified to LA for Commencement & 69 newly completed residential units plus 8 non-residential units were submitted, assessed and validated in January. There has been a 21% increase in Commencement Notice submissions compared to the same period in 2023 and a 375% increase in Certificate of Compliance on Completion submissions compared to the same period in 2023.

BER certificates for all newly completed units were requested & submitted to Building Control as per S.I. No. 243/2012 - European Union (Energy Performance of Buildings) Regulations 2012.

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

Revised Information requests remained high in January for both Commencement Notices and Certificates of Compliance on Completion, 79% of Commencement Notice submissions & 63% of Certificate of Compliance on Completion submissions required revised information. It should be further noted that some Opt Out Submissions are requiring 2 to 3 Revised information requests which results in submissions being assessed 2 to 3 times to ensure compliance prior to commencement.

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

Building Control staff attended both in person & online a National Building Control & Market Surveillance Office CPD Day event in Athlone on Modern Methods of Construction.

Civil Defence

New Volunteers

Induction training continued for 10 new volunteers completing civil defence specific manual handling and cardiac first response course. Integration of new volunteers into local training units will commence in early February.

Regional Assistance

Our swift water flood responder instructors assisted Kildare Civil Defence with the delivery of a Life Jacket Emergency Services Course and Food Responder Course in the rivers of Wicklow, using the Meetings of the Waters and Jacksons Fall in Laragh.

Organisational Development & Financial Matters

HR & Corporate Services

The following interviews were held in January 2024:

- Temporary Environmental Awareness Officer
- Part Time Retained Firefighter (County Wide)
- Shortlisting Library Assistant

Employee Numbers

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

** Increase due to lifeguards (lifeguards retained for 1st week of Q3)*

Freedom of Information

January 2024: 23	January 2023: 9
January– January 2024: 23	January – January 2023: 9

Ombudsman Requests

January 2024: 0	January 2023: 3
January– January 2024: 0	January – January 2023: 3

Press Releases

February - 11

Register of Electors

Online applications via www.checktheregister.ie continue to be received and processed daily. The numbers of applications have increased significantly since the announcement of the date of the referendum.

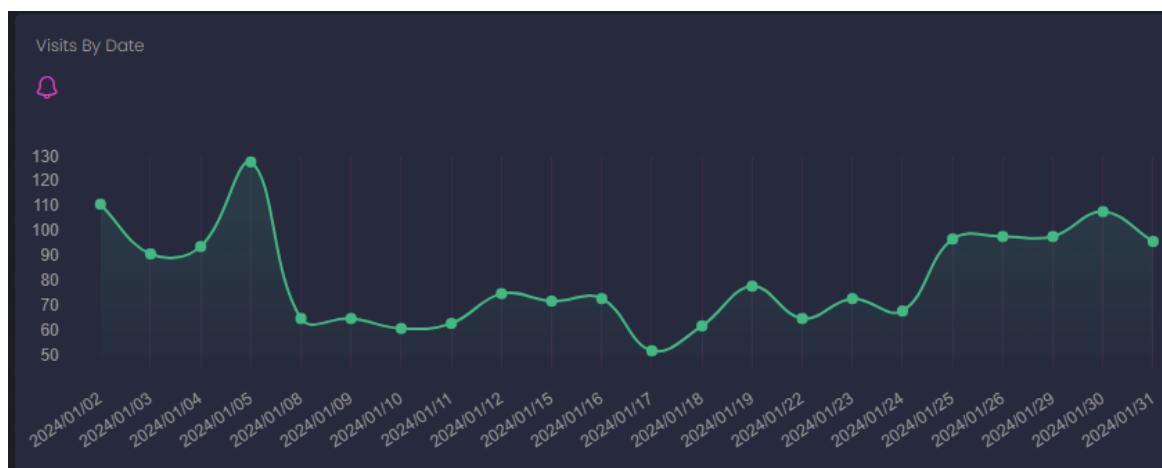
We are continuing with our weekly social media campaign in tandem with the Electoral Commission’s social, print and out of home media campaign. Print media adverts are appearing in all local papers between 23rd January and 7th February encouraging voters to check their registration details or register for first time. Voting register forms have been issued to all libraries and council offices.

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

Customer Service Innovation Hub

Customer Service Innovation Hub			
2024 - January			
Communication	No.	Public Counters	No.
No. of Phone Calls received to 0404 20100	10,596	Motor Taxation transactions in County Buildings	1977
No. of Customer Service Emails received	1614	Revenue Transactions	1466
No. of Elected Members / Deputy Representatives Received	125	Housing Counter Visits	444

Total in person visits for January 2024 – 1,793



I.C.T.

Operations

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

GIS & Systems Analysis

- Meeting with the Environment Section and Tailte Eireann re Nutrient Management Planning Reports. A project plan going forward was agreed upon for more streamlined data submissions.
- Consultation Hub for Blessington LAP has been finalised and is due to go live late February.
- Extraction of EPA dataset for Strategic Environmental Assessment report (Blessington LAP).
- Extraction of Prime2 data for Environmental Impact Assessment drawings (Arup).
- Data processing for the Arklow Flood Relief Scheme (Prime2, Discovery and County Development Plan data).
- Tailte MapGenie REST Services updated on the Planning GIS Viewers.
- New National Inventory of Architectural Heritage Open Data feature service link has replaced existing internal link.

Infrastructure

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

Finance

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

Cashflow/Overdraft

Wicklow County Council manages its cashflow requirements on a daily basis and did not avail of its overdraft facility during the period 1st January 2024 to 31st January 2024.

Capital Account

CAPITAL ACCOUNT					
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE SUMMARY BY SERVICE DIVISION AT 31ST JANUARY 2024					
	Opening Balance at 01/01/2024	Actual Expenditure	Actual Income	Transfers to/from Reserves	Closing Balance at 31/01/2024
	€	€	€	€	€
Housing and Building	18,989,917	3,938,755	(6,784,275)	0	16,144,398
Road Transport & Safety	(38,788,655)	1,700,905	(382,571)	0	(37,470,321)
Water Services	(11,690,745)	53,361	(60,260)	0	(11,697,643)
Development Management	(36,883,144)	73,170	(1,314,427)	0	(38,124,401)
Environmental Services	(1,434,750)	911,801	(162,256)	0	(685,205)
Recreation and Amenity	(972,251)	462,253	(34,052)	0	(544,050)
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	(2,096,186)	65,249	0	0	(2,030,937)
Miscellaneous Services	(12,090,030)	546,283	0	0	(11,543,746)
	(84,965,843)	7,751,778	(8,737,841)	0	(85,951,907)

Commercial Rates, Rents and Loan Collections

SUMMARY OF MAJOR COLLECTIONS AT 31ST JANUARY 2024										
Income Collection Area	Opening Balance 01/01/2024	Accrued	Vacancy Property Adjustments	Write Offs	Waivers	Total for Collection	Collected	Closing Arrears 31/01/2024	Specific Doubtful Arrears	% Collection
Rates	3,456,866	0	0	0	0	3,456,866	(690,786)	2,766,080	217,375	21%
Rents & Annuities	3,434,243	1,702,111	0	(5,105)	0	5,131,249	(1,474,424)	3,656,824	0	29%
Housing Loans	295,691	0	0	0	0	295,691	(8,820)	286,871	0	3%

NB: The commercial rated figures will be populated after the 2024 rate demands are issued. The updated 2024 housing loan figures will be available in next month’s report. The rent collection percentage is below normal levels due to the carry forward of arrears at the start of the new financial year. This situation will be regularised over the course of the year.

General Municipal Allocation and Discretionary Fund 2024

The decision taken by Members at the LPT meeting on October 9th 2023 to maintain the LPT basic rate increase at 6% generated circa €1.2m which was ring-fenced for discretionary funding within the 5 Municipal Districts to implement important public realm projects. The total Municipal District’s General Municipal Allocation funding for 2024 is set out below:

Description	Arklow	Baltinglass	Bray	Greystones	Wicklow	Total
Town Twinning	6,000	6,000	10,000	6,000	6,000	34,000
Economic Development and Promotion	28,000	7,000	9,500	10,000	9,000	63,500
Festivals / Other	25,000	20,000	52,000	20,000	25,000	142,000
Civic Receptions	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	10,000
Discretionary Funding	223,028	223,028	367,370	223,028	223,028	1,259,482
Total	284,028	258,028	440,870	261,028	265,028	1,508,982

Capital Investment Programme 2023-2025

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

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

Capital Funded Projects

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

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