

# Wicklow County Council Chief Executive's Monthly Report



W I C K L O W

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

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**APRIL 2024**

**This month:**

### **€3 MILLION IN FUNDING FOR A NEW LIBRARY AT BALLYWALTRIM IN BRAY**

Wicklow County Council has welcomed the announcement from Minister Heather Humphries yesterday with the confirmation that a maximum grant of €3 million euro has been allocated for a new library at Ballywaltrim. This substantial investment will mean the existing Ballywaltrim Library will almost quadruple in size and provide a modern public library space for the community.

Proposals for the major €3 million revamp of Ballywaltrim Library were given the green light back in February 2022 and are included among the capital projects contained within Wicklow County Library Service Development Plan 2021 to 2025.

Other ideas considered at the time included extending Bray Carnegie Library on Eglinton Road, however due to its historical significance and location with the prospect of losing the garden, it was agreed that the site at Ballywaltrim presented a better opportunity for development.

Like all **Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF)** funded libraries, the new Ballywaltrim Library will be a My Open Library whereby the public will have access from 8am to 10pm, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

### **FINALISTS ANNOUNCED FOR TOP STUDENT ENTERPRISE AWARDS**

Over 80 of Ireland's brightest young entrepreneurial minds will compete in the finals of the Student Enterprise Programme from the 26,000 or so who began their businesses in September. A selection of the finalists joined Student Enterprise Programme Ambassador and radio and TV star Louise Cantillon in Dublin for the announcement.

The initiative of the Local Enterprise Offices has seen almost 400,000 secondary school students take part since it began in 2003. The 81 shortlisted businesses will exhibit at the National Finals on the 9<sup>th</sup> May in Mullingar where winners will be announced across the three categories of senior, intermediate and junior and one business will be named Student Enterprise of the Year for 2024.

The Finalists cover all sectors of business from seaweed harvesting and medical identification to farm safety and portable cranes. For the programme, each student enterprise is challenged with creating, setting up and running their own business, and must show viable sales of their service or product.

The Student Enterprise Programme is open to students of all ages at senior level, with three separate categories - Junior (1<sup>st</sup> year), Intermediate (2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year) and Senior (4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> year, LVA, LCA and Youth Outreach). There are also a number of prizes that recognise achievements across specific categories – including the “*Best Business Website*”, “*Sustainability Award*”, the “*Smart Business Idea*”, the “*My Entrepreneurial Journey*”, “*Finance Award*”, “*Technology Award*” and “*Intellectual Property*” competitions from previous years.

This year also marks the re-launch of the student workbooks ‘as Gaeilge’, further encouraging participation amongst Gaelscoil students while supporting the promotion of the Irish language.

## Social Development (Housing & Community)

### Housing

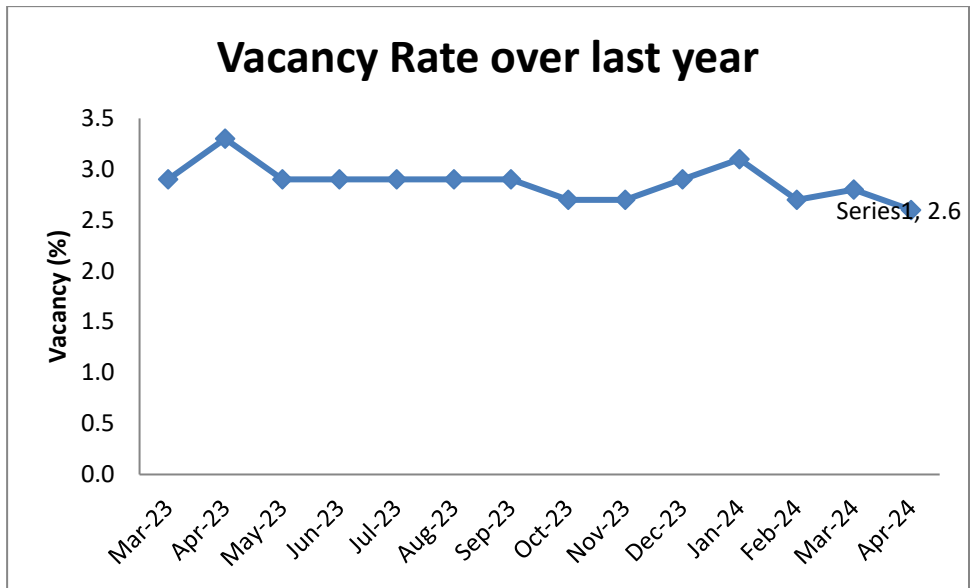
	March 2024	March 2023
No. on list for Social Housing Support – (includes RAS & HAP) *	4114	4444
No. availing of Rental Assistance Scheme (RAS)	182	190
No. availing of Housing Assistance Payment	1398	1603
No. in Long Term Leasing Accommodation	22	23
No. in Short Term Leasing Accommodation	24	33

### Allocation of Social Housing

	March 2024	March 2023
Wicklow County Council	08	17
Approved Housing Bodies	12	41

### Re-Lets / Voids

MD	Completed in 2024	In Progress	Not Started	Completed but not yet tenanted	Vacant
Arklow	6 (+4)	9 (-2)	10 (+3)	1 (0)	20 (+1)
Baltinglass	10 (+6)	6 (-6)	9 (+3)	1 (-5)	16 (-8)
Bray	2(+2)	5 (-2)	35 (+2)	6 (-6)	46 (-6)
Greystones	1(+1)	4 (0)	1 (+1)	1 (0)	6 (+1)
Wicklow	7 (0)	15 (-1)	27 (+2)	0 (-1)	42 (0)
<b>2024 Totals</b>	<b>26 (+13)</b>	<b>39 (-11)</b>	<b>82 (+11)</b>	<b>9 (-12)</b>	<b>130 (-12)</b>
<b>2023 Totals</b>	<b>140</b>				
<b>Total Vacancy as % of Total Stock (Total Vacancy + Occupied Tenancies)</b>	<b>2.6% (- 0.2%)</b>	<b>Figures in brackets indicate change on last month</b>			



According to CSO Census 2022 data:

Total No of rented properties in the state	513,704	100%
No of properties rented by Private landlords	330,632	64.4%
No of properties rented by Local Authorities	153,192	29.8%
No of properties rented by AHBs	29,880	5.8%
No of vacant houses (including Holiday Homes) in Co Wicklow	4,320	
Average no of WCC vacant units (using 2023 figure)	140 (3.2% of total vacant houses in the county)	

The overall vacancy rate for rental properties (private and social) on Census night was 7%, so our vacancy rate is less than half the overall rate for a rental sector where Local Authorities account for only 29.8% of the properties. Also, Wicklow Co Co's vacant units only account for 3.2% of the total number of vacant units in our county.

### **Housing Maintenance**

The Planned Maintenance funding allocation from the Department of Housing, Heritage, and Local Government for 2024 is €173,000, however there is still €185,000 which was spent on boiler replacements in 2023 which was invoiced too late for us to claim in 2023. This amount will have to come out of the 2024 allocation, and we continue to press the Department for an increase in the allocation to allow us to continue with much needed Planned Maintenance in 2024. The focus in 2024 will be on upgrading electrical installations in our pre 1990s housing stock.

### **Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS)**

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

CAS Acquisitions 2024	No. of Units	Delivery Schedule	Scheme
Bray	1	Delivery February 2024	CAS
Newcastle	1	Delivery due April 2024	CAS

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

	2023 Budget	Amount Spent as of March 2024
Grant Funding for Private Housing	€2,352,438.16	€608,690.34
Grant Funding for Social Housing	€818,793.00	€198,651.40

**2024 Overview**

- 39 Open Applications
- 53 Approvals (Plus 164 from 2023)
- 73 Applications Paid and Closed

Year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Number of Grants Received/Processed	249	216	266	327	281	456	95

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

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

**Local Authority Home Loans up to March 2024**

Received	Approved in Principle
24	10

**2016 Tenant (Incremental) Purchase Scheme**

	To Date	March 2024
Applications Received	425	6
Completed	109	1
Declined	280	0
Ongoing	15	15

**Homeless Figures for March 2024**

<b>Addressing Homelessness</b>			
	<b>As at 31/03/2024</b>	<b>Year To Date</b>	<b>As at 31/03/2023</b>
<b>No of New Presentations</b>	37	85	36
<b>No. of Repeat Presentations</b>	0	0	1
<b>No. of Families (Minimum 1 Adult + One Child)</b>	12	25	14
<b>No. of Individuals (Single Adult, no children)</b>	32	63	23
<b>No. Of Couples (2 Adults, no children)</b>	5	8	0
<b>No. of Children</b>	22	40	26
<b>NTQ/Asked to Leave/Landlord selling</b>	8	21	13
<b>Family Circumstances</b>	9	29	12
<b>Leaving Prison/Hospital Care</b>	3	7	1
<b>Mental Health</b>	1	7	3
<b>Risk of Homelessness</b>	16	32	2
<b>Arrears/Loss of Income</b>	2	4	1
<b>Addiction Issues</b>	8	14	6
<b>DV/DA</b>	1	3	2
<b>Medical Issues</b>	2	3	4
<b>Overcrowding</b>	1	4	4
<b>Unsuitable/Voluntarily Left</b>	1	7	8
<b>ASB:</b>	3	3	2
<b>Rough Sleeping*</b>	1	6	5
<b>Sofa Surfing*</b>	3	7	1
<b>Staying with Family*</b>	6	18	11
<b>Staying with Friends*</b>	6	8	0

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

<b>Own Door Temporary Accommodation at 31/03/23</b>	
Families	17
Adults	31
Children	52
Single individual	2

<b>Bed &amp; Breakfast Accommodation - No. of Homeless Emergency Accommodation Placements &amp; Duration @ 31/03/2024</b>								
	<b>No. of Households</b>	<b>No. of Adults</b>	<b>No. of Children</b>	<b>&lt; 3 mths</b>	<b>3-6 mths</b>	<b>6-9 mths</b>	<b>9-12 mths</b>	<b>&gt;12mths</b>
<b>Household breakdown</b>	21	31	52	0	4	1	0	16

<b>Bed &amp; Breakfast Accommodation - No. of Homeless Emergency Accommodation Placements &amp; Duration @ 31/03/23</b>								
	<b>No. of Households</b>	<b>No. of Adults</b>	<b>No. of Children</b>	<b>&lt; 3 mths</b>	<b>3-6 mths</b>	<b>6-9 mths</b>	<b>9-12 mths</b>	<b>&gt;12mths</b>
<b>Household breakdown</b>	19	29	47	0	6	3	4	11

### **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, 536 households (375 families & 154 singles) have been assisted under the Homeless HAP Scheme in Wicklow County Council from the inception on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. (218 homeless cases, 299 prevention cases to date and 18 direct provision). 139 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 9 clients supported in the Kilmantin Hill facility, operated by Dublin Simon. There is continuous transition by the clients to suitable alternative accommodation.

A report is being undertaken at present to cost the refurbishment of the current rooms with a view to making them all ensuite. More details will be available over the coming months.

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Neighbourhood Liaison Committee is now operational and meets monthly.

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



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

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

### **Other Homeless Supported Accommodation**

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

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

### **Housing First**

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

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

Wicklow County Council has, to date, successfully accommodated 18 clients under Housing First. Other clients proposed for Housing First have been assessed by the team and are availing of key support work pending finalisation of sourcing of accommodation. The main issue facing this programme is the availability of 1-bed units in suitable locations with easy access to required services.

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

The plan was approved by the elected members of Wicklow County Council at the Council meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

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

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

### **Ukrainian Response**

As of 18<sup>th</sup> April 2024, the number of Ukrainian Displaced Persons in emergency type accommodation is 1,803 (although we know that there are considerably more in the County)

This number is broken down as follows –

- Arklow MD 270 No.
- Baltinglass MD 370 No.
- Bray MD 767 No.
- Greystones MD 199 No.
- Wicklow MD 197 No.

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

Wicklow County Council are working through a list of pledged properties within the County and matching families accordingly. As of 18<sup>th</sup> April, Wicklow County Council will have housed 262 displaced Ukrainian people into pledged stand-alone ‘Offer a Home’ properties with the County.

Larger buildings and vacant units are also being identified and explored as potential options for medium to long term accommodation.

The Community Response Forum continues to meet on a regular basis.

## Community

### Community Recognition Fund 2023

The projects below are underway, with completion dates estimated in Q3 2024.

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

	Landscaping, large planters and benches
<b>Greystones Community Park</b>	Boules/pétanque playing ground
	Landscaping and Community Placemaking

**Community Recognition Fund 2024**

The Minister for Rural & Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD, together with her colleague Minister Joe O’Brien TD, have announced a further €50 million in national funding under the Community Recognition Fund to deliver projects over 2025 and 2026.

The Community Recognition Fund was first introduced last year to recognise the huge efforts made by communities in welcoming and supporting people coming to Ireland.

Wicklow County Council has been allocated €1,584,550 under the 2024 Community Recognition Fund.

The Community Recognition Fund 2024 aims to support the development of community infrastructure and facilities for the entire community, in recognition of the contribution being made by communities across the country in welcoming and hosting significant numbers of arrivals from Ukraine and other countries.

The scheme details set out that only areas which have high levels of new arrivals will be deemed eligible for this scheme.

Wicklow County Council is seeking expressions of interest for project proposals from community groups in areas where large numbers of citizens from other countries are currently living. Projects to be funded will be capital in nature, deliver medium to long term benefits for the communities in which they are located, and be capable of being delivered over the course of 2025 to 2026. The application window is now open for submissions. Applications will be accepted until 4pm on Friday, 10th May 2024.

An information session was held online on 18th April 2024 at 5.30pm, with approximately 35 groups joining this online session.

**Community Awards Scheme 2024**

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

**Local Enhancement Programme 2024**

The Local Enhancement Programme for 2024 closed for applications on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2024. The scheme was announced by Minister for Rural and Community Development and Minister of State with Responsibility for Community Development and Charities on the 6th of December 2023. €176,338.11 was allocated to Wicklow County Council, €29,389.69 of which has been reserved for Women’s groups in recognition of the fact that there is a growing number of Women’s Sheds, Groups, and Networks across the country.

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

## APRIL 2024

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

The assessment process was completed and approved by the Wicklow LCDC on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> April and returned to the Department for final approval. Once approved, applicants will be notified directly, and arrangements made to pay the successful applicants in accordance with the terms of the scheme.

### **Fáilte Ireland Regional Grants Scheme 2024**

Wicklow County Council was approved for the sum of €13,000.00 in respect of the Regional Festival and Participative Events Funding 2024.

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

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

Wicklow County Council has discretion as to how and to whom it wishes to allocate funding for 2024. It is the Council's remit to ensure that these funds are spent on those festivals and participative events that best drive tourism and have an economic impact.

Following consultation with Wicklow County Tourism and County Wicklow Arts Office, five festivals and participative events were recommended for funding in 2024. Payments have been processed to the following:

West Wicklow Chamber Music Festival	€4,000.00
Flow State Open Water Festival	€1,500.00
Footfalls Wicklow Walking Festival	€1,500.00
Wicklow Mountain Bike Festival	€2,000.00
October Feast	€4,000.00



### **Joint Policing Committee Public Meeting**

Wicklow County Council Joint Policing committee held a public meeting on Tuesday 23rd April 2024 at The Avon, Burgage More, Blessington.

The purpose of the JPC is to provide a forum where the local authority and the senior Garda officers, responsible for the policing of that area, can consult and make recommendations on matters affecting the policing of the area and in particular to keep under review the levels and patterns of crime,

disorder and anti-social behaviour occurring and the factors underlying and contributing to it. Membership of the committee consists of the Chief Superintendent, Senior Members of the Gardai, Wicklow County Council Chief Executive, Elected Members and representatives from the voluntary and community sector.

Councillor Gerry Walsh, Chair of the Wicklow Joint Policing Committee, welcomed and thanked all present for taking the time to attend the meeting and for their engagement during a lengthy questions and answers session. The issues raised were met comprehensive responses from both Chief Superintendent Derek Hughes and Superintendent Rory Sheriff.

Superintendent Sheriff delivered a presentation outlining the new operating model in the Wexford/Wicklow division, which was implemented in March 2024, along with detailed statistics on crime trends for the Blessington area. Chief Superintendent Derek Hughes gave a presentation which demonstrated crime data for Wicklow division and set out the plans for Q2 2024.

Emer O’Gorman, Chief Executive, thanked everyone for their attendance and engagement, and noted that public JPC meetings are an excellent example of community, Gardai and the Council working together through a collective approach to the benefit of all members of our local communities.



## **County Wicklow Age Friendly Programme**

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

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

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

The service is designed to enable older people to remain living in their own home for longer. The local coordinator undertakes home visits to older people living in the community, where a needs assessment is carried out, looking at four key areas of supports: housing, health, community/social supports, and technology. Home visits from the local co-coordinator are available to anyone aged 65+years. **Marion Van der Wel** has been appointed as **Local Coordinator** for County Wicklow.

The programme’s ambition is based on four key objectives:

1. Enable older people to continue to live in their homes, or in a home more suited to their needs
2. Live with a sense of independence and autonomy
3. Feel part of, and be part of, their community
4. Support the avoidance of early or premature admission to long-term residential care

The programme accepts referrals from a variety of sources including from:

- The older person themselves
- Family and friends
- Elected Representatives
- Local Authority Staff
- Public Health Nurses, GP’s and Occupational Therapists
- Community Organisations

Please note, consent from the older person (verbal) must be obtained before the referral is submitted. Once the referral is received, Marion will be in-touch with the older person to arrange a free home visit.

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

**Local Update (Data as of 14<sup>th</sup> April 2024)**

Healthy Age Friendly Homes Programme	
Number of Referrals for Wicklow to date	98
Home Visits Conducted to date	48
Stakeholder Engagement Attended	36 stakeholder engagement meetings and presentations conducted since Jan. 2024. Engagements include MD meetings, Full Council meeting, various Active Retirement Group meetings, Primary Care team engagements (HSE) and numerous voluntary organisations meetings e.g. Meals on Wheels.

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

The Older People's Council (OPC) met in the Brockagh Centre on Thursday, 18<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

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

**Age Friendly Ireland Committee**

The Age Friendly Ireland team met for a planning workshop in Athy, Co. Kildare on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2024.



Healthy Wicklow



Sláintecare. Healthy Communities

**Healthy Wicklow**

**County Wicklow Food Coordinator**

Under the key performance indicator, a decrease in the percentage of those at risk of poverty and basic deprivation a County Wicklow Food Coordinator position has been approved under the Healthy Ireland Fund Round 4. Bray Area Partnership has been awarded the hosting agency for this position. Interviews took place on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> April.

### **Brain Grooves Hip Hop (7+) Rathnew**

Brain Grooves is a programme of dance lessons created by tutor Zoe Patterson designed to engage the bodies and minds of students. This 6-week programme commenced on 8<sup>th</sup> April and had maximum capacity targeting age cohort 7+. What makes this programme different from regular dance lessons is that it combines brain activation with body movement.

### **Boxercise Programme**

A new dynamic 6- week boxing and exercise programme started on 12<sup>th</sup> April in Gaelscoil Chill Mhantáin Rathnew. Boxercise is for everyone, regardless of age, fitness level, or experience. This course was fully booked out.

### **Dancing with Declan Programme**

Learn to dance the easy way is commencing in Tinahely Community Hall on 26<sup>th</sup> April. Not only does this programme promote physical fitness and well-being, but also fosters social cohesion and self confidence among participants from the Tinahely/Shillelagh/Carnew area and its environs.

### **Period Poverty Project**

Due to the success and demand for the period poverty initiative across Wicklow an expression of interest was submitted to the Department of Health for further funding for 2024. Wicklow has received approval for an allocation of €15,000 to continue the roll out across disadvantaged communities.



## **Local Authority Integration Team**

### **Process Updates**

The LAIT is in place since January 2024. During the establishment phase, the team focused on networking across a wide range of statutory and community stakeholders, including the IPAS centre managers. The Wicklow LAIT has developed a prioritisation process in order to target the individuals and families in most need of support in Wicklow as follows:

1. New International Protection Applicants arriving to new centres: These will be identified as per communications from the LGMA and DECIDY. For the most part, LAIT support for these groups will consist of Advice and Information clinics and coordinated engagement with additional support providers.
2. New International Protection Applicants arriving to established centres: These will be identified locally through a weekly communication process with IPAS centre managers. When identified, the LAIT will conduct an initial 1:1 support session, and the clients will be able to access follow up support at any Advice and Information Clinics held at their centre.

3. Residents in established centres: The team will conduct regular Advice and Information clinics across a range of IPAS centres in Wicklow, with a particular focus on centres where support, or access to support, is limited.
4. Centres and/or individual clients requesting support: the LAIT can be contacted directly at [integration@wicklowcoco.ie](mailto:integration@wicklowcoco.ie).

As such, and based on the range of needs identified so far, there will be three forms of engagement with clients by the Wicklow LAIT as follows:

1. Advice and Information clinics
2. 1:1 appointment-based meetings with targeted clients.
3. Themed workshops and information sessions (e.g. a training and education session, possibly conducted in collaboration with appropriate stakeholders)

### **Client engagements**

- **Advice and Information clinics**

By the end of April, the LAIT conducted 7 Advice and Information Clinics in IPAS centres. At the time of writing this report, the average time of engagement per client is 40 minutes. The majority of those accessing the A&I clinics are International Protection Applicants, however a smaller number of people with status have requested support regarding employment and housing applications. The predominant requests are for support accessing employment, training, and health services. The team have assisted clients to complete work permit applications, apply for training and education, signposted to a range of community support services, arranged medical cards, and made referrals to HSE Social Inclusion for several clients with significant health concerns.

- **Targeted 1:1 with new arrivals**

As a result of collaborating with the IPAS centre managers, the team have been able to target newly arriving families to existing centres, providing them with initial integration supports including orientation to their local area, support accessing school places, medical card applications, MyGov ID registration, and referral to HSE for medical assessment.

The **Directory of Services** for all services offering supports to new communities in Wicklow is complete.

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

Bray Area Partnership and Co. Wicklow Partnership presented their Annual Plans 2024 to the most recent meeting of Wicklow LCDC. As both demonstrated a comprehensive range of work in supporting the needs of SICAP target groups and were also in compliance with all technical and budgetary requirements as set out by Pobal, both Plans were formally approved by the Committee.

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

Membership: Currently 445 members in total. 22 new community groups joined since start of year.



**APRIL 2024**



Informative and effective environmental networking event held between Wicklow County Council Climate Action Team, PPN member groups and An Tairseach Farm & Ecology Centre.

Consultations: Wicklow Coast Blueway Project; Arklow Local Area Plan; Blessington Local Area Plan Pre-Draft; Part 8- M11 Junction 19 Weighbridge Facility; N81 Hollywood Rural Traffic Calming.

Funding opportunities: Wicklow County Council Community Awards Scheme.

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

## Planning, Economic & Rural Development

### Planning

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

**Healthy Place-making, Climate Action** and **Economic Opportunity** are the three overarching cross-cutting themes that inform and shape all aspects of the plan. The plan also includes the Core Strategy and the Settlement Strategy for the County. The plan also includes the **Town Plans** for the following settlements: - Baltinglass, Newtownmountkennedy, Rathdrum, Ashford, 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 2 to the County Development Plan 2022 – 2028 (Wicklow Town - Rathnew LAP)**

We are currently preparing proposed Variation No. 2 to the WCDP 2022-2028. The purpose of the Variation will be to ensure consistency between the WCDP 2022-2028 and the draft and final Wicklow Town – Rathnew Local Area Plan, which is being prepared separately but alongside the Proposed Variation. Consultants have been appointed to carry out the SEA and AA for the Variation and the initial stages of the SEA screening is currently being carried out.

#### **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 currently reviewing all five.

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

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

the draft plan is prepared it will go out on public consultation for 6 weeks with submissions invited from everyone. It is hoped that the draft plan will commence display in Q2 2024.

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

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**

Pre-draft consultation closed for the new ‘Greystones - Delgany’ & ‘Kilcoole’ Local Area Plan closed on 31 January 2024 with 115 submissions received. Two well-attended public information days were held in January 2024. All valid submissions have been reviewed and considered and a draft plan is being prepared. Once the draft plan is prepared it will go out on public consultation for 6 weeks with submissions invited from everyone. It is hoped that the draft plan will commence display in Q3 2024.

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

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 pre-draft public consultation stage of the Local Area Plan process ran from 21 February 2024 to 03 April 2024. An online consultation web portal was created for this stage, with submissions invited through the portal. 128 submissions were received. A well-attended public information day was held on 1 March 2024. Consultants have been appointed to carry out the SEA and AA for the LAP and they are continuing to work on the SEA/ AA work. All other studies / assessments are intended at this time to be carried out in-house.

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

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

The pre-draft public consultation stage of the Local Area Plan ran from 01 March 2024 to 02 April 2024. An online consultation web portal was created for this stage, with submissions invited through the portal. 80 submissions were received. A well-attended public information day was held on 15 March 2024. Consultants have been appointed to carry out the SEA and AA for the LAP and they are continuing to work on the SEA/ AA work. All other studies / assessments are intended at this time to be carried out in-house.

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

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

Work has commenced on the review of the Bray Municipal District Local Area Plan. We are currently preparing an online consultation portal and are aiming to commence the pre-draft consultation in Q3 2024. Consultants have been appointed to carry out the SEA and AA for the LAP and they are continuing to work on the SEA/ AA work. All other studies / assessments are intended at this time to be carried out in-house.

The current LAP for these Bray is available to view here

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

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

The Government's [Housing For All – A New Housing Plan for Ireland](#) has introduced a new tax to activate vacant land for residential purposes as a part of the 'Pathway to Increasing New Housing Supply'. The draft RZLT maps for lands liable in 2025 were published on 01 February 2024. Submissions were invited on the draft maps up to 01 April 2024 with 9 submissions received. Submissions requesting a variation of the zoning of land are invited up to 31 May 2024. To view the draft RZLT maps click on the link below. Details on how to make a submission is also available on this link too.

<https://www.wicklow.ie/Living/Services/Planning/Residential-Zoned-Land-Tax/Residential-Zoned-Land-Tax-2024>

## 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 Office

**County Heritage Plan (CHP):** The Heritage Council have approved a funding allocation of €57,000 for projects submitted under the following thematic areas; Landscape People & Place; Wicklow Community Archaeology Projects: Heritage Recording & Surveying; Consultation and Planning. The part time Wicklow Community Archaeology service has been funded for a third year.

**Wicklow Heritage Forum Meeting:** Next meeting is scheduled for 30<sup>th</sup> April.

**Irish Community Archive Network (iCAN)** – Five new community groups have signed up to the *Our Wicklow* Heritage network and are currently receiving training in setting up their digital archives. The Groups are Roundwood Historical Society & Friends of Derralossary; Blessington Heritage Group, Wicklow Film Archive; Tinahely Past Heritage Group.

**Archaeology:** Community Monuments Fund- CMF 2024. Six projects have been a successful in receiving funding allocations as per project applications prepared by the Heritage Office and submitted to National Monuments Service. These are: Drumgoff Barracks €12,159 for structural repairs plus €29,889 for Conservation assessments; Mullinacuff Church €90,678 for repair to medieval masonry; Kilmacanogue (Old) Church €30,000; St. Kevin Church Hollywood €29932 for conservation plans, and €9,588 for Kilranelagh Graveyard survey

**Built Heritage Capital Funds (Architecture):** A funding allocation of €101,000 has been received in respect of 16 projects shortlisted for County Wicklow under the Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS). There are 4 projects which have been successful under the Historic Structures Fund (HSF) as follows;

Coolattin House €171,000; Clermont House €171,000; Former Post Office, Shillelagh €20,000 and Vernacular house at Rosebank, Avoca €10,000.

**Development Management**

**Planning Applications**

Total valid applications received	To 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2024	To 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2023	% difference
Received (Valid)	265	265	

A total of 102 valid applications were received during March as follows:

Type of Development	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2024 Number Received
Individual Houses	26 (22 refer to a rural house)
Housing Developments*	04
Agricultural Structures	00
Commercial	08
Other Developments**	64
<b>Total</b>	<b>102</b>

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

Decisions issued in respect of 72 applications in March 2024

Type of Development	Number of Decisions
Housing Developments	01
Individual Houses	00
Other Developments	71
Other Developments Requiring EIA	00
<b>Total</b>	<b>72</b>

Decisions issued between January and March, in comparison to the same period for 2023:

	<b>31/03/2023</b>	<b>31/03/2024</b>
Total Number of decisions issued	240	225
Total Number of decisions to grant	200	193
% Grant Rate	83%	86%
No of applications withdrawn		14 (09 refer to rural house)

### **Applications Lodged with An Bord Pleanala**

#### **Strategic Housing Development**

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

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

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

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

#### **Strategic Infrastructure Development**

An Bord 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 long term grassland/scrub habitat: establishment and operation of a construction and demolition waste recovery facility; installation and operation of a soil washing plant and all associated site works at Ballinclare and Carrigmore townlands, Kilbride, Co. Wicklow – Decision, refuse permission under section 37G of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, 27/09/2023.

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

### **Substitute Consent**

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

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

### **E-Planning Project.**

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

For the month of March 2024, a total of 132 planning applications were received of which 46.21% were hard copy applications and **53.79% were received online.**

From 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 a total of 341 applications were received of which 45.16% were hard copy applications and **54.84% were online applications.**

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



There has been a mix of application types received including:

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

**Planning Enforcement**

New Files	10
Advisory Letters	29
Warning Letters	9
Enforcement Notices	0
Legal Files	0
Closed	12

**Short Term Letting – 01/03/2024 – 31/03/2024**

Applications received for Registration in March 2024	2
Complaints received in March 2024	1
Warning Letters issued in March 2024	0
Enforcement Notices issued in March 2024	0
Legal proceedings in March 2024	0
Files under investigation as of 31/03/2024	65

## Vacant Sites

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

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

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

## Derelict Sites

Municipal District	No sites on Register
Baltinglass	2

## Economic and Rural Development

### Town Regeneration

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

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

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

## **Funding Schemes**

### **Town Centre First – Suite of Supports**

Newtownmountkennedy have recently been approved for funding of €30,000.00 under Town Centre First Measure 2 Suite of Supports. This Town Centre First Plan must be completed, and reports submitted to the Department by 5<sup>th</sup> September 2025.

The Town Centre First Measure 3 Application closed on the 8<sup>th</sup> April.

Two applications have been submitted for this project funding:

1. Blessington – measures to include enhancement to the Square with tree planting and a rain garden, spaces for dining and fixed seating.
2. Wicklow Town – Further enhancement at the Black Castle area to encourage more tourism and attractions for locals with installation of picnic tables, seating and a sculpture park.

### **Thrive**

Under the new Thrive – Town Centre First Heritage Revival Scheme Strand 1, two applications were submitted on the 5<sup>th</sup> April for Bray and Wicklow Town/Rathnew. The aim of these projects is to enhance and develop existing Town Realms under the Town Centre First approach.

The Town Centre First Heritage Revival Strand 2 for Bray Courthouse and Heritage Centre is presently being discussed and an architect has been appointed to help in the preparation of the application which is due to be submitted on the 3<sup>rd</sup> May.

### **Town Teams**

We currently have four Town Teams: Arklow, Wicklow, Greystones and Blessington. Discussions are continuing on the future establishment of a Bray Town Team.

The teams work closely with the Town Regeneration Office, attending meetings and giving information on funding and grants available to Town Teams.

## **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 Councils URDF (Urban Regeneration and Development Fund) and RRDF (Rural Regeneration and

Development Fund) projects. The group meet monthly to streamline the advancement of RRDF and URDF projects along with a sub-group that will meet fortnightly and report to the steering group. This is a significant step in setting up the structures for town regeneration in the County.

These groups continue to meet fortnightly and monthly for discussions on updates.

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

**Baltinglass RRDF:** The costing for Baltinglass Gateway to Southwest Wicklow has come in over budget on both the public realm and the Courthouse refurbishment. The proposals have been revised and the necessary technical plans are complete in order for the works to commence. Works on the Public Park and playground are underway.

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

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

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

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

Another property has been identified in Arklow and we are now awaiting approval from the department to start the process of acquiring this property.

**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 DHL&H and a tender brief is being prepared for the procurement of engineering consultancy services to produce detailed designs, environmental reports and an application to An Bord Pleanála for the proposed works.

## Tourism

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

**Promotion: Wicklow Gardens, Wicklow Music Festivals & Wicklow Outdoors:** This month, the promotion activities were based around spring and the reopening of the various Wicklow Gardens. Focus was also given to Wicklow's two major music festivals, West Wicklow Chamber Music Festival, and the Bray Jazz Festival. Features also covered the first Wicklow Mountain Bike Festival which will be held at Ballinastoe over the May bank holiday and the very popular Hell & Back event.

**Irish Wish Movie:** Irish Wish, the Netflix movie starring Lindsey Lohan, has generated extensive interest around the various Wicklow film locations which were featured in the movie.

**Wicklow Passport Interactive Map and New Stamps:** The new interactive digital map is making it much easier for visitors to find the nearest stamping locations. Another feature on the map includes a pop up window showing the stamps design available at each location. This feature is becoming very handy as members are encouraged to design and use their own stamps. New stamps include a dedicated design for Wicklow Gardens with the first one available at the Botanic Gardens at Kilmacurragh.

### Meitheal – Killarney

The annual event is Fáilte Ireland's flagship trade event, which is organised in conjunction with Tourism Ireland and enables Irish tourism businesses to sell the best of Ireland to top international tourism buyers. Wicklow County Council was present to offer support to the Wicklow tourism trade present at the event as well as engaging with representatives of Failte Ireland and Tourism Ireland.

### Local Government Tourism Conference – Kildare

The conference provided a great opportunity to bring the sector and key stakeholders together to hear from a range of engaging speakers, share knowledge and ideas and to look to the future of tourism in Ireland. This year's special focus was given on Sustainable Tourism & Destination Development, Innovation in Tourism, Re-imagining Local Tourism, EU Just Transition for Tourism, and Global Irish & The Power of Networks.

### Abbey Grounds, Wicklow

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

The detailed designs for the Amphitheatre and Park area are being finalised. These works will be issued as a separate contract due to the nature of the works. A proposal for the lighting design for the Amphitheatre and Park area has also been commissioned.

The tender for the coach house refurbishment works closed on 5<sup>th</sup> April. The assessment of the tender responses will be progressed as quickly as possible with an appointment of a contractor by mid to end May 2024 (for coach house refurbishment only).

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

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

A Working Group comprising representatives from all stakeholders has also been formed and has commenced work on short term actions for 2024, along with longer term actions also. As community consultation and participation is a central tenet of the masterplan, a Local Advisory Group will be established to keep the local community informed and ensure their input to the process. Individuals and groups with a focus on the community have been invited to join the Local Advisory Group. The first meeting of the group is taking place on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at the Brockagh Centre.

### **Special Projects**

**Greystones Enterprise Hub:** Property Management Contracts have been signed between Greystones Enterprise Hub CLG and Cushman and Wakefield for the fit-out, marketing, and management of the centre. A Concept Proposal for funding has been submitted to Enterprise Ireland under the Smart Regions Enterprise Innovation Fund. Wicklow County Council is meeting with Cushman and Wakefield and with Enterprise Ireland in April to discuss progress on these.

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

**Carnew Remote Working Hub:** Contracts have been signed for the design of the former Bank of Ireland building in Carnew for the provision of a remote working hub and ancillary facilities. A timeframe of 12 months has been given for design, costing (to include estimate construction costs and fit-out costs), and Part VIII if required.

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

Marketing Plan has been agreed recommending a campaign idea “Choose Wicklow”. Requests for quotations have issued seeking the provision of consultancy services to support the implementation of the plan.

### **Offshore Renewable Energy**

The Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE) Network continues to meet regularly and engage with the offshore renewable energy companies who are developing proposals off the coast of County Wicklow. A plan for 2024 based around three work-streams (skills, ports/harbours, and supply chain) has been agreed.

### **Skills Strategy**

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

### **Food and Beverage Strategy**

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

Interviews to appoint a coordinator for Wicklow Naturally have taken place and work is underway to appoint the successful applicant.

Wicklow County Council has been awarded grant funding from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine to support Destination Wicklow, a project focusing on telling the story of Wicklow Naturally members and their products. Preparation work on this project has commenced.

### **Local Enterprise Office**

<b>LEO Objectives</b>
To foster an enterprise culture and stimulate enterprise at local level by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Promotion of the enterprise message at local level.</li><li>- Working with the relevant stakeholders in the county to foster entrepreneurship.</li><li>- Delivering appropriate enterprise training and mentoring to entrepreneurs.</li></ul>

- 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
<b>Grants Approved (number/ value)</b>	- 28/ € 672,873		
- - Measure 1	4/ € 6,541	42 Combined	2
- - Technical Assistance for Micro Exporters			3
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	26
Start Your Own Business Participant numbers (included in total training programmes)	73 / 7 programmes	120	32
Total No. of all Participants participating in training Programmes and events (all programmes except SYOB and MDP)	757	1020	244
Women in Business Network Number of Meetings	30	20	8

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	132
Number of One-to-One Business Advice meetings including Businesses assigned a mentor	528	390	163

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



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

<b>Trading Online Voucher</b>	<b>HISTORICAL</b>	<b>TARGETS</b>	
	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>Year to Date 2024</b>
No of Trading Online Vouchers approved	81	38 (meet demand)	22

<b>Lean, Green &amp; Digital Start for Micro Projects</b>	<b>HISTORICAL</b>	<b>TARGETS</b>	<b>YEAR TO DATE</b>
	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2024</b>
No. of Companies who have undertaken a Lean for Business Assessment by a Lean Expert	11	15	6
No. of Companies who have undertaken a Green for Business Assessment by a Green Expert	5	17	9
No. of Companies who have undertaken a Digital for Business Assessment by a Digital Expert	1	6	1
Energy Efficiency Grant	-	12	-

<b>Microfinance Ireland</b>	<b>HISTORICAL</b>	<b>TARGETS</b>	<b>YEAR TO DATE</b>
	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2024</b>
No. of Companies who have submitted an MFI loan application through the LEO	6	11	2

<b>New Exporters</b>	<b>HISTORICAL</b>	<b>TARGETS</b>	<b>YEAR TO DATE</b>
	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2024</b>
No. of Companies who have started exporting (at least €10k in first time export sales).	5	3	-

**March 2024 Events:**

- ‘Local Enterprise Week’, a national LEO celebration of local enterprise, full of events and business workshops took place from 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> March 2024

**April 2024 Activities:**

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

**Business Skills and IT skills Training Programme**

The training programme for Spring 2024 is ongoing. Courses are open for bookings through the online portal on.

Training completed in March includes:

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

Training scheduled for April includes:

- Start Your Own Business
- Bookkeeping for Small Businesses

## Climate, Environment, Recreation & Amenity

### Climate Action

#### Update on posts for the Climate Action Team

- Environment Awareness Officer Appointed (Sarah Rubalcava)
- Assistant Environment Awareness Officer (Vacant - Post to be reviewed, Tree and Landscape Officer could be a good position as an alternative for the team.)



### Climate Action Plan

- Community Gardening Expression of interest with Closing date 26<sup>th</sup> April advertised, 19 expressions received to date.
- Application made for Wicklow County council to become SDG champion
- Actions for progress reporting has been circulated to proposed members of the committees mentioned below.
- The Climate Action Team PMDS Plan has been Drafted and circulated to the team for PMDS.
- Cross Departmental Committee Structures are currently under review in order to deliver and monitor the Actions of the Plan, including:
  1. Climate Action Committee (Two DOS with Grade 8's or equivalent meeting "quarterly" prior to CABA SPC's)
  2. Climate Action Delivery Team (Grade 7's meeting "quarterly" prior to Climate Action Committee meetings)
  3. Climate Action Team (Current Team in place- Env Awareness, Climate Action, Energy, Biodiversity and Heritage) – plan to meet Monthly
  4. Municipal District Meetings – On a quarterly Basis Prior to Climate Action Delivery Team
  5. Green Team (Ideally to act as Representatives / Climate Champions / Ambassadors across the organisation to help deliver Climate Action.)

### Community Climate Action Programme

Funding of €646,000 allocated to Wicklow.

41 Application has been received for the Fund.

The Community Climate Action Officer is currently reviewing the applications.

An Evaluation Committee will be organised shortly

**Climate Adaptation**

**Coastal Erosion**

1. The ECRIPP consultant engineers are reviewing Wicklow County Councils response to their concept designs. The project is in relation to the coastal protection works from Bray Head to Wicklow. Malachy Walsh have verbally quoted €2,500 to advise WCC in relation to the ECRIPP project. They will also be providing advice to DLR on the ECRIPP project.
2. Malachy Walsh and Partners have been engaged in relation to Brittas Bay and Ennereilly.
3. Seabank to Kilmichael Point (An application has been lodged to the OPW for funding and this project was tendered on etenders.)
  - a. The tender has closed with two tenders received.
  - b. Awaiting on formal notification of funding from OPW
4. Greystones North Beach (Funding submitted to OPW, May be covered by ECRIPP)



**Climate Mitigation**

Meeting took place with Bolt in relation to Greystones MD parking locations reviewed on the 05<sup>th</sup> March 2024, parking locations circulated to district engineer.

Contract for Bolt in Bray extended until 1<sup>st</sup> May 2024.

Awaiting revised contracts from Legal Department for Bray and Greystones.

Might have to tender or seek quotes for a scheme in Arklow and Wicklow.



### Climate Networking

- Climate CARO Conference took place on the 10 and 11<sup>th</sup> April
- PPN event held at 23<sup>rd</sup> March with Climate Action Team – Great success, high attendance
- Bioeconomy Forum member (Two LA's represented Tipperary (Enterprise) and Wicklow (Climate Team))
- SDG Forum
- Biodiversity Officers Network
- Community Climate Actions Officers network
- LA Climate Action Forum
- RMP template workshop

### Environmental Awareness

- Currently reviewing work priorities for the year ahead and reviewing expenditure on various historical projects / events

### Other Climate Actions:

- Arklow NORRI Project – Climate Action Team currently liaising with DLR in relation to their piolet project.
- NB SuDS scheme been designed in Redford Park and in front of Templecarrig Greystones, Greystones MD and Active Travel involved with Climate Action Team.
- Meeting took place with Active Travel and incorporation of NB SuDs in schemes.

### Biodiversity Office

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



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

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

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

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

**Harbours and Ports**

**Wicklow Harbour Dredging**

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

**Harbours CCTV and security**

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

**Arklow Harbour**

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

	<b>Ships</b>	<b>Single (Import or Export)</b>	<b>Double (Import &amp; Export)</b>	<b>Transactions</b>	<b>Imports</b>	<b>Exports</b>
Jan-24	7	5	2	9	7	2
Feb-24	6	7	1	7	5	2
Mar-24	8	7	1	9	7	2

**Litter/Waste Management**

No. of Complaints Created	134
No. of Cases Closed, Resolved or Completed	142
No of Litter Fines Issued	12
No. of Waste Management Files Opened	0
No. of Warning Letters Issued	6
No of Abandoned Car Notices Issued	7
No. of Temporary Signs Granted	3
No. of Notices Issued under Section 14 of the Waste Management Act	12

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	22
No. of Cases listed for Court during the month under the Litter Pollution Act	2
No. of Cases in Court during the month under the Waste Management Act	2
Income - Litter	€900.00
Income- Waste Management	€3,150.00

**Pollution Control**

**Pollution Response & Investigation**

- 19 Water pollution complaints received and investigated.
- 13 Water pollution complaints closed.
- 0 Noise pollution complaints received and investigated.
- 2 Noise pollution complaints closed.
- 1 Air pollution complaints received and investigated.
- 2 Air pollution complaints closed.

**Private Water Supplies**

- 1 Drinking Water Monitoring Plan for 117 Regulated Private Water Supplies prepared.
- 43 Private Water Supplies Monitored.
- 37 Private Water Supplies were compliant with drinking water parametric limit values.
- 3 Private Water Supplies were non-compliant with microbiological parametric limit values.
- 3 Private Water Supplies were non-compliant with pH parametric limit values.
- 2 Boil Water Restrictions placed on Private Water Supplies upon HSE advice due to microbial failures.

**Water Framework Directive National Monitoring Programme**

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



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

- 4 Catchment engagement activities was undertaken.

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

- 1 Inspection Plan prepared
- 16 Inspections of domestic waste water treatment systems were carried out.
- 9 domestic waste water treatment systems were found compliant.
- 7 domestic waste water treatment systems were found non-compliant and were issued advisory notices.
- 1 inspection of domestic waste water treatment systems and was found compliant with advisory notice.

## **Good Agricultural Practice Inspections**

- 2 Inspections of farms carried out for adherence to good agricultural practice.

## **Well Grants**

- 3 New Water Grant application received
- 4 New Well granted
- 8 New Pumps granted
- 13 Water Treatment/Disinfection Equipment Units granted
- 17 inspections in advance/completion of works

## **Petrol Vapour Recovery**

- 3 Stage Ib Installations (Petrol Delivery) Inspections.

## **Deco Paint Solvent Regulations**

- 1 Vehicle Refinisher Installations issued with Certificate of Compliance.
- 1 Vehicle Refinisher Installation inspected.
- 3 Dry cleaner Installations inspected.
- 2 Paint Retailer inspected.

## **Smokeless Coal Regulations**

- 5 Wholesalers/distributors/retailers inspected.

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

- 6 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.



- 8 environmental reports on referred planning applications/consultations were completed concerning commercial development.
- 4 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

#### Dogs

A total of 1,183 licences were renewed in March 2024. There has been a marked increase in the renewal figures compared to the same time last year and this continues into this month. The dog wardens have been carrying out patrols in a number of locations in the county, and advertising the location where they will visit, which has contributed to the increase in purchase of licenses.

#### Lambing season

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



#### Blue Flags

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



## Projects Office

### Whitestown Remediation Project

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

### Avoca Mines Remediation Project

The Council is working in Partnership with DECC to advance the Remediation of the Avoca Mines project. Currently, this work primarily involves making the mines sites safe, by replacing fencing and making safe access to locations that require sampling and monitoring. The contract has been awarded to complete the fencing around Cronebane and Tigrony sections of the Mines. Monitoring and repair works to existing fencing continues.



### Arklow Flood Relief Scheme

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

### Wicklow County Library Service

Wicklow County Council Library Service is pleased to report that the months January to March have been busy in Library terms with issues marginally above the first quarter last year, January, February and March saw 126,250 physical books being borrowed locally. During this time period 28,410 used their library cards to access a plethora of library services including books, PCs, online resources such as eBooks and Audiobooks, newspapers and magazines, language learning and much more.

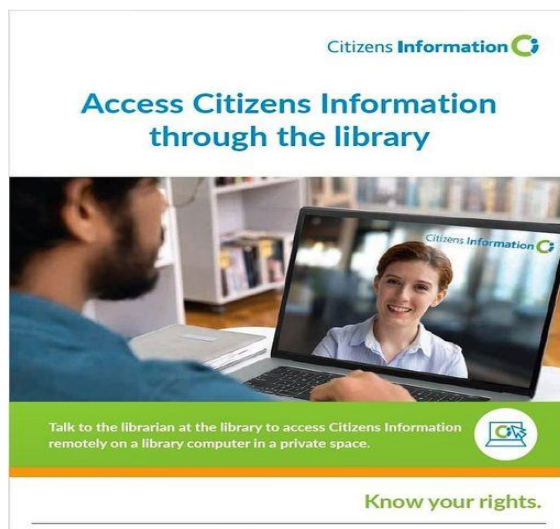
Other news of relevance is the recent availability of Cyrillic and Arabic keyboards in library branches of Arklow, Ballywaltrim, Bray, Blessington, Baltinglass, Greystones and Wicklow – these are available for use on library PCS on request at the library desk.

Citizens Information Service offers free information and advice appointments remotely through a computer in [#WicklowTown](#) library.

These appointments are Online and library staff will help to connect with the Information Officer on the computer in a private space, to guide you with information and advice on rights and entitlements.

The service is free, but you need to book an appointment. Information and advice on the following is available:

- Social Welfare Payments and Entitlements
  - Help you if you are new to Ireland
  - Entitlements for Young People
  - Housing Matters
  - Education and Training
  - Health
  - Employment Rights
  - Personal Rights
  - Help with filling out forms
  - Bereavement
- The service is free, but an appointment is required.



### Chien Buggle Recital – Classical Guitarist

Both Bray and Arklow Libraries recently welcomed classical guitarist Chien Buggle for recitals. Chien, known for his solo work and as a member of the acclaimed Dublin Guitar Quartet, has performed across Europe and America, and is continuing his library tour with a visit to Gorey Library. Hosting events like Chien Buggle's recital adds a touch of musical culture to our everyday offer and we welcome other opportunities such as this.



#### Lunchtime Guitar Recital with Chien Buggle

12pm  
Wednesday  
10th of April  
in Bray Library

No need to book



### Supporting Sustainability with Wicklow County Council Library Service

Local partnerships have formed between Blessington Tidy Towns, Blessington Allotments, Dunlavin Tidy Towns, and the two local libraries in Blessington and Dunlavin. Plant Swap sessions were held in both libraries during April. These events aim to promote community sustainability and wellness.

The library service is happy to team up with Tidy Towns Groups to provide space and promotion for these activities. People from the community are encouraged to bring plants and seeds to share and swap with each other. The library service also runs a Seed Ark, and seeds from this project are shared at the Plant Swaps. Organisers hope to expand these events to other library locations in the county in the future.

'Time to Grow'- A planting workshop for children was organized at Arklow Library where children made their own seed pots from recycled materials and pretty flower labels to go along with them. They also designed their own "cress heads" and had lots of fun planting seeds. A sensory-friendly version of the workshop was held on Tuesday, April 2nd at 3 pm, and siblings and families were welcome to join. The session for the general public took place on Thursday, April 4th at 3 pm.

The Circular Economy featured in both Bray and Ballywaltrim libraries during the month with PlanitPlay encouraging children to look at old and broken toys with a view to make new ones, lots of monsters and aliens and much fun was enjoyed by all.

The décor of 2 of Wicklow's newest libraries, Arklow and Wicklow Town, were transformed this week, by the installation of United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) wall art and cube seating, proudly sponsored by SSE Renewables.

Wicklow Town Library Service is marking Earth Day on the 22<sup>nd</sup> April by handing out ready planted seeds to children so they can nurture them at home.

Clean Coasts are teaming up with North Wicklow Clean Coasts Group on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> April to host a habitat mapping session for children and families.

The event will take place at Greystones Library for a biodiversity presentation followed by marine species mapping on the South

Beach. This event is a great opportunity for children and families to learn more about biodiversity, marine habitats and their local natural environment.

Codema Energy kits available to borrow at all Library branches, The kit contains five tools you can use to measure how your home uses energy and where energy might be escaping.



## Spring Into Storytime

*Spring Into Storytime*, the annual Spring reading initiative is part of Right To Read initiative and each year sees libraries across the the country focus on Storytime's in the library for preschool and primary school aged children.

Wicklow Library staff from all 13 of our libraries will be presenting 44 different story sessions across the county during the month of April.



## Arklow Library

Starting on Thursday April 11th “Healthy Food Made Easy” - this sensory friendly, all-inclusive course over 5 weeks will explore how to easily provide a healthy diet for you and your loved ones.

Arklow Library Art Group will have its first meeting on Tuesday 28th April at 6pm – picture a book club or a writer’s group, but for art! Interested adults are encouraged to bring their own materials and create spontaneously in an encouraging space. People can also bring along a piece they have been working on and wish to complete. This group will continue to meet on the last Tuesday of each month at 6 pm.

Time to grow – a planting workshop for children. We will be making our own seed pots from recycled materials and pretty flower labels to go along with them. We will also design our own "cress heads" and have lots of fun planting seeds. We will run a sensory friendly version of this workshop on Tuesday 2nd April at 3pm, siblings and families are welcome to join. Our session for the general public will take place on Thursday 4th April at 3pm. Booking essential.

Let’s Play Wicklow games set; reserve our box of outdoor and indoor games to take home with you and enjoy with the family or have available at birthday parties! Contact Arklow Library to place your reservation.

All kinds of Amazing: Thursday 28th 10am – 12pm. This is a support group for families with children with additional needs. Guest speakers are welcomed regularly, and it’s a warm and welcoming reason to come into the library, have a cup of tea and find your tribe.

Baby Sing-Along Sessions: Laura the librarian will sing some baby-friendly songs and all babies can enjoy our Magic Mat with some sensory friendly toys. Thursdays 10am for ages 0-2.

Family Fun Day takes place every Saturday in Arklow Library, with storytime, arts and crafts, Magnatiles, Magic Table demos, colouring activities and more! From 12 o’clock.

Lego Club: Each month our Lego Club is given a new theme and a new backdrop to unleash their imagination! Saturday 2nd, 3-4pm. Booking Essential, suitable for those aged 7+.

Chess Clubs; Following on from the success of Arklow Library's booked out Kids Chess Club (every Saturday 3pm) we are launching an Adults Chess Club! Starting Tuesday 19th, this club will run every Tuesday at 7pm.

Writers' Group: Join our writers group in a warm safe and encouraging space to let your creative side flourish. Tuesdays 12th & 26th 6:30 -8pm.

Toddler Storytime & Craft: Kathy & Anne Marie entertain pre-schoolers every Wednesday at 10am with fun rhymes, stories and simple crafts.

Irish Conversation Circle: Practice your cúpla focail with us, Tuesdays 5th & 19th, 7pm. All levels welcome.

Book Clubs: Wednesday Book Club: 6th, 11am – 12pm. Thursday Book Club: 7th - 7 – 8pm. Young Adult Book Club: Thursday 7th 4:30-6:30pm.

Adult Knitters' Group: By hook or by stitch, this group will make it worth your while to come enjoy a cup of tea and have a chat while you sew/stitch/crochet! All levels welcome, Thursdays - 6:30 – 8:30pm.

English Conversation Group: This is a mixed international group, where anyone can improve their English-speaking skills. All adults are welcome on Thursdays 7 – 8pm.

Magic Table – book a session to enjoy the use of our Tovertafel, or Magic Table in the library free of charge. This interactive projector with sensory friendly games created to encourage development of motor and cognitive skills is beneficial for those with dementia and sensory issues. Also available to use with a padded mat for smaller people!

### **Ballywaltrim Library**

The month of April began in Ballywaltrim Library with a series of events focused on children and families, including a creative writing workshop led by bestselling Children's author Caroline Busher, an Easter Arts & Crafts session, and special visits from local creches for toddler storytime sessions. These activities aimed to promote literacy, creativity, and social interaction among children.

Regular programs such as Tummy Time sessions for new mothers and their babies, Age Action's weekly IT training, and the Knitters in the Library group continued to provide valuable resources and support to various segments of the community.

STEM Saturday sessions provided children and their carers with opportunities to engage with science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) activities in an informal and interactive setting. Additionally, Coderdojo workshops offered children the chance to learn coding skills with professional volunteers.

Recurring events like storytime sessions, Scrabble for Adults, and book clubs, including the BBC Book Club and the Bookaneers Book Club, continued to foster community connections and provide opportunities for intellectual stimulation and social interaction.

A highlight during April and to celebrate Spring Into Storytime was the Teddy Bear Sleepover which attracted a huge audience of teddies to stay overnight and have breakfast at the library. The children brought their favourite teddy bears to spend the night at the library and children were hugely entertained to hear of their antics the next day.



### Baltinglass Library

A Conversational English Group for people learning English is held every Tuesday evening at 6.30, this group is facilitated by four dedicated local volunteers. Anyone is welcome to come along and there is no requirement to attend every week. Wicklow County Council Library Service wish to thank the volunteers for their commitment to this activity which is now in progress for almost 9 consecutive months, adults attending have really benefitted through forging friendships and the improvement to oral English is amazing.

Baltinglass's Creative Writing Group which originally formed as a 6-week workshop with a tutor has continued to meet independently after the sessions ended. They will get together twice in April, with the tutor now being a member of the group.

Olha continues to facilitate Art and Craft Classes for Adults weekly, these classes are beloved by participants and provide opportunities for learning new skills and building connections.

A Storytime is scheduled for April 26th, this event is tailored for 4-7 year olds and will feature a story followed by a craft session.

The Movie Club (Adults) is due for a relaunch in April and plans to have one showing each month, offering an enjoyable experience for adults. Due to licencing agreement, to discover the film schedule, it is necessary to drop into the library.



### Blessington Library

Easter was celebrated at Blessington Library with a variety of engaging activities aimed at fostering community engagement and promoting literacy among children. A highlight was a creative writing workshop led by bestselling Children's author Caroline Busher, catering to children aged 9-12. Eighteen children participated in the workshop, where they explored their imaginations, honed their writing skills, and let loose their storytelling potential.

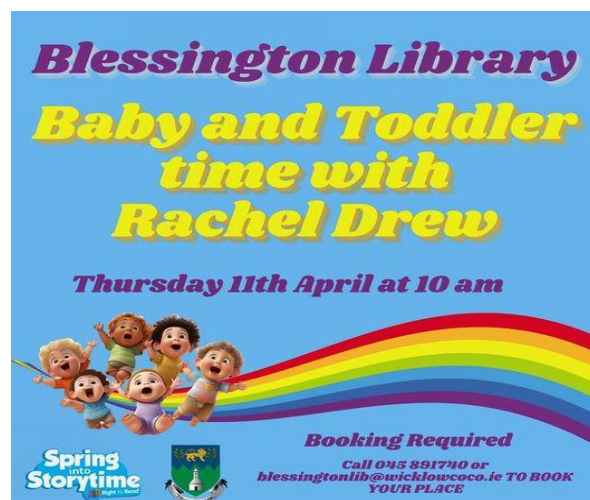
Additionally, two movie sessions were hosted, one for all children and another specifically for those aged 12 and above. These film screenings provided opportunities for community members to come together, socialise, and connect in a relaxed and informal setting.

Blessington Library has organised a series of activities in line with the "Spring into Story Time at your library" initiative. Throughout April, regular Saturday morning Stories sessions are tailored to promote Spring into Story Time. Library staff engaged children with lively readings, interactive discussions, and creative activities related to the stories. A special day for babies and toddlers, led by Rachel Drew from Let's Sing, took place on Thursday, April 11th, featuring music and song workshops. On Friday, April 26th, a special tea story time for children ages 4 will be hosted. This event combined the joy of storytelling with the cosy atmosphere of a tea party, with library staff reading "The Tiger Who Came to Tea" by Judith Kerr.

In addition to storytelling, two craft workshops were organized. The first, a Clay workshop, engaged children aged 7 and above in a hands-on activity to create clay magnets. The second held on April 19th as part of Earth Day, introduced children to the concept of sustainable development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through a Creative Craft session using recyclable materials.

Children from the Fun Bugs crèche were eagerly welcomed for a fun and educational morning at the library (day to be confirmed in April). Additionally, on April 8th, a special visit was received from the Autistic Unit at Lacken School.

Recurring events, including adult and children book clubs, poetry and writing groups, continue to play a vital role in fostering community engagement, promoting literacy, and enriching the cultural fabric of the library.



### Bray Library

April brings a quieter vibe to Bray Library as students focus on their exams. But that doesn't mean the library is empty! There's plenty happening. Storytime sessions took on a spring theme especially for the annual celebration of reading to children, Spring Into Storytime with every Monday morning featuring nature stories for little ones, while Tuesdays featured outdoor adventures for older kids.



The Circular Economy and PlanitPlay recently encouraged children to look at old and broken toys with a view to make new ones, lots of monsters and aliens and much fun was enjoyed by all.

Bray's Romance Book Club read was "Trespases" by Louise Kennedy and for younger readers the Transition Year book club explored the year's best books.

North Wicklow Educate Together Secondary School was offered support with research skills and critical thinking. Despite exams, Bray Library remains a hive of activity, connecting our community through stories, music, and learning.

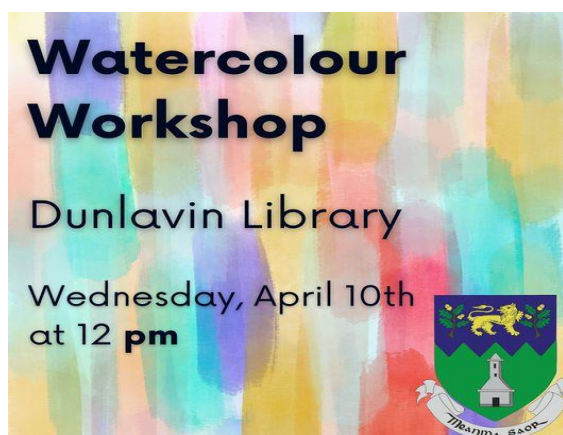


### Carnew Library

Carnew Librarian, Marie will be hosting a children's Storytime in April for Spring Into Storytime with little pupils from the local National School. The class will be invited to the library for stories and a craft afterwards. On April 15th the Book club met for coffee and cake and a lively discussion about their Easter reads and also compiled a reading list for the coming months.

### Dunlavin Library

People of Dunlavin are now regularly inspired to create a variety art and craftwork on Wednesday afternoons, April's offer included embroidery, quilling, acrylic painting and coffee painting. These sessions are facilitated by Olha from Ukraine and are very much enjoyed by all. This month the library in conjunction with the Tidy Towns in Dunlavin are running a Plant and seed swapping and sharing session. Locals are encouraged to select excess plants from their own garden for sharing on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> of April.



## Enniskerry Library

Adults in the community of Enniskerry have good reason to join their local library. Two Book Clubs happen on a monthly basis – the Murder, Mystery and Thriller Book Club, facilitated by Mary Maxwell and the Wednesday Book Club are sure to provide plenty of opportunity for sharing stories and conversations. Chess enthusiasts meet weekly on Saturday mornings 11.30-12.30 and if knitting is your cup of tea, why not come to the Learn to Knit sessions on Wednesdays from 7-8 pm.

Children's Storytime is also a regular feature in Enniskerry with librarian Caitriona reading to younger children every Saturday morning at 10.00 am. A brand new activity is the SDG Junior Book Club via Zoom to happen once monthly.

On Friday 26 April from 11:00 to 12:30: Brian White will deliver part 2 of his talk on Enniskerry.



## Greystones Library

The following activities and events are scheduled to take place in Wicklow County Council Library Service during the specified period:

Conversation Groups - On April 2nd, 2024, a Spanish Conversation Group gathered at the Library of Sanctuary, facilitating interaction between native Spanish speakers and learners. April 4th, 2024, the French Conversation Group provided language learning opportunities and the German conversation. These three conversation groups meet regularly at the library, inquire at Greystones Library for further information regarding dates and times.

April 3rd, 2024, will see the hosting of a Spring into Storytime event, featuring a special Easter-themed Storytime for families. Toddler Storytime, a weekly session, engages preschoolers and their families in songs, rhymes, and stories, fostering early literacy skills. On April 10th, 2024, children's author Hannah Gold will meet with Reading "Ambassadors" to discuss her books and their connection to UN SDGs.

The inaugural meeting of the Greystones Library Creative Writing Group will take place on April 3rd, 2024, inspired by an Ireland Reads talk from February 2024. The group will convene monthly, coinciding with the music group meeting upstairs.

Greystones folk are lucky to have a range of Book Clubs on offer at their local library. The Thursday Murder Book Club and The Men's book Club meet monthly at the library for lively discussion on their current book choice. The KWETB Book Club providing specially selected texts for students with additional needs. Also the Seaside Book Club, welcoming

members of all ages, discuss light fiction and biographies. There is also The Wise Words Book Club who discuss general fiction, the Between the Spines Book Club delves into the latest novels, The Bookmark Club and the Moon and Stars Club who embrace many genres. Further information on the dates and times can be had by inquiring at the library.

Occupational Therapist Sorcha Rice delivered a talk on sensory processing difficulties and behaviour management on April 11th, 2024, as part of Healthy Ireland initiatives.

Rebecca Garvey from Wicklow County Childcare will provide guidance for prospective childminders and parents on April 24th, 2024.

Concluding the month, a Poetry Circle will meet on April 30th, 2024, continuing their tradition of sharing and discussing favourite poems.

### Rathdrum Library

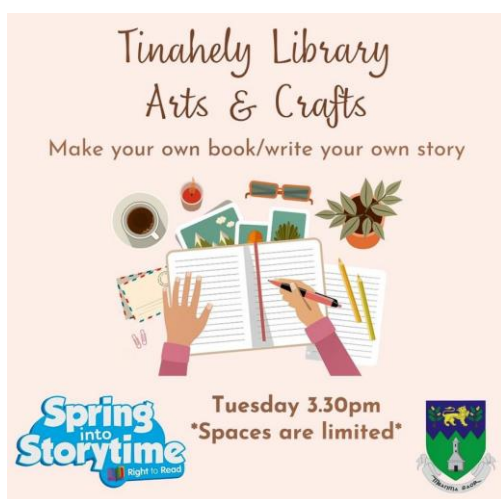
Every Friday, Tinahely Library welcomes little ones aged 0 to 3 years for a delightful Baby & Toddler Storytime, from 10 to 10:30 in the morning. On the first and third Saturdays, the library comes alive with stories for different age groups: from 3 to 5-year-olds at 11 to 11:30, followed by the 6 to 8-year-olds from 11:45 to 12:15. The first Wednesday of each month is dedicated to adult readers of our community, as the Adult Book Club meets from 7 to 8:15 in the evening.

Every Tuesday sees the Boy's National School sending four classes to explore the library while Thursdays are just as bustling, with visits from Our Lady's Girls National School, welcoming half a class each time.

Secondary students from Avondale Community College enriches our library experience with their paired reading sessions every Tuesday, fostering a love for books from 4 to 5 in the afternoon.

### Tinahely Library

Tinahely Library now offers a range of engaging activities and events catering to different age groups, from adults to toddlers and children. Recurring events such as the Adult Book Club and Baby & Toddler Storytime provide consistent opportunities for community engagement. Three Spring Into Storytime events for children the month of April, offer unique reading experiences tailored to specific age groups. Additionally, the inclusion of arts & crafts activities adds a creative dimension to the library's programming, encouraging hands-on participation and creativity.





## Wicklow Town Library

### EVENTS FOR CHILDREN

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

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

Storytime: Saturday mornings at 11am and Baby and Toddler story rhyme time on Mondays at 10:15am.

Chess Club: Every Tuesday evening from 6-7 we will be running the Wicklow Library Chess Club for children. It is growing every week! (7-13 years).

Junior Book Club – meet on the first Saturday of the month from 2.30 to 3.30pm (ages 9-11).

### EVENTS FOR YOUNG ADULTS

Young Adult Writing Workshops are starting on Thursday 18th April and will be running for a number of weeks from 6.30-8pm.

Young Adult Book Club – meet the second Saturday of the month from 2.30 to 4pm.

### EVENTS FOR ADULTS

#### 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!

April's movie is on Wednesday 17th April at 7.00pm sharp. Or come along beforehand for a chance to chat. The only requirement is that film-goers are members of the library and must have "My Open Library" activated on their membership card. This is a requirement of the library in order to be on the premises after normal working hours. Please

contact Wicklow library about joining in the days beforehand as a tour and health and safety checklist needs to be completed.

Email: [filmclubwicklow@gmail.com](mailto:filmclubwicklow@gmail.com) to reserve a seat.

Irish Conversation Group for Adults takes place on the last Saturday of the month from 3-4pm. The next meeting takes place on Saturday 27th April.

Wicklow Partially Sighted Group meets on the first Tuesday of the month in the Community Room to help and advice each other. The last meeting was April 2nd.

LA Leche League meets on the first Wednesday of the month from 10-12noon. The last meeting was April 4th. La Leche League of Ireland is a voluntary organisation which provides free information and support to all those who want to breastfeed or give their babies human milk.

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

Jobs Fair: On Thursday 25th April, the Department of Social Protection will host an information session for job seekers in Wicklow Library from 10am to 1pm.

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

Meditation Sessions: took place every Saturday from 12.30 – 1pm.



***Pictured – The Continuum Art Group***



### Archives & Genealogy Service

#### Successful funding application

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

#### Decade of Centenaries

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

#### Collections management

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

#### *New collections*

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

## **Outreach**

### *Special projects*

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

## **Education programme**

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

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

Wicklow County Archives is developing a protocol with the Department of Children around records research and accessing records to provide the Department with documentary evidence for claimants to the scheme, in relation to time spent in the Wicklow County Home. Scheme commenced in March 2024.

## **Recreation**

### **Coastal Blueway**

Following meetings with Irish Leisure Consultants (ILC), we are developing a timeline for the project over the next few months, with consultations taking place in Greystones and Arklow on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> March aimed at sport providers, clubs and tourism businesses.

The Blueway project is moving towards the second stage of the accreditation process with the current accreditation mainly reliant on provider-based activities. We are liaising with the Blueway Partnership to identify where self-led Blueway trails might be located.

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

The next WORC meeting will take place on the 25<sup>th</sup> of April 2024 at Coillte Headquarters in Newtown Mount Kennedy, to continue the delivery and progress of the County Wicklow Outdoor Recreation Strategy 2020- 2025.

### **Wicklow Way Partnership**

Following the Wicklow Way Partnership meeting on the 6<sup>th</sup> February 2024, 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. WWP partners are: Wicklow Co Co, Coillte, Mountain Meitheal, County Wicklow Partnership, National Parks and Wildlife Service and Dublin Mountains Partnership.

### 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 – It is envisaged that these works will commence in quarter 2 of 2024.

The Sugarloaf Repair Scheme – Part VIII CE Report submitted to CE and will be presented to the members of Bray Municipal District in April.

The table below is a list of current projects funded under ORIS which are now completed or being progressed:

ORIS	Project Name	Brief description	Date for Completion
ORIS 2018 - M2	Vartry Trails	Trail Upgrade Works and loop walk around Vartry Reservoir	Completed
ORIS 2018 - M2	St Kevin's Way	Trail Upgrade Works, bridge construction and tree planting along St Kevin's Way at Wicklow Gap	Completed
ORIS 2019 - M2 OR219WW01	North Wicklow Trails	Trail Upgrade Works on North Wicklow's Trails Network, developing further trail links to urban hubs like Bray and Greystones	substantially completed
ORIS 2020 - M1 OR120WW01	Avondale /Avonmore Upgrade	Two trail segments linking Avondale to the Jubilee Loop and Avonmore Way with associated signage and mapping.	Completed
OR120WW07	Glenmalure Access project	The car park has been upgraded at Clogherna Access.	Completed
ORIS 2020 - M3 OR320WW01	Wicklow Coastal Blueway	An East Coast Blueway development in County Wicklow of coastal/water access facilities for varying abilities, animation activities and signage.	Completion due Dec'24
ORIS 2021 - M1 OR121WW06	Keadeen Access 2021	To extend the carpark at Ballinabarney Forest to allow for improved access	Completed
OR121WW04	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.	Extension granted
ORIS 2021 - M1 OR121WW01	Kilmacanogue Nature Trail 2021	Enhancement of the links between Wicklow Uplands Way and Sugarloaf Way by taking a section off road.	Completed
ORIS 2021 - M1 OR121WW02	Lacken Mass Path 2021	Provide a link between the final section of the original mass path and carry out repairs along the trail.	Completed
OR221WW02	Bray to Greystones - Cliff Walk Protection Scheme	This project is paused briefly to allow finalising the purchase of third-party land.	In progress
ORIS 2021 - M2	St. Kevins Way Video Guide 2021(CWP)	St Kevin’s Way – a wonderful 35km route across the Wicklow Mountains will be brought to life with this multi media video guide and will add to the library of video trail guides in Wicklow	Completed - Video for Wicklow Tourism Website
ORIS 2021 - M1	Waymarking of the Wicklow Way 2021(CWP)	Replacement of waymarking plaques, posts and finger post road signs throughout the 132km Wicklow Way.	Extension granted, not completed



ORIS 2021-M2 OR221WW01	<i>Jubilee Loop and Avonmore Way link 2021 Scheme</i>	Upgrade of the route from Laragh to Clara Vale to include an access ramp at Samuel Hayes Bridge ensuring accessibility to all.	In progress
ORIS 2021-OR421WW01	<i>Project Development - Three Trout Route 2021 Scheme</i>	A feasibility study to investigate several stream crossings required to complete the Three trout route.	Extension to March'24
ORIS 2021-M3 OR321WW01	<i>The Sugar Loaf Repair 2021 Scheme</i>	The Sugarloaf repair project will entail manual stone pitching of an ascent and descent route	New project 2024
ORIS 2022 M1 OR122WW07	<i>Avonmore Way - Age Friendly Surfacing</i>	Resurfacing of the Avonmore Way through Clara Vale Nature Reserve	Completed
ORIS 2022 M1 OR122WW03	<i>Glen Turn Cliff Walk</i>	Widening and upgrading works to improve surface and drainage on the cliff walk trail.	Completed
ORIS 2022 M1 OR122WW04	<i>Miners Way Ballinafunshogue</i>	Resurface Ballinafunshogue section of the Miner's Way	Completed
ORIS 2022 M1 OR122WW05	<i>Red Kite Loop (Avoca) Play Area</i>	Project extended to add a linear wild play area on the Red Kite Loop	Extension May'2024
ORIS 2022 M1 OR122WW01	<i>West Wicklow Access Points</i>	Creation of user friendly access points in West Wicklow via Coillte properties	Completed
ORIS 2022 M1 OR122WW06	<i>Wicklow Uplands Airlift Materials</i>	Airlifting of materials into sensitive project sites in the Wicklow Uplands. Djouce area at White Hill.	Completed
OR122WW02	<i>Ballyboy Equestrian Trail</i>	New info board installation during March.	Completed
ORIS 2022 M2 OR222WW01	<i>Blessington Greenway Russborough Parklands &amp; House Trail</i>	Enhancement of trails in Russborough Parklands/cycle hub	Extension
ORIS 2022 M2 OR222WW02	<i>Glenmalure Community Riverside Walk &amp; Recreation Area</i>	Upgrade of existing trail	Extension
ORIS 2022 M2 OR222WW03	<i>Coolkenno Equestrian Trail</i>	Construction of equestrian trail and associated access	Extension
ORIS 2022 M3 OR322WW01	<i>Roundwood Recreation Area</i>	Bike hub, bridge, signage, way marking and promotion of recreation area	New project 2024
2023 - PDM	<i>Lugnaquilla Recreation Plan</i>	Recreation plan for the Luqnaquilla uplands area to manage visitor numbers, land use, habitats and safety in the light of changes to access routes, and increased pedestrian traffic.	Due to commence
2023 - PDM	<i>Bray Head Sustainable Recreation Plan</i>	Bray Head hosts heavy recreation usage, both authorised and unauthorised. The land has suffered significant erosion and habitat damage and requires a new, sustainable approach to recreation and habitat management in order to protect the landscape and ensure safe and appropriate recreation	Due to commence

## Project Development Measure (PDM) 2023

### Lugnaquilla Recreation Plan

Quotation requests were sought from six companies based in Co Wicklow to provide a Feasibility study into management of Recreation on Lugnaquilla. From this tender process, 2 companies were unable to quote at present, 2 were unanswered and one of them has returned a full quotation, Go Wild Ltd, based in Ashford, Co Wicklow.

### Bray Head Sustainable Recreation Plan

This project development measure will set the requirements for the Measure 3 project to be funded and expected to be completed in 5 phases in 2025.

## 2023 ORIS Projects announced

On Thursday 28th March, Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD, announced funding of €4.1 million to develop and enhance over 150 outdoor recreation projects around Ireland.

In Wicklow, 6 projects with total funding of €174,780 have been approved for Wicklow County Council to implement around the County. This funding is in addition to the €90,000 which was announced in November 2023 for 2 projects under ORIS Project Development Measure. Two further projects, under Measure 1, have also been approved for County Wicklow Partnership for €52,725.

Wicklow County Council	Hollywood natural play	Provision of a natural play area within Ballysize forest	€29,700
Wicklow County Council	Wicklow Way Resurface	Construction of a 200m route and resurfacing at Wicklow way	€29,700
Wicklow County Council	Knockree Bridge	Replacement of Knockree bridge with bike traffic blockades	€29,700
Wicklow County Council	Stranhely	Repair and Drainage works of two bridges at Stranhely	€29,700
Wicklow County Council	Three Wells and Cushbawn	Enhancement and resurfacing works	€29,700
Wicklow County Council	Wicklow Uplands Way to Sugarloaf Way re-branding	Re-branding of the full route to "The Sugarloaf Way".	€26,280

## Wicklow Sports & Recreation Partnership

### Marathon Kids

Almost 500 children from West Wicklow schools gathered to run part of their 8 week Marathon on Thursday 18th of April, organised by Wicklow Sports Partnership. Olympian David Gillick was on hand to warm up the students and teachers and encourage them on their laps. The schools that took part were; Donard NS, St Marys SNS Blessington, Scoil Naomh Íosaf Baltinglass, Scoil Niocláis Naofa Dunlavin, Jonathan Swift NS, St Laurence O'Toole NS, Gaelscoil ns Lochanna and Blessington No.1 School.

## **Drug & Alcohol Taskforce**

Wicklow Sports Partnership has allocated €20,000 of Sport Ireland programme funding towards a sports clubs targeted conference and follow up courses and materials to tackling the impact that addiction is having on sports clubs. This will be delivered in conjunction with the Wicklow Drugs and Alcohol taskforce and Wicklow sports clubs.

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

### Strength & Balance Programme

Due to waiting list popularity term two of our Strength & Balance Programme started Tuesday April 9<sup>th</sup> in Shoreline Leisure Greystones. The programme is aimed at people who are prone to falling and struggle with balance and mobility. Again, the programme is full, with a waiting list. Each participant has been given a Wicklow LSP drawstring bag consisting of a pen and a HSE Falls Prevention Booklet.

### Aqua Aerobics for People with Chronic Pain & Arthritis

Due to waiting list popularity, term two of our Aqua Aerobic for People with Chronic Pain & Arthritis starting 22<sup>nd</sup> of April. The programme is aimed at people with chronic pain such as: arthritis or back pain. This programme is taking place on Monday's at 12pm in Shoreline Leisure, Bray with a staff member delivering. The programme is full with 16 people registered and with a wide range of chronic conditions being targeted.

### Aqua Aerobics for people with Parkinson's

A six-week programme with nine participants taking part each week. This programme is taking place in Druids Glen, as there are steps down to the pool, a handrail and the pool is one depth. Overall feedback has been very positive, with participants finding huge benefits to their health.

### Tai Chi for Asthmatics

This is an 8-week programme which started Tuesday 09<sup>th</sup> April in Shoreline Leisure, Bray. 16 people are taking part and Patricia Cronnelly is our Tai Chi teacher.

### Walk & Talk Bray

A 10-week programme aimed at people with asthma, COPD and other illness. Taking place in Bray, meeting point at the bandstand on Bray Promenade, twice a week, Wednesday, and Friday mornings. The programme is full with 16 people registered. Lisa Redmond our walking leader will be delivering the 10-week programme.

## **HSE Grant Aid Agreement Funding**

### HSE In-Patient Physical Activity Programme

An 8-week physical activity programme in conjunction with OT Aisling O'Sullivan in the HSE in Arklow. This programme took participants through the gym equipment in Coral Leisure Arklow showing them how to use the equipment.

### Walk & Talk with Activator Poles

A 6-week walking programme with Aughrim Active Retirement Group. 10 women took part in this programme with purchasing 10 sets of poles.

### Siel Bleu Activity Programme for Roundwood Men's Shed

A 10-week physical activity programme starting 23<sup>rd</sup> April with Roundwood Men's Shed. There are 12 men registered for this programme.

## Age & Opportunity Funding

### Walking Football for 55+

A five-week Walking Football Programme for people aged 55+. Started Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> February in Wicklow Rovers FC. This was a pilot programme being delivered by a walking football leader Peter MacNulty for Age & Opportunity. The programme is now complete, the club have received five footballs, bibs, and a whistle for the programme to continue. There are currently 16 men taking part weekly.

### **Orienteering teacher training**

Wicklow Sports and Recreation Partnership collaborated with Orienteering Ireland to deliver teacher training in East Glendalough School in Wicklow Town. 21 teachers from Primary and Secondary School across County Wicklow attended and gained the Ready to go orienteering qualification. Each school was given resource packs to help deliver orienteering sessions in their schools.

## Women in Sport Funding

### Teenage Girl Roller Skating Programme

A 4week teenage girl roller skating programme was delivered by Grainne Binns in Shoreline Greystones. 22 teenage girls learned the fundamentals of roller skating and an introduction to dancing on roller skates.

### Women in Sport walks

There were two instructor led walks during women in sport week. The first walk was the Tinahely loop walk. This 2-hour walk was led by Bruce Copeland and approx. 10km was covered through the woods. The second walk was led by Lisa Redmond and the route was up to Bray Head.

### Women in Sport Badminton

Wicklow Sport and Recreation Partnership collaborated with Badminton Ireland to deliver coaching sessions in St Marys Secondary School Arklow. 4th and 5th year teenage girls got the opportunity to take part in 4 weeks of badminton coaching from Badminton Ireland coach Georgina Ward during their school PE programme.

### Women in Sport Pilates

John Kenny of JFK physio delivered an introduction to Pilates for women in Hollywood Community Centre. 18 women participated in this taster session.

### Women in sport Physical activity and female physiology online workshop

Orna Murray delivered an online workshop during women in sport week. The workshop covered the areas of Understanding Female Physiology along with Menstrual cycle awareness, The 1% rule and supporting female athletes.

### Women in sport kickboxing taster session

Ann Hargaden delivered a kickboxing taster session for women in Bray Wheelers Hall for celebrate women in sport. 5 women attended and were signposted to Ann's kickboxing classes to continue the sport.

### Women in sport Coaching teenage girl's workshop

A 3-hour workshop was delivered in Ardmore Rover FC during women in sport week by a Sport Ireland tutor. 19 coaches attended. The four main modules:

- Drop-out And Engagement in Girls' Sport and Physical Activity,

- Meeting the Psycho-Social Needs of Girls in Sport,
- Key Considerations for Coaching Girls 12-17 years - Body image & Maturation
- Preparing for the Challenges of Adolescence in Girls

Training & Education

<u>ACTIVITY</u>	<u>VENUE</u>	<u>DATE</u>
<b>SAFEGUARDING 3</b>	3 Hours Online	5th March
<b>SAFEGUARDING 1</b>	3 Hours Online	26th March
<b>SPORTS FIRST AID</b>	Wicklow Tennis Club	23rd March
<b>SAFEGUARDING 1</b>	3 Hours Online	11th April
<b>SAFEGUARDING 1</b>	3 Hours Online	23rd April
<b>SPORTS FIRST AID</b>	Valleymount GAA	27th April 2024

# Transportation, Infrastructure Delivery & Emergency Services

## Transportation

### Public Lighting Maintenance

Please find attached the latest update on the outstanding public faults. The total number of faults currently outstanding stands at **324 – 2.08%** of total stock of 15,555. 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)	2	3	4	1	1	11
Cable Fault (Attended)		1	4		1	6
ESB Interface Required			1	1		2
ESB Required (Attended)	11	15	6	14	13	59
Knock Down (Attended)						0
Materials Required		4	5	1	1	11
No Supply		1	1	1		3
On Hold	4	5	12	1	4	26
Submitted	34	31	71	23	40	199
TMR			2	1	2	5
Tree Cutting Required			2			2
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>324</b>
<b>Percentage Not Working</b>	<b>1.65%</b>	<b>2.47%</b>	<b>3.19%</b>	<b>1.47%</b>	<b>1.66%</b>	<b>2.08%</b>

Date	11/03/2024	19/03/2024	25/03/2024	02/04/2024
Access Issues (Attended)	12	11	10	10
Cable Fault (Attended)	6	6	9	8
ESB Interface Required	2	2	2	2
ESB Required (Attended)	64	64	65	65
Knock Down (Attended)	0	0	0	0
Materials Required	11	11	11	11
No Supply	3	3	3	3
On Hold	32	32	31	30
Submitted	196	206	164	201

Traffic Management Required	8	7	5	4
Tree Cutting Required	6	6	6	6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>340</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>306</b>	<b>340</b>
<b>PERCENTAGE NOT WORKING</b>	<b>2.22%</b>	<b>2.26%</b>	<b>1.99%</b>	<b>2.20%</b>

### Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project (PLEEP)

The initial survey element of the above project has been completed. This is the initial phase of the project, and the design and fitting of lanterns will follow on in due course.

### Periodic Speed Limits

PWS Signs Ltd. has substantially completed the erection of the signage for the periodic speed limits at schools. Snagging of the installations will follow in the coming weeks.

### Noise Action Plan

The Dublin Agglomeration Noise Action Plan (NAP) has been put out for public consultation by DCC (as the lead authority). This plan includes the majority of Bray Town.

The Wicklow Noise Action Plan is currently being drafted.

### Transportation Statistics

	Total 2022	Total 2023	Total 2024	January 2024	February 2024	March 2024
<b>Solicitors Queries</b>	838	1026	241	84	89	68
<b>Road closure applications</b>	78	42	19	9	4	6
<b>Road Opening licences</b>	1414	1956	419	159	137	123
<b>Abnormal Load applications</b>	60	54	18	4	8	6

### M11N11 Junction 4 to 14 Improvement Scheme

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

### M11N11 Bus Priority Interim Scheme

The BPIS seeks to achieve the early delivery of bus priority measures in advance of the main scheme between Loughlinstown Roundabout and Junction 9 (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.

A further non-statutory public display event was held in the Glenview Hotel in September 2023 that presented the overall emerging preferred option for the BPIS between Loughlinstown Roundabout and Junction 9 (Glenview).

The public display documents are available to view on the project website [www.n11m11bpis.ie](http://www.n11m11bpis.ie).

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

Further environmental studies and traffic analysis have now been completed on elements of the emerging preferred option. As a result, further consideration is now being given to the preferred options at J8 Kilmacanogue, J7 Bray south (including Herbert Road access) and J6 Fassaroe (including the R117 access).

**N11 Parallel Service Road at Kilmacanogue**

A noise assessment to the east of the new Parallel Service Road Scheme was carried out during April and May 2022. The options review and design commenced in March 2023 following confirmation of funding from TII. Site investigation works were completed in November 2023. This information has been reviewed by the Design Team and the final design option has been prepared to allow direct consultation with the affected residents. The procurement of a works implementation contractor is the next phase of works for the project team.

**N81 Knockroe Bend Realignment**

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

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

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

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

The Phase 2 Options Selection work is currently progressing under TII's Project Management Guidelines. A non-statutory Public Display event on the Route Options took place in the Inis Fail Germaines, Main Street, Baltinglass, on Wednesday 27th March 2024. The public display documents are available to view on the project website [www.N81whitestownandtuckmill.ie](http://www.N81whitestownandtuckmill.ie) with submissions accepted from Wednesday 27th March 2024 to Friday 26th April 2024.

**N81 Pavement Capital Works**

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

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

The Feasibility and Options report was finalised and approved by TII in November 2023. TII have also approved funding to proceed with the design phase in accordance with TII Standards. The preliminary design report was submitted to TII in March 2024 following which a Pre-Part 8 briefing was provided to the members of Baltinglass Municipal District on the 25th March 2024. The Part 8 statutory process commenced on the 28th March 2024 with the period for submissions by interested parties due to end on the 14th May 2024.

**Park & Ride/Share at Hollywood**

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

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

**N81 Blessington Gateway Project**

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

**N11/M11 Strategic Bus Park & Ride Facilities**

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

The Chief Executive's report, that followed the part 8 public consultation for the park and ride at Junction 6 Fassaroe, was presented to the full meeting of Wicklow County Council on the 6th November 2023 where it was passed following a vote by Councillors.



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

### **Arklow Public Realm**

The Parade Ground Public Realm works are complete on site. 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 completing site investigation works and have started utility works. 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 and drawings for the construction phase with these documents anticipated to be issued Q2 2024.

### **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.

Meetings and information sharing is ongoing with Irish Rail for their East Coast Rail Infrastructure Protection Project. Meeting with the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) took place in June 2023. The meeting provided an opportunity to engage with the NPWS and discuss important aspects related to the project.

Greenway Project Consultant Atkins have issued a Constraints Report and a 4 week long public consultation period is currently underway for the emerging route corridors. The project was presented at the April Council meeting with two public events taking place in Greystones and Wicklow during April.

### **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 for additional information to January 29<sup>th</sup> 2024. As this information has been deemed significant additional information by ABP we are required to undertake a public consultation period again to take place in May 2024.

## Active Travel Updates – March

### Projects Under Construction

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

Provision of new pedestrian facilities and road safety improvements along the Ballyguilemore Road between Carrig View and the entrance to the proposed new St. Patricks GAA Pitch. The scheme includes for new footpaths and road widening works. Construction works are progressing well on site, with embankment construction works completed on the western side. Public lighting works are ongoing.

#### **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 ongoing on the northbound carriageway. Preparation works have commenced for the slipform kerbing on the northbound carriageway.

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

Provide infrastructure for schools to increase walking and cycling as the preferred travel mode where possible and improve safety at front of schools. Front of school implementation works are substantially completed. Detail design being completed for the footpath connection from Church Lane. 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. Contractor to be appointed to lay the High Friction Surfacing (HFS).

#### **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. Contractor to be appointed to lay the High Friction Surfacing (HFS).

### Project Updates

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

New plaza and public transport interchange in front of Bray DART station, with revised car parking, set down and taxi rank arrangements. David Walsh Civil Engineering have commenced works on site.

David Walsh Civil Engineering commenced ground works in Mid-February. Works are ongoing on the installing the new drainage system for the project. Sod turning event took place on 18<sup>th</sup> April and was attended by Minister Eamon Ryan.

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

The project scope has been changed and will focus on the provision of high-quality pedestrian and cycle facilities along R750 from Wicklow Town Car Park and along Station Road. It will also include the provision of a new pedestrian and Cycle Bridge linking Station Road to Wicklow Town relief Road. Traffic surveys have been completed and work is ongoing on the preliminary design for the route.

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

Provision of new and improved pedestrian and cycle links to Greystones Train Station. The spine route extends from Greystones Marina to Shoreline Sports Centre. The project will include improved pedestrian and cycle crossings along the Charlesland Dual Carriageway. Baseline assessment required by Department of Transport as part of Pathfinder. Design of pedestrian crossings on Charlesland Dual Carriageway agreed with NTA. Tender documents are being prepared for contractor to carry out the construction works at the roundabouts on Charlesland Dual Carriageway. Rapid Build Options Report for the spine route has been approved by NTA and work is ongoing on the preliminary design for the spine route.

#### **Safe Routes to Schools: Scoil Nioclás Naofa, Dunlavin (Baltinglass MD)**

Provide infrastructure for schools to increase walking and cycling as the preferred travel mode where possible and improve safety at front of schools. The Preliminary Design has been prepared and issued to NTA for approval. The Preliminary Design was presented to the Baltinglass MD Members on 22<sup>nd</sup> April.

**Kilcoole Road Footpath (Greystones MD)**

Footpath to be constructed linking Greystones to Kilcoole. Meeting held with landowner to discuss accommodation works. A design has been prepared and issued to the landowner for agreement. Once the design is agreed a tender will be run to appoint a Contractor. It is hoped to begin construction in Q3 this year.

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

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

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

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

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

During March and April, works were carried out at 3 more bridges with our crew.

Colbinstown Bridge is currently being assessed by OCSC and others for remedial works.

**Machinery Yard**

Works continue the maintenance of council vehicles, plant, and machinery. In particular Winter maintenance vehicles and surface dressing vehicles.

The application for a Dangerous Substances Licence has progressed to compliance with conditions.

All 3 fitters have completed their training in the maintenance of electric vehicles.

**Winter Maintenance**

The season finishes on April 30<sup>th</sup>. It has been a relatively mild winter.

From March 19<sup>th</sup> to April 24<sup>th</sup> there have been 2 nights gritting.

**Surface Dressing**

Preparations are underway for the season which is planned to start in mid-May.

Materials are being ordered and all H&S documents are being updated.

**Parking Income**

<b>Parking Income by Municipal District</b>	<b>EURO</b>
Bray Municipal District	<b>218,890</b>
Greystones Municipal District	<b>64,268</b>
Wicklow Municipal District	<b>91,772</b>
Arklow Municipal District	<b>45,838</b>
Parking Permits	<b>29,062</b>
Parking Fines	<b>141,610</b>
<b>Wicklow County Council</b>	<b>591,440</b>

## Infrastructure Delivery

### Affordable Housing information as at the 30<sup>th</sup> March 2024

#### Greenhill Road – 36 Houses

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

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

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

#### Phase 2

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

#### Rathnew – 43 houses

- Finalising details to be advertised shortly.

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

### Housing Supply – Programme of Delivery

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
<b>Schemes on Site</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Current Status</b>
Cois Droichead, Greystones	41	Completion anticipated Q2 2024
Ballard Shillelagh	20	Completion anticipated Q2 2024
Lugduff Tinahely	20	Completion anticipated Q1 2025
Merrymeeing Rathnew Phase 2	21	Completion anticipated Q2 2024
Liam Kavanagh Park Ballynerrin	10	Completion anticipated Q2 2024
<b>Pipeline Schemes</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Current Status</b>
Merrymeeing, Rathnew, Phase 3	7	About to commence Part 8
Fassaroe, Bray	15	Preparing tender documents

Burgage More Blessington	106	Part of PPP bundle 3 with NDFA. Tender stage
Lott Lane, Kilcoole	75	Has been retendered due back May 2024
Rehills, Bray	80	Not continuing due to high estimated costs
Burnaby, Greystones	75	PPP Bundle 5 continuing
Ballinahinch Ashford	25	Part 8 to commence June 2024
Tinahask, Arklow	75	Part 8 to commence May 2024.
Sheephouse Arklow	30	Design Stage
Mountainview, Blessington	10	Design Stage

**Traveller accommodation**

**Capital Programme**

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

Fire safety annual checks on Halting sites for 2022 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.

**Part V**

The following Part V units are due during 2024:

Location	No. of Units	Due for Delivery	Method
Bray	1	Delivery due Q3 2024	CALF
Dunlavin	3	Delivery due Q2 2024	WCC
Delgany	1	Delivered Q1 2024	WCC
Rathnew	2	Delivered Q1 2024	WCC
Greystones	8	Delivery due Q2 2024	WCC
Wicklow	3	2 Delivered Q1 2024, 1 due Q2 2024	WCC
Rathdrum	2	Delivered Q1 2024	WCC
Delgany	8	Delivery due Q2 2024	WCC
Blessington	6	Delivery due Q2 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**

The following Turnkey units are due during 2024:

Location	No. of Units	Due for Delivery	Method
Bray	17	Delivery Due Q3 2024	CALF
Greystones	5	Delivery Due Q2 2024	WCC
Baltinglass	2	Delivery Due Q3 2024	WCC
Arklow	3	Delivery Due Q3 2024	WCC
Rathnew	1	Delivery Due Q2 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.

CALF Acquisitions 2024	No. of Units	Delivery Schedule	Scheme
Bray	2	Delivered February 2024	CALF
Bray	1	Delivery Due Q2 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.

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

**Expressions of Interest – Social Housing on Council lands**

**Parnell Road (Central Garage site)**

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

**Kilbride Lodge and Sutton Villas**

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

### Infill Sites

- Knockroe – Two 4 bed fully accessible homes in progress - snagging being carried out. Completion due in April.
- 5a Rednagh Rd – One 4 bed house – Section 179A commenced 27<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

### Housing for Older People - Age Friendly Schemes

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

### Vacant Homes Scheme

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

100 Wicklow Heights, Wicklow Town	<b>House allocated.</b>
2 Lakeview Grove, Wicklow Town	<b>House allocated and tenant in situ.</b>
30 South Green, Arklow	Preparation for Tendering for Works.
5 Priory Way, Delgany	Preparation for Tendering for Works.
6 Ashleigh, Ashford	Preparation for Tendering for Works.
114 Hillside, Greystones	Preparation for Tendering for Works.
41 Kilgarron Park, Enniskerry	Refurbishment near completion.
108 Charnwood, Bray	Closing of sale pending.
10 Liam Mellows Avenue, Arklow	Compensation/Vesting Pending.
88 Wicklow Heights, Wicklow Town	Pending registration in the PRAI/Compensation Agreed March 2024
53 South Green, Arklow	Sale completed February 2024. Preparation for Tendering for Works.
53A South Green, Arklow	Sale completed February 2024. Preparation for Tendering for Works.
2 Harbour Road (“Merdenville”), Arklow	Compensation now agreed February 2024 Closing of Sale pending.
36 Wheatfield Bray	CPO published March 2023. An Bord Pleanála Hearing April 24
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.

<i>Number of Applications</i>	92
<i>Applications in progress/information requested from applicants</i>	15
<i>Applications Approved</i>	48
<i>Applications paid</i>	3
<i>Applications pending execution of Legal Deed of Charge.</i>	6
<i>Applications withdrawn/Rejected</i>	20



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

Ref. 827

## For Sale

### READY TO BUILD SCHEME

#### 5 Serviced Sites for New Homes

@  
Kilcommon, Tinahely, Co. Wicklow.



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

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

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

Riverside Business Centre, Tinahely, County Wicklow  
 Tel: 0402 38899 | Email: [info@kwa.ie](mailto:info@kwa.ie)  
<http://www.kwa.ie>  
A.M Kiersey Limited: C.R.D. reg no: 409002, VAT: reg no: 6429002V, PSRA Registration No: 001217



Number of Sites	5
Number of applications	6



## Derelict Properties

The following four derelict properties have been approved for sale:

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

## Emergency Services

### Operational Fire Statistics April 2024

There were **97 incidents** attended during the month of March 2024. Due to laid down procedures to mobilise two stations to potentially serious incident types, individual Fire Stations were mobilised on a total of **119 occasions** including **10** 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 March 2024 **increased by 25% (+24 mobilisations) on the preceding month** (February 2024: 95 mobilisations). There was an increase in mobilisations to RTCs (+7 mobilisations), automatic alarm activations (+5), malicious outdoor fires in urban areas (+5), Vehicle fires (+5), gas leaks (+3) and incidents in neighbouring counties (+4).

Operational activity for the month of March 2024 **increased by 7% (+8 mobilisations) on the equivalent month in 2023** (March 2023, 111 mobilisations). Year on year RTCs increased by 13 mobilisations and there was an increase in chimney fires (+5), but there was a decrease in domestic house fires (-6) and a slight decreases in a number of other incident types.

### Examples of Incidents attended:

- 01/03/2024 Bray and Greystones crews attended an overturned car during heavy snow at Calary with the driver trapped.
- 11/03/2024 Baltlinglass and Dunlavin crews responded to a quad bike accident in Grangecon which required a helicopter evacuation.
- 19/03/2024 Wicklow Town and Arklow crews attended a serious RTC near Jack Whites on the M11 south involving a HGV.
- 30/03/2024 Blessington fire crew supported by crews from Naas attended an overturned car on the Naas Road.

### Incidents in County Kildare (6-incidents total) examples:

- 02/03/2024 Dunlavin crew supported crews from Naas and Newbridge at a domestic house fire at Mylerstown.
- 23/03/2024 Dunlavin crew supported crews from Naas and Athy at a domestic house fire at Narraghmore.
- 27/03/2024 Blessington crew supported crews from Naas at a fire at the Water Treatment Plant, Ballymore Eustace.
- 30/03/2024 Blessington crew supported crews from Naas at a river rescue near Punchestown.
- 31/03/2024 Dunlavin crew supported crew from Monasterevin at a domestic fire in Narraghmore.

### Incidents in County Wexford (4-incidents total) examples:

- 03/03/2024 Arklow crew were mobilised to a car fire at Coolgreaney.

- 10/03/2024 Arklow crew supported crews from Gorey at an RTC involving an overturned car on the M11, junction 22.
- 18/03/2024 Arklow crew assisted Gardai to provide lighting at a possible crime scene at Ballylarkin, Inch.

**General Update**

New Fire Stations (Baltinglass and Dunlavin). The preliminary designs have been completed. Permission is expected in April from the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management (NDFEM) to proceed to Part 8 Planning Application stage.

Fire Prevention Statistics March 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	6	0	2	0	8
Revised FSCs	1	0	0	0	2
FSC 7-Day Notice	8	0	4	0	5
Regularisation FSCs	0	0	0	1	1
DACs	16	0	1	0	3
Revised DACs	0	0	0	0	2
Dispensations / Relaxations	0	0	0	0	0

The Chief Fire Officer was forwarded correspondence in relation to 20 planning files during the month of March 2024.

The Chief Fire Officer made recommendations in relation to 17 of these files.

Licensing	Received	Inspected	Request further info	Letter / Licence Issued	No objection entered on Courts on-line Service
District	2			2	0
Circuit	0			0	0
Dangerous Substances Act	1	3		0	0
Explosive Act					

**Building Control Statistics March 2024**

**Commencement Notices for March 2024:**

Commencement Notices Submitted: 112

- 38 Commencement Notices with Compliance Documents
- 52 Opt Out Declarations
- 4 Commencement Notices without Compliance Documents
- 18 Seven Day Notice

**Submission Statistics**

- 46 % of Commencement Notices - Opt Out
- 75 % of Commencement Notices Revised Information required & requested = 84 No. Commencement Notices (CN) of which
  - With Compliance Documentation (not yet available )
  - Opt Out (not yet available)
  - Without Compliance Documentation (not yet available)
  - Seven Day Notice (not yet available)
- 93 Valid Commencement Notices
- 322 new build residential Units and additional 365 Apartments
- 7 Non Res new builds
- 1 Invalidated CNs

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

- 20 New No. of CCC submitted
- 6 Required Revised Information
- 16 No. Validated
- 1 No. Invalid
- 89 new Residential units
- 0 Non Res. Builds

**Submission Statistics**

16 No. Validated CCCs related to;  
 5 No. CCCs submitted in February 2024  
 11 No. CCCs submitted in March 2024

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

322 new residential houses and 365 apartments were notified to LA for Commencement & 89 newly completed residential units plus 0 non-residential units were submitted, assessed and validated in March. There has been an exceptionally high increase in both Commencement Notice and Certificate of Compliance on Completion submissions compared to the same period in any previous year. The Temporary Waiver in respect of Development Contributions is leading the urgency in submitting Commencement Notices prior to April 2024. The Temporary Waiver has now been extended until December 2024 and existing levels of submissions is predicted to continue. The assessment process of current levels of submissions to BCMS is unsubstantial with existing resources available to Building Control.

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 a lower level of site inspections in March to identify non-compliances with Building Regs onsite and 2 Section 11 Compliance Requests were issued. With current resources available to Building Control & unprecedented levels of BCMS submissions resources have been focused on administration of submissions.

Revised Information requests remained high in March for both Commencement Notices and Certificates of Compliance on Completion, 75% of Commencement Notice submissions & 30% 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.

In March, Building Control staff also attended Eastern Region Quarterly Meeting in Navan and Annual Building Control Conference in Sligo.

### **Civil Defence**

#### **Community Assistance**

- **Tasking**

Our severe weather off road driving crews assisted AGS with motorists that had become stuck on the Sally Gap due to adverse weather, over 110 motorists were assisted over the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> of March. 20 volunteers, 136 hours.

Our volunteers were tasked to assist AGS with 2 separate missing person searches on the 15<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

- Female missing from Wicklow Town, where our drone team were deployed with also the assistance from the K9 units from Dublin. Later that evening, Male missing in the Bray area, our search responder teams were deployed and thermal drone, body recovered by CD crews. RIP



St Patrick day is always a way to show off our volunteers and equipment to the public, we did so this year taking part in parades in Bray, Greystones & Baltinglass.



## Organisational Development (HR & Corporate)

### Recruitment

The following interviews were held in March 2024:

- Shortlisting Sláintecare Local Development Officer
- Senior Executive Architect
- Broadband Development Officer
- I.S. Project Leader
- Temporary Beach Lifeguards
- Executive Technician
- Substitute & Part Time School Warden Bray
- Substitute & Part Time School Warden Greystones

### Employee Numbers

Employee Numbers	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023	Q1 2024
Managerial/Administrative	316	318	319	323
Professional/Technical	134	143	150	150
Outdoor	260	263	265	261
Temporary/Seasonal	68 *	64	43	44
Non DoHPLG	5	5	5	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>783</b>	<b>793</b>	<b>782</b>	<b>783</b>

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

### Freedom of Information

March 2024: 9	March 2023: 14
January – March 2024: 51	January – March 2023: 31

### Ombudsman Requests

March 2024: 3	March 2023: 1
January – March 2024: 6	January – March 2023: 7

### Press Releases

March 2024 – 6

**Register of Electors**

Online applications via [www.checktheregister.ie](http://www.checktheregister.ie) continue to be received and processed daily. Now that the date for the Local and EU Elections has been set as the 7<sup>th</sup> June 2024 there has been an increase in the volume of applications received. The closing date for receipt of postal/special votes is the 11<sup>th</sup> May and for applications for additions and updates to the Register is the 20<sup>th</sup> May 2024. We are expecting high volumes of applications in the coming weeks.

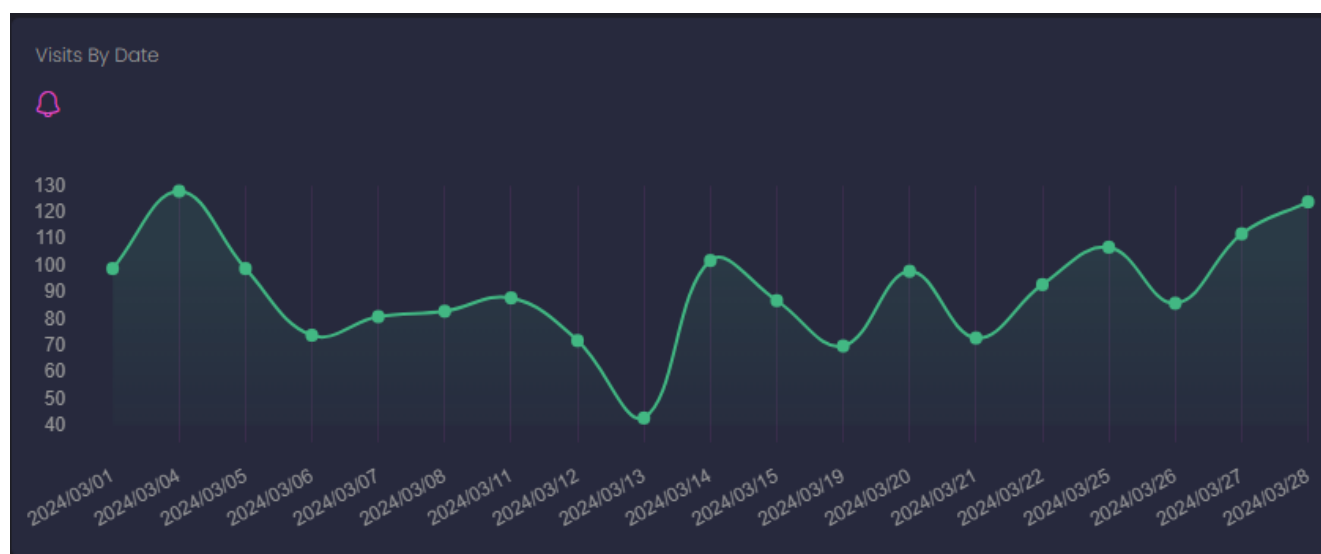
We have re-commenced our social media campaign in tandem with any proposed Electoral Commission’s social, print and out of home media campaign.

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

**Customer Service Innovation Hub**

Customer Service Innovation Hub			
2024 – March			
Communication	No.	Public Counters	No.
No. of Phone Calls received to 0404 20100	8,623	Motor Taxation transactions in County Buildings	1,800
No. of Customer Service Emails received	1,161	Revenue Transactions	1,326
No. of Elected Members / Deputy Representatives Received	135	Housing Counter Visits	725

Total in person visits for March 2024 – 1,719





**Energy Efficiency**

2024					
Action	Energy Savings	Carbon Savings	Simple Payback before Grant (Years)	Project Status	Funding
	(kWh)	(T CO2)			
<b>Bray Fire Station</b>					
Air-to-water heat pump, re-piping, replacing radiators and re-plumbing	350,000	71	8	Contractors On-Site	50% SEAI Pathfinder 50% WCC Energy Efficiency Fund
Appliance Bay Doors (5)				Contractors On-Site	
Window Upgrades				Contractors On-Site	
<b>Total</b>	<b>350,000</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>8</b>		
<b>County Buildings</b>					
Air-to-water heat pump	230,000	47	10	Contractor Appointed	50% SEAI Pathfinder 50% WCC Energy Efficiency Fund
Upgrade radiators to higher output				Contractor Appointed	
Enabling Works				Contractor Appointed	
<b>Total</b>	<b>230,000</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>10</b>		
<b>Bray Civic Offices</b>					
Air-to-water heat pumps replacing gas boiler	120,000	24	8	Contractor Appointed	50% SEAI Pathfinder 50% WCC Energy Efficiency Fund
<b>Total</b>	<b>120,000</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>8</b>		
<b>Wicklow Civil Defence (Greystones)</b>					
Air-to-water heat pump, replacng gas boiler	10,000	5	7	Contractor Appointed	50% SEAI Pathfinder 50% WCC Energy Efficiency Fund
Solar Photovoltaics (10kWp)				Contractor Appointed	
Insulated hot water cylinder				Contractor Appointed	
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,000</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>		
<b>Wicklow Town Fire Station</b>					
Air-to-water heat pump, replacing electric storage heating	10,000	3	8	Contractor Appointed	Wicklow Fire Service
Window & External Door Upgrade				Contractor Appointed	
Insulation Upgrades				Contractor Appointed	
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,000</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>		

Blessington Fire Station					
Air-to-water heat pump, replacing gas boiler	24,657	5	13.5	Contractor Appointed	50% SEAI Pathfinder 50% WCC Energy Efficiency Fund
Solar Photovoltaics (10kWp)				Contractor Appointed	
Insulated hot water cylinder				Contractor Appointed	
Upgrade Lighting to LED				Contractor Appointed	
Insulation Upgrades				Contractor Appointed	
<b>Total</b>	<b>24,657</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>13.5</b>		

# Finance, Water & Information Systems

## Finance

### Revenue Account

DRAFT REVENUE ACCOUNT							
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE SUMMARY BY SERVICE DIVISION AT 31ST MARCH 2024							
	EXPENDITURE			INCOME			NET
	Actual Expenditure	Adopted Full Year Budget	% Budget Spent to Date	Actual Income	Adopted Full Year Budget	% Budget Spent to Date	Actual Expenditure / (Income)
	€	€	%	€	€	%	€
Housing and Building	16,670,395	53,458,479	31%	(17,451,217)	(57,560,824)	30%	(780,822)
Road Transport & Safety	3,167,109	25,608,536	12%	(1,323,563)	(18,366,119)	7%	1,843,546
Water Services	1,184,310	4,809,015	25%	(1,347,909)	(5,729,978)	24%	(163,600)
Development Management	3,055,367	15,877,727	19%	(1,663,601)	(10,024,717)	17%	1,391,766
Environmental Services	3,360,055	15,632,861	21%	(482,078)	(4,087,049)	12%	2,877,977
Recreation and Amenity	2,173,573	9,440,065	23%	(162,945)	(1,079,718)	15%	2,010,628
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	449,507	2,283,534	20%	(176,194)	(1,104,228)	16%	273,313
Miscellaneous Services	2,286,749	9,997,953	23%	(3,072,913)	(13,219,706)	23%	(786,164)
Central Management Charges	5,620,676	22,890,755	25%	(242,793)	(1,050,000)	23%	5,377,883
Local Government Fund				(4,220,175)	(16,880,701)	25%	(4,220,175)
Commercial Rates				(7,852,798)	(31,045,885)	25%	(7,852,798)
	<b>37,967,740</b>	<b>159,998,925</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>(37,996,186)</b>	<b>(160,148,925)</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>(28,446)</b>

### Cashflow/Overdraft

Wicklow County Council manages its cashflow requirements on a daily basis and did not avail of its overdraft facility during the period 1<sup>st</sup> February 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024.

### Capital Account

CAPITAL ACCOUNT					
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE SUMMARY BY SERVICE DIVISION AT 31st MARCH 2024					
	Opening Balance at 01/01/2024	Actual Expenditure	Actual Income	Transfers to/from Reserves	Closing Balance at 31/03/2024
	€	€	€	€	€
Housing and Building	13,566,712	12,736,053	(6,880,914)	0	19,421,850
Road Transport & Safety	(41,551,755)	1,853,979	(212,666)	0	(39,910,443)
Water Services	(6,530,052)	108,404	(45,795)	0	(6,467,443)
Development Management	(32,037,828)	770,808	(3,405,233)	0	(34,672,254)
Environmental Services	(936,699)	705,959	(216,443)	0	(447,183)
Recreation and Amenity	(2,144,873)	1,013,553	(378,779)	0	(1,510,100)
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	(2,046,613)	35,239	0	0	(2,011,373)
Miscellaneous Services	(10,410,645)	(2,187,829)	(12,000)	1,912,812	(10,697,662)
	<b>(82,091,754)</b>	<b>15,036,165</b>	<b>(11,151,831)</b>	<b>1,912,812</b>	<b>(76,294,608)</b>

**Commercial Rates, Rents and Loan Collections**

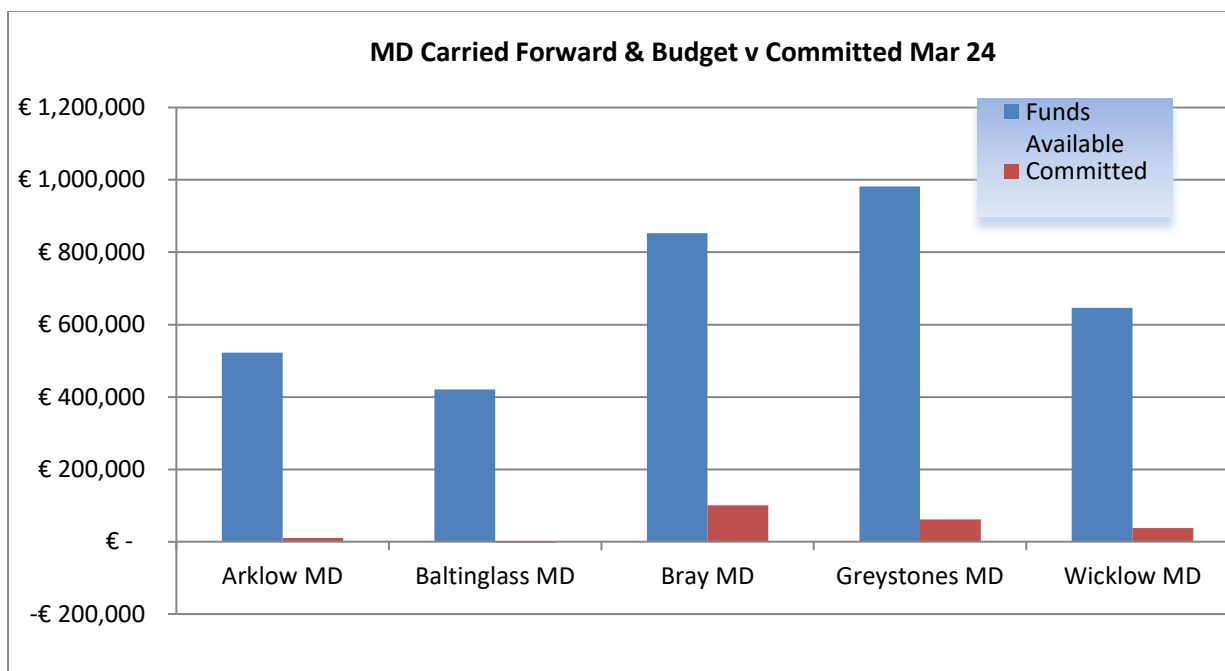
SUMMARY OF MAJOR COLLECTIONS AT 31st MARCH 2024										
Income Collection Area	Opening Balance 01/01/2024	Accrued	Vacancy Property Adjustments	Write Offs	Waivers	Total for Collection	Collected	Closing Arrears 31/03/2024	Specific Doubtful Arrears	% Collection
Rates	3,457,366	31,412,565	0	10,129	0	34,880,059	(6,248,402)	28,631,657	645,585	18%
Rents & Annuities	3,434,905	4,460,544	0	(5,518)	0	7,889,931	(4,343,733)	3,546,199	0	55%
Housing Loans	276,649	625,154	0	0	0	901,803	(414,799)	487,004	0	46%

**NB:** The collection percentages are below normal levels due to the carry forward of arrears at the start of the new financial year. This situation will be regularised over the course of the year.

**General Municipal Allocation and Discretionary Fund 2024**

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

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



**Capital Investment Programme 2024-2026**

The Capital Investment Programme 2024-2026 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 8<sup>th</sup> 2024. The table below outlines the proposed capital expenditure by programme group.

PROGRAMME GROUP	Expected Outlay				Proposed Funding				
	2024	2025	2026	TOTAL	Dev Charges <sup>1</sup>	Loan	Grant Aid <sup>2</sup>	Other <sup>3</sup>	TOTAL
	€	€	€	€	€	€	€	€	€
HOUSING AND BUILDING	107,375,000	130,150,000	136,500,000	374,025,000	-	30,000,000	333,083,500	10,941,500	374,025,000
ROAD TRANSPORT & SAFETY	20,331,000	45,830,000	58,400,000	124,561,000	31,001,000	7,000,000	69,360,000	17,200,000	124,561,000
WATER SERVICES	100,000	100,000	100,000	300,000	-	-	300,000	-	300,000
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT	8,271,000	4,849,507	8,435,000	21,555,507	2,172,376	-	15,623,131	3,760,000	21,555,507
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	4,990,000	25,370,000	23,997,000	54,357,000	-	-	47,867,000	6,490,000	54,357,000
RECREATION AND AMENITY	8,467,791	9,595,000	18,017,000	36,079,791	12,773,291	-	21,806,500	1,500,000	36,079,791
AGRICULTURAL, EDUCATION, HEALTH & WELFARE	4,000,000	12,210,000	20,400,000	36,610,000	3,127,500	-	30,507,500	2,975,000	36,610,000
MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES	700,000	500,000	500,000	1,700,000	-	-	-	1,700,000	1,700,000
<b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>	<b>154,234,791</b>	<b>228,604,507</b>	<b>266,349,000</b>	<b>649,188,298</b>	<b>49,074,167</b>	<b>37,000,000</b>	<b>518,547,631</b>	<b>44,566,500</b>	<b>649,188,298</b>

**Capital Funded Projects**

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

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

## Information Systems

### Operations

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

### GIS & Systems Analysis

- Following a meeting with ESRI-Ireland regarding Climate Fund Application software, the Climate Action team has been assigned AGOL accounts for evaluation purposes.
- In collaboration with the Roads Department, a meeting was held regarding the Noise Action Plan and data return, prompting plans for installing ArcGIS Pro to make the data publicly available.
- Progress has been made on green infrastructure mapping for the Arklow LAP and zoning layouts for Greystones/Delgany and Kilcoole LAP.
- Review of Disabled Parking Spaces in Bray MD was undertaken.
- Efforts to update Wicklow's draft zoning layer for Local Area Plans are ongoing.
- Progress continues on reviewing existing zoning plans for Wicklow Town-Rathnew and advancing zoning plans for Greystones-Delgany and Kilcoole and Arklow areas.
- Maps depicting local electoral areas and polling districts have been developed.
- Stormwater layers on the ArcGIS viewer have been updated in collaboration with the Roads Department, incorporating new data on stormwater infrastructure and drainage systems.

### Infrastructure

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