



Comhairle Chontae Chill Chainnigh
Kilkenny County Council

CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT

DECEMBER 2025 ISSUE

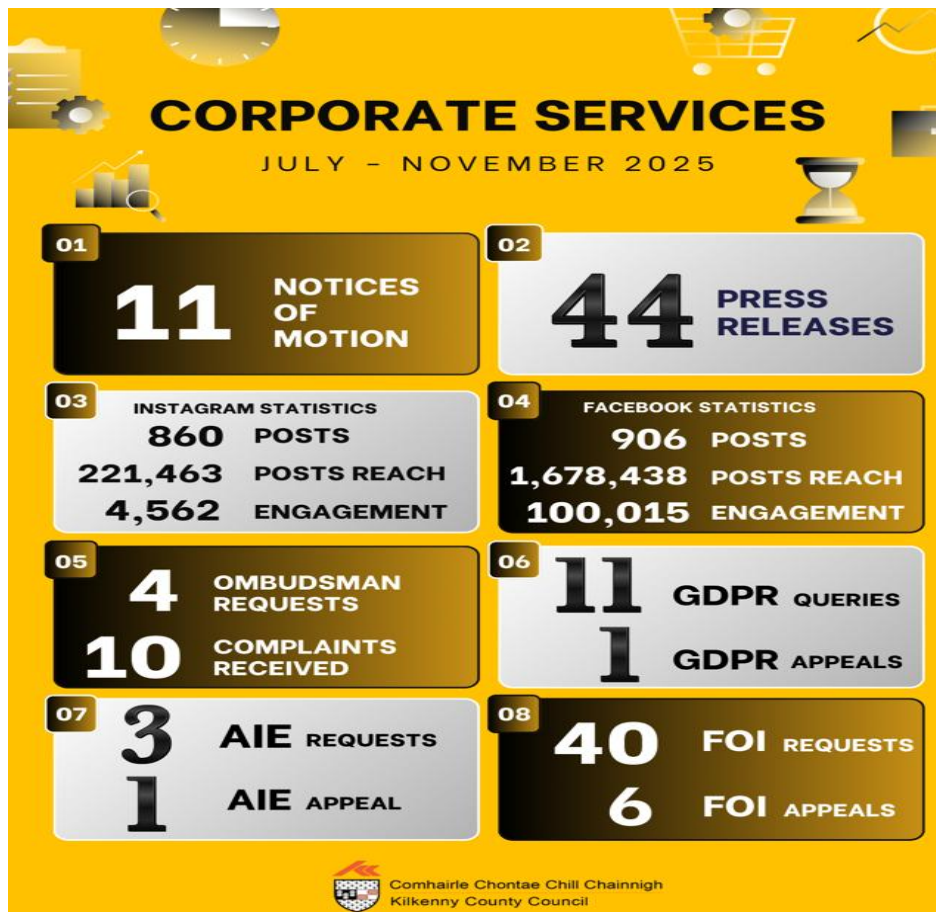


EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS

- A list of Orders made in the last month will be available in the Corporate Department for inspection by the Elected Members.

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CIVIC EVENTS IN NOVEMBER

Kilkenny Countryside Park was awarded a Green Flag at the Green Flag Awards ceremony.



Chambers Ireland
Excellence in Local Government Awards
Kilkenny County Council attendees



Launch of the Student Enterprise Christmas Markets in MacDonagh Junction Shopping Centre



Launch of Yulefest 2025



PLANNING

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

Planning Summary	Total January to November	
	2024	2025
Planning Applications Received	737	892
Planning Applications Granted	602	687
Planning Applications Refused	52	59
Complaints Received	108	134
Warning Letters Issued	74	98
Enforcements Notices Issued	31	50
Cases Closed	54	137
Cases sent for legal prosecution	3	13
Section 5's Received	72	65
Section 5's Decided Upon	57	75

There has been a significant increase in the number of planning applications in the year to date compared with the same period in 2024 with a 24% increase in application numbers being recorded. The figures also indicate increased activity in enforcement with significant increases in the issue of warning letters and enforcement notices with increases of 27.5% and 61% respectively along with a 153% increase in the number of cases closed.

FORWARD PLANNING

Ministerial Guidelines on Housing Growth

The Minister recently published Guidelines on the implementation of the *National Planning Framework (NPF) First Revision*. These Guidelines set out the housing demand projections to 2040 for each local authority. Each local authority is required to assess the current City and County Development Plan core strategy and settlement strategy against the objective of the Guidelines.

The Council was required to prepare a report detailing how the objectives of the Guidelines will be secured, and submit it to the Elected Members. The '*Chief Executive's Report on NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements*' was approved at the November Kilkenny County Council meeting and is available through the following link:

<https://www.kilkennycoco.ie/eng/services/planning/development-plans/city-and-county-development-plan/variation-8-npf-implementation-housing-growth-requirements.html>

The process of varying the Development Plan to take account of this Report has now be commenced. The preparation process for a Variation begins with the assessment of all proposals under relevant EU Directives (*Environmental Assessments*). The process will include a comprehensive public consultation, which will be an opportunity for landowners, and all interested parties, to engage.

Development Plan 2021 – 2027 - Update on Review

The Southern Regional Assembly recently notified the Council that they will commence the review process for the RSES (*Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy*), and MASP (*Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan*) by 2nd April, 2026. As the RSES should be completed prior to commencing the review of the Development Plan, the date for commencement of review and preparation of the new Development Plan will be determined in consultation with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

Castlecomer Settlement Plan

Proposed Variation 5 to incorporate a Settlement Plan for Castlecomer into the Kilkenny City & County Development Plan (KCCDP) and align the KCCDP with the Specific Planning Policy Requirements (SPPRs) of the *Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024)* as relevant commenced public display on the 30th May and submissions were accepted up until the 27th June. A total of 15 submissions were received.

The Chief Executive's Report on submissions was considered by Members at the July 2025 Council meeting, and it was resolved to materially alter the Proposed Variation. The preparation of the material alteration documents, and associated environmental assessments, will also consider the *NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements Guidelines for Planning Authorities* issued in July under Section 28 of the Planning Acts.

Ferrybank / Belview Settlement Plan

Proposed Variation 6 to the Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021 – 2027 commenced public display on 18th July with the closing date for submissions being 19th September, 2025. Variation No. 6 proposes to incorporate a Settlement Plan for Ferrybank/Belview into the current City and County Development Plan. A total of 77 submissions were received.

A Chief Executive Report is being prepared and this will consider the proposed Draft Plan, the submissions made and the requirements of the *NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements Guidelines for Planning Authorities* issued in July under Section 28 of the Planning Acts. A Chief Executive's Report will be considered at the December Plenary Meeting of the Council.

Proposed Variation No. 7 to the Kilkenny City and County Development Plan

Proposed Variation No. 7 to the Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021 – 2027 commenced public display on Friday, 21st November for a 4 week period with submissions due by 5.00 p.m. on Friday, 19th December. This variation deals zoning changes resulting from the RZLT and facilitating infill housing at Upper Patrick Street in Kilkenny City.

A Chief Executives Report will then be prepared and will be presented at the January Plenary Meeting.

Taking in Charge

Works are progressing on the following estates:

- Westcourt, Callan
- Hillview, Bennettsbridge

Active Land Management

Residential Zoned Land Tax

- The Residential Zoned Land Tax (RZLT) has come into effect. The Council prepare the RZLT maps and Revenue administer the tax. The settlements currently liable are Kilkenny City, Rosbercon, Callan and Thomastown. Preparation of the Final Map for 2026 and the Annual Draft Map for 2027 is underway.
- As set out in Budget 2026, landowners subject to RZLT will have another opportunity to request a change in the zoning of their land. As a result of making such a request, landowners may qualify for an exemption from the 2026 RZLT liability.

Vacant Sites Register

There are 14 Vacant Sites on the Vacant Sites Register and the number of cancelled entries due to site activation or improvement is 29. The Vacant Site Levy (VSL) will be replaced by the RZLT later this year and any outstanding VSL's will remain due to the Council.

Conservation

The Conservation Office manages all protected structures in Kilkenny County and City. These structures are recognised for the following special interest: Architectural, Historical, Archaeological, Artistic, Cultural, Scientific, Technical, Social.

An advisory service on conservation matters is provided to the public and colleagues, while the conservation grants and funding applications are also delivered.

The Conservation Grants for 2025 have now been completed. The Table below details the amount of grant funds assigned to BHIS, HTB and HSF to Kilkenny projects in 2025, it also includes the amount of privately leveraged funds, the total project costs, and number of employment days required to complete the work.

Grant	Department Funding	Privately leveraged	Total Project Costs	Number Projects	Employment Days
Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS)	€253,062	€106,157.76	€359,219.76	8*	606
Historic Thatched Buildings (HTB)	€23,916	€12,233.50	€36,150.00	1	48
Historic Structures Fund (HSF)	€179,890**	€131,580.41	€311,470.41	1	727
Total	€456,868	€249,971.67	€706,840.17	10	1380

BHIS 2025: Eight projects availed of grant funding, work included: historic window repair, basement works to period house, lime works, historic plaster repair. Works resulted in a total spend of €359,219.76 with 606 professional days required to deliver the work. This money was predominately spent supporting Kilkenny crafts people and other professions.

**Seven further projects were offered money but declined the offer.*

These funds were allocated to the eight projects: this resulted in an average **88% increase** in funding amount from the initial offer.

HTB 2025: Two projects were offered funding under this scheme. One unfortunately had to decline, this resulted in the Cave Bar, Ballyfoyle receiving €23,916.50. This funding was significant factor in saving the thatched public house which had a temporary tarpaulin in place for a number of years and has led to property (*a rural thatch public house in Kilkenny, which is something a rarity*) remain in business, while also securing Kilkenny's built heritage.

HSF 2025: This funding was extended over two years 2024 and 2025 for stabilisation works in Woodstock House. Work to date involved removal of very heavy vegetation, followed by conservation works on the front and rear walls of the house. Funding totalled €179,890 without such funds the project would not have proceeded.

Conservation Grants 2025 Overview

Overall, the three schemes supported ten projects, with a total funding of €456,868.50 which released money from the applicants to the value of €249,971.67 with a total spend of €706,840.17 resulting in 1,380 employment days in Kilkenny. These funds are spent in localities across the County with an economic multiplier of approximately 1.95 (*Heritage Council 2024*) giving a local economic impact of €1.38 million directly benefiting the local economy.



Before



After

Conservation Grants 2026

Built Heritage Investment Scheme 2026: Thirty-three BHIS applications have been received by the Conservation Office. These applications will be assessed and applicants will be notified of decisions shortly. The total funding for BHIS funding for Kilkenny is €253,062.00.

Historic Thatch Building 2026: Two HTB applications have been received by the Conservation Office. These applications will be assessed and applicants will be notified of decision shortly. The total funding for BHIS funding for Kilkenny is €23,916.50

Historic Structures Fund 2026: The scheme has been launched, the closing date for submission is the 16th January, 2025. All information available on the Kilkenny County Council website and also the Planning Department front desk.

For the month of November, the Conservation Officer also completed reports on the following:

- Planning Referrals..... 4
- Further Information requests 1
- Clarification of Further Information requests..... 0
- Section 57 Declarations..... 0
- Section 5 Declarations..... 1

Building Control

Valid Commencement Notices Received	Disability Access Applications Received
November 2025.....317	November 2025..... 54
November 2024.....339	November 2024..... 48
November 2023.....296	November 2023..... 54
November 2022.....316	November 2022..... 62

TOWN REGENERATION OFFICE

Town Centre First

The Draft Healthcheck Report was presented to the Castlecomer Town Team on 7th November and the design is now being finalised.

The Town Regeneration Office met with Callan Town Team on 25th November to commence healthcheck process for Callan and surveys are being progressed for Mooncoin to gather information for a draft healthcheck which will be presented to the Town Team in January, 2025.

Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant

The following are the full statistics up to end of November, 2024:

Number of Applications Submitted to-date.....	242
Number of Approvals / Approvals in Principle to-date	162
Grant Drawdown to-date.....	13
Number of Queries during the month of October	67

Derelict Sites

The TRO has 2 CPO's in progress. The following is the up-to-date position:

Fr. Hayden Road, Kilkenny – The owner of the property has taken a judicial review case against the decision of An Bord Pleanala.

Canal Road, Johnstown (*Site A*) – Vesting Order period up to 16th December, 2024.

Valuations have been carried out on an additional 8 properties on the Derelict Sites Register for the purpose of applying the levy from 2025. Owners have the right to appeal the valuations within 28 days from issue of the notice.

THRIVE

The Kilkenny Municipal District Members approved the draft John's Quay/John Street Urban Design Strategy at their meeting held on 8th November. The Strategy has been submitted to the Southern Regional Assembly for approval. The next step, following approval, will be the progression of a Part 8 application for Carnegie.

Butts Regeneration

A drop-in public meeting was held in St. Canices Neighbourhood Hall on 6th November, from 3.30 p.m. to 7.00 p.m. with approx. 70 people attending. The Consultants displayed results of surveys carried out to date together with large layout visuals of the area. A questionnaire was also circulated on the night and there will be a further meeting in January 2025 to review findings.

ENVIRONMENT

CLIMATE ACTION

Community Climate Action Programme – Phase 2

Applications for Phase 2 of the Community Climate Action Programme will be accepted until Wednesday 17th December 2025. The overall objective of the Community Climate Action Programme is to support and empower communities to take climate action and to shape and build low carbon, sustainable communities in a coherent way to contribute to national climate and energy targets.

Phase 2 of this Programme is very similar to Phase 1 and successful applicants under this scheme will deliver a variety of projects that have a direct climate action impact. Projects will have to address, at least one, of the following five themes: Community Energy, Travel, Food and Waste, Shopping and Recycling and Local Climate and Environmental Action. For further information about the Community Climate Action Programme, and how to apply, contact Kilkenny County Council's Community Climate Action Officer, Breda Maher by email, breda.maher@kilkennycoco.ie or visit Kilkenny County Council's [website](#), for full details including the Briefing Note, Terms and Conditions and Guidelines document for communities and how to apply for this Programme.

Excellence in Local Government Awards -

The Climate Action team were delighted to win the Climate Change award for their entry "Championing Community Climate Action, Kilkenny" at the Excellence in Local Government Awards which were held on 27th November.

Climate Action Training

Since March of this year training has been provided to staff and members of the Climate Action Steering Committee, by the CARO under the [Local Authority Climate Action Training](#) programme across the themes of Climate Risk Assessment, Nature-based Solutions, Biodiversity, Weather Forecasting; Green Public Procurement; Biomethane, Energy Performance and Financing of Climate adaptation and Mitigation.

All webinar recordings and presentations from the *Local Authority Climate Action Webinar Series* (under the *Building Capacity* training pillar) are accessible via the Climate Action Training Programme LMS available on the **Local Authority Services National Training Group (LASNTG)** [LMS Moodle platform](#).

Training will resume in 2026.

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

Green Schools Programme 2025/2026

There are 85 schools registered with the Green Schools programme, of which 71 are active (*in the process of attaining a flag*). 14 have a status of either "long term deferral" or "deferral from the previous year." The deadline for the first-time Green Schools Litter & Waste application is **Wednesday, December 3, 2025**. For schools renewing their Green Flag award, the general deadline for the 2025/2026 school year is **Friday, March 20, 2026**.

8 Tidy Towns Forum

The second Tidy Towns Forum of 2025 took place in the Rivercourt Hotel on Wednesday 26th of November.

The Forum affords an opportunity for representatives of the Tidy Towns Committees to meet for peer-to-peer learning, attain information and advice as well as show case some of the excellent work being undertaken in our communities.

On the night, members were given a presentation by the EAO on the results of the 2025 National Tidy Towns Competition highlighting where additional marks can be attained under the various categories.

Eibhlin Fitzpatrick, Community Liaison Manager, Circular.ie gave a presentation on Circular.ie, which is the national platform for circular economy initiatives. Eibhlin focused on ways the Tidy Towns groups can repair, reuse, waste prevention and creative upcycling to their work as well as access the circular communications grant aid to support them in their efforts. Bernadette Moloney, Biodiversity Officer, presented on the Hares Corner Project highlighting how Tidy Towns Groups, private landowners and farmers can participate in 2026. She also showcased the variety of supports needed to achieve biodiversity restoration and enhancement.

Celebrating the Gold Medal Award for Tullahought Tidy Towns



On Sunday 30th of November, Tullahought Tidy Towns groups together with the wider communities of Windgap and Carrick-on-Suir, celebrated their Gold Medal win at the 2025 National Tidy Towns Awards after 34 dedicated years of effort. Tullahought has long been recognised for its excellence having won many awards throughout the last number of years. Their care for the environment is very apparent and their passion for biodiversity with projects like their Tadpole Pond project, the community orchard, the pollinator friendly planting and overall attention to detail.

“Let’s Fix Fashion” Supported by Kilkenny County Council

Kilkenny County Council is supporting and sponsoring An Taisce’s “Let’s Fix Fashion” programme, which officially launched on 14th of October. We are encouraging as many schools as possible to participate. It is a student-led climate action where we tackle fast fashion by exploring repair, reuse, upcycling and circular economy thinking. There is hands-on learning with practical workshops and challenges that fit neatly with the Green-Schools themes and whole-school engagement. You can view the programme page: <https://greenschoolsireland.org/the-programme/projects/lets-fix-fashion/>

WASTE

RMCEI Inspection

The waste team are working their way through the almost 2,000 inspections planned for 2025 under the RMCEI Programme (*Recommended Minimum Criteria for Environmental inspections*). Up to the end of November the team have completed over 1,800 inspections. Inspections are carried out in the areas of commercial and household waste, construction and demolition waste and illegal waste activities amongst other areas. The team complete this program of works whilst also investigating complaints received by members of the public.

Bring Banks Usage



The Council provides and manages 47 Bring Centres across the City and County. A total of **1620 tonnes** of recyclables were collected from our Bring Centres to date in 2025. Loughboy Shopping Centre (16 tonnes collected) Aldi - Kilkenny city (16 tonnes collected) and Lidl - Johnswell Rd (12 tonnes collected) were the busiest locations in the City in November. Lidl in Thomastown (9 tonnes collected) and Graigueamanagh (8 tonnes collected) were the

busiest outside of the City in November. Environment staff are continuing to work very closely with our service providers to ensure the collection service is in keeping with demand, especially around long weekends and holiday period.

Civic Amenity Site - Dunmore

The Civic Amenity site at Dunmore continues to provide a valuable service to the public and operates from 8am to 4.30pm through lunch five days a week whilst also providing a Saturday morning service from 9am to 12 noon.

AIR NOISE WATER

Water Quality - Farm Inspections

Council staff continue to carry out farm inspections with 300 initial inspections completed to date. Farm inspectors are carrying out the onsite inspections and identifying sub basins that have high Nitrates and Phosphates present and focusing the inspection program in areas that are at risk from this pollution. The target for 2025 is 308 inspections.

Septic Tank Inspections

Septic tank inspections are ongoing with 55 completed to date. The target for 2025 is 59 inspections to complete.

Environmental Complaints

All Environmental complaints received are logged on the CRM (Customer Relations Management) System. The number of complaints that have been received and logged for November 2025 is 61. The nature of these complaints included littering, illegal dumping, burning of waste and abandoned cars. The majority continue to be related to illegal dumping. Whilst every effort is made to bring unacceptable environmental practice into compliance, Environment Enforcement staff continue to manage significant enforcement cases progressing through prosecution cases.

Noise

Several staff in the Environment Office have completed Noise Monitoring Course in the previous month. This Training will enable staff to deal with noise complaints going forward and will allow Environment Section to be able to act more efficiently on noise complaints from the public. Noise monitors are currently in the process of being calibrated .

Air

Two new air monitors have been installed - Butts area and City Centre. Staff will be monitoring the information received from these air monitors. The majority of Air inspections will take place in Q4. All solid fuel inspections have been completed for 2025

RURAL WATER

Rural Water Committee

On 21st November 2025, a meeting was held to reconvene the Rural Water Committee. At this session, Councillor John Brennan was elected as Chairperson, while Councillor Maurice Shortall was appointed Vice Chairperson. The meeting was attended by representatives from Group Water Schemes (GWS), the National Federation of GWS, and the rural sector, along with Councillor Jenny Catt Slattery, Tim Butler, Director of Services and staff from the RW Section. Attendees expressed their support for the re-establishment of the Rural Water Committee and emphasized their commitment to collaborative efforts aimed at safeguarding and enhancing water quality for the residents of County Kilkenny.

Multi Annual Rural Water Programme 2024-2026

Group Water Schemes who have funding approval from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage are progressing planned works through the procurement phase. Kilkenny West GWS and Highrath GWS are currently proceeding with planned works.

Subsidies for GWS Operations

A total of 50 valid Group Water Scheme (GWS) subsidy applications were submitted in 2024. To date, payments amounting to €325,503 have been issued in respect of 43 approved claims. The remaining applications are currently under review.

Well Grants - Improvement Works to Private Water Supply

A total of 230 applications have been received to date, with funding amounting to €435,503 paid out. During the same period in 2024, 196 applications were submitted, and funding totalling €469,493 was released.

Water Testing

Rural Water technical staff are conducting water sampling on group water schemes and small private supplies throughout County Kilkenny. This sampling programme will continue over the coming weeks.

PARKS & SPECIAL PROJECTS

PROJECT GENERAL

Woodstock - Chambers Ireland Excellence in Local Government Awards

The Capital Delivery Office & Parks Department were delighted to scoop the Heritage & Built Environment Award for Woodstock Gardens & Arboretum at a recent awards event in Dublin.

The Excellence in Local Government Awards are held in conjunction with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. These awards showcase best practice in local authorities and honour the exceptional work of local authorities across Ireland in enhancing community life and delivering high-quality public services.



The Heritage & Built Environment award category recognises local authorities for their work in protecting, promoting and raising public awareness of local heritage sites. The award celebrates projects that demonstrate best practices, innovation, and community engagement in preserving the built and natural environment.

Receiving this award will strengthen the Woodstock Gardens and Arboretum brand in making it a must-see destination in the South East of the Country.



But not to be resting on our laurels! Phase Two of the works commenced recently to secure the Woodstock House ruin. This work is being progressed through funding secured under the Historic Structures Fund. The focus of this phase will see the removal of vegetation and the stabilisation of the front wall elevation of the house. Future phases will turn to the stabilisation of the internal walls and the removal of the steel frame to the front elevation.

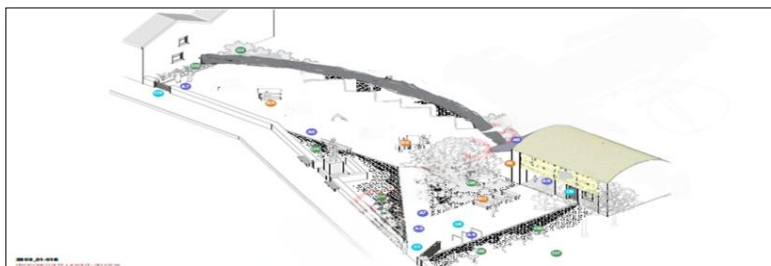
Amenity Grants

In 2025, 186 applicants under the Amenity Grant scheme were awarded funding totalling €140,000, this saw an increase of 11 applications on the previous year. This funding enabled groups across the County to maintain their own outdoor recreational spaces. The range of works typically involve tree planting, grass cutting, planting flowers and many other amenity type projects. Successful applicants were required to submit documentation (*receipts in respect of expenses incurred and photographs of completed projects*) to claim their grants. This process has now concluded and all monies are paid out for the year.



Dunnamaggin - Town & Village Renewal Scheme

This project is being progressed in collaboration with the local community and will see the transformation of a green space in the village centre, locally known as Madge's Garden, into an assessable public realm area that can cater for community events for all, while providing an activity/recreational space for families. The project involves the restoration of a derelict outbuilding into a usable space and which will include a wheelchair accessible toilet. Soft and hard landscaping will also be undertaken across the site, and its central location will make it a prime spot as a casual meeting space.



The works appointed Contractor, JFK Groundworks, commenced on site on the 15th September, 2025 and works are expected to be completed in early Quarter 1.

Green Flag for Kilkenny Countryside Park

Kilkenny County Council were delighted to be awarded the Green Flag for the Kilkenny Countryside Park at Dunmore at an award ceremony, launched by Mr. Jerry Buttimer T.D., Minister of State for Community Development, Charities and Rural Transport in Maynooth University Campus in County Kildare, on Wednesday 12th November. The international Green Flag Award administered by An Taisce in Ireland, is the international quality benchmark for the public green space sector - now operating in 30 countries around the world. The Green Flag Awards recognise and encourage the provision of good quality parks and green spaces that are managed in environmentally sustainable ways.



The Kilkenny Countryside Park, once the site of the City and County landfill, opened in December 2023 and occupies an area of 24 acres. Achieving the Green Flag status is another milestone in the Park's story of its transformation from what was once considered a negative on the landscape into a sanctuary that aims to restore and protect our natural environment, while also providing a top class outdoor recreational space for the public.



Most recent interventions in the Park include the sowing of over one acre of yellow rattle seed within the Park's meadows along with the planting on over 100 native tree saplings. Bug hotels, bat and bird boxes have also been installed across the park to enhance and support biodiversity.

And not forgetting about the human visitors, two new exercise zones have been installed along the trails. Some of the new equipment include dip bars, push-up bars, a sit-up bench, an arm bike and a fitness City bike.

The above works were carried out in collaboration with the Kilkenny Recreation & Sports Partnership and were fully funded under the Participation Nation Fund.

LEO/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Summary of 2025 Awards to Businesses

- €350,220 in direct financial assistance has been approved for 15 manufacture/export service businesses in located in throughout the County.
 - €238,507 in Business Expansion Grant Assistance.
 - €60,000 awarded in Business Priming Grant Assistance.
 - €19,713 awarded in Feasibility Study Grant Assistance.
 - €30,000 awarded in Grad Start Grant Assistance.
 - €2160 in IP Grant Assistance.
- 16 Businesses have commenced LEAN one to one consultancy to investigate possible resource efficiencies and process improvements their businesses
- 31 businesses have availed of the Digital for Business programme to prepare and implement a plan for the adoption of digital tools and techniques across the enterprise.
- 25 businesses have availed of the Energy Efficiency Grant totalling €205,725 to support investment in technologies and equipment of enterprises.
- 37 business have availed of the green for business consultancy support scheme. This scheme supports businesses to become greener and environmentally friendly.
- 6 applicants have been supported to make loan applications to the Micro Finance Ireland loan fund.
- 911 people participated in focused small business training, including 118 people participating on the Starting Your Business programme and 86 in MDP
- 377 businesses have availed of specialised business specific mentoring on a variety of topics including finance, marketing, social media marketing and HR.

MacDonagh Junction Shopping Centre Christmas Market

Students from schools all over the County will be showcasing their mini companies at special Christmas Markets on Tuesdays and Thursdays (2nd, 4th, 9th, & 11th December) from 12 noon.

These markets are a fantastic opportunity for the students to not only sell their goods but to also gain valuable real-world sales experience and learn about the ins and outs of running a successful business.



Broadband Digital Update

Cyber Safe Parent Talks Parent Talks 'How to Raise a Healthy Screen User'

Kilkenny County Council in partnership with the County Kilkenny Family Resource Centres hosted cyber safe parent talks to support and educate parents to create a healthy screen user environment for their children by working with two experienced facilitators to deliver a one-hour parent talk at the four family resource centres in October and November.

Screen Kilkenny Inaugural Networking Event

Screen Kilkenny, Screen Wexford and Waterford Film Centre hosted their inaugural 'Screen South East' event 'Crew Networking & Expert Panels' on Saturday 29th November in Garter Lane, Waterford. There were attendees from all aspects of the film and animation sectors across the South East region.

'Our Kids Code' Taster Workshops at BCPs

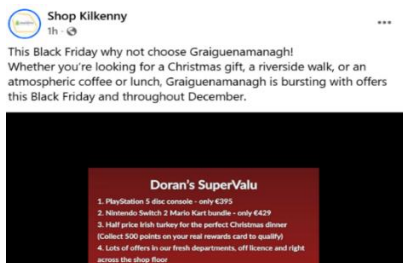
After a successful series of Trinity College Dublin (TCD) 'Our Kids Code' Taster Workshops at Kilkenny libraries over the summer, this initiative returned to one Broadband Connection Point (BCP) for the Autumn Programme coordinated by the Broadband Officer. Ballyouskill Community Hall Taster Workshop took place on Saturday 22nd November with six local families participating in family coding activities for children aged 7 to 12 years old. Additional Workshops will take place in the New Year.

Kilkenny Ambassador Book



The new Kilkenny Ambassador Book was published in late October featuring 13 Ambassadors from around the County who demonstrate the breadth and wealth of experience and entrepreneurship that Kilkenny offers. Copies of the Ambassador Book are available from the LEO Office to be shared as widely as possible as part of our marketing suite for visitors and potential investors to the County.

Shop Graiguenamanagh



A Shop Graiguenamanagh Campaign kicked off in late October with a feature piece in the Kilkenny People outlining all that is on offer in Graiguenamanagh. This was supported by Economic Development. More than 15 businesses in Graiguenamanagh were involved in a follow-on Black Friday social media campaign outlining special offers and initiatives for the Black Friday weekend and into December.

Shop Kilkenny Autumn and Winter Campaign



A feature piece on the Irish Independent's online platform with a Home of Halloween, Savour Kilkenny and Toil & Trouble flavour focused on five reasons to shop and visit Kilkenny this Autumn. This was an editorial piece released on the Independent.ie and Belfasttelegraph.co.uk websites in late October 2025. In addition to reinforce the #shopkilkenny message for the Christmas period a feature piece was submitted for inclusion in the Winter edition of the Kilkenny Life magazine outlining the top reasons to visit and stay in Kilkenny this winter.

NIGHT TIME ECONOMY & CIVIC FESTIVALS

Night Time Economy Diversification Fund

The 12 recipients under Call 3 of NTE Diversification Fund concluded their events in November. As a result of this support under the three funding calls, hundreds of additional events have been programmed in Kilkenny and contributed to increased footfall and economic spend and greater awareness for the participating businesses and community groups.

Night Time Economy Transport Marketing Campaign

A night time transport marketing campaign for Kilkenny City in conjunction with the National Transport Authority has commenced and will run until the end of December. The campaign will highlight the public transport options available to people to travel into and around the City after 6.00 p.m.

Safe & Sound

The NTE pilot, in partnership with a number of stakeholders has announced various safety initiatives aimed at enhancing safety and fostering a sense of community in the City Centre through the winter.

- Safe & Sound” offers free 30-minute online training modules and policy templates to Night-Time Economy businesses and their workers in Kilkenny City. This program is designed to make nightlife safer, more inclusive, and more enjoyable for everyone.
- An Garda Siochana, the Vintners Federation of Ireland and the Local Community Safety Partnership have collaborated with the NTE pilot to develop an online “Safe & Sound” communications and social media campaign with a message from Inspector Alma Molloy promoting a culture of safety and respect in the City.
- The ‘Light Up, Light Up’ campaign, in collaboration with the Kilkenny Chamber of Commerce has supported a pilot initiative which will see 23 City Centre businesses keeping their shopfront light on until 1.00 a.m. from November to January. This initiative will ensure greater visibility on our streets for those who are exercising, walking home from a night out or waiting for public transport.

Six After 6

The Six After 6 collaboration between the NTE pilot and six of the visitor attractions in the City won the Night Time Experience Award at the Kilkenny Chamber of Commerce Business Awards in the Lyrath Hotel.

Civic Festivals: Yulefest Kilkenny

The second Festivals Committee meeting for Yulefest took place on Monday 17th November and the committee were updated on the all the details for the month-long festival. The festival runs from Saturday, 29th November until Tuesday, 23rd December. The festival launched with a turning on of the Christmas Tree and lights by renowned local singer, Robert Grace. Full details on all the events can be found on www.yulefestkilkenny.ie

Kilkenny Tourism

The autumn season saw visitkilkenny run three separate marketing campaigns, the general seasonal campaign “Take it Slow”, the very successful “Home of Halloween” campaign focusing on the domestic audience for the season and a Craft and Design Competition targeting interest in the craft and design market and to develop this sector in future activity. The Christmas campaign ads went live on 6th November to showcase all the wonderful things to see and do in Kilkenny over the Christmas period. Content will include a gift guide along with promoting Yulefest celebrations all around the City and County.



Festivals & Events



Kilkenny County Council continues to support our year-round calendar of events with November welcoming the return of Kilkenomics to venues in the City. Kilkenomics welcomed in excess of 3,000 visitors to the city to enjoy events from 3rd to 6th of the month.

Meet in Kilkenny

A key priority in Kilkenny’s Destination Experience Development plan is to attract a larger portion of the international tourism market. To meet this objective, Kilkenny County Council and Kilkenny Tourism, in partnership with Failte Ireland have developed the micro site “Meet in Kilkenny” to specifically target tour operators and destination management companies to attract additional business to Kilkenny. A targeted campaign will commence in the New Year to engage with this audience to let this market segment know that Kilkenny has all the essentials for great meetings and events, super access from key transport hubs, a wide variety of venues and accommodation and value for the visitor.

HOUSING

The Directorate of Housing incorporates a wide range of services for applicants and tenants to facilitate and support the provision of independent and supported accommodation. The following information gives the up-to-date progress for November 2025 under the various support services.

HOUSING CAPITAL



20 houses under construction at An Tobar, Freshford



6 apartments at the Weather Station, Dunningstown Road



Apartments at Marnellsmeadows, College Road



Group home under construction at An Tobar, Freshford

AFFORDABLE HOMES

September was an important month in advancing our delivery of affordable housing under the Local Authority Affordable Purchase Scheme. With two active developments – **Church View, Kilmacow** and **Abbey Hill, Thomastown**, our team made substantial progress in launching and promoting these schemes. Emphasis was placed on strategic outreach, digital and print marketing, and direct community engagement to ensure strong visibility and accessibility for eligible buyers.

Church View Kilmacow

Kilkenny County Council working in collaboration with Michael Murphy building services and supported by the Department of Housing & Local Government. Application portal opened on **10th October 2025**. Applications are currently being reviewed for eligibility and completeness. There are 13 x 3-Bedroom units Available, with a starting price from **€248,475**. Target Audience Includes First-Time Buyers & Fresh Starters.

Engagement efforts and direct marketing activities have been undertaken, which includes outreach to **An Garda Síochána (Waterford Regional Station)** and engagement with staff at **University Hospital Waterford**, as well as local print and digital campaigns, with over 1600 emails distributed to potential buyers and key organisations.

Abbey Hill, Thomastown

Built by Ormonde Construction and supported by Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage Abbey hill is a stunning new development of 22 units of 2 and 3 bed homes.

A total of 22 homes are available for purchase under the Affordable Purchase Scheme - 16 No 3 bed and 6 No 2 bed homes. The portal for this affordable housing scheme is now closed, and applications are currently being assessed.



HOMELESS SERVICES

The government have put in place a number of measures to prevent homelessness arising from the reactivation of notices of termination of tenancies in June 2023. We are currently providing advice and directing Tenants to the appropriate services required to prevent homelessness. Where a household is in receipt of a valid notice to quit and requires assistance in establishing what options are available to them to avoid potential homelessness they are advised to contact the Housing Office at its dedicated email address NTQEnquiries@kilkennycoco.ie. Further details are available on www.kilkennycoco.ie.

Any tenants who may have received a notice of termination or a landlord who has issued a notice of termination to their tenants or who may wish to in the coming months should direct any queries to the dedicated email provided and all queries will be responded to in a timely manner.

HOMELESS SERVICES SUMMARY NOVEMBER 2025	
Homeless Presentations	56
Homeless Assessment Outcomes	
Prevention & Interventions	40
Emergency Service	11
Not eligible / Did not avail of service	5
HAP Place Finder Service	
No of Homeless HAP tenancies at 1 st day of month	146
No of Homeless HAP tenancies created during month	0
Number of Homeless HAP tenancy breakdowns	1
No of Homeless HAP tenancies in place at last day of month	145
Other Social Housing Tenancies supported /created during month	4
Provision of Emergency Accommodation	
Households in Temporary Emergency Supported Accommodation at 30 th November	32
Households in Temporary Emergency B&B Accommodation	10
Households in Temporary Emergency B&B Accommodation that are families	9
Households (<i>singles/couples</i>) in Transition Emergency Accommodation (<i>Own Front Door</i>)	46
Households (<i>Families</i>) in Transition Emergency Accommodation (<i>Own Front Door</i>)	19

SOCIAL HOUSING PROVISION

SOCIAL HOUSING SUPPORT APPLICATION SUMMARY NOVEMBER 2025	
Number awaiting Social Housing Support on November 30 th Gross Need)	1,245
Number awaiting Social Housing Support on November 30 th Net Need)	607
Number of Social Housing Applications received in November	70
Number of applications incomplete / awaiting further information/clarification	30
Number of applications validated and ready for assessment during the month	37
Number of applications assessed during November	21
Number of applications awaiting assessment as at 30 th November 30 th	63

HOUSING ASSISTANCE PAYMENT (HAP) SUMMARY NOVEMBER 2025	
Total active HAP tenancies	372
New HAP tenancies set up	38
HAP allocated Social Housing	85
Closed HAP tenancies	91
HAP Rent Reviews	263
HAP Other tenancy amendments	982

HOUSING ALLOCATIONS NOVEMBER 2025	
LA/RAS/Leasing offers of allocations made in November	10
LA/RAS/Leasing offers of allocations made to date 2025	258

TENANCY MANAGEMENT

Complaints

The Tenancy Management Section of Kilkenny County Council deals with anti-social behaviour complaints in relation to our tenants as outlined in the Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy. Total number of issues as of the 27th November, 2025 were 33 issues.

Complaint Type	Number of Complaints	Number Investigated	Number Ongoing	Number Closed
Drugs Related, Violence, Racism, Threats & Intimidation	5	2	2	1
Damage to property, animal related (dog/horse/fowl); Refuse/Dumping/Hoarding	8	4	4	0
Noise, Parking/boundary issues, Other	20	14	4	2

MAINTENANCE HOUSING STOCK

The Housing Operations team have commenced a pilot scheme for roll out of a new app for stock surveys to existing housing stock as agreed with the department. The completion of stock surveys will allow Kilkenny County Council to improve the delivery of our planned maintenance programme.

MAINTENANCE CALLS NOVEMBER 2025	
Maintenance calls in October	711
Maintenance calls year to date	6,948

PRIVATE HOUSE GRANTS

The 2025 housing grants allocation has been received from the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage in the amount of **€2,575,197** comprised of €2,188,917 (85%) grant and €386,280 (15%) KCC contribution.

GRANTS APPROVED & COMMITTED NOVEMBER 2025

Scheme	Number	Amount
HGD - Housing Adaptation Grant	143	€1,566,607
MAG - Mobility Aid Grant	16	€59,987
HOP - Housing Aid for Older Persons	268	€1,634,536
Total	427	€3,260,130

GRANTS PAID OUT NOVEMBER 2025

Scheme	Number	Amount
HGD - Housing Adaptation Grant	86	€917,523
MAG - Mobility Aid Grant	9	€29,207
HOP - Housing Aid for Older Persons	178	€995,411
Total	273	€1,942,141

HOUSING LOANS

HOUSING LOAN ACTIVITY 2025					
Loan Type	Received	Approved	Amount Approved	No. Paid	Amount Paid
Local Authority Home Loan	28	5	€545,000	4	€434,278
Caravan Loan	0	0	€0.00	0	€0
Total	28	5	€545,000	4	€434,278

VOIDS

VOIDS ACTIVITY NOVEMBER 2025	
Number of Voids Upgraded Ready for Allocation in November 2025	1
Number of Voids in progress on the 30 th of November 2025	40
Total Number of Voids Upgraded for Allocation to-date 2025	70

COMMUNITY

Community Projects

The Table below outlines in summary ongoing projects and schemes in the Community Department.

Town & Village Scheme			
Community Group	Project Description	Grant	November Status
Callan 2023	King's River Town & Village Project - River bank and amenity area	€247,500	Design stage work in progress
Dunnamaggin Local Community Group 2023	The transformation of a community green space into and events amenity for all the community knows as Madge's Garden	€247,500	Works 50% complete
Urlingford Town Team 2023	Refurbishment of Community Hall. Phase 2	€500,000	90% of works complete
Callan Project Development Measure 2024	Develop plans to establish an outdoor classroom community space in Abbey Field and examine the re-development of a derelict cottage in Moate Field and complete biodiversity studies on both sites	€49,950	Surveys in progress, stakeholder engagements in progress
Paulstown Community Group Project Development Measure 2024	Complete feasibility and design studies for the creation of a centre point in the village, consisting of an open public green space with seating and leisure facilities. This will redevelop the village centre and provide accessibility between the main street and residential areas	€49,950	Part 8 being prepared

Rural Regeneration Development Fund			
Community Group	Project Description	Grant	November Status
Piltown	Phase 1 of the project comprises of main street urban renewal enhancement, parking bays, EV charging points, and bicycle bays x2	€2,180,931	Tender Stage
Glenmore	Develop the South East Greenway Connectivity Link and Pink Rock Cycle Loop & Amenity Trail	€2,356,423	Design Team appointed
Thomastown	Thomastown Library and upgrade to Community Centre	€4,013,115	Works 90% complete

Community & Cultural Facilities Capital Scheme				
Community Group/ Year Approved	Project Description	Grant	November Status	
Johnstown Sports Field 2022	Contribution to development of walkway around complex	€40,000	Works in progress, 20% complete	
Mooncoin Celtic AFC 2023	LED Floodlighting for extra training area	€20,000	Planning granted	
Ballyhale Shamrocks 2024	Upgrade of toilets / disability access	€9,000	Works in progress	
Gowran Community Complex 2024	Contribution towards the refurbishment of a community hub	€27,000	Commencing in December 2025	
Glenmore Camogie Club 2025	Contribution towards the re-instatement of walkway	€29,000	Works not yet commenced	
Mullinavat Drama Group 2025	Lighting, Sound, Projector, Screen, Curtains	€11,000	Works not yet commenced	
Marian Hall Kilmacow 2025	Installation of heating, bathrooms, kitchen	€11,000	Works to commence January 2026	
Kilkenny Girl Guides 2025	Emergency Lighting & Fire Alarm	€15,000	Works to commence January 2026	
Kilkenny SOS Lawn Bowls 2025	Fencing, Lighting, Bicycle Bays, shed	€30,000	Tender Live, closing December 2025	
Kilkenny Ambers Women's Refuge 2025	New Playground	€35,000	Installation February 2026	
Freshford Town AFC 2025	Floodlighting for all weather pitch	€32,000	Works due to commence in Q1, 2026	
Deen Celtic Castlecomer 2025	Refurbishment of shower facility into girls dressing room	€26,000	Complete, claim to be processed	
St. Joseph's Athletic Club 2025	Shelter and walking track	€11,000	Works in progress	
Graiguenamanagh Rowing Club 2025	Storage racking for rowing boats	€15,000	Procurement in progress	
Evergreen Football Club 2025	Spectator Stand	€20,000	Works in progress	

CLÁR			
Community Group	Project Description	Grant	November Status
Galmoy Community Hall 2023	Provision of a MUGA	€30,015	Not yet commenced
Ballyouskill Community Hall 2024	Upgrades to carpark, roof repairs and replacement of door.	€36,641	Not yet commenced
Windgap Handball Alley 2024	External insulation of two outside walls	€29,419	Seeking a revision of works
Windgap GAA 2024	Works to include tarmacadam to driveway and parking area	€38,307	Not yet commenced on site
Naomh Aodhan Community Centre CLG 2024	Upgrade works on rebuilding and refurbishing of handball alley and ground works	€44,312	Works in progress

Community Recognition Fund			
Community Group	Project Description	Grant	October Status
Christian Youth Centre	Development of existing building to provide community space, meeting rooms	€390,607	Contractor to commence November 2025
Fr. McGrath Centre	Installation of Solar Panels, Painting of building	€100,474	Solar Panel project due to commence
Ballyragget Community Hall	Renovation of CYMS Hall	€173,000	Procurement process ongoing

Age Friendly Creative Connections Workshops

The Kilkenny Age Friendly Programme in partnership with Creative Ireland and Kilkenny Carlow ETB, delivered a series of free creative taster sessions throughout November under the banner of *Creative Connections 2025*. Workshops included Smartphone Skills, Pebble Art, Arts and Crafts, Drawing, Wellness, and Flower Arranging, held in Urlingford, Mullinavat, Thomastown, Paulstown, and Kilkenny City.

The programme was designed to strengthen community connections and promote active ageing by engaging older people in creative activities. Feedback was extremely positive, with over 200 participants taking part. These taster sessions will inform the development of the full programme for 2026, ensuring continued opportunities for creativity, social inclusion, and wellbeing among older adults.

Chambers Ireland Excellence in Local Government awards

The Age Friendly Programme of Information and Activities in the Mayfair Library was shortlisted for the Chambers Ireland Excellence in Local Government Awards held in Dublin recently. Over 550 people attended the activities which took place to support access to information and to support people to remain in their own communities for their life course.



Kilkenny County Council at the Chambers Ireland Excellence in Local Government Awards

Pride Of Place Awards 2025

The Piltown Community Group was honoured at the All-Ireland Pride of Place Awards on 7th November in Limerick, winning the category for Areas with a Population of 1,000–2,000 a significant achievement that reflects their outstanding commitment to community development.

Kilkenny County Council nominated three groups for this year's competition:

- **Piltown** (*Population Category*)
- **Windgap Community** (*Wellbeing Category*)
- **Gowran** (*Inclusive Communities Category*)

Each group delivered an impressive showcase of local initiatives:

- **Piltown** hosted judges at the Community Centre and provided a guided tour of key sites, including the Ink Bottle Bug Hotel, new walkway at Piltown AFC, upgraded GAA facilities, renovated Garda Station and Community Hub, and the Iverk Showgrounds.
- **Windgap** welcomed judges with a presentation and village tour, visiting the community centre and tearooms, handball club, local artists at the pond, heritage group, GAA club, memorial garden, and local school.
- **Gowran** highlighted its inclusive community spaces with a tour of the MUGA intergenerational playground, Young Ireland's GAA grounds, and Dalton House Daycare Centre and Tearooms, complemented by local drama and music performances.

The Pride of Place competition, sponsored by IPB Insurance and initiated 23 years ago by Co-operation Ireland, is the largest event celebrating community development across the island of Ireland. Kilkenny's strong representation underscores the county's commitment to fostering vibrant, inclusive communities.



Winners - Piltown Community Group

Piltown Community Hub & Garda Station

Piltown Community Hub & Garda Station project was shortlisted in the Energy in Buildings category at the prestigious SEAI Energy Awards 2025. The project transformed the former Garda Station, a protected heritage structure into a vibrant community hub through innovative design, expert guidance, and strong community collaboration. This retrofit sets a benchmark for best practice in balancing energy efficiency with heritage conservation, demonstrating that sustainability and cultural preservation can go hand in hand. The upgraded building now delivers significant energy savings, reduced carbon emissions, and vital social benefits for the local community while maintaining its historic character and architectural integrity.



This nomination reflects Kilkenny County Council's commitment to climate action, community development, and heritage protection, ensuring that local projects contribute to national sustainability goals while enriching community life.

Kilkenny Local Community Safety Partnership – Progress Update

Launch of “Safe & Sound” Campaign

The Kilkenny Local Community Safety Partnership (LCSP), in collaboration with An Garda Síochána and the Night-Time Economy stakeholders, launched the *Safe & Sound* campaign this month. The initiative aims to promote safer, more inclusive, and enjoyable nights out in Kilkenny City, reinforcing community safety and wellbeing in the evening economy.

Kilkenny Taxi Alerts Relaunch

Also relaunched this month was the Kilkenny Garda Taxi Text Alert Scheme—a collaborative effort between An Garda Síochána, local taxi drivers, and the LCSP. Key highlights include:

- Over **150 taxi drivers** currently registered, with numbers continuing to grow.
- The scheme enables Gardaí to share real-time alerts with drivers, including crime-related information, missing persons, and road safety updates.
- Taxi drivers play a vital role in *Operation CitySafe*, helping patrons get home safely and reducing congestion in the city centre during peak times.

This initiative strengthens community policing and crime prevention efforts, demonstrating the value of partnership in enhancing public safety across Kilkenny.

The Kilkenny Local Community Safety Partnership (LCSP)

The Local Community Safety Partnership held its inaugural meeting on 25 November 2025, marking an important milestone in advancing community safety initiatives.

At this meeting, Councillor Pat Fitzpatrick was elected Chairperson, and Councillor David Fitzgerald was nominated as Vice-Chairperson. The Partnership will meet regularly to develop a Local Community Safety Plan, ensuring that community voices shape priorities on key issues such as crime prevention, public lighting, and the creation of safe, accessible public spaces.



Members of Kilkenny Local Community Safety Partnership

INTEGRATION

The Local Authority Integration Team (LAIT) continues to play a vital role in supporting the integration of diverse communities across Kilkenny. Their work continues to focus on individuals in the following categories:

- Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection (BOTP) – Ukrainians
- International Protection Applicants (IPAs)
- Programme Refugees
- Those granted Refugee, Subsidiary Protection, or Permission to Remain status

Currently, Kilkenny is home to 476 Ukrainians accommodated in 12 properties contracted by the Department of Justice, Migration & Home Affairs. An additional 198 Ukrainians reside in Offer A Home properties and Irish Red Cross pledged homes, benefiting from the Accommodation Recognition Payment. Alongside them, 203 IPAs are housed in 4 Department-contracted properties. Employment figures show encouraging progress: 27% of Ukrainians and 67% of IPAs are now registered as employed.

Throughout November, LAIT continued delivering information, advice, and advocacy, including:

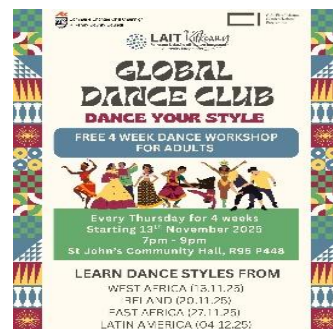
- 34 Ukrainians supported through 41 interventions, covering signposting to wider stakeholders.
- 31 IPAs assisted with 49 interventions, addressing immigration processes, work permits, and accommodation queries.

Year-to-date, LAIT has provided 3,226 interventions to 1,090 individuals, underscoring their commitment to fostering inclusion and stability within the community.

Events:

The Local Authority Integration Team (LAIT) continues to work closely with partner agencies. Here's a snapshot of what happened in November:

- **Global Dance Club** – A free, four-week program for adults at St. John's Community Hall. Participants explored West African, Irish, East African, and Latin American dance styles, culminating in a vibrant global fusion performance scheduled for December.
- **Webinar Series** – Delivered by the Irish Red Cross and Doras Luimní, this free series equipped accommodation providers and their teams with practical tools to support residents' welfare and wellbeing.
- **Weekly Drop-In Clinic** – Every Thursday afternoon, LAIT hosts an open clinic at the Neighbourhood Hall, offering advice and assistance to those seeking support.
- **Information Sessions** – Ongoing at the Wallslough Designated Accommodation Centre, these sessions help new arrivals navigate integration processes and access accommodation supports.



Offer of a Home and IRC Pledged Properties

30 th November, 2025	Number of Pledged Properties	Number of Residents
Offer a Home Scheme	55	185
Pledged Properties (<i>shared and not shared</i>)	3	13
Total	58	198

The 'Offer a Home' Scheme is managed by Local Authorities on behalf of the Government. A Government tax-free Accommodation Recognition Payment (ARP) of €600 per month is available to property owners offering accommodation to Ukrainians with Temporary Protection status. Further details are available on www.offerahome.ie or you can contact the Kilkenny County Council Ukrainian Response Team.

A separate programme is in place run by the Irish Red Cross which is seeking pledges of spare rooms or accommodation that would be shared with the owner or others. If an owner wishes to pledge a spare room in their house, they can contact the Irish Red Cross at (01) 6424600 or email info@redcross.ie.

Community Recognition Fund:

The Community Recognition Fund was first introduced in 2023 to recognise the huge efforts made by communities in welcoming and supporting Ukrainians coming to Ireland. This funding is specifically targeted at projects located in areas where there is hosting of Ukrainian Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection. The following projects were approved funding under the Community Recognition Fund 2024 and have been successfully completed.

Community Recognition Fund (CRF) 2024 Window 1

City/Town/Village	Lead Applicant	Project Description	Funding Approved
Muckalee	Muckalee Community Centre Ltd	Enhancement of newly refurbished Community Centre Elements: Coffee Machine , Tarmac, Fob Access System, Oven, Tables and Chairs (indoor and outdoor)	€50,000



New Tarmacadam



New Coffee Machine



New Tables & Chairs



New Fob Access Security System



New Oven



New outdoor Furniture

City/Town/Village	Lead Applicant	Project Description	Funding Approved
Castlecomer	Castlecomer Community Hall CLG	Upgrade and enhancement to Community Hall. Elements: - Painting of building, signage re safety - Restoration of floor in main hall, repairs to leaking roof and repairs to ceiling	€50,000

Painting of Building Completed



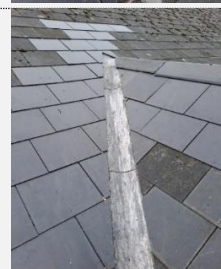
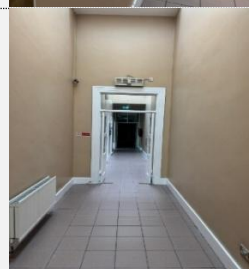
Restoration of Floor in Main Hall Completed



New Safety Signage Displayed



Repairs to Leaking Roof and Repairs to Ceiling Completed



FIRE SERVICES

Fire Brigade Operations

The Fire Service plays a crucial role in making our communities safer, whether it be preventing and protecting people from fire and other risks or responding swiftly and effectively to the incidents and emergencies that occur 24 hours per day/7 days per week/365 days per year. 677 incidents were responded to-date. These incidents included a significant number of road traffic collisions, ambulance assists, outdoor rubbish, chimney fires, and automatic fire alarm activations.

Fire Safety Certificate Applications

Kilkenny Fire & Rescue Service Senior Fire Officers advise on current Building Regulations in relation to the fire safety standards required for proposed developments. In addition, Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service Fire Prevention Officers hold Fire Safety Certificate/Fire Prevention Clinics under Section 18(5) of the Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003. These are held on a weekly basis and/or upon request in Fire Station HQ.

- 106 applications for Fire Safety Certificates were received to-date.
- A number of risk premises throughout Kilkenny City and County have been subject to review and Fire Safety Certification applications to ensure minimum standards.

Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003

- Fire Prevention staff made targeted inspections of premises both to provide advice and to enforce legislation during the first few months of 2025.
- 61 Licence Applications were processed under Section 24 of the Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003.
- 6 licence applications under the Dangerous Substances legislation was assessed to date
- 92 Fire safety inspections of premises have taken place to date.

Recruitment of Retained firefighters

Our current complement of Firefighting staff in our 7 Fire Brigades are as follows: Kilkenny City (13), Castlecomer (11), Freshford (12), Urlingford (8), Thomastown (11), Callan (12), Graiguenamanagh (12).

The WRC recommendation is to have a minimum of twelve firefighters in all Fire Stations. As well as responding to emergency calls and undertaking community fire safety initiatives, Retained Firefighters attend weekly training nights to maintain competency levels and undertake routine checks on their equipment.

Training

Kilkenny County Council's Fire and Rescue Service are obliged under the Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003 and the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 to ensure that our Firefighters and Officers are adequately trained and competent to deal with tasks and varying roles they may encounter in the performance of their duties.

All personnel responding to Fire and Rescue Service incidents require a minimum level of training to meet core requirements. Personnel also require appropriate refresher training in all the above throughout their careers, generally delivered either through on-station training or through specific refresher courses. New recruits have also attended Initial Breathing Apparatus training in recent weeks.

This training aims to equip learners with the underpinning knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes to enable them efficiently, effectively, safely and competently perform the role of firefighter, as an individual, team member or team leader, in responding to a range of compartment fire incidents when breathing apparatus is used.



Photo shows students and instructors at our recent Breathing Apparatus training course.

Health & Safety

Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service is committed to safeguarding, as far as is reasonably practicable the Safety, Health and Welfare of all employees, contractors and visitors. Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service are committed to attaining full compliance with the Local Authority Safety Management System (LA SMS). The Fire Service has started its journey in achieving accreditation to ISO 45001 in relation to Health and Safety Management.

Community Fire Safety

Community Fire Safety (CFS) means promoting fire safety in the community, including in the home, whether in houses or apartments and is aimed at complementing the existing services provided by Kilkenny County Council to protect communities from fire. Where opportunities exist, operational crews will promote checks for working smoke alarms in neighbourhoods after attending incidents. Ongoing public messaging campaigns are maintained to encourage members of the public to install smoke alarms and to test their smoke alarms once a week to ensure that they are working.

Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service respond positively to requests for presentations on fire safety from community groups along with distributing and making available fire safety promotional material in Kilkenny City and County.

The fire prevention objectives in domestic premises are primarily addressed by engagement and education in the delivery of Community Fire Safety (CFS) Initiatives across the City and County of Kilkenny.

External Validation Process

The National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management carried out an external validation of Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service recently. The External Validation Process is a key component of the Keeping Communities Safe Framework, providing a structured approach to assessing Fire Service delivery and identifying opportunities for continuous improvement. A full national report will be produced upon completion of all Fire Authorities in Ireland. Initial feedback to Brigade Management from the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management was very positive.



Science Week 2025

Kilkenny Library celebrated the 30th anniversary of Science Week from 9-16 November with an exciting programme of events under the national theme “Then. Today. Tomorrow.” Supported by our partners, CALMAST - SETU’s STEM Engagement Centre, the library service offered a vibrant mix of workshops, talks, and family-friendly activities designed to spark curiosity and creativity.



Highlights included 3D printing sessions at the Mayfair Makerspace, a cultural heritage talk by Anne-Karoline Distel, Luke’s Deadly Dinosaurs with real fossils, The Nutty Scientist’s Time Machine, and the return of Junior Einsteins with nature-inspired experiments and slime-making. The week was a celebration of curiosity, creativity, and community, bringing science to life for families, schools, and lifelong learners across Kilkenny.

Virtual Record Treasury of Ireland & The Statute of Kilkenny Book Launch

On 25th November 2025, we welcomed an audience of over 80 people to a special event combining the Virtual Record Treasury of Ireland Roadshow with the launch of The Statute of Kilkenny. The Roadshow showcased how researchers are digitally reconstructing valuable archives lost in the 1922 destruction of the Public Record Office, recovering tens of thousands of documents that illuminate Ireland’s rich history.

Guests then celebrated the publication of The Statute of Kilkenny, edited by Professor Keith Busby and published by the Irish Manuscripts Commission. The launch highlighted the significance of these resources for understanding Kilkenny’s past and featured speakers Professor John McCafferty, Dr Peter Crooks and Alicia Dunphy, Kilkenny Library.



Little Library at Bedtime

As part of the both the National First 5 and The Library is the Place 2023-2027 strategies, our library staff delivered a Bedtime Reading initiative aimed at Families with children aged 0-4 years. Families with children aged 0-4 were invited to visit their local library for a free bedtime storybook and membership. Each child received a free bedtime storybook, library membership card and wallet, while parents received a leaflet with reading tips and benefits.

We hosted Bedtime Storytime events across the county throughout the month. Library staff also visited seven parents' groups at primary schools and family resources centres, in conjunction with partners from Family Learning KCETB. The programme aimed to foster a love of stories, encourage parental engagement, and promote library membership, particularly in disadvantaged communities.



Shortlisted for Excellence in Local Government Award

Mayfair Library was delighted to be shortlisted in the Urban Revival category at the Chambers Ireland Excellence in Local Government Awards held in November. This recognition highlights the library's role in breathing new life into urban spaces and fostering community engagement. Being shortlisted places Mayfair Library among Ireland's most innovative local authority initiatives, showcasing creativity, forward-thinking design, and a commitment to enhancing quality of life for the people of Kilkenny.

Library Association of Ireland's Public Libraries Conference 2025

4 of our staff attended The Library Association of Ireland's Public Libraries Conference 2025 – *Book to the Future: How reading anchors us as AI reshapes the creative landscape*. Speakers included Nick Tanzi (US) Debbie Hicks (UK) along with Laureate for fiction Éilís Ní Dhuibhne, Brian Dobson (RTE), Eimear Ní Bhraonáin, and Jack McCarron.

Library Activities

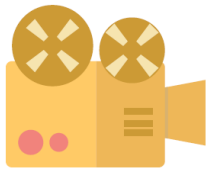
This month we held lots of activities and events across our libraries. These events included:

- Drawing for Animation Workshop at Castlecomer Library
- A talk on walking in the southeast of Ireland in Ferrybank Library.
- Christmas Sign Printing Workshop at Castlecomer Library.
- MABS Kilkenny Advice Talk at Graiguenamanagh Library.
- Back Health talk by UPMC- Graiguenamanagh Library.
- Messy Play Session for Babies at Mayfair Library.
- Christmas Decoration making workshop at Mayfair Library.
- Christmas Wreath making workshops at Mayfair & Thomastown Libraries.
- Lady Louisa Tighe of Woodstock talk at Loughboy Library.



Online Services Usage Nov 2025





Digital Engagement

Library staff prepared, recorded, edited and published **328** posts and videos on our social media platforms in November. Our engagements for the month were **6338** and our virtual newsletter was sent to **7892** email accounts.

Alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals



Here are 3 ways in which Kilkenny County Council Library Service helped to further the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals in October:



SDG 4: Quality Education

The Science Week programme supported UN Sustainable Development Goal 4: Quality Education by providing free, inclusive STEM activities that encouraged curiosity and lifelong learning. Through workshops, talks, and interactive events, the initiative promoted engagement with science and technology while strengthening partnerships with CALMAST and South East Technological University, reinforcing the library's role as a community hub for education and innovation.



SDG 10 - Reducing Inequalities

The Bedtime Reading initiative delivered by Kilkenny County Council Library Service in November supported UN Sustainable Development Goal 4: Quality Education by promoting early literacy and lifelong learning, and Goal 10: Reduced Inequalities by ensuring access to books and library membership for families in disadvantaged communities. Partnerships with Family Learning (KCETB) and Muma Postnatal (HSE) extended the reach of the initiative, reinforcing the library's role in supporting educational equity and community well-being.



SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

The Virtual Treasury Roadshow and Statute of Kilkenny book launch hosted by Kilkenny County Council Library Service on 25 November supported UN Sustainable Development Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities by preserving and promoting cultural heritage through digital innovation. The event showcased the Virtual Record Treasury of Ireland's work to reconstruct archives lost in 1922, ensuring public access to historical resources online free of charge. This event fostered awareness of local history and strengthened partnerships with leading academic institutions. This initiative reinforced the library's role as a custodian of heritage and a hub for inclusive cultural engagement.

ARTS

Creative Kilkenny

During the month many events concluded under the Creative Ireland Scheme. Thus far through 124 projects, over 327 artists and creatives have been employed with a current participant figure of 28,360. One of which was the Living Artfully project, a collaboration with Carlow County Council.



"Artists and representatives from Creative Ireland, Carlow and Kilkenny County Councils at Borris House celebrating Living Artfully."

Living Artfully

The Living Artfully project, funded through the Creative Health and Wellbeing Fund, culminated in a powerful celebration at Borris House, affirming the transformative role of creativity in fostering community connection and wellbeing.



The event showcased nine diverse projects, with participants sharing deeply personal reflections on their experiences. Testimonials highlighted the programme's impact – building confidence, reducing isolation, and creating spaces for expression and belonging. One cancer survivor described the poetry workshops as "a lifeline," while a carer involved in singing sessions noted, "For an hour each week, we forgot about illness and just felt joy."

Feedback on the day reinforced the value of sustained investment in arts-based community initiatives. The celebration concluded with a performance by Iarla Ó Lionáird and his band, featuring a specially commissioned piece that captured the spirit of *Living Artfully*.



"Iarla Ó Lionáird and his band perform a specially commissioned piece"

Importantly, the legacy of this initiative will extend well beyond its formal timeframe, continuing to influence participants, communities, and the artistic team. *Living Artfully* has demonstrated lasting impact – strengthening social connections, fostering inclusion, and embedding creativity as a cornerstone of wellbeing and cultural life across Carlow and Kilkenny.

The Tea Houses

The Tea Houses presented *River(s) of No Return* by Kilkenny artist Bernadette Kiely, guest curated by Shannon Carroll, as part of the [K]nore Your River Programme – A Community-Powered Season of Art, Science and Storytelling Along the River Nore.

This exhibition explored what it means to truly know a river, inviting audiences to reflect on how the Nore shape's identity and how we can care for it collectively. The wider programme was organised and led by SEA School Studios & Labs, a mobile learning centre dedicated to connecting communities with the ecological and cultural layers of their local landscapes through Science, Ecology, and the Arts. Co-presented during Science Week in Kilkenny, the initiative exemplified a creative meeting of art and ecology, celebrating the shared curiosity and collaboration at the heart of both disciplines.

Ecoliteracy Sessions

Ecoliteracy for Inclusive Change, a half-day learning session was facilitated by eco-poet and environmental writer **Grace Wells**, and ecoliteracy educator **Dr Cathy Fitzgerald**. Grace and Cathy supported both artists and council, staff across two different sessions, to explore how **ecoliteracy** – a deep understanding of ecological principles and values – can empower us to co-create meaningful, inclusive change in our communities, our creative work, and within local government.

Rhyme Rag

Poets and writers Alice Bennett, Enda Coyle-Greene, and Janis Woodgate delivered a series of poetry workshops in schools across the county, engaging young people in creative writing and self-expression. Participants explored the work of a wide range of poets and experimented with diverse writing styles. Through these sessions, they developed their own distinctive voices and produced original pieces that reflected their individuality.

Completed works were submitted to *Rhyme Rag* editor Jessica Traynor for review. Selected poems will be published on the *Rhyme Rag* website and Instagram page, while all contributors will receive personalised feedback from the editor – ensuring every participant benefits from professional guidance and encouragement.

Art of Change

The Art of Change programme is nearing completion, with workshop series delivered across Grennan College, Loreto Secondary School, Kilkenny Vocational School, St. Kieran's College, and Coláiste Abhainn Rí.

Each school explored sustainability and social responsibility through creative practice:

- St. Kieran's College worked with artist Rudi-Lee McCarthy, who introduced his approach as a social artist. Students examined how their local environment could be redesigned to promote the wellbeing of all species, translating their ideas into 3D models.
- Loreto Secondary School collaborated with Miriam Keegan of Sew-Sustainable on workshops addressing the circular economy, fast fashion, and workers' rights in the garment industry. Students learned basic sewing techniques and applied them to upcycle their own clothing.
- Grennan College explored the Earth Charter with artist Thomas Duffy, creating personal "maps of intention." Each student crafted a vessel to hold their intentions, sealed with cloth and wax in a symbolic ritual of placing commitments into the earth.

This programme has combined creativity with environmental and social awareness, equipping young people with practical skills and a deeper understanding of sustainability.

Excellence in Local Government Awards

The Arts Office's Art of Change Project was shortlisted for an Excellence in Local Government Award in the category Sustaining the Arts, recognising its innovative approach to climate action through creativity.

The *Art of Change* Programme operates in Youth Centres and secondary schools as part of the Arts Office's Climate Action initiative. It encourages young people to explore environmental and climate issues through artistic practice, raising awareness of the impact of individual and collective actions on the environment.

By learning new art techniques, participants gain confidence and feel empowered to make meaningful choices. The programme offers an alternative, hands-on way to engage with sustainability, fostering personal connections to nature and natural resources.

Through collaboration with local artists, *Art of Change* enriches the cultural landscape while creating inclusive spaces for discussion and creative exchange. It develops artistic skills, deepens understanding of sustainability, and demonstrates how art can address contemporary challenges – making the programme both relevant and impactful.

HERITAGE

Draft County Kilkenny Heritage Strategy, 2026-2030

After extensive research and consultation, a draft Heritage Strategy for Co. Kilkenny has been prepared and all residents, local organisations, and stakeholders in Kilkenny's heritage are now invited to review and comment on this draft. This strategy will help preserve, protect, and promote the rich heritage of our County within a local, regional and national context.

County Kilkenny Heritage Strategy, 2026-2030 [DRAFT] is available for review and comment in all library branches and on <https://consult.kilkenny.ie/> or on request by emailing: heritage@kilkennycoco.ie



Ómós - Remembering the Revolutionary Period in Kilkenny

The Ómós Project has been in development throughout 2025 in response to representations made to the Naming and Commemorative Memorial Committee regarding the need for a central memorial to remember the sacrifices made by the people of Kilkenny in the cause of Irish independence just over 100 years ago. It was decided that this project would be best undertaken through the Public Arts Management Group and that a memorial would be designed and developed through the public art process involving consultation with all stakeholders.

The project was presented at all Municipal District Meetings and at SPC5 throughout October and November and received very positive feedback. *Ómós* is an Irish term meaning to pay respect, do homage or to act in honour, consideration or tribute to another. The next steps in this process is to form a sub-committee from the PAMG and organise a stakeholder consultation session to be facilitated by historian, Tomás MacConmara who is Ireland's leading expert in history, memory and commemoration.

2025 Community Monuments Fund Projects Completed

Just under €500,000 was awarded to Kilkenny County Council for seven projects under the 2025 Community Monuments Fund. The Community Monuments Fund supports a range of initiatives to conserve, maintain, protect and promote local monuments and historic sites. This investment safeguards monuments for the benefit of communities and the public.

In Kilkenny conservation works were undertaken at St. Coleman's Church, Churchclara; St. Catherine's Church, Rathbeagh, 19 Parliament Street - a privately owned 16th Century masonry structure in the heart of Kilkenny's historic town, the MacGiolla Pádraig tomb at Grangefertagh and Kilbeacon Graveyard.

Funding was also awarded to St. Canice's Cathedral who successfully upgraded interpretation in the Cathedral. These sites tell the story of the people of Kilkenny reaching back to pre-Norman times. Conserving these sites preserves these stories protecting an invaluable aspect of our heritage. These conservation works and repairs build resilience through protecting monuments from the effects of extreme weather and climate change.



Kilkenny's Toil and Trouble Shortlisted for Excellence in Local Government Awards

Kilkenny's Toil and Trouble festival was shortlisted for the 2025 Chambers Ireland Excellence in Local Government Awards in the Festival of the Year category.

Held in 2024, the festival commemorated the 700th anniversary of the Kilkenny Witch Trials with a rich and diverse programme, including theatrical re-enactments, exhibitions, podcasts, a conference, and a Service of Atonement and Forgiveness. The initiative was coordinated by the Heritage Office in partnership with cultural organisations across Kilkenny City, reflecting strong collaboration and community engagement.

The awards ceremony took place on 27th November. While Toil and Trouble did not win in what was an exceptionally competitive category, its shortlisting highlights the festival's cultural significance and the County's commitment to delivering high-quality, impactful events.



BIODIVERSITY

Wild Kilkenny, Discover, Learn, Protect, Record

Due to the great success of the collaboration with the Kilkenny Carlow Education Training Board (KKCET) in rolling out a community biodiversity course with their community division over the summer, preparation is now underway to prepare a grant application to repeat the course next year with the support of the KKCETB. This year's course participants continue to meet up at events, and many have signed up to other courses to continue their confidence and to expand their knowledge in different areas. The class of 2025 had a recent meet up to discuss ideas for collaboration for next summer as many feel that as a collective they could embark on a practical action for biodiversity.

Hare's Corner

The Hare's Corner project is coming to Kilkenny in 2026 following a recent successful bid by the Council's Biodiversity Officer. Open to private landowners, schools and community groups, are invited to apply for support in the creation of wildlife ponds, mini-woodlands, hedgerows, mini-orchards and plans for nature on their land through the initiative, which takes its name from the old farming expression for an awkward section of a field which wasn't intensively farmed and was therefore left to nature.



Kilkenny is one of ten counties involved in The Hare's Corner project this year, with the others being Limerick, Offaly, Carlow, Donegal, Monaghan, Kerry, Sligo, Louth and Wexford. Applications open on the 1st of January and closes on Sunday, January 18th. Anyone interested can apply via www.thehairescorner.com.

CIVIL DEFENCE



Kilkenny Civil Defence held their Annual Awards Night in Council Chambers, where volunteers were presented with specially commissioned 75th Anniversary medals. The event was attended by the Cathaoirleach and Mayor, Elected Members, management of Kilkenny County Council as well as Ms. Cep Carthy, Principal Officer of Civil Defence Branch. Mr Noel Bourke (*retired Civil Defence Officer*) was also in attendance.

This amazing group represented the growing number of volunteers in Kilkenny Civil Defence, with numbers surpassing 50 for the first time in over 10 years. The continued work and dedication of the volunteers was congratulated by the Cathaoirleach.

FINANCE

The expenditure by service division to the end of November is set out in Table 1. Total Expenditure for the period was €122m compared with the annual budget of €120m.

Table 1	Actual YTD November 2025	Budget Full Year 2025
	€'000's	€'000's
Housing & Building	33,544	30,784
Road Transport & Safety	31,755	31,383
Water Services	5,959	7,180
Development Management	13,553	15,417
Environmental Services	17,428	18,991
Recreation & Amenity	8,222	9,425
Agriculture, Education, Health, Welfare	422	354
Miscellaneous Services	8,645	6,938
Central Management Charges for Allocation	2,726	
OVERALL TOTAL	122,255	120,472

Rates Revaluation

Further to Revaluation 2017, 197 customers with a total rate demand value of €4.5m appealed their new valuation to the Valuation Tribunal. To-date 191 appeals have been completed. The following is a breakdown of the appeal outcomes to date:

Decrease in Revaluation on Appeal	149 cases
Appeal Withdrawn	33 cases
Increase in Revaluation on Appeal.....	1 case
No change to Revaluation on Appeal	9 cases
Appeals Outstanding.....	2 cases

The total annual Income lost to date stands at €853k.

Summary of Major Revenue Collections for 2025

Debtor Type	Opening Arrears at 01/01/2025	Accrued	Adjustments	Total for Collection	Amount Collected	Closing Arrears at 30/11/2025	Specific Doubtful Arrears	% Collected
	€	€	€	€	€	€	€	
Rates	2,411,467	24,272,945	580,551	26,103,861	22,593,232	3,510,629	317,388	88%
Rents & Annuities	617,225	11,885,976	17,745	12,485,455	11,778,749	706,706		94%
Housing Loans	349,489	2,876,352	-	3,225,840	2,768,657	457,184		86%

*Specific doubtful arrears = (i) Vacancy applications pending/criteria not met & (ii) Accounts in examinership/receivership/liquidation.

Finance Update

The bank overdraft facility was not utilized in the eleven month period to the end of November.