



COMHAIRLE CHONTAE CHILL CHAINNIGH
KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL
TUARASCÁIL BHAINISTÍOCHTA MÍOSÚIL
MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT
SAMHAIN - NOVEMBER 2020

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS

A list of Orders made in the last month will be available in the Council Chamber for inspection by the Elected Members.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

15th December 2020.

Closing date for receipt of submissions on Draft Horse Bye Laws.

23rd – 27th of November.

Kilkenny County Council in collaboration with the Southern Waste Region Office is preparing a Virtual Waste Roadshow.

24th November 2020 @ 7.30pm

LAWPRO Community Meeting via Zoom

REPORT AT A GLANCE

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HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM COVID-19 [CORONAVIRUS]
INFLUENZA & OTHER VIRAL ILLNESS



IF YOU ARE NOT FEELING WELL

Check if you have symptoms of coronavirus. These are a cough, shortness of breath, breathing difficulties, loss of taste or smell, fever (*high temperature*).

If you do have symptoms of coronavirus, phone your GP or local Emergency Department [ED] without delay.

Do not go to your GP or ED. Phone them first. Tell them about your symptoms. Give them the details about your situation. Avoid contact with other people by self-isolating. If you do not have a GP, phone 112 or 999.

IF YOU ARE FEELING WELL

If you are feeling well, carry on with your normal routine.

Follow the advice on how to protect yourself and others from coronavirus and other infections such as flu.

Avoid spending time with people who are ill with a cough, high temperature, or breathing problems.

If you develop symptoms of coronavirus:

- avoid contact with people by self-isolating
- phone your GP or emergency department
- tell them your symptoms and the details of your situation





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 THE IRISH TIMES	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
 Visitors	10 from 3 households	6 from 2 or 3 households	1 other household	No visitors permitted	No visitors permitted
 Gatherings	50 outside your home or garden	6 indoor 15 outdoor	No social or family gatherings	No indoor gatherings	No Except funerals or weddings
 Weddings	100 people can attend	50 people can attend	25 people can attend	6 people can attend	6 people can attend
 Indoor events	100 Up to 100 can attend indoor gatherings	50 But up to 100 in larger venues	No indoor gatherings	No indoor gatherings	No indoor gatherings
 Sports fixtures	100 indoor 200 outdoor	50 indoor 100 outdoor	No matches or events (except elite sport)	No matches or events (except elite sport)	No matches or events
 Bars, cafes & restaurants	Open with protective measures in place	Open 6 people from up to 3 households	Open. Take away or delivery. Outdoor dining only. Max 15 patrons	Open. Take away or delivery. Outdoor dining only. Max 15 patrons	Open. Take away food or delivery only.
 Wet pubs	Open	Open Groups of six from 3 households	Open Additional restrictions	Open outdoor only limited to a max of 15	Only offer takeaway or delivery service
 Domestic travel	No restrictions	No restrictions	Stay in your county/region apart from work/education/essential purposes	Stay in your county/region apart from work/education/essential purposes	Stay at home except to exercise within 5km from home
 Public transport	Travel off-peak hours or walk/cycle, if possible	Peak hours essential workers/ purposes only; 50% capacity	All hours essential workers/ purposes only; 50% capacity	Avoid public transport; essential workers/ purposes only; 25% capacity	Avoid public transport; essential workers/ purposes only; 25% capacity

Graphic: Paul Scott/IRISH TIMES GRAPHICS



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CORPORATE

Are You Registered to Vote?



Check Draft Register of Electors

The Draft Register of Electors is available in Kilkenny County Councils offices in John Street, High Street, all Area Offices, all Libraries, in the Garda Station, Dominic Street and the Post Office, High Street. If you wish to view the Draft Register please contact 056 7794187 for an appointment otherwise you can view the Draft Register online at www.checktheregister.ie until 25th November 2020.

Anyone aged 18 or over should check that their name, address and other details are present and correct on the Draft Register. If any of the details are incorrect on the draft register please contact Corporate Section in County Hall on 056 7794187 before the 25th of November 2020.

Winner of Kilkenny.ie's Spookiest House in Kilkenny Competition



Kilkenny Day 11th October, 2020

Kilkenny County Council was delighted to host Kilkenny Day, 2020. Kilkenny people at home and abroad used their imagination and ingenuity to join in, while those at home got out and about in a very safe socially distanced way.

Over 40 events both physical and virtual took place right across the county;

Online events garnered a huge response from followers including the "Kilkenny Conversations" series of interviews conducted by Edward Hayden.

The response of the schoolchildren of the county to Kilkenny Day – from Mooncoin to Lisnafunchin – to the 1,000 Bikes to School was phenomenal. The hope now is that the younger generation have been inspired to make their journeys to school healthier and kinder to the environment.

The Young Soldier *Thomas Woodgate* from Mill Street, Callan, Co. Kilkenny was only 14 years old when he died in October 1918. He was the youngest official Irish casualty from the 26 Counties who died as a result of enemy fire in World War 1-1914 - 1918. The Kilkenny Great War Memorial Committee unveiled a new sculpture dedicated to Thomas Woodgate at the Courthouse on the 11th October, 2020.



We can confirm that this first Kilkenny Day will not be the last. The support from our local communities and businesses throughout the City and County was remarkable so we hope to use this years event to build on an even bigger and better event in our 2021 calendar.



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ROADS

NATIONAL ROADS

Kilkenny Major Schemes:

N25 Glenmore to Waterford Scheme

The scheme is within the concluding stage of Phase 2 - Option Selection. A preferred route corridor is expected to be announced in early Q1 2021.

N24 Waterford to Cahir Scheme

Arup and Partners Ireland Ltd are working in the early stages of this project which take approximately 60 months. Their brief is to bring the scheme through the statutory processes. (*Planning, CPO, etc.*)

Kilkenny Minor Schemes

A number of minor schemes are progressing through various stages in conjunction with TII on the national road network.

N24 Tower Road

Planning approval for the proposed scheme was secured in 2019. Approval of the Compulsory Purchase Order for the scheme was given by An Bord Pleanála on the 5th August 2020. We are presently undertaking the administrative procedures necessary to give effect to that decision. It is expected that construction will commence in 2021.

N77 Ballyragget to Ballynaslee

A planning application under 177AE and a Compulsory Purchase Order application will be submitted to An Bord Pleanála in the coming weeks for the above project.

N24 Carrick Road

The section of N24 proposed to be improved is rural in nature and located immediately North West of the village of Mooncoin in County Kilkenny. The overall length of the scheme is 1.9km. We are currently preparing the necessary documentation to make an application to An Bord Pleanála for approval under 177AE and also

Compulsory Purchase Order approval for the scheme. It is expected that the application will be made in the early part of Q1 2021.

OTHER

N76 Callan By-Pass to Ballymack and Cuffesgrange Pavement Project

A major pavement project involving improvement to 5.05km including drainage improvements, road markings, etc has been completed on the N76.

Castlecomer Footbridge

The preparation of construction tender documents is on-going with a view to going to tender in December 2020 or early Q1 2021. The main construction works will take place during the summer 2021 with works completed by Q4 2021.

PLANNING

Development Management

<i>Planning Summary</i>	<i>Total to October</i>	
	2019	2020
Planning Applications Received	821	730
Planning Applications Granted	622	599
Planning Applications Refused	62	52
Complaints Received	100	84
Warning Letters Issued	108	74
Enforcements Notices Issued	34	10
Cases Closed	96	54

The Planning Department is open for business subject to Covid-19 recommendations for social distancing and other safety measures for the protection of customers and staff. Visits to the Planning Office are by pre-booked appointment. Appointment can be made by telephoning the planning office at 056 7794010 or by email to planning@kilkennycoco.ie



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FORWARD PLANNING

City & County Development Plan

Updates on the process of the City & County Development Plan are provided on the dedicated portal for the draft plan at Ourplan.Kilkenny.ie.

South East Greenway

Government announced funding of approximately €15.5 million for the South East Greenway, incorporating the Kilkenny Greenway, which is the current estimated cost being provided for the project over 2021/2022. The increase in grant aid recognises the challenges faced by Councils nationally in finding the matched funding for significant capital projects during the current COVID crisis. The original grant aid was €8 million to deliver the Kilkenny Greenway Project. The Minister's announcement provides for €9 million in 2021 with the remainder of the current estimated cost being available in 2020. It is estimated that the South East Greenway will take 18 months to complete and will be due to open during 2022.

North Quays Project:

Government has announced funding of €110 million for the overall North Quays Project in Waterford which will see the relocation of the train station in Waterford to the North Quays site along with a bridge to link the North Quays to the South Quays around the Clock Tower. This bridge will also link the Waterford Greenway with the Kilkenny Greenway which also recently received additional national funding to enable its early delivery. All going to plan the Kilkenny Greenway will open for use in 2022. This project is a very significant investment in the South East and South Kilkenny will benefit directly from the announcement with the following four projects located in Ferrybank and Belview included in the announcement:

Belmont Link Road: The provision of this road, linking from the Abbey Road to the Belmont Road, will support building of houses by opening

up lands for development and facilitating the planned population growth for the Greater Waterford City in a compact manner.

Abbey Road - Greenway Connectivity: The Kilkenny Greenway benefitted from an announcement of a significant increase in grant aid on Monday and today's announcement provides for additional connection points to the Kilkenny Greenway. This will give greater access and facilitate usage of the Greenway in Ferrybank as a smarter travel option for people living and working in the area. It will also provide greater connectivity to schools in the area.

Abbey Road & Belmont Road Improvement Works: The delivery of this project will enhance the approaches to the North Quays and will accommodate cycling infrastructure.

In addition, there is funding for works on **the Port Road:** The planned upgrade works will provide access to open up additional lands for development. This work is considered critical if Belview Port is to grow to its full potential.

Masterplans

In a parallel process a number of masterplans for the areas of Loughmacask, St Canice's Campus (*the former St. Canice's Hospital*) and the Fairgreen area of the City are being prepared. This work was impacted by Covid 19. Work is continuing with the preparation of these masterplans with the first of these, Loughmacask, being the furthest advanced. Members will be briefed before any draft masterplans are placed on public display.

Graiguenamanagh Local Area Plan

A draft joint Local Area Plan for Graiguenamanagh and Tinnahinch has been finalised. It was agreed with Carlow County Council that the plan will be placed on public display for 8 weeks from mid November 2020.

Conservation

Projects availing of the Built Heritage Investment Scheme and the Historic Structures Fund nearing completion.



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Approval received for the Bridewell and Mid Terrace house, Mullinavat to the value of €25,000 and €35,230.40 respectively under the July Jobs Stimulus Package.

Conservation advise to the public and agents, while planning referrals and Sections 57 Declaration continue to be responded to

Building Control

A total of 286 valid Commencement Notices were received in 2020 up to the end of October. This compares with 264 commencement notices for the same period in 2019.

Valid Commencement Notices Received End September	2020	2019
Number of Applications received	286	264

A total of 71 valid DAC/Part M Dispensation Applications were received in 2020 up to the end of October. This compares with 48 applications for the same period in 2019.

Valid Part M [DAC] Applications	2020	2019
Valid [DAC] Applications received to end of October	71	48

Taking in Charge

Works are ongoing on the following estates:

- The Green, Ballyfoyle.
- Friary Walk, Callan.
- Roseleigh, Mooncoin
- Banagher Court, Piltown.
- Rath Ullard, Kilkenny City

Vacant Sites

- There are currently 30 sites on the Vacant Sites Register. A total of 19 of these are now liable for the 7% levy. The Council was in the process of issuing payment demands in March, however that process was halted following the Government's Emergency Order. The process will recommence to ensure compliance with statutory deadlines. Two sites have had their levy discharged to date.

- The number of cancelled entries due to site activation or improvement now stands at 13 sites.
- As part of the annual review of sites around the county, survey work has commenced and a number of sites are being assessed for addition to the Register for 2021.

PARKS

Parks & Playgrounds

The new Ferrybank park and playground opened to the public on the 12th of October. It has been very well received by the local community and has been extremely busy demonstrating it was a much needed facility for the area. The playground boasts an activity trail, zipline, swings and slides and the centrepiece being a large ship unit with a variety of play elements incorporated. An adult gym zone is located immediately beside the playground so parents and children can enjoy the facilities at the same time. A ball wall is placed out in the open parkland to allow for informal ball games.

The park is being jointly funded by the Department of Housing, Planning, and Local Government (50%), Kilkenny County Council (25%) and Waterford City & County Council (25%).

The new park and playground will be maintained by the Parks Department and added to our weekly inspection regime. The local Tidy Towns Association have kindly offered to assist in litter picking to help keep the park in good condition.



Images of Ferrybank Park and Playground



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Woodstock Gardens

The installation of a new adventure play area is now complete. The new play area will almost double the playground space for adventure play with children encouraged to play in the woods with sand, wood and other natural elements. The activity trail will add another element in the gardens for families to enjoy and also help to minimise wear and tear on more formal parts of the gardens. This project is funded through the Sports Capital scheme.



Local artist Gill Campden is currently painting a mural of a Victorian scene on the wall of the conservatory which houses the tea room. The tea room has had a full refurbishment while it was closed during the Covid Restrictions and we look forward to opening a new and improved facility in 2021.

With Christmas approaching plans are being put in place to make Woodstock part of YuleFest. There will be some fun festive installations set in the woods similar to the Cats trail for Kilkenny Day and the conservatory will be decorated in a Victorian Christmas theme.



Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS)

Works under the current round of ORIS Measure 1 funded schemes are now complete. Applications under this heading can attract funding up to €20,000 plus match funding. The projects completed this year included the following:

- Freshford Loop Walk - surface upgrade
- Kilkenny Outdoor Activity Trail - Marketing of amenities including flyers and brochure development;
- Tory Hill, Mullinavat - Improvement works to existing walking trail.
- Woodstock Estate, Inistioge - Social media marketing campaign to promote Woodstock Garden and Trails within the estate.



Brown's Wood, Freshford – Before & After

Of the two ORIS Measure 2 funded schemes which can attract funding up to a maximum of €200,000, plus match funding, works are expected to commence at Poulanassy Waterfall before year end. Whilst in Graiguenamanagh the reconstruction of the Silaire Wood boardwalk along the River Barrow along with the rehabilitation of the existing woodland trails is nearing completion and it is anticipated that this wonderful amenity will reopen to the public in December. Apart from the nuts and bolts the new boardwalk is made from 100% recycled plastic, made from a mixture of blended plastic from household items such as bottle caps, plastic film and margarine tubs.



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Silaire Wood Boardwalk

2020 Call for new applications under the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme

The scheme is open to all Local Authorities and a number of other State Agencies, and funding is allocated via a competitive process based on the quality of the applications put forward. To this end, we endeavor to ensure highest quality applications are put forward.

The funding applications are divided into following three categories:

Measure 1: Grant available €20,000 and Local Authorities can submit a maximum of 5 applications.

Measure 2: Grant available €200,000 and Local Authorities can submit a maximum of 3 applications.

Measure 3: Grant available €500,000 and Local Authorities can submit a maximum of 1 application.

(10% Match funded must be provided by the Local Authority)

At the end of September, the following new Measure 1 applications were submitted to the Department of Rural and Community Development:

Location	Scheme
Goresbridge	Cois Bearbha riverside looped walk upgrade
Brandon Hill, Graiguenamanagh	Walking trail signage upgrade
Nore Valley Walk	Signage and furniture upgrade along trail
Freshford Loop Walk	Trail enhancement works and marketing
Castlecomer	Upgrade & extension of Castlecomer Discovery Park Elf Trail
Tory Hill, Mullinavat -	Installation of summit cairn map interpreting surrounding landscape
Woodstock Estate, Inistioge	Social media marketing campaign to promote Gardens and Trails within the estate

Applications are currently being prepared for Measure 2 and 3 schemes which must be submitted by the end of November. The schemes that will be submitted under same include:-

- Creation of Biodiversity and Recreational Countryside Park at Dunmore – Measure 3
- Woodstock Estate- Continuation of Loop Trail improvements -Measure 2
- Castlecomer Discovery Park – Upgrade Tree Top Walk – Measure 2
- Westcourt Callan - Continuation of Moat Field Loop Trail – Measure 2

South East Greenway

Works are at advanced stage on the rail lifting contract on the South East Greenway which runs from Ferrybank in South Kilkenny to New Ross, terminating at Mount Elliot. Rails and sleepers are now lifted over approximately 80% of the track. The rails and sleepers are being collected at Rosbercon at the old railway station and returned to CIE to their central yard in Portlaoise. The railway sleepers are considered hazardous waste due to the presence of creosote and will be safely disposed of by CIE after collection.



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In the urban section of the Greenway in the Ferrybank area, screen fencing is being erected shortly to address concerns over security and privacy due to the proximity of the old railway line to back gardens, in particular in the Ard Glas area. Preparation works are underway to install sections of screen fencing where very open views are possible into rear gardens.

The lifting of rails and sleepers will clear the way for construction of the Greenway which is anticipated to commence in 2021. The route covers a distance of 24km in total, much of this travelling through rural south Kilkenny, terminating at Ferrybank from where in future it will link with the Waterford Greenway. The Greenway will pass through some very scenic countryside in south Kilkenny. At Carrickcloney there will be views of the new Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Bridge and the river Barrow. In New Ross the Greenway will bring visitors through the 600-metre-long Mount Elliot tunnel having crossed the River Barrow over the Redbridge. From here there are stunning views up and down the River Barrow.

Two Part 8 planning applications for Greenway Car Parks to facilitate access to the Greenway at Raheen, New Ross and Ballyverneen, Glenmore are listed for decision by the Elected Members. These applications were on public display in the Ferrybank Area Office, County Hall Planning Office and in New Ross Municipal District Offices.

Tender documents for the engagement of consultancy services to prepare a route selection and design options report with respect to pedestrian and cyclist connectivity from the Greenway to the villages of Glenmore and Slieverue were issued at the end of October. An application to cover the cost of the professional fees associated with same was submitted by Trail Kilkenny to Kilkenny LEADER Partnership and supported by the Council.



ENVIRONMENT

Draft Horse Bye Laws 2020

Kilkenny County Council has advertised its intention to make Bye Laws for the Control of Horses in the County of Kilkenny and to make provision for the Control, Welfare and Licensing of Horses. These Bye Laws will also incorporate horse exclusion zones within Kilkenny City.

These Bye Laws, if adopted, will replace the Control of Horses Act, 1996, Horse Bye Laws 2015. The Draft Bye Laws are currently available for public inspection at a number of Council offices throughout the County. They are also available on the Council's website and free of charge from the Environment Section.

Written submissions on the Draft Bye Laws are invited and should be sent to the Environment Section. Submissions may also be made online on the consultation portal of Kilkenny County Council at <https://consult.kilkenny.ie>

The closing date for receipt of all submissions is 4.00pm on Tuesday 15th December 2020.

Halloween Bonfires

In conjunction with a public awareness and safety campaign on the dangers of bonfires and fireworks Enforcement Officers from the Environment Section carried out numerous inspections around the City and County in the lead up to Halloween to detect any stockpiled material that may be used for illegal bonfires.

On the whole people seemed to be complying with the advice given and only small amounts of materials were detected.



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Carlow/Kilkenny Dog Shelter



The 2019 Annual National Dog Statistics, based on returns from all Local Authorities, were recently published. Compared with the national statistics the number of dogs euthanised in the Carlow/Kilkenny Dog Shelter is very favourable when compared with the rest of the Country in that the percentage of dogs euthanised national was 4.4% compared with 0.75% for Carlow/Kilkenny.

This is despite the fact the national figures show a reduction of 8% in the number of dogs entering LA run shelters whereas in the Carlow/Kilkenny Shelter the number dogs taken in increased by 45%.

Statistics	2019	2020 to end of October
No of dogs entering Local Authority shelter	400	222
PTS	3	2 (due to sheep worrying)

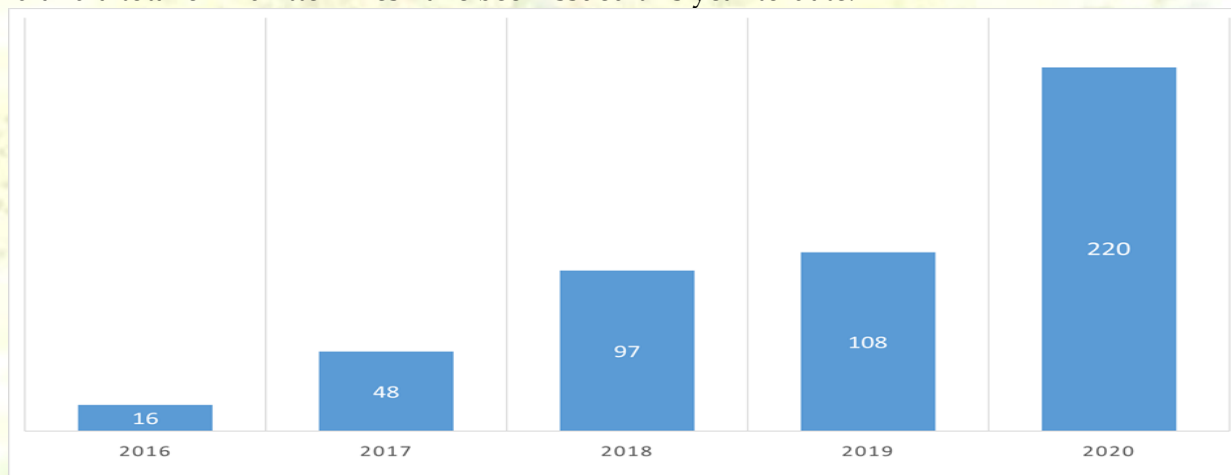
In line with HSE/Government guidelines on essential services the Carlow/Kilkenny Dog Shelter and Dog Warden Services has remained open to the public but by appointment only. Further information is available at www.kilkennycoco.ie

Environmental Complaints

The number of complaints logged and investigated by Environment staff this year to-date has seen a significant increase on 2019 figures with 1,127 cases logged for 2020 compared with 957 during the same period last year, representing an 18% increase for the year and a 29% increase since Covid-19 restrictions were introduced.

The nature of these complaints range from littering, illegal dumping, water quality, noise, abandoned cars and odours from controlled and illegal burning and farm activity. However, the majority continue to be related to littering and illegal dumping.

Despite the restrictions imposed due to Covid-19, our Enforcement Officers remain very active on the ground and a total of 220 litter fines have been issued this year to-date.



Trajectory of Litter Fines issued from 2016 to date 2020



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Summary of the waste inspections completed under our RMCEI plan for 2020

The restrictions put in place to combat the spread of Covid-19 has impacted on planned inspections that require site visits and/or meetings with landowners. However, Environment staff have endeavoured to carry out as many inspections as possible and indeed in some cases have exceed yearly targets for particular inspection requirements. To facilitate the continuation of our inspection regime, protocols were put in place, since restriction were introduced, to safe guard members of the public and staff.

A summary of some of the inspections undertaken to date is provided in the below table:

RMCEI Inspections	Planned 2020	Completed to end of October	RMCEI Inspections	Planned 2020	Completed to end of October
Inspections relating to water pollution incidents	21	31	Bring Bank Surveillance	150	246
Nuisance/ Air pollution inspections	4	18	Routine Litter Patrols (south County)	175	150
Inspections of existing planning permissions (or in advance of grant)	550	639	Routine Litter Patrols (City)	175	105
Ground water quality (planning inspections)	80	223	Ambient Monitoring (us/ds WWTPs)	192	202
Nutrient Management Plan Assessments (NMPs)	22	20	WFD Monitoring & surv, samples taken (WFD)	377	298
Bring Bank Inspections	84	81	Additional BOD analysis for Water Services	550	473

Environmental Education

All primary schools received their Climate Change Pack during An Taisce "Climate Change Week". The pack included climate change themed educational resources, biodiversity resources from the Heritage Officer and a newsletter providing resource links to assist their environmental studies this autumn.

Due to the closure of schools in March, An Taisce were late processing some Green School applications. Kilkenny County Council is delighted to inform members that the Presentation Secondary School, Kilkenny and Listerlin NS recently received notification of their Green Flag Awards for Litter and Waste. This is in addition to St. Senans NS in Kilmacow who also received their first green flag. Congratulations to all three schools as it takes a lot of work to achieve this award. An online Green Schools information evening took place on the 19th of October for green school co-ordinators. An Taisce emphasised the programmes flexibility and provided guidance on how to progress the programme with Covid restrictions in place. These activities completed by the Environmental Awareness Officer are actions of Kilkenny County Council's Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and the Southern Region Waste Management Plan 2015-2020.





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Home Energy Saving Kits

Cathaoirleach Cllr Andrew McGuinness took time out of his busy schedule in October to launch the Home Energy Saving Kits which are now available to borrow from every library branch in the County. The kit assist householders to detect potential energy savings and will be a great asset for tidy towns groups and schools who wish to borrow the kit to explore energy conservation. Kits are available as part of the library service click and collect and book and browse services which are operational at Covid restrictions level 4 and below. This initiative is an action of Kilkenny County Council's Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024.



The Acorn Project

Kilkenny County Council sponsored a day's workshop by Kilkenny Forest School, Slí na Coille allowing Thomastown Scouts to have a day of nature connection which included acorn picking. Inspired by the story 'Every oak begins with an Acorn', the scouts learned about the valuable ecosystem of the woodland and the 150 acorns that the scouts collected will become part of the Acorn Project tree nursery which the scouts will develop later in the season.



All Tidy Town groups registered with the Council's Tidy Town Forum were contacted and invited their members to collect acorns on an individual basis this autumn in their own locality. Storage advice was provided and it's hoped a spring tidy towns outdoor forum will take place in Q1 of 2021, creating an acorn nursery with the assistance of the Kilkenny Forest School in Woodstock Gardens. This will be coupled up with a Forest Therapy Walk, a wellbeing exercise to connect mindfulness with nature. The collaboration with The Acorn Project is an action associated with Kilkenny County Councils Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024.

Irish Business Against Litter IBAL

Kilkenny City has once again been deemed cleanest of 40 towns and cities surveyed by business group Irish Business Against Litter (IBAL). Kilkenny topped the IBAL litter rankings for a record 5th time. An Taisce, who conduct the surveys on behalf of IBAL, praised Kilkenny saying "Again Kilkenny comes up shining! The series of interconnecting laneways between the streets and medieval area were excellent – this is often not the case in other towns / cities throughout the country."

Kilkenny County Council acknowledges the combined efforts of outdoor staff, garden staff and volunteers who continuously patrol the city to ensure the city looks its best. The Environment Section leads both enforcement and education initiatives to ensure everyone plays their part in keeping Kilkenny litter free.



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Litter Campaigns



Littering of personal protection equipment (PPE) like disposable masks and gloves during the Covid pandemic continues to be a public health concern. Kilkenny County Council continues to promote the proper disposal of PPE through traditional and social media.

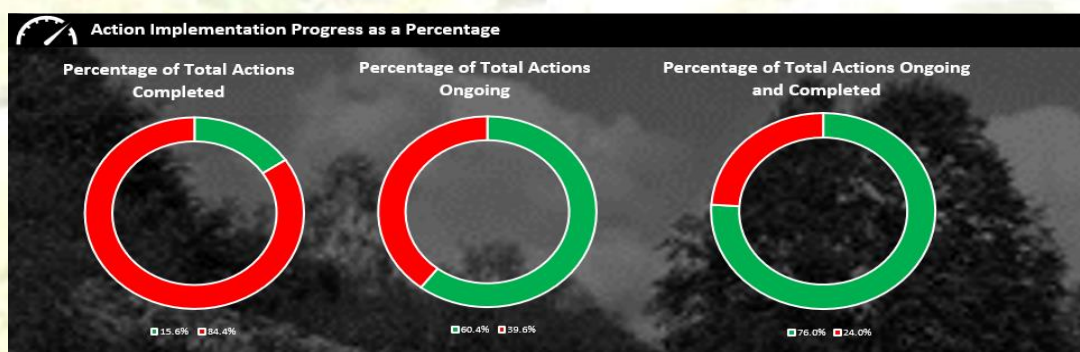
A two-week radio campaign ran on KCLR at the beginning of the restriction 5 lock down to remind dog walkers to clean up after their dogs, this campaign ran from the 28th of October to the 7th of November.

Virtual Waste Roadshow

Kilkenny County Council in collaboration with the Southern Waste Region Office is preparing a virtual waste roadshow which will take place between the 23rd – 27th of November. The week will see the debut of the Dunmore Recycling Centre promotional video and will mark the launch of a Paint Smarter Campaign, an EPA funded waste prevention project collaboration between Waterford, Kilkenny & Carlow Local Authorities. Each day will carry a specific theme, a schedule will be issued to elected members when its finalised. DIY tips will be shared throughout the week by Marianne @the revamp tramp who is a furniture up-cycler. As it's a virtual roadshow, it would be greatly appreciated for elected members to share posts and films across their social media when content is loaded up on Kilkenny County Councils social media platforms. This will ensure a greater audience reach throughout the City, County and hopefully further afield!

Kilkenny Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019 -2024 (CCAS)

The Environment Section has completed the annual review of the Kilkenny Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and submitted the findings of same to the Eastern & Midland Climate Action Regional Office and the DCCAE. To date, 15% of the 96 actions have been completed with another 60% having commenced in the past 12 months.



Dashboard of Action Progress to-date- Kilkenny Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019 -2024

A review was also undertaken of the CCAS Sub-action Plan which was developed in December of 2019. This Sub-action Plan targeted 235 specific actions derived from the 96 main actions within the CCAS. In total, and despite the challenges faced by the organisation around Covid-19, of the 235 sub-actions 185 have commenced and or completed, representing 79% of the total.

Example of Sub-Actions Completed

- Ban of single use plastic cups, cutlery & straws in KCC buildings.
- Appointment of Cycling Officer in partnership with WIT.



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- Installation of enabling infrastructure EV charging points in carparks in Thomastown, Griguenamanagh and the Fairegreen Callan.
- Thomastown Mobility Management Plan.
- Work in partnership with NTA and develop infrastructure for the new Kilkenny City Bus Service.
- Improved facilities in meeting rooms to promote telephone conferencing.
- Run Bulky Furniture Day at Dunmore and Granny CAS - Held 2019 & 2020.
- Run / Support Shop Local Campaigns - A number of campaigns run to-date.
- Assess feasibility of installing an amenity trail in Dunmore civic amenity site. Plans and funding application progressing, planning process to commence 2020.
- Circulate Waste Bye-law Leaflet to households and collaborate with the SEWMO media campaign to raise awareness of requirements.
- Annual Local Authority Tree Planting Programme - Initiative to plant semi-mature pollinator friendly trees to mark significant milestones in Kilkenny.
- Setup Flood Relief Project Office to advance 6 funded Projects.
- Purchased electric vehicle for use by the Public Realm Warden (*Pilot Initiative*).
- Commence works in the Kilkenny Greenway.

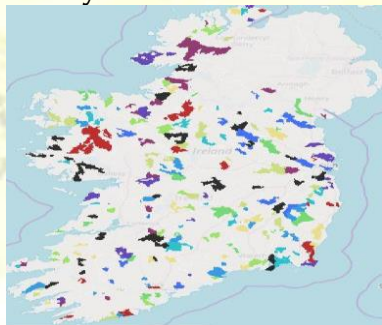
LAWPRO - Local Authorities Water Programme

LAWPRO will be carrying out work in the Bregagh Catchment in 2020 and 2021, carrying out assessments on the river to identify water quality issues and ways to remedy them. We will be engaging with the local community and all relevant stakeholders to find solutions. LAWPRO would normally hold face to face meetings with the local community but because of Covid-19, we have to change to an online community information meeting via Zoom. This meeting will be held on **Tuesday 24th November 2020 @ 7.30pm via Zoom. To register visit: <https://bit.ly/2Fn7jRa> Facebook @LAWPROteam.** If you have any questions please contact Ann Phelan 085 8084067 or aphelan@lawaters.ie



The Bregagh is one of 190 Priority Areas for Action across the country. From its source near Dreelingstown, the Bregagh River flows into the River Nore beside the Abbey Quarter development in Kilkenny City.

Priority Areas for Action



The River Basin Management Plan (2018-2021) has identified a number of our waterbodies for focussed action to improve water quality. These are the **Priority Areas for Action (PAA)** listed in Appendix 2 of the Plan. This is part of a new and collaborative approach engaging all stakeholders, specifically at a local level. The process involves scientific assessment of existing information followed by stream walks in the catchment to better understand the issues and develop locally appropriate solutions. Nationally, there are 190 priority areas for action covering 726 water bodies.

Useful Links:

www.watersandcommunities.ie/areas-for-action/

www.catchments.ie

<https://www.housing.gov.ie/water/water-quality/river-basin-management-plans/river-basin-management-plan-2018-2021>



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COMMUNITY

Kilkenny Integration Strategy

The Kilkenny Migrant Integration Strategy is being finalised. The process has taken longer because of the Covid 19 restrictions. The final stages of the plan involve the agreement of lead agencies on actions in the plan. Once this step is finalised the plan can then go forward to the full Council for approval.

Town & Village Health Checks

The tender process has commenced for undertaking 5 health checks in the following areas Castlecomer, Goresbridge, Urlingford/Johnstown Mullinavat and Thomastown. It is expected that the health check will be started in January 2021 and completed by April 2021.

Town & Village Projects – Accelerated Measures

Work is progressing well on projects in Inistioge, Castlecomer, Callan and Graiguenamanagh which were awarded funding under the Accelerated Measures. The Community Team are also linking with communities in the 4 district towns regarding the provision of Christmas lights, another project which received funding under this stream.

CLÁR 2020

The Department of Rural and Community Development have awarded Kilkenny €77,000 under the CLAR grant scheme. The scheme is for designated CLAR areas as defined due to rural depopulation.

The following schemes were successful.

- (i) Muckalee Community Creche, Completion of community Car Park and associated works, serving the Community Creche and National School. €50,000
- (ii) Coolagh Church and Community Hall, Safety measures and access improvement along the junction of the R698. €27,000

SICAP Plan 2021

The LCDC is in the processing of overseeing the 2021 SICAP Plan for Kilkenny. The budget remains the same at €631,889. The SICAP Sub-group of the LCDC is responsible for developing the plan in partnership with CKLP. The Final Plan will be approved by the LCDC.

Kilkenny Resettlement Programme 2018-2020

The final stages of the Kilkenny Resettlement Programme are in train. The programme has been supported by Respond with a resettlement worker. The worker will finish in January 2021. There is general agreement that an interagency structure should remain in place to ensure gaps in meeting the needs of families can continue to be coordinated. The SICAP 2021 plan is looking to add additional supports to families.

Kilkenny One-parent Families

The One-parent families steering group will be launching the Voice and Visibility research and Action Plan by the end of November 2021. This is a key action outlined in the LECP.

Healthy Kilkenny

The Healthy Kilkenny Programme has allocated Mental Health Grants to a total of €32,000. Grants averaged between €2,500 and €5,000. The recipients include -Social Farming (in Callan), Foroige, Transgender Equality Network, Amber Women's Refuge, Open Circle Women's Arts Collective, South East Regional Family Support Network for support packs to families in Kilkenny, The Mill FRC in Urlingford and LikelinkK.

Pride of Place

The 2020 IPB Pride of Place Awards Ceremony will take place on Saturday the 21st November at 7pm hosted by Marty Morrissey. Please find the virtual awards invite attached. The awards will be streamed from the Pride of Place website: www.prideofplace.ie. (Entries from Kilkenny include Castlecomer Discovery Park, Clogh Village, Ferrybank Allotments and the Callan Town Team).



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Callan Town Team Plan

A review of the actions from the Callan Town Team Plan is presently under way. An update on progress will be available in January 2021. This will also be promoted within the local community through an online magazine format.

The 2021 Grants Booklet

The Kilkenny County Council Grants Booklet will be released in early 2021 and will be available online and in hard copy.

KRSP Covid -19 Club Funding

The KRSP COVID-19 club small grant scheme has awarded €17,797 to clubs in Kilkenny. This grant is part of a programme from the Government of Ireland, implemented through Sport Ireland and its network of Local Sports Partnerships to support the sports sector during the COVID-19 pandemic. This scheme is designed to support clubs, which do not have the finances to implement COVID-19 related protocols.

HERITAGE

Stay Well this Autumn and Winter: A Nature Prescription

This Winter the Heritage Office is encouraging everyone to get outdoors, observe nature, and to undertake simple actions to make your garden a haven for pollinators and biodiversity. We'll have a series of hints and tips on radio and social media for the next few months. Stay tuned for more! This initiative is part of Kilkenny County Council's "Keeping Well programme supporting communities during Covid 19.

Kenny's Well Plan - Can you help?

The Heritage Office of Kilkenny County Council has commissioned a Conservation Management Plan for Kenny's Well - a much loved historical site in the city. The plan will focus on the repairs needed to the collapsed boundary wall with the River Bregeagh. It will be drawn up in partnership with the Kilkenny Area Office, the Conservation Officer, and other relevant state agencies. It's

intended that the plan will help to secure funding for capital works in 2021. If you have any stories about the well, or old photographs etc, we'd love to hear from you. Please email us at heritage@kilkennycoco.ie

Tullahought wins County Heritage Week Award

Congratulations to Tullahought Community Development who won the County Kilkenny Award for National Heritage Week 2020, co-ordinated by the Heritage Council for a video on water heritage which was scripted, filmed and produced by the community. It's a great example of a community heritage group adapting to and rising to the challenges of Covid. <https://www.heritageweek.ie/projects/back-to-the-past-valuing-water-in-the-community>

LEO/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Launch of New Branding & Website Kilkenny.ie



On 9th October, Kilkenny launched its new branding and website kilkenny.ie under the banner of "The Best of Ireland". Well-known across the globe, Kilkenny is synonymous with creativity, heritage, hospitality, food and natural beauty. Following a study of the Kilkenny 'brand', the City Centre Task Force in conjunction with the Council took the decision that stakeholders would benefit from the roll out of an umbrella branding for Kilkenny which ultimately



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communicates all that Kilkenny has to offer. The aim of the initiative is to attract visitors and investors to the county by raising awareness of the many outstanding attributes that make Kilkenny an ideal place to visit, shop, work, locate a business, live and raise a family. At the heart of the new identity is a blending of old and new working in harmony with rich layers of history and modernity working together.

A cultural blend of craft, design, food, business, festivals, shopping and more, Kilkenny is both the Medieval heart of Ireland and a progressive and ambitious entrepreneurial hub which fosters a vibrant living culture for its visitors, residents and investors alike. The new visual identity will convey this in a modern modular 'K' shape. The familiar Kilkenny scripted logo is being retained along with the iconic Black & Amber colours. The new branding is now visible across the County and City.

Brexit Supports For Businesses



The Local Enterprise Office continues to prepare businesses for Brexit with a range of supports in the run up to 1st January 2021. We are providing a range of training, free of charge, as follows:

- Manage Brexit and Covid19 Effects using Strategic Management.
- Brexit Advisory Clinics.
- Prepare your Business for Brexit Customs Workshops.

Training Programmes Now Available...

Advanced Management Development Programme

The Advanced Management Development Programme, our flagship programme, commenced on 21st October and is aimed at owner/managers of small/medium sized businesses, who have a strong commitment to maintaining their businesses in a challenging economic trading environment (Brexit, COVID 19 etc) and wish to consider expanding their businesses onto the next stage of its business cycle.

This programme, which is being delivered by Blaise Brosnan from the Management Resource Institute will combine management theory, peer learning, networking and action learning approaches. The programme will run virtually every Wednesday (8am – 11am) for a duration of 10 weeks. Each company can avail of two one-to-one mentoring sessions with Blaise Brosnan to address specific issues within their business.

Objectives of the programme:

- To provide 'survival' strategies to well established business faced with challenges such as Brexit etc
- To increase the participant's ability to further develop their business by focusing on the practical challenges and opportunities they are facing or about to face. The current issues of COVID-19 and Brexit need to be managed around.
- To challenge the participants to clarify their next move and put in place the necessary resources and plans to make it happen.
- To ensure that appropriate local businesses can experience the commercial benefits of this type of programme.

'Lighthouse South East' Programme

The South East Network of Local Enterprise Offices is responding to new innovation opportunities by launching a new innovation programme entitled 'Lighthouse South East'. This programme will deliver a rapid assessment



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of a company's innovation capability and will also test their innovation concept through one-to-one mentoring with innovation experts. High potential companies and their innovations can progress onto Enterprise Ireland's Agile Innovation or Research and Development grant support to develop a company's innovation pipeline. This one-to-one practical mentoring programme will be led by Laurence Knell of Strategic Innovation Partners Ltd, an experienced strategy, innovation and leadership consultant.

'BRIGHTSTART' PROGRAMME

The BrightStart South East Start-Up programme has been designed to help new start-ups define their business idea and have a step by step action plan to deliver their business goals in this changing business world. What sets the BrightStart programme apart is that high potential start-ups will be given the opportunity to pitch their idea to Enterprise Ireland, South East Business Innovation Centre and their Local Enterprise Office to apply for accelerated grant support and services which can fundamentally boost a start-up business's growth potential. Topics include Female-Led Start-Ups, Green Technology Start-Ups, New Normal (Brexit/Covid-19 innovations) Start-Ups and Remote Working Start-Ups.

Each sector will have a dedicated webinar focusing on start-up supports and entrepreneurial culture required for successful business development growth. After the webinar businesses will have completed essential work that will frame the strategic thinking for their business. Mentoring support will be provided to assist participants to develop a prioritised action plan for the business concept. This plan will form part of the pitch to funding agencies to apply for accelerated grant aid and business supports.

Further information on these programmes along with our full range of programmes is available on localenterprise.ie/kilkenny

Kilkenny County Council were successful under the Town & Village Renewal Scheme 2020 -

Accelerated Measure in Response to COVID-19 in receiving funding towards the 'Shop Kilkenny - Keep It Local' campaign which will run throughout the County from mid-November to Christmas, in order to encourage shoppers to spend locally and by doing so they are supporting businesses and jobs in our local communities. The campaign will also encourage shoppers to shop online with local businesses where possible. The campaign will consist of a range of initiatives as follows:

- Advertising packages with the local media.
- Online campaign promoting the shopkilkenny message
- Signage throughout the County reiterating the shopkilkenny message
- Promotion of the Kilkenny Gift Voucher Scheme

KEY STATISTICS FOR 2020

- €368,945 approved in financial assistance to 18 businesses linked to the creation of 138 jobs over a 3-year period - (€322,170 in *Business Expansion Grants* and €46,775 in *Feasibility Study Grants*).
- 1,390 business owners and employees attended 91 core training programmes including seminars from Financial Training to Management Development Programmes.
- 747 students from 14 schools participated in the Student Enterprise Programme which fosters a spirit of entrepreneurship from an early age.
- 978 entrepreneurs have received one-to-one mentoring to assist them in relation to particular issues within their business ranging from business continuity to ICT.
- 429 entrepreneurs attended Business Advisory Sessions with LEO staff to discuss starting or growing an existing business (*including remotely from March 2020*).
- 311 Covid-19 Business Continuity Voucher applications were approved totalling €698,218.
- 266 Trading Online Vouchers were approved totalling €619,293.58 in order to assist



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businesses to implement e-commerce within their business.

- 136 participants attended 10 Start Your Own Business programmes which explores all the aspects encountered when starting up a new business (*including remotely from March 2020*).
- 15 Microfinance loan applications have been submitted to Microfinance Ireland (*1 pre COVID and 13 COVID related*) of which 13 have been approved to date with total loan value of €258,300.
- 7 businesses have participated on Lean for Micro in order to assist them to look at their competitiveness and innovation specifically in relation to Brexit.
- 6 businesses have been approved Technical Assistance Micro Export Assistance Grants in order to assist them access overseas markets totalling €12,996.

HOUSING

Housing Capital Delivery 2020

The capital schemes proposed for delivery in 2020 is as outlined in the table below. These are estimated figures, subject to change and are dependent on construction sites being permitted to remain open for the remainder of the year.

Pipeline Delivery 2020	Proposed
Kilkenny City	
Nuncio Road	28
20 Green Street	1
24 Green Street (CAS)	1
City Total	30
Kilkenny County	
Hoban Park, Bolton, Callan	38
Breaghagh Place, Main Street, Piltown	17
Lime Grove, Belmont, Ferrybank (Turnkey)	4
Group Home, Cloghabrody, Thomastown	4
Willow Grove, Belmont, Ferrybank (PART 5)	3
No 47 Barrack Street, Castlecomer	1

(Buy & Renew)	
Main Street Kilmoganny (Buy & Renew)	1
County Total	68
City & County Total	128



*New St. Patrick's Group Home, Windgap, Kilkenny
KKVHA project-ready for occupation*

Delivered to date in 2020 [51 units]

- 38 units Hoban Park, Bolton Callan,
- 1 unit at Main St, Kilmoganny (Buy and Renew)
- 1 units at 20 Green St. Kilkenny, full refurb, long term void
- 4 units (Group home) at Cloghabrody, Thomastown (KCC Direct Build)
- 4 units at Lime Grove, Belmont, Ferrybank (Turnkey)
- 1x 2 person unit at 24 Green St., Kilkenny (Good Shepherd Centre)
- 1 unit at Old Health Centre, Windgap (Buy and Renew) (KCC Direct Build)
- 1x 3 person Group Home at Garraun, Windgap (KKVHA for St. Patrick's)



Old Health Centre, Windgap ready for occupation

Under Construction at 31st October [254 units]:

- 28 units Nuncio Road, Kilkenny City (Respond Housing)



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- 17 Units at Breaghagh Place ,Main Street, Piltown (*KCC Direct Build*)
- 33 units at Glebeside, Donaguile, Castlecomer (*KCC Direct Build*)
- 6 Units at New Road and Chapel Street, Mooncoin (*Turnkey*)
- 22 units at Station Avenue, Ballyraggett (*KCC Direct Build*)
- 40 units Margaretsfield Callan Road, Kilkenny
- 1 unit at 47 Barrack St, Castlecomer (*Buy & Renew*) (*KCC Direct Build*)
- 18 units at Pairc Nua [*Broguemaker*], Castlecomer Road, Kilkenny City (*Direct Build*)
- 16 units at Greenville Mews, Lower Kilmacow (*Turnkey*)
- 58 units at Pennefeather Green, Hebron Road, Kilkenny (*Turnkey*)
- 1x5 person unit at Grennan Villa, Thomastown (*Camphill*)
- 8 units at Pennefeather Court, Hebron Road, Kilkenny (*Turnkey*)
- 2 Units at Shanganny, Jenkinstown
- 2 Units at 25 a & b Green Street, Kilkenny (*GSC CAS*)
- 1 Unit at "Woodville" Belmont, Ferrybank (*Waterford Dove Housing Assoc.*)
- 1x5 Bed Group Home, Grennan Villa, Thomastown (*Camphill Community Ireland*)

Tender Stage [51 units]

51 units (*houses/apartments*) and community facility at Crokers Hill, Kennyswell Road, Kilkenny [*Phase1*]

Detailed Design / Pre Tender Stage [12 units]

- 6 units at Golf Links Road (*Mulhalls Shop*) Kilkenny City
- 2 Units at Inchacarron, Mullinavat
- 2 Units at Old Fire Station, Graignamanagh
- 1 unit at 18 Wolfe Tone Street, extension and full refurb, long term void
- 1 bed unit Old Fire Station, Thomastown, refurb.

Planning Stage [29 units]:

- 25 Units at Ladywell, Thomastown (*An Bord Pleanála*)

- 1 Accessible bungalow, Circular Road, Kilkenny City
- 1 Accessible bungalow, Haggardsgreen, Callan (*Buy & Renew*)
- Reconfiguration of 1 apt to 2 units- Ayrfield, Granges Road

Capital Assistance Scheme Projects

There are a large number of projects of varying sizes being developed by Approved Housing Bodies in conjunction with Kilkenny County Council at feasibility, planning and tender stage throughout the City and County. A wide range of bodies are being supported including Good Shepherd Centre, Kilkenny Voluntary Housing Assoc., Focus Ireland, Camphill Community, Waterford Dove Housing Assoc., St. Patrick's Centre, SOS and Irish Wheelchair Association.

Vacant Homes

12 vacant properties have been identified for the commencement of Compulsory Purchase Order procedures in the coming weeks. Assessment of further vacant properties & sites will continue around the county to locate viable housing options.

October Monthly Statistics

Number awaiting social housing support at 31 st October (<i>Gross Need</i>)	1,953
Number of assessment interviews carried out in October	35
LA/RAS/Leasing allocations up to end of October (<i>offers made</i>)	12
Number of HAP tenancies 31 st Oct.	876
Number of LA tenancies surrendered in October	8
Anti-social behaviour cases in October	46
New Homeless Presentations in October	26
Maintenance Calls for 31 st October 2020	633
Maintenance Calls year to date	4414
No. Housing Loans Approved to date (<i>Annuity/Construction</i>)	12
Amount of Loans Approved to 31st October 2020	€2,426,230



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Housing Waiting List

The current **gross** Housing demand at 31st October and a comparative analysis with previous years is outlined below:

Year	Number on Housing List
31 st October 2020	1,953
December 2019	1,988
December 2018	2,067
December 2017	2,180
December 2016	2,059 (Statutory Assessment 2016)
December 2015	2,744

Housing Loan Activity

Loan Type: Annuity/RI Home Loan

Received.....	40
Approved	12
Amount Approved	€1,611,430
Paid.....	17
Amount Paid:	€2,426,230

Private Grants

Kilkenny County Council approved a budget of €1.5m for all three private grants (HOP/MAG/HGD). The Council recoups 80% of all eligible expenditure from the Department. Projects already committed and approved for 2020 are in excess of the allocated budget. Only emergency cases can be processed for the remainder of 2020. The estimated position at 31st October 2020 is as follows:

Grants Paid 2020		
Scheme	No.	Amount Paid
HGD - Housing Adaptation Grant	63	€711,785
MAG - Mobility Aid Grant	27	€99,006
HOP - Housing Aid for Older Persons	64	€322,065
Total	154	€1,132,856
Grants Approved & Committed 2020		
Scheme	No.	Amount Paid
HGD - Housing Adaptation Grant	103	€1,150,943

MAG - Mobility Aid Grant	35	€137,555
HOP - Housing Aid for Older Persons	126	€729,530
Total	264	€2,018,028

Covid19 Challenges:

- Majority of applicants are elderly or very ill and have been advised to cocoon.
- Builders not able to carry out works, source materials or provide quotations during restrictions.
- Builders had to delay starting works as they were unable to access applicant's home.
- Backlog of works building up since the restrictions were lifted.
- Occupational Therapists were unable to carry out assessments during restrictions. They are now resuming work but they will need to follow restrictions/guidelines from HSE,
- Housing Department were still progressing applications. Desktop assessments were carried out where possible as site inspections could not take place.

Homeless Update

Details of homeless presentations up to 31st October, 2020 along with the comparative, monthly presentations for 2017, 2018, 2019 are set out below. There have been 186 Homeless/Potentially Homeless presentations at 31/10/2020

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
January	37	29	37	27	23
February	30	26	32	14	27
March	18	26	21	16	24
April	26	25	18	20	19
May	34	28	29	20	14
June	31	24	20	16	12
Total	176	158	157	113	119
July	31	34	15	31	19
August	32	27	26	28	22
September	27	24	19	26	26
October	30	27	27	25	26
November	32	29	23	16	
December	21	19	6	17	
Total	349	318	273	353	



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Currently, there are 6 households including 1 child in Hotel emergency accommodation and 5 households in transitional emergency accommodation.

TOURISM

Wolfwalker Month

The month-long celebration in Kilkenny City of the global release of Cartoon Saloon's new Academy Award®-tipped animated feature, Wolfwalkers, which is set in Kilkenny has wrapped up.

Kilkenny County Council was delighted to support this project in partnership with Fáilte Ireland. However, the unfortunate change in the restrictions in October meant that our fantastic illuminations at the Castle and the dressing of the City to promote Wolfwalkers was not enjoyed by as many as we had hoped.

With the closure of Butler Gallery, the exhibition of the Wolfwalker Sketching for the film will hopefully be re-visited when their doors re-open.

Notwithstanding the restrictions, the project was still able to deliver our beautiful Wolfwalker mural at St Mary's Lane and the nightly illumination of the Castle with the film's imagery has provided us with a bank of wonderful footage to showcase Kilkenny into the future.



Outdoor Kilkenny: Come See, Come Do!

'Outdoor Kilkenny' is a joint initiative between Kilkenny Tourism and Kilkenny County Council and continues to promote and showcase all the wonderful outdoor and adventure activities available throughout the County. The initiative

consists of over 15 different categories of activities for visitors to choose from including Culture, Walking & Hiking, Sport, Golf, Activity Centres and Family Activities. For the duration of the current restrictions we can only encourage local communities to get out and about within their 5km location and enjoy the parks, trails and outdoor spaces in their local community. Further details available at; <https://outdoorkilkenny.ie/>

Visit Kilkenny.ie & Kilkenny Tourism Supporting shop local for Christmas



Our Winter campaign includes an on-line Christmas Market where Kilkenny Tourism Members can showcase their Christmas gift ideas and encourage visitors to shop kilkenny this Christmas season.



Living History, Loving Kilkenny section of the visit kilkenny website contains captivating imagery and content promoting Kilkenny as the medieval capital of Ireland. #keepdiscovering For more details visit www.visitkilkenny.ie

Fáilte Ireland's COVID-19 Adaptation Fund

Fáilte Ireland's **COVID-19 Adaptation Fund** closing date has now passed. The fund will help tourism businesses offset some of the costs they have incurred in adapting their premises or operations in line with Fáilte Ireland's Guidelines for Re-opening. The latest CSO Business



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Demography Survey (2018) reports that over 900 (or 20% of all businesses) in County Kilkenny are in the Hospitality Sector. 68 applications have been submitted by Kilkenny businesses. For further information; www.failteireland.ie

We continue to be cognisant that the current Level 5 restrictions have closed our museums, galleries our hotels, pubs and restaurants and restricts our movement at the current time. This is an extremely difficult time for businesses and the tourism and hospitality sector have been one of the most severely impacted sectors in our economy.

FIRE SERVICES

Capital Projects

A new fire engine for Callan was handed over to Kilkenny County Council's Fire Service for training familiarisation with Callan Fire Brigade in October 2020. The new fire engine will be "on the run" in the coming days.

Fire Safety Certificates

101 applications for fire safety certificates were received up to 3rd November 2020. This was a 16% increase in 2019 applications for the same period last year.

Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003

To date Fire Prevention staff have made 36 inspections of premises both to provide advice and to enforce legislation. As of 3rd November 2020, 83 Licence Applications were processed under Section 24 of the Fire Services Acts 1981 & 2003.

Fire Brigade Operations

Fire Brigades responded to 690 turnouts up to the 31st October 2020. The same period last year we responded to 631 turnouts.

ARTS

Rhyme Rag Poetry Workshops for TY students

Stephen Murray's Poetry workshops are Ireland's most popular, fun and powerful TY activity, bar

none. For the last six years, courtesy of Kilkenny Arts Office, he has brought these workshops to Kilkenny Schools as part of the peerless Rhyme Rag project.

On this occasion we moved online. Stephen facilitated a full day workshop with CBS secondary school TY students and further workshops are in the pipeline for December.

Siamsa

Our autumn Siamsa programme moved online this year and took place from Tuesday 27th to Thursday 29th October. Brickflicks rolled out your *Stop Motion with Lego Animation*. Participants learned about the different parts of making a film work, and tips and skills to use when making their own films. A spooky set, a zombie invasion and then favourite Lego characters saved the day! Everyone received a digital copy of their movie through YouTube.



Knitted Together project

Our blankets have started the long journey out to South Africa and will hopefully reach the Elkana Charity in time for Christmas.



Arts Office Partner with Visual Artists Ireland

We partnered with VAI to roll out Cafés and workshops online for visual artists in the Kilkenny area. The first Café which took place on 6th October had six guest speakers. 3 workshops plus another Café have been scheduled for November.



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KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL
TUARASCÁIL BHAINISTÍOCHTA MÍOSÚIL
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LIBRARY

October 2020

Contact and Collect Library Service

12,885

Items issued
in October



6,059

People visited
our branches to
collect books

Door to Door Service for Cocooning members

789

Members
served since
we started



3143

Items deliver
ed since we
started

▲ 55% increase in users
from delivery run 3 to 4

▲ 43% increase in items
borrowed from delivery
run 3 to 4



* New online memberships & their use
of online services is not reflected in
these figures

Online Services use:



1,316

eBooks borrowed
▲ 80% on 2019

713

eMagazines borrowed
▼ 10% on 2019



4,888

eNewspapers borrowed
▲ 14276% on 2019

972

Songs accessed
▲ 2758% on 2019



1,638

eAudiobooks borrowed
▲ 55% on 2019

811

Online Course sessions
▼ 26% on 2019



68

Language sessions
▼ 24% on 2019



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Bookville in a Book:

Bookville in a Book came to a close for 2020, following a very successful run. Having to reimagine Bookville due to the limitations of Covid, we went back to the drawing board, and decided to reinvent the festival as an activity book that could be enjoyed by thousands of children across the county, and would be a lasting legacy of our annual festival's adaption to these challenging times.

We targeted some of the best authors and illustrators from Kilkenny, Ireland and even the UK in a bid to keep the festival ethos alive. 10,000 copies of the activity book were distributed throughout Kilkenny City and County to almost 90 national schools and to our libraries and Arts Office. As the content was adapted to complement the school curriculum, it allowed more people than ever before to engage with Bookville and the response has been phenomenal!

The full activity book is available through www.bookvillekilkenny.com. Pictured are students from Gael Scoil Osraí and St. John's Senior School enjoying the book.



School and Creche Support

We have continued to work to resume our services to the 25 Schools across the county that are supported by our Mobile Library Service. We have invested in lots of new stock for the service – from a new collection of class readers for all ages to new general stock for leisure reading. Deliveries of boxes of books will commence shortly.



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FINANCE

The expenditure by service division to the end of October is set out in table 1. Total Expenditure for the ten months to the end of October was €83.66m compared with the annual budget of €83.6m. The expenditure under development management includes a sum of €8.6m relating to the restart grants. This expenditure was not included in the budget but is fully funded by the Department of Business, Enterprise and innovation.

Table 1	Actual YTD October 2020	Budget Full Year 2020
	€'000's	€'000's
Housing & Building	17,368	17,623
Road Transport & Safety	21,705	22,688
Water Services	5,763	6,576
Development Management	16,975	10,525
Environmental Services	8,900	11,463
Recreation & Amenity	5,340	6,425
Agriculture, Education, Health, Welfare	501	639
Miscellaneous Services	7,107	7,623
OVERALL TOTAL	83,659	83,562

The bank overdraft facility was utilised six times during the ten month period to the end of October 2020. The earlier payment by Government Departments of grant monies including the Local Property Tax allocation has assisted cashflow since the beginning of the Covid-19 crisis.

The audit of the 2019 Annual Financial Statements commenced on 13th July. The audited statements will be presented to Council later in the year on completion of the annual audit by the Local Government Auditor.

Rates Revaluation

The Valuation Office conducted a revaluation of all commercial properties throughout County Kilkenny to come into effect for the year 2018 as part of its ongoing programme to revalue all such properties within the State.

The following is an update on appeal outcomes and outstanding appeals:

- 197 Rate Customers appealed their valuation to the Valuation Tribunal.
- Total value of rate demand under appeal is €4.5m, 22.6%
- 165 appeals have been completed to date (28 *withdrawn*)
- 132 of the 165 appeals have resulted in a reduction in rates income, 4 confirmed the decision of the revaluation, 1 resulted in an increase in rates income & 28 were withdrawn.
- Income lost to date = €768,642
- 32 appeals outstanding
- If this trend continues the total loss will be in the region of €1m.



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Impact of Covid-19 on Council Finances

Covid-19 is presenting serious financial challenges as all income streams have been impacted. In October, Government announced that the waiver on commercial rates for businesses impacted was being extended by another three months to nine months covering the period to the end of December 2020. The estimated compensation arising is €8.3m. This leaves a balance of approximately €2m to be collected on commercial rates. The estimated shortfall on income from goods and services has now increased to €2m due to the impact of the current lockdown. Additional costs arising from Covid-19 are estimated at €5m. Submissions have been made to Government on these issues seeking compensation for the losses being incurred.

Expenditure in a number of areas in the 2020 budget totalling €2.35m has been deferred until further clarity is obtained regarding the income loss for the year. The current estimate on the target savings is €1.8m as the planned savings in housing will not be achieved due to the pressures on maintenance and housing grants.

There is a significant risk that the Council will incur a deficit for 2020 based on the current projections in the absence of additional compensation from Government.

Budget 2021

The budget process for 2021 has already commenced. As already stated the Covid-19 crisis is presenting unprecedented financial challenges for the Council in the current year and will continue to do so into 2021. All income streams are and will be impacted for the foreseeable future. The statutory Budget meeting for the Council is fixed to take place at 3pm on Friday, 27th November.

Re-Start/Restart Plus Grants

The Restart Grant Plus Grant Scheme closed as of 31st October, 2020. Kilkenny County Council has received 1,243 Restart Grant Plus applications. The Restart Team has approved and paid 1,096 applications totalling €5,855,298. This is in addition to 966 applications processed under Restart 1 with a total payment of €2,948,925 bringing the total paid to date to €8,804,223.

The Restart Team is currently processing the 30% top up for all Restart Grant Plus applications and appeals in relation to Restart Grant 1. Appeals arise where eligible businesses failed to apply for Restart Grant 1 before the early cut off closing date of 22nd July. There is no application for the appeal process and the Restart Team will be in contact with eligible applicants who have applied for Restart Grant Plus or businesses who contacted the Restart Team directly.

Rates Waiver

As part of the support measures for businesses announced by Government a waiver on commercial rates for the nine months to the end of December is being provided for eligible businesses. The waiver will take the form of a credit in lieu of rates.

The Finance Department is currently working on the application of the waiver across the eligible accounts. Credit in lieu of rates will be applied to eligible accounts and customers will be notified by letter in the next week.