

# CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT

## JULY 2022 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.

### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

#### Summer Stars Reading Challenge

Runs through July and August at all libraries

#### Walking Programme

Join Loughboy Library walkers Monday mornings at 11am Monday 11<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> July.

#### Dogs Trust Workshops For Children

- Thomastown & Graiguenamanagh Libraries Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> July;
- Castlecomer and Loughboy Libraries Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> July

#### 9<sup>th</sup> July, 2022

Deadline for submissions to Public Library Strategy Consultation.

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## CORPORATE

### **Election of new Cathaoirleach & Leas Cathaoirleach**

At the Annual Meeting of the Council held on Friday, 17<sup>th</sup> June, 2022 in the Council Chamber, Cllr. Pat Fitzpatrick was elected Cathaoirleach of Kilkenny County Council for 2022/2023.

Cllr. Patrick O'Neill was elected Leas Cathaoirleach.



### **Election of Cathaoirleach & Deputy Cathaoirleach of Municipal Districts**

Following the Annual Meetings of the Municipal Districts the following were elected as Chairperson & Deputy Chairperson:

#### **Piltown Municipal District [8<sup>th</sup> June, 2022]**

Cathaoirleach: ..... Cllr. Fidelis Doherty

Leas Cathaoirleach: ... Cllr. Ger Frisby

#### **Callan-Thomastown Municipal District [8<sup>th</sup> June, 2022]**

Cathaoirleach: ..... Cllr. Matt Doran

Leas Cathaoirleach: ... Cllr. Peter Cleere

#### **Kilkenny City Municipal District [10<sup>th</sup> June, 2022]**

Mayor: ..... Cllr. David Fitzgerald

Deputy Mayor: ..... Cllr. Andrew McGuinness

#### **Castlecomer Municipal District [20<sup>th</sup> June, 2022]**

Cathaoirleach: ..... Cllr. Mary Hilda Cavanagh

Leas Cathaoirleach: ... Cllr. Michael Delaney

## ROADS

### **MAJOR PROJECTS**

*(Included in National Development Plan (NDP) - Funded by TII)*

#### **N24 Waterford to Cahir Scheme**

The public consultation No 2 on Alternatives & Options is complete and the design team is working through the submissions and commencing the preparatory work on site investigations/studies which will feed into the selection of the preferred corridor.

### **MINOR PROJECTS**

*(Not included in NDP-Funded by TII)*

#### **N24 Tower Road (Safety Scheme)**

Approval to proceed to Phase 5 (*Enabling and Procurement*) has been received from TII. The tender documentation is undergoing final cross checking and review. Once complete the formal request to go to tender will be submitted to TII. It is expected that the tender will be formally issued on etenders in early August with an expectation of contractor appointed before the end of 2022. The project has a 12/15 month construction period. An allocation of €3m was received for 2022. The overall outturn cost for the project is expected to be in excess of €10m.

#### **N77 Ballyragget to Ballynaslee**

An allocation of €500K was received for 2022 which will fund progression to preparation of contract documents and potentially land acquisition. Approval has been sought from TII to move to Phase 5 (*Enabling and Procurement*) and is expected imminently. The overall outturn cost for the project is expected to be circa €10m.

#### **N24 Carrick Road:**

An allocation of €150K was received for 2022 which will fund progression to statutory approvals stage (177AE Planning Approval and Compulsory Purchase Order Approval). The formal request from KCC to move to Phase 4 (*Statutory Processes*) and to publish the scheme is expected to be submitted shortly to TII. Subject to that approval it is expected that submission of the project for approval to An Bord Pleanála will occur in early September 2022. The overall outturn cost for the project is expected to be circa €10m.

## OTHER

### Kilkenny Ring Road Extension

Consultants have submitted the first draft (SAR) Strategic Assessment Report for review by Kilkenny County Council. The intention is for a submission to the Department for consideration to proceed with the design and planning in July/August.

## ENVIRONMENT

### CLIMATE ACTION

The Council's Acorn Nursery is situated at the side of County Hall. Native acorns were gathered to celebrate the October staff wellness event which was a collaboration between the Council's Health and Safety Department and the Environment Section.

Last month, Maura Brennan, the founder of the Acorn Project which is established within the River Nore Basin, completed a wellness session with previous participants, feed the acorn box with organic seaweed fertiliser and instructed the participants how to care for the acorn nursery. The nursery will remain in situ for 18 months and oak saplings will then be removed and planted locally.



### RECOMMENDED MINIMUM CRITERIA FOR ENVIRONMENTAL INSPECTIONS (RMCEI)

#### Domestic Wastewater Treatment Systems under the National Inspection Plan (NIP)

Kilkenny County Council carry out routine annual inspections of Domestic Wastewater Treatment Systems under the NIP. 58 Inspections were planned for 2022. 46 Inspections have been completed to date. A failed inspection may mean that the system poses a potential risk to Public Health and the Environment.

Out of the 46 Inspections completed to date:

- 17 passed Inspection; and
- 28 failed Inspection, 9 of which require major works in the form of completely new treatment systems or new infiltration areas.

Typical issues encountered or matters to be addressed:

- Desludging;
- Broken or damaged covers leading to water ingress;
- Rainwater gullies discharging to septic tanks;
- Discharges from septic tanks directly to a watercourse / river;
- Failed percolation areas with effluent backing up in distribution boxes; and
- Septic Tanks which could not be located on site.

Individuals whose systems have failed inspection can contact the staff member from the Environment Section who completed the septic tank inspection or via

[environment@kilkennycoco.ie](mailto:environment@kilkennycoco.ie) in order to confirm their eligibility for a septic tank grant.



*New Cover provided to existing Septic Tank following inspection*

### Environment Complaints

All complaints are logged on the CRM (Customer Relations Management) System. The number of complaints being received & logged by Environment staff for investigation for the first six months of 2022 is 504 compared with 723 for the same period last year (*i.e. down circa 30%*). The nature of these complaints ranges from littering, illegal dumping, water quality and abandoned cars. However, the vast majority continue to be related to littering and illegal dumping.

### WASTE, RECYCLING & COLLECTION

#### Bring Banks Usage

The Council provides and manages 46 Bring Centres across the City and County and a total of 1,109 tonnes of recyclables were collected from our Bring Centres in the first half of 2022. This



represents a 24% decrease on the same period last year and is mainly due to the lifting of all Covid restrictions. LIDL Loughboy (*with 68 tonnes collected YTD*), Newpark Shopping Centre (*with 67 tonnes collected YTD*) and Graiguenamanagh (*49 tonnes collected YTD*) are the busiest of the sites. 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 periods. Kilkenny County Council is also currently in the process of moving the Bring Bank location in the village of Johnstown.

### Dunmore Recycling & Waste Disposal Centre

A Mattress Amnesty Week was held on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> June to Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> July, 2022 at both Dunmore and Granny Civic Amenity Sites. This Anti-Dumping Initiative was funded through our WERLA Southern Regional Office. It yielded 724 mattresses and was welcomed by the general public. Both sites had large number of customers throughout the week. Dunmore recorded one of its busiest weeks ever due to customers also bringing in other items along with their mattresses for the advertised event.



### WEEE Ireland Collections

WEEE Ireland completed 5 Saturday collections in April and May. The 5 collection events resulted in over 55,000 kg of electrical household waste being collected for appropriate recycling.



Date	Location	Weight (kg)
21/05/2022	Castlecomer	6,740
28/05/2022	Piltown	12,134
04/06/2022	Thomastown	13,464
11/06/2022	Johnstown	16,910
18/06/2022	Kilkenny	5,760

Kilkenny County Council would like to acknowledge the community support it received that promoted the collection events locally.

The Environment Section in collaboration with WEEE Ireland and the Councils Communication Team will now promote the recycling centres which accept household electrical waste all year round which operate in the County. This is to ensure that the public are aware of their options when they need to recycle household electrical waste. These activities compliment the actions under the Litter Management Plan 2021-2023.

### LITTER AWARENESS

#### Leave No Trace Campaign



The **Love This Place** campaign aims to change behaviours outdoors by raising awareness of our impacts and what we can do to make a difference. The ethos behind the campaign is by leaving no trace and respecting our environment we can help to minimize our impact on the outdoors. Picking up after your dog, keeping them on a lead near wildlife and livestock, bringing your rubbish home with you and parking your car so it doesn't block access points are all simple ways to enjoy the outdoors in a responsible way. Launched nationally on the 30<sup>th</sup> of May, Kilkenny County Council pledged to be a campaign supporter, by promoting the campaigns key messages. This activity is an action under the Litter Management Plan 2021-2023 and is being completed in collaboration with the Councils Communications Team.

This litter initiative was formerly launched with our corporate sponsors on the 30<sup>th</sup> of June. Registration is now open for both events. The first event will take place on the 9<sup>th</sup> of October in Kilkenny City only to coincide with Kilkenny Day. A County wide event will take place on the

5th of February 2023. Registration for both events is now open via; <https://cleanup.kilkenny.ie/>.



*Let's Team Up to Clean Up, Together for Kilkenny Corporate Sponsor Representatives with Kilkenny County Council's Cathaoirleach, City Mayor and Representatives of the Environment Section.*

### **Dog Fouling Campaign - Bag It Bin It**

Kilkenny County Council will be continuing its dog fouling campaign throughout the summer, with a plan to complete an educational piece in primary schools when they return in September. A social media campaign will run in association with the Councils Communications Team and will complement the Leave No Trace national campaign.



### **Gum Litter Taskforce Summer Campaign**

The Gum Litter Taskforce is a national campaign supported by IBEC and Wrigley's with the backing of the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications Environment.

It promotes the proper disposal of chewing gum. Campaign advertising is currently airing on national radio stations and its roadshow is set to visit Kilkenny City on the 14<sup>th</sup> July. Come along to the Parade between 10am-3pm and join in the fun.

For more info go to:

<https://www.gumlittertaskforce.ie/>

### **ANIMAL WELFARE**

The Animal Welfare Standards Committee had its eighth meeting on 2nd June 2022. JJ Tobin Veterinary Officer continues to carry out monthly inspections at the Dog Shelter to ensure the site is operating efficiently and effectively.

To-date this year, 140 dogs have been dealt with in the Carlow/Kilkenny dog shelter, with 96 of these dogs rehomed by the shelter and by charities. There were 10 dogs remaining at the shelter at the end of May. There were no horses impounded to date this year.

### **BURIAL GROUNDS**

#### **Community Monuments Fund 2022**

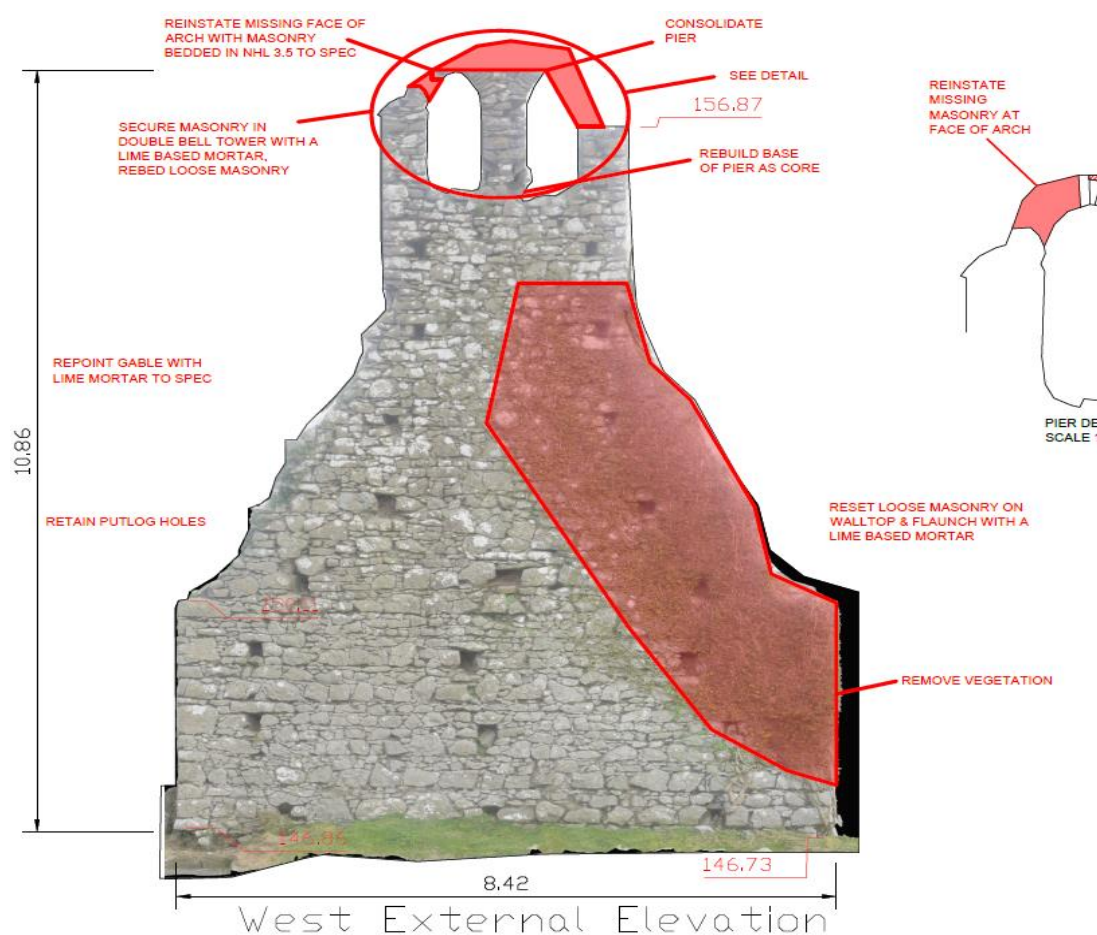
Kilkenny County Council has secured €196,200 from the Dept of Housing, Local Government and Heritage to help conserve and protect three medieval churches and graveyards (*Grangefertagh, Clomantagh, Dunkitt*) under the Community Monuments Fund 2022.

The projects will be managed by the Environment Section and Heritage Office, and will help protect them from the impacts of climate change and keep them safe for current and future generations to access and appreciate.



Site	Grant Aid	Proposed Works
Clomantagh Church and Graveyard	€85,000	To stabilise and conserve the 13 <sup>th</sup> century church ruin including its distinctive double bell-tower, walls, doors and windows of the church.
Dunkitt Church and Graveyard	€85,000	To stabilise and conserve the late 12 <sup>th</sup> /early 13 <sup>th</sup> C church and the adjacent graveyard boundary wall.
Grangefertagh Church and Graveyard	€26,200	To prepare a Conservation Management Plan for the medieval church and graveyard which will provide a vision, policies and actions to help protect and conserve the site for future generations.

The Dunkitt & Clomantagh projects have been put out to tender on the 20<sup>th</sup> of June on e-tenders as the one contract, tender prices are due back 8<sup>th</sup> of July with a view to awarding contract and commencing works the end of July. Grangefertagh tender documents are currently being prepared and issued mid-July, with a view to awarding contract and commencing surveys in September.

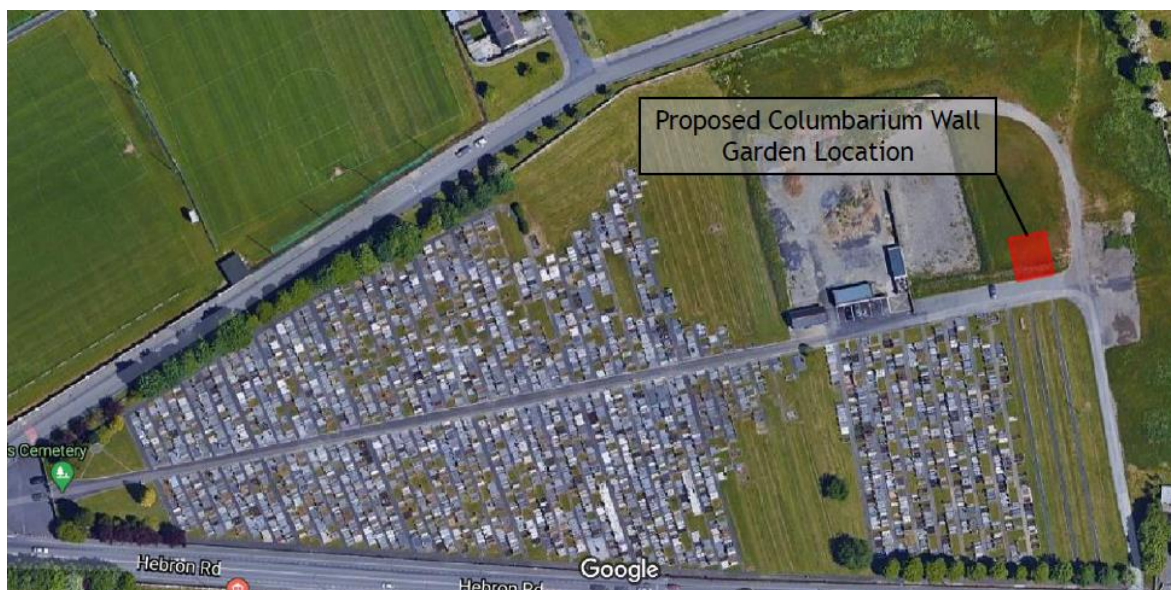


*Proposed Works to West Elevation & Bell Tower Clomantagh*

### **Columbarium Wall Garden at St. Kieran's Cemetery**

Following on from a survey of existing funeral directors in Kilkenny in Q1 of 2021 and subsequent presentations to the Kilkenny Municipal District meetings in 2021, Kilkenny County Council proceeded with planning for the provision of a Columbarium Wall Garden at St. Kieran's Cemetery via the Part 8 Planning process. Significant advancement has been made and the construction contract will be awarded in July 2022 with a stated contract duration of August-December 2022.

The estimated budget for this project in 2022 is €90,000. This estimate covers garden completion including the initial provision of 2 No. Columbarium wall Units (40 Niches), with civil works completed for future units which will be provided in the future as demand arises.



*Proposed Location of Columbarium Wall Garden St. Kieran's Cemetery*

## HISTORIC LANDFILLS

It is anticipated that the Risk Assessment process and the submission of Certificate of Authorisation applications will be completed on the 7 remaining old municipal sites in the County at Ardreagh (Urlingford), Ballykeoghan (Kilmacow), Caherlesk (Dunamaggin), Dungarvan, Grannagh, Mallardstown (Callan) and Sheastown (Bennettsbridge). It is also anticipated that all of the current allocation of €126,974 will be spent.

## WATER SAFETY

Kilkenny County Council's five lifeguarded areas located at The Weir and The Meadows in Kilkenny City, Inistioge, Thomastown and Graiguenamanagh opened for the June Bank Holiday weekend. 15 lifeguards are contracted for the summer period, with lifeguards on duty at the five sites from 2.00 p.m. to 7.30 p.m. daily. The Kilkenny Area Office completed works at the River Nore access at The Weir, on the Bleach Road and has been welcomed by many users and Kilkenny Water Safety, as the works improved accessibility and comfort for all users.

One of our current lifeguards Lucy Cleere, participated in a national promotion for Water Safety Week, which ran the 13-19 June, this promotion appeared in national news print and on social media.



Kilkenny County Council WSDO is assisting Kilkenny Water Safety with the Nore Swim on the 6<sup>th</sup> August and Water Safety Swim Week (18<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> July), where kids swimming lessons and water safety lessons for teens will be taking place, at Thomastown Weir Pool and Graiguenamanagh.



## PARKS / SPECIAL PROJECTS

### Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) – 2022 Works

In 2022 funding was provided by the Dept. of Rural and Community Development for 11 separate projects across the County under the four ORIS funding categories below:

- *Measure 1:*..... Grant available €20,000
- *Measure 2:*..... Grant available €200,000
- *Measure 3:*..... Grant available €500,000
- *Project Development:*..... Grant available €50,000

Under the funding agreement a minimum of 10% match funding must be provided by the Local Authority.

The expenditure grant deadline for the Measure 1 and Project Development projects is the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022, whilst the deadline for the Measure 2 & 3 projects is the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023.

As we now enter the second half of 2022, a progress summary for each project is provided hereunder:

### MEASURE 1 PROJECTS

PROJECT NAME	DESCRIPTION	PROGRESS TO-DATE
<i>Community Loop Walk Network</i>	The establishment of a countywide network of community walks	The signage design is nearing completion and it is expected that installation works will commence over the next few months.
<i>Kells – King's River Walk Enhancement</i>	Rehabilitation of a 200m section of walking trail along the King's River and repairs to the pedestrian bridge over the river which connects the walk to the Kells Augustine Priory	A structural assessment of King's River bridge was undertaken earlier in the year. The subsequent Bridge Rehabilitation Tender was awarded and works were completed in June. <i>(Significant additional works were required to render the bridge fit for purpose and to extend the life span of same).</i>
<i>Silaire Wood – Walking Trail Extension</i>	Extend the existing walking trail by 500m, giving a total trail length of 1.5km.	The route layout is finalised and a contractor is expected to be appointed shortly with works commencing in September.
<i>The Bishops Meadows – River Nore Swimming Area</i>	Enhancements to the traditional open water swimming area located on the Nore Valley Park in Kilkenny City.	Tendering process for seating completed and seating ordered. Suitable enhancement design options under review with works to progress over Q3 2022.
<i>Woodstock Estate – Promotion &amp; Marketing</i>	Further development and continuation of the promotion and marketing campaign for Woodstock Estate	The coverage of the opening of the new Woodstock Waterfall Loop gave us a great boost in June, and posts highlighting the food & beverage offering performing very well along with the sharing our visitors images and videos.
<i>Outdoor Kilkenny – Promotion &amp; Marketing</i>	Continuation/development of the promotion and marketing campaign for 'Outdoor Kilkenny' a new brand and website that promotes all outdoor attractions that Kilkenny City and County has to offer.	The Tourism Office continues to work with our service provider and other stakeholders to strengthen the Outdoor Kilkenny brand.
<i>Tory Hill Looped Walk Enhancement Work</i>	Sections of the trail have deteriorated and are in need of significant rehabilitation.	A Licence and M.O.U. agreement is in place with Coillte to facilitate works.



## MEASURE 2 PROJECTS

PROJECT NAME	DESCRIPTION	PROGRESS TO-DATE
<i>Woodstock Estate - Accessible Trails , Age Friendly and Disabled Parking and Wheelchair Swing</i>	Upgrade of woodland and garden trails in Woodstock Estate to improve accessibility for all.	Work has commenced on improving access for all to the gardens. A new pathway has been constructed from the carpark to the playground and significant surface restoration works are nearing completion on existing pathways.
<i>Rehabilitation of the Ardra Looped Walk &amp; Arboretum Walk - Castlecomer Discovery Park</i>	Trail rehabilitation to two established woodland walking trails located in the Castlecomer Discovery Park.	A Memorandum of Understanding and Licensing Agreement was put in place between Coillte and Kilkenny Co. Council, so as to facilitate the council undertaking works on Coillte lands that form part of the Castlecomer Discovery Park.

## MEASURE 3 PROJECT

PROJECT NAME	DESCRIPTION	PROGRESS TO-DATE
<i>Kilkenny Countryside Park - Cycle Swim Play Stay, from the City to the Park.</i>	Kilkenny Countryside Park -. The focus of this application is linked to recreational amenities along the North Kilkenny Cycle Loop.	Advance works to rehabilitate the Mass Path from Dunmore Carpark and the widening of the access road to the proposed Bleach Road carpark were completed earlier this year. It is anticipated that the works tender will be advertised in Q3 with works commencing on site later this year.

## PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

Project Name	DESCRIPTION	PROGRESS TO-DATE
<i>Castlecomer Discovery Park Masterplan plus Planning &amp; Design for Free Activity Attractions</i>	Engage consultancy services to: (i) Develop of a Masterplan for the Castlecomer Discovery Complex, and (ii) Advance planning and design process of agreed activity elements identified in the Masterplan.	Preparation of tender documents to engage specialist consultants to commence over the summer months.



*Recently completed rehabilitation to the Kings River Bridge, Kells*

### Website Blogs & Press Releases:

- Awesome Things to do in Kilkenny this Summer
- A Guide to Holidaying in Kilkenny with Teenagers
- Amazing Outdoor Walks to Explore in Kilkenny
- Self Catering Stays in Kilkenny
- Family friendly places to stay in Kilkenny
- Self Catering, Glamping and Camping Accommodation in Kilkenny
- Top 5 Outdoor Cocktail Bars in Kilkenny
- Cool Places for Brunch in Kilkenny
- Kilkenny's Top Restaurants, Gastro Pubs and Cafés

### Social Media May & June



#### Facebook

**Fans:** 42,031

**Posts:** 136

**Organic Reach:** 519,772

**Impressions:** 539,567

**Engagement:** 9,629



#### Instagram

**Followers:** 15,074

**Posts:** 125

**Engagements:** 13,008

**Reach:** 283,137



#### Twitter

**Followers:** 8,000

**Tweets:** 131

**Engagements:** 2290

**Impressions:** 71,214

### *Outdoor Kilkenny Social Media interaction May & June 2022*



*Trail restoration / enhancement – Noble Fir Avenue and Monkey Puzzle Avenue, Woodstock*

### **South East Greenway**

**Construction:** Lots 1 – 3 are almost complete with approx. 8km of Greenway surfaced with seating and fencing installed from Rosbercon to Ballyverneen, Glenmore.

The construction compound located at Ferrybank has been reinstated & restored with all stone & construction materials removed. A number of bridges were sand blasted and painted and the replacement of tie rods was completed to one of the jack arch bridges.

**Design & Tender:** Final review of the detailed design and tender documents is nearing completion for Lot 5a (*Ferrybank to Luffany*), in advance of advertising for tender. Works are also progressing on the preparation of detailed design and tender documents for Lot 5b (*Luffany to Aylwardstown*), Lot 6 (*Glenmore to Aylwardstown*) and Lot 4 (*New Ross to Mount Elliott*).

Landowner agreements on the accommodation works for Lots 4 – 7 continues to move forward. Works at Lots 1-3 are nearing substantial completion.

### Links to Slieverue and Glenmore from South East Greenway

On foot of the initial landowner and public engagement evenings on the emerging routes to connect both villages to the Greenway, the preferred route for each village was confirmed. A presentation of the route selection process and preferred route was given at the Piltown Municipal District June meeting. The Appropriate Assessment Screening for each preferred route will commence shortly.

### Parks & Playgrounds

Tender documents are being prepared for a number of playground and amenity projects around the County. The Parks Department are assisting the local community of Freshford with the preparation of tender documents for the development of an outdoor activity hub, which includes a children's playground adjacent to the GAA pitch in the village. Funding has been approved under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme and Community & Cultural Facilities Capital Scheme. The scheme will provide an access road, car parking and outdoor activity equipment including play equipment aimed at children. The local community also intend to develop a sensory garden at the site also.

### Woodstock Gardens

Early summer in the gardens has been busy. The Rose garden, terraces and Walled gardens have been the focus of much of the attention with topiary planting needing pruning to maintain the formal shapes typical of the Winter Garden. Also underway is the replanting of the walled garden herbaceous border and the removal of the box hedging which is unfortunately infested with box blight like so many box plants (*Buxus sempervirens*) in formal gardens all around Europe. New planting of herbaceous plants typical of the Victorian era will be planted to refresh the planting scheme.



*Aerial view of the Walled Garden, the herbaceous border follows the central axial path through the gardens connecting the Arboretum to the Flower Terrace*

### The Tea Rooms

The tea room was open seven days a week throughout the month of June offering a variety of gorgeous cakes and good coffee. Visitors can enjoy a cuppa in the beautiful surroundings and enjoy the outdoor terrace when the sun shines.

The Woodstock coffee truck, located near the carpark and tented picnic area, was also serving refreshments throughout the weekends in June and from mid-July our offering will increase to include fresh ice cream cones, 99's etc. with the completion of our new eagerly awaited ice cream parlour.





A group of Rural Recreation Officers visited Woodstock Loop Walks in late June on a field trip organised by the Leader Partnerships in conjunction with the Dept of Rural and Community Development. The meeting was a great success with lunch provided for the group from all over Ireland in the Tea Rooms after a strenuous walk uphill from Inistioge village.



*Rural Recreation Officers from all over Ireland enjoy a tour of Woodstock Gardens*

### **Local Biodiversity Action Fund**

In conjunction with the Heritage Office, the Parks Section applied for funding under the Local Biodiversity Action Fund for invasive species control in both Silaire Wood and Woodstock Gardens. This builds on the actions set out in the management plans for invasive species prepared last year with assistance from the same fund. This year, €20,190 was awarded to Woodstock Gardens for the purchase of a flail to control invasive Laurel growth and to hire in contractors to assist in cutting and mulching the dominant shrub and €6,810 was awarded for Silaire Woods for the pulling of Himalayan Balsam.

The timing to pull the Himalayan Balsam is key as same needs to commence immediately prior to the plant flowering and going to seed. Himalayan Balsam is a significant issue on the River Barrow having totally colonised many sections of river bank.

Working Groups are beginning to gather in towns in Carlow and Kilkenny to 'Balsam bash' in an effort to control the plant. A co-ordinated approach is needed due to the prolific nature of the plant to set seed, thus, one section cannot be treated in isolation.

### **Balsam Bashing at Silaire Wood**

On foot of the above funding and with the help of a great team of volunteers from the Graiguenamanagh Canoe Club a Himalayan Balsam bash was held in Silaire Wood recently.

Teams of approximately 20 people assisted each night on the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> of June to pull this invasive weed before it went to seed to prevent its spread both within the wood and further downstream.

# PLANNING

## DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

Planning Summary	Total June	
	2021	2022
Planning Applications Received	89	70
Planning Applications Granted	86	41
Planning Applications Refused	11	14
Complaints Received	74	44
Warning Letters Issued	67	52
Enforcements Notices Issued	13	20
Cases Closed	52	13

The Planning Department is open for business subject to current Covid-19 recommendations for social distancing and other safety measures for the protection of customers and staff.

## FORWARD PLANNING

### Masterplans

#### Abbey Quarter

A brief for the Abbey Quarter Masterplan Review was prepared, and published on etenders in May. The closing date for receipt of tenders was 24<sup>th</sup> June. A successful tender has been recommended their appointment is being progressed.

#### St. Canices

The preparation of the Masterplan for the HSE's St. Canice's Campus is ongoing. Loci Consultants are assisting the Project Steering Committee in the drafting of the Masterplan. Draft concepts are currently under consideration. Following consultation with the HSE on these concepts, a plan will be drafted. Once a Draft Plan is available, it will be presented to the Council and HSE before it is placed on public display. Public display of a Draft Masterplan is targeted for commencement in September 2022.

#### Loughmacask

Work is continuing on the preparation of a Masterplan for Loughmacask. An initial draft Masterplan was prepared and was internally reviewed. The Environmental Authorities were consulted in relation to environmental assessments associated with the Draft Masterplan. The concepts included in the Draft Masterplan were presented to the Kilkenny Municipal District meeting in May. The final drafts of the

Environmental Assessments have now been received and are being considered. Once the iterative process of modifying the draft Masterplan is finalised, the draft plan and associated documents will be placed on public display. A sufficient length of time will be allowed for public consultation (*minimum 8 weeks*) to take account of the summer holiday period.

### Urlingford

Work has commenced on the preparation of a Masterplan for Urlingford Town Centre. The appointed Consultants are currently working on this Masterplan and several meetings have been held between the Consultants, the Planning Department and the Community Section of the Council. A format for the Masterplan has been developed and the document is being worked on presently. A pre-draft draft public consultation event will take place during the last week of July.

### Other Towns & Villages

A brief for Masterplans for the settlements of Ballyraget, Paulstown and Kilmacow has been prepared and placed on etenders at the start of July. The closing date for receipt of tenders is 12 noon on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> July.

### Taking in Charge

Works are continuing on various other estates:

- College Park, Callan Road
- Rioch Court
- The Greens, Thomastown
- Kiln Lane, Callan
- Castlehyde, New Ross
- Whitehall, Paulstown
- Ogenty, Gowran
- Abbeygate, Ferrybank

Arbourmount, Ferrybank and Kiln Lane, Clashacollare, Callan, Co. Kilkenny have been completed and are before the Council for taking in charge at the July meeting.

### Active Land Management

- There are 13 sites on the Derelict Sites (DS) Register at present. Notices have also been issued giving notice of the intent to enter further sites on the DS Register. Owners have an opportunity to make representations on foot of those notices.
- There are 29 sites on the Vacant Sites Register, and the number of cancelled entries due to site activation or improvement stands at 18 sites.

- The 2021 levy is now due and payment demands have issued. Measures are now being taken to pursue the non-payment of levies.
- For 2022, the emphasis will be on the activation of sites currently on the Register, the pursuit of levies due, and ongoing monitoring.
- Guidelines on the Residential Zoned Land Tax were published at the end of June; we now have to begin the process of mapping lands in scope for this tax.

### **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 delivered to the public and colleagues, while the conservation grants and funding applications are also delivered.

For the month of June, the Conservation Office has compiled reports on the following

- Planning Referrals - 2
- Further Information requests - 1
- Clarification of Further Information requests - 0
- Section 57 Declarations - 3
- Section 5 Declarations - 0

### **Conservation Grants**

All approved Built Heritage Investment Scheme and Historic Structures Fund grant projects have commenced.

### **Building Control**

Valid commencement notices submitted - 197 for the first 6 months of 2022

June 2022 number of valid notices received - 34 (*an increase on the previous month's number of 24 applications*)

## **COMMUNITY**

### **National Play Day**

National Play Day 2022 takes place from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> July with the aim of promoting play and recreation opportunities for children and young people all over Ireland. This year's theme is 'All Play Together'. Kilkenny County Council is

proud to support these play initiatives which are part-funded by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.

Kilkenny County Council have worked in collaboration with Kilkenny Civil Defence, Kilkenny Children and Young Peoples Services Committee (CYPSC) and HSE Disability Services Kilkenny to provide sensory gift packs for children and young people with disabilities in County Kilkenny. These packs will ensure that the children will have stimulating and comforting toys appropriate to their age and abilities, and will also allow these children to play with their siblings. Kilkenny Civil Defence Volunteers will distribute the free play packs throughout County Kilkenny during the week Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> July to 9<sup>th</sup> July which is always a very enjoyable event for both the receivers and the volunteers.

Kilkenny County Council Community Department have worked in collaboration with Kilkenny Civil Defence & Kilkenny Children and Young Peoples Services Committee (CYPSC) to provide outdoor play equipment for Ukrainian children & teenagers in St. John of God's Ukrainian Housing Centre.

Kilkenny Civil Defence volunteers will deliver the following toys and games during the week Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> July to 9<sup>th</sup> July: outdoor tennis nets and stands/rackets and balls, outdoor soccer goals & soccer balls, outdoor friends playhouse, outdoor blackboards/whiteboards & chalks, outdoor jenga games, swing ball games. The Ukrainian community will assist in assembling the equipment. This will encourage all children and teenagers to play together and form friendships with their new friends who they have met since coming to Ireland.

### **Pride of Place**

Dates for the Judging of the National Pride of Place Awards have been scheduled for August. The groups representation Kilkenny in the 2022 national Awards include Mullinavat, The Callan Barrow Valley Community Development Tourism HUB (Camping Area) and the Thomastown Recreational Amenity.

The National Pride of Place awards promotes and celebrates the best in community development and recognises the selfless efforts of people in making their local area a better place to live, work and socialise.



## Outdoor Community Exhibition Basketball Game/Festival 9<sup>th</sup> July 2022 7pm

Ireland's largest outdoor Exhibition Basketball game with a number of Irish International and professional players will participate in this event in Thomastown on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> of July. The game will celebrate the first anniversary of the hugely popular outdoor amenity funded under the Town & Village Renewal Scheme and developed by Kilkenny County Council in partnership with the local community.

## Town & Village Renewal (Building Acquisition Scheme)

An application has been submitted for Glenmore under the 2022 Town & Village Renewal Building Acquisition Scheme.

## LEO/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### National Enterprise Awards 2022

Graiguenamanagh's Cushendale Woollen Mills proudly represented Kilkenny at the finals of the National Enterprise Awards on June 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Mansion House.



### Summary of Awards to Businesses Via Local Enterprise Office 2022

- A total of €403,748 in direct financial assistance has been approved for 14 manufacture /export service businesses located throughout the County. This assistance is linked to the projected creation of 41 jobs over the next three years.
- €262,385 in Business Expansion Grant assistance awarded to 9 existing businesses with forecasted new job creation of 37 jobs. Business Expansion grants assist businesses trading greater than 18 months to make investment in growing their businesses and employment numbers.
- €47,778 in Agile Innovation Funding to support a business to carry out research and development on a new product for their business.

- €35,610 in Priming Grant (Start-up assistance) to 1 new business.
- €27,975 awarded in feasibility study grants to 3 businesses.
- €30,000 in Grad Start funding to 1 business.
- 6 Technical Assistance for Micro Exporter grant awarded totalling €12,320. This scheme supports businesses to explore their export market opportunities.
- 13 Businesses have commenced LEAN one to one consultancy programmes to investigate possible resource efficiencies and process improvements their businesses.
- 5 Business have commenced the LEO Building Better Business LEAN programme.

**Building Better Business** program is about building a stable, secure, and sustainable business that is agile enough to face economic challenges. This programme is centred on the belief that waste exists in all processes and while it is a practical, hands on programme but not focusing on the obvious ways of looking at problems and opportunities. It is about finding ways to do things faster, better, and together as a team.

- 18 business have been approved a Trading Online Voucher totalling €35,232 to support the enhancement of their online trading capacity.
- 10 Green for Micro supports awarded totalling €22,426. This scheme supports businesses to becoming greener and environmentally friendly.
- 5 business applicants have been supported to make loan applications to the Micro Finance Ireland loan fund.
- 142 people participated on focused small business training, including 55 people participating on the Starting Your Business programme
- 296 businesses have availed of specialised business specific mentoring on a variety of topics including finance, marketing, social media marketing and HR.

### Digital Start – Support for Small Business

Applications are open for the Local Enterprise Office pilot scheme **Digital Start**. This initiative is designed to help businesses prepare and implement a plan for the adoption of digital tools and techniques across the business.

Digital Start will provide strategic intervention for businesses to work with third party consultants to:

- assist them identify where they are on their digital business journey,
- develop a digital adaptation plan based on their identified need,
- implement their digital adaptation plan

This is a **free programme, offering up to 4 days business specific advice and technical support** and is available to businesses with up to 50 employees operating in the manufacturing or internationally traded service sectors.



### Green for Micro

The Green for Micro programme is designed to help prepare small businesses for the low carbon, more resource efficient economy of the future. This is a **FREE** programme, offering two days business specific advice and technical support and is available to businesses with up to **ten employees**. With climate change, changing regulations, rising resource costs and changing customer expectations, adopting an eco-friendlier approach is the best way forward for business and this green for micro programme can assist businesses to get started on their green journey.



## TOURISM

### Kilkenny Tourism and visitkilkenny.ie

June marketing activity was themed around the Great Outdoors: Parks, Gardens & Outdoor Activity. The target market being Social Energisers, Culturally Curious and Great Escapers. Blogs included Family Friendly places to stay this Summer in Kilkenny, Awesome Things to do in Kilkenny this Summer and Horizon Irish Open. The Visit Kilkenny Events page heavily promoted the programme of activity for the Cat Laughs Comedy Festival - June 2<sup>nd</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> & the Horizon Irish Open June 30<sup>th</sup> - July 3<sup>rd</sup> 2022.

### Horizon Irish Open 2022 in Kilkenny



Kilkenny County Council in partnership with the European Tour, Mount Juliet and Failte Ireland worked together to maximise the opportunity for Kilkennys exposure as a tourism destination at the 2022 Horizon Irish Open. Kilkenny County Council dressed the streets of the City as well as surrounding towns and villages close to the event.

The Kilkenny stand at Mount Juliet displayed many of Kilkennys' wonderful "Made" and "Taste" products as well as reinforcing to all guests during the week to come back and visit Kilkenny again in the future.





**Kilkenny's Welcome Team** returned for 2022: trained volunteers to meet and greet visitors, providing them with a warm welcome along with visitor information. The team will be out and about around the City core again for this summer season at the weekends.



### South East Food Stories

During June, South East Food Stories was launched at a regional event hosted by Highbank Orchards in Kilkenny. This initiative will promote the wide variety of food producers, providers and makers delivering quality foods directly from source to plates across the South East.

This pilot agri-food initiative incorporates produce from across Carlow, Kilkenny, Tipperary, Waterford and Wexford and highlights the businesses working hard to keep food sustainability at the heart of what they do. This is a collaborative project of the five Tourism

Officers across the region supported by the Department of Agriculture and South East.

The South East is known for an abundance of



naturally sourced food and drink, and for its unique and inventive makers and producers. Kilkenny's cluster of experiences focuses on Highbank Orchard, Mount Juliet, Jerpoint Glass and Jerpoint Park Experiences.





## HOUSING

### Projects Delivered to-date in 2022

Scheme	Project Name	Substantial Completion Date	Units
SHIP Construction Turnkey	8-17 Limegrove, Ferrybank	14/01/2022	10
SHIP Construction Turnkey	Pennefeather Court, Hebron Road, Kilkenny City	11/02/2022	8
SHIP Construction Turnkey	Pennefeather Green, Hebron Road, Kilkenny City	02/03/2022	58
SHIP Construction Single Stage	Ayrfield, Kilkenny City	14/03/2022	2
SHIP Construction Single Stage	Shanganny, Jenkinstown	17/05/2022	2
CAS CONSTRUCTION	Milton Lodge, Johnswell Road, KK (Phase 2)	28/06/2022	1
			<b>81</b>

### Projects Currently On Site

Scheme	Project Name	Projected Substantial Completion	Total Units
CAS Construction	Kingsriver, Ennisnag	04/07/2022	2
CAS Construction	Grennan Villa, Thomastown	14/07/2022	5
CAS Construction	Brother Thomas Place, Church Lane, Kilkenny	27/07/2022	12
AHB CALF Construction	Orchard Close, New Orchard, Kilkenny	31/07/2022	21
CALF Part V	Orchard Close, New Orchard, Kilkenny	31/07/2022	2
CAS Construction Turnkey	Tinnypark, Callan Road, Kilkenny	31/08/2022	6
AHB CALF Turnkey	Nuncio Road, Kilkenny Phase 3	27/10/2022	17
CALF Part V	Nuncio Road, Kilkenny Phase 3	27/10/2022	5
SHIP Construction Turnkey	New Road, Mooncoin	17/11/2022	4
SHIP Construction Turnkey	Chapel Street, Mooncoin	17/11/2022	2
SHIP Construction Single Stage	Inchacarron, Mullinavat	31/01/2023	2
SHIP Construction Single Stage	Graiguenamanagh - Old Fire Station	31/01/2023	2
SHIP Construction Turnkey	Main Street, Piltown, Co. Kilkenny	24/03/2023	4
SHIP Construction	Legan Grange & Legan Court, Ladywell, Thomastown, Co Kilkenny	30/03/2023	25
CAS Construction	19/21 Blackmill Street, Kilkenny	31/03/2023	12
SHIP Construction	10 Golf Links Road, Kilkenny	31/03/2023	6
SHIP Construction Single Stage	Haggardsgreen, Callan	31/03/2023	1
			<b>128</b>

## Project Pipeline

Scheme	Project Name	Project Status	Projected Substantial Completion	Total Units Expected
CAS Construction	8/9 Kilkenny Street, Castlecomer	Due to start on site	Q2 2023	3
LA Part V	Marnellsmeadows, Callan Road, Kilkenny	Funding recently Approved	Q2 2023	2
SHIP Construction Turnkey	Marnellsmeadows, Callan Road, Kilkenny	Funding recently Approved	Q2 2023	20
LA Part V	Abbeygate, Ferrybank, via Waterford, Co. Kilkenny	Funding recently Approved	Q3 2023	3
SHIP Construction Turnkey	Abbeygate, Ferrybank	Funding recently Approved Turnkey	Q3 2023	21
CAS Construction Turnkey	70-71 Patrick Street, Kilkenny	Due to start on site	Q4 2023	4
SHIP Construction	Crokers Hill, Kennyswell Road, Kilkenny	Stage 3 Approved	2024	88
				<b>141</b>



6 units at Golf Links Road – infill scheme, substructure complete





*3 bed accessible house at Haggardsgreen, Callan – substructure complete*



*Erection of timber frame at Inchacarron Mullinavat. Low Carbon Construction*





Erection of timber frame at Inchacarron Mullinavat. Low Carbon Construction.

<b>HOMELESS SERVICES SUMMARY JUNE 2022</b>	
Homeless Presentations	40
Homeless Assessment Outcomes	
<b>Prevention &amp; Interventions</b>	26
<b>Emergency Service</b>	6
<b>Not eligible / Did not avail of service</b>	8
HAP Place Finder Service	
<b>No of Homeless HAP tenancies @ 1<sup>st</sup> day of month</b>	105
<b>No of Homeless HAP tenancies created during month</b>	0
<b>No of Homeless HAP tenancies in place @ last day of month</b>	105
<b>Number of Homeless HAP tenancy breakdowns</b>	0
<b>Other Social Housing Tenancies supported /created during month</b>	5
Households in Temporary Emergency Supported Accommodation	31
Households in Temporary Emergency B&B accommodation	6
Of Households in Temporary Emergency B&B accommodation that are families	4
Households (singles / couples) in Transition Emergency Accommodation (Own Front Door)	20
Households (Families) in Transition Emergency Accommodation (OFD)	7

<b>SOCIAL HOUSING SUPPORT APPLICATION SUMMARY JUNE 2022</b>	
Number awaiting Social Housing Support at June 30 <sup>th</sup> (Gross Need)	1656
Number awaiting Social Housing Support at June 30 <sup>th</sup> (Net Need)	747
No. of Social Housing Applications received in June	74
No. of applications incomplete / awaiting further information / clarification	53
No. of applications validated and ready for assessment during the month	25
No. of applications assessed during June	18
No. of applications awaiting assessment as @ June 30 <sup>th</sup>	84

<b>HOUSING ASSISTANCE PAYMENT SUMMARY UP TO JUNE 30<sup>th</sup> 2022</b>	
Number of active HAP tenancies to June 30 <sup>th</sup> 2022	761
New HAP tenancies set up	50
HAP tenants allocated Social Housing	25
Closed HAP Tenancies	64
HAP Rent Reviews	115
Other tenancy amendments	207
HAP Calls Received 2022 year to date	1827
HAP Calls Received June	315

JUNE 2022	
LA/RAS/Leasing allocations up to end of June (offers made):	56
Number of LA tenancies surrendered in June:	7
Tenant Liaison Officer cases in June:	70
Maintenance Calls for June:	449
Maintenance Calls year to date	3,209

Housing Loan Activity 1 <sup>st</sup> January 2022 to 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2022					
Loan Type	Received	Approved	Amt approved	No. Paid	Amt Paid
Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan		2	€197,500	3	€548,000
Local Auathority Home Loan	31	1	€90,000	1	€90,000
Caravan Loan	0	0	€0.00	0	€0
Total	31	3	€287,500	4	€638,000

Grants Approved & Committed up to 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2022		
Scheme	No.	Amount
HGD - Housing Adaptation Grant	111	€1,108,258
MAG - Mobility Aid Grant	14	€55,708
HOP - Housing Aid for Older Persons	100	€584,259
Total	225	€1,748,225

Grants Paid out up to 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2022		
Scheme	No.	Amount
HGD - Housing Adaptation Grant	61	€595,670
MAG - Mobility Aid Grant	10	€38,227
HOP - Housing Aid for Older Persons	44	€243,260
Total	115	€877,158



## FIRE SERVICES

### Capital Projects

Construction work has commenced on the new fire station for Urlingford.



### Fire Safety Certificates

46 applications for fire safety certificates were received to date.

54 were received for the same period last year.

### Fire Services Acts 1981 & 2003

Fire Prevention staff made targeted inspections of premises both to provide advice and to enforce legislation.

13 Licence Applications were processed under Section 24 of the Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003.

1 Dangerous Substance licence applications were received and assessed to date

39 Fire safety inspections of premises have taken place so far this year.

### Community Fire Safety

Engagement with agencies / groups such as Age Friendly Counties Programme (Kilkenny), An Garda Síochána, Muintir na Tíre, the Irish Farmers Association (IFA), ICA, Neighbourhood Watch Schemes, Active Retirement Groups, St Vincent

De-Paul, HSE, Local Community Alert Groups, Local Text Alert Groups and Twilight is key to improving and continuing to deliver fire safety awareness in our communities.

Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service carried out a number of fire safety presentations through the PASS Programme by the Twilight Community Group.

Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSVs) are a significant element of our Community Fire Safety strategy. Fire service personnel call to houses by appointment and give fire safety advice to the occupants. A HFSV is usually carried out by two uniformed operational fire service personnel. The primary aim of these HFSVs is to reduce the numbers of fires, deaths and injuries in the home by firstly preventing fires occurring and to secondly ensure that when fires do occur, the occupiers are given early warning, and they know how to react quickly and safely.

Resumption of the Primary Schools Fire safety programme is well underway and a number of schools have been visited recently by Freshford Fire Brigade such as Gathabaun NS, Tullaroan NS, Freshford NS, Ballyragget NS, Clontubrid NS, Conahy NS, Clinstown NS.

### Supporting Ukrainian Firefighters

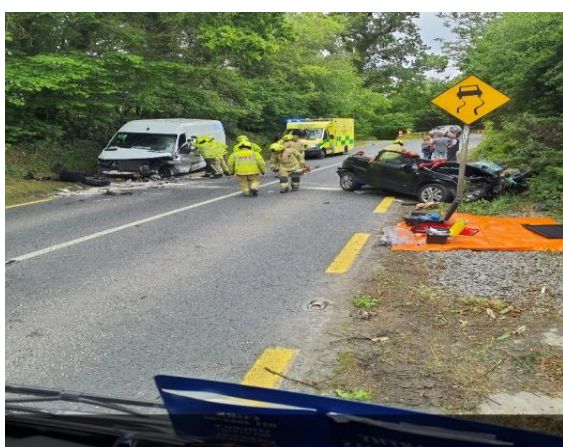


Kilkenny Fire Service are transporting donated fire vehicles and equipment this week 28<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022 to provide vital support to the Ukrainian firefighters who are battling the most horrendous conditions imaginable on a daily basis. Over 110 fire stations and over 1300 fire appliances have been destroyed in the Ukraine, and tragically 37no. firefighters have lost their lives as they battle to do their job in their local community. Kilkenny County Council's Fire and Rescue Service have been in contact with the State Emergency Services in the Ukraine regarding their immediate requirements. Fire Services

across the South East of Ireland have donated firefighting equipment such as generators and lighting, hydraulic rescue gear, pneumatic lifting equipment and sets of firefighting PPE. The 3 jeeps loaded up with this equipment were accompanied by a fire engine from Kerry Fire and Rescue Service. The convoy of vehicles were driven by firefighters from Kilkenny Fire Service who have volunteered their time to assist in this humanitarian crisis.

### Fire Brigade Operations

The Brigades have attended over 388 incidents to date in 2022. These incidents included a number of road traffic collisions, public road hazards, automatic fire alarm activations, chimney fires, ambulance assists.



Castlecomer Fire Brigade at a recent road traffic collision

## ARTS

### Knitted Together 2022

The Knitted Together Project was featured on RTE New2Day on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> June. Filming took place at St. Canice's Co-Ed National school on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> June highlighting the intergenerational aspect of the project and the involvement of the schools in this successful Community Arts Project. Our Maker Meet Up Sessions are continuing and the blanket was completed by the participants meeting in the Book Shop, William Street on Wednesday evenings. Aren't the colours just fabulous!

### Cruinníú na nÓg

The Cruinníú na nÓg Cabinet of Curiosities exhibition was installed in the Arts Office Johns Green House exhibition space on 10<sup>th</sup> June and ran until 27<sup>th</sup> June and showcased the items the children made during the workshops. Cruinníú na nÓg is Ireland National day of creativity for

children under the age of 18 and the Cabinet of Curiosities was one of many events across the County.

### Culture Night 2022

Plans for Culture Night 2022 are being finalised with participating organisations supplying information to the Arts Office for the Culture Night brochure.

### Kilkenny Arts Office's Writers Map had a successful Launch

The Kilkenny Arts Office's Writers Map, a visual guide that highlights all the various opportunities provided by the Arts Office for writers at every stage of their careers, was successfully launched in MacDonagh Junction on 9<sup>th</sup> June. Anne Tannam MC'd a very enjoyable Open Mic Session for Kilkenny's writers and poets.

### Emerging Curator in Residence

Lee Shanahan- *A Human Voice*, the first exhibition organised by Sinead Keogh our Emerging Curator has ended after a very successful 5 weeks, with 453 people visiting the exhibition and a total of 11 artworks being sold. Lee Shanahan is an emerging painter based in Kilkenny, a graduate of Fine Art at Ormonde College where he received the *Blackstack Studio Bursary Award* 2019. The exhibition hosted a number of community engagements also.

These engagements included:

- (i) a special tour and painting response workshop for Kilkenny's older generation, which resulted in a week long exhibition in the Window Gallery of John's Green House of the participants;
- (ii) a tactile tour with local and national NCBI service users and;
- (iii) an online audio tour for audiences who are blind and visually impaired.

In addition to this, the Emerging Curator Development Programme this year is partnering with the local Amber Women's Refuge to provide information on their services and work in the gallery space and has sold selected prints of Shanahan's with 50% of the profits to benefit the refuge. These sales raised over €200 for this cause.

Overall the exhibition was a success in meeting its targets of supporting the local artistic community and making meaningful connections with the local expanded community.



## June 2022



20,999  
Items borrowed



12,855  
visitors



1,246  
Members

### National Virtual Records Treasury

We are delighted to have contributed records to the virtual reality Record Treasury, launched recently.

No one alive today has ever stepped foot in the Record Treasury destroyed a century ago – but now you can re-enter in Virtual Reality. The Record Treasury held seven centuries of Irish history and was destroyed in the Battle of the Four Courts on 30 June 1922. See [virtualtreasury.ie](http://virtualtreasury.ie).



### Cruinniú na nÓg



As part of the national Cruinniú na nÓg festival, we received funding from Creative Ireland to run a series of online Art workshops with Tina Mation, and some in-branch lego workshops in Thomastown and Ferrybank libraries on June 11th.

This was further supplemented by purchase of lego materials for all of our libraries, to encourage creativity amongst young people. The workshops were a huge success, and children are dropping in regularly to use the lego.



### Stocking up

The Delahunty family, Luffany borrowed a whopping 65 books from our mobile library recently, to keep them busy over the summer!



1,414  
books  
borrowed



120  
members  
registered



26  
Schools  
visited



19 Early  
Learning  
Centres visited



# Mayfair Library update



- Blockwork GF Northeast Extension completed to RC beam height
- South West Extension progressing as per images



## Online Services usage:



**2,084**

eAudiobooks borrowed  
▲ 4% on 2021



**4,667**

eNewspapers borrowed  
▼ 3% on 2021



**1,027**

eBooks borrowed  
▼ 23% on 2021



**211**

Online Course sessions  
▲ 400% on 2021



**701**

eMagazines borrowed  
Same as 2021



**546**

Songs accessed  
▼ 16% on 2021



## Digital Engagement

Our staff have prepared, recorded, edited and published **144** posts on our social media platforms in June. Our video views for the month were **3008**.

## FINANCE

The expenditure by service division to the end of June is set out in table 1. Total Expenditure for the period was €43.58m compared with the annual budget of €93.9m.

Table 1	Actual YTD June 2022	Budget Full Year 2022
	€'000's	€'000's
Housing & Building	10,943	22,101
Road Transport & Safety	11,423	26,590
Water Services	3,403	7,255
Development Management	4,112	10,502
Environmental Services	5,343	12,178
Recreation & Amenity	3,420	7,175
Agriculture, Education, Health, Welfare	265	680
Miscellaneous Services	4,675	7,390
<b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>	<b>43,584</b>	<b>93,871</b>

### Finance Update

Inflation is having a significant impact on the cost of delivering all services and on the delivery of the Capital Programme. This issue will be kept under review throughout the year.

Car parking income is 15% below budget level for the year. The budget income figure was based on pre Covid-19 income levels.

The bank overdraft facility was not utilised in the six month period to the end of June.

The total expenditure on the Capital Account to the end of June was €23.7m with housing accounting for €15.2m of the total.

The audit by the Local Government Auditor for FY 2021 is ongoing.

### 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 ..... 150 cases
- Appeal Withdrawn ..... 33 cases
- Increase in Revaluation on Appeal..... 1 case
- No change to Revaluation on Appeal ..... 7 cases
- Appeals outstanding..... 6 cases

The total Annual Income lost to date stands at €841k.

### Targeted Rates Waiver Quarter 1, 2022

On 12<sup>th</sup> October, 2021 a targeted Commercial Rates Waiver to support certain sectors was agreed by Government for the final Quarter of 2021. An extension of this waiver for a further period of three months for the first Quarter of 2022 was agreed by Government in December, 2021.

The extended waiver took the form of a credit in lieu of rates. The terms and conditions relating to eligibility and administration of the extended waiver remained the same as those outlined in Circular Fin 20/2021 “*Targeted Commercial Rates Waiver Final Quarter 2021*”.

The broad categories of businesses the credit in lieu of rates applied to were as follows:

- Hospitality, including restaurants and cafes;
- Leisure;
- Miscellaneous entertainment;
- Certain tourism related categories; and
- Airports.

The value of the waiver is the equivalent value of 25% of the annual rate bill for 2022 for eligible categories of business. The waiver (*January to March*) was applied to eligible rate accounts by the Rates Section as a credit in lieu of rates in the value of €748,378 in March and eligible businesses were notified by letter.

### **Budget 2023**

Given the current inflationary pressures it will be necessary to commence the preparation of the 2023 Budget earlier than previous years. It is intended to have a workshop with the Elected Members in mid-July to review the challenges being faced by the Council.

The consultation period on setting the local adjustment factor for the Local Property Tax for 2023 will commence on July 13<sup>th</sup> and will close on the 12<sup>th</sup> August. The matter will be considered by the Elected Members at a meeting to be held before the end of September 2022.

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