

CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT

MAY 2022 ISSUE



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

Speed Limits

Submission can be made up until the 10th June, 2022 for the proposed draft Speed Limit Review.

Household Electrical Collection Days

WEEE Ireland is coming to Kilkenny to five locations across the County this May and June. These will be the only collections for 2022.

REPORT AT A GLANCE

CORPORATE: 3

ROADS:..... 7

PARKS/SPECIAL PROJECTS:..... 7

PLANNING:..... 12

ENVIRONMENT: 13

COMMUNITY: 18

HERITAGE: 18

LEO/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT 21

HOUSING: 24

FIRE SERVICES: 28

ARTS:..... 29

LIBRARY SERVICES: 31

FINANCE..... 33

CORPORATE

CIVIC RECEPTION

A Civic Reception was held for Patrick Rafter on Monday, 25th April, 2022.



ABBEY QUARTER

Following agreement in February to carry out a review of the Abbey Quarter Masterplan, the tender process to procure the Consultants to carry out the review is underway.

The Council will be kept informed and there will be public consultation engagement when a draft is agreed.

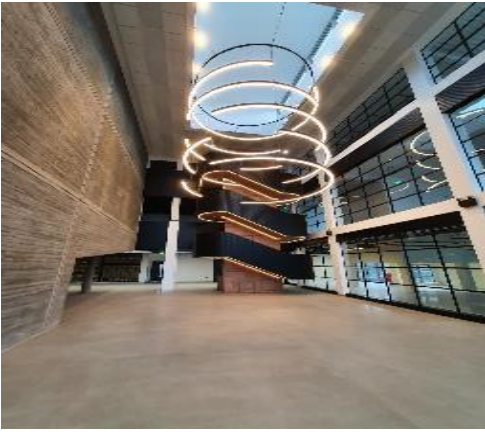
Brewhouse including Horse Barrack Lane and Brewhouse Courtyard

Work on the redevelopment of the Brewhouse building (*by Kilkenny Abbey Quarter Development Ltd*) is now completed. Glanbia Ireland have commenced the fit out of their office space and they expect to have staff working in the building in August 2022.

O'Neill Foley Accountants have completed their fit out work and their staff moved into the new offices on 16th May. This represents a very significant milestone for the Abbey Quarter development.

The Brewhouse project included the development of the Public Realm area of Horse Barrack Lane and the Brewhouse Courtyard, with these projects being part funded by the Urban Regeneration & Development Fund and the European Regional Development Fund. These areas were formally opened by Minister Darragh O'Brien on 16th May.





Building 7

Kilkenny Abbey Quarter Development Partnership has applied for planning permission for the development of the first of the new buildings on the abbey Quarter site. This building (Building 7 in the Abbey Quarter Masterplan) is located beside the Brewhouse Building and forms the boundary to the remaining two sides of the Brewhouse Courtyard. The Building will include retail and commercial spaces at ground floor level, with office space in the upper floors.



Mayfair Library

Work is continuing on the redevelopment of the Mayfair Building as the new City Library. Some delays have been encountered to date on site due to difficulties with procurement of materials, as is being experienced throughout the construction sector at present. It is expected that the project will be completed in Spring 2023.



The redevelopment of the Mayfair Building includes the completion of the landscaping works to Horse Barrack Lane and the development of a pedestrian plaza area between the building and Parliament Street.



Tionscadal Éireann
Project Ireland
2040



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund



Ireland's European Structural and
Investment Funds Programmes
2014-2020
Co-funded by the Irish Government
and the European Union

Tea Houses

Conservation work on the Tea Houses on Bateman Quay has been completed. Tenders are now being sought from interested parties to lease and operate the buildings. commenced in August, with the works expected to take approx. 6 months to complete. The building will be made available for reuse by private operators and it is expected that expressions of interest from interested parties will be sought before the end of the year.



This project is funded by the Urban Regeneration & Development Fund.

Urban Park & Street

Work on the preparation of the detailed design and tender documents for the Urban street and park project is substantially completed. This project will go to tender following formal confirmation of funding for the project through the Urban Regeneration & Development Fund.

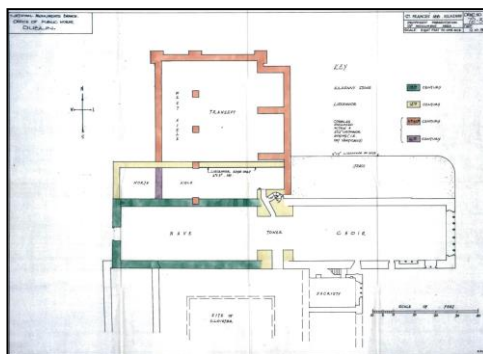
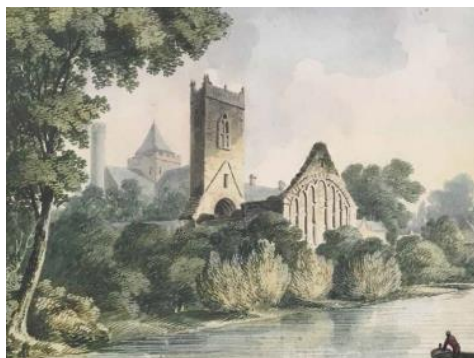
The Urban park, which will be centred around St Francis Abbey, will be the central focus of the Abbey Quarter development, while the development of the street will open up the former Brewery site for the development of new buildings.



The project is part funded by the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund, with some funding for the street element of the project provided by the European regional Development fund.

Abbey Quarter Conservation Plan

A DRAFT Conservation Plan for the Heritage Structures on the Abbey Quarter site including St Francis Abbey, the City Walls, Evans Turret and St Francis Well has been prepared in conjunction with the Office of Public Works, the National Monuments Service and the Heritage Council. Public Consultation on the DRAFT Conservation Plan will commence in early June.



The preparation of the Conservation plan has been part funded by the National Monuments Service through the Community Monuments Fund.

Temporary Car & Coach Park

Work on the development of the temporary car & coach park on the Abbey Quarter has commenced, with these works expected to be completed in June 2022. The development provides 7 coach parking spaces, which will be a significant addition to tourist facilities in the city.



Tionscadal Éireann
Project Ireland
2040

This project is part funded by the Urban Regeneration & Development Fund

ROADS

Major Projects

(Included in NDP- Funded by TII)

N24 Waterford to Cahir Scheme

The public consultation No 2 on Alternatives & Options started on the 3rd of May in Mooncoin Hall and continued for the week in Clonmel, Cahir and Carrick on Suir. Large numbers attended each of the venues to view the options and meet the Project team. The closing date for submissions on this phase (alternatives and options) is the 20th May.

Minor Projects

(Not included in NDP-Funded by TII)

N24 Tower Road (Safety Scheme)

Approval to proceed to tender has been requested from TII. Once approval is received it is expected that the scheme will go out to tender in Q2 2022 with a view to construction commencing during Q3 2022. An allocation of €3m was received for 2022 to allow the scheme proceed to construction. The overall outturn cost for the project is expected to be circa €10m.



N77 Ballyragget to Ballynaslee

An allocation of €500K was received for 2022 which will fund progression to preparation of contract documents and potentially provide for some land acquisition. 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 which is likely to be submitted to An Bord Pleanála in May 2022. The overall outturn cost for the project is expected to be circa €10m.

Other

Kilkenny Ring Road Extension

Consultants are continuing to work on the SAR report (*Strategic Assessment Report*) for above project. This report will be ready in Q2 2022 for submission to the Department for consideration to proceed with the design and planning.

Speed Limits

The proposed draft Speed Limit Review Public Consultation was advertised in the Kilkenny People dated 6th May 2022. The documents are available for public viewing in each of the Municipal District offices, County Hall and City Hall and are also available on Consult.ie. Submission can be made up until the 10th June, 2022.

PARKS / SPECIAL PROJECTS

Parks & Playgrounds

Maintenance continues around the County in our playgrounds and parks to present them to a high standard. This month the focus was on the replacement of parts of old or worn play equipment.

Changes in our grass cutting regime, to help and encourage our pollinators was very evident over the past number of weeks with an abundance of dandelions and daisies on display, with locations such as the Kilkenny Ring Road and Graiguenamanagh Relief Road looking particularly good.

To support the Ukrainian Refugees currently accommodated in the St. John of God's Convent, Kilkenny, the Parks Department has developed a proposal to maximise the outdoor space within the grounds of the convent to afford the residents an opportunity to better interact with their outdoor surroundings in a safe and comfortable environment. With the support of the Sister's of St. John of God, works will be undertaken in the area on the southside of the convent and will include the installation of outdoor seating, play equipment and raised vegetable beds (*the residents having themselves expressed an interest in getting involved in the latter*). It is expected that works will be completed before the end of May.

Amenity Grants

The 2022 amenity grants scheme application closing date was the 25th of March. All applications are now being assessed and will be

brought before the May meeting of the County Council for approval by Elected Members. Final numbers are expected to be up on last year's applications as the fund grows in popularity and as more estates are taken in charge. The fund for 2022 is set at €140,000. This will be distributed to groups across the County to enable them to maintain their own outdoor recreational spaces. The range of works typically involve tree planting, grass cutting, planting flowers, erecting signage and many other amenity type projects.

Woodstock Gardens

Springtime in the gardens has been busy with an abundance of pruning and planting jobs to be completed before the summer season. The Winter Garden has been the focus of much of the attention with topiary planting needing pruning to maintain the formal shapes typical of the Winter Garden.



Trimming of the formal parterres in Woodstock . This time consuming job has provided more definition to the formal planting.

Work has also commenced on improving access to the gardens under the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (Phase Three) and the Disability Participation and Awareness Fund. These funds will assist in making Woodstock more accessible and inclusive for all with measures to include the construction of new and upgrade of existing pathways, the purchase of a mobility buggy, which will accommodate wheelchairs, along with improvements to the playground including introduction of new accessible play equipment.

Improvements will also be made in the car park with the provision of designated disabled car parking spaces and an improved access to the path network and formal gardens from there.



Improvements to footpaths underway in Woodstock

South East Greenway

The landscaping of sections of the South East Greenway over Lots 1 and 3 has been completed. This includes an area from Rosbercon to Ballyverneen, Glenmore. The emphasis has been on re-establishing native planting and where appropriate allowing natural recolonisation on embankments.

The Greenway is an important wildlife corridor in the countryside and will be managed sensitively to ensure this is prioritised. Landowner agreements on the accommodation works for Lots 4 – 7 continue to progress. Works continue on the preparation of the detailed design and tender documents for Lot 4 (New Ross to Mount Elliott) and Lot 5a (Ferrybank to Luffany) and Lot 5b (Luffany to Aylwardstown).

It is intended that Tender Documents for Lots 5a will be advertised later this Month.



The deep cut of the Greenway through Ferrybank. Lighting and final surfaces are now in place. Recolonisation of the steep banks by natural vegetation is already underway

2022 Call for new applications under the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS)

In mid-February, The Department of Rural & Community Development announced a call for new applications under ORIS. 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 are endeavoring to ensure the highest quality applications are put forward.

The funding applications are divided into following four categories:

Measure 1: grant available €30,000 and Local Authorities can submit a maximum of 7 applications, *(Increased by €10,000/application on previous years).*

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.

Project Development: grant available €50,000 and Local Authorities can submit a maximum of 2 applications *(An increase on 1 application last year).*

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

The deadline for the submission of Measure 1 & Project Development Applications was the 18th April 2022 and the following applications were submitted on behalf of Kilkenny County Council.

Measure 1 Application Submission 2021

Project Name	Description	Grant Sought	Estimated Total Cost
Dock Road to Barrow Valley Outdoor Activity Hub - Pedestrian/Cyclist Connectivity Link Upgrade - Graiguenamanagh	The rehabilitation of the Dock Road, a key pedestrian-cyclist link between the Barrow Valley Outdoor Activity Hub and the town of Graiguenamanagh. This link also forms part of the first section of the Brandon Hill Looped Walk and the Silaire Wood Trail.	€29,700	€33,000
Windgap Village Loop - Repair & Enhancement of Walking Trail	Repair of existing trail along Windgap village loop concentrating on access to Windgap grotto. Installation of new seating at rest areas and interpretive signage explaining this unique site	€29,700	€33,000
The Wood Road to the River Barrow Amenity Area - Pedestrian Connectivity Link- Graiguenamanagh	Re-establish and construct a pedestrian connectivity link between the Wood Road and the River Barrow Amenity Area in Graiguenamanagh	€29,700	€33,000
Pollrone Quay Community Walk - Mooncoin	Development of signed community walk over 5km of quiet local roads around Mooncoin village with a connection to Pollrone Quay and the River Suir.	-€16,182	€17,979
Woodstock Estate Marketing and Communications Plan	The further development and continuation of the promotion and marketing campaign for Woodstock Estate. The Estate encompasses 50 acres of Gardens and Arboretum along with riverside and woodland Victorian walkways within the wider 1000 acres of forestry.	€29,700	€33,000
Outdoor Kilkenny Digital/Social Media, Marketing and PR Campaign 2023	Outdoor Kilkenny Digital/Social Media, Marketing and PR Campaign 2023	€18,000	€20,000
Castlemorris Woodland Trail Repair & Enhancement Scheme	Upgrade & enhancement of existing network of woodland trails in Castlemorris wood, part of the old Castlemorris Estate.	€25,790	€28,655
Totals		€146,408	€198,634

Project Development Application Submission 2022

Project Name	Description	Grant Sought	Estimated Total Cost
Kilkenny to Ballyragget & Castlecomer Greenway Link - Phase 1 - Kilkenny City to The Kilkenny Countryside Park - Feasibility Study, Route Selection Report & Planning.	To engage consultants to assess the feasibility of creating an off-road cycling/pedestrian link, along the line of old Kilkenny - Abbeyliex railway Line, connecting Kilkenny City Centre (John's Green) with the new Kilkenny Countryside Park located c.5km north of the City.	€50,000	€55,000
Thomastown River Nore Wild Swimming and Canoeing Amenity Hub	A community facility to provide amenity for all engaging with the River Nore from recreational, sporting, community, social, environmental, research, etc. including a) a boathouse and pontoon or slipway on the River Nore in Thomastown to accommodate Thomastown Paddlers canoeing club and promote and grow kayaking and other paddle sports. B) provide welfare facilities for swimmers and the lifeguard service using the Weir Pool. c) The provision of a landscaping design/Masterplan to help site proposed facility into surroundings, improve accessibility around the site, and to enhance biodiversity in the area.	€50,000	€55,000
Totals		€100,000	€110,000

The deadline for the submission of the Measure 2 & 3 applications is the 25th May 2022 and works are continuing on the preparation of same. The applications to be put forward include:

Measure 2 Applications

- Millennium Forest - Trail Enhancement and Accessibility Scheme
- Jenkinstown Wood – Walking Trail Rehabilitation Scheme
- Newpark Fen – Trail Enhancement Scheme

Measure 3 Application

- Nore Valley Walk (Lacken Walk) – Timber Boardwalk Replacement Scheme – Funding will be sought to replace the existing boardwalk, with a wider cross-section structure and to construct same using composite or recycled plastic materials

Additional information on the above applications will be provided in the next Chief Executives (CE) Report.

PLANNING

Development Management

Planning Summary	Total April	
	2021	2022
Planning Applications Received	85	75
Planning Applications Granted	58	62
Planning Applications Refused	7	4
Complaints Received	51	27
Warning Letters Issued	47	21
Enforcements Notices Issued	5	11
Cases Closed	28	34

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

Forward Planning

City & County Development Plan:

Following adoption of the City & County Development Plan 2021-2027 in October 2021, the Minister for Planning, Local Government and Heritage issued a Draft Direction in relation to certain renewable energy elements of the Plan. After a period of public consultation, the written submissions or observations in respect of the Draft Direction were forwarded to the Office of the Planning Regulator in December 2021, who has subsequently made a recommendation to the Minister on the matter.

Masterplans:

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. Several workshops were held during December 2021 and January 2022 to progress design concepts around land use and movement. 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.

Work is continuing on the preparation of a Masterplan for Loughmacask. An initial draft Masterplan was prepared and was internally reviewed. The Environment Section were consulted in relation to environmental assessments associated with the draft Masterplan and their comments are now being incorporated into the assessments. Once the environmental assessments are progressed, and the iterative process of modifying the draft Masterplan is finalised, all the documentation will be presented to Members prior to public display. This item is on the agenda for the upcoming Kilkenny Municipal District meeting.

The preparation of the Fair Green Masterplan will recommence following public display of the two other draft Masterplans.

Work has commenced on the preparation of a masterplan for Urlingford Town Centre. The consultants have been appointed and an initial meeting was held between them and the Planning Authority and they are now working on this masterplan.

Taking in Charge

Margaretsfield, Callan Road – completion of taking in charge on agenda for May Meeting.

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
- Arbourmount, Ferrybank
- Abbeygate, Ferrybank

Active Land Management

- There are 13 sites on the Derelict Sites Register at present.
- 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 for qualifying sites and payment demands were issued during February and early March. Owners now have the right of appeal to An Bord Pleanála.

- Revised valuations of the 8 2019 sites have recently been undertaken and the owners were notified of these.

For 2022, the emphasis will be on the activation of sites currently on the Register, the pursuit of levies due and ongoing monitoring.

Conservation

The **Historic Structures Fund (HSF)** provides an opportunity for home owners to apply for funding for large scale repair works to protected structures. The national budget for the fund has increased from €3 million in 2021 to €4million in 2022. The table below details the successful projects submitted by Kilkenny County Council.

STREAM 1	DHLGH DECISION
Four applications were selected by KCC and forwarded to DHLGH for review	Following assessment, DHLGH awarded three projects the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Old Ennisnag Bridge (€50,000) Kells House (€38,000) St. Canice's Cathedral (€27,820)

The Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS) encourages applications for repairs to historic fabric of protected structures and proposed protected structures. A total of 17 projects that made applications under the BHIS have been approved funding totalling **€171,600** this year and will now commence in the coming weeks.

Site meetings between the Conservation Officer, the applicant and the applicant's agent have already commenced. The works include thatch, render, roof and roof features repair.

Historic Towns Initiative 2022 (HTI): Following a successful application, **€10,000** has been secured from the Heritage Council. This funding is specifically for the appointment a conservation architect to work with owners of a minimum of three buildings located in Upper Bridge Street, Callan. This will provide the basis for returning vacant residential floorspace back into use in the street.

A Heritage Stewardship Fund: €15,000 has been secured from the Heritage Council. The application focuses on the Early Medieval Town Houses in Kilkenny and follows collaboration to

date between the Conservation Office and the Built Heritage Unit and the National Monument Service of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

Building Control

Number of Valid Commencement Notices Received

April 2022	130
April 2021	132
April 2020	120
April 2019	111

Number of Valid Disability Access Applications Received

April 2022	32
April 2021	20
April 2020	27
April 2019	24

ENVIRONMENT

Climate Action

The Department has recently confirmed that there will be an official announcement in the coming weeks with regard to resources dedicated to Climate Action for each Local Authority.

For Kilkenny County Council, there will be an additional three staff employed which will include the Community Climate Action Officer and the Climate Action Specialist Officer who will be the lead on the preparation and development of the Climate Action Plan for the Council.

It is expected that towards the last quarter of 2022, the Minister will sign the Order requesting Local Authorities to commence the preparation of their Climate Action Plan for the next five years. In the interim, the Council will be commencing the process and working with the 3CEA in ensuring that the required baseline data is captured and accurately assessed.

Bike Week

This year, Bike Week in Kilkenny celebrates sustainability in our communities. Bike Maintenance workshops will take place in different venues around the County. Cycling enthusiasts who share a passion for hurling are being encouraged to leave the car behind on match day at Nowlan Park on Saturday, May 21, for the eagerly-anticipated clash with Wexford. There will be goodies on arrival for those who travel on two wheels.

A Cycle to Work Breakfast takes place on Wednesday, the 18th May, for local employers who want to find out more about promoting cycling in the Workplace. The week culminates in Bike Fest, a free family festival in Kilkenny County Hall on Sunday, the 22nd May. Activities include Family Cycles, E-Bike Trials, Foraging Cycles, Balance Bike and Off-Road Zones, Obstacle Courses, a Wellbeing Area and lots of hands-on workshops from local food and craft producers. The Bike Fest will open with a Slow Roll through the City, leaving County Hall at 12 noon on Sunday, 22 May, returning to join in the Bike Fest celebrations.

Recommended Minimum Criteria for Environmental Inspections (RMCEI)

Each year Kilkenny County Council submits a Statistical return and a plan for the year ahead for our environmental inspections.

A summary of some of the inspections undertaken so far in 2022 is provided in the below:

Waste, Litter and Producer Responsibility Initiatives

		Planned	Completed	% Complete
Waste	Subtotal Routine Waste Inspections	634	324	51
	Subtotal Non-routine Waste Inspections	1440	714	50
Litter	Subtotal Routine Litter Patrols/Investigations	510	190	37
PRI	Subtotal (Routine) Producer Responsibility Inspections	118	0	0
Total Routine Inspections end of year		1262	514	41
Total Non-Routine Inspections end of year		1440	714	50
Total Inspections end of year		2702	1228	45

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 four months of 2022 is 351 compared with 575 for the same period last year (i.e. down circa 39%). 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 740 tonnes of recyclables were collected from our Bring Centres in the first 4 months of 2022. This represents a 19%

decrease on the same period last year and is mainly due to the full re-opening of society following the Covid 19 pandemic. Loughboy Shopping Centre (with 46.16 tonnes collected YTD), Lidl Loughboy (with 45.49 tonnes collected YTD) and Graiguenamanagh (33.85 tonnes collected YTD) is the busiest bring centres outside of the City. 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 looking to increase the number of recycling centres in the County this year and is currently in discussions with the Tidy Town committee's with regard to suitable locations in towns and villages across the County.

Kilkenny County Council has recently awarded the contract for textile recycling to Textile Recycling Limited (TRL) for the next 2 years following a tender process. The new clothes banks are currently being rolled out across our bring bank centres all over the County.



New Textile Banks in Shamrock Grove, Kilmacow, Co. Kilkenny

Dunmore Civic Amenity Site 2022

Approximately 6,500 customers visited Dunmore during the month of April, resulting in 5.9 tonnes of Cardboard, 5.8 tonnes of Plastic, 7.7 tonnes of Paper and 18.7 tonnes of WEEE (Waste Electrical & Electronic Equipment) being sent from the site for recycling. With spring in full flight, the site received 31.5 tonnes of green waste which was sent for composting.



Household Electrical Collection Days

WEEE Ireland is coming to Kilkenny to five locations across the County this May and June. These will be the only collections for 2022.

They will accept any household electrical appliance operated by a plug or battery for recycling. Collections will operate between 10am-4pm.

Date	Location
21/05/2022	Erins Own GAA Club, Castlecomer
28/05/2022	Community Centre, Piltown
4/6/2022	Quay Car Park, Thomastown
11/6/2022	Johnstown, Church Car Park
18/06/2022	Cillin Hill Mart, Kilkenny City

Anti-Dumping Initiative application for 2022

Kilkenny County Council has been awarded funding for the following projects under the Anti-Dumping Initiative for 2022.

Project Number	Project Title	Grant Amount
1	County Wide Mattress Amnesty	€24,000
2	Haz Waste Collection Event	€15,000
3	Variable messaging boards for waste	€6,000
4	Media campaign using ADI info	€9,000
5	Clean up of Bishops Mountain	€6,000
6	Clean up of various Roadside verges around County	€16,000
7	Clean up at Thomastown Bridge	€5,000
8	Clean up at Fiddown	€6,000
	Total Grant	€87,000

Works on these projects will be commencing shortly, and all projects are required to be completed by the end of September 2022.

Councils Waste Prevention Programme

Bicycle Initiative for Ukrainians

As Ukrainians continue to come to Kilkenny and settle into their new accommodation, their needs are being considered and one solution to transport is being addressed by a community collaboration funded by the Council's Waste Prevention Programme. Collaborating with the Leader Partnership, the Civil Defence, the Council's Cycling Officer and the Kilkenny City Men Shed a scheme has commenced to bring unused bicycles back into circulation. Donated bikes are repaired and serviced at Kilkenny's Mens Shed and then are being provided to communal hubs and to new residents now living throughout the County.



Deposit, Return Scheme Demonstration Day

SAVE THE DATE; 19th May 2022

Voice Ireland will be coming to The Parade on Thursday, the 19th of May to demonstrate how the national deposit return scheme machines will work. This scheme is due to be rolled out nationally by the end of the year.



National Spring Clean

Registrations for the 2022 An Taisce's National Spring clean are now closed. This year saw over 100 groups registered on the national registration for County Kilkenny. The Environment Section provide support to groups who are completing litter picks in their own local area by supplying litter picking supplies and assistance with litter removal after litter picking. Events will continue throughout the summer.



Thomastown Beavers taking part in a litter pick as part of the National Spring Clean Campaign.

Picker Pals

Picker Pals and Kilkenny County Council is hosting a monthly competition to encourage classes that are participating in Picker Pals to show how the programme is running in their classroom. The first winning classroom was from Piltown National School who sent in an example of one pupils account of his litter picking adventure.



There are 35 classes participating in the Picker Pals programme this year throughout the City and County. The programme provides a litter picking kit to participating classrooms and provides an opportunity for each pupil to borrow the kit over a weekend and tell the class their findings the following week. This programme will see over 1,000 families being involved in weekend litter picking adventures over the course of the programme. Voice Ireland who runs the programme in Ireland also provides classroom supports throughout the year.



Tidy Towns

The first Tidy Towns Forum took place in Kells on the 2nd of April. Kells Tidy Towns kindly hosted the event and took Tidy Town Representatives for a guided tour of their village showcasing numerous projects which have been completed over the years. This provides an opportunity for volunteers from different Tidy Town Groups across the County to meet, share ideas and get advice on different aspects of their activities.

Plans are currently underway to take the next forum out of the County to visit an award winning location which is particularly strong on biodiversity.



Animal Welfare

JJ Tobin Veterinary Officer continues to carry out monthly inspections at the Dog Shelter to ensure the site is operating efficiently and effectively. Up to end of April this year, 113 dogs have been dealt with in the Carlow/Kilkenny dog shelter, with 77 of these dogs rehomed by the shelter and by charities. There were 4 dogs remaining at the shelter at the end of April.

COMMUNITY

CLÁR

The closing date for submission of applications to the Department was 6th May and 12 applications were submitted.

Rural Regeneration Application Cat 1 2022

A Rural Regeneration Funding Application was submitted to the Department on the 29th of April. The Application focuses on the regeneration of the centre of Piltown - overall project cost €1.7m.

Pride of Place 2022

Three groups have been selected to represent Kilkenny in the 2022 Pride of Place Awards - Mullinavat (*Village Category*), The Hub Graiguenamanagh (Community Tourism) and the Thomastown Recreation Amenity (Community Wellbeing). Best of luck to the 2021 entries. The Olders Peoples Council, Windgap and KCAT in Callan will be attending the National Awards on the 16th of May in County Kerry.

KRSP DRAFT Strategy 2022-2025

The Kilkenny Recreation & Sports Partnership Strategy 2022 – 2025 is presently being finalised and will be launched within the next three weeks.

HERITAGE

Medieval churches receive funding for conservation

Kilkenny County Council has secured €196,200 from the Department 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 works will be overseen by the Environment Section and Heritage Office. It will help protect them from the impacts of climate change and keep them safe for current and future generations to access and appreciate.

Clomantagh

€85,000 for urgent works to stabilise and conserve the 13thC church ruin including its distinctive double bell-tower, walls, doors and windows of the church.

Dunkitt

€85,000 for urgent works to stabilise and conserve the late 12th/early 13thC church and the adjacent graveyard boundary wall.

Grangefertagh

€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 bell tower at Clomantagh Church will be repaired



Dunkitt church walls will be stabilised



The MacGiolla Phadraig Tomb, Grangerfertagh will be addressd in the Conservation Plan

Have your say on Ireland's Biodiversity

The National Parks and Wildlife Service is preparing a new national Biodiversity Action Plan. It will be an ambitious plan which aims to address the biodiversity crises through a whole of Government, whole of society approach to biodiversity protection, informed by scientific evidence. The Heritage Officer attended a workshop and made a written submission on the first draft of the plan on behalf of Kilkenny County Council. Public consultation will open to all this summer and will be the focus of the **National Biodiversity Conference (8th & 9th June, Dublin Castle)**. To book your place at the conference (blended online and face-to-face) <https://www.biodiversityconference.ie/>.

Cruinniú na nÓg (Free Day of Creativity)

Cruinniú na nÓg is a national free day of creativity for children and young people on **Saturday, June 11th**. The Kilkenny County Council Cruinniú na nÓg programme co-ordinated by the Culture Team and funded by the Kilkenny Creative Ireland Programme, provides a wide range of projects for all youth age groups.



Project	Details	Location	Delivered by	Further information
Circus Explored	Circus skills - juggling course	Kilkenny City	Circus Explored	Circus Explored - Register Now! - ISACS
Dragons and Dinosaurs	Workshops with primary schools	Castlecomer Discovery Park	Calmast STEM Engagement Centre, W.I.T.	Kilkenny Cruinniú na nÓg - STEM Kilkenny
"Devisovise"	Theatrical workshops	Kilkenny City	Kilkenny Youth Theatre & Youth Theatre Ireland	www.instagram.com/dreamstuff_youth_theatre
Féile Lachtain	Open air painting	Freshford	Ionad Lachtain	https://ionadlachtain.com/mqc/
Festive Day of Creativity	Artistic exhibition and workshops	Kilkenny City	Butler Gallery	https://www.butlergallery.ie/
Masterclasses Traditional Irish Music and Dance	Online music and dance classes	Online	Craobh Osraí	https://www.facebook.com/OsraiComhaltas/
TADA! Take Two!	Short film-making workshops	Thomastown	TADA Theatre School	https://www.facebook.com/tadatheatre/
Animation workshops	Creative drawing and animation workshops	Kilkenny City	Kilkenny County Council Library Service	https://www.kilkennylibrary.ie/eng/whats_on/library-event-calendar/cruinniu-na-nog-drawing-and-animation-art-show-with-tina-mation.html
Cabinet of Curiosities	Visual arts workshops and exhibitions	Kilkenny City	Kilkenny County Council Arts Office	http://kilkennyartsoffice.ie/cruinniu-na-nog/
Creative Lego workshops	Craft/ design workshops	Kilkenny City	Kilkenny County Council Library Service	https://www.kilkennylibrary.ie/eng/whats_on/

All details available at <https://cruinniu.creativeireland.gov.ie/>

Kilkenny Creative Ireland Programme 2022

The Kilkenny Creative Ireland Programme connects people, creativity and wellbeing. The 2022 programme includes projects funded under the public grant scheme and projects delivered by Kilkenny County Council. The programme is managed by Kilkenny County Council Culture Team. Creative Ireland is a national programme co-ordinated by the Dept of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media. <https://www.creativeireland.gov.ie/en/>

Project	Details	Location	Delivered by	Further information
Alternative Kilkenny Arts Festival	Arts festival	Kilkenny City	Alternative Kilkenny Arts	http://akafringe.com/
Drawing Club	Drawing events & children's drawing camp	Kilkenny City	Butler Gallery	https://www.butlergallery.ie/
Inistioge Shopfronts	School workshops & exhibition of shopfront signage	Inistioge	Deirdre Ring	https://instagram.com/signwriteire?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=
The River Orchard	Circus workshop	Kilnaspic, Mooncoin	The River Orchard	https://m.facebook.com/TheRiverOrchardProject/
Se7en Inch Collective – Family Roots	Live DJ event	Kilkenny City	The Se7en Inch Collective	https://en-gb.facebook.com/people/The-se7en-inch-collective/100063615454749/
“Unreasonable”	Theatre production	Kilkenny City	Dreamstuff Youth Theatre	https://www.facebook.com/dreamstufftheatre/
“The Second Chamber”	Film documentary	Knockroe	Kilkenny County Council Heritage Office	https://kilkennyheritage.ie/
Bookville 2022	Book festival	Kilkenny City & County	Kilkenny County Council Library & Arts Services	http://www.bookvillekilkenny.com/
Arts Show	Radio programme on Kilkenny’s art scene/ projects	Kilkenny City & County	Kilkenny County Council Arts Office	http://kilkennyartsoffice.ie/
Youth Arts Now	Developing & progressing youth arts policy	Kilkenny City & County	Kilkenny County Council Arts Office	http://kilkennyartsoffice.ie/

The Pollinator Award (2022) is open for entries!

The Local Authority Pollinator Award in the national Tidy Towns competition is open for entries. The award has a total prize fund of €10,000, including a Newcomer Award of €1,000 and is open to all groups participating in the national Tidy Towns competition. The award encourages and rewards Tidy Towns groups for managing towns and villages in a pollinator-friendly way.

The Local Authority Pollinator Award supports the [All-Ireland Pollinator Plan](#) and is sponsored and managed by Local Authority Heritage Officers in partnership with the National Biodiversity Data Centre.

The deadline for entries is Friday 10th June. For more details please email heritage@kilkennycoco.ie

Application forms for the 2022 award are available here:

[Local Authority Pollinator Award 2022 \(English\)](#)

[Local Authority Pollinator Award 2022 \(As Gaeilge\)](#)

LEO/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Newly launched support - Digital Start

Digital Start provides support to obtain digital strategy, technical and/or advisory services for eligible businesses. Expert digital consultants can help to develop a unique digital strategy that transforms businesses by identifying where they are on their digital business journey, developing a digital adaptation plan based on the businesses identified need and assistance to implement the digital plan.

This programme allows for manufacturing or service business who are exporting access up to 4 days of specialised consultancy to look at digitalisation within this business – the can include topics such as:

- Internal Process Optimisation (*Lean-Digital Automation*)
- Enhancing Customer Digital Experience (*Product, Service, Route to Market, Channels*)
- Becoming a Data Driven Business

Further information and the link to start an application can be found below or

<https://www.localenterprise.ie/Portal/Digital/What-is-Digital-Start.html>.

Minister Visits Kilkenny businesses

Minister of State for Business, Employment and Retail, Damien English, TD visited Local Enterprise Office (LEO) in April where he met with Council Officials, members of the LEO team as well as some client companies. The Minister was greeted at County Hall by Cathaoirleach Cllr Fidelis Doherty, Deputy John Paul Phelan, Fiona Deegan Head of Enterprise and the Chief Executive Colette Byrne and was briefed about developments in the County as well as future plans. Minister English also met with Kilkenny Local Enterprise Office team, members of the Evaluation Committee and Elected Members. He had the opportunity to meet with some of the LEO client companies during this visit including Louise Kennedy, Red Robin Events Ltd.; Ken Loughlin, Nirvana Lighting; Martin Stapleton, CDS Metal Products and CF Pharma, represented by Clare Hughes, Caroline Fogarty and Sandra Moore.

Minister English then travelled by foot on to the Abbey Quarter, via the Butler Gallery. The Chief Executive outlined the future development plans for the site and then proceeded to Cakeface to meet other LEO supported companies - Kay Lyng of KKajoux Jewels; Miriam Cushen, Cushendale Woollen Mills and Eilis Gough, Mileeven Fine Foods. Rory and Laura Gannon also provided the Minister with a tour of their nearby cookery school and coffee roastery.



Presentation of Student Enterprise Programme Awards to Successful Students

On Wednesday 27th April, the Local Enterprise Office Kilkenny presented the Student Enterprise Programme Awards to successful finalists in the Set Theatre, Kilkenny. Invited guests included the successful students, their proud parents, teachers and school principals, the Cathaoirleach Cllr Fidelis Doherty, Mayor Cllr Andrew McGuinness, Cllr Pat Fitzpatrick and Fiona Deegan, Head of Enterprise. Further to our Awards ceremony, the winners of the County Student Enterprise Awards in all categories were considered for inclusion in the National Finals to be held in The Helix on 18 May 2022.

In the “My Entrepreneurial Journey” competition whereby students interview and mapped out the life of an entrepreneur and what is required, Saoirse Walsh from Grennan College was presented with the Junior Category while Ned O’Meara from Coláiste Éamann Rís was awarded the Intermediate Category. Both will go forward to represent Kilkenny at the next stages of their respective competitions.

While in the “Most Creative Business Idea” competition, senior level students were asked to come up with an inventive business idea based around the theme of ‘Fitness and Wellbeing Innovations’, Maria Salvans from Loreto Secondary School was presented with her award.

In the Junior Category, the student who will represent Kilkenny in the next stages of the competition is Ciara Ryan from “Sew Stylish” at St. Brigid’s College, Callan. Ciara’s business creates uniquely designed multifunctional hair scrunchies with a discrete zip pocket that can be used to hide/store money, lip gloss or keys, but can also still be used to tie your hair up.

In the Intermediate Category, twin brothers Adam and Liam Doyle, from Coláiste Éamann Rís with their painting service business “Twin Painters” will be representing Kilkenny. In the Senior Category of the competition, Kilkenny representatives going forward to the next stages of the competition will be Presentation Secondary School students Aoibhinn Morrissey and Louise Hearne with their business “Sea Ya later”. They identified a need in the market to develop and sell a natural based tan remover.

2022 Activities:

- €288,470 in direct financial assistance has been approved for 12 manufacturing/export service businesses located throughout the County. This assistance is linked to the projected creation of 39 jobs over the next three years.
- €224,885 in Business Expansion Grant assistance awarded to 8 existing businesses with forecasted new job creation of 35 jobs. Business Expansion grants assist businesses trading greater than 18 months to make investment in growing their businesses and employment numbers.
- €35,610 in Priming Grant (Start-up assistance) to 1 new business.
- €27,975 awarded in feasibility study grants to 3 businesses.
- 4 Technical Assistance for Micro Exporter grant awarded totalling €7,320. This scheme supports businesses to explore their export market opportunities.
- 11 Businesses have commenced LEAN one to one consultancy programmes to investigate possible resource efficiencies and process improvements their businesses.
- 7 Business have commenced the LEO Building Better Business LEAN programme. This programme 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.
- 9 business have been approved a Trading Online Voucher totalling €17,990 to support the enhancement of their online trading capacity.
- 5 Green for Micro Grant awarded totalling €11,070. This scheme supports businesses to become greener and more environmentally friendly.
- 2 applicants have been supported to make loan applications to the Micro Finance Ireland loan fund.

Green for Micro – Support for Small Business

Applications are open for the Local Enterprise Office Green for Micro programme. 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.

To support businesses to consider green issues for their business, the Local Enterprise Office have designed a Green for.... business webinar, taking place as follows:

- May 5th Green for Packaging

Webinars can be booked online at www.localenterprise.ie/kilkenny

Destination Experience Development Planning Commences

April saw the commencement of work on Kilkenny's Destination Experience Development Plan (DEDP) with a conference on 7th April in the River Court Hotel in Kilkenny. Fáilte Ireland hosted the event with Irish and international speakers and approx.. 60 local stakeholders who provided input into the shaping of Kilkenny as a leading tourism destination.



This conference is part of the process to create a **Kilkenny Destination and Experience Development Plan (DEDP)** currently being developed by the Fáilte Ireland team in partnership with Kilkenny County Council. This DEDP will be a five-year sustainable tourism destination Development Plan for Kilkenny City and County.

Kilkenny Tourism and visitkilkenny.ie

Kilkenny Tourism continues its work in delivering Kilkenny's marketing and PR plan for 2022. Spring's 2022 campaign continues to keep Kilkenny to the forefront of the domestic visitors mind for a staycation this year. April's marketing

efforts showcased and promoted all things to see and do in Kilkenny over the Easter break. Family Fun and outdoor activity featured high on social media posts and the "What's On" section of our web-site. Our festival and events section also continues to promote all our wonderful festivals. April welcomed back Kilkenny Roots Festival which was a great success and is supported by Kilkenny County Council festival grant funding.

April activity also included:

- April Website visits - Up 72% from April 2021
- Blogs
- Posts
- Media Exposure (local and national)

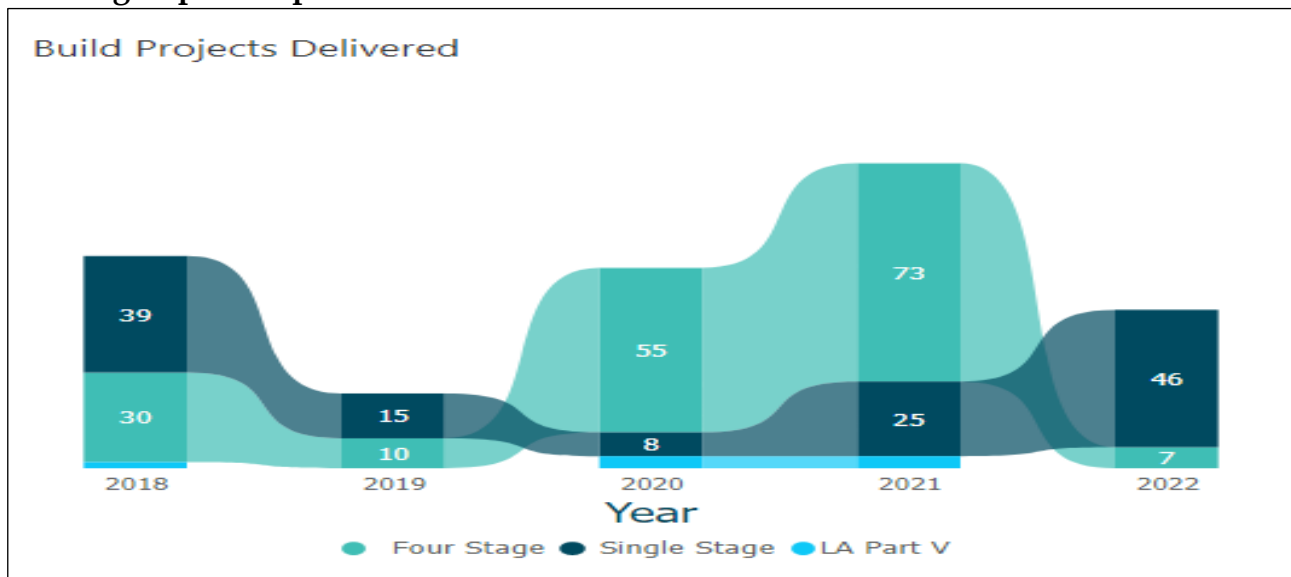
Plans for Horizon Irish Open

Kilkenny County Council in partnership with the European Tour, Mount Juliet and Fáilte Ireland continue to work together to maximise the opportunity for Kilkenny's exposure as a tourism destination in the run up to and during the 2022 Horizon Irish Open. Video content created last year showcasing Kilkenny and the surrounding areas will be made available to broadcasters again for the event.

A media document is also being prepared for broadcasters to be able to comment on and mention Kilkenny as much as possible throughout the event. There will also be a "Kilkenny" stand at Mount Juliet for the duration of the competition in order to display many of Kilkenny's 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.

HOUSING

Housing Capital Report



Current Housing Projects on Site

Scheme	AHB	Project Name	Projected Substantial Completion	Units
CAS CONSTRUCTION TURNKEY	SOS	Milton Lodge, Johnswell Road, Kilkenny (Phase 2)	17/05/2022	2
SHIP CONSTRUCTION SINGLE STAGE		Shanganny, Jenkinstown	17/05/2022	2
LA Part V		Pennefeather Green, Hebron Road, Kilkenny (Nos. 53 -58)	20/05/2022	6
SHIP CONSTRUCTION TURNKEY		Pennefeather Green, Hebron Road, Kilkenny City	20/05/2022	52
AHB CALF Turnkey	Respond	Nuncio Road, Kilkenny Phase 3	31/05/2022	17
CALF Part V	Respond	Nuncio Road, Kilkenny Phase 3	31/05/2022	5
CAS CONSTRUCTION	Camphill	Grennan Villa, Thomastown	31/05/2022	5
CAS CONSTRUCTION	Kingsriver	Kingsriver, Ennisnag	28/06/2022	2
AHB CALF Construction	Cluid	Orchard Close, New Orchard, Kilkenny	31/07/2022	21
CALF Part V	Cluid	Orchard Close, New Orchard, Kilkenny	31/07/2022	2
CAS CONSTRUCTION TURNKEY	SOS	Tinnypark, Callan Road, Kilkenny	31/08/2022	6
CAS CONSTRUCTION	KVHA	Brother Thomas Place, Church Lane, Kilkenny	30/09/2022	12
SHIP CONSTRUCTION SINGLE STAGE		Inchacarron, Mullinavat	31/01/2023	2
SHIP CONSTRUCTION SINGLE STAGE		Graiguenamanagh - Old Fire Station	31/01/2023	2
SHIP CONSTRUCTION		Legan Grange & Legan Court, Ladywell, Thomastown, Co Kilkenny	30/03/2023	25
CAS CONSTRUCTION	KVHA	19/21 Blackmill Street, Kilkenny	31/03/2023	12
SHIP CONSTRUCTION		Mulhalls Shop, Golf Links Road, Kilkenny	31/03/2023	6
SHIP CONSTRUCTION SINGLE STAGE		Haggardsgreen, Callan	31/03/2023	1
Buy and Renew		Circular Road Kilkenny City	31/03/2023	1
				181

SHIP = Kilkenny County Council Direct Build / CAS or CALF = Approved Housing Body Project



Works on Pennefeather Green nearing completion



Work Progressing on Golf Links Road – 6 units – infill scheme

Projects Approved and Awaiting Site Start

Scheme	AHB	Project Name	Projected Substantial Completion	Total Units
SHIP CONSTRUCTION TURNKEY		New Road, Mooncoin	17/11/2022	4
SHIP CONSTRUCTION TURNKEY		Chapel Street, Mooncoin	17/11/2022	2
SHIP CONSTRUCTION SINGLE STAGE		18 Wolfe Tone Street, KK	30/11/2022	1
CAS CONSTRUCTION	KVHA	8/9 Kilkenny Street, Castlecomer	31/01/2023	3
CAS CONSTRUCTION TURNKEY	Clanmill	70-71 Patrick Street, Kilkenny	31/05/2023	4
				14

HOMELESS SERVICES SUMMARY APRIL 2022	
Homeless Presentations	25
Homeless Assessment Outcomes	
Prevention & Interventions	13
Emergency Service	4
Not eligible / Did not avail of service	8
HAP Place Finder Service	
No of Homeless HAP tenancies @ 1 st day of month	104
No of Homeless HAP tenancies created during month	0
No of Homeless HAP tenancies in place @ last day of month	104
Number of Homeless HAP tenancy breakdowns	0
Other Social Housing Tenancies supported /created during month	11
Households in Temporary Emergency Supported accommodation	27
Households in Temporary Emergency B&B accommodation	6
Households in Temporary Emergency B&B accommodation with families	3
Households (singles / couples) in Transition Emergency Accommodation (Own Front Door)	18
Households (Families) in Transition Emergency Accommodation (OFD)	6

SOCIAL HOUSING SUPPORT APPLICATION SUMMARY APRIL 2022	
Number awaiting Social Housing Support at April 30 th (Gross Need)	1,653
Number awaiting Social Housing Support at April 30 th (Net Need)	732
No. of Social Housing Applications received as @ April 30 th	95
No. of applications incomplete / awaiting further information / clarification	70
No. of applications validated and ready for assessment during the month	32
No. of applications assessed during April	20
No. of applications awaiting assessment as @ April 30 th	73

HOUSING ASSISTANCE PAYMENT SUMMARY UP TO APRIL 30th 2022	
Number of active HAP tenancies to April 30 th 2022	762
New HAP tenancies set up	35
HAP tenants allocated Social Housing	20
Closed HAP Tenancies	49
HAP Rent Reviews	64
Other tenancy amendments	131
HAP Calls Received 2022 year to date	1,021
HAP Calls Received April	255

April 2022	
LA/RAS/Leasing allocations up to end of Apr (offers made):	9
Number of LA tenancies surrendered in April:	4
Tenant Liaison Officer cases in April:	60
Maintenance Calls for April:	505
Maintenance Calls year to date	2,254

Housing Loan Activity 1st January 2022 to 30th April 2022					
Loan Type	Received	Approved	Amt approved	No. Paid	Amt Paid
Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan		1	€135,000	1	€548,000
Local Auauthority Home Loan	25	0	€0	0	€0
Caravan Loan	0	0	€0.00	0	€0
Total	25	1	€135,000	1	€548,000

Grants Approved & Committed up to 30th April 2022		
Scheme	No.	Amount
HGD - Housing Adaptation Grant	98	€985,014
MAG - Mobility Aid Grant	11	€47,353
HOP - Housing Aid for Older Persons	72	€441,468
Total	181	€1,473,835

Grants Paid out up to 30th April 2022		
Scheme	No.	Amount
HGD - Housing Adaptation Grant	36	€329,262
MAG - Mobility Aid Grant	6	€22,803
HOP - Housing Aid for Older Persons	25	€148,786
Total	67	€500,851

FIRE SERVICES

Capital Projects

Contracts for the construction of the new fire station for Urlingford are to be signed this week.

Delivery of 3 fire service jeeps for Castlecomer, Urlingford and Graiguenamanagh has taken place. Minister Darragh O' Brien officially handed over the jeeps last week before the Chief Fire Officers' Association Conference. Funding was received from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage to purchase these jeeps.



Fire Safety Certificates

- 37 applications for fire safety certificates were received to date.
- 26 were received for the same period last year.

Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003

- Fire Prevention staff made targeted inspections of premises both to provide advice and to enforce legislation.
- 10 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
- 28 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.

Brigades carried out a number of fire safety presentations e.g. . 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 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 underway and a number of schools have been visited recently. Thomastown Fire Brigade held a road safety demonstration at Colaiste Cois Siuire, Mooncoin for their Transition Year students.

Training

ESDS technical checks and fire service appliance visual inspections



Fire Brigade Operations

The Brigades have attended over 283 incidents to date. These incidents included a number of road traffic collisions, public road hazards, automatic fire alarm activations, chimney fires, Ambulance assists. The Fire service was represented at the ANZAC ceremony at World War 1 memorial.

ARTS

Literature

Poetry Phone

Kilkenny County Council Arts Office Poetry Phone has a new selection of poems selected by Kilkenny Paralympian Mary Fitzgerald and uploaded to the Poetry Phone. Anyone can listen to these beautiful poems by ringing Free Phone 1800 272 994 and select 0 to 9

Mary Fitzgerald is a 22-year old Paralympian. She competes in the F40 category alongside other women within a certain range of height and arm span. Her main event is shot put but she has also competed in both discus and javelin, holding the Irish record for her category in all three disciplines.

Mary choose 12 poems from our Poetry Broadsheet entries and these are just some of the reasons why she picked a particular poem.

Respondi by Breda Joyce

We learn of the great send of tragedy, sadness, bleakness, despair, and of unfathomable grief of a mother which I'm sure many can relate to.

Little letters spell hope by Darren Frances Caffrey
This poem is relatable to many of us as we bring ourselves back to where we were at the beginning of the pandemic. The pandemic was, and continues to be, a unique experience for everyone.

Visual Artists Mentoring Programme – Meet the Mentors

This programme is part of Kilkenny Arts Office's Artists Supports Programme 2022 and provides an opportunity for artists to meet face-to-face with a specialist mentor who has expertise in their artform to discuss and develop their artistic practice. The four mentors are Eamonn Maxwell, curator, Pauline O'Connell, visual artist, Ann Mulrooney, artist and curator and Aisling Prior, curator.

Successful artists will receive six mentoring sessions over the period of May to November 2022.

Knitted Together

Our 2022 Knitted Together project is up and running and once again our Kilkenny makers have come through for us with offers to knit and crochet either squares or blankets for the project. Knitted Together is focusing on in-person and intergenerational learning for 2022.

Meet up hubs are being rolled out across the City and County. This year's project also involves a number of the Kilkenny Men's Sheds and they will be making stools for which covers and cushions will be made by those knitting and crocheting.

The Irish Times had an article titled "What life skills are being lost to technology and time pressures" recently and they featured our Knitted project in the article. To read the full article go to <https://www.irishtimes.com/life-and-style/health-family/parenting/what-life-skills-are-being-lost-to-technology-and-time-pressures-1.4851701>

Local Live Performance Scheme

April Sounds saw us host a series of concerts in St Canice's Cathedral & the Medieval Mile Museum the weekend of 8th / 9th & 10th April/. The concerts were in aid of the Red Cross Ukraine and Unicef who are running emergency appeals. This beautiful & uplifting series combined local and national acts in two of our most wonderful Kilkenny venues. St Canices Cathedral hosted Lisa O' Neill, Rónán Ó Snodaigh and Myles O'Reilly, Arrivalists & Bríd Lyons.

The Medieval Mile Museum Series included Seamus & Caoimhe Uí Fhlatharta, Niamh Regan I Gary O' Neill, Ailbhe Reddy & Elise. A total of €5,682 was raised for UNICEF and the Irish Red Cross Ukraine appeals. A further €1,500 was generously donated by April Sounds artists and audiences over the weekend for Kilkenny Civil Defence Urgent Appeal for the Ukraine community in Kilkenny.

Platform31

The final selection has been made for the PLATFORM 31 national Professional Development programme. This year's successful applicant is a playwright. Platform 31 is a national professional development opportunity for artists across art forms to be supported to investigate how they might develop their practice or make work in a different way. It is designed to support and enable career development for 31 mid-career artists - one artist will be selected from each of the 31 local authorities around Ireland. The programme will provide coaching, advisory support and networking opportunities for participating artists, introducing them to a pool of critical thinkers to share their work and

encouraging a national conversation about creating work in local contexts.

Creation 21

This programme is focussed on performing artists at all stages of their careers and across a range of disciplines (dance, theatre, circus, spectacle, performance art, street arts), and aims to develop their practice, deepen their network, learn and showcase work. The project offers artistic development opportunities through national and International residencies, mentoring, coaching, residencies and 'in-progress' presentation opportunities.

There are 11 artists taking part in the residency programme with one artist from each participating County Arts Service: Wexford, Waterford, Kilkenny, Carlow, Wicklow, Kildare, South Dublin, two from Dublin City and one from Catalonia and another from the Balearics.

They encompass a broad scope of experience from senior to emerging artists to ensure a collaborative blend which will be to the benefit of all involved. To date the group have engaged in Professional development workshops and residencies working collaboratively to develop their practices. They are currently undertaking a residency in Catalonia.

Public Art Butler Gallery

Based on the construction cost of this project a budget of €50,000 was allocated for a Per Cent for Art piece. Three artists were invited to submit proposals and a selection committee was convened in March. Isabel Nolan was the successful artist and the project is progressing.

Mayfair Library

As part of the Mayfair Library Development and to preserve the social heritage of this former ballroom an exhibition space will be developed so that it appropriately reflects this unique and rich social history.

Visual Arts Ireland has agreed to project manage the Mayfair Library Per Cent for Art project and this is also progressing well.

Bookville Festival

The Bookville Festival is progressing well with all authors and artists selected to perform this year. The Bookville exhibition this year will take place

in the Watergate Theatre Gallery and a number of illustrators have been selected for the show.

Poetry Broadsheet Publication

The Kilkenny Poetry Broadsheet editor Elaine Feeney has made her selection of poems for this year's edition of the Broadsheet. She selected 14 poems from a total of 108 poems. Elaine Feeney lectures at The National University of Ireland, Galway, where she is also a founding member of the Tuam Oral History Project.

She has published three poetry collections including *The Radio was Gospel & Rise*. Feeney wrote the award-winning drama *WRoNGHEADED* commissioned by the Liz Roche Company.

Elaine said of her selection: *This selection of poems all moved me in some way, in a distinct aesthetic, a family moment, a snapshot of something frozen in time, family, relationships, love, loss, and all the in-between.*

April 2022



15,787
Items borrowed



10,076
visitors



1,076
Members

Spring into Storytime

Events	In Branch	Online	Offsite	Numbers
18	13	5	1	640

Our annual Spring into Storytime took place again this year in April, with 18 events both in our libraries and online. 640 children enjoyed the storytimes with staff and authors, and crafts workshops for children. Spring into Storytime is part of a national Right to Read Literacy campaign, promoting literacy and reading development across the country.



Ukrainian supports



A simple how-to guide has been developed in Ukrainian for anyone wishing to register to use the library. This is available in libraries and in the information hub in John Street. We recently invested in a selection of dual language books in English and Ukrainian and also some books in Ukrainian for children. These are available for borrowing in all of our libraries. We also offer a range of Ukrainian eBooks through [Borrowbox](#), International newspapers through [PressReader](#), and English and Ukrainian language courses on our [Transparent Languages](#) platform.



1,741
books
borrowed



81
members
registered



20
Schools
visited



18 Early
Learning
Centres visited

Mayfair Library update



- Demolitions and site clearance completed
- Works to extension on westside completed
- Foundation slab for east side extension poured
- Internal foundations poured



Online Services usage:



1,882

eAudiobooks borrowed
▼ 9% on 2021



5,056

eNewspapers borrowed
▼ 10% on 2021



969

eBooks borrowed
▼ 36% on 2021



1846

Online Course sessions
▲ 76% on 2021



601

eMagazines borrowed
▲ 168% on 2021



298

Songs accessed
▼ 65% on 2021



Digital Engagement

Our staff have prepared, recorded, edited and published **321** posts on our social media platforms in April. Our video views for the month were **2355**.

FINANCE

The expenditure by service division to the end of April is set out in table 1. Total Expenditure for the period was €28.78m compared with the annual budget of €93.9m.

Table 1	Actual YTD April 2022	Budget Full Year 2022
	€'000's	€'000's
Housing & Building	7,508	22,101
Road Transport & Safety	5,866	26,590
Water Services	2,246	7,255
Development Management	2,999	10,502
Environmental Services	3,404	12,178
Recreation & Amenity	2,509	7,175
Agriculture, Education, Health, Welfare	179	680
Miscellaneous Services	4,070	7,390
OVERALL TOTAL	28,781	93,871

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 as we go through the year. The bank overdraft facility was not utilised in the four-month period to the end of April. The Local Government Auditor has commenced the Audit for 2021.

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 12th 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 (Jan 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.