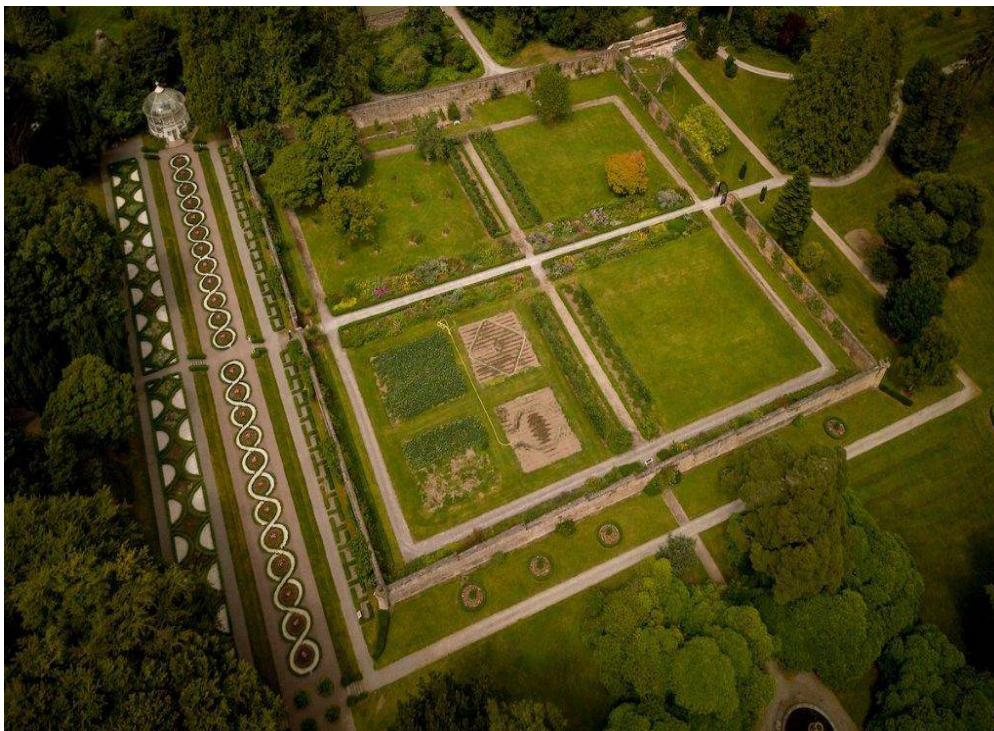


KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE CHILL CHAINNIGH



ANNUAL REPORT 2018



Adopted by Kilkenny County Council on Monday, 25th March, 2019.

STATEMENT OF AN CATHAOIRLEACH



It is a great privilege for me to introduce the Annual Report for 2018. This Annual Report details the wide variety of services provided by Kilkenny County Council to the people of Kilkenny City and County. We, the Council, play a key role in providing essential core services such as housing, roads, water, fire and emergency services and in supporting local communities through the arts, heritage, conservation, libraries and community and enterprise functions.

In 2018, the provision of additional housing continued to remain a priority for Kilkenny County Council. The Housing Task Force set up in 2017 continued to play an important in working with the Executive to progress much needed new housing units.

In 2018, the Council welcomed many dignitaries to the City & County both from home and abroad. This is an opportunity for us to showcase what is best in Kilkenny. In particular, we were pleased to formally twin with Formigine in Italy after a number of years developing links with them.

I also welcome the many awards bestowed on Kilkenny throughout the year. This is a recognition of the hard work of many communities across the County working in collaboration with Kilkenny County Council and many statutory agencies. These awards are a boost to many rural communities and also fosters greater community engagement and encourages other towns and villages to develop projects in their own communities. The allocation of funding under various schemes greatly assists in the development of our towns and villages. Schemes such as CLAR, Town & Village Renewal, local funding from Kilkenny County Council gives communities a much needed boost.

I thank all Elected Members and those who serve on the various committees and sub committees of the Council. They dedicate their time to the business of the Council and to representing their particular and general interests on the committees. The extensive range of business discussed and decided is outlined in the report and is testament to their ongoing dedication and service.

I would like to sincerely thank all the Council's staff for their work for the people of Kilkenny. I commend their commitment and dedication and we look forward to continued progress, working with all of the people of Kilkenny in making Kilkenny a better place to live in, work and visit.

Whilst we have come through very difficult times and many people are still experiencing the consequences of the recession, there is a slight increase in economic activity. Kilkenny can look forward to 2019 when we will see many important projects complete and new ones commence.

Finally, it has been my privilege as Cathaoirleach to lead my fellow Elected Members in meeting those challenging and sometimes controversial and often courageous decisions, as we work together with the Executive and staff for the betterment of Kilkenny and the communities that we all live in.

Cllr. Eamon Aylward
Cathaoirleach

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S STATEMENT



I am pleased to be associated with this Draft Annual Report for 2018 which outlines the extensive range of services provided directly or indirectly by this Council. Within the main body of this report the various activities and delivery of services and infrastructure projects being progressed by Kilkenny County are outlined.

It has been a challenging year from both a financial and staffing resources perspective in ensuring that an ever increasing range of high quality services are provided and maintained, new projects are delivered and empowering our communities to take an active role in developing their town, village or community.

There was a high level of commitment across all Departments to delivering the 2018 Service Delivery Plan and in achieving the Objectives of the Corporate Plan. Most areas met all of their stated objectives and where the level of achievement was less than 100% it will not have any impact on the Council meeting the objectives of its Corporate Plan. I am satisfied therefore that the Council substantially achieved the objectives as set out at the commencement of 2018 in the Service Delivery Plan and that it did so within the parameters set out in the 2018 budget.

I wish to pay tribute to the work being done at Municipal District level and at SPC level. These committees are invaluable in assisting the Council in pursuing its objectives and getting through its business. The commitment of the Councillors and external members is evident from the activities outlined in the report.

I would like to acknowledge the dedication and hard work of the Elected Members, my colleagues on the Management Team and the staff of the Council and for their support, valuable contribution, effort and commitment across the local authority in Kilkenny during 2018. This was particularly evident during our response to Storm Emma. It is our staff's dedication, commitment and their hard work that makes the Council such a progressive and vibrant organisation.

I am confident, given the abilities and spirit of cooperation that is consistently shown by the Elected Members and staff that we are in a position to meet the challenges that lie ahead. We can look forward to a positive 2019.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge and sincerely thank the Cathaoirleach Cllr. Eamon Aylward and his predecessor Cllr David Fitzgerald, the Municipal District Cathaoirligh - Cllr's Michael McCarthy and his predecessor Cllr John Brennan, Cllr Ger Frisby and his predecessor Cllr Fidelis Doherty and Mayor Peter Cleere and his predecessor Mayor Michael Doyle, who have distinguished themselves in their respective roles.

I commend this Annual Report for adoption by the Elected Members.

I am confident that it will give an overview to the people of Kilkenny and beyond, of the broad range of activities undertaken and of the Council's achievements in 2018.

Colette Byrne
Chief Executive

HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2018

- Launched report on Provision of Third Level campus in Kilkenny.
- Success achieved in National Enterprising Town Awards.
- Third successful Yulefest festival.
- Further development of St Patrick's Day Festivities as a civic event.
- "Visitkilkenny.ie" website redeveloped.
- Kilkenny named as Ireland's top "Foodie Destination" in 2018
- Hosted "Ras na mBan" cycling race for the 3rd time in Kilkenny.
- Minister announced €12.3m in development loan finance for regeneration of buildings in Abbey Quarter.
- Planning Approval in place for the Mayfair and Brew house buildings and for the Linear Park. €4.764m secured under the Urban Regeneration & Development Fund. It is expected works will commence in 2019.
- Work commenced in 2018 on the redevelopment of Evans Home as a home for the Butler Gallery, due for completion by end of 2019.
- 114 new housing units completed by Kilkenny County Council and Voluntary Bodies.
- 78 housing units purchased by Kilkenny County Council and Voluntary Bodies.
- 29 housing loans paid out to a value of €3.17m.
- 238 housing grants paid for adaptation to houses to the value of €1.73 m.
- 514 Private Rented Inspections carried out.
- Resettlement Working Group established for the Irish Refugee Protection Programme – resettled 20 Syrian families in 2018.
- Commenced review of Traveller Accommodation Programme- delivered 70 units under previous programme.
- Completed works on the Callan Rd Realignment to a value of €8.75m.
- Completed pavement improvement on N78 Coolbaun to Crettyard to a value of €2.37m.
- Retrofitted 2,200 public lights under energy efficiency funds in 2018.
- €61,750 approved for Callan under Rural Regeneration & Development Programme.
- Castlecomer Local Area Plan adopted.
- Commenced process for the 2020 -2026 City & County Development Plan.
- Adopted 3 variations to the current Development Plan.
- 9 Housing Developments taken in charge.
- Plans advanced to commence development of 2 LIHAF funded projects in the Western Environs, Kilkenny City and Ferrybank in 2019.
- Funding secured for various works in Woodstock Gardens – outdoor classroom and recreation trails.
- New fire station in Graiguenamanagh opened in May 2018.
- Major Emergency Management Plan reviewed in 2018.
- Effective response to Storm Emma.
- Civil Defence provided assistance to 15 communities for various events.
- Town & Village Health checks were undertaken in 8 locations.
- Funding of €727,280 provided to Communities under Town and Village Renewal Scheme & Healthy Ireland.
- Allocation of €303,465 for 11 projects under the CLAR Programme 2018 (*CLAR - Ceantair Laga Árd-Riachtanais*).
- Cultural Strategy for Kilkenny 2018 – 2022 launched in November 2018.
- 15% increase in library membership.
- Adopted the garden bumble bee as the County Emblem.
- Grant funding of €12,000 received to upgrade and develop digital spaces in the Libraries.
- Paid total of €79,600 to festivals in the City and County.
- Paid a total of €250,000 to groups under the Community and Cultural Grant Scheme.
- Progressed work on Thomastown Age Friendly Town Plan.
- 92 events held during Heritage week.
- Increase in use of social media platforms.

- Continuous emphasis on improving collection rate across all of our income sources and reducing the arrears.
- €2.264m collected in development levies.
- Small surplus achieved in the Revenue Budget in 2018.
- Kilkenny City retained its gold medal in the National Tidy Towns competition. Inistioge & Tullahought also retained their silver medals. Windgap received an Endeavour award. Kilkenny also received the South East Region Award.
- Inistioge received a gold medal in the Entente Florale organised by The European Association for Flowers and Landscape.
- Kilkenny City was assessed as cleaner than European norms and in the top ten in the IBAL league table.
- 126 Community groups actively participated in the National Spring Clean.
- A total of 1416 tonnes of recyclable material and 3047 tonnes of residual waste were collected at the Dunmore Recycling & Waste Disposal Centre with 55,000 customers using the facility.
- In 2018 a total of 1,419 environmental complaints were received, all of which were inspected and the appropriate action taken to resolve same.
- A total of 1,642 tonnes of glass and 109 tonnes of aluminium and steel were collected at the newly rebranded 44 individual Bring Centres within Kilkenny City and County.
- The Kilkenny County Council new Waste Management Bye-Laws were adopted.
- Under an Anti-dumping initiative, a Mattresses Amnesty Day was held at Dunmore Recycling Centre, the event was a huge success with a total of 550 old mattresses collected.
- Kilkenny County Council's Repair Directory was rolled out as a national on-line Repair Directory.
- Kilkenny County Council prepared a Noise Action Plan 2019-2023.
- 2018 was a very successful year in terms of re-homing dogs from the Carlow Kilkenny Dog Shelter, with in excess of 97% of all dogs finding an alternative suitable home.
- Ongoing provision of lifeguard service supervising in public bathing areas in the County for the months of June, July and August.
- Under the Local Authority Waters Programme (LAWPRO), the Catchment Assessment Team set up in 2018 and communities received grant aid.
- The Public Sector in Ireland is tasked with reducing their energy consumption by 33% by 2020. In 2018 Kilkenny County Council achieved 27% and is on track to reach the 2020 targets.
- Energy saving measures carried out at Callan Fire Station with the installation of a new LED lighting system and heating upgrade in Castlecomer Library.
- Forty-two bursaries and mentoring opportunities were awarded in 2018
- Innovative, comprehensive and high quality artistic programmes administered and managed across diverse art forms, including three publications and four videos
- Over 10,371 people participated and attended events organised by the Council's Arts Office
- Music Generation – As successful applicants for funding as part of the National Programme MG Kilkenny got underway in 2018
- Open Circle programme won a Special Award under the Creative Place category as part of the annual IPB Pride of Place Awards.
- Achieved targets set at national level for housing provision under Rebuilding Ireland.
- Succeeded in attracting funding for C4D in a partnership led by ITC.

ELECTORAL REPRESENTATIONS

Kilkenny County Council's membership consists of twenty-four Members, elected for a five-year term of office. The current Council was elected in May 2014 and membership at 31st December, 2018 is as follows:

		KILKENNY CITY EAST	
			
			
			
			
	Michael McCarthy (FF) <i>Buncrusha Street, Freshford, Co. Kilkenny.</i>		Breda Gardner (NP) <i>Cloghabrody, Thomastown, Co. Kilkenny.</i>
	Pat Fitzpatrick (FF), <i>Cloghpook, Ballyfoyle, Co. Kilkenny.</i>		David Kennedy (SF) <i>Ballyvool, Inistioge, Co. Kilkenny.</i>

			
			
			
			
	<p>David Fitzgerald (FG) <i>24 Patrick Street, Kilkenny.</i></p>		<p>Tomás Breathnach, (Lab) <i>Forge Road, Narabane, Kilmacow, Co. Kilkenny.</i></p>
	<p>Sean Tyrrell (SF) <i>2 Abhainn Rí, West Street, Callan, Co. Kilkenny.</i></p>		<p>Ger Frisby (FF) <i>Treanaree, Slieverue, Co. Kilkenny.</i></p>

MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

Kilkenny County Council's Management Structure is:

Colette Byrne
Chief Executive



Mary J. Mulholland
Director of Services

Housing, Community, Library, Arts, Heritage, Fire Service

Municipal District of Castlecomer



Tim Butler
Director of Services

Corporate, Human Resources, Roads & Transportation, Water Services, Communication, Health & Safety

Municipal District of Kilkenny City



Sean McKeown
Director of Services

Planning, Environment, Building Control, Parks, LEO/Economic Development, Tourism Marketing & Veterinary Services

Municipal District of Piltown



Martin Prendiville
Head of Finance

Finance, Information Technology, Facilities Management, Procurement & Special Projects



COMMITTEES & SUBSIDIARY BODIES

There is a legal obligation on Local Authorities to establish certain Committees such as Strategic Policy Committees. Local Authorities have discretionary authority to establish other Committees to assist them in performing their roles as Elected Members.

Strategic Policy Committees

Kilkenny County Council has a Strategic Policy Committee Scheme which parallels the lifespan of the newly elected Council 2014 to 2019. The role of the Strategic Policy Committees [SPC's] is to assist the Council in the formulation, development and review of policy. Their composition reflects the major functions of the Council within the broader context, are tailored to the size, membership and administrative resources of the Council and have one third of their membership drawn from sectors relevant to the committees' work.

The SPC's bring together both Elected Members and people actively working with social, economic, cultural and environmental bodies to develop and review policies related to Council's services. The SPC's provide Elected Members with external views as they discharge their strategic role in the development of the local authority, including their policy development and oversight roles within the local authority. The overall configuration and membership of the Kilkenny County Council's Strategic Policies in 2018 was as follows:

SPC 1: Economic Development Enterprise Support & Tourism

Elected Members [7]	Members from External Sectors [6]	
Pat Millea	Agriculture/Farming:	John Bambrick [IFA]
Pat Fitzpatrick	Development/Construction:	Mark Kennedy [Chambers Ireland]
Peter Cleere	Business/Commercial:	Deirdre Shine [Chambers Ireland]
Patrick McKee	Trade Union:	Phil Funchion [ICTU]
Patrick O'Neill	Social Inclusion:	Charles Wani [PPN]
Michael Doyle	Environment/Conservation	Theresa Delahunty [PPN]
John Brennan		

SPC 2: Infrastructure Policy, Transportation, Fire & Emergency Services

Elected Members [7]	Members from External Sectors [6]	
Matt Doran	Agriculture/Farming:	Michael Rice [IFA]
Eamon Aylward	Business/Commercial	Gary Graham [Chambers Ireland]
Michael McCarthy	Development/Construction	Barry Lynch [Chambers Ireland]
Fidelis Doherty	Trade Union	Patrick Kavanagh [ICTU]
Michael Doyle	Community/Voluntary	Gerard Ferris [PPN]
Sean Tyrrell	Social Inclusion	Mairead Phelan [PPN]
Tomás Breathnach		

SPC 3: Planning & Development Policy, Heritage, Community Arts & Culture

Elected Members [7]	Members from External Sectors [6]	
Patrick McKee	Agriculture/Farming	Paul O'Brien [IFA]
Pat Fitzpatrick	Business/Commercial	John Hurley [Chambers Ireland]
Pat Dunphy	Development/Construction:	Denis Carroll [Chambers Ireland]
David Kennedy	Environment/Conservation	Mary T. Brennan [PPN]
Malcolm Noonan	Community/Voluntary	John Bourke [PPN]
John Brennan	Social Inclusion:	Martin Brennan [PPN]
Andrew McGuinness		

SPC 4: Housing

Elected Members [6]	Members from External Sectors [5]	
Andrew McGuinness	Development/Construction	Brian Dunlop [Chambers Ireland]
Joe Malone	Environment/Conservation:	Declan Murphy [An Taisce]
Michael McCarthy	Trade Union	Yvonne Moriarty [ICTU]
Melissa O'Neill	Community/Voluntary:	Mary Egan [PPN]
Fidelis Doherty	Social Inclusion:	Noel Sherry [PPN]
Maurice Shortall		

SPC 5: Environmental Protection, Water Services & Energy

Elected Members [6]	Members from External Sectors [5]	
Ger Frisby	Agriculture/Farming:	James Murphy [IFA]
Joe Malone	Development/Construction:	Clare Murray [Chambers Ireland]
Pat Dunphy	Business/Commercial:	Owen Sweeney [Chambers Ireland]
Tomás Breathnach	Environment/Conservation:	Brian Hamilton [PPN]
Breda Gardner	Community/Voluntary:	Shem Caulfield [PPN]
Maurice Shortall		

MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL

MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL

The Council holds Ordinary meetings on a monthly basis. It also holds special meetings to consider and adopt its annual budget. The Council may hold as many meetings as it considers necessary to discharge its functions.

PLENARY MEETINGS OF KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL

Number of Meetings held in 2018: 23

Ordinary Monthly Meetings.....11, Workshops.....6 & Special Meetings.....6

- Adoption of Budget
- Amendment to Record of Protected Structures
- Amenity Grants
- Annual Financial Statement & Audit Committee Report on AFS
- Annual Report 2017
- Anti-Social Behaviour Policy
- Appointments of Members to SPC, Committees and other Boards
- Approval for 2019 Bank Overdraft Facility.
- Approval of Loan from Housing Finance Agency for Housing Loan purposes.
- Arts Act Grants
- Audit Committee Annual Report 2017
- Capital Budget 2018 - 2020
- CFRAMS [*Catchment Flood Risk Assessment & Management*]
- Chief Executive's Monthly/Quarterly Reports
- Circular Letter LG 02/2018: Training Needs of Elected Members
- Climate Adaptation Plan
- Community & Cultural Facilities Capital Grant Scheme 2018 - 2020
- Draft County Kilkenny Waste Management Bye-Laws 2018
- Draft Protocol - Civic Honours
- Election of Cathaoirleach & Leas Cathaoirleach.
- Festival & Event Grants 2018
- Graveyard Grants 2018
- Homeless Services Policy
- Housing Capital Programme – Bridging Loan facilities
- Kilkenny County Council Cultural Strategy [*Arts, Heritage, Libraries*] 2018-2022
- LCDC Annual Report 2017
- LEO Enterprise Activity in 2017
- Litter Management Plan 2018-2020
- Local Government Audit Service – Statutory Audit Report
- Local Government Funding Baseline Review
- Local Property Tax
- National Planning Framework
- Part 8 Reports for Various Projects
- Performance Indicators Report 2017
- Road Works Programme 2018
- Section 85 Agreements with other Local Authorities.
- Service Delivery Plan 2018
- Severe Weather Report
- Small Business Vacant Premises Incentive Scheme
- St. Patrick's Day Festivities
- Submissions to Local Area Plans
- Taking in Charge of Housing Estates.
- Town & Village Renewal Update
- Update on Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy [RSES].
- Variations/Material Contravention to County and City Development Plans
- Winter Maintenance Plan

MEETING OF COMMITTEES, SUB COMMITTEES

MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF KILKENNY MEETINGS

Number of Ordinary/Monthly Meetings held in 2018: 13

- Adoption of Draft Schedule of Municipal Works including Draft Road Works Scheme.
- Adoption of Schedule of Municipal Works.
- Budget Plan for 2018 for the Municipal District of Kilkenny.
- Callan Draft Local Area Plan
- Car Parking in the City
- Confirmation on LIS funding
- Election of Cathaoirleach & Leas Cathaoirleach.
- General Municipal Allocation – Funding Allocation.
- Housing and Planning updates.
- Kilkenny City Bus Service – Update on proposals
- Mobility Management Plan.
- National Commemorative Programme 2018 to 2023.
- Re-establishment of City Wall Steering Committee
- Review of Community and Cultural Facilities Grant Scheme.
- Road Works Scheme 2018 & 3 Year Multi Annual Programme
- Roads issues in the Municipal District Area.
- Signage in Kilkenny City.
- Talbot's Tower – Recommencement/Completion of Works
- Thomastown Culvert
- Thomastown Draft Local Area Plan
- Town Hall Project
- Town Twinning.
- Update on repairs to clock tower

Presentation at the Meeting:

- Address by Deputy John Paul Phelan, Minister of State for Local Government and Electoral Reform on Local Government Reform and Electoral Area's

MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF CASTLECOMER MEETINGS

Number of Meetings held in 2018: 14 & Number of Deputations Received: 1

- Bus Shelter – Johnstown.
- Buy and Renewal Scheme and Repair and Lease Scheme.
- Castlecomer Barracks.
- Castlecomer Local Area Plan.
- Castlecomer Riverside Pedestrian Bridge.
- CLAR Programme.
- Commercial Premises Paint Scheme.
- Community and Cultural Facilities Grants Scheme.
- Community based CCTV Scheme.
- Community Enhancement Grant Programme.
- Community Grants Information Evenings.
- Community Involvement in Road Works Programme.
- Crosshill Cemetery.
- Draft Litter Management Plan 2018 -2020
- Driver Feedback Signs.
- Eir – replacement of leaning / dangerous poles.
- Election of Cathaoirleach & Leas Cathaoirleach.
- Flood relief schemes – Parksgrove and Freshford.
- Galmoy Mines and Future Development at the Site.
- Galmoy Rural Water Supply Scheme
- Gateway Scheme.
- General Municipal Allocation and Multi Annual Allocation.
- Hedge Cutting and Roadside Trees.
- Housing Developments / Unfinished Estates.
- Housing Need / Vacant Housing Unit / Heating Systems in Local Authority Houses.
- Illegal Dumping / Replacement of Litter Bins.
- Irish Water – Attendance at Municipal District meetings.
- Local Improvement Scheme.
- Municipal District Boundary Revision.
- Pedestrian crossings – Ballyragget and Castlecomer.
- Policing Issues – Attendance of An Garda Síochána.
- Provision of Broadband and National Broadband Plan.
- Provision of Passing Bays.
- Public lighting.
- Public Water and Waste Water Schemes.
- Recycling Bring Centres.
- Review of the roads network after severe weather.
- River Goul.
- Road Works Programme – Progress Reports and Roads Issues.
- Rural Regeneration and Rapid Schemes.
- Safety at Junctions.
- Schedule and adoption of Municipal District Works for 2018.
- Speeding in Clogh and other Villages.
- Street Cleaning.
- Town and Village Renewal Scheme.
- Urlingford Fire Station / Fire Brigade call out Insurance Cover.
- Village Health Checks.
- Winter Services Plan 2018 - 2019.

Presentation at the Meeting:

- The Synergy Network Group Castlecomer in relation to broadband provision in Castlecomer.

MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF PILTOWN MEETINGS

Number of Meetings held in 2018: 20

including AGM in June & Budget Meeting in November and Joint Meetings 7

- 1918-1921 Commemorative Programme
- 24/7 Cardiac Service for Waterford
- Albatross Site, New Ross
- Bottle Banks at Bigwood
- Bus Stops / Shelters – Piltown Municipal District
- CLÁR funding & Submissions
- Community Involvement in Roadworks Schemes & Local Improvement Schemes
- Draft Litter Management Plan
- Draft Waste Management Bye-laws
- Educational Facilities in the South East Region
- Ferrybank District Centre
- Ferrybank Neighbourhood Park & Playground
- Festivals & Events Supports Grant Scheme
- Flooding – Flood Investigation Works
- Granny Recycling Centre
- Grass Recycling
- Housing Developments & Delivery / Unfinished Estates / Taking in Charge Process
- Kilkenny Greenway
- Local Discretionary Fund Allocation
- Meetings with TII
- Mullinavat Playground & Amenity Area
- N24 Piltown Bypass – Tower Road Junction Improvements & Footpath
- N25 New Ross Bypass
- N25 Safety at Junctions
- Naming of the New Bridge on the N25 (New Ross Bypass)
- National Broadband Plan Updates
- National Planning Framework
- National Spring Clean
- Newfoundland Ireland Festival
- North Quays Strategic Development Zone
- Parking at Boys School, Ferrybank
- Piltown Village Traffic Calming / Management Scheme
- Poulanassy Waterfall
- Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy & Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan
- Restoration Improvement Plan 2019-2021
- Roadworks Programme, Winter Maintenance & Roads Issues
- Rural Regeneration Development Fund
- Severe Weather Events & Storm Related Issues
- Speeding in Mooncoin & other villages
- Traffic / Speed Surveys
- Urban Regeneration Development Fund

JOINT MEETINGS:

New Ross Municipal District:	2
Waterford Metropolitan District:	4
Carrick-on-Suir Municipal District:.....	1

SITE VISIT

Site visit was arranged to the N25 New Ross Bypass.

SPC 1: Economic Development Enterprise Support & Tourism

Number of Meetings Held	Main Policy Issues Considered
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Adoption and monitoring of the delivery of the LEO Local Enterprise Development Plan for 2018, on behalf of the Council [per SLA with Enterprise Ireland];▪ Monitoring of the economic elements of the LECP Annual Action Plan 2017 – 2018;▪ Nominations to the LECP Advisory Group;▪ South East Action Plan for Jobs.▪ The Abbey Quarter;▪ Vacant Premises Incentive Scheme;

SPC 2: Infrastructure Policy, Transportation, Fire & Emergency Services

Number of Meetings Held	Main Policy Issues Considered
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Car Parking▪ Electric Vehicles▪ Fire Service – water supplies/hydrants▪ Major Emergency Plan▪ Mobility Plan▪ Road Safety Plan▪ Winter Maintenance Plan

SPC 3: Planning & Development, Heritage, Community, Arts & Culture.

Number of Meetings Held	Main Policy Issues Considered
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ All Ireland Pollinator Plan▪ Architectural Conservation & Record of Protected Structures▪ Callan & Thomastown Local Area Plan Reviews▪ County Development Plan Review▪ ePlanning Update▪ Hinkley Point C Nuclear Power Station – Kilkenny County Council conduit for public consultation▪ Kilkenny County Council Development Contribution Scheme▪ Kilkenny Cultural Strategy 2018-2022▪ National Planning Framework & Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy▪ Our Public Libraries 2022▪ Solar Energy▪ Vacant & Derelict Sites

SPC 4: Housing

Number of Meetings Held	Main Policy Issues Considered
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Annual Report 2017▪ Capital Programme 2017 – 2021▪ Homelessness and monthly analysis▪ Housing Needs Assessment 2018▪ Kilkenny Strategic Plan for People with a Disability Strategy 2016 – 2020▪ Over the Shop Residential Development - Living Cities Initiative▪ Refugee Resettlement Programme▪ Repair & Leasing Scheme▪ Review of the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2014 -2018▪ Tenant Handbook

SPC5: Environmental Protection, Water Services and Energy

Number of Meetings Held	Main Policy Issues Considered
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Action Plan for SPC 5▪ Climate Adaptation Plan▪ Draft Animal Welfare Charter▪ Draft Horse Bye Laws▪ Dunmore Civic Amenity Site▪ Environmental Noise Regulations – KCC – Implementation Plan 2019/2023▪ LAWCO – Local Authority Water Communities Office▪ Litter Management Plan 2018 -2020▪ Solar Energy▪ Use of Glyphosphate▪ Waste Management – Draft Waste Bye Laws

Kilkenny Joint Policing Committee

Number of Meetings Held	Main Policy Issues Considered
4 & 1 Public Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ “Operation City Safe” and “Ask for Angela”.▪ Animal Welfare Issues.▪ CCTV.▪ Garda Youth Diversion Project.▪ Policing Plan.▪ Presentation by the Criminal Assets Bureau▪ Presentations by An Garda Síochána on Crime Statistics, Traffic and Road Safety.▪ Purple Flag Status for Kilkenny City and Safer Socialising.▪ Update on Kilkenny Road Safety Engineering Works.



CIVIC OCCASIONS & EVENTS 2018



Kilkenny County Council incurred expenditure in the amount of €40,000 in 2018 for the hosting of civic occasions and events. The following is a representation of the events which were hosted by the Cathaoirleach and Mayor during 2018.



Tree Planting in Inistioge by Minister for Rural and Community Development, Deputy Michael Ring T.D.



Opening of new Carpark in Inistioge by Minister of State for Local Government and Electoral Reform, Deputy John Paul Phelan, T.D.



Reception for Board of Heritage Council



BREXIT BREAKFAST CONFERENCE 18TH MAY, 2018 - GUEST SPEAKER: TÁNAISTE. DEPUTY SIMON COVENEY T.D.



Launch of Fairytale Festival



Cathaoirleach Reception for L'Arche Kilkenny



Cathaoirleach's Reception for Vicky Phelan



Official Opening of Callan Road Realignment Scheme N76 by Minister of State for Local Government and Electoral Reform, Deputy John Paul Phelan, T.D.



CIVIC OCCASIONS & EVENTS 2018



Launch of Cultural Strategy



Switch On of Xmas Lights
Kilkenny City



Savour Kilkenny Festival Goes Green



Visit to James Stephens Army Barracks by
Cathaoirleach and Elected Members



Civic Reception for Cartoon Saloon



National Enterprise Awards



NATIONAL COMMEMORATION DAY REGIONAL CEREMONY
JULY 2018



Cathaoirleach & Mayor
Greet the Hungarian
Ambassador



Unveiling of WW1 Monument at Linear Walk, Kilkenny City

DIRECTORATE OF CORPORATE & INFRASTRUCTURE

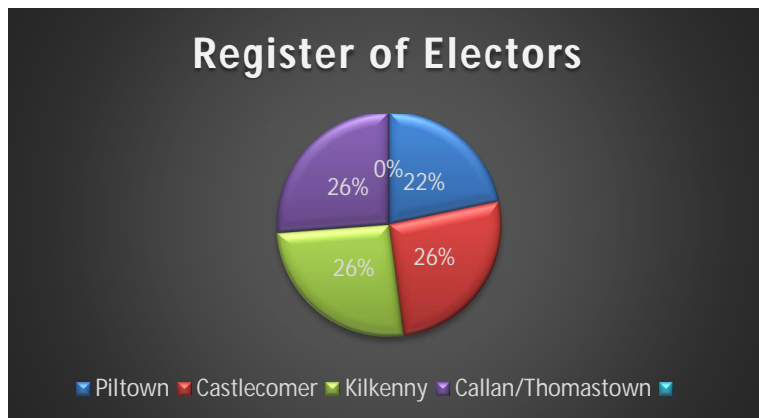
Director of Services: Mr. Tim Butler

CORPORATE SERVICES

REGISTER OF ELECTORS

The Annual Register is published on 1st February each year and is a list of all persons aged 18 years or over, resident in the State, who are entitled to vote in Elections to the Dail, European Assembly, Presidential, Local Elections and Referenda.

The total number on the Register on the 31st of December 2018 is 73,353.



There are 24 members in total elected to Kilkenny County Council.

The Electoral areas are as follows:

- Castlecomer
- Kilkenny East
- Kilkenny West
- Piltown

Each of the Electoral Areas have 6 members.

The Register is available in Post Offices, Libraries and Garda Stations.

Any member of the public can check if they are on the register on the following website: www.checktheregister.ie. or can contact the Corporate Services department in the Council.

ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE 2018

Kilkenny was transformed into a sea of green and gold from March 16th to 19th to celebrate St. Patrick's Weekend Festivities. The 2018 programme was launched on Thursday, 15th of February in the stunning surrounds of the Medieval Mile Museum where the assembled crowd were treated to wonderful traditional music and dance by locally talented musicians and dancers.

At the heart of the Kilkenny St. Patrick's Day celebrations, is our annual parade which is a civic event hosted and funded by Kilkenny County Council. Local community groups and organisations, as well as clubs, schools and businesses take part in what is always a fantastic day of celebration and entertainment, celebrating all that is great about Ireland and the Irish, at home and across the world. The theme of the Parade for 2018 was "Kilkenny Through the Ages". The Grand Marshall for 2018 was the prominent media presenter, entrepreneur and Kilkenny native, Bobby Kerr.



Kilkenny County Council allocated funding to the amount of €35,000 for the St. Patrick's Day Parade in 2018.

TOWN TWINNING

Current Twinning Agreements/Arrangements with Kilkenny City & County

- Kilkenny is currently twinned with Moret sur Loing (France), Kilkenny (Minnesota), U.S.A., Suzhou (China) and Malbork Poland.
- Kilkenny County Council has a friendship arrangement with Leicestershire County Council.
- Castlecomer, Co. Kilkenny is twinned with Pennevenan (France).
- Piltown Co. Kilkenny, is twinned with Mellac in France.
- Kilkenny has developed a relationship over the last few years with Formigine (Italy) through an initial contact via the Urbact LINKS project. The relationship was principally fostered through Ossory Youth. Kilkenny finalised the twinning arrangements with Formigine with the signing of a Twinning Charter on St. Patrick's Day 2018.



In September 2018, following an invitation from the Mayor of Formigine, Maria Costi, the Mayor of the Municipal District of Kilkenny City, Cllr. Peter 'Chap' Cleere accompanied by a delegation travelled to Formigine, Italy, for the "Irlanda in Festa" Festival and promoted some Kilkenny produce.

Expenditure of €5,637.78 was incurred by Kilkenny County Council on Twinning Arrangements in 2018.

Evans Home

The €6m refurbishment of Evan's Home commenced in June 2018. The refurbished building will serve as the new home for the Butler Gallery who currently operate from the basement in Kilkenny Castle. Relocating to Evan's Home provides an opportunity to bring art to the forefront of life in Kilkenny City and County. The Evan's Home site dates back to the early 1200s and was originally part of the adjoining St. John's Priory. The site served as the first Military Barracks in the City replaced eventually by the James Stephens Barracks on the Castlecomer Road. Joseph Evans then built an Alms House on the site and the building/site was used in that capacity up to the early 1980's and has remained vacant since then. Contract works on the site will conclude by the end of 2019 and the Butler Gallery will move to their new home in early 2020.



Kilkenny World War 1 Memorial

The Kilkenny World War 1 Memorial was unveiled on the 15th July, 2018. Located at Noonan's Folly on the River Nore Linear Park the Memorial was designed and constructed by Kilkenny County Council in close consultation with the local, voluntary World War 1 Memorial Committee.



Town Hall Clock

The Town Hall clock is a key feature of Kilkenny City. In 2018, nearly 43 years since the Town Hall was destroyed by a fire in 1985, refurbishment works were undertaken to the clock faces and clock mechanics. The cosmetic works to the clock faces are clearly visible and ensure that clock is appropriately presented and maintained.



STORM EMMA

Storm Emma hit the Country from 28th February to 5th March 2018. Many parts the County were brought to a standstill for much of the period with snow lying in all areas but particularly in higher areas in the North and South and East of the County.

The Severe Weather Response Plan was activated for the period of the storm. Great credit is due to our outdoor staff and Fire Service who gritted and cleared roads and footpaths in all areas. Also acknowledged is the assistance of other agencies including the Army, Civil Defence, the Gardaí, farming community and local volunteers / communities who cleared roads, transported patients and medical staff and generally helped neighbours during this period.



Coppengh, Graiguenamanagh



Urlingford



James Green

YULEFEST 2018

In its third year Yulefest has grown from strength to strength and ran for a four week period from launch in Butler House on 29th November right up to the New Year. The lighting up of the city took place on 1st December with additional lights being added at Yulefest venues. Yulefest is a County wide festival and the PPN funded many communities throughout the County for craft, food and community events in the towns and villages. This year a number of charities benefited as partners to key events and much needed funding was donated to Cois Nore, Amber Refuge, Good Shephard Centre and the High Hopes Choir.



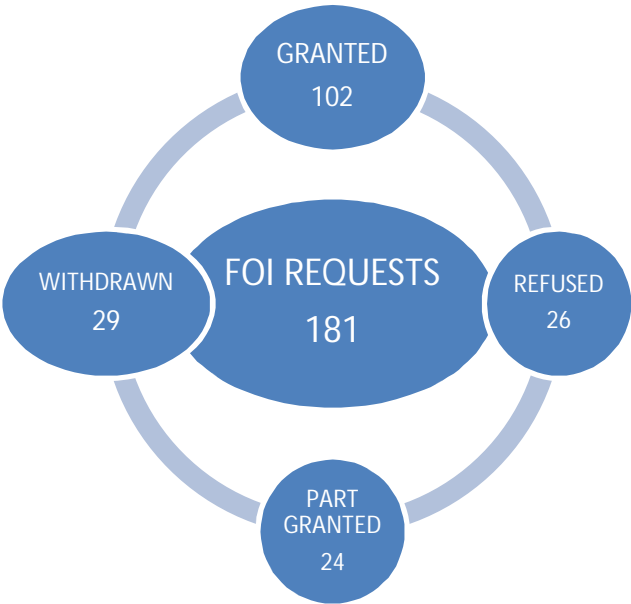
Highlights of the festival included:

- Christmas Tree Festival in St. Canice's Cathedral
- Fire Pois Street Entertainment
- Craft Fair
- Medieval Mile Run with in excess of 1,400 entrants
- Flagship Concerts – High Hopes Choir & the Carlow Ukulele Band, High Kings, Finbar Furey and Vladimir's Viennese Christmas

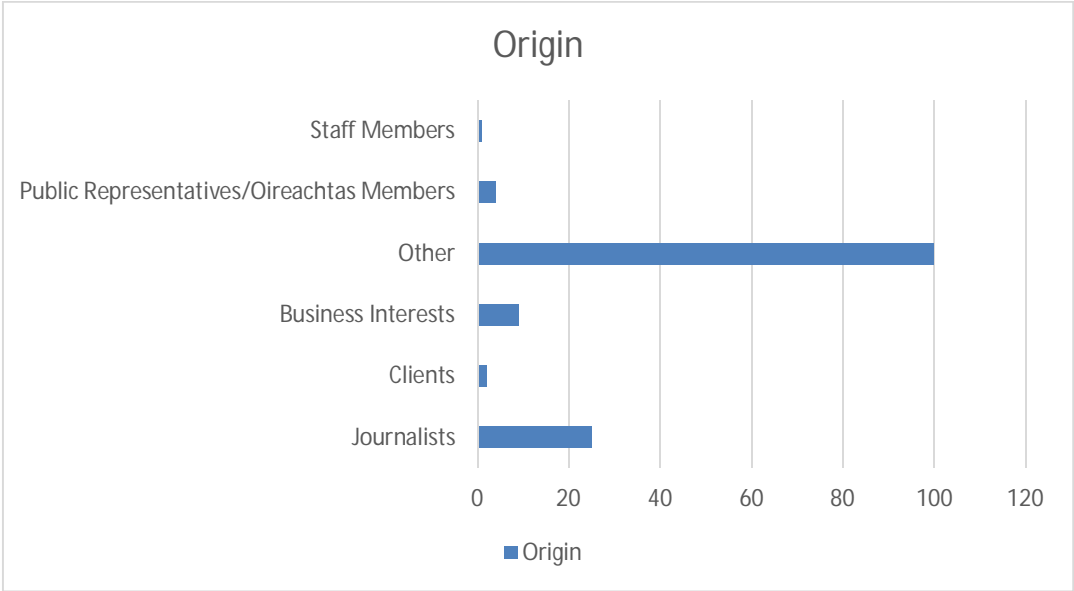
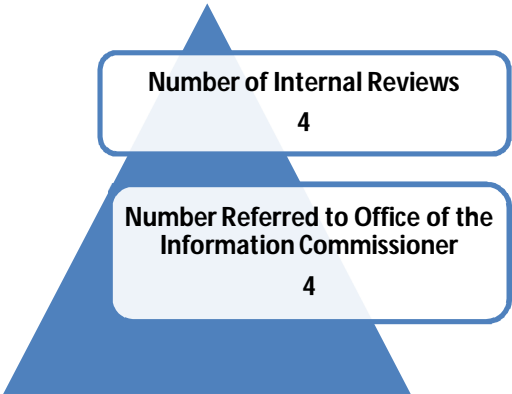
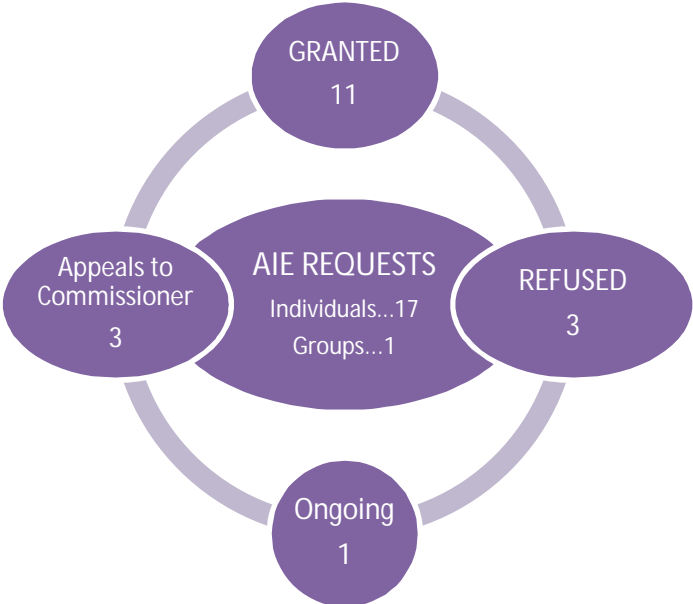
Another flagship highlight was the hugely successful Silent Night – a play re-enacting the Christmas Day Truce in the First World War, 25th December, 1914 held in James Stephens Military Barracks, Kilkenny. This featured on the RTE Radio 1 Sean O' Rourke Show.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS



AIE REQUESTS



COMMUNICATIONS & SOCIAL MEDIA 2017

The Council communicates its message through a number of outlets including newspapers, radio and social media. Social Media is playing a growing importance in the Council's communications.

The Council directly manages 15 websites in addition to overseeing a number of externally provided sites and services.

The cumulative number of page views for the Council's websites in 2018 was 2,761,552 an increase of 1.7% over the 2017 figure of 2,714,698.

	2016	2017	2018
kilkennycoco.ie	1,108,658	1,334,687	1,484,003
visitkilkenny.ie	1,032,563	1,003,774	826,894
kilkenny.ie	155,373	169,919	183,222
kilkennylibrary.ie	122,892	150,855	224,550
kilkennycity.ie	37,653	26,570	14,423
kilkennyheritage.ie	15,470	10,023	11,397
investkilkenny.ie	9,131	11,296	9,221
kilkennyagefriendlycounty.ie	4,486	3,654	4,384
kmhp.ie	5,202	1,682	1,149
rhymmerag.net	1,235	2,238	2,309
	2,492,663	2,714,698	2,761,552

During 2018 total website page views increased by 48,854 compared with 2017. (1.7%).

The total number of Face book followers across all of the Council's Face book accounts is 40,212 an increase of 13% on the 2017 figure of 35,491

	2016	2017	2018
Tourism	20,000	28,121	30,599
Main County Council	1,695	3,676	5,586
Kilkenny Heritage	2,150	2,535	2,592
Environmental Awareness	282	588	706
Invest Kilkenny	222	322	398
Dunmore Recycling	182	249	331
	24,531	35,491	40,212

Total Facebook Followers increased by 4,721 people.

Kilkenny County Council Main Facebook page total reach

(reach is the number of times a post on the main Kilkenny County Council Facebook page was viewed)

The total reach for the primary Kilkenny County Council Facebook page was 1,637,521 an increase of 179% on the 2017 figure 587,742.

Quarter 1	116,679	112,941	505,218
Quarter 2	24,869	96,449	241,558
Quarter 3	77,610	86,611	368,074
Quarter 4	26,887	291,741	522,671
	246,045	587,742	1,637,521

Reach for primary Facebook page increased by 1,049,779 post views

The total number of Twitter followers across all of the Council's Twitter accounts is 24,618 an increase of 8% on 2017 figure of 22,719

Twitter Followers

	2016	2017	2018
Kilkenny	6,754	7,545	7,906
Visit Kilkenny	4,731	5,439	5,965
Kilkenny Notices	3,358	3,908	4,394
Kilkenny Arts Office	2,132	2,360	2,506
Invest Kilkenny	1,630	1,837	1,947
Kilkenny Library	1,391	1,630	1,900
	19,996	22,719	24,618

Total Twitter follower number has increased by 1,899 people.

MEMBERS TRAINING & EXPENSES

DATE	CONFERENCE	LOCATION	COUNCILLOR	FEES	EXPENSES
5 th to 7 th January	Celtic Conference: The Finance Act 2017	Louth	Michael McCarthy, Peter Cleere, Sean Tyrrell	€300.00	€1,473.40
12 th to 14 th January	IPPB: Local Property Tax 2018 – Defining the Role of the Councillor	Donegal	John Brennan, Maurice Shortall	€290.00	€76.98
2 nd to 4 th February	Celtic Conference: EU Cohesion Policy 2018	Louth	David Kennedy, Eamon Aylward	€200.00	€97.02
16 th to 18 th February	Celtic Conference: Nursing Homes Support Scheme	Cork	Breda Gardner	€100.00	€336.87
22 nd February	AILG: Information on Local & National Media	Westmeath	Breda Gardner	€100.00	€306.19
17 th February	AILG: How to Convey your Message as a Member of your Council through Local & National Media	Carlow	Malcolm Noonan, Maurice Shortall, Mary Hilda Cavanagh, Pat Fitzpatrick, Michael McCarthy, Eamon Aylward, Pat Dunphy, Peter Cleere, John Brennan, Fidelis Doherty, Melissa O'Neill	€1,200.00	€900.83
9 th to 11 th March	Celtic Conference: New Affordable Housing Scheme	Louth	Andrew McGuinness	€100.00	€72.73
23 rd to 25 th March	Celtic Conference: The Eight Amendment	Cork	Ger Frisby	€100.00	€28.70
6 th to 7 th April	LAMA Spring Training Conference	Donegal	David Kennedy, Pat O'Neill, Mary Hilda Cavanagh, Ger Frisby, Joe Malone, John Brennan, Maurice Shortall, Sean Tyrrell, Michael Doyle, Mick McCarthy, Breda Gardner, Peter Cleere, Matt Doran, Pat Millea, Eamon Aylward, Andrew McGuinness, Patrick McKee, Pat Fitzpatrick	€2,880.00	€10,083.19
12 th to 13 th April	AILG Annual Conference	Waterford	MH Cavanagh, David Kennedy, Joe Malone, John Brennan, Maurice Shortall, Peter Cleere, Michael McCarty, Sean Tyrrell, Breda Gardner, Michael Doyle, Fidelis Ger Frisby, Pat Dunphy, Pat Fitzpatrick, Pat Millea	€2,295.00	€3,390.78
19 th May	AILG: A Briefing on Joint Policing Committees	Mayo	Pat Millea, John Brennan, Pat Fitzpatrick, Maurice Shortall	€400.00	1,720.53
24 th May	AILG: A Briefing on Joint Policing Committees	Clare	Joe Malone, Peter Cleere, Michael McCarthy, Ger Frisby, Breda Gardner, David Kennedy, Andrew McGuinness, Mary Hilda Cavanagh, Melissa O'Neill	€900.00	€3,258.08
19 th June	AILG: Training Irish Water	Kerry	Joe Malone, David Kenney, Michael McCarthy, Andrew McGuinness, Ger Frisby, Peter Cleere, Maurice Shortall, Pat Fitzpatrick, John Brennan, Pat Millea, Eamon Aylward	€1,100.00	€5,069.72

DATE	CONFERENCE	LOCATION	COUNCILLOR	FEES	EXPENSES
23 rd June	AILG: Training Irish Water	Louth	Melissa O'Neill, Malcolm Noonan, Pat Dunphy, Matt Doran, Mary Hilda Cavanagh, Michael Doyle	€600.00	€2,096.41
22 nd to 27 th July	MacGill Summer School	Donegal	Pat Millea	€0.00	€700.00
6 th to 7 th July	IPT: Local Electoral Area Boundary Commission	Donegal	Pat Fitzpatrick, Patrick McKee	€290.00	€1,016.59
3 rd to 5 th August	IPI: Changing Trends & Approaches to Drugs & Alcohol	Kerry	Mary Hilda Cavanagh	€145.00	€379.85
15 th September	AILG: Planning on Line & National Building Management Project	Cork	Andrew McGuinness, Breda Gardner, Sean Tyrrell, Melissa O'Neill, John Brennan, Pat Millea, Mary Hilda Cavanagh, David Kennedy, Joe Malone, Pat Fitzpatrick, Peter Cleere, Pat Dunphy, Mick McCarthy	€1,300.00	€3,633.31
27 th to 29 th September	LAMA Autumn Training 2018	Kerry	Andrew McGuinness, Michael McCarthy, Michael Doyle, Joe Malone, Sean Tyrrell, Ger Frisby, Eamon Aylward, Matt Doyle, Melissa O'Neill, Pat Dunphy, Patrick McKee, Maurice Shortall, Pat Fitzpatrick, Pat Millea	€2,520.00	6,241.281
12 th to 13 th October	AILG: Training Local Authority Finance & Budgeting	Sligo	Mary Hilda Cavanagh	€55.00	€481.21
18 th October	AILG: Training Local Authority Finance & Budgeting	Limerick	Eamon Aylward, Fidelis Doherty, David Kennedy, Joe Malone, Pat Dunphy, Maurice Shortall, Melissa O'Neill	€385.00	€2,645.76
25 th to 26 th October	AILG Autumn Training	Monaghan	Michael Doyle, Pat Dunphy, Melissa O'Neill, Patrick O'Neill, Eamon Aylward	€675.00	€2,529.97
15 th November	AILG: Training General Data Protection	Kilkenny	Maurice Shortall, Pat Fitzpatrick, John Brennan, Peter Cleere, David Kennedy, Joe Malone, Malcolm Noonan, Pat Dunphy, Fidelis Doherty, Ger Frisby, Eamon Aylward	€605.00	€267.96
17 th November	AILG: Training General Data Protection	Kildare	Matt Doran	€55.00	€374.20
23 rd to 25 th November	Celtic Conferences: Entitlement to Health Services	Cork	Matt Doran	€100.00	€600.00
14 th to 16 th December	Celtic Conferences: EU Cohesion Policy 2014 – 2020	Louth	Michael Doyle	€100.00	€204.07
14 th to 16 th December	IPI: Local Government Restoration of Town Councils	Wexford	Fidelis Doherty	€145.00	€122.36
				€16,940.00	€50,707.99

HUMAN RESOURCES

The Human Resources Department deals with the following areas:

- Human Resource Strategy
- Workforce Planning
- Recruitment and Selection
- Payroll and Superannuation
- Employee Training and Development
- Performance Management
- Leadership Development
- Equality
- Diversity Management
- Work-Life Balance
- Industrial Relations
- Employee Health, Safety and Welfare

Staffing Levels

The number of staff employed at 31st December, 2018 was 664 (*Headcount*) or 550 (*Whole-Time-Equivalent*).

Recruitment

The implementation of the Indoor Work Force Plan was completed in 2018.

There was a total of 30 competitions held during the year which resulted in 93 new staff (indoor & outdoor) being employed in the organisation.

Summer Student & Lifeguard Programme

The Council employed 52 students during the summer months of 2018 to cover the area of Litter Picking, Gardening and other seasonal work under this programme.

There were also 15 Lifeguards employed throughout the County during the summer period of 2018.

Shared Payroll & Superannuation Service

This service is delivered by My Pay the Local Government Shared Services Provider from its offices in Portlaoise Co Laois. Kilkenny County Council successfully completed the transition of the Superannuation function for the Council to the Shared Service Centre in 2018.

Training & Development

Kilkenny County Council is committed to ensuring the professional and personal development of all employees. Training and development is aimed at helping employees to become more effective in their jobs and developing their potential, while also meeting the goals and objectives of the Council. A comprehensive training programme was delivered in 2018 which incorporated Health & Safety training, Third level Learning Programmes and various other in house training and workshops. A sample of the training programmes provided in 2018 is as follows:

- Abrasive Wheels
- Confined Spaces
- Data Protection Training
- Dealing with Difficult Violent & Aggressive Behaviour
- Forklift Training
- Local Government Studies
- Location of Underground Services
- Manual Handling
- Occupational First Aid
- Safe pass
- Safe use of Ladder
- Staff Induction Training

Kilkenny County Council endeavours, subject to available resources, to facilitate and support employees wishing to pursue Third Level Courses that are relevant to and contribute to their role and the business need of the Council.

Attendance Management

Kilkenny County Council continued to manage absenteeism levels in accordance with Attendance Management Policy.

Equality and Supporting Diversity

Kilkenny County Council is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to a broad range of policies, practices and procedures which aim to recognise individual contribution and performance, develop each individual's capability and give everyone an equal opportunity to use his/her talent and realise his/her potential.

Kilkenny County Council supports the employment of people with disabilities and meets the target as set out by the Department of the Housing, Planning & Local Government.

INTERNAL AUDIT

The Audit Committee is made up of three external members and two elected members.

Its role is:

- To review the Council's financial reporting practices and procedures
- To foster the development of best practice in the local authority internal audit function
- To review the Council's financial reports and to report on its findings
- To assess and promote efficiency and value for money
- To review systems that are operated by the local authority for the management of risks.

There were four [4] Audit Committee meetings held in 2018. The main issues considered were as follows:

- Abbey Quarter Development
- Draft Annual Financial Statement 2017
- Internal Audit Reports
- Key Capital Projects
- Local Government Audit Report 2017
- NOAC Reports
- Special Development Contributions
- Tourism and Economic Development
- VFM Reports

ROADS & TRANSPORTATION

The Elected Members adopted the 2018 Roadwork's Scheme for County Kilkenny in April 2018. The total value of Maintenance and Improvement Schemes amounted to €21,049,440. Kilkenny County Council received funding of €384,388 to assist with the costs of the severe weather event in March. Additional supplementary funding from the Department of €600,000 facilitated further improvement works on non-national roads.

Kilkenny County Council successfully secured €780,806 (B12 Maintenance, HD28 Works and Capital Maintenance Works) in additional funding from Transport Infrastructure Ireland [TII], during the course of the year which allowed for additional design, improvement and maintenance works on the National Road Network.

Kilkenny County Council was successful in 2018 in securing funding under the CLÁR Programme and the Town and Village Renewal, whereby allocations amounting to €303,464 and €652,280 were allocated respectively. Funding under both these initiatives allow for investment in enhancement, permeability and safety improvement works in towns, villages and the rural areas within the County. An amount of €290,000 was allocated under the Local Improvement Scheme (LIS) scheme for works on nonpublic roads.

Roads Capital Projects & Improvements

The past decade has seen capital expenditure in excess of €1 billion invested in roads and motorway schemes in Co. Kilkenny.

MAJOR PROJECTS

N25 New Ross By-Pass

TII awarded the PPP Contract to a BAM Iridium consortium (the PPP Co.) in January 2016. The PPP Councils contractor for the works is BAM Civil Ltd and Dragados Ireland Limited joint venture. Works commenced on site in February 2016. Construction works are substantially complete on the N25 Glenmore intersection and Glenmore Road Underpass. It is anticipated that this element of the project will be fully completed in Q1 2019. The main Barrow Road Bridge (to be named Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Bridge) at Pink Rock is proceeding as planned and the overall delivery of the Scheme remains on programme to open to traffic in Q3 2019.



Construction Works at Glenmore Roundabout and road underpass



Barrow Bridge view from Pink Rock.

Quarterly project newsletters were published and circulated widely at public buildings, in local conveniences shops and on a dedicated project website (www.n25newross.ie). This provides progress updates as well as information on traffic management and road works.

N25 Glenmore to Waterford Major Scheme.

In Q4 of 2018, TII gave approval to Kilkenny County Council to engage the services of an engineering consultant to advance the planning and design stage of this Scheme. A brief to engage a consultant is being finalised and it is anticipated that a consultancy firm will be tendered for in Q1 2019.

Pavement Improvement and Minor Works Programme

Under the Pavement Improvement and Minor Works Programme, financed by TII, Kilkenny County Council has made significant progress with respect to the following:

N76 Callan Road Realignment: 4.38km - €8.75m

The N76 Callan Road Realignment Scheme extends from the N76 Ring Road Callan Road Roundabout to just south of the Brownstown Junction. The Scheme provides for the introduction of on-line footpaths/cycle tracks and public lighting from the Ring Road to Tennypark Cross and off-line road realignment between Tennypark Cross and Brownstown. This scheme was officially opened by Minister of State John Paul Phelan TD in the presence of Cathaoirleach Cllr David Fitzgerald on the 29th May 2018.



Pre-Works. View North of Brownstown Junction



Post Works. View of new Brownstown Junction.

N78 Castlecomer Bridge to Coolbaun South & Coolbaun North to Crettyard

This project consisted of a 6.73km pavement improvement overlay and other associated works. The project was substantially completed by LAGAN by the end of Q4 2018 with a contract value of same was €2,370,000.

N24 Carrick Road Minor Improvement Scheme

An allocation of €43,000 was provided in 2018 to advance the design stage of this Scheme. A public consultation was held in the Mooncoin Community Hall on the 27th November 2018, where route options were outlined. It is anticipated that a final Options Report will be completed in Q1 2019.



New pavement/footpaths at Discovery Park, Castlecomer.

N24 Tower Road Junction & Inkbottle Junction

An allocation of €310,000 was provided in 2018 to advance the design stage of this Scheme. Planning, detailed design, land acquisition and the preparation of contract documents will be advanced by the appointed consultants in 2019. It is expected that an application for Part VIII approval shall be made in Q1 2019.

Interim Safety measures, at a cost of €87,000, were completed in 2017 at the Tower Road Junction.

N25 Graiguenakill (New Ross By-pass tie-in) to Gaulstown

Kilkenny received funding from TII in 2018 to advance the detailed design and preparation of contract documents for this pavement improvement scheme. Tenders were sought in Q3 with Roadstone Ltd appointed during Q4 2018 to complete the works. This project is scheduled to commence on site in early Q1 2019 with a contract value of €2,040,000

N77 Ballyragget to Ballynaslee Minor Improvement Scheme

An allocation of €5,000 was provided in 2018 to advance the design stage of this Scheme. Planning application was made to An Bord Pleanála and lands were acquired. This Scheme will be advanced in 2019 subject to funding.

N78 Castlecomer Pedestrian Bridge

The Bridge Management Office attached to Kildare Regional Design Office is advancing the planning and design of the bridge through a section 85 agreement with Kilkenny County Council. It is expected that an application for planning permission will be made to An Bord Pleanála in Q1 2019. The funding for the new pedestrian bridge is being funded by TII with an expected construction commencement date subject to necessary approvals in 2020.



Existing footpath over bridge which will be replaced with a new

National Road B12 Maintenance Works

Kilkenny County Council received €250,000 to address a number of specific issues identified by the Municipal District Engineers on the national road network. Samples of the works included addressing pavement defects or the provision of replacement footpaths.



Pre B12 footpath, Kilkenny Rd, Castlecomer



Upgraded Footpath, Kilkenny Rd, Castlecomer

NON- NATIONAL ROAD NETWORK

Restoration Improvement and Restoration Maintenance Programme 2018

The main road improvements on the Non-National road network are funded from the Road Restoration Improvement and Maintenance Grant Scheme. The Council received a grant allocation of €7,423,500 in 2018. Works under this funding Scheme are prioritised on a basis of providing for enhancements to the road condition rating, skid resistance and impermeability. In 2018, 48.4Km were improved under this Scheme, with 60km improved under the Restoration Maintenance Programme (Surface dressing). Significant progress has been made on the Non-National road network over the years since the Restoration Grant was introduced and the condition rating of the roads in County Kilkenny compares favourably with that of other Counties.

Non- National Low Cost Safety Programme

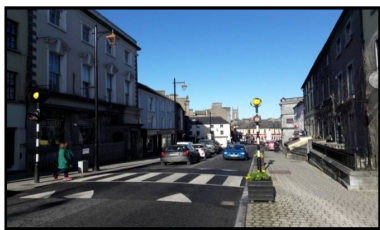
The Non- National Low Cost Safety Programme is targeted at locations along the non-national road network which have been identified as collision prone zones. The works carried out under this programme include improved junction delineation and visibility splays, traffic calming, enhanced roadside delineation and pedestrian crossing facilities within urban areas. Ten [10] schemes were completed under this programme at a cost of €282,000 in 2018.

One of the projects undertaken in 2018 under the Programme was in the Rower Village. This provided for the provision of dedicated parking, new footpaths, public lighting, drainage and a new pedestrian crossing in the vicinity of the school and church in the Rower.



Completed Low Cost Accident Scheme at the Rower.

KEY INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES:



Patrick Street Enhancement Scheme

Patrick Street Enhancement Scheme

Works continued in 2018 on the Patrick Street Enhancement Scheme which provided for the upgrade of existing pavement. This followed on from works by Irish Water on a mains replacement project on the street. The end product greatly improves the attractiveness of the streetscape whilst also providing for better pedestrian connectivity.

Kilkenny Northern Ring Road Extension 1.5 km

The Environmental Impact Statement, Compulsory Purchase Order for this scheme issued to An Bord Pleanála on 13th December, 2013. An Bord Pleanála approved the EIS and the CPO in the second quarter of 2014. A Judicial Review of that decision was sought by local landowners. In May 2017 the High Court referred the case to the European Court of Justice. On foot of the European Court of Justice decision the High Court in Q4 2018 with the agreement of An Bord Pleanála quashed the decision to approve the EIS and CPO. Kilkenny County Council will now recommence the process to make a fresh application to An Bord Pleanála in order to advance the project. In the time since the original Bord decision in 2014, the process for seeking approval has changed and Kilkenny County Council will be required to prepare an EIAR – Environmental Impact Assessment Report. The Council will be cognisant of the decision of the European Court of Justice in the above case bearing in mind the issues identified therein.

R700 Thomastown Culvert.

Deficiencies were identified during the course of a recent Town and Village Renewal Scheme with this culvert which carries a small stream under the Regional Roads R700, R448 via Lady's Well Street, Pipe Street and Market Street. In the intervening period detailed structural surveys of the culvert were completed following receipt of Department funding.

In 2018 funding was also provided under the specific improvement grant which facilitated the engagement of consultants to prepare the detailed design and tender documentation for the rehabilitation works recommended. Tenders were issued in Q3 2018 and it is expected that the tender to complete the works will be issued in early Q1 2019 with a construction commencement date of prior to the end of Q1 2019. The overall cost for the works will be in the region of €800,000.

Road Safety

The Council continues to fund this important function through road safety awareness, the school warden system and the support of community focused road safety campaigns.

The Kilkenny Road Safety Plan 2015 to 2020 was adopted by the Elected Members in July 2015. This Plan sets out a clear blueprint for progress in the area of road safety up to the end of 2020. The Plan is underpinned by a series of defined projects and actions across the core areas of intervention namely, Engineering, Education, Enforcement and Engagement. The plan sets out 45 individual projects with 54 Actions /Targets for the period up to 2020 and the relevant lead agencies are working to deliver same.

Kilkenny County Council and An Garda Síochána will continue to cooperate to ensure improvements in road safety in the county.

Public Lighting

Kilkenny County Council maintains approximately 11,000 public lights throughout the County.

Following a tendering process Kilkenny and Carlow Local Authorities entered into a new contract with SSE Airtricity in April 2017 for the maintenance of public lighting. The period of this contract is two years with the possibility of a further two-year extension. The decision shall be made in Q1 2019 whether to extend the scheme for the additional two years as provided for in the contract. The

contract with SSE Airtricity is structured as a Schedule of Rates maintenance service contract. The introduction of this new maintenance contract will generate savings to both Local Authorities. It is Kilkenny's intention to reinvest this saving into essential public lighting infrastructure and energy efficiency projects.

The energy supplier for unmetered public lighting stock is Energia whilst metered public lighting stock is SSE Airtricity. Both supply contracts are overseen by the National Procurement Service. The annual investment in public lighting provision per annum is €1.13m. Maintenance and capital works now approximately accounts for 20% and energy accounts for 80%. Approximately €900,000 was spent on the energy account and the balance €230,000 was spent on maintenance and capital works.

Kilkenny LED Replacement Programme in Housing Estates 2018 (Phase 1)



Before & After Change to LED.

Kilkenny County Council in conjunction with the 3CEA using an SEAI grant and capital funding completed the retrofit of approximately 2200 lights to LED in 2018. It is intended that a similar budget will be spent in 2019 using further capital and grant funding. The primary driver for the retrofit programme is energy efficiency and cost savings.

Kilkenny County Council is actively encouraging the use of LED lighting technology in new public lighting installation and retrofits. In addition, the use of energy efficient technology is being recommended in new planned developments in the County.

WATER SERVICES

Since 2014, Irish Water has been the Water Services Authority for all public water and waste water schemes. Kilkenny County Council continues to be the Water Services Authority for the Rural/Group Water Sector.

Under the twelve-year Service Level Agreement between Irish Water and Kilkenny County Council, the Council undertakes the day to day delivery of the public water and waste water services on behalf of Irish Water. Irish Water funds and macro manages the service delivery, while the Council provides the staff and micro manages the service delivery.

The Service Level Agreement covers:

- public water and waste water treatment,
- public water and waste water networks,
- project management of and waste water capital projects.

Operation & Maintenance

Kilkenny County Council manages 24 public drinking water supplies and 35 public waste water treatment schemes on behalf of Irish Water. In 2018, 10.38 billion litres of water (28.5 million litres/day) was supplied through Kilkenny's public water supply network to approximately 65,000 customers.

2017 is latest year for which the EPA has published its Drinking Water Quality Report. The 2018 report will be published later in 2019.

In 2017, for the seventh year in a row, Kilkenny's Public Water Schemes achieved 100% microbiological compliance (National average 99.9%). 97.99% compliance was achieved for chemical parameters (National Average 99.4%).

In line with recent years, the level of environmental compliance achieved at Kilkenny's waste water treatment plants have continued to improve. This overall trend is illustrated by the improvement in results recorded in the EPA's Annual Urban Waste Water Reports.

Capital Programme

Irish Water has a five year (2017 - 2021) National Capital Investment Programme of €3.5bn, with in excess of €60m included for investment in the following projects in County Kilkenny during the lifetime of the programme.

Kilkenny City Regional Water Supply Scheme

Current daily demand for drinking water supply to Kilkenny City (*approx 11,000m³/day*) has traditionally been met by way of 50% supply from Troyswood (sourced from the Nore) and 50% supply from Radestown (sourced from the Dinan and the Douglas rivers).

In December, 2016, Irish Water lodged a planning application for a proposed upgrade. The proposal outlined in the planning application envisages the entire City supply being sourced from the Nore. An upgrade and extension to the Troyswood Water Treatment Plant, together with a treated water pump station and 2.8 km of treated water rising main from Troyswood to Radestown are proposed. The proposed scheme will provide for the production of all drinking water for Kilkenny City at the Troyswood facility with distribution from the existing reservoirs at Thornback and Radestown. Planning Permission has been granted by Kilkenny County Council but the decision has been appealed to An Bord Pleanala. The expected decision date by an Bord Pleanala is Q1/Q2 2019.

Castlecomer Ice Pigging Programme

Over 40km of Castlecomer water network was cleaned using the ice pigging process to remove manganese deposits from the pipes. This was the first time IW has used this method of cleaning in Ireland. Ancillary works such as installation of new hydrants, valves, magnetic meters, etc. was required to facilitate the works. As part of the manganese removal process, the manganese filter media was up graded at the WTP.

Mullinavat & Inistioge Waste Water Treatment Plants

Planning Permission has been granted for both projects with Land and Wayleave acquisitions ongoing. Site investigations are ongoing and due to be completed by end of Q1 2019. Both schemes are Early Contractor Involvement (ECI) form of contract with contractor appointment imminent. The estimated value of the upgrades is approximately €3m

Gowran Regional Water Supply Scheme

Pre-Planning meeting with the Council was held in Q4, 2018, and the project received positively. CPO has been advertised. Site investigations completed in December 2018. Raw water sampling programme has been tendered with contractor to be appointed in Q1 2019. Hydraulic modelling is ongoing, and due to be completed in Q1 2019. Preparation of documents ongoing with intention of procuring the works through a Design-Build contract.

Mains Rehab Works 2018

- Patrick's Street - mains rehab works, installation completed of 370m of Watermain main and associated works.
- Dangan and Aderra, Kilmacow - installation complete on approx. 3km of water main and associated water meters.
- Mill Street, Freshford - installation completed on 400m of 180mm water main at Kilkenny Street, Freshford. Further works to begin in Jan 2019.
- Dean Street and Black Mill, Kilkenny - trial holes completed in Q4 2018. Works to begin on laying new main in Q1 2019.
- James Street, Kilkenny - trial holes completed in Q4 2018. Works to begin in Q1 of 2019



Installation of Back wash pipe from Galmoy WTP



Installation of a new watermain in Freshford (work being carried out under the Water Network Programme)



Installation of new watermain by Directional Drilling in Freshford

Telemetry Up-grade Programme

Up-grade of the Telemetry (Scada) equipment at Water Treatment Plants and Reservoirs included in the Disinfection and pH Control programme continued in 2018. Currently 95% of sites completed.

Reservoir Cleaning and Minor repairs programme

Reservoir cleaning continued in 2018 and is 80% complete. Major repair carried out to walls and floor in Thornback reservoir. Lid replacement and small repairs have been carried out at a number of sites.

Treated Water Storage Programme

Two sites in Kilkenny have been chosen for new reservoirs due to lack of adequate storage at the current reservoir sites, Callan and Jamestown. Consultants are due to start commence preliminary design in early 2019.

Rural Water Programme

While the EPA is the Supervising Authority for public water supplies, Kilkenny County Council is the Supervising authority for private water supplies in County Kilkenny, which fall under the Drinking Water Regulations.

This includes 134 small Private Supplies (SPS), which typically include schools, food premises and rural housing estates.

The Council also manages and allocates Government grants approved under the Rural Water Programme for group water and waste water schemes, in addition to private wells grants.

There are 195 Group Water Schemes, 125 of which are served own sources and 70 which are served from public mains.

In 2018 €81,203 was paid by the Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government to Kilkenny County Council for works undertaken as part of the Rural Water Programme as follows:

- €16,720 for Group Water Scheme Treatment Upgrades. This included works at Listerlin and Dunbell.
- €15,524 for Group Water Scheme Installation of Water Meters. This included works at 12 Group Water Schemes in the County
- €16,862 was spent on Network Upgrades of Group Water Schemes. This included works at Castlewarren, Clonmantagh Kiloshulan and Maddoxstown.
- €32,096 was spent on the Taking in Charge of GWS by Irish Water. This included works at Newtown Ballinearla GWS

Group Subsidies towards the operational running costs of Water Schemes totalling €328,125 were paid to 50 Group Schemes.

Approvals were issued for 81 grant applications for the provision of wells to private houses. Total of €136,949 was paid out in well grants.



Castlewarren Rising Main

Flood Relief Scheme

OPW published a Flood Risk Management Plan (FRMP) for 29 river catchment areas, including the River Nore, Suir and Barrow in May 2018. The Plan identifies non structural and structural flood measures proposed to protect communities from the risk of flooding. Structural works were aimed at reducing the likelihood and/or degree of flood identified during the programme.

Six communities in Kilkenny have been identified as potentially benefiting from Flood Relief Schemes namely in Graiguenamanagh, Thomastown, Freshford, Piltown, Inistioge and Ballyhale. The works identified in the plans consist of building hard defences, embankments, walls and sheet piling where necessary. It is important to note that measures identified are not definitive or final and project level assessment will be required in advance of planning /public exhibitions, during which more detailed assessments will be undertaken at local level. Further public and stakeholder consultation will also occur at this time.

Responsibility for implementation of the schemes rests with the OPW and significant funding (€1bn) has been identified to implement these scheme and all other schemes nationally over the next 10 years.

Kilkenny County Council is committed to working with the OPW in the delivery of all these schemes and OPW agreed in 2018 to fund the appointment of staff to Kilkenny County Council to manage design, planning and construction of flood relief measures through the County. Assessment will commence in Q1 2019 with a commitment to prioritise Graiguenamanagh and Ballyhale initially.

**DIRECTORATE OF
HOUSING, SOCIAL, COMMUNITY
& CULTURAL SERVICES**

Director of Services: Ms. Mary J. Mulholland

HOUSING

HOUSING & ACCOMMODATION

The Directorate of Housing incorporates a wide range of services for applicants and tenants to facilitate and support the provision of independent and supported accommodation. This is achieved by offering a variety of social housing supports by the Housing Authorities, Voluntary and Private Sector.

Housing Strategic Policy Committee

The committee met on 5 occasions during 2018 and the following topics were examined; Review of the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2014 -2018, Kilkenny Strategic Plan for People with a Disability Strategy 2016 – 2020, Homelessness and monthly analysis, Annual Report 2017, Repair & Leasing Scheme, Tenant Handbook, Capital Programme 2017 – 2021, Housing Needs Assessment 2018, Over the Shop Residential Development - Living Cities Initiative, Refugee Resettlement Programme

The Core Housing Services Are:

Housing Capital Programme 2018

The Minister for Housing by letter dated 18th April 2018 notified Kilkenny County Council of its revised delivery targets under Rebuilding Ireland i.e. 599 units for the period 2018 to 2021 and a specific target of 133 units for 2018.

In 2018 a number of schemes advanced as follows:

Completions:

- 5 units at Togher Way, Urlingford
- 1 Rural Cottage Barna, Freshford
- 9 units acquired as a Turnkey development at Abbeygate, Ferrybank
- 9 units at Side Road, Moneenroe (Oaklee Housing)
- 4 units in Phase II, St. Catherine's Group Housing Scheme, Wetlands, Kilkenny
- 5 units at Greensbridge, Kilkenny
- 4 units at Smith's Road, Ballyraggett (Oaklee)
- 15 units at Callan Manor, Green Lane, Callan (Long term Leasing)
- 12 units at Ogenty, Gowran
- 18 units at Togher Way, Urlingford
- 6 units at Garringreen, KK (SOS)
- 12 units at Wing 52, Church Lane, KK (Good Shepherd Centre)
- 2 units by Dove AHB in Ferrybank
- 10 units at Castlehyde, Rosbercon (Co-operative Housing)
- 2 units at O'Loughlin Road, KK (Respond)



Housing at Togher Way under construction

Construction Schemes Under Way

- 38 units Hoban Park, Callan, Kilkenny
- 54 units Ballybough Street, Kilkenny
- 27 units Walkin Street, Kilkenny
- 11 units Nuncio Road, Kilkenny
- 1 unit at St Mary's Crescent, Hebron Road



Minister Damien English visits site at Bolton

Construction Schemes to commence in 2019

- 33 Donaguile, Castlecomer
- 17, Main Street, Piltown
- 22 units, Station Avenue, Ballyraggett
- 4 units at Blackstaff, Callan
- 40 units at Margaretsfield, Callan Road



Contract signing for Bolton Housing

Information Evenings

Consultations evenings were held in Piltown, Ballyraggett, Newpark Hotel to inform the local community of proposed developments in their area.

Acquisitions

KCC completed 29 purchases and a further 28 units are at sale agreed stage

Voluntary Bodies completed 49 purchases and a further 48 units are at sale agreed stage

On Monday, October 15th Minister John Paul Phelan, officially opened Kilkenny County Council's newest social housing units at Greensbridge near the centre of the city. These housing units are one bedroom homes to be used as short term accommodation for people with urgent housing need, as a valuable alternative to the use of hotel room accommodation.

Rental Accommodation Scheme [RAS] & Housing Assistance Payment [HAP]:

- Expenditure for RAS in 2018 was €5.9 million.
- A total of 532 RAS Properties are now forming part of social housing options.
- 27 properties were taken on in 2018 and 39 left the RAS Scheme in 2018
- The Housing Assistance Payment was introduced in Mid-October, 2014. 1,370 tenancies were set up since the schemes commencement and 865 are live at 31/12/2018.
- There are over 100 households on rent supplement in Kilkenny at present

In addition to the 50,000 units which are to be delivered nationally under Rebuilding Ireland by way of Acquisition, Build and Leasing, the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) and the Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS) continues to be an immediate form of social housing support and effective mechanism to meet housing need.

The Department is working with each local Authority to establish a combined HAP and RAS targets on an annual basis. The Annual target plus a weekly target in respect of HAP together with a HAP rent supplement transfer rate in 2018 for Kilkenny is set out in the following table;

	Total RAS	Total HAP	Weekly HAP	Rent Supplement to HAP	Combined Total RS Transfers	Total New Households
Target	23	120	2	18 [15% of new HAP]	41	143
Delivery in 2018	42	210	4 [avg]	36	78	252

Homeless Services 2018

- There were 273 homeless presentations during 2018, a decrease of 46 on 2017.
- There were 34 persons availing of emergency accommodation at 31st December, of which 2 were families
- There were no persons found rough sleeping in Kilkenny City & Environs on the either night of the Official Rough Sleepers Count carried out in May and December 2018.

Private Rented Accommodation

The Department has set a target of 465 inspections to be carried out in 2018. The End of Year position is as follows:

- (i) the total number of inspections carried out in 2018..... 514
 - (a) First Inspections..... 364
 - (b) Second Inspections..... 150
- (ii) the number of final inspections achieving compliance carried out in 2018..... 164
- (iii) the number of Improvement Notices issued in 2018..... 18
- (iv) the number of Prohibition Notices issued in 2018..... 2

Traveller Accommodation Programme [TAP]

While 2018 is the final year of KCC's Traveller Accommodation Programme (TAP) 2014 – 2018, the current Programme will continue to operate until July 1st 2019 as per Circular 35/2018.

At December 31st 2018, KCC has delivered **70** units of accommodation under the Programme, which exceeds the target of **65** units of accommodation set out in TAP for this time period. The redevelopment of St. Catherine's Halting Site to a Group Housing Scheme, construction of an additional house at St. Mary's Hebron and the number of newly formed families accommodated during the lifetime of the programme warrant particular mention.



Under Section 10 of the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act, 1998 the Minister has directed that the next accommodation programme should be for a period of 5 years for the period from 1st July 2019 to 30th June 2024. The preparation and assessment of need for the new Traveller Accommodation Programme has commenced.

The Draft Programme will be available for circulation and inspection by the target date of April 1st 2019 when written submissions will be requested. The latest date for the adoption of the Programme by Council members is September 30th 2019

Assessment of Needs:

The Housing Needs Assessment (Summary Report was completed in 2018 and reflects the number of approved applicants (**Net Need**) on our Housing Waiting List as at **11th June 2017 i.e. 971**. The Net Need figure excludes transfers, RAS and HAP. There were 307 households removed from the Housing List of which 245 households did not reply to our request for information.

Housing List

The current **gross** Housing demand at 31st December 2018 is 2,070 and a comparative analysis with previous years is outlined below:

Year	Number on Housing List
December 2018	2,070
December 2017	2,180
December 2016	2,059 (Statutory Assessment 2016)
December 2015	2,744
December 2014	2,456
December 2013	2,144 (Statutory Assessment 2013)
December 2012	3,688
December 2011	3,118
December 2010	2,876

Maintaining Housing Stock:

- 16 homes adapted and one extension completed at a cost of €15,377
- 74 LA houses were retrofitted at a cost of €172,894
- 5,071 calls were made seeking housing repairs in 2018

Estate Management Grants

- 55 Estate Management Grants were allocated (€55,000) in 2018 to community groups and Residents.



- 8 Large Estate Enhancement Projects applications were approved for funding in July. They included:

Hebron Park	€4,000	Shamrock Grove.....	€2,000
Chapelfield.....	€3,500	Fairview	€4,000
Brandon Crescent.....	€2,000	Newpark Lower.....	€4,000
Woodland Estate	€2,425	Church Avenue.....	€4,000

- **Sports Partnership Programmes** were delivered to disadvantaged Youth in Kilkenny County Council's RAPID estates.
- Issue 8,9,10,11 and 12 of the Kilkenny County Council Community interactive e newsletter were released in 2018.
- The average readership including the magazine and the social media post is approx. per issue /articles 9,10,11,12 is 1,600 -2,200 per issue. Largest video views from the magazine was 33,000 in 2018.
- **Tidy Estates competition** - Judging of the Kilkenny County Council 2018 Tidy Estates awards took place in August/early September announcements of the winners will be in January 2019.
- **National Pride of Place Awards;** Kilkenny community groups were honoured at the annual IPB Pride of Place awards held in Cork City Hall on the 17th November.
- **Map Alerter:** a new Map Alerter on line promotional campaign commenced in September 2018. Number of subscribers in 2017 was 1,783 and the number of subscribers in 2018 was 2,605 which is an increase of 46%.

Housing Loans & Tenant Purchase Scheme

Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan is a new Government backed mortgage for first time buyers. It is available nationwide from all local authorities from 1st February 2018. First time buyers can apply to purchase a new or second-hand property, or to build their own home.

The maximum loan amount under the Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan is limited to 90% of the market value of the property i.e. maximum loan amount of €225,000. A Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan offers three rate products:

- 2% fixed for up to 25 years (APR 2.02%)
- 2.25% fixed for up to 30 years (APR 2.27%)
- 2.30% variable (subject to fluctuation) for up to 30 years (APR 2.32%)

- 38 loans applications were received in 2018
- 24 Loans were approved to the value of €2,738,729
- 29 Loans were paid out in 2018 amounting to €3,171,660 including reconstruction and caravan loan
- The average home loan paid out in 2018 was €117,068
- Five houses were sold under the Tenant (Incremental) Purchase Scheme funded by the LA at a total value of €433,525

Anti-Social Behaviour

138 complaints were received during 2018, a decrease of 18 on the previous year.

Refugee Resettlement Programme

Nationally the government through the Irish Refugee Protection Programme has pledged to offer safety and protection to approximately 4000 asylum seekers/refugees. The Programme commits Ireland to offering families and children, who have been compelled to leave their homes due to war and conflict, a place of safety. Kilkenny forms part of that response and has agreed to resettle 140 Syrian Refugees (25/30 families) as part of the Irish Refugee Protection Programme.

Kilkenny County Council chairs a Statutory Resettlement Committee that works together with the Department of Justice and Equality to resettle families in Kilkenny. This process is supported by a Resettlement Worker and an Intercultural Interpreter, which is all funded through the Department of Justice and Equality.

To date, Kilkenny has resettled 111 (20 families) Syrian Refugees in seven (7) locations around the county and are working to resettle a further 24-30 people (4-6 families) by Quarter 2 2019.

Housing Private Grants:

Opening of Housing Aid for Older Persons Grant (HOP) Scheme 2018: The total number of HOP grants received by closing date in December was 275, an increase of 38 applications on the previous year.

The number of Private grants paid in 2018 is as follows;

Scheme	No.	Approved Amount
HGD	69	€806,269
MAG	26	€124,199
HOP	143	€795,266
	238	€1,725,734

A new Occupational Therapist Panel set up in 2018 to assess our medical based applications for grant assistance

Disability Strategy:

The Housing & Disability Steering Group met on 4 occasions during 2018 and a number of sub-committee meetings were held on the de-congregation of St Patrick's:

- 4th July 2018
- 16th October 2018
- 5th September 2018
- 12th December 2018

The de-congregation of St Patrick's is progressing where residents are relocated back into community type accommodation. The Sub-Committee Meeting was held on 7th June with St. Patrick's, HSE and Local Authority in attendance.

- 12 individuals were de-congregated in 2018 into **permanent** accommodation.
- 10 individuals were de-congregated into **private rented** accommodation.
- 17 individuals to be de-congregated during 2019/2020

Kilkenny County Council funded Oaklee AHB to provide 4 units at Smyth's Road, Ballyragget and 2 units at O'Loughlin Road, Hebron, Kilkenny under the Capital Assistance Scheme in 2018

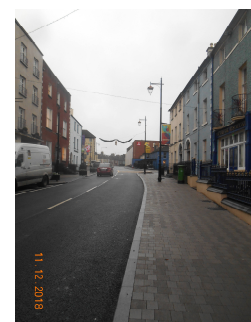
COMMUNITY

- A total of €652,280 was approved for 5 projects under the 2018 Town and Village Renewal Scheme.
- The sum of €61,750 has been approved under the Rural Regeneration and Development Programme in respect of two “Ready to go projects” -Fair Green Regeneration and Motte Fields Amenity-both in Callan Co Kilkenny.
- 8 Community based projects were awarded funding to the total value of €250,000 under the Councils Community and Culture Facilities Capital Grant Scheme.
- 11 projects were approved under the 2018 CLÁR scheme –total funding awarded €303,465.
- The sum of €281,205 was allocated to 49 community projects under the Community Enhancement Programme.
- An additional €8,696 was allocated (under the Community Enhancement Programme) to 6 Men’s Sheds affiliated to the National Men’s Shed Association.
- An allocation of €100,000 was approved in respect of the inclusion of Upper Bridge Street, Callan, in a Departmental pilot programme to encourage town centre living.
- 5 Projects received funding to a total allocation of €75,000 under the Healthy Ireland Fund.
- The sum of €20,000 was awarded to 37 commercial premises under the 2018 Commercial Premises paint scheme.
- The sum of €6,900 was awarded to Woodstock Outdoor Garden under the Play and Recreation Grant Scheme 2018.
- A number of other community based projects received ongoing and annual financial support.
- Town and Village Health Check were undertaken in collaboration with local communities in 8 locations.
- The Draft Callan Town Improvement Plan was published in December.
- The Councils Community Grant information booklet was produced and launched. 230 copies were distributed locally-5 information evenings were held in conjunction with the launch.
- The Councils interactive One Stop Shop on community grants was developed and launched in 2018.
- The average readership including the magazine and the social media post is approximately 1,600 – 2,200 per issue. The largest video views from the magazine was 33,000 in 2018.



Issue's 9, 10, 11 and 12 of the Kilkenny County Council Community interactive e newsletter were published in 2018.

- Extension of the Councils Community development role in assisting local groups and programmes. Amongst the local Community Groups and initiatives undertaken, supported, assisted and facilitated by the Council in 2018 were the School Helmet Safety Initiative in Ballyhale Primary School, the establishment of Graignamanagh Men's Shed, supports to Thomastown Men's Shed, the Thomastown Peace Park Committee, the Thomastown Allotment Committee, Thomastown Senior Citizens Committee, Thomastown Walking Trails Committee and the Thomastown River Trust.
- Support was also provided to a number of residents groups including Fairview Residents Association Graignamanagh, Brookfield Residents Ballyhale, Castle Avenue Residents Thomastown, Dunan Residents Thomastown, Woodland Estate Graignamanagh, Brandon Park Graignamanagh, Belfry Residents Association, and the Skoughvosteen local Committee.
- Community Department staff continues to support Kilkenny LCDC - Kilkenny LCDC has produced its own annual report which highlights the following:
 - commitment to the implementation of the Local Economic Community Plan (LECP) by 10 separate agencies.
 - high level review of the 2018 and 2018 LECP implementation plans.
 - management of the contract for the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) valued at €630,000 p.a.
 - community development support provided under SICAP to 26 community groups and the employment ready assistance and skills provided to 478 individuals in 2018.
 - publication of Kilkenny LCDC Healthy Ireland plan.
 - allocation by Kilkenny LCDC of awards under, and the administration of both the Healthy Ireland Fund and the Community Enhancement Programme.
 - support provided to Kilkenny Public Participation Network (PPN) through staffing and financial resources and the sharing of information and opportunities to participate.
 - completion of the audit of sports and community facilities.
 - mapping of funds awarded to community funds.
- Staff from the Council's Community Department continue to co-ordinate, and assist in the implementation of Kilkenny Age Friendly County programme which has produced its own separate Annual Report for 2018. Amongst its highlights are the progress made to developing the Thomastown Age Friendly Town Plan, the ongoing provision of age friendly seating, bus shelters, footpath improvements, recreational walking paths, outdoor gym equipment and the provision of financial support office accommodation/equipment to the Kilkenny Age Friendly Seniors Forum.
- A Local Policing Partnership was established in the Castlecomer Municipal District in 2018.
- National Pride of Place Awards-Community Groups from Kilkenny were honoured at the annual IPB Pride of Place awards held on Cork City Hall on the 17th November. Open Circle Arts received a Special Award for their work, Thomastown and Kells Regional Economic Enterprise took runner up prizes in their categories. Members of the Kilkenny community groups joined with 800 community heroes from across the country at the awards night in Cork City Hall which is in association with IPB/Co-operation Ireland.





- Map Alerter on line promotional campaign was completed in 2018.

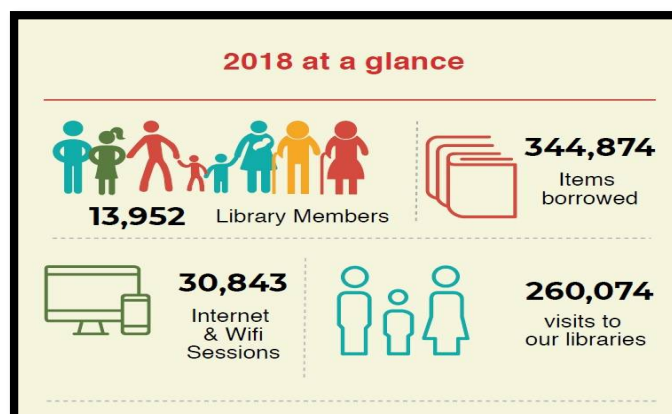


- Kilkenny Comhairle na nÓg held 13 meetings in 2018. The Comhairle produced and printed posters & wallet cards to promote safe socialising for young teens and distributed them through the secondary schools. The AGM was held in October. It was attended by 89 students representing 9 secondary schools and 4 youth groups.
- Community Section supported the DRUM Youth Cafe with €50,000 for the provision of youth cafe services to 12-18 year olds. €8,000 was provided to Ossory Youth for the Garda Diversion project and service delivery.
- Staff from the community section actively support the Kilkenny Children & Young Peoples Services Committee (CYPSC). In 2018 the CYPSC launched its consultation report with Children & Young People and carried out a Socio-demographic analysis on children & young people in Kilkenny. CYPSC availed of €15,000 in project seed funding and €36,284 in Healthy Ireland funding for projects on health, education and fitness.

LIBRARY SERVICES

Library Services

- 15% increase in people who have joined the library
- 38% increase in people using eBooks and eMagazines and 6.5% increase in the amount of items borrowed from the library
- Increase in opening hours in City Library
- Revamped library website and new Kilkenny Digital Archive website.
- 1,263 children completed our Summer Reading Challenge and 2,774 children attended Bookville Kilkenny.



Science week in Ferrybank Library



2D Felting during Bealtaine in City

Learning

Kilkenny Library Service supports and facilitates lifelong learning, helping people to develop skills to empower their development.

- Grant of €12,000 was received to upgrade & develop digital spaces with access to coding, 3D printing, podcasting and digital education.
- A range of digital classes were provided by trainers, as well as one-to-one supports from TY students from local schools.
- Provision of community educational opportunities in partnership with other agencies across the library network providing people with access to craft workshops, flower arranging, art classes, knitting classes and Irish Language classes.



Wayne O'Conner, Bookville in Castlecomer



Family history resources in Loughboy



Living with dementia Talk in Graigenamanagh

Information

Kilkenny Library Service continues to provide a wide range of information resources in a variety of formats and is a vital information hub within the local community.

- 30,800 public internet sessions.
- Increased usage of our suite of online services and social media platforms.
- Development of Kilkenny Digital Archive at <http://digital-archive.kilkenny.ie/>.
- Revamp of Kilkenny Library website at www.kilkennylibrary.ie to increase public engagement and usage.
- Rollout of Work Matters in Graiguenamanagh & Castlecomer, supporting the information and research needs of businesses and jobseekers.



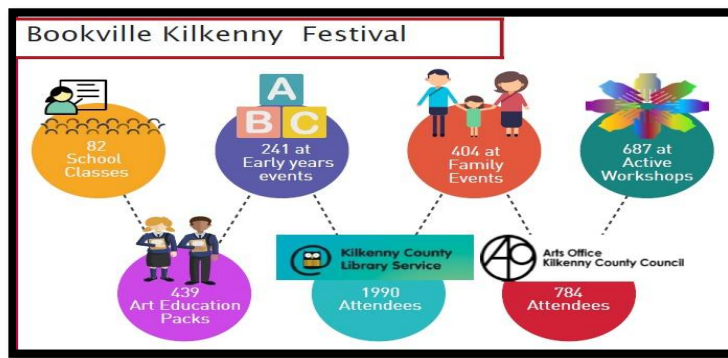
Duiske College IT classes through Action in Graiguenamanagh Library

Reading & Literacy

Kilkenny Library Service is at the forefront of supporting and developing literacy skills, reading, creativity, innovation and helping people realise their potential.

- Right to Read Action Plan delivered a variety of programmes including:

- Opportunities to join Language Circles, Bookclubs, Creative writing groups, Storytimes.
- Rollout of Healthy Ireland at your Library with a comprehensive stock and dynamic programme of events in all library branches.



Community & Culture

The library is a centre of community and cultural activity. It provides a welcoming space for individuals and all communities, bringing people together, celebrating diversity and facilitating personal development.

- Participation in Creative Ireland 2018 Programme including Cruinniú na nÓg, Bookville Festival, Bealtaine, Mná na hEireann Roadshow.
- The library service works in close collaboration with a range of agencies and organisations including Glanbia to roll out farm safety workshops.
- The service continues to participate and engage with national and local festivals and programmes including: Heritage week, Science week, Savour Kilkenny, Tradfest, Yulefest, Mental Health Week, Culture Night.
- Development and completion of the Library Development Plan as part of Kilkenny County Council's Cultural Strategy, Arts, Heritage and Libraries 2018-2022.



Agrikids Farm safety Workshop in Callan Library, in association with Glanbia Agribusiness



Insect hotel making during Cruinniú na nÓg in Thomastown Library



Messy Play Workshop during Bookville in City Library

Service Development and Infrastructure

Our public libraries are places of free civic participation and vibrant focal points of the community. We constantly strive to redesign our spaces to reflect changing community and individual need. Investment is made to address:

- Interior reconfigurations including flexible shelving.
- Create modern, vibrant and accessible spaces using modern furniture and colour.
- Heating and Lighting upgrades as part of a range of positive energy efficiency measures with the Energy Officer and 3 CEA.
- Streamline and automate processes and increase ICT and digital options.
- Self-service RFID services available across the branch network.
- Self-service printing available across the branch network.



Loughboy Library



City Library



Callan Library

ARTS

The Arts Office has varied and diverse responsibilities and functions. We develop, co-ordinate, motivate, inspire and empower artistic activity throughout the city and county. We promote the arts as a worthwhile activity for all, providing advice and support for groups and individuals. The Arts Office works to further strengthen Kilkenny's position as a centre of excellence for the arts and ensure a successful and prosperous arts environment within the region.

Literature

Our focus is on ensuring a balanced approach to the continuing development of our literary programme. We engage with diverse sectors of the community, beginners and emerging writers including adults, children and teenagers.

- Kilkenny Poetry Broadsheet 18, edited by Peter Sirr and Illustrated by Ale Mercado.



Mór bhileog – celebrated Bliain na Gaeilge a poetry Broadsheet as Gaeilge edited by Aine Ni Ghlinn and Illustrated by Ross Stewart of Cartoon Saloon.

- Annual Writing Workshops – ongoing engagement and tutoring writers across the County.

Rhyme Rag continued to publish the poetry of young Kilkenny writers (age 12- 21) on www.rhymerag.net.

Community, Education & Inclusion

- The design and delivery of high quality community and education programmes were delivered to suit this diverse sector.
- Open Circle Community Arts Collective - Developing and delivering high quality arts engagement and collective cultural experiences for women across the county of Kilkenny.
- Siamsa, Childrens programme – engaging children in a variety of visual arts and writing projects
- School subsidy for visit to Barnstorm Theatre production.
- Culture Night – national event promoting culture in all its guises.
- Music Generation Kilkenny - Recruited Music Generation Development Officer to implement plans and programming within the County.



Siamsa Papercuts

Artists Supports

- Arts Act Grants 2018 – twenty-six Arts Act Grants awarded in 2018.
- Irish Youth Choir Summer Courses Bursary 2018 – three bursaries were awarded to teenagers.
- The Moth Bursary 2018 – two bursaries were awarded to emerging young writers and artists.
- Tyrone Guthrie Bursary 2018 – three bursaries were awarded to practitioners working in literature and the visual arts.
- Exhibition Programme – number of exhibitions took place in 2018.
- Blackstack Studio - studio members facilitate artists from Kilkenny, Carlow, Waterford and Wexford.
- ArtLinks, CPD partnership programme including Kilkenny, Carlow, Waterford and Wexford County Councils – eight bursaries awarded. Partnership with the Bealtaine national office to deliver a project across Kilkenny, Wexford and Waterford. Two Professional Development Workshops and mentoring for visual artists/cultural managers and administrators.

HERITAGE

Kilkenny County Council Heritage Office provides a strategic heritage service including: providing advice and information on heritage issues; developing policies and priorities for the identification, protection, conservation and enhancement of Kilkenny's heritage; collecting and collating heritage data and promoting heritage awareness and education. Key objectives include working with the Kilkenny Heritage Forum to prepare and implement the County Heritage Plan and County Biodiversity Plan, and co-ordinating and implementing the Kilkenny Creative Ireland programme.

The following are the key outputs and achievements from 2018:

New County Cultural Strategy Launched



Launching the new Kilkenny Cultural Strategy: Cllr. Malcolm Noonan, Chair Kilkenny Heritage Forum; Dearbhla Ledwidge, Heritage Officer; Colette Byrne, Chief Executive; Cllr. Eamonn Aylward, Cathaoirleach Kilkenny County Council; Mary Mulholland, Director of Services; Mary Butler, Arts Officer; Josephine Coyne, County Librarian.

The Cultural Services Team (Heritage, Arts, Library) developed and launched a new 5-year Cultural Strategy (*Kilkenny County Council Cultural Strategy (Arts, Heritage & Libraries) 2018-2022*) in November after an extensive public consultation process. The strategy provides a framework for the delivery of the Arts, Heritage & Library Services of the Council from 2018 to 2022. It replaces the former Arts, Biodiversity, Heritage & Library Plans.



The uncovering and interpreting of the Talbot's Inch Suspension Bridge was undertaken in 2018. The suspension bridge was built by Lady Desart in the early 1900s. The bridge, which carried mill workers from Talbot's Inch to the mill on the opposite bank of the River, was destroyed in the Great Flood of 1947. This heritage project has exposed the remnants of that bridge and provides a local interest point and a focus on the need, when the opportunity presents, to reinstate a pedestrian bridge at this location to compliment the Ossory Pedestrian Bridge.

Talbots Tower & Kilkenny City Walls Brochure launched

A beautifully illustrated brochure funded by the Heritage Council, telling the story of Talbots Tower, was produced by the Heritage Office. The brochure is a valuable educational resource, to encourage schools and visitors to explore our rich medieval heritage.

<http://kilkennyheritage.ie/2018/04/kilkenny-citys-medieval-walls-talbots-tower/>.

The re-opening of Talbot's Tower in April 2018 marked the end of a 10 year refurbishment and conservation project. The Tower represents a key component of the City Wall network and is the only upstanding defensive tower on the City Wall circuit. The refurbishment and conservation works were completed under the umbrella of the Kilkenny City Walls Heritage Conservation Plan, in close consultation and partnership with the Irish Walled Towns Network, the Heritage Council, the Department of Heritage and the National Monuments Service. Many local experts and contractors contributed significantly to the refurbishment/conservation project and the result is another jewel in Kilkenny's crown of heritage assets.



Irish Walled Towns Network Grant

Funding was received from the Irish Walled Towns Network to commission condition reports on 2 sections of the city walls – the River Bregagh & the Black Abbey Carpark. The reports were completed in November and will be used to inform future grant applications and conservation works on these walls in 2019.

Heritage Week [17-25th August]

National Heritage Week was a great success in Kilkenny with 92 events taking place throughout the city and county.

Launching Kilkenny Heritage Week: Cllr Eamon Aylward, Cathaoirleach; Bernadette Roberts, Heritage Office; Cllr Malcolm Noonan, Chair Kilkenny Heritage Forum; Dearbhala Ledwidge, Heritage Officer; Cllr. Peter Chap Cleere, Mayor Municipal District Kilkenny City



Biodiversity Workshops at Fairytale Festival

Over 250 children and 375 adults took part in workshops “Biodiversity in Schools”, at the Fairytale Festival in Woodstock, Inistioge (22nd July) to raise awareness about pollinators and Kilkenny’s biodiversity.

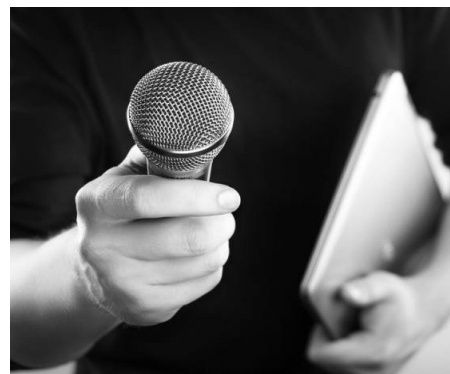
The event was part funded by Creative Ireland



Biodiversity Corner at the Fairytale Festival

Kilkenny’s Oral Heritage Audit

The funding from the Heritage Council and Creative Ireland historian Tomas MacConmara undertook a comprehensive audit of all existing oral history recordings and collections of folklore, history, tradition and memory for Co. Kilkenny. 51 collections of oral heritage relating to County Kilkenny, held both in Ireland and abroad, were identified and documented – amounting to 1,299 individual recordings. A publication of the findings will be produced in 2019.



Kilkenny Hosts Global Biodiversity Conference

The Global Biodiversity Information Forum which took place in Kilkenny in October. Over 200 delegates from Asia, Africa & Europe attended the Forum, organised by the National Biodiversity Data Centre. The Cathaoirleach Cllr. Eamon Aylward welcomed the delegates at a ceremony in the Medieval Mile Museum. Kilkenny County Council co-sponsored the event.

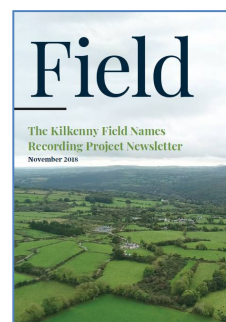


Dearbhala Ledwidge, Heritage Officer; Pat Reid, Heritage Council; Dr. Ciaran O'Keeffe, National Parks & Wildlife Service, at the Global Biodiversity Information Forum

Kilkenny Field Names Project

The Kilkenny Field Names Project is co-funded by the Heritage Council. The Project Co-ordinator is Alan Counihan.

- Over 1,400 fieldnames collected by the volunteers
- Supported 2 communities to host Heritage Week exhibitions at Castlecomer Library & in the Old Schoolhouse, Ballyfoyle.
- Public meetings and training were held at Dunnamaggan, Kells, St Canice's Cathedral.
- 3000 copies of the project newsletter "Field" were produced for dissemination to the volunteers and public.
- Presentation given at the Minor Place Names Conference at Dublin City University.



- The Kilkenny Field Names Project was accepted to be part of Ireland's official programme for European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018.
- A new Kilkenny Urban Place Name Survey was initiated to map and record the place-names and landmarks of several townlands in and around Kilkenny City.
- "The Whispering Fields", a short film commissioned by the Heritage Office was premiered in Scoil Bhríde, Lisdowney on Friday 2nd November. *See the film at www.kilkennyheritage.ie and at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DdCEI8-qeNM>.*



Musicians Holly Moore, Shane Grace & Jack Grace performed live music at the film launch



Dearbhala Ledwidge, Cllr. Mary Hilda Kavanagh, Eilís Costelloe, Kevin Hughes, Cllr. Maurice Shortall & Alan Counihan at the film launch

New Kilkenny City Archaeological Database

A new Kilkenny City archaeological map and dataset, which was launched in November. It comprises all the archaeological reports and findings in Kilkenny City from the period 1968 to 2006.



Launching the new Kilkenny Archaeological Project in County Hall were Dearbhala Ledwidge, Heritage Officer; Cllr. Malcolm Noonan, Chair Kilkenny Heritage Forum; Colette Byrne, Chief Executive; Pat Reid, Heritage Council; Cllr. Eamonn Aylward, Cathaoirleach Kilkenny County Council; Mary Mulholland, Director of Services; Cólín Ó Drisceoil, Kilkenny Archaeology Ltd; Beatrice Kelly, Heritage Council.

Creative Ireland: Kilkenny Culture and Creativity Strategy

The Kilkenny Culture and Creativity Strategy 2018-2022, was prepared by the Cultural Services Team of Kilkenny County Council (Heritage, Arts, Library), and launched by An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar & Minister Madigan on 12th September 2018. This strategy is part of the national Creative Ireland programme. The Heritage Officer is the Creative Ireland Co-ordinator for Kilkenny, and oversees the delivery of Pillar 2 of the Creative Ireland Programme in Kilkenny, in partnership with the Culture Team.

Projects funded and delivered under the Kilkenny Creative Ireland Programme 2018 include: Bookville; Yulefest – Christmas Eve 1914 truce re-enactment; Yulefest – Sensory Sensitive Quiet Time Project; The Whispering Fields; Fairytale festival – cultural workshops; Rhyme Rag Ensemble – Mark my Works publication; County Kilkenny Oral Heritage Audit; Stories from waterways; Kilkenny Mental Health Week 2018; Bealtaine; Poetry Broadsheet as Gaeilge - Morbhileog; The Big Chapel; The Breadwinner Exhibition; Bring your own Chair; History Roadshow; Kilkenny Citizen Science Project; Graiguenamanagh Town of Books – Fringe Festival; Gallipoli the GPO and Flanders Performance; Herstory. Decade of Commemorations (La na mBan). Cruinnui na nOg (Cultural workshops; Barnstorm Theatre Company theatre workshops; Design & Crafts Council of Ireland mini craft village).



National Biodiversity Action Plan Grant

Funding from the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht under the National Biodiversity Action Plan Grant was received to raise awareness about Kilkenny's biodiversity. The following projects were co-funded:

Pollinator Awareness Programme

- Kilkenny County Council agreed to adopt the All Ireland Pollinator Plan 2015 - 2020 and to prepare & implement an annual pollinator plan of action. The Council also agreed to adopt the garden bumble bee (*Bombus hortorum*) as the county emblem.
- Purchased 2,550 pollinator brochures which provide advice on supporting pollinators in communities, farmland, schools, council land etc.
- Commissioned professional photographs of 5 pollinator-friendly planting areas in Co. Kilkenny to raise awareness and to map pollinator areas on www.pollinator.ie. The 5 sites were: Inistioge (Car Park, St. Columcille's Well; Woodstock); Kilkenny (Peace Park, Talbots Tower Park).
- Reprinted 800 copies of the Kilkenny Wildlife Detective poster for dissemination to schools to encourage children to explore and record Kilkenny's biodiversity
- "Saving our Bees: Starting in Your Garden" bilingual adverts "Saving our Bees – starting in your school" promoting the Junior Pollinator Plan.

- # Save our bees... Starting in your garden
- What does a pollinator friendly garden look like?
-
-
- # Save our bees... Starting with your school
- T**he STOP Beee Shopping Plan Ireland can help your school. We need you to tell everyone how important bees are. We also need you to make your school and garden a safe place for bees to live.
- Why do we need bees?**
Without them we won't be able to grow our fruits and vegetables, and our wild flowers will begin to disappear. We don't want to let happen. We need to have the buzz of hardworking bees carrying out their important pollination work.
- What is Pollination?**
It is the transfer of pollen from one flower to another. Pollen is the powder that flowers have inside. They use it to make new seeds.
- Bees are the most important insects for pollinating. They fly from flower to flower, carrying pollen on their bodies. When they land on a flower, they pick up some pollen. When they fly to the next flower, they drop the pollen. This is how the pollen gets from one flower to another.
- Info box**
Bees have six legs and six wings. They are very important that there are lots of different flowers in the countryside so that the adult bees can bring them home and feed their young.
- What bees can you find in your garden?**
There are many different bees in our gardens. Some are very small and some are very large. Some are very busy and some are very lazy.
- So to help the whole school to be a better place for bees, there are lots of things we can do. We can plant flowers that bees like to visit. We can make sure there are no pesticides in our garden. We can make sure there are no holes in our walls where bees can get in.
- What Can You Do To Help In Your School?**
We need everyone's help. We need you to make sure your school becomes bee friendly. Some things you could do are:
- Plant lots of different flowers in pots or flowerbeds around your school.
 - Plant a shrub that flowers in early spring.
 - Grow some fruits and vegetables in the school garden. Remember, bees like to visit flowers that have a strong smell.
 - Let the grass grow long in some areas. Bees like to fly over the grass and pick up pollen.
 - Provide some safe places for bees to live, like bee hotels or bee houses.
- Joke**
What bee is good for your health?
A honey bee.
What bee is good for your school?
A bee that is good for your school.
- What bee is good for your school?**
A bee that is good for your school.
- What bee is good for your school?**
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- What bee is good for your school?**
A bee that is good for your school.
- What bee is good for your school?**
A bee that is good for your school.
- There are lots of resources to help you help your school become pollinator friendly:
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- STOP Beee Shopping Plan Ireland**
- Bees and the Environment**
- Bees and the Environment**
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FIRE SERVICES & MAJOR EMERGENCY

Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service main functions are:

- To engage with the community in order to inform and educate citizens in how to reduce the risk of fires and other emergencies.
- To influence and regulate the built environment in order to protect people, property and the environment from harm.
- To plan and prepare for emergencies that may happen, and making a high quality, effective and resilient response to them.
- To work together to deliver the highest quality services within a safe and positive environment for everyone in the organisation.



Graigenamanagh Fire Brigade also took the delivery of a second fire engine.

- All 7 Fire Brigades were supplied with additional specialist Road Traffic Collision Equipment.
- Two sets of Structural Fire Protective Clothing was provided to all our firefighters.

Capital Projects

The new fire station for Graigenamanagh was officially opened by Deputy John Paul Phelan, Minister of State at the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government, in the presence of Cathaoirleach Cllr. David Fitzgerald, Mayor Michael Doyle and a large gathering of invited guests on Monday, 21st May, 2018.



Cathaoirleach Eamon Aylward presenting new PPE to Thomastown fire Brigade

Fire Safety Certificates

85 applications for fire safety certificates were received in 2018. These applications were dealt with in-house by the technical fire prevention staff. 3no of these were maximum application fee applications – one hotel and two industrial developments. 15no of these were Regularisation Fire Safety Certificate (equivalent to Planning Retention) applications. This is a reduction from 2017 when 99no applications were received and processed.

Fire Services Acts 1981 & 2003

- Fire Prevention staff made a considerable number of visits to premises both to provide advice and to enforce legislation.
- 2no Fire Safety Notices under the Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003 were served in 2018.
- 3no Closure Notice under the Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003 was served in 2018.
- 80no Fire Safety Inspections were carried in 2018.
- 4no Fire Safety Assessments were ordered under the Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003

Community Fire Safety

- The Fire Service took part in a Multi-agency pre tenancy presentation meeting in Johns Green.
- Ongoing public messaging campaigns were maintained to encourage members of the public to install smoke alarms and to test their smoke alarms once a week to ensure that they are working.



- Kilkenny County Council ran an awareness campaign during National Fire Safety Week in October 2018, to highlight the importance of fire safety in the home.
- This campaign included online activity and the following are the statistics in relation to the social media platforms for the week:

FACEBOOK

Posts had 32,402 impressions. There were 32 #18FSW posts during this week.

TWITTER

15 Tweets earned 5,464 impressions during this week.

- Open days were facilitated in Kilkenny City Fire Station, Castlecomer, Freshford, Urlingford and Callan Fire Stations. Fire Safety information stands were held in The Market Cross Shopping Centre and MacDonagh Junction Shopping Centre.



Cathaoirleach Eamon Aylward with fire personnel at our information stand at MacDonagh Junction

- Talks and information were given to various communities such as Kilkenny Age Friendly Seniors Forum, and Festival of Speed.
- Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service continue to deliver the NDFEM Primary Schools Programme (PSP) throughout the City and County of Kilkenny each year. This programme has been running since 2006 and over 17,812 3rd class pupils have received the fire safety programme to date.
- Visits by various groups to the Fire Stations was also facilitated. The children got to see some of the specialist equipment and learn more about fire safety in the home.



Pupils from Kilmanagh National School with Fire Officer from Callan Fire Brigade

Training

The following training was provided by Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service in 2018:



Firefighters from Kilkenny Fire & Rescue Service carried out flooding first responder training on the River Barrow.



Ladder training exercise at the new Graiguenamanagh Fire station



ESDS Emergency Services Driving Standard Course



Pump Operators Course

Operations

Fire Brigades responded to an increased number of grass, ditch and gorse fires during the hot weather spell in 2018. Compressed air foam system (CAFS) has been used at these fires as it reduces the amount of water to be used.

Great work was done by Fire Brigades from Kilkenny City, Freshford, Callan and Castlecomer at a major fire at the Bridge House, John Street, Kilkenny.

The Fire Service prevented loss of life, contained the fire from spreading to adjoining buildings, saved the building from total collapse and preserved some of the buildings unique heritage features.



Fire at Bridge House, John Street, Kilkenny

Members of Kilkenny Fire & Rescue Service that received their 20 yearlong service awards from Minister Eoghan Murphy



Major Emergency Management

The following Plans were reviewed in 2018:

- Major Emergency Management Plan.
- External Emergency plan for Nitrofert *[also tested under the Seveso Regulations]*
- Flood Emergency Response Plan
- Severe Weather Plan *(excluding Flooding)*.

The Fire Service is a very resilient and useful resource to the Local Authority in that Brigades (trained and equipped manpower) can be mobilised within minutes of an emergency in their area and assisted communities during Storm Emma.



Castlecomer Fire Brigade responding to a motorist in distress during the snow

CIVIL DEFENCE

Kilkenny Civil Defence is a volunteer based organisation that supports the Principal Response Agencies (County Councils, Gardai and HSE) in dealing with severe weather, flooding, major incidents and searching for missing people. It also assists our local communities in events including large events such as concerts and festivals and smaller local events such as parades and sports events.

Volunteers are trained in Casualty, Search & Rescue, Auxiliary Fire Service, Welfare and Communications.

Callouts

During 2018 Kilkenny Civil Defence were called out to assist the Gardai with 4 River Search & Recoveries and an open country land search

*Land search, Ballyfoyle, June 2018,
with assistance from surrounding Counties
& the Central Drone Unit.*



During **Storm Emma** the Civil defence spent 5 days on active duty assisting the Local Authority, the HSE and the local community. 11 dialysis patients were transported to and from hospitals for treatment. HSE staff were transported to hospital sites. Provisions were transported to St Patricks and the Good Shepherds centre. Members of the public were rescued from stranded vehicles and transported to safety and provisions were delivered to families in need.

Community Events

During 2018 Kilkenny Civil Defence provided assistance to over 15 community events including safety boat cover for water based charity and sporting events, first aid and ambulance cover for sports events, charity events, fun days and local concerts.



Safety Boat for the Barrow Challenge September 2018

Training

Instructor training is provided to volunteers through the National Civil Defence training college in Roscrea. In 2018, 3 new Instructor Training Courses were undertaken by local Civil Defence personnel. In turn the local instructors provide multi-skill training from our training centre in Kilkenny City.

The areas of training provided for our volunteers are as follows:

- Casualty / First Aid Service
- Rescue – Open Country Search - missing persons search skills
- River-based Search & Recovery- water safety and boat operators courses
- Auxiliary Fire Service- pumping flood water
- Flooding- Swift water operative course
- Welfare Service
- Civil Defence Communications
- Severe weather driving skills

Volunteers train at least one night weekly and some weekends throughout the year in both the Kilkenny training centre and off site throughout the county. Joint training takes place with other counties to plan for major emergencies.



Swift Water Training River Nore



*Boat Training
Graiugenamanagh Lock*



*Off Road Severe Weather
Driving Course, Meath*

Recruiting

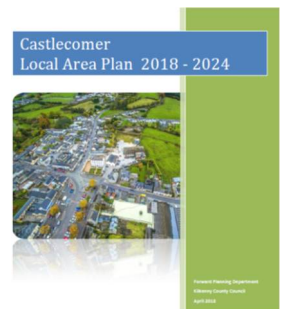
In July 2018 a fulltime Civil Defence Officer was recruited to manage the operations of the Kilkenny Civil Defence. New volunteers were actively recruited in the later part of the year and recruitment is still open and ongoing.

**DIRECTORATE OF
PLANNING, ECONOMIC &
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**

Director of Services: Mr. Sean McKeown

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

- 868 planning applications received during 2018.
- Castlecomer Local Area Plan adopted.
- The process for the 2020 -2026 City & County Development Plan review commenced
- Submissions were made to National Planning Framework.
- Submissions made to the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy Issues Paper.



- Commenced preparation and publication of Draft Local Area Plan for Thomastown
 - Commenced preparation and publication of Draft Local Area Plan for Callan
 - Adopted three variations to the City & County Development Plans to facilitate housing and temporary car parking in the Abbey Quarter.
- 9 housing developments taken in charge.
 - €2,264,465.00 collected in development levies.
 - Vacant sites levy for 2018 progressed with a review of Kilkenny City and Ferrybank the focus extended to Castlecomer, Callan and Thomastown.
 - €144,650 paid in Build Heritage and Structures at Risk Fund Grants. This leveraged a further €222,634 from private sector funding and resulted in 800 days' employment for local professional and trades people.



ENVIRONMENT

The key aims of the Council's Environment Department are:

- To promote sustainable development, to provide an efficient and environmentally waste management infrastructure, to implement the Joint South East Waste Management Plan and to maintain proper regulatory and monitoring systems for environmental protection and control of pollution
- The Council has responsibility for over 500 statutory environmental functions, which are contained within legislation. The key areas dealt with include:
 - Waste Management
 - Waste Management Planning
 - Recycling and Waste Disposal Centres
 - Recycling
 - Enforcement
 - Litter Management
 - Climate Change
 - Education and Awareness
 - Water Quality and Pollution Control
 - Water Framework Directive
 - Pollution Control and Enforcement
 - Coastal Pollution Planning
 - Water Safety
 - Veterinary Services
 - Burial Grounds

Waste Management

Southern Region Waste Management Plan

Kilkenny County Council continues to work towards achieving the objectives set out in the Southern Region Waste Management Plan.

Repair Directory

Kilkenny County Council's Repair Directory was rolled out as a national on-line Repair Directory repairmystuff.ie through the lead Local Authority Monaghan County Council. This initiative was funded through the Local Authority Prevention Network and the National Waste Prevention Programme.

National Re-Use Month

Four workshops were organised/supported for National Re-Use Month through Waste Prevention:

- Paper Creatures facilitated by Tom Duffy
- Workshop for 8-12 year olds held in the Arts Office
- Old Sock to Soft Toy facilitated by Zoe Wong
- Workshop for 6-12 year olds held in Thomastown Library
- GSC Men's Shed - Bicycle Repair Workshop
- A Weave practical held in Kings River, Stoneyford

National Re-Use Month was also promoted on local and social media.

Dunmore Recycling and Waste Disposal Centre 2018

Dunmore Recycling Centre continued to serve the community by providing an accessible waste management service. Some of the key statistics are provided below:

- 1,416 tonnes of recyclable material was collected in 2018. This is a 5.4% increase in recycled material of which 222 tonnes consisted of WEEE, 332 tonnes of green garden waste and 5.6 tonnes of food waste.

- 3,096 tonnes of waste quantities received at the site. This is a 1.6% increase in waste disposed at the facility. The rise in waste and recycling quantities at the site show the continued growth and use of the site by the public.
- Social Media used to advertise the site – the Facebook site currently has 332 followers.
- Over 7000 people were reached through social media across 21 posts relating to the site.



December 2018 saw the 'Bikes to Africa' initiative launched by the Kilkenny Rotary Club in conjunction with the Dunmore Recycling & Waste Disposal Centre. A branded storage container and drop off point was located in Dunmore. 200 bikes were collected in the first 4 weeks of the initiative. This will be an ongoing collaboration to reuse unwanted bicycles, which will be repaired in Ireland before being delivered to the end recipients in Gambia, West Africa.

Council Recycling Services

Saturday recycling service is operated at Dunmore Civic Amenity each Saturday morning accepting mixed paper, cardboard, plastics and glass.

A new privately run recycling and waste disposal centre is now operating at Granny, South Kilkenny. Kilkenny County Council contributes towards the cost of operating this facility. This facility accepts a variety of waste for recycling and is comparable to that offered at Dunmore.

A number of WEEE Ireland mobile collections were completed throughout the County to assist the public to recycle their electrical appliances.

Bring Banks

The rebranding of the Bring Centre's, involving 280 individual receptacles, within the City and County was completed in 2018. The rebranded signage provides for a symbol of the recyclable item along with bi-lingual Irish/English text to the front of each bank. This initiative was progressed through the Southern Regional Waste Management Office in conjunction with the Environment Section of Kilkenny Co. Council.



- 44 bottle banks throughout the County.
- 1,642 tonnes of glass
- 109 tonnes of aluminum and steel collected in 2018.

Litter Management Plan

The Litter Management Plan 2018 – 2020 was formally adopted by the Elected Members at the February Council Meeting. This Plan sets out the Council's policy on litter related issues and sets out objectives to achieve the 42 listed actions by the end of 2020. Throughout 2018 progress was made on the delivery of the target actions prescribed in the Plan.

4.1 Waste:						%
4.1.2 Illegal Dumping, non C&D waste	215	472	687	670	17	98
4.3 Air/Odour	26	68	94	90	4	96
Totals	759	1419	2178	2145	33	98

A total of 95 Fined Penalty Notice fines were issued along with 9 successful prosecutions taken in 2018.

Recommended Minimum Criteria for Environmental Inspections (RMCEI) Plan

The RMCEI Plan 2018 was approved by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and ensures the efficient monitoring and implementation of environmental legislation. The plan takes on board both regional (WERLA) and local priorities and has regard to the resources available to Kilkenny County Council

The following inspections were completed under the RMCEI plan in 2018.

RMCEI – Recommended Minimum Criteria Environmental Inspection Plan	Number of Inspections undertaken up to end 2018	Yearly Target Number under RMCEI	Percentage of Yearly Target achieved to-date
Discharge Licensed Premises	25	24	104%
WFD Monitoring, op & surv, samples taken	436	435	100%
WFD Investigative monitoring, samples & analysis	95	94	101%
Bathing Waters (Non-designated)	20	20	100%
Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems under NIP	27	27	100%
Nutrient Management Plan Assessment	32	22	145%
Ambient Monitoring	200	160	125%
Additional BOD sampling for Water Services Section	556	550	101%
Planning Assessment (written report to planning)	525	525	100%
Waste Permitted facilities – Inspections	15	15	100%
Bring Bank Surveillance	176	150	117%
Historic Landfills – risk investigation & remediation	7	7	100%
Historic Landfill monitoring	22	24	92%
Routine Litter Patrols – City	352	200	176%
Routine Litter Patrols – County	399	175	228%
Waste Collection Permit Holders	5	4	125%
WCP AR Validation	73	73	100%
Garages – Waste Management, oil burners	20	20	100%

Anti-Dumping Initiative

Kilkenny County Council secured funding of €40K from the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment towards the cost of delivering a number of anti-dumping initiatives in 2018. These initiatives were aimed at tackling problem areas (e.g. for illegal dumping in quiet corners of urban areas, alongside rural roadways and in forestry areas across the County) and developing an effective enforcement response. One of the initiatives undertaken during the summer was a Mattresses Amnesty Day at Dunmore Recycling Centre. A total of 550 old mattresses collected.

Historic Landfill Sites

Consultant Engineers were appointed in 2018 to undertake an environmental risk assessment on five historic landfill sites, namely Thorpes, Skehana, Seven-Houses, Oldcourt and Talbotsinch.

A Tier 2 level assessment was completed for Skehana, Seven-Houses, Oldcourt and Thorpes, whilst a Tier 3 level assessment was completed for Talbotsinch. Each report advised on the next stage with respect to the need for further investigation works and / or remediation works.

In September 2018, a Certificate of Authorisation (COA) was obtained from the EPA for the landfill sites at Rockfield, Gorwan and Sherman's outside Ballyragget. The COA allows the Council to advance with the proposed remediation works at each site and it's anticipated that tender documents will be prepared in early 2019 and, subject to funding, with works commencing in Q2 2019.

An application was submitted to the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment in Q4 2018 seeking funding to advance all the above schemes.

County Kilkenny Waste Management Bye Laws 2018



Following a period of public consultation, the Elected Members of Kilkenny County Council adopted new Waste Management Bye-laws at the Council meeting in December. These new Bye-laws place obligations on waste producers in households and commercial premises regarding storage, presentation, segregation of waste, contamination prevention and demonstration of proof that their waste is disposed of by an approved waste operator or brought by the waste producer to an authorised waste facility.

The new Bye-laws will help promote the segregation of waste in separate bins. Householders and commercial premises in population centres of over 500 people are already required to have a third food waste bin to dispose of food waste which must be provided by their Authorised Waste Collector. Those who home compost or use an authorised waste facility are exempt but will have to prove that their food waste is being disposed of in accordance with the Bye-laws.

The population centres that fall into this category are listed below:

- | | | |
|-----------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| ○ Kilkenny City | ○ Thomastown | ○ Freshford |
| ○ Mooncoin | ○ Castlecomer | ○ Paulstown |
| ○ Callan | ○ New Ross (Co. Kilkenny) | ○ Ballyragget |
| ○ Kilmacow | ○ Bennetsbridge | ○ Gowran |
| ○ Graignamanagh | ○ Ferrybank (Co. Kilkenny) | ○ Piltown |
| ○ Urlingford | ○ Moneenroe | |

The Bye-laws are supported by Enforcement Provisions with a max penalty of €2,500 with a subsequent daily fine of €500 for non-compliance and/ or Fixed Payment Notices of €75 for those who are non-compliant with the Waste Management Bye-laws.

Water Quality & Pollution Control

Pollution Control

- 25 premises which hold a Section 4 Discharge Licence were inspected in 2018.
- 146 Farm Inspections were undertaken under the European Communities (Good Agricultural Practice for the protection of Waters) Regulations, 2014. Approximately 21.5% were found to be non-compliant with the regulations. 30 warning letters were issued which were subsequently resolved and 4 cross compliance notifications to Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine [DAFM]. 20 follow up farm inspections were carried out including Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM).
- DAFM undertook a further 75 farm inspections on behalf of Kilkenny County Council in 2018, of which 20 were found to be non-compliant and would have been subject to sanctions on their single farm payments.
- 27 septic tank inspections were undertaken.
- Extensive Surface Monitoring Programme for the Water Framework Directive was continued
- 556 samples taken were taken from various rivers for analysis in 2018 as part of the Water Framework Directorate National Sampling Programme.
- 32 Nutrient Management Plans were received, assessed and approved with conditions in relation to the use of sewage sludge in agriculture.
- 525 planning reports were issued to the Planning Department by the Section during the year, primarily advising on the protection of or improvement to water quality.

Climate Change Adaptation Strategy Plan

Two Workshops were held in December. The purpose of the workshops was to assess the current baseline and inform the development of viable actions for mitigation and adaption for climate change.



The workshops were facilitated by Ms. Breda Maher from the Climate Action Regional Office (CARO) and attended by staff, Elected Members & SPC External Members.

In early 2019 the Environment Department will prepare the draft Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and following an internal review it is anticipated that this document will go out to public consultation in Q2 2019 prior to going before the Council at the September 2019 meeting for approval.

Noise Action Plan

Kilkenny County Council prepared its Draft Noise Action Plan 2019-2023 and submitted same to the EPA for comment. The Noise Action Plan is designed to firstly assess noise exposure in relevant areas (e.g. resulting from particular noise sources such as roads, railways and airports), and secondly to manage and control future noise sources through planned measures (e.g. land-use planning, traffic planning, abatement by sound-insulation measures). Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) prepared a noise map for the relevant roads and areas to be covered by the Noise Action Plan. It is anticipated that Plan will be published in early 2019.

Campaigns, Education & Awareness

Kilkenny County Council provided a free Christmas Tree Recycling Service at 9 locations across the County between the 4th & 14th January, 2018.

Green Teen Training Day - Students from 5 secondary schools attended a Green Teen Training Day facilitated by Eco-Unesco. This activity was delivered to support students who are coordinating the Green Schools Programme in their school.

#Bin It, Don't Fling It Campaign was launched in March 2018. This roadside anti-litter campaign was rolled out in conjunction with Waterford & Wexford County Councils. Over the period of the campaign up to 12,000 motor disc holders were distributed and the roadside anti-litter message was further highlighted in regional, local and social media.



Green Schools Programme - 3 schools applied for their first green flag and 16 schools applied to renew their green flag award.



National Spring Clean - An Taisce National Spring Clean received 126 registrations in 2018 and groups/individuals were further supported by Kilkenny County Council with the provision of litter picking equipment and collection of waste.

The **Stook 10 Road Race** took place on the 18th November in Gowran and celebrated its first year to go green. The Environment Section worked with the Stook Committee on greening initiatives and the primary initiative was to remove single use plastic bottles. Refill Ireland were sponsored by the Environment Section to supply 1500 reusable cups in lieu of single use plastic bottles. This sponsorship on Refill Ireland has led to Kilkenny Recreation and Sports Partnership acquiring our reusable cups for the **Medieval Mile Road Race** further reducing single use plastic waste. It is envisaged that the Environment Section will work with Kilkenny Recreation and Sports Partnership on future greening initiatives for their events.

#Savour Going Green - Kilkenny County Council and Clean Technology Centre in conjunction with Savour Kilkenny supported Savour Kilkenny in going green in 2018. The Savour Festival has taken on green initiatives that minimised environmental impacts through waste minimisation and also increased environmental awareness for stall holders and the many visitors who attended the festival.

#Poop Off Our Pavements

This anti dog fouling campaign #Poopoffourpavements was launched by Mary Kennedy on the 16th November at KCLR Offices. Four audio poles have been installed in various city locations and a social media and radio campaign has been rolled out. People were asked to post a picture of their dog to Facebook or Twitter with #Poopoffourpavements to be in with a chance to win one of four Kilkenny Chamber vouchers.



WEEE - 4 WEEE collections were undertaken in Kilkenny in 2018 at Johnstown, Thomastown, Castlecomer and Piltown with a combined tonnage of 49.84 tonnes collected.

Anti-litter themed murals were provided in two national schools, whereby artists were engaged to design and paint murals to raise the awareness of the do's and don'ts when it comes to dealing with your waste. School children were encouraged to participate with the painting of the artwork and the initiative was funded through the 2018 Anti-Litter & Anti-Graffiti Fund.

Grants

- Anti-Litter & Anti-Graffiti Awareness Grant 2018 - Department of Community, Climate Action & Environment provided grant support of €23,000. 19 Communities received grants.
- Local Agenda 21 Environmental Partnership Fund 2018 - Co-funding of €21,850 between the Department of Community, Climate Action & Environment & Kilkenny County Council was awarded to 18 environmental themed projects centred on sustainable development.

2018 Awards and Achievements IBAL

Kilkenny was assessed as cleaner than European norms and came ninth out of forty towns/cities surveyed in the Irish Business against Litter (IBAL) League table.



Entente Florale

The Entente Florale awards are organised by The European Association for Flowers and Landscape (AEFP) who receive applications from towns, villages and cities throughout Europe. Inistioge along with Dungarvan, Co. Waterford were nominated as the village and town representatives for Ireland in 2018 by the Department of Rural & Community Development and competed with 7 other European countries comprising of 12 entries.



The aim of the Entente Florale competition is to enhance horticulture, tourism and environmental awareness and to promote a greener and more pleasant environment in European towns and villages. The annual competition encourages public authorities, private bodies and individuals to cooperate in beautifying their towns and villages.

The Entente Florale Committee members, volunteers, extended community, staff of Woodstock and Kilkenny County Council put in months of tireless work and dedication to enhance the village across the various adjudication categories. A panel of 8 European judges adjudicated Inistioge Village and Woodstock on the 20th July 2018 and Inistioge was ultimately awarded a Gold Medal at the Entente Florale Awards Night in September.

The Heritage Office supported the development of the following:

- Inistioge Green Infrastructure Map: a beautifully illustrated map identifying Green Infrastructure & ecosystem services.
- Biodiversity Action Plan for St. Columcille's National School - identifying simple biodiversity actions for the primary school.
- Inistioge Heritage Trail Brochure - a creative and colourful new heritage visitor brochure.
- Pollinator Planting List - guidance on pollinator friendly plants for Inistioge.



Eileen O'Brien, Cllr. Andrew McGuinness, Leas Cathaoirleach, and Carmel Cummins, launching Inistioge Heritage Trail brochure, August 23rd

TIDY TOWNS

Kilkenny Tidy Towns - Keep Kilkenny Beautiful

2018 was again a bountiful year for Keep Kilkenny Beautiful. The Supervalú Tidy Town Adjudicator's report is testament to the hard work, dedication and organisational skills of this Tidy Towns Committee and extended group of volunteers. With a score of 337 points Keep Kilkenny Beautiful were once again gold medal winners, County winners and Regional winners in the South East. In the special award category, they also attained the Water & Communities Award for their work on the eradication of Himalayan Balsam, Japanese Knotweed and Giant Hog weed along the banks of the River Nore and Breaghagh within the City.

Tullahought Tidy Towns

Tullahought Tidy Towns achieved a silver medal in the Supervalú Tidy Towns Competition 2018 and were commended coming third in the County Awards. They also won a Local Authority Pollinator Award.



Inistioge Tidy Towns

2018 was an extremely busy year for Inistioge Village due to taking part in the Entente Florale European Competition and Supervalú Tidy Towns Competition. They were awarded a silver medal and highly commended in the County Award category.

Windgap Tidy Towns

In the Special Awards Category Windgap Village was awarded an Endeavour Award for a 15-point improvement on their 2017 adjudication marks.

Burial Grounds

Kilkenny County Council has 14 open burial grounds.

Kilkenny County Council operates a Graveyard Grant Scheme. This scheme is open to any Community Group/Organisation involved in the management and maintenance of local graveyards. A total of 21 applications were received in 2018.

Veterinary Services

The Veterinary Service fulfils the food safety service contract between the FSAI and Kilkenny County Council which includes responsibility for the Food Safety Section of the Local Authority Veterinary Service in the Carlow area also. The Veterinary public health and animal welfare functions include providing official controls/ regulation in small to medium throughput slaughterhouses and small meat processing plants, and the regulation of small poultry slaughtering plants.

Inspections and audits are carried out on supervised premises to verify compliance with legislation. The service is involved in interagency planning at regional and national level.

- Approved Slaughterhouses under the service's supervision in 2018 slaughtered 4,592 Cattle, 20,357 Sheep, and 152,776 Poultry.
- 20 Food Businesses were under the supervision of the service in 2018
- 19 Residue Samples were taken as part of the National Residue Control Plan.
- 69 Meat, Swabs and Water Samples were taken as Official Controls.
- 202 Hygiene Inspections (other than AM/PM Inspections) were done in food premises under the services supervision.

Dogs & Horses

The Dog Warden Service and the Veterinary Service is involved in the implementation of the Control of Dogs Act 1986 as amended and the Dog Breeding Establishments Act 2010 as amended. There are new Ministerial Guidelines, coming into effect from January 2019. During 2018 the Service has been working with the stakeholders to ensure premises are upgraded accordingly. It is noted 17 premises were registered on the Dog Breeding Establishments Register on the 31st December 2018. There were 35 Dog Breeding Establishments inspections completed in 2018.

4,625 individual dogs, 7 general dog licences and 24 lifetime dog licences were issued for the county.

99% of all dogs were re-homing from the Carlow Kilkenny Dog Shelter.

21 horses were impounded and another 12 horses were licenced in 2018.

Water Safety

15 lifeguards were employed for the months of June July and August 2018 at the following locations:-

- The Meadows, Kilkenny City
- The Weir, Bleach Road, Kilkenny City
- Graiguenamanagh
- Inistioge
- Thomastown

Lifeguard Statistics Summer Season 2018				
<i>Rescue</i>	<i>First Aid</i>	<i>Advice Given</i>	<i>Accident Prevented</i>	<i>Other</i>
2	115	1650	815	0

Swimmers enjoying the water at Graiguenamanagh, Co. Kilkenny.



Presentation of Certificates by Irish Water Safety

Certificates were presented by Minister of State for Natural Resources, Community Affairs and Digital Development, Mr. Seán Canney in Dublin Castle on 28th November, 2018 to the following:

- Joan McLoughlin, WSDO was awarded a Ten Year Service Award in recognition of her voluntary commitment to promoting a public awareness of water safety and rescue in saving lives.
- Michael Gaule Snr. from Kilkenny Water Safety was presented with a Just In Time Award (JIT) to recognise his bravery while on holidays in Costa Del Sol in 2016 where he successfully rescued three people from the sea including a mother and child.
- Michael Gaule Jnr from Kilkenny Water Safety was awarded a JIT award for successfully administering BLS (Basic Life Support) to his Aunt who had suffered concussion.
- Kilkenny People Newspaper was presented with a Media Appreciation Award in recognition of their covering drowning prevention water safety issues through the year and for the past number of years.



Local Authority Waters Programme (LAWPRO)

Kilkenny and Tipperary County Councils are the joint lead authorities for the national shared service that supports and co-ordinates implementation of the River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2018 – 2021 (RBMP). The Programme now has 57 staff across the country in place with a further three positions to be filled in 2019.



LAWPRO Team Training Day September 2018

The staff are based in 13 local authority offices around the country, including 5 people within the offices of Kilkenny County Council. The programme operates within a strong governance structure of five Regional Water and Environment Management Committees, set up in 2016. The south east committee is chaired by the Kilkenny Chief Executive Ms. Colette Byrne and meets quarterly. The five chairs also meet regularly with the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DHPLG) and the EPA as the National Co-ordination and Management Committee.

The Catchment Assessment Team, set up in 2018, is a team of scientists with a wide range of technical expertise. It supports the implementation of local measures to address water quality issues. Its work involves assessing the catchment to further understand the local issues impacting on water quality, and collaborates with communities, landowners and public bodies to develop and implement workable solutions.



The 2018 work programme focussed on recruitment and training of the scientific staff. The Regional Implementation Programmes requires the teams to focus on 190 priority areas for action, containing 726 water bodies, and anticipates water quality improvements in all of them by December 2021. In 2018, the Catchment Assessment Teams carried out approx. 50 desk top studies of these areas and, together with the Community Water Officer, ran 20 community information meetings to explain the Waters Programme prior to commencing fieldwork. The fieldwork will assist the scientists to assess each of the areas and ultimately design local solutions for the specific issues that are impacting on water quality. LAWPRO staff will then support and advise those land owners and public bodies charged with implementing those measures. There are additional supports available to agricultural land owners and managers through the Agricultural Sustainability Support and Advisory Service (ASSAP) where Teagasc and dairy industry advisors will provide free one to one advice to farmers in the areas for action.

Community Engagement

The Community Water Officer (CWO) continues to work and support communities in the implementation of the RBMP and to create awareness amongst members of the public about its objectives and the protection and restoration of our water bodies.

A public meeting took place in Coon on the River Dinin in Kilkenny.

2018 saw an expansion of the river clean ups, with a variety of clean ups taking place on the Barrow and on the River Nore over 2 weekends in September. The river clean-ups have focused attention on the amount of plastic waste in our water bodies and a “plastic trap” has been placed on the River Barrow to prevent plastic from the river going out to the estuary. This trap is monitored by the

community. Anti- dumping initiatives also took place along the approaches to rivers during the Big Spring Clean Up in association with KCLR, schools and community groups, resulting in one school banning plastic from its school environment. The Big Spring Clean Up reached an audience of over 25,000 people. A continuous awareness raising campaign about water quality is being carried out across schools in the Breaghagh, Dinin, Duiske, Nuenna and Pockocke areas of Kilkenny.



The CWO continues to support and develop projects through LAWPRO's Community Water Development Fund 2018. A very successful Water Heritage Day 2018 was held on August 26th, with events organised across County Kilkenny. This is a very successful collaboration between LAWPRO and the Heritage Council and is a dedicated day to celebrate our natural waters and heritage. Events took place in Kilkenny, Castlecomer, Thomastown and Graigueenamanagh.



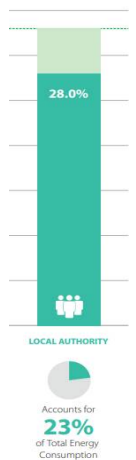
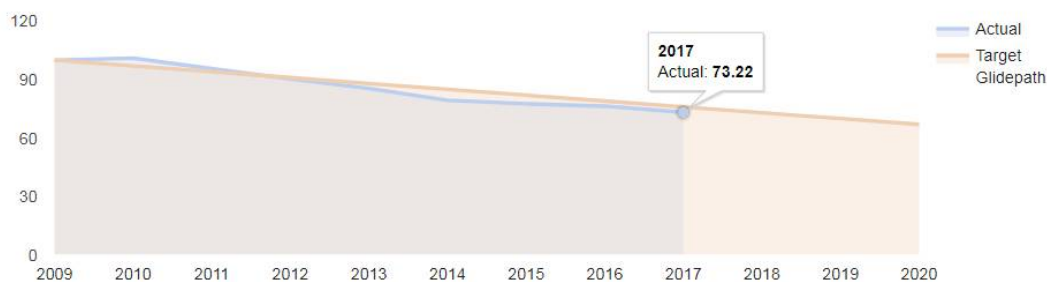
Young scientists, Castlecomer Discovery Park Water Heritage Day.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY, CONSERVATION & CLIMATE CHANGE

Monitoring & Reporting 2018

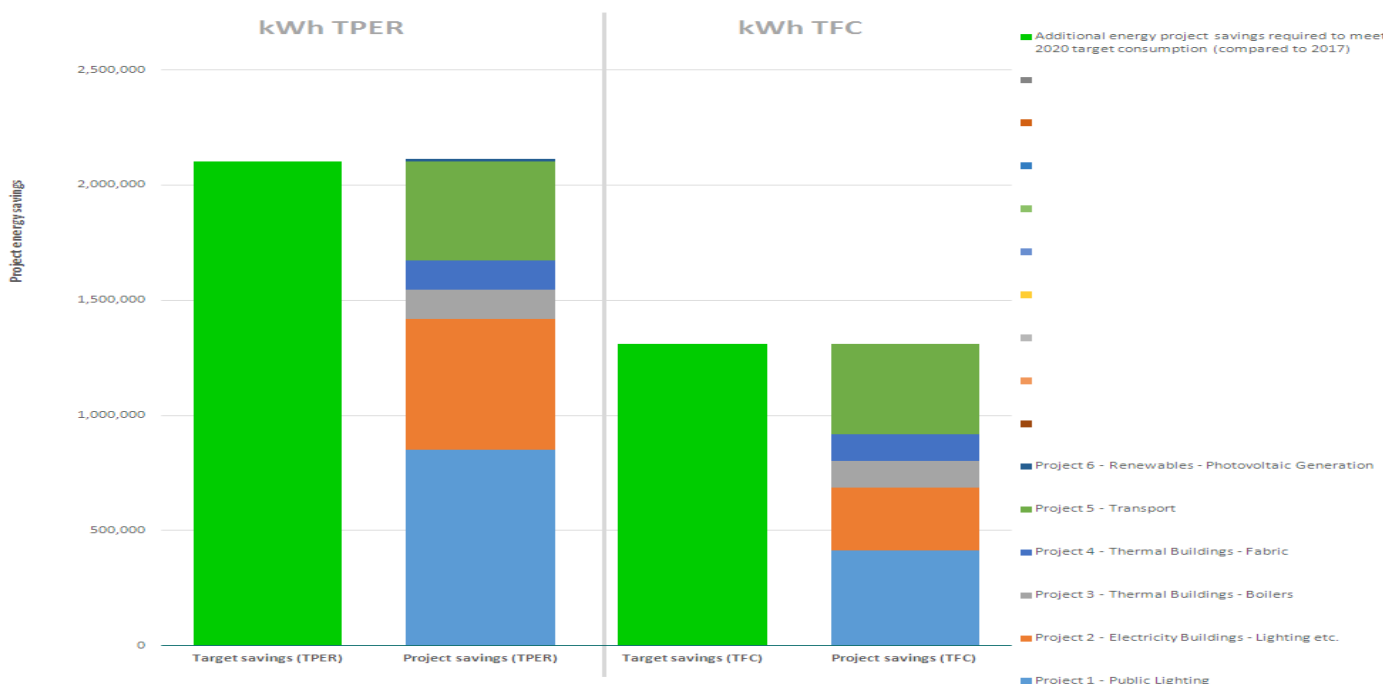
The Public Sector in Ireland is tasked with reducing their energy consumption by 33% by 2020 from their baseline year. The baseline year for Kilkenny County Council is 2009. Kilkenny County Council reports their energy usage annually to the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) which manages the reporting process on behalf of the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCAE). SEAI prepare a report on energy efficiency in the public sector to DCCAE annually. This report entitled “Annual Report 2018 on Public Sector Energy Efficiency Performance” details the entire energy performance of the public sector. Based on the 2018 report, Kilkenny County Council is currently at 27%. As a result of this the council is currently more efficient than the baseline year and is on track to reach the 2020 targets.

The energy consumption across the local authority and water services sectors accounts for 23% of all Public Sector energy use. The local authorities and water services sector as a group is currently at 28% toward the target and it is envisaged that further developments towards energy efficient street lighting projects, such as the pilot project developed in Kilkenny will help the group to achieve their targets.



Kilkenny County Council's 2017 Monitoring & Reporting Results

Kilkenny County Council needs to achieve a 33% energy reduction by 2020. Six key areas have been identified. These areas are public lighting, electricity efficiency in buildings, thermal efficiency, transport and renewable energy. Kilkenny County Council will revise the energy efficiency investment strategy in 2019 to develop these projects further.



Kilkenny County Council's Gap to Target

Kilkenny Better Energy Communities 2018

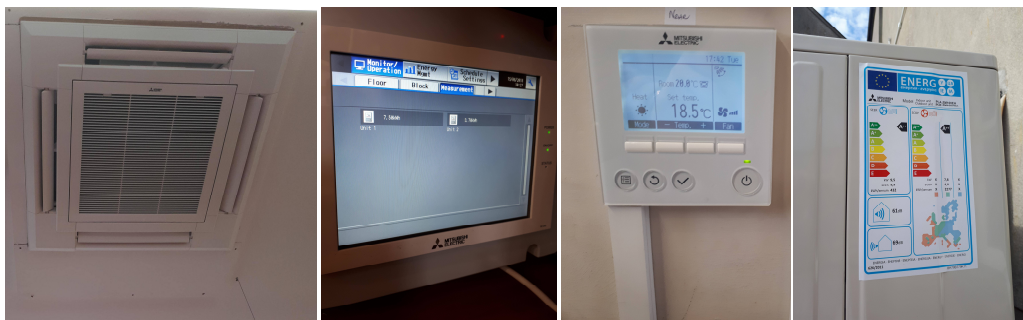
Kilkenny County Council were successful in an application to the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) for grant funding through the Better Energy Communities programme. The Council acted as the lead applicant with 3 Counties Energy Agency (3cea) administering and project managing the grant programme.

The Council project's consisted of public lighting retrofit, library upgrade and fire station upgrade. The community beneficiaries of the grant included a residential nursing home, two community centres, church, national school, swimming pool and catering business.

The total energy spend on all projects was €875,000 with SEAI grant aid of approximately €287,000 and anticipated energy savings of 600,000kWh. Kilkenny will lead another SEAI BEC project in 2019.

Castlecomer Library

The Library Service under took a heating upgrade of Castlecomer Library in 2018. This included the replacement of the old inefficient heating system and the installation of a new heating system with the integration of an energy management system and energy monitoring.



Energy Upgrade works Castlecomer Library

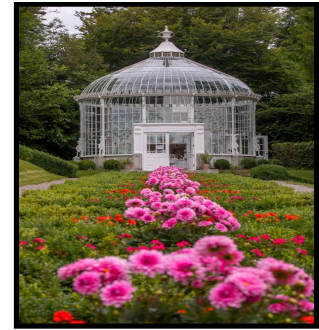
Callan Fire Station

The Fire Service is currently in its sixth year of implementing energy efficiency projects across the buildings operated by the Fire Service. Callan Fire Station was upgraded in 2018 with the installation of a new LED lighting system having previously upgraded the fabric of the building in 2016.

Covenant of Mayors

Kilkenny signed up to the Covenant of Mayors in April 2015. The covenant is a European initiative to reduce carbon emissions by 2020 and 2030. The Covenant of Mayors requires signatories to compile a sustainable energy action plan to meet the carbon reduction target of 20% by 2020. Kilkenny County Council adopted the action plan in 2017. The energy office is also working closely with the Environment Section on the Climate Adaptation Plan.

PARKS & AMENITY



Parks & Recreation

The Parks Department oversees the development and maintenance of recreational amenities in Kilkenny City and County. Parks Department deliver a range of high quality recreational amenities including playgrounds, parks and sports pitches which are available for use to people of all ages. The Parks Department is also responsible for on-going developments, visitor management and maintenance of Woodstock Gardens and Arboretum in Inistioge which has become a major tourist attraction in the south east.

Playgrounds

Development of playgrounds County-wide, takes place in conjunction with local communities. A smaller number of playgrounds were provided as part of housing developments by the developer and when completed to a satisfactory standard were taken in charge by the County Council and managed thereafter by the Parks Department. 27 playgrounds in total are now open for play at the following locations across the County. Throughout 2018 all playgrounds were inspected on a weekly basis by Parks Staff and any repairs or cleaning necessary was undertaken immediately in the interest of maintaining the playgrounds in good order for safe play.

List of playgrounds within each Municipal District provided hereunder:

Piltown Municipal District

- Ferrybank
- Blackthorn Hills
- Fiddown
- Kylemore Walk
- Mooncoin
- Mullinavat
- Windgap

Castlecomer Municipal District

- Ballyragget
- Castlecomer Demesne
- Clogh
- Coon
- Paulstown
- Urlingford

Kilkenny Municipal District

- Assumption Place
- O'Loughlin Road
- Fr. McGrath Centre
- The Butts
- Garringreen
- Johnswell Road
- Talbots Court Estate
- Rose Hill, Kells Road
- Ballyhale
- Bennettsbridge
- Fair Green, Callan
- Goresbridge
- Graiguenamanagh
- Kells
- Stoneyford
- Thomastown
- Woodstock Gardens

SOME IMAGES OF PLAYGROUNDS FROM AROUND THE COUNTY PARKS



River Nore Linear Park – At present the route covers approximately 7km of river bank and provides an attractive walkway and cycleway for outdoor exercise. The riverside paths are exceptionally well used, the development of the Ossory pedestrian bridge under the existing Ring Road bridge allowing for a loop of the city south of John's bridge. The linear park will be further developed with links in the near future to the river banks at the former brewery site. The long term plan is to create a loop back to the city north of Green's bridge by means of a second foot bridge at Talbot's Inch, returning to the city on the eastern bank. This last phase would create a continuous 10km loop walk of the city, all off road.



New way finding signage was provided in the first half of 2018 along the River Nore Linear Park. This signage has proven to be particularly useful for visitors to the City and numbers using the River Nore Linear Park increase annually.

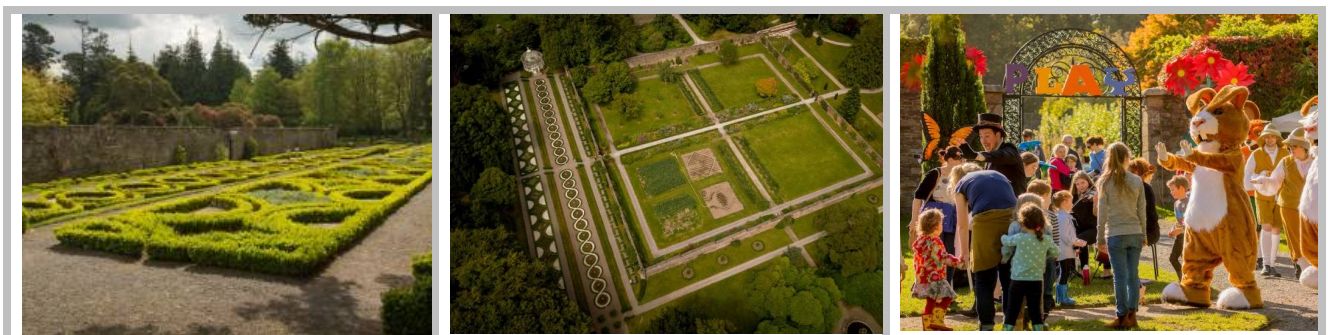
The Parks Department manages the large grassland meadows in both Bishopsmeadows and Dukesmeadows which make up the linear park with sustainable mowing practices. The meadows are a significant wildlife habitat and home to a variety of important grass and wildflower species. Meadowgrass cutting is carried out once a year only after flowering in support of pollinators.

Woodstock Gardens & Arboretum

The Parks Department look after the day to day operations and planning of future restoration projects for Woodstock Gardens in Inistioge which has become a major attraction in the South East attracting in the region of 35,000 – 40,000 visitors per year. These formal gardens and parkland areas are maintained to a high standard by a dedicated crew of staff. It is a popular destination for visitors from home and abroad and particularly for those with special interest in our very significant tree collection which recently was very highly commended by visiting judges from the Entente Florale.

A number of events including outdoor theatre performances, orienteering, fun runs and woodland foraging were held for the enjoyment of our visitors in 2018. These were very well attended and many were free of charge. Woodstock is becoming increasingly popular for civil ceremonies in recent years and has hosted a number of weddings for couples on their big day with further weddings booked in for 2019.

In 2018 The Parks Department have been successful at securing funding from Woodstock from a variety of sources including the Department of the Environment's Structures at Risk Scheme for works to garden buildings, from the Department of Children and Youth affairs for an outdoor classroom and from the Department of Rural and Community Development for recreation trails throughout the wider Woodstock estate.



Ferrybank Neighbourhood Park

2018 saw the advancement of plans for the development of a neighbourhood park for the community of Ferrybank. Extensive consultation ensured all members of the community had an opportunity to have their say in their park's design. A number of fun outdoor events were held on the site to further involve people. The process led to a masterplan for the site which has now been detailed up with specifications in preparation for seeking tenders in early 2019 with expected open date for the park before the end of summer 2019. A large playground will form the focal point of the park. Paths for walking and outdoor exercise equipment will encourage physical activity.



Kilkenny Greenway

After an extensive round of consultation with local people along the route of the proposed Waterford to New Ross Greenway, the project was subsequently granted planning permission. The proposed Greenway follows the line of the old railway line from Waterford to New Ross Parks where it will link in with the New Ross Red Bridge Trail and in Waterford will link in due course to the Waterford Greenway upon development of the North Quays project. Wexford County Council will be the lead authority for this regional project which involves linking up Counties Wexford, Waterford and Kilkenny. A funding application was made in late 2018 to construct the project. An announcement is expected on this in early 2019.

Sports Capital Projects

The Parks Department was successful in its application for three grants for the provision of outdoor gym equipment at locations across the City. This exercise equipment is proving very popular particularly when sited adjacent to existing facilities. Following public consultation, the outdoor gyms were rolled out in 2018 in Kilkenny City at Riverside Drive, River Nore Linear Park, The Fair Green and Pococke Valley Park. A further application for grant assistance was made to the Sports Capital Programme for a trim trail in Woodstock Gardens to complement the Orienteering Course and walking path there and for the new Neighbourhood Park in Ferrybank to supplement the facilities which will be covered by the LIHAF grant.

Amenity Grants

These grants are provided to assist resident's associations and local community groups maintain or upgrade outdoor public amenities. A total fund of €27,000 was allocated in 2018.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic Development

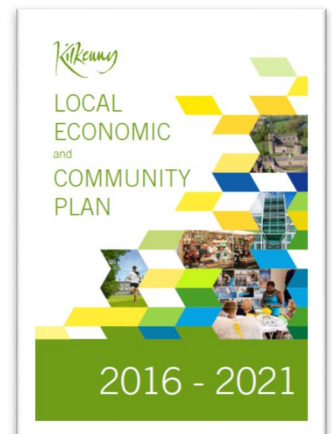
The role of the Economic Development Section is to promote economic development and create a positive environment for job creation.

The Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2021 (LECP), adopted by Kilkenny County Council, is the strategic plan for aligning all economic development and community development activity over the life of the plan. The work of the Economic Development section is guided by the economic element of the LECP whose overarching theme is job creation and to foster a high employment economy.

LECP

During the first three months of 2018 a review of the Economic element and actions of the LECP took place with all lead agencies. Following this review an implementation plan for the time frame 2018-2021 was drawn up. This plan was presented at and adopted by the SPC 1 - Economic Development, Enterprise Support and Tourism when they met on March 22nd.

This plan outlines 9 strategic goals and 66 actions for implementation between 2018 and 2021. The SPC1 agreed 13 high level strategic actions from this plan for regular review. These actions were identified because of their strategic importance for economic development of Kilkenny.



Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF)

Kilkenny County Council secured funding €4.764 Million towards the delivery of the Abbey Quarter under the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF). The URDF Fund was announced as part of Project Ireland 2040, to support the compact growth and sustainable development of Ireland's five cities and other large urban centres.

The grant funding secured is for a number of 'shovel ready' infrastructure projects that are essential to stimulate and enhance commercial development on the Abbey Quarter. The overall redevelopment of the Abbey Quarter will be delivered in a number of phases and the URDF grant funding is towards three distinct yet inter-related elements that form part of Phase 1, namely:

- (i) The Abbey Quarter Core Project
- (ii) Abbey Quarter Key Enabler Project
- (iii) Abbey Quarter Enhancing Project

The Abbey Quarter Core Project is comprised of 7 public realm infrastructure, community and cultural projects. These projects in turn will leverage investment for the other part of Phase 1, namely the redevelopment of the Mayfair and Brewhouse Buildings on the Abbey Quarter, to deliver a city library and circa 6,500 square metres of unique office space respectively. The Enabler Project comprises a number of projects that are located adjacent to the Abbey Quarter site and will be key to ensuring full access and integration within the existing medieval fabric of the City. The Enhancing Project comprises a number of projects that are complementary to the Abbey Quarter and will improve connectivity and enhance tourism routes surrounding the Abbey Quarter.

The Abbey Quarter will be a place where people work, live, be educated, visit and invest. The Abbey Quarter will be an extension to the Medieval Mile, and will open up access to St Francis Abbey, where Kilkenny's rich history in brewing can trace its roots. All development within the Abbey Quarter area will be in keeping with the overall Master plan adopted (in 2015) and the Design Guidelines adopted (in 2018) by Kilkenny County Council.

Regional Enterprise Development Fund (ERDF)

The National Design Innovation Hub DAC t/a Centre 4 Design was successful in its application to Enterprise Ireland under the REDF and was allocated €1,843,320 towards the development of the project.

The project will develop a design innovation hub that will enable companies to conceptualise, innovate, build and test new products and services through critical problem-solving methodologies and the standardisation of the design process as a commercial enabler. A not for profit venture, it will focus on the creation of high economic value jobs through business development, research and talent generation. It is envisaged that this facility will be housed within the Abbey Quarter. Partners involved are Carlow IT, Kilkenny County Council, Design & Crafts Council of Ireland and Kilkenny Industrial & Development Company.

Invest Kilkenny

The Invest Kilkenny website <https://www.investkilkenny.ie/> is used by the IDA as part of their sales pitch for the South East. This website is constantly under review and updated as the need arises. During 2018 two new videos were added to the content showcasing The Abbey Quarter and Belview Port.

The Invest Kilkenny Factsheet was redesigned to reflect a more modern, professional look.

Belview Port Zone

The Port of Waterford in conjunction with the 3 County Councils of Kilkenny, Wexford and Waterford are in the process of carrying out an Economic Study of the future potential of the 3 ports of Belview, Rosslare & New Ross (*in the context of Brexit*).

During the year, the three Councils collaborated with the three ports in the south east (Belview Port, Rosslare Europort & New Ross Port) to produce a promotional video '*The 3 Ports of Irelands South East Region*'. This video showcases the 3 ports, the services they provide and the complementarities between the three. While each port provides a different service, all three have a role to play in facilitating economic trade within the region. Working collectively strengthens their case as the ports work to capitalise on opportunities as they arise <https://www.investkilkenny.ie/belview-port/>.

Provision of Third Level Education

Kilkenny County Council proactively supports the establishment of a Technological University of the South East (TUSE). It is envisaged that the TUSE will be a multi-campus facility with a campus in Kilkenny City. Kilkenny County Council commissioned a business case to support this Third Level campus in Kilkenny. On April 30th, Mary Mitchell O'Connor T.D., Minister of State for Higher Education launched the Council's report on third level education. The report entitled "From Charter to Framework: The case for higher education provision in Kilkenny" concludes that there is a very convincing educational, social and economic case for locating a third level education campus in Kilkenny. The report concludes that demand for third level education places nationally over the next 10 years supports the case for third level capacity expansion in general, and for a campus facility in Kilkenny in particular. The Report states that one of the options to achieve this is through the development of a campus facility in Kilkenny as part of the proposed Technological University of the South East (TUSE).

Kilkenny County Council submitted this report to The Technological University of the South East Ireland (TUSEI) consortium to inform the formal application for Technological University designation made to the Department of Education.

Mary Mitchell O'Connor T.D., Minister of State for Higher Education, with Minister John Paul Phelan, Colette Byrne, Chief Executive & Elected Members of Kilkenny County Council and members of the TUSEI Consortium.



Small Business Vacant Premises Incentive Scheme

The purpose of this scheme is to encourage the use of vacant commercial premises through a grant related to the level of rates payable on the property. The scheme was reviewed in 2018 which resulted in Kilkenny County Council at their May meeting raising the threshold for eligibility of the scheme from €2000 to €5000. To date there have been 36 inquiries regarding the scheme with seven successful applicants. All applicants that have been awarded this grant have stressed the importance and value of this scheme to their respective businesses. The scheme continues to be promoted on an on-going basis.

Commercial Property

The Economic Development Section continues to review and update a database of vacant commercial property in the City and County. This database includes information relating to industrial, office and retail space for sale or rent. It also includes a list of lands for sale or lease, which has potential for use for the promotion of economic development. This database is an important reference when inquiries come through from IDA and EI re property specs. It is also useful in dealing with direct queries that also come through from existing businesses in Kilkenny who are seeking premises or are moving premises.

AWARDS / RECOGNITIONS

Kilkenny City & Castlecomer Share The Spoils At Bank Of Ireland National Enterprising Town Awards 2018

The final of the Bank of Ireland National Enterprising Town Awards took place on November 28th in the Lyrath Hotel, Kilkenny. This initiative aims to assist in the promotion of enterprise across the country by bringing business and community groups together to showcase the spirit of enterprise in their local area. The 2018 competition saw over 80 entries from across the country. Kilkenny, Castlecomer, Griaguenamanagh and Piltown were the entries from County Kilkenny.

Kilkenny City was named winner of the 'Regional Large Town in Leinster' taking home a cash prize of €3000 and a Crystal Trophy. Castlecomer was named Runner Up in the 'Small Town in Leinster' category receiving a cheque for €2000 and a framed certificate. Congratulations to all involved for a well deserved recognition.

While disappointed in not being amongst the prize winners, Graiguenamanagh and Piltown must be acknowledged for their entries and the work invested in their towns' development. Their showcase to the judging panel clearly demonstrated the strong enterprising spirit within these communities. Well done all.



An Cathaoirleach, Cllr Eamon Aylward with members of the Kilkenny City Enterprising Town Committee and Bank of Ireland representatives.



An Cathaoirleach, Cllr Eamon Aylward with members of the Castlecomer Enterprising Town Committee and Bank of Ireland representatives.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2018:



Oifig Fiontair Áitiúil Cill Chainnigh

Local Enterprise Office Kilkenny



103

new jobs created
by LEO supported
companies



1,257

people employed in

210

LEO supported
companies in Kilkenny



€333,000

in direct financial
assistance approved to
28 business projects



1,077

clients attended
seminars, core training
and management
development
programmes



486

clients received
1 to 1 mentoring



12

businesses assisted
with MFI and Smart
Options Loan
Fund applications



39

businesses awarded
Trading Online
Vouchers



12

businesses approved
Technical Assistance
for Micro
Exporter Grants



644

students from

12

schools participated
in the Student Enterprise
Programme



3

LEO supported
companies transferred
to Enterprise Ireland

TOURISM INCLUDING FESTIVAL SUPPORT

ONE KILKENNY – City & County

In 2018, Kilkenny County Council's Tourism Section continued the development of Kilkenny as an international visitor destination, concentrating on delivering on the "ONE KILKENNY" concept, in accordance with the adopted Statement of Tourism Strategy and Work Programme 2017 – 2022. The key stakeholder groups in the development of Kilkenny's tourism product are Kilkenny Tourism CLG, and Destination Kilkenny, both supported and guided by Kilkenny County Council, and both groups adopted the ONE KILKENNY strategy as an objective in seeking to broaden the economic impact of tourism in the County. During 2018 tourism promotional work has taken place across the County in communities including Inistioge, Windgap, Thomastown, Castlecomer, Graigueenamanagh, Kells, and Gowran. A new Walking trail "Woodstock Loop Walk" was completed in 2018, and contributed to the success of Inistioge in the 2018 Entente Florale competition. Other walking trails have been upgraded in 2018, through the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme, including Freshford (Brown's Wood), the South Leinster Way, and in Castlecomer Discovery Park.

Marketing collateral was developed and distributed to give substance to the concept:

Visitkilkenny.ie

The development of a renewed bespoke website was undertaken in 2018 to completely transform the role and function of visitkilkenny.ie. The new website is a mobile first design that focuses on visual portrayals of Kilkenny, and experience based and storytelling content as opposed to list based information.



We now have a site that is easy to navigate and has an aspirational impact on visitors through the use and placement of images and videos and the presentation of the new story based content. Kilkenny Tourism wants this website to be at a world class standard within the tourism sector.

Foodie Destination: Kilkenny wins the title of Ireland's top 'Foodie Destination' 2018

In 2018 Kilkenny won the top prize at the awards ceremony for Ireland's top Foodie Destinations, an initiative run by the Restaurants Association of Ireland (RAI) sponsored by FBD. Kilkenny is known nationwide for its vibrant food and hospitality offering, from local producers to food festivals, farmers markets and trails, cookery schools and gastro pubs, to the Michelin star dining experiences that regularly receive critical acclaim and national attention.

The adjudication process was intense and driven by Kilkenny County Council's Tourism Section, demanded a collaborative approach engaging stakeholders from Taste Kilkenny, Kilkenny Tourism, Kilkenny LEO, Kilkenny County Council, Kilkenny Chamber of Commerce and KLP to restaurants, cookery schools, retailers, accommodation and activity providers, media partners and festival organizers across the county.



In July 2018 an esteemed panel of judges visited the city for a packed schedule where the vibrant culinary culture of Kilkenny City and County was experienced firsthand. The tour kicked off in style, taking the judges in a vintage car to their first lesson of the day in cake decorating and continued at pace throughout the City visiting many of Kilkenny's finest establishments and demonstrating the color and vibrancy of food experiences on offer, and they received a portfolio of

information detailing the rest of the best in City and County. The award was presented at a reception in Lisnavagh House, Rathvilly and presented by Judges Wendy Kavanagh and Zack Gallagher who lauded Kilkenny's incredible community spirit and real collaboration.

Following Kilkenny's win, RTE's Neven Maguire Kilkenny Christmas Special was broadcast from Kilkenny in December 2018 to over 300,000 viewers highlighting the chefs, food producers and historic sights of Kilkenny.

Festival & Event Supports

Kilkenny has a calendar of festivals which is the envy of every other town and city in Ireland. Kilkenny is seen as a place where festivals are part of the fabric. Our festivals are at the forefront of quality Irish festivals, and their contribution to the local economy needs to be understood and protected. As well as creating employment for the organisers, the festivals underpin a huge portion of the hospitality employment in Kilkenny. Employment in bars, cafés, hotels, can be directly attributed to festival activity. There are also the less obvious benefits: indirect employment in areas like electrical suppliers, stage mounting, event management, health and safety personnel, equipment hire, local bands, musicians, theatre hire, taxis and transport. Kilkenny County Council allocated funding to 16 tourism focussed festivals in 2018 in the sum of €79,600.



From "The Breadwinner", by Cartoon Saloon

A new festival, Kilkenny Animated started in 2018, and has the potential to grow into a significant event in the national events calendar, especially given the collaboration with the Academy Award nominated, Kilkenny based Cartoon Saloon.

Kilkenny host to "Rás na mBan" 2018

For the third consecutive year Kilkenny City played host to Ireland's premier stage race for women, Rás na mBan.

The 13th edition of the event took place from September 5th to 9th 2018 with stages starting and finishing in Kilkenny in the heart of Ireland's Ancient East. Running to a similar format as in previous years the event comprised six stages around Kilkenny City and County. Once again, Kilkenny County Council supported Rás na mBan and lent their backing to the coveted Best Irish Rider Classification.



Award for the Medieval Mile Museum at the Irish Construction Excellence Awards 2018:

Following a rigorous judging process, the Irish Construction Excellence Awards 2018 winners were announced at the Gala Awards Event in the Mansion House, Dublin on Friday, 23rd March, 2018 and the Medieval Mile Museum, Kilkenny, was awarded a Judges Silver Award:



"The Medieval Mile Museum project combined sensitive restoration and contemporary design to an exemplary standard and the completed building is now the centre-piece of Ireland's Medieval Mile, a concentration of medieval sites and buildings in the core of Kilkenny City".

**DIRECTORATE OF FINANCE,
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY,
FACILITIES MANAGEMENT**

Head of Finance: Mr. Martin Prendiville

FINANCE

The Finance Department is responsible for the overall control and management of the Council's finances. The main services being provided under this directorate are Financial Planning and Control, Income Collection, Treasury Management, Property Management, and Motor Taxation.

Income & Expenditure Account Statement

The Income and Expenditure Account summarises the expenditure on the day to day services provided by the Council and provides details of how this expenditure is funded. There was a surplus in the year of €7,143 which resulted in a cumulative surplus at 31st December 2018 of €17,805. Strict budgetary controls were maintained on a total expenditure of €84.6 million.

Capital Project Funding Arrangements

The total cost of capital projects delivered under the Capital Programme in 2018 was €48.3m, Housing and Roads Projects accounted for 86% of the expenditure. The outstanding commitments on completed capital projects amounted to €12m as at 31st December, 2018. The annual budget provides for repayment of this commitment over a period of 8 years.

The Council adopted a Capital budget for the three-year period 2018 to 2020 in May 2018. This budget sets out the estimated cost of the capital projects under consideration and the related funding sources.

The Council can only initiate capital projects that have an identified funding source.

Balance Sheet at 31st December 2018

The Council has maintained a relatively strong balance sheet as at 31st December 2018. There was no additional non-mortgage loan finance required.

The overdraft facility was utilised for 26 days during the year and the maximum overdrawn balance as €2.3m.

Further progress was made on reducing income arrears in 2018. The historic collection rates in the main income categories are set out in Table 1.

TABLE 1	Collection % 2014	Collection % 2015	Collection % 2016	Collection % 2017	Collection % 2018
Commercial Rates	89	92	94	95	93
Rents & Annuities	92	92	93	92	93
Housing Loans	77	82	80	85	88

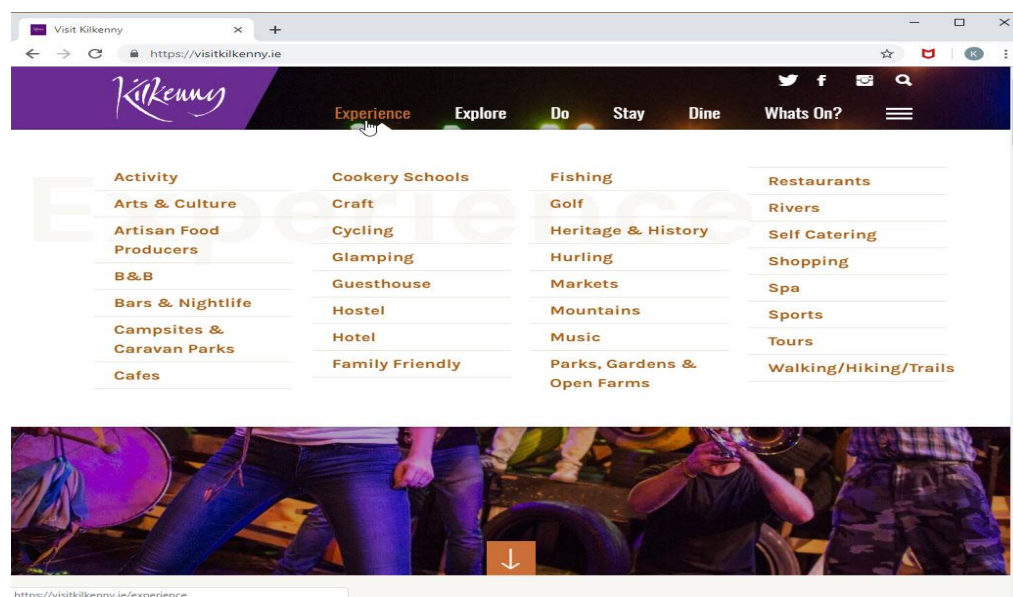
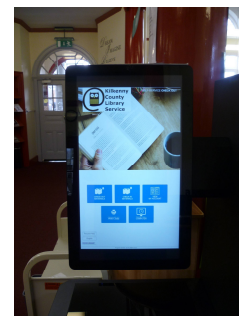
These collection rates are among the highest in the country. Total arrears have been reduced by almost €1.8m since the end of 2013.

The total bank loans (excluding housing related loans) outstanding as at 31st December 2018 were €12.3m.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Key achievements for 2018 included the following:

- Implementation of self check – in systems for the library branches.
- Expanded the use of mobile devices.
- Upgraded network Infrastructure.
- Rollout of new telephone system across the Council.
- Upgrade of Public Library PCs in Library Branches.
- Redevelopment of Kilkenny Library Website.
- Upgrade of WIFI facilities in Council Chamber.
- Ongoing additions and updates to the various local authority web sites.
- Ongoing updates to servers and PCs to maintain security of the network.
- Implemented of CRM in Environment Section.
- Re-Development of Kilkenny Tourism/Visit Kilkenny website.



- Ongoing management of Social Media including social media response to Storm Emma and Beast from the East.
- Commenced new domain migration project with the installation of new domain controllers.
- Installation of new email server.
- Ongoing rollout of new PCs and laptops.
- Drawdown of Microsoft Enterprise Agreement.
- Upgrade of Uninterruptable Power Supply System for the Comm Room.
- Development of Kilkenny Digital Archive.
- Development of in-house bulk email sending platform.
- Consolidated of all externally hosted websites to single cloud platform.
- Development of Winter Maintenance Schedule Map Viewer.

PROCUREMENT

Notable Achievements in 2018

- Works Contractor procured for Butler Gallery at Evan's Home, Kilkenny
- Works Contractor to be finalised for Brewhouse Building, Abbey Quarter
- Design Team procured for Abbey Quarter Urban Street
- Works Contractor to be finalised for Western Environs Phase 1 Infrastructure – LIHAF Scheme
- Architect Led Design Team procured for Tholsel Upgrade Project
- Works Contractor procured for Social Housing Scheme, Bolton, Callan
- Works Contractor to be finalised for further Social Housing Schemes at Piltown, Castlecomer and Ballyragget
- Legal Services provider procured for 4-year term under OGP Framework

Other work undertaken in 2018

- Works Contractors procured for N25, N76 and N78 Pavement Improvement Schemes
- Works Contractor to be finalised for Thomastown Culvert Works
- Architect Led Design Team to be finalised for Urlingford Fire Station
- Consultant procured for Woodstock Business Plan
- Suppliers procured for Fire Services PPE clothing and RTC equipment
- Suppliers procured for new Phone Handsets and Switches for IS Department
- Drawdown of Plant Hire, Roads Materials etc. for Machinery Yard/MDs on LGOPC *supplygov* portal

New Developments

- Implementation of full electronic tendering on eTenders for major projects from October 2018

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Abbey Quarter

Work on the implementation of the Abbey Quarter Masterplan has continued in 2018. Significant progress has been made on the planning, design and preparation of tender documents for a number of projects within the Masterplan area, with a number of the individual projects to commence on site in 2019.



Abbey Quarter Launch

A very successful launch event was held for the Abbey Quarter development in July 2018. The event was attended by Minister for Business, Enterprise and Innovation, Heather Humphreys, T.D. along with representatives of Kilkenny County Council, development partners in the National Treasury Management Agency (*Ireland Strategic Investment Fund – ISIF*) and invited guests. The event provided an opportunity to outline the development plans for the site and to provide confirmation of construction finance from ISIF for the first phase of building works on the site.

Public Realm

Kilkenny County Council made a successful funding application in 2018 to the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government under the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund for the development of the first phase of public realm works in the Abbey Quarter. This funding application also included projects required to integrate the former brewery site into the City Centre. An initial funding allocation of €4.764 has been provided for 2019, with additional funding to be provided in 2020. This will allow Kilkenny County Council to proceed with the first phase of public realm works in 2019 including the development of:

- Horse Barrack Lane
- Brewhouse Square
- Mayfair Public square
- Riverside Garden Project incl. skate park
- Restoration of Tea Houses
- Development of a Cultural Hub in the area of the former squash court.
- Projects required to integrate the Abbey Quarter into the city include the completion of the Medieval Mile to Irishtown, the refurbishment of Vicar Street, City Gateways, Smarter City Travel connectivity with the Eastern Environs and the lighting of the Heritage Structures along the Medieval Mile.

Abbey Quarter Kilkenny Abbey Quarter Development Ltd

Development proposals for the proposed buildings on the Abbey Quarter Site have been progressed by Kilkenny Abbey Quarter Development Ltd (KAQD) in 2018. (KAQD is the development company set up by the Partnership between Kilkenny County Council and the National Treasury Management Agency through the Ireland Strategic Investment Fund (ISIF) for the development of the building blocks on the former Smithwicks Brewery site.) The partnership will proceed with the development of the Brewhouse Building in the first instance, with proposals now being progressed for some of the new buildings on the site, including the development of a new hotel on one of the riverside plots. The marketing of the site to potential tenants continued in 2018, with Letting Agents, Lisney, commencing the active marketing of the development. Whilst interest has been strong in the development, the focus has been on getting the Brewhouse Building developed to give potential tenants an idea of the quality and overall look of the proposed development.

Brewhouse Building

Work has continued on plans for the redevelopment of the **Brewhouse Building** in 2018. Revised plans for the development were referred by a third party to An Bord Pleanála in December 2017, seeking a determination in relation to the need for an Appropriate Assessment of the proposed development in accordance with the provisions of the Habitats Directive. The Board determined in late September 2018 that the proposed development does not require Appropriate Assessment, thus allowing the development to proceed. The detailed design of the development was completed in 2018. From an initial list of 18 no. building contractors who applied to be considered for the project, tender documents were issued to 9 no. contractors in December 2018. Construction on the project is expected to commence in early 2019 and will be completed in mid-2020.



Mayfair Building

While work continued on the preparation of the detailed design of the Mayfair Building in 2018, a decision was made in late 2018 to house the new city library within the building, subject to formal approval from the Department of Rural and Community Development and Planning. This change of use and associated modifications to the original building design will require a new planning consent for the proposed development and work on the revised planning details for the project commenced in late 2018.

Urban Street Project

Work has commenced on the preparation of the design of the Urban Street through the Abbey Quarter site, with a multi-disciplinary design team appointed to the project in 2018. It is expected that a planning application for the proposed development will be made in 2019. The development of this street, which will be of pedestrian and cyclist priority, will facilitate the development of the proposed new buildings within the Abbey Quarter site.

Archaeology

In accordance with the provisions of the Archaeological Strategy, extensive archaeological test excavations were undertaken throughout the former Brewery site in 2018. These works were undertaken by Archaeological Consultancy Services Unit (ACSU) with the excavations undertaken in accordance with the requirements of a Ministerial Consent and License issued under the National Monuments Act. Test excavations were undertaken in the area of each of the development blocks and public realm areas within the site and the findings of the excavations will inform the development proposals for each plot.



Tholsel Project

A multi-disciplinary design team was appointed in 2018 to prepare plans for the redevelopment of the Tholsel (Town Hall) on High Street, Kilkenny. The redevelopment of the building and the opening up of the building for tourism use, whilst retaining its important civic use in the City, was provided for in the Tourism Strategy for the city in 2013. In light of this, funding was allocated by Failte Ireland towards the development of outline proposals for a tourism related function within the building.



Plans for the redevelopment of the building were progressed in 2018 planning public consultation to commence in January 2019. Key features of the proposed development will include:

- Construction of new stairs and lift to access all floors to achieve compliance with Part M.
- Provision of formal civic reception area at ground floor level.
- Opening up and renovation of the basement/dungeons.
- Construction of glass 'box' with timber frame in inner porch area.
- Restoring the Mayor's Parlour to double height space, including the reinstatement of windows.
- Removal of office and creation of double height reception/exhibition area outside the Council Chamber.
- Works to facilitate limited public access to the cupola.

Works undertaken in 2018 on this project included a detailed survey of the building, archaeological test excavations and structural opening up works.

Exhibition designers were also appointed to the project in 2018 to develop the tourist story and exhibition element of the project. The initial story concept will focus on telling the story of the history of Kilkenny through the Mayors of Kilkenny.

FINANCIAL TABLE

Expenditure By Division	Note	Gross Expenditure 2018 €	Income 2018 €	Net Expenditure 2018 €	Net Expenditure 2017 €
Housing & Building		17,859,900	19,338,369	(1,478,470)	(622,669)
Roads, Transportation & Safety		23,788,630	17,509,559	6,279,071	5,477,345
Water Services		7,028,561	7,071,846	(43,284)	(25,857)
Development Management		8,699,409	3,384,766	5,314,643	4,758,926
Environmental Services		11,352,631	2,978,801	8,373,830	7,459,012
Recreation & Amenity		6,263,772	382,000	5,881,772	5,158,609
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare		626,897	440,024	186,873	169,554
Miscellaneous Services		4,501,267	2,636,349	1,864,918	3,651,557
Total Expenditure/Income	15	80,121,066	53,741,714		
				2018	2017
Net Cost of Division to be funded from Rates & Local Property Tax				26,379,352	26,026,477
Rates				19,774,173	19,408,708
Local Property Tax				10,673,913	10,673,913
<i>Surplus/(Deficit for Year before Transfer</i>				4,068,734	4,056,143
<i>Transfers from/(to) Reserves</i>	14			(4,061,591)	(4,050,712)
<i>Overall Surplus/(Deficit) for Year</i>	16			7,143	5,431
<i>General Reserve at 1st January 2018</i>				10,661	5,231
<i>General Reserve at 31st December 2018</i>				17,805	10,661