

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE CHILL CHAINNIGH KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL



ANNUAL REPORT 2021



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*Adopted by Kilkenny County Council on \_\_\_\_\_*

## STATEMENT OF AN CATHAOIRLEACH

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It is a great privilege for me to introduce the Annual Report for 2021. 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.

Little did we know at the start of 2021 how our lives would continue to adapt to the restrictions imposed by COVID 19. This virus has changed all our lives, how we work and socialise, how businesses operate and how we go about our daily life. It has impacted on people's businesses, children schooling, older peoples mixing with their families and everyone continued to feel the strain of isolation. The Council has responded to many challenges in providing much needed services to the public during this time. The staff have responded to these challenges and have adapted to different ways of working. The Elected Members also have changed to respond to their constituents needs for a wide variety of services. We have continued with online meetings to protect ourselves and staff. This has been a whole change for how we work in the public arena but we have adapted for the safety of our communities and citizens.

I sincerely congratulate and thank all our frontline staff who have continued to meet the very demanding challenges of dealing with the spread of this virus and its variants. In particular, I would like to thank our Civil Defence volunteers who still continue to assist in helping with transport for medical appointments and other needs of our communities. Despite the ongoing COVID restrictions, the Council continued to deliver all of our services to the public.

In 2022, the provision of additional housing remains a priority for Kilkenny County Council to meet the growing demand for social housing. We will work to meet the targets set out by Government to deliver as many units as possible.

The Council continues to source much needed grant allocations to enable us to fund the many projects planned for the enjoyment and benefit of all our citizens. 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. All staff in the Library Service are to be commended for their commitment to continue with the delivery of the library service albeit in a different format to our older citizens who really appreciated the library visits and personal deliveries.

Our businesses were severely impacted with closures and loss of business. All of us need to support our local businesses going forward to ensure that there are not closures in the future. Our Finance Staff administered the Rates Waiver Scheme. LEO staff assisted businesses in adapting to new ways of trading and this was greatly appreciated by all.

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 impacts of COVID and lockdowns, Kilkenny must look forward in hope to 2022 when we will see many important projects completed and new ones commence.

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

**Cllr. Fidelis Doherty**  
**Cathaoirleach**

# CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S STATEMENT

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I am pleased to be associated with this Draft Annual Report for 2021 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.

The year 2021 similar to 2020 was very challenging for everyone with the COVID Pandemic. Despite restrictions and reopening's, we continued to deliver all our services and assist the businesses and communities to get through the year. We continued to facilitate remote working to ensure the continuity of all the services. The members and staff rose to the challenges of providing additional services such as the rates waiver scheme and some staff assisted the HSE where required. We were able to continue to hold all our Council meetings which were facilitated virtually most of the time. Little did we think in March 2020 that we would still be hosting our Council meetings remotely at the end of 2021.

There was a high level of commitment across all Departments to delivering the 2021 Service Delivery Plan and achieve the Objectives of the Corporate Plan. Most areas met all of their stated objectives within the limitations placed on us by COVID 19 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 set out in the Service Delivery Plan for 2021 and that it did so within the parameters set out in the adopted 2021 Budget and the COVID 19 restrictions. The Council met the challenges of continually providing improvements to the one-way system in the City and the public realm to assist safe movement of people in our towns when businesses reopened during 2021. We continued to administer, on behalf of the Government, the Commercial Rates Waiver Scheme. We will continue to do everything within our resources to support all our citizens/businesses as we return to a new normal life.

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 express my appreciation for the dedication and hard work of all the Elected Members, my colleagues on the Management Team and the staff of the Council. I am confident, given the abilities and spirit of co-operation that is consistently shown by the Elected Members and staff that we should be in a position to meet the challenges that lie ahead. We can look forward to a more positive 2022.

Finally, I would like to particularly thank the Cathaoirleach Cllr. Fidelis Doherty and her predecessor Cllr Andrew McGuinness, the Municipal District Cathaoirleach Cllr's Pat Fitzpatrick and his predecessor Cllr Michael McCarthy, Cllr Michael Doyle and his predecessor Cllr Peter Cleere, Cllr Andrew McGuinness Mayor and his predecessor Cllr John Coonan, and Cllr Pat Dunphy and his predecessor Cllr Eamon Aylward 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 this very challenging year of 2021.

**Colette Byrne**  
**Chief Executive**



## HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2021

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- Sixth successful Yulefest festival with many outdoor events.
- Progressed redevelopment of Brew House building and Linear Park subject to COVID restrictions. Funding secured under the Urban Regeneration & Development Fund.
- Official opening of new road funded under LIHAF in the Western Environs, Kilkenny City in September, 2021.
- 151 new housing units completed by Kilkenny County Council and Voluntary Bodies.
- 5,974 calls were made seeking housing repairs in 2021
- 21 housing loans paid out to a value of €2,696,352.
- 234 housing grants paid for adaptation to houses to the value of €1,509,081.
- 437 Private Rented Inspections carried out.
- €28m spent on improving and maintaining our entire road network.
- Advanced design work for the 2 Flood Relief Schemes, in Graiguenamanagh and Ballyhale.
- Supplied 9.59 billion litres of water through the public water schemes.
- Complied 100% on microbiological & 99.65% on chemical parameters for water supply.
- Adopted the 2020 -2027 City & County Development Plan.
- 1,054 planning applications received during 2021.
- 29 sites on the Vacant Sites Register at 31/12/2021.
- €310,825 in conservation grant funding awarded in 2021 to 16 projects.
- 10 Housing Developments taken in charge.
- 31 public playgrounds are now open and maintained by the Council.
- Fire Brigades responded to 759 incidents in 2021
- Civil Defence provided 421 hours of assistance in respond to COVID Community Call, 12 Community Events and assisted in 5 Searches.
- Over 1,576 tonnes of recyclable material and over 2,999 tonnes of residual waste were collected throughout the County.
- 2,259 tonnes of glass, aluminium and steel were collected across the 46 Bring Centres.
- 1,255 environmental complaints were received.
- 5,333 Dog licence issued.
- Adopted Migrant Integration Strategy 2021-2023.
- €191,861 spent on community projects with funding from Creative Ireland.
- Funding of €574,326 provided to 5 towns under Town and Village Renewal Scheme.

- Funding of €291,311 provided to Communities under Healthy Ireland.
- Allocation of €57,300 for 2 projects under the CLAR Programme 2021.
- Allocated €130,414 under Town Streetscape Scheme to 61 premises.
- Allocated €272,638 under Community Enhancement Programmes through the LCDL.
- Allocated €2,562,291 for Library/Community facilities in Thomastown under RRDF.
- €100,000 funding secured for preparation of Town centre Masterplan for Urlingford.
- 6 Town Plans developed in consultation with local communities and Town teams established.
- Library Services developed and supported many Community and Well Being Programmes during COVID restrictions.
- 32% increase in library membership.
- 16,576 E Books borrowed.
- Delivered 6,968 Books to 1,377 Cocooners.
- 32 Projects developed for National Heritage week.
- 13 projects received funding totalling €50,000 under Decade of Centenaries Programme 2021.
- Over 41,477 people engaged with Arts Office programmes.
- 13,000 “Bookville, Festival in a Book” distributed to all Primary schools.
- Awarded 32 bursaries and mentoring opportunities to Artists.
- Funding of €286,000 received under the Live Local Performance Programme Scheme.
- Continuous emphasis on improving collection rate across all of our income sources and reducing the arrears.
- €2.94m collected in development levies.
- Surplus of €50,707 achieved in the Revenue Budget in 2021.

# 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 2019 and membership at 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2021 is as follows:

| CALLAN – THOMASTOWN                                                                 |                                                                                          | CASTLECOMER                                                                          |                                                                                                          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|    | <b>Peter Cleere (FF)</b><br><i>Aughiletuan,<br/>Skeoughvosteen,<br/>Co. Kilkenny</i>     |    | <b>John Brennan (FG)</b><br><i>Crutt,<br/>Clogh,<br/>Castlecomer,<br/>Co. Kilkenny</i>                   |
|    | <b>Deirdre Cullen (FF)</b><br><i>Kilree,<br/>Bennettsbridge,<br/>Co. Kilkenny.</i>       |    | <b>Mary Hilda Cavanagh (FG)</b><br><i>Whiteswall,<br/>Crosspatrick,<br/>Via Thurles,<br/>Co Kilkenny</i> |
|   | <b>Matt Doran (FF)</b><br><i>Shrughawadda,<br/>Kilmoganny,<br/>Co. Kilkenny</i>          |   | <b>Michael Delaney (FF)</b><br><i>The Village Shop,<br/>Tullaroan,<br/>Co. Kilkenny</i>                  |
|  | <b>Michael Doyle (FG)</b><br><i>Ballinbarna,<br/>The Rower,<br/>Co. Kilkenny.</i>        |  | <b>Pat Fitzpatrick (FF),</b><br><i>Cloghpook,<br/>Ballyfoyle,<br/>Co. Kilkenny.</i>                      |
|  | <b>Joe Lyons (FG)</b><br><i>Bauntha,<br/>Callan,<br/>Co. Kilkenny</i>                    |  | <b>Denis Hynes (LAB)</b><br><i>Ballyellen,<br/>Goresbridge,<br/>Co. Kilkenny.</i>                        |
|  | <b>Patrick O'Neill (FG)</b><br><i>Ballyreddin,<br/>Bennettsbridge,<br/>Co. Kilkenny.</i> |  | <b>Michael McCarthy (FF)</b><br><i>Buncrusha Street,<br/>Freshford,<br/>Co. Kilkenny.</i>                |

## KILKENNY CITY WEST



**Martin Brett (FF)**  
Callan Road,  
Kilkenny City



**John Coonan (FF)**  
17 Willow Close,  
Ardnore,  
Kilkenny



**Maria Dollard (GP)**  
Vianore,  
Greenshill,  
Kilkenny



**David Fitzgerald (FG)**  
24 Patrick Street,  
Kilkenny.



**Joe Malone (FF)**  
11 Maiden Hill  
Kells Road,  
Kilkenny.



**Andrew McGuinness  
(FF) Constituency  
Office,  
O' Loughlin Road,  
Kilkenny.**



**Eugene McGuinness  
(NP)**  
40 Bishop Birch  
Place,  
Kilkenny

## PILTOWN



**Eamon Aylward (FF)**  
Ballynooney,  
Mullinavat,  
Co. Kilkenny.



**Tomás Breathnach,  
(Lab)**  
Forge Road,  
Narabane,  
Kilmacow,  
Co. Kilkenny.



**Fidelis Doherty(FG)**  
Ballyfacey,  
Glenmore,  
Co. Kilkenny.



**Pat Dunphy (FG),**  
Ballygorey,  
Mooncoin,  
Co Kilkenny



**Ger Frisby (FF)**  
Treanaree,  
Slieverue,  
Co. Kilkenny.



# COMMITTEES & SUBSIDIARY BODIES

## Corporate Policy Group

The Corporate Policy Group (CPG) is a committee of the Council consisting of the Cathaoirleach of the Council and the Chairperson of each of the five Strategic Policy Committees (SPC's).

The CPG links the work of the different SPCs and provides a forum where proposed items for Council meeting agendas and policy matters are discussed. The CPG also monitors the performance of the local authority and plays a key role in the budgetary process.

The CPG met on 12 occasions in 2021.

## 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 adopted a Strategic Policy Committee Scheme on 16<sup>th</sup> September, 2019 for the newly elected Council 2019 to 2024. The role of the Strategic Policy Committees (SPC's) is to assist the Council in the formulation, development and review of policy. Their composition reflect 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 Policy Committees is as follows at the 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2021:

### SPC 1: Economic Development, Enterprise Support & Tourism, Planning & Development Policy

| Elected Members [8] | Members from External Sectors [7]                           |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| John Coonan         | Agriculture/Farming: Bill O'Keeffe [IFA]                    |
| Michael Doyle       | Development/Construction: Marion Acreman [Chambers Ireland] |
| Pat Fitzpatrick     | Business/Commercial: Deirdre Shine [Chambers Ireland]       |
| Ger Frisby          | Trade Union: Eileen Moyles [ICTU]                           |
| Michael McCarthy    | Social Inclusion: Fiona O'Neill [PPN]                       |
| Eugene McGuinness   | Environment/Conservation: Brian Hamilton [PPN]              |
| Maria Dollard       | Community & Voluntary: Paul Brophy [PPN]                    |
| Patrick O'Neill     |                                                             |

## SPC 2: Transportational Policy/Mobility Management & Water Services

| <b>Elected Members [8]</b> | <b>Members from External Sectors [7]</b> |                                       |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Tomás Breathnach           | Agriculture/Farming:                     | Jim Mulhall <i>[IFA]</i>              |
| Peter Cleere               | Business/Commercial                      | Gary Graham <i>[Chambers Ireland]</i> |
| Deirdre Cullen             | Development/Construction                 | Barry Lynch <i>[Chambers Ireland]</i> |
| Michael Delaney            | Trade Union                              | Ger Mooney <i>[ICTU]</i>              |
| Fidelis Doherty            | Community/Voluntary                      | Gerard Ferris <i>[PPN]</i>            |
| Matt Doran                 | Social Inclusion                         | Eileen Ryan <i>[PPN]</i>              |
| Pat Dunphy                 | Environment/Conservation                 | Alan Sullivan <i>[PPN]</i>            |
| Patrick O'Neill            |                                          |                                       |

## SPC 3: Housing

| <b>Elected Members [8]</b> | <b>Members from External Sectors [6]</b> |                                        |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Eamon Aylward              | Development/Construction:                | Brian Dunlop <i>[Chambers Ireland]</i> |
| Martin Brett               | Environment/Conservation                 | Mags Morrissey <i>[PPN]</i>            |
| Pat Fitzpatrick            | Community/Voluntary                      | John Bourke <i>[PPN]</i>               |
| Denis Hynes                | Social Inclusion:                        | Lisa Morris <i>[PPN]</i>               |
| Joe Lyons                  | Trade Union:                             | Yvonne Moriarty <i>[ICTU]</i>          |
| Andrew McGuinness          |                                          |                                        |
| Eugene McGuinness          |                                          |                                        |
| Joe Malone                 |                                          |                                        |

## SPC 4: Environment Protection, Climate Action & Energy

| <b>Elected Members [6]</b> | <b>Members from External Sectors [5]</b> |                                           |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Mary Hilda Cavanagh        | Agriculture/Farming                      | James Murphy <i>[IFA]</i>                 |
| Deirdre Cullen             | Development/Construction                 | John Hurley <i>[Chambers Ireland]</i>     |
| David Fitzgerald           | Business/Commercial:                     | Laurence Conroy <i>[Chambers Ireland]</i> |
| Denis Hynes                | Community/Voluntary:                     | Noel O'Donoghue <i>[PPN]</i>              |
| Joe Lyons                  | Environment/Conservation:                | Shem Caulfield <i>[PPN]</i>               |
| Maria Dollard              |                                          |                                           |

## SPC 5: Community, Cultural & Fire Services

| <b>Elected Members [6]</b> | <b>Members from External Sectors [5]</b> |                                         |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Tomás Breathnach           | Agriculture/Farming:                     | Michael Rice <i>[IFA]</i>               |
| John Brennan               | Business/Commercial:                     | Kathy Purcell <i>[Chambers Ireland]</i> |
| Martin Brett               | Community/Voluntary:                     | Denis Brophy <i>[PPN]</i>               |
| Peter Cleere               | Social Inclusion:                        | Martin Brennan <i>[PPN]</i>             |
| John Coonan                | Trade Union:                             | Fergal Canton <i>[ICTU]</i>             |
| Pat Dunphy                 |                                          |                                         |

# MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL

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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. Due to COVID restrictions most of the Statutory meetings were held remotely.

## PLENARY MEETINGS OF KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL

*Number of Meetings held in 2021: 28*

*Ordinary Monthly Meetings - 11, Workshops – 8 & Special Meetings - 9*

- Adoption of Budget
- Abbey Quarter and St. Francis Abbey Park
- Amenity Grants 2021
- Annual Financial Statement 2021
- Annual Report 2021
- Anti-Litter/Graffiti Grants 2021
- Appointments of Chairs of SPC's
- Arts Grants 2021
- Audit Committee Annual Report 2021
- Bank Overdraft Facility for 2021
- Bye-Laws – Control of Horses & Casual Trading
- Capital Programme 2021 – 2023 & Updates on Projects in all Departments
- Chief Executive's Monthly Reports
- Commercial Rates Payment Incentive Grant 2021
- Community Event Grants
- Creative Ireland Grant Scheme 2021
- Draft Development Plan for City & County 2021 – 2027
- Draft River Basin Management Plan
- Economic Dashboard
- Election of Cathaoirleach & Leas Cathaoirleach
- Events Grant Scheme
- Festival Grants 2021
- Finance Update
- Graveyard Grant Scheme 2021
- Hedge Cutting Policy
- Housing Policies

- LAP Graiguenamanagh/Tinnahinch
- LAWPRO Update
- LCDC Annual Report 2021
- Litter Management Plan
- Local Property Tax
- Migration Integration Policy
- Monuments & Memorials
- Part 8 Reports on Various Projects
- Part 10 Applications
- Performance Indicators 2019 & 2020
- Presentations from Eirgid & National Broadband
- Public Arts Management Policy
- Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project
- Road Works Programme 2021
- Section 85 Agreements with other Local Authorities
- Section 183 Disposals
- Service Delivery Plan 2021
- Severe Weather & Flooding Response Plan
- Speed Limit Review
- Statutory Audit Report
- Strategic Infrastructure Developments
- Taking in Charge
- Technological University for the South East
- Update on Covid Pandemic Impacts
- Water Quality Report - EPA
- Winter Services Maintenance Plan 2021-2021



# MEETING OF COMMITTEES

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## MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF CASTLECOMER MEETINGS

*Number of Meetings held in 2021: 13 & Number of Deputations Received: 0*

- Active Travel Measures
- Broadband Connection Points (BCPs) & Connected Hubs
- Castlecomer Pedestrian Footbridge
- Casual Trading Bye Laws 2021
- Changes to the application process for Social Housing Support
- CLÁR Programme
- Climate Adaptation & Resilience Works
- Cyber Safety
- Destination Greening - #KILKENNYINGREEN
- Draft Litter Management Plan 2021 - 2023
- Election of Cathaoirleach & Leas Cathaoirleach
- Environment Protection
- Footpaths
- General Municipal Allocation & Adoption of Municipal Budget Plan
- Grangefertagh & Clonmantagh Churches & Grounds
- Health Checks - Johnstown & Urlingford
- HD15 Programme
- Hedge Cutting
- High Speed Broadband Delivery for Castlecomer & Urlingford & National Broadband Plan Rollout
- Housing Capital Programme
- Illegal Dumping - Bring Banks, Dog Fouling & Naming & Shaming of Offenders
- Junction Safety
- Local Improvement Scheme & Community Involvement Scheme
- Low Cost Safety Improvement Schemes
- Local Community Development Committees (LCDC) Funding
- Outdoor seating & Accessories Grant Scheme for Tourism & Hospitality Businesses
- Public Lighting
- Public Participation Network (PPN) Plan for 2021
- Road Works Programme & Roads Issues
- Speed Limit Review
- Speeding issues in Towns & Villages
- Street Cleaning
- Super Bus Stops
- Taking in Charge
- Town & Village Scheme
- Traffic Core Presentation
- Undergrounding Overhead Cables - Urlingford
- Update on COVID Pandemic Impacts & Supports
- Weed Control
- Winter Services Maintenance Plan 2021 - 2022 & Salting Operations

## MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF CALLAN - THOMASTOWN

*Number of Meetings held in 2021: 13 & Number of Deputations Received: 0*

- Adoption of Roadworks Programme 2021
- Roadworks Programme Updates & Roads Related Issues
- Level 5 Covid Restrictions: suspension of non-essential construction & civil engineering projects
- Town & Village Renewal Schemes Accelerated Measures due to Covid
- Town & Village Renewal Schemes
- Rural Development Updates
- Rural Regeneration Roads Projects
- Mobility Management Plans
- Rural Regeneration Development Fund & Outdoor Recreational Infrastructure Scheme funded projects
- Community and Cultural Facilities Capital Grant Scheme
- Town and village Health Checks
- Creative Ireland grant scheme
- Public Participation Network workplan 2021
- Presentations of CE reports on submissions received & Material Amendments to Joint Graiguenamanagh/Tinnahinch Local Area Plan
- Tourism Recreational & Connectivity projects
- Outdoor Seating & Accessories Grant Scheme for Tourism & Hospitality
- Streetscape Enhancement Scheme
- Small Events Grants Scheme
- Speed Limit Review
- Election of Cathaoirleach & Leas Cathaoirleach
- General Municipal Allocation / Adoption of Municipal Budget Plan
- Winter Maintenance Plan/Salting Operations
- Level 5 Covid restrictions on construction and civil engineering projects
- Adoption of Three-year Multi Annual Restoration Improvement Programme
- Taking in charge of housing developments
- Active travel & climate change
- Illegal dumping & littering, Litter Management Plan 2021 - 2023
- Hedgecutting
- Parking facilities
- Existing and potential future official walking trails
- South-East Greenway & potential links to same
- Local tourism potential
- Development of smaller villages
- Castlebanny wind farm
- Flood Relief Schemes
- Broadband connection points
- Connected hubs call funding
- Funding streams available
- Callan one-way system/Public Realm and Flaggy Lane
- Callan By-Pass
- 2021 Speed Limit Review
- Kings River, Callan
- Speeding issues
- Compacting bins & Solar panel bins
- Schedule of Municipal District Meetings
- Graiguenamanagh-Tinnahinch Local Area Plan

- Friary Complex, Callan
- Presentation on South-East Greenway
- Drainage works
- Restoration Improvements works
- Restoration Maintenance works
- Bridge Cleaning works
- Burial grounds
- Real time bus shelters Callan & Killamery
- Historic Towns Initiative Fund – St Marys, Callan
- Footpaths
- CLÁR Projects
- Low Cost Safety Improvement Schemes
- Public Lighting
- Directional and road signage
- Community Involvement in Roadworks Schemes
- Local Improvement Schemes
- Banking services in County towns
- Road Safety Issues

**MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF KILKENNY MEETINGS**  
(including Annual Meeting, Budget Meeting & Special Meeting)

**Number of Meetings held in 2021: 14**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Adoption of Draft Schedule of Municipal Works including Draft Road Works Scheme</li> <li>▪ Adopted Municipal Budget plan for 2022</li> <li>▪ Casual Trading Bye-Laws</li> <li>▪ City and County Development Plan 2021 – 2027</li> <li>▪ Election of Mayor and Deputy Mayor</li> <li>▪ Footpaths - 5-year funded programme</li> <li>▪ Footpath completion and upgrade around the City</li> <li>▪ Housing and Planning updates</li> <li>▪ One-way System in Kilkenny City - Social distancing</li> <li>▪ Roads – Monthly updates</li> <li>▪ Road Safety at key Junctions</li> <li>▪ Road Works Scheme 2021</li> <li>▪ Traffic Report for Upper Patrick Street</li> <li>▪ Lighting up the City</li> <li>▪ Commemorate of the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Friary Street ambush</li> <li>▪ Kilkenny City Cycling Study</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Casual Trading Bye-Laws</li> <li>▪ Litter Management Plan 2021-2023</li> <li>▪ Municipal District of Kilkenny City Annual Road Work's Programme 2021</li> <li>▪ Proposed Columbarium Wall St. Kieran's Cemetery (Pre-Part 8)</li> <li>▪ NTA Active Travel/URDF</li> <li>▪ Presentation - Cois Nore</li> <li>▪ Overview on additional Broadband Connection Points</li> <li>▪ Strategic Housing Development at Margaretsfield (115 Units)</li> <li>▪ Climate Adaptation/Resilience Funding (DTAS)</li> <li>▪ Additional Outdoor Infrastructure Fund (NTA)</li> <li>▪ Proposed Part 8 Outdoor Performance Area.</li> <li>▪ St Canice's Masterplan – Presentation.</li> <li>▪ Speed Limit Review</li> <li>▪ 3 Year Roads Programme</li> <li>▪ Kilkenny City Demarcation &amp; Gateways</li> <li>▪ Strategic Housing Development application Breagagh Valley</li> </ul> |
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## MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF PILTOWN MEETINGS

**Number of Meetings held in 2021: 13**

*(including AGM & Budget Meeting)*

- Election of Cathaoirleach & Leas Cathaoirleach
- General Municipal Allocation / Adoption of Municipal Budget Plan
- Adoption of Road Works Scheme
- Roadworks Programme Updates & Roads Related Issues
- Winter Maintenance Programme / Salting Operations
- Taking in Charge Developments
- Unfinished Estates
- South East Greenway, incorporating Kilkenny Greenway
- Glenmore Bus Stop and Weighbridge
- N25 Glenmore to Waterford Scheme
- N24 Waterford to Cahir Scheme
- N24 Carrick Road Scheme
- N24 Tower Road Improvement Scheme
- North Quays Strategic Development Zone
- Meetings with TII – Road Safety Issues
- Draft Litter Management Plan 2021-2023
- Rosslare to Waterford Greenway
- Castlebanny Wind Farm Development
- PPN Workplan for 2021
- Treatment of Ragwort / Hogweed
- Boundary Review
- Technological University for the South East
- National Broadband Plan
- Ferrybank Shopping Centre
- Irish Water – Disruption to Supply Piltown MD
- Derelict Sites – Vacant Homes Initiative
- Poulanassy Waterfall
- Local Improvement Scheme
- Community Involvement in Roadworks Scheme
- Speeding Issues Piltown MD
- Eirgrid – Shaping our Electricity Future
- Section 70 Roads Act – Hedgecutting / Overhanging Trees
- Decarbonisation Zones – Climate Action Plan – Leadership Training
- Town & Village Renewal Scheme and Connected Hubs 2021
- Anti-Dumping Initiative
- Speed Limit Review 2021
- Casual Trading Bye Laws
- Housing Programme Update
- Granny Castle Access
- County School Safety Scheme Review
- Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan
- Greyway proposal – R723 Glenmore Roundabout to New Ross
- Active Travel Measures
- Pil River Park Piltown
- Housing Delivery Action Plan
- Communications – sharing of information on Social Media platforms
- Ferrybank-Belview Local Area Plan Review



# KILKENNY JOINT POLICING COMMITTEE

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Kilkenny County Council has established a Joint Policing Committee in accordance with the Garda Síochána Act 2005.



**Chairperson:** Cllr. Patrick Fitzpatrick, Cloopook, Ballyfoyle, Co. Kilkenny

## MEMBERS OF JOINT POLICING COMMITTEE -

Cllr. Martin Brett, Callan Road, Kilkenny.  
Cllr. Deirdre Cullen, Kilree, Bennettsbridge, Co. Kilkenny.  
Cllr. Pat Dunphy, Ballygorey, Mooncoin, Co. Kilkenny.  
Cllr. Michael Delaney, Tullaroan, Co. Kilkenny.  
Cllr. Tomas Breathnach, Forge Road, Narabane, Kilmacow, Co. Kilkenny.  
Cllr. Denis Hayes, Ballyellen, Goresbridge, Co Kilkenny  
Cllr. Joe Lyons, Bauntha, Callan, Co. Kilkenny.  
Cllr. Patrick O'Neill, Hillview, Bennettsbridge, Co. Kilkenny.  
Cllr. Michael Doyle, Ballinbarna, The Rower, Co. Kilkenny.  
Cllr. Mick McCarthy, Buncrusha Street, Freshford, Co. Kilkenny.  
Cllr. Joe Malone, 11 Maiden Hill, Kells Road, Kilkenny.  
Cllr. Andrew McGuinness, O'Loughlin Rd., Kilkenny.  
Chief Superintendent Pdraig Dunne, Waterford Garda Station.  
Superintendent Derek Hughes, Kilkenny Garda Station.  
Superintendent Colin Furlong, Thomastown Garda Station.  
Detective Inspector Séan O'Meara, Kilkenny Garda Station.  
Deputy Jennifer Murnane O'Connor, Graigue, Co. Carlow.  
Deputy Kathleen Funchion, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Lower New Street, Kilkenny  
Deputy John McGuinness, O'Loughlin Rd, Kilkenny  
Deputy John Paul Phelan, 25 Market St., Thomastown, Co. Kilkenny.  
Deputy Malcolm Noonan, Cedarwood Drive, Loughboy, Kilkenny.  
Samual Morgan, PPN, Kilkenny.  
Helena Power, PPN, Kilkenny.  
Gerard Ferris, PPN, Kilkenny.  
Collette Murphy, PPN, Kilkenny (resigned during year)  
Marion Chamber, Chambers of Kilkenny.  
Anthony Morrisson, Vintners Association.

**Number of Meetings:** 4 Committee Meetings (*held remotely*)

**Public Meeting:** None held due to COVID restrictions

## Summary of issues discussed in 2021:

- Annual Report 2020
- Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy 2020 -2025
- Crime Statistics, Gardai Stewardship, Traffic and Road Safety
- Draft Works Programme 2021
- Kilkenny City CCTV Update
- National Youth Awards 2021
- Online Fraud & Cyber Security
- Presentation from Traffic Core
- Taxi Text Alert
- Update on Speed Limits Review

## MEMBERS TRAINING & EXPENSES

| MEMBERS TRAINING 2021 |                                                        |                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |           |            |            |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|------------|------------|
| DATE                  | CONFERENCE                                             | LOCATION                  | COUNCILLOR                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | FEES      | EXPENSES   | TOTAL      |
| 12th-13th August 2020 | AILG - Moorhead Report                                 | Cork                      | Deirdre Cullen                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |           | €263.27    | €263.27    |
| 16th September        | AILG Tralee                                            | Kerry                     | Peter Cleere, Michael Delaney, Michael McCarthy, Matt Doran, Andrew McGuinness, Joe Malone, John Brennan, Patrick O'Neill                                                                                                                                      | €520.00   | €2,177.22  | €2,697.22  |
| 18th September        | AILG Training Prog M 1                                 | Waterford                 | Pat Dunphy                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | €65.00    | €9.57      | €74.57     |
| 24th -26th September  | Celtic Conference - Health and Safety in the Workplace | Cork                      | Peter Cleere                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | €100.00   |            | €100.00    |
| 1st- 3rd October      | Celtic Confrence - The Fair Deal Scheme                | Louth                     | Joe Malone, Mary Hilda Cavanagh, Michael Delaney, Andrew McGuinness                                                                                                                                                                                            | €400.00   | €1,996.06  | €2,396.06  |
| 2nd October           | AILG - Training Prog M1                                | Sligo                     | Pat Fitzpatrick, John Coonan                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | €130.00   | €818.31    | €948.31    |
| 5th October           | AILG Training Prog M 1                                 | Tipperary                 | Eamon Aylward, Maria Dollard                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | €130.00   | €110.17    | €240.17    |
| 8th -10th October     | Celtic Conference - Mental Health & Wellbeing          | Cork                      | Deirdre Cullen, Mary Hilda Cavanagh, Denis Hynes, John Brennan, Andrew McGuinness, Michael Delaney                                                                                                                                                             | €600.00   | €2,120.35  | €2,720.35  |
| 15th - 17th October   | Celtic Conference - A Practical Guide to Budget        | Cork                      | Eamon Aylward, Deirdre Cullen                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | €200.00   | €881.39    | €1,081.39  |
| 29th -31st October    | Celtic Conference- Housing for All                     | Louth                     | Mary Hilda Cavanagh, Michael Doyle                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | €200.00   | €696.30    | €896.30    |
| 3rd - 4th November    | LAMA Autumn Training                                   | Sligo                     | Deirdre Cullen, Denis Hynes, Eugene McGuinness, Eamon Aylward, Ger Frisby, Andrew McGuinness, Michael Delaney, Peter Cleere, Matt Doran, Michael Doyle, Patrick O'Neill, Pat Fitzpatrick, Michael McCarthy, Joe Malone, John Coonan, Pat Dunphy, Martin Brett. | €2,550.00 | €7,688.70  | €10,238.70 |
| 6th November          | AILG - Mental Health                                   | Galway                    | Matt Doran, Peter Cleere, Michael McCarthy                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | €195.00   | €993.40    | €1,188.40  |
| 10th November         | AILG- - Mental Health                                  | Castlecomer, Co. Kilkenny | Pat Dunphy, John Coonan, Maria Dollard, Fidelis Doherty, Tomas Breathnach, Eamon Aylward, Ger Frisby, Andrew McGuinness, Pat Fitzpatrick, Joe Malone, John Brennan.                                                                                            | €715.00   | €330.16    | €1,045.16  |
| 3rd -5th December     | Celtic Conference -Mental Health and Wellbeing         | Louth                     | Ger Frisby, Michael McCarthy, Matt Doran                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | €300.00   | €1,027.06  | €1,327.06  |
|                       |                                                        |                           | TOTAL                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | €6,105.00 | €19,111.96 | €25,216.96 |

## PAYMENTS TO ELECTED MEMBERS IN 2021

| Councillor                | No Meetings Attended | Salaries (Taxable) | Allowance          | Vouched Expenses | Cathaoirleach     | Leas-Cathaoirleach | Municipal District Chair | SPC Chair Allowance | Mobile Phone     | TOTAL              | Expenses paid from Outside Bodies |
|---------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Cllr. John Brennan        | 40 out of 41         | €21,994.19         | €4,461.72          |                  |                   |                    |                          | €3,000.00           | €254.87          | €29,710.78         | 2388.16                           |
| Cllr. Mary Hilda Cavanagh | 43 out of 46         | €22,362.00         | €5,318.17          |                  |                   |                    |                          | €3,000.00           | €114.10          | €30,794.27         | 395.02                            |
| Cllr. Pat Fitzpatrick     | 39 out of 43         | €22,335.17         | €3,554.47          |                  |                   |                    | €3,180.30                |                     | €244.50          | €29,314.44         | 4434.41                           |
| Cllr. Michael McCarthy    | 40 out of 42         | €21,673.38         | €4,089.28          |                  |                   | €2,135.53          | €2,897.75                |                     | €116.08          | €30,912.02         | 0                                 |
| Cllr. Michael Delaney     | 32 out of 37         | €22,362.00         | €4,045.31          |                  |                   |                    |                          |                     | €110.58          | €26,517.89         | 0                                 |
| Cllr. Denis Hynes         | 35 out of 43         | €22,362.00         | €4,198.53          |                  |                   |                    |                          |                     | €63.46           | €26,623.99         | 0                                 |
| Cllr. Peter 'Chap' Cleere | 32 out of 38         | €21,673.38         | €4,359.73          | €2,714.00        |                   |                    | €2,713.76                |                     | €0.00            | €31,460.87         | 1030.02                           |
| Cllr. Matt Doran          | 43 out of 45         | €22,362.00         | €4,964.58          |                  |                   |                    |                          | €6,049.28           | €0.00            | €33,375.86         | 0                                 |
| Cllr. Michael Doyle       | 35 out of 38         | €21,964.03         | €5,184.21          |                  |                   |                    | €3,364.29                |                     | €124.42          | €30,636.95         | 0                                 |
| Cllr. Patrick O'Neill     | 31 out of 41         | €22,017.69         | €4,035.23          |                  |                   |                    |                          |                     | €220.75          | €26,273.67         | 1552.63                           |
| Cllr. Deirdre Cullen      | 40 out of 41         | €22,362.00         | €4,046.79          |                  |                   |                    |                          |                     | €56.53           | €26,465.32         | 0                                 |
| Cllr. Joe Lyons           | 43 out of 47         | €22,362.00         | €3,962.90          |                  |                   |                    |                          |                     | €78.86           | €26,403.76         | 0                                 |
| Cllr. David Fitzgerald    | 36 out of 40         | €22,362.00         | €4,270.97          |                  |                   |                    |                          | €3,049.28           | €0.00            | €29,682.25         | 0                                 |
| Cllr. Joe Malone          | 48 out of 51         | €22,362.00         | €3,827.44          |                  |                   |                    |                          | €6,049.28           | €74.83           | €32,313.55         | 2797.96                           |
| Cllr. Andrew McGuinness   | 49 out of 51         | €22,312.17         | €3,014.71          |                  | €9,582.50         |                    | €5,366.20                |                     | €0.00            | €40,275.58         | 4802.2                            |
| Cllr. Martin Brett        | 50 out of 51         | €22,017.69         | €4,228.76          |                  |                   | €1,916.50          |                          |                     | €222.07          | €28,385.02         | 0                                 |
| Cllr. John Coonan         | 35 out of 42         | €22,017.69         | €3,897.66          |                  |                   |                    | €4,599.60                |                     | €55.04           | €30,569.99         | 0                                 |
| Cllr. Eugene McGuinness   | 38 out of 39         | €22,362.00         | €3,853.11          |                  |                   |                    |                          |                     | €71.76           | €26,286.87         | 0                                 |
| Cllr. Eamon Aylward       | 30 out of 35         | €21,673.38         | €5,455.57          |                  |                   |                    | €2,598.78                |                     | €0.00            | €29,727.73         | 1089.54                           |
| Cllr. Tomás Breathnach    | 57 out of 58         | €22,362.00         | €5,747.69          |                  |                   |                    |                          |                     | €109.38          | €28,219.07         | 0                                 |
| Cllr. Fidelis Doherty     | 41 out of 43         | €22,017.69         | €5,675.73          |                  | €10,677.64        |                    |                          |                     | €148.81          | €38,519.87         | 7441.74                           |
| Cllr. Pat Dunphy          | 47 out of 48         | €22,289.17         | €6,387.98          |                  |                   |                    | €3,479.27                | €3,049.28           | €134.97          | €35,340.67         | 0                                 |
| Cllr. Ger Frisby          | 41 out of 46         | €21,362.02         | €6,358.78          |                  |                   |                    |                          | €6,049.28           | €144.04          | €33,914.12         | 5604.22                           |
| Cllr. Maria Dollard       | 38 out of 41         | €22,362.00         | €4,093.31          |                  |                   |                    |                          |                     | €109.38          | €26,564.69         | 0                                 |
| <b>TOTALS</b>             |                      | <b>€531,329.65</b> | <b>€109,032.63</b> | <b>€2,714.00</b> | <b>€20,260.14</b> | <b>€4,052.03</b>   | <b>€28,199.95</b>        | <b>€30,246.40</b>   | <b>€2,454.43</b> | <b>€728,289.23</b> |                                   |



# CÉAD MILE Fáilte

WELCOME BIENVENUE - WILKOMMEN BIENVENUES  
CELEBRATING IRISH MUSIC, CULTURE & CREATIVITY

## 2021 VIRTUAL PROGRAMME - AT A GLANCE:

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>ONE FESTIVAL PROGRAMME FROM 10TH MARCH:</b></p> <p><b>DESTINATION GREENING - KILKENNY DOES GREENEY</b><br/>         BORD NA BÉIRNE'S GREENEY CHALLENGE<br/>         ST. PATRICK &amp; THE LOST SHANES TOUR - DOUGLASS PARK<br/>         WILLOW WALKERS - FORAGE EXPLORER, CREATE - TUTORIALS<br/>         WILLOWFARMERS TALK FROM BUTLER GALLERY<br/>         STORIES &amp; CRAFT WITH KILKENNY LIBRARY SERVICES<br/>         COSTUME &amp; FINGER PUZZLE MAKING WITH KILKENNY CO. CO.</p> <p><b>TRAD FAD DHO - DUETS FOR KILKENNY</b><br/>         WEDNESDAY 17TH MARCH 11.30AM - 1PM<br/>         ONE OBJECT AT A TIME - DR. TARA SHANE<br/>         KILKENNY'S 2021 BIODIVERSITY CHAMPION<br/>         ANIMATION TUTORIAL - DRAW ST. PATRICK &amp; HIS SHANES!<br/>         FOREST FORAGING GUIDES FOR KIDS WITH KILKENNY FOREST SCHOOL<br/>         IRISH MYTHOLOGY STORYTELLING WITH HERITAGE COUNCIL<br/>         SNARE ENCOUNTERS AT NATIONAL REPTILE ZOO<br/>         GARDENING FOR BIODIVERSITY - HINTS AND TIPS<br/>         NOBE VIEWING FOR KILKENNY</p> | <p><b>MUSIC &amp; ENTERTAINMENT THROUGHOUT THE FESTIVAL</b><br/> <b>WEDNESDAY MARCH 17TH 11.30AM - 3PM FEATURING:</b><br/>         WILLOW DOG WOLF &amp; BOWLING PAPER<br/>         ST. PATRICK'S DAY MESSAGES FROM BT HOME AND PARAD<br/>         IRELANDS CALL - LADY DEBART CHOR<br/>         RITHIN GLASA - MUSIC GENERATION<br/>         BUEMCHILIN - FAD/ROCK TRAD<br/>         SÉD LINN - FAD, WOOL &amp; BOWLING PAPER<br/>         CAILÍN FALLOIN - HARVEST WITH DANCE SOPHIA KHOODABACHSH<br/>         IRELANDS CALL - ALIZES SCHOOL OF SINGING<br/>         LINN PAIRLE, SINGER BONGWRITER<br/>         ROBERT GEESE SINGER SONGWRITER<br/>         KILKEENIN ORCHILIN, SEAN NÓ SINGER<br/>         JEREMY MCKEAY RODE (DRUMS) &amp; ZAHRA KHOODABACHSH (DANCER)<br/>         ULLKANN PIP DREAMS - MUSIC GENERATION<br/>         SEAN NÓ DANCE - KILKOPUS DUNSTUP (KEVIN SHORTALL, ACCORDION)</p> <p><b>SPECIAL CONTENT - WEDNESDAY 17TH MARCH 4PM - 5PM</b><br/> <b>WOLF &amp; FALWALKERS WITH KILA IN CONCERT</b></p> <p><b>TRAD FAD DHO - DUETS FOR KILKENNY</b><br/>         WEDNESDAY 17TH - MARCH 3PM - 5PM<br/>         PÓIPÉ FÉITHARH &amp; DONAL MCQUEE (WHISTLE &amp; FIDDLE)<br/>         LEONARD BARRY &amp; DECLAN FOGAN (PIPES &amp; FIDDLE)<br/>         MUIRLEIGH MACADAMHUI &amp; GERRY O'BYRNE (FIDDLE &amp; GUITAR)<br/>         MICHAEL MC GILDOIR &amp; DEZI DONNELLY (FIDDLE &amp; FIDDLE)</p> |
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**WATCH LIVE 7.17. MARCH ON [stpatricksfestivalkilkenny.com](http://stpatricksfestivalkilkenny.com)**



## KILKENNY DAY

'Kilkenny Day' is a fantastic new, grass roots celebration of all things Kilkenny - the diversity of our local and new communities, the richness of our cultural heritage, along with our wide-ranging creativity and sporting excellence. Everything that makes Kilkenny a very special place to be.



Returning for the second year, Kilkenny Day took place all around the County with events to suit all ages and interests. There was live music, a food and craft market, children's workshops and lots more. The celebration was open to locals and visitors, with everyone encouraged to get out to explore and experience everything Kilkenny has to offer.

Kicking off the 'Kilkenny Day' activities in 2021 were two very special screenings of Cartoon Saloon's Wolfwalkers in the grounds of the Kilkenny Castle. Wolfwalkers was nominated for Best Animated Feature Film at 2021 Oscars and the screening was introduced by Directors Paul Young and Ross Stewart.

On Kilkenny Day, there were also two Local Live Concerts, celebrating local professional and emerging Kilkenny musicians in the Castle Park. These were the final events in the 'local live performance programme' series which included the September Sounds series funded by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport & Media.

A special feature for the 2021 festival was the 'Your Community Your Council' event, where members of the public got a chance to meet local clubs and organisations and learn about Council's initiatives. On Kilkenny Day there was a meet and greet area beside the market on the Parade, workshops and demonstrations on Canal Square and more open sessions around the County. We asked people to wear their Kilkenny colours with pride.

### Kilkenny Tourism Welcome Ambassadors Community Stalls on the Parade



## YULEFEST KILKENNY

Yulefest Kilkenny Christmas Festival was first established in 2016 by Kilkenny County Council to promote Kilkenny as a Christmas festive destination for local people and visitors to enjoy.

A key feature of the Yulefest Kilkenny Festival is its community connectivity. Christmas 2020 was a very different for everyone and Yulefest Kilkenny was no exception as much of our Festival was virtual. However, the 2021 Festival was not virtual and we all enjoyed what the festival had to offer being always mindful of keeping ourselves and each other safe over the festive season.

Santa arrived in Kilkenny City on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> November, 2021 by boat down the River Nore to launch Yulefest 2021 – Christmas in Kilkenny!! He was carried safely by the Civil Defence and flanked by two boats full of Dragon Paddlers and a string of canoe and kayakers. Arriving at Canal Square, he was greeted by excited spectators. Once he had safely landed, he joined his elves and the children on a cycle through the City. Over 300 people took part in Santa's eco journey around the City which included bikes, scooters and even a toy tractor!



There were outdoor movie nights with Oscar nominated Cartoon Saloon films. Live Music on the Yulefest Bandstand with over 50 music performances. The Christmas Market was on the Parade, as well as several more at locations across the County. Especially for children, there were Santa Hat elves workshops, Snowglobe Photobooths, Santa visits and the Butler House Christmas Garden. Pop-up pocket parks let you feel festive anytime, but especially on Friday's when DJs turned up that Friday feeling. Plus lots more outdoor and Covid-safe events across the City and County.





We even had a visit from RTE's Nationwide Programme where we got a half hour national coverage for Yulefest Kilkenny. 300,000 viewers tuned in on the night.



## OTHER EVENTS

### Official Opening of Riverside Garden and Skatepark -9<sup>th</sup> June, 2021



### Commemoration of 1921 Friary Street Ambush



### Election of Cathaoirleach of Kilkenny County Council for 2021/2022 – Cllr. Fidelis Doherty





- Mayoral Election 2021 -  
Cllr. Andrew McGuinness elected Mayor of Kilkenny Municipal District for 2021/2022.



*Relaunch of Tea Rooms at Woodstock*



**Regional National Commemoration Day Ceremony held in July 2021**



**Official Opening of Ferrybank Neighbourhood Park**





**Kilkenny was designated a World Craft Council Craft City and Region,  
one of only four regions to achieve this recognition in Europe**



**Launch of Graiguenamanagh Audio Guide**





## Launch of Kilkenny Day and September Sounds Series



## Minister Darragh O'Brien officially opened Housing Capital and LIHAF Projects in Kilkenny





**Glebeside Housing Estate, Castlecomer.**



**Minister O'Brien visits the Abbey Quarter Site, Kilkenny City**





**Minister O'Brien opens the  
Kilkenny Western Environs Phase 1 Infrastructure Scheme (LIHAF)**



**RESPOND Housing Estate at Margaretsfield, Kilkenny**



**Minister Heather Humphreys visits Kilkenny City and County  
to officially open Capital Projects funded by  
Department *Rural and Community Development* in Kilkenny.**



**Funding announced for new Library at old Mayfair Ballroom site in Kilkenny City.**



**Thomastown Community Recreational Area**





**Woodstock Victorian Pathways Enhancement Scheme**



**Minister Humphreys cuts ribbon on new boardwalk at Silaire Woods, Graiguenamanagh**



# MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

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Kilkenny County Council's Management Structure is:

**Colette Byrne**  
**Chief Executive**



**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*



**Mary J. Mulholland**  
**Director of Services**

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

*Municipal District of Callan - Thomastown*



**Martin Prendiville**  
**Head of Finance**

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

*Municipal District of Castlecomer*



# **DIRECTORATE OF CORPORATE & INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Director of Services: Mr. Tim Butler**

# CORPORATE SERVICES

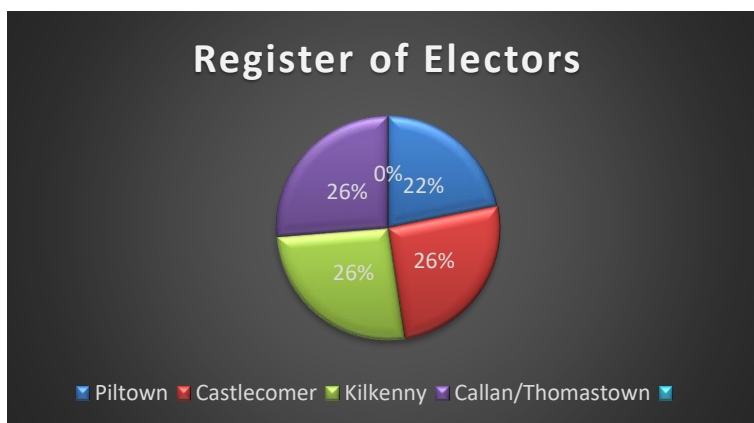
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## REGISTER OF ELECTORS

The Annual Register is published on the 15<sup>th</sup> February each year. It is a list of all persons aged 18 years or over, resident in the State, who are entitled to vote in the following elections:

- Local Elections (County Council),
- General Elections (Dail),
- European Elections (EU Parliament),
- Presidential,
- Referenda.

*The total number on the Register on the 31<sup>st</sup> of December, 2021 is 72,987.*



Any member of the public can check if they are on the register on the following website: [www.checktheregister.ie](http://www.checktheregister.ie) or can contact the Corporate Services Department in the Council.

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

## CUSTOMER CARE

The Council is committed to providing a quality service to all its customers. Kilkenny County Council's Customer Charter sets out the way in which the Council endeavours to deal with its customers. The document is available on our website at [www.kilkennycoco.ie](http://www.kilkennycoco.ie). This Charter includes a commitment to equality in service provision and a recognition of the diverse nature of the community we serve. The Charter also includes a Customer Complaints Procedure which may be availed of by any person not satisfied with the quality of service received. The Senior Executive Officer in Corporate investigates all complaints/comments received. A person not satisfied with the response provided by the Senior Executive Officer can request to have their case reviewed again by the Director of Services, Corporate Services.

In 2021, Kilkenny County Council dealt with 16 formal complaints from customers.

## OMBUDSMAN

The Office of the Ombudsman was established under the Ombudsman Act 1980. The role of the Office is to investigate complaints about administrative actions, delays or inactions adversely affecting persons or bodies in their dealings with state bodies including Local Authorities.

The Office of the Ombudsman dealt with 14 Customer complaints in 2021. Reports on each complaint was provided by Kilkenny County Council to the Office of the Ombudsman.

## OMBUDSMAN FOR CHILDREN

In 2021, no complaint was made to the Ombudsman for Children.

## **IRISH LANGUAGE SCHEME**

Kilkenny County Council's Irish Language Scheme 2019-2022 was confirmed by the Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and came into effect on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2019. The scheme is available to view on our website - [www.kilkennycoco.ie](http://www.kilkennycoco.ie).

Kilkenny County Council recognise that our customers have the right to choose to do business with us in their preferred language and they are facilitated in their dealings with us as far as practicable, whether that is through Irish or through English.

If you wish to contact the Council in Irish, please send an e-mail to [gaeilge@kilkennycoco.ie](mailto:gaeilge@kilkennycoco.ie). During 2021, Kilkenny County Council dealt with 7 formal Irish complaints.

## **PROTECTED DISCLOSURES**

The Protected Disclosures Act 2014 became operational on 15th July 2014. The Act is intended to provide a statutory framework within which workers can raise concerns regarding a potential wrongdoing that has come to their attention in the workplace in the knowledge that they can avail of significant employment and other protections if they are penalised by their employer or suffer any detriment for doing so.

In accordance with Section 22 of that Act, Kilkenny County Council has an obligation to report on the number of protected disclosures made to the Council in the preceding year. To 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2021, no disclosure was received by the Designated Officer for Protected Disclosures.

## **DATA PROTECTION (GDPR)**

Kilkenny County Council processes all personal information in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 and the Data Protection Acts, 1988 to 2018.

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) applies from 25th May 2018. It has general application to the processing of personal data in the EU, setting out more extensive obligations on data controllers and processors, and providing strengthened protections and rights for data subjects.

### ***Privacy Statement***

At Kilkenny County Council we are committed to protecting and respecting your privacy. The Privacy Statement lets you know how we look after your personal data. It also informs you as to our obligations and your rights under data protection law. Kilkenny County Council's privacy statement can be found at: [www.kilkennycoco.ie/privacy-statement](http://www.kilkennycoco.ie/privacy-statement)

In 2021, Kilkenny County Council dealt with 14 data subject access requests. One request which was appealed to the Data Protection Commissioner (DPC) in 2019 was finalised in 2021 by the DPC in favour of Kilkenny County Council. The Data Protection Officer (DPO) was notified of 12 data breaches of which 2 were notified to the DPC. Kilkenny County Council was invited to take part in a Cookie Survey by the DPC which is currently being reviewed. The DPO has actively engaged with Service Departments in carrying out Data Privacy Impact Assessments and addressing any risks identified.

## **PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

Section 126(c) of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 sets out the functions of the National Oversight and Audit Commission (NOAC) which includes examination of the performance of local government bodies against forty-two indicators.

The report in respect of 2020 was published by NOAC in September, 2021.

Kilkenny County Council's performance in each area in 2020 compared to other local authorities is available for viewing on [www.noac.ie](http://www.noac.ie)

# FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

The Freedom of Information Act 2014 was enacted on 14th October 2014. It introduced significant changes to the Freedom of Information regime repealing and replacing the Freedom of Information Acts 1997 and 2003 and expanding the scope of FOI to a number of further bodies. It also consolidated, modernised and updated the legislation generally.

It is the policy of Kilkenny County Council to give members of the public access to information held by the Authority in accordance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2014. Further information is available on the Council's website [www.kilkennycoco.ie](http://www.kilkennycoco.ie)

The Freedom of Information Unit deals with requests for records held by Kilkenny County Council from members of the public, Journalists and Organisations. Kilkenny County Council is a public body which is subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, 2014, which allows for access to certain records held by the local authority subject to a number of exemptions

## Kilkenny County Council received 115 Freedom of Information requests in 2021.

| 2021  | Journalists | Business/<br>InterestGroups | Oireachtas/<br>PublicReps | Staff | Clients | Others | TOTAL |
|-------|-------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-------|---------|--------|-------|
| TOTAL | 20          | 3                           | 0                         | 0     | 5       | 84     | 112   |

## A total of 111 decisions were made by the Freedom of Information Officer in 2021.

Two applications for Internal Reviews were received following the decisions of the FOI Officer.

|       | FOI DECISIONS MADE 2021 |                           |                     |                       |       |
|-------|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-------|
|       | Requests Granted        | Requests Part-<br>Granted | Requests<br>Refused | Requests<br>Withdrawn | TOTAL |
| TOTAL | 40                      | 17                        | 41                  | 13                    | 111   |

## ACCESS TO INFORMATION ON THE ENVIRONMENT

You are entitled to request access to information on the environment that is held by Kilkenny County Council. This right comes from Directive 2003/4/EC of the European Parliament, the European Communities (*Access to Information on the Environment*) Regulations 2007 to 2014 (*hereafter referred to as the AIE Regulations*).

Under these Regulations, information relating to the environment held by, or for, a public authority must be made available on request, subject to certain exceptions. The AIE regulations also oblige public authorities to be proactive in disseminating environmental information to the public.

In 2021, Kilkenny County Council received 15 requests. 12 requests were granted, 1 internal review and 2 requests were withdrawn.

There is no initial fee for making an application under the AIE Regulations. However, the Regulations do allow a public authority to charge a reasonable fee for the cost of supplying environmental information, and Kilkenny County Council has set the following charges: -

- Search, retrieval and copying of records: €20 per hour
- Photocopy: €0.04 per sheet
- CD Rom: €10.00
- Radiograph: €6.00

## COMMUNICATIONS & SOCIAL MEDIA 2020

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The Communications Team oversees corporate and internal communications for the Council. It is responsible for all internal and external communications, public relations, crisis management and marketing on behalf of the Council extending across all Council services.

### **The Team provides full support to An Cathaoirleach and Elected Members regarding:**

- Advice on Event Management.
- Organising of Civic Events.
- Advise on Protocol and Event Management.
- Circulation of Press Release post events.
- Photoshoots and videos for promotion.

### **ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2021:**

- 106 Press Releases issued in 2021.  
.....
- Promotion and management of Council Events and activities.  
.....
- Publication of second Council newsletter “Kilkenny Connects”.  
.....
- Publication of Annual Report 2020.  
.....
- Management of Council’s social media accounts.  
.....
- Management of Council’s websites.



# HUMAN RESOURCES

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The objective of the Human Resources Department is “to ensure that there is an appropriately resourced, skilled and motivated workforce to meet the priorities and objectives of the Organisation and to ensure as reasonably practical the safety, health and wellbeing of all our staff”.

The Human Resources Department vision is to provide effective strategic and operational support as a business partner to service delivery units of the Authority.

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
- Data Analytics
- Employee Health, Safety and Welfare

The Human Resource Service in 2021 continued to be impacted significantly by the Covid 19 pandemic and the public health restrictions imposed during the year. The impact ranged from a temporary cessation of service to radical changes to the service delivery model – affecting both the scope and nature of service delivery. The restrictions required services to quickly pivot to maintain business continuity whilst observing public health protocols. Our Recruitment service quickly moved to video interview format whilst the proportion of online delivered training modules also increased significantly. Increased emphasis was placed on employee welfare to support staff facing the challenges of the pandemic both in work and home life.

## **Work Force Planning/ Staffing Levels**

The number of staff employed at 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2021 was 604(*Headcount*) or 569.30 (*Whole-Time-Equivalent*). The Human Resource Department coordinates the ongoing management of the work force plans; managing new entrants, staff transfers and staff departures with line management colleagues.

## **Recruitment**

The Human Resources Department has moved to an e recruitment process with competitions now being administered on line using a system called submit.com. Competitions are now administered with online applications, online selection stages including new hybrid interview service where candidates are offered either face to face or video interviews.

There was a total of **24** competitions held during the year which resulted in **925** applications being received by KCC. While **92** offers were made during the year **50** new staff (*indoor & outdoor*) were employed by the organisation in 2021.

### **Summer Student & Lifeguard Programme**

The Council employed 25 students during the summer months of 2021 to cover the area of Litter Cleaning, Gardening and other seasonal work under this programme. This was an increase of 18 on the previous year.

There were also 14 Lifeguards employed throughout the County during the summer period of 2021 - this number was down on previous year.

### **Shared Payroll & Superannuation Service**

This service is delivered by My Pay the Local Government Shared Services Provider from its offices in Portlaoise Co Laois with support from Kilkenny Human Resources Department. Kilkenny County Council successfully completed the transition of the Superannuation function for the Council to the Shared Service Centre in January 2019.

### **Attendance Management**

The Local Government Sectors Attendance Management Policy was revised in 2013 and revised sick pay schemes were introduced for the Sector. Absenteeism levels continue to be managed in accordance with these policies with particular attention to Covid 19 related absences. The Authority has seen improved reduced levels of absences year on year.

In response to the pandemic, the Human Resource Department supported the Authority's implementation of significant and widescale changes to work attendance practices to ensure business continuity and to support staff. This included implementation of widescale remote working patterns and the temporary assignment scheme to the HSE.

There was a total of 120 instances of staff who were Covid positive /had symptoms and a total of 60 instances of staff self-isolating/close contacts in 2021.

### **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 2021 which incorporated mandatory training, work related and personal development programmes. This included Health & Safety training, Third level Learning Programmes and various other in house training workshops. A sample of the training programmes provided in 2021 is as follows:-

- Manual Handling
- Safe pass
- Abrasive Wheels
- Confined Spaces
- Banksman
- Safety Representative Training
- Child Protection training
- Driver CPC
- Location of Underground Services
- CSCS Signing, Lighting & Guarding Training
- Mobile Elevated Work Platform Training
- Dealing with Difficult Violent & Aggression
- First Aid Response Refresher
- Customer Care Training

- Leadership Training
- Supervisory Management Training
- Library Services Training
- Local Government Studies
- Competency Based Interview Training IPA

Kilkenny County Council endeavours, subject to available resources, to facilitate and support staff personal development wishing to pursue Third Level Courses that are relevant to and contribute to their role and the business need of the Council. Also dedicated to providing a library of courses/information which is easily accessible to staff online and to a new hybrid delivery of courses online and in house - in total we ran 64 courses in 2021 and between these courses 918 staff attended.

### **Garda Vetting**

A total number of 59 staff were vetted or re-vetted in 2021. This was an increase of 8 on the previous year.

### **Vaccination Programme**

Due to the Pandemic the Vaccination Programme was limited during 2021. A total number of 21 staff were vaccinated in 2021.

### **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 Environment, Heritage and Local Government i.e.3.66%.

### **Data Analytics**

Kilkenny County Council Human Resources commenced a new human resource data analytics sub programme in 2020. The objective of the programme is to use people data to solve business problems and to provide insight into our workforce, HR policies and practices. Ultimately the programme will support evidenced based decision making in human resource strategic and operations management. The programme commenced quarterly data analytic reports on Human Resource activity in 2021.

### **Industrial Relations**

Kilkenny County Council engages positively with staff union representatives to address issues in a proactive positive manner.

# INTERNAL AUDIT

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The Audit Committee is made up of three external members and two Elected Members. The current Audit Committee was established by resolution of the Council upon nomination by the Corporate Policy Group and following consultation with the Chief Executive. The term of the committee is concurrent with that of the current Council which commenced on 1st June 2019 and will terminate on 31st May 2024. 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 Audit Committee meetings held in 2021. The four meetings were held remotely due to COVID-19 restrictions. During the year the Committee met with the Local Government Auditor and various Line Managers to discuss a broad range of issues.

Areas of priority included:

- Annual Budget 2022
- Annual Financial Statement 2020
- Financial Implications of Covid-19
- Impact of COVID-19 on Kilkenny County Council Services
- Internal Audit Reports
- Key Capital Projects
- Local Government Audit Service Statutory Report 2020
- NOAC Reports
- Tourism and Economic Development

Each year a new plan of work for Internal Audit is designed and prepared based on risk evaluation and on consultation with Management of the Council and the Audit Committee. Covid-19 had an impact on the completion of the Internal Audit Plan in 2021. The list of Internal Audit Assignments carried out in 2021 included the following:

- Public Spending Code – In Depth Review of Capital and Revenue Projects.
- Housing Loan Application Compliance.
- Procurement.
- Motor Tax EOY Stock take.
- Payroll Process.

## ROADS & TRANSPORTATION

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The Elected Members adopted the 2021 Roadwork's Scheme for County Kilkenny in April 2021. The total value of Maintenance and Improvement Schemes amounted to €28million. Kilkenny County Council successfully secured €458,826 (B12 Maintenance, Skid Resistance 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.

### Roads Capital Projects & Improvements

The past decade has seen continued significant capital expenditure invested in road schemes in Co. Kilkenny.

### Western Environs Infrastructure

Kilkenny Western Environs Phase 1 Infrastructure road scheme was completed and opened in August 2021. Minister for Housing, Darragh O'Brien TD officially opened the road on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2021. This road has been named the *William Robertson Way*.



### Major Projects – National Routes

#### N25 Glenmore to Waterford Major Scheme.

An initial allocation of €1,000,000 was provided in 2021 to advance this Scheme. The planning and design of this scheme is at the end Phase 2 (Option Selection) The selection of the Preferred Option was announced in June 2021 as the Navy corridor. It is noted that there is no funding allocation for this scheme in 2022 and clarification has been sought from TII in this regard.

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

An initial allocation of €1,700,000 was provided in 2021 to advance this Scheme. The planning and design of this scheme moved from Phase 1 (Concept & Feasibility) to Phase 2 (Option Selection) during 2021. It is noted that there is no funding allocation for this scheme in 2022 and clarification has been sought from TII in this regard.

#### **Minor Works Programme**

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

#### **N24 Carrick Road Minor Improvement Scheme**

An allocation of €500,000 was provided in 2021 to advance the design stage of this Scheme and the preparation of documentation for the statutory approval stage. It is expected that the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Order application will be made to An Bord Pleanála during Q1 2022.

#### **N24 Tower Road Junction Improvement Scheme**

An allocation of €1,500,000 was provided in 2021 to advance this scheme.

Notice to Treat was served on effected landowners during 2021 and land acquisition procedures are on-going. Advanced archaeological investigations were completed during 2021.

It is expected that construction of the scheme will commence in Q3 2022 following the tendering process.

#### **N77 Ballyragget to Ballynaslee Improvement Scheme**

An initial allocation of €500,000 was provided in 2021 to advance this scheme. There were no objections to An Bord Pleanála in respect of this scheme and confirmation of the CPO was made by Kilkenny County Council in May 2021. Planning Approval was secured from An Bord Pleanála in late August 2021. It is anticipated that the notice to treat will be served on effected land owners in Q2 2022 to allow the land negotiations and acquisition processes to commence. Advanced archaeological investigations are also expected to be concluded during 2022.

#### **N78 Castlecomer Pedestrian Bridge**

Through a Section 85 Agreement, Kildare County Council (Bridge Management Office) project managed the construction of the footbridge in Castlecomer on Kilkenny County Council's behalf. It is 100% grant funded by Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII.). RPS Consulting Engineers Ltd were appointed consultants on the project and took the project from inception through to construction. RPS engaged Powell Williams Architects (UK) for specialist bridge architect advice early on in the project on which various options for the design were considered. Kenny Civils & Plant Ltd (Galway) were the appointed contractors on the project. Works commenced in June 2021. It is expected that the bridge will open in January 2022. The overall cost of the project will be in excess of €1.85m.





*Bridge Lift in Progress around midnight on night of 23<sup>rd</sup> November*



*Overview with the new Castlecomer Footbridge in position (just after the bridge lift)*

### **National Pavement Improvement 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 Kilkenny – Clonmel Road (Riversfield to Ahanure North)**

This project was completed during 2021 and consisted of approximately 2.55 km pavement improvement overlay and other associated works. The project was completed by Kilkenny Block Company Ltd for a contract value of €819,758 ex VAT.



*N76 Riversfield to Ahanure North – Finished Pavement*



### **N77 Kilkenny – Ballyragget Road (Oldtown to Ballyragget)**

This project was completed during 2021 and consisted of approximately 1.3 km pavement improvement overlay and other associated works. The project was completed by Priority Construction Ltd for a contract value of €748,543 ex VAT.



*N77 Oldtown to Ballyragget – Finished Pavement*

### **National Road Skid Resistance (HD28) Maintenance Works**

Kilkenny County Council undertook both mechanical abrasion and surface course replacement works to address surface pavement issues across the national road network including at:

#### **N77 Baun to Hennebrys Cross**

This project was completed during 2021 and consisted of approximately 3.2 km pavement improvement overlay and other associated works. The project was completed during 2021 by Lagan Kilkenny Asphalt Ltd for a contract value of €740,000. (ex VAT)



*N78 Baun to Hennebrys Cross- Finished Pavement at Dunmore*

### **N24 Waterford – Cahir Road (West of Mooncoin)**

This project was completed during 2021 and consisted of approximately 0.75 km of pavement improvement overlay and other associated works. The project was completed by Roadstone Ltd for a contract value of approximately €200,000 (ex VAT).





*N24 West of Mooncoin. Renewed pavement, markings and signage.*

### **N10/N76 Kilkenny Ring Road Roundabouts**

A contract was tendered and awarded to Lagan Asphalt Ltd at the latter end of 2021 to improve skid resistance on the N10/76 Ring Road Roundabouts (8 no roundabouts) for a contract value of €1,598,780 (ex VAT). Works are expected to commence towards the end of Q1 2022.

### **Mechanical Abrasion**

A contract was tendered and awarded to Tracblast at the latter end of 2021 to undertake mechanical abrasion works at various locations on the N10, N24 & N78 for a contract value of €41,614. Works are expected to commence and conclude during Q1 2022.

### **National Road Capital Maintenance Works**

Works involving pavement reconstruction to the value of €126,270 (Ex Vat) were completed by Priority Construction Ltd on the N77 within Ballyragget Village during 2021.



*N77 Ballyragget- Works in progress on the reconstruction of failed pavement*

### **Local Improvement Scheme**

An amount of €778,682 was allocated under the Local Improvement Scheme (LIS) scheme for works on private roads and lanes throughout the County.

### **Fencing Retrofit on the National Road Network**

Kilkenny County Council spent just over €100,000 (Including VAT) during 2021 having received an initial allocation of €50,000 at the beginning of 2021. This provides for the replacement of old concrete post and rail fencing with passively safe fencing. The funding provided for the completion of works on the N25, N76 and N78.



*Typical Fencing Retrofit completed works on the N76*

### **Vehicle Restraint System Upgrade**

A contract was awarded during 2021 to Lagan Operations & Maintenance for the replacement of substandard and damaged sections of Vehicle Restraint Systems on the national road network. This work commenced in Q3 2021 and is expected to be completed during Q1 2022. The contract value was in excess of €600,000



*New section of VRS on the R723 (Former N25)*

## **NON- NATIONAL ROAD NETWORK**

### **Restoration Improvement and Restoration Maintenance Programme 2021**

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 €10.7m in 2021. Works under this funding Scheme are prioritised on a basis of providing for enhancements to the road condition rating, skid resistance and impermeability. In 2021, 85 Km were improved under this Scheme, with 105 km 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 zones prone to collision. 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. 15 schemes were completed under this programme to a value of €373,000 in 2021.

### **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 2021. 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 2021 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. The new national Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030 'Vision Zero' was launched at the end of 2021. A corresponding plan for Kilkenny County Council will be prepared in due course.

### **Public Lighting**

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

SSE Airtricity (now Enerveo) maintains the public lighting stock through a maintenance agreement with Kilkenny County Council. A new maintenance tender process was advanced during 2021 and the new maintenance agreement is due to commence in Q1 2022. This was a joint tender by Kilkenny and Carlow Local County Councils. The introduction of this new maintenance contract will generate further savings for both Local Authorities.

In addition, it is expected that the retrofitting under the new Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project (PLEEP) will commence on the ground in Q3 2022.

The energy supplier for public lighting stock is Energia but a new tender may be sought in this regard during early Q1 2022.

### **Kilkenny LED Replacement Programme Non-National Roads**

The replacement of the existing lanterns with new LED lanterns will be carried out as part of the overall Public Lighting Energy Enhancement Project (PLEEP). The PLEEP project is current in the tender process and it is anticipated that the works will commence in County Kilkenny in Q2 of 2022 with completion of the works in Q4 of 2022. Approx 5,200 (50%) lights in Kilkenny require upgrading.

### **Flood Relief Projects**

Kilkenny County Council saw a €29.6million investment in Flood Risk Management measures proposed across 6 schemes in the County, funded by the Governments Ten Year Programme of investment (2018-2028) and administrated by the OPW.

In 2021, two major Flood Relief Capital Projects are advancing through the Design Stage of the schemes for both the communities of Graiguenamanagh and Ballyhale. Both schemes will advance to Stage 2 in 2022, the Planning Phase. These schemes will provide a standard of protection to approximately 92 properties and will have a significant social and economic benefit to the effected communities of both Graiguenamanagh and Ballyhale.



# WATER SERVICES

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## Operation & Maintenance

Under Service Level Agreement with Irish Water, Kilkenny County Council manages:

- 19 public drinking water supplies
- 35 public waste water treatment schemes
- 9.59 billion litres of water (average 26.28 million litres/day) provided to approximately 67,500 customers.

In 2020, Kilkenny's Public Water Schemes achieved:

- 100% microbiological compliance.
- 99.65 % compliance for chemical parameters



*Water Quality Monitoring Station*

*Note: 2020 is the latest year for which the EPA has published its Drinking Water Quality Report. The 2021 report will be published in 2022.*

## Kilkenny City Drainage Area Plan

This project which involves the mapping and modelling of the existing sewer network in Kilkenny City has continued throughout 2021. Mapping & modelling will accurately record the foul & combined networks allowing an assessment of the capacity, condition and performance level of the sewer network.

Flow surveys and model build was completed during 2021 with model build verification commenced in Q4 2021 and is expected to be completed in Q3 2022. Stage 3 of the Drainage Area Plan Works consists of identifying maintenance works, network capacity issues and any upgrades required to the network.

Once complete this plan will help identify network maintenance and capacity issues leading to improved performances in the wastewater networks, better protection of the environment and will assist in facilitating social and economic development in Kilkenny City over the coming years.

## Kilkenny City Regional Water Supply Scheme

Construction commenced on the Kilkenny City RWSS in Q4 2021 with a 26-month construction programme envisaged.

The upgrade to the Kilkenny City Regional Water Supply Scheme consists of upgrading the existing Troyswood Water Treatment Plant to increase the daily production capacity from 8MLD (mega litres per day) to 19MLD, all ancillary works to facilitate the decommissioning of the existing water treatment plant in Radestown and to address shortcomings in water quality in the existing plant.

Upgrade works will include:

- Main new building comprising of chemical storage and dosing, high lift pump station, Control room, ESB substation.
- New Clarification & filter tanks.
- New UV treatment.
- New wash water treatment facilities including sludge dewatering building, sludge tanks, settlement tanks.
- Relocate the River Nore water abstraction point upstream of its current location.
- New intake works comprising of inlet structure with coarse screens, sediment settlement sump, fine screen chamber, pump sump, control building & rising main to the upgraded water treatment plant site.
- Construction of a 2.8km rising main to supply treated water from the upgraded Troyswood WTP to the existing reservoirs at the Radestown WTP.
- The new rising main will cross the river Nore at Loughmerans and will be carried out by no-dig techniques below the channel bed.
- Decommissioning of the existing intake at Troyswood.
- Decommissioning of the existing Radestown WTP and associated raw water abstraction works on the River Douglas and River Dinan.



*Compound setup including Safety, health and welfare facilities, offices, material storage and car parking*

### **Pressure Management**

Two pressure reducing valves (PRV's) were installed in November 2020 on the primary trunk mains feeding Kilkenny City from Troyswood and Radestown treatment plants. These remotely controlled hydraulically actuated PRV's replaced throttled valves which reduced pressures in the network in proportion to the flow through the valves, resulting in high pressures at night and reduced pressures at peak demand periods.

The generation of more stable pressures within the Kilkenny City network allowed for increased pressure management applications and had a direct effect on levels of leakage. Savings achieved from both PRV's to year-end 2021 was 1.065Ml/d with a 15% reduction in burst frequencies. The works improved the supply to many properties in the City in particular the Shellumsrath area.



*PRV installation at Radestown WTP*

### **Mains Rehabilitation Works**

- Jerpoint, Thomastown - installation completed on 450m of ageing 100mm Asbestos Watermain with 125mm HDPE watermain on the R448 along the site of Jerpoint Abbey.



*Construction of new HDPE water-main at Jerpoint Abbey*

- Detailed designs have been completed on mains rehab schemes at Knocktopher and Norelands respectively with commencement dates scheduled for Q1 2022.

### **Backyard Services**

- The Fatima Place mains rehab and backyard services project was completed in Q3 2021. Decommissioning of old main resulted in a reduction in leakage and improved pressure for the residents of Fatima place, Emmet Street and St. Teresa's Terrace.
- Lead replacement works completed at Fr Delahunty Place and Walkin Street, Kilkenny Q3 2021.
- Michael St, Kilkenny - Preliminary design submitted for mains rehab (196m) and backyard services (9) - scheduled for construction 2022
- St Fiacre's Place, Kilkenny - Preliminary design submitted for mains rehab (697m) and backyard services (909) - scheduled for construction 2022



### **Find & Fix**

The Find and Fix process continued through 2021 reducing leakage within the Bennettsbridge, Castlecomer, Thomastown, Inistioge, South Kilkenny, Piltown and Kilkenny City water supply zones.

### **First Fix**

Cold calling resumed in Q2 2021 after Covid-19 restrictions lifted. New regional contractor commenced FF works in Q3 2021 on Customer-Side-Leaks in Kilkenny where waivers were received by property owners. These works helps to improve supplies for all customers on the scheme and reduce wastage of water.

### **Kilkenny County Council Leak Reduction Performance**

A leakage reduction plan was issued in February 2021 setting out the plan for Irish Water and Kilkenny County Council to reduce leakage and demand to achieve a net reduction of 0.75ML/d in leakage in 2021. This reduction is the equivalent demand of supplying circa 2,100 housing units.

| Leakage Baseline<br>MLD | 2021 Target<br>Leakage MLD | 2021 Actual<br>Leakage MLD | Reported Leakage<br>on Target |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 11.80                   | 11.05                      | 10.24                      | YES                           |

Based on above data, leakage savings of 1.56MLD have been achieved in Kilkenny County for 2021, greater than the proposed target of 0.75MLD.

### **Disinfection and PH Correction Programme**

The Disinfection and PH programme was completed in 2021. This upgrade of works at Water Treatment Plants and reservoirs has delivered a standardisation of disinfection across the County. The programme has improved drinking water quality, by improving the disinfection system and standards, while ensuring compliance with all regulations. Source protection design proposals continuing at Gorteen and Jamestown Water Treatment Plants with works scheduled for Q2 2022.

### **Access to Heights and Edge Protection AHEP Scheme**

This scheme was undertaken in partnership with IW. Contractors were appointed to carry out works to address the risk associated with falling from heights and ensure the safety of personnel at designated Waste-Water and Water Sites in Kilkenny. Works on ladders, platform's, covers, handrail, fencing, security etc. Risk assessments have been submitted for 19 sites with works commencing in Q4 2021.



*New Access Platform with Handrail support at Paulstown WWTP*



## **Welfare Programme**

In conjunction with IW, Welfare Facilities to be provided at following Water Treatment Sites in Kilkenny:

- Loon WTP
- Ballyragget WTP
- Gowran WTP
- Bennettsbridge WTP
- Callan WTO

Civil Works commenced in 2021 with programme scheduled for completion in 2022.

## **Rural Water Programme**

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. There are 144 small Private Supplies (SPS), which typically include schools, food premises and rural housing estates.

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

- 195 Group Water Schemes in County Kilkenny.
- 125 are served from own sources.
- 70 are served from public mains.
- 51 Group Schemes were paid €439,528.26 Group Subsidies towards the operational running costs of Water Schemes.
- 194 grant applications were approved for the provision of wells to private houses.
- €504,977.51 was paid out in well grants.

In this challenging year (due to Covid 19 restrictions) some of the planned projects under the Rural Water Programme for 2021 did not commence but works to the value of €680,422 was paid by the Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government to Kilkenny County Council.

This work includes:

- €15,375 for Source Protection
- €324,306 for Treatment Upgrades and Rationalisation/ Amalgamation Projects
- €336,491 for mains replacements, water conservation and metering
- €4,250 on TIC of GWS by Irish Water.

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

Director of Services: Ms. Mary J. Mulholland

# HOUSING

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## 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 Authority, Voluntary Groups and Private Sector. The delivery of housing support is a client based service and requires close engagement with families and individuals. During 2021, the restrictions imposed by the Covid 19 Pandemic presented serious challenges to service delivery. With the support of the public and the dedication of our Housing Staff all essential services were maintained throughout 2021.

### Housing Capital Programme 2021

143 newly built homes and 8 refurbished units delivered in County Kilkenny under the Rebuilding Ireland housing delivery programme in 2021. This was the most significant delivery of newly built social housing in many years.

- **Glebeside, Donaguile, Castlecomer**, 33 units completed June 2021 –Kilkenny County Council (KCC) Direct Build. Designed by McGarry NiEanaigh Architects, Contractor: - Cleary Doyle Construction Ltd
- **Pairc Nua [The Broguemaker], Castlecomer Road, Kilkenny City**, 18 units completed June 2021 – KCC Direct Build, Designed by CJ Falconer and Associates, Contractor: - Nevin Construction
- **Station Avenue Phase 2, Ballyragget, Co Kilkenny**, 22 units completed June 2021 – KCC Direct Build, Designed by CJ Falconer and Associates, Contractor: - Thos. Kelly & Sons
- **Blackwater Grove, Lower Kilmacow, Co. Kilkenny**, 16 units completed April 2021 – KCC Turnkey Project, David Flynn Construction
- **Seville Rise, Margaret's Field, Callan Road, Kilkenny City**, 40 units completed January 2021 – Approved Housing Body (AHB) Turnkey – Respond Housing
- **Cois Na Bearu, Graignamanagh**, 14 units completed January 2021 – AHB Turnkey – Co-operative Housing
- **Ayrfield, Kilkenny City**, 8 units were delivered through refurbishment and reconfiguration of an existing apartment block, creating 4 fully wheelchair liveable units.

### Projects on Site - Due for completion in 2022

- 17 Units at Limegrove, Belmont, Ferrybank (Turnkey)
- 8 units at Pennefeather Court, Hebron Road, Kilkenny (Turnkey)
- 58 units at Pennefeather Green, Hebron Road, Kilkenny (Turnkey)
- 2 Units at Shanganny, Jenkinstown (KCC Direct Build)
- 23 Units at New Orchard, Kilkenny City (AHB Calf Turnkey – Cluid)
- 12 Units Brother Thomas Place, Church Lane (AHB CAS Direct Build – KVHA)
- 7 Fiennes Court, William St, Kilkenny City (AHB CAS Refurb – KVHA)
- 2 units at Kingsriver, Ennisnag (AHB CAS Refurb)
- 5 units at Grennan Villa, Thomastown (AHB – CAS)

### Units on site or due to start on site in 2022

- 25 Units at Ladywell, Thomastown (KCC direct build)
- 6 units at Golf Links Road, (Mulhalls Shop) Kilkenny (KCC direct build)
- 2 Units at Inchacarron, Mullinavat (KCC direct build)

- 2 Units at Old Fire Station, Graignamanagh (KCC direct build)
- 88 units (houses/apartments) and community facility at Crokers Hill, Kennyswell Road, Kilkenny (KCC direct build)
- 1 Accessible bungalow, Circular Road, Kilkenny (KCC direct build)
- 1 Accessible bungalow, Haggardsgreen, Callan (KCC direct build)

Glebeside, Donaguile, Castlecomer  
 33 units completed June 2021 – KCC Direct Build  
 Designed by McGarry NiEanaigh Architects  
 Contractor:- Cleary Doyle Construction Ltd



Pairc Nua [The Broguemaker], Castlecomer Road, Kilkenny City  
 18 units completed June 2021 – KCC Direct Build  
 Designed by CJ Falconer and Associates  
 Contractor:- Nevin Construction





Station Avenue Phase 2, Ballyragget, Co Kilkenny  
22 units completed June 2021 – KCC Direct Build  
Designed by CJ Falconer and Associates Contractor:- Thos. Kelly & Sons



Blackwater Grove, Lower Kilmacow, Co. Kilkenny  
16 units completed April 2021 – KCC Turnkey  
David Flynn Construction



Seville Rise, Margaret's Field, Callan Road, Kilkenny City  
40 units completed January 2021 – AHB Turnkey – Respond Housing



## Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) & Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS)

- 774 active HAP tenancies at December 31<sup>st</sup> 2021
- 151 new HAP tenancies set up in 2021
- 138 HAP tenants allocated Social Housing in 2021
- 87 Closed HAP Tenancies in 2021
- €5.8m spent on RAS accommodation
- 405 RAS units provided for social housing applicants

## Homeless Services 2021

Kilkenny County Council face significant challenges in dealing with people and families being made homeless. Lack of housing supply and increasing rents are resulting in people finding themselves in a homeless situation.

| HOMELESS SERVICES SUMMARY 2021                                         |     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| <b>Homeless Presentations</b>                                          | 370 |
| <b>Homeless Assessment Outcomes</b>                                    |     |
| Prevention & Interventions                                             | 193 |
| Emergency Service                                                      | 84  |
| Not eligible / Did not avail of service                                | 96  |
| <b>HAP Place Finder Service</b>                                        |     |
| No of Homeless HAP tenancies @ 1 <sup>st</sup> January 2021            | 70  |
| No of Homeless HAP tenancies created during year                       | 30  |
| No of Homeless HAP tenancies in place @ 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2021 | 100 |
| Number of Homeless HAP tenancy breakdowns                              | 1   |

## Housing List and Assessment of Needs

532 social housing applications were reviewed as part of the Summary of Social Housing Assessments 2021.

The gross Housing Demand at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021 was 1,619 and a comparative analysis with previous years is outlined below:

| Year          | Number on Housing List | Year          | Number on Housing List |
|---------------|------------------------|---------------|------------------------|
| December 2021 | 1,619                  | December 2015 | 2,744                  |
| December 2020 | 1,899                  | December 2014 | 2,456                  |
| December 2019 | 1,988                  | December 2013 | 2,144                  |
| December 2018 | 2,070                  | December 2012 | 3,688                  |
| December 2017 | 2,180                  | December 2011 | 3,118                  |
| December 2016 | 2,059                  | December 2010 | 2,876                  |

## Housing Allocations

406 tenancies were offers to approved Social Housing Applicants in 2021.

|                     | Kilkenny County Council | %   | Approved Housing Body | %   |
|---------------------|-------------------------|-----|-----------------------|-----|
| Allocations Offered | 284                     |     | 122                   |     |
| Offers Accepted     | 214                     | 75% | 91                    | 75% |
| Offers Refused      | 64                      | 3%  | 27                    | 22% |
| Decisions Pending   | 6                       | 2%  | 4                     | 3%  |

### Maintaining Housing Stock

5,974 calls were received requesting 7,251 repair items. Due to Covid 19 restrictions, housing maintenance works were limited to essential repairs. The safety of both tenants and staff during the year was paramount and where maintenance issues have been deferred they will be reviewed post Covid 19 restrictions.

26 properties were adapted and 1 property was extended as part of the Housing Adaptation Grant Scheme at a total cost of €175,934 with an allocation received from the Department of €144,340.

### Voids

61 properties were refurbished under the voids programme in 2021 to carry out works to vacant or void properties to bring them back into use as quickly as possible.

Grant of €718,186 was received by Kilkenny County Council.

### Energy Efficiency Retrofitting Programme

31 units were upgraded at a cost of €917,191 on Energy Retrofitting Programme was carried out in 2021.

Grant of €814,538 was received by Kilkenny County Council.

### Housing Loans & Tenant Purchase Scheme

During 2021, 5 Affordable Homes were sold under the Incremental Purchase Scheme at Hoban Park, Callan and a further twelve properties were sold under the Tenant Purchase Scheme.

|               |                                             |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------|
| 61.....       | Loan Applications Received                  |
| 22.....       | Loans Approved [ <i>Value €2.841,652m</i> ] |
| 21.....       | Loans Paid [ <i>Value €2,696,352m</i> ]     |
| €128,000..... | Average Loan Paid                           |

### Housing Private Grants

In 2021, there were Covid-19 challenges in relation to Housing Grants. The restrictions in place had an impact on the assessment of applications by Occupational Therapists. Desktop inspections were used by Housing Technical staff. Applicants experienced delays in contractors being able to carry out works and provide quotes.

| Grants Paid out up to 31st December 2021 |            |                   |
|------------------------------------------|------------|-------------------|
| Scheme                                   | No.        | Amount            |
| HGD - Housing Adaptation Grant           | 85         | €697,073          |
| MAG - Mobility Aid Grant                 | 25         | €106,548          |
| HOP - Housing Aid for Older Persons      | 124        | €705,460          |
| <b>Total</b>                             | <b>234</b> | <b>€1,509,081</b> |



## Private Rented Accommodation

The Covid-19 restrictions had an impact on the numbers of inspections carried out in 2021.

| PRIVATE RENTED INSPECTIONS 2021                  |       |
|--------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Target Inspections for 2021                      | 1,163 |
| Total Number of Inspections Carried out in 2021  | 437   |
| Total number of First Inspections                | 162   |
| Total number of Second Inspections               | 275   |
| Number of Final Inspections achieving compliance | 219   |
| Number of Improvement Notices issued             | 6     |
| Number of Prohibition Notices issued             | 1     |

## AGE FRIENDLY

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Kilkenny Age Friendly Alliance is a multi-agency voluntary partnership that works closely with older people in Kilkenny. The Alliance meets regularly throughout the year and is responsible for the development and implementation of Kilkenny's Age Friendly Strategy 2017-2022.

The Alliance is currently chaired by the Chief Executive of Kilkenny County Council, Ms. Colette Byrne. Membership of the Alliance represents a number of organisations such as HSE, Garda Síochána, Leader Partnership, Chamber of Commerce, Kilkenny Sports Partnership and Kilkenny Older People's Council.

### **Kilkenny County Council**

- Published online the Age Friendly Annual Report 2020.
- Grant applications for Town & Village Renewal grants for age friendly initiatives submitted by the Council.
- Progressing MacDonagh train station as an Age Friendly Train Station.
- 50 outdoor concerts took place at Nursing Homes around the County.
- Under the Keep Well Campaign age friendly collaborative activities included radio programmes called "The Tonic" and "My Home Place", digital support for older people in Nursing Homes and age friendly promotional material.
- Under the National Creative Initiative, the Design and Craft Council implemented a national programme for everyone to participate in various craft projects.
- Additional outdoor seating around the City and County.
- New Riverside Park in Kilkenny City which included age friendly seating.
- Age friendly housing delivered under the Housing Programme.

### **Kilkenny County Library Service**

- The successful door to door library service was extended to the over 65's.
- The Keep Well Campaign was supported with a range of initiatives including creative writing and poetry writing workshops, Ireland Reads Author Series and Dial a Story.
- Age Friendly Libraries Digital Ambassadors programme was launched where Library Staff trained to become digital mentors for older people.
- Library book stocks were increased to respond to demand.
- New initiatives introduced included the Grow it Forward campaign, gardening classes on line and the Eating Well programme.
- The portable Magic Tables from Castlecomer and Graigueenamanagh Libraries were offered to Nursing Homes for short term use.
- As part of Science Week 250 packs of hyacinth bulbs were given to Door to Door borrowers.
- The Library's Winter Programme of events was developed with the help of the ETB.

### **Kilkenny Recreation and Sports Partnership**

- Virtual 5k walk/run promoted.
- Keep Well Campaign includes 6-week programmes of chair-based activities delivered via zoom.
- 250 physical Activity Bags for older adults containing equipment and information leaflets to help people to get active were organised. The Civil Defence assembled and distributed the bags around the County.

- Staff and Tutors underwent Activity Pole training and this activity was offered to any community group interested.
- Programmes run during the year included, Ladies Let's Move, Couch to 3k, Men on the Move, Yoga for Men, Monday Night Walking and getting 1,000 people active including schools (Strava).
- Four sessions for Men on the Move (over 45's) were held on the track.
- Boccia sets were procured and free tutor led programmes for organisations, groups or settings were provided.

### **An Garda Siochána**

- Gardai continued to have contact with Voluntary Groups and helping people with delivering groceries, collecting prescriptions and providing assistance where needed due to Covid.
- Project Connect was established in areas around the County including Castlecomer, Johnswell, Ballyfoyle and Jenkinstown. This project targeted people with home support services but are otherwise on their own.
- Gardai supported The Lions Club in promoting "Message in a Bottle". This is a simple idea designed to encourage people to keep their personal and medical details in a standard form and in a common location in case of an emergency.
- Fraud Awareness Week was run from 15<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> March to make older people aware of the scams that are prevalent at the moment.
- Donated bicycles from Garda stores to the Men's Shed in Callan.

### **Kilkenny Older Persons Council (OPC)**

- The OPC worked with artist to design a cat as part of the Kilkenny Cat Sculpture Trail.
- Participated in the Keep Well Campaign, liaised with KCLR regarding radio programme called "The Tonic" which aired from January 2021 for 12 weeks.
- Made submissions to the draft City and County Development Plan on housing options for older people, designated car and bus parking spaces and the provision of public toilets.
- Helped with the roll out of the Age Friendly tablets and the allocating of tables to the chronic illness programme.
- Quarterly Newsletters circulated to all members on the OPC's database.
- Two members of OPC participated on the Housing Committee set up by Kilkenny County Council to look at policy documents on "Housing Options for Older People".
- OPC have representation on the National Transport Working Group.
- A subcommittee was established to map the developments within the Age Friendly Programme over the last 10 years. A booklet was produced together with videos and audio recordings.
- OPC carried out a survey on the availability of public toilets in the centre of Kilkenny City.
- AGM for the OPC scheduled to take place in November 2021 was postponed due to Covid.

### **Kilkenny Leader Partnership**

- Housing Aid project was wound down due to lack of referrals, rising costs, access to funding, and complexity of some jobs.
- Funding was approved for Paulstown walking track, Urlingford walk way, Crosspatrick community hall, Rosedale community garden, Pil River Park and new community shop/café in Muckalee.



- Supported a rural bike hire pilot project, with 6 hubs around the County where bikes and equipment can be hired enabling people to explore Kilkenny at their own pace.
- Provided training and support to the Men's Shed network.
- Worked with Lifelink Community group for an out of hours crisis café (safe haven) in Kilkenny. Funding was secured to produce videos promoting positive mental health.
- Supported the Thomastown School of Food for free online cookery classes.
- Liaised with Kilkenny County Council around the installation of 6 new bus shelters in rural Kilkenny.

### **Health Service Executive**

- Announced National Service Plan to provide more funding towards the delivery of care in the community or at home where ever possible. The aim is to keep people in their homes as long as possible by putting money into social and primary care and reduce hospital admissions and outpatients' appointments. Kilkenny/Carlow was a pilot area for the plan.
- Recruitment campaign for Home Supports ran during 2021 and 20 new Home Support Staff were appointed.
- All Home Support Staff were fully vaccinated and boosters given during the year.
- The Service Provider forums were held in February and November.
- A remembrance mass for those bereaved by Covid was held in Castlecomer Church on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> Dec at 7.30pm.

### **Kilkenny Chamber of Commerce**

- Continued to engage with the Age Friendly Business Initiative during 2021. Kilkenny is acknowledged nationally as one of the most successful locations for rolling out the concept.
- Supported and helped to promote the Chambers Ireland Excellence in Local Government Awards 2021 which included an Age Friendly category.

### **Kilkenny Carlow Education Training Board**

- Provided training for Acorn tablets to Tutors that were part of the working group that rolled out the tablets throughout the County.
- Offered courses to Nursing Homes.
- Worked with the HSE to provide training to the Wellbeing Digital Champions.
- Provided help with the use of technology to small groups/ individuals.
- Held courses on zoom, outside windows and face to face during the year.
- Civic Trust and Kilkenny County Council gave the opportunity to Community Education Groups – 3 of which are active retirement groups to showcase their Christmas Wreaths in Butler House.

### **Kilkenny Public Participation Network (PPN)**

- Worked collectively with OPC, HSE, ETB, FRC and Kilkenny County Council on the allocation, training and support for the roll out of the Acorn tablets.
- Rolled out a series of Mindfulness workshops every Tuesday evening in February facilitated by Mindful Ireland.
- Developed and published a guidance document on "How to use Social Media".
- Selected as part of a pilot programme by the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications to host a Climate Action Conversation.

## COMMUNITY

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### **Community Call & Community Forum**

The Community Forum continued to meet in 2021 up to November as part of the Government's response to COVID-19. Following receipt of national advice and the reopening of the economy in October, the Community Forum and the Community Call was stepped down, although the helpline continued and was integrated into the normal Council services.

### **Keep Well Campaign**

The "Keep Well" campaign was delivered in the first half of 2021 as part of the Government's Resilience and Recovery 2020-2021 Plan for Living with COVID-19. Some of the initiatives delivered included a radio show entitled "The Tonic" aimed at the elderly population, purchase of tablets to promote digital support for older people in nursing homes, "rewarding reads" campaign by the Library Service, creative writing workshops and Dial a Story.

### **Creative Ireland**

Kilkenny County Council received €191,861 funding under Creative Ireland in 2021 to deliver the Creative Ireland Programme in County Kilkenny. Actions under the programme included a grant scheme, projects supporting creativity in older people and Cruinniú na nÓg.

### **Volunteer Centre for Kilkenny**

A new Manager was appointed to the Volunteer Centre in Kilkenny in January 2021. The Volunteer Centre covers the County Kilkenny area. Kilkenny Volunteer Centre is a registered charity, forming part of a network of 29 Volunteer Centres from across the country and affiliated to Volunteer Ireland. The service is a one stop shop for all the volunteering needs of the County.

For people who wish to volunteer or for organisations and groups who are seeking the help of volunteers, Kilkenny Volunteer Centre can help them find a suitable volunteering opportunity in their locality by providing a free matching service between volunteers and organisations.

### **Kilkenny Public Participation Network (PPN)**

The Council continues to support and resource the Kilkenny PPN by providing funds to employ staff and office accommodation.

### **Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF)**

The Council received funding of €2,562,291 for a public library and community facilities in Thomastown in 2021. Projects carried out under this fund were completed at the Fair Green and Motte Field in Callan and also at Lowe/Logan Street in Thomastown. An application was submitted for the design and planning phase of the Friary Complex in Callan to include new library, remote working hub and community theatre.

### **Town & Village Renewal Scheme 2021**

Kilkenny County Council received funding of €574,326 for 5 applications under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme for projects in Freshford, Thomastown, Stoneyford, Hugginstown and Kilmacow.

A further 7 applications were submitted under the standard Town & Village Scheme for projects at Piltown, Gowran, Callan, Johnstown, Urlingford, Graiguenamanagh and Kilmanagh. The Council completed projects at Slieverue, The Rower and Thomastown. Health Checks were carried out for Castlecomer, Thomastown, Urlingford/Johnstown, Goresbridge and Mullinavat.



*Thomastown Recreational/Park Amenity ( Before & After) – Town & Village Renewal*

### **Town Team Plans**

In 2021, Kilkenny County Council in conjunction with Turley's consulted with the local communities and developed Town Plans for six towns and villages - Castlecomer, Urlingford, Johnstown, Goresbridge, Thomastown, and Mullinavat. Town Teams have been set up in each location to shape and take forward these plans.

### **Town Centre Masterplan Initiative**

Kilkenny secured funding of €100,000 for the preparation of a town centre masterplan for Urlingford. This funding was received from the Department of Rural & Community Development as part of the Town Centre First Policy.

### **Streetscape Enhancement Scheme 2021.**

This once-off scheme was announced in August by the Minister for Rural and Community Development. The Council received 61 applications for funding under the scheme from the towns involved – Castlecomer, Goresbridge, Mullinavat, Thomastown and Urlingford. Grants were awarded totalling €130,414.



## **Community and Cultural Facilities Capital Scheme (CCFCS) 2021**

CCFCS Grants were awarded to seven groups across the County in 2021.

- Paulstown Development Association €40,000 – Upgrade to Community Hall
- Muckalee Community Centre €40,000 – Community shop and cafe
- Graigue/Ballycallan GAA €35,000 – Community walkway
- Highview Athletic €30,000 – Community walkway
- Bennettsbridge GAA €40,000 – Clubhouse development
- Mullinavat GAA €40,000 – Community walkway
- Kells Handball Club €25,000 – Redevelopment of Handball Court



*Development of the Graigue Ballycallan GAA Amenity under the 2021 CCFCS*

## **Kilkenny Migrant Integration Strategy/Kilkenny Integration Forum**

Kilkenny County Council continues to support the implementation of actions as outlined in the Kilkenny Migrant Integration Strategy for 2021-2023. This work is undertaken in partnership with the Kilkenny PPN and Kilkenny LEADER Partnership Company as well as with migrants engaged in the process.

## **Kilkenny County Council Migrant-Councillor Forum**

Kilkenny County Council has been successful in receiving funding from the LGMA to support the establishment of a Migrant-Councillor Forum. The programme involves workshops for engagement, education and empowerment that aims to increase diversity and inclusion in local decision making and will continue into 2022.

## **Kilkenny Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)**

Kilkenny County Council continues to support the LCDC. The LCDC continued to meet virtually in 2021 (6 meetings) due to public health restrictions. The LCDC successfully administered the Community Enhancement Programme Grants, Social Enterprise Grants, The Healthy Ireland Programme and maintained its oversight role of the Kilkenny SICAP Programme. The LCDC administers and monitors a variety of funding streams for communities that experience social exclusion or disadvantage.

## **Community Enhancement Programme Funding (CEP)**

A second round of funding under the COVID-19 Emergency Fund was advertised in January 2021 with a focus on supporting communities to adapt their facilities to fit the new COVID-19 reality and also to become more involved in the Government's "Keep Well" campaign. LCDC received an allocation of €46,621. LCDC awarded 30 grants under this round. In May, €136,319 was awarded under the CEP.

The focus on this round was to provide grants towards projects or equipment enhancing facilities (*similar to previous years*) and one-off grants towards costs associated with reopening of a facility or the sustainability of a facility. Under this round, small grants were available for up to €3,000 or medium grants up to €10,000. In total, 43 grants were awarded to community groups.

In November 2021, the Department of Rural and Community Development announced the Community Activities Fund under the Community Enhancement Programme. LCDC received an allocation of €272,638. This fund is to support groups, particularly in disadvantaged areas with non-pay running costs/operating costs and also to carry out necessary repairs/improvements to their facilities. This Scheme is to be advertised and processed in early 2022.

### **Social Enterprise Grants**

LCDC was allocated €26,544 by the Department of Rural and Community Development. The Scheme was limited to Social Enterprises and aimed at providing funding for the purchase of equipment or the carrying out of repairs or refurbishments to enable social enterprises to improve service delivery. Applications under the scheme were assessed by the LCDC and a recommendation was forwarded to the Department for approval. Eight grants were approved by the Department.

### **Healthy Ireland**

The Department of Health and Pobal have continued to support the third round of funding for the Healthy Ireland Fund (HIF) which is currently extended to March 2022. The aim of this funding is to support local and national organisations to deliver actions that will improve health and wellbeing in line with *Healthy Ireland, A Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2013-2025* and the local [Healthy Kilkenny Community Plan](#). The final Healthy Ireland (July 2019-March 2022) approved budget for the LCDC is €291,311 (HI Fund €229,761 and Community Mental Health Fund €61,550). The Healthy Ireland Round 3 actions progressed in 2021. LCDC received updates and presentations on the progress of actions from the Healthy Kilkenny Coordinator and the implementing partners

### **Healthy Kilkenny Actions 2021**

The Healthy Kilkenny Community Engagement Programme supported engagement with one-parent families, individuals living with disabilities, Victims of Domestic Abuse and young & older adults who are isolated as a consequence of the COVID-19 Pandemic. The Community Engagement programme has enabled the LCDC and the Healthy Kilkenny Committee to support and engage with those who experience health inequalities.

As part of the Healthy Inclusive Communities Action, Kilkenny Recreational Sports Partnership continued to deliver Physical Activity programmes, targeting the hard to reach communities of Castlecomer, Urlingford, Callan and Kilkenny City. Workhouse Union worked in collaboration with LCDC to inform the Kilkenny Transport Plan and the Kilkenny Development Plan, on understanding needs, experiences and barriers to mobility (walking, cycling, public transport) and public space in Kilkenny City with under-represented groups including people living with disabilities. This action also included collaboration with Kilkenny County Council and the HSE to consult with young people on creating a vision for the Lacken Masterplan.

**Kilkenny One-Parent Families:** The Community Engagement Facilitator implemented actions from the LCDC Lone Parents Needs Analysis 'Voice and Visibility'. These actions included; Advocacy and capacity building amongst one-parent families who were interested in volunteering to be part of the Peer Network. This process focused on developing relationships within the group and explored a peer support model. The work also involved awareness-raising activities, developing signposting resources and social & information hubs.

The **Regional Action** progressed with the delivery of two Healthy Food Made Easy programmes in Kilkenny and Five online Adult Resilience Training was delivered across the region.

The **Social Prescribing** Pilot has progressed in Kilkenny City & County in 2021. This Service has proved to be an essential support for individuals seeking to improve their health and wellbeing, reduce loneliness and isolation and empower individuals to engage in their community and link in with local supports.

The **Community Mental Health Small Grants** projects progressed throughout the year with the completion of mental health projects from five of the 8 community groups/agencies. The remaining three will be completed by March 2022.

### **Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP)**

LCDC continues its management of the contract for the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) valued at €650,090. The 2021 Plan supported approximately 32 community groups in areas of disadvantage in the County. The SICAP programme also supported 482 individuals into education, employment or enterprises.

### **Kilkenny Traveller Interagency Group (KTIG)**

KTIG membership undertook a Needs Analysis Profile and 2-year Action Plan with the Traveller Community in Kilkenny. The Kilkenny Traveller Community Movement was awarded funding under the new 3-year pilot Community Development Programme announced by Mr. Joe O'Brien T.D., Minister of State for Community Development and Charities.

### **Callan Town Improvement Plan**

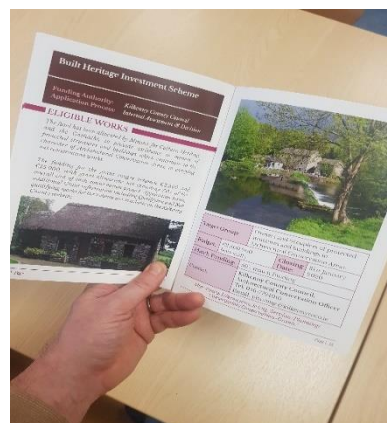
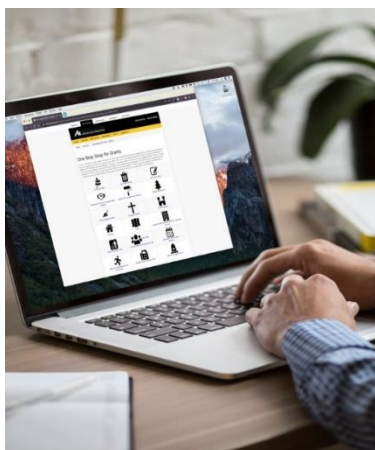
80% of projects/actions have been completed from the Callan Town Improvement Plan in 2021.

### **Community Grants Booklet**

The fourth Community Grants information booklet was produced by the Council and launched early 2021. This interactive document was also available on-line.

### **Phase 4 - ONE STOP SHOP**

Phase 4 of the online ONE STOP SHOP for funding was developed. This online portal is designed to make the Kilkenny Grants Booklet more accessible to the general public.





## Community CCTV Scheme

The Urlingford CCTV community scheme was implemented in 2021 and is now operational.

## Kilkenny Recreation & Sports Partnership (KRSP)

In 2021, consultations were completed with key stakeholders for the new KRSP Strategy 2022-2025.

## Estate Management Grants

The Estate Management grant is available to resident's groups/community committees who represent Kilkenny County Council Social Housing Estates. In 2021 a total of 43 applications were received under this scheme. This is the first-year online applications were received. A total of approx. €38,000 was recommended and paid to Residents Associations.

## Pride of Place 2021

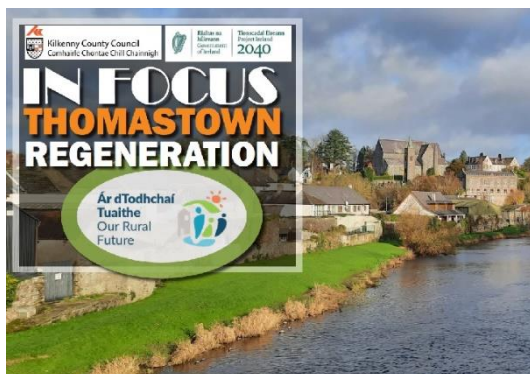
In 2021, three local projects were nominated by Kilkenny County Council to represent Kilkenny in the National Pride of Place Awards, Ireland's largest community awards event. Dubbed the 'Oscars of the Community Sector' the Pride of Place awards is an annual competition organised by Co-operation Ireland and sponsored by IPB Insurance. It promotes and celebrates the best in community development and recognises the selfless efforts of people in making their local area a better place to live, work and socialise. The projects representing Kilkenny include the Kilkenny Older Person's Council Laptop initiative, Windgap Village and KCAT in Callan. Judging for the Kilkenny entries took place in September 2021, the 2021 awards ceremony have been postponed due to the pandemic.

## Community Events Grants Scheme

6 applications were received and these applications were funded totalling €8,100. Scheme was re-advertised in November. Eight applications were received with recommendation to approve all applications to a total value of €8,070.

## Community Information e-newsletter (IN FOCUS - District Town e-magazines)

Three Community IN FOCUS information newsletters were published in 2021. These e-newsletters focused on Town and Village and Rural Regeneration projects completed and underway throughout the County Kilkenny. These newsletters inform the public on community related information including, funding, project updates and future projects planned.





### **Comhairle na nÓg**

Comhairle na nÓg prioritised in 2021 Youth Mental Health & Climate Justice as the key issues facing young people in Kilkenny. The work resulted in the development of a peer led toolkit called **Compass** under the Youth Mental Health Programme.

The 2021 AGM was held virtually on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> November, 2021 and was very successful. 62 second level students attended from 12 secondary schools and community-based organisations across Kilkenny. A number of staff from Foroige, Kilkenny County Council and CYPSC facilitated workshops on the day in relation to Youth Mental Health and Climate Justice. Bernadette Moloney, Environment Protection Officer gave some valuable insight into the workshop on Climate Justice. Each young person who attended the AGM received a gift bag with our Compass module, stress balls, reusable water bottle and Comhairle pens.

### **Children and Young Peoples Services Committee (CYPSC)**

The CYPSC provides an interagency forum at which service providers for children and young people's services meet to ensure the best services for children and young people in the County.

The inter-agency committee drew up its first 3-year Children and Young People's plan for County Kilkenny in 2020. The strategy targets children and young people 0-24 years and is being implemented by sub-groups of staff in front line service such as mental health, physical activity, learning and development, safety from harm etc.

The CYPSC has been involved in interagency initiatives throughout the County such as:

- Mental Health Referral Pathways poster
- Lone Parents Group Social Event
- Literacy Programme in Afterschool Service
- Research on Resilience Programmes for young people in the County
- Development of an Oral Language support programme
- Theatre programme for babies

It has received funding from Healthy Ireland and has rolled out a family-based healthy nutrition and physical exercise programme (Healthy Streets) in Castlecomer, Graiguenamanagh and Newpark Close, Kilkenny City. It has also brought together FRCs and youth organisations to develop programmes to address mental health issues for children and young people throughout the County.

It has worked with Kilkenny County Council to provide Sensory Play Packs for children with disabilities on National Play day. It has worked with Healthy Kilkenny to set up a Domestic Abuse action network and funded a relationship programme being delivered by Amber refuge and KASA Rape crisis service.

### **CLÁR**

In 2021, Kilkenny County Council received €57,300 funding for two projects under this national funding stream:

Kilmaganny:- €42,300 to complete junction, footpath & pedestrian crossing improvement works in Kilmaganny Village along with associated road markings.

Kilmanagh:- €15,000 to provide driver feedback signs in the village of Kilmanagh

### **Capital Play & Recreation Grants**

Funding of €15,620 was awarded by Department of Children and Youth Affairs towards the provision of Zipline and Sand diggers in Kells playground.

### **Bike Week**

Bike week was held from 12<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> September, 2021 whilst adhering to Covid restrictions. Highlights of Bike Week 2021 included an inaugural Slow Roll through Kilkenny City, the introduction of Cycle Right training for adults and the provision of Bike Maintenance workshops to communities of Kilkenny City, Stoneyford and Kilmacow. Opportunities to trial E-Bikes was offered overcoming barriers for those with reduced mobility to travel greater distances. The trial of Cargo Bikes allowed those with younger families to swap the car for cargo bikes. An extensive schools programme was co-ordinated with the Safe Routes to School initiative, offering escorted trips to students to explore routes to school and providing Cycle Right training in schools. Bike Week funding allowed for the delivery of Learn to Cycle programmes for people with intellectual and physical disabilities. Workplace roadshows were offered to encourage employers to support employees to make the shift to commuting by bike.

### **National Play Day**

€3,000 funding was allocated for a National Play Day. Play Days were organised by Newpark Family Resource Centre and Mill Family Resource Centre, Urlingford. Due to the restrictions and in consultation with CYPSC, sensory gift bags were assembled with suitable sensory toys and distributed to 42 families (throughout the County) for children with disabilities. Special thanks to CYPSC, Tusla, HSE and Kilkenny Civil Defence who distributed the gift bags. This initiative was very well received by the families involved. There was no national recreation week in 2021.

### **Youth Work and Support**

Kilkenny County Council continues to support the work of youth development throughout the County through:

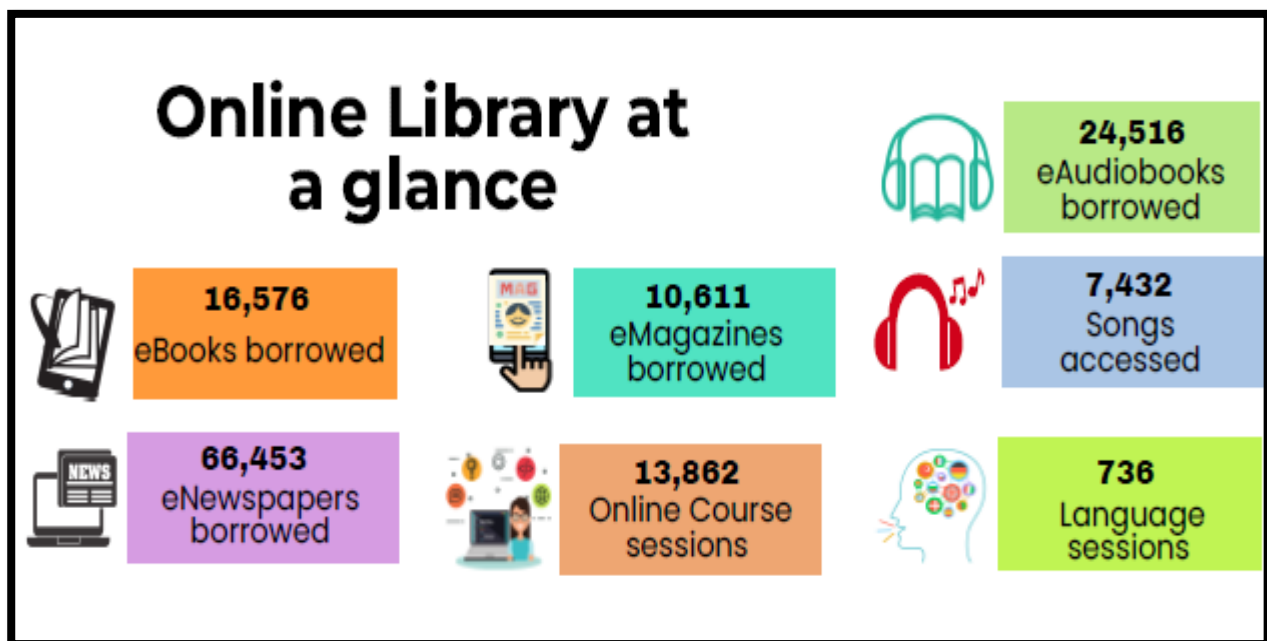
- Young Social Innovator Programmes for 15-18 years old, focusing on innovation around social issues affecting young people.
- Ossory Youth – Support for delivery of programmes and funding of same
- DRUM Youth Café – Joint funding partner with TUSLA for the DRUM youth café based at MacDonagh Junction.



# LIBRARY SERVICES

## Notable Achievements

- 32% increase in membership this year.
- 177,220 books, eBooks and eAudiobooks were borrowed throughout the year.
- 6,968 books were delivered to 1,377 readers across the county as part of our Door to Door delivery service.
- 13,000 Bookville Activity Books distributed to all 88 primary schools across Kilkenny as part of our annual Bookville Kilkenny Festival.
- 85,847 video views across our social media and YouTube platforms.



## Keep Well Campaign

### Switching off and Being Creative



**Programmes:**

- Ireland Reads
- Rewarding Reads
- Sending A Smile

### Staying Connected



**Door to Door Service**

**Dial -a- Story**

### GIY: Grow It Forward



**830 Growing Kits** were distributed

## National Initiatives

- **Right to Read:** All strands of Right to Read proved extremely popular this year – we ran a host of storytimes, online workshops and events for Spring into Storytime, Summer Stars, Children’s Book Festival and Family Time at Your Library.

**Ireland Reads:** Our new national day of reading was held on 25<sup>th</sup> February, and we ran a series of talks and workshops for all ages, with over 3,000 views of our online events.

**Little Library Bag:** We engaged with 90 Early Learning Centres and childminders as part of this project, giving out 1,380 books to encourage a love of reading and books from an early age.



- **Work Matters:** We collaborated with Kilkenny Carlow ETB to run a series of online webinars for jobseekers and businesses on interview skills and using social media and other platforms to promote business, whilst profiling a new local business to share the challenges and avenues they found helpful.

- **Healthy Ireland At Your Library:** We ran a series of online talks throughout the year on a range of topics such as: Raising Resilient Children with Dr. Mary O'Kane, Coping with Neuro-diverse diagnosis with Fiona Hall, and partnered with Health Kilkenny coordinator on a Healthy Food Made Easy cookery course. We also developed a musical recording entitled “Those were the days’, celebrating classic sing-along- songs with a bit of fun and comedy thrown in! This was run online and also sent to each nursing home in Kilkenny in December.

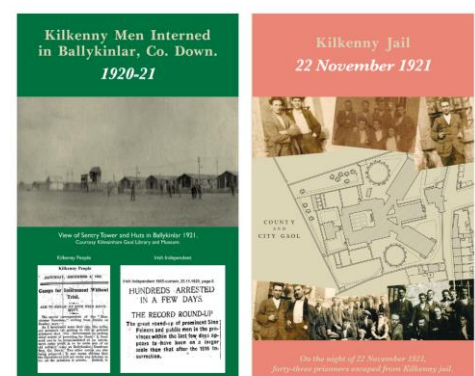


- **Age Friendly Programme:** Age Friendly Digital Ambassadors Programme offered one-to-one remote training in use of our online library platforms. We celebrated Bealtaine with an online series of flower arranging, planting, decluttering your home workshops, and a webinar on coping with grief. Our mobile magic tables are being loaned to nursing homes in Kilkenny for use and are proving very popular.
- **Decade of Centenaries:** We engaged a local historian and a local author to develop a series of 13 podcasts on 1921 themes, and commissioned two publications covering significant local events on The Kilkenny Jail Break and Ballykinlar Internments.

- **Creative Ireland:**

**Bookville Kilkenny:** We developed and delivered 13,000 activity books to primary schools in Kilkenny and ran 15 online workshops for families and children. Every child in primary schools in Kilkenny received a book, making the festival fully accessible.

**Slí na Scéalta:** We received funding to develop an outdoor Story trail which will be launched in early 2022 in Woodstock, Inistioge.





*Gaelscoil Osraí students enjoying Bookville  
Students enjoying Science Week Escape Room / ASD packs delivered to units across Kilkenny*

### **Programming and Events**

**Sensory Resources:** Our sensory collection was expanded to include 150 toys and 300 books, social stories for each library and sensory boxes for use in the branches. The new collection is based centrally allowing easier access for all. As part of our Encouraging Minds Literacy Project, Staff and students at 18 ASD and language units all over Kilkenny received specialist motor skills resources and sensory books in March.



*Sensory Toy and Book Launch in Ferrybank Library*

**Virtual Book Club:** Our Virtual Book continued to thrive this year, offering a 24/7 space to discuss and recommend books with over 100 other members.

**OWL:** Our Oral Language literacy programme focused on developing the oral language skills of 0-3 year olds, by helping support parents, childcare practitioners and teachers to ensure a good oral language base from an early age. These short online workshops were developed by a Speech and Language Therapist, Behavioural Specialist and Storyteller Neil Griffiths. These proved extremely popular amongst parents and childcare workers.





We actively collaborated and partnered with a range of organisations, agencies and community groups such as Kilkenny Carlow ETB, Kilkenny Education Centre, Kilkenny Childcare Committee, Healthy Kilkenny, Music Generation, HSE, and Calmast. We participated in national and local festivals such as Kilkenny Day, Seachtain Na Gaeilge, National Poetry Day, Decade of Centenaries, Bealtaine, Heritage week and Science week.



Mobile Library on Kilkenny Day



Staff Storytime at Thomastown Creche and Montessori



Ferrybank Readers completed Summer Stars



Mobile Library on Kilkenny Day

## Information and Communication

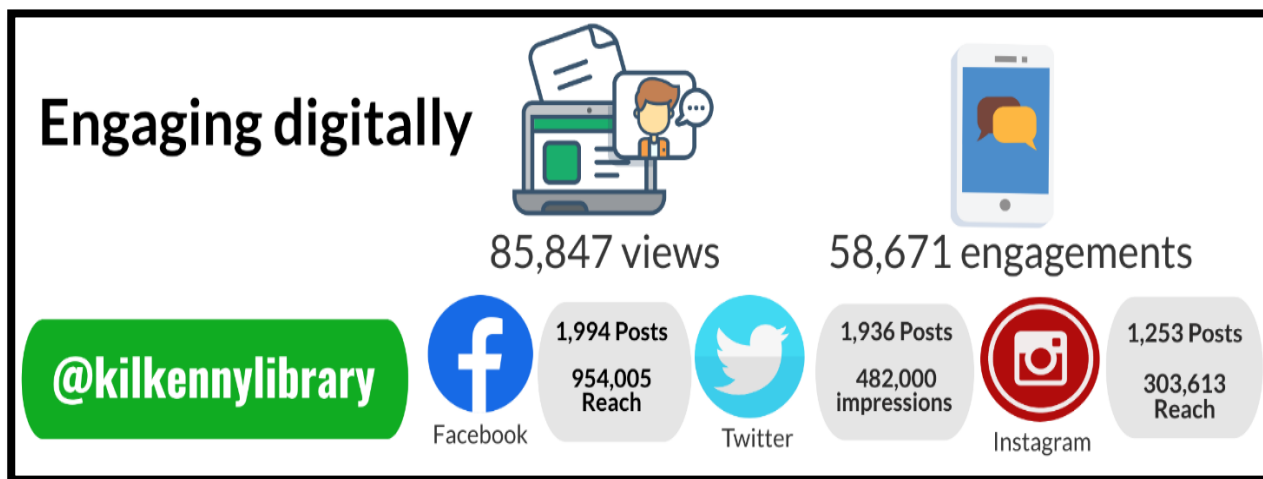
We engaged in various platforms and media to engage people with our services, facilities and events. We had 85,847 video views across our social media and YouTube platforms.

Eduroam (education roaming) is a wifi service which enables 3<sup>rd</sup> level students, researchers and staff from participating institutions to securely access the internet at their college/university remotely. This has been installed in Callan, Thomastown and Ferrybank Libraries.

Capacity Management Systems were installed to ensure safe management of numbers visiting our libraries.

C-Pens were purchased for each library and 4 accessible PC monitors were purchased through grant funding.

Coding Licences were purchased for children aged 6-14+ to improve digital literacy amongst young people in Kilkenny.



## Reading Supports

**Schools Services:** Our school services were further expanded this year, with a dedicated section added to our website, offering access to widely relevant resources. We invested in and developed brochures for our class novel collection, sensory book collection, sensory book and toy collections, and Aistear collection. A teacher's resource pack was developed and will be distributed in 2022. Monthly interactive mailings were sent to schools with storytimes and crafts for children of all ages.

**Mobile Library Service:** Our mobile service routes were evaluated using evidence-based methods, and changes put in place to best serve our rural communities. Additional nursing homes, schools and Early Learning Centres were added, and a number of community stops were transferred to our Door to Door service. Our mobile van was also part of Kilkenny Day celebrations.



Presentation Convent Castlecomer visited to show



St. Aidan's NS Kilkmanagh were delighted to get some new books from the mobile library

## Income

We successfully applied and were awarded €91,335.49 from a range of funding sources including Dormant Accounts Fund, Decade of Centenaries, ETB, Small Scale Capital Fund, Creative Ireland and Healthy Ireland.

## Service Development and Infrastructure



- Commencement of capital project in Mayfair Library in November 2021
- Progressed capital project in Thomastown to design stage
- Replacement of roof in Graiguenamanagh Library
- Revamp of internal space in Castlecomer to ensure accessibility

### Workforce

Kilkenny Library Service continues to proactively upskill and train staff in relevant areas to enhance the service we provide to our diverse community. Specialised Library training courses were completed by a large number of staff, with 2 staff currently training for a professional qualification in Librarianship. Progress also continued on our workforce plan.



# ARTS

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The Arts Office develops, co-ordinates, motivates, inspires and empower artistic activity throughout the City and County. It promotes the arts as a worthwhile activity for all and work 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. The Arts Officer also supports the facilitation and coordination of the Arts Office Creative Ireland Kilkenny Programme.

## **Notable Achievements in 2021**

- 41,477 people engaged with the Arts Office programmes in 2021
- Thirty-three bursaries and ten mentoring opportunities were awarded in 2021
- In excess of €9,000 was raised for local charities through two particular programmes this year.
- Many areas flourished this year including community programming, through the Knitted Together Project .

## **NEW DEVELOPMENTS**

**Creative Writing & Visual Arts School Arts Bursary Spring & Autumn 2021** – 8 secondary schools availed of this bursary in the Spring and Autumn with €12,300 distributed to the schools.

**Digital Upskilling workshops** – seven-week online sessions for all art practitioners in April/May 2021. Topics covered included how to create quality images + film using your mobile phone, how to edit, add text and sound to videos, how to produce stop-motion animations, broadcast and how to broadcast/host events using Facebook Live and Zoom, all skills that art practitioners might not have been familiar with pre-COVID.

## **LITERATURE**

**Kilkenny Poetry Broadsheet** - edited by Jessica Traynor and illustrated by Carol Ann Treacy. 98 poems submitted with 12 chosen for publication and uploaded to the Poetry Phone and the Arts Office blog <http://kilkennyartsoffice.ie/kilkenny-poetry-broadsheet-2021-publication/>

**Annual Writing Workshops for adults** – five-week short story online workshops in March 2021 and a one-day online summer masterclass during July. Poet and tutor, Emmaleene Leahy, facilitated both programmes.

**Mentoring** – 9 writers were mentored through the 2021 programme.

## **Your Voice Matters**

The Arts Office focuses on ensuring a balanced approach to the development of various programmes and activities across the City and County. The Arts Office designed a series of workshops, activities and explorations to ensure that the voice of the writer remains at the core of the programme planning.

**Poetry phone** - over 600 people engaged with Poetry Phone this year and the freephone service continues to deliver solace, joy and pleasure to all who choose to call.

**Community, Education and Inclusion** – The design and delivery of high-quality community and education programmes were delivered to suit this diverse sector.

**Open Circle Community Arts Collective** – despite the restrictions Open Circle hosted a number of very successful activities for 2021. These included a series of online writing workshops, drawing and weaving in Rothe House and Gardens and two wonderful full day outdoor sessions based around drawing, making and working in nature.

**Bookville Children's Festival** - Bookville Festival in a Book with 15 videos online for create and craft. Over 13,000 books delivered to Kilkenny Primary schools.

**Knitted Together** – 230 volunteers – 90 blankets distributed to 7 charity shops. Over €3,500 was raised for local charity shops who needed support after such a challenging 18 months

**Culture Night** – National event promoting culture in all its guises. The programme included World Music Night, Irish Music, Song, Dance and Storytelling and craft. 3,149 people attended Kilkenny events both online and offline.

### **Kilkenny Skate Park**

The Arts Office worked with the skateboarders throughout the summer in order to engage them in the process of enhancing the Skate Park by getting it painted by a professional artist. The young people worked with the Arts Officer to develop the design brief and to select the artist ensuring their ownership and connection to the outcome.

The painting of the Park was completed in line with original schedule and it has made an enormous difference to the aesthetic of the Park and feedback to date has been extremely positive. A video of the process was also produced which is a great record of a collaboration between the skateboarders and Kilkenny County Council. This is on the Youtube channel

### **Artists Supports**

**Arts Act Grants 2021:** 13 grants awarded totalling €13,194 for short films, poetry publication, music composition, new body of sculptural work, Masters Degree in Performance Science, community workshops, drama development and online music festival

**Bursaries:** 8 awarded for the Tyrone Guthrie Centre and The Rivermill (15 weeks in total)

**ArtLinks:** CPD partnership programme between Kilkenny, Carlow, Waterford and Wexford County Councils. 11 bursaries awarded totalling €14,000 for mentorship, printmaking, new scripts, tuition, research and development of new work, develop new manuscripts, development of curatorial practice and recording/launch of new album. A number of practitioners across the region were supported by our social media platforms.

**Wednesday Weeklies:** A second series of online meetings aimed at artists and other creatives in Kilkenny to explore ideas around dealing with the ongoing Covid19 restrictions which were having a major impact on artists and led by experienced practitioners. 224 artists and creatives attended these events.

Emerging Curator in Residence enabling emerging curators to gain direct experience in their field and supporting emerging artists. The 2021 curator in residence Aoife Banks hosted 3 exhibitions – *Shiftings* in July/August, *Prima Materia* in September/October and the final exhibition *I Never Promised You a Dystopia*, a virtual group exhibition, in December 2021.

## Partnership with KCLR – the Gallery Arts Show

*The Gallery Arts* radio show was aired for twelve weeks between March and June. The show was funded through the Creative Ireland programme and was a collaboration between the Arts Offices at Kilkenny and Carlow County Councils and KCLR. *The Gallery* was not just pitched at people making money from their art. It explored the intrinsic role of art within the community providing interesting and engaging content for a broad range of listeners. In December, the Arts Office hosted three further special episodes of *The Gallery*. All three episodes were devoted to books and writing and the content was inspired by the Arts Offices *Your Voice Matters* project. This project saw us work with Kilkenny writers to gather feedback on their needs and aspirations, ensuring that the voice of the writer remains at the core of our future programmes. The show aired after the 6pm news until 7pm and can be listened back to on <https://kclr96fm.com/the-gallery-on-books-and-writing-22nd-dec/>

## LOCAL LIVE PERFORMANCES

September Sounds - Local emerging and professional musicians took to stages at three fantastic venues over the weekend of September 24<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup>. The sounds of classical, jazz, pop, rock, indie, folk and traditional music took place in Woodstock Gardens, Ballykeefe Amphitheatre and the Watergate Theatre. The funding to make all this happen came from the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media and was delivered locally by Kilkenny County Council's Arts Office and the Watergate Theatre. This was a real opportunity for the Council to support the breadth of this important industry, i.e. the performers, but also their crew, the caterers, project and event managers, designers, marketing experts, health and safety personnel, etc all of whom were local to Kilkenny.



*World Renowned Violinist, Patrick Rafter,  
performed at Woodstock Gardens as part of September Sounds Series.*





**December Sounds:** The Local Live Performance scheme further enabled the Council to provide work across the music and performance industry and to provide a diverse wealth of music and entertainment for the people of Kilkenny during the month of December. This was delivered through Yulefest on the bandstand on the Parade; December Sounds in St. Canice's Cathedral and a concert series in ten of Kilkenny's nursing homes bringing music and joy to the nursing home residents and staff the week before Christmas



*Bird on the Wire perform at St. Canice's Cathedral during December Sounds Series.*



# HERITAGE

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The Heritage Office delivered a comprehensive programme of projects, grants and initiatives in 2021. The projects were co-funded by Kilkenny County Council and a wide range of partners including the Heritage Council, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (National Parks and Wildlife Service, National Monuments Service), Creative Ireland, and Commemorations Unit of Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media.

## NOTABLE PROJECTS & AWARDS

### **“The History Fix” radio show wins Silver IMRO Award**

The History Fix radio series about Kilkenny’s history and heritage won Silver at the IMRO Radio Awards 2021. The series is a collaboration between KCLR and Kilkenny County Council and was funded under the Kilkenny Creative Ireland Programme. <https://kclr96fm.com/the-history-fix/>

### **Farming with Barn Owls film on RTE’s *Ear to the Ground***

A short film featuring Kilkenny farmer Nicky Murphy was produced for the Heritage Office by Birdwatch Ireland and featured on RTE’s “Ear to the Ground” (Dec 2021). It shows how Nicky has welcomed barn owls to the farm and no longer needs rat poison to control rats, preferring to let the barn owls do the job.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WWhV0BtBqog>

### **Commemorating 1921**

13 projects including podcasts, dramas, workshops, a garden of remembrance, lectures, brochures and talks were funded under the Decade of Centenaries Grants Programme (Total €50,000) <https://kilkennyheritage.ie/2022/01/kilkenny-county-council-decade-of-centenaries-programme-2021-3/>

### **Community Monuments Fund**

2 projects (*Abbey Quarter, Kilkenny and St. Lachtain’s Church, Freshford*) received a total of €60,000 for heritage interpretation and management from the Community Monuments Fund.

### **Irish Walled Towns Network**

Repaired and conserved Black Friars Arch, part of Kilkenny’s medieval city walls, with co-funding from the Irish Walled Towns Network.

Article showcasing Talbots Tower published in the Walled Town Crier <https://irishwalledtownsnetwork.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/IWTN-The-Walled-Town-Crier-June-2021-ISSUE-4.pdf>



Black Friars Arch after repair and conservation works completed

### **Kilkenny Pollinator Programme**

7 Tidy Towns groups from Kilkenny entered the Local Authority Pollinator Awards in the National Tidy Towns competition (Coon, Castlecomer, Kells, Inistioge, Freshford, Tullahought, Windgap).

10 sustainable gardening and pollinator friendly workshops delivered in partnership with the Environmental Awareness Office to provide advice and support to the public on supporting biodiversity and pollinators in the garden. 40+ participants attended.

2,400 free pollinator resources (plans, booklets, signs, badges and totes) purchased and disseminated to communities, sports clubs, schools, hospitals, businesses, and County Council staff and elected representatives to support the public to undertake pollinator actions.

200 pollinator adverts aired on local radio with advice on simple actions for people to take to help pollinators.

### **Kilkenny's Traditional Shopfronts**

53 shopfront fascia signs were photographed, classified and evaluated as part of an audit of traditional shopfront fascia signage in Kilkenny City, by graphic designer Deirdre Maher.



### **Community Engagement with Heritage**

32 projects from Kilkenny registered for National Heritage Week in 2021.

5 applications for monuments/memorials assessed by the Civic Memorials and Infrastructure sub-committee.

Kilkenny's Citizen Scientists recorded 7 of Ireland's 9 bat species in Kilkenny as part of BATLAS 2000 initiative.

### **Biodiversity Programme**

30 wetland sites were surveyed throughout Kilkenny in partnership with Birdwatch Ireland (Phase 2 of Kilkenny Wetland Audit). The data will inform future policies and climate action.

199 swift nest sites in 51 buildings across 13 towns in the County were recorded as part of the first County Kilkenny Swift Audit in partnership with Birdwatch Ireland.

26 barn owl nest sites identified in a county wide survey of barn owls in partnership with Birdwatch Ireland. 12 of the sites were located due to support from Citizen Scientists.

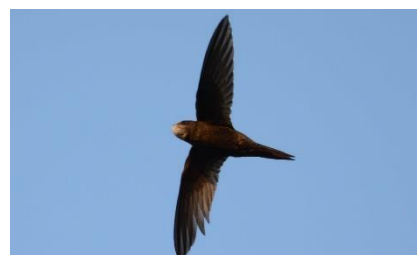
Survey of small mammals undertaken to determine changes in small mammal populations in the County which may impact on birds of prey. 28 records received from citizen scientists/public.

Supported a public workshop for the first Irish Hedgehog Survey in partnership with NUI Galway and the National Biodiversity Data Centre.

6 themed Awareness Campaigns (barn owls, small mammals, swifts, heritage week, pollinators, biodiversity gardening) on local radio, print media and social media to raise awareness about and encourage active participation in caring for Kilkenny's heritage.



26 barn owl nests identified in Kilkenny in 2021, photo Mike Brown.



199 swift nest sites identified in Co. Kilkenny in 2021



# **FIRE SERVICES & MAJOR EMERGENCY**

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Our focus is on protecting the communities we serve. Fire and Rescue Service provides a highly skilled response to a range of emergencies. During Storm Barra and in the current pandemic, the Fire and Rescue Service showed to be very resilient and a useful resource in that Brigades (trained and equipped manpower) can be mobilised within minutes of an emergency in their area 24hrs a day, 7days a week 365 days a year.

## **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.

## **Corona Virus Disease (COVID-19) - Corona Virus Pandemic**

The Fire and Rescue Service is an essential public service and has operated and responded to calls at all times during the current pandemic in 2021.

During this public health crisis our focus is on:

- (i) Protecting the communities we serve and to limit the spread of COVID-19;
- (ii) To ensure the safety and wellbeing of our staff in the pursuance of their duties;
- (iii) To maintain an effective Emergency Response - we continued to respond to all incidents in 2021.

## **Capital Projects**

Assessment of the tenders for the construction of a new fire station for Urlingford is underway. Construction of the new fire station for Urlingford is planned to commence in Q1 2022.

Kilkenny Fire Service have taken delivery and are using the 82 - 300-bar breathing apparatus (BA) cylinders along with the associated BA boards and compressor upgrades. Funding for the BA cylinders was approved from the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management. These BA cylinders are integral to the use of breathing apparatus in Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service which is both an operational imperative and to comply with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005.

Capital funding from the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management for the purchase of a new Emergency Tender Vehicle has been approved. Tenders were received and High Precision Motors have been awarded the contract for this new vehicle. The new Emergency Tender vehicle will have the capacity to carry rescue equipment for all types of emergencies including Road Traffic Collisions, chemical incidents and Heavy Goods Vehicle Rescue which will enhance Kilkenny Fire and Rescue response to incidents. The new vehicle will replace our existing Emergency Tender and is expected to be in operation in Q1 2022.

Advertisements for a new site for Kilkenny City Fire Station were placed in the Kilkenny People over a two-week period to identify a new site. Auctioneers were appointed to identify and source possible site locations close to the City and have submitted their report on the various options for our consideration.

**Funding for 7** - battery powered Positive Pressure Ventilation Fans, Smoke Curtains and battery powered lighting was approved by the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management (NDFEM).

**Funding for 3** - 4-wheel drive jeeps was approved by the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management. These jeeps will be located in Castlecomer, Urlingford and Graiguenamanagh Fire Stations in Q2 2022.

New lightweight thermal imaging cameras (TICs) were purchased for each Fire Station which greatly improves crew safety at fires and also our search capabilities.

### **Fire Safety Certificate Applications**

- 95 applications for fire safety certificates were received in 2021 and processed on behalf of the Building Control Section.
- 7 of these were maximum application fee applications and 11 of these were Regularisation Fire Safety Certificate Applications (*the equivalent to Planning Retention Applications*).
- A number of large-scale fire safety certificate applications for (a) the Brewhouse within Abbey Quarter, Kilkenny City and (b) industrial developments at Belview Port were processed.

### **Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003**

- Fire Officers made a number of fire prevention visits to premises both to provide advice and to enforce legislation.
- 70 inspections of premises both to provide advice and to enforce legislation were undertaken.
- 76 Licence Applications were processed under Section 24 of the Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003.
- 7 Dangerous Substance licence applications, 4 Vapour Recover Certificates and 2 Certificate of Installations were received and assessed to date.
- 1 Fire Safety Notice under the Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003 was served in 2021.

### **Community Fire Safety**



86 Home Fire Safety Visits were carried out by Fire Brigade personnel in 2021. Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSVs) are a significant element of our Community Fire Safety Strategy. Fire service personnel call to houses by appointment and give fire safety advice to the occupants. A HFSV is usually carried out by two

uniformed operational fire service personnel. They use a checklist to ask questions, try to identify the fire safety hazards in the house and recommend solutions. Fire safety advice is given, fire safety leaflets handed out and smoke detectors may be provided and fitted, where necessary. They also discuss the occupant's response should a fire occur in their home.

The fire fighters leave the occupier with further advice and information to also make available to other members of the household. The primary aim of these HFSVs is to reduce the numbers of fires, deaths and injuries in the home by firstly preventing fires occurring and to ensure that when fires do occur, the occupiers are given early warning and they know how to react quickly and safely.



Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service participated in this year's National Fire Safety Week. Activities included radio interviews, in conjunction with Kilkenny County Council's Social Club a fire safety competition was run, home fire safety visits were carried out in a number of homes, increased use of social media.

Ongoing public messaging campaigns were maintained through our social media channels 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.

Talks and information to various communities was on hold due to current Public Health restrictions. Kilkenny County Council's Fire and Rescue Service were unable to deliver the NDFEM Primary Schools Programme (PSP) throughout the City and County of Kilkenny as a result of the impact of COVID-19. This programme has been running without a break since 2006 to over 19,112 3<sup>rd</sup> class pupils who received the benefit of this national primary school fire safety programme to date.

Home fire safety visits (HFSV's) recommenced after Level-5 initial lockdown.

During the build up to Halloween 2021, we liaised Liaison the Environment Section and An Garda Síochána to reduce the risks associated with bonfires. Thankfully from a brigade point of view it was a quiet day and night as no calls were received to attend bonfires over Halloween 2021.

Radio Interviews on fire safety were also given and an advert on Fire Safety Tips for Christmas were placed on the local newspaper.

## **Training**

The following training was provided by Kilkenny County Council's Fire and Rescue Service in 2021: *Firefighting Skills, Working at Heights, Emergency Services Driving Standard (ESDS) course, Use Breathing Apparatus (BA-Initial Wearer), Breathing Apparatus Refresher, Compressed Air Foam System (CAFs), Drone Operator, Abrasive Wheels and Emergency First Responder (EFR) training, Emergency Traffic Management (ETM).*

Most fire service personnel have been trained to Emergency First Responder (EFR) level. An Emergency First Responder (EFR) course were held in Freshford Fire Station. This course is fully registered with Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council (PHECC). We are fortunate to have our own in-house qualified and certified instructors, Ray Regan and Paul O'Sullivan to deliver this training. The course covers airway management, O<sub>2</sub> therapy, vacuum splints, collars, spinal boards, helmet removal, medications and all the basic life support skills for victims of stroke; cardiac arrest; heart attack; choking, trauma, etc. EFR is a course for fire personnel operating in a first responder role who require more than the more basic Occupational First Aid. EFR is the national standard of first-aid training for Fire Services in Ireland.



All training was delivered while making best efforts not to allow the spread of COVID-19 while at work. We have recorded no secondary infections arising from training.

Some drill nights (approximately 12 out of 52 drill nights) for training of Fire Personnel were put on hold at the start and end of the year in an effort to reduce the spread of Covid-19.

A 3-week initial fire-fighting skills course was run in Castlecomer on the 8<sup>th</sup> February 2021. All covid-19 safety measures in line with the Risk Assessments were in place. 6 new recruit fire fighters from Kilkenny together with students from Waterford, Tipperary, Clare and Wexford participated in this QQI level 6 course in Castlecomer Fire Station. Later in 2021, Recruit Fire fighters from Freshford and Castlecomer fire brigades successfully completed their QQI level 6 Fire Fighting Skills training in Bunclody Fire Station, Co. Wexford.

The QQI accredited initial training programmes for new firefighters have been developed by the Local Authority Services National Training Group (LASNTG) in collaboration with the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management (NDFEM). Training to QQI standard was delivered for Fire Fighting Skills course, BA Initial Wearers course and a Compartment Fire Behavior (CFB) course.



*Cllr John Brennan, Chairperson of SPC-5 addressing the Recruits in Castlecomer.*

Personnel in our stations were trained as Working at Heights Instructors by Industrial Safety and Rescue Techniques (ISRT). The aim of this course is to provide personnel with the knowledge and skills required to be able to train and refresh others to work safely at heights.



*Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service firefighters refresh their skills in the use of Breathing Apparatus (BA) for 2 days every second year.*



*Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service ran a QQI level 6- Initial Breathing Apparatus course in Hackettstown Fire Station Training Centre. Firefighters from Kilkenny, Waterford, Tipperary and Wexford participated in the course.*



Cllr Pat Dunphy Chair of SPC-5 attends training day.

- 6 fire brigade personnel received Drone Operator training. This course is an Irish Aviation Authority (IAA) approved ground training course with an IAA approved Small Unmanned aircraft flight exam.
- 11 Firefighters from the Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Services brigades completed 2-day training course in 'CAFS- compressed air foam systems'- training in Castlecomer.



- 7 fire brigade personnel received Emergency First Responder training in Freshford. This course is a Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council of Ireland approved course with our own in-house instructors.





Firefighters from the Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Services brigades completed abrasive wheels training in Graiguenamanagh Fire Station.

## Operations

Fire Brigades responded to 795 turnouts in 2021. 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, etc.

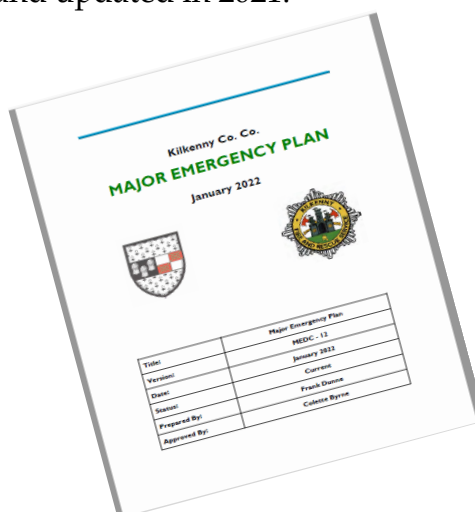
Firefighter John O'Neill, Callan Fire Brigade saved a member of the public's life on William Street, Kilkenny. Whilst off duty, John performed key live saving CPR skills on a man to keep him alive prior to the arrival of the Ambulance Service.

The Road Safety Authority carried out a risk rating for Roadworthiness in relation to the safety of our vehicles and compliance with our legal obligations. Great work was done by our Brigade Mechanic in maintaining our fleet (over thirty vehicles) to such a high standard and also to all our personnel involved in the checking of appliances. We are currently ranked in the green 90<sup>th</sup> percentile risk rating percentile which is of a very high standard.



## Major Emergency Management

The Major Emergency Management Plan and its Appendices document were both reviewed and updated in 2021.

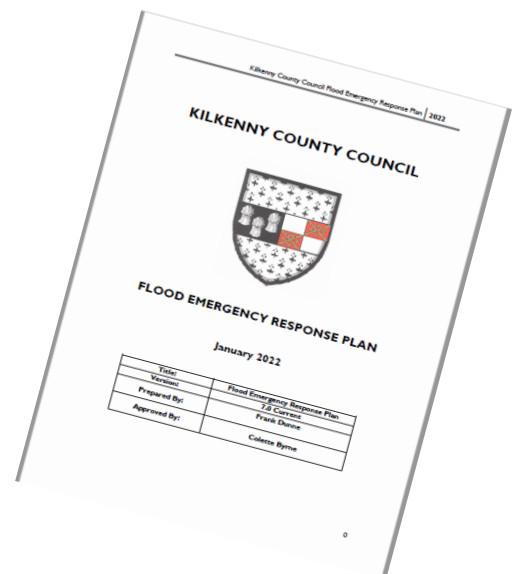
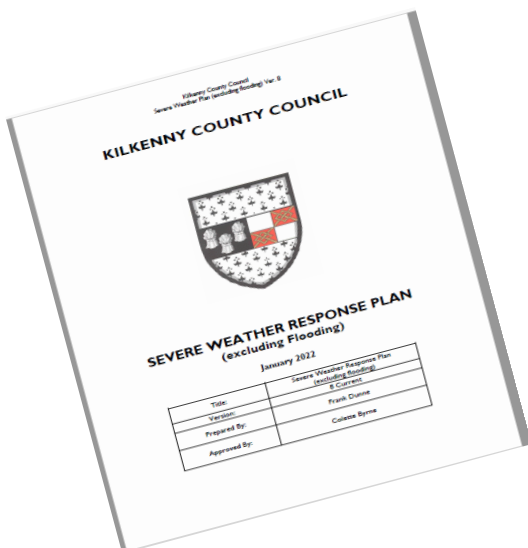




The External Emergency plan for Nitrofert was reviewed and tested under the Seveso III Directive in 2021. This comprised a test of the mobilisation procedures of the Principal Response Agencies (PRA's) and a test of the External Emergency by the PRA's, Site Operator and other statutory agencies.



The Flood Emergency Response Plan and the Severe Weather Plan (*excluding Flooding*) were both reviewed and updated during 2021.



## Occupational Health and Safety

Kilkenny Fire Service maintains its Safety Management System. The Safety Statement for each Fire Station was updated in 2021 and all staff were given their annual safety induction. The learning outcomes for all accident reports and near miss reports are used to update the Safety Manual each year.

# CIVIL DEFENCE

**Kilkenny Civil Defence** is a volunteer-based organisation that supports the Principal Response Agencies both locally and Nationally (County Councils, Gardai and HSE) in dealing with severe weather, flooding, major incidents and searching for missing people. It also assists our local communities primarily in a first aid capacity at large and small events. In 2021, the number of volunteers increased by 18% to 40 active volunteers and in July an Assistant Civil Defence Officer was recruited.



**Activity 2021** Covid-19 response continued to dominate the activities of the unit throughout 2021 with an equally high number of tasks undertaken as in 2020. The concentration of activity was on assistance at test centers, vaccination centers and supporting the Irish Blood Transfusion Service. A large number of medical appointment transports for the elderly and other vulnerable groups. The volunteers packed and delivered care packs to children with disabilities for the HSE and delivered Christmas Dinners to the Elderly on behalf of Alone.

| Duties           | Number     | Hours        |
|------------------|------------|--------------|
| Covid            | 404        | 1,904        |
| Community Events | 12         | 318          |
| Search's         | 5          | 708          |
| <b>Total</b>     | <b>421</b> | <b>2,966</b> |

The unit has worked collaboratively with so many sections within the local authority such as Fire Services, Healthy Ireland, the Sports Partnership, the Arts Office, the PPN and the Yulefest committee and external agencies such as the HSE, the Irish Blood Transfusion Service, the Gardai and many more.

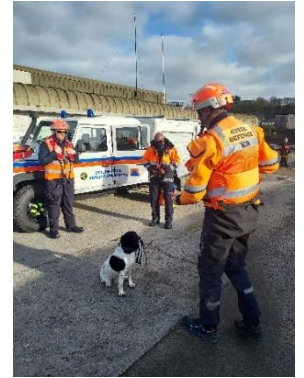


Supported community organisations and the Local Authority at festive, sporting and charitable events operated in line with Covid-19 restrictions. Maintaining standards of training and certification has been of critical importance to continue with the level of community support given. In total, 23 courses were completed in medical, search responder, swift water, severe weather driving and power boat courses totaling 102 certificates.



In 2021 with additional funding from the Dormant Accounts and the Department of Defence two additional vehicles were purchased, an off-road ambulance and an incident response vehicle. New rescue equipment, radios and an inflatable tent were added to the equipment to keep the unit up to date.

5 searches for missing persons were undertaken. One being a protracted cross county and multi-agency search coordinated by Kilkenny Civil Defence.



## Awards & Recognition

In December 2021, the Civil Defence held an awards night where volunteers were recognised for their achievements and long service. The unit was also recognised and awarded externally for their service to the Community.



The Civil Defence officer was awarded the all-Ireland 'Covid unsung hero' of the Local Authorities by Irish Pensions and Finance.

The unit was awarded a Certificate of Appreciation by the Cathoairleach on behalf of the Elected Members.



Recipients of the Kilkenny community and Voluntary Award 2021 for 'Covid-19- Response'



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

Director of Services: Mr. Sean McKeown

## PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

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### Planning Applications

1,054 planning applications were received during the year. This is an 12.5% increase over 2020.

The public health restrictions introduced in 2020 to combat COVID-19 continued to impact on the delivery of the planning service during the year. That said, the Planning Department continued to remain open for business subject to public health restrictions, social distancing and other safety measures for the protection of customers and staff.

### Building Control

434 valid commencement notices were processed in 2021 compared to 319 for 2020 representing an increase of 36%. This is a positive indication of the uptake in construction activity generally and in particular the delivery of much needed housing units.

54 valid applications for Disability Access Certificates were received compared to 85 for the same period in 2020.

### Taking in Charge

42 developments were being processed for Taking in Charge (TIC) in County Kilkenny during the year.

The TIC process was completed for 10 developments namely:

- The Green, Ballyfoyle
- Whitescastle, Knocktopher
- Bellfield, Ferrybank
- Rath Ullard, Kilkenny
- Banagher Court, Piltown
- Brookfield, Ballyhale
- Haven Court, Ballyragget
- Newpark Crescent, Kilkenny
- Friary Walk, Callan
- Roseleigh, Mooncoin

The main areas subject to TIC are: public roads and footpaths; public open spaces; unallocated surface parking areas; and public lighting. Application for TIC was made during the year on behalf of a further 3, leaving a total of 35 estates at various stages of the process at the end of 2021.

### City & County Development Plan 2021-2027

The City and County Development Plan (CDP) adopted by the Elected Members came into effect on 15<sup>th</sup> October, 2021. The CDP is a hugely significant policy document and it sets out the overall core settlement strategy, zoning and other objectives for the sustainable development of the City & County for the next 6 years. There was significant public engagement during the various stages involved in preparing the CDP, despite the COVID-19 restrictions. A number of online events were held attended by over 350 people and a Virtual Public Exhibition Website was developed to facilitate public consultation on the Draft CDP in the first half of 2021.

Almost 500 submissions were received and following consideration of these, the Elected Members agreed to a number of material alterations. These proposed changes were placed on public display and over 620 further submissions were received. The vast majority of these (in excess of 75%) related to aspects of the proposed Wind Energy Strategy contained in the Draft. Following deliberation, the Elected Members adopted the CDP, and in doing so decided not to accept some of the recommendations made by the Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) in relation to the Wind Energy Strategy. Following a recommendation from the OPR, Minister Burke, Minister of State at the Department of Housing, Local Govt and Heritage indicated his intention to issue a direction to the Council on aspects of the Wind Energy Strategy in the adopted CDP. The Minister's draft notice was placed on public display and over 700 submissions were received.

The Chief Executive submitted a Report to the Minister and the OPR summarising the submissions received along with a summary of the views and recommendations of the Elected Members on the direction. The OPR must now consider the Report and make a recommendation to the Minister to either: issue the draft direction with or without amendments; or not to issue the direction. Where the Minister agrees with the OPR's recommendation, he may issue the final direction. In the meantime, all other aspects of the CDP are deemed to be settled policy and are not therefore the subject to direction from the Minister

### **Graiguenamanagh/Tinnahinch local Area Plan (LAP)**

The Local Area Plan for Graiguenamanagh/ Tinnahinch, jointly prepared with Carlow County Council, was adopted in July, 2021 following extensive public consultation.

### **Masterplans**

Consultants have been appointed to assist the Project Steering Committee for the drafting of a Masterplan for the St. Canice's Campus, Kilkenny City. Once a draft plan is available, it will be presented to the Council and HSE before it is placed for public consultation. Work continued during the year on the preparation of the Masterplans for Loughmacask and Fair Green areas in Kilkenny City. When these drafts are prepared they will be placed for public consultation.

### **Conservation Grants**

The quality of our historic built environment contributes to the vitality of our urban areas, villages and countryside, instils a sense of pride of place and enhances the quality of our everyday lives. Our built heritage is one of the main attractions for visitors to Ireland so its conservation also reinforces and promotes our tourism industry as well as contributing to the regeneration of urban and rural areas.

The following conservation grant projects were completed in 2021:

*Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS)* - The aim of the BHIS is to leverage private investment in small-scale, labour-intensive conservation projects and to support the employment of conservation professionals, craftspeople and tradespersons in the repair of the historic built environment. Total funding of €117,600 was approved for 14 projects under the BHIS in County Kilkenny in 2021 for a wide range of works from the repairs to windows and external render through to roof and rain water goods, lime pointing and historic shopfronts.



Historic Structures Fund (HSF) - The aim of the HSF is to support conservation and enhancement of historic structures and buildings in both private and public ownership. 6 projects were supported with total grant-aid of €193,725 in County Kilkenny under the HSF in 2021.

Historic Town Initiative (HTI) - The HTI is a joint undertaking by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and the Heritage Council which aims to fund conservation works to repair and enhance the buildings and streetscapes in Ireland's historic towns. The Council secured funding under the HTI in 2021 to complete Phase 2 of St. Mary's Church, Callan boundary iron railings and masonry conservation works.

### **Vacant Sites**

There are now 29 sites on the Council's Vacant Sites Register as at the end of 2021. The number of cancelled entries due to site activation or improvement now stands at 18 sites which demonstrates that the levy is having the desired effect.

# ENVIRONMENT

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## **RMCEI**

The Council's Recommended Minimum Criteria for Environmental Inspections (RMCEI) Plan for 2021 set an ambitious target of almost 5,000 planned inspections across Waste, Water, Noise and Air. Notwithstanding the impact and challenges around COVID-19 restrictions and public/staff safety approximately 85% of these inspections were completed by the Environment Team in 2021. There was a total of 1,255 complaints reported to the Environment Section in 2021, ranging from littering, illegal dumping, water quality and abandoned cars. However, the vast majority continue to be related to littering and illegal dumping. All complaints are logged on the CRM (Customer Relations Management), investigated by relevant staff, action taken and once resolved closed on the system.

## **Dunmore Civic Amenity Site (CAS)**

Activity at Dunmore CAS continued to increase during 2021, albeit at a reduced rate compared to 2020, with over 2,999 tonnes of waste and 1,576 tonnes of recycling material collected. 87,721 customers availed of the facility during 2021. Dunmore and Granny CAS hosted a hugely successful Bulky Furniture Waste Collection Event resulting in a total of almost 35 tonnes of bulky waste collected under the Anti-Dumping Initiative.

## **Brink Banks**

The Council provides and manages 46 Bring Bank Recycling Centres across the City and County and a total of 2,259 tonnes of recyclables were collected at these Centres in 2021, which was down slightly on the tonnage collected in the previous year. Newpark Shopping Centre is the busiest Bring Centre in the City while ALDI, Graiguenamanagh is the busiest centre outside of the City. Environment staff are continuing to work very closely with our service providers to ensure the collection service is in keeping with demand, especially around holiday periods. The Council continues to look to expand the network of recycling centres and in this regard is in discussions with Tidy Town committee's in relation to suitable locations.

## **Anti-Litter Initiatives**

The Council continued to deliver anti-litter initiatives, including:

Adoption of a new Litter Management Plan 2021 – 2023 which was formally adopted by the Elected Members at the April Council meeting.

Securing €75,000 under the Anti-Litter infrastructure support grant scheme in 2021 towards the installation of new solar compacting bins in Callan, Thomastown, Graiguenamanagh and Kilkenny City, the replacement of street litter bins in Municipal District areas and support for local communities to help eliminate litter at waterside amenity locations across the County.

Promoting the annual An Taisce's National Spring Clean campaign. While the COVID-19 restrictions impacted on the delivery of the initiative in 2021, there was still over 150 registrations recorded across the County and many community leaders reported that volunteer numbers were the best ever recorded. The Council assisted with the removal of rubbish from 88 litter picks resulting in the disposal of over 33 tonnes of litter/waste.

On-going promotional campaigns such as the 'Conscious Cup Campaign' in conjunction with Carlow County Council in 2021 aimed at limiting the littering arising from take away disposable cups, and the local community and businesses are being encouraged to

participate. The Council also launched the 'Picker Pals' Programme in 2021 which is an innovative primary school programme aimed at inspiring young people to become the next generation of environmentalists by leading their families on local litter picking adventures. Over 1,000 families participated in the Programme in 2021.

### **Waste Prevention initiatives**

The Council continued to deliver a wide range of waste prevention projects in 2021, including:

- Securing funding of €103,000 under the Anti-dumping Initiative towards 9 projects, including clean-up and preventative measures of dumping 'black spots.'
- Enforcement Team actively in patrolling and carrying out investigations and inspections ranging from Construction & Demolition (C&D) Waste, Commercial Food Waste and Household Food Waste to Abandoned Cars and illegal disposal by burning. This included a joint operation between the Environment Section and the City MD on tackling illegal dumping in the City Laneways.

Enforcement team are currently working on Litter Quantification & Litter Pollution Surveys around the City and County as a means of capturing the quantities of waste in our County. These surveys are an important part of our ongoing work under the RMCEI.

Delivering a range of community waste prevention projects funded under the Waste Prevention Grant scheme funded by the EPA. These projects included bicycle recycling, re-uses of musical instruments, refurbishment of hurleys and an online repair directory.

Promotional campaigns including: on local radio to remind business owners and householders to keep their rubbish secure and not offer waste for bonfires as it impacts on local air quality; and production of an enforcement video which has been shared on social media platforms to ensure this important message reaches communities across the County.

Promotion of Reuse Month in October - This included webinar talks by Elaine Butler, an advocate for sustainable living, covering topics including 'Sustainability on a Shoestring', 'Tackling the Climate Crisis', 'Creating a Sustainable Wardrobe' and 'Raising Zero Waste Kids.'

Supporting Castlecomer Discovery Park to improve their environmental performance. The Council organised a waste audit of their operations in association with the EPA as part of their waste characterisation programme of Amenity Centres. This was overseen by Clean Technology Centre at Munster Technological University.

### **Climate Action**

The scientific evidence for global warming is undeniable and the effects of climate change are evident. Greenhouse gases (GHG), in particular carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) are the biggest contributor to climate change. The Council adopted a 5-year Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (CCAS) in 2019 which is aimed at proactively taking action to minimise the impacts of climate change on local people, ecosystems, infrastructure and buildings and encouraging people to change their behaviour to more sustainable lifestyles. The latest progress report submitted to the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications reported that almost 80% of CCAS actions are either complete or ongoing at this point.



These include:

- deep retrofit of older Council buildings to improve energy efficiency
- installation of solar panels on Council buildings to produce renewable energy
- provision of Home Energy Saving Kits through the Council's Library branches, available to home owners to help them identify and implement energy savings in their own homes
- continued upgrade of the almost 11,000 public lights across the County to more energy efficient LED lights (note c40% already upgraded)
- delivery of OPW funded flood relief schemes in towns and villages across the County that are exposed to flooding
- initiatives to promote reduction of waste (in particular food waste), encourage recycling and reduce single use plastics
- extensive tree planting programme to encourage carbon sequestration initiatives and more biodiversity friendly open spaces and parks, including the development of a new Countryside & Biodiversity Park at the disused landfill at Dunmore.

The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act adopted in 2021 sets out an even more ambitious role for Local Authorities in helping Ireland transition to a carbon neutral economy.

### **Decarbonisation Zones**

The Council nominated a potential Decarbonisation Zone (DZ) for consideration by the Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government in the Breagagh Valley area of Kilkenny City Centre. The overall objective of the DZ is to agree actions setting out how to achieve a minimum average reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emission of 7% per annum and by a total of 51% reduction by 2030. This nominated DZ includes a range of urban and urban fringe areas with a variety of uses and zonings under the City and County Development Plan. The Council, subject to Department acceptance of the potential DZ area will form an Implementation Working Group of key staff and relevant stakeholders, including the Three Counties Energy Agency (3CEA) to develop an Implementation Plan. The Implementation Working Group will develop a range of climate mitigation, adaptation and biodiversity measures to address low carbon energy, greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) and climate needs to contribute to climate action targets. The DZ will be included in the Climate Action Plan to be prepared by the Council in 2022.

### **Energy**

In March, the Council received formal notification of ISO 50001 accreditation from the National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI). ISO 50001 is an internationally recognised energy management standard and those organisations that have achieved the standard must provide evidence that they have put in place rigorous energy efficiency systems and procedures. ISO 50001 will help the Council achieve the more ambitious energy efficiency targets going forward. The Council were approved for a number of projects under the SEAI Better Energy Communities (BEC) Programme. These projects included a lighting upgrade and EV charger installation at Kilkenny Machinery Yard along with roof insulation at County Hall. These projects will continue to support the Council in delivering on the public sector energy and carbon targets.

### **Cycle for Work Initiative**

The Environment Section are continuing to progress this initiative to encourage staff to cycle to work and also to cycle at work for meetings and site visits around the City and Environs. Progress to date has included the installation of staff welfare facilities.

Environment Section are working in collaboration with Kilkenny City Area Staff and our Cycling Officer and have recently received grant funding for a bicycle storage facility. It is intended to purchase two e-bikes, a cargo bike along with some regular bikes for use by staff.

This is an environmentally green initiative and fulfils one of the actions in our Climate Change Adaptation Strategy. Kilkenny County Council as one of the largest employers in the County will lead by example and encourage other employers and businesses to take similar initiatives.

### **Casual Trading Bye-Laws**

A review of the Casual Trading Bye-Laws in respect of the Municipal Districts of Castlecomer, Callan-Thomastown and Piltown commenced in 2021 and draft Bye-Laws were approved by the Members in October to go to public consultation. The purpose of the Bye-Laws is to set out the procedures for licencing for casual trading. They also set out the conditions attached to casual trading in relation to litter management, food hygiene, insurances, fees, penalties and other matters in detail. The Chief Executive will submit her Report on the proposed new Bye-Laws for consideration by the Elected Members in early 2022.

### **Historic Landfill Sites**

There are 14 Historic Landfill sites in County Kilkenny formerly used by the Council for the disposal of waste. Local Authorities are required to carry out an assessment of the risk of environmental pollution on historic landfills according to a Code of Practice issued by the EPA which involves a framework of assessments and remediation works if required. COVID-19 restrictions on the construction sector in the first half of 2021 adversely impacted on site investigations works. The historic landfills at Sherman's, Ballyragget and Gowran were fully remediated and validation reports issued to the EPA in 2021. Site Investigation works were also completed at historic landfills at Mallardstown and Sheastown and a Consultant has been appointed to undertake site investigation works at the historic landfill at Dungarvan. Certificate of Authorisation (CoA) applications have been submitted to the EPA in respect of the historic landfills at Oldcourt, Inistioge and Thorpe's, Ballyragget. Risk Assessment reports were received on the remaining 7 sites and are at various stages of review. Five of these sites will require additional analysis and monitoring work to close out Risk Assessments including Tier 3 Reports.

### **Columbarium Wall**

The Elected Members agreed to proceed with Part 8 Planning for the provision of a Columbarium Wall at St. Kieran's Cemetery, Kilkenny City. A Columbarium wall is a structure used for the respectful inurnment of human remains in niches designed to receive a receptacle containing cremated remains. The proposed development aims to provide an alternative option to traditional burials. The Chief Executive will submit her Report on the Part 8 proposal in early 2022.

### **Tidy Towns**

The Council's Environmental Awareness Officer continued to proactively support Tidy Towns Groups across the County in 2021. Kilkenny City was runner up to Ennis in Ireland's Tidiest Large Urban Centre. Kilkenny City was only 4 marks behind Ennis who won the overall national title. Kilkenny retained its gold medal status and was joined this year by Inistioge who graduated to a Gold medal which was their overall objective since competing in the Entente Florale Competition in 2018. Inistioge was only three marks behind Geashill, Co. Offaly who won their category. Tullahought village retained its silver medal winner status. Listerlin village won the County Endeavour Award, as they achieved the highest %

increase in marks from the previous year, gaining 14 marks and also scooped the SE COVID-19 Community Award. It is also very positive that there were 4 new groups to the competition this year (Mooncoin, Paulstown, Dunnamaggin and Kilmoganny) bringing the total number of Kilkenny entrants to 25 this year.

### **Water Safety**

5 new Lifeguard Welfare Units were provided to accommodate the lifeguard service who supervise our five non-designated bathing areas. Lifeguards continued to be on duty at specified times during the months of June, July and August at The Meadows and The Weir in Kilkenny City, Graiguenamanagh, Inistioge and Thomastown.

### **Control of Dogs and Horses**

Together with the Dog Warden Service (DWS), 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.

Summary of activity in 2021 is as follows:

- 10 Dog Breeding Establishments regulated by the service and there were 28 Dog Breeding Establishments inspections completed in 2021.
- The number of dogs licensed was 5,333.
- 185 dogs surrendered and handled by the Dog Shelter (including those picked up by the DWS as strays).
- 62 dogs reclaimed.
- 123 dogs rehomed.
- No dogs was put to sleep (PTS).
- 19 horses impounded in 2021 of which 18 were rehomed and one was PTS.

The Council adopted new Control of Horses Bye Laws in March, which require horse owners, excepting in limited circumstances, to have a licence to keep a horse. This is to control the number of horses and prevent them causing a nuisance, annoyance or injury to the public or damage to property.

The new Bye-Laws updated the provisions on how horses should be kept, stabled and cared for and the procedure for seizure of horses where they are not under adequate control. The main new provision in the revised Bye-Laws is the introduction of horse exclusion zones in identified areas in the central core of Kilkenny City as a public safety and animal welfare measure.

The Animal Welfare Standards Committee continue to provide input and guidance to the Council on the control of dogs and horses.



## VETENINARY SERVICES

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The Council's Veterinary Service continued to fulfil the food safety service contract between the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) which includes responsibility (under a Section 85 Agreement with Carlow County Council) for food safety inspections in County Carlow. The Service had to continue to be resilient to cope with the unique challenges posed by the food industry during COVID-19 restrictions.

Activity for the year is as follows:

- Slaughterhouses under the service's supervision in 2021 - slaughtered 5,350 Cattle, 20,764 Sheep, and 121,338 Poultry.
- 20 Food Businesses were under the supervision of the service in 2021.
- 178 Hygiene Inspections ( other than AM/PM Inspections ) were done in food premises under the services supervision.

112 Official Control Samples were taken by the Veterinary Service consisting of the following:

- 18 for Animal Remedies
- 10 for chemicals in food
- 23 water samples
- 30 Carcass Swabs for microbes
- 30 food samples for microbes

All of these were sent to designated Official Control Laboratories in accordance with Ireland's National Official Control Sampling Plan

In 2021 the service continued to assist the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine (DAFM) in the follow up of a multidisciplinary investigation into a national animal health incident from Q4 2020.

The Veterinary Service enabled some food businesses to adopt to the changing trading circumstances of 2021 by facilitating them to change approved activities within the confines of European Food law . There were inquiries from a new red meat slaughterhouse who wishes to become operational in 2022. A pathway to approval was outlined by the Veterinary Service.

The challenge of Veterinary Certification for trade with GB for food of animal origin was postponed from 2021 to July 2022 . The Veterinary Service attended BREXIT /TRACES training in 2021 on this subject to enable food businesses to do this trade into the future if required.

In December the service was involved in the Local Authority part of a DG Sante F Audit on the Ante Mortem And Post Mortem Inspection of Poultry in Ireland ( EU Audit )

The Local Authority Sector were informed in 2021 by FSAI of their intention to enter into a national service level agreement with the DAFM for the delivery of this service from the end of March, 2022.

Kilkenny and Tipperary County Councils' continue to lead the national shared service "The Local Authority Waters Programme" (LAWPRO) that supports and co-ordinates implementation of the River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2018 – 2021 (RBMP). Nationally, the RBMP requires LAWPRO to focus on public participation, stakeholder co-ordination and achieving water quality improvements in 189 priority areas for action. Within Kilkenny the focus areas are the Dinin River, the Muckalee, the Nuenna, the Duiske and Powerstown Stream, the Breagagh, the Pococke, the Lingaun and the Erkina.

The draft River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2022 – 2027 was published by Ministers O'Brien and Noonan in September 2021 and is available for public consultation until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022. In County Kilkenny a virtual public meeting on the draft Plan took place in November organised in cooperation with the PPN Network. Further virtual public meetings are scheduled for February 2022. To facilitate the public consultation process, LAWPRO has prepared a virtual consultation room accessed through the website [www.lawwaters.ie](http://www.lawwaters.ie).

The DHLGH and LAWPRO worked closely with stakeholders on the issue of nature based solutions to surface water management. A Webinar on 30 November, 2021 focused on integrating a nature-based approach to rainwater management into urban design and planning. Minister Malcom Noonan T.D., Minister of State at DHLGH addressed the webinar and spoke of his Department's commitment to innovation and solutions to adapt to the impacts of a changing climate and weather patterns. This was followed by speakers from both Ireland and Wales with experience in this area. An interim National Guidance Document and an Implementation Strategy Scoping Study were launched at the webinar which was aimed at planners, designers engineers, architects and landscape architects, environment, climate, biodiversity, heritage, parks and landscape professionals within Local Authorities and the private sector.

The Community Water Officer for Kilkenny continued to work with community groups in developing awareness of their local waters and supporting various local projects.

"Stories from the Waterside" - During the 2020 lockdown, LAWPRO (in partnership with The Heritage Council, the Heritage Officers Programme, IFI and Waterways Ireland) organised a story writing competition with the theme of "Stories from the Waterside". The competition winners were published in a book in 2020 and in February 2021 all stories were published on a new website [www.storiesfromthewaterside.ie](http://www.storiesfromthewaterside.ie)

Water Heritage Day is a key public awareness and engagement day in the LAWPRO calendar. It occurs each August on the Sunday of Heritage Week. Key events this year included the launch in Kilkenny of a national Eco Showboat project which will bring arts and science together as it plans to journey along Ireland's navigable waters on an eco-friendly barge combining arts activities and water science. The Project was launched by Minister Noonan in the grounds of Kilkenny County Council in August.





*Minister Noonan and LAWPRO staff at the launch of the Eco Showboat in Kilkenny County Council grounds, Aug, 2021.*

On Water Heritage Day, Éanna Ní Lamhna led a wildlife safari along the River Barrow in Graiguenamanagh and Minister Noonan opened the Outdoor Activities Hub in Graiguenamanagh.



*Éanna Ní Lamhna leads a wildlife safari on the River Barrow, Aug 2021*





*Launch of the Outdoor Activities Hub, Graiguenamanagh on the River Barrow by Minister Noonan, August 2021*

Wild Child Day, also part of Heritage Week saw Inland Fisheries Ireland, Nore Vision and LAWPRO come together for Eel watching on the River Nore in Inistioge.



*Wild Child Day: River Nore, Inistioge, August 2021*

## PARKS & AMENITY

### Parks Department

The Parks Department oversees the development and maintenance of a wide variety of outdoor recreational amenities in Kilkenny City and County including playgrounds, parks, walking trails, multi-use games areas and sports pitches which are available for use to people of all ages. The Parks Department also manages grass cutting, pollinator and biodiversity projects, tree surgery and day to day upkeep of parks and playgrounds in our care. The Parks Department is also responsible for the on-going restoration, visitor management and maintenance of Woodstock Gardens and Arboretum in Inistioge.

### Parks and Playgrounds

The Parks Department continued to provide technical assistance throughout the year to local communities to aid in the development of new parks and playgrounds. The new playground in Piltown was opened during the year. 31 playgrounds are maintained by the Parks Department. All playgrounds are inspected weekly by Parks Staff and any repairs or cleaning deemed necessary are undertaken immediately in the interest of maintaining the playgrounds to a high standard of presentation and good order for safe play.

#### *Location of playgrounds maintained by Kilkenny County Council.*

| Piltown Municipal District   | Castlecomer Municipal District | Kilkenny Municipal District       | Callan - Thomastown Municipal District |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Ferrybank Neighbourhood Park | Johnstown                      | Newpark                           | Woodstock Gardens                      |
| Ferrybank, Blackthorn Hills  | Ballyragget                    | Assumption Place, O'Loughlin Road | Ballyhale                              |
| Fiddown, Kylemore Walk       | Castlecomer Demesne            | Fr. McGrath Centre                | Bennettsbridge                         |
| Mooncoin                     | Clogh                          | Talbots Court Estate              | Fair Green, Callan                     |
| Mullinavat                   | Coon                           | Garringreen, Johnswell Road       | Graiguenamanagh                        |
| Kilmacow                     | Paulstown                      | Rose Hill, Kells Road             | Kells                                  |
| Piltown                      | Urlingford                     |                                   | Stoneyford                             |
|                              | Tullaroan                      |                                   | Thomastown                             |
|                              | Goresbridge                    |                                   | Windgap                                |



*Playground in Piltown with sensory area in the foreground*



## Ferrybank Park

Work was completed on the construction of the Ferrybank Neighbourhood Park with the official opening day taking place in October 2021. The park is part of a wider network of green spaces in the Ferrybank area with plans in the future to create linkages to the South East Greenway. The Park was jointly funded by the Department of Housing, Planning, and Local Government (50%), Kilkenny County Council (25%), and Waterford City and County Council (25%).



*Ferrybank park with pollinator bed in foreground*

## Woodstock Gardens and Arboretum

The Parks Department continued to look after the day to day maintenance, promotion and planning for future restoration projects for Woodstock Gardens in Inistioge. Some of the year's highlights are listed below:

St Patricks Day - Woodstock entrance 'went green'. Enhancement works to the Tea Room Conservatory were completed and the building was officially reopened by the Cathaoirleach of Kilkenny County Council, Cllr. Fidelis Doherty in July.

In response to concerns around Covid-19, our outdoor dining offering was significantly increased with regular deployment of the Woodstock Coffee Truck and the installation of a large tent covered seating area near the carpark.



A new pergola seating area was also provided near the walled garden. This attractive structure was constructed using timber from trees within the garden that succumbed to storm damage. The area provides for a relaxed setting that will only improve as the surrounding planting matures.



Woodstock Gardens was one of three venues across the City and County chosen to host the 'September Sounds Series'. On the 24<sup>th</sup> September, the Croquet Lawn beside the Winter Garden was alive to the sound of classical and jazz music much to the delight of all who attended.

Significant works were undertaken restoring the Victorian pathways through the wider Woodstock Estate. The works undertaken in 2021 will add to the existing trail offering extending the existing official trail by some 3.25km taking in the Brownsford Stream Waterfall.



As part of the Yulefest Christmas events programme, Woodstock hosted Santa's Woodland Reindeer Trail within the Gardens. The trail had both a fun and educational element to it, providing information to visitors on the incredible trees in Woodstock. The initiative was very well received by young and old, offering plenty of selfie opportunities with Santa's nine famous reindeer.

### **Amenity Grants**

181 groups received grant assistance in 2021 amounting to €140k in funding. The range of works funded included landscaping, grass and meadow maintenance, the development of open spaces, the provision of street and outdoor furniture and small-scale improvement works.

## **PROJECTS OFFICE**

### **South East Greenway**

The construction of the South East Greenway over a length of 24km has been divided into a number of Lots so as to allow the works to progress on a phased basis. During 2021, construction works advanced to substantial completion along Lot 1 (from Mount Elliot to Rosbercon), Lot 2 (*urban section through Ferrybank*) and Lot 3 (*from New Ross Boatyard to Glenmore*). It is expected works on these three Lots, measuring just over 9km will be completed in early 2022. Progress was also made in terms of landowner agreements on accommodation works along the remaining Lots. The preparation of the detailed design and tender documents for Lot 4 (*from New Ross to Mount Elliott*) and Lot 5 (*from Ferrybank to Aylwardstown*) is nearing completion and construction tenders for same will be issued in the first half of 2022. In the latter part of the year, significant progress was also made on the preparation of detailed mapping to facilitate the transfer of the railway lands from CIE to the Local Authority. A preliminary assessment of the potential route options to link the villages of Slieverue and Glenmore to the Greenway was also undertaken.



*Images of completed sections along the Greenway*

### **2020 Outdoor Recreational Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS)**

Under ORIS Measure 1, a total of 5 projects were completed in 2021. The projects are as follows: - delineation of the Brandon Hill Summit Walk and carpark improvements, trail enhancement works to the Cois Bearbha Riverside Loop Walk, Nore Valley Walk and Freshford Looped Walk and the continued promotion of Woodstock Gardens.



*Images of completed works at Cois Bearbha (l) and Brandon Hill (r)*



Under the 2020-21 ORIS Measure 2, work to rehabilitate a further 2 kilometres of the old Victorian pathways linking the Brownsford Stream Waterfall back towards the main gardens was substantially completed. Sections of these pathways were lost for decades under vegetation. In order to find and restore the paths extensive clearance of the invasive



*Image of Woodstock Waterfall loop Walk*

cherry laurel had to be undertaken. This newly restored trail will complement the existing 3.5km Ladies Loop and 4.5km Woodstock Loop Walks. Trailheads will be provided at both the Woodstock carpark and Inistioge carpark beside the GAA grounds. The total length of this new section is circa. 3.25km. Visitors availing of this new trail will be afforded spectacular views of the waterfall from the bridge and overhead views of the wider watercourse as they meander up the hill away from the stream. Trail signage will be installed in early 2022. The new trail will then be officially opened to the public.

Under the 2021 ORIS call for funding applications, each Local Authority was permitted to submit 12 individual applications across the various headings. Following a competitive process, the Department advised that 11 of the 12 applications submitted by Kilkenny were successful. The total funding amount secured was €1,063,865 which represents an increase of almost 20% on the 2020 allocation. The total investment in 2022, accounting for match funding will be € 1,182,000. Some of the successful applications include - Kilkenny Countryside Park at Dunmore, Rehabilitation of the Ardra Looped Walk & Arboretum Walk in the Castlecomer Discovery Park, the development of accessible trails, the provision of age friendly and disabled parking and a wheelchair swing within Woodstock Gardens. Partnership Projects

6 projects were advanced in 2021 under the LEADER Programme 2014-2020. Working in collaboration with Kilkenny LEADER Partnership, the Council provided match funding along with technical assistance in terms of planning, design, tender documentation, procurement and contract administration to local community groups. This arrangement has proven very successful for both agencies but more importantly for the communities that will benefit from the completed projects. Some of the projects completed or substantially completed over the year in Graiguenamanagh included the Barrow Valley Outdoor Activity Hub access road and serviced campervan pitches, the restoration of the Abbey Hall Recreational Area and the repurposing of the disused toilet block into a Men's Shed.

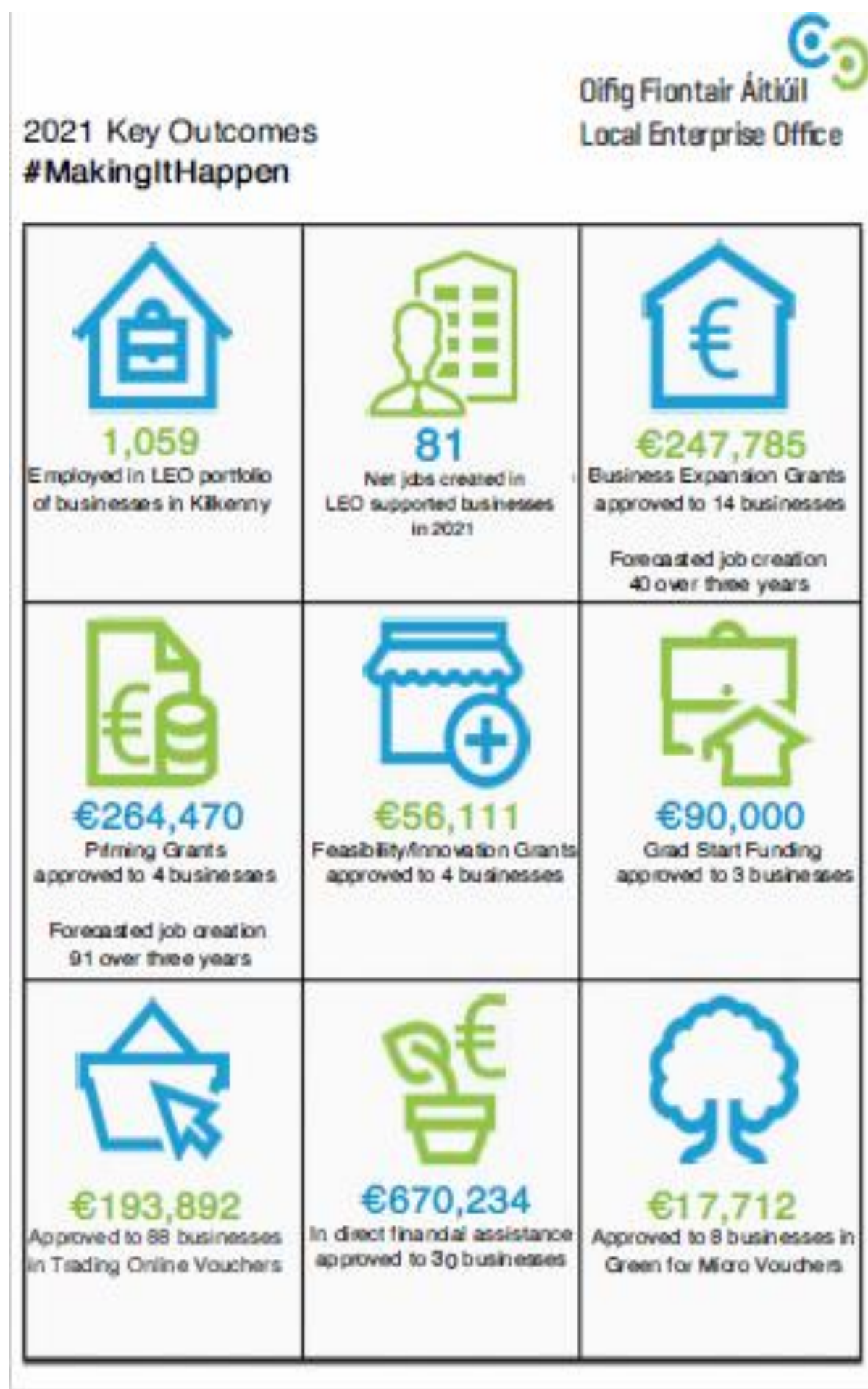















*Images above of Barrow Valley Outdoor Activity Hub and Before & After of Abbey Hall*

It was also agreed between both agencies to extend the partnership agreement with respect to the LEADER Programme for 2021-2023 and a total of 6 projects were identified for progression. Over 2021, progress was made on a number of these projects including the advertising of two tenders for consultancy services for a) The Bennettsbridge Riverside Amenity Area & Pedestrian/Cyclist Bridge- Feasibility Study & Design Options Report and b) a Feasibility Study & Route Selection Report for a Recreational Connectivity Link between Woodstock Estate and the South East Greenway. Community engagement and a preliminary design was also developed to advance the Slieverue Linear Park Phase 2 to construction in 2022.



2021 Key Outcomes  
#MakingItHappen

|                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  <p><b>5</b><br/>LEO supported businesses transferred to Enterprise Ireland</p>                     |  <p><b>€11,868</b><br/>Approved 6 businesses for Technical Assistance for Micro Exporter Grants</p>                            |  <p><b>706</b><br/>clients availed of one-to-one Mentoring to assist them with issues within their business</p> |
|  <p><b>828</b><br/>Clients participated in 75 Training &amp; Management Development Programmes</p> |  <p><b>48</b><br/>Businesses received strategic mentoring under the Local Enterprise Office Covid-19 Client Stimulus Fund</p> |  <p><b>175</b><br/>Clients participated in 14 Start Your Own Business Courses</p>                              |
|  <p><b>525</b><br/>Students from 15 schools participated in the Student Enterprise Programme</p>  |  <p><b>12</b><br/>Businesses participated in Lean for Micro to assist them with their competitiveness &amp; innovation</p>   |  <p><b>12</b><br/>Clients submitted Micro Finance Loan Applications</p>                                       |



## TOURISM INCLUDING FESTIVAL SUPPORT

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The core objective of the Tourism Department is to support tourism development throughout County Kilkenny, working with key stakeholders – public, private, community and voluntary to implement *Kilkenny's Statement of Tourism Strategy and Work Programme 2017-2022* as well as the *Government's Tourism Recovery Plan 2020-2023*.

2021 continued to be a challenging year globally, nationally and locally for the tourism and hospitality sector due to the Coronavirus pandemic. In response to same, Kilkenny County Council in partnership with Failte Ireland worked with 'Kilkenny's Tourism Recovery Taskforce' to support the local tourism sector as well as to re-open our City and County safely.

### Festivals and Events

Kilkenny County Council & Failte Ireland provided funding to festival organisers to assist with the development and promotion of festivals with a significant tourism impact despite the challenges brought to event organisers. The main purpose of the Festival Support Grant Scheme is to support festivals which drive tourism in Kilkenny, underpinning Kilkenny County Council's Tourism Strategy and improving the visitor experience in Kilkenny City and County. However, in 2021, many festivals and events were supported to simply keep their brand name alive during restrictions and to host smaller events with a view to coming back bigger and better in 2022.



Kilkenny County Council supported the online St. Patrick's Day Festival which was a great success and reached massive audiences world-wide through its social media platforms.



The Cat Laughs Festival held a summer series of events supported by the Live Performance Fund of the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts Gaeltacht, Sport and Media and Kilkenny County Council. The series sold out and was a great opportunity for comedians to get back to live performance, albeit with reduced audience numbers.



The Butler Gallery in partnership with Kilkenny Arts Festival was delighted to present 2 internationally-acclaimed installations, brought together for the first time in Kilkenny on the ongoing migration crisis in the Mediterranean by the award-winning Kilkenny-born artist Richard Mosse. This outdoor Art Installation was delivered through the Brightening Air Programme 2021 and Kilkenny was delighted to be chosen as a host location for one of the nationwide events. Events were held from 11<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> June and was a great addition to the offering of things to see and do in Kilkenny in June 2021 as businesses re-opened to visitors.



Kilkenny Arts Festival was held in August and was the first festival in 2021 nationwide to invite guests back to engage in person with a wide and varied programme of events. For 10 days in August, the city's historic churches, castle, courtyards, townhouses and gardens offered a magical setting for unique collaborations and intimate encounters between audiences and artists with reduced numbers in adherence with restrictions.



Kilkenny Day was held on Sunday 10th October and consisted of a packed programme of events run across the City and County showcasing the very best that Kilkenny has to offer. People participated in their black and amber colours and joined in the celebrations and conveyed how proud they are to call Kilkenny their home. A big thanks to all our local partners who got involved to make the day a success - the Design and Craft Council, the OPW, Castlecomer Discovery Park, Cartoon Saloon and local businesses to name but a few.

### Capital Investment

2021 was a successful year for Kilkenny in its efforts to attract significant capital investment to deliver a range of Tourism Initiatives throughout the City and the County. Fáilte Ireland announced significant amounts of funding for a number of ambitious projects that will greatly enhance the visitor experience going forward. We are excited to deliver projects as follows:



*A new water-based Activities Hub for Kilkenny* - April saw the announcement by Minister for Tourism, Catherine Martin and Fáilte Ireland of a major new investment in water-based activities. The funding will be used to build world-class facility centres at 22 locations across the country where water-based activities are a key visitor attraction. In Kilkenny, a Water Sports Hub on the grounds of County Hall will be developed under this

scheme by Kilkenny County Council. Each centre will provide hot showers, changing and toilet facilities, secure storage, induction spaces, equipment washdown and orientation points. The significant increase in people enjoying outdoor water-based activities such as kayaking, surfing, paddle-boarding and open water swimming is expected to continue to grow year on year and not just during the summer months. This means all-weather changing facilities, secure storage and bathrooms will be in huge demand. Delivery date is expected to be December, 2023.

We also worked together throughout the year to develop and further enhance our outdoor public spaces to provide additional recreational space for our citizens during restrictions whilst also developing spaces for visitors to come, explore and enjoy our City and County

*Significant Capital Investment in our Outdoor Spaces* - on the 9<sup>th</sup> June, 2021 the official opening of Kilkenny's new Riverside Park and Skatepark took place. Investment of €2.1 million allowed the opening up of the River Nore in the city centre to our citizens and visitors alike.



### *Development of Outdoor Seating and Live Performance Spaces in the City*



Throughout May, Kilkenny County Council developed plans to deliver continued capital investment in public realm throughout the City. Two applications were made to both Failte Ireland and to the Department of Arts, Tourism, Culture, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media to develop two outdoor spaces in the City for citizens and visitors alike to enjoy. The Watergate Public Park will deliver a high quality outdoor live performance space for use by local artists and musicians along with our festivals and event's organisers to use. When not being used for live performance the space will transform to a lively outdoor seating area for all to enjoy. €250,000 was successfully secured under the Department's Performance Space funding stream.



The Market Square outdoor dining area will be further enhanced with weatherproofing and new furniture installed and additional improvements made to the seating area. A successful response to this funding application of €649,000 provided an opportunity for businesses in the City core to facilitate year-round outdoor dining. Both of these projects will be complete in 2022.

### *Urban Animation – 'Creative Kilkenny'*

Kilkenny County Council was successful in securing €439,875 under Failte Ireland's Urban Animation Scheme in 2021. 'Creative Kilkenny' will animate public spaces throughout the core of Kilkenny to re-imagine our Medieval City for visitors, while also creating vibrant and creative community spaces for our citizens. The project has 5 keys elements:



*Cartoon Saloon Mural @ Watergate Performance Space* – working in conjunction with Cartoon Saloon, images from any or many of their Oscar nominated films will be used to design and install a mural to the rear of the Watergate Performance Space along the link to Brew House Courtyard.





*The Copper Tank at Brewhouse Square* - we will use a reclaimed Copper Tank from Smithwick's Brewery to tell the story of brewing in Kilkenny, exactly where brewing began here dating back to the monks at the Abbey. The installation will reflect the sustainable principles engaged throughout the project by using a recycled, upcycled and locally sourced material. We will engage a local craftsman to work on the project in an innovative and different way.

*Outdoor Art Gallery* - Digital Culture Screens throughout Kilkenny to connect with visitors, reminding them that Kilkenny is a city of creativity with so much to offer. Galleries, festivals, artists and venues will be able to share high-quality work from film screenings, digital exhibitions, behind-the-scenes footage, commissioned artworks to creative interactive engagement as people move throughout the City.

*This is Kilkenny*: a selfie opportunity for visitors to enjoy, take a picture with Kilkenny Castle as your backdrop on the banks of the River Nore - step into the sculpture, snap and send out to the world - yes indeed you are in Kilkenny - using the Kilkenny.ie brand - COME SEE COME DO

*Laneway Lighting*: We will install feature lighting along both Market Slip and Butter Slip - 2 laneways off High Street to attract visitors directly to our newly developed Outdoor Dining Space at Market Square.



The successful implementation of this urban animation project will improve local business viability by providing beautiful, top class additional public realm in Kilkenny. It will increase stay times at these public spaces and will encourage visitors to spend, sit and enjoy the Outdoors in the City.

### ***Outdoor Seating and Accessories Scheme***

Throughout the year, Kilkenny County Council continued to administer the Outdoor Seating and Accessories scheme funded by Failte Ireland. June saw the re-opening of many businesses and wonderful outdoor seating has sprung up throughout the City and County. June also brought a change under the terms of the scheme to allow for businesses not serving food to apply for the grant. Grants were made available for individual businesses in the tourism and hospitality sector to increase their capacity to provide outdoor seating at their premises and applications were accepted up to October, 2021. A total of €340,000 was approved to individual businesses in the County to support the extension of outdoor seating.



Lots of smaller initiatives were delivered throughout the year to keep the tourism sector alive and to support businesses in their efforts to welcome visitors back to Kilkenny in 2021.

## Graiguenamanagh Audio Guide Launched



A new Audio Guide was developed to help people discover the stories of Graiguenamanagh. Graiguenamanagh truly is a town where you can encounter a story around every corner. The new audio guide, *Explore Graiguenamanagh*, is designed to help visitors discover all the highlights of the town and its hinterland, while introducing them to some of the many tales that make Graiguenamanagh such a special place. The audio guide received funding through the Town and Village Renewal Scheme and can be found on [kilkenny.ie](http://kilkenny.ie), [visitkilkenny.ie](http://visitkilkenny.ie) and

[AbartaHeritage.ie](http://AbartaHeritage.ie) where it can be downloaded free.

### Kilkenny Welcome Team

Kilkenny County Council welcomed back its 'Kilkenny Welcome Team' in August. The Welcome Team are a group of over 21 trained volunteers who meet and greet visitors to Kilkenny, providing a warm Kilkenny welcome along with visitor information over the Summer/Autumn months. Officially launched by Kilkenny's Cathaoirleach and Mayor, this innovative initiative was first developed in 2020 by Kilkenny County Council, in association with Kilkenny Tourism from funds won under the National Enterprise Town Awards. The Kilkenny Welcome Team were strategically placed at high footfall locations around Kilkenny to provide a range of information from opening hours to local attractions, nearby toilet facilities, pharmacists, ATM locations, train and bus times.



### #tastekilkenny



Kilkenny County Council was successful in securing funding from the Department of Agriculture to enhance the marketing and PR plans for #tastekilkenny in 2021. Work commenced on new and improved content for the #tastekilkenny website together with building a bank of up to date material for its social media platforms - twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

We worked throughout the year with our local food producers, restaurants and cafes to showcase the wonderful local food offering available here in Kilkenny for all visitors planning to visit to enjoy. May saw "the two Jackies" take a trip around the County to experience some wonderful local food, drinks and they even learned to skin a fish. This digital and social media campaign launched at the end of the summer and highlighted many wonderful food tourism stories from around the County. Funding remains in place to deliver #tastekilkenny Restaurant Week in February, 2022.





## Kilkenny Catwalk Tourism Trail

The Kilkenny Catwalk Trail was a fantastic arts trail of 21 Cat sculptures which were illustrated by some of Ireland's most talented artists, mainly local, for public display in and around Kilkenny City. The trail was launched for Kilkenny Day on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2021 and will remain in place until Easter 2022.



This project is a partnership between Kilkenny Civic Trust and Kilkenny County Council and can be engaged with the outdoors regardless of restrictions and was designed to support and bring local businesses, arts and community together, attract visitors to Kilkenny and create footfall in sculpture host locations throughout the City. The project also provides a new and exciting activity and walking route around the City for families and people of all ages.



Feedback has been so positive. It has added a bit of colour and fun to the things to see and do in Kilkenny for the shoulder season of 2021 and into 2022.

### Marketing and PR for Kilkenny



Fáilte Ireland launched its €5m domestic marketing campaign on 1<sup>st</sup> June, "Keep Discovering" with Kilkenny featuring heavily in its print content. Their goal for 2021 is to sustain businesses, support survival in the short term to thrive in the long term. Focus of the campaign is on the domestic visitor and to encourage the "staycation" and multiple trips around Ireland for 2021. Kilkenny Tourism

continued its work throughout the year to market Kilkenny as a must visit destination for the family staycation in 2021. Its "More to Explore" campaign was a huge success with reach on social media increasing by 60% throughout the year. Failte Ireland enabled us to boost the marketing and PR for Kilkenny in Q4,2021 by providing an additional €30,000 towards marketing campaigns.



Combined with our immediate and reactive responses to the pandemic, the Tourism Department continued to deliver and progress the strategic objectives outlined in our Service Delivery Plan throughout 2021.



*Destination Towns Funding* had been secured by Kilkenny County Council of €500,000 to improve and enhance the visitor experience here in the City. While Kilkenny is a key visitor destination within Ireland's Ancient East, visitors in the main only visit for a few hours on their way to other destinations rather than spending a day or two here. Visitors are not fully aware of what Kilkenny as a city has to offer, as some attractions are hidden or not on the Medieval Mile. Kilkenny County Council has discovered through recent research (undertaken by Placemarque+) that there are six main factors that contribute to the visitor experience gap: Wayfinding mapping, improved crossings, emphasising the new centre of gravity of the city, defining visitor car parks and Improved public realm.

### *A Unified Visitor Experience at the Tholsel*

September 2021 saw the announcement by Fáilte Ireland of significant capital investment for the delivery of a new visitor attraction in the heart of Kilkenny City. Under Fáilte Ireland's Large Capital Grants Scheme 2016, Kilkenny County Council has been offered €3.2 million to develop the experience, increasing visitor spend and supporting jobs in the city centre.



The Museum of Medieval Ireland will encompass the historic Town Hall (Tholsel), the existing Medieval Mile Museum and the churchyard of St Mary's. A new brand and interpretive scheme will unify the entire complex and will use fun, humour and 'horrible history' style stories to appeal to a wider variety of visitors. It is intended that this major new attraction which has an expected opening date in Summer 2023 will help to re-establish the historic city centre as the essential

highlight of any visit to Ireland's Ancient East.

In 2022, our focus will be on the development of Kilkenny's Destination Experience Development Plan led by Fáilte Ireland. As we move to a new stage in the planning and further enhancement of the tourism offering in Kilkenny, we will continue to be a key driver locally in supporting the Tourism and Hospitality Sector.

We will continue to work to attract visitors all year round to our culturally vibrant City and County whilst further collaborating to develop exceptional tourism experiences.

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

**Head of Finance: Mr. Martin Prendiville**

## FINANCE

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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 €50,707 which resulted in a cumulative surplus at 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2021 of €95,340. Strict budgetary controls were maintained on a total expenditure of €106.7 million.

### Capital Project Funding Arrangements

The total cost of capital projects delivered under the Capital Programme in 2021 was €44.6m. Housing and Roads Projects accounted for 88% of the total expenditure. The outstanding commitments on completed capital projects amounted to €10.4m at 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2021. The annual budget provides for repayment of this commitment over a period of 8 years.

A total of €2.94m was collected in Development Levies in 2021.

The Council adopted a Capital Budget for the three-year period 2021 to 2023 in June 2021. 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 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2021

The Council has maintained a relatively strong balance sheet at 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2021.

The total bank loans (*excluding housing related loans*) outstanding at 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2021 were €15.1m. The bank overdraft facility was not utilised during 2021. The closing cash balance on hand at the end of December, 2021 was €35.9m of which €20.6m is ring-fenced for match funding of Capital projects.

### Debt Collection

Covid-19 continued to have a significant impact on income arrears on commercial rates in 2021. The total collection rate increased slightly to 87% but is still well below the 2019 result.

The collection performance on housing rents has improved on 2020 levels.

|                   | Percentage Collection (%) |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|-------------------|---------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
|                   | 2015                      | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
| Commercial Rates  | 92                        | 94   | 95   | 93   | 94   | 85   | 87   |
| Rents & Annuities | 92                        | 93   | 92   | 93   | 95   | 96   | 97   |
| Housing Loans     | 82                        | 80   | 85   | 88   | 90   | 90   | 90   |



# FINANCIAL TABLE

| Expenditure By Division                                             | Note      | Gross<br>Expenditure<br>2021<br>€ | Income<br>2021<br>€ | Net<br>Expenditure<br>2021<br>€ | Net<br>Expenditure<br>2020<br>€ |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Housing and Building                                                |           | 23,267,789                        | 23,479,161          | (211,372)                       | (1,382,579)                     |
| Roads, Transportation & Safety                                      |           | 27,843,958                        | 21,575,108          | 6,268,850                       | 6,661,382                       |
| Water Services                                                      |           | 7,895,127                         | 7,683,419           | 211,708                         | 83,961                          |
| Development Management                                              |           | 11,063,888                        | 5,820,024           | 5,243,864                       | 5,416,551                       |
| Environmental Services                                              |           | 12,514,220                        | 3,934,633           | 8,579,587                       | 8,315,448                       |
| Recreation & Amenity                                                |           | 7,159,990                         | 735,107             | 6,424,883                       | 6,452,446                       |
| Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare                            |           | 653,527                           | 463,536             | 189,990                         | 170,326                         |
| Miscellaneous Services                                              |           | 10,024,185                        | 10,405,974          | (381,789)                       | 1,202,599                       |
| <b>Total Expenditure/Income</b>                                     | <b>15</b> | <u>100,422,684</u>                | <u>74,096,962</u>   |                                 |                                 |
| Net Cost of Division to be funded from Rates and Local Property Tax |           |                                   |                     | 26,325,722                      | 26,920,134                      |
| Rates                                                               |           |                                   |                     | 20,823,490                      | 20,992,880                      |
| Local Property Tax                                                  |           |                                   |                     | 11,806,494                      | 11,799,822                      |
| <b>Surplus/(Deficit) for Year before Transfer</b>                   |           |                                   |                     | <u>6,304,262</u>                | <u>5,872,568</u>                |
| <b>Transfers from/(to) Reserves</b>                                 | <b>14</b> |                                   |                     | (6,253,555)                     | (5,855,933)                     |
| <b>Overall Surplus/(Deficit) for Year</b>                           | <b>16</b> |                                   |                     | <u>50,707</u>                   | <u>16,635</u>                   |
| <b>General Reserve at 1st January</b>                               |           |                                   |                     | 44,633                          | 27,998                          |
| <b>General Reserve at 31st December</b>                             |           |                                   |                     | <u>95,340</u>                   | <u>44,633</u>                   |

# INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

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With the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, 2021 was again a challenging year for Information Systems Department.

Key achievements for 2021:

- Upgrade of Firewalls and installation of new security systems.
- Facilitated Remote Working for many staff.
- Facilitated Remote Council Meetings via MS Teams.
- Maintained the Citrix environment for remote working.
- Rollout of VPN software for remote workers.
- Maintained GDPR compliant cookie pop up system across all websites.
- Continued the expansion in the use of mobile devices to staff and Elected Members.
- Facilitated online public meetings using MS Teams.
- Continued Support for Business Restart Scheme and Central Credit Register.
- Implemented various online surveys.
- Completed Updates of iHouse and iPlan systems.
- Completed the migration of servers to new domain.
- MS Teams Deployment to staff and Elected Members.
- Ongoing additions, updates and security enhancements to the various local authority web sites.
- Completed the Upgrade of the new Council Web Site.
- Completed SharePoint Migration.
- Ongoing rollout of new PCs and laptops.
- Ongoing rollout of surveying technologies to staff.
- Ongoing updates to servers and PCs to maintain security of the network.
- Expanded the use of Two Factor Authentication.
- Updates to public Geographical Information System viewers.
- Updates to internal GIS Portal for staff.
- Completed the upgrade to the new Core HR System.
- Supported Communications Department with multiple livestreaming events.
- Upgrade to Anti-Virus and endpoint management system.
- Upgrade to File Backup System.

## **Broadband**

Our Broadband Officer works closely with the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications & Department of Rural & Community Development to help to deliver the National Broadband Plan.

Key achievements for 2021:

- Attendance at online Monthly Broadband Officers meetings.
- Ongoing liaison with Broadband Service Operators.
- Ongoing liaison with National Broadband Ireland – development of colocation sites.
- Ongoing Digital Strategy Development.
- Addition of 2 more Broadband Connection Points (BCP) – now 8 in total.
- Setup of 5 Remote Working Hubs under Community Hub Grant within BCPs.
- Award of Tender for WIFI4EU.
- Ongoing contact with public on broadband and telecoms queries.

# PROCUREMENT

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Kilkenny County Council's Procurement Unit have continued to facilitate the progress of an ongoing flow of contract opportunities in line with the organisation's ambitious public works programme public works programme. Approx €31 million of Kilkenny County Council's Revenue spend and €35 million of capital spend is procured on various works, services and goods from suppliers, mainly based locally or nationally.

## Key achievements for 2021:

- 52 Tenders advertised on the *eTenders* procurement portal
- 32 Mini tenders and Quotations advertised on the *SupplyGov* portal
- The Office of Government Procurement and the Local Government Operational Procurement Centre work closely with local authorities to provide national frameworks that local authorities can draw from Kilkenny County Council drew on these frameworks in 2021 in the areas of public utilities, fleet, ICT, professional services and PPE
- Further measures to promote Green Procurement Policies including the implementation of electronic tendering for all tenders at national level
- Participation by staff at internal and OGP training courses
- Procurement of vital PPE during the pandemic

## Main Procurements per Service Area for 2021

### TENDERS PROCESSED IN 2021

#### CORPORATE SECTION INCLUDING SPECIAL PROJECTS

- Civil & Structural Engineer Led for the design and construction of the proposed pedestrian and cycle link between the River Nore Linear Park (Bishops Meadows) and the Riverside Gardens (Abbey Quarter) in Kilkenny City.
- Architect Led Design Team Services Restructuring and Renovation of Community Sports Centre Marsh's Street, Thomastown, County Kilkenny for use as a Library and Community Centre
- Civil/Structural Engineer Led Multi-Disciplinary Design Team Service.Design & Construction of an urban park & street & associated works through the Abbey Quarter (former *Smithwicks Brewery*)
- Conservation and Refurbishment of Tea Houses, Bateman Quay, Kilkenny.
- The Provision of Festival/Event Management for Kilkenny County Council Festival/Events for the period 2021 to 2024
- The Mayfair Library, Abbey Quarter, Kilkenny
- Graiguenamanagh Library - Roof Refurbishment
- Appointment of a Communications and Marketing Company to provide services to Kilkenny County Council to Write, Tell and Share the Story of Kilkenny 2030
- Tender for Interpretive and Exhibition Design Services for the Kilkenny Medieval Experience (Tholsel Project)
- Abbey Quarter Temporary Bus/Carpark
- Conservation Architect Led Design Team Service for Conservation Plan for the Heritage Structures in the Abbey Quarter (former *Smithwicks Brewery* site)
- Abbey Quarter Kilkenny- Demolition of Maturation Building



## **ENVIRONMENT AND PARKS**

- Provision of Services for the installation and servicing of textile banks in County Kilkenny
- Provision of Services for Grass Maintenance in Kilkenny City and County

## **FIRE SERVICE**

- Compressed Air Breathing Apparatus Cylinders and Cylinder Covers
- Supply an Emergency Tender Vehicle to Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service
- Tender for Urlingford Fire Station, Urlingford, County Kilkenny
- Vehicle Fit Out of 3 Ford Rangers for Kilkenny Fire Service

## **FLOOD RELIEF**

- Graiguenamanagh-Tinnahinch Flood Relief Scheme - Site Investigation Contract

## **HOUSING**

- Tender for construction of 6 Houses at Golf Links Road, Kilkenny
- Proposed Construction of 25 Units of Social Housing Development at Ladywell, Thomastown, County Kilkenny
- 2 - 1 Bed Apartments at High Street, Graiguenamanagh, County Kilkenny
- 2 - 2 Bed Semi-Detached Bungalows at Inchacarran, Mullinavat, County Kilkenny
- Extension & Refurbishment works to 18 Wolfe Tone Street, Kilkenny,
- Construction of Houses at Site A New Dwelling at Haggardsgreen, Callan, County Kilkenny and Site B New Dwelling at 29 Circular Road, Kilkenny

## **IS**

- Design, supply and installation of a fully supported Wi-Fi network of 44 outdoor public access points at designated locations around County Kilkenny under the WiFi4EU programme

## **MACHINERY YARD**

- Tender for Rubber Tracked Excavator
- Supply and Delivery of 1- 10 Ton Crew Cab truck (chassis and cab)
- 10 Ton Crew Cab truck (chassis and cab) with fitted folding crane
- Option 1-Supply and Delivery of 1 - 32 Ton Tipper (Chassis and Cab);Option 2-Supply and Delivery of 2 - 32 Ton Tipper (Chassis and Cab)
- Request for Tender for the supply of Brine Saturation Station and associated works at Kilkenny County Council Machinery Yard, Hebron Industrial Estate, Hebron Road, Kilkenny

## **PUBLIC LIGHTING**

- Public Lighting Maintenance and Ancillary Services for the Counties of Kilkenny and Carlow
- Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project Eastern Region
- Multi-disciplinary Consulting Engineering Services to deliver stage (iv) to(v) inclusive of Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project - Eastern Region

## **ROADS ACTIVE TRAVEL**

- Engineering Consultancy Services (Technical) - North-Western Environs Cycle Routes
- Consultancy Services (Technical) - St. Kieran's Street & Market Yard Urban Enhancement Scheme
- Bridge Street/Flaggy Lane Callan Refurbishment and Traffic Management Schemes

## **ROAD DESIGN**

- TII VRS Programme 2021: Competition #1 for County Kilkenny
- Tender for Traffic Surveys for N24 Waterford to Cahir and N24 Cahir to Limerick Junction
- Archaeological Consultancy Services - Stages (i) - (iv) N24 Tower Road Junction Improvement Scheme, Piltown, County Kilkenny
- Abbey Road & Belmont Road Improvement Works at Ferrybank, Kilkenny - Engineer Led Design Consultancy Services
- N25 Waterford to Glenmore TII Phase 3 Design & Environmental Evaluation Ground Investigation Contract
- HD28 National Routes Retexturing Schemes 2021
- N76 Riversfield to Ahanure North Pavement Scheme
- South East Pavement Framework - N77 Oldtown to Ballyragget Pavement Improvement Scheme 2021
- N24 Section\_001 - N24 Section\_001 Mooncoin HD28 Scheme 2021
- N24 Section\_002 Mooncoin HD28 Scheme 2021
- Kilkenny City Ring Road HD28 Scheme 2021
- N77 Ballyragget Village to Ballynaslee Road Improvement Scheme

## SPECIAL PROJECTS

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### **Abbey Quarter**

Work on the implementation of the Abbey Quarter Masterplan has continued in 2021 with the completion of the Riverside Garden & Skate Park. Construction continues on the redevelopment of the Brewhouse Building including the Public Realm areas of Horse Barrack Lane and the Brewhouse Courtyard. Work has also commenced on the construction of the Mayfair Library.

Delays were experienced on these projects in early 2021 due to the COVID 19 related shutdown of all construction sites from January to April inclusive.

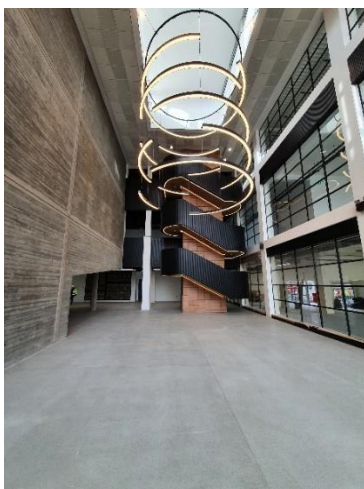
### **Kilkenny Abbey Quarter Development Ltd**

Development proposals for the buildings on the Abbey Quarter Site have been progressed by Kilkenny Abbey Quarter Development Partnership in 2021. This partnership between Kilkenny County Council and the National Treasury Management Agency through the Ireland Strategic Investment Fund (ISIF) has been established for the development of the building blocks on the former Smithwicks Brewery Site. The first of these buildings to be developed is the Brewhouse Building.

### **Brewhouse Building**

Work commenced on the construction of the Brewhouse Building in July 2019 with Mythen Construction appointed as main contractors for the project. Work has continued through 2021, although significant delays have been experienced due to the requirement to close the site from January to April 2021 to comply with COVID 19 restrictions.

With the reopening of construction sites in May 2021, there have also been subsequent delays as a result of staff absence due to illness/being close contacts with COVID 19 cases, unavailability of sub-contractors as a result of a COVID 19 related backlog of construction works and delays with the availability of materials. The project is now expected to be completed in Q1 2022, at which time the building will be handed over to the tenants for fit out. It is expected that the building will be occupied with office workers during the summer of 2022.







### **Abbey Quarter - New Buildings**

Work has commenced in 2021 on the design of the first new building in the Abbey Quarter site. This 'L shaped' building, located beside the Brewhouse will complete the boundary of the Brewhouse Courtyard. ABK Architects have been appointed by Kilkenny Abbey Development Partnership to design the building. The proposed use of the building will be office use with commercial or retail uses on the ground floor. The building design has been progressed to planning stage in 2021.



### **Kilkenny County Council**

Kilkenny County Council is responsible for the redevelopment of the former Mayfair Ballroom and the extensive areas of public realm in the Abbey Quarter Site.

### **Mayfair Library**

The new Kilkenny City Library is to be located within the Mayfair Building on the Abbey Quarter site. The Mayfair Building is a very significant building in the social heritage of Kilkenny having housed the Mayfair Ballroom from 1943 to 1973.

Duggan Lynch Ltd were appointed as main contractors for the Mayfair Library project in September 2021. The project has a 15-month programme and is due for completion at the end of 2022. It is expected that the new library will open in Q1 2023.



### Public Realm Areas

Kilkenny County Council are responsible for the development of the extensive areas of public realm areas in the Abbey Quarter Site with 60% of the former brewery site to be developed as public realm. The development of areas of High Quality Public Realm through the site is considered to be critical to the integration of the former Brewery site into the City Centre.

Funding for these works will be provided through the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) through the Designated Urban Centres Grant Scheme and Kilkenny County Council's own funds.



Tionscadal Éireann  
Project Ireland  
**2040**



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

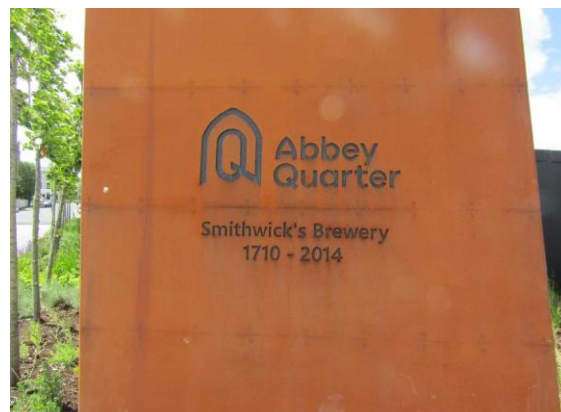


**European Union**  
European Regional  
Development Fund

### Riverside Garden Project incl. Skate Park

Work on the Riverside Garden and Skate Park was completed in 2021 following delays associated with the COVID 19 related shut down of construction sites. The Skate Park was opened for the May Bank Holiday weekend in 2021 with the Riverside Garden Project opening a few weeks later for the June Bank Holiday weekend.

The project was awarded the Overall National Award in the Urban Land Institutes Excellence in Placemaking Awards for 2021.







### **Horse Barrack Lane & Brewhouse Square**

The contract with Mythen Construction for the redevelopment of the Brewhouse Building includes for the redevelopment of Horse Barrack Lane and Brewhouse Square. These projects have been delayed due to the impact of COVID 19 and they are now due to be completed in Q1 2022.



### **Urban Street and Park Project**

Planning permission for the development of the Urban Park & Street project through the Abbey Quarter was granted by An Bord Pleanála in February 2021.

The Urban Park centred around the National Monument of St Francis Abbey will be the central focus of the Abbey Quarter Site and will be designed to accommodate outdoor events associated with the many festivals held in the City throughout the year. The development of the Urban Street which will be of pedestrian and cyclist priority will facilitate the development of the proposed new buildings within the Abbey Quarter Site.

The detailed design and preparation of tender documents have been progressed through 2021 and it is expected that work on the project will commence in Summer 2022.





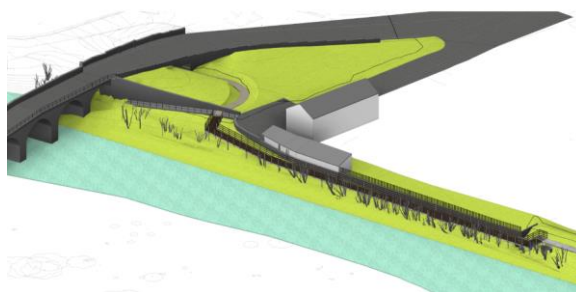
## Tea Houses

Conservation works on the two tea houses on Bateman Quay has been advanced in 2021 with a view to the buildings being brought back into use as part of the overall Abbey Quarter Development. The Tea Houses are located at a key entrance to the Abbey Quarter at the start of the Riverside Garden Project. The work which is being undertaken by Pat Tallis & Co. are due to be completed in Q1 2022. Expressions of Interest will be sought in 2022 for an operator for the Tea Houses.



## Greensbridge Boardwalk

With the completion of the Riverside Garden through the former Smithwicks Brewery site, the last missing link in the existing Riverside walks through the City Centre is a short 150m length of walkway immediately north of Greensbridge. A preliminary design for the walkway has been progressed in 2021 with a view to going to planning in 2022 for the project.



## Tholsel Project

Work on the detailed design of the Tholsel Project has been advanced in 2021 following the announcement of Failte Ireland Funding for the project. The Tholsel is to be renovated and will incorporate a new tourist visitor attraction and will provide for the opening of the basement and the clock tower to visitors. An Exhibition Design Team was appointed in late 2021 and work on the detailed design of the Exhibition will commence in 2022.



The project will provide a lift in the building making the building universally accessible and compliant with the requirements of the Disability Act and the Building Regulations.

## THOMASTOWN PROJECTS

### Sessions House



The Sessions House (former Courthouse) in Thomastown is currently being redeveloped by Kilkenny County Council for reuse by the Design & Craft Council of Ireland, with funding from the Rural Regeneration Fund, LEADER and Kilkenny County Council's own funds. The development offers the opportunity to provide a sustainable new use for the building whilst also promoting the vibrancy of Thomastown as a creative and artistic hub in the region.

Work on the development which is being undertaken by Richard McEvoy Contracting Ltd is due to be completed in September 2022.

### Thomastown Library

Thomastown Library which currently does not meet with the requirements of a modern-day library is to be relocated a short distance from its current location on Marshes Street to the adjoining former Community Sports Hall.

Funding for the project under the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund was confirmed in 2021. The detailed design of the project has been advanced in 2021 with a view to construction commencing in 2022.

