

# ÉACHTAÍ NA COMHAIRLE SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS 2019-2024



Kilkenny County Councillors  
AGM June 2019



Comhairle Chontae Chill Chainnigh  
Kilkenny County Council

*This document is prepared for information  
of the Elected Members only.*

*It does not contain all activities of  
Kilkenny County Council  
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# CATHAOÍRLAIGH DEN CÓMHAIRLE CHAIRPERSONS OF THE COUNCIL

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**2019 to 2020**

*Cllr. Peter Cleere*



**2020 to 2021**

*Cllr. Andrew McGuinness*



**2021 to 2022**

*Cllr. Fidelis Doherty*



**2022 to 2023**

*Cllr. Pat Fitzpatrick*



**2023 to 2024**

*Cllr. Michael Doyle*



# COMHALTAÍ TOFA - ELECTED MEMBERS

CALLAN - THOMASTOWN	CASTLECOMER	KILKENNY CITY	PILTOWN
 <p>Peter Cleere [FF]</p>	 <p>John Brennan [FG]</p>	 <p>Martin Brett [FG]</p>	 <p>Eamon Aylward [FF]</p>
 <p>Deirdre Cullen [FF]</p>	 <p>Mary Hilda Cavanagh [FG]</p>	 <p>John Coonan [FF]</p>	 <p>Tomás Breathnach [LAB]</p>
 <p>Matt Doran [FF]</p>	 <p>Michael Delaney [FF]</p>	 <p>Maria Dollard [GP]</p>	 <p>Fidelis Doherty [FG]</p>
 <p>Michael Doyle [FG]</p>	 <p>Pat Fitzpatrick [FF]</p>	 <p>David Fitzgerald [FG]</p>	 <p>Pat Dunphy [FG]</p>
 <p>Joe Lyons [FG]</p>	 <p>Denis Hynes [SF]</p>	 <p>Joe Malone [FF]</p>	 <p>Ger Frisby [FF]</p>
 <p>Patrick O'Neill [FG]</p>	 <p>Michael McCarthy [FF]</p>	 <p>Andrew McGuinness [FF]</p>	
		 <p>Eugene McGuinness [NP]</p>	

# COISTÍ UM BEARTAIS STRAITÉISEACHA STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEES

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

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

### MAIN POLICY ISSUES CONSIDERED

- Abbey Quarter Regeneration & Masterplan.
- Brexit.
- Conservation Grants.
- COVID Supports for Business.
- Decarbonisation Zone (DZ).
- Development Bonds.
- Developments at St Canice’s Campus in Kilkenny.
- City & County Development Plan 2021 – 2027 including Ministerial direction regarding windfarms.
- Kilkenny County Council Digital Strategy.
- Kilkenny County Council Tourism Strategy 2023 – 2028.
- Local Enterprise Development Plan (LEDP) – Monitoring.
- Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2016 – 2021 – Monitoring high level strategic economic actions.
- Adoption of Consideration and recommendation to adopt the LECP 2023 to 2028 Framework and 2023/2024 Implementation Plan Masterplan for Loughmacask.
- Night Time Economy Pilot.
- North Quays Strategic Development Zone (SDZ).
- Outdoor Recreation and Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS).
- Outdoor Seating & Accessories for Tourism & Hospitality Businesses Precision Agriculture Centre of Excellence (PACE).
- Service Level Agreement with Enterprise Ireland.
- South East Greenway.
- SUMP Process update.
- Taking in Charge (TIC).
- Tourism Development Supports and Work of Tourism Recovery Task Force.
- Urban Regeneration & Development Fund (URDF).
- Vacant Sites & Vacant Site Levy.

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

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

### MAIN POLICY ISSUES CONSIDERED

- Climate Change / Climate Action Plan
- Flood Relief Schemes
- Schools Safety Programme
- Road allocations / Road Ratings
- Roads Overview
- Role of SPC
- Water Services
- Roadworks Programmes
- Water Capital Projects
- Road Safety Plan
- Covid-19 Works
- Hedge Cutting
- Water & wastewater capacity
- Cycling Safety
- Active Travel
- Broadband
- Motorway Junction Parking
- Speed Limit Review
- Severe Weather Response & Flood Emergency Plan
- National Road Safety Strategy
- Wastewater collection for village settlements
- Water & wastewater capacity registers
- Update on PLEEP
- Rainbow Crossings & Sunflower Parking Spaces
- IW Leakage Reduction Programme
- IW Transformation
- Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP)
- Loughmacask Local Area Plan
- Radial Routes
- Braille Trail
- Northern Ring Road Extension & City Links
- Rural Transport
- Winter Maintenance Plan 2023/24
- Fleet Management
- Speed Limits
- Road Safety Plan 2022 - 2030
- Roads overview 2023

## SPC 3: Housing

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

### MAIN POLICY ISSUES CONSIDERED

- Acquisitions Policy
- Affordable Housing
- Allocations Policy (*Scheme of Letting Priorities*)
- Anti-Social Behaviour Policy
- Capital Projects Updates
- Choice Based Letting Scheme
- Differential Rent Review Scheme
- Homeless Policy
- Homeless Update
- Housing for All Action Plan
- Housing Disability Strategy
- Housing First – Own Front Door
- Incremental Purchase Scheme
- Pets in Apartments
- Private Housing Grants
- Right to Reside Policy
- Scheme of Letting Priorities
- Self Help Scheme
- South East Regional Homeless Action Plan
- Succession of Tenancy Policy
- Tenant Handbook



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

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

### MAIN POLICY ISSUES CONSIDERED

- Amenity & Graveyard Grants
- Animal Welfare Standards Committee
- Anti-Dumping Initiative
- Bring Centres and Textile Banks
- Burial grounds strategy - care and maintenance
- Carlow-Kilkenny Dog Shelter
- CARO - Climate Adaptation Action Plan
- Climate Action Plan
- Climate Action Update including the role of the Climate Action Co-Ordinator and the preparation of the new five year Climate Action Plan for Co. Kilkenny.
- Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019 - 2024
- Community Climate Action Fund
- Decarbonisation Zone
- Draft National Waste Management Plan
- Draft River Basin Management Plan
- Dunmore Civic Amenity Site
- Dunmore Recreational & Biodiversity Park
- EPA Local Authority Environmental Enforcement Performance Report
- EPA Water Quality Report
- European Climate Alliance
- Ferrybank Neighbourhood Park
- Historic Landfills Remediation Programme
- Horse Bye Laws 2020
- ISO 50001 Certification
- Kilkenny Greenway
- LAWPRO - Local Authority Water Communities Office
- "Lets Team Up to Clean Up" initiative
- Litter Management Plan
- 3 Bin Collection Service
- 4<sup>th</sup> National Biodiversity Action Plan
- Presentation and Approval of Draft Casual Trading Bye-Laws for the County
- Presentation on Review of Casual Trading Bye Laws for County Kilkenny
- Recommended Minimum Criteria for Environmental Inspections (RMCEI) updates
- St Kieran's Cemetery - Bye Laws
- Waste Management - Waste Bye Laws

## SPC 5: Community, Cultural & Fire Services

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

### MAIN POLICY ISSUES CONSIDERED

- Art Acts Grants
- Audit on Archaeological Landscapes
- CCFCS Grant Schemes
- Community Monuments Fund
- Community Projects and Grant Schemes
- County Heritage Plan 2023
- Creative Ireland Programme
- Creative Ireland Strategy 2023 – 2027
- Decade of Centenaries
- Disability Strategy
- Fire Safety Plan 2021-2026
- Fire & Emergency Operations Plan 2022 - 2026
- Healthy Ireland Programme
- Library Strategy
- Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2023 - 2028
- % for Arts Scheme
- Public Art Policy
- UcanACT - Urban ACTION for Cancer Prevention – European Project

# COMHCHOISTE PÓILÍNEACHTA CHONTAE CHILL CHAINNIGH KILKENNY COUNTY JOINT POLICING COMMITTEE

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



*Chairperson 2019 to 2021*  
*Cllr. Pat Fitzpatrick*



*Chairperson 2021 to 2023*  
*Cllr. Martin Brett*

## NUMBER OF MEETINGS

- 4 Meetings each year including a Public Meeting (*except during Covid*).

## MEMBERS OF JOINT POLICING COMMITTEE

Cllr. Tomas Breathnach  
Cllr. Deirdre Cullen  
Cllr. Fidelis Doherty  
Cllr. Michael Delaney  
Cllr. Michael Doyle  
Cllr. Pat Dunphy  
Cllr. Pat Fitzpatrick  
Cllr. Denis Hynes  
Cllr. Joe Lyons  
Cllr. Andrew McGuinness  
Cllr. Joe Malone  
Cllr. Mick McCarthy  
Cllr. Patrick O'Neill

Chief Superintendent Anthony Pettitt, *Kilkenny Garda Station*  
Superintendent Aidan Brennan, *Kilkenny/Thomastown Garda Station*  
Sergeant Peter McConnan, *Kilkenny Garda Station (Retired 2023)*  
Deputy Jennifer Murnane  
Deputy Kathleen Funchion  
Deputy John McGuinness  
Deputy John Paul Phelan  
Deputy Malcolm Noonan  
Samual Morgan, *PPN*  
Helena Power, *PPN*  
Gerard Ferris, *PPN*  
Colette Murphy, *PPN*  
Marion Acreman, *Kilkenny Chamber*  
Anthony Morrisson, *Vintners Association*

## SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS

- Active Travel Initiatives
- Animal Welfare
- Annual Reports
- Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy 2020 -2025 & Presentation
- Community CCTV in Urlingford
- Community Drugs Initiatives in conjunction with Kilkenny G.A.A, Schools & College

- Community Engagement /Policing Partnerships
- Community Text Alert
- Crime Statistics, Gardai Stewardship, Traffic and Road Safety
- Divisional Protected Service Unit/Victim & Community Office
- Draft Kilkenny Road Safety Plan 2022 - 2030
- Draft Road Works Programmes
- Drug Awareness Steering Group – New Sub Committee set up
- Drugs Initiative - An Garda Síochana & GAA
- Freshford to Tullaroan Road - Improvement Works update
- Garda Youth Project/Achievement Awards
- Kilkenny City CCTV
- Kilkenny Integration Strategy 2021-2023
- Local Policing Partnerships
- Lock Up – Light Up.
- National Slow Down Day
- National Youth Awards 2021
- New Divisional Policing Model
- Online Fraud & Cyber Security
- Operation City Safe
- Operation Surround
- Project Connect – Health Service Executive’s Presentation
- Project EDWARD – European Day Without A Road Death
- Property Marking Ireland- Submission
- Speed Limits Review
- Taxi Text Alert
- Traffic Core Presentation

# POLASAITHE/PLEANANNA/FODHLÍTHE

## POLICIES/PLANS/BYE LAWS

The following Policies, Plans and Bye Laws were adopted by Elected Members of Kilkenny County Council during the years 2019 to 2024.

<b>Annually</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Annual Financial Statements</li> <li>▪ Audit Reports</li> <li>▪ Borrowings</li> <li>▪ Budget- Revenue &amp; Capital</li> <li>▪ Local Property Tax</li> <li>▪ Part VIII of the Planning &amp; Development Projects Road Works Schemes</li> <li>▪ Service Delivery Plans</li> <li>▪ Winter Maintenance Plan</li> </ul>
<b>September 2019</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024</li> <li>▪ Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019-2024</li> <li>▪ Strategic Policy Committee Scheme 2019-2024</li> </ul>
<b>November 2019</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Corporate Plan 2019 – 2024</li> </ul>
<b>January 2020</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Standing Orders for Strategic Policy Committees</li> </ul>
<b>June 2020</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Scheme of Letting Priorities</li> </ul>
<b>November 2020</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Standing Orders</li> <li>▪ Polling Scheme for County of Kilkenny</li> </ul>
<b>December 2020</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy 2020-2025</li> </ul>
<b>January 2021</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hedge Cutting Policy</li> </ul>
<b>March 2021</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Migration Integration Plan</li> <li>▪ Control of Horses Act 1996 Bye Laws 2020</li> </ul>
<b>September 2021</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ County &amp; City Development Plans 2021 - 2027</li> </ul>
<b>November 2021</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Own Front Door Procedure</li> </ul>
<b>January 2022</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Fire &amp; Emergency Operations Plan 2022-2026</li> </ul>
<b>March 2022</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Casual Trading Bye-Laws 2021</li> </ul>
<b>September 2022</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Self Help Scheme Policy</li> </ul>
<b>December 2022</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Policy on Pets in Local Authority Social Housing Apartment Accommodation</li> </ul>
<b>February 2023</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Scheme of Priority for Affordable Dwelling Purchase Arrangements</li> <li>▪ Abbey Quarter Conservation Management Plan</li> </ul>
<b>June 2023</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Loughmacask Masterplan</li> </ul>
<b>July 2023</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Succession Policy</li> </ul>
<b>October 2023</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Right to Reside Policy</li> <li>▪ Scheme Letting Priorities</li> </ul>
<b>November 2023</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Choice Based Letting</li> <li>▪ Special Speed Limit Bye – Laws</li> <li>▪ Disability Inclusion Strategy 2023</li> </ul>
<b>December 2023</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Southeast Regional Homeless Action Plan 2023-2026</li> <li>▪ County Kilkenny Road Safety Plan 2022 – 2030</li> <li>▪ Kilkenny Tourism Strategy 2023-2028</li> </ul>
<b>February 2024</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Callan &amp; Thomastown Local Area Plans – extended to 2027</li> <li>▪ Climate Action Plan 2024 - 2029</li> </ul>



# **DIRECTORATE OF CORPORATE & INFRASTRUCTURE**

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



**2019 CORPORATE EVENTS**



**TAOISEACHS VISIT TO THE ABBEY QUARTER SITE**



**RECEPTION FOR COMHALTAS CEOLTOIRI EIREANN MULLINAVAT**



**LAUNCH OF THE ABBEY QUARTER**

## 2019 CORPORATE EVENTS



CIVIC RECEPTION FOR CARTOON SALOON



CIVIC RECEPTION FOR VICKY PHELAN RIP



COMMEMORATION OF THE 1ST DAIL



## 2019 CORPORATE EVENTS



CIVIC RECEPTION FOR THE ORDER OF MALTA VOLUNTEERS



CIVIC RECEPTION FOR GARDA CAROLINE O BRIEN

## 2020 CORPORATE EVENTS



ANNOUNCEMENT OF GRAND MARSHAL AIDAN FOGARTY FOR ST. PATRICKS DAY FESTIVAL



LAUNCH OF CITY BUS

# 2021 CORPORATE EVENTS



KILKENNY DAY 2021



LAUNCH OF YULEFEST 2021

## 2022 CORPORATE EVENTS



HOMECOMING FOR KILKENNY SENIOR HURLING TEAM



COVID REMEMBRANCE CEREMONY



ST. PATRICKS DAY PRIZE GIVING RECEPTION

## 2022 CORPORATE EVENTS



HOMECOMING FOR ALL IRELAND WINNING SENIOR CAMOGIE TEAM



CIVIC RECEPTION HELD FOR INTERNATIONAL AWARD WINNING VIOLINIST AND CONDUCTOR PATRICK RAFTER



KILKENNY DAY



OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE RESTORED TEAHOUSES



NATIONAL DAY OF COMMEMORATION

## 2023 CORPORATE EVENTS



MAYORS CYCLE



NATIONAL DAY OF COMMEMORATION  
JULY



CIVIC RECEPTION HELD FOR THE KILKENNY SENIOR HURLING TEAM 2022 AND  
THE KILKENNY SENIOR CAMOGIE TEAM 2022



ANNOUNCEMENT OF ST. PATRICKS DAY GRAND  
MARSHAL



ST. PATRICKS DAY FESTIVAL

## 2023 CORPORATE EVENTS



LAUNCH OF KILKENNY FULL FORWARD 2030



CIVIC RECEPTION HELD FOR BISHOP NIALL COLL



CIVIC RECEPTION HELD FOR SPECIAL OLYMPIANS GEMMA HAIRE AND MARGARET TURLEY

## ACMHAINNÍ DAONNA - HUMAN RESOURCES

**Human Resources** - 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.

**Workforce Planning and Staffing Levels** - The Human Resources Department co-ordinates the ongoing management of the Workforce Plan, managing new entrants, staff transfers and staff departures in conjunction with line management colleagues. Staffing numbers were as follows:

Year Ending	Headcount	Whole Time Equivalent
31 <sup>st</sup> December 2019	691	581
31 <sup>st</sup> December 2020	668	565.84
31 <sup>st</sup> December 2021	604	569.3
31 <sup>st</sup> December 2022	606	575
31 <sup>st</sup> December 2023	625	596

**Recruitment:** Total Number of competitions held during the year were as follows:

Year	Number
2019	28
2020	22
2021	24
2022	44
2023	54

**Training & Development** - a comprehensive Training Programme is delivered annually which incorporates Mandatory training, Health and Safety training, Third Level Learning Programmes and in-house training workshops.

A sample of these courses are:

- Abrasive Wheels
- Banksman
- Climate Change
- Confined Spaces
- Customer Care
- Dealing with Violence & Aggression
- First Aid Response
- Forklift Driver
- GDPR
- Leadership Training
- Library Services Training
- Local Government Studies
- Manual Handling
- Occupational First Aid
- Safepass
- Staff Induction
- Supervisory Management

**Number of Staff who undertook Training Courses:**

Year	No. of Training Places (completed successfully)
2019	2,124
2020	2,000
2021	1,470
2022	2,064
2023	2,973



### **Other Achievements:**

- The Superannuation function for the Council was successfully transferred to MyPay, the Local Government Shared Services Provider in January 2019.
- The Human Resources Department commenced a new Human Resource Data analytics sub-programme in 2020 which will provide data to aid effective decision making in human resource management and operations management.
- In 2020 Recruitment moved to Video Interview Format due to Covid 19 restrictions and a significant increase in the delivery of online training modules.
- The Summer Student & Lifeguard Programme continues to be a success each year with Litter Picking, Gardening and other seasonal work carried out. Circa 20 Lifeguards carried out their duties throughout the County over the summer months from 2019 - 2023.
- Kilkenny County Council participated in the annual Careers Fair from 2019 - 2023.
- The Human Resources Department is successfully implementing the e-recruitment process with all competitions now administered online via submit.com.
- Kilkenny County Council's Employee Wellbeing Strategy 2023 - 2026 was launched in October 2023 with funding received to help develop, delivery and improve wellbeing within Kilkenny County Council.

Kilkenny County Council promotes and supports the employment of people with disabilities and we exceed the public sector target of 3% as set out in the Disability Act.

# FEABHSÚCHÁIN AR BHÓITHRE & SCÉIMEANNA SÁBHÁILTEACHTA AR BHÓITHRE ROAD IMPROVEMENTS & ROAD SAFETY SCHEMES

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The following outlines the major road schemes delivered in County Kilkenny during the period 2019 to 2023, under the current five-year term of the Council.

- **The N25 New Ross Bypass Scheme** was approved by An Bord Pleanála in December 2008. The Scheme included the construction of sections of both the N25 and N30 routes. The PPP Project comprised works of approximately 16km: 14.8km of dual carriageway (*N25 and N30 routes*) and 1.2km of single carriageway (*New Ross N30 route*). Three at-grade roundabout junctions at Glenmore (N25), Ballymacar Bridge (N25) and Corcoran's Cross (N30) and a compact grade separated junction at Camlin (R733) was also constructed as part of the scheme. The River Barrow crossing is by way of a 3-tower extrados bridge and the structure will extend for approximately 900 metres from Pink Point in County Kilkenny to Stokestown in County Wexford.

Works commenced on site in February 2016. The scheme was officially opened on the 29<sup>th</sup> January, 2020. Following a public consultation process the bridge was named the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Bridge.



- Under the **National Road Network Pavement & Minor Improvement Scheme** in excess of over €14.05m has been spent to undertake strengthening and improvement works during the period 2019-2023 on National Primary and Secondary Road Network. The roads addressed included the N76, N77, N78, N10, and the N24. In total 25.5km of National Primary and National Secondary Routes and 9 roundabouts have been treated.
- Under the **TII Safety Works (HD15)** on the National Road Network, two controlled pedestrian crossings, one uncontrolled crossing and safety improvements at three junctions on Kilkenny Road, Castlecomer have been substantially completed at a cost of €0.25m. It is expected works will be completed by early Q2 2024.
- **N77 Ballyragget to Ballynaslee Minor Improvement Scheme**  
A contract signing event officiated by Cathaoirleach of Kilkenny County Council Cllr. Michael Doyle took place on the 29<sup>th</sup> of January 2024 in the presence of Cllr. Michael Delaney Chairperson of the Castlecomer Municipal District and invited guests. Construction of the scheme commenced on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2024 with an expected 12-month time frame.

The completion of this project will realise an improvement scheme objective identified within the City & County Development Plan 2021-2027. The total cost of the project is approximately €13.3 million.

The contractor is Fox Building and Engineering Ltd and supervision during the construction phase will be undertaken by Barry Transportation Ltd.



- **N24 Carrick Road Minor Improvement Scheme**

Simultaneous applications to An Bord Pleanála for 177AE Planning Approval and Compulsory Purchase Order Approval was made on the 25<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

An Bord Pleanála decision on the scheme is expected towards the end of Q1 2024.

The scheme is a national primary route minor works scheme of approximately 2.2 km in length. The scheme commences just west of Mooncoin Village and extends 2.2 km to tie in with the existing N24 Piltown Fiddown Bypass. It is also intended to extend pedestrian and cyclist facilities. The carriageways will be upgraded.

The Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) along the scheme is estimated at 7,600 vehicles.

The objective of the scheme is to eliminate a number of substandard bends that exist on the N24 commencing just west of Mooncoin Village and continuing on to that section of the N24 known as the Piltown Fiddown Bypass, thereby improving safety and travel times over this section of the N24.



▪ **N78 Castlecomer Pedestrian Bridge**

The Castlecomer Footbridge was officially opened on the 28<sup>th</sup> January, 2022 by Cllr. Fidelis Doherty, Cathaoirleach of Kilkenny County Council, in the presence of the Cllr. Pat Fitzpatrick, Chairman of the Municipal District of Castlecomer and the Elected Members of Kilkenny County Council. The bridge links the town of Castlecomer to the Discovery Park. The bridge was 100% grant funded by Transport Infrastructure Ireland with the overall cost was in excess of € 1.7m.



*View of New Footbridge*



*Night View of Footbridge*

▪ **N24 Tower Road Improvement Scheme**

This was a Safety Scheme and included the following works:

- Upgrade of the Tower Road junction to a compact grade separated junction including an overbridge spanning the N24 national road.
- Removal of existing Tower Road roundabout and replacement with a new roundabout to the North West of Piltown Tower.
- New 750m link road connecting the Ink Bottle Junction to the Tower Road junction with closure of the Ink Bottle Junction access to the N24.
- A connection to the local access road at the south of the bridge and the N24. This road will have a junction onto the new link road beside of the new bridge.
- Widening of the current 2+1 N24 carriageway to a 2+2 carriageway for 1.8km.

Substantial completion of the scheme is expected by mid-February 2024. Landscaping and snagging works will continue beyond that time for a number of weeks.



*Overhead drone footage of the compacted grade separated junction.*

- Under the Multi-Annual Non-National Roads Restoration and Maintenance Programme from 2019 up to the end of 2023 in excess of 330km will have been reconstructed and approximately 430km surface dressed throughout the County at a combined cost of in excess of €54 million. This work will ensure improved skid resistance and extend the pavement life of the improved sections of network.
- The Council in collaboration with local communities under the Community Involvement Scheme have from the period 2019 up to the end of 2023 carried out 46 road improvement schemes on the Local Tertiary network.
- Under the Local Improvement Scheme, for the period 2019 up to the end of 2023 the Council again in collaboration with local communities carried out 48 improvement and reconstruction projects on non-public accommodation roads and private lanes.
- Under the Low Cost Safety Improvement Scheme accident cluster sites are identified for treatment on the Regional and Local Road Network. For the period 2019 up to the end of 2023 approximately 77 sites on the Non-national Road Network have been treated at a combined cost of approximately €1.8million. The works generally provide for setting back of roadside boundaries, installation of signage and road-marking, traffic calming features, pedestrian crossings and in more recent times VMS and vehicle activated speed detection signs. Before and after studies of the targeted sites have shown a substantial reduction in accidents.
- Non National Road Allocations 2019 – 2023

YEAR	Allocation
2019	€12,678,250
2020	€14,948,195
2021	€16,795,195
2022	€16,981,877
2023	€17,767,860
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>€79,171,347</b>

- **LIHAF:** Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Deputy Darragh O’Brien, T.D., visited Kilkenny in September 2021 and officially opened the Kilkenny Western Environs Infrastructure Project (*now known as the Breagagh Valley*).

This new road will service an area of 140 hectares (*350 acres*) of land zoned for housing, schools and social infrastructure in a location within easy reach of Kilkenny City Centre.



*Minister Darragh O’Brien, T.D. with Cathaoirleach, Mayor, Elected Members and Project Team.*

*Low Cost Safety Scheme Station Road Ballyragget*



*Before*



*After*

*LCAS Bateman Quay 2020*



*Before*



*After*

*R700 Bennetsbridge LCAS 2020*



*Before*



*After*

*Grannagh Junction 2020*



*Before*



*After*

### Bridge Rehabilitation Grant

Under the **Bridge Rehabilitation Grant** Scheme a concentrated effort was made to carry out bridge rehabilitation works on the Regional and Local Road network. From the period 2019 up to and including this year it is expected that over 92 bridges will have been improved. The scope of the works varied from general rehabilitation, widening of the bridge cross-section to full reconstruction. Some of the key projects carried out under this scheme included bridge strengthening and rehabilitation works at Old Ennisnag Bridge, Kilmacow Bridge and Coolraheen Bridge. Emergency works were also carried out at Ballynoon Bridge on the R704 following a bridge failure.



*Ballynoon Bridge - R704 -Emergency Works*



*Kilmacow Bridge – Strengthening and Rehabilitation Works*



*Coolraheen Bridge – Strengthening and Rehabilitation Works*



*Old Ennisnag Bridge – Strengthening and Rehabilitation Works*

### **Road Safety Working Together Group (RSWTG)**

During 2023 Kilkenny County Council established a Road Safety Working Together Group (RSWTG), chaired by Cllr. Matt Doran and comprising representatives from the RSA, Ambulance Service, TII, Elected Representatives, Fire Service, An Garda Síochána, Director of Roads & Transportation, Cycling Officer, Road Safety Officer and Roads Engineering Staff.

The group had their inaugural meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> November, 2023 and agreed the adoption of Kilkenny's ROAD SAFETY PLAN 2022 – 2030 which sets out Kilkenny's aims and objectives for road safety in line with the Government's Road Safety Strategy – Vision Zero.

The adopted Road Safety Plan was presented to SPC2 – Road Transportation and Mobility on 7<sup>th</sup> December, 2023 and was launched at the Council Meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> December, 2023.





## Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project

Kilkenny County Council are the Lead Local Authority for the Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project for the Eastern Region comprising Kilkenny, Carlow, Offaly, Tipperary, Wicklow, Westmeath, Meath, Kildare and Louth. The project is delivering the survey of the existing 125,000 luminaires, the design of the new lighting system to the European design standards including upgrading of the electrical circuits and the separation of the Local Authority assets from the ESB networks, and the installation of 80,000 new high efficiency LED luminaires.

The project will deliver energy saving of between 60-70% with the associated reduction in emissions. This will contribute to Kilkenny County Council achieving its legal requirements in relation to the 2030 and 2050 Climate change mitigation obligations. The Project will bring additional environmental improvements by reducing light pollution, the use of “warm white” colour light and having the right light in the right place at the right time.

The Contract for the survey, design and installation works was awarded to Killaree Lighting Services- ASD lighting Joint Venture in August 2022 and the Contract Administration contract was awarded to Arup RPS Consulting Engineers.

The Survey works are completed in Kilkenny, Carlow, Offaly, Tipperary and Wicklow (65,000 assets), the design works are completed in Kilkenny, Carlow and Offaly and installation works have commenced in Kilkenny with over 900 luminaires changed to LED and the balance of the 4,500 luminaires will be completed in 2024.



## Flood Relief Schemes

Works have continued on both the Ballyhale and Graiguenamagh/Tinnahinch Flood Relief Schemes.

A Section 177AE application together with a CPO application as made to an Bord Pleanála for the Ballyhale Flood Relief Scheme in May of 2023. A decision is awaited.

Stage 1 of Graiguenamagh/Tinnahinch Flood Relief Schemes has continued and Site investigations are nearing completion on site. OCB Geotechnics Ltd commenced both land and in-stream works in Summer 2023. Ayesa Consulting Engineers prepared initial draft scheme and drainage drawings.



*Site investigation works at The Quay, Graiguenamagh*

Two further schemes (*Freshford and Piltown*) were approved in 2023 as pilot schemes that will assist with their delivery of these and the remaining schemes in Thomastown and Inistioge. The pilot is being progressed in Kilkenny and Donegal in consultation with the OPW.

## Minor Works Schemes

Investigative works were completed in both Callan and Ardalo as part of the minor flood works programme. Applications have now been made to complete the identified infrastructure works.

# Kilkenny City

Some of the many schemes progressed in Kilkenny City are detailed below:

Footpaths New & Improved within Kilkenny City - 2019
Abbey Street Paving
Ballyfoyle Road link to Brooklawn
Medieval Mile Footpath at Irishtown
Bennettsbridge Footpath
Assumption Place footpath
Dominic Street realignment
Old New Park



Footpaths/Pavements Works New & Improved within Kilkenny City - 2020
Bennettsbridge Footpath
Walkin Street/Old Callan Road Footpath
Gaol Road/St. Rioch Street
Barrack Lane
Bohernatounish Footpath
Lover's Lane
College Road & Leggettsrath Footpath



Footpaths/Pavements Works New & Improved within Kilkenny City - 2021/2022
Rath Ullard
Glendine Heights
Old Callan Road
Sion Road
Dean Cavanagh Place
Castlecomer Road



Rath Ullard



Glendine Heights



**Footpaths/Pavements Works New & Improved within Kilkenny City - 2023**



- St. Fiacres Place
- Dominic Street
- Talbots Grove
- Westfield
- Marble Crest



**Kilkenny City Bus Service**



- Provision of Bus Stops around the City
- Construction of New Bus Stop Cillin Hill
- Construction of Set Down Area St. Lukes



**Miscellaneous Works - 2020**

- Restoration of City Walls at Abbey Street
- Laneway from Dublin Rd to Bishop Birch Place
- Rose Inn Street & High Street One Way
- Outdoor Seating Market Yard
- Stephen Street to Fatima Lane



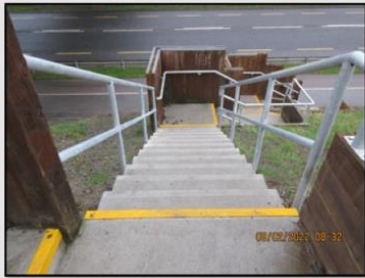
**Miscellaneous Works – 2021/2022**

Car Road Rioch Street to Gaol Road

Steps from Ring Road to Ballyfoyle Road

Circular Road to Old Callan Road

Willow Close Laneway



**RING RD TO BALLYFOYLE RD STEPS**



**CIRCULAR RD TO OLD CALLAN RD**



**WILLOW CLOSE**

**Kilkenny City Bus Service**

Installation of New Bus Shelters



**LARCHFIELD**



**KILKENNY BUSINESS & TECHNOLOGY PARK**



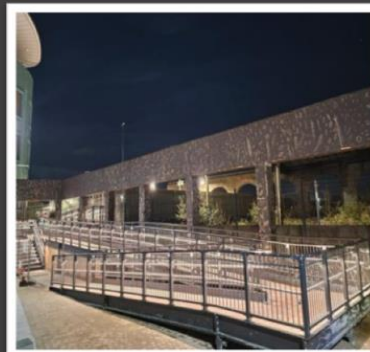
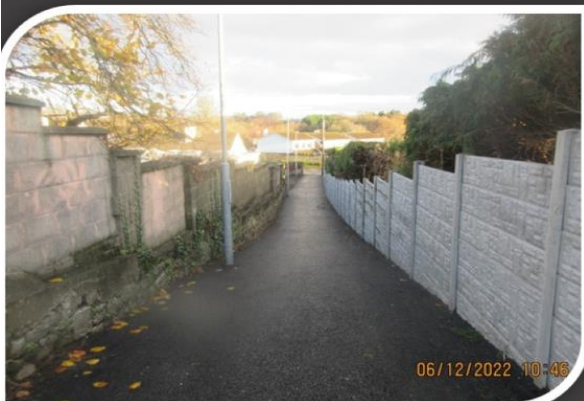
**Miscellaneous Works - 2022**

McDonagh Junction Ramp Link

Laneway at Willow Close

Provision of Seating on Patrick Street

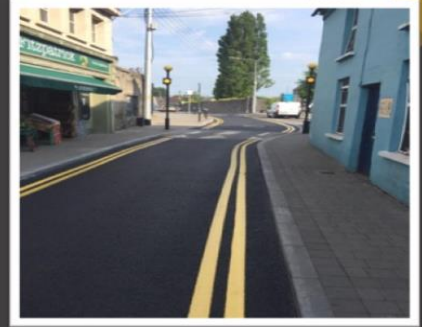
NewPark Fen Seating



*Kilkenny*

**Pedestrian Crossings & Ramps 2020**

Ballybought Street  
 High Hayes Terrace  
 Gaol Road Junction  
 Dean Street,



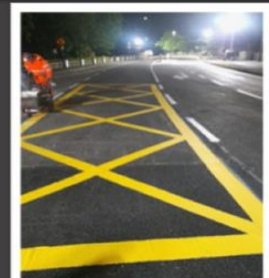
**Shared Surface Works**

Drakelands  
 Dunningstown Road  
 Springhill



**Major Improvements Works**

Ormonde Street  
 New Street/College Road/Ormonde Road  
 Dean Street Improvements  
 Freshford Road Resurfacing Works



**Major Improvements Works**

Rath Ullord Surfacing

Dominic Street

Patrick Street



**Traffic Calming Measures 2020**

Speed Reduction Ramps in many Estates

Clongowen

Stephen Street

Riverside Drive

Talbotsinch Village

Waterbarrack Roundabout Mobility Improvements



**Clongowen Estate**



**Stephen Street**



**Riverside Drive**



**Talbotsinch Village**

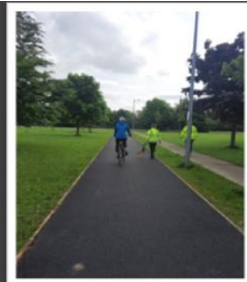
**Active Travel Works**

Pococke Upgrading Works

Public Lighting Improvements –  
Drakelands, Melville Heights, Lintown Hall

Ourath Road Zebra Crossings

Pennyfeather Way Crossing



**Miscellaneous Works - 2023**

Street Name New Signage

Canal Walk Well Repair

Belly Bing Wrapping



**New Christmas Lighting 2023**

St. John's Street Upper & Lower

Rose Inn Street

Parade Junction



**New Christmas Lighting 2023 contd...**

6m Tree on Canal Square

10m Tree on the Parade

Patrick Street & Ormonde Street.



## Works Completed 2019-2023

Thomastown and Inistioge Construction completed on the amalgamation of both water schemes. The upgraded Thomastown Water Treatment Plant now supplies water to the Thomastown, Inistioge, The Rower and surrounding areas. The existing Water Treatment Plant at Ballygub is decommissioned.

Kilkenny City Regional Water Supply Scheme - Construction on the upgrade of the Kilkenny City RWSS commenced in early 2022 with approximately 80% of the overall construction works completed by the end of 2023.

The works to the existing Troyswood Water Treatment Plant will increase the daily production capacity from 8MLD (*mega litres per day*) to 19MLD (*19 million litres/day*).



*Kilkenny City RWSS – New Clarifier & Rapid Sand Filter*

## National Certificate of Authorisation Programme (NCAP)

The Wastewater Treatment Plant in Kilmoganny has been selected by Uisce Éireann for upgrade works under the National Certificate of Authorisation Programme (NCAP). The upgrade works are at planning application stage as of December 2023.

## Small Towns and Villages Growth Programme

The Bennettsbridge Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) upgrade project, part of the Small Towns & Villages Growth Programme (STVGP) is currently in the concept design phase. Data collection for the design has been collated and a number of ecological and other surveys have been completed.

Data collection and analysis (*UÉ Project Stages 1 and 2*) for the Paulstown Wastewater Treatment Plant commenced during 2023.

## Kilkenny Main Drainage - Satellite Dewatering Centre

Construction works on this project were completed in June 2023. The existing wastewater treatment plant can now accept and treat wastewater sludge for all other wastewater treatment plants located in County Kilkenny



*Kilkenny City & Environs Wastewater Treatment Plant Purcellsinch  
Completed Sludge Import & Tank Installation Works*



## Mains Rehabilitation Works 2019-2024

- *Fatima Place BYS*: 400m HDPE watermain + 85 backyard services. Completed Q1 2021.
- *Jerpoint, Thomastown*: 450m HDPE watermain. Completed Q3 2021.
- *Knocktopher Village*: 1,250m HDPE watermain. Completed Q2 2022.
- *Michael St, Kilkenny*: 250m HDPE watermain + 25 backyard services. Completed Q2 2022.
- *Slieverue Village*: 1,200m HDPE watermain. Completed Q4 2022.
- *Carrickmourne, Thomastown*: 3,250m HDPE watermain. Completed Q1 2023.
- *St. Fiacres Place BYS*: 600m HDPE + 99 backyard services. Completed Q2 2023
- *Dublin Rd, Thomastown*: 1400m HDPE watermain. Completed Q2 2023.
- *Rathduff Reservoir to Norelands WTP*: 4,270m HDPE watermain + 2,800m Ductile Iron rising main. Completed Q3 2023.
- *Annamult, Bennettsbridge*: 2560m HDPE watermain. Completed Q4 2023
- *R700 Bennettsbridge*: Killarney Cross – 2435m HDPE watermain. Completed Q1 2024.
- *Leggatsrath Cottages BYS*: 210m HDPE watermain + 99 backyard services. Completed Q1 2024



*Construction of Ductile-Iron Rising Main Norelands WTP - Rathduff Reservoir*

## Disinfection and Source Protection Programme 2019-2014

- 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 projects completed at the following sites:
  - Gorteen WTP (2022)
  - Jamestown WTP (2023)
  - Callan WTP (2023)



*Disinfection Programme works at Gorteen WTP*

## Kilkenny Pilot Welfare Programme

- Programme targeted at addressing specific health, safety and welfare issues as a pilot programme in Kilkenny.
- In conjunction with UE, Welfare Facilities and ancillary works carried out at following assets in Kilkenny:
  - Clogh WTP
  - Ballyragget WTP
  - Gowran WTP
  - Bennettsbridge WTP
  - Callan WTP



*New Welfare Facility installed at Loon Water Treatment Plant*

### Pressure Management Programme

- Two new pressure reducing valves (PRV's) were installed in Kilkenny City in 2021.
- PRV's work by reducing pressures on an automatic basis, reducing network pressures at various times of the day.
- PRV's have instant impacts on leakage rates and long-term impacts on network burst frequencies.
- Estimated 15% reduction in burst frequency.
- Smaller scale PRV's installed at Inistioge, Ferrybank and Thomastown 2022-2023.



*Installation of PRV in Kilkenny City February 2021*

### Find & Fix Programme

- Planned and structured program where find crews use network information to streamline efficiencies with finding leakage.
- Improved network visibility from 45% in 2020 to 90% in 2023, resulting in improved information on high leakage areas.
- In 2023, rollout of a trial leak acoustic listening system. This entailed the installation of 1,500 smart listening devices into the water network in the Kilkenny City, Callan and Castlecomer town areas.



*Find & Fix Leak repair at Kilcross, Inistioge*

### First Fix Programme

- Cold calling resumed in 2022 after Covid-19 restrictions lifted.
- Each Customer is entitled to one initial fix on the private side once consent is provided to Uisce Eireann (UE)/Regional Contractor (RC) to undertake the repair
- Repair must be outside the footprint of the house
- These works help to improve supplies for all customers on the scheme and reduce wastage of water.



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

**Director of Services:  
Mr. Sean McKeown**



## FORWARD PLANNING

### **Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021-2027**

One of the most important functions of the Council is to make a Development Plan every six years and the Council adopted its City & County Development Plan for the period 2021-2027 in September 2021. The Development Plan is a hugely significant document, as it sets out the overall core (settlement) strategy, zoning and other objectives for the sustainable development of the City & County, including in particular how the Council proposes to cater for the projected population growth of an additional 11,000 people by 2027, to include the housing, commercial, social, amenity and infrastructural needs.



The process took longer than expected, owing mainly to the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020. The Plan involved a comprehensive process of consultation and engagement, and the Forward Planning Section developed an interactive overview of the Plan, using an Innovision website, to present a Virtual Public Exhibition which included a synopsis of each chapter of the Draft Plan.

Over 350 people attended the online events and 463 submissions were received on the Draft Plan.

Following the in-depth consideration of all submissions, the Chief Executive submitted a report to the Elected Members with recommendations on how to address the issues raised.

The Councillors considered the Chief Executive's report and agreed to a number of material alterations to the Draft Plan. These were placed on display for a further period of public consultation, including using the Consult online portal. A total of 628 submissions were received at this stage.

A further report issued from the Chief Executive to the Elected Members which addressed the issues raised in the submissions.

Following extensive deliberation, the Kilkenny City and County Development Plan for 2021-2027 was adopted at a Special Meeting held on 3rd September, 2021.

The Plan forms the policy context for all planning decisions in the City and County to the end of 2027.

### **2 Year Review of the Development Plan**

The "Two Year Progress Report on securing objectives in the Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021-2027" was published in November 2023. This concluded that the Council has made significant progress in implementing some of the most strategic and far-reaching objectives of the current Plan, and the progress only marks the beginning of what is to be achieved over the full six years of the Plan.

### **Local Area Plans**

The Thomastown and Callan Local Area Plans were adopted in March 2019. This followed a comprehensive public consultation and engagement process, including consultation events and the receipt of over 60 submissions.

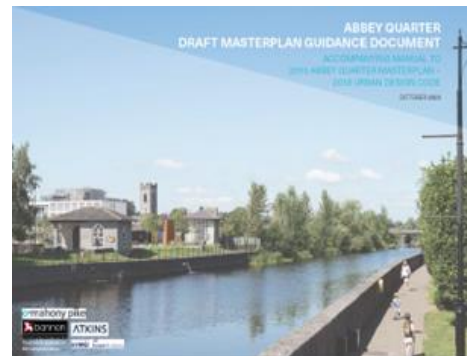
The Graiguenamanagh-Tinnahinch Local Area Plan was adopted in 2021. This was jointly prepared by Kilkenny and Carlow County Councils. Public consultation events were run jointly by the two Councils and a total of 35 submissions were received to the making of the Plan.



## Masterplans

The Council brought forward a number of Masterplans over the last 5 years to complement the statutory plans in place. Masterplans provide an opportunity for a more detailed spatial planning analysis of specific areas of the City and County. They provide guidance on land use, infrastructure, and design elements in a more granular manner, and integrate various sectors, such as transportation, housing, commercial development and environmental considerations. The process of preparing the Masterplans involved extensive community engagement and stakeholder consultation.

The Abbey Quarter development is the largest regeneration project ever undertaken by Kilkenny County Council. The project involves the redevelopment of a 15-acre brownfield site as a seamless extension of Kilkenny City Centre, to encompass new commercial space (*upwards of 2,500 additional people working in the new Quarter*), retail, residential (*150+ new housing units to be delivered on site*), education and community uses. 60% of the site will be transformed by new public realm, for which the Council are responsible and the remaining 40% will comprise commercial elements to be delivered by a 50:50 partnership company between the Council and Ireland's Strategic Investment Fund (ISIF).



Given the scale of the regeneration it will be delivered in a number of phases and the Council adopted a Masterplan in 2015, following an extensive period of public consultation articulate the vision and guide the regeneration.

Phase 1 of the regeneration is complete with 12 public realm projects delivered, including a Riverside Park that won an Excellence in Placemaking Award in 2021. The first commercial building is fully occupied by three major companies, employing over 400 staff. Phase 2 of the public realm has secured approval, and a planning application has been submitted for the second commercial building. The project is regarded as an exemplar by ISIF and the Department's URDF Unit. A Review of the Abbey Quarter Masterplan was undertaken to ensure it remained fit for purpose and to provide for the following:

- Extend the masterplan area to include sections of Vicar Street, Greens Bridge Street, Sweeney's Orchard and lands to the rear of the Smithwick's Experience.
- Incorporate updated National and Local Policy Guidance - in particular Climate Action and Housing.
- Further consult with the public and other stakeholders now that the first phase of the regeneration is now complete, to assess sentiment on the appropriateness and progress of the vision of the development to date.
- Review the 2018 Urban Design Code in the context of development undertaken to date.
- Review of building form, frontages and mix of uses.
- Review of the economic viability.
- Review of mobility and access in the context of the above policy and sentiment.
- Review and update the proposed phasing of the development. - taking account of progress to date.
- Introduce Development Management requirements to accommodate in particular Housing delivery and active travel.
- Consolidate all relevant objectives for design proposals into one Guidance Document.

A Review of the Abbey Quarter Master Plan in Kilkenny City was completed in 2023.

Masterplans were also completed for the Loughmacask Neighbourhood in Kilkenny City and for Urlingford.

## LOUGHMACASK

### MASTERPLAN

A distinctive and new residential City Quarter, physically and culturally connected to the historic City of Kilkenny and its surrounding landscape.

June 2023



Presently the Council have engaged consultants to carry out masterplans for several smaller villages and towns, namely Paulstown, Ballyragget and Kilmacow.

A Masterplan for St. Canices HSE site in Kilkenny City is also being prepared by the Council presently.

Consultants have also been appointed to carry out Cluster Housing Design Guidelines for County Kilkenny. These documents will all be finalised in 2024.

### Planning Applications Received

Year 2019	Year 2020	Year 2021	Year 2022	Year 2023	Total
976	935	1,054	837	880	4,682

The Council seamlessly transitioned to ePlanning in 2023, marking a significant modernisation and streamlining of the planning process. The ePlanning Project is an online system through which planning applications can be made and through which applicants are kept updated on the progress of their application. The project aims to improve efficiency, reduce paperwork, facilitate greater public participation, reduce the potential for invalid applications and deliver on the government strategy to move more public services online. As at the end of 2023, almost 70% of all planning applications were submitted on the ePlanning portal. Paper applications are still accepted and the same timelines apply.

## Planning Enforcement Complaints Received

Year 2019	Year 2020	Year 2021	Year 2022	Year 2023	Total
116	104	119	92	96	527

## Vacant Sites

Kilkenny County Council was one of the few local authorities to proactively use the Vacant Sites legislation to activate lands zoned for residential purposes. Over the last 5 years over 50 sites were targeted across the City and County, leading to 23 sites being activated by landowners. Of these, a total of 14 sites had permission for residential development, with the potential to deliver over 630 housing units. To date 255 housing units have been completed on these sites and another 348 have commenced. A further 28 units will commence construction in the near future. This confirms the success of the proactive approach adopted by Kilkenny County Council.

## The RZLT

There was seamless integration of the new Residential Zoned Land Tax (RZLT), to replace the Vacant Sites Levy from 2025, into the Planning work schedule with production of mapping requirements within the scheduled time frame. This will be an annual requirement going forward.



## Residential Zoned Land Tax (RZLT)

## Conservation

The Council distributed over €1.6 million in conservation grant funding over the last 5 years, which in turn levered in excess of €1.4 million of private sector investment in worthy projects across the County.



Year 2019	Year 2020	Year 2021	Year 2022	Year 2023	Total
€263,000	€280,025	€372,024	€432,042	€244,910	€1,592,001

## Building Control

### Commencements Notices

Year 2019	Year 2020	Year 2021	Year 2022	Year 2023	Total
297	319	434	336	307	1,693

### Disability Access Certs

Year 2019	Year 2020	Year 2021	Year 2022	Year 2023	Total
56	85	54	72	67	334

## Taking in Charge

Year 2019	Year 2020	Year 2021	Year 2022	Year 2023
<b>5 Developments</b>	<b>4 Developments</b>	<b>10 Developments</b>	<b>4 Developments</b>	<b>12 Developments</b>
Chapel View Stoneyford	Ard Glas, Ban Ard, Grainin, Tuar Na mBlath, An	Roseleigh, Pollrone, Mooncoin	Kiln Lane, Clashacollare, Callan	Lakeside Housing Estate Lakeside
Hunter's Wood, Newmarket	Grianan, An Cuainin - Abbeylands, Ferrybank,	Whitescastle, Whitescastle Lower, Knocktopher	Seville Rise (Phase1), Margaretsfield, Callan Road, KK	Cycleway/Walkway Rioch Court, Kilkenny College Park, Kilkenny Abbeygate, Ferrybank
Inis Alainn, Fiddown	Kingscourt, Bolton, Callan	Friary Walk, Phase 1 & 2, Clashacollare	The Paddocks (Phase1), Gowran	Blackchurch Square, Inistioge Breagagh Court, Kilkenny Patricks Gate, Kilkenny The Belfry, Thomastown Friarshill, Graiguenamanagh
Archersfield, Kilmoganny	Glenvale, Ballyragget	Brookefield, Ballyhale	Filbuckstown, Mooncoin	Ardmillan, Thomastown Steps into Linear Park, Talbotsinch
Kilfera Court, Kilfera	Cois na Bearu, Graiguenamanagh	Rath Ullord, Phase 1, New Orchard  Haven Court, Ballyragget  Bellfield, Abbeylands, Ferrybank  Banagher Court, Main St, Piltown  The Green, Ballyfoyle  Newpark Crescent, Golf Links Rd, KK		

Some of the estates were completed by the developer, but in other cases the Council have been instrumental in carrying out improvement works by successfully claiming funds from Bonds and carrying out the necessary improvement works to bring the estates to a standard to enable taking in charge.

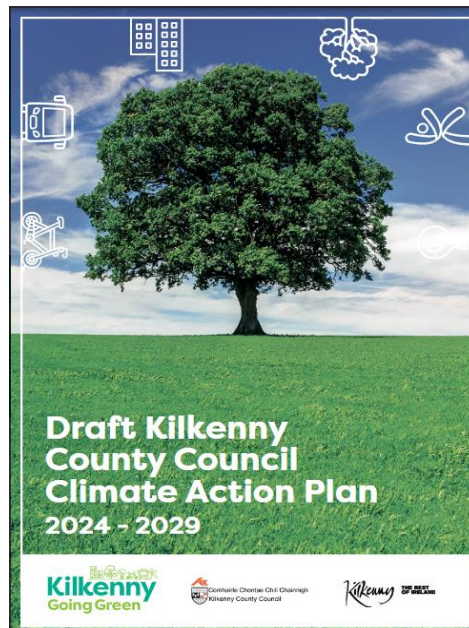


# TIMPEALLAUGHT - ENVIRONMENT

## Climate Action

Over the last 5 years, the Council has been proactive in responding to the impacts of climate risk, including:

- Completed reporting on the *Kilkenny County Council Climate Adaptation Plan (2019-2024)*.
- Established a new *Climate Action Office* within the Environment Section of the Council, comprising 4 members of staff, dedicated to supporting climate action delivery with the local authority.
- Established the Kilkenny County Council *Climate Action Steering Committee*, a cross departmental committee to support the preparation and implementation of the Kilkenny County Council Climate Action Plan.
- The inaugural *Kilkenny County Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2029* was adopted by the Elected Representatives at the Council Plenary on 19<sup>th</sup> February, 2024. The Plan sets out how Kilkenny County Council will respond to the climate crisis by improving energy efficiency, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and embedding climate resilience across the organisation. It also addresses how the Council will adopt a leadership role in the County by supporting local communities, businesses and other stakeholders to take climate action.



## Education & Awareness

- The Environmental Awareness Officer (EAO) is continuing to assist schools around the County to renew their membership as part of the Green Schools programme under their respective themes- Litter and Waste, Energy, Water, Travel, Biodiversity and Global Citizenship.
- The EAO continues to support 92 schools as part of the An Taisce Green Schools Programme to renew or attain a flag. Green schools is an international environmental education programme, offering a well-defined, controllable way for schools to take environmental issues into the curriculum and apply them to the day-to-day running of the school. Green schools is a holistic, long-term programme and has a two-year cycle in relation to preparation, assessment and attainment of a particular flag.
- Kilkenny Tidy Town Committees have a long tradition of participating in the Supervalu Tidy Towns Competitions. There were 27 entrants in 2023 showing an increase on years 2022 and 2021. In 2023, Kilkenny City won Gold and became the South East Regional Winner and was only 2 points off the national winner. Our Tidy Towns committees around the County work tirelessly in enhancing the appearance of our towns and villages and contribute a sense of place in making Kilkenny an attractive place to live, work and visit.
- Some of the investments made by Kilkenny County Council in the last 5 years include:
  - The installation of solar compacting bins in Kilkenny City, Callan, Thomastown and Graiguenamanagh.
  - The replacement of street litter bins in the Municipal Districts.
  - Supported communities to eliminate litter at waterside amenity locations across the County during the summer season.



- Kilkenny has a wow factor that is the envy of other Irish counties. Kilkenny City is recognised nationally as a litter free location, regularly winning medals in the IBAL and Tidy Towns competitions and even being awarded the much-coveted title of overall Tidy Towns national winner on two occasions. The County-Wide ‘Team Up to Clean Up’ initiative which took place in March 2023, brought together residents, businesses, and local organisations to collaborate in a mass effort to enhance the cleanliness and sustainability of our County. The weekend event created a fantastic sense of community ownership and pride by engaging participants in a variety of cleanup activities, awareness campaigns and environmental educational programs. The initiative created a sense of ownership and focus for many communities, with significant additional interest by many groups and individuals outside of national campaigns, such as the annual National Spring Clean which takes place during the month of April.



All cohorts of society engaged resulting in the “Team Up to Clean Up” exemplifying best practice in the areas of social inclusion and environment. Over 200 groups registered and took part in the initiative which was generously co-sponsored by PRL, Glanbia/Tírlan, Panda, Dawn Meats and the John O’Shea Trust.

- Projects completed under the Local Authority Prevention Network (LAPN) Fund over the last 5 years, include:
  - Re-cycle the Bicycle Project whereby children’s bikes were repaired/ serviced for primary schools to facilitate the Sprocket Rocket programme. This programme facilitates junior and senior infants to learn how to cycle and is supported by the re-use hub located at Dunmore Recycling Centre, which weather proofed the stone building for storage of recycled and reusable materials.
  - The “Waste Not, Want Not” Project undertaken in conjunction with the Council’s Art Office. This project facilitated collaboration with partners to identify and utilise waste streams exploring repurposing and upcycling of waste materials with members of the public. This will continue in to 2024.

## Waste

- The Environment Enforcement Team took part in a number of Multi-Agency initiative’s including Operation Thor and inspections of unauthorised End of Life Vehicle (ELV) sites.
- Kilkenny County Council promoted “Waste Week” each year to highlight the waste services provided by the Council and to promote information resources available to the public to assist them to manage their household waste. A promotional film of Dunmore Recycling & Waste Disposal Centre was launched on social media.



- Activity at Dunmore Civic Amenity Site increased during the last 5 years with the Site offering a number of initiatives, such as bulky furniture drop off days and mattress drop off days under the Anti Dumping Initiative.



Year	Municipal Solid Waste (tonnes)	Municipal Dry Waste (tonnes)	Recyclable Material (tonnes)
2019	2,069	936	1,433
2020	2,078	744	1,702
2021	2,034	964	1,579
2022	1,715	893	1,355
2023	1,786	973	1,333

Materials (in tonnes) transferred from Dunmore CAS 2018-2023

- The Environment Section carried out door to door inspections under the County Kilkenny Waste Management Bye-laws to check how households are disposing of their waste.

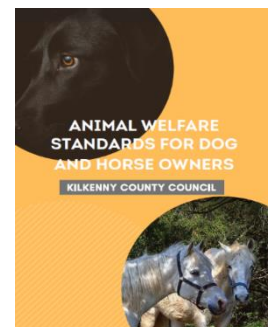


*Staff completing door to door inspection 1*

- The Council provides and manages 46 Bring Bank Recycling Centres across the City and County. Environment staff continue to work very closely with the service provider to ensure the collection service is in keeping with demand.
- The Council were successful in prosecuting a number of significant waste cases under the Waste Management Acts.
- The Council continues to have an excellent working relationship with the Waste Enforcement Regional Lead Authorities (WERLA) Southern Region. WERLA was established to support the waste enforcement actions of local authorities, setting priorities and common objectives for waste enforcement and ensuring consistency of enforcement of waste legislation.

### **Environment**

- The Council established a new Animal Welfare Standards Committee to provide monitoring and oversight in the operation of the Council's Animal Welfare Standards for dogs and horses.
- The Council adopted new Bye-Laws for the Control of Horses in the County of Kilkenny incorporating horse exclusion zones within the city core.



- Kilkenny County Council carried out works to help conserve and protect two medieval churches and graveyards in the Thomastown area under the Community Monuments Fund, provided by the Department of Housing, Heritage and Local Government.

*The Thomple Historic Church and Graveyard*

- February 2023 saw the beginning of works on the closed landfill at Dunmore to repurpose its topography as a Countryside Park for use by the public. The project was overseen by Kilkenny County Council Parks Department and facilitated by the Environment Section and staff at the Dunmore Site. The park officially opened on December 15<sup>th</sup> 2023.



*Proposed layout of Dunmore Biodiversity 1*

- The Council provided Lifeguards at traditional swimming areas across the County. While there are no bathing waters in County Kilkenny where the Bathing Water Quality Regulations apply, there are a number of river locations that have traditionally been used by swimmers during the summer months and the Council provides lifeguards at these locations.



*Thomastown Weir Pool 1*



*Casual Trading Bay at Inistioge 1*

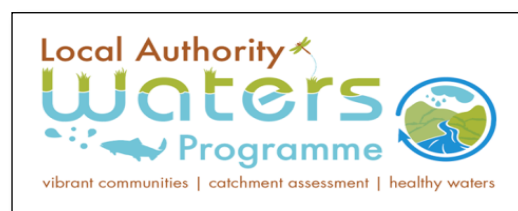
- The Casual Trading Bye-Laws 2021 for the Municipal Districts of Castlecomer, Callan Thomastown and Piltown were adopted and came into operation in 2022. These Bye-Laws made available 20 designated Casual Trading Bays.
- The construction of the Columbarium Wall and all associated site works was completed at St. Kieran's Cemetery in 2023. A total of 100 niches are available within the Columbarium wall units in the garden, with the option to add more unit's subject to future demand.



*Columbarium Wall - St. Kieran's Cemetery 1*

## Air, Noise and Water

- Kilkenny County Council implemented the Noise Action Plan 2019-2023.
- 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). LAWPRO is working to identify issues affecting water quality in every county in Ireland. Nationally, the RBMP requires LAWPRO to focus on achieving water quality improvements in priority areas for action (PAAs). These are the areas where the greatest pressures on water quality exist. One of the greatest pressures is agriculture. LAWPRO, in conjunction with Teagasc and Dairy Industry Ireland secured €60m under Water European Innovation Partnership (EIP) – the largest EIP project ever secured in the history of the state. The EIP is aimed at helping farmers to implement measures to reduce losses of nutrients, sediment and pesticides from agricultural lands.
- The Council established a location for a new EU grade air quality monitor. This monitor is to be erected in the car park of the Watershed which is surrounded by major roadways and residential areas in an effort to better understand the Cities air quality.



## Environment Complaints

All environmental complaints received are logged for investigation by the Environmental Enforcement Officers. The nature of these complaints ranged from littering, illegal dumping and water quality to abandoned cars. The vast majority continued to relate to littering and illegal dumping. The total number of complaints received has been declining year on year since 2020.

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
<i>Number of Environmental Complaints Received</i>	1,035	1,317	1,204	983	938

# CLÁR UISCÍ NA NÚDARÁS ÁITIÚIL

## LOCAL AUTHORITY WATERS PROGRAMME

### Key Achievements 2019-2024

Kilkenny County Council has a pivotal role in safeguarding water quality through regulation and monitoring to ensure water quality and public health for local communities. The Council takes its responsibilities seriously in this regard and continued along with Tipperary County Council to provide the Local Authorities Water Programme (i.e. LAWPRO) shared service on behalf of the local authority network nationally. LAWPRO operates as a national Water Framework Directive (WFD) office, fostering cooperation between local authorities and relevant public bodies to improve water quality and meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive.

LAWPRO led on the local public consultation at Municipal District level nationwide for the River Basin Management Plan for Ireland (RBMP) 2018 – 2021 and the current RBMP 2022 -2027, which is at draft stage. LAWPRO significantly expanded its role, functions and staff base over the period 2019 – 2024, and is now leading on a €60 million EU and Government of Ireland funded Water EIP (*European Innovation Programme*), project to support farmers implement specific measures with water quality benefits. Below are some of the highlights of the work of LAWPRO over the last 5 years:

- **ASSAP Collaboration**

The Agricultural Sustainability, Support and Advisory Programme (ASSAP) was established as a collaborative initiative involving Teagasc and the dairy industry to address the impact on water quality from dairy sector activities. It is funded by DAFM, DHLGH and Dairy Sustainability Ireland and 2019 was the first full year of the collaboration. ASSAP is coordinated with LAWPRO on both a national and a regional basis.

- **Launch of the Blue Dot Programme**

LAWPRO launched the national Blue Dot Catchments Programme in 2019, with a dedicated Blue Dot scientist to coordinate activities and an oversight steering group.

- **Draft River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2022-2027**

The Draft River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2022-2027 was published in September 2020 for a six-month public consultation. LAWPRO delivered a local level public consultation process in 2021 and 2022 to engage communities on the draft Plan and increase public knowledge of water policy implementation structures. Meetings were held in collaboration with Kilkenny PPN and in the Castlecomer, Thomastown, Piltown and Kilkenny City Municipal Districts.

- **Stories from the Waterside**

Stories from the Waterside was a national competition held during COVID-19 Lockdown in May 2020, to help people cope and promote the value of local waters. Almost 500 stories were submitted with 20 prize winners selected. Those winners and a further 18 stories were published in the *Stories from the Waterside* book which was launched in Kilkenny during National Heritage Week 2020 by Minister of State Malcom Noonan, T.D. to mark Water Heritage Day.



*Minister of State Malcolm Noonan, T.D. launches Stories from the Waterside book.*

*LtoR: Sean Keating, former Director of Services LAWPRO, Ann Phelan, Community Water Officer for Kilkenny, Minister Malcolm Noonan, T.D., Dr Fran Igoe, Regional Coordinator, LAWPRO, Colette Byrne, former Chief Executive, Kilkenny County Council.*

- **GAA Green Club Programme**

The Green Club Programme is a partnership between the GAA, LGFA and Camogie Association and Local Authorities across Ireland. LAWPRO is a member of the working group and is partnering with Irish Water to deliver a holistic approach for the water theme, incorporating water quality, conservation, water supply and wastewater. The programme was launched on 9<sup>th</sup> December, 2020, with 45 clubs taking part in the pilot stage. Phase 1 was completed in 2022, with the participation of over 30 clubs and Phase 2 in 2023 and 2024 with an additional 75 clubs, representing all 32 counties.



*Official launch of the GAA Green Clubs Phase 2 Programme in Croke Park, 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2022. Pictured from LAWPRO are Sheevaun Thompson, Bernie White and Tom Carolan with the then Uachtarán Cumann Luthchleas Gael, Larry McCarthy.*

- **Water European Innovation Partnership (EIP)**

LAWPRO, in partnership with Teagasc / ASSAP and Dairy Industry Ireland (DII), is leading a European Innovation Partnerships (EIP) project, with €50m over 5 years in grant payments to farmers and €10m over 5 years for operational costs, funded by DHLGH and DAFM. The project specifically focuses on reducing losses of phosphorus, nitrogen, sediment and, where relevant, pesticides to water from agricultural lands by promoting the adoption of innovative best practice in nutrient management, the application of nature-based Natural Water Retention Measures (NWRM) and other suitable measures at the farm level following the principals of Integrated Catchment Management (ICM) and science.

The LAWPRO Community Water Officer (CWO) for Kilkenny, Ann Phelan, led a wide variety of community events across Kilkenny in the period. Events are held each year to mark significant national campaigns including World Wetlands Day, World Water Day and Water Heritage Day. Events to mark significant local festivals or to celebrate particular water features within the locality are also supported by our CWO. Events held in Kilkenny include:

- World Water Day 2023 – Anglers and the River with Nore River Catchment Trust and IFI, Castlecomer.
- Biodiversity Week 2023 Keep Kilkenny Beautiful Bio-blitz at Kilkenny Castle.
- Biodiversity Week 2023 Nature Paddle with Nore River Catchment Trust and Kilkenny Aqua Canoe Club.
- Water Heritage Day 2023 - Eels of the River Nore with NRCT and IFI, Inistioge.
- Water Heritage Day 2023 - Barrow Safari with Eanna Ni Lamhna, The Hub Graiguenamanagh, August.
- Buffer Wetland Workshop & Construction Mark O’Brien’s Farm, Breagagh Catchment, with Nore River Catchment Trust, Teagasc and Feidhlim Hearty, May and July 2023



- Wild Child Day 2021 and 2022 – Eel Watching and Monitoring Inistioge.
- Boat Trips on the River Nore 2022
- Lingaun River Walk and history of the valley 2022.
- Castlecomer Bio-blitz on the River Dinin 2022
- A Water Heritage Day event was run in 2022 at the Outdoor Activity Hub in Graignamanagh Co Kilkenny, called the River Barrow Safari with Éanna Ní Lamhna.
- Launch in Kilkenny of a national Eco Showboat project by Minister Noonan in the grounds of Kilkenny County Council in August 2021
- Water Heritage Day 2021, Éanna Ní Lamhna led a wildlife safari along the River Barrow in Graiguenamanagh and Minister Noonan opened the Outdoor Activities Hub in Graiguenamanagh.



*River Barrow Safari with Éanna Ní Lamhna L to R: John Grace (participant), Éanna Ní Lamhna, Ann Phelan – LAWPRO*

The Community Water Development Fund aims to fund projects that will bring about improvements in water quality and/or raise public awareness of the value of good water quality and how to improve it. It aims to build community capacity in water related challenges, working together to improve water quality. The Fund is administered by the Local Authority Waters Programme on behalf of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. The following Kilkenny projects were awarded grants under the CWDF between 2019-2023:

- Capacity funding was provided for the Nore River Catchment Trust over the period.
- 2021 - €5607 to School of Looking Limited for an Eco Showboat Fresh Water Ecology Awareness Expedition.
- 2021 - €1,600 to Castlecomer Tidy Towns group for the Castlecomer Biodiversity Action Plan 2021-2025.
- 2021 - €5,749 to Keep Kilkenny Beautiful for Outdoor Classrooms for Kilkenny City – River Bregagh and Newpark Fen.
- 2022 - €2,000 to Thomastown Community Rivers Trust for infrastructure repair, installation and facilities upgrade at the Weir Swimming Pool.
- 2023 - €1,250 to Barrow Valley Community Development for survey and installation of nest boxes.
- 2023 - €4,000 to the Acorn Project for the development of a tree strategy for the Nore Catchment.
- 2023 - €8,242 to Nore River Catchment Trust for the design of a wetland at the Old Water Barracks field, Kilkenny City.

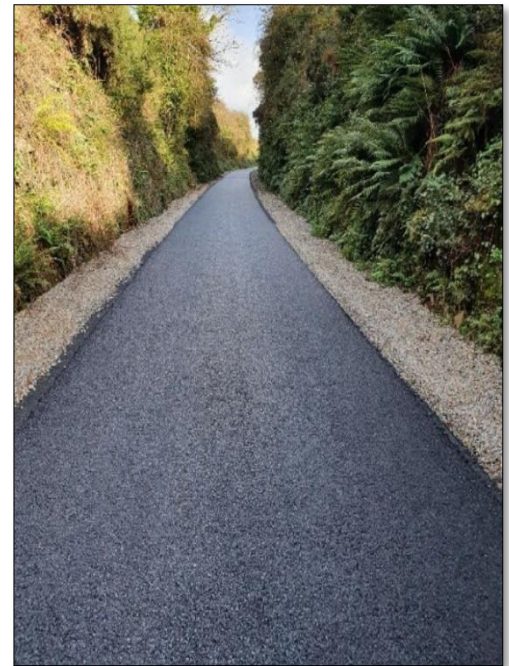
## PROJECTS

### South East Greenway

The construction of the South East Greenway, over a length of 24km has progressed significantly over the past 5 years. In July 2023, Phase 1 - a 6km section from New Ross to Glenmore, was officially opened to the public and over that period to the end of the year c.27,000 people were counted using this new amenity.

### Greenway Related Projects

Greenway Link to Glenmore: Part 8 Planning was approved in 2023 and a funding application under the Rural Regeneration Development Fund (RRDF) was submitted recently to advance this project to detail design, land acquisition and construction stage. The funding application also incorporated the provision of a new Pink Rock Cycle Loop, which would offer Greenway users travelling from the New Ross end with the option of cycling back on an alternative route along the scenic River Barrow.



*Greenway Link to Slieverue:* The Feasibility and Route Selection Report were completed in 2023. It is anticipated that the planning process will commence in 2024.

*Woodstock (Inistioge) to South East Greenway Link:* The Tender Assessment and Recommendation Report for Technical Consultancy Services to identify and progress a route to planning has been approved by Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII).

### Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS)

Over the past 5 years significant investment has been made under the ORIS to improve outdoor recreational facilities across the County to:

- (a) enhance the quality of life of people living in the County and
- (b) to develop an enhanced tourism offering that will support sustainable economic development in rural areas.

Since 2019 over 40 projects have been progressed and the completion of same will see an investment of c.€4.5million, details provided hereunder:

### Measure 1 Applications

- Freshford Loop Walk Upgrade Phase 1 & 2 - Completed.
- Tory Hill Walking Trail Improvement Scheme - Completed.
- Social media marketing campaign to promote Woodstock Estate 2019 to 2023 - Ongoing.
- Outdoor Kilkenny Brand social media marketing campaign 2019 to 2023 - Ongoing.
- Cois Bearbha Riverside Loop Walk Upgrade in Goresbridge - Completed.
- Brandon Hill Walking Trail Signage Upgrade- Completed.
- Nore Valley Walk Signage and Trail Furniture Upgrade - Completed.
- Development of Community Loop Walk Network - Johnstown, Stoneyford & Skeoughvasteen - Completed.
- Upgrade & Extension of Castlecomer Discovery Park Elf Trail - Completed.
- Tory Hill, Summit Upgrades - Completed.
- King's River Walk Enhancement Scheme, Kells - Completed.
- The Bishops Meadows - River Nore Swimming Area Enhancement Scheme - Completed.
- Silaire Wood, Graiguenamanagh - Walking Trail Extension - Completed.

- Windgap Village Loop - Repair & Enhancement of Walking Trail – Completed.
- Dock Road to Barrow Valley Outdoor Activity Hub, Graiguenamanagh - Pedestrian/Cyclist Connectivity Link Upgrade – Completed.
- The Mooncoin Rose Walk – Development of Community Walk – Completed.
- Castlemorris Woodland Trail Repair & Enhancement Scheme – Completed.
- The Wood Road to the River Barrow Amenity Area, Graiguenamanagh - Pedestrian Connectivity Link- Completed.

### Measure 2 Applications

- Outdoor Activity Hub & Motorhome Aire, Graiguenamanagh, construction of new roadside boundary to Brandondale House to facilitate new access road to service site – Completed.
- Abbey Meadows – Callan Walking Trail Enhancement Works, refurbishment of pedestrian bridge over Kings River and upgrading of signage and furniture along trail – Completed.
- Silaire Wood, Gariguenamanagh, Replacement of 450lin.m boardwalk and restoration of existing loop walk. – Completed.
- Poulanassy Waterfall, provision of visitor carpark and walking trail development – Completed.
- Woodstock Estate, construction of Woodstock Waterfall Loop Walk – Completed.
- Woodstock Gardens – Accessibility Enhancements – Completed.
- West Court, Callan, construction of walk on lands adjoining the Kings River. The new walk will form part of the Moat Field and Abbey Meadows Loop Walk – Completed.
- Castlecomer Discovery Park – Rehabilitation of The Ardra Loop Walk and Arboretum Walk- Completed.
- Millennium Forest - Trail Enhancement and Accessibility Scheme – Design and Tender Docs completed, works to commence 2024.
- Jenkinstown Wood – Walking Trail Rehabilitation Scheme - works commenced Q1 2024.



### Measure 3 Applications

- Woodstock Estate – Rehabilitation to Woodstock Loop Walk and Ladies Loop Walk and enhancement of main entrance – Completed.
- Kilkenny Countryside Park – Development of new 24 acre Park on site old landfill in Dunmore – Completed.
- River Nore Linear Park - Lacken Walk Timber Boardwalk Replacement Scheme – Design and tender docs completed, works to commence Q2 2024.

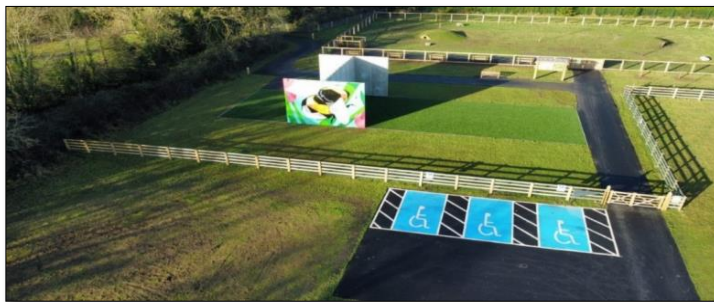
### Project Development Measure Applications

- Castlecomer Discovery Park Masterplan plus Planning & Design for Free Activity Attraction – Near completion.
- Kilkenny to Ballyragget & Castlecomer Greenway Link - Phase 1 - Kilkenny City to The Kilkenny Countryside Park - Feasibility Study, Route Selection Report & Planning. To be tendered.
- Kings River Boardwalk and Pedestrian Bridge, Kells, Co. Kilkenny- Design & Planning - To be tendered.
- Brandon Hill Summit Walk – Upland Trail Enhancement Scheme – Design & Planning - To be tendered.

## OTHER PROJECTS

### Kilkenny Countryside Park

In December 2023, the new Kilkenny Countryside Park at Dunmore was officially opened to the public. This project sees the development of a new Countryside Park on the site of the now closed municipal landfill at Dunmore, which occupies an area of circa. 24 acres and is located just 5km north of Kilkenny City Centre.



The new Park offers visitors three themed trails:

- (i) the Mass Path Trail, which starts at Dunmore Village.
- (ii) an Accessibility Trail and
- (iii) a Biodiversity Trail.

The new Park also provides a myriad of other attractions including two ball walls, a bespoke viewing area, play and exercise equipment and novel relaxing spaces that include hammocks, and loungers along with Kilkenny's first dedicated dog-friendly enclosure. The new Park was approved planning back in 2021, sees an investment of c.€1.2 million into Kilkenny's newest large scale amenity offering. The funding to deliver this project was secured from the Department for Rural and Community Development, under the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme and the Community Recognition Funds, along with Sports Capital funding and the Council's own funds.

### Ferrybank Neighbourhood Park

Ferrybank Neighbourhood Park was officially opened 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%). More recently work has commenced on the construction of a new Multi-use Games Area (MUGA) funded through the Sports Capital Programme and the Councils own funds and it is anticipated that this new amenity will be opened to the public in Q2 2024.

### Castlecomer Discovery Park

In 2022, The Ardra Loop Walk and Arboretum Walk in the Castlecomer Discovery Park was officially re-opened by Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys T.D.

The works were funded under the ORIS and consisted of the rehabilitation of 2.5km's of trails including with the installation of new trailheads, waymakers and interpretive signage along with the provision of age friendly seating along the trail. The Council continue to work with key stakeholders in terms of the preparation of a Masterplan for the Park to sustain and develop same into the future, and it is anticipated that this Plan will be completed in Q3 2024.



### Partnership Projects (Kilkenny LEADER Partnership & Community)

- Barrow Valley Outdoor Activity Hub & Motorhome Aire, Graiguenamanagh - Delivery of Access Road and on-site infrastructure to service new Campervan Aire and Activity Hub - Completed.
- South East Greenway - Connectivity to Glenmore and Sileverue - Feasibility & Route Options Report - Completed.

- Nore Valley Link - Bennettsbridge – Thomastown - Route Options Report - To be completed end Q1 2024.
- Bennettsbridge Riverside Amenity Area - Feasibility and Design Option Report - To be completed end Q1 2024.
- The Graiguenamanagh Men’s Shed, Retro-fit and refurbish the disused toilet block on the Convent Road to facilitate a new workshop for the Graiguenamanagh Men’s Shed.
- Woodstock – Link to SE Greenway - Route Options Report – Completed.
- Callan Heritage Trail - Develop trail and interpretative signage showcasing Callan’s rich build and cultural past.



- Abbey Hall Recreational Area, Graiguenamanagh- Rehabilitation of outdoor amenity spaces across two levels including the installation of a multi-games sports surface, bringing a much loved public amenity in the heart of the town back into use for public enjoyment.



*Before Playing Area*



*After Playing Area*

**Slieverue Linear Park**

In June 2023, Slieverue Linear Park was officially opened, much to the delight of the big crowd in attendance, including many excited local school children. The new Park has been designed to promote an open space where both people and biodiversity can flourish. It includes a central pathway that forms part of a wider walking route within the village, natural woodland play and exercise equipment, seating areas, an outdoor class room with blackboard and a basketball area. Surrounding these features the Park evolves into a more natural setting with a strong focus on native biodiversity planting and wildflower meadows.



## Woodstock Gardens & Wider Estate

There has been considerable success in attracting capital funding to preserve this unique amenity and to enhance the visitor offering, culminating in an investment of over €1,000,000 in past five years. Some of the key developments include:

- Rehabilitation of the 3.5km of Victorian Pathways, namely the Woodstock and Ladies Loop Walks.
- The development of the 2.7km Woodstock Waterfall Loop Walk.
- Surface restoration of the Monkey Puzzle Avenue and Noble Fir Avenue.
- Enhancements to Woodstock Main Entrance.
- Provision of tented outdoor dining area.
- Significant enhancements to Tea Room and outdoor patio.
- Development and roll-out of social media promotion campaign.
- Provision of new Ice-cream parlour offering to complement Coffee Truck.
- Positive accessibility and age friendly interventions including the provision dedicated parking area, wheelchair accessible play components in playground, seating, trail surface improvements and the purchase of an Electric Wheelchair Accessible Mobility.
- New seating and pergola area.
- Toilet Block upgrade.



In addition to the above, works continued on the day-to-day maintenance of the Gardens and Aboretum and the culmination of these works has significantly added to the offering of the area and will help sustain and grow the local economy into the future.

## Playgrounds

Technical assistance and funding supports were continued to be provided to local communities to aid in the development of new playgrounds and since 2019 7 new playgrounds were provided in the following locations Freshford, Ferrybank Neighbourhood Park, Piltown, Johnstown, Tullaroan, Kilkenny Countryside Park, and Slieverue. This brings the total number of playgrounds under our charge to 35. The provision of these new amenities are in addition to a significant maintenance and upgrade annual works programme in place to ensure that all our amenities are well presented and fit for purpose. The table below provides a breakdown of the playground locations per Municipal District:

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	Countryside Park	Stoneyford
Slieverue	Tullaroan		Thomastown
	Goresbridge		Windgap
	Freshford		
	Castlecomer Church Avenue		



*Opening day in Freshford Playground*

### **Parks General**

- The administration of amenity grants for Community Groups across the County rising from 130 applicants in 2018 to 180 in 2023.
- Sustainable grassland management of meadows in support of wildlife at Bishopsmeadows, Dukesmeadows and the Moate Field.
- Introduced changes to annual grass cutting regime to support pollinators, while also continuing to work in partnership with communities and Tidy Towns Groups to encourage and support a better way of managing our whole landscape to permanently support our struggling biodiversity.
- Continued to identify suitable locations and engage with communities to support the annual National Tree Week.
- Roll-out of annual tree management programme in urban areas.

## LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE KILKENNY FIVE YEAR FIGURES 2019 - 2023



**€2,962,284**  
 in direct financial  
 assistance  
 throughout the  
 county.



**€213,733**  
 approved to 22  
 businesses for  
 Feasibility Study  
 grant assistance



**€891,070**  
 was awarded for  
 Covid Related  
 Assistance.



**€1,099,704**  
 approved to 491  
 businesses in  
 Trading Online  
 Vouchers



**57 businesses**  
 commenced  
**LEAN 1:1**  
 consultancy  
 programmes



**12 businesses**  
 transferred to  
 the Enterprise  
 Ireland Portfolio



**37 Green for**  
**Business**  
 supports have  
 been awarded  
 since 2021



**42 businesses** were  
 assisted to make  
 applications to the  
**Micro Finance**  
 Ireland loan fund



**3759 Second**  
**Level Students**  
 participated in  
 the Student  
 Enterprise  
 Programme



**4,788 people**  
 attended 167 Busine  
 skills programmes  
**3408 businesses**  
 recieved specialised  
**1:1 Business specific**  
 mentoring



**€120,000**  
 approved to 4  
 businesses in  
**Grad Start**  
 Funding



**€89,664** approved  
 to 52 businesses in  
**Technical**  
 Assistance for  
**Micro Exporter**  
 Grants



**€38,349**  
 approved to 9  
 businesses to avail  
 of the Digital Start  
 Programme since  
 2022



**€186,560** was  
 awarded to 3  
 businesses to avail  
 of Research,  
 Development &  
 Innovation  
 Supports



**€910,413**  
 approved to 21  
 businesses in  
**Priming Grants**



**€1,441,914**  
 allocated to 61  
 businesses in  
**Business**  
 Expansion  
 Grants

### National Enterprise Awards

Annually Kilkenny is represented on the national stage at the Local Enterprise Awards by exceptional local businesses. We have been proud to acknowledge the contribution of these wonderful businesses over the years, in 2019 Mechanical Modular Solutions represented Kilkenny at the National Final; 2020 it was Loaniit Ltd; 2022 it was Cushendale Woollen Mills Ltd & in 2023 CHI Environmental Ltd.



**LEO Kilkenny**  
National Enterprise Award winners

Difig Fiontair Áitiúil  
Local Enterprise Office



Presentation of National Enterprise Award - County Winners CHI Environmental



MMS LTD Presentation with Cllr Pat Fitzpatrick & Cllr John Brennan



Presentation to Cushendale Woolen Mills



Presentation to Loanitt Ltd - County Award

### Student Enterprise Programme (SEP)

Since 2019, 3,700 second level students have participated in our County wide Student Enterprise Programme (SEP). The SEP is an enterprise education programme run by the Network of Local Enterprise Offices of Ireland (LEOs). Students get to set up their own business and do everything a real life entrepreneur would do from coming up with the business idea to marketing and writing a Business Plan.

**Student Enterprise Awards**

Difig Fiontair Áitiúil  
Local Enterprise Office

**2020/ 2021**



**2019/ 2020**



**2022/ 2023**



## Green for Business



Since 2019, a range of new supports for businesses to consider sustainability in their business have been introduced. Supports now range from one to one mentoring to assist businesses to get started to energy efficiency grants. Once such event was held during September 2023 when Local Enterprise Office Kilkenny in conjunction with Kilkenny County Council Climate Action Team and the South East Energy Agency hosted an event to showcase Funding and Supports for Going Green.

## Kilkenny was crowned overall winner at the Bank of Ireland National Enterprise Town Awards in 2019.

Kilkenny was named Ireland's most enterprising town at the Bank of Ireland National Enterprise Town Awards in 2019, taking home the trophy for Regional, National and Overall Winner and a cash prize of €33,000.



## Launch of Local Economic and Community Plan

Monday June 12<sup>th</sup> 2023, saw the launch of a new Framework document, the Local Economic and Community Plan 2023 to 2028 for Kilkenny in a joint initiative by Kilkenny County Council and the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC.)



## Design Kilkenny



In November 2022 and again in 2023 - Kilkenny County Council staged two unique conferences celebrating the strong history of design in Kilkenny and cast an eye on how this rich legacy could contribute to the future of design in Kilkenny. The event in 2022 also saw the launch of a new publication by Minister Malcolm Noonan, 'Designing for Ireland' commissioned by KIDCo and authored by Mark Duncan. This book examines the political context of the Kilkenny Design Workshops and design in Ireland.

## #CareersKilkenny

Kilkenny County Council staged two extensive careers event in 2019 and 2022 over the Christmas period. A range of local businesses in the Life Sciences and Financial Services sectors, including Tirlán, State Street, CluneTech, Loanitt, VHI, Bank of Ireland, UPMC, Asgard Cleanroom Solutions and CF Pharma showcased the great career opportunities available in Kilkenny.



### **Belong Kilkenny Website.**

2023 saw the launch of the new belongkilkenny.ie website and social media platform, along with the upgraded investkilkenny.ie website.

The belongkilkenny.ie website offers a valuable resource with information on housing, education, healthcare and many other topics consolidated in one location.



### **Connected Hubs**

There are now 10 remote or co working hubs located throughout the County. September 2023 saw the launch of a radio, paper and digital marketing campaign to promote the number of community and privately-owned remote working hub spaces in Kilkenny. The Campaign promotes the available desks, it promotes the quality of life in Kilkenny as a location to work. The Connected Hubs in Kilkenny include locations in Galmoy, Glenmore, Ballyouskill, Crosspatrick and Dunbell and were launched in May 2022.



# TOURISM



## Butler Gallery

Butler Gallery re-opened its doors in an exciting new location in 2021. The gallery re-located to the historic Evans' Home in Kilkenny City. The new location allows for highlights from the [Butler Gallery](#) Collection to be exhibited in a contemporary new double-height exhibition space – known as 'The O'Malley Wing'. In addition, St. Canice's Credit Union Learning Centre and a Digital Gallery are also part of the visitor experience. Kilkenny County Council, The Arts Council and Failte Ireland invested €6.3 million into this new and vibrant tourist attraction here in Kilkenny.



## Kilkenny Catwalk Tourism Trail

The Kilkenny Catwalk 2021 was a fantastic arts trail of 21 wonderful Kilkenny Cat sculptures 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 remained in place until Summer 2022.



The project was a partnership between Kilkenny Civic Trust and Kilkenny County Council which was engaged with outdoors, regardless of COVID restrictions, and was designed to support and bring local businesses, arts and community together, attract visitors to Kilkenny and create footfall to the City. The project also provided a new and exciting activity and walking route around the City for families and people of all ages. Great feedback was received on the project and we were delighted to have 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.

## Welcome Team

A great Kilkenny welcome was ensured for our visitors to the City once COVID restrictions eased. Over 20 enthusiastic individuals answered the call to join Brian Cody's Welcome Team and play their part in supporting Kilkenny's economic recovery.

The Welcome Team hit the streets for the first time over the August Bank Holiday weekend in 2020 and now continues annually, decked out in highly visible branded gear.

The Team operate in strategic locations in the City meeting and greeting visitors and providing a warm Kilkenny welcome, along with helpful information on opening hours to attractions, ATM locations and providing interesting snippets about Kilkenny.



## Horizon Irish Open 2022 in Kilkenny

Kilkenny County Council in partnership with the European Tour, Mount Juliet and Failte Ireland worked together to maximise the opportunity for Kilkenny's exposure as a tourism destination at the 2022 Horizon Irish Open. Kilkenny County Council dressed the streets of the City, as well as surrounding towns and villages close to the event. The Kilkenny stand at Mount Juliet displayed many of Kilkenny's wonderful "Made" and "Taste" products, as well as reinforcing to all guests during the week to come back and visit Kilkenny again in the future.



## Kilkenny Tourism Marketing



Always closely aligned and complimentary to the national marketing campaigns is Kilkenny Tourism have maintained a constant digital PR and marketing presence over the past 5 years. All campaigns continue to keep Kilkenny to the forefront of the domestic visitors' mind for Kilkenny to be top of the visitors "must see" destinations for great year round experiences and world class festivals and events.

## Capital Investment in Tourism Development 2019-2023

Scheme	Funding Approved	Project
Urban Animation	694,875	Creative Kilkenny
Outdoor Dining Local Authority	649,000	Market Yard Outdoor Space
Outdoor Performance Space	250,000	Watergate Urban Park
Watersports Activities HUB	1,000,000	Kilkenny Watersports HUB
Destination Towns	500,000	Mapping and Wayfinding
Platforms for Growth 2	3,054,414	Museum of Medieval Kilkenny
FI Marketing Supports	75,000	Wolfwalker Month 2021
Dept of Agriculture Food Tourism	60,000	Taste Kilkenny Marketing and Promotion
Outdoor Dining Scheme for Business	340,000	Outdoor Dining Scheme for Business
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,623,289</b>	

## Festival and Events Grants 2019-2023

Since 2019 - Kilkenny County Council has financially supported our local festival and events organisers in the amount of €560,000, with over 15 festivals held annually attracting visitors both national and international to our City and County.





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

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



# TITHÍOCHT - HOUSING

## RAS/HAP

- A total of 352 RAS Properties are now forming part of social housing options.
- The Housing Assistance Payment also forms part of social housing supports with 591 at 31/12/2023.

## Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019-2024

- Traveller Accommodation Programme for the period 1st July 2019 – 30th June 2024 adopted by the Elected Members on 16th September, 2019 aimed to provide 66 units of accommodation for traveller families.
- To date under the Traveller Accommodation Programme we have made 81 offers of accommodation to Traveller families in Kilkenny in the period.

## Homeless Services

- There were 252 homeless presentations in 2019 and peaked in 2023 at 537 presentations.

Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Homeless Presentations	252	256	370	478	537
% increase decrease	0%	1.6%	31%	23%	11%

- This 5-year period has seen a difficult period for homeless services provision with more than a 100% increase in presentations.
- In 2021 lack of housing supply and increasing rents resulted in people finding themselves in a homeless situation.
- In 2022 the cases presenting increased in complexity and the number of HAP tenancies began to decline making it very difficult for people to exit homeless accommodation.
- We continue to focus on the prevention of homelessness and offer emergency accommodation as a last resort.
- We have been successful in the prevention approach with a reduction in emergency B&B and hotel accommodation.
- Following the ending of the “eviction ban” no household affected required homeless accommodation.

## Housing Loans

- €11.8ml paid out over the past 5 years on home loans.
- €80,000 paid out on caravan loans under the Nationwide Pilot Caravan Scheme.
- The Local Authority Home Loan, introduced in January 2022 replaced the previous Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan.

## Housing Grants

- 1,309 applicants were supported to remain living in their own homes through the provision of private housing grants. This represents an investment of €8.9m in grants over the past 5 years.
- Covid-19 presented challenges in relation to Housing Grants in 2020 with the majority of grant applicants advised to cocoon. Contractors, as a result, were unable to carry out works, source materials or provide quotations during restrictions.
- An increase in works in 2022 under the various grant schemes has resulted in an increase in expenditure. An application for additional funding was made to the Department of Housing during November 2022 with approval received to increase the 2022 budget allocation for Housing Grants by €64,000 to meet increased demand.
- Kilkenny continues to process applications under all grant schemes with more than 200 projects approved to proceed at the end of 2023.

## Housing List

- The current **gross** Housing demand at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023 is 1,554 and a comparative analysis with previous 5 years is outlined below:

Year	Number on Housing List
December 2019	1,988
December 2020	1,899
December 2021	<b>1,619</b>
December 2022	<b>1,588</b>
December 2023	1,554

- Changes to the income eligibility thresholds came into effect from January 3<sup>rd</sup> 2023. An increase on the baseline income threshold by €5,000 was agreed.

## Choice Based Letting

- Choice Based Letting is a new system for the allocation of vacant Council and Approved Housing Bodies (AHB'S) houses which was introduced at the end 2023.
- Approved housing applicants will have access to this website and will be able to make what is known as an expression of interest in any advertised vacant property suitable to your housing needs and give an applicant an element of choice.
- Help reduce the refusal rate on properties from applicants as they will only express interest if it suits their needs.
- Aid the Allocations Team to allocate properties in areas where they don't have high demand from applicants in the area and which may suit someone else who wishes to move to the area.

## Housing Allocations

- During the period 2020 to the end of 2023, 1,456 households have been offered accommodation by Kilkenny County Council. An increase in the number of properties available and a reduction in the refusal of properties has resulted in a steady increase in offers of accommodation.
- As a result Kilkenny's housing waiting list is at the end of 2023 lower than in 2019 despite an increase in applications for housing supports, a reduction in the availability of private rental accommodation and the removal of the "eviction ban".

## Voids

Funding in the amount of €4.5 million was secured by the Housing Office during 2019-2023 to carry out works to vacant or void properties to bring them back into use as quickly as possible. 254 properties were refurbished under the voids programme and made available for tenancies.

## Maintenance

- 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. Maintenance calls have increased greatly over recent years after Covid.
- The Maintenance Team dealt with 30,011 calls over the last 5 years with each call leading to one or more repairs.
- In total over €12.5 million of expenditure has been spent on housing maintenance responding to emergency requests mainly.

## Energy Retrofit Programme

- Over the last 5 years 121 units have been retrofitted to a standard B2 Ber rating with an allocation amount of €3 million.



# CAIPITEAL TITHÍOCHTA - HOUSING CAPITAL DELIVERY

## Rebuilding Ireland and Housing For All

- During the period 2018 to 2022 Kilkenny County Council provided new homes through acquisitions, leasing and construction under Rebuilding Ireland, the national policy on housing delivery.
- Kilkenny was provided with the targets shown in table 1 and exceeded delivery overall year on year providing 928 housing units over the four year period.

Rebuilding Ireland	Build	Acquisition	Leasing	Total
<b>Target</b>	402	78	120	600
<b>Delivered</b>	478	350	96	924



*Breagh Place, Piltown, 17 units 2020 – Direct Build*



*Hoban Park, Callan, 38 units 2020 – Direct Build*



*Blackstaff House, Callan, 4 unit Group Home for Decongregation - 2019 – Direct Build*

In 2022 Kilkenny County Council adopted its **Housing Capital Delivery Action Plan** under government policy Housing For All. Again targets for the delivery of new homes were set by the Department of Housing. These targets only related to new build properties with acquisitions no longer at the discretion of the local authority. New acquisitions are now approved in respect of cases of special need including the prevention of homelessness, disability and traveller accommodation.

The overall delivery of new homes over the five year period 2019 to 2024 is comprised of delivery under both national programmes and table 2.

Capital Delivery	Build	Acquisition	Leasing	Total
2019	116	168	15	299
2020	95	63	24	182
2021	156	37	35	228
2022	144	23	15	182
2023	182	20	10	212
<b>Total</b>	<b>693</b>	<b>311</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>1,103</b>



*Glebeside, Castlecomer, 33 units 2021 – Direct Build*



*Blackwater Grove, Kilmacow, 16 units 2021 – Turnkey*



*Rural House, Jenkinstown, 2022 – Direct build*

Covid 19 restrictions presented significant challenges for the provision of new build housing units and resulted in price inflation when works recommenced on most sites. During this period acquisition of existing housing stock was supported to ensure delivery.

The Housing Capital Delivery Action Plan for Kilkenny outlines all targets for delivery by Municipal District under social and affordable housing for the period 2022 to 2026, based on assessed housing need in each area and forms the basis for the delivery pipeline going forward. Homes have been delivered across the county over the past five years with projects in all major county towns as well as Kilkenny City reflecting the demand led focus of capital delivery to provide sustainable communities.



*Station Avenue, Ballyragget, Phase 2, 22 units 2021 – Direct Build*



*Old Creamery, Kilmacow, 9 units 2023 – Turnkey*



*Pairc Nua, Kilkenny City, 18 units 2021 – Direct Build*



*Legan Grange and Legan Close, Thomastown, 25 units 2023 – Direct Build*

### **Vacant Homes**

The Housing office commenced 14 CPOs of underutilised vacant properties to be repurposed for the provision of social housing, 6 of which have been completed and form part of the delivery pipeline of future projects.

In 2022 The new Croi Conaithe vacant home refurbishment grant was introduced with 91 applications approved for County Kilkenny as at March 2024. The grant has attracted a lot of interest and is very effective in bringing disused properties into use, in particular in rural communities.

# POBAL & CULTÚR - COMMUNITY & CULTURE

## TOWN & VILLAGE RENEWAL SCHEME

Kilkenny County Council were allocated funding for several rural communities benefitting from the Town and Village Renewal Scheme. In the years 2019-2023 Kilkenny County Council were allocated total funding of €3,286,130 for 42 projects under Town & Village Scheme as follows:

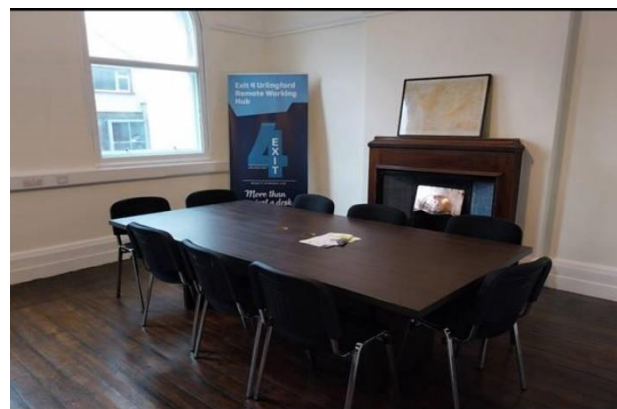
Year 2019 Funding €391,600	Year 2020 Funding €461,200	Year 2021 Funding €574,826
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Rower</li> <li>▪ Slieverue</li> <li>▪ Mullinavat</li> <li>▪ Goresbridge</li> <li>▪ Castlecomer</li> <li>▪ Thomastown</li> <li>▪ Urlingford-Johnstown</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Castlecomer</li> <li>▪ Inistioge</li> <li>▪ Callan</li> <li>▪ Graiguenamanagh</li> <li>▪ Kilmacow</li> <li>▪ Mooncoin</li> <li>▪ Mullinavat</li> <li>▪ Ballyhale</li> <li>▪ Freshford</li> <li>▪ Piltown</li> <li>▪ Kilkenny</li> <li>▪ District Towns</li> <li>▪ Countywide</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Freshford</li> <li>▪ Thomastown</li> <li>▪ Stoneyford</li> <li>▪ Hugginstown and</li> <li>▪ Kilmacow</li> </ul>

A further 10 applications were submitted under the standard Town & Village Scheme. The Council completed projects at Inistioge and Ballyhale to Knocktopher.



*Freshford Playground Town & Village 2020/2021*

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 also carried out for Castlecomer, Thomastown, Urlingford/Johnstown, Goresbridge and Mullinavat.



*Remote Working Hub Urlingford Town & Village 2021*



*Graiguenamanagh Barrow Valley Hub Town & Village 2021*

### **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 these plans forward.

### **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.

### **Town & Village Renewal Scheme 2022**

Kilkenny County Council were allocated funding of €1,177,860 for 6 applications that were submitted under the T&V 2021 scheme. The following projects received funding:-

- **Gowran** - Intergenerational Outdoor Activity Hub in Gowran Town Centre
- **Urlingford** - Remote Working Hub in the centre of Urlingford
- **Graiguenamanagh** - Security barriers, grass matting, CCTV, outdoor furniture in Barrow Valley Activities Hub
- **Kilmanagh** - Upgrade Community Hall to make it a meeting place for all the community to enjoy
- **Piltown** - Upgrade and renovation of the former Garda Station to Remote Working Hub and a Garda Station
- **Johnstown** - Public Realm Plan for Johnstown Square for redevelopment of derelict buildings, etc.



*Naomh Aodhan Hall, Kilmanagh Town & Village 2021*

Kilkenny County Council submitted 6 applications for consideration by the Department during 2022 as follows:

- Thomastown – further development and finishing of existing outdoor park/amenity in centre of town
- Streetscape Enhancement Measure in Callan
- Building Acquisition Measure Glenmore for purchase of building to house community café/shop/meeting space
- Project Development Measure for Thomastown and Glenmore – consultation, design brief, tender, EIA, surveys and screenings, planning, architect fees for buildings to turn into community facility.
- Marketing Campaign for Remote Working Hubs

### **Town & Village 2023 Scheme**

Kilkenny County Council were allocated funding of €450,230 for 6 applications for the following projects in County Kilkenny:

- Thomastown – further development and finishing of existing outdoor park/amenity in centre of town.
- Streetscape Enhancement Measure in Callan.
- Building Acquisition Measure Glenmore for purchase of building to house community café/shop/meeting space.
- Project Development Measure for Thomastown and Glenmore – consultation, design brief, tender, EIA, surveys and screenings, planning, architect fees for buildings to turn into community facility.
- Marketing Campaign for Remote Working Hubs.



*Thomastown Recreational Complex Town & Village 2022*

Kilkenny County Council continued to advance the 2021 and 2022 Town & Village approved projects, namely:

- Thomastown – further development and finishing of existing outdoor park/amenity in centre of town.
- Streetscape Enhancement Measure in Callan.
- Project Development Measure for Thomastown and Glenmore – consultation, design brief, tender, EIA, surveys and screenings, planning, architect fees for buildings to turn into community facility.
- Marketing Campaign for Remote Working Hubs.

In November 2023, Kilkenny County Council submitted a further 5 applications under Town & Village 2023 Scheme for projects at Ballyragget, Callan, Dunamaggin, Gowran & Urlingford. No decision on these applications yet.

In the years 2019-2023 Kilkenny County Council were allocated total funding of €964,746 for 27 projects under the CLAR Scheme.

### CLÁR 2019

Kilkenny County Council were allocated €114,770 for 3 projects as follows:

- Windgap – A new pedestrian crossing at the renovated community hall and tea rooms
- Black & White's GAA Club – To develop a new multi-use games area
- Tullogher-Rosbercon GAA – Car park surfacing

### CLÁR 2020

Kilkenny County Council were allocated €77,000 for 2 projects as follows:

- Muckalee – Completion of community carpark to service the primary school and community creche
- Coolagh – Improvement works to junction serving the church and community hall

### CLÁR 2021

Kilkenny County Council were allocated €57,300 for 2 projects as follows:

- Kilmoganny – Complete junction, footpath & pedestrian crossing improvement works in Kilmoganny Village along with associated road markings.
- Kilmanagh – Provision of driver feedback signs in the village.

### CLÁR 2022

Kilkenny County Council were allocated €420,207 for 12 projects as follows:

- Listerlin Public Lighting – Public lighting along footpath linking the national school to shop and church
- Muckalee Community Centre Ltd – Fit out for community centre kitchen, café and shop
- Windgap Community Development Ltd – Hard surface for carpark outside community centre and tea rooms
- Kilmoganny GAA – Community walkway at club
- Naomh Aodhan Handball Alley – Renovate existing ball alley to modern standard
- Galmoy Community Hall – Multi-use activity area in community hall
- Skeoughvosteen Community Centre & GAA Club – Provision of outdoor public and wheelchair accessible public toilets
- Kilmogue Dolmen – Access road improvements
- Tullahought Community Development – Tarmac surface for 3 amenity areas
- Muckalee Public Lighting – Upgrade public lighting from creche to national school
- Windgap Tidy Towns – Public lighting at Lake area carpark & upper village
- St. Martin's GAA Club – Astro-turf pitch at GAA Club



*Galmoy Community Hall*



*St. Martin's GAA, Coon West,  
Kilkenny Astro Turf Pitch'*



*Windgap Community Development Works*



## CLÁR 2023

Kilkenny County Council were allocated €295,469 for 8 projects as follows:

- Muckalee Public Lighting – Phase 2 of upgrade of public lighting in Muckalee Village
- Galmoy Community Hall – Community Hall upgrades
- Collagh – Carpark upgrades
- Tullogher-Rosbercon GAA – GAA Park Upgrades
- St. Martin’s GAA Club – Lighting, railings and gates at GAA Club
- Windgap Community Development – Tarmac Lake carpark
- Kilmoganny GAA Club – Car Park upgrades
- Muckalee GAA Club – Car Park upgrade

## RURAL REGENERATION DEVELOPMENT FUND

In the years 2019-2023 Kilkenny County Council were allocated total funding of €8,534,919 for 6 projects under the Rural Regeneration Development Fund.

### RRDF 2019

The Council progressed the RRDF application approved in 2018 in the sum of €561,750 for the Callan Regeneration Project (*Fair Green and Moate Field in Callan*).

Allocated €1,752,886 for a series of projects in Thomastown to include Quayside Carpark, Public Realm works in Lowe Street, Logan Street and the refurbishment of the former Courthouse (*Sessions House*).



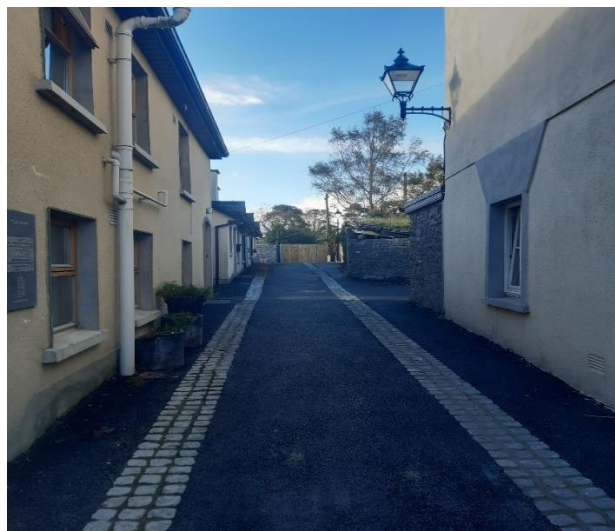
*Sessions House Left Court Room, Right Jewellery School DCCI*



*Street View Sessions House Before and After*

## RRDF 2020

Progressed works under the RRDF fund in Thomastown and the works in Callan Regeneration Project were finalised at the Fair Green and Moate Field.



*RRDF Callan Regeneration Project Before and After*

## RRDF 2021

Allocated €2,562,291 for the public library and community facilities in Thomastown in 2021.

## RRDF 2022

Allocated €861,867 in January 2022 for Callan Friary Complex/Upper Bridge Street Regeneration & Master Plan for the historic core of Callan Town. This funding will enable the Council to carry out the design and planning stages for the future use of the Callan Friary Complex, to include the relocation of the existing library services in Callan.

## RRDF 2023

Allocated funding of €1,345,301 for Piltown Town Centre Rural Regeneration Project. This project builds on existing regeneration projects to bring a holistic response to addressing identified challenges in Piltown. It includes the development of a historic building to provide a social enterprise and community space and public realm works to revitalise the town centre.

In December 2023 Kilkenny County Council were allocated an increase in funding for Thomastown Library and Community Centre of €1,450,824 for this project originally approved in 2021.

## COMMUNITY & CULTURAL FACILITIES CAPITAL SCHEME

In the years 2019-2023 Kilkenny County Council allocated total funding of €1,000,000 for 32 projects under Community Cultural Facilities Capital Scheme.

### Year 2019

The successful applicants were:

- Freshford Playground Committee – provision of local playground at area beside GAA facilities
- St. Canice's Neighbourhood Hall – to complete the refurbishment programme to the centre such as stage lighting, lighting, screens and storage.
- Thomastown Scouts – carry out fire safety works to the Scouts Den to comply with Fire Safety Standards
- Pil Rive Park – development of new public park including playground and sensory garden.
- Trasna Productions Ltd – refurbishment to create a cultural gallery space and foyer.
- Mooncoin Celtic – security fencing & hedging boundary for new pitch development complex
- Paulstown Development Association – Upgrade and improve Fire & Safety provisions in Community Hall.



*Freshford Playground*

## Year 2020

None due to Covid-19.

## Year 2021

- Graigue-Ballycallan GAA - Floodlight Community Walkway.
- Highview Athletic Football Club - Walkway with floodlighting.
- Muckalee Community Centre Ltd - Community Shop & Café - external works.
- Bennettsbridge GAA Club - Clubhouse Development.
- Paulstown Development Association - Upgrade to Community Hall.
- Mullinavat GAA - Walkway with Floodlighting.
- Kells Handball Club - Redevelopment of Handball Court.



*Mullinavat GAA Walkway*

## Year 2022

- St. Lachtain's GAA Club - Development of club walkway with floodlighting.
- Ballyhale Shamrocks GAA Club - Development of walkway and floodlighting.
- Johnstown Sports Field Committee - Development of community walkway with floodlighting.
- 1<sup>st</sup> Kilkenny Scout Group - Upgrade of lighting to LED lighting, improve insulation in attic, upgrade boiler and installation of solar panels.
- Bigwood Children's Playground - Development of playground facilities.
- Thomastown Community Centre - Development of community cinema.
- Mooncoin Celtic FC - Erection of spectator railing around playing pitches.
- The Rower Inistioge GAA Club - Erection of floodlighting as part of ball wall facility.
- Carrigeen GAA Club - Replacement of side panels on Astro Turf pitch.

## Year 2023

- Urlingford Town Team - Community facility/Remote Working Hub.
- Gowran on the Move - Completion of MUGA& Playground Project.
- The Rock Youth Centre (*Kilkenny Christian Centre*) - Upgrade of Centre facilities.
- Ferrybank AFC - Installation of tarmac and concrete surface for disability access for pedestrians.
- Dunamaggin GAA Club - Lighting of Dunamaggin Walkway.
- Kilfane Handball Club - Construction of gym.
- Mooncoin Celtic AFC - LED Floodlighting for extra training area.
- John Lockes GAA Club - Walkway improvements, walkway benches, security gate.
- Graiguenamanagh Hall - Installation of new stage lighting/screen & projector.

# OIDHREACHT - HERITAGE

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## Decade of Centenaries

- 2023 marked the end of the Decade of Centenaries Programme which was successfully coordinated by the Heritage Office. Over the course of the past decade, over 300 initiatives took place as communities across Kilkenny deeply engaged and re-connected with the story of their place during 1912-1923.
- In December 2023 *Kilkenny's Decade of Centenaries, 1912-23/2012-23* was launched by Cathaoirleach Michael Doyle. This booklet documents all of the initiatives that took place in Kilkenny supported by the Community Strand of the Decade of Centenaries Programme. The booklet is available on the [Kilkenny Heritage Website](#).

## Community Monuments Fund

- Kilkenny County Council was awarded €667,260 by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage under the Community Monuments Scheme between 2021-2023. This has funded conservation and stabilisation works at ten archaeological monuments around County Kilkenny.

## Kilkenny City Walls

- The Medieval City wall at the Black Abbey Carpark was conserved and repaired with co-funding from the Irish Walled Towns Network and Kilkenny County Council.
- Interpretative signage was installed at 7 additional sections of the City wall as part of a wider programme of interpretation to enhance the prominence and conservation of Kilkenny's City Walls.

## Data Collection Surveys

- County Kilkenny Holy Wells Survey recorded 117 holy wells around County Kilkenny. These will be mapped on our GIS system and inform education backs and further community engagement and awareness about this important aspect of our cultural heritage in the coming years. This was funded by the Heritage Council and Kilkenny County Council.
- A methodology was developed for surveying mass paths. In 2024, this methodology will be piloted in community across the County as we endeavor to record Kilkenny's remaining holy wells. This was co-funded by the Heritage Council and Kilkenny County Council
- Kilkenny County Council completed a County Swift Survey in 2021. Assessing 50 villages and towns for swift nests, it confirmed 199 swift nests in 13 localities. This study has provided Kilkenny with information to inform the Council on conservation priorities and policy.
- The Heritage Office undertook a countywide Barn Owl Survey in partnership with Birdwatch Ireland and undertook further actions to protect these endangered birds in our County, including installing and monitoring nesting boxes. This project was co-funded by the National Biodiversity Action Fund and Kilkenny County Council
- The Heritage Office undertook a programme of Wetland Surveys in 2021 in association with Wetlands Survey Ireland. This was co funded by the Heritage Council and Kilkenny County Council.
- 51 traditional shopfronts in Kilkenny City were photographed & documented in partnership with Forward Planning. This collection was then ingested into the Digital Repository of Ireland through Kilkenny Libraries.
- 1,889 field names from 85 townlands were recorded by 25 volunteers for the Kilkenny Field Name Recording Project.

## Heritage and Engagement Awareness Programme

- Annual Engagement and Awareness Campaigns have taken place since 2020 promoting Heritage Office initiatives. These have campaigns have including, radio, newspaper and social media.
- Two series of *The History Fix* and two series of *The History Show* were produced and broadcasted on KCLR 96 FM with funding from the Decade of Centenaries programme and Creative Ireland.
- Almost 200 events/initiatives took place in Kilkenny (*in person & online*) as part of the National Heritage between 2020-2023.

## 25 Years of the Heritage Officer Programme

A Kilkenny project featured in a special new Heritage Council publication featuring stories from Heritage Officers in every County. The publication was launched to mark 25 years since the Heritage Officer Network was founded. The booklet features the story of the Kilkenny Holy Wells Survey project, which documented and recorded the County's holy wells.



*Kilkenny Heritage Officer Regina Fitzpatrick (second from right) at the launch of the booklet in the Newpark Hotel in Kilkenny with CEO of the Heritage Council Virginia Teehan (left), Minister for Nature, Heritage and Electoral Reform Malcolm Noonan TD (second from left) and Chairperson of the Heritage Council Martina Moloney (right)*



*Holy Wells Story Sharing Event at Johnswell, Heritage Week 2023*

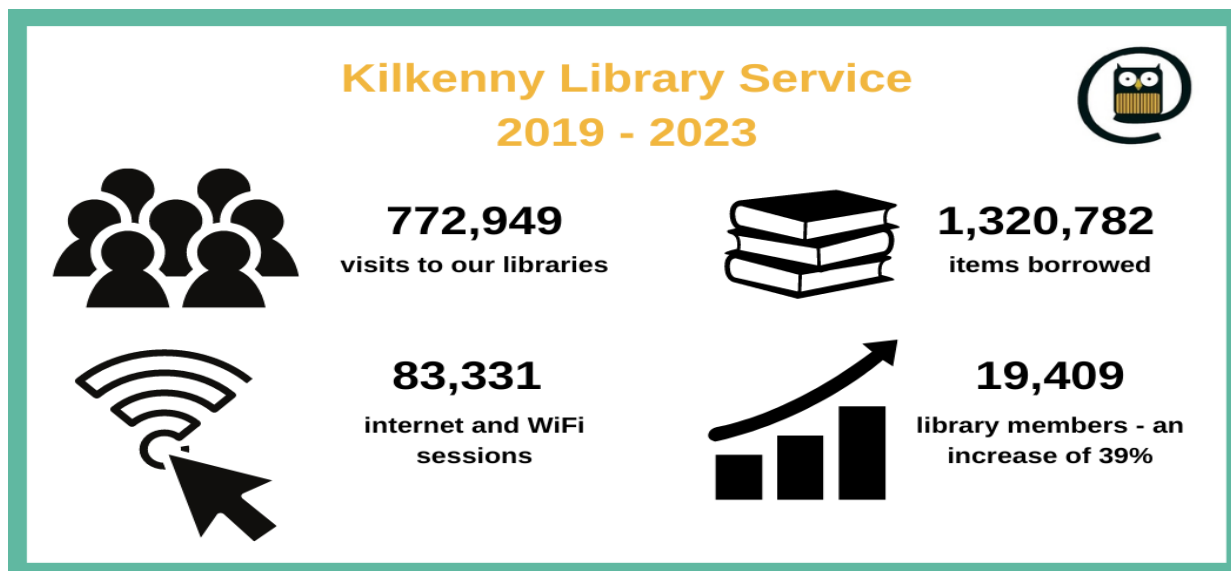


*Thomple Medieval Church and Graveyard which underwent conservation works under the Community Monuments Fund 2023*

# LEABHARLANN - LIBRARY

## Libraries: Notable Achievements 2019-2023

- 39% increase in Library Memberships.
- 30% increase in the number of physical and digital items borrowed.
- 772,949 visits to our libraries between 2019 and 2023.
- My Open Library service in operation in Castlecomer Library with over 440 inductions in the past five years.



## Libraries: Response to Covid-19 Pandemic

- Rapid response to ensure services were delivered to individuals and communities throughout the Covid-19 crisis.
- Flexible, hybrid model of service delivery including a contact and collect/book and browse service and door to door delivery service which is still in operation.
- Pivotal role played in developing and supporting programmes and initiatives as part of the Government's Community Wellbeing Campaign.
- Supported the Community Call helpline and Contact Tracing service in the HSE.
- Developed a virtual book club for adults with 185 members.
- "A Time to Remember" collection on digital archive preserving memories from the public during this period.



*Door to Door Delivery Service*



*Book and Browse at Graiguenamanagh Library*

## Libraries: Education and Literacy

- Literacy programming under the national Right to Read framework:
  - Summer Stars Reading Challenge.
  - Family Time at your Library.
  - Spring into Storytime.
  - Toddler storytime and play sessions.
  - My First 5 Little Library Bag initiative.
  - Language and creative writing groups.
  - 11 adult book clubs and 6 children’s book clubs .
- Community education opportunities in partnership with a range of organisations and agencies providing access to workshops including art, knitting, flower arranging and sewing.
- OWL oral language literacy programme for 0-3 year-olds developed across our library network.
- Scéal Trail in Woodstock Gardens supported by Creative Ireland.
- “Light Up Your Nights” winter reading campaign for adults.
- Expansion of schools services with investment in class reader sets, Aistear collections, sensory toy and book collections and development of teacher resource packs.
- Provision of coding licences to young people in Kilkenny.
- Intergenerational technology classes and drop-in support sessions.
- Digital literacy classes in partnership with other agencies.



*Storytime in Ferrybank Library*



*Summer Reading Challenge in Urlingford Library*

## Libraries: Health and Wellbeing

- Healthy Ireland at your Library with a varied programme of events and collection of stock.
- Participation in Mental Health Week.
- Connect Cafés.
- Participation in Work Matters Programme to support business and employment.
- “A Time to Relax” mindfulness series for adults and children.
- Dial-a-Story freephone line.



*Connect Café*



*Walking Group in Thomastown Library*

### Libraries: Programming and Events

- Dynamic and varied event programme for adults and children celebrating local and national festivals including Bealtaine, Science Week, Culture Night and Seachtain na Gaeilge.
- Active participation in the Creative Ireland programme with events for Cruinniú na nÓg and the continued development of the Bookville Festival.
- A Storyteller in Residence was appointed to deliver a programme of activities in library branches.
- Climate-focused programme of events rolled out including the Grow it Forward initiative, swap shops and Biodiversity Workshops.
- Commemorative programme of events developed with in-person and online events, podcasts and publications as part of Decade of Centenaries.



*Bookville 2023 in Loughboy Library*



*Storyteller in Residence, Helena Byrne - Castlecomer Library*

### Libraries: Inclusive Community Hubs

- Library staff in each branch have been trained as Age Friendly Champions and Digital Ambassadors to support usage of online services and implement Age Friendly improvements including provision of trolleys, reading glasses and dedicated parking spaces.
- Age Friendly status awarded to all library branches.
- C-Pens were purchased for each library and 4 accessible PC monitors were purchased through grant funding.
- Sensory toy and book collection expanded.
- Touch Type Read Spell licenses secured with Dormant Account funding.
- Autism-friendly accreditation awarded by AsIAM to all library branches.



*Age Friendly parking in Castlecomer Library*



*Sensory Toy Launch in Ferrybank Library*



### **Libraries: Service Development, Infrastructure and Workforce**

- Commencement of Mayfair Library Capital Project
- Progression of Thomastown and Callan Library Capital Projects
- Replacement of roof in Graiguenamanagh Library
- Revamp of internal space in Castlecomer to ensure accessibility
- Installation of a stable, high-speed WiFi service for students (*Eduroam*) in Callan, Thomastown and Ferrybank Libraries.
- Digital hub developed - 3D printer, podcasting equipment, training tablets and laptops.
- Magic tables purchased for Loughboy, Castlecomer and Graiguenamanagh Libraries.
- Expansion of home energy saving kit scheme.
- Workforce Plan agreed and fulfilled.
- Robust training plan put in place for library staff.
- 4 library staff completed their professional qualification in Library and Information Management.



*Digital rendering of the Mayfair Library*



*Magic Table visit in Loughboy Library*

# NA HEALAÍONA - ARTS

The Arts Office has continued to deliver diverse, innovative, comprehensive and high-quality artistic programmes across the years. Many programmes have developed new strands and increased their reach and impact across the County.

## Notable Achievements 2019

- 13,337 people participated in and attended events organised by the Arts Office.
- Teenagers and Rhyme Rag Ensemble members Orla Browne and Aaron O’Dea were invited to perform on RTÉ Radio 1’s Sunday Miscellany Christmas Poetry Programme broadcast on Christmas Day.
- Rhyme Rag Ensemble members participated in the Laureate na nÓg’s #WeAreThePoets programme and performed as part of Kilkenny Arts Festival’s official programme.
- 37 bursaries and mentoring opportunities awarded.

## Notable Achievements 2020

- Over 19,550 people engaged with the Arts Office programmes
- 27 bursaries and mentoring opportunities were awarded.
- The Rhyme Rag Ensemble took part in the national review of the Laurate na nÓg programme, an exciting project recognising the role and importance of literature for children in Ireland.
- A number of very successful new community programmes were initiated during the Covid pandemic, including the Poetry phone, Knitted Together 1, ‘the ‘We’ve Got This’ mural and beautiful posters which were situated in various places in the City and County offering a welcome relief from the stark Covid posters.
- A number of very successful new artists professional development and support programmes were initiated during the Covid pandemic, including the Wednesday Weeklies



## Notable Achievements 2021

- 41,477 people engaged with the Arts Office programmes.
- 33 bursaries and 10 mentoring opportunities were awarded.
- In excess of €9,000 was raised for local charities through two particular community programmes.
- Many areas flourished including community programming through the Knitted Together project.
- Phase 1 of the Local Live Performances was initiated to great success.



## Notable Achievements 2022

- 42,106 people engaged with the Arts Office programmes.
- 413 artists and creators worked with the Arts Office.
- 41 bursaries were awarded.
- 15,400 young people engaged with Arts Office programmes across the year.
- 31,355 children and families engaged with Bookville Festival.
- Developed a Writers Map specific to the services & programmes that Kilkenny Arts Office offers to beginner, emerging and established writers.
- Phase 2 and 3 of the Local Live Performances was continued with great success.

## Notable Achievements 2023

- Over 26,000 people engaged with our programmes.
- 221 artists and creatives were engaged in programmes.
- 62 grants & bursaries were awarded.
- New collaborations with Creative Futures Academy (CFA) and the Ecoversity for artists seeking to gain new qualifications to support their career development.

# COSAINT SHIBHALTA - CIVIL DEFENCE

Kilkenny Civil Defence is a volunteer based organisation that supports the Principal Response Agencies (*Local Authority, An Garda Síochána, Fire Service and HSE*) in dealing with severe weather, flooding, major emergencies and searching for missing people. We also assist in our local community with the provision of first aid at events, sports days, family fun days etc.

## 2019

2019 saw Civil Defence undertake 6 Missing Person searches. The provision of first aid and safety boat cover at 34 Community events. The volunteers undertook 361hrs of training with over 100 accredited certificates in 12 different disciplines. There was interagency training with Kilkenny Fire Service as well as inter County training with other units.



*Kilkenny Civil Defence was also awarded a New Ford Ranger by the Department of Defence funded by the dormant accounts fund to increase our 4-wheel drive capacity*

## 2020

2020 saw a very different world emerge when the Corona Virus pandemic hit. There were demands placed on the unit like none ever seen before. We completed hospital transfers, medication delivery, packing and delivering of care packs, administration at the blood clinics and assisting in the COVID Test Centre. We conducted 2 missing person searches during this year with one covering a 4 week period involving 22 volunteers and assistance from other Counties with K9 units, etc. We took part in a fund raiser "Frontline to Finishline" to raise money for Alone and Pieta House and transported a band to nursing homes around the County on St Patrick's day for some entertainment for the residents.

Kilkenny Civil Defence were awarded funding for a second Ford Ranger replacing one of our older vehicles.

## 2021

COVID response continued to dominate the activities throughout 2021. The volunteers continued to support the community bringing Santa to town during Yulefest and delivering dinners for Alone on Christmas Day.



We received additional funding from the Department of Defence, this was invested in a 4x4 Ambulance. Our missing person searches increased this year to 5. In December 2021, we held a COVID compliant awards night where the Chief Executive, Colette Byrne and the Cathaoirleach Fidelis Doherty awarded Certification of Appreciation on behalf of Elected Members.

Civil Defence were also recipients of the Community and Voluntary Awards 2021 for "COVID-19 Response".

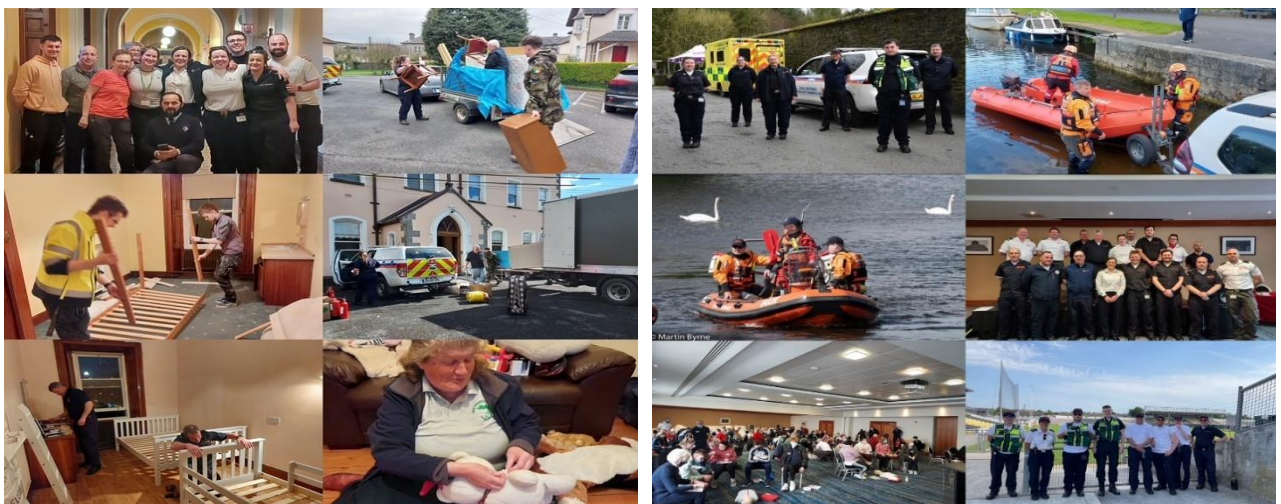


## 2022

This year saw us begin to emerge in part from COVID restrictions to face a new crisis, The war in Ukraine and all displaced people fleeing it. In April our volunteers set up, manned and ran the emergency accommodation in the initial stages alongside KLP.

In under 1 week our volunteers took the keys to St. John of God Convent and turned it into a home. This was done with the assistance of the Defence Forces, Scouts and Girl Guides.

This was a huge undertaking and a large focus of our work for 3 months. All the while we completed first aid duties, missing person searches and safety boat. We also trained 52 members of the public in CFR in collaboration with Order of Malta and Irish Red Cross.



*Our annual awards night was held in Council Chambers and attended by The Cathaoirleach, The Mayor as well as Elected Members and Council Management Team.*



*We attended Croke Park on the 28<sup>th</sup> November where the Minister of Defence Simon Coveney presented each volunteer with a COVID medal in recognition of the tremendous work carried out.*

**2023**

2023 has been a very progressive year for Kilkenny. We have procured a new boat “Lady K” to increase our water rescue capabilities and a state-of-the-art underwater sonar to assist in our Missing Person searches. This year saw 8 missing person searches undertaken with volunteers dedicating 721 hours to this. 141 courses were completed, upskilling the volunteers to allow them assist the people of Kilkenny.

In March of 2023, Kilkenny Civil Defence responded to the Major Emergency in Wexford General Hospital. Evacuating 9 patients to St Luke’s Hospital in Kilkenny.



**The Figures**

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Volunteer Hours	1,361	2,668	2,966	2,906	2,398
Volunteer Numbers	29	34	40	46	48



**DIRECTORATE OF  
UKRAINIAN RESPONSE UNIT AND  
FIRE SERVICE**

**Acting Director of Services:  
Ms. Fiona Deegan**



# AONAD FREAGARTHA NA HÚCRÁINE

## UKRAINIAN RESPONSE UNIT

On 24<sup>th</sup> February 2022, the war between Russia and Ukraine saw a major escalation as Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine, leading to the mass influx of displaced persons caused by the invasion. Ukrainian refugees began to arrive in Kilkenny from 17<sup>th</sup> March 2022 and Kilkenny County Council was tasked with the setup of temporary Rest Centres to provide accommodation for the new arrivals.

A Ukrainian Unit was established within the Council to co-ordinate the Kilkenny response. The Community Response Forum chaired by the Chief Executive was re-established to provide support to the crisis.

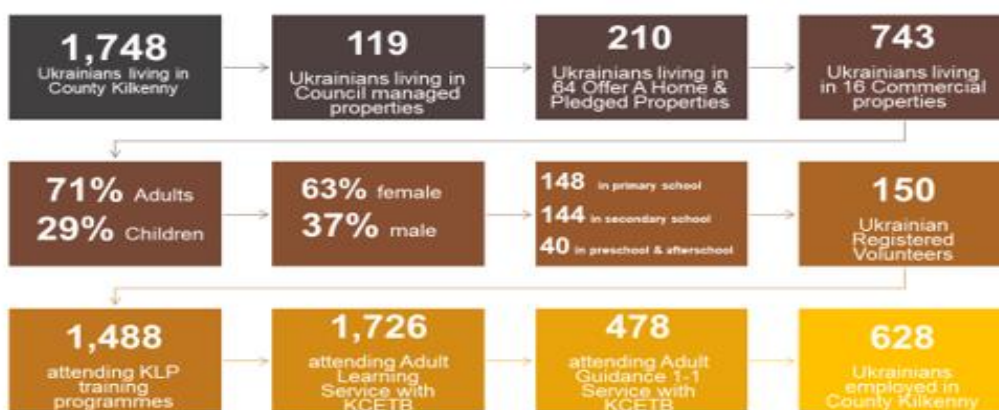
By the end of 2023:

- 1,748 Ukrainians were living in County Kilkenny.
- 119 were living in 2 Council managed properties at St. John of God Convent in the City and The Friary in Knocktopher.
- 210 Ukrainians were living in 84 Offer a Home & Pledged Properties.
- 1,488 Ukrainians had availed of training programmes developed through Kilkenny Leader Partnership in order to prepare them for the workplace.
- 1,726 Ukrainians had attended English as a second language with Kilkenny Carlow Education and Training Board in order to develop their language skills.
- 478 Ukrainians had availed of the Adult Guidance Services.
- 628 Ukrainians were registered as employees in Kilkenny businesses.
- Children integrated into our school system with 148 children enrolled in Primary Schools, 144 children enrolled in Secondary Schools and 40 children enrolled in pre-school education and afterschools.
- The integration was very noticeable in our Volunteer Centre with 150 Ukrainians registered as volunteers who became involved in the various festivals and other events arranged throughout the year.

A huge thanks must go to the following agencies who put their shoulder to the wheel to support the Ukrainian people - Kilkenny Civil Defence, Defence Forces, Health Service Executive, Kilkenny Carlow Education & Training Board, Department of Social Protection, Kilkenny Leader Partnership, Local Link and many more who continue to support the Ukrainians.

Thanks also to the people of Kilkenny who couldn't do enough to help by providing beds, cots, clothes, donations of anything else required and continue to do so. The work of the Ukrainian Crisis Unit within the Council will continue to provide emergency accommodation and oversee the work of the agencies and communities in 2024 and ensure that the people of Ukraine feel that Kilkenny is now their second home, until such a time that they can return to their homeland.

### Ukrainian Monitor to 31.12.23





# KILKENNY

## FIRE and RESCUE SERVICE



2019 to 2023





## Capital Projects

Contracts for the design of a new site for a fire station for Kilkenny City were signed with Architects HLM in 2023. The site for the new station is a 3-acre site at the Kilkenny Business and Retail Park, Waterford Road, Kilkenny.



*Construction of a new Fire Station for Urlingford is completed and ready to be opened in Q2-2024.*

## Investments in Vehicles & Equipment

- Delivery of a new fire engine for Callan in November 2020.
- Delivery of 2 second hand fire engines for Urlingford Fire Brigade.
- Delivery of 80 300 bar breathing apparatus cylinders.
- New Emergency Tender Vehicle has been received in 2022 for Kilkenny City.
- Delivery of 3 fire service jeeps for Castlecomer, Urlingford and Graiguenamanagh in 2022.
- Delivery of 7 battery powered Positive Pressure Ventilation Fans, Smoke Curtains and battery powered lighting took place in 2022.
- Delivery of two new jeeps for Callan and Freshford fire brigades in July 2020.
- Provision of a fire service Drone in recent months has been a huge benefit to the Brigades response to all types of incidents.
- Additional specialist battery powered operated road traffic collision equipment provided in 2023.
- Donated fire vehicles and equipment to provide vital support to the Ukrainian firefighters.





*Handing over the Drones by Cathaoirleach Peter Chap Cleere and Director of Services Mary Mulholland to our trained operators. (just before lockdown!)*



*Cathaoirleach Michael Doyle presents battery powered Road Traffic Collision cutting equipment to Graiguenamanagh Fire Brigade.*

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

- 540 applications for Fire Safety Certificates were received
- 324 inspections to premises both to provide advice and enforce fire safety legislation.
- 9 Fire Safety Notices and 1 Closure Notices were served on premises.

The Fire and Emergency Operations Plan (2015-2020) under Section 26 of the Fire Services Act was adopted. The approval by SPC of Kilkenny County Councils "Fire Safety Plan 2021-2026".

### **Community Fire Safety**

- Fire Station Open Days in all its stations were held during this period.
- Continued to deliver Primary Schools Programme (PSP) throughout the City and County of Kilkenny each year. This programme has been running continuously since 2006 and over 23,000 3<sup>rd</sup> class pupils have received the benefit of this fire safety programme to date.
- Over 100 home fire safety visits were carried out where smoke alarms were installed and advice given to the home owners/occupiers.

### **Training** *(Operational Response and Readiness)*

- QQI level 6 - Initial Breathing Apparatus
- 3-week initial fire-fighting skills course
- Bi-annual SCBA Refresher training



*Cathaoiríoch Pat Fitzpatrick presented a Recognition Award to Fire Fighter John O' Neill for saving a member of the public's life on the evening of 10th December 2021 on William Street in Kilkenny City.*

### **Major Emergency Management**

External Emergency Plan for Grassland Fertilizers, Nitrofert and Transtock were tested under the Seveso Regulations in co-operation with the HSE and An Garda Síochána.





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

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



## SUMMARY STATISTICS 2019 -2023

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total 2019 - 2023
	€m	€m	€m	€m	€m	€m
<b>Revenue - Total Expenditure</b>	83.50	110.60	100.40	97.20	106.793	499.05
<b>Capital Expenditure</b>						
Capital Expenditure - Housing	39.00	37.69	25.89	34.64	48.70	185.92
Capital Expenditure - Roads	13.14	13.02	10.72	15.30	29.78	81.96
Capital Expenditure - Other	11.56	8.73	8.04	13.19	14.58	55.87
<b>Capital Expenditure - Total</b>	<b>63.70</b>	<b>59.44</b>	<b>44.65</b>	<b>63.13</b>	<b>93.06</b>	<b>323.75</b>
<b>Income Collection %</b>	%	%	%	%	%	
Commercial rates	94%	83%	87%	95%	87%	
Housing Rents	95%	96%	97%	96%	96%	
Housing Loans	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	
<b>Income Arrears</b>	€m	€m	€m	€m	€m	
Commercial rates	1.27	1.96	2.05	1.51	3.29	
Housing Rents	0.54	0.37	0.32	0.44	0.50	
Housing Loans	0.32	0.33	0.35	0.33	0.35	
New Mortgage Loans Issued	2.73	3.14	2.95	2.15	1.23	12.19
Mortgage Loan Balance outstanding	34.85	35.10	35.22	33.85	33.34	
Non Mortgage Loan Balance Outstanding	11.68	15.95	15.10	14.24	13.37	

# SOLÁTHAR - PROCUREMENT

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The procurement process plays an essential role in the delivery of projects that will serve the people of Kilkenny City and County for years to come. Kilkenny County Council has a specialised Procurement Unit which advises the various contracting sections of Kilkenny County Council on the tendering process, assists them in the completion of tender documentation and coordinates the various competitions from when they go live on the eTenders system up to the conclusion of the competition and the signing of contracts.

On average between 45-50 projects come to tender each year as well as numerous quotations being sought from suppliers for those requirements that fall below national or EU thresholds. Between capital projects and day to day revenue spend Kilkenny County Council would have procured an average over €50 million per annum when securing goods, services and works during this period. The vast bulk of this spend goes to local or national suppliers, so as well as progressing local projects Kilkenny County Council contributes to the local and national economy by having a procurement policy based on the principles of transparency, accountability and fairness.

Some of the major projects that would have gone through the procurement process over the last 5 years include:

- Abbey Quarter - Procurement of Designers and Contractors for several projects as part of the ongoing development of that site.
- Completion of appointment of Works Contractors for the Western Environs Scheme (LIHAF).
- Energy Projects - Assistance to the Council's Energy Team and CKEA in procuring energy efficient improvements in the Council offices, libraries and depots.
- Finalisation of tenders and award of contracts under the Town & Village Renewal Scheme.
- Fire Services-Completion of the competition for building a new station in Urlingford as well as appointment of consultants in respect of the proposed new Station in Kilkenny City.
- Flood Relief Schemes - Roll out of flood relief schemes.
- Further measures to promote Green Procurement Policies (GPP) including the implementation of electronic tendering for all tenders at national level and the roll out of extensive training in GPP for key tendering sections across the organisation
- Housing Capital - Procurement of Building Contractors for a number of Social Housing Schemes.
- Library - Capital Projects at Mayfair and Thomastown Community Hall.
- One Kilkenny - Various regeneration projects around the County.
- Planning - Procurement of service contracts to enable the role out of various local and countywide strategies.
- Provision of Services in the areas of Parks and Environment.
- Public Lighting-Kilkenny County Council is the lead authority for the Eastern Region.
- Roads - Procurement of Works Contractors as required. Appointment of contractors for roads projects drawing on national and regional frameworks.
- Roads-Active Travel.Roll out of a number of projects under that scheme.

## Key Achievements for 2019 – 2024

- Additional Security Systems rolled out.
- Additional Sites added to the Council Network.
- Audio Visual Systems Upgraded in the Council Chamber and Meeting Rooms in County Hall.
- Completed the configuration of the Choice Based Letting system.
- Completed the provision of ICT services to Patricks Court Offices.
- Completed the redevelopment of Kilkenny Library Website.
- Completed the rollout of new telephone system across the Council.
- Completed the rollout of ePlanning Project.
- Completed the rollout of WIFI4EU Project.
- Completed SharePoint Migration.
- Completed Updates of iHouse , iDocs, iPlan and iReg systems.
- Completed upgrade to the new Core HR System.
- Completed upgrade of the new Council Web Site.
- Continuation of the email Migration Project.
- Deployment of VPN software for remote workers.
- Development and roll out of Covid-19 Community Call Centre GIS system & dashboards.
- Facilitated Remote Working for staff.
- Facilitated Remote Council Meetings and public meetings via MS Teams.
- Fibre Upgrades to Ferrybank and Thomastown Area Offices.
- Implemented Business Restart Grant Forms and Scheme.
- Implemented new work flows and document management system for Human Resources.
- Implemented the new Online Payment Systems.
- Implemented the new Planning Application Capture System (PACE).
- Implemented public appointment booking systems for Dunmore and Library Branches.
- Installation of new internal GIS system and portal.
- Installation of new Library Management System.
- Launched new Search Planning Applications viewer.
- Maintained GDPR compliance for our websites.
- Managed and supported our consultation portal Consult.kilkenny.ie.
- Migrations of servers, users and applications to new domain.
- MS Teams Deployment to staff and Elected Members.
- Network upgrade to 1Gb fibre at City centre sites.
- Rapid Rollout of Remote Working Laptops and Remote working solutions.
- Rollout of latest Microsoft Office Software to all staff PCs.
- Rollout of Laptops to Elected Members.
- Rollout of new Time Clocks.
- Rollout of new Traffic Fines System.
- Rollout of survey technology to Housing staff.
- Upgrade of Agresso Financial Management System to Milestone 7.
- Upgrade of Firewalls and installation of new security systems.

# TIONSCADAIL SPEISIALTA - SPECIAL PROJECTS

## Abbey Quarter

Significant progress has been made on the redevelopment of the former Smithwicks Brewery site, now known as the Abbey Quarter. These works are undertaken by both Kilkenny County Council and Kilkenny Abbey Quarter Development Partnership.

## Kilkenny County Council

Kilkenny County Council is responsible for the development of the public realm projects on the former Smithwicks brewery site and the redevelopment of the Mayfair Building as the new City Library. The Abbey Quarter Masterplan provides for 65% of the redeveloped former Brewery site to be retained as public space.

The public areas of the site are developed with funding from Kilkenny County Council own funds, the Urban Regeneration & Development Fund, the European Regional Development Fund and Failte Ireland.



**Kilkenny Abbey Quarter Development Partnership** is a 50:50 partnership between Kilkenny County Council and the National Treasury Management Agency (NTMA) through the Ireland Strategic Investment Fund (ISIF). The Partnership was established for the purposes of developing six building plots on the former Brewery site, with the building plots to be developed as a mixed use development, in line with the provisions of the Abbey Quarter Masterplan.

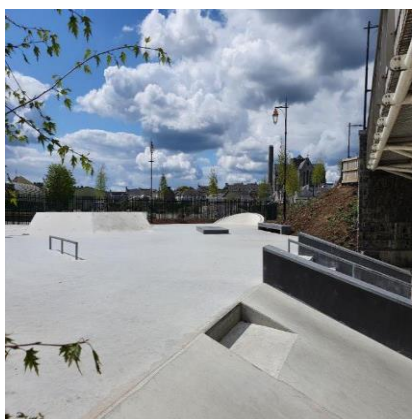
The work of the partnership is undertaken by its General Partner, Kilkenny Abbey Quarter Development Limited.

The Building Development by the Partnership will be a mix of Office, Education, Residential, Leisure (*including Hotel*), and Retail/Services (*including Restaurant space*).

## KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL PROJECTS

### Riverside Garden & Stake Park

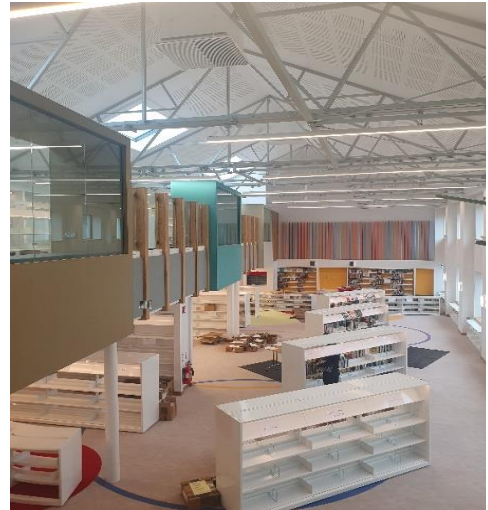
Project is complete and was opened to the public in summer 2021. The project won the 2021 overall National Award for Excellence in Placemaking from the Urban Land Institute. The park also incorporates the new skate park.





## Mayfair Library

Construction work on the Mayfair Library and the adjoining Public Realm commenced on site in October 2021 with construction work completed in January 2024. The Library is currently being fitted out by library staff and is due to open in Spring 2024.



## Tea Houses

The Tea Houses at Bateman Quay have been renovated for reuse and expressions of interest have been sought to operate them as a café / coffee shop.



### Horse Barrack Lane & Brewhouse Courtyard

In tandem with the construction of the Brewhouse building by Kilkenny Abbey Quarter Development Partnership, Kilkenny County Council constructed the public realm areas of Horse Barrack Lane and the Brewhouse Courtyard.



### Urban Park & Street

The design and tender documents for the project are complete and final approval has now been received from the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund to proceed to tender.

The park, which measures approx. 1ha in area will be centered around the upstanding remains of St Francis Abbey and will be the focal point of the overall Abbey Quarter Development.

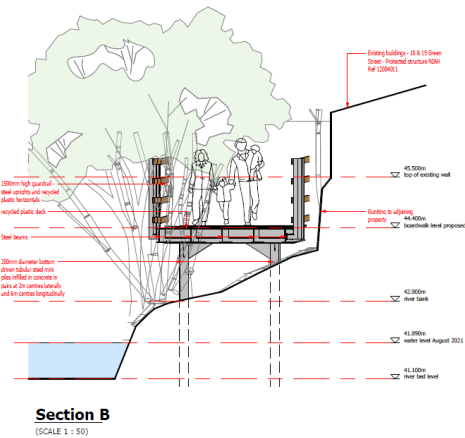
The street, which will be of pedestrian and cyclist priority will provide access to the new buildings to be developed on the Abbey Quarter site.



## 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.

An application for Planning Approval for the project was submitted to An Bord Pleanála in 2023 and a planning decision is currently awaited.



## KILKENNY ABBEY QUARTER DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS

### Brewhouse

The Brewhouse project comprising 4,600sqm of high-quality office accommodation was completed in April 2022. The building is now 100% let, with Tirlan (formerly Glanbia Ireland), O'Neill Foley Accountants and Security Risk Advisors as tenants.

The building has been developed to LEED Gold Standard (*Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design*).



### Building 7

A planning application was lodged in May 2022 by Kilkenny Abbey Quarter Development Partnership for the next building in the Abbey Quarter site. This building is located immediately beside the Brewhouse Building and will accommodate office use, with ground floor retail/restaurant/services. Planning permission was granted by Kilkenny County Council for the proposed development in May 2023, but this decision has subsequently been appealed to An Bord Pleanála and a decision is currently awaited.



## OTHER PROJECTS

### City Sessions House, Thomastown

The Sessions House in Thomastown has been renovated for reuse by the Design & Craft Council of Ireland as a Jewellery School.



### Shee Alms House, Kilkenny.

The Shee Alms House on Rose Inn Street, Kilkenny has been renovated for reuse. The project was part funded through the Historic Structures Fund from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.



### Piltown Garda Station

Work on the renovation of Piltown Garda station for reuse as a remote working hub has commenced and is due to be completed in Summer 2024.





Kilkenny County Councillors  
AGM June 2023

