



KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL
COMHAIRLE CHONTAE CHILL CHAINNIGH
MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT
JANUARY 2019
TUARASCÁIL BHAINISTÍOCHTA MÍOSÚIL

To: Each Member of Kilkenny County Council

Monthly Management Report to Members of Kilkenny County Council for consideration at the January Monthly Meeting.

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS

A list of Orders made in the last month will be available in the Council Chamber for inspection by the Elected Members.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

12th February, 2019

Closing date for receipt of applications for Community Water Development Fund 2019.

23rd February, 2019

The Regional Environmental Conference of the PPN will take place in Thomastown Community Hall.

8th March, 2019

Closing date for receipt of submissions on the draft RSES to the Southern Regional Assembly.

15th March, 2019

2019 Amenity Grants will be advertised at end of January with a closing date of 15th March, 2019.

REPORT AT A GLANCE

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CORPORATE

Yulefest 2018

In its third year Yulefest Kilkenny has grown from strength to strength. Launched in Butler House on the 29th November, where the gardens were tastefully lit and the venue remained a huge attraction for the Christmas period as it did in 2017. The lights were turned on at the tree on the Parade on Saturday 1st December where the Victorian Carousel provided a stunning backdrop for the large crowd attending. Flagship concerts for this year's festival include:

- o High Hopes Choir & Carlow Ukulele Collective: *Medieval Mile Museum*
- o High Kings: *Hotel Kilkenny*
- o Vladimir's Viennese Christmas: *St. Canices Cathedral*
- o Finbar Furey: *St. Canices Cathedral*



The focus this year was to build on 2016 & 2017 and to increase the number of national and international visitors to the City & County during the month of December. Early marketing of the flagship events ensured sell out crowds which had a spin off for all other events and for business throughout the county.

The highlight of this year's Yulefest was the re-enactment of the Christmas Day 1914 Truce remembered at James Stephens Barracks Kilkenny on 15th & 16th December (Silent Night). This was also featured on the Sean O'Rourke Show on RTE Radio 1. The second year of Medieval Mile Run attracted more than 1,400 adults and children participants.

Other highlights included:

- Kilkenny on Ice.
- Stormtroopers.
- Sensory Sensitive Quiet Time - Vintage Carousel.
- Christmas Tree Festival,
- Mayors Concert.
- Craft & Food Demonstrations.

Events throughout the county were held in Castlecomer, Graiguenamanagh, Thomastown and Mullinavat to name a few. The Christmas lights and other festive features throughout the city were added to for 2018 and this will continue into 2019. A new venture this year was to have partner charities for some paid events and some of the charities that benefited were the Good Shepherd Centre, Cois Nore and Amber Refuge Kilkenny, [Mayors Charity Concert], High Hopes Choir.

Big thanks to event organiser Ms. Paula Lawlor and the Yulefest Kilkenny Committee chaired by Ms. Anne Marie Freyne for all their work in making 2018 a very memorable festival.

ROADS

N25 New Ross Bypass

The design and construction phase of the PPP Contract is well over two-thirds complete, and the scheme remains on programme to open in Q2/3 2019.

The very informative project website www.n25newross.ie is available for updates on progress and the elected members are encouraged to view this.

Pavement Schemes.

N78. The €2million N78 pavement overlay scheme is complete with some minor snagging works outstanding. This scheme involves repairs to the existing pavement, a structural overlay, road markings, drainage and footpath works over an extent of approximately 6.0 km between



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Castlecomer and Crettyard. The works were completed by LAGAN.

N25. The €2.2m N25 pavement scheme over two sections totalling approximately 4.5km, Gaulstown to Graiguenakill and Luffany to the Rhu Glenn is commencing in early Q1 2019.

Kilkenny Minor Schemes

Several schemes are progressing through various stages in conjunction with TII on the national road network.

These include the N24 Tower Road, N77 Ballyragget to Ballinaslee Improvement Scheme, N24 Carrick Road Improvement Scheme.

Kilkenny Major Schemes

- N25 Glenmore to Waterford Improvement Scheme - Site Investigation/Option Study.
- N24 Cahir to Waterford Preliminary Investigation/Feasibility.

NON NATIONAL ROADS

Low Cost Safety:

Total Value: €282,000

Works at 10 location were completed in Q4 2018 through the local Municipal District Offices principally involving low cost interventions to address specific road safety issues or hazards. The works involved are varied involving signage, road markings, footpaths etc

CLAR works:

Overall Grant Value: €300,000.

Works at Kilmaganny, Kilmanagh, Tiscofin, Listerlin, Windgap (Kilamery), Kilmacar (Conahy), Knockroe (Kilamery), Muckalee and Cross Patrick are ongoing. The works are being completed through the local Municipal District Offices. The works at each location are varied but can include provision for car parking, footpaths, driver feedback signs and public lighting.

OTHER PROJECTS:

Castlecomer Pedestrian Bridge

Kilkenny County Council has entered a Section 85 agreement with Kildare County Council and specifically the Bridge Design Office attached to Kildare RDO to progress this scheme. RPS Consultants have been appointed consultants. The options report identifying a preferred solution is expected in January 2019 with a view to an application for planning permission during Q1 2019.

Kilkenny Western Environs Phase 1 Infrastructure Scheme

The procurement process for the construction of the Western Environs enabling infrastructure has been completed and the successful contractor identified. Approval to proceed with the contract on the basis of the lowest tender submitted was received from the Department of Housing, Planning, and Local Government (*co-funders of project with Kilkenny County Council*) on December 19th last. The process for the appointment of this contractor will be undertaken in the coming weeks. Subject to the successful completion of the appointment process, construction of the scheme is expected to commence in March 2019.

Kilkenny Ring Road Extension

High Court Judicial Review Holohan & Others v An Bord Pleanala

The above matter was listed before the High Court on 17th December following the decision of the European Court on legal points that had been referred to them.

At the hearing, An Bord Pleanala consented to the quashing of the approval granted by them to Kilkenny County Council in respect of the Northern Ring Road Extension. It is our understanding that the Bord took the view, that this grant was not capable of being remedied by a referral of the decision back to the Bord by the High Court.



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Kilkenny County Council will now recommence the process to make a fresh application to An Bord Pleanála in order to advance the project. In the time since the original Bord decision in 2014, the process for seeking approval has changed and Kilkenny County Council will be required to prepare an EIA – Environmental Impact Assessment Report. Additionally the Council will be cognisant of the decision of the European Court of Justice in the above case bearing in mind the issues identified therein.

This project remains a priority for Kilkenny County Council and the pre planning process will commence in early 2019.

Flood Relief Scheme

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

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

Details of the preferred flood relief works are set out in the FRMP. Responsibility for implementation of the schemes rests with the

OPW and significant funding (€1bn) has been identified to implement this scheme and all other schemes nationally over the next 10 years. Kilkenny County Council is committed to working with the OPW in the delivery of all these schemes and OPW has agreed to fund the appointment of staff to Kilkenny County Council to manage design, planning and construction of flood relief measures through the County. Assessment will commence in Q1 2019 with a commitment to prioritise Graigueenamanagh and Ballyhale initially.

WATER SERVICES

Inistioge Water Supply Scheme

Works (18.7 Km pipelines, 3 Reservoirs) is substantially complete. River Nore crossing is outstanding. Negotiations with landowner regarding new wayleave is ongoing. It is hoped that the new wayleave will be agreed in Q1 2019. Commissioning of section to Inistioge due to commence on Jan 21st '19 and continue during Jan, Feb & Mar '19 with water supply to Inistioge expected by end March '19.

Mullinavat & Inistioge Waste Water Treatment Plants

Planning Permission granted for both projects. Land and Wayleave acquisitions ongoing. Site investigations ongoing and due to be completed by end of Jan'19. Early Contractor Involvement (ECI) form of contract. Contractor appointment is imminent.

Kilkenny Drainage Area Plan

Consultant appointed, bundled with Wexford, Waterford & Dungarvan. The proposal is to map and model the existing sewerage network in the City and Environs for current and proposed population growth. Stage 1 Planning Meeting took place on 04/12/18. Stage 1 Report to be issued Jan'19. Advanced survey of the 'Bregagh Valley Sewer & Branches' ongoing with completion and report expected by end of Jan'19.



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Kilkenny DAP main contract surveys expected to be complete by Q1 2020.

Gowran Regional Water Supply Scheme

Pre-Planning meeting with KCC held on 29/11/18, project received positively. CPO advertised and currently on public display until 16/01/19. Site investigations completed Dec '18. Raw water sampling programme tendered, with contractor appointment imminent. Hydraulic modelling ongoing, due to be complete in Jan'19. Preparation of documents ongoing with intention of procuring the works through a Design-Build contract.

Kilkenny City Water Supply Scheme

Kilkenny City WSS - Currently awaiting outcome of Planning Appeal and CPO Oral Hearing held on 29th May 2018. Further information requested by ABP on the 24th July, 2018. Request for Further Information was submitted on 24th December, 2018. Tendering process was put on hold in October 2018 and was re-launched on 9th January, 2019.

Castlecomer Ice Pigging Programme

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

Mains Rehab Works

- Patrick's Street mains rehab works, installation complete of 225m of 200mm & 150mm Ductile Iron main. All reinstatement complete.
- Dangan and Aderra, Kilmacow, installation complete on approx 3km of water main and associated meters.
- Mill Street, Freshford, installation complete on 400m of 180mm water main.

- Kilkenny Street, Freshford, installation to begin in January 2019 on 350m of 180mm water main.
- Dean Street and Black Mill Street, trial holes completed. Works to begin on laying new main in January/February 2019.
- James Street, trial holes completed. Works to begin in Q1 of 2019.
- Preliminary and Detailed designs currently being produced for other Mains rehab works in the City, also at Jerpoint Abbey and Knocktopher village.

PLANNING

Planning Summary	Total to December	
	2017	2018
Planning Applications Received	871	868
Planning Applications Granted	717	666
Planning Applications Refused	53	61
Complaints Received	108	101
Warning Letters Issued	113	70
Enforcements Notices Issued	36	49

FORWARD PLANNING:

Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy

The draft Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) was published by the Southern Regional Assembly in December, 2018. Submissions on the draft RSES can be made to the Southern Regional Assembly up to 5pm on Friday the 8th March 2019.

City & County Development Plans:

Background survey and analysis work on the City & County Development Plan continues. A series of workshops have taken place between the Planning Department and other Council Departments as part of the review process of the plan. The final session will take place in January 2019.



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Local Area Plans:

Draft local area plans for Callan and Thomastown were placed on public display for a six week period which ended on the 20th December 2018. Sixteen (16) submissions were made to the draft Callan plan and nineteen (19) submissions to the draft Thomastown plan. The Chief Executives report for both draft plans will be considered by the Council at the January meeting.

Vacant Sites

There are now 16 (sixteen) sites on the Vacant Sites Register following the initiation of the vacant sites levy in 2017.

A total of 7 sites have now been activated since the Register was established.

The Finance section will issue payment demands shortly for the payment of the 3% levy on these 16 sites.

On December 31st a total of 21 sites were added to the Register across Kilkenny City, Ferrybank, Castlecomer, Callan and Thomastown. The owners were notified of entry on the register in accordance with the legislation. The owners now have an opportunity to make an appeal to An Bord Pleanála within a period of 28 days after the date of the notice.

There are now 37 sites in total on the register.

CONSERVATION

Bridge House, John Street

Under the Planning Acts a Section 59 notice was served on the owner of the Bridge House following a serious fire incident and extensive damage in October in order to secure the protection of the remaining historical fabric.

The owner has positively engaged with the Council and a number of meetings have been held with the owner and their agents to progress stabilisation of the structure and also progress re-roofing of the building. Works have commenced on site and the first phase of the works to water proof the building have been completed. Works

to underpin the remains of the stucco ceiling are underway at present.

Taking in Charge

Following completion of works and the public consultation stages for taking in charge the following 6 Estates were formally taken in charge at the December Council meeting.

- The Weir View, Kilkenny
- Lios na Si, Johnstown
- Bradóg Way, Gowran
- Nore Terrace, Kilkenny
- Barronscourt, Bennettsbridge
- Aylesbury, Ferrybank

This brings to 9 the total number of estates taken in charge in 2018. These estates contain 410 housing units. The roads and services for these estates are now under the Council's management and maintenance.

Works are ongoing in Chapel View Stoneyford, Cois na Bearu Graiguenamanagh, and Ard Glass Ferrybank with further works due to commence at Belfield, Ferrybank in January.

ENVIRONMENT

County Kilkenny Waste Management Bye-laws, 2018

Following a period of public consultation the Elected Members of Kilkenny County Council adopted new Waste Management Bye-laws 2018, effective from the 15th January 2019, at the Council meeting held on Monday 17th December. These new Bye-laws place obligations on waste producers in households and commercial premises regarding storage, presentation, segregation of waste, contamination prevention and demonstration of proof that their waste is disposed of by an approved waste operator or brought by the waste producer to an authorised waste facility.

These new Bye-laws are hitting at the core of unauthorised dumping which is a County wide problem. With a current rate of 27% of



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households failing to use the services of an authorised waste collector in Kilkenny the question has to be asked as to where this waste is ending up. The new Bye-laws place an obligation on households to be able to demonstrate how they are disposing of their waste. The new Bye-laws will also help the local authority tackle the problem of unauthorised waste collectors (i.e. the man in the van who typically disposes of waste indiscriminately). Kilkenny County Council Officials will now be carrying out door to door checks to ascertain how waste producers are disposing of their waste. Households and commercial premises are being advised to retain receipts for waste disposal for a minimum of one year for inspection purposes.

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

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

The County Kilkenny Waste Management Bye-laws are a step in the right direction in terms of protecting our environment, reducing public spending on illegal dumping clean-ups and reaching waste disposal targets as set by the European Union. The scourge of littering and the need to increase our recycling rates and diversion of food waste from landfill and incineration is a County wide effort that requires

the support and buy in of all waste producers in households and commercial premises.

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



Annual Targets: Non – Routine Environmental Complaints / Investigations

In 2018 the Environment Section dealt with c2,100 complaints or investigations in addition to the c4,150 planned inspections for the year. At the outset of each year our target is to deal with a minimum of 90% of the complaints received within the calendar year. In 2018 a total of 98% of the complaints received were dealt with by year end, leaving only a small number being carried forward into 2019.

A summary of the complaint headings and figures are provided in Table below:-

COMPLAINT SUMMARY 2018						
	Open from P'vious Year	Rec'd in Reporting Year	Investigated In R'porting Year	Resolved in R'porting Year	Unresolved In R'porting Year	% of Complaints Investigated & Resolved
4.1 Waste:						%
4.1.1 Litter	486	842	1328	1320	8	99
4.1.2 Illegal Dumping, non C&D waste	215	472	687	670	17	98
4.2 Water/Wastewater	31	33	64	60	4	94
4.3 Air/Odour	26	68	94	90	4	96
4.4 Noise	1	4	5	5	0	100
Total	759	1419	2178	2145	33	98



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Community Water Development Fund 2019

The Local Authority Waters Programme are pleased to announce the launch of an open call for applications to a Community Water Development Fund 2019. Closing date for receipt of applications is Tuesday 12th February 2019 at 7.00pm.

The Community Water Development Fund aims to support communities in progressing water related projects and initiatives, delivering benefits locally whilst also helping to meet the objectives of the River Basin Management Plan for Ireland and the wider EU Water Framework Directive.

This fund is open to all community and voluntary groups to assist in the protection and management of water quality, both locally and in the wider catchment. This can include the development of a catchment partnership or River/Lake Trust, and delivery of local projects to protect and improve water quality in a local waterbody.

This fund will enable communities to get more involved in the management of their local water environment, delivering multiple benefits for present and future generations. The fund is administered by the Local Authority Waters Programme on behalf of the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government.

Types of projects considered will include:

- Capital projects such as restoration/habitat conservation/natural flood mitigation measures.
- Projects that promote public awareness/ education and events such as biodiversity days, surveys, training workshops, surveys and plans, etc.
- General amenity such as beach clean, improving amenity areas, bird watching facilities, etc.

Grants awarded will range from up to €5,000; up to €10,000 and up to €25,000.

The fund is capped at €180,000 for 2019.

Application Form and Guidance Notes in respect of the Community Water Development Fund 2019 are available to download at www.watersandcommunities.ie or by contacting the Waters and Communities Office at 0761 06 5260 or info@lawaters.ie.

Climate Adaptation Strategy Plan

Following the initial briefing to the elected members in September 2018 two Climate Change Adaptation Strategy Plan workshops were held on the 14th December.

The purpose of the workshops was to assess the current baseline and inform the development of viable actions for mitigation and adaption for climate change. The morning workshop was attended by senior management and a wide cross-section of Council staff, and the afternoon session was attended by members of Strategic Policy Committee 5 for Environmental Protection, Water Services and Protection.

The workshops were organised by the Environment Section in conjunction with the Climate Action Regional Office (CARO). The workshops generated plenty of discussion. The Environment Section are currently working on the draft Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and following an internal review it is anticipated that this document will be presented to SPC5 before going out to public consultation in Q2 2019.

The final strategy is to go to the Council for adoption in September 2019.



December Climate Change Adaptation Strategy Workshop



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Report on RMCEI – Recommended Minimum Criteria Environmental Inspection Plan

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

PARKS

Playgrounds

Consultation is underway with residents in Bradóg Way in Gowran with a view to providing

a small play space for children. Residents in Belfield in Ferrybank were also offered a playground but declined on the grounds of fear of anti social behaviour that it might potentially bring.

The Parks Section finalised a detailed schedule of repairs on all playgrounds across the County which require constant upkeep and maintenance to keep them in good order. With planning for 2019 and 2020 in mind a timber specialist has been engaged to determine the structural soundness of the older timber equipment as due to age much of it is showing decay. The results of this survey will be available shortly and will allow the limited resources to be targeted where they are needed most.

Woodstock Gardens

A successful application was made to the Department of Rural and Community Development for the Outdoor Recreational Infrastructure Fund. Funding of €337,552 was received with €84,388 matching funding required. This funding will upgrade the existing path network from the village of Inistioge through the Woodstock estate and up to gardens.

Stormy weather in late December 2018 was responsible for some further tree losses. One tree of note a Bentham Cypress which fell was an endangered tree species on the IUCN's Red List (The International Union for the Conservation of Nature). Head gardener John Delaney took cuttings from the fallen tree with a view to propagating from the original tree to replant in the gardens.





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Ferrybank Neighbourhood Park

Works to clear construction waste on site has commenced in preparation for the construction of the park later on this year. A large playground will be the focal point of this park which will serve the wider community of Ferrybank and surrounding environs. This park will be funded by a combination of LIHAF funding with match funding from Kilkenny and Waterford Local Authorities. The current budget for this park is €623,000 however other avenues of potential funding such as Sports Capital have been applied for to supplement the budget if successful.



Copy of Plan for Ferrybank Park and Playground

Amenity Grants

The final amenity grants from 2018 are being processed with approximately 99% of the grant aid being drawn down by community groups. The 2019 grants will be advertised at the end of January 2019 with a closing date of 15th March 2019.

Kilkenny Greenway

A funding application was prepared for the development of the proposed Kilkenny Greenway from Waterford to New Ross including the Redbridge Walking Trail from Rosbercon to Mount Elliot by means of the Redbridge and Mount Elliot Tunnel. The total length of the combined routes is 24.3km. Wexford County Council as lead authority were assisted by the Parks Department to collate all

the necessary material to make the application to the Department of Tourism Transport and Sport in late 2018. The estimated total project cost is €13.5m. A funding announcement is expected in 2019.

LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE



LEO Kilkenny has launched Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur (IBYE) programme for 2019. We are looking for dynamic, innovative young business people

from across Kilkenny city and county to enter the 2019 competition. Hosted by the LEOs around the country, the competition is staged in conjunction with the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation; Enterprise Ireland and the Local Authorities of Ireland.

Now in its fifth year, this nationwide competition invites 18-35 year olds who have a business idea, a start-up or an established business to enter. Shortlisted applicants will take part in Business Bootcamps and compete in the County Final with an investment fund of €50,000 to share between the winners of the Best Business Idea, Best Start-Up and Best Established Business categories.

Taking part in IBYE challenges young business people to focus on where their business is now, and where they can take it. The business planning, mentoring, advice and support they receive during the process is of significant value. IBYE helps them to build a network of fellow local entrepreneurs and they often become trusted friends and advisors to each other. IBYE is often their first experience of getting media exposure, which is important in building a profile as a business grows. **Interested participants can apply now by visiting www.IBYE.ie. The closing date is Friday 15th March.**



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Local Enterprise Week will take place from 4th to the 9th March and highlights of the week alongside our wide range of training and mentoring will be The Student Enterprise

Programme County Final on Wednesday 6th March, International Women's Day on Friday 8th March and the launch of our flagship Management Development Programme.

SPRING 2019 TRAINING PROGRAMME

The Local Enterprise Office(LEO) will launch the Spring 2019 Training Schedule shortly for entrepreneurs and employees of micro-enterprises. Twenty seven training programmes will commence including 4 Start Your Own Business Courses. The schedule will be available to view and book on the LEO website www.localenterprise.ie/kilkenny.

TOURISM

LEGENDARY LOCATIONS - TRAVEL CHANNEL USA

"It's a Wrap"! - closing comments from Jonathon Ulrich American Producer with the Travel Channel USA for their show 'Legendary Locations, to signal the end of filming in Kilkenny.

The Council's Tourism Department have spent the last number of weeks working closely with Jonathon to help him and his crew film at locations such as:

- Kilkenny Castle
- Kytlers Inn
- St. Canice's Cathedral
- Dunmore Caves

The Travel Channel is the world's leading travel media brand. The network is available in nearly 96 million homes in the USA and is carried on every major provider in the country. The

network is also seen by millions of viewers around the world on Travel Channel UK, Travel Channel Asia, Travel Channel Germany, and Travel Channel New Zealand. So this is an amazing opportunity for Kilkenny!

There was a huge amount of work involved in making this happen, and thanks goes to all involved. This is a great example of co-operation between Kilkenny County Council and the OPW and other venue owners to work together to raise the profile of Kilkenny internationally.

FESTIVAL GRANTS

All Festival Grants for 2018 have now been processed and payment made to all successful applicants. New applications for Festival Grant Support will open up again in January 2019. Kilkenny County Council will continue to support festival organisers to help grow visitor numbers, and deliver real economic value to Kilkenny City and County.

PR

Kilkenny was again selected by RSVP Magazine to feature on their January issue which hit the shelves in December, giving great exposure. Henry Shefflin and his family graced the cover and featured in the magazine on location at Mount Juliet Estate Hotel. The Tourism team secured a two page spread entitled: "Have yourself a very Kilkenny Christmas and New Year, New Adventures." This affords the opportunity to show case and profile a large number of Kilkenny Tourism CLG members.





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Highbanks Orchard 'Medieval Cider' named one of the Best Top 10 Ciders of 2018

146 ciders from such European countries as Italy, Hungary, Poland, Russia and Switzerland, UK, France, Spain, Germany, Canada, and the U.S. were sampled by 'Cider Explorer'.

Medieval Cider, Farmley, Cuffesgrange, Co Kilkenny (that comprises a blend of Irish apples and honey), was named as one of the Best Top 10 Ciders of 2018.



Castles & Conquests Workshop December 2018

The Kilkenny Tourism team were among over 60 Tourism businesses that took part in a bespoke workshop at the Newpark Hotel in Kilkenny to develop stories and experiences centred on the Castles & Conquests theme, helping to create a more connected visitor experience in destinations across Ireland's Ancient East and, in turn, drive increased visitor numbers to the region. Emphasis was placed on developing compelling visitor experience in terms of bringing our rich history to life – key elements of the Ireland's Ancient East brand.

Through engagement at the workshop, a Medieval Mile walk through experience has been scheduled for mid January.



HOUSING

Capital Delivery 2018

The Minister for Housing by letter dated 18th April 2018 notified Kilkenny County Council of its revised delivery targets under Rebuilding

Ireland i.e. 599 units for the period 2018 to 2021 and a specific target of 133 units for 2018.

A summary is provided below of the targets set and delivery achieved at end of December 2018:

Target set for 2018 = 133 units

	Department Target	Delivered 2018	Difference
Built	98	102	4
Acquisition	7	82	75
Leasing	28	23	-5
Sub Total	133	207	74
HAP & RAS	143	252	109
Total	276	459	183

In 2018 a number of schemes advanced as follows:

Units Completed:

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

Units under Construction :

- 38 units Hoban Park, Bolton Callan
- 54 units Ballybough Street (*Respond Housing*)
- 27 units Walkin Street (*Oaklee Housing*)
- 11 units Nuncio Road (*Respond Housing*)
- 1 unit at St Mary's Crescent, Hebron Road.



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Construction Schemes to commence in early

2019:

- 33 units at Glebeside, Donaguile, Castlecomer.
- 17 units at Breaghagh Place Main Street, Piltown.
- 22 units at Station Avenue, Ballyraggett.
- 4 units at Blackstaff, Callan.

Acquisitions

- Kilkenny County Council completed 30 purchases and a further 28 units are at **sale agreed** stage.
- Voluntary Bodies completed 52 purchases and a further 48 units are at **sale agreed** stage.

18 Units complete at Togher Way, Urlingford in 2018



Leasing

Leasing is an increasingly important mechanism for delivery of social housing as it attracts greater private investment in Social Housing. Nationally, 50,000 social housing units are to be built, acquired or leased of which 10,000 units are to be leased (1 in every 5 units). Leasing can be delivered by short or long term Leases, Mortgage to Rent (MTR) and the Repair and Leasing Scheme (RLS). In 2018, the Council secured 23 units under the various leasing options i.e. 19 Long term leases, 1 RLS and 3 MTR.



Leased Houses at Callan Manor

Rental Accommodation Scheme [RAS] & Housing Assistance Payment

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

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

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

	Target	Delivery To-Date
Total RAS	23	42
Total HAP	120	210
Total New Households Supported by HAP & RAS	143	252

Weekly HAP	2	4 [Avg.]
Rent Supplement (RS) To HAP	18 (15% of new HAP)	36
Combined Total RS to HAP & RAS	41	78



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Homeless Update

Details of homeless presentations for the months of 2018 along with the comparative, monthly presentations for 2016 and 2017 are set out below. There were 273 Homeless/Potentially Homeless presentations to 31st December, 2018.

MONTH	2016	2017	2018
January	37	29	37
February	30	26	32
March	18	26	21
April	26	25	18
May	34	28	29
June	31	24	20
July	31	34	15
August	32	27	26
September	27	24	19
October	30	27	27
November	32	29	23
December	21	19	6
Total	349	319	273

Housing List

The current **gross** Housing demand at 31st December 2018 is 2,067 and a comparative analysis with previous years is outlined below:

Year	Number on Housing List
December 2018	2,067
December 2017	2,180
December 2016	2,059 (<i>Statutory Assessment 2016</i>)
December 2015	2,744
December 2014	2,456
December 2013	2,144 (<i>Statutory Assessment 2013</i>)
December 2012	3,688
December 2011	3,118
December 2010	2,876

Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) 2018

The Housing Needs Assessment (Summary Report) was completed in 2018 and reflects the number of approved applicants (**Net Need**) on our Housing Waiting List as at **11th June 2017 i.e. 971**. The Net Need figure excludes transfers, RAS and HAP. There were 307 households removed

from the Housing List of which 245 households did not reply.

A. December 2018 Housing

Number awaiting social housing support at 31 st December, 2018	2,067
Number of assessment interviews carried out in December:	21
LA/RAS/Leasing allocations (<i>offers made</i>):	30
Number of HAP tenancies to 31 st December:	865
Number of LA tenancies surrendered:	1
Anti Social Behaviour cases:	10
New Homeless Presentations:	6
Maintenance Calls for December 2018	355
Maintenance Calls year to date	5,008
No. Housing Loans Approved to date (<i>Annuity/Construction</i>)	20
Amount of Loans Approved to 31 st December, 2018	€2,426,905

First Area of Choice	No.	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed
Ballyhale	13	6	4	2	1
Ballyragget	43	17	21	1	4
B'bridge	42	16	18	5	3
Callan	108	40	40	26	2
Castlecomer	61	25	20	15	1
Clara	1	0	0	1	0
Clogh	7	1	3	2	1
Coon	5	1	1	3	0
Ferrybank	77	31	21	23	2
Fiddown	5	2	1	2	0
Freshford	28	10	7	10	1
Glenmore	9	4	4	1	0
Goresbridge	6	1	2	2	1
Gowran	24	11	8	3	2
G'namanagh	43	18	17	7	1
Hugginstown	1	1	0	0	0
Inistiogue	20	13	5	2	0
Johnstown	23	10	5	4	4
Kells	10	4	2	2	2
Kilkenny City	1,221	469	472	241	39
Kilmacow	34	9	14	10	1
Kilmanagh	5	2	1	2	0



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Kilmoganny	5	1	3	1	0
Knocktopher	7	3	3	1	0
Moneenroe	18	3	8	6	1
Mooncoin	36	10	13	12	1
Mullinavat	6	1	3	1	1
New Ross Environs	7	3	0	4	0
Paulstown	16	8	6	2	0
Piltown	35	10	9	16	0
S'vosteen	1	0	1	0	0
Slieverue	9	3	2	4	0
Stoneyford	10	6	3	1	0
The Rower	1	1	0	0	0
Thomastown	81	37	27	14	3
Tullaroan	1	1	0	0	0
Urlingford	46	9	21	12	4
Windgap	2	0	2	0	0
TOTAL	2067	787	767	438	75
		38%	37%	21%	4%

Housing Maintenance

- Council has a stock of 2,379 houses and apartments with 80 additional units acquired and built during 2018.
- 16 homes were adapted and one extension completed at a cost of €215,377
- 74 LA houses were retrofitted at a cost of €172,894
- 5,008 calls were made seeking housing repairs in 2018, a reduction of 12.3% on previous year.

Housing Repairs Calls 2018

	2018	2017	2016	2015
Total	5,008	5,711	4,664	4,232

Vacant Council Units for Renting – Casual Vacancies & Voids

1 st Jan. 2018	No. of Units Vacant:.....	31
	Units Became Available in 2018:	77
Year 2018	Refurbished Units in 2018.....	90
31 st Dec. 2018	Vacant Units.....	18

Breakdown of current vacant units within each district

District	No of Vacant Properties @ 31/12/2018
Municipal District of Kilkenny East.....	<u>5</u>
Municipal District of Kilkenny West.....	<u>6</u>
Municipal District of Piltown.....	<u>4</u>
Municipal District of Castlecomer.....	<u>3</u>

Private Grants

Opening of Housing Aid for Older Persons Grant (HOP) Scheme in 2018: The total number of HOP grants received by closing date in December was 268 and are currently being assessed for 2019.

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

Scheme	No.	Amount Paid
HGD	69	€806,269
MAG	26	€124,199
HOP	143	€795,266
	237	€1,725,734

The Council recoups 80% of the funding from the Department.

A new Occupational Therapist Panel was also created in late 2018 to assess our medical based applications for grant assistance.

Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan

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

The maximum loan amount under the Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan is limited to 90% of the market value of the property i.e. maximum loan amount of €225,000. A Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan offers three rate products: 2% fixed for up to 25 years (APR 2.02%), 2.25% fixed for up to 30 years (APR 2.27%) and 2.30% variable (subject to fluctuation) for up to 30 years (APR 2.32%).



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Housing Loans Activity 2018

	No. of Appl. Rec	Apprvd	% Apprvd	No. Paid	Amt Paid
Annuity/ Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan	36	21	58%	27	€3,160,836
Reconstruction Loan	1	1	100%	1	€3,900
Caravan Loan	1	1	100%	1	€6,924
Total	38	23	60%	29	3,171,660

Estate Management

- 55 Estate Management Grants were allocated (€55,000) in 2018 to community groups and Residents
- 8 Large Estate Enhancement Projects applications were approved for funding in July. They included:

Hebron Park, Kilkenny:.....€4,000
Chapelfield, Urlingford:.....€3,500
Brandon Crescent, G'namanagh:.....€2,000
Woodland Estate, G'namanagh:.....€2,425
Shamrock Grove, Kilmacow:.....€2,000
Fairview, G'namanagh:.....€4,000
Newpark Lower, Kilkenny:.....€4,000
Church Avenue, Castlecomer:.....€4,000

- Issue 8,9,10,11 and 12 of the Kilkenny County Council Community interactive e newsletter were published in 2018.
- Tidy Estates competition** - Judging of the Kilkenny County Council 2018 Tidy Estates awards took place in August/early September. Announcements of the winners will be in January 2019.
- Map Alerter**; a new Map Alerter on line promotional campaign commenced in September 2018

Anti Social Behaviour

The Anti Social Behaviour policy was updated following recommendation by the Housing SPC and approved by the Council at the October monthly meeting. The statistics of complaints

made for the years 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018 (see table) demonstrate that the number of complaints are decreasing. Each complaint is logged and investigated by our Tenant Liaison Officer(s).

It should be pointed out the Local Authority is not the only authority with responsibility for dealing with Anti Social Behaviour and to date the Council, HSE, TUSLA, and the Gardai work closely together where appropriate. Criminal matters are primarily a matter for the Gardai.

Analysis of Complaints

Type	2015	2016	2017	2018
Alcohol/Solvent Abuse	15	13	12	10
Boundary/Parking	5	1	3	5
Damage to property	6	10	6	12
Dogs	14	22	19	9
Drug Dealing	4	6	10	3
Noise	19	27	29	24
Rubbish/Maintenance	60	62	49	50
Threats/Intimidation	21	12	13	7
Violence	1	3	4	4
Other (horses)	11	10	11	14
TOTAL	156	166	156	138

COMMUNITY & CULTURAL

Town & Village Renewal Scheme 2019

Expressions of Interest are now being sought in respect of the Town and Village Renewal Scheme 2019. The earlier we receive the expression the earlier we can engage with the relevant community group to develop the application into a meaningful application for submission to the Department in June 2019.

Callan Town Improvement Plan (Draft)

At a public meeting held on 5th December a joint presentation was made on the draft Town Improvement Plan by the Callan Town Team and Kilkenny County Council's Community Department. The community plan was drafted by the Town Team following consideration of the Callan Health Check report. The Draft plan contains 30 actions which are aimed at



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addressing identified issues in the town with regards to the public realm and residential regeneration, traffic management enhancements, tourism, culture and heritage development, recreation and amenity, community development and engagement, branding and marketing the town and the promotion of local skills, produce and enterprise. The Team will consider any written submission made in the period up to in relation to the draft plan prior to finalising it and prior to its formal presentation to various potential implementing partners including Kilkenny County Council.

Inistioge Village Improvement Plan

The is currently being drafted by the Inistioge Village Improvement Team and at a public meeting on a date to be arranged the draft plan will be presented to the wider community. The process following the presentation will be similar to the process involved for the Draft Callan plan as outlined above.

Health Check Reports

All Health Checks have now been completed. Public meetings were held to provide feedback to local communities in Ballyhale/Knocktopher, Inistioge, Freshford, Ballyragget, and Mooncoin.

A public meeting will be arranged for The Rower shortly. Each Health Check report contains a suite of recommendations for consideration by local community committees and may be used to inform and develop local community action plans, inform funding applications and form the basis for local communities to develop collaborative working arrangements in relation to locally identified issues.

All individual health check report are available on the Council's website and the composite report for all 8 locations will also be published when finalised.

The various communities of Freshford are currently in the process of forming the Freshford Village Team with the view to preparing a Village Improvement Plan, on foot of the

recommendations of the recently completed Health Check report.

Rural Regeneration and Development Fund

Following the announcement of successful projects under the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund the second round of announcements is due to issue in February 2019.

CLÁR Scheme 2019

In anticipation that the CLÁR Scheme will issue in March 2019 and that the closing date for applications will be April (similar to 2018). The identification of projects at this stage is appropriate and will facilitate early preparation of applications for submission to the Department. Should elected members have suggestions in this regard they should bring them to the attention of the relevant Municipal District Engineers (Castlecomer or Piltown).

Community Grant Information Booklet

The Community Grant booklet, first developed in 2018, is being updated and the revised version will be made available early in March 2019.

Kilkenny Local Community & Development Committee [Kilkenny LCDC]

The Kilkenny LCDC met on two occasions in Q4 2018.

October Meeting

At the October meeting the elections to the position of Chair and Vice Chair (to be held at the December meeting) were discussed. It was agreed that the Chief Officer would circulate a report to all LCDC members, in advance of the December meeting, on the legal position concerning membership and tenure of office and on the provisions concerning elections to both positions.

The Committee heard from representatives from TULSA on the Family Resource Programme in Kilkenny and in the context of an application from TULSA to extend the programme , it was agreed that an LCDC task group be established



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to develop a strategic approach and pursue an extension of the programme.

The Department made a top-up allocation of € 153,582 available to Kilkenny LCDC under the Community Enhancement Programme. The top up grant followed an initial allocation of €136,600. The LCDC, in accordance with the terms of the scheme, allocated the top –up grant to all existing applications, including affiliated Men’s Sheds that had not been funded in full in the initial allocation.

Members noted the deadlines in relation to the Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP) contract and the key tasks for the LCDC. The LCDC decided on the targets for 2019, the Emerging Needs to be targeted by the Programme Implementer and on the Case Studies for submission to Pobail.

The LCDC decided to prioritise 6 high level Strategic Actions from the 2019 implementation programme of the Local Economic Community Plan (LECP). The 6 Actions will form the focus of the LCDC’s work programme in 2019.

The LCDC was briefed on the Healthy Ireland successful funding applications, the two recent CLÁR approvals, the 5 successful funding applications under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme and on a successful Sudanese 10 year celebration event.

December Meeting

At the December meeting Anne Corr was elected as the new chair of Kilkenny LCDC and Colette Byrne was returned as Vice Chair. The departure of Fergus Keane from the LCDC and the retirement of Loretto O Driscoll from Teagasc and from the LCDC were noted. The LCDC was informed that Cllr David Fitzgerald was also vacating his seat on the LCDC due to work commitments. The LCDC thanked all outgoing members for their service. The LCDC was informed that Angela Hayes, Teach Tom and the Thomas Hayes Trust will be replacing Fergus

Keane on the LCDC and that the elected member’s vacancy will be filled by Kilkenny County Council.

One of the high level Strategic Action identified by the LCDC is the SICAP Programme. The LCDC heard from Martin Rafter, Assistant CEO of County Kilkenny LEADER Partnership, on the implementation of the 2018 programme.

The LCDC was updated on the 5 Actions being funded under the Healthy Ireland funding stream.

The LCDC also agreed its schedule of meetings for 2019.

The 2019 proposed SICAP plan was agreed in principal by the LCDC.

The PPN report was considered and welcomed. It was noted that:

- the PPN had increased its membership further and has now reached 277 members,
- Margaret Whelan has taken up the role of PPN Development Officer effective from the 6th November, 2018,
- confirmation has been circulated from Department of Rural and Community Development that additional funding has been allocated for the provision of a support worker to the PPN. The job description and recruitment process is currently being collated.
- the PPN Plenary took place on Thursday 22nd of November in the Ormonde Hotel, Kilkenny. Speakers included Theresa Delahunty, Kilkenny Immigrant Services and Angela Hayes, Teach Tom. The Plenary was an opportunity to introduce the new PPN Development Officer to members and say farewell to the outgoing officer, Katherine Peacock. A Questionnaire circulated at the



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Plenary requesting feedback and suggestions pertaining to the 3 pillars-Community, Social Inclusion and Environment. This feedback will inform the Secretariat and Development Officer re potential areas of concentration for the year ahead.

- the PPN supported 9 community groups through Christmas Capacity Building Funding. Most events are linked with the Yulefest festival in Kilkenny and have been advertised on relevant websites/social media.
- Kilkenny Access for All Programme continues to be rolled out with interest being expressed by staff of St Luke's Hospital. Registration for training is currently open with a view to undertaking a second training workshop in late January.
- the Regional Environmental Conference of the PPN has been confirmed for February 23rd, 2019 in Thomastown Community Hall, Thomastown, Co Kilkenny. This will be an open conference and not confined to PPN members. Speakers and Agenda will be circulated at a later stage.
- the PPN took the opportunity to thank Katherine Peacock for her dedication and hard work on behalf of the PPN and the wider Kilkenny community and wished her every success in her new role.

Kilkenny Age Friendly Programme

Kilkenny County Council continues to make provision for our older persons in the planning, design and delivery of projects.

Planning [Policy]

The Draft Thomastown and Callan Local Area Plans both acknowledge that Positive Ageing can be facilitated by means of various age friendly initiatives, including universal design and can be supported by the adoption of the appropriate

development objectives to facilitate same within the planning process.

The Draft Thomastown LAP (Policy AF1- Age Friendly) sets out that *"It is the policy of the Council to support the vision of the Thomastown Age Friendly Committee to encourage a sustainable and age friendly community, which meets the needs of all residents"*.

The Draft LAP also provides written objectives *"to support the actions set out in Kilkenny Age Friendly County Strategy 2017 – 2022 regarding the implementation of Age Friendly principles in the planning, design and delivery of physical infrastructure, public realm works, business and commercial premises, with particular reference to the Thomastown Age Friendly Action Plan where practicable"* (AFO1.1) and *"to support and facilitate the delivery of age friendly seating, bus stops and other public realm initiatives identified in the Walk ability study carried out for Thomastown"* (AFO1.2).

The Draft Callan LAP also outlines an objective *"to support the actions set out in Kilkenny Age Friendly County Strategy 2017 – 2022 where practicable."* (HC8).

Planning [Development Management]

Permission has been granted by Kilkenny County Council for a new housing development at Cloughabrody, Thomastown (PI Ref: 17/739) which includes 2 single storey housing units which have been designed to comply with the Centre for Excellence in Universal Design (CEUD) current document; 'Universal Design of Homes' and 'Housing for Older People; Future Perspectives' Age Friendly Ireland. In addition, a number of Age Friendly seating have been provided within the development which will allow resting places within the open space between the location of the age friendly seating and the pedestrian access areas.



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Public Realm (Engineering) Works

Bus Shelters

Bus shelters installed on the Square, (N.78) and Kilkenny Street, Castlecomer.

Pedestrian Crossings

Pedestrian Crossings completed at Castle Road near Switzers Gate and Freshford Road .

Enhancements to existing crossing at Greens Bridge.

Public Lighting

Improvement to 3 public lighting schemes in Thomastown to LED lights to improve the feeling of safety.

Public Lighting Upgrades on John Street, Kilkenny.

Age Friendly seating proposals

Upgrades to seating on the Canal Walk and Bishops Meadow Walk, including timber retrofits to seats at the Parade and Canal Square, seating in Thomastown-other locations are planned.

Age Friendly Footpaths

Age friendly footpath provided from Kells village to the Playground.

Age friendly footpath from Friarshill to link to the town centre in Thomastown.

Reconstruction of footpath to age friendly standard on Kilkenny Road, Castlecomer.

Car parking spaces

Age friendly car parking space installed on Market Street, Thomastown.

Age friendly car parking space installed on Upper Patrick Street, Kilkenny.



Figure 1 Upper Patrick Street

Walkways etc

Age friendly accessible walkways at various locations across the city including:

- Glendine Heights
- Patrick Street
- Sion Road
- Greensbridge Street

Housing

Kilkenny County Council now includes a proportion of housing in its housing provision programme that can be considered for letting to older persons if the need arises .

In the period 2018-2021 there are 12 such houses included (Castlecomer (2), Piltown (1), Crockershill (8), Thomastown (1).

Under the Capital Assistance Scheme 57 houses are proposed, of which a proportion will be let to older persons.

Under the leasing provisions by approved housing bodies 15-20 houses will be set aside for older persons.

Other opportunities will also arise.

Fire Services

The Fire Service continue with their "Home Fire Safety" Visits to elderly/vulnerable persons. Specifically focusing on adequate working smoke alarms. These home visits are requested through local Community Groups across the County. Each Home Fire Safety Visits is conducted by two serving fire officers, at a time convenient to the householder. It is informal but effective in chatting about fire risks, discussing a fire escape plan as well as installing 10 year smoke alarms where necessary.

Thomastown Age Friendly Town

The Thomastown Age Friendly Action Group is a local collaboration which has managed the process involved in enabling Thomastown to become age-friendly.



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To date it has undertaken the following:

- Established itself as the Thomastown Age Friendly Town Action Group,
- Identified and mapped the Town area for the purposes of the Age Friendly process,
- Mapped the Towns assets and its key services to older persons in the town,
- Identified the key access routes in Thomastown being used by older persons,
- Undertaken Walk ability Audits of those key routes,
- Presented the Walk ability Audit findings report to the Municipal District Engineer,
- Consulted with older persons by means of an On-Street Survey and compiled a report of the key findings,
- Consulted with Service Providers and Older people through a facilitated workshop and compiled a report of the key findings,

The Thomastown Age Friendly Action Group will undertake key next steps as follows:

- Draw up the Draft Action Plan and make the Action Plan publically available in Thomastown.
- Consider any submissions in relation to the Draft Plan and revise if considered appropriate.
- Present the Thomastown Age Friendly Action Plan to Kilkenny Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) and to Kilkenny County Council.
- Manage the implementation of the Plan.
- Gain Recognition as an Age Friendly Town.

It is anticipated that Thomastown will be recognised by Age Friendly Ireland as an Age Friendly Town in Q2-Q3 2019.

There are several other agencies and groups involved in implementing the Kilkenny Age Friendly Programme and the Age Friendly

Annual Report 2018 will provide a comprehensive overview of all of the measures being implemented in response to the identified needs of older persons.

LIBRARY SERVICES



Christmas Programme - Family Time at your Library & Yulefest



Family Time at your Library and Yulefest took place this December in all branches, with storytimes, book clubs, crafts sessions for adults and children, Silhouette Making, flower arranging and movie mornings.

Family Time at Your Library was developed to promote the importance of a family focused approach to reading, and increase awareness of the importance of literacy for all.





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Art Classes:

The participants of our art classes in Graiguenamanagh library thoroughly enjoyed their sessions recently, and created some beautiful work.



Battle of Wits Regional Final

Congratulations to Grennan College who came third at the regional final of our TY Battle of Wits Quiz, held in Council Chambers in Athlone in December. Abbey College Ferrybank also represented Kilkenny, and were well placed amongst the 16 teams from the 8 participating authorities.



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APPENDIX 1

FINANCE REPORT – JANUARY 2019

The expenditure by service division to the end of December is set out in table 1. Total Expenditure for the period was €83.32m compared with the annual budget of €74.15m.

Table 1	Actual YTD December 2018	Budget Full Year 2018
	€'000's	€'000's
Housing & Building	17,993	15,864
Road Transport & Safety	23,960	20,108
Water Services	7,056	6,579
Development Management	8,879	8,693
Environmental Services	10,999	9,722
Recreation & Amenity	6,833	6,022
Agriculture, Education, Health, Welfare	589	637
Miscellaneous Services	7,014	6,526
Overall Total	83,323	74,151

Please note the actual figures for 2018 are draft only and are subject to change as the final out turn for 2018 will not be available for some weeks yet.

The bank overdraft facility was utilized for twenty six days during the twelve months to the end of December 2018 and the maximum overdrawn balance was €2.311m.

The total non mortgage loan balance outstanding as at December 2018 was €12.3m. The new loan finance of €5m approved by Council in 2018 will be drawn down before the end of quarter 1 2019. The housing capital bridging loan facility will be finalised in the coming weeks.

The final out turn on cash collections for 2018 is not available yet. It is expected that the results will be in line with previous years.