

# CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT

## NOVEMBER 2022 ISSUE

### EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS

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

### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

#### *November & December 2022*

OWL literacy Project

#### *1<sup>st</sup> November - 31<sup>st</sup> December*

Winter Reading Challenge for Secondary School students and adults.

#### *13<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> November 2022*

Science week at your Library.

#### *4<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> December*

Library Ireland Week

#### *1<sup>st</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> December*

Family Time at Your Library

#### **13<sup>th</sup> December**

Christmas at the Carnegie

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## CORPORATE

### Are You Registered to Vote?



Several improvements have been made to the process of registering to vote and updating registration details, arising from provisions in Part 3 of the Electoral Reform Act 2022, which were commenced on 13 October, 2022.

In addition to making the process more accessible, the changes to how the register is managed and maintained will ensure a robust electoral register into the future. All electors are now being asked to visit [Check the Register](#) website to confirm or update their entry by adding their PPSN, Date of Birth and Eircode. This will help Kilkenny County Council to ensure that entries are accurate and up to date as well as enabling the identification of entries on the register that require follow up.

The core changes to the electoral registration process include:

- a move from fixed periods for updating details to rolling updates: previously people could only update their details in November or via the supplement which required a visit to a Garda Station.
- streamlining of the application process through use of PPSNs: The use of PPSNs will enable a simple identity data cross-check to protect and improve the integrity of the register, while streamlining the process for electors. This will mean that most people won't have to visit a Garda station to have their forms witnessed.
- registering to vote for the first time will now be possible online: PPSNs also enable online applications - for the first time people can register to vote or update their details online at any time.
- 16 and 17 year olds will be able to pre-register to vote: The introduction of a pending electors list to enable those 16 and 17 to pre-register and be automatically added to the register from when they turn 18.

- new provisions to make the register more accessible to all. The new process includes measures to facilitate electors whose safety might be at risk if their details were to be published on the register and those who have no address.
- a paper form will remain available for those who wish to use it, either with a PPSN or with an in-person identity check at a local Garda Station similar to the previous process.

### Kilkenny Day

On the 9<sup>th</sup> October, 2022 we celebrated Kilkenny Day. Although the weather was grey and wet, that didn't deter people from coming out and getting involved in the events. Umbrellas in hand, the day was thoroughly enjoyed by many. We unveiled our Virtual Hug sculpture inspired by Adam King. Adam appeared on The Late Toy Show in 2020 where he unveiled his virtual hug. This brought people together during a time when we couldn't be together and gave us all hope.

Another exciting feature on Kilkenny Day was the opening of the Fire Stations for the public and adding something extra special to the day. It was a highlight of the day for many.

The Virtual Hug sculpture is located 1km down the Canal Walk.



### Savour Kilkenny

Kilkenny County Council continues to support the year-round calendar of events with October welcoming Savour back to the streets of Kilkenny. Savour Kilkenny Food Festival returned from 28<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> October, 2022 and hosted talks from experts, demos from top chefs, unique dining

experiences and all the food stalls you can imagine packaged into a festive atmosphere in the beautiful surrounds of the City.

Kilkenny County Council is a major sponsor for this Festival.



awarded before the end of November 2022 with works most likely to commence on the ground in early Q1 2023 with a 12/15 month construction period. An allocation of €3m was received for 2022. The overall outturn cost for the project is expected to be circa €10m.

### **N77 Ballyragget to Ballynaslee**

An allocation of €500K was received for 2022 which will fund progression to preparation of contract documents and potentially provide for land acquisition. The Notice to Treat under CPO procedures issued to all affected landowners and occupiers in mid-September 2022. The preparation of contract documents is on-going. The overall outturn cost for the project is expected to be circa €10m.

### **N24 Carrick Road:**

An allocation of €150K was received for 2022 which will fund progression to statutory approvals stage including 177AE Planning application and Compulsory Purchase Order. Approval has been received from TII to commence statutory approval procedures. Preparations to do so are on-going and it is expected that the application will be submitted to An Bord Pleanála before the end of November 2022. The overall outturn cost for the project is expected to be circa €10m.

## **OTHER**

### **Kilkenny Ring Road Extension**

The SAR (*Strategic Assessment Report*) has been submitted to the Department for consideration to proceed to design\planning.

### **Pavement Schemes.**

The N78 Webbesborough Pavement Improvement Scheme has been completed.

The N10 Danesfort Pavement Improvement Scheme including additional safety improvement works has commenced construction. Depending on the weather conditions, works may be completed before the end of 2022 but may extend into Q1 2023.

The N77 Georges Tree to Dunmore West (*Phase 1 Ardloo Junction North*) Pavement Improvement Scheme is presently out to tender. It is expected that the tender will be awarded by early December 2022 with works dependent on suitable weather conditions expected to commence towards the latter end of Q1 2023.

## **ROADS**

### **MAJOR PROJECTS**

*(Included in NDP- Funded by TII)*

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

The public consultation No 2 on Alternatives & Options is complete and the Design Team is working through the submissions and starting the preparatory work on site investigations/studies that will feed into the selection of the preferred corridor.

### **MINOR PROJECTS**

*(Not included in NDP-Funded by TII)*

#### **N24 Tower Road (Safety Scheme)**

Three contractors submitted tenders in relation to the project by the tender deadline of 19<sup>th</sup> September. A preferred tenderer has been identified and the tender award procedures are on-going. It is expected that the tender will be

# ENVIRONMENT

## CLIMATE ACTION

### Climate Risk Assessment

RPS Consultants have recently been appointed to undertake a Climate Change Risk Assessment for Kilkenny County Council as part of our preparation work for the Climate Action Plan. The assessment will identify current and future climate hazards, such as flooding, heatwaves, extreme rainfall etc., and the potential impacts on infrastructure, health and well-being, environment, biodiversity, heritage, society, finance, and reputation. The findings of the report will be used to inform the new Kilkenny Climate Action Plan. RPS Consultants are also preparing Climate Change Risk Assessments for Wexford, Waterford, Carlow and Tipperary County Councils as part of this joint project. Funding is provided by the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications.

### Audit of Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Kilkenny County Council have commissioned the South East Energy Agency to undertake an audit of greenhouse gas emissions in County Kilkenny. The findings of the report will be used to inform the new Kilkenny Climate Action Plan and will be a baseline against which we will measure changes in emissions over the next 5 years and ensure we meet the targets set. Funding is provided for the project by the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications.

### New Communities Climate Action Officer Post

The Council has received approval for a new Community Climate Action Officer post (*Grade VI, 3 Year Fixed Term Contract*). The new role will form part of the Climate Action Team and will support communities to take positive climate action, including administering a community climate grants programme. Further details of this Community Climate Action post can be viewed on the Council website at [https://www.kilkennycoco.ie/eng/your\\_council/jobs-vacancies/vacancy-community-climate-action-officer.html](https://www.kilkennycoco.ie/eng/your_council/jobs-vacancies/vacancy-community-climate-action-officer.html)

### Recommended Minimum Criteria for Environmental Inspections (RMCEI)

The following table is an extract from NEMIS (*National Environmental Management Information System*) which shows waste inspections carried out as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022.

### Waste Inspections as at 30/09/2022

Routine waste inspections	Actual	Planned	Complete
Waste Permitted Facilities	32	32	100%
Inspections in relation to segregation, recovery and disposal of C&D waste at construction/development sites to include major public projects (e.g. waste mgt plans, gypsum handling etc.)	2	10	20%
Registration of Sewage Sludge Facility inspections	1	1	100%
Household Waste Surveys	45	100	45%
Other inspections of waste collection permit holders to include, for example, data validation audits	68	68	100%
Commercial Food Waste Inspections (original waste producers, e.g. hotels, nursing homes, restaurants, etc.)	10	25	40%
Inspections in relation to authorised ELV facilities (ATFs) with an emphasis on traceability requirements (SI 320 of 2014)	2	7	29%
Other routine inspections (not included in above numbers) Bottle Bank inspections around County Kilkenny	271	350	77%
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>593</b>	<b>73%</b>

Non Routine Waste Inspections			
Investigative inspections of fly tipping or illegal dumping, excluding unauthorised C&D, ELVs & Tyres	2	4	50%
Investigative Inspections in relation to unauthorised C&D sites (sites with no permit)	4	5	80%
Investigative Inspections in relation to unauthorised Tyre dumps (no permit in place)	4	2	200%
Inspections in relation to Waste Facility Permits continuing to operate after their permit has expired	2	1	200%
Inspections of sites notified under Article 27	2	2	100%
Other non-routine inspections (not included in above numbers) Investigation of waste complaints	485	650	75%
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>499</b>	<b>664</b>	<b>75%</b>
Litter & Awareness			
Litter Patrols/Investigations	275	300	92%
Visits in relation to Green Schools Programme	10	10	100%
Providing support to community groups during litter clean ups	45	40	113%
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>92%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>2465</b>	<b>3164</b>	<b>78%</b>

### Use of CCTV by Local Authorities

A Code of Practice for the use of CCTV and Mobile Recording Devices (MRDs) for the prevention, detection and prosecution of offences under the Waste and Litter Pollution Acts (*as amended*) is a statutory requirement provided for in the recently enacted Circular Economy and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 2022.

The Codes of Practice set out the standards that each Council seeking to use CCTV for the stated statutory purpose must adhere to, in order to be compliant with GDPR and LED (*Law Enforcement Directive*). The CCMA subgroup tasked with developing the Codes of Practice is progressing well and it is planned that these codes of practice will be in place for January 2023.



### **Upgrade works at Dunmore Civic amenity Site.**

Works have commenced on site for the securing of infrastructure on the landfill site.

The Bio Diversity Park will open in 2023 and the groundworks around the leachate lagoons are being upgraded. These upgrades require new security fencing to protect members of the public when using the site.



## Environment Complaints

All Environment complaints received are logged on the CRM (Customer Relations Management) System. The number of complaints being received and logged by Environment staff for investigation for the first ten months of 2022 is 814 compared with 1,066 for the same period last year (i.e. down circa 24%). The nature of these complaints ranges from littering, illegal dumping, water quality and abandoned cars. The vast majority continue to be related to littering and illegal dumping.

There was a total of 5 fixed penalty notices issued by Waste Enforcement Officers in relation to unauthorised signage which have been paid in full.

## WASTE, RECYCLING & COLLECTION

### Bring Banks Usage

The Council provides and manages 46 Bring Centres across the City and County. A total of 1,782 tonnes of recyclables were collected from our Bring Centres so far this year. This represents a 22% decrease on the same period last year and is mainly down due to the lifting of all Covid restrictions. Loughboy Shopping Centre (119 tonnes collected YTD), Newpark Shopping Centre (112 tonnes collected YTD) are the busiest locations in the City and Graiguenamanagh (83 tonnes collected YTD) is the busiest outside of the City. Environment staff are continuing to work very closely with our service providers to ensure the collection service is in keeping with demand, especially around long weekends and holiday periods.

All bottle and textile recycling receptacles have been removed from Lidl Loughboy due to development works involving the demolition of the existing store and replacing with a much larger new store at the same location. The store closed on the 8<sup>th</sup> of August 2022 and will re-open on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of February 2023.

### Litter Awareness

#### Savour Kilkenny Food Festival

Savour Kilkenny Food Festival increased their greening activities this year through waste minimisation. Stall holders as part of the Festival Green Charter pledged to minimise waste and reduce water and energy consumption. Free water refill points were located on the Parade for members of the public and a three-bin system to segregate food waste was operational.

St Brigid's Camogie Club, Kilmanagh assisted over the weekend by becoming the "Let's Team Up to Clean Up" street crew who kept the Parade litter free throughout the Festival.

These initiatives were part sponsored by the Council's Waste Prevention Programme.

#### Food Waste Awareness Campaign

The Council's Environment Section hosted a food waste awareness stand throughout the Savour Kilkenny Food Festival and gave away 1,000 food caddies to enable households to segregate food waste easily.

The recycling of food waste diverts this important resource from landfill and allows it to be transformed into renewable energy and fertilisers for horticulture and agriculture use in Ireland. Every tonne of food waste that is recycled rather than ending up in a landfill can prevent about half a tonne of carbon dioxide entering the atmosphere. The stand was in association with [www.mywaste.ie](http://www.mywaste.ie).



## Madra Monday

The Environment Section had an awareness stand at the Madra Monday for the final day of the Savour Kilkenny Food Festival.

The stand highlighted the importance of bagging and binning dog fouling to all those attending the dog shows throughout the afternoon. Branded dog hi vis vests were given away to dog owners who pledged to clean up after their pooch.



## Tidy Towns Awards

There were twenty-five entrants from County Kilkenny which is an increase in participation from previous years. The following awards were achieved:

- Kilkenny City retained its gold medal and won the County Award;
- Inistioge retained its gold medal and came 2<sup>nd</sup> in the County Awards;
- Tullahought retained its silver medal and came third in the County Awards;
- Kilmoganny Tidy Towns won the Endeavour Award;
- Castlecomer Tidy Towns was the national winner of the Agent Brite Litter Awareness Award; and
- Tullahought Tidy Towns won the SE category of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan Award.

## Let's Team Up to Clean Up, Together for Kilkenny

"Let's Team Up to Clean Up, Together for Kilkenny" saw over 50 groups registered to participate in the 1<sup>st</sup> environmental day of action, with 600 litter pickers distributed along with 6,000 flowering bulbs to neighbourhoods across Kilkenny City. The pilot event took place on Kilkenny Day, the 9<sup>th</sup> of October. It helped the Council to gain logistical experience in advance of running the much larger event next Spring that will incorporate both the City and County.

The Corporate Sponsors have been instrumental to allow this initiative to become a reality by providing the necessary financial support for the next three years to cement this environmental day of action into the County's community calendar. Thanks and gratitude goes to PRL, Dawn Meats, John O Shea Trust and Glanbia PLC/Glanbia Co-op together with our waste management sponsor Panda.





*Tidy Towns Forum in Ballyragget*



*Kilkenny Library*

### **Graveyard Grant Scheme 2022**

There was a total of 54 applications received earlier this year under the Graveyard Grants Scheme 2022. Two of these applications were deemed ineligible as the works proposed in these applications did not come under the scope of the Scheme. The total awarded under the Graveyard Grants Scheme for 2022 was €20,000. Payment of these grants has now commenced.

### **Animal Welfare**

The Veterinary Officer continues to carry out monthly inspections at the Dog Shelter to ensure the site is operating efficiently and effectively. At the end of October 2022, the total number of dogs dealt with at shelter was 292. This compares to 153 for 2021, which is a 91% increase.

Of this year's 292 dogs: 253 were strays and 39 were surrenders. There were 100 dogs rehomed by the shelter and 114 were transferred to charities for rehoming along with 67 dogs being reclaimed by their owners. There were ten dogs remaining on site at the end of October.

This upward trend in dogs being dealt with in the shelter is being experienced nationwide, which is possibly due to dog owners returning to their workplaces away from their home and hence are unable to commit the time required to care for and exercise their pet, leading to an increase in abandoned dogs.

On the 20<sup>th</sup> October 2022, the shelter remained operational, however it was unable to accept surrendered dogs due to reaching full capacity which is 22 dogs. After a combination of successfully reuniting dogs with their owners and finding homes for dogs that were not reclaimed, the shelter was once again able to accept dogs from the 25<sup>th</sup> October 2022. It is expected that the dog shelter will reach capacity again in the near future due to this ongoing trend nationwide.

This year we would like to encourage people to consider adopting a dog from Carlow/Kilkenny Dog Shelter if they are planning on getting one for Christmas.



## PARKS/SPECIAL PROJECTS

### Playgrounds

Ongoing maintenance continues around the County in our playgrounds and parks to maintain them to a high standard. This month the focus was on the replacement of parts of old or worn play equipment, tree planting and re-mulching.

Services were also procured recently for the annual independent inspection of all playgrounds under our care. It is expected that inspections will commence early in November. These are an added layer of checks to complement our own in-house weekly and quarterly inspections. The annual checks are a detailed check on the safety of all playground features so as to highlight any issues which require attention to ensure continued safe play.



### Woodstock

Funding was secured under the 2022 Local Biodiversity Action Fund for invasive species control in both Silaire Wood and Woodstock Gardens. In Woodstock, the funding allowed for the clearing of circa 2.3 acres of Cherry Laurel within the Gardens and wider Estate, the funding also facilitated the purchase of equipment to allow in-house garden staff continue this work into the future. The works were completed over the month of October and particular attention was given to the removal of Cherry Laurel between the Noble Fir and Monkey Puzzle Avenues. These new vista's will be planted over the winter with native bluebell bulbs which will not only be attractive to look at in the spring but will also help our early emerging pollinators



Enhancement works are also continuing under the Outdoor Recreational Outdoor Scheme (ORIS), in addition to the resurfacing of the Noble Fir and Monkey Puzzle Avenues, works commenced recently to improve the appearance and accessibility of the toilet block within the carpark. These works include for new cladding to the front and side elevations of the building, the installation of a new accessibility ramp and improvements to the disabled toilet to bring same in line with current standards.

Despite the pent up demand and desire for holidaymakers to travel abroad and the lifting of travel restrictions introduced in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, visitor numbers to Woodstock were steady over the summer months. Provided below is a selection of some of the reviews the Gardens received throughout the summer on social media.

★★★★★ 2 weeks ago **NEW**  
Kilkenny county council and there hard working staff have these parklands looking amazing will worth a visit so peaceful and if ya do drop in don't forget to stop of at the beautifully restored tea room amazingly the young lady attending the tea rooms had seven verity's of fresh and fresh cream cakes. 5 stars ★★★★★

★★★★★ 3 weeks ago **NEW**  
Beautiful place. Coffee house open. Lovely cappuccino and a slice of lemon cake.

★★★★★ 3 weeks ago **NEW**  
Just enjoyable walk so quite peaceful spotless clean

★★★★★ a month ago  
I just love it here! There's a sense of calm even when there are children being children having adventures amongst the walks and the fairy house. So atmospheric, on quiet days you can almost feel the ghosts continue their daily perambulation consulting with the gardener and drinking tea on the lawn....

A beautiful place to visit with walks around the grounds. The story board trail (Elephant and Owl) are a nice touch for younger children. The staff in the tea room were lovely and th e tea and cakes tasty and the setting fab.

★★★★☆ 4 weeks ago  
Extensive formally laid out gardens with something for all the family. Great coffee shop to relax in.

★★★★★ 2 months ago  
Fantastic restoration work on gardens & victorian iron and brick/stonework by Kilkenny CoCo. Café too a real treat after a leisurely walk amongst some monster trees.

Lovely gardens being renovatd with a very small staff of volunteers. The special points of the garden are the monkey puzzle avenue which I've never seen before. There is a rose garden and a lovely lavender avenue. The tea room is a must visit with home made cakes and some of the best scones I've ever had. Reasonable prices too.  
Everyone is incredibly friendly and helpful. There is a buggy driven round the grounds by Woodstock Lenny who will transport anyone to the cafe. This was so useful to us as I cannot walk too far. And his little Jack Russell is a sweet little companion.

★★★★★ 3 weeks ago **NEW**  
Wow, what a surprise to find this when doing a short walk from Inistioge.  
  
We were there in end August and while we did not see much blooming and flowers, this was still impressive.  
  
Definitely recommend to come here and if you are able to: do the walk from the center of Inistioge instead of using a car. Saves you €5 for car park as well, but the walk itself also has magnificent views.

### Freshford Playground and Amenity Area.

The Council are assisting the local community to develop the Freshford Playground and Amenity Area. Planning for the development was granted in April this year by An Bord Pleanála. The Council entered into a long-term lease agreement with the local GAA club for part of the lands required to deliver this amenity, the balance of the lands already being in Council ownership. The procurement process for the fencing and play equipment is concluded and the Castlecomer Area Office are currently undertaking the civil works, which include the construction of an access road, parking area, footpaths, drainage etc. Good progress has been made over the month of October and it is anticipated that this element of the project will be completed before the end of the year.



The works are being funded through a combination of Town & Village Renewal, CCFCS grant, Council's own funds and community funding.

*Image of new access road and carparking area under construction*

### **South East Greenway**

Design & Construction: Lots 1 and 3, Glenmore and New Ross, is now substantially completed and during the month of October parapet railings were installed at the railway bridges. The combined length of these two Lots is 8km. Lot 2, Ferrybank, is also substantially completed and the ramp access to the Greenway from the Abbey Road is also complete. The Greenway Project Office are exploring the possibility of opening sections of the Greenway as they are completed. A mini-tender is currently being prepared for carpark works at Rosbercon and Glenmore to facilitate the opening of Lot 1 & 3 in early Qtr. 2 of next year.



It was decided to split Lot 5 into two sections of equal length comprising Lot 5a (Ferrybank to Luffany) and Lot 5b (Luffany to Aylwardstown South). In early October, Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) requested that a third party due diligence check be undertaken on the Lot 5a tender documents prior to the advertisement of same. Tramore House Regional Design Office are currently undertaking this process and it is expected this final check will be completed over the month of November. The review of the design to rock cutting faces for Lot 5b in accordance with TII specifications is ongoing.

**Ferrybank Car Park Option:** Following detailed environmental assessments, a Part 10 planning application to An Bord Pleanála will now be progressed for the new South North Link Road from the Abbey Road to Belmont Road. The Ferrybank Car Park will be accessed from the Link Road and will form part of the overall project. Tenders for consultancy services to develop the design and documentation for this scheme were received recently and will now be assessed by the Road Design Office.

**Links to Slieverue and Glenmore:** Following confirmation of the preferred routes in July 2022, the preliminary design and initial environmental assessments proceeded. The consultants intend to submit updated design information for review in November 2022 and a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit will also be undertaken. The Screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) was undertaken in August 2022, the conclusion that the Ecologist reached was that an Appropriate Assessment is not required. The next step is for Council, to review same and subject to this review it is anticipated that proposals will proceed to design without an application of specific environmental mitigation measures. The preliminary design of the route includes for the assessment of all interfaces between the route and existing roadways, footways and private lands to determine the specific and appropriate measures to be implemented.

**Woodstock Estate and the South East Greenway Recreational Connectivity Link between:** In a joint initiative Kilkenny County Council with Kilkenny LEADER Partnership and Trail Kilkenny engaged the services of Punch Consulting Engineers to prepare a Feasibility Study & Route Selection Report to investigate the Feasibility of a Link between the South East Greenway (SEG) and Woodstock Estate, Inistioge. The Feasibility Study for the proposal was completed in October and the Consultants concluded that the Woodstock SEG Link was feasible in meeting the objectives of the brief. The Council have since engaged with Transport Infrastructure Ireland to determine if same could be considered within their current Greenway project portfolio as an extension to the SEG.

# PLANNING

## DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

Planning Summary	Total October	
	2021	2022
Planning Applications Received	885	699
Planning Applications Granted	742	542
Planning Applications Refused	67	82
Complaints Received	106	71
Warning Letters Issued	92	72
Enforcements Notices Issued	17	31
Cases Closed	90	79

## FORWARD PLANNING

### Masterplans:

#### Abbey Quarter

The tender for the review and extension of the Abbey Quarter Masterplan area was awarded to O'Mahony Pike Consultants. An inception meeting was held and a site visit completed with the Consultants. The Consultants are currently meeting with stakeholders and interested parties with the aim of preparing a draft plan. It is anticipated that the process will be completed in the second quarter of 2023.

#### St. Canice's Campus

The preparation of the Masterplan for the HSE's St. Canice's Campus is ongoing. Loci Consultants are assisting the Project Steering Committee in the drafting of the Masterplan. Draft concepts were presented to the HSE in October and they are currently considering the proposals against their needs for the next 30 years. A further meeting with the HSE will take place mid-November to discuss their needs. Following this consultation with the HSE on these concepts, a plan will be drafted. Once a draft plan is available, it will be presented to the Municipal District Members and HSE before it is placed on public display.

#### Loughmacask

The draft Loughmacask Masterplan was placed on display from the 26<sup>th</sup> August, 2022 to the 28<sup>th</sup> October, 2022. Three public information sessions on the draft were held in September and October and a total of 182 submissions were received during the consultation timeframe. These submissions will now be assessed and summarised and a Chief Executive Report will be prepared. Following the presentation of the CE's

recommendations to the Elected Members and following their consideration the amendments to the draft plan will be put out on public display again.

#### Urlingford

The Council's Consultants are currently drafting the Urlingford Town Centre Masterplan and it is estimated that the draft Masterplan will be complete mid-November. Once available, the draft plan will be presented to the Municipal District Members before it is put on public display.

#### Ballyragget/Paulstown/Kilmacow

Work has commenced on the preparation of Masterplans for the settlements of Ballyragget, Paulstown and Kilmacow. The appointed Consultants are currently undertaking a review and updating of Health Checks for each settlement along with various other surveys. A Stakeholders meeting will be held in each settlement in the coming weeks, after which the Consultants will commence drafting these Masterplans.

#### Taking in Charge

Whitehall Estate, Paulstown and The Greens, Thomastown have progressed through initiation stage of taking in charge.

Works are continuing on the following estates:

- An Choill Rua, Paulstown
- Abbeygate, Ferrybank
- College Park, Callan Road
- Kiln Lane, Callan
- Rathullard - Phase 1

#### Active Land Management

The Draft Maps of land in scope for the Residential Zoned Land Tax (RZLT) were published on the 1<sup>st</sup> November. Submissions are now invited. This is a national exercise and all maps will be on public display until January 2023. An awareness campaign is being run on the draft RZLT maps.

There are 20 sites on the Derelict Sites Register at present. Three sites were added in September.

There are 28 sites on the Vacant Sites Register and the number of cancelled entries due to site activation or improvement now stands at 19 sites.

The most recent cancellation was for John's Green, a regeneration site, where improvement works were recently carried out by the owner. For 2022, the emphasis will be on the activation of sites currently on the Register, the pursuit of levies due, and ongoing monitoring. The Vacant Site Levy will be replaced by the Residential Zoned Land Tax in 2024. Any outstanding levies will remain due to the Council.

### Conservation

The Conservation Office manages all protected structures in Kilkenny County and City. These structures are recognised for the following special interest: Architectural, Historical, Archaeological, Artistic, Cultural, Scientific, Technical, Social.

### Conservation Grants

Works for the **Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS)** are complete for 2022 are as follows:

- Total Grants paid out: ..... **€153,947.55**
- Total amount leveraged by private funds: ..... **€184,378.00**
- Total cost of projects:..... **€338,325.22**
- Total number of days employment:..... **526**
- Total projects supported:..... **12**

The BHIS funding supported repair works to historic stained glass, roofs, windows, shopfronts, render, pointing, chimneys and timber joinery throughout Kilkenny. The scheme also provides a considerable amount of local employment.

The **Historic Structures Fund (HSF)** is also concluding, to date four of five projects have been delivered, with works to the Shee Alms House nearing completion: The completed projects are:

Structure Project Stream	Grant Awarded	Privately Leveraged Money	Total Project Cost	Total No. Days Employment
<b>Stream 1</b> Old Ennisnag Bridge  <i>Arch &amp; Parapet Repairs</i>	€50,000	€19,806	€69,806	155
<b>Stream 1</b> Kells House  <i>Render Works</i>	€38,000	€44,245	€82,245	180
<b>Stream 1</b> St. Canice's Cathedral Kilkenny	€27,820	€8,475	€36,295	52

<i>Upgrade Lightening Conductor</i>				
<b>Vernacular</b> Balief Farmhouse, Woodsgift	€10,000	€10,004	€20,004	80
<i>Render Works</i>				
<b>Stream 2</b> Shee Alms House*	€150,000	€150,000**	€300,000**	300**
<i>Pointing &amp; Roof Works</i>				
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>€275,820</b>	<b>€232,532**</b>	<b>€508,352**</b>	<b>767**</b>

\* Project nearing completion

\*\*Current figures. These will increase when Shee Alms House project is complete.

### Heritage Council Funding

Completion of Early Modern Townhouse project for gathering and collating relevant information from existing planning files to increase the knowledge base for 30 possible Early Modern Townhouse building in Kilkenny City.

### Historic Town Initiative

Survey works and assessments on vacant property on Upper Bridge Street Callan is being carried out by a Conservation Architect.

### Building Control

**Valid Commencement Notices submitted:**

300 for the first 10 months of 2022

**Valid Disability Access Applications received:**

62 during the first 10 months of 2022

## COMMUNITY

### 2022 Community & Cultural Facilities Grant Scheme

The closing date for 2022 was on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November, 2022. Fifteen Applications were received. This Scheme provides funding for Community Groups that will support:

- The creation of '**needs-based**' facilities to deal with the deficit in community/cultural infrastructure.
- Opportunities for communities to give added value to their existing facilities.
- The strengthening of community relationships by supporting communities to

work together to provide much needed facilities.

- Small to medium scale projects.
- The community to get back what they have already paid through development levies.
- General activity in the community.
- Equality of access to all community facilities.

### **Pride of Place 2022**

The date for the 2022 National Pride of Place Awards has been announced, the event will take place on Saturday the 21<sup>st</sup> January, 2023 in the Clayton Hotel, Dublin. Three groups have been selected to represent Kilkenny in the 2022 Pride of Place Awards. They are: Mullinavat (*Village Category*), The Hub Graiguenamanagh (*Community Tourism*) and the Thomastown Recreation Amenity (*Community Wellbeing*).

### **One Stop Shop for Rural Regeneration Information**

A One Stop Shop, covering all aspects of the Town & Village Renewal and Rural Regeneration schemes has been developed for communities and is now available on the Kilkenny County Council website. This portal showcases sample projects, videos, Town Team Plans, Policy Documents and Funding Streams available. Please see link to the one stop shop here <https://kilkennycoco.ie/eng/publications/rural-regeneration/>

## **LEO/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### **Management Development Business Coaching Programme**

The Management Development Business Coaching Programme kicked off with 11 Kilkenny based businesses in October. The programme is a joint initiative with LEO Carlow and this flagship business development programme has assisted hundreds of Kilkenny based owner-managers to significantly improve their businesses.

### **Promising Future for Kilkenny's Food Sector**

The annual *Savour Kilkenny* Food Festival kicked-off on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> October with a special event aimed at food product development for food business. *'Foodpreneurs - Food Product Development'* organised by Local Enterprise Office Kilkenny gave attendees the opportunity to learn from industry leaders and gain insightful information into the sector.

Guest speakers on the day included Chef Brian McDermott, Eddie O'Neill, of O'Neill Food Solutions, Colm Foley of BIA Innovator Campus Galway, Sarah Gough of Mileeven, and Pat Fitzgerald of Fitzgeralds Nurseries Ltd.



### **Summary of Direct Supports to Businesses Via Local Enterprise Office 2022**

- €475,748 in direct financial assistance has been approved for 17 manufacture /export service businesses located throughout the County. This assistance is linked to the projected creation of 46 jobs over the next three years.
- €344,385 in Business Expansion Grant assistance awarded to 12 existing businesses with forecasted new job creation of 39 jobs. Business Expansion grants assist businesses trading greater than 18 months to make investment in growing their businesses and employment numbers.
- €47,778 in Agile Innovation Funding to support a business to carry out research and development on a new product for their business
- €35,610 in Priming Grant (Start-up assistance) to 1 new business.
- €27,975 awarded in feasibility study grants to 3 businesses.
- €30,000 in Grad Start funding to 1 business
- 8 Technical Assistance for Micro Exporter grant awarded totalling €15,196 This scheme supports businesses to explore their export market opportunities.
- 13 Businesses have commenced LEAN one to one consultancy programmes to investigate possible resource efficiencies and process improvements for their businesses.
- 4 Business have commenced the LEO Building Better Business LEAN programme.
- 30 businesses approved for the Trading Online Voucher totalling €61,023 to support

the enhancement of their online trading capacity.

- support the enhancement of their online trading capacity.
- 11 Green for Micro supports awarded totalling €22,426. This scheme supports businesses to becoming greener and environmentally friendly.
- 3 Digital Start Vouchers to the value of €12,528.
- 9 business applicants have been supported to make loan applications to the Micro Finance Ireland loan fund.
- 342 people participated on focused small business training, including 85 people participating on the Starting Your Business programme
- 525 businesses have availed of specialised business specific mentoring on a variety of topics including finance, marketing, social media marketing and HR.

### **New Enterprise Support Schemes**

**GreenStart** is a grant for businesses to fund a training/consultancy/advisory project of up to 7 days carried out by an external Green Service provider. This scheme supplements the existing Green for Micro programme.

The aim of the project is to improve the environmental performance of the business thereby increasing the agility and resilience of clients to climate change impacts.

The maximum grant funding available from the Local Enterprise Office is €5,000 based on a grant rate of 80% of eligible third-party costs.

### **Ukraine Enterprise Crisis Scheme**

The Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Leo Varadkar, and Michael McGrath, Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform announced details of the new €200m Ukraine Enterprise Crisis Scheme on 27 October 2022.

There will be funding under the Scheme to assist viable but vulnerable firms of all sizes in the manufacturing and internationally traded services sectors.

The first stream will assist firms suffering liquidity problems because of Russia's war on Ukraine. It will address direct liquidity issues, with aid of up to €500,000 in grants, repayable advances, equity, and/or loans. Applicants will have to demonstrate the impact of the Ukraine

war on their business including supply chain and input cost increases including energy. Aid will be granted to implement a Business Sustainment Plan.

The Local Enterprise Office will have a role to play in supporting companies access Stream 1 of the Scheme. LEO applicants for direct grant assistance of €20,000 will be processed through the LEO.

Applications for awards of both direct aid and repayable advance i.e., of €40,000 or greater will require the LEO to undertake the commercial appraisal but they will then be approved through Enterprise Ireland.

Stream 2 of the Scheme is for "energy-intensive businesses" (*where the energy cost was at least 3% of turnover prior to the crisis*). It will be a grant of up to €2m for costs incurred between February and December 2022. The quantity of units of gas and electricity used to calculate the eligible costs must not exceed 70% of consumption for the same period in 2021 – this ensures that companies do not receive compensation for increased energy costs that have resulted from the company increasing production output compared to 2021. The LEO are only required to signpost businesses to this intervention.

### **National Women's Enterprise Day**

The Kilkenny networking event for entrepreneurs took place on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> October in Mountainview, Ballyhale. 50 local entrepreneurs and businesswomen participated and speakers included: Ruth Larkin, Lark Bridal Ltd who as the event MC and host of masterclass entitled "Elevate Your Pitch in 30 Seconds" followed by a panel discussion with Suzie McAdam, Suzie McAdam Design and former judge on RTE's Home of the Year along with Leading Light, Louise Kennedy, Founder & Group Chief Operation Officer of Kilkenny based Red Robin Events Ltd.



## South East Technological University (SETU)

The region welcomed the announcement in May of this year of the amalgamation of the Institute of Technology Carlow and Waterford Institute of Technology as the new SETU, with campuses across the region in Wicklow, Wexford and Kilkenny as well as Carlow and Waterford. SETU celebrated its official launch last September and will prepare a strategic plan for its development over the next 5 years. Kilkenny County Council has commissioned BH Consulting to assist in the preparation of a submission to SETU to show how the Kilkenny campus can help the new university achieve its stated ambition to grow its student numbers by 7,000 and to increase its teaching space by 40,000 square metres over the next 10 years.

## Kilkenny Tourism

Kilkenny Tourism working in partnership with Kilkenny County Council continues its marketing and PR campaign for Kilkenny throughout the Autumn season.

The Kilkenny Tourism, digital marketing will work in conjunction with the National Keep Discovering Campaign highlighting all the festivals, events and activities to see and do in Kilkenny in the shoulder season and beyond.

CURRENT CAMPAIGN

CULTURAL HEART.

ADVENTUROUS SPIRIT.



## Faillte Ireland Supports

To support businesses to manage energy usage and reduce energy costs, Failte Ireland are currently running a series of practical in-person workshops across the country including an event in Kilkenny.

The National Keep Discovering season campaign is now in full swing, encouraging people to explore Ireland and take short breaks over the coming months, Kilkenny featured on TV in the weather time slot for October.

## Creative Kilkenny

October saw additional elements of the "Creative Kilkenny" Urban Animation project delivered

including the beautiful Cartoon Saloon inspired mural at the Handball Alley on Michael Street overlooking the river.

As part of this project, Kimx ran two nights of light projections over the bank holiday weekend bringing the art to life in an amazing evening time event. This work follows on from the installation of outdoor art screens throughout the City in July and also the animation of two of our medieval laneways Market Slip and Butter Slip.

The two final elements of this Fáilte Ireland funded project will involve the installation of a refurbished Copper Tank at Brewery Square and the installation of a "selfie spot" along Bateman Quay.



## Taste Kilkenny

October saw Taste continue in its support of our local food producers and local hotels and restaurants and worked to cross promote all the wonderful Savour Activity through its social media platforms:

- The Taste Facebook page has reached 4,200 followers
- The Taste Instagram Page has passed 2,000 followers
- Social Media Competitions have been run to promote Kilkenny Animated and Kilkenomics. These competitions each had over 200 entries.





## HOUSING

	Project Name	Approved Housing Body	Project Status	Projected Substantial Completion	Total Units Expected
SHIP CONSTRUCTION TURNKEY	8-17 Limegrove, Ferrybank		Completed	14/01/2022	10
SHIP CONSTRUCTION SINGLE STAGE	Ayrfield, Kilkenny City		Completed	31/01/2022	2
SHIP CONSTRUCTION TURNKEY	Pennefeather Court, Hebron Road, Kilkenny City		Completed	11/02/2022	8
SHIP CONSTRUCTION TURNKEY	Pennefeather Green, Hebron Road, Kilkenny City		Completed	17/02/2022	52
SHIP CONSTRUCTION SINGLE STAGE	Shanganny, Jenkinstown		Completed	17/05/2022	2
LA Part V	Pennefeather Green, Hebron Road, Kilkenny		Completed	24/06/2022	6
CAS Construction	Milton Lodge, Johnswell Road, KK (Phase 2)	SOS Kilkenny Housing CLG	Completed	28/06/2022	1
CAS Construction	Kingsriver, Ennisnag	Kingsriver Housing Assoc. Ltd.	Completed	30/06/2022	2
AHB CALF Construction	Orchard Close, New Orchard, Kilkenny	Cluid Housing	Completed	31/07/2022	21
CALF Part V	Orchard Close, New Orchard, Kilkenny	Cluid Housing	Completed	31/07/2022	2
CAS Construction	Brother Thomas Place, Church Lane, kilkenny	Good Shepherd Services Ltd	Completed	17/08/2022	12
CAS Construction TURNKEY	Tinnypark, Callan Road, Kilkenny	SOS Kilkenny HA	Completed	31/08/2022	6
CAS Construction	Grennan Villa, Thomastown	Camphill Communities of Ireland	Completed	01/09/2022	5
SHIP Construction TURNKEY	New Road, Mooncoin		On-site	17/11/2022	4
SHIP Construction TURNKEY	Chapel Street, Mooncoin		On-site	17/11/2022	2
SHIP Construction TURNKEY	Berkely Drive Mount Sion Road Ferrybank Co Kilkenny		On-site	30/11/2022	5
AHB CALF Turnkey	Nuncio Road, Kilkenny Phase 3	RESPOND	On-site	09/12/2022	17
CALF Part V	Nuncio Road, Kilkenny Phase 3	RESPOND	On-site	09/12/2022	5
				<b>2022 Total</b>	<b>162</b>
CAS Acquisitions	Completed 2022				3
CAS Acquisitions	In Progress / Sale Agreed				6
LA Acquisitions	Completed 2022				1
LA Acquisitions	In Progress / Sale Agreed				4
				<b>2022 Total</b>	<b>14</b>

## HOMELESS SERVICES

<b>HOMELESS SERVICES SUMMARY OCTOBER 2022</b>	
<b>Homeless Presentations</b>	34
<b>Homeless Assessment Outcomes</b>	
Prevention & Interventions	18
Emergency Service	6
Not eligible / Did not avail of service	10
<b>HAP Place Finder Service</b>	
No of Homeless HAP tenancies @ 1 <sup>st</sup> day of month	111
No of Homeless HAP tenancies created during month	1
No of Homeless HAP tenancies in place @ last day of month	112
Number of Homeless HAP tenancy breakdowns	0
Other Social Housing Tenancies supported /created during month	5
<b>Households in Temporary Emergency Supported Accommodation</b>	27
<b>Households in Temporary Emergency B&amp;B accommodation</b>	6
<b>Households in Temporary Emergency B&amp;B Accommodation that are families</b>	5
<b>Households (singles/couples) in Transition Emergency Accom. (<i>Own Front Door</i>)</b>	26
<b>Households (Families) in Transition Emergency Accommodation (OFD)</b>	11

<b>SOCIAL HOUSING SUPPORT APPLICATION SUMMARY OCTOBER 2022</b>	
Number awaiting Social Housing Support at October 31 <sup>st</sup> (Gross Need)	1,591
Number awaiting Social Housing Support at October 31 <sup>st</sup> (Net Need)	756
No. of Social Housing Applications received in October	79
No. of applications incomplete / awaiting further information / clarification	58
No. of applications validated and ready for assessment during the month	25
No. of applications assessed during October	29
No. of applications awaiting assessment as @ October 31 <sup>st</sup>	90

<b>HOUSING ASSISTANCE PAYMENT SUMMARY UP TO OCTOBER 31<sup>st</sup> 2022</b>	
Number of active HAP tenancies to October 31 <sup>st</sup> 2022	720
New HAP tenancies set up	79
HAP tenants allocated Social Housing	61
Closed HAP Tenancies	121
HAP Rent Reviews	212
Other tenancy amendments	415
HAP Calls Received 2022 year to date	3,100
HAP Calls Received October	350

## Tenancy Management

The Tenancy Management Section deals with allocations, maintenance and anti-social behaviour complaints in relation to our tenants.

- LA/RAS/Leasing allocations in September (offers made): ..... 16
- LA/RAS/Leasing allocations to date (offers made):..... 184
- Tenant Liaison Officer cases in September: ..... 33
- Tenant Liaison Officer cases year to date:..... 459
- Maintenance Calls for September:..... 621
- Maintenance Calls year to date..... 4,947

## Housing Grants

Kilkenny County Council administers a number of grant options to assist older people and people with a disability in carrying out works which are necessary for the purposes of rendering a house more suitable for their accommodation needs. The annual budget is €1,977,000.

Grants Paid out up to 31st October 2022		
Scheme	No.	Amount
HGD - Housing Adaptation Grant	94	€893,704
MAG - Mobility Aid Grant	21	€81,035
HOP - Housing Aid for Older Persons	97	€534,261
<b>Total</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>€1,509,000</b>

Grants Approved & Committed up to 31st October 2022		
Scheme	No.	Amount
HGD - Housing Adaptation Grant	141	€1,386,094
MAG - Mobility Aid Grant	23	€87,359
HOP - Housing Aid for Older Persons	165	€925,034
<b>Total</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>€2,398,488</b>

## Housing Loans

The Local Authority Home Loan Scheme (LAHL) replaced the Rebuilding Ireland Home Scheme from 4th January, 2022.

Housing Loan Activity 1st January 2022 to 31st October 2022					
Loan Type	Received	Approved	Amt approved	No. Paid	Amt Paid
Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan	0	4	€451,750	5	€794,000
Local Authority Home Loan	50	8	€995,025	3	€398,700
Caravan Loan	0	0	€0.00	0	€0
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>€1,446,775</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>€1,192,700</b>

## FIRE SERVICES

### Capital Projects

A new Emergency Tender and a previously owned fire engine were purchased from Capital Funding costing over €200,000. The Capital Funding was received from the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

The new Emergency Tender and the fire engine are replacing two older vehicles, both over 20 years old. These fire engines will be utilised in Kilkenny City Fire Station as front-line emergency response vehicles serving the people throughout Kilkenny for many years to come. The Emergency Tender operates as a heavy rescue unit and will attend incidents of a more serious nature where more specialised and heavier equipment is needed. The vehicle will also respond to incidents involving Road Traffic Collisions, Motorway Accidents involving Large & Heavy Goods Vehicles; Persons trapped in machinery; Train Incidents; Building/ Trench Collapse, chemical incidents and other major incidents.

### Fire Safety Certificates

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

### Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003

- Fire Prevention staff made targeted inspections of premises both to provide advice and to enforce legislation.
- 60 Licence Applications were processed under Section 24 of the Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003.
- 59 Fire Safety Inspections of premises have taken place so far this year.

### Community Fire Safety

Fire Service Personnel call to houses by appointment and give fire safety advice to the occupants. A HFSV is usually carried out by two uniformed operational fire service personnel. The primary aim of these HFSVs is to reduce the numbers of fires, deaths and injuries in the home by firstly preventing fires occurring and to ensure that when fires do occur, the occupiers are given early warning, and they know how to react quickly and safely. All seven fire stations held an Open Fire Station Day on Kilkenny Day. We were delighted to see huge crowds visiting the Fire

Stations despite the inclement weather conditions.



*Fire Personnel giving fire safety advice at the Kilkenny Older People's Council celebration in the Kilkenny Ormonde Hotel.*

### Fire Brigade Operations

The Brigades have attended over 600 incidents to date. These incidents included a fatal road traffic collision, public road hazards, domestic fires, automatic fire alarm activations, grass fires, chimney fires and ambulance assists. Freshford and Callan Fire Brigade attended numerous flooding incidents in their areas.



### Fire Service Training

Five 1 day water awareness courses were held in Graiguenamanagh Fire Station. The Water Awareness course is both a classroom-based and on site (*River Barrow*) course with practical demonstration, designed to provide personnel who may be working near water with sufficient knowledge to be aware of the hazards created by this environment and develop an understanding of water rescue techniques.

A number of two day refresher training on Emergency Services Driving took place in October. A total of 11 Fire Service Drivers took part in these courses.

A very successful fire safety seminar was provided to Housing Technical staff by a Senior Fire Officer.

## ARTS

### **Bookville Festival**

This year saw the most comprehensive festival to date with 13,000 Bookville Festival books distributed to every primary school and library across the County, six online videos, a Bookville exhibition and the re-introduction of fifty live events after a three-year break from live events due to Covid. Thirty-eight authors, illustrators and entertainers were involved in Bookville 2022, with twenty-eight based in Ireland and seven from County Kilkenny. Twenty-eight of the thirty-eight authors, illustrators and entertainers were new to Bookville.

### **Autumn Writer Workshops**

John McKenna is facilitating our 6-week writer workshops with four workshops completed during October and the final two in November. John is working with the participants on developing their work and supporting them to examine the essentials required before they begin to write stories, poems, novels, memoirs or plays.

### **Knitted Together Evaluation Event**

The final event for our 2022 Knitted Together 2022 project took place in the Set Theatre on 18<sup>th</sup> October with over 40 participants attending. They crocheted, knitted and chatted over a cup of tea and scone. They swapped stories about projects they have completed or are working on and where to get the best value in supplies etc. This event was also used this as an opportunity to evaluate the project and its benefits to the participants across the past nine months.

The National Age Friendly Recognition & Achievement Awards 2022 took place in Dromoland Castle Hotel on 27<sup>th</sup> October and the Knitted Together project was one of twenty-eight projects shortlisted from 200 entries entered from all over the country. Unfortunately, we didn't win on this occasion but as far as the project participants are concerned it was a winner!

### **The Arts Show on KCLR**

Kilkenny Arts Office and KCLR radio station will co-produce a ten-week Arts Show. The show will share and highlight arts & cultural activity. It is an opportunity to highlight the intrinsic value and significance of the arts, but also its economic and social benefits. The show will be presented by Hugo Jellett, in association with Kilkenny County

Council Arts Office and Creative Ireland. It will air on KCLR on Wednesdays at 6.10pm, starting on 2<sup>nd</sup> November.

### **School Bus Subsidy**

A second round of school bus subsidies was awarded to primary schools to support classes to visit a Barnstorm theatre play *The Elves & The Shoemaker*, taking place in Padmore and Barnes from the 30<sup>th</sup> November - 17<sup>th</sup> December. A total of 734 children will be supported to attend.

### ***Those who take care of Us* - A Creative Celebration of One Parent Families**

Members of Kilkenny One Parent Community (KOPC) took place in printmaking workshop where they were invited to collect fallen leaves from plants and trees and use them to create a range of colourfully embossed monoprints as part of a printmaking workshop facilitated by artist Michelle McMahon in the Butler Gallery.

### **Artist in Residence - Youth Residency with Ossory Youth & The Drum**

Artist in residence Aoife Doherty has devised a programme that focuses on the creative process. She is guiding young people into making their own art works that focus on the value of art making, taking inspiration from various Modern art movements like Cubism, Surrealism and more. By experimenting with new ways of making, Aoife hopes that the young people will not only enjoy the creative space but utilise these new methods of making in their future art making.

While the Youth Residency enables young people to explore and experiment new ways of making, it also enables artist Aoife Doherty to gain experience in devising and facilitating these art groups while under the mentorship and support of the Kilkenny Arts Office. This Residency acts as professional development for the selected artist and this opportunity will enable Aoife with the skills and knowledge to continue similar work.



28,046 Items borrowed



14,266 Visitors



1,722 Members

## Heritage Week 2022

Kilkenny County Council Library Service was delighted to welcome our users back into our libraries for our first inhouse Heritage Week events since 2019. Our talks/events in our branches also touched on the ongoing Decade of Centenaries with talks covering the local in Loughboy Library on the Life of Tom Treacy, in the City Library on the role of Newspapers during this period as well as on a local community project, 'Common Threads' also in the City Library. We also welcomed back our popular Genealogy Masterclasses in Loughboy, Graiguenamanagh and the Local Studies Department. In keeping with our focus on virtual events we had daily posts of early 20<sup>th</sup> century images from our photographic collections online.

## Culture Night

We held a fantastic Culture night in Loughboy Library, with Historian John Dorney. John gave a very informative talk and presentation on the destruction of the big houses during the Civil War to a large crowd.

## Library Activities

Our libraries are back, and busier than ever with groups, classes and workshops. We have Irish and French conversation classes, Adult and children's book clubs, knitting groups, Wet Felting classes, Writings groups, children's story times, one to one tech support in City Library and much more happening. To see what is coming up, visit our What's on section on [kilkennylibrary.ie](http://kilkennylibrary.ie).

We had a number of groups and events running across our library network throughout the month of October. Here are some that you can still join! For more information on any of these groups/events contact your local library



## Mayfair Library Update

Shot blasting of existing roof trusses completed. Fortnightly progress meetings continue with contractor.



## Online Services Usage



2,309 eAudiobooks borrowed



4,970 newspapers read



823 eMagazines borrowed



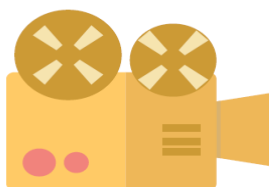
1,019 eBooks borrowed



192 Online Courses sessions



369 Songs accessed



## Digital Engagement

Our staff have prepared, recorded, edited and published 313 posts on our social media platforms in July and August. Our video views for the two months were 3,059.

# FINANCE

The expenditure by service division to the end of October is set out in Table 1. Total Expenditure for the period was €82m compared with the annual budget of €93.9m.

Table 1	Actual YTD October 2022	Budget Full Year 2022
	€'000's	€'000's
Housing & Building	19,071	22,101
Road Transport & Safety	24,548	26,590
Water Services	5,863	7,255
Development Management	8,463	10,502
Environmental Services	9,770	12,178
Recreation & Amenity	6,294	7,175
Agriculture, Education, Health, Welfare	474	680
Miscellaneous Services	7,863	7,390
<b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>	<b>82,346</b>	<b>93,871</b>

## Finance Update

Inflation is having a significant impact on the cost of delivering all services and on the delivery of the capital programme.

Energy costs for all Council buildings is expected to be €600k over budget for the year as a result of recent price increases. The impact of inflation on other goods and services is estimated to cost an additional €550k in 2022 which will have to be absorbed within existing budgets. The public sector pay agreement that was recently negotiated will result in additional payroll costs of €936k for 2022. Government did provide compensation for 80% of the additional cost arising from the pay restoration in recent years. The sector will be seeking similar compensation for the additional cost arising from the latest agreement.

The issue of recoupment of salary and overheads from the Department for the RAS scheme has still not been resolved. This will result in a shortfall for the year of €650k.

Car parking income is 10% below budget level for the year. The budget income figure was based on pre covid-19 income levels. A 10% reduction will result in the income for the year being €230k lower than budget.

The completion of social housing voids is costing significantly more than the grant available. The estimated shortfall per unit is €13k with a total projected shortfall for the year of €1.1m. Commercial rates income is estimated to be €700k higher than budgeted which will partially offset the shortfalls outlined. The projected net deficit could be in the region of €2m in the absence of further support from Government to deal with the impact of spiralling inflation.

The bank overdraft facility was not utilised in the ten month period to the end of October.

## Rates Revaluation

Further to Revaluation 2017, 197 customers with a total rate demand value of €4.5m appealed their new valuation to the Valuation Tribunal. To-date 193 appeals have been completed. The following is a breakdown of the appeal outcomes to-date:



Decrease in Revaluation on Appeal	149 cases
Appeal Withdrawn	33 cases
Increase in Revaluation on Appeal	1 case
No change to Revaluation on Appeal	10 cases
Appeals outstanding	4 cases

The total annual Income lost to date stands at €853k.

### **Targeted Rates Waiver Quarter 1, 2022**

On 12<sup>th</sup> October, 2021 a targeted commercial rates waiver to support certain sectors was agreed by Government for the final quarter of 2021. An extension of this waiver for a further period of three months, for the first quarter of 2022 was agreed by Government in December, 2021.

The extended waiver took the form of a credit in lieu of rates. The terms and conditions relating to eligibility and administration of the extended waiver remained the same as those outlined in Circular Fin 20/2021 “Targeted Commercial Rates Waiver Final Quarter 2021.

The broad categories of businesses the credit in lieu of rates applied to were as follows:

- Hospitality, including restaurants and cafes;
- Leisure;
- Miscellaneous entertainment;
- Certain tourism related categories; and
- Airports.

The value of the waiver is the equivalent value of 25% of the annual rate bill for 2022 for eligible categories of business. The waiver (Jan to March) was applied to eligible rate accounts by the Rates Section as a credit in lieu of rates in the value of €748,378 in March and eligible businesses were notified by letter.

### **Budget 2023**

Work on the 2023 budget is ongoing. A number of workshop meetings have been held with the Elected Members in recent weeks. The date for the Statutory Budget meeting is Friday, 25<sup>th</sup> November, 2022. The Budget book will be issued to Elected Members on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2022. The national budget has provided for support for the Local Government sector for 2023 to assist with the rising energy costs and the additional cost arising from the new national pay agreement. These supports have been critical in trying to achieve a balance budget position for 2023.