



2024 ANNUAL REPORT

WEXFORD COUNTY
COUNCIL



**Comhairle Contae
Loch Garman
Wexford
County Council**

To be passionate and
ambitious in working for
Wexford, delivering a vibrant
model county.



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CATHAOIRLEACH'S INTRODUCTION

It is a great privilege to introduce Wexford County Council's Annual Report for 2024. Since my election as Cathaoirleach in June, I have been honoured to represent this Council and work alongside my fellow elected members and the dedicated staff who serve the people of Wexford.



One of the standout moments of the year was Wexford's hosting of Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann, a truly special occasion that brought an incredible cultural and economic boost to our county. The success of the Fleadh was due in no small part to the remarkable contribution of the people of Wexford, particularly the volunteers who gave their time and energy to ensure the event ran smoothly. Their dedication was inspiring, and it was an honour to host an event as Cathaoirleach to acknowledge their efforts – a definite highlight of my term so far. We now look forward with great anticipation to welcoming the Fleadh back to Wexford in 2025, building on the achievements of this year to make it an even greater success.

This year also saw a significant deepening of transatlantic relationships with Georgia, underscoring Wexford's growing global profile. As Cathaoirleach, I was proud to host a distinguished delegation from the state of Georgia, including U.S. Congressman Earl L. "Buddy" Carter; Georgia Department of Economic Development Commissioner Pat Wilson and five of his senior team; senior executives from Georgia Power and other utility providers; Trip Tollison, CEO of the Savannah Economic Development Authority; Teresa MacCartney, COO of the University System of Georgia; Georgia Representative James Burchett, Majority Whip, and ten members of the Georgia House of Representatives.

Their visit reflects the growing importance of the bicultural partnership between Georgia and Wexford, driven in no small part by the establishment of Georgia Southern University's Wexford Campus. This initiative has opened doors to vibrant educational, civic, business, and trade connections, and it was a privilege to welcome the delegation to Wexford as we continue to build those ties for the benefit of our county.

The local elections in June were a significant milestone, bringing both change and continuity to the Council. Ten new councillors were elected, while some long-serving colleagues chose not to seek re-election. Others, despite their dedication and hard work, were unfortunately unsuccessful in returning. I want to acknowledge their contribution to public service and thank them for their commitment to Wexford. To the new and returning councillors, I extend my best wishes for the next five years, and I look forward to working constructively with all members in the years ahead.

The General Election in November saw Councillors George Lawlor and Fionntán Ó Súilleabháin elected to Dáil Éireann, and subsequently two new Councillors co-opted in their place. I congratulate those elected to Dáil Éireann and look forward to working closely on issues of particular importance to Wexford. I also take the opportunity to acknowledge the immense contribution made by Brendan Howlin and Paul Kehoe as they step away from Leinster House.

2024 was also a year of transition at an executive level, with Eddie Taaffe appointed as Chief Executive of Wexford County Council in May. I want to congratulate Eddie on his appointment and wish him every success.

Across housing, infrastructure, economic development, and climate action, significant strides were made to enhance the quality of life for our citizens. The Council remains committed to delivering on its priorities and ensuring that Wexford continues to develop and prosper.

A personal highlight of my year was the official opening of the restored Fr. Murphy cottage at the Fr. Murphy Centre in Boolavogue on Sunday, 26th May – the very date that marks Fr. Murphy's first fateful encounter with the Yeomen, which led to the Battle of Oulart Hill. As a proud Boolavogue native, it was an immense honour as Cathaoirleach of Gorey-Kilmuckridge Municipal District, to open this significant heritage project alongside Minister of State James Browne TD. I'd like to acknowledge Wexford County Council's efforts in sourcing funding through Creative Ireland's 225 Commemoration of the 1798 Uprising.

I want to sincerely thank all the staff of Wexford County Council for their dedication and hard work throughout the year. Their efforts ensure that essential services are delivered efficiently, and that Wexford continues to thrive.

As we embark on this new Council term, I am confident that by working together, we can continue to deliver meaningful progress and positive change for the people of Wexford.

Cathaoirleach Pip Breen

Wexford County Council

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S INTRODUCTION

It is a great honour to introduce Wexford County Council's Annual Report for 2024 as Chief Executive. I want to begin by sincerely thanking the Elected Members for their support in appointing me to this role. It is a privilege to lead an organisation with such a dedicated and talented staff, whose hard work and commitment continue to make a real difference in the lives of the people of Wexford.



2024 has been a particularly eventful and historic year for Wexford. The county proudly hosted Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann, bringing a vibrant celebration of Irish music, culture, and heritage to our communities. The event was a resounding success, attracting well in excess of half a million visitors and providing a significant boost to the local economy.

This year was also marked by an unprecedented level of electoral activity with two referenda, local, European and general elections. Wexford County Council successfully managed the local elections in June electing thirty-four Councillors who I look forward to working with.

The Franchise Department managed a significant volume of requests from citizens seeking to be added to the register of electors or updating their details, ensuring that all eligible voters had the opportunity to participate in these important democratic processes. The general election saw further historic changes, with the creation of the new three-seater Wicklow-Wexford constituency and a four-seater Wexford constituency.

Corporate and Strategic Planning

A significant milestone in 2024 was the adoption of the new Corporate Plan 2024-2029 in December following extensive consultation. This plan sets out a clear vision and strategic direction for Wexford County Council over the next five years, ensuring that we continue to deliver high-quality services and drive sustainable development across the county.

Housing

Housing delivery remained a key priority in 2024, with significant progress made under the Government's 'Housing for All' strategy with 275 new social housing dwellings delivered in Wexford and in excess of 400 housing allocations. A significant milestone was reached in September with the sod-turning for 20 affordable homes at Ramsfort Park, Gorey, marking an important step in providing accessible homeownership opportunities.

Economic Development and Enterprise

Wexford's economic landscape has continued to evolve, with significant investment in enterprise, innovation, and tourism. February saw the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with IDA Ireland for the development of an Advanced Technology Building in Killagoley, demonstrating Wexford's commitment to attracting high-value investment and supporting job creation. 2024 also marked the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the Local Enterprise Office (LEO), which has played a pivotal role in supporting small businesses and entrepreneurship creating on average 290 jobs per year, demonstrating its sustained impact on the local economy. The Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2024-2029 and its Implementation Plan were adopted in April, providing a strategic framework to drive sustainable economic and community development across the county. June saw the launch of the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) 2024-2028, a €10 million investment in empowering disadvantaged communities and individuals across Wexford.

Town Centre Regeneration

A central focus in 2024 has been the rejuvenation of our towns and villages. Seven Town Centre First Teams have been established across the county, bringing together local stakeholders to drive forward initiatives aimed at revitalising town centres, supporting local businesses, and enhancing the public realm. These efforts reflect our commitment to strengthening communities and ensuring our towns remain vibrant and sustainable places to live and work.

Climate Action and Sustainability

Sustainability and climate action continue to be at the forefront of our agenda. The Climate Action Plan 2024-2029 was adopted in February, setting out an ambitious roadmap for Wexford's transition to a low-carbon society. In support of community-led climate action, €669,000 was allocated to 16 community groups to advance local sustainability projects. Wexford County Council has also progressed initiatives aimed at reducing carbon emissions, enhancing energy efficiency, and promoting renewable energy projects. Our commitment to the Pathfinder Project and the broader transition to a low-carbon society has seen tangible advancements in sustainable transport, energy, and biodiversity conservation.

Acknowledgements

The achievements outlined in this report are the result of the collective efforts of our staff, elected representatives, and many stakeholders across the county. I extend my sincere gratitude to all staff for their dedication and resilience, to the Elected Members for their leadership, and to our community partners for their invaluable collaboration.

As we look ahead, Wexford County Council remains committed to delivering for our county, ensuring sustainable growth, and enhancing the quality of life for all who live, work, and visit here. I look forward to continuing this important work in the years ahead.

Eddie Taaffe

Chief Executive
Wexford County Council

ELECTED MEMBERS

Wexford Borough District



Cllr George Lawlor
Labour



Cllr Tom Forde
Sinn Fein



Cllr Leonard Kelly
Non-Party



Cllr Maura Bell
Labour



Cllr John Hegarty
Fine Gael



Cllr Gary Laffan
Fianna Fáil



Cllr Davy Hynes
Sinn Fein

Enniscorthy Municipal District



Cllr Aidan Browne
Fianna Fáil



Cllr Barbara-Anne Murphy
Fianna Fáil



Cllr Cathal Byrne
Fine Gael



Cllr John O'Rourke
Non-Party



Cllr Kathleen Codd Nolan
Fine Gael



Cllr Jackser Owens
Non-Party

Gorey Kilmuckridge Municipal District



Cllr Mary Farrell
Non-Party



Cllr Willie Kavanagh
Fianna Fáil



Cllr Donal Kenny
Fianna Fáil



Cllr Andrew Bolger
Fianna Fáil



Cllr Oliver Walsh
Fine Gael



Cllr Diarmuid Devereux
Fine Gael



Cllr Anthony Donohoe
Fine Gael



Cllr Pip Breen
Fianna Fáil



Cllr Fionntán Ó Suileabháin
Sinn Fein



Cllr Joe Sullivan
Fianna Fáil

New Ross Municipal District



Cllr Pat Barden
Non-Party



Cllr Michael Whelan
Fianna Fáil



Cllr John Fleming
Fianna Fáil



Cllr Bridín Murphy
Fine Gael



Cllr Anthony Connick
Non-Party



Cllr Michael Sheehan
Fianna Fáil

Rosslare Municipal District



Cllr Ger Carthy
Non-Party



Cllr Jim Moore
Fine Gael



Cllr Lisa McDonald
Fianna Fáil



Cllr Jim Codd
Aontú



Cllr Frank Staples
Fine Gael

STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEES (SPCS)

Planning & Building Control Strategic Policy Committee

Two meetings held: 11th January and 25th April 2024.

MEMBERS	
Cllr. John Hegarty, Chairperson	Tom Doyle – Farming Pillar
Cllr. Anthony Donohoe	Anthony Neville – Development/Construction Sector
Cllr. Garry Laffan	Zeno <u>Winkens</u> – Environmental Sector
Cllr. <u>Bridin</u> Murphy	

The key items discussed during 2024 were as follows:

- Local Area Plans,
- E-Planning,
- County Development Plan – Core Strategy Monitoring Report,
- Planning Legislation updates & Planning Bill,
- Regeneration Unit updates,
- Housing Workshop/Meeting with CIF,
- Pre-Planning Meetings and updates,
- Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy (RSES) – 2 Year Report and
- Draft Taking in Charge Policy.

Economic & Enterprise Strategic Policy Committee

Two meetings held: 25th January (Special LECP) & 02nd May 2024

MEMBERS	
Cllr. Michael Whelan	Cllr. <u>Cathal</u> Byrne
Cllr. Aidan Browne	Joe Breen; Farming Pillar
Cllr. John Fleming	John Doyle; Development/Construction Sector
Cllr. Barbara Anne Murphy	Niall Slattery; Business/Commercial Sector
Cllr. George Lawlor	Ernest <u>Levingstone</u> ; Business/Commercial Sector
Cllr. Ger <u>Carthy</u>	Dave Morris; Trade Union Sector
Cllr. Michael Sheehan	<u>Senan</u> O'Reilly; Environmental Sector
Cllr. Kathleen Codd Nolan	Seamus Murphy; Community/Voluntary Sector

The Key items discussed during 2024 were as follows:

- LECP Implementation plan
- LEO's success with job creation
- Offshore Renewal Energy
- Rosslare Europort
- Economic Community monitor - Central Statistics Website
- Climate Action Overview,
 - Climate action week
 - Expansion of fleet including use of EV's and HVO in heavy goods vehicles
 - Appropriate location of ev charging stations
 - Biodiversity fund approved
 - Dune restoration projects & Beach nourishment
- Technology & business infrastructure
- Projects
 - Town centre revitalisation & regeneration projects
 - Public building and space enhancement projects
 - Recreational and tourism projects
 - Greenway
 - Municipal swimming pools
- Wexford Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann 2024
- Thrive Funding

Transportation & Water Services Strategic Policy Committee

One Transportation & Water Services SPC meeting held in 2024.

MEMBERS	
Cllr. Pip Breen	John Waters - Community/Voluntary Sector
Cllr. Anthony Connick	Tom Logan - Social Inclusion Sector
Cllr. Andrew Bolger	Eoin Neville - Development/Construction Sector
Cllr. Willie Kavanagh	Emer Ward - Trade Union Sector
Cllr. Pat Barden	Brendan Crowley - Business/Commercial Sector
Cllr. Diarmuid Devereux	

The key items discussed during 2024 were as follows:

- Update of the progress of Major Road Projects
 - N11/N25 Oilgate to Rosslare
 - N25 Rosslare Europort Access Road
- Active Travel Update of current projects
 - Large Cycle Schemes being progressed through Wexford Town
 - Safe Routes to Schools Scheme
- Special Speed Limit Byelaws

- Outlined the proposed reduction of 80km/h to 60km/h on rural non-national roads and 50km/h to 30km/h in urban areas.
- Parking Update
 - Installation of more card enabled parking machines
 - Introduction of new parking app
 - Recruitment of additional traffic wardens
- Water Services Transition to Úisce Éireann
 - Overview of Multi Annual Rural Water Programme 2022-2026

Climate Change, Environment & Biodiversity Strategic Policy Committee

The Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environment SPC met twice in 2025 (new Council elected June) 8th February and 25th April, 2024.

MEMBERS	
Cllr. Mary Farrell	Allen Holman – Community/Voluntary Sector
Cllr. Tom Forde	Kevin Molloy – Social Inclusion Sector
Cllr. Leonard Kelly	Danny Ford – Environmental Sector
Cllr. <u>Donal</u> Kenny	Anne Marie Neville – Development/Construction Sector
Cllr. Maura Bell	Joe Ryan – Trade Union Sector
Cllr. Jim Moore	Mary Walsh – Business/Commercial Sector
Cllr. Oliver Walsh	James Brennan – Agriculture/Farming Sector

The key items discussed during 2024 were as follows:

- Climate Action updates including the new Climate Action Plan 2024-2029.
- Coastal Management updates including reports on coastal erosion, protection schemes, Piers & Harbours and beaches.
- Draft Litter Management Plan 2024-2027 updated.
- Biodiversity matters updates.
- Draft New Ross Port Explosive Bye-Laws.
- New Domestic Waste Water Treatment System (DWWTS) Grant Scheme.
- Wexford County Council and IFA Protocol for Farm Inspections.
- Review of the Recommended Minimum Criteria for Environmental Inspections (RMCEI) 2023 & 2024.

Housing & Community Strategic Policy Committee

Two meetings held in 2024: 14th February 2024 & 10th April 2024

MEMBERS	
Cllr. Joe Sullivan	Cllr. Frank Staples
Cllr. David Hynes	Cllr. Jim Codd
Cllr. Lisa McDonald	Michael Wall, Trade Union Rep
Cllr. John O'Rourke	William Considine, Community & Voluntary Rep
Cllr. Fionntán O'Suilleabháin	Alice Doyle, Farming Rep
Cllr. Jackser Owens	Anne Sharry , PPN rep

The key items discussed during 2024 were as follows:

- Traveller Accommodation Programme 2025 – 2029 was adopted.
- Policy for Naming Estates
- Affordable Housing
- Tenant Incremental Purchase Scheme Changes
- Update on Implementation of the Strategic Plan for Housing Disabled People 2021 – 2026
- Tenant in Situ
- Allocation Scheme

JOINT POLICING COMMITTEE

The Joint Policing Committee met once, in March 2024, as the committee has been replaced by the Local Community Safety Partnership (LCSP) from 2025 onwards.

The LCSP will seek to foster sustained community involvement in identifying needs and co-designing solutions, and sustained commitment from services in working together to address those needs.



Joint Policing Committee Members and support staff photographed at the final JPC Meeting, which took place on the 11th of March 2024.

Final updates were given to the JPC in respect of the following at the March meeting:

- The Property Marking Device, formally launched in Ballycullane Community Centre in February 2024
- CCTV
- Quarterly Crime Statistics in County Wexford

WEXFORD BOROUGH DISTRICT

During 2024 Wexford Borough District continued to experience growth and positive development, fostering collaborative approaches with the business sector, local groups, and communities to strengthen and respond to economic, social and cultural opportunities for Wexford Town and District.

Throughout the year, the elected members and staff were to the forefront working collaboratively with various key stakeholders to promote the development of the district and the Wexford brand while ensuring consistent delivery of high-quality public services.

This was especially evident when the town hosted the highly successful Comhaltas Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann 2024, with a record attendance of 650,000 people over the course of the 8 days. The event provided a unique opportunity to showcase the town at its best with a huge economic and cultural boost. Following the success of the event, Wexford will again host Comhaltas Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann in August 2025.

LOCAL & GENERAL ELECTIONS

The 2024 local elections were held on 7th June 2024. The Wexford count concluded on Monday 10th June with all 34 seats on Wexford County Council filled following a competitive and, at times, closely contested process. Five outgoing Councillors did not seek re-election, and a further five Councillors who sought re-election lost their seat. Eight of the thirty-four Councillors were elected to the Council for the first time, with John Dwyer and Paddy Kavanagh returning having previously been members of the Council.

The overall composition of the new Council is as follows:

Independents: 11*	Sinn Féin: 3
Fianna Fáil: 9*	Labour: 2
Fine Gael: 8	Aontú: 1

*The number of Independent Councillors increased to 12 in November 2024 when Cllr. Michael Sheehan became an independent and the number of Fianna Fáil Councillors decreased to 8, as a result.

Local Electoral Area (LEA) Breakdown

Wexford Borough District (7 seats):

George Lawlor (Lab) *	Raymond Shannon (Ind)
Catherine 'Biddy' Walsh (Lab)	Robbie Staples (FG)
Leonard Kelly (Ind)	Garry Laffan (FF)
Tom Forde (SF)	

*Vicky Barron was co-opted to the Council in December 2024 following George Lawlor's election to Dáil Éireann.

Rosslare (5 seats):

Jim Codd (Aontú)	Lisa McDonald (FF)
Ger Carthy (Ind)	Aoife Rose O'Brien (SF)
Frank Staples (FG)	

New Ross (6 seats):

Pat Barden (Ind)	John Fleming (FF)
Michael Sheehan (FF)	Bridín Murphy (FG)
Marty Murphy (Ind)	John Dwyer (Ind)

Gorey (6 seats):

Donal Kenny (FF)	Anthony Donohoe (FG)
Joe Sullivan (FF)	Nicky Boland (Ind)
Darragh McDonald (FG)	Fionntán Ó Súilleabháin (SF)*

*Craig Doyle was co-opted to the Council in December 2024 following Fionntán Ó Súilleabháin's election to Dáil Éireann.

Kilmuckridge (4 seats):

Mary Farrell (Ind)	Oliver Walsh (FG)
Pip Breen (FF)	Paddy Kavanagh (Ind)

Enniscorthy (6 seats):

Cathal Byrne (FG)*	John O'Rourke (Ind)
Aidan Browne (FF)	Jackser Owens (Ind)
Barbara-Anne Murphy (FF)	Pat Kehoe (FG)

*Patricia Byrne was co-opted to the Council in June 2025 following Cathal Byrne's election to Seanad Éireann.

Outgoing Councillors Who Didn't Seek Re-Election or Who Lost Their Seat – 2024 Wexford Local Elections

Name	Party	LEA	Status
Maura Bell	Labour	Wexford Borough	Did not seek re-election
Kathleen Codd-Nolan	Fine Gael	Enniscorthy	Did not seek re-election
Diarmuid Devereux	Fine Gael	Gorey	Did not seek re-election
John Hegarty	Fine Gael	Wexford Borough	Did not seek re-election
Jim Moore	Fine Gael	Rosslare	Did not seek re-election
Andrew Bolger	Fianna Fáil	Gorey	Stood but lost seat
Anthony Connick	Independent	New Ross	Stood but lost seat
Davy Hynes	Sinn Féin	Wexford Borough	Stood but lost seat
Willie Kavanagh	Fianna Fáil	Kilmuckridge	Stood but lost seat
Michael Whelan	Fianna Fáil	New Ross	Stood but lost seat

At the annual meeting held on June 25th, 2024, Cllr George Lawlor was elected as Mayor to succeed the former Mayor, Cllr John Hegarty, for the following 12 months.

Following the General Election held on November 29th, 2024, Cllr George Lawlor was elected as a T.D. to the 34th Dáil for the Wexford Constituency. Cllr Vicky Barron was co-opted to fill Cllr Lawlor's vacancy at a Special Meeting of Wexford County Council on December 16th, 2024.

At the Ordinary Meeting of Wexford Borough District held on December 16th, 2024, Cllr Catherine Walsh was elected as Mayor for the remaining 6-month term.

ROADS PROGRAMME

2024 saw further significant investment in the town and wider district under the Roads Restoration Maintenance and Improvement Programme.

Restoration Maintenance Programme	
R730-24	Muchwood to Ardcandrisk
R742	Curracloe Road
L3006-2	Deeps Bridge
L7040-2	Barntown*
L3006-1	Kyle Cross/Newtown

Restoration Improvement Programme	
R730-29	Redmond Road to Tennis Club
R730-30	Redmond Road
R730-31	Wexford Bridge to Redmond Road
L3509-2	St Aidans Road
L7009-3	Crossabeg to Crory
L7505-1	George's Street Lower
L7511-1	Mary Street
L7015-2	Muchwood
L7015-2	Bolabaun
L7017-7	Blackhall Lane
L7535-1	George's Street Upper
L35002-1	Redmond Square
L700083-1	Craanagam
R-889-1	Up John Street
L-7525-1	Abbey Street
	Ardcandrisk Junction

Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience Works

R733 Condition assessment for Culverts in Wexford Town – ongoing

Low-Cost Safety Works

R889-1 Safe Crossing at junction of Bride St, St. Joseph's St. & Thomas St

L7542-1 Safe Crossing point at St. John's Road outside the Mercy School

Bridge Rehabilitation Works on Regional and Local Roads

L3002 Knockahone Bridge, Ardcandrisk - Removal of vegetation to access bridge and removal of silt under same. Inspection of the bridge has taken place and design for repairs is being drawn up with works to be completed in 2025.

ACTIVE TRAVEL SCHEME

- Works are complete on phase 1 of the Newtown Road Pedestrian and Cycle Scheme with phase 2 works to continue in 2025
- Discussions are ongoing with National Transport Authority regarding the design of the Beechlawn/Clonard Avenue Cycle Scheme
- The preliminary design for the R730 Roxborough Phase 1 (Danone to Coolballow Junction) is to be submitted to the National Transport Authority for approval

Light Segregation Cycle Schemes

- Works will be integrated into the main Newtown Road Cycle Scheme
- Roads selected for this scheme also include cycle lanes on Drinagh Road R730 and Ardcavan R741

EMERGENCY EVENTS

Following Storm Darragh, December 2024, there were approx. 50 locations where trees were removed from the road network. There was one road failure due to the lifting of tree roots which was repaired.

ENVIRONMENT

Wexford Tidy Towns achieved a Gold Medal for the 4th consecutive year in the 2024 National Tidy Towns Competition. This is a huge recognition of the ongoing work and dedication of the local Tidy Towns Committee and volunteers.



PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS

Laneways Project - On July 31st, 2024, His Worship the Mayor, Cllr George Lawlor officially unveiled the art- work project to upgrade and brighten up Fettits Lane. This was a collaborative project with Wexford Tidy Towns, Wexford in Bloom, artist Helen McLean and volunteers to create mosaics, alongside 50 young people with biodiversity themed artwork to transform the laneway and open the laneway up for the public to use. The project was funded by WWETB and Wexford Borough District, with contributions from local businesses including Westgate Design, Colm Neville and Michael Hayes.

The success of the project has led to the establishment of the Wexford Creative Laneways Committee which will look at upgrading all the town's laneways on a phased basis.



Fox Mosaic Fettits Lane



Project unveiling Fettits Lane

Window Display Competition – Fleadh 2024 - As part of Comhaltas Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann 2024, Wexford Borough District held a window display competition based on the theme, "Wexford Welcomes Fleadh 2024". Displays had to be sustainable and environmentally friendly design.

The winners were:

- Best Pub Visual Display - Mary's Bar
- Best Restaurant or Café Visual Display – Wexford Coffee Roasters
- Best Retail Visual Display - Fortunes Chemist
- Best "Other" Venue Visual Display - Kearney's Undertakers.

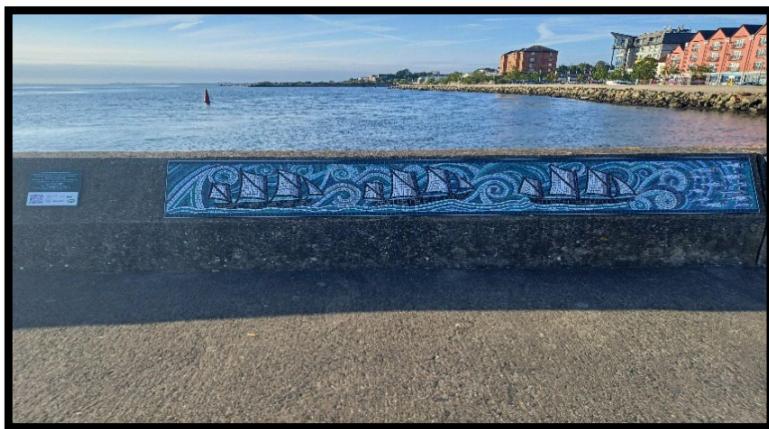


The overall winners were Acquired Brain Injury Ireland – Wexford Clubhouse whose display was featured in the window of Babooska.

Prize winners – Window Display Competition – Fleadh 2024



The Fishermen of Wexford Mosaic - On March 15th, 2024, His Worship the Mayor, Cllr John Hegarty unveiled the "The Fishermen of Wexford" mosaic on Wexford Quayfront.



The mosaic was created by Wexford Tidy Town volunteers and the community in collaboration with artist Helen McLean. The project was funded by WWETB, Creative Ireland, Wexford County Council and Wexford Tidy Towns. The artwork for the mosaic was inspired by John Boyle O'Reilly's poem marking St. Martin's Day on November 11th.

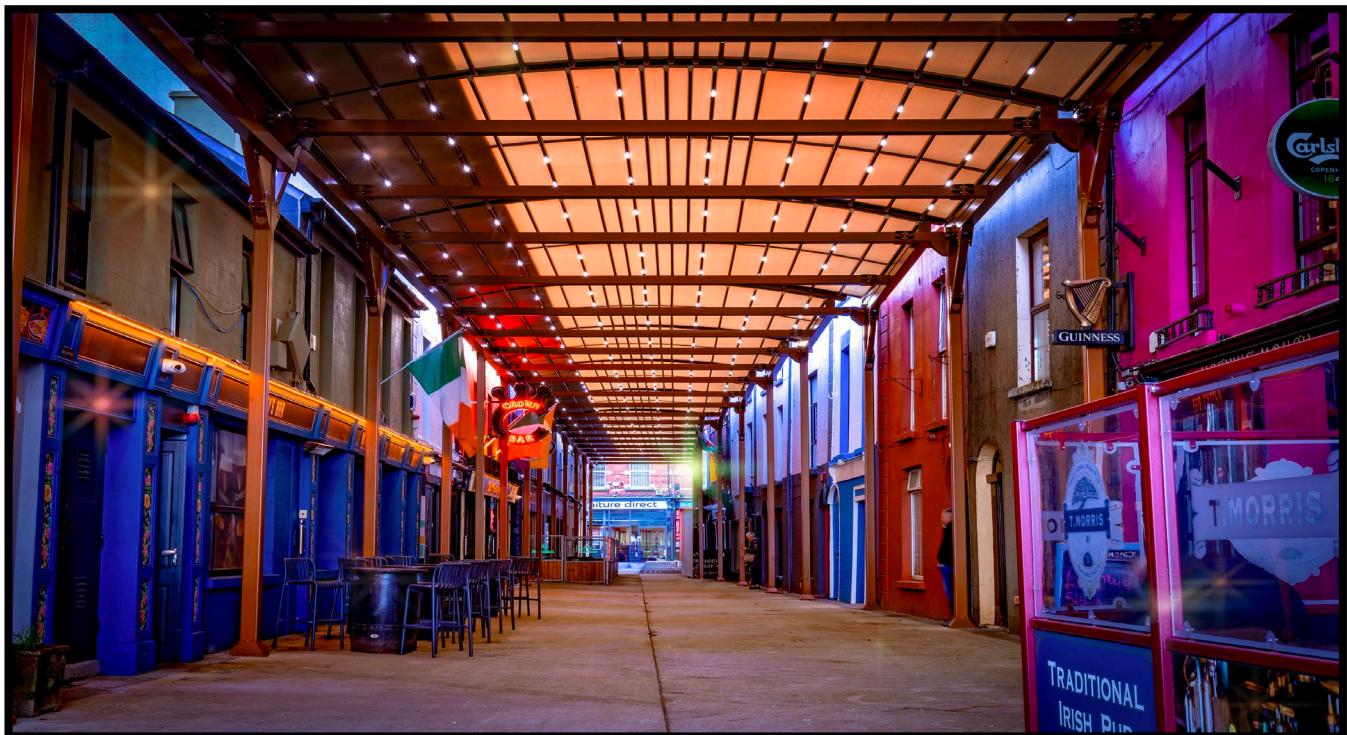
The mosaic depicts Wexford's historic and ongoing relationship to fishing and the unpredictable nature of the sea. Using waterproof glass and ceramic pieces mounted on cement panels supported by steel frames, the image highlights the themes of community and climate change.

ECONOMIC

Shopfront Improvement Scheme - Wexford Borough District devised a grant scheme to support businesses in the town to renovate the front façade of their building, both ground and upper floors.

The scheme was once again very successful with a total of 12 applications approved, receiving grant aid of €19,072. As part of the scheme, two unoccupied premises on North Main Street displayed a photo gallery of different images promoting Comhaltas Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann 2024, serving to enhance the buildings.

Monck Street Public Realm Scheme - On April 17th, 2024, His Worship the Mayor, Cllr John Hegarty officially opened the Monck Street Public Realm Scheme. The pedestrianisation works were funded by the National Transport Authority under the Active Travel Programme, with the retractable canopy funded by Fáilte Ireland under the Outdoor Dining Enhancement Scheme. The canopy is the first of its kind in Ireland and provides a unique opportunity for outdoor hospitality in the heart of Wexford Town.



"A great country if you could put a roof on it"

CIVIC HONOURS/EVENTS

Wexford Borough District hosted a civic award night on January 26th, 2024, in recognition of International Sporting Achievement. His Worship the Mayor, Cllr John Hegarty presented 35 awards to recipients in the fields of soccer, Special Olympics, hockey, boxing, kick boxing, fishing, rugby, gymnastics, handball and snooker.

Other civic and mayoral receptions hosted during 2024 included the following groups and individuals who were honoured by the mayor.

- Wexford CBS Soccer Team 2022/2023 recognition of victory in Dr. Tony O'Neill FAI Schools All Ireland
- Abled Disabled Role Models and Campaigners to mark their outstanding work on the Able Disabled Caller Campaign
- St. Patrick's Fife and Drum Band to mark their 130th Anniversary
- Mr. Billy Roche for his contribution to Irish theatre.
- Wexford Wanderer's RFC 100th Anniversary
- Mr. Ger Hore on his retirement as press photographer.

- Mr. Dylan Fawsitt for his contribution to International Rugby
- Faythe Harriers 75th Anniversary
- Mr. Larry Kirwan for his contribution to music, arts and theatre



International Sporting Achievement Awards Night 2024

May Day Ceremony – 1911 Lock Out Gate - On May 5th, 2024 the Annual May Day Ceremony and wreath laying took place at the Lock Out Gate in The Faythe, where His Worship the Mayor Cllr John Hegarty laid a wreath in remembrance of the leaders of the 1911 Lock Out and 700 men and their families who were affected by the Lock Out.

Commodore John Barry Commemorative Ceremony - The 68th Annual Commodore John Barry Memorial Wreath Laying Ceremony took place on June 30th. Guest of Honour Seán Fleming TD, the Minister of State at the Department of Foreign Affairs with responsibility for International Development and Diaspora addressed the gathering. Wreaths were laid by Minister Fleming on behalf of the Irish Nation and Lt Col Thomas Nolta on behalf of the United States of America.

As part of the 2024 celebrations marking the Annual Commodore John Barry Memorial, a plaque commemorating the establishment of links between Wexford and Annapolis Maryland, USA agreed in March 1989 between Alderman Peter Roche, Mayor of Wexford and Mayor Denis Callahan of Maryland was unveiled by Mrs. Breda Roche.

Remembrance Sunday - The Annual Remembrance Day Service in St. Iberius Church was held on November 10th. Afterwards, His Worship the Mayor, Cllr. G. Lawlor laid a wreath at the War Memorial Monument in Redmond Square.

Pomona Monument Paupers Graveyard - At the Annual Patron at the Pauper's Graveyard, Coolcotts on June 14th, 2024 the lives of 27 unidentified people who died in a shipwreck off the coast of Wexford 165 years ago were remembered. The 27 people were passengers on the emigrant ship, The Pomona, which left Liverpool en route to New York on April 27, 1859.

During the night, the Pomona went astray and ended up beached on the Blackwater Bank and following a terrible storm overnight the ship slipped off the bank and sank. Of the 424 passengers who perished that fateful night, 27 were buried in The Paupers Graveyard. Unfortunately, like almost all those buried in The Paupers Graveyard, there was no way of identifying these people. A special memorial to the 27 people was unveiled by Mr. Padge Reck, founder of the Wexford Memorial Trust. The memorial was created by Hughes



Monumental Works which features a mosaic designed by local artist Helen McLean. The memorial was funded through the Wexford Borough District's Amenity Grant Scheme.

COMMUNITY

Community Supports - The Amenity, Arts and Residents Association Grant Schemes provide much needed assistance to community and voluntary groups and to committees in local estates. In 2024, 49 Amenity Grants were awarded totalling €35,200, 20 Arts Grants, totalling €20,800 and 43 Residents Associations Grants, totalling €15,996 were awarded.

FESTIVALS AND CULTURAL PROGRAMME

Wexford Borough District promotes and supports a vibrant festival programme throughout the district each year. The following events took place during the year:

Comhaltas Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann 2024	Wexford's Walled Town Medieval Day
St. Patrick's Day Festival	Wexford Stages Rally Ceremonial Start and Pairc Feirme
Wexford Half Marathon	Cannonball
National Services Day	Wexford Opera Festival
Coolcotts Halloween Fest	Fredrick Douglas Festival
Park Live Music Festival	Wexford Festival Art Trial
Culture Night	Art in the Open

Wexford Winterland - The wondrous Wexford Winterland 2024 was officially launched on November 30th, 2024 to much fanfare including the Christmas Parade, the turning on of the Christmas lights and a magnificent fireworks display.



Wexford Winterland 2024

Santa relocated to the Crescent this year and took up residence in the historic Ballast Office from November 30th to December 23rd, 2024.

The Ballast Office



Wexford Winterland was a phenomenal success creating a great Christmas atmosphere during the festive season in Wexford.

ENNISCORTHY MUNICIPAL DISTRICT



The staff and elected members of the Enniscorthy Municipal District continued to work together successfully throughout 2024. They were committed to delivering high quality services, building productive working relationships with local stakeholders and championing issues of importance to the district. This commitment underpins a shared vision to develop the Enniscorthy District as a location of choice to live, work, visit and invest.

The Enniscorthy Municipal District meeting take place on the third Tuesday of each month at 9.30am. A total of eleven monthly district meetings were held during 2024.

PROGRESS IN 2024

Bellefield Road Community Playground and Public Realm - The official opening of the Bellefield Playground and Public Realm took place on Monday 21st October. The Playground is a fantastic new facility for community use. The enhanced entry/exit facility and the additional car parking for users has transformed the Bellefield Road area.



Ross Road, Enniscorthy All-Weather Astro Pitch - Works on the full size All Weather 3G Astro Pitch were completed in 2024. The Astro pitch, located at the Ross Road, offers a top-quality, all-weather playing surface suitable for a variety of sports. The facility features modern amenities, including floodlights for evening play, dugouts and toilet facilities.



The project was funded by a Sports Capital Grant of €300,000 received from the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media and from Wexford County Council.

Wexford Football Alliance signed a Maintenance and Operation Contract with Wexford County Council on a two-year pilot basis and will be responsible for the overall running of the pitch. Wexford Football Alliance is a new community groups formed which includes members of the Wexford Football League, Wexford Schoolboys League, Wexford Women's League including Schoolgirls and Wexford FC. The Astro Pitch is the first of its kind community facility which is being led by the community and managed by the community with support from Wexford County Council. The innovative approach of this facility is also supported by the FAI. May clubs in Enniscorthy town and district will benefit from this facility. The community facility will be available for clubs to use in early 2025.



Playful Spaces Project - The Cathaoirleach of Enniscorthy Municipal District Cllr Aidan Browne officially launched the Playful Spaces Project in the Orchard Peace Park. Funding in the sum of €25,000 was secured by Enniscorthy Municipal District from the Department of Health for musical equipment. The musical instruments have encouraged old and young to the park. Additional seating was also installed along the way to allow users of the park to rest. The project was supported by Healthy Wexford through the Healthy Ireland fund.

St Johns Community Activity Garden - Town and Village Funding was secured for a new community garden to be located at St. Johns Hospital, Enniscorthy. The project is a collaborative approach between the HSE, Enniscorthy Mens Shed and Wexford County Council. The works on the new community activity garden commenced in September. These works include a small outdoor amphitheatre and sensory garden. The garden will be a fantastic facility and will be open to the public to use.



Bunclody: Public Park & Playground - Planning permission was lodged for the new public park, car parking, playground, public toilets & associated site at lands adjacent to Market Square providing access to the River Slaney. The application was approved with conditions at the end of February. WCC Property Section is in discussion with the landowners to progress the project further.

CCTV Schemes - Authorisation was given by the Garda Commissioner to progress with the Enniscorthy Town CCTV Project. A total of 22 CCTV cameras will be installed at different locations within Enniscorthy Town which have been agreed with An Garda Siochana. The civil works are due to commence in January 2025.

A proposed amendment to the Bunclody CCTV Scheme was discussed at the CCTV Advisory Committee meeting that took place on 11th October 2024 and it was recommended that the amendment be forwarded for consideration of the Garda Commissioner.

Enniscorthy Walking Trails - The official opening of the scenic trail took place on October 21st. The new 600m loop around the Urrin River extends the existing Enniscorthy Riverside Trail. The new extension to the trail will allow accessible access to the river walk where previously the Urrin Bridge provided a barrier to persons in wheelchairs or mobility scooters. The riverside walk was also widened and resurfaced along its length. The trail has proved to be very popular with the public and is well used by the residents of Enniscorthy Town and visitors alike.

Vinegar Hill - The trails on Vinegar Hill trails were refurbished, the overgrowth was cut back, pathways widened and re-surfaced with gravel. Seating was installed along the trails to provide resting areas for users. The trails will be developed as formal walking trails with appropriate signage. Upgrade works were also carried out on the monument at Vinegar Hill. The trail is popular with local and visitors alike giving spectacular views of the town, its surrounding townlands and the River Slaney.



Enniscorthy Flood Defence Scheme

Flood Relief Scheme – Phase 1 – Wexford County Council progressed the planning consent for Phase 1 of the project. This phase of the project will include the construction of the new River Slaney Bridge, the removal of the Seamus Rafter Bridge and the construction of a new pedestrian bridge in the town centre. The baseline data for this phase has been updated. Traffic surveys are complete, ecology survey reports are complete. Multi criteria analysis of the bridge options is currently in progress. Public consultation will take place in Q1 2025. The planning application is to be submitted in Q4 2025.

Flood Relief Scheme – Phase 2 - This phase of the scheme will include the construction of the main flood relief measures for Enniscorthy town. The project baseline data is to be updated, scheme alternatives are to be assessed, consulted on publicly and a preferred option identified. It will then be necessary to decide on the most appropriate planning route for the scheme. The hydrology and environmental baseline data has been updated, and ecology survey reports are completed.

Murphy Floods Redevelopment - Wexford County Council acquired the former Murphy Floods Hotel site, and adjacent derelict properties, in Enniscorthy Town Centre. Wexford County Council will seek to advance a proposal to redevelop this vacant plot.

A Bill of Quantities and Tender documents are being prepared by Consulting Engineers to develop the Murphy Floods site. Enniscorthy Municipal District will run the tender for the development in Q1 2025 once the documentation has been completed.

Enniscorthy Town Centre First Plan was officially launched in February 2024 - The Planning Department, in collaboration with Special Projects, developed a strategic plan for Enniscorthy town centre, which was adopted at the Enniscorthy MD meeting in December 2022. Regeneration works to the Market Square, Enniscorthy Castle Quarter and Templeshannon will form part of a forthcoming Call 4 URDF application.

The Part 8 process for Market Square and town centre street enhancement commenced on 4th October 2023, which was designed by Moloney O’Beirne Architects & Roughan & O’Donovan Consulting Engineers. Following a public submission, An Bord Pleanála have requested further information from WCC in relation to the proposed development. This was submitted to ABP on 18th December 2023.



ODKM Architects were appointed to undertake concept master planning design services for the Templeshannon Regeneration Project. This masterplan will be completed in time for the forthcoming URDF application.

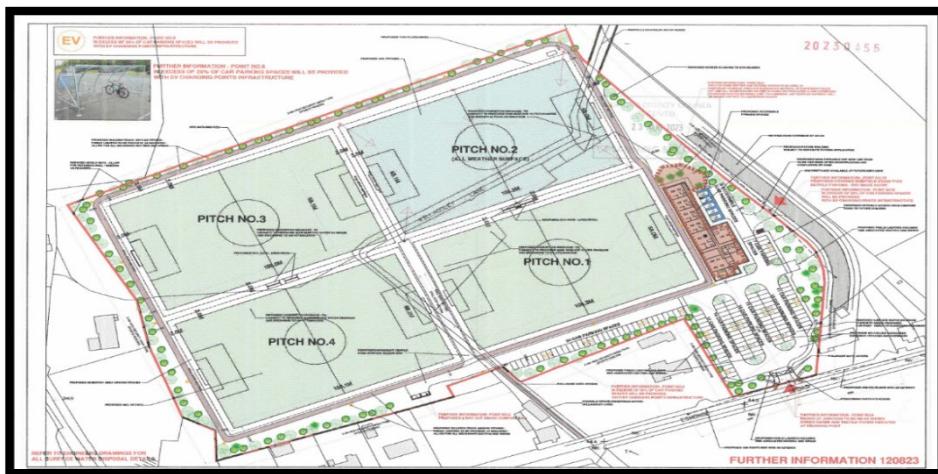
The Part 8 process for the Market Square project was concluded on 9th September 2024, with the Council approving the scheme with amendments to address matters raised during the public consultation process.

Preliminary design work on the Enniscorthy Castle Quarter project is ongoing.

Enniscorthy Athletics Track - O'Leary Sludds Architects were appointed in Feb 2021 for the detailed design, procurement of works contractor and construction management of the Athletics Track building. A competition to award a works contract for the Athletics Track building was advertised in May 2022. The lowest price tender opened for the project exceeded the available budget and, therefore, it was decided not to progress with awarding this works contract. A redesign process for the project was completed, the appointment of a contractor to undertake the works is imminent.

Enniscorthy Municipal District purchased additional athletics equipment which will be available to all users, and this will allow the hosting of National Events at the Athletics Track.

Centre of Excellence – Turret Rocks - Wexford Football Alliance submitted a Sports Capital Grant application in partnership with the Wexford Football League and the Wexford and District Mens, Women's, Schoolboys and Schoolgirls League. This Project will be delivered under Wexford Football Alliance. Grant funding secured via Sports Capital fund of €373,841 in September 2024. Contractors will move on-site to commence preparatory works in Q1 2025



The Waterfront Pool & Leisure Centre, Enniscorthy, operations handed over to Wexford County Council - The Board of Enniscorthy Swimming Pool and Leisure Complex Limited (trading as The Waterfront Pool & Leisure Centre) confirmed the operational transfer of the Pool & Leisure Complex to Wexford County Council in March of 2024.

The Board and Management Committee of the pools operating company formally stepped down in March, having served close to 160 years between them and after securely transferring management to the Council.

The outgoing Board and Management Committee were among the leisure centre's existing founding committee and have been involved since the charitable company was first established in 1995 with the ambition of building a swimming pool for the people of Enniscorthy and surrounding communities. By mid-1999, the Company, with support from the local community and Department of Sport, had successfully secured significant funding to design, construct and open a state-of-the-art leisure centre in the heart of the town, designed by Duncan Stewart.

Following the centre's successful 24-year operating period, a review was undertaken by the Board in 2023 in terms of succession planning. Arising from this review, the Board entered discussions with Wexford County Council about taking the Centre under the custody of the local authority - with the expressed intention of ensuring the complex continues to serve the people of Enniscorthy and District into the future. Discussions concluded in March with a formal transfer process. Importantly, there were no significant changes for staff or current users of the pool.

ROAD TRANSPORT AND SAFETY

Enniscorthy Municipal District received funding of €2,175,379 from the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government under the Restoration Improvement Grant along with funding of €498,115 under the Restoration Maintenance Grant which allowed further improvements to the road network throughout the town and district. Numerous footpaths in the district were also improved in relation to condition and access under Active Travel funding.

The Local Improvement Scheme continued in 2024 and funding of €178,842 was received from the Department of Rural and Community Development, this allowed for the completion of works to numerous laneways. The Community Involvement Scheme also continued, and this allowed for the completion of drainage and resurfacing works on the public road network. Enniscorthy also received €150,000 for the maintenance and repair of bridges within district.

PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS THROUGHOUT THE DISTRICT

Pedestrian Crossing	St Mary's Graveyard, Enniscorthy
Pedestrian Crossing	Church Road, Bunclody
Section of Footpath	Kiltealy Village
Public Lights	Tanyard Lane
Mogue's Well Granite Paving	Ferns Village
Line Marking, Signs & Bollards	Pearse Road and Various Schools

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

The Enniscorthy Municipal District is proud of its achievement to date and continued improvement on its presentation, as evidenced by the Council's annual Parks Improvement Programme which continued throughout 2024.

In addition to maintenance of 60 acres of green areas throughout the town of Enniscorthy, the Council also planted roundabouts on the entrances to the town and maintained impressive street side floral displays in many areas. Wildflower biodiversity planting and invasive species control continue to be carefully managed in various locations within the town and district during 2024.

Additional area enhancements include a new paved area at Castle Hill with new flowerbeds. Under a playful places project, seven new interactive musical instruments were installed in the Orchard Peace Park. Work has also commenced this year on St. John's Community Activity Garden. This site offered a unique opportunity to create a vibrant, biodiverse and visually enriched community activity park with associated amphitheatre & performance space providing much-needed outdoor activity space within the existing community. This work will be completed in Q2 of 2025.

Council Street cleaning and town presentation crews continued to present the town in an excellent light and the fruits of their labours were enjoyed throughout the year by shoppers, visitors and residents alike. This in conjunction with our active tidy towns group, contributed to our receiving a Gold Medal standard in the SuperValu Tidy towns award for 2024.

In the IBAL Anti-Litter League, Enniscorthy continue to put up a good performance, in maintaining its status of being cleaner than European norms.



TIDY TOWNS

Supervalu Tidy Towns Awards – Enniscorthy Tidy Towns celebrated a historic gold medal in this year's National Supervalu Tidy Towns Awards. This is a fantastic achievement. The adjudicators noted that "the town has a charm and the amenities are excellent". They also commended the local group on "a lot of work accomplished to date" and noted that "it's clear Enniscorthy has many plans in the pipeline that will enhance the town and the lives of its residents". Enniscorthy Municipal District will continue to work with the Tidy Town Committee.

Tidy Towns Committee's committees around the District including, Bree, Bunclody, Ferns, Ballindaggin, Kiltealy, Kilanne also increased their points in the competition.

They will continue to engage with stakeholders in the community including schools, Residents Associations, Sustainable Enniscorthy, Enniscorthy Community Allotments, Wexford Barn Owl project, Wexford Bat Group, Wexford Environmental Network, Wexford Volunteer centre, Enjoy

Enniscorthy and Reimagining Enniscorthy to raise awareness of anti-litter initiatives and volunteers work.

Tidy Towns Groups Appreciation Evening - Enniscorthy Municipal District hosted a Tidy Towns Appreciation evening on Thursday 23rd May in Enniscorthy Castle to thank them for their commitment and continued efforts in keeping Enniscorthy District tidy and looking its best.

The Tidy Towns Groups that attended on the night were from Bree, Bunclody, Ballindaggin, Enniscorthy, Ferns and Kiltealy.

Informative presentations given at the event were from Frank Burke, Climate Action Co-Ordinator Wexford County Council and Christy Boylan, Adjudicator for the Tidy Towns Competition (Ireland). Entertainment was provided by well-known Wexford harpist Una Walsh.



Enniscorthy Municipal District Elected Members 2024 - Local Election was held on 7th June 2024 and saw returning elected members Cllr Cathal Byrne, Cllr Aidan Browne, Cllr Barbara Anne Murphy, Cllr Jackser Owens and Cllr John O'Rourke joined by newly elected Cllr Pat Kehoe who was elected into the vacant seat of his party colleague Cllr Kathleen Codd Nolan who retired in 2024 after almost twenty years of service to the Enniscorthy District and County Wexford.

FESTIVALS AND EVENTS

The Enniscorthy Municipal District continued to support community development in 2024 through local festivals and events. Working closely with local groups and committees is a key objective in Wexford County Council's Corporate Plan and we recognise the importance of ensuring the implementation of a successful festival programme putting Enniscorthy and its surrounds on the map while significantly benefiting the economy of the district.

Under the 2024 Festival Programme the Enniscorthy Municipal District supported a number of festivals, including but not limited to:

Ceremonial event on Vinegar Hill to commemorate the day the <u>Tricolour</u> was first flown publicly in 1848 in Waterford City by Thomas Francis Meagher and carried in a parade on Vinegar Hill, Enniscorthy	
Easter Monday Commemoration	St. <u>Patricks</u> Day Parades in a number of towns throughout the district
Street Rhythms Festival	<u>Blackstairs</u> Blues Festival
Santa's Enchanted Experience	Christmas Festivals – Enniscorthy, <u>Ballindaggin</u> , <u>Bree</u> , <u>Bunclody</u> and <u>Ferns</u>

The Rockin' Food & Fruit Festival – May Bank Holiday Weekend.



Enniscorthy Christmas Light Switch On - A large crowd gathered in Enniscorthy for the Enniscorthy Christmas Lights switch on event. Santa, Mrs Claus, the Elves, and characters from Rathnure Panto, and Leacy's School of Dance provided festive fun with the parade leading up to the Market Square. Free kids face painting and glitter tattoos were popular on the day as well as the snow machine which created a fantastic Christmas atmosphere. South East Radio broadcasted live from the Market Square from 3pm with local businesses including M&M Meats, Evolv Health, Smyths Homevalue and Glamour Boutique all going live on air to promote Enniscorthy and encouraging all to shop local this Christmas.



Fleadh Cheoil County Events - As part of the Fleadh Cheoil County Enniscorthy Municipal District hosted a series of pop-up events at the following locations in the month of June. On June 23rd The Wild Turkey's and Gavin Buggy performed at The National 1798 Rebellion Centre and on July 6th Celtic Routes performed at The Village at Wheelocks. Video and drone footage were taken at each of the events which will showcase landmarks sites in Enniscorthy Municipal District.

A Traditional Irish Music Busking Competition took place on June 22nd in Enniscorthy Town. 1st Place was awarded to the O'Donoghue Family; 2nd Place went to Carraig Bán CCÉ and 3rd place went to Brother and Sister Group Ar Nós Na Gaoithe.

Enniscorthy was buzzing with excitement as Enniscorthy MD played host to the internationally renowned TikTok sensation, The Gardiner Brothers in a spectacular Fringe Fleadh event.



They wowed crowds at Vinegar Hill, Enniscorthy Castle, Market Square and Slaney Street under the colourful umbrellas. The video has reached almost 100k plays on social media which will be viewed by their fans all around the world.

Visit of the Guild of Freemen of the City of London - The Cathaoirleach of Enniscorthy MD Cllr John O'Rourke and Members of Enniscorthy Municipal District gave a warm welcome to John Barber- Master of the Guild, and members of the Guild of Freemen of the City of London. A brunch was held at Enniscorthy Castle for the delegation where Cllr O'Rourke updated them on new developments since their last visit in 2019.



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Civic Awards - A Civic Awards evening took place in Enniscorthy Castle on Thursday 16th May to recognise and honour the achievements of individuals and groups within Enniscorthy Municipal District. Congratulations and well done to all.

Sporting Achievements - Dannan Long, Abbie Doyle, John Connors, Sean Nolan, Shauna Kearney, The Woodsmen Horseshoe Club, Wexford A Team (Pool), Ann Redmond Captain of Wexford Darts Team, Charlie Dixon, Evan Thorpe, Oscar Mordaski, Micheal Dolgilevics, Sean Kelly, Oisin Goff



The Arts - Bunclody Kilmashall Drama Group and Maria Nolan Music was performed during the ceremony by talented harpist, Una Walsh, who is well known from her three appearances on the

Late Late Show on RTÉ. Showcasing her formidable talent as a musician, Úna played her own compositions at the event.

SHOPFRONT PAINTING & FLOWER GRANT SCHEME

The Enniscorthy Municipal District Shopfront Painting & Flower Grant Scheme 2024 ran again for 2024. The scheme assisted business owners / operators to carry out works which improved the exterior appearance of their business premises. Applications were invited from commercial properties in the following locations: Ballindaggin, Bree, Bunclody, Enniscorthy, Davidstown, Ferns and Kiltealy. Grants made available for 2024 were as follows:

Shopfront Painting	€300	Flower Grant Scheme	€150
21 applications for the Painting/Awning Grant Scheme		€5,632.79	
26 applications for the Flower Grant Scheme.		€3,266.21	

The scheme was introduced to improve the attractiveness of the town and make it a better to place to live, work and invest.

RECREATION AND AMENITY GRANTS

The role of community groups in the provision of recreation and amenity facilities in the Enniscorthy District has long been recognised by Wexford County Council. In 2024 the Enniscorthy Municipal District further supported these worthy organisations by awarding funding in excess of €47,150.00 to some 84 local groups under the Amenity & Arts Grants Scheme 2024.

The Enniscorthy Municipal District also administered funding to Residents Associations to assist with planting and general estate improvements in excess of **€10,800.00** to 18 Resident Associations throughout the district.

ENNISCORTHY CASTLE AND 1798 CENTRE

In 2024, Enniscorthy Castle was visited by 10,712 people and the National 1798 Rebellion Centre had 5711 visitors with an additional 2130 for the Santa's Enchanted Christmas experience for a total across both sites of 18,553 visitors. The two sites and Vinegar Hill hosted 90 group tours from primary, secondary and third level schools, as well as active retired and special interest groups. An additional 39 events, classes, workshops and civil ceremonies were also held.



Enniscorthy Castle was a key participant in the Rockin' Food & Fruit Festival, the Fringe Fleadh and Enniscorthy town Switch-On. The Castle also hosted 3 local art exhibitions in addition to an in-house curated summer exhibition, 'Their Finest Hour' Sporting Greats of Wexford, with the kind assistance of the Wexford County Council Archives. The exhibition showcased decades of sporting achievements across the county and was viewed by Wexford sportspeople and their families as well as by visitors from around the world.

The National 1798 Rebellion Centre hosted its 3rd annual '1798 Summer School and Rebellion Day' with lectures, re-enactors, music and activities to a crowd of over 300 people, held to coincide with the Longest Day Commemoration on Vinegar Hill on June 21st. The festival was partially funded by the Wexford County Council and Failte Ireland Small Festival Grant. Much needed

repairs and upgrades to the Centre, including modernisation of the kitchen and toilet facilities, new flooring, window repairs, painting, installation of low energy lighting, and a new entry bridge were kindly funded through the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media. 2024 saw the re-opening of the cafe space as Cafe 98, under the management of Tim & Fiona Phelan. This has brought more awareness of the 1798 Centre to locals and visitors to the area.

PRESENTATION CENTRE

Enniscorthy Presentation Centre is a vibrant community arts facility. Enniscorthy Municipal District works in partnership with Wexford Arts Centre to manage and promote the community arts venue in the County. 2024 continued to be a very busy year for the Presentation Centre with added support and as administration hub for Creative Places Enniscorthy project also supported by Wexford Arts Centre. The visual arts programme saw over 402 artists from across Wexford and Ireland given support through exhibition opportunities, curatorial advice and funding guidance. Exhibition launch attendees and overall gallery visitors reached over 3000. Meanwhile events booked through our Ticketsolve system saw a total audience number of 4,015 throughout the year and the centre supported over 603 rentals supporting local groups and workshop facilitators and artists. The centre also hosted over 105 Wexford County Council meetings and events.

The Presentation Centre managed by Wexford Arts Centre delivers a vital role in provision and support of diverse arts and culture offer within the Enniscorthy community. The partnership with Wexford Arts Centre ensures good governance and management is provided in the centre. Staff includes one full time manager and a shared Visual Art Manager role along with 1 Community Employment position and three Tus Scheme positions. The centre is in great need of capital renovations. Wexford Arts Centre has secured some support funds through Wexford Local Development for upgrades in equipment and furnishings over the years and but investment in structural maintenance and for sustaining ongoing rising costs in staffing, programme and operations is required for ongoing sustainability.



GOREY - KILMUCKRIDGE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT



The staff and elected members of the Gorey-Kilmuckridge Municipal District continue to work together successfully throughout 2024. They are committed to delivering high quality services, building productive working relationships with local stakeholders and championing the issues that are important for the district. This underpins a shared vision to develop the Gorey-Kilmuckridge District as a location of choice to live, work and visit.

INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS DELIVERED IN 2024 - There is a continuous roll-out of works of both large and small scale.

ACTIVE TOWN TRAVEL FUNDING FOR 2024 - Safe Routes to School – Gorey Central School (€50,000). The works involved were a new pedestrian crossing and junction tightening, improved sightlines, and improved footpath linkage.

FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENTS IN 2024

- East Coast Sports & Activity Hub (St. Waleran's) - Ministers Catherine Martin and Thomas Byrne announced the funding allocations under the Large-Scale Sport Infrastructure Fund from the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media. The East Coast Sports and Activity Hub is to receive €4.9m under this Scheme which will be match funded by Wexford County Council giving a total budget of close to €10m for the first phase of this development. This phase will develop the access route, playing fields, athletics & walking tracks and landscaping.
- Gorey Market House THRIVE Project - Funding of €7m under THRIVE, the Town Centre First Heritage Revival Scheme, awarded under the ERDF Southern Eastern & Midland Regional Programme 2021-2027. This funding will be utilised to regenerate the oldest building in Gorey – Gorey Market House, which is associated with the foundation of Gorey Town in line with the Town Centre First approach.
- Riverchapel Community Complex - Funding of €1,797,919 was announced by Minister Heather Humphreys under the Community Centre Investment Fund through the Department of Rural and Community Development for the development of a new Community Centre at the Riverchapel Community Complex.

COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT 2024 HIGHLIGHTS

- Outdoor Dining Facilities - New panels for outdoor dining buildouts were installed in February. Feedback from businesses was very positive and during off-season periods these multi-functional buildouts are used for hosting events.



GRANT SCHEMES

- Amenity & Arts and Resident Association Grants in the amount of **€103,000** were allocated to 137 Community Groups in 2024.

Projects funded under the Amenity & Arts Grant Scheme included small scale village improvements, community development initiatives, promoting local heritage, planting of trees, shrubs, landscaping, and promoting an interest in the Arts.

Projects funded under the Resident Association Grant Scheme included improvement of community facilities and enhancing the appearance of private housing estates.

- A total of **€150,000** was allocated under the District Development Grant Scheme 2023-2024 as follows:
 - 2023 Community Allocation (Gorey)
Gorey Resource Centre €45,000
 - 2024 Community Capital Grant Scheme (Gorey)
23 X Community Groups €45,000
 - 2023 & 2024 Community Allocation (Kilmuckridge)
 - Ballycanew Footpath & Public Realm €10,000
 - Oulart Community Garden €50,000

GOREY MENS SHED

On May 21st Gorey Men's Shed celebrated the official opening of their new facility on McCurtain Street, inaugurated by Cathaoirleach Pip Breen.

This new space has already proven to be a tremendous asset to the community, as the skills and experience of this group created the musical notes seen in Gorey, contributing to the warm welcome at Fleadh Cheoil Loch Garman over the weekend of 17th to 19th May.



GOREY FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRE

The newly renovated Gorey Family Resource Centre officially opened its new premises on McDermott Street, Gorey on May 23rd. This new premise is an example of the continued collaboration with Wexford County Council and the core funders, Tusla, as part of the National Family Resource Centre Programme. This Centre will also operate as a Community Centre within the town and spaces have been provided that will accommodate groups of differing sizes.

FR MURPHY CENTRE - Official unveiling of thatched buildings on 26th May.



2021 TOWN & VILLAGE RENEWAL SCHEME CRAANFORD

The newly renovated Craanford Community Centre was officially opened by Minister James Browne and Cathaoirleach, Cllr Pip Breen on the 26th of May. Funding was approved to assist with the development of a shop and digital hub in the existing Community Centre under the 2021 TVR Scheme.

This project brought disused rooms back into use as an operating social enterprise amenity. The Community Shop provides everyday essentials & basic groceries, and the remote working hub provides a digital hub & training centre for local groups, an evening study hub for local students and supports a work-life balance and mental health & well-being.

This project has brought much needed amenities and facilities to the village for the overall improvement of the village, village living and remote working opportunities for locals.



BALLYMONEY ACCESS FOR ALL AND AGE FRIENDLY IMPROVEMENT WORKS

Following the completion of The Ballymoney Access for All and Age Friendly Improvement Works, "Matthew's Way", a new and far more accessible path leading to Ballymoney North Strand was officially opened on **May 31st**. The path is named after local disability activist, Matthew McGrath, who has been advocating for all beaches to be more disability friendly.

NORTH WEXFORD 2K CLEAN INITIATIVE

Gorey-Kilmuckridge MD continues working with North Wexford Tidy Towns & Development Groups for North Wexford 2K. This initiative can be promoted by all Groups as a National Spring Clean Project and involves people 'adopting' a 2km stretch of road and ensuring that it is kept litter free for the month of April. This year there were 80 roads/160km looked after by volunteers and we thank them for their ongoing work.

The areas were inspected during the month of April and Gold, Silver or Bronze standards were awarded based on the level of littering.

Leas-Chathaoirleach, Cllr Fionntán Ó'Súilleabháin welcomed Community Groups from across North Wexford to Gorey Civic Offices & Library on May 30th where they were presented with their North Wexford 2K Clean Awards. This Gorey-Kilmuckridge District initiative has again been a huge success with communities working hard to improve their environment.

COMMUNITY RECOGNITION FUND ROUND 2 FUNDING

A second round of funding under the Community Recognition Fund was announced in July and those successful applicants included:

Gorey Youth Needs Community Hall	€55,000
Kilmuckridge Memorial Hall	€92,500

CIVIC FUNCTIONS 2024

North Wexford Tidy Towns Event - A Civic Reception was held at the Ashdown Park Hotel on **February 26th** to thank the members of all the Tidy Towns Groups within the district for the enormous amount of work they do in their local towns and villages.

Each group was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation for the work they do on behalf of their communities. Blackwater and Gorey Tidy Towns Groups received special awards in acknowledgement of their respective Gold and Bronze Medals in the National Competition.



Heroes on Wheels - On **September 9th**, Gorey proudly hosted a remarkable group of 80 firefighters, 40 from New York's FDNY and 40 from Ireland, who took part in an incredible charity cycling event. The team, organised by the NRFA rode from Dublin to Kinsale to support Aoibheann's Pink Tie, Ireland's national children's cancer charity.

Starting their journey from the American Ambassador's Residence in The Phoenix Park, the firefighters cycled down the stunning east coast, passing through Bray, Wicklow Town, and Arklow before arriving in Gorey to finish at The Amber Springs Hotel where a reception was hosted by GKMD.



VISITING DELEGATIONS 2024

[Visit of His Excellency Gary Gray, Australian Ambassador to Ireland](#) - An Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Pip Breen was delighted to welcome the Australian Ambassador H.E. Gary Gray and his wife, Pippa McIntosh, to the Civic Centre and Council Chamber on **January 15th**.

Mr Gray and his wife attended a series of engagements around the town which included meeting with students from the School of Sanctuary Committee at Gorey Central School, Myles Doyle My Select Grocer on Gorey's Main Street where John Doyle spoke about the wide range of quality local foods that Ireland produces, The Hatch Lab where they met with several businesses who are members of Wexford Chamber and finally, a tour of Naomh Eanna GAA Club led by Club Chairperson, Tony Molloy.

The Australian Ambassador has several connections to Gorey and during his wife's research about the history of the Australian Ambassador's residence in Dublin, discovered links to the Willoughby family in Gorey.

Visit of Her Excellency Claire D. Cronin, United States Ambassador to Ireland - The United States Ambassador to Ireland, H.E., Claire D. Cronin visited Gorey on **February 12th** and received a warm welcome at Gorey Civic Offices by An Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Pip Breen where he highlighted the strong ties between Wexford and the United States. Ms Cronin was also invited to sign the distinguished visitors' book at Gorey Civic Offices.

Additionally, Ms Cronin had the pleasure of meeting with members of the Wexford Eagles, Gorey's resident American Football Club.



Visit of His Excellency Norio Maruyama, Japanese Ambassador to Ireland - The Japanese Ambassador to Ireland, H.E. Norio Maruyama visited Gorey on May 16th and attended a series of engagements around the town and district.

Mr Maruyama met with students from Gorey Community School, Gorey School of Art and Gorey Youth Needs. A visit to the Hatch Lab revealed how some of the companies operating there do business with Japan which led to a productive engagement with County Wexford Chamber of Commerce.



Mr Maruyama was a guest of Senator Malcolm Byrne and was also welcomed to the town by Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Pip Breen with a Civic Reception at Gorey Civic Offices, where he was invited to sign the distinguished visitors' book.



To conclude his visit, Mr Maruyama and his delegates attended the launch of Fleadh Cheoil Loch Garman in Gorey Civic Offices & Library.

Visit of His Excellency Paul Johnston, British Ambassador to Ireland - The British Ambassador to Ireland, H.E. Paul Johnston visited Gorey on June 24th and attended a series of engagements around the town and district to discuss trade, tourism, educational and cultural links.



Mr Johnston met with students from St. Joseph's National School, visited Irish Country Meats and The Hatch Lab where he engaged with County Wexford Chamber of Commerce.

Mr Johnston was a guest of Senator Malcolm Byrne and was also welcomed to the town by An Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Pip Breen with a Civic Reception at Gorey Civic Offices, where he was invited to sign the distinguished visitors' book.

Visit of the New Zealand Ambassador to Ireland - The New Zealand Ambassador to Ireland, H.E. Trevor Mallard visited Gorey on **September 10th** and attended a series of engagements around the town and district.

Mr Mallard began with a visit to Kia Ora Mini Farm, followed by a meeting with the Student Council and Politics & Society students in Creagh College and afterwards a tour of the Hatch Lab where he met with County Wexford Chamber and local businesses to explore potential business & trade opportunities. Mr Mallard also visited the Ferns Medieval Experience and Gorey Rugby Club.

Mr Mallard was a guest of Senator Malcolm Byrne and was also welcomed to the town by Cllr Pip Breen, Cathaoirleach of Wexford County Council and Cllr. Oliver Walsh, Cathaoirleach of Gorey-Kilmuckridge MD. Following a Civic Reception at Gorey Civic Offices, where Mr Mallard was invited to sign the distinguished visitors' book, a public discussion and Q&A session on "New Zealand & Ireland" took place in Gorey Library.

EVENTS & FESTIVALS HIGHLIGHTS 2024

St. Patrick's Day Celebrations 2024 - The Gorey's St. Patrick's Day Parade was a great success this year. The theme for this year's parade was "Irish Music Legends" to acknowledge the role of music and musicians in Irish Culture and Heritage on the Island's National Day, particularly with the Fleadh Cheoil being hosted in Wexford and the recent loss of some big names from the Irish music scene in the last 12 months. 42 entries from Gorey's businesses, sports & community groups and bands took part this year and the lead was taken by Grand Marshal Veronica Lombard.



Gorey May Bush Féile - The annual "Let's Decorate the May Bush" community event took place on May Eve, **April 30th**. Young and old met under the 'Circ Pavilion' in Gorey Civic Square beside the communal May Bush for an evening of traditional music, song, poetry, stories, and dance whilst sharing and exchanging traditions around welcoming in summer.



Song Writers Group - Gorey welcomed back the Mercyland Song Writers Group for a second year just in time for Fleadh Cheoil Loch Garman. This international songwriting event is co-hosted by local musician Sammy Horner and Grammy winner Phil Madeira.

Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Pip Breen warmly welcomed the 2024 attendees at the Loch Garman Arms on **May 14th**.

The Caroline Fleming Irish Dance Academy helped create a warm welcome to Gorey for our international visitors with a stunning display of singing and Irish dance.



Fleadh Cheoil Loch Garman – 2024 - On **May 16th** Gorey set the stage for an exhilarating and memorable summer of Fleadh based events with the launch of Fleadh Cheoil Loch Garman and Fringe Fleadh Events in Gorey Civic Offices. Cathaoirleach, Cllr Pip Breen hosted a reception in the Civic Offices followed by entertainment from CCÉ Gorey-Ballygarrett, Molly Carroll and International Uilleann Piper, Mark Redmond.



A warm and inviting atmosphere was present over the weekend with groups travelling from all over the County to compete to go on to the Leinster competition in advance of the National Fleadh Cheoil being held in Wexford in August.



Old photos from the 1962 Fleadh in Gorey were exhibited in The Foyer of Gorey Civic Offices, offering insight into the town's rich Fleadh history. A firsthand account of the event by local man Tomás Keegan who participated in the 1962 event was also documented for this exhibition.

The event marked the beginning of a series of celebrations leading up to the Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann in August.

Cruinniú na nÓg National Day 2024 - On **June 15th** children and young people took part in a range of events created by Wexford artists, creatives, and organisations. **Gorey Library** played host to several events, including a drama-based workshop, “Don’t Drink the Water!” And two Gaming Workshops “Meet the Maker Session” and “Alt.Ctrl.Game.Craft.”

Other events in the district included “Exciting Electronics! Creative Thinking & Problem Solving in the Technology World” at FixCraft, St. Michael’s Road and “Geometric Gala Visuals & Rulemaking Through Land-art” at Gorey Civic Gardens where children made beautiful patterns and pictures with a mix of natural materials such as flower petals, leaves, pinecones, and twigs.

The Gap Arts Festival 2024 - The fourteenth annual Gap Arts Festival was held in and around Ballythomas, Gorey in August.



A new documentary “Croghan’s Gold” about the Wicklow Gold Rush of 1795, commissioned by The Gap Arts Festival and funded by the Wind Farm Community Fund was screened each night before the Dublin Theatre Company’s new play “Madeira” in Ballythomas NS. Other events held in the school included a Children & Parent’s Workshop and the Whistleblast Quartet Family Concert.

Gorey Market House Festival 2024 - The weekend of July 19th - 21st saw the slightly earlier return of the Gorey Market House Festival, with large crowds treated to a mixture of music over three nights with Paddy Casey headlining on Friday night and Buffalo Soul and Mack Fleetwood headlining Saturday & Sunday nights.



Wexford/Gorey Acts, Aoife Doyle, Los Mexicanos, Commór Live Drummer, Frankenstein Bolts & Dr. Jim’s Acoustic Revue, along with Soul Cowboys & Lucy June supported the headliners.

Gorey Market House Festival Fringe Events - Amongst the Market House Festival fringe events there was a highly successful Family Fun Day in Gorey District Park and a foot stomping Fleadh session on the Sunday afternoon provided by the Caroline Fleming Irish Dance Academy and CCE Gorey/Ballygarrett.



Other festival fringe events included a Walking Tour of Gorey from Gallivanting Tours, Pokemon Battles at Geek's Corner by FixCraft.ie and TK Print, the Making Music & Market House Festival Busking Competition, Fancy Dress Fun Run, and Street Market with Arts, Crafts & Artisan Foods.

The Event Committee aimed to produce a high quality, family friendly festival from the outset and all feedback received from attendees confirmed that this was achieved.

Rás na mBan - For the first time in its 18-year history, Rás na mBan, Ireland's only All-Women's Cycling event, introduced a Wexford stage to its five-day schedule. On **September 6th**, Stage 3 ended on The Avenue, Gorey with Paris Olympian Mia Griffin, sprinting to victory.



Culture Night Gorey 2024 - There was a real buzz about the District for Culture Night on **September 20th** with plenty of cultural events to choose from, from exhibits and talks to music and dancing.

For the historical enthusiasts the night included a series of exhibitions and tours of St Michael's Church, a talk by John Nangle exploring the Esmonde family connection with the Norman invasion and a Community Archive Event in Askamore Community Hall hosted by North Wexford Historical Society.

Music connoisseurs were treated to the sounds of Gorey Ukes on Main Street, the Voices of Gorey Community Choir at Gorey Library, Suantrai Femaile Vocal Ensemble at Christchurch, CCÉ Gorey-Ballygarrett at The Loch Garman Arms Hotel and a Trad Session at The Ashdown Park Hotel.

Rachel Uí Fhaoláin and John Ó Faoláin created and performed Ceol Mo Chroí Culture Club in the Book Café. This was an intergenerational performance filled with music, dance, poetry, film

screenings and stories that supported the Irish language which audience members could participate in.

Other events which took place included Arts, Crafts, Live Painting Demos and Film Screenings.

Culture Night 2024 brought something new and exciting to Gorey, with a fresh venue and a fantastic event. Michael O'Callaghan created an unforgettable evening of music, chat, book readings, poetry, and more. It was a brilliant 3-hour session filled with captivating readings, exceptional jazz, and delicious food & wine served all night for the audience.

Overall Culture Night in Gorey Town and environs was extremely successful and it was wonderful to see events spreading into the district areas beyond Gorey town.

Gorey Yellow Belly Comedy Festival - As Culture Night started to wrap up, Gorey's Yellow Belly Comedy Festival launched on **Friday, 20th September** in Gorey Little Theatre with the brilliant Enya Martin, Eric Lalor, Willa White with guest MC Adam Burke providing an unforgettable night of comedy.



The festival, now in its third year, is a key driver for boosting Gorey's nighttime economy. The aim of this festival is to elevate Gorey's profile as a year-round destination, extending beyond the peak summer season. Spanning four nights, the event delivered top-tier entertainment and laughter, drawing audiences and businesses together. As it gains recognition as a premier comedy festival, it continues to provide significant economic benefits, supporting local businesses and enhancing Gorey's cultural vibrancy.

A Very Gorey Halloween - There was a spooky feeling to Gorey over the schools' mid-term break. Ghoulish figures cropped up around the town created by Gorey Men's Shed and Gorey Youth Needs. Our resident witches created by artist Kim Dagg took up their regular positions on Main Street.

Local historian, Willie Willoughby took a group of 50 on a spooky tour as the ghost of Bishop Ram giving an insight into the town's secret and murky past. Young actors from Gorey Youth Needs spiced up the event popping up to scare the unwitting attendees.

The highlight of Halloween was undoubtedly the Family Fun Day where some 1,500 children dressed up and gathered in the District Park. They were entertained by DJ Liam Sharkey and a host of their favourite costumed characters before going on a spooky parade around the park. Halloween treats were provided courtesy of the Coffee Pod and Gorey Youth Needs face painters were on hand for anyone who did not look scary enough.

Christmas in Gorey 2024 - The Big Switch On took place on **November 30th** when Santa arrived in Gorey to switch on the lights kicking off the festive season in the town. This year was hampered by the arrival of the Grinch; however, Buddy the Elf and Gorey Gardaí were on hand and normal proceedings were quickly restored. With assistance from his little helpers from Gorey Youth Needs and Shine Bright Theatre and accompanied by music from Gorey Ukes, Santa switched on the lights.



NEW ROSS MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

New Ross Municipal District, a key part of Wexford County Council, serves as a hub for community development, economic growth, and sustainable progress in County Wexford. In 2024, the district worked diligently to enhance infrastructure, support local businesses, develop tourism opportunities and improve the quality of life for its residents.

In 2024, the New Ross District pursued strategic goals centered on sustainable development, community revitalization, and enhanced connectivity. Notable projects commenced, completed, or ongoing include:

- Sensory Garden Pearse Park
- South East Greenway
- Duncannon Fort Works
- Brennan's Lane / The Shambles Regeneration
- New Ross Skate Park
- New Ross Motorhome Park
- Hook Lighthouse Interpretive Design

Infrastructure and Development projects were a focal point of the district's efforts in 2024:

- John Street Grain Store: Beyond its refurbishment, plans for an adjacent riverside park advanced, promising to enhance the town's public spaces. This project is expected to become a defining feature of New Ross once completed.
- South East Greenway: Construction is ongoing and milestones were achieved, with the fully segregated path set to connect key natural and historical sites, driving economic, tourism and recreational benefits.
- Motorhome Park and Skate Park: Preparatory work, including flood risk assessments and planning approvals, moved forward to deliver these anticipated community amenities. The Skate Park has planning and awaits funding.

PUBLIC REALM PROJECTS

Sensory Garden - On May 21st, Pearse Park welcomed a vibrant new addition with the grand opening of the new pocket sensory garden, a thoughtfully designed space aimed at engaging visitors with neuro-diverse abilities. This space, crafted to stimulate the senses, promises to be a haven for relaxation, education, and sensory exploration. The sensory garden's opening enhances the town park, offering a unique space for sensory enjoyment.



Quay Street Pedestrianisation - The Quay Street pedestrianisation project remains a key focus of the town's revitalisation efforts, aligning with the Government's Town Centre First Policy and Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF). This ambitious initiative aims to transform Quay Street into a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly hub, enhancing connectivity between the town urban centre and the South East Greenway while boosting local tourism and commerce.

Significant progress has been made since the project's inception. In May 2024, it was announced that €864,884.72 had been secured from the RRDF to support the pedestrianisation, with the total project cost estimated at €1 million. The project's development has been guided by the Town Centre First Plan. The initiative promises to redefine New Ross as a pedestrian-centric destination, leveraging its historic charm and location along the River Barrow.



CCTV SCHEME PHASE 1

After years of anticipation, phase one of the New Ross CCTV Scheme finally received the green light to move forward and installation will take place in Q1 of 2025. This project, aimed at enhancing public safety and aiding law enforcement, will see the installation of CCTV cameras at strategic locations across the town, with the goal of deterring anti-social behaviour and improving outcomes. The scheme represents a significant step toward improving safety and addressing local challenges like illegal dumping.

TOWN & VILLAGE RENEWAL SCHEME (TVR)

New Ross is experiencing a transformative wave of development through the Town and Village Renewal Scheme, a government initiative designed to breathe new life into rural towns and villages. This scheme provides funding to enhance economic, social, and cultural vitality of areas like New Ross, fostering a brighter future for residents and visitors alike. The following projects were further advanced during the year:

- Brennan's Lane / The Shambles TVR2021- €500,000 – nearing completion - The upgrade works to Brennan's Lane and The Shambles represent a significant investment aimed at revitalizing these historic areas in the town centre. Initiated to transform Brennan's Lane and The Shambles into vibrant multi-use public spaces. Both are due to be completed by Q2 2025.
- Duncannon Fort Renovation TVR2022 - €500,000 nearing completion - The upgrade works at Duncannon Fort are steadily progressing, with completion anticipated in Q2 2025. Key works include replacing the bridge deck, upgrading electrical wiring and internal improvements to three of the fort's buildings.
- Cushinstown TVR2023 - €250,000 – works ongoing - The Cushinstown TVR project continues to make headway, with construction on the new men's shed nearing completion and the installation of a timber cabin to serve as the women's shed.
- Rathgarogue TVR2023 - €500,000 - works ongoing - The Rathgarogue TVR project is also advancing, with planting being carried out along the boundaries of the site. Tenders are currently being sought for construction of the playground and for the stone-masonry element of the project.

FESTIVALS, EVENTS AND CULTURAL PROGRAMME

In 2024, the New Ross district hosted a vibrant array of festivals that showcased its rich cultural heritage, community spirit, and artistic excellence. From internationally acclaimed music events to cherished local traditions, the year was marked by celebrations that drew both residents and visitors to the heart of this historic town. Among the standout events were the New Ross Piano Festival, the St. Patrick's Day Parade, and the festive Christmas activities, each contributing to the district's lively atmosphere and sense of togetherness. The following events took place in 2024:

Kennedy Summer School	Eugene O'Neill International Festival of Drama
AIMS Choral Festival	<u>Baginbun</u> Norman Festival
St <u>Patricks</u> Day Festival	Magdalene Laundry Commemoration
Civic Awards Evening	Heritage Week Talks
Summer Sessions	New Ross Piano Festival
Tri the Hook / Hike to the Hook	New Ross Guitar Festival
Nollaig New Ross	

Screening - Small Things Like These - Filmed largely in New Ross, this film production brought the town's streets and spirit to the silver screen, fostering a profound connection with the residents. To celebrate its release, St. Michael's Theatre hosted multiple screenings. Among these were two invitation-only events tailored for locals who contributed to the film, crew members and actors. Offering them a first look at their collective achievement complete with a red carpet and festive atmosphere. These screenings buzzed with anticipation, as hundreds gathered to see their home and neighbours immortalized in cinema.



The film's impact extends beyond the theatre, as New Ross embraces its starring role with initiatives like walking tours, guiding visitors through filming locations throughout the town. Also, a fantastic mural honouring Cillian Murphy and Claire Keegan offers a lasting tribute to this cinematic milestone. These efforts not only highlight the town's involvement but also draw tourists eager to explore its newfound fame.

Fringe Fleadh 2024 - In the lead up to the highly anticipated Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann 2024, the Fringe Fleadh brought a vibrant celebration of Irish traditional music and dance at various locations across the County. Among these, New Ross hosted a three-day festival, Fleadh Fest '24, in the picturesque Library Park from June 28th to 30th. This free event welcomed nationally renowned musicians and dancers. Featuring artists such as Zoe Conway, John McIntyre, and Phelim Drew, the festival highlighted the depth and richness of Ireland's cultural heritage.

As a prelude to the main Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann in Wexford Town, the New Ross Fringe Fleadh events played a crucial role in building anticipation across the county.

Held over a month before the larger festival, Fleadh Fest '24 not only showcased top-tier talent but also fostered a deeper appreciation for the traditions that the Fleadh embodies.

A series of short films were also produced for social media at key tourist locations in the District and featuring performances from local Wexford musicians and singers.



Success at Paris 2024 - The New Ross area erupted in celebration as it welcomed home two of its sporting heroes, Paralympian Linda Kelly and Olympian Sophie Becker, following their standout performances at the Paris Games. The community pride was palpable, with hundreds turning out to honour the athlete's remarkable achievements, showcasing the tight-knit spirit of the communities.

Linda Kelly returned as a Paralympic gold and silver medalist, taking gold in the Women's B Individual Time Trial, followed by a silver in the road race. A civic reception was held at the Tholsel, where Cathaoirleach Bridín Murphy hailed Ms Kelly as an inspiration.

Sophie Becker was celebrated for her role in Ireland's Women's 4x400m relay team, which finished fourth at the Paris Olympics, narrowly missing a medal. Arriving in a green Volkswagen Beetle, hundreds gathered at Pearse Park to give her a hero's welcome, following a civic reception at the Tholsel.



Olympian Sophie Becker and Eileen Dunne at Pearse Park Homecoming Event

Both homecomings underscored the area's support of its athletes.

Culture Night - Culture Night 2024 unfolded with a rich line-up of free events, allowing residents and visitors alike to immerse themselves in a blend of music, drama, and film, reflecting the area's cultural depth.

A highlight was New Ross Library's packed schedule, with performances by the Danescastle Music Group and the New Ross Drama Group. St. Michael's Theatre hosted Screen Wexford's showcase of locally produced short films, spotlighting the region's emerging filmmakers. The New Ross Singers performance at High Hill another feature of the night.

ACHIEVEMENTS

LAMA Awards - New Ross Municipal District emerged as a standout winner at the 2024 Local Authority Members Association (LAMA) Awards, held in early 2024, clinching two prestigious accolades that underscored the area's commitment to transformative community projects.

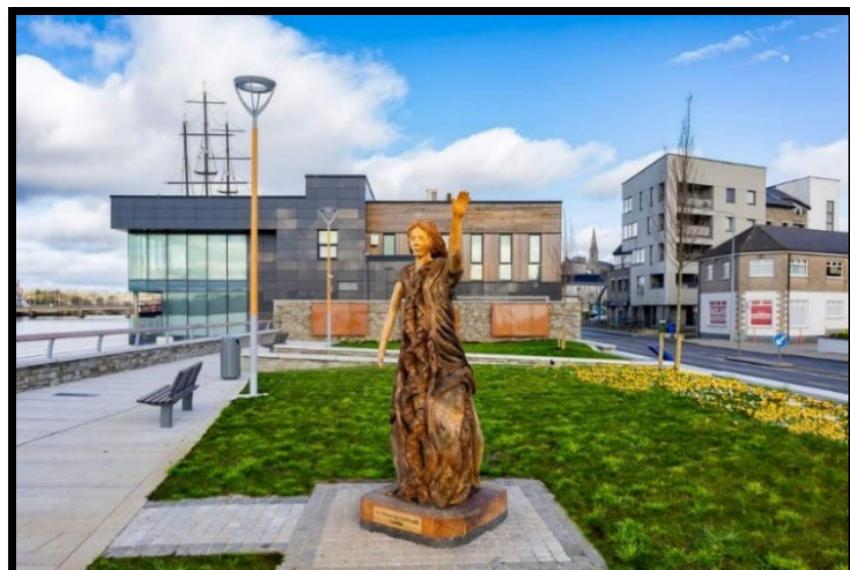
The district's High Hill Norman Gardens project took home Best Town or Village Regeneration Award. This medieval-inspired garden space has revitalised a historic corner of New Ross, blending heritage with modern appeal.

Meanwhile, the newly opened Emigrant Park, which replaced unsightly oil tanks along the quay front, won Best Urban Planning Award. This park not only enhances the town's aesthetic but also honours its emigrant history, adding depth to the waterfront's renewal.



ELG Awards - The new Emigrant Park in New Ross won a further honour at the Excellence in Local Government Awards held in Dublin in November. Voted the 'Best Overall Municipal District Initiative' throughout the country, the newest award nicely complements the Best Urban Planning Award win of early 2024, also achieved by the Emigrant Park. The Emigrant Park is a beautiful public realm space replacing the old oil tanks site which dominated the quayfront in New Ross for many years.

The Emigrant Park honours and reminds people of the strong history of emigration from the Port of New Ross, whilst providing a reflective space to relax and enjoy the wonderful views along the River Barrow. The park's location beside the Dunbrody adds meaning and context to the park and is another link in the chain of projects to return the river to the people of New Ross to enjoy. The award is very welcome recognition of all the quality work invested in this latest project.



ROSSLARE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

In 2024 Rosslare Municipal District built and expanded on the successes of the previous years. The General Municipal Allocation continued to fully recognise and support the excellent work of the Rosslare Municipal District with additional funding in the discretionary programmes providing support for the delivery of District projects and initiatives during 2024.

Work of the following major projects either continued, commenced or completed during 2024:

- N11/N25 Oilgate to Rosslare Harbour Road
- Rosslare Europort Access Road
- Rosslare Harbour to Rosslare Strand Greenway
- Coastal Protection Works
- Bridgetown to Kilmore Quay (B2K) Walkway/Greenway
- Kilmore Quay Recreational Trail
- Silvermines Conservation Works
- Corock Blueway

The roads programme in 2024 carried out the following:

- 19km of Road restoration at cost of over €2,022,000.
- 16km of surface dressing at cost of over €476,520.
- Drainage grant of over €135,000 cover a series of drainage improvement across the district.
- An Additional €120,000 of other drainage related improvements under Climate Change Adaptation & Resilience Works.
- Additional drainage related works under the Regional and Local Roads maintenance budget & severe weather-related drainage works.
- Bridge Rehabilitation Grant covered repairs of the Ambrosetown Bridge and Goff's Bridge at a cost of €115,000
- R733 embankment repairs at Wellingtonbridge under the Specific Improvements Grant.

Tuskar Lighthouse Sculpture

2024 saw the installation of the wonderful replica of Tuskar Lighthouse sculpture on the Ashfield Cross Roundabout highlighting the approaches to the coastal villages of Rosslare Harbour and Rosslare Strand.

The lighthouse sculpture designed and built by Damian McAleenan is an exact scale model of the famous Tuskar Lighthouse which also features prominently on the crest of the Rosslare Municipal District.

Rosslare Municipal District Strategic Plan 2024 - 2030

Work continues towards achieving the objectives set out in The Rosslare Municipal District Strategic Plan 2024 – 2030. The strategic plan, commissioned by the elected members of the district, recognises that there is a need to have an evidence based and planned approach to the future development and growth of the district. This will ensure it has every opportunity to reach its full potential, in accordance with the objectives set out in the County Development Plan 2022-2028 and serve as a blueprint for developing the district by providing a roadmap to deliver beneficial projects for our communities.



Projects Throughout the District

The following projects were undertaken throughout the district during 2024. As a rural district without an urban centre, Rosslare MD is greatly dependent on funding schemes such as the Town & Village Renewal Scheme (TVR), the Community Recognition Scheme (CRF) and the Community Centre Investment Fund (CCIF).

Commenced

- **Medical Centre Rosslare Harbour** - Situated behind the Community Centre in Rosslare Harbour Village, a purpose-built Medical Centre commenced construction by GJM Contracts Ltd. The Centre is due to be completed in March 2025 and will be leased by Centric Health, ensuring the village will have adequate facilities for their resident GP for many years to come.
- **Rosslare Harbour Community Centre** - Construction got under way on the new Rosslare Harbour Community Centre, The Bank Community & Enterprise Hub. The project consisted of the renovation of the old BOI building, which was funded by the TVR 2022, as well as an extension to accommodate a function room, which was funded by the CRF 2023. The centre is scheduled to be opened in February 2025.
- **Rosetown Pitch** - Ground works began on the disused area to the rear of Rosetown Housing Estate in Rosslare Strand to facilitate a community green area, works are currently ongoing.
- **Carraig on Bannow** - The Carrig on Bannow Community Centre were successful in their application for €247,590 in TVR 2023. This funding will facilitate a new playground, community green space and a walking track; work commenced in the last quarter of 2024 with an expected completion date of October 2025.
- **Ballymitty Community Centre** - A new community centre is currently at design stage after the awarding of €1.39 million through the CCIF 2023. Building is expected to commence in 2025 with an expected completion date of June 2026.
- **Town Centre First** - Wexford County Council were successful in applying for €10,000 for the establishment of a Town Centre First Team in Taghmon Under Measure 1 of the 2024 Town Centre First Suite of Supports. Town Centre First aims to create towns that function as viable, vibrant and attractive locations. It's a collaborative process creating Town centres that people want to live, work, play and learn in. It supports towns/villages to function as the social, cultural and recreational hub for the local Community.

Completed

- **Taghmon Castle** - Taghmon Castle was awarded €50,000 in TVR 2022, this funding was used recruit a multi-disciplinary team of a structural engineer, conservation architect and archaeologist to prepare designs, construction method plans and costings with the aim of bringing the castle into use as a heritage tourism centre.
- **Safe to School – Scoil Mhuire NS Rosslare** - A range of Traffic Calming Measures were carried out at the approach to Scoil Mhuire NS, Rosslare as part of the Active Travel “Safe to School” initiative. The works undertaken greatly improved the approach to the school which was officially opened by Minister Jack Chambers in April 2024.

- **Shipwreck Cove – Kilmore Quay Playground** - The playground in Kilmore Quay was redesigned and redeveloped in 2024. This project was funded through the CRF 2023 and was reopened on 25th October 2024 by Minister James Browne.



Announced

The following Projects in the district were allocated funding during 2024.

- Rosslare Harbour Community Playground MUGA - Redevelop old playground, Outdoor Gym and develop new MUGA €100,300
- Kilrane Rosslare Harbour Community Centre – Refurbishment of the Community Centre €50,000

TY Grant Initiative

Rosslare Municipal District aims to include the youth in the shaping of the district and encourage their participation at Local Government Level. A pilot grant scheme commenced during 2024 through which the TY students at Bridgetown College were encouraged to put forward their ideas for small scale projects in their area. Numerous submissions were received showcasing a range of project ideas, they are currently being assessed by the district for feasibility.

Festivals, Events and Cultural Programme

Rosslare Municipal District continues to support a wide-ranging programme of festivals each year. The following were supported by the district in 2024:

St Patrick's Day Parade, Carrig on Bannow	Rathangan Country Fair
• Embrace your inner St. Brigid Fundraiser	Taghmon Festival
Rosslare Maritime & Heritage Festival	Filling of the Well - Culture Night Event
Jazz at Johnstown	Kilmore Quay Seafood Festival
Grantstown 5km Walk	Phil Murphy Weekend
Fringe Fleadh Events	Leo Carthy Traditional Weekend
Foulksmills Duck Race	Write by the Sea Literary Festival
Duncormick Street Festival	Christmas Lights Events

Civic Receptions

Rosslare Municipal District continued to host civic receptions during 2024 where groups and individuals, nominated by the elected members, were honoured at a prestigious award ceremony in Johnstown Castle.

The following awards were presented in 2024;

- Small Boats Fishing Festival - Excellence in Sport & Tourism
- Billy Doyle - Service to the Community
- Jim Hurley - Excellence in Environmental Awareness
- Cora Harris - Excellence in Sport
- Jordan Hunt - Excellence in Sport
- Eve Donohoe - Excellence in Music
- Daniel Kearns - Excellence in Trade Skills
- Jamie Connick - Excellence in Trade Skills



Official Twinning

Dunkirk

Our twinning relationship with Dunkirk, France continued to develop throughout 2024 with a delegation travelling to Dunkirk on 1st May.

The official visit included; a meeting with the newly elected Mayor, Mr Jean Bodart and senior officials of the Local Government, a visit to Ypres in Belgium where the Dunkirk officials had made arrangements with their associates from Ypres Local Authority and the Cities of Remembrance Network, as well as a visit to DFDS Shipping in Dunkirk Port where we were introduced to the newly opened passenger terminal building at the Irish berth. Route Director, Chris Parker, gave an update on the establishment of a marketing office for the Southeast Region based in Rosslare Europort.

The Rosslare Municipal District has received an invitation from former Mayor, now Minister for Transport, Patrice Vergriette, to visit Dunkirk in May 2025 for a special commemoration marking the 85th anniversary of Operation Dynamo and the 80th Anniversary of the Liberation of Dunkirk.

Fishguard

In September, Rosslare Municipal District accepted an invitation to form an official twinning arrangement with Fishguard and Goodwick Town Council in Wales with the aim of strengthening the existing bonds of culture, family and economy and creating a stronger, more vibrant partnership. A delegation from the Rosslare Municipal District plan to visit to Fishguard in May 2025 and have invited the Fishguard and Goodwick Town Council Elected Members to visit the Rosslare Municipal District during the Fleadh later that year.

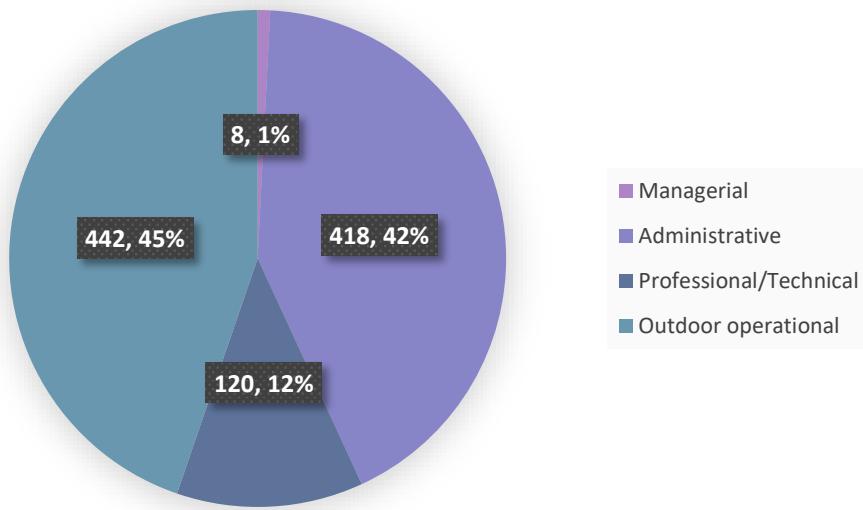


Human Resources

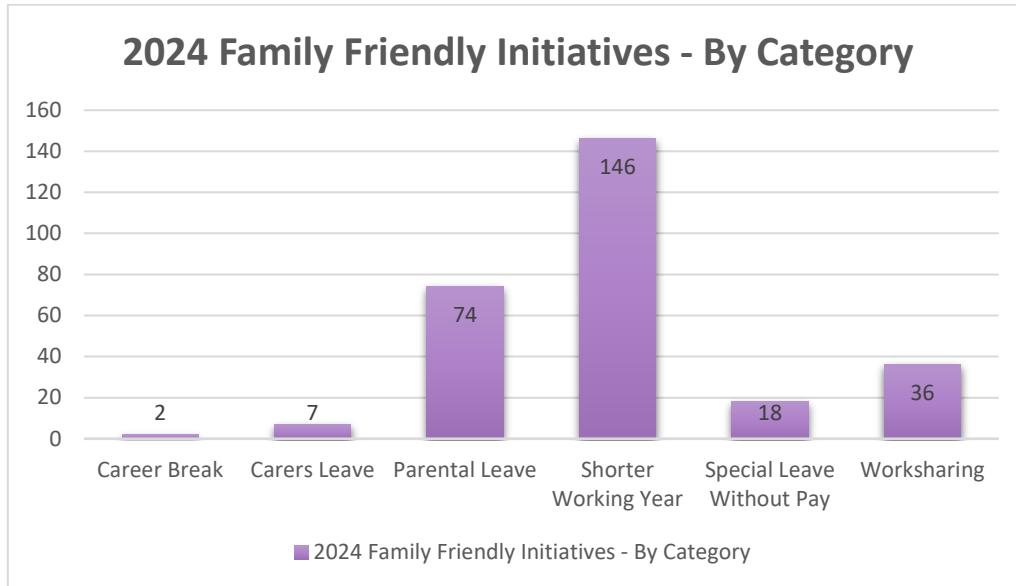
The HR team play a crucial role in ensuring that both staff and line managers are well-versed in various important aspects of workplace management. By providing guidance on human resource policies, industrial relations, and family-friendly schemes, HR create a supportive and efficient work environment. Additionally, HR offer support with sick leave, blended working, and employee assistance programs ensures that employees have the resources they need to maintain a healthy work-life balance.

Number of Staff Employed December 2024 was 993

Employee Category



In 2024, Family Friendly Initiatives approved for staff by HR totalled 283 and may be broken down as follows:



Pensions

The HR Pensions team manages the pensions schemes for staff and pensioners in Wexford County Council. The number of pensioners on 31 December 2024 was 609. During 2024, a total of 39 retirements were processed and 81 pension estimates provided to staff. In line with the public service agreement, 3 pension increases were calculated and paid to all pensioners.

The Single Public Service pension scheme is in operation for all staff who started in the public service for the first time after 1 January 2013, or who re-joined after a break in service of at least 26 weeks. Each member of the Single Public Service pension scheme must be provided with a benefit statement each year, and in 2024 a total of 420 annual benefit statements were calculated and issued to SPS scheme members.

The Supplementary Pension is an additional payment that may be made, in certain circumstances, to a retired public servant whose public service pension is integrated (co-ordinated) with the State Pension (Contributory) and came into effect for employees on 1st August 2024.

Executive Coaching Programme

During 2024, a pilot coaching programme was introduced for 20 internal coaches within the organisation, in collaboration with the LGMA and facilitated by Kingstown College. This initiative spans all business areas and aims to enhance coaching skills among employees.

Key elements of the programme include:

- **Accreditation:** Participants completed a Level 6 QQI Coaching Programme.
- **Support System:** A panel of 20 internal coaches was established, a Team Co-ordinator has been appointed, and ongoing guidance and support will be provided to maintain the programme's quality.
- Details of all coaches are available on the staff intranet.

Staff Engagement Survey 2024

In September 2024, HR launched a Staff Engagement Survey to coincide with the Wellness Strategy for Wexford County Council.

The aim of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy is to develop a workplace where employees are supported to make informed choices and engage in positive wellbeing behaviours in order to thrive both at work and beyond.

By focusing on mental, physical, social, and financial wellbeing the Local Authority looks to highlight and support all elements of wellbeing in the workplace. To determine wellness priorities for our organisation we are conducting a Staff Engagement Survey. Healthy Places to Work who are dedicated to promoting a healthy workplace culture are assisting Wexford County Council with this survey.

Key headline results from the Survey are as follows:

54%

Workplace
Health
Score



Comhairle Contae Loch Garman
Wexford County Council

Pillars

Purpose
48%



Mental Resilience

58%



Connection

57%



Physical Health

48%



I know the measures I need to take to improve my health

87%



I feel I have a family member or friend to rely on if I have a serious problem

86%



I have a good appetite

82%



I understand how my work fits into the overall aim of the organisation

79%



I'm thankful for my talents

76%



All things considered, I would say this is a healthy place to work

47%



People here are passionate about their jobs

27%



I participate in programs at work that enable me to live a healthier life when they are available

22%



Many of my colleagues exercise well

27%



In general, changes in this organisation are well implemented

33%



Total Number of Respondents 584
Response Rate: 62%

Key Achievements for HR during 2024

- HR calculated and implemented 3 Public Service Agreement pay increases in 2024, consisting of 2.25% from 1 January 2024, 1% effective from 1st June 2024 and a further 1% from 1st October 2024.
- Uisce Eireann
- 74 New Starter / Rehires (53 First Appointment, 5 Re-Hire and 16 Temporary Staff).
- 77 no. Seasonal Staff including Beach Wardens, Beachguards, Litter Patrollers, Nature Trail Guides and Summer Students.
- 149 Appointment Changes (47 Promotion, 35 Transfer, 16 Permanent, 26 Change of workgroup and 25 Acting / Cessation of Acting).
- 124 Leavers (Incl. 47 staff and 77 no. Seasonal Staff)
- Blended working – a further 63 applications were approved bringing a total number of approvals to date to 246 since September 2022.
- In terms of PMDS there were 559 staff assigned a PDP at the end of the year but there were 581 employees assigned a PDP throughout the year.
- A total of 62 interviews were conducted resulting in 1755 applicants applying for posts.
- Learning and Development, in total over 160 courses including mandatory health and safety, professional development and personal development were arranged from HR.
 - Furthermore, 13 employees completed the Certificate in Local Government and a further 3 completed the Diploma in Local Government.
- Bespoke half day Induction Training Course for all new employees.
- The 2024 report shows a Mean Pay Gap of -1.32, this means that on average females occupy higher paid roles than males. The Median Gender Pay Gap of -9.18% means that there is a proportionately more males in higher grades, however a 50% (male) / 50% (female) gender breakdown in senior grades is to be welcomed and reflects progress on gender balance in senior management roles.

Annual Service Delivery Plan

Every year Wexford County Council must prepare a Plan identifying the services which it intends to provide to the public. The Plan must take account of the Council's Annual Budget, and of best practice in service delivery. The Plan must include: (a) a statement of the principal services to be provided by the local authority during the year (b) the objectives and priorities for the delivery of each of these services and the strategies for achieving those objectives and priorities, (c) the performance standards to be met in the delivery of services (d) the manner in which the local authority will assess its performance in respect of the delivery of services. The Plan is developed following the preparation of the Annual Budget and must be approved by the elected Members. The Annual Service Delivery Plan for 2024 was adopted by the Council at its meeting on 8th April 2024. Significant progress was achieved in the delivery of each of the objectives and was reported on a quarterly basis to the Elected Members. An annual progress report was published at the end of the year on the Council's website.

Customer Service Unit

The Customer Service Unit (CSU) handles all incoming calls, emails and the reception for County Hall, and comprises 9 staff. In addition, the CSU has active Service Level Agreements with the Housing and Environment Departments to handle additional services in order to streamline the customer experience.

The CSU additionally manages the Council's website, consultation portal, and newspaper advertising.

Emails 35,182

Phone calls Handled 43,888

Website edits 823

With Housing, the CSU validates all Housing Applications and Change in Circumstance forms, logs all Housing Maintenance requests, and processes Homeless Service presentations.

Change in Circumstance Forms 874

Housing Applications 1,626

With Environment, the CSU logs all incoming reports from customers.

Environment Complaints 4,333

In 2024 CSU transitioned to a new call centre phone software package called Luware Nimbus, which has resulted in more reliable uptime in the CSU phonelines as well as more flexibility in our phone menu. This results in greater preparedness for Wexford County Council's response to sudden weather problems.

Procurement

The procurement department is responsible for the following:

- improving compliance with local and national guidelines and with EU procurement rules
- advising staff involved in procurement activities
- assisting staff to follow the correct procedures and develop guidelines to ensure compliance with policies
- acting as an intermediary between the Office of Government Procurement and the Local Government Operational Procurement Centre and Wexford County Council to get the most out of centralised procurement
- reporting progress in procurement reform to management
- the application of government circulars relating to procurement
- staff members from the procurement department sit on the Council's climate action steering group
- Procurement Officer is a member of the Munster South Leinster Procurement Officers Working Group
- uploading of all Wexford County Council tenders on the eTenders platform
- management of the corporate purchasing cards for all council staff

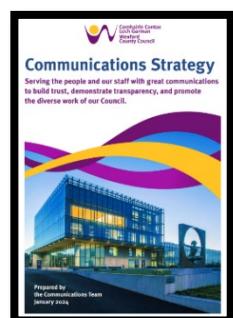
Type	Number of requests 2023	Number of requests 2024
Tenders dealt with	94	71

Issues advanced in 2024

- Promotion of green public procurement across the organisation through training and support
- The continued implementation of the new eTenders platform which commenced in May 2023. Training, and support to all business areas throughout the organisation is ongoing
- The implementation of the new e-forms commenced in 2024
- The procurement unit commenced a full review of Wexford County Council's corporate purchasing card procedures and agreement. This document will be finalised and implemented in quarter one of 2025
- The procurement unit commenced preparation of a new corporate procurement plan. This plan will be approved before the end of quarter one in 2025 and will be published on Wexford County Council's website.
- 2024 saw the creation of an internal procurement information team developed to further heighten awareness of local, national and EU guidelines and identify areas for interdepartmental integration.

Communications

The Communications Office is responsible for developing and managing Wexford County Council's Communications Strategy. The Communications Strategy was issued in January 2024 and covers the period 2024 – 2027. The strategy has devised clear communications protocols on how the Council communicates with external stakeholders, with staff and our elected members, as well as strategies to support wider community engagement, monitoring and evaluation.



The Section provided support to staff in relation to internal and external communications, event management, social media, publications and advertising including compliance with the Official Languages Act.

The Communications Office centrally manages content and the development of Wexford County Council's social media channels. 2024 saw continuous growth in followers across all social media platforms.



Christmas Free Parking
In Public Car Parks Only

FREE PARKING IN ALL PUBLIC CAR PARKS BEGINS AT 11:00 EACH DAY ON THE FOLLOWING DATES:
SATURDAYS: 30TH NOVEMBER, 7TH, 14TH, AND 21ST DECEMBER
MONDAY, 23RD DECEMBER AND TUESDAY, 24TH DECEMBER, INCLUSIVE.
WEXFORD – GOREY – ENNISCORTHY – NEW ROSS

Comháilte Contae
Loch Garman
Wexford
County Council

81.8k Views



Strong Winds
Saturday 7th December

Comháilte Contae
Loch Garman
Wexford
County Council

4.2k Impressions



35.3k Views



The Communications Office also handles interaction with mainstream media for the council, including:

- Promoting the Council's achievements to the national and international media.
- Helping journalists find the appropriate experts to comment on their fields of expertise.
- During 2024, 175 Press Releases were issued. Media queries were also received and responses issued.

Communication Liaison Officers were nominated across the organisation to:

- Advise the Communications Team of upcoming events in their section.
-

- Maintain an up-to-date calendar of events for their section.
- Share details on new schemes, initiatives with everyone in their section and the Communications Team.

A number of Communication Liaison Officers meetings, chaired by the Communications Officer, were held in 2024.

Official Languages (Amendment) Act 2021

Corporate Services through the Irish Language Officer continued to support the delivery of services through the Irish language under the Official Languages Acts 2003 & 2021 and other legislation.

The Council continued to co-operate with Oifig an Choimisiúna Teanga, in dealing with issues raised by members of the public, regarding Irish language services and legislation.

Wexford County Council has put processes in place to meet new obligations for advertising in the Irish Language under Section 10A (Advertising by Public Bodies) of the Official Languages (Amendment) Act 2021.

Submission of report on the 2023 performance via Oifig an Choimisiúna Teanga is due by 29th March, 2024 (outline of 2023 stats below)	Advertising Medium	Irish as % of Total Volume (Requirement under Act – 20%)
Press		32.41
Radio		0
Owned Asset		24.68
Social Media (Paid)		7.69
% Spend Through Irish Language Media (Requirement under Act – 5%)		5.71

Protected Disclosures

Report Prepared & Published by Wexford County Council In accordance with Sub-section 22 of the Protected Disclosures Act 2014

Reporting Period: Year Ended 31st December 2024

The number of Protected Disclosures made to Wexford County Council	0
The Action (if any) taken in response to those Protected Disclosures	N/A
Such other information relating to these protected disclosures and the action taken as may be requested by the Minister from time to time	N/A

Wexford County Council also confirms that it has in place the following:

- i. Internal reporting channels and procedures
- ii. External reporting channels and procedures

Women's Coalition

Wexford County Council partnered with Women for Election to support women in Wexford who were considering running in the Local Elections in 2024, those who were already selected to run, and those who will campaign to help get more women elected.

A range of events, online and in-person were run from January 2024 to May 2024 as part of the programme, which was funded by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. A series of online webinars, supported by Wexford, Meath and Dún Laoghaire County Councils targeted women in these counties and women from across the country who were running or considering running in LE2024. A promotional campaign, on local radio and press and on social media, on websites and through targeted social media advertising preceded the launch of the Council's Candidate Training Programme on 31st January.

The event, held in the Council chamber drew current women councillors, candidates, and others to explore women's role in Wexford local government. The Cathaoirleach of the Women's Coalition, Cllr Maura Bell opened the event, followed by a talk from Wexford County Council Archivist Gráinne Doran on Ellen 'Nell' Ryan who was the first female councillor elected to Wexford County Council in June 1928.

Women for Election gave a brief overview of the background to women in local government, followed by a conversation with long-serving and retiring Cllr Kathleen Codd-Nolan, who shared her experience of being a councillor for 25 years. In March, a full-day training for women candidates or those intending to run was held in the Council Chamber. This focussed on some key skills and knowledge for candidates in the upcoming local election. It was focused on practical instructions for local election candidates on maps, tallies, and voter targeting voters. Its aim was to support candidates in developing or honing their campaign strategy and optimising their time in the lead up to the election. The second session was designed to support candidates maximise their access to and impact from engagement with local media throughout the campaign. This included practice interviews with a professional journalist and presenter from regional radio, helping candidates perfect their approach to media and understanding how best to get their message across effectively and succinctly.

The Women's Coalition intends to continue to promote issues that are particularly relevant to women and also initiatives that will lead to the increased engagement of women in politics particularly at a local government level.

Wexford County Council's Commitment to the Public Sector Duty

One of Wexford County Council's guiding principles in the Corporate Plan 2024-2029 is a commitment to the elimination of discrimination, the promotion of equality and protection of human rights for our service-users, employees, elected members and policy beneficiaries. Based on this commitment, we implement the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty as an integral part of our ongoing work across the organisation.

Steps to Ensure Wexford County Council meet its Statutory Obligations

In fulfilling the Duty, in 2024 we have undertaken an evidence-based and participative assessment of the equality and human rights issues relevant to our purpose and functions. Corporate Services are responsible for driving implementation of the Duty and have established a cross-organisational Working Group to support and enable this.

This group in 2024 prepared the draft Implementation Plan for the Duty. The plan sets out the actions to be taken to allow ongoing application of the Duty and provides direction on how to complete the 'Address Step' in the development and review of our plans, strategies, policies, programmes and projects over the life of this corporate plan.

The final plan will be brought to Management Team in early 2025 for approval. This group will prepare an action plan for the Duty in 2025. This plan will include actions to be carried out across the organisation and by the Working Group including briefing events for staff, training event for staff on carrying out the "Address Step", mentoring support and dedicated webpage.



Conclusion

Wexford County Council remains fully committed to embedding the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty across all areas of our work. Through the implementation of the Duty, we aim to ensure that equality, inclusion, and respect for human rights are central to our decision-making, service delivery, and organisational culture. We will continue to work collaboratively across departments and with key stakeholders to uphold this commitment and deliver meaningful, measurable outcomes for all in our community.

HOUSING SERVICES

Housing Delivery

The Housing Department works to provide Housing Supports to people who are unable to meet their accommodation needs from their own means. We work in partnership with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH), Housing Agency, and Approved Housing Bodies to increase housing supply. The Council engages in various channels of housing delivery in an effort to increase supply of homes including own build, Turnkey acquisition, Part V Acquisition, CALF and CAS by Approved Housing Bodies, Mortgage to Rent, Tenant in Situ and Repair and Lease.

Wexford County Council has an ambitious 5-year capital programme under the Housing for All Action Plan. Wexford County Council achieved 96.5% delivery under our housing for all targets in 2023. This was exceeded in 2024 where we met 155% of the annual target. We are hopeful with approved and proposed projects, that we will surpass annual targets for the rest of the programme years.

Year	Part V (Private & LDA)	Existing LA Landbank	LA Turnkey Development	LA Leasing	AHB CALF	AHB CAS	Total Homes delivered	DHLGH TARGET	Target V's Delivery
2024	32	42	55	1	133	12	274	176	+98

AHB Forum - The aim of WCC AHB Forum is to promote co-operation and develop partnership opportunities between Wexford County Council and Approved Housing Bodies to achieve our shared objective to deliver and manage homes for individuals and families who need support in meeting their accommodation needs.

The Housing department hosted two AHB Forums in April and November 2024 in County Hall. We were joined by our AHB Partners and discussed housing delivery and services. It is intended to make the AHB Forums a bi-annual event.



Key Achievements in - Housing Delivery

- 451 tenancy offers – 322 local authority and 129 AHB
- 32 new homes delivered through Part V
- 145 homes delivered in partnership with AHBs through CALF and CAS in 2024
- 406 homes delivered in partnership with AHBs through CALF and CAS since Housing for All commenced in 2022.
- 160 new HAP units.

Housing Maintenance

The Housing Department is also responsible for the management and maintenance of our housing stock. The Maintenance Team provides supports and assistance to tenants as needed. Wexford County Council manages a housing stock of 5,108 Council owned housing units in the County as at the end of December 2024. In addition, WCC manages 184 leased units including Repair & Leasing.

Key Achievements in 2024 - Housing Maintenance

4,242 Repair requests completed at year end.

Energy Retrofitting

Energy Efficiency Retrofit Programme 2024 was the fourth year of a new 10-year Energy Efficiency Retrofit Programme to retrofit local authority housing stock.

As part of this programme, the Housing Maintenance Section completed energy upgrades to 144 properties in 2024. The range of works undertaken in the properties included external wall and attic insulation, solar panels, new doors, new windows, blocking of fireplaces, low energy lighting, high efficiency boilers and upgraded heating controls. All properties received a minimum of a B2 BER rating after the works were completed.

Homeless Prevention and Supports

Within the Housing Department we have the HSSU Homeless Support Service Unit which plays a key role in prevention of Homelessness in the County.

The Unit offers homeless supports, advice and services in one location, with an emphasis on homeless prevention and supports.

This is a collaborative initiative by Wexford County Council working in partnership with the HSE and Focus Ireland. Some of the main services being provided through the HSSU working in partnership with external state agencies and NGO's are:

WCC Services	Focus Ireland Services	HSE Services
Homeless Assessment	Tenancy Sustainment Services	Substance Misuse Outreach Services
Homeless Prevention and support services through early intervention	Housing First Project	Mental Health
HAP Place Finder Service	Advice & Information Service	Tusla Aftercare
Links to external agencies where appropriate		Tusla Domestic Violence Women's Refuge
Advice and information		

It is important to point out that the figures below represent the total number of calls to the HSSU - it is not reflective of the number of individuals/families as quite often the same client may make multiple calls to the HSSU.

There were 1,429 calls to the HSSU from 1st January 2024 to 31st December 2024, the following is the breakdown of same:

1336(93%)	Provided with advice and support in relation to housing and homeless prevention
47 (3%)	Supported with temporary, short, medium and long-term accommodation and tenancy sustainment support through Place Finder and Social Care Workers
37 (3%)	Ineligible at the time presentation for housing/homeless services. HSSU advised and assisted to regularise housing situation.
9 (1%)	It was not possible to complete a full assessment.

Housing Grants

The Housing Department provides private grants assist works which improve the living conditions of people with a disability, persons with mobility issues as well as assist older people living in poor housing conditions.

Key Achievements 2023 – Housing Grants

A total of €4,233,306 was paid to assist 649 households:

- €2,066,836 paid to 212 Applicants under Housing Adaptation Grant for persons with a Disability (HGD)
- €2,024,691 paid to 404 applicants under Housing Aid for Older Persons (HOP)
- €141,778 paid to 33 applicants under Mobility Aids Grants (MAG)

Housing Social Housing Support

The Housing Department assesses eligibility for Social Housing Supports and allocates properties in accordance with the Council's Allocation Scheme. It also provides nominations to Approved Housing Bodies for tenancies.

Wexford County Council has 1,543 applicants on the social housing support list as at 31st December 2024. An additional 1,378 were on the transfer list, this includes applicants currently in private rented receiving the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP). 279 applicants on the transfer list were in local authority or AHB houses.

Key Achievements 2024 – Social Housing Supports

- 322 Wexford County Council property allocations.
- 119 further Approved Housing Body Properties were tenanted in 2024.
- Completed a Summary of Social Housing Assessment for 2024.
- Wexford County Council exceeded the targets for housing disabled people set out in their Strategic Plan for Housing Disabled People 2021- 2026. The target for new builds and relets is 20% and the target for HAP, RAS and Leased is 10%. The actual percentages realised were 25.9% and 17.6%.

Private Rented Sector

Wexford County Council continues to work with the Private Rented Sector to provide housing solutions to social housing applicants through the provision of Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) and Leasing Scheme.

The number of inspections carried out in 2024 are outlined in the following table:

Target (dwellings inspected)	1,562
Inspections carried out	1,650
No. of dwellings inspected	1,554
No. of AHB inspected	660

The total number of inspections carried out (1,562), includes the 660 AHB inspections.

Key Achievements 2023 – Private Rented Sector

- 160 New HAP Tenancies (Housing Assistance Payment)

Affordable Homes Wexford Programme

Wexford County Council continued to progress plans for the supply of affordable housing across County Wexford in 2024.

Affordable Housing Team – Additional technical and administrative resources have been approved by the Department of Housing to manage this delivery stream.



Identifying demand - On line survey launched February 2024 – Affordable Housing Team hosted an Affordable Housing Survey for the county to identify demand for affordable housing, prior to designing and planning schemes. Survey launched in (February 2024), over 440 submissions were received during the 8-week period from across all five Municipal districts, findings will aid in designing schemes with the right type of homes, at the locations and price points that suit needs.

Delivery and Pipeline Management - To support the delivery of the county Wexford housing programme, the Affordable Housing Team hosted a 'A Breakfast Briefing on Affordable Housing Delivery'. The event included members of Wexford County Council, officials from Planning and Housing Delivery Teams, Construction Industry Federation Members, Housing Building Finance Ireland and property professionals from across the county.

Invited speakers outlined the council's ambition for affordable housing in the county, an overview available schemes, and available funding opportunities to deliver affordable homes.



Expression of interest in County Wexford for building contractors and housing developers - Wexford County Council launched an Expressions of interest for the delivery of new dwellings for affordable housing in County Wexford. In this call, home builders and housing developers were asked to consider offering properties with planning permission to Wexford County Council under an advance purchase turnkey arrangement.



AFFORDABLE HOMES WEXFORD

CALL TO HOME BUILDERS & HOUSING DEVELOPERS

Wexford County Council are seeking expressions of interest for the delivery of new dwellings for affordable housing in county Wexford

Comhairle Contae Loch Garman
Wexford County Council

A number of applications were received, following evaluation 3 applications were approved to advance to full application which were submitted to the Department of Housing for inclusion in the Affordable Housing Fund Programme.

Pilot Scheme - Ramsfort Park (Radharc na Beannóige), will be the first affordable housing scheme for county Wexford with funding secured to develop this pilot project via the Affordable Housing Fund under the Governments 'Housing for All' Programme in 2024.

Work continued throughout the year to advance this project which consists of a total of 20 affordable homes, available for sale via Wexford County Council's 'Local Authority Affordable Purchase Scheme', providing A rated homes which are designed to meet the needs of eligible families and individuals in the Gorey area.



The scheme is due to be advertised for applications early in 2025, with the delivery of the units scheduled for end 2025. A series of applicant information events both online and in person, were developed in advance of the scheme launch to assist interested parties through the application process.

Choice Based Letting

Wexford County Council introduced Choice Based Letting in August 2023. All applicants approved for social housing supports including approved transfer applicants received a login to the system.

To date there has been significant positive interest. The following table shows the number of properties advertised on the Choice Based Letting website, to **31/12/24**, together with Number of Views & Expressions of Interest.

Municipal District	Number of Properties Advertised	Properties Available for Allocation	Number of Views	Number of Expressions of Interest
Enniscorthy	36	77	10259	2250
Gorey/Kilmuckridge	29	89	11794	3247
New Ross	19	19	4299	736
Rosslare	24	57	8599	1941
Wexford	32	63	13940	3590
TOTAL	140	305	48891	11764

Residents Awards Day 2024

On October 30th, 2024 the Housing Section hosted the Local Authority Residents Awards Day. This day was the culmination of the Local Authority Estates Competition and the Local Authority Children's Art Competition which ran during Summer 2024. There were **75 attendees** in total (59 adults and 26 children) as well as housing staff and Elected Members. Adults attended talks presented on Climate Action, Energy Saving, Fire Safety in the Home and Healthy Age Friendly Homes Programme while the children attended an interactive clowning event 'Juanita the Cleaner' facilitated by Circus250. Information stands were provided by Environment, Library Service, Fire Service and many more. The event finished with presentation of awards by the Cathaoirleach of each district.

ROADS & TRANSPORTATION

The Roads and Transportation Department, in its statutory role as the Roads Authority of Wexford County Council, plays the principal role in the delivery, improvement and maintenance of public roads and roads related infrastructure throughout the county for the safe and efficient conveyance of vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians.

The Transportation Department works closely with the Department of Transport (DoT), Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) and the National Transport Authority (NTA) for the delivery of new major road schemes, the maintenance of 3,704kms of public thoroughfares, and the delivery and maintenance of active travel schemes, footpaths, public lighting and car parks.

The Transportation Department leads on road safety initiatives and schemes, supports community projects while being conscious of the Council's obligations to address climate change and adaptations through programmed works, the use and reuse of materials and work practices.

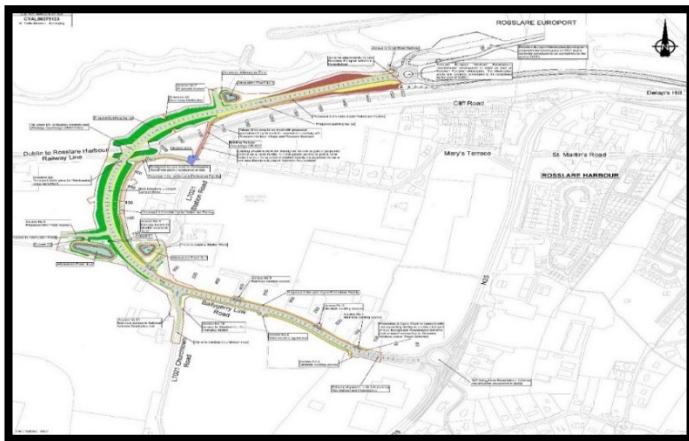
The Transportation Department also operates a Machinery Yard that provides plant and machinery to deliver the annual Roads Programme in conjunction with the Municipal Districts, delivers the Winter Maintenance Programme and manages the Council fleet for all Departments.

Summary of Achievements

- Wexford County Council continues to deliver, together with Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) and the Regional Design Office (RDO), Major Road Projects providing a critical strategic land-sea transport connection between Ireland and Continental Europe.
- The projects comprise of an access road to Rosslare Europort and the continuation of the major road network from Oilgate to Rosslare Harbour.
- The National Primary & Secondary Roads continued to receive ongoing maintenance grant of €24.7m.
- The Municipal District Offices carried out 106 km's of surface dressing and road restoration on 86 km's of local and regional roads.
- The winter maintenance programme was expanded to cover 421 km's of regional and local roads on 5 salting routes.
- 2024 saw the drawdown of NTA Active Travel funding at €3.75m.
- Over 13 schemes were progressed with the continued design and delivery of cycle routes and safe routes to school.
- Wexford Local Link Service has expanded year on year. Total passenger use has increased by 36.85% from 2023 to 405,527 trips.
- 2024 saw the completion of 8 Community Involvement Schemes. In 2024 Wexford County Council received €850,436.00 in grant funding which facilitated improvement works for 17 lanes and approx. 8034 sq. m of road surface

MAJOR ROAD PROJECTS

- N25 Rosslare Europort Access Road - The N25 Rosslare Europort Access Road Scheme is being developed as a key link in a very significant multi-modal transport investment that has commenced in Rosslare Europort and will continue over the coming years. The delivery of this section of road will connect the N25 to Iarnrod Éireann's new port access.
 - With planning consent achieved in 2023, and the compulsory purchase order confirmed, work progressed through Phase 5 (Enabling and Procurement) of TII's project management guidelines with detailed design and the compilation of tender documentation.



- **N11/N25 Oilgate to Rosslare Harbour** - The 31km section from Oilgate to Rosslare Harbour, in addition to the Rosslare Europort Access Road, provides a critical strategic land-sea transport connection between Ireland, Continental Europe and the UK.

This scheme forms part of the comprehensive TEN-T European Transport Network and complies with strategic policies at national, regional and local level. It strongly supports and aligns with two key objectives of Project Ireland 2040 of enhanced regional accessibility & high-quality international connectivity. The scheme is also a key objective for the delivery of Regional Spatial Economic Strategy for the Southern Region in the Wexford County Development Plan.

The project team is progressing through the Phase 3 (Design & Environmental Evaluation) in preparation for the submission for planning consent. The project includes the requirement for a new River Slaney crossing of significance north of Wexford Town and a mainline rail crossing in conjunction with 4 major junction interchanges and numerous ancillary crossing structures. The consideration and provision of an active travel scheme along the route was evaluated in line with new national policy and guidelines. The provision of an off-road service area is under review for site selection options in line with new national policy and guidelines.

National Roads

Despite a significant reduction in the 2024 grant allocations from the TII nationally, two pavement resurfacing schemes were completed on national roads and essential maintenance works continued on national roads.

The pavement improvement schemes are:

- 1.65 km on the N80 from Tomacurry to Ballycarney Phase 2 costing €1.21m;
- 2.1 km on the N25 from Drinagh to Ballykillane costing €0.91m.

A total of €840,000 was used to continue essential maintenance works on the N11, N25, N30 and N80

Non-National (Regional & Local) Roads

In 2024, €24.7m was secured in grant funding from the Department of Transport for non-national roads. All planned works were successfully delivered which included 215km of roads upgrade under the restoration improvement & maintenance programs.

Restoration Improvement (RI)

The significant expenditure of €12,177,500 was spent on 85.5km of our Regional and Local Network, improving 2.8% of the network. This relates to works deemed necessary to first strengthen and then surface and reseal. This provides for a 1 in 35-year treatment cycle.

Emphasis is placed on reducing transport of material and recycling existing stone where appropriate. This approach is consistent with low carbon, green and climate action policies.



Restoration and Improvement Works (Strengthening) 2024

Restoration Maintenance (RM)

More commonly referred to as surface dressing with the works intended to extend the longevity of the road. In 2024 €2,841,500 was spent on 106km of road, improving 3.0% of the road network.

Bridges

The bridge maintenance and repair program included fourteen bridges completed across the County. A grant of €603,000 was fully utilized.

Specific Improvement Grants

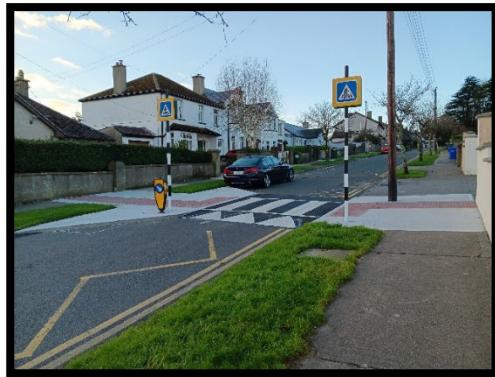
- Deeps Bridge, Killurin Wexford - The restoration of the bridge was fully funded by the DoT by means of a Specific Improvement Grant. Restoration and conservation of the piles, bridge deck and parapets was carried out over two years with the resurfacing complete in 2024 at a final outturn of €2.86M.



- R733 Owenduff Slope Stabilisation - The integrity of the regional road south of Wellingtonbridge was compromised due to erosion of the sloped bank of the tidal Owenduff River from surface water run-off following torrential rain. As the R733 links Wexford town with the Hook Peninsula and the car ferry crossing the River Suir at Ballyhack to Passage East it was essential to stabilise and strengthen the bank and road foundation to keep the road open. Earth retaining and drainage works were complete in 2024.

Safety Improvement Schemes

Nine minor safety improvement schemes or Low-Cost Safety Schemes were completed across Wexford utilising a grant of €398,000. These schemes included pedestrian crossings, junction tightening, sightline improvements and driver awareness signage.



Courtesy Crossings at Riverchapel and St Johns Road, Wexford, 2024

Climate Adaptation and Resilience Schemes

Twenty minor schemes were completed around the county utilising a grant of €687,200. The are a mix of drainage schemes, storm/surface water management and pavement schemes.

ACTIVE TRAVEL

The Active Travel team works on delivering new infrastructure and existing infrastructure upgrades to support and encourage active travel in the county, coupled with education and promotion of alternative means of transport and mobility.

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) - By encouraging children to walk or cycle to school we can make a big impact on their safety and wellbeing and reducing congestion at school gates. Projects commenced at schools in 2024 at Gorey Central School, Ramsgrange Community School & St. Patrick's National School, Crossabeg.



Safe Route to School, New footpath buildup, Charlotte Grove, Gorey Central School



Safe Route to School, New footpath, connection from School to village, Ramsgrange

Pathfinder Projects or Cycle Schemes - The Pathfinder Programme forms a key part of the implementation of the National Sustainable Mobility Policy which sets out a plan to 2030 to transform how we travel, especially in urban areas, making sustainable journeys more attractive and feasible for all.

The Pathfinder Projects in Wexford are active travel schemes from the Barntown Roundabout on the Newtown Road R769 to Wygram; the Hospital Junction at Newlands, through Beechlawn to Clonard and from the Drinagh Roundabout on the N25 through Roxborough to Maudlintown. Phase 1 of the Newtown Road scheme was completed in 2024, including two new accessible bus stops to accommodate both local and national bus services.



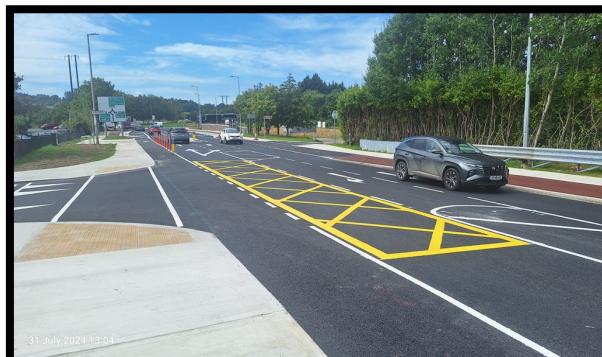
Phase 1 Newtown Rd during construction



Bus Shelter construction, Newtown Rd, Phase 1.



Completed phase 1 Newtown Rd Works, Maldron Roundabout in foreground with bus shelters and segregated cycling lanes.



Area Based Transport Assessments and Plans - Transport assessments are being undertaken in Wexford Town and Enniscorthy to establish baseline transport data, identify potential modal transport shifts, including land use and transport corridors that will inform and support statutory Local Area Plans under review by the Planning Section of the Council.

Bike Week May 2024 - As part of Bike Week 2024 a series of events were organised throughout the county in conjunction with schools, community groups and stakeholder groups.



E-Bike and E-Scooter Sharing Scheme - In August 2024, a trial e-scooter sharing scheme was introduced in Wexford Town. An e-bike sharing scheme was already established in town so the e-scooters offered an alternative means of conveyance around town.

Wexford County Council is the first local authority in Ireland to introduce an e-scooter sharing scheme and combined with the e-bike sharing scheme, users in Wexford Town have completed over 170,000km since May 2023.



Minister James Lawless and Cllr Pip Breen, Council Cathaoirleach at e-scooter launch day 15th Aug 2024

Bus Stop Enhancement programme - As part of the Bus Stop Enhancement program, funded through the NTA, new bus shelters were installed in Bree village, Ballycullane and Ramsgrange



Bree Village



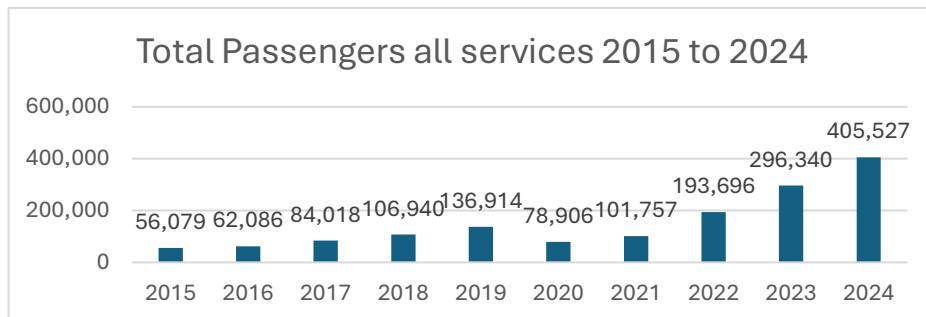
Ballycullane Village



Ramsgrange Village

LOCAL LINK

The growth of the bus routes provided by Wexford Local Link, demonstrates the need for public transport in the county. The number of passenger trips has increased from 56,000 in 2015 to 400,000 in 2024.



In addition to regular scheduled services Wexford Local Link, provides, demand response transport (DRT) which is a door-to-door service, once off social inclusion trips and beach services.

ROAD SAFETY

Just 1 Life Road Safety Campaign - Wexford County Council and Wexford Rotary Club jointly present a unique road safety event aimed at transition year students. The event, 'Just 1 Life' aims to highlight awareness of the causes of road traffic accidents and road deaths.

The event has been hosted countywide since 2007 and was seen by an audience of 23,000 secondary school students. Over five events in the National Opera House in 2024, 2,000 TY students participated in the programme.

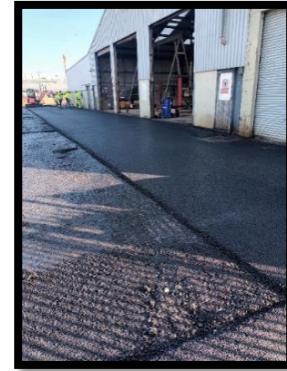


National Speed Limit Review - The Department of Transport enacted legislation and supporting Statutory Guidelines and regulations for the reduction of speed limits on certain classes of public roads to be rolled out in 3 phases. The roll out of Phase 1 to erect poles and signage supporting the reduction of the speed limit on rural county roads from 80 kmph to a default speed of 60 kmph is well advanced by years end in preparation for the effective date for Phase 1 implementation early in 2025.

Machinery Yard & Fleet Management

We continue to invest in our plant and machinery, supporting all operation sections within the Council. This includes the purchase of EV vehicles, larger capacity vehicles and improvements to Machinery Yard facilities.

The Machinery Yard delivers the annual Winter Maintenance Plan. In 2024, salting pre-treatments were carried out on five planned routes treating 421 km of national and regional roads at times of low and freezing temperatures between October and April.



PUBLIC LIGHTING

Public lighting development fund was created to support the project of updating the public lighting with LED lights countywide.

To date over 14,000 lanterns have been replaced with LED. This equates to 90% of all public lights have now transitioned resulting in an annual energy saving of €450K.

PARKING MANAGEMENT

A review of the parking infrastructure, systems and facilities was undertaken. New Pay & Display machines were introduced in the four towns in 2024, modernising the service provided and increasing the number card enabled machines countywide.

In 2024, Wexford eParking was launched as a new cashless option to pay parking charges and this coupled with upgraded pay parking machines offers the motorist greater choice and flexibility in paying for public parking.



COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT SCHEME

Wexford County Council sponsors 2 Community Employment Schemes employing 2 Supervisors and 75 CE participants. The scheme is countywide with participants operating in various locations in Wexford, Duncannon, New Ross, Enniscorthy, Gorey and Wexford Library Archives.

In 2024, 7 participants transitioned to full-time employment and one participant being accepted to full time education. In addition, several participants availed of temporary work placements within the Council and others within external organisations.

All participants can engage in further training and education under the guidance and mentorship of our CE Supervisors and Participant Development Officer.

RURAL WATER

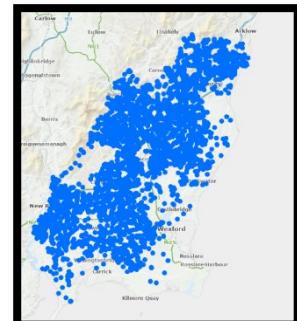
The Water Services Department of Wexford County Council historically delivered both Rural Water and Public Water Services. On 6th September 2023, Uisce Eireann took over the Management and Direction of Water Services Staff engaged in the delivery of Public Water Services. Approximately 75% of the population of Wexford is served by public water, 5% by Group Water Schemes and 20% by private wells.

In 2024 Rural Water Services was established as a separate section within Wexford County Council. The section supervises the operation of the Group Water Schemes (~70 schemes serving approximately 4,250 people), the Individual Well Grant scheme, and the Lead Grant Scheme.

The section oversees the delivery of the Rural Water programme by providing technical and financial support to individual supplies and group water schemes to provide water services or upgrade existing services. This is funded by the DHLGH under The Multi-Annual Rural Water Programme (MARWP) programme. The MARWP provides the necessary funding to improve the Quality, Quantity and Reliability of the water services relied upon by rural dwellers, where no public water services are available.

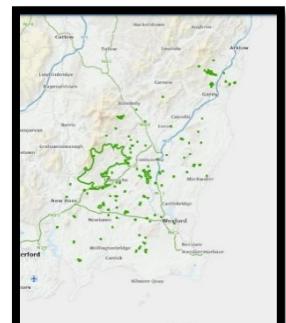
Private Well Grants

In 2024, the Rural Water Section received 245 new applications relating to Private Well Grants (an increase of 15% compared to 2023). Of the total submitted 6% were ineligible applications. The Section paid out over €510,000 to 170 applicants during the year -an increase of over 50% compared to 2023. This was made possible by a restructuring and strengthening of the Rural Water team, with staff dedicated to the rural water section allowing for quicker turnaround of inspections and administration.



Group Water Schemes

Having worked actively with Group Water Schemes and Community Wastewater Schemes, submissions were made in April 2024 to DHLGH under the MARWP 2024-2026 across a range of measures for the county totalling €3.26 million. All submitted projects have progressed to Phase 2 assessment and we are awaiting final announcement from the Department.



Progress under the previous **MARWP 2019 to 2021** throughout 2024 included:

- Funding under Public health compliance: Ballybeg GWS upgrade (works complete) and Kilanerin GWS (works ongoing)
- Works well under way on Blackstairs GWS reservoir bypass and tank, which was allocated approximately €200,000 under Enhancement of existing schemes including water conservation.
- Under the funding for Transition of Existing Group Water Schemes and GWS to the Public (UE) Water Sector, tenders were received for the Bing. This tender was for the installation of a public main sewer network, Kilrane, Co.
 - Wexford with the connection of 76 houses. The tender assessment process carried out by Wexford County Council immediately followed to determine the Most Economically Advantageous Tender submitted. The Department have been advised of the tender price and are currently reviewing the request by Wexford County Council for the additional funding required to meet the tender submitted.



DPI

The Multi Annual Developer Provided Water Services Infrastructure Resolution Programme (DPI) is run by the Rural Water Sections Executive Engineer. DPIs are Housing estates served by Developer Provided Water Services Infrastructure (developer no longer in business) and, due to poor construction or maintenance has not been taken in charge. DPIs do not have water services networks connected to the public (Uisce Eireann) network.

The DPI Resolution Programme aims to bring these estates up to standard and connect to Uisce Eireann network taking the water services into the charge Uisce Eireann. Estates can then be taken in charge by Local Authorities

Programme is to have all 7 estates rectified by end of 2026. WCC are progressing the resolution of Developer Provided Infrastructure at the following sites so that the services can be connected to the public supply and taken in charge by Uisce Eireann.

DPI Infrastructure Resolution Programme 2019-2021

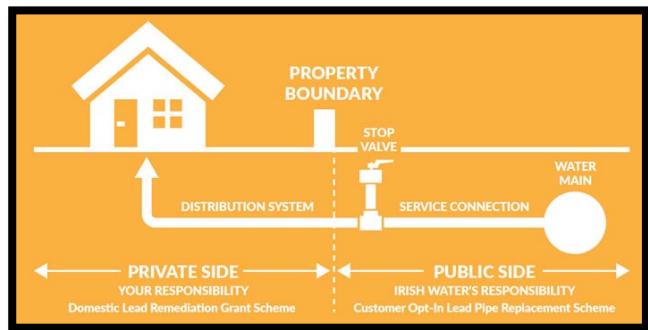
Name	Townland	Expected Costings	75% Funding Provided	Project Completion/ Programme
Cois Cuan	Arthurstown	€152,475	€114,356	Q4 2025
Kyle's Close	Oular	€107,153	€80,365	Q4 2025
Mountain View	Ballindaggin	€208,016	€156,012	Q4 2025
Gleann na gCaor	Monageer	€302,878	€227,159	Q4 2026

DPI Infrastructure Resolution Programme 2023

Name	Townland	Expected Costings	75% Funding Provided	Project Completion/ Programme
Beach View	Duncannon	€72,300	€54,225	Q4 2025
Farrin Carraig	Duncannon	€202,986	€152,240	Q4 2025
Beechfields	Ballaghkeen	€353,968	€265,476	Q4 2026

Lead Remediation Grants

Lead Remediation Grants are also administered by the Rural Water Section. Grants of up to €5000 are provided to replace lead pipes in houses and grants are now available without means testing. To date 9 Lead Remediation Grants have been approved. During 2024, the Rural Water Section received 1 new grant application and paid out 3 grants to applicants.



Compliance and Monitoring Function

The Rural Water Section also performs a statutory function - monitoring private water schemes to ensure they comply with EU drinking Water regulations. Private schemes are on own well with public consumers (eg pub, hotel, school, private estates, shops with delis) with > 50 people and > 10m3/day. 6 group schemes sampled at least twice per annum.

Approx 160 private schemes sampled in 2024 by Council Contractor. HSE is contacted for all Boil Water Notices issued and for public health advice on out of specification results. Results are uploaded to EPA annually.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & ENTERPRISE

Town & Village Renewal Scheme

A total of €997,500.00 grant aid was secured for 3 projects in County Wexford under the Town & Village Renewal Scheme. The successful projects were:

- **Rathgarogue, Co. Wexford** – Sensory Meditation Gardens & Play Areas (€500,000)
- **Carrig On Bannow, Co. Wexford** - Playground, walking track, sensory garden, biodiversity area and adult gym (€250,000)
- **Cushinstown, Co. Wexford** - Community Garden, Men's and Women's Sheds, toilet facilities and repair existing infrastructure safe access (€247,590)

Wexford County Council & County Wexford Chamber of Commerce Heads of Agreement

Wexford County Council's Economic Strategy supports the creation of a vibrant economy in County Wexford that stimulates job creation, fosters an enterprise culture and supports capability/skills development. Wexford County Council signed a three-year agreement with County Wexford Chamber of Commerce which will support this strategy and align to the Chamber's objectives in supporting and representing the business community in County Wexford. The Heads of Agreement will add value to the Council's economic programme while supporting the Chamber in its delivery of its 3 year Strategic Plan.



IDA and WCC Collaboration for Enniscorthy Tech Park

As part of Wexford County Council's economic strategy to provide high quality property solutions for investment by companies with potential for job creation, Wexford County Council secured an Memorandum of Understanding with the IDA to collaboratively develop a property solution for an advanced factory at Enniscorthy Technology Park. Following an e-tender process a design team has been appointed to design and bring the project to planning permission stage with this work due to commence in Q1 2025.

Savannah, Georgia / Georgia Southern University (GSU)

During 2024 a total of 160 students travelled from the US to study at the GSU learning campus in Wexford. Students also had the opportunity to travel around the county on education field trips as well as undertaking work study placements.

Wexford Delegation to Savannah Georgia

A Wexford County Council delegation headed up by An Cathaoirleach, travelled to Savannah in March for a series of meetings and events aimed at building on the strategic, civic, economic, education and cultural opportunities between South East Ireland and the Southern counties of Georgia, USA and further strengthening the agreement between the City of Savannah and Wexford County Council.



Building International Linkages

Building on the existing strong relationships between Wexford and Savannah, a number of high-level delegations including US Congressman Earl L 'Buddy' Carter, representatives from the Georgia State House of Legislature and members of Georgia Economic Development Department accompanied by the Georgia State Economic Commissioner visited Wexford in August. Opportunities for further development of the economic, education, civic and tourism links between County Wexford and the wider state of Georgia were discussed.

Wexford County Council also welcomed a delegation from Le Cotentin, France and the newly appointed French Ambassador to Ireland, H.E. Céline Place, in a visit that underscored the growing bonds of friendship and cooperation between Wexford and Le Cotentin in Normandy. A series of meetings were held with key stakeholders aimed at strengthening diplomatic, economic, educational, science and cultural ties between both regions.

Trinity Wharf

The Trinity Wharf development is a critical step towards activating greater economic activity in Wexford and the wider South East Region. As part of our strategy to seek expressions of interest from potential investors for the delivery of this transformational project for Wexford, an Expression of Interest / Preliminary Market Consultation process (in line with Article 40 of the 2014/24/EU Directive) was launched in November 2024 seeking engagement and feedback from investors and developers to unlock the delivery of this flagship project.

Wexford Delegation to Jiangxi Province, China

Following on from a letter of intent signed in 2023 with Jiangxi Province in China, a delegation from Wexford County Council visited Jiangxi in Spring 2024 for a series of meetings aimed at increasing future trade, education, tourism and cultural ties between Wexford and the Chinese province. A meeting with the Department of Commerce in Jiangxi was featured on the Jiangxi Business news channel.



Trade Bridge

A number of virtual trade missions took place between South East Ireland and Savannah Georgia to explore and develop export and job creation opportunities. As a result, a number of companies in the South East are currently progressing contracts with companies from Savannah and South East Georgia.

Tourism

Wexford County Council is working with Failte Ireland, Visit Wexford and other key stakeholders on 3 key strategic documents that will provide the basis for County Wexford's Tourism strategy

for the next 5 years: The Wexford Destination Experience Development Plan, a Wexford Food in Tourism strategy and an International Tourism Sales and Marketing plan.

International Market

Ongoing communications are taking place with Tourism Ireland to assist in promoting Wexford to international Visitors. Meetings have taken place with representatives of Tourism Irelands teams from Spain, France and Great Britain.

A five part television series featuring Wexford Ambassador, Dermot O Leary aired on ITV. The first episode of 'Dermot's Taste of Ireland' and supported by Tourism Ireland featured County Wexford and provided a significant showcase for all the county has to offer.



First entire street in Ireland to be fully covered by a retractable roof.

Monck Street in Wexford is the first entire street in Ireland to be fully covered by a retractable roof stretching a mere 80-metres long. The Official launch of Monck Street Public Realm took place on Wednesday 17th April 2024 with a cost over €1.5 million.



Fringe Fleadh

The Economic Section supported four Municipal Districts in running Fringe Fleadh events around County Wexford in the lead up to the main Fleadh Cheoil na hEireann held in Wexford Town. Events included traditional music, song, dance and storytelling, from sessions, to workshops, to concerts and exhibitions.



European Summit of the “Norman People of Europe”

The first European Summit of the “Norman People of Europe” took place in October 2024 to discuss the Millennium of William the Conqueror in 2027. The Summit was held at the historic Abbaye aux Dames in Caen, France, and included representatives from Ireland, France, Southern Italy and Sicily, Scandinavia, United Kingdom and the Channel Islands. Following the workshops that took place at the Summit, works are progressing to strengthen the links between each of the destinations that attended with a view to hold events in each region highlighting the Norman Story from 2027 onwards.



Local Enterprise Office (LEO) Wexford

10 Years of LEO Celebration.

Local Enterprise Office (LEO) Wexford celebrated its 10th anniversary on Monday, December 9th at Wexford County Council marking a decade of growth, innovation, and support for the local business community.

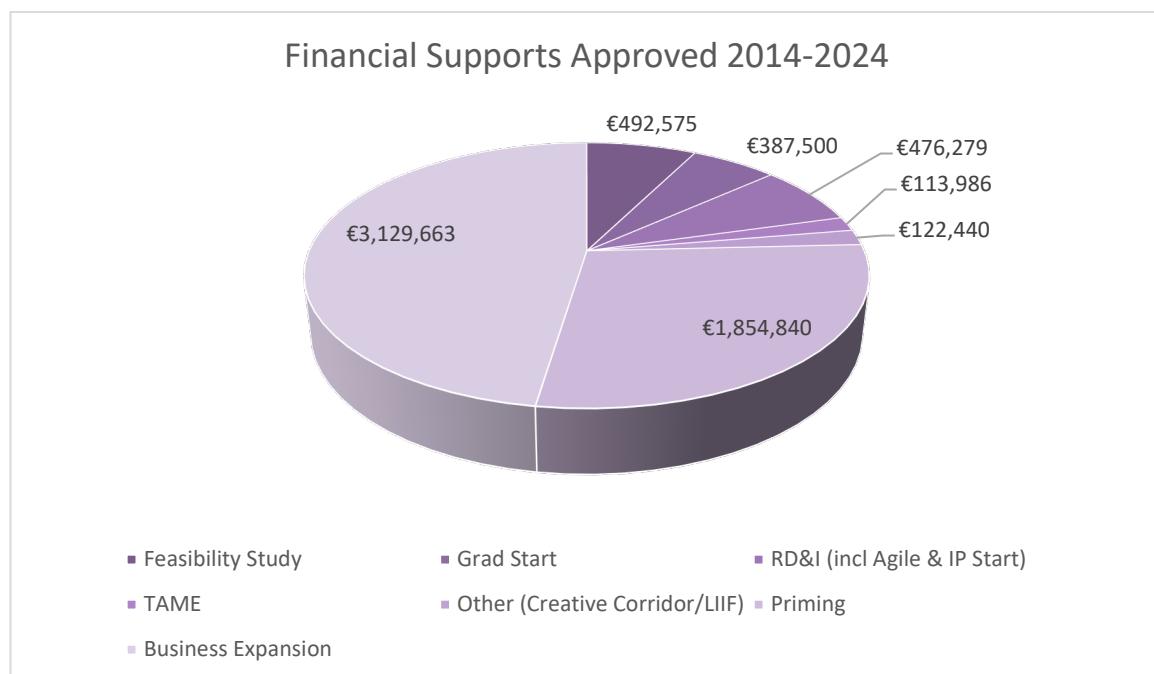
In 2024 Wexford LEO reported an 11th consecutive year of positive job creation, with 329 total jobs created and a net employment gain of 163 jobs. A total of 2,314 jobs have been created in Wexford supported by the Local Enterprise Office since 2014 and there are currently 225 small businesses across the county employing a total of 1,945 staff which are supported by LEO Wexford.



LEO Wexford Employment Data 2014 – 2024

Year	No. of LEO Clients	Jobs in LEO Grant aided Clients	Gross Jobs Created	Nett Jobs Created
2014	170	1070	267	210
2015	185	1167	326	132
2016	187	1192	197	103
2017	213	1348	238	143
2018	227	1308	302	33
2019	221	1,438	200	106
2020	241	1,474	331	23
2021	231	1,630	465	288
2022	234	1,773	330	177
2023	234	1,954	329	177
2024	225	1,945	329	163

330 Financial Grant packages, total value €6,577,283 approved in 10 years 2014-2024



The Local Enterprise Office recorded the following outputs in 2024:

No. of applications	Grant Support detail	Value of Support
14	Business Expansion	€469,822
8	Priming	€252,417
7	Feasibility/Innovation	€47,121
5	GradStart	€150,000
1	IP Start	€2,160
1	Research Development & Innovation	€49,256
13	Lean for Business	€71,955
20	Green for Business	€44,280
10	Digital for Business	€44,280
9	Technical Assistance for Micro Exporters	€17,912
117	Trading Online Voucher	€250,350
10	Digital for Business	€44,280
10	Energy Efficiency	€61,625
2	Grow Digital	€8,455
Total amount approved in grant aid in 2024		€1,469,633

Training and development Programmes/Mentoring support	Output
100 General Training Programmes	1520 participants
5 Start your own Business courses	131 participants
Management Development programmes	45 participants
17 schools engaged in Student Enterprise Programme	1390 participants
Individual Mentor Meetings approved	376 meetings
14 MFI Loan applications processed	Loan value €202,500

Showcase 2024

Sully and Juno, a pioneering sensory-inclusive clothing design business supported by LEO Wexford won Best Newcomer at the inaugural “Business of Craft Awards” at RDS Showcase 2024. Sully and Juno overcame stiff competition from 105 competing craft and design businesses across the country to come away with the award.



Local Enterprise Week 2024

Local Enterprise Week 2024 which took place from March 4th to 8th was a resounding success with all events sold out. During the week the LEO collaborated with a number of different partners including industry leader Rory O'Connor from Scurri, the Wexford Chamber, the ICT Gateway at the Walton Institute in SETU and an exciting lineup of speaker to run events which provide both established business owners and budding entrepreneurs with the opportunity to be inspired, informed and engaged. The week featured events aimed at identifying trends, facilitating peer learning, fostering growth ambition, stimulating digital adoption, innovation and entrepreneurship, and building a strong and resilient business community in the county.



Local Enterprise Offices Policy Statement 2024-2030

The Local Enterprise Offices Policy Statement was published in May 2024. The Policy Statement provides clarity and communicates the role of the LEO network to stakeholders and the wider enterprise ecosystem. It sets out a policy direction and sketches the pathway of how LEOs will align their work with the priorities of the White Paper on Enterprise. The policy statement was developed by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment in collaboration with Enterprise Ireland, the LEO Network, and the City and County Managers Association.



Operational Efficiency Programmes

Two new LEO Grants supports were launched in 2024. The Energy Efficiency Grant and the Grow Digital Voucher were developed to provide financial support to assist with the implementation of consultants recommendations in the areas of Sustainability and Digitalisation. Financial support of up to €10,000 is available to businesses under the Energy Efficiency Programme and €5,000 is available under the Grow Digital scheme.

National Women's Enterprise Day (NWED) – 17th October 2024

95 attendees across a range business sectors attended the Wexford event at the Ferrycarrig Hotel to celebrate NWED and listen to inspirational and dynamic speakers including keynote speaker Martina Fitzgerald - Scale Ireland. Panellists included Deborah Cogley - Deborah Cogley Art, Ann O'Brien - Kent Stainless and Liz Nolan - Dampdoctor who shared their experiences from the highs and lows of running business and lessons learned. NWED events act as a catalyst to support Government policy in encouraging and promoting more women to set up and scale their business.



REGENERATION UNIT

The regeneration unit was established in late 2023 with a strong focus on town regeneration and a concentrated focus on the town centre first and vacant homes functions. The unit consists of the town regeneration officer, vacant homes officer, senior general services supervisor and an assistant staff officer.

The unit is dedicated to regeneration and vacancy activation working through various government programmes and other sections within Wexford County Council to ensure that our town centres become nicer places to live, work and do business and that vacancy and dereliction are targeted and tackled to improve the quality of life in all parts of the County.

Town Centre First

The Town Centre First (TCF) Policy aims to create Town Centres that function as viable, vibrant and attractive locations for people to live, work and visit, while also functioning as the service, social, cultural and recreational hub for the local community.

There are over 500 Towns in Ireland with over 400 people and they all face similar challenges including building vacancy/dereliction-lack of vibrancy, how to increase employment in the Town centre, out of Town/Online shopping, poor pedestrian/cyclist access, less desire to live in the Town Centre, lack of parking, access to green spaces.

Town centre first was created to help address these challenges with the establishment of Town Centre first teams and the creation of a town centre first plan which recognises that every town is unique. It lays the foundation for each Town to develop at a local level, their own plan-led path forward. This will be expressed through a tailored TCF plan which is underpinned by a clear diagnosis of local strengths and challenges.

We have embraced this policy in Wexford and engaged actively in promoting Town Centre First throughout the towns and villages of Co. Wexford.

We have town centre first teams active in 7 towns in county Wexford with each town at different stages of the Town centre first journey.

New Ross was a pathfinder town under the national town centre first programme and became an exemplar town in terms of what town centre first plans can do for an area. The New Ross Plan was launched in 2024 and became an example of how quality public realm improvements can enhance a towns attractiveness.

New Ross Town Centre First Team hosted a delegation from Margistar Cost Action group on the April 18th, 2024 where 40 delegates / academics from 27 Countries around Europe came to New Ross to discuss Town Centre First and the New Ross experience to date on their TCF journey.



Enniscorthy town centre first team continued to meet in 2024 after the launch of the town centre first plan. The plan is now in place and enhancements will be made to the town over the following years embracing the town centre first principles.

Wexford town established a town centre first team in late 2024 and is looking to complete a town centre first strategy in 2025 as part of the new local area plan. This town team has met on a number of occasions and is looking forward to extensive community engagement in 2025.

The Department of Rural and Community Developments 2024 town centre first suite of supports provided another opportunity to introduce additional towns in Wexford to Town Centre First.



Measure 1. Under this measure we have successfully established town teams in Taghmon, Bunclody and Castlebridge and completed health checks for all towns.

This is the start of the town centre first journey, and we have embarked on extensive capacity building in 2024 and brainstorming with a view to listening to the community and developing regeneration ideas within these communities.



**Photo walk in session for establishment of Taghmon town centre first team.

Measure 2. Under measure 2 each county in Ireland had to nominate one town within the county which was awarded funding to complete a full town centre first plan. They are the second national pathfinder towns. Following an analysis Courtown / Riverchapel was chosen as Wexford's nominated town.

We established a town centre first team in Courtown / Riverchapel and have started the process of developing a town centre first plan that reflects the needs and wants of the community within Courtown / Riverchapel. LOCI consultants have been appointed, and extensive consultation is expected to take place in 2025.



Measure 3. Under this measure and administered by the Regeneration unit funding of €50,000 by DRCD to St Michaels Theatre in New Ross and Kilmore Scope (Bridgetown waterway hub) to develop these projects to shovel ready status.

Vacant Homes

The vacant homes side of the regeneration unit were extremely busy throughout 2024 administering the hugely successful vacant property refurbishment (Croí Conaithe) grant. This grant has been very well utilised in County Wexford with a very high take up which is having a noticeable impact on addressing vacancy and dereliction throughout the county.

The grant is up to €70,000 and provides significant assistance in getting old derelict properties back into active ownership and the vacant homes teams are available to help people through the application process.

To enhance awareness and support for owners of vacant/derelict properties and sites, the Regeneration Unit held a series of Roadshows in 2024. These walk in sessions were held in locations in all 5 municipal districts and were very well attended. The objective was to publicise the availability of the grants, and we ran a number of radio and newspaper features again to raise awareness during 2024.

We also commenced a vacancy survey in 2024 providing us with the information to analyse the levels of vacancy that exist throughout the County.



Croí Conaithe before and after photos

Croí Conaithe Applications

Wexford County Council as at 31st December 2024

Applications Received	389
Applications Info Requested	131
Applications Approved	247
Funding Issued	52
Total Funding Paid to Date	€3,048,224.93



New Ross Road Show

SPECIAL PROJECTS

The Special Projects Office covers the development of:

- Industrial, Commercial, Technological and Business Infrastructure to facilitate and act as a catalyst for economic development.
- Town Centre space revitalisation, public buildings, and regeneration projects.
- High value recreational amenity and tourism projects.
- The Special Projects Office is also the lead for Regional Greenways. This function is resourced by Wexford and Kilkenny County Councils to develop a strategy for an integrated network of Greenways in the region.

Enniscorthy Technology Park, Killagoley

The Enniscorthy Technology Park is located alongside the old N11 to the south of Enniscorthy. The site is approximately 14.5 HA and Wexford County Council is developing the lands as a technology park with associated services infrastructure to facilitate investment by the science and technology sectors

- **Phase 1** - The development of three serviced sites and construction of first building is substantially complete.
- **Phase 2 - Access Road** - The Technical Consultancy Services Contract has been awarded for Stage (i) to (v) design services. Design work and site investigation is due to commence in Q1 2025.



IDA Advance Factory Building

Tenders have been received for an architect-led design team to prepare a planning application for a proposed advance factory building in Enniscorthy Technology Park. Appointment is anticipated Q1 2025.

Trinity Wharf

The development of the 3.6 Hectare waterside Trinity Wharf site will facilitate a new sustainable urban quarter with a high-quality public realm, a mix of modern office space, hotel accommodation, leisure and residential development, a landmark cultural and events building, residential units and a multi-storey car park. The leisure and residential development includes the provision of a 64-berth marina, a new boardwalk linking Trinity Wharf with Paul Quay and The Crescent, new public realm spaces and an urban greenway.

The contract for the construction of the access road was awarded to Glás Civil Engineering Ltd, in January 2023 and works commenced on site in late February 2023. Construction of Phase 0 includes the



Access Road, which was substantially complete in spring 2024, and the level crossing access which is due to begin construction in Q2/Q3 2025.

Ayesa is the lead consultant of design team and is progressing with design services for the next phase of the project. Procurement of site investigation works is at an advanced stage, expected to commence in Q1 2025, following which Irish Rail will build a level crossing for site access ahead of the main construction contracts.

The next phase of the Trinity Wharf development project is Phase 1a – Site Development. The works contract for this next phase is expected to commence in Q3/Q4 2025, and will deliver site establishment and protection works, comprising of elements such as a new sea wall, bulk filling, installation of site services, and a portion of surface works.

Murphy Floods Redevelopment

In 2023, WCC acquired the former Murphy Floods Hotel site, and adjacent derelict properties, in Enniscorthy town. O'Connor Sutton Cronin Consulting Engineers were appointed in May 2023 to undertake full stage design services for the demolition and site preparation elements of the scheme.

John Tinnelly & Sons were appointed as works contractor in September 2024. Works were completed on site in mid-October 2024. Enniscorthy Municipal District will deliver a proposal for an interim car park and public realm on the lands.

John Street Building Regeneration Project:

WCC was previously successful in securing RRDF funding to advance the design a redevelopment of the old grain stores at John Street, New Ross. This proposed project will see the conversion of the Grain Store into a high-quality town-centre hub, with offices, community space and a destination café/restaurant.

A portion of the grain store building has been purchased by agreement and the CPO for the remaining sections is now formally complete.

A Part 8 process for the Grain store and building extension elements was approved on 8th April 2024. An application for Category 1 funding, under the RRDF, was submitted on 8th February 2024, which was unsuccessful. Environmental assessments to inform an application for development consent to An Bord Pleanála will be made in the coming months, for the public realm area to the rear of the property.



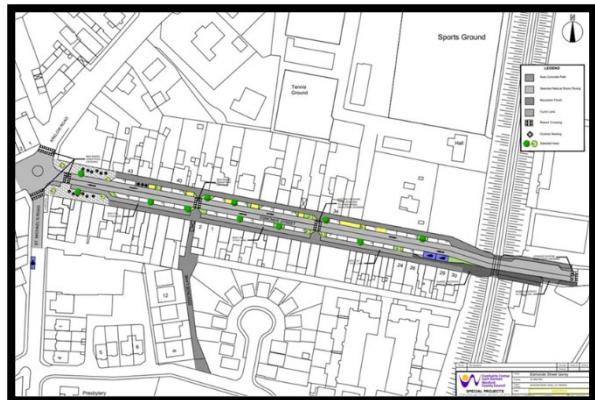
Templeshannon Regeneration, Enniscorthy

ODKM Architects have been appointed to undertake concept masterplanning design services for the Templeshannon Regeneration Project. This masterplan will be completed in time for the forthcoming URDF application.

Esmonde Street Public Realm Improvement Project

The aim of this project is to provide an upgraded public realm to Esmonde St. Gorey, that undergrounds the overhead services on the street, improves accessibility to individual shop units on the street, as well as between Main St. and Esmonde St. To enhance the public realm thereby encouraging retail opportunities on Esmonde St.

The detailed design for the Public Realm Improvement Scheme was completed, incorporating the ESBN and EIR design for the undergrounding of the overhead services. The tender package for the project was completed. The tender competition for a works contractor was published to e-tenders in December 2024. It is anticipated that construction will commence on-site in late Q1 2025.



Mechanics Institute, Wexford

The works contract for essential maintenance works at the Mechanics Institute was awarded to Roger Doyle Contractors and works commenced on site in January 2023. The essential maintenance works at the Mechanics Institute were completed in July 2024

We are now commencing to scope up the required works to prepare the building for community use. It is planned to have the building ready for occupancy by Q4 2025



New Ross Public Realm:

The Emigrant Park Project is now complete, and the park was officially opened by Minister Heather Humphrey's on 26th October 2023. The Emigrant Park was the winner of the LAMA best urban planning award 2024 and Best Municipal District Initiative Award 2024.



Carrigfoyle

This site was identified for the construction of an Activity Centre in conjunction with Waterford & Wexford Education and Training Board. The centre will provide recreational, social, health and wellbeing activities for locals and visitors.

- **Phase 1** – Trails and Carpark- (access road, car park, trails, and services) of this project is complete.
- **Phase 2 - Activity Centre Building** - The proposed boathouse at Carrigfoyle Lake went through a redesign in 2024 to provide a more cost-effective design solution, due to tenders for the previous design exceeding the budget available for this project. Site Clearance and enabling works took place in November 2024 to facilitate the development of this project. A tender package for the project was drafted in December 2024. It is planned to commence construction of the boathouse and associated works in Q1 2025.

Gorey Town Park

This high-quality landscape designed park incorporated Gorey Town Park and Gorey Showground. The external area of the park opened to the public in 2021 and the new playground and adult gym equipment was fully installed. As part of this redevelopment and in line with Wexford County Council's inclusivity and accessibility objectives, it appointed a contractor for the design, supply & install of a new registered and fully compliant modular Changing Places facility. The Changing Places unit has now been installed with snagging completed in February 2024.



WEXFORDIA – Irish National Heritage Park (INHP), Hook Lighthouse and New Ross Tourism Projects

The ambition is to develop a strong cluster of tourism projects within the county to maximise the economic impact of these attractions on the local economy; and by offering a new and exciting tourism destination for visitors to the South East region and Ireland.

Wexford County Council secured RRDF Category 2 (Feasibility Stage) funding for the following tourism projects within the county.

Irish National Heritage Park: INHP

The tourism and environmental design teams for the INHP have commenced work on a preliminary design and the environmental assessments for the expansion of the Visitor experience at the INHP to include 'Vikingar! Viking Village' which will replicate a Viking settlement from the middle ages (see image below). The preliminary design has been extended to include a



design for a new Visitor Centre in order to support service requirements at the INHP and to mitigate against future flood events. It is planned to submit a planning application for the entire project to An Bord Pleanála in Q3 2025. Fáilte Ireland have estimated that the completed project will generate in excess of €14 million to the local economy and create over 50 jobs.

Hook Lighthouse

The ambition is to develop Hook Lighthouse and the lighthouse site as a long-term sustainable tourism experience capable of attracting significantly more paying visitors and improving the economic output of the peninsula and region; and the creation of a “must see” destination within Ireland, Ireland’s Ancient East and the Hook peninsula. The experience will celebrate the region’s unique landscape and heritage that will appeal to domestic and international audiences. In high season the pressure on the physical infrastructure (car parks, centre buildings etc) and capacity restrictions on the hugely popular guided tour of the Hook Lighthouse Tower mean that the growing number of visitors are experiencing delays and crowding, affecting the experience of the local community and visitors to the Hook Lighthouse campus and peninsula and a potential threat to the environmental sustainability of the area. The ambition of the project is to achieve a much greater conversion of existing site visitors to admission paying visitors over a period of time while protecting the site for future generations.

Feasibility assessments are taking place on the management of visitors to the Hook Lighthouse and the expansion of the visitor experience at the Hook Lighthouse. Tandem Design continue to work on the development of the Interpretive and Concept Design of the project. An Integrated Design Team led by Architect Hall Mc Knight has been appointed and the concept will now be further developed and finalised. Initial environmental assessments have also been conducted. It is expected that the feasibility stage of the project will be completed in 2025. Due to the location of the Hook Lighthouse within a Special Area of Conservation, the project will require approval from An Bord Pleanála. This application for approval will be made later in 2025, after all relevant environmental assessments have been made. Recent estimations made by Fáilte Ireland have estimated that the completed project will generate an economic impact of €14 million for the local economy and provide over 50 jobs for the area.



WCC secured RRDF Category 1 (Construction Stage) funding for the following tourism project within the county

New Ross Tourism Project

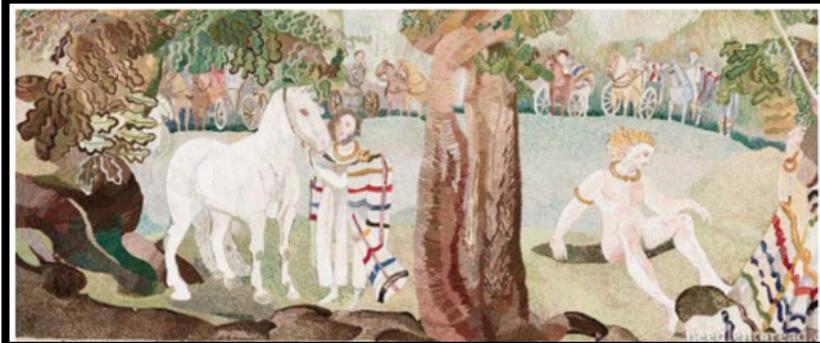
The renovation of the Dunbrody Visitor Centre exhibition experience is now complete and open to the public. A formal opening of the refurbished Dunbrody Ship and Visitor Experience took place on August 30th 2024, by An Taoiseach Simon Harris TD with Paul Kelly, Chief Executive of Fáilte Ireland also in attendance.

The renovated centre is expected to generate €9 million euros for the local economy and 36 jobs in the next 10 years.



Norman Themed Visitor Centre

The Norman Centre, to be based in two prominent vacant properties, the Bank and Murphy Furniture buildings on the Quay, New Ross will focus on the Norman story of New Ross and Ireland and will include the Ros Tapestry. The visitor experience at the centre will delve into the story of the original Gaelic way of life and the impact made on this by the Normans, a people who turned from being invaders to merging the cultures and becoming 'more Irish than the Irish themselves'.

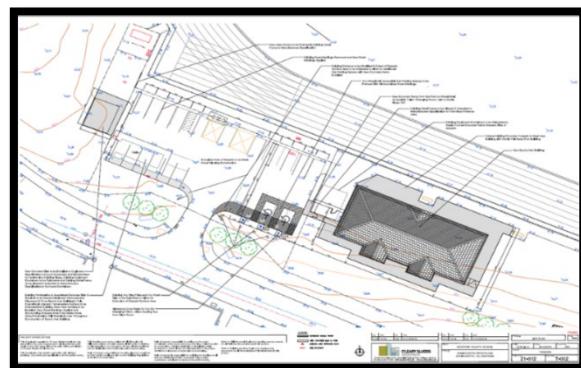


The Norman Themed Visitor centre is progressing towards development consent early in 2025. Bright Ireland have been appointed as Interpretive designers for the Norman Themed Visitor Centre with conceptual design ongoing. An integrated design team led by Architect firm Hawkins Brown Ireland Ltd. was appointed in 2024 and are developing the preliminary & detailed design, management of the procurement and supervision of the works. A Part VIII application for development consent will be made early in 2025 with construction to begin as soon as possible. 2027 marks the 150th Anniversary of the birth of William the Conqueror, the first Norman King of England and events will take place across Normandy, England and Ireland in commemoration, providing a tourism connection for Irish, English and French visitors. The centre is expected to generate €25 million over 10 years for the local economy and provide over 70 jobs.

Enniscorthy Sports Hub

O'Leary Sludds Architects were appointed in Feb 2021 for the detailed design, procurement of works contractor and construction management of the Sports Hub building.

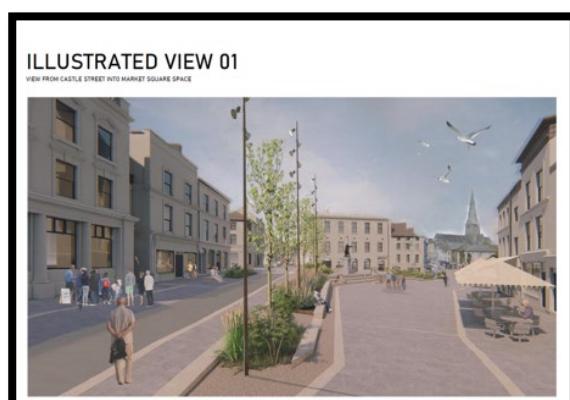
A tender competition to procure a works contractor for the Sports Hub has been concluded. It is expected to make an appointment for a works contractor in February 2025.



Enniscorthy Town Centre Regeneration Project:

The Part 8 process for the Market Square project was concluded on 9th September 2024, with the Council approving the scheme to include street enhancement works in the town centre area, as well as the pedestrianisation of Market Square.

Preliminary design work on the Enniscorthy Castle Quarter project is ongoing. An initial concept design was presented at the December 2024 Enniscorthy Municipal District meeting. It is intended to submit a Part 8 application for this project in the coming months.



Gorey Market House:

Gorey Market House is an historic building, which forms an important part of the urban fabric & Public Realm Plan of Gorey Town. In August 2024 it was announced Gorey Market House was successful in grant application under EU THRIVE scheme receiving the maximum allocation of €7m grant aid. A tender for the procurement of an architect led design team for detailed design, procurement and construction supervision services was published in December 2024. It is anticipated this tender will be awarded in Q1 2025.



Gorey Relief Road – Ballytegan Avenue

The Technical Consultancy Services Contract has been awarded for Stage (i) design services including development consent. Design work and site investigation will commence in Q1 2025.

Ballynagee Link Road

A tender for the procurement of a consultant to undertake preliminary design and preparation of a Part 8 submission (subject to screening) was published in July 2024. The successful tenderer has been identified, the contract may be awarded subject to land access.

Oyster Lane Car Park, Wexford

Surfacing and landscaping works to make the site suitable for use as a public space, have now been completed. The site is now open to the public.

Ferndale Gymnasium and Multi-Use Games Areas (MUGAs), Wexford

Sole Sports and Leisure Ltd. were awarded the contract, following public tender, for the construction of two MUGAs at an adjacent site, following confirmation of €100,000 in grant funding through the 2023 Community Recognition Fund. Works commenced on site in August 2023. The works are now substantially complete and in use by the public.

Sports Capital funding of €300,000 was secured for this project-Ferndale Park Gymnasium, supporting a private donation of €500,000 from William Neville and Sons. The project commenced onsite in September 2024, with works being undertaken by Colm Byrne Civil Engineering & Building. The project is anticipated to be complete in September 2025.



Adoration Convent Wexford

Part 8 approval is in place for this project to convert the old convent into accommodation for students of Georgia Southern University Wexford campus. A tender competition to appoint a works contractor to undertake works at the Convent is ongoing. It is anticipated that works will commence onsite in Q2 2025 and will take 15 months to complete.

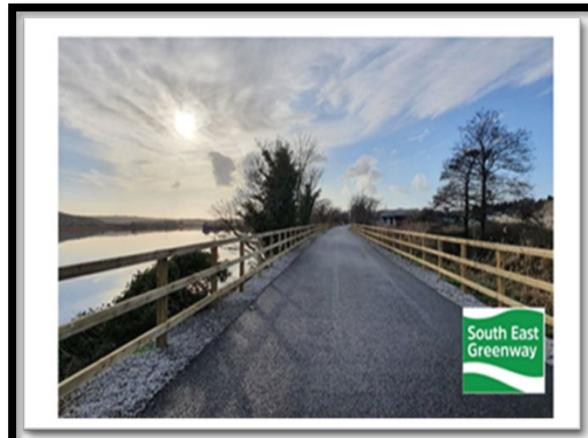


South East Greenway

The South East Greenway is under construction on the disused rail corridor that extends from Mount Elliot, north of New Ross, to Ferrybank in Waterford running through south Kilkenny. It will, in conjunction with the North Quays projects and the Bilberry Greenway in Waterford, connect the South East Greenway with the Waterford greenway creating a 72km greenway that will attract both domestic & international visitors to the area & will act as an economic driver for the region.

The contractor has requested substantial completion for Phase 2, a 5.5 km section from Ferrybank to Curraghmore in December 2024. Public lighting was installed along urban sections and a trailhead was provided at Glenmore as part of this contract also. A Stage 3 Road Safety Audit and works to provide a temporary trailhead for this section will now be carried out to enable a 7.7km section from Ferrybank to Curraghmore to open in Q1 2025.

Fehily Timoney and Company are progressing detailed designs for the remaining section of the Greenway. Topographical, structural and geological surveys are well advanced. It is targeted to commence works on these sections in Q3 2025.



Wexford Town to Rosslare Strand & Rosslare Strand to Rosslare Harbour Greenways

Fehily Timoney & Co were appointed to provide consultancy services for a feasibility study, route selection, preliminary design and environmental assessments for the development of these projects.

TII Phase 2 – Options Selection commenced for both projects in 2024.

A Public Consultation on the proposed Route Options for both projects took place from 14th August to 11th September 2024. A high volume of submissions were received and subsequently reviewed.

The compilation of the Options Appraisal Report commenced in October 2024 and is currently ongoing. It is now expected to confirm a preferred route in Q1 2025.

Ecological Assessments to inform the Environmental Evaluation for both projects have continued during 2024.

Consultations with Iarnród Eireann, CIE, NPWS, and Mara have taken place during 2024.



Curracloe Water Sports Activity Facility

WCC received grant funding of approximately €1.2m from Fáilte Ireland for the development of facilities to support water sports activities at Whitegap, Curracloe. The project will include showers, toilets, changing facilities and lockers.

The main works contract has been awarded to Kilcaven Property Developments. Works commenced on site in mid-October 2024, with completion expected in Spring 2025.



Courtown Coastal Protection & Beach Nourishment Scheme

RPS Ltd was appointed to undertake the Preliminary Design and Statutory Consents Phase of the Courtown Coastal Protection and beach nourishment scheme. The scheme was designed in 2 phases: Phase 1 construction of the Sea arm and Beach Renourishment. Phase 2 will be the construction of the 200-berth marina and associated structures. The application for the Marine Area Consent will be submitted Q1 2025. It is planned to submit an application to An Bord Pleanála for development consent in 2025, subject to advance approval of a Marine Area Consent by the Marine Area Regulatory Authority.

Enniscorthy Flood Defence Scheme:

Flood Relief Scheme – Phase 1

WCC is progressing the planning consent for Phase 1 at present. This phase of the project will include the construction of the new River Slaney Bridge, the removal of the Seamus Rafter Bridge and the construction of a new pedestrian bridge in the town centre. The baseline data for this phase has been updated. Traffic surveys are complete, ecology survey reports are complete. Multi criteria analysis of the bridge options is currently in progress. Public consultation will take place in Q1 2025. The planning application is to be submitted in Q4 2025.

Flood Relief Scheme – Phase 2

This phase of the scheme will include the construction of the main flood relief measures for Enniscorthy town. The project baseline data is to be updated, scheme alternatives are to be assessed, consulted on publicly and a preferred option identified. It will then be necessary to decide on the most appropriate planning route for the scheme. The hydrology and environmental baseline data has been updated, and ecology survey reports are completed.

Wexford Flood Relief Scheme:

Nicholas O'Dwyer Ltd were appointed on 23rd March 2023 for the engineering and environmental services for the Wexford Town & Environs Flood Relief Scheme. A preliminary cost estimate of €9.52m has been approved by the OPW for scheme, which will be fully funded. The scheme is currently in Stage 1 Option Assessments, Scheme Development and Design. Ecological surveys are continuing. The Hydrology method statement has been completed, and work commenced on the fluvial and coastal modelling.

Data (i.e. river gauging, rain fall monitoring from various third parties etc) gathering was commenced in 2024 and will continue into 2025. Surveying in culverts, rivers and bridges is complete.

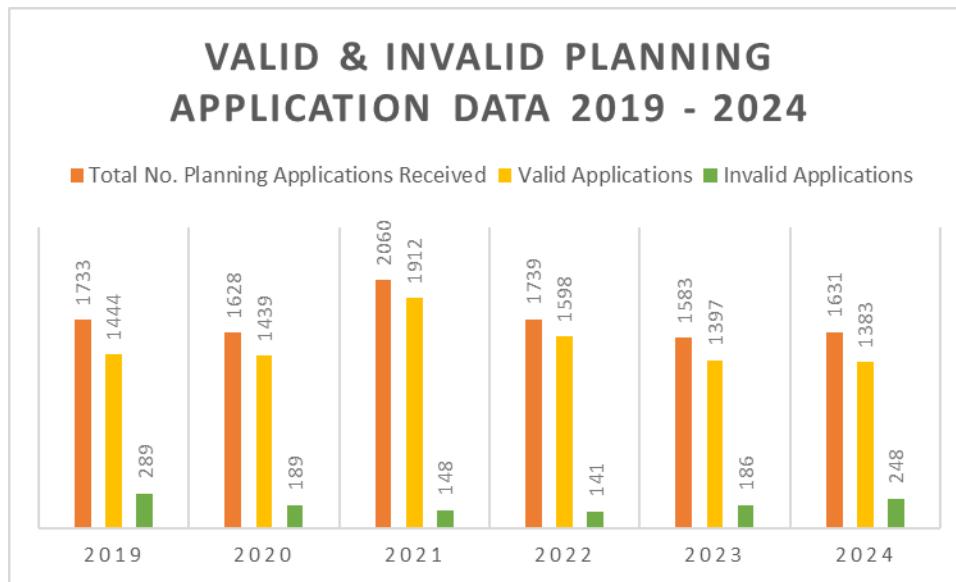


PLANNING

Development Management 2024



- 1631 No. Planning Applications received.
- 71 No. Exempted Development Applications received.
- 37 No. Extension of Duration Applications received.
- 363 No. Pre-planning Applications received.
- 318 No. Pre-planning Applications closed.
- 63 No. Major Pre-planning Meetings held.



Major Pre-planning Data 2024 – Figures to 31st December 2024

DISTRICT	No of Meetings
Enniscorthy	13
Gorey	10
New Ross	12
Wexford	23
Rosslare	5
Total no. of meetings held to date	63
Commercial Development (approx. sqm)	149,015
Total No. of Housing Units	2,167

2024 Permissions granted for New Dwellings as at 31st December 2024

Housing Developments (Total No. of Units)	Apartments incl. Self-contained Dwelling Units (Total No. of Units)	One-off Houses	LAC's Local Authority Development	Total No. of permissions granted
253	103	234	94	684

Housing Developments = 2 or more houses (Total no of Units)

Apartments include Self-contained Dwelling Units (total no of Units)

One-off Houses

Permissions exclude outline, retention, change of plans and continuation of use

LAC's – Local Authority Development

Forward Planning

Wexford Town Urban Area Plan

The emerging draft Wexford Town Urban Area Plan is a complex, multidimensional plan which will set the spatial planning framework for Wexford Town for the period of the plan, and critically looks beyond this period to ensure that Wexford Town optimises its status as a Key Town and is an attractive place to live and work. It will ensure that housing is delivered in a timely manner, that regeneration is prioritised, and infrastructure is provided to facilitate land activation. In recognition of the climate and biodiversity crises the plan will ensure that the town is resilient, robust and that environmental and biodiversity restoration and gain are at the forefront of policy development. Changing legislation and policy require that the plan is evidence-based and that development in the future is plan-led. To this end a number of new and advanced strategies are being integrated into the plan.

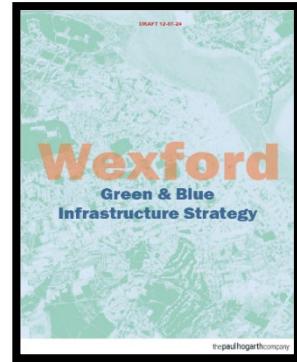
Rainwater Management Plan incorporating Nature Based Solutions

Having regard to the increasing frequency of extreme rainfall events as a result of climate change the team appointed McCloy Consulting to prepare a Rainwater Management Plan for the town. The focus of the plan is the sustainable management of rainfall with an emphasis on using nature-based solutions. To date the process has involved the development of a rainfall model and pluvial flood mapping to inform the Flood Study, the development of a draft spatial plan to manage surface water at town-wide and site level and the development of a guidance document for

planners and developers. While the project commenced in advance of the recently published Rainwater Management Plans - Guidance for Local Authorities the plan will comply with the requirement of the guidelines. It will be among the first such plans of scale in the Country.

Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy

Wexford Town benefits from an enviable position on the banks of the River Slaney overlooking Wexford Harbour. Its attractive landscape contains habitats and species which are of international and European importance. In order to set out a long-term framework for the management of the town's green and blue assets a Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy is being prepared. The strategy will ensure that nature and biodiversity are protected and restored, while at the same time planning for recreation, sport and active travel. The strategy has been informed by town-wide habitat mapping and identification of key areas for protection.



Urban Design Strategy

Loci consultants were appointed to prepare an Urban Design Strategy for the Town. This strategy will ensure that place-making is central to planning decisions in the future. The draft strategy sets out an overall development framework for the entire town and contains 10 separate Neighbourhood Framework Plans for existing and planned areas. The frameworks will focus on the delivery of sustainable neighbourhoods which have appropriate facilities, amenities and services and which are inclusive, well connected and attractive.

Town Centre First Strategy

A Town Centre First Strategy is also being prepared as part of the Urban Area Plan. The strategy is being led by the recently formed Town Team who, working with consultants Loci, the Regeneration Unit and the Forward Planning team, will prepare a strategy which employs the principles contained in the Town Centre First – A Policy Approach for Irish Towns. Using the expertise of the Town Team, and information gathered from planned public consultation, the strategy will be grounded in local knowledge. The strategy is also being informed by an Economic and Market Review prepared by McCabe Durney Barnes and extensive survey work.



Other ongoing work on the Urban Area Plan includes policy development, infrastructure assessment and planning, draft land use zoning and the assessments required under the *Strategic Environment Assessment, Habitats and Floods Directives*. *The plan will also be informed by the Local Transport Plan being prepared by the Active Travel Team.*

Ballynagee Masterplan

The Ballynagee Masterplan is being prepared alongside the Wexford Town Urban Area Plan and it will form part of that plan once adopted. It is comprised of 50ha of greenfield lands acquired by the Council for the delivery of critical education, recreation and housing development. The vision is for:

- a distinct, multi-functional mixed use and neighbourhood hub that is linked with surrounding existing development
- A new educational ecosystem to include a mixed teaching and learning, research and innovation building for SETU (first phase in the order of 10,000sqm.) with potential for student accommodation and primary and post-primary school infrastructure and facilities
- New and enhanced recreation and amenity infrastructure and facilities including Wexford FC Arena (Pitch and stadium, 2 training pitches, car parking, access to new avenue), new changing rooms and a GAA pitch
- Mixed housing typology and tenure, including Live-work capability in residential areas
- Active and passive recreation and open space network and a nature-based approach to rainwater management in new local and strategic green and blue infrastructure



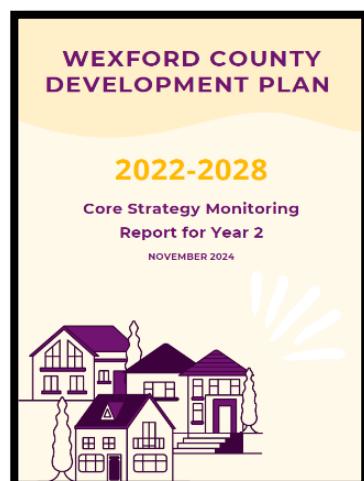
Enniscorthy Plan

A draft Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Report has been completed and work has commenced on some preliminary background work such as planning history surveys.

Monitoring of the Wexford County Development Plan 2022-2028

Monitoring the implementation of the County Development Plan (CDP) is critical to its success. In terms of housing delivery the CDP Core Strategy Monitoring Report for Year 2 of the plan demonstrated that the Core Strategy housing delivery targets are being exceeded with 2,202 housing units completed and a further 2,336 units granted planning permission in the first two years of the plan. It also showed encouraging levels of commercial development with 70,177sqm of commercial floorspace granted planning permission.

Work is ongoing on the Chief Executive's Report on the implementation of CDP objectives. The report demonstrates the excellent progress achieved in implementing the objectives of the plan by the Members, the Executive and stakeholders.



Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy

The Forward Planning team prepared a report as required under Section 25A of the Planning and Development Act 2000 on the implementation of the objectives of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region. This report demonstrated the significant progress made and the important role County Wexford plays in the achievement of the objectives of that Strategy.

Policy Support and Submissions

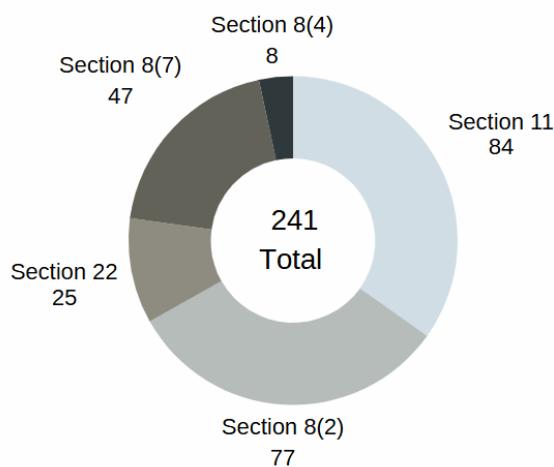
The team made a number of submissions on behalf of the Council including:

- First Revision of the National Planning Framework
- South Coast Offshore Renewable Energy Designated Maritime Area Plan
- Rosslare Europort Offshore Renewable Energy Hub
- National Transport Authority - Regional Transport Model
- Draft Rainwater Management Plan Guidelines

The team provided interdepartmental policy advice to support the work of the Council including:

- Local Economic and Community Plan
- Thrive grant application for Market House, Gorey Town
- Rural Regeneration and Development Fund applications
- Local Transport Plans
- Local Authority Climate Action Plan

Derelict Sites & Dangerous Structures



241 Total Notices issued under the Derelict Sites Act 1990

124 Derelict sites on the Register
87 New cases opened
42 Cases closed
338 Site visits/inspections carried out
15 Total Notices issued for Dangerous Structures and Places under the Local Government (Sanitary Services) Act 1964.



URDF Call 3 – Urban Regeneration Development Fund

173 sites approved on the acquisition programme as of the 31st of December 2024

- **39** Awaiting initial engagement with property owner
- **32** Engagement with Property Owner Commenced
- **1** Process to Purchase Commenced by Agreement
- **9** Process to Purchase Commenced by CPO
- **1** Property Acquired by LA
- **2** Enabling works underway by LA
- **7** Advertised for sale - property owned by LA
- **49** Brought back into use by Original Owner (closed case)
- **28** Property no longer vacant/derelict following review (closed case)
- **6** Being Dealt with Under Different Programme

Regulation of Short-Term Letting (in the Gorey Rent Pressure Zone)

As of 31st December 2024

Live Cases	Cases Opened	Cases Closed
8	3	5

Planning Enforcement

287 formal complaints were received by Planning Enforcement in 2024 (an increase of 23% on 2023). Planning Enforcement complaints relate primarily to unauthorised development or non-compliance with Planning permissions.

- 415 Planning Enforcement cases remained open at the end of December 2024. A further 9 complaints were received where it was considered there was no role for Planning Enforcement
- 437 Warning Letters were issued in 2024 relating to 227 cases
- 238 Enforcement Notices were issued relating to 109 cases. Enforcement Notices are issued following complaint investigation and site inspection
- 232 Planning Enforcement cases were closed in 2024 following the issuing of Warning letters, compliance with Enforcement Notices or the outcome of legal proceedings in District Court cases
- 19 Planning Enforcement cases progressed to legal proceedings in relation to non-compliance with Enforcement Notices in 2024

Building Control

During 2024 Wexford County Council received 602 Commencement Notices for New Buildings. National Guidelines recommend that 12-15% of new properties are inspected by a Local Authority to ensure that they comply with the proper building standards. Wexford County Council inspected 23% in 2024.

In 2024, 7 estates were taken in charge in County Wexford. This was a benefit to 349 houses across the county, as Wexford County Council then becomes responsible for the maintenance of the roads, footpaths, services and public lighting in these estates.

Built, Cultural and Natural Heritage

In 2024 the Heritage Section managed the following grant schemes for both local authority properties and private owners:

- Community Monuments Fund
Wexford County Council was successful in obtaining grant funding totalling €272,972 for 5 projects in County Wexford under the Community Monuments Fund. These included conservation repairs to Clonmines church, Ballycogley Castle and Ballingly Church, and conservation management plans for Killag Church and Lady's Island Castle.
- Built Heritage Investment Scheme & Historic Structures Fund
The Built Heritage Investment Scheme and the Historic Structures Fund support owners of historic buildings in maintaining and safeguarding their properties. In 2024 the grant aid to homeowners in Wexford was €137,162.70 and this assisted 8 projects.

Access Section

Disability Access Certificates (DACs/ DRVs): The number of valid DAC applications, for the period from 1st January 2024 up to and including 31st December 2024, totals **108**

District	Total	Awaiting	Further	Granted	Refused
		Assessment	Info		
Enniscorthy	21	2	1	18	0
Gorey	17	0	2	14	1
New Ross	13	2	0	11	0
Wexford	45	4	7	33	1
Rosslare	12	0	1	11	0
2024 Totals	108	8	11	87	2

Invalidated DACs applications totalled 24 of which only 9 were resubmitted

Disability Proofing carried out as part of Access activity to support appropriate development in relation to Part M Building Regulations where applicable

Referrals	Total
LAC /PLAC/ LRD & General Planning Applications	152
Major Pre-Planning attended/informed	10

Disability Inclusion Strategy Wexford

Significant Achievements

Throughout the past year, the Power BI reporting App developed to enable an effective method of reporting on accessibility related activity through all departments of Wexford County Council has continued to support our reporting structure, while also informing of the “gaps” in service provision. This resource is invaluable in assisting us to include and address access issues which are relevant and local. This process will supplement any National Disability Strategy which may be produced in the coming year.

Accessibility and Opportunity for all to the Great Outdoors

The external environment, beaches, parks, playgrounds are often seen as spaces where people get to relax, unwind and enjoy, they are seen as a key element to both physical and mental wellness. Access to the external environment and its facilities has long been a struggle for disabled people or people with a disability be it permanent or acquired for a long or short term. This year the Access Section in conjunction with other departments of Wexford County Council and in collaboration with community groups and individuals introduced the Beach Stroller Initiative. This initiative literally “rolled out” and was made available at Curracloe, Rosslare Harbour, Rosslare Strand, Kilmore Quay and Duncannon Beach. The beach strollers assist persons whose mobility, walking across sand and uneven surfaces is an issue but who do not require to use a wheelchair.

Ballymoney Beach, activity on foot of a complaint brought to us in 2023, resulted in extensive collaboration with the community, environmental groups and interdepartmental partnerships for a programme of access works at Ballymoney Beach. These works included the installation of an accessible WC, the resurface and restructure of the walkway with a beach wheelchair and also a beach mat provided. The newly improved accessible access to the beach was officially opened in June and named "Matthew's Way". This is seen as a significant achievement for all to provide access in an ever-shifting coastal setting.

The Beach Accessibility Promotion Programme available at [Your Council Day 2024 - Our Beaches - YouTube](#) highlights in some way our commitment to access for all. On foot of this Wexford County Council was shortlisted for the 2024 Age Friendly Awards.

Throughout the year we continued to focus on ensuring accessibility was considered and included in outdoor spaces, examples of this being the works at the new Sensory Garden, Pearse Park in New Ross and through support funding to the Enniscorthy Allotments Committee. These community spaces which are open, inclusive and accessible for all.

Collaboration and Supports

- The Jam Card pilot rolled out in libraries is one such example of where a recognised National Scheme to support people with disabilities has now become available in Wexford County Council. The aim is to continue to roll this service out to other frontline departments over the coming years
- The Make Way Day Campaign, 2024, focused this year on Gorey Town, with community groups, residents and Municipal District, Members and staff participating
- The Age Well in Wexford Expo and a presentation event to Wexford Dementia Alliance are but some of the local events which were attended to inform of our activities and supports and presents us with an opportunity to take back from participants their feedback as to how and what access activities best continue to address, support and remain relevant for the citizens of Wexford

On a national scale, to ensure best practice examples are published, our successful and innovative ICE project of 2023 was presented to the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA). This project, Innovative Community Engagement (ICE) was a project whereby a meitheal approach to development was adopted, funding supports provided and direct input from disabled people to 10 community groups given to develop community gardens, parks and community spaces which are accessible for all. This project was endorsed by Minister Rabbitt

Summary of Access Complaints received in 2024

A total of 27 complaints/queries were recorded in the general complaints/query log in 2024, all of which have been acknowledged. 17 of these complaints have been addressed, with the remainder having been actioned and/or in progress as appropriate and practicable in collaboration with the relevant Wexford County Council Departments and/or Municipal Districts.

Significant Complaints addressed:

- Wexford Borough Municipal District, inaccessible wheelchair route, Kevin Barry Street, the Faythe towards R733
- Wexford Borough Municipal District, The Bullring, Wexford Town – redesign- layout of features to ensure accessible for visual impaired
- Gorey Municipal District footpath works Ballytegan Road
- Enniscorthy Municipal District, footpaths at The Avenue, Meadowfields

- New Ross Municipal District, providing Disabled Parking in Rathgarogue Village

Total complaints received by district:

5 complaints raised in Wexford Borough District
8 complaints raised in Gorey-Kilmuckridge Municipal District
5 complaints raised in Enniscorthy Municipal District
3 complaints raised in New Ross Municipal District
4 complaints brought over from 2023 (3 in Wexford and 1 in Rosslare)

Total: 25 complaints

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

COASTAL MATTERS

Harbours

Fethard Harbour – a notice for the foreshore consent was arranged for Wed 4th December, this is the final notice in order to bring foreshore process to a conclusion.

Duncannon Harbour – The Coastal team is monitoring structural cracks in the pier very closely. The council will soon appoint a contractor to carry out site investigations to determine the cause of the problem and design a suitable solution for the repairs.

Operations - The regularisation of the public lighting system on the Barrow is ongoing and expected to finalise in December. The business development plan for the port is expected to be completed by Q4 2024.

The Naval Service has expressed an interest in utilising the Port of New Ross for temporary berthing on an ad hoc basis.

An expression of interest from a private company for explosive shipments into Marshmeadows has been received. Other enquires have been received for specialist cargoes, e.g. poles, heavy lift generators and plastic pellets. Draft explosive byelaws are due to be circulated for public consultation before year end.

Marine Operations Working Group (Wexford County Council, Wicklow County Council, Dun Laoighaire Rathdown County Council & MARA) met in November, to examine legislative changes enacted under the Maritime Area Planning Act and possible effects it may have on marine operations.

Ballyhack Slipway Piles need upgrade works. An initial meeting with Wexford County Council, Waterford County Council and the Ferry Company has taken place, agreement in principle to work together to find a solution. Initial application to obtain a dredging studies / survey license from MARA has been submitted.

Beaches

Grange Beach Cliff Stabilisation Works: a contract to remedy sections of the unstable cliff was awarded in July 2024, works started in Oct 2024. The beach access is temporarily closed until the works are completed late 2024 / early 2025.

An Taisce announced the Blue Flag and Green Coast awards at the national ceremony in Salthill, Galway on 20th May 2024.

- Blue Flag Beaches: Morriscastle, Ballinesker, Curracloe, Rosslare, Carne
- Green Coast Beaches: Cahore, Oldbawn, Culleton's Gap, Rosslare Harbour, St Helen's, Ballyhealy, Cullenstown, Grange, Baginbun, Booley Bay.
- Blue Flag Marinas: Kilmore Quay and New Ross.

Curracloe beach won Ireland's Best Beach in the Irish Independent's 2024 Travel Awards. These annual awards are based on readers' votes; Curracloe has won this award four out of the past five years.

Ballymoney Blue Flag Beach – Access for All and Age Friendly Improvement Works – works complete. Universal Access Toilet, Beach wheelchair and improved beach access was officially opened on 31st May 2024.

Coast

- Seaview Coastal Protection and Beach Access, Kilmore: total funding of €1.6m was approved by OPW. The Contract award to install rock armour and beach access was made to Stephen Byrne Plant Hire and Civil Engineering Contractors on 18th October 2024. Works expected to start in January 2025.
- Lady's Island Water Level Management Structure – The Council met with NPWS on 26th November regarding funding of the overall scheme. NPWS to further consider salinity and water level issues first before a decision on funding the solution is made.

Drainage Districts

- Kilmarnock Drainage District, Great Island: Consulting engineers were appointed to progress repair, maintenance and health and safety works. This involves over 1,000 acres near Great Island.

Public Conveniences

- Cahore PC: Carpark surfacing, white-lining and bollards completed by Contractor.
- Carne PC: A contractor completed the upgrade toilet facilities.
- Wexford County Council has provided some 19 public conveniences in the main towns, Blue Flag Beaches and some Harbours.

WATER, AIR & NOISE

Water Framework Directive - Under this directive every catchment in the County must be assessed to identify required actions to maintain and improve water quality. This work which is being carried out by Wexford Co. Council in conjunction of LAWPRO is being supervised by the Sub-Catchment Unit of the EPA.

Water Sampling - In 2024 a total of 340 river water samples will be taken from 76 sampling sites on 36 rivers by Wexford Co. Council (WCC) staff. 7 surveillance sites will be sampled in 2024 with analysis of all samples carried out by the EPA lab in Kilkenny.

Septic Tank Inspections:

NIP Grants 2024	50 applications Received	38 Grants Paid/Sent for payment	12 outstanding for review/documents due
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Court cases

- 3 currently in the court system for failing to comply with Advisory Notices
- 9 cases closed prior to court hearing as works were already carried out.
- 11 cases over 4 years old closed. 54 other cases closed. 122 new inspections carried out.

Open cases

Year	Number of inspections	Pass	Fail	Outstanding	Closed in 2024
2017	154	62	92	5	0
2018	150	51	99	1	3
2019	156	48	108	5	0
2020	111	38	73	3	3
2021	91	24	67	11	6
2022	139	50	89	8	3
2023	123	54	69	25	19
2024	122	36	86	62	24

No of Verification Inspections

2023 -Verification Inspection = 72

2024 - Verification Inspections = 58

Section 4 Discharge Licences to surface waters/ground water - Currently, there are 88 active discharge licences with scheduled biannual, quarterly and bimonthly monitoring returns assessed for compliance on receipt by Environmental Technical Staff and actively pursued to address any ongoing issues arising from exceedances in chemical/microbiological and flow parameters as laid down in the discharge licence for the site.

There are currently 8 Discharge Licence applications under assessment and review.

Air Quality - Wexford County Council enforces air quality requirements for 3 specific types of facilities, which must be registered with WCC – vehicle refinishers, dry cleaners and petrol stations. These certificates must be renewed every 3 years. On-going enforcement action is carried out to ensure sites remain certified.

No. of Certificates of Compliance Issued

Category of Facility	2021	2022	2023 (to 1 st Dec)	2024 (to end December)	On the Spot Fines (to end November)
Vehicle Refinishers	19	24	20	15	0
Petrol Vapour Emissions	22	22	14	27	N/A
Solvents	3	5	0	2	N/A

Low Smoke Fuel Areas - The 4 stations in New Ross, Wexford, Enniscorthy & Gorey have now had their monitors updated to measure air quality and noise levels. There are also 6 low-cost sensors installed in Enniscorthy monitoring PM10 & PM2.5 only. UoG & UCC have started a programme called Openair to monitor gases NOx, SO2, CO continuously, particle numbers 10 nm to 10 microns, as well as black carbon and organic aerosol, ions ammonium, chloride, sulfate

and nitrate, all in real-time, as well as collecting 24hr filter samples of PM2.5. The filter samples will be analysed for metals and toxicity. These will be compared with 2016 levels taking during the SAFFIRE project. They will be monitoring the weather also.

Noise and NAP 2019-2023 - Two complaints of persistent noise pollution are currently under investigation.

Agriculture - Wexford County Council continues to undertake a significant number of farm inspections in accordance with the WFD. Wexford County Council engages with landowners to undertake the necessary rectifications works through encouragement of improvement of farming infrastructure and farming practices.

Section 12 & 23 notices under the Local Government Water Pollution Act 1977-1990 were served upon farms where major non compliances are observed and cross reported to DAFM.

Under the National Agricultural Inspection Programme (NAIP), Wexford co. Council (WCC) carried out a total of 169 farm inspections throughout the County concentrating on areas where water quality was most at risk of not meeting its objectives under the WFD.

In 2025 Wexford County Council will be required under the NAIP, to carry out 270 Good Agricultural Practice Regulations Inspections where a Team of 4 Assistant Scientists will take on this role led by the Agricultural Scientist in the environment Section.

Agriculture & Planning - A total of 108 Agricultural related Planning Permission Applications have been assessed in 2024 to date. 10 of these applications related to further information been submitted on behalf of the applicant.

Wexford County Council continue to complete odour monitoring assessments on two separate sites for 2024 on foot of hundreds of complaints from the public. These sites included a pig farm and a composting facility where compost is produced by processing straw and animal waste. Section 24 & Section 26 notices under the Air Pollution Act 1987 have been served upon these businesses.

PLANNING

The Environment Section makes an assessment and recommendations on planning applications relating to the environmental aspects of the application and the main issues regarding the impact of planning on the environment which have arisen in recent years are as follows:

1. Density of housing.
2. Applications for extensions and upgrades of existing houses on sites where the soil is unsuitable for discharge of wastewater via a domestic wastewater treatment system.
3. Applications for detached granny flats and other detached ancillary accommodation.

Breakdown of planning applications referred from Planning Section to Environment

Year	Single Dwelling	Commercial	Discharge/ glamping	Housing estates	Schools	Solar Farms	Sports	Agricultural	Compliance assessments
2023	630	94	4	42	17	3	16	104	121
Q1 2024	99	25	0	0	0	0	0	47	33
Q2 2024	58	6	0	5	1	0	4		13
Q3 2024	89	6	1	4	1	0	1		34
Q4 2024	75	8	1	1	0	0	1		7

WASTE MANAGEMENT

New Recycling - Re-turn Scheme. Irelands new deposit return scheme. In February 2024 the new deposit return scheme commenced throughout Ireland. Plastic bottle, aluminium or steel can with the Re-turn logo, are refund a deposit typically be 15c to 20c per item. For more information, please see www.MyWaste.ie

Food Waste - Since 1 January 2024 every household in Ireland, regardless of location, were entitled to a brown bin collection service. Follow up enforcement for the roll out of the Brown Bins are being carried out through the county at present.

Landfills - Holmestown Landfill remains temporarily closed. Environmental monitoring and maintenance of infrastructure continues at both Killurin and Holmestown in accordance with the conditions of our waste licences. The Household Recycling Centre at Holmestown continues to provide recycling services to members of the public as well as a disposal service for other waste streams such as residual waste, bulky waste, segregated food waste, garden waste and waste paint.

Recycling Services

Bring Bank Network WASTE CATEGORY	No. of Sites December 2024	Recycling out (End December 2023 (t)	Recycling out (End October 2024 (t)
Glass bottles		3,576	3,624
Aluminium Cans		91	54
Total	108	3,667	3,678

Household Recycling Centres - Summary of Activities

WASTE CATEGORY	Enniscorthy		New Ross		Holmestown		Gorey	
	Recycling out Jan-Dec 2023 (t)	Recycling out Jan-Dec 2024 (t)	Recycling out Jan-Dec 2023 (t)	Recycling out Jan-Dec 2024(t)	Recycling out Jan-Dec 2023(t)	Recycling out Jan- Dec 2024(t)	Recycling out Jan- Dec 2023(t)	Recycling out Jan- Oct 2024(t)
Total Recycling out	609	633	657	667	793	935	496	524
Total Domestic Waste in Daily Average Customers Jan-Dec	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	3,235	3,512	N/A	N/A
	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024
	81	88	117	114	122	124	81	85

Rapid Response Crew - Our Rapid Response Crew operates out of Holmestown, with a four-man crew servicing Enniscorthy and Gorey MD's and a second six-man crew servicing Wexford and New Ross and Rosslare MD's.

All environmental complaints are logged by the Customer Service Unit on the DASH CRM system. **The total figures for complaints received are as follows:**

	Jan to Dec 2020	Jan to Dec 2021	Jan to Dec 2022	Jan to Dec 2023	Jan to Dec 2024			
	Incidents	4998	5136	3896	4235	4196		
Closed	4997	5133	3702	3890	3552			
Closure Rate	99%		95%		92%		85%	

- Beach and lifeguard work
- Black spot checks across county
- Town inspections every morning
- Trails maintenance
- Min Ryan Park maintenance and upkeep
- Community Clean up across county

Waste Facility Permits - The full list of 68 registered operational Waste Facility Permits and Certificates of Registration can be viewed on the Council's website.

Enforcement - RMCEI 2024: The Recommended Minimum Criteria for Environmental Inspections (RMCEI) plan was submitted to the EPA on 15 March 2024. The plan aims to undertake 6,921 routine inspections this year by 21 full time equivalent staff members to cover waste, water, air & noise. The mid-year review was carried out in July and presented to the SPC Environment Committee.

Clean Soil & Stone - As part of the circular economy on 29 August 2024 the EPA published National By-Product Criteria for Greenfield Soil and Stone. The National By-product Criteria

apply to greenfield soil and stone destined for lawful use at another development with appropriate planning permission or exemption.

Waste Recovery Levy - The Department of Environment, Climate and Communications are looking for feedback before 16th August on the phasing out of exemptions for C&D waste.

Phase 1 1 September Remove levy exemption for C&D waste to incinerators & landfills.
 Phase 2 1 January 2025 Apply levy €10/tonne on greenfield soil & stone to landfills
 Phase 3 1 September 2025 Apply levy waste recovery facilities > 200,000 tonne.
 Phase 4 1 March 2026 Apply levy waste recovery facilities < 200,000 tonne.

LITTER / WASTE MANAGEMENT

Total fixed penalty notices issued	TOTAL FOR 2023	TOTAL FOR OCTOBER- 2024
No of incidents reported	2,489	2,486
Fines Issued (All Fixed Penalty Notice Issued)	212	175 (148 litter/27 waste)
Fines Paid in Full●	64	67litter / waste 2= 69 total
Fines Cancelled/Proceedings Discontinued/Struck Out*	56	47 Litter / 6 Waste = 50 total
Successful Prosecutions** (Litter fines & WPBL fines)	28	53
Legal Proceedings in Progress (Litter fines & WPBL fines)	41	26
Amount Collected in Fines -total	€13,023	Litter €10,151.00, waste €775.00. Total €10,926.00
Amount awarded via the Court system (fines awarded for litter and waste cases) - overall	€6,210.00	€4,293.00

* Other fines may be paid prior to the hearing or withdrawn for evidential or legal reasons.

- Includes income from all Fixed Penalty Notices
- Fines paid in full- data excludes fines partly paid.
- Amount collected in fines- includes part payments.

Year	Dumping Incidents Reported	Percentage Increase/Decrease	Community Clean Ups	Percentage Increase/Decrease
2023	2,486	Up 11%	1054	Up 3%
Jan – Dec 2024	2,489	Static	1,021	Down 3%

The reduction in reported dumping incidents is also reflected in a similar decline in attendances by the Environment Clean Up Crew to incidents.

Wexford Co. Council National Litter Pollution Monitoring System Results Litter Pollution Surveys 2004-2023.

Year	Litter free	Slightly littered	Moderately littered	Seriously littered	Grossly littered
2023	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%
2022	24.2%	63.4%	11.3%	1.1%	0%
2021	6.9%	74.1%	15.5%	3.4%	0%
2020	9.4%	68.8%	18.8%	3.4%	0%
2019	9.8%	67.9%	18.8%	1.5%	0%
2018	10%	70.5%	17.7%	17.7%	0%
2017	18.3%	67%	14.7%	0%	0%
2016	12.10%	65.9%	21.9%	0.4%	0%
2015	10.60%	65.90%	18.43%	5.07%	0%
2014	37.40%	50.41%	12.30%	0%	0%
2013	51.92%	39.43%	7.69%	0.96%	0%
2012	26.79%	60.71%	12.50%	0%	0%
2011	7.5%	82.5%	10%	0%	0%
2010	13.2%	53.9%	28.9%	3.9%	0%
2009	0%	75.3%	21.0%	3.7%	0%
2008	9.4%	55.2%	26%	9.4%	0%
2007	5.4%	60.9%	17.4%	16%	0%
2006	0%	53%	23%	20%	3%
2004	0%	23%	56%	21%	0%

CLIMATE ACTION

Climate Action Plan 2024-2029 (CAP) adopted by Wexford County Council on 12th February, 2024.

Decarbonizing Zones - Following on from the four Decarbonizing Zone (DZ) workshops held in September and October, the Climate Action Team focused their resources on a proposed workplan for Enniscorthy DZ. The Baseline Emission Inventory for the Enniscorthy DZ outlines that the transport Sector accounts for 35.5% of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions in DZ and the commercial sector emits 34.9% of the total GHG in DZ. An Internal meeting was held with the main sections involved in the Transport Area in Enniscorthy and a separate internal meeting was held with the Economic Development Section. Staff from the Enniscorthy MD were present at these meetings. Proposals to progress several actions based on these meetings were agreed. Other items under consideration are the promotion of the Climate Heroes App in Enniscorthy among community groups/businesses and schools over a two-week period in March April 2025. The idea is to engage and mobilise different sectors into Climate Actions in the Enniscorthy Area. The app is a tool that can capture how certain actions can help reduce emissions by giving an estimated CO2 savings associated with particular choices.

The Climate Action team is also linking in with the Arts & Creative Communities officers for a number of projects both in Enniscorthy DZ and around the county with a focus on Climate awareness.

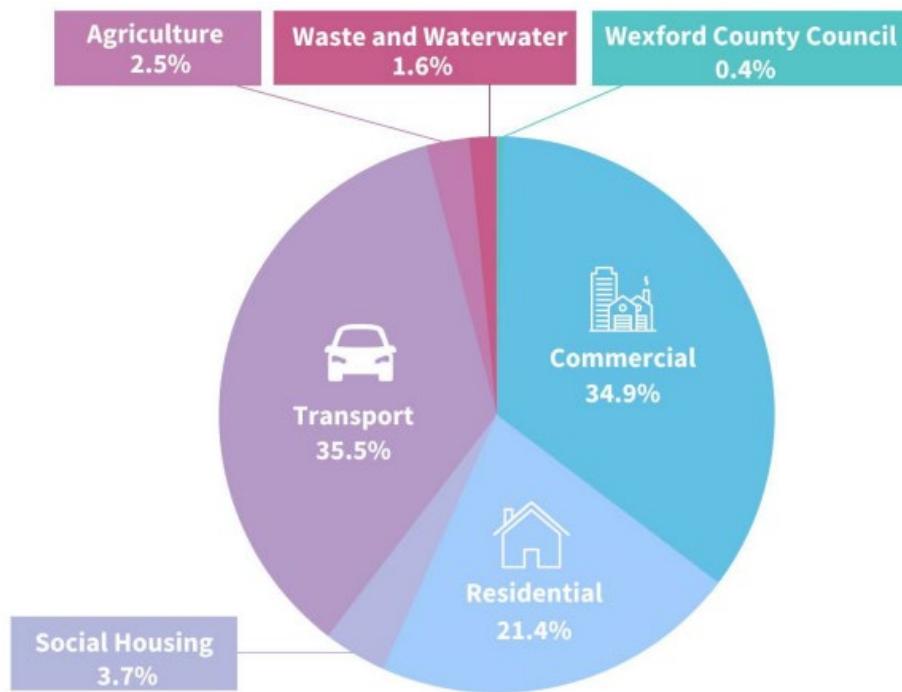


Figure 2. Total GHG emissions for Enniscorthy DZ by sector type in 2018

Update on Actions

With the recent appointment of both the Heritage officer and the Fleet Manager, progress on the actions in the CAP assigned to them can proceed. The Walking & Cycling Officer post is still unfilled which may delay progress on the actions assigned to this post.

Energy - Monitoring & Reporting 2023 data submitted to SEAI. Additional Reporting required

- Council Vehicle Fleet Inventory
- Vehicle procurement & Drawdown
- Building Register
-

Waterfront Pool and Leisure Centre, Enniscorthy – Operational Transfer of Pool & Leisure Centre to Wexford County Council. It will now be included in the M & R reporting and is one of the Significant Energy Users SEUs)

Southeast Energy Unit implementation Action group formed and will meet fortnightly.

Regional Energy Service Manager for the Energy unit appointed – Siona Daly

Pathfinder projects - 500t CO₂ potential savings available via pathfinder projects

Project Matrix to be prioritized with preliminary Business case assessment Nov 2024

Pilot EV Charging Hub - Discussions are underway with Zero Emission Vehicles Ireland (ZEVI) regarding possible locations for an EV charging hub in the county. ZEVI will provide capital funding for an approved pilot project.

Events

A number of events were attended by members of the CAT including

- Climate Network Forum held in Portlaoise
- Enniscorthy Interagency – Presentation to the group

- Attend presentation in Wexford Library during Science Week by Dr Niamh Shaw on her recent trip to Antarctica
- DECC Meeting on 11th November on the Community Climate Action Plan
- Conundrum Stakeholder Engagement & Launch – A community mobility strategy for Enniscorthy
- Presentation by CAT at the Local Authority Residents Day
- Visit to Tullabeg Solar & Community Wind Farm and presentation on the development of Ballincurry Wind Farm Presentation
- South East Regional Operating Committee(SEROC) - LAWPRO with a focus on Nature Based Solutions and Climate Action in Rathvilly Co. Carlow.



SEROC – Nature Based Solutions project underway in Rathvilly, Co. Carlow

TRAINING

Delivering Action – this is the training pillar for Outdoor Staff. Approx. 130 staff identified for training- awaiting details of roll out from training centre Roscrea.

Raising Awareness – 45 people requested to complete the programme. 21 completed the training up to 15th November 2024 when the training platform closed.

Eco Driving & Fuel saving - It is proposed to roll out staff awareness training on driving efficiently for staff who drive council vehicles.

COMMUNITY CLIMATE ACTION PROGRAMME



The 16 successful projects have commenced works, with four groups having already completed significant elements of their projects. The second round of the Programme is expected in 2025.

Sustainable Energy Communities (SEC)

Wexford SEC and the Climate Action Team continued with the awareness promotion of the SEAI's Warmer Homes Scheme, which is a fully funded home energy upgrade grant for homeowners who meet certain social welfare criteria. A drop-in information afternoon was held on 7th November in Access 2000, Green St, Wexford and was very well attended.

Enniscorthy SEC on behalf of the SEC's within Co Wexford has submitted a funding application to the "Climate Actions Work Engagement Fund". The application is seeking funding of €10,000 to enable a training of "energy champions" across all SEC's. These champions would then inform and assist members of their communities with making grant applications for home energy upgrades.

Biodiversity Officer

Local Biodiversity Action Fund

€63,0000 was claimed from National Parks and Wildlife Service for Local Biodiversity Action Fund projects which included

- Holmestown and Killurin Landfill ecology surveys – These sites were surveyed to identify the diversity of habitats on them and with the intention of looking at management practices going forward to benefit wildlife thriving on site. Both sites have been shown to be quite diverse in plant and animal life albeit with some issues around invasive species in Killurin in particular.
- Wetland Surveys Enniscorthy Area – this survey involved a more in depth look at wetlands identified in a previous county wide wetlands survey and which were noted as warranting further investigation. We are grateful to landowners who allowed access to the surveyors for the field work. Many are in poor condition however identified 5 wetlands of 'county significance. The data will be uploaded to GIS shortly for viewing inhouse to assist with decision making.
 - Nightjar survey – As a result of a Wexford and Kilkenny Counties wide survey for Nightjar, which identified two pairs, one breeding successfully, NPWS are now adding the Nightjar to the Article 12 assessment . Article 12 of the Birds Directive requires Member States to report on the implementation of national provisions taken under this Directive including specific reporting on status and trends of bird species. Coillte have indicated they are keen to work with us and Birdwatch Ireland to improve the Nightjar's nesting sites which are being kept secret at present due to their potential to be disturbed.
 - National Mayfly survey – Wexford County Council was part of a national Mayfly survey. Mayflies are important as indicator of water quality and any declines in water quality are of

concern for this insect group. More surveys will be carried out in 2025. This is in association with Dr Jan Robert Baars UCD

- Curracloe – fencing off of select areas of sand dunes close to the main entrance to Curracloe beach areas was carried out to encourage reestablishment of marram grass. This will in turn in order help to stabilise sand dunes, a valuable habitat, but also important in the fight against coastal erosion. In spring time next year we would expect to see marram grass begin to re-establish and help to bind the dunes together further.

THE IRISH TIMES 4°

Environment

Once feared extinct in Ireland, the secretive nightjar calls again

The confirmation revives the question of whether nightjars could have a more hopeful future in Ireland than previously believed

 Expand

LATEST STORIES >

Jury urged to decide woman's claim over alleged rape by Conor McGregor on evidence, not whether they 'love' or 'loathe' him

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Niall Ó Ceallacháin aiming to make history with Na Fianna before maiden campaign with Dublin

Moscow's Gulag museum closed as Russia silences criticism of Soviet crimes

Dallas Cowboys suffer fifth straight defeat at the hands of Texans

Recent Irish Times Article on the Nightjar



Fencing of part of the dune system in Curracloe

GENERAL

All environmental complaints are logged by the Customer Service Unit on the DASH CRM system.

The total figures for complaints received are as follows:

	Jan - Dec 2019	Jan - Dec 2020	Jan - Dec 2021	Jan - Dec 2022	Jan - Dec 2023	Jan - Oct 2024
Incidents	4749	4999	5136	3896	4235	3644
Closed	4733	4967	5072	3564	3712	2753
Closure	99%	99%	99%	91%	88%	75%
Rate						

Control of Dogs & Horses - The Council employs one full-time Dog Warden and one part-time Dog Warden. The main pound is Pets First Kennels, Ballycarney, Co Wexford.

Control of dogs	2021	2022	2023	2024
Dogs collected	429	546	575	565
Dogs reclaimed	133	117	128	147
Dogs re-homed/transferred	267	370	404	407
Dogs put to sleep	29	51	38	31
Dog Fines	18	21	14	11

There are now 27 registered Dog Breeding Establishments with several applications on hand awaiting inspection.

Wexford County council arranged for the impounding of 6 ponies and 5 goats in 2024 all of which were re-homed.

ENVIRONMENT EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

Our aim is to promote awareness and active participation in a range of environmental initiatives.

Circular Economy Workshop - A circular Economy workshop took place on Tuesday 19th November. 32 students from 4-6th class from St Mary's PS, St Senan's PS, St Aidan's PS and Gaelscoil Inis Corthaidh participated. The workshop based on the 'Designathon' method which was delivered by an Taisce green schools facilitators and was fully funded by the Environment Section. The children were introduced to the topic of the circular economy and designed and made a solution that will contribute to building a new circular economy.

Annual Artwork Competition – the theme of this year's competition was "The Wildlife of Hedgerows". Cllr Pip Breen, Cathaoirleach Wexford County Council, presented prizes to 40 school children representing both primary and secondary schools on Monday 24th June.



*Overall Primary Schools Winner Ella
Dundon, Our Lady of Lourdes NS
Bunclody*



*Overall Secondary School
Winner Júlia Ásmundsdóttir,
Colaiste an Átha, Kilmuckridge*

Rubbish Film Festival - The programme is being run with 7 secondary schools and dates for workshops are being finalised.

Christmas Decoration Competition - 188 decorations were received from 31 schools across County Wexford and displayed in County Hall. Prizes were presented to winners by An Cathaoirleach Cllr Pip Breen on Wednesday 18th December 2024. The overall Primary School winning decoration was Harry Siggins, St. Kevin's National School, Tara Hill, Gorey, Co. Wexford entitled "The Christmas Wreath".

Leave No Trace Workshops - 10 primary schools will be funded for the academic year 2024 /2025. 10 primary schools have been offered this free workshop.

Picker Pal Programme – 10 primary schools participated in the picker pal programme. The picker pal programme has received great praise from all schools participating and another 10 schools will be funded in 2024-2025 academic year.



Composting in Schools Programme - 4 secondary schools will participate this year. The programme will offer schools the opportunity to explore and improve waste management in and will look at waste separation systems and explore ways to improve waste management via waste prevention, reduction, reuse recycling and composting. The school will receive 2 visits, will create an action plan and all teachers will be given training and given access to Base Camp so that they can avail of the resources developed so far for the programme including booklets, guides, instructional fact sheets, videos as well as learning resources that teachers can bring into the classroom. In addition, schools receive a **€300** voucher for bins, tools and supplies to help carry out their action plans.

Green Schools - Communication with renewal schools is ongoing. All schools must have a renewal visit by end of March.

Community Clean Ups - Registrations and support for community clean ups continue.

Date	No of Community Clean Ups
01/01/24 – 31/12/24	1,021
01/01/23 – 30/12/23	1,054

Planting Grant - All 94 grants have been claimed, and administration of the scheme is complete.

Environment Awards - The annual Environment Awards took place on Monday 11th November. Representatives from 11 schools and 53 community groups were in attendance on the night. The winners of the Keep Wexford Beautiful Competition were announced on the night. List of all the winners on the night as follow:

- Blackwater Tidy Towns were awarded the overall winners in the Keep Wexford Beautiful competition.
- Enniscorthy Tidy Towns were presented with a plaque for winning the Community Group Snap into Action competition.
- Gorey Tidy Towns, The Gap Tidy Towns & Heritage Group and Hollyfort Development Group, were also presented with awards for their participation in the North Wexford 2K.
- Gorey Educate Together Secondary School, St Patrick's School, Enniscorthy and Tombrack National School, Ferns were all recognised for receiving their first green flag and presented with a nest box sponsored by The Wexford Naturalists' Field Club.
- Coláiste an Atha, Kilmuckridge, Gorey Community School, Meánscoil Gharman, Inis Córthaidh, Ramsgrange Community School, Selskar College and St Peter's College Wexford were awarded certificates for their participation in the Rubbish Film Festival Programme.
- Niamh O' Connor, St Fintan's National School, Taghmon was awarded a Plaque as the overall primary school winner in the Christmas Decoration Competition 2023 in conjunction with South-East Radio for her decoration entitled 'The White Angel.'
- Certificates were presented to Ella Dundon, Our Lady of Lourdes national School, Bunclody who was the Overall Primary School Winner in the Environment Artwork Competition and Júliá Rós Ásmundsdóttir Coláiste an Atha, Kilmuckridge who was the overall secondary school winner of the Environment Artwork Competition.
- Kilmashall National School were awarded a Plaque for being Wexford's Cleanest School. An Award for Outstanding Individual Contribution to Wexford's Environment was presented to Jim Hurley.



Trees for Wexford Campaign - The 'Trees for Wexford Scheme' closed on October 4th. 137 applications received. Quotations are now being sought for the supply and delivery of trees.

Sustainable Christmas Wreath Workshops - 2 workshops were held in Enniscorthy on Wednesday 13th November. The workshops demonstrated how to make a wreath from sustainable materials.

Local Waste Prevention Grant - This grant is funded by the Environment Section of WCC as part of their Waste Prevention Programme for the County. 7 applications were received, and 6 groups were funded the maximum grant of €500. The closing date was 27th September. The scheme aims to support communities to take steps on waste prevention, re-use and repair activities in their local areas, and encourage partnership between local businesses, local schools, charities and voluntary groups.

Green Dog Walker - An event in partnership with National Parks and Wildlife Service took place on Sunday 27th October at the Raven Woods, Curragoe. 46 pledges were signed on the day. The Green Dog Walker Campaign is continually being promoted and registrations are through the website. Packs are provided to community groups for promotion at events.

WEXFORD COUNTY FIRE SERVICE

Facilities and Equipment

Wexford County Fire Service maintains five retained fire brigades located in the main towns throughout the county with a fleet of 28 vehicles and 85 firefighters.



Figure 1: Gorey Fire Station

During 2024 the upgrade works to Gorey Fire Station were completed. The works created a canteen, lecture room and office at first floor level with the ground floor reconfigured and the facilities upgraded. The total cost of the project was €971,000 fully funded by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.



Figure 2: Muster Bay



Figure 3: Confined Space Training Rig

Grant funding was also approved for the purchase of a High Reach Appliance, a Fire Appliance and a Confined Space Training Rig located in Bunclody Fire Station, see image Figure 3.

Operations – Incidents

The fire service attended 1051 incidents in total during 2024. The following is a breakdown of incidents attended by each Fire Brigade:

Fire calls by Brigade in 2024

INCIDENT TYPE	WEXFORD	GOREY	ENNISCORTHY	NEW ROSS	BUNCLODY	TOTAL
Fire Classification	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number
Chimney Fire in House	27	7	9	8	0	51
Other Fire in House	18	17	9	10	0	54
Caravan/Mobile Home	1	1	2	4	0	8
Flats: Local Authority	0	1	1	0	0	2
Flats: Privately Owned	2	0	0	2	0	4
Other Institution	2	2	1	1	0	6
Factory	1	1	2	1	0	5
Storage	1	1	3	2	1	8
Building/Warehouse						
Shop/Supermarket	0	2	1	2	0	5
Office	0	0	0	3	0	3
Hotel/Guesthouse/Boarding House etc.	1	2	1	3	0	7
Place of Public Entertainment - Dance Hall, Disco, Cinema, Theatre, Bingo Hall	1	0	0	1	0	2
Restaurant	2	0	0	1	0	3
Motor Vehicle	19	17	16	11	5	68
Unoccupied Building	2	0	0	1	1	4
Agriculture Business	1	1	0	3	0	5
Forest/Bog/Grass	19	26	14	0	6	65
Ship/Aircraft	0	0	0	0	0	0
Miscellaneous	8	1	2	1	2	14
Outdoor Storage	2	1	0	1	0	4
Outdoor Rubbish	13	13	17	6	6	55

INCIDENT TYPE	WEXFORD	GOREY	ENNISCORTHY	NEW ROSS	BUNCLODY	TOTAL
Special Service Classification	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number
Entrapment	14	1	12	7	0	34
Gas/Chemicals	0	2	0	0	1	3
Hazardous substances in transit not involving fire	0	0	1	0	0	1
Hazardous Substances non Transit	0	0	0	1	0	1
Machinery	0	0	0	1	0	1
Miscellaneous	19	6	14	16	5	60
Other rescue	33	28	8	13	6	88
Rescue/Removal of persons from water	1	0	1	2	0	4
Road traffic accident	73	56	64	24	22	239
Water pumping/flooding	2	1	2	0	0	5
False Alarm Classification	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number
Good Intent	103	40	47	39	10	239
Malicious	3	0	0	0	0	3
Total	368	227	227	164	65	1051

Operations – Training

A competency-based training programme continued in 2024. 80 training courses were organised and attended with courses ranging from 1/2-day duration to 3 weeks in some cases. Some of the core training courses undertaken by Wexford County Fire Service were as follows:

- Breathing Apparatus Training both Initials/Refreshers
- Compartment Fire Behaviour Training Initials/Refreshers
- Breathing Apparatus Maintenance course
- Emergency Services Driving Standard Training
- Pump Operators Instructors Course
- Fire Fighting Skills Courses
- Hydra Tactical Training
- Hydra Effective decision-making Training
- Managing Fire Safety Incidents Module 1
- Managing Fire Safety Incidents Module 2
- Managing Fire Safety Incidents Module 3
- Fire Service Management 1
- Fire Service Training Delivery
- Water Awareness
- Abrasive wheels
- Critical Incident Stress Management Training

- Critical Incident Peer supporters
- Manual Handling Training
- Foam Courses
- Haz-Mat Instructor Course
- Emergency First Responders
- Media Skills
- Road Traffic Collision Courses
- Electric Vehicle Course
- Brigade Order familiarisation
- Fire Extinguishers training for the local authority

The Fire Services Health & Safety Management System had its Recertification Audit in April over 3 days. The audit confirmed that the Health & Safety Management System in place conforms with all requirements of ISO 45001:2018 and recertified the Health & Safety Management System until 2027.

Major Emergency Management

The Major Emergency Development Programme was maintained with monthly meetings and exercises by the Development Committee. Several exercises were carried out during the year to ensure the organisations preparedness for any major events that may occur.

The dedicated local coordination centre was maintained throughout the period to cater for a major emergency response. Wexford County Council staff participated in several internal exercises including hazardous materials, coastal pollution, flooding and severe weather preparedness to ensure a state of readiness.

Fire Safety

Wexford County Fire Service promotes fire safety with a view to reducing the incidence and effect of fires in the home and other buildings. Wexford County Fire Service have an extensive Community Fire Safety Plan and run eight Community Fire Safety Programmes:

- Primary Schools Programme
- General Fire Safety promotion
- Seasonal Fire Safety campaigns
- Traveller Fire Safety
- Home Fire Safety Visits
- 'Hot strikes' smoke alarm installations at incidents
- False alarm intervention
- Remote Areas Priority Programme

In 2024 the following Community Fire Safety activities were completed:

- 3 Primary Schools were visited and the “Fire Safety in the Home” programme delivered to the third class students;
- 18 Fire Safety Talks were giving to various groups;
- 47 group visits to the Fire Stations took place;
- 22 Events were attended by the Fire Service;
- 479 Home Fire Safety Visits took place &
- 30 Hot strikes at incidents.



Figure 4: Fire Safety Stand at Gimont Tea on the Green, Enniscorthy

Wexford County Fire Service is notified annually of all relevant applications to the District and Circuit Courts for Music & Singing, Dance, Club and Transfer of licences and Lottery and Gaming certificates. During 2024, 161 notifications were received.

During 2024 a total of 215 Fire Safety inspections were carried out on a broad range of premises types. With Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann taking place in Wexford Town additional inspections were carried out in the public houses within the Town and also during the event to ensure fire safety provisions were maintained.

There were 208 fire safety certificate applications received in 2024 an increase of 15% on the applications received in 2023.

CIVIL DEFENCE

Civic Duties

Larger events covered included: Relay for Life, Killag Agricultural Show, Maritime/ National Services Day, Gorey Market House Festival, Wexford Opera Festival, Fleadh Cheoil. **Total covered = 60**



Training

All units completed training including- first aid (CFR, FAR, EFR), manual/ patient handling, AFS, welfare, Missing Persons Search, Swift Water & Flood Responder, communications, etc. Central training including Instructor upskilling.
Total Training Events= 69

16 new recruits: Induction March 2024

Missing Persons Search:

missing persons searches 2024

Community Response - Wexford Civil Defence continued to provide transport support to the patients under our care during Covid Response & requests from housing dept. **Patient Transports: 20.**

Ukrainian Response:

Transports: Transports of persons- **6 tasks.**

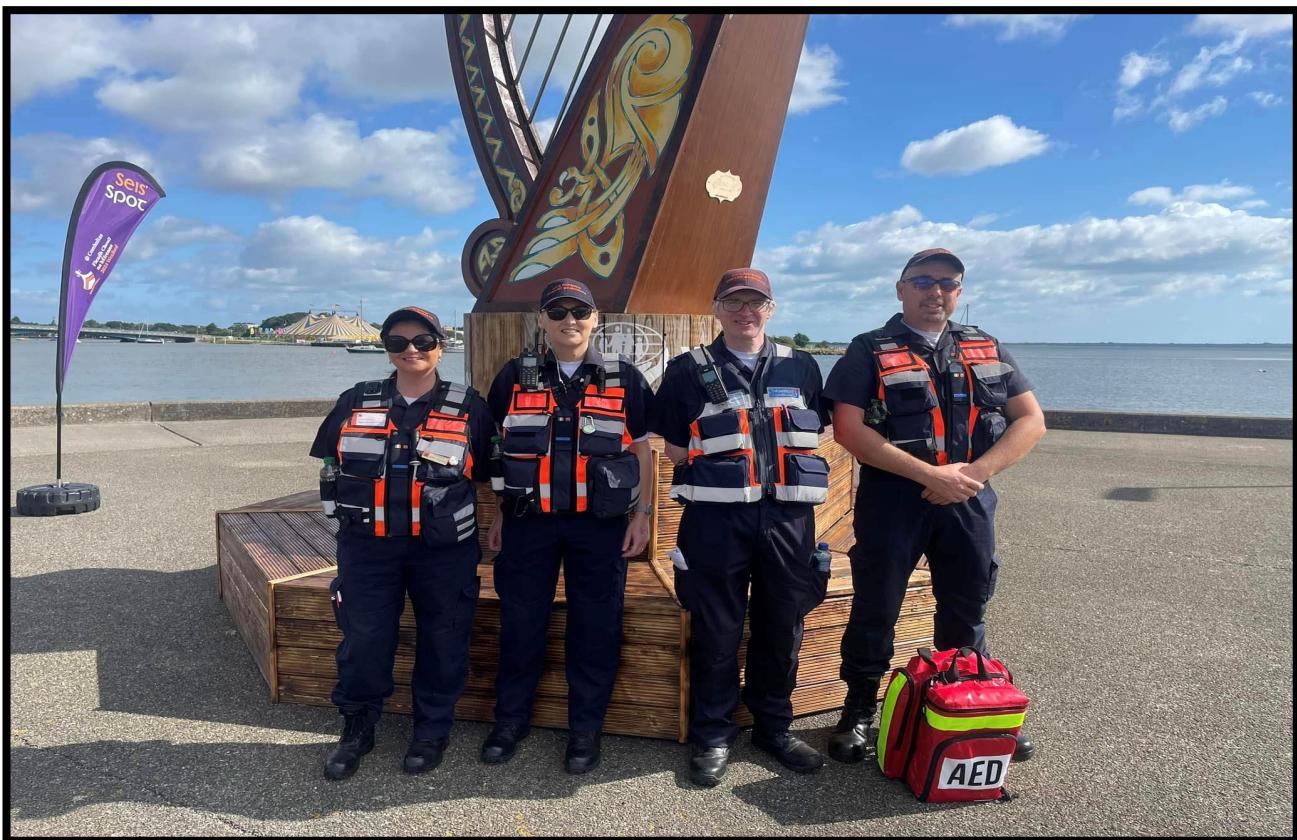
Additional funding & New Equipment:

- **SRK Rescue Boat** – to replace Avon funded by Department of Defence Dormant Accounts & Wexford County Council
- **Drone DJI**—funded by Wexford County Council
- **All Weather Drone**- funded by Department of Defence & Wexford County Council
- **Lourdes Military Pilgrimage May 2024:** 8 Volunteers represented Wexford at the Lourdes Military Pilgrimage May 2024

Fleadh Cheoil 2024

Wexford Civil Defence was tasked to lead and manage the medical response for the Fleadh with the assistance of Wexford Red Cross and Order of Malta.

87% of our Civil Defence volunteers made themselves available for the medical response during the week of Fleadh Cheoil. Contributing 3774 volunteer hours by Wexford Civil Defence alone.



HEALTH & SAFETY

The Health and Safety Section continued to deliver a targeted corporate improvement programme, ensuring the continued health, safety and wellbeing of our employees, contractors, and members of the public. No enforcement action was taken against Wexford County Council by the Health and Safety Authority and the overall accident trend continues to reduce.

ISO 45001 (Health and Safety Management System)

In 2024, the health and safety section successfully maintained the management system to the ISO45001 standard. This involved ongoing surveillance audit by an externally accredited body. The organisation demonstrates a structured and managed approach to health and safety with a commitment to monitored continuous improvement. Wexford County Council had a robust internal and external audit programme in place throughout the year.

Violence and Aggression

Wexford County Council continues to be challenged by incidents of violence and aggression towards our employees. During 2024, the Health and Safety Section continued to monitor and intervene in such cases, working closely with the County Secretary. Incidents of violence and aggression increased during 2024 and is the focus of an ongoing campaign, with increased training and procedures available to our staff. Wexford County Council works closely with other agencies, such as the Gardai, to ensure that our employees are protected at the same time as providing an effective service to our customers.

Events Management

The Health and Safety Section welcomed the appointment of a new Events Officer in 2024. Events across County Wexford continue to increase year on year. We held very well-attended and popular parades on St Patricks Day. Major events processed and assessed by our section included The Market House Festival, Gorey, The Rocking Food Festival, Enniscorthy, The Opera Festival Fireworks and the Wexford Stages Rally. The Health and Safety Section provided support for Event Control throughout the successful Fleadh Event.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2024-2029



The Local Economic and Community Plan was officially launched at the December meeting of Wexford County Council on 9th December 2024. The Wexford LECP 2024-2029 sets out 6 ambitious High-Level Goals which are supported by a series of actions and objectives which aim to deliver an ambitious plan to transform the lives of County Wexford's residents. The Plan also

includes an initial 2 - year implementation plan, detailing which actions are to be prioritised for the first two year period. The plan is now available to be downloaded from the council's website at www.wexfordcoco.ie

Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) & Local Action Group (LAG):

The LCDC held 6 meetings in 2024. Key Functions of the LCDC carried out in 2024 include:

- Approval of the final version of the LECP 2024 – 2029 Framework and 2-year Implementation Plan
- Co-ordination and monitoring of the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) through the SICAP sub-committee and bi-annual reviews
- Management of various funding streams, including the Local Enhancement Fund and Healthy Ireland Funding

The LCDC also received periodic updates on the following Community programmes within the County:

- Independent Living Movement of Ireland VOICE Project.
- Sláintecare Healthy Communities
- LEADER
- Local Authority Integration Team

Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann

The Volunteer Co-ordinator, supported by the Community & Sports Active Team, co-ordinated the recruitment and training of over 1,000 volunteers for the Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann in 2024. In addition, the Co-ordinator and Community & Sports Active Team handled volunteer handbook creation, materials design, volunteer pack preparation and distribution, rostering, and set up and planning of the volunteer hubs, prior to the Fleadh

Much of the work undertaken by Community & Sport Active during the Fleadh was back office work, such as responding to shift changes, additional volunteer requirements, ensuring welfare and access needs were met, and although not visible, was crucial to the success of volunteer element of the Fleadh.

Following the Fleadh, a Civic Reception, hosted by An Cathaoirleach, Cllr Pip Breen was held to honour the Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann Volunteers on Saturday 14th September 2024. Over 400 volunteers who had participated during the Fleadh were welcomed to County Hall to celebrate the valuable contribution made by the volunteers to the success of the week.



Community Recognition Fund 2024

The Community Recognition Fund, by the Department of Rural and Community Development, is delivered by Wexford County Council on a local level. It aims to support the development of new infrastructure and facilities, in recognition of the contribution being made by local communities in welcoming and hosting new arrivals from Ukraine and other countries, in a spirit of inclusion and integration. The funding has been specifically targeted at local projects that will be used by all members of the community, now and into the future.

A total of €1.5M was allocated to County Wexford through the DRCD Community Recognition Fund 2023 (CRF23), for 27 no. Community Group and Municipal District projects, with the funding being distributed during 2024. As of end of year 2024, €1.08M of the fund had been claimed, with 74% of projects completed.

A further €1.7M was allocated by the Department of Rural and Community Development for the next round of the CRF24 fund. To date, €798K has been awarded in 2024 by Wexford County Council to 11 no. projects across the five municipal districts, with further allocations under the same fund projected in early 2025, for activity for 2025/26. <https://www.wexfordcoco.ie/community/supports-grants-and-awards/community-recognition-fund>

Enniscorthy Municipal District

Bellefield Playground and Public Realm, Enniscorthy opened by Minister James Browne (Enniscorthy Municipal District), 21/10/24. €110,000



Gorey Kilmuckridge Municipal District

Gorey Family Resource Centre renovated building opened by Minister James Browne (Gorey Kilmuckridge Municipal District), 23/05/24. €63,278.00



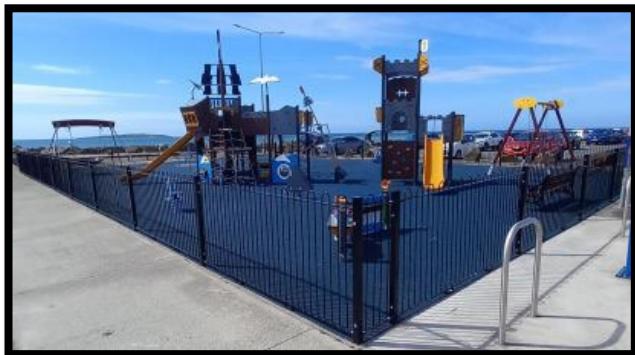
New Ross Municipal District

Pearse Park Sensory Garden opened by Minister James Browne (New Ross Municipal District), 21/05/24. €30,000.00



Rosslare Municipal District

Kilmore Quay Playground opened by Minister James Browne (Rosslare Municipal District), 25/10/24. €145,000.00



Wexford Borough District

Ferndale Park MUGA completed (Wexford Town Borough) €100,000.00



Healthy Wexford

The Vision for a Healthy Wexford is where everyone can enjoy physical and mental health and wellbeing to their full potential, where wellbeing is valued and supported at every level of society and is everyone's responsibility. The Healthy County Committee, a sub-committee of the Wexford LCDC, work to deliver this vision through an agreed workplan and with funding the Healthy Ireland Fund, with support from Wexford County Council, and through accessing other funding sources.



In line with the Healthy Ireland Framework, the committee has four overarching goals in their work:

- increase the proportion of people who are healthy at all stages of life
- reduce health inequalities
- protect the public from threats to health and well being
- create an environment where every individual and sector of society can play their part in achieving a healthy Ireland

Six key priority areas have been identified under the Healthy Ireland Framework, and these are replicated priorities for Healthy Wexford.

Priority 1 -Physical Activity

Priority 2 – Healthy Weight

Priority 3 – Tobacco Free

Priority 4 – Sexual Health

Priority 5 – Alcohol & Drug Related Harm

Priority 6 – Mental Health

PRIORITY 1. Physical Activity

PRIORITY 4. Sexual Health

PRIORITY 2. Healthy Weight

PRIORITY 5. Alcohol and Drug Related Harm

PRIORITY 3. Tobacco Free

PRIORITY 6. Mental Health

Our work also considers the Healthy Ireland Strategic Action Plan 2021-2025 Priority Focus Areas which are:

- Keeping Active
- Staying Connected
- Switching Off and Being Creative
- Eating Well
- Minding your Mood
- Minding your Body



Healthy Ireland Fund

Round Four of the Healthy Ireland Fund 2022-2025 is currently underway with focus on the following two Healthy Ireland outcomes agreed for Wexford:

- Increase in % of adults and children meeting physical activity guidelines
- Decrease in unconditional probability of dying (aged 30-70) from cardiovascular diseases, cancer, diabetes or chronic respiratory disease

Healthy County Coordinator

The Healthy County Coordinator is a support resource for the delivery of a Healthy Wexford, funded by the Department of Health from 2022-2025 and based in the Community Section of Wexford County Council. The current Coordinator's contract began in October 2022 and runs to end 2025.

2024 Highlight Activity

During 2024 the Healthy Ireland Fund activity continued with the following key projects supported:

- New Ross Community Activity Hub – Access for All, targeting Disadvantaged families & communities
- Age Friendly Wexford – Lets Get Moving Physical Activity Programmes for Older People
- Social Farming Placements for People with Disabilities encouraging increased physical activity
- ‘Strong not Tough’ Resilience Training for Community Volunteers
- Support for development of Playful Spaces with New Ross Play Tables and Enniscorthy Musical Trail delivered in 2024 and Gorey Park Play Tables Project progressing.
- Healthy Home Environments pilot programme rolled out a second programme
- Women’s Healthy Through the Ages commended programmes with young girls and women focusing on women in disadvantaged communities, in collaboration with FRC’s and Youth Organisations



Outside of this activity some 2024 highlights included Healthy Wexford support to Fleadh Cheoil na hEireann with provision of Not Around Us signage and securing Sun Screen dispensers, continuation of the Mental Wellbeing Working Group Activity including ‘Meet Your Neighbour’ & ‘Nearby Nature’ supported activity, and progression of the Period Dignity project.

Health messaging and call to action continues through Healthy Wexford social media, expo events and the Community Calendar, with focus in these channels on signposting, awareness raising and behaviour change.

Burial Grounds

The Community section manages 12 open burial grounds and over 112 closed vested burial grounds across County Wexford in accordance with the Burial Ground Maintenance and Development Strategy 2017, and all relevant legislation including the updated Bye laws for the Regulation of all open burial grounds within the jurisdiction of Wexford County Council.

Access and safety improvement works under the 2024 burial ground programme of works were completed at Bunclody cemetery, Clongeen cemetery, Ballymurn cemetery and St. Michael’s vested burial ground.

Community Buildings

The Community section manages at present 13 community buildings across County Wexford. These buildings allow local community groups a central designated space to meet and create a sense of community within that area.

Safety improvement works carried out at Teach na nOg Carrig on Bannow and Cois Barry Community Centre.

Regional Festival Fund 2024

This funding provided by Fáilte Ireland and administered by Wexford County Council aims to support festivals and participative events that will drive domestic tourism and help to improve the visitor experience in County Wexford. 11 groups were successful recipients of the Festival and Participation Event Fund in 2024. The picture shows the Festival of Ferns 2024.



Comhairle na nÓg

The annual AGM of Comhairle Na nÓg was held in Wexford Council Chamber on Friday 18th October 2024 with attendees from secondary schools and youth projects. Substance Abuse was chosen by the young people as their topic of choice for 2024. Wexford County Council continues to support the delivery of the Comhairle Na nÓg programme in County Wexford in conjunction with FDYS.

Comhairle Na nÓg provides a forum for children and young people to discuss local and national issues of relevance to them. Comhairle Na nÓg are recognised by the Department of Children Equality Disability Integration and Youth as the official structures for participation by children and young people in the development of policies and services.



Comhairle na nÓg 2024 in Council Chamber with, SEO Dymphna O'Connor, DOS Carolyne Godkin, Chairman Pip Breen, CEO FDYS Dr. Kieran Donohue, Comhairle na nÓg members and Comhairle Co-Ordinator Avril O'Sullivan.

IPB Pride of Place competition

The two Wexford nominees for the 2024 Pride of Place Competition – The Rocks Community Area, and Fethard on Sea CDA were visited, by the competition judges during July. The awards ceremony was held in November 2024 in Monaghan – The Rocks Community Area (pictured) won the Urban Neighbourhood Category while Fethard on Sea CDA were runner-up in the Population 1000-2000 category.



Wexford Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme (SHCP)

The Sláintecare Healthy Communities (SHCP) Programme is a targeted cross-government initiative to reduce health inequalities in disadvantaged communities in Ireland.



“Health inequalities exist when a subgroup of the population suffers a disproportionate burden of ill health and premature death compared to the general population. Health inequalities are unnecessary, unfair, and avoidable.”

2024 marked the 3rd year of the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme operating in the four SHCP areas of Enniscorthy Town, Wexford Town, Taghmon and Edermine Electoral Division. Several projects continued or commenced which were all focused on improving the health and wellbeing of the local population. These included:

- Enniscorthy Community Interagency Team work on targeted projects in the town
- Taghmon/Camross Community Car
- Southend Community Retrofitting Project
- Edermine Rowing Club intergenerational boat building, education project and purchase of rowing machines
- Telehealth and Falls Detection Project for older people with the HSE
- Taghmon Community Food Projects
- Creative Ireland Sculpture project with Enniscorthy Community Allotments
- Green Therapy/Access to Nature project for young people with schools and youth services
- Ferndale Street Soccer
- Sports projects with communities and sporting organisations



Edermine Edermine Rowing Club with new indoor rowing machines



Ferndale Street Soccer



Taghmon Community Food Project



Taghmon Community Car

Other highlights of 2024:

- Wexford Loreto Secondary School project featured on US TV channel 'Nature on PBS'
- 'Opera For All' in partnership with Wexford Festival continued to make opera more accessible to more disadvantaged groups and individuals
- Walkability Audit of Gimont Ave, Cluain Dara and Forgelands Estates in Enniscorthy
- Sporting Memories reminiscence event for people living with dementia with Wexford GAA and Alzheimers Society
- 'Gimont Tea on The Green' celebratory event for residents of Enniscorthy estate



Walkability Audit in Enniscorthy January 2024

Sláintecare Healthy Communities Local Development Officer

The Sláintecare Healthy Communities Local Development Officer is a support resource for the delivery of the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme, funded by the Department of Health from 2022-2025 and based in the Community Section of Wexford County Council.

LEP – Local Enhancement Programme 2024

The Local Enhancement Programme (LEP) 2024 was funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development and was designed to support small scale projects for not-for-profit community or voluntary groups. Wexford County Council, in conjunction with Wexford Local Community Development Committee (LCDC), invited applicants at the beginning of 2024 to provide submissions.

A total of €214,000 has been provided to Community groups to date. €35,110.08 of this was specifically allocated for projects by women's groups, such as sheds, groups, clubs and networks.

The funding was targeted toward communities impacted by disadvantage, as identified in the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP).

SICAP - Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme

The third iteration of the Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP) commenced in January 2024. The SICAP 2024-2028 provided funding to tackle poverty and social exclusion at a local level through local engagement and partnerships between disadvantaged individual, community organisation and public sector agencies.

SICAP is a targeted, holistic programme, for those who are most disadvantaged and less likely to access mainstream services, which provides supports directly to beneficiaries and links them into existing services. Programme Implementers (PIs) engage with marginalised communities and service providers using a community development approach to address issues relating to social

exclusion and inequality. SICAP also prioritises local engagement and partnerships, between SICAP Programme Implementers, disadvantaged individuals, community organisations and public sector agencies.

Following a procurement process, Wexford Local Development have been successful in securing the contract for the delivery of the programme again for the next 5 years.

Wexford Local Community Development Committee (LCDC), who are responsible for the management and oversight of the programme, chose 3 “Local Priority Target Groups” for a specific focus for the duration of this programme which are:

- People living in disadvantaged communities
- People impacted by educational disadvantage
- Travellers

Promotion of climate justice, with a focus on facilitating a just and equitable transition to a greener economy and society, will also be a horizontal theme in the new programme.

On the 31st May 2024, Wexford County Council and Wexford Local Development held an event hosted in Templeshannon Community Centre to mark the official launch of the SICAP 2024-2028 programme.



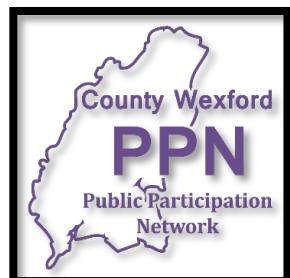
Traveller Interagency Group:

Wexford Traveller Interagency Group (TIG) continued its work during 2024 to ensure that the relevant statutory agencies and state supported initiatives involved in providing the full range of services to Travellers would focus on improving the integrated practical delivery of such services. The TIG sub-groups focused on developing specific actions to respond to the issues identified within the 2018 Traveller Needs Analysis Report, funded by the Department of Justice, Equality & Law Reform and Wexford County Council.

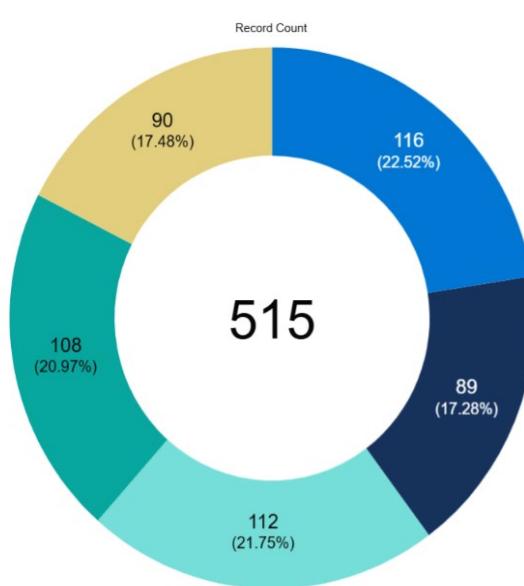
Wexford Public Participation Network

Key Achievements 2024

- Wexford PPN is now 10 years in existence. 2014 - 2024
- Membership has increased – 63 new member groups 2024
- New Wexford PPN Website up and running.
- Age Well Expo – joint event with Age Friendly Wexford and Age Friendly Ireland
- Tea on the Green Gimont, Enniscorthy – Enniscorthy Inter Agency Initiative supported by Wexford PPN
- Climatic Action Thematic Group survey with Wexford County Council Climate Action Team
- Community Growers Event held in Camross, Wexford with Horticulturist, Aoife Munn, in collaboration with Healthy Wexford.
- Attendance at Bannow Rathangan Show, Gorey Agricultural Show, National Ploughing Championships DRCD Stand



Municipal Districts



Gorey Kilmuckridge - 116

Wexford - 112

New Ross – 108

Enniscorthy - 90

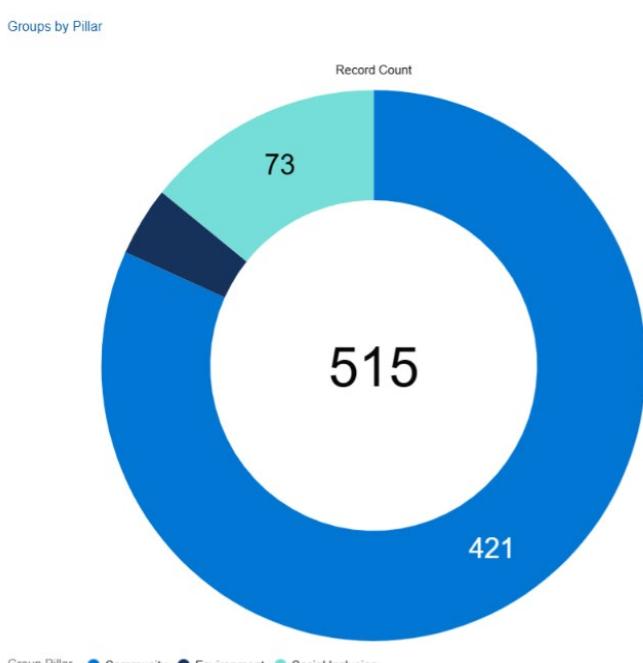
Rosslare – 89

Total No. of Groups

2024 - 515

63 new groups 2024

Community Groups 2024



Electoral Colleges/Pillars

Community & Voluntary – 421

Social Inclusion – 73

Environment - 21



DRCD Stand at National Ploughing Championships Rathineska, Co. Laois



PPN National Conference, Limerick

Wexford Age Friendly Programme

Work on the Age Friendly Programme continued in 2024 with the focus on extensive public consultation with older people and organisations which represent them. Our partners in the Age Friendly Alliance continued to make progress in their themed areas including Outdoor Spaces & Buildings, Transportation, Housing, Social Participation, Respect and Social Inclusion, Civic Participation and Employment, Communication and Information, Community Support and Health Services and Safety and Security.

Older People's Council

Wexford Older People's Council held 4 meetings in 2024 during which they identified priority areas of need for older people, raised issues of importance and informed and influenced the decision making process of the Age Friendly Programme.

Wexford Age Friendly Alliance

Wexford Age Friendly Alliance held 4 meetings in 2024 during which the partners reported back on progress on the action plan and other age related initiatives or projects.

Key Achievements 2024

- **Snooker Lessons** – St Joseph's Community Centre Wexford
- **Little Kneaders Make Your Own Therapy Dough Workshop** –
- **Age Well Expo** 19th September St Joseph's Community Centre, on the day there was over 30 exhibition stands including An Garda Síochána, HSE, ALONE, Wexford libraries, Fire Services, Sports Active, Healthy Wexford and Wexford Healthy Home
- **Physical Activity Leaders Course**
- **Let's Get Moving** project which aims to increase physical activity of Older Person across County Wexford

LIBRARY SERVICES & ARCHIVES

Wexford Libraries Stats 2024



25,661
Wifi Sessions



159,281
Requests



Library App
152,567 Views



492,894
Visitors
across all
5 Branches
& 2 Mobiles



55,723
Reservations



Website
95,100 Library
page views

2024 - A busy year in Wexford Libraries

Visits to libraries in County Wexford increased by 64,000 from 2023 to 2024. eBook e-audiobooks and e-newspapers issues performed very strongly with 169,544 downloads in 2024.

Department of Rural and Community Development Libraries Capital Programme Investment

County Wexford benefitted from the Libraries Capital Programme funding announcement in 2024 of €1.7 million towards an extension and refurbishment of New Ross Library and a contribution of €262,500 toward a new mobile library vehicle.

This extension and refurbishment project will increase the library size by 136% from approximately 410m² to 968m². The building footprint will be enlarged, and a mezzanine floor will be added. The library will also have access to the large adjacent Library Park with its amphitheatre for outdoor events. The newly extended library will be constructed to enable it to continue to function as a My Open Library providing optimal opening hours to the public and acting as a focal point for the local community.

The new mobile library will replace the existing 24-year-old vehicle that services North County Wexford. In a rural county such as Wexford, mobile library services are an essential way of expanding the reach of the library service into rural communities. They help combat loneliness and social isolation faced by our older citizens as well as providing an essential literacy service to our rural schools. The new vehicle will house up to 3,000 new books and will offer multimedia and modern IT facilities that are accessible to all as well as incorporating many new climate friendly features.

Community and Culture

- **Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann** - Wexford Library was a hub for cultural activity during Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann. Fifteen adult events were held over the week with acclaimed traditional musicians such as Mark Redmond, Martin Hayes, Toner Quinn, Dr. Nóra Kavanagh and CUAS. Prof. Kevin Whelan gave a lecture on Old and New Wexford Maps. Aileen Lambert spoke about local song collections and Newfoundland and Appalachian songs. A presentation was given by Colm Brennan, an internationally renowned sculptor and writer. Michael Fortune presented a talk on The Unique Folklore of County Wexford.
- There were six family friendly events held during the Fleadh. A sensory space with play resources for children was available along with a quiet adult space for anyone who needed some time out.



*Dr. Nóra Byrne Kavanagh, Cllr Pip Breen Cathaoirleach Wexford County Council,
John Roche, Eileen Morrissey, County Librarian*

The Wexford Tune book compiled by Wexford fiddle player John Roche was published by Wexford Public Library Service as a special project to coincide with the hosting of the Fleadh Cheoil. The Wexford Tune book is a publication of over 450 traditional compositions, collections and repertoire of County Wexford. It contains traditional style pieces of music gathered from various sources throughout County Wexford and from the Wexford diaspora. Much of the collection consists of traditional tunes composed by County Wexford musicians which have been notated in printed music for the first time. The publication was generously supported through the Comhaltas Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann, Fleadh Executive Committee and additional funding from Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Eireann. It was launched in Wexford Library by the Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Pip Breen

- **National Open Day at Your Local Library** - Libraries are open most days but on Saturday 28th of September a special invitation was issued to everyone in the country to see everything that is on offer in their local library. Wexford libraries held events including, sensory time, story time, free play Lego. Library staff were on hand to show how library membership allows access to borrow from 12 million items. Members can access all the regular services of the library as well as eBooks, audiobooks, emagazines and enewspapers free and straight to their device.



- **Referendum Commission Information Session** - In March the Referendum Commission held an information meeting about the referendum on Family and Care. The Commission Chair, Ms Justice Marie Baker, and Mr Art O'Leary, Chief Executive Officer, spoke and answered questions for the members of the public who attended. This was an excellent opportunity for citizens to gain independent information in advance of the referendum.

Inclusive Services at the Library

- **Refugee Week** - Refugee Week is the world's largest arts and culture festival celebrating the contributions, creativity and resilience of refugees and people seeking sanctuary. The theme in 2024 was 'Our Home'. Staff from Wexford libraries arranged to both visit and welcome visits from those living in Direct Provision Centres and held events throughout the week.
- **Services to Ukrainian Nationals and persons whose first language is not English** - Informal English-speaking lessons continued throughout 2024 in libraries along with distribution of information on library resources and e-resources to newcomers. Library literacy apps for children provide children's books in languages other than English, LOTE. Transparent Language Online provides online English language learning resource for speakers of over 30 other languages. Numerous cultural events provided a focal point for the celebration of different cultures.
- **Wexford Women's Refuge** - Wexford Library Service was happy to partner with Wexford Women's refuge to provide a selection of fiction and non-fiction books suitable for children from birth to approximately 12 years. These books are available on long-term loan to families taking sanctuary in the Refuge. Wexford Library plans to develop the relationship with the Refuge to include literature support for healthcare professionals working with the families.
- **Book Buddies Inclusive Book Club** - Gorey Library hosted the 'Book Buddies' book club for adults with intellectual disabilities in 2024. This book club allows participants to choose books according to their own interests and abilities each month, with a focus on inclusion and reader development.

Members of the "Book Buddies" Book Club, Gorey Library



Climate Action in the Library

- **LEAF, the literacy and food education programme**, is a partnership between GIY (Grow it Yourself), Wexford Libraries and Libraries Ireland. The programme aims to establish community growing initiatives in every locality, transforming libraries into central hubs for food growing. It also provides resources including seeds, educational videos, and digital materials to support food growing and foster connections through library-based events to encourage food growing as a climate action in the community.

The public were invited to take part by registering with the LEAF programme at www.libraryleaf.ie and calling in to their local library to collect free seed packets of peas, beans and spinach. LEAF is funded under the Community Climate Action Programme (CCAP) Strand 2.

- **Sustainable Development Goals Week, September 20th to 29th September** - The Sustainable Development Goals address the global challenges we face, including those related to poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace and justice. Libraries around the county hosted events on themes of recycling, sustainability and growing during this week and over the course of the year.

- **Community Energy Hub Website Launch** was held in Wexford Library to promote the Community Energy Hub Website. In person one to one Energy Advice Clinics with the Community Energy Hub were also held in library branches.
- **Swift Conservation Ireland** - Enniscorthy Library was part of a Swift conservation project. Ten Swift nest boxes, which were built by the Men's Shed, were installed on the outside of the library earlier this year. This project also ties in with Wexford County Council's Climate Action Plan Goals for Enniscorthy Urban Area.
- **A “Library of Things” – Circular Economy** - A **biodiversity kit** is available to borrow from Wexford Library. The kit can be borrowed for up to three weeks and is free to borrow with a library membership card. The **Home Energy Saving Kit** is available to borrow for two weeks with a library membership card. **Digital Radon Monitors** are currently available free to library members in all five library branches in the county. Activator poles can also be borrowed free of charge from branch libraries.

Healthy Ireland at Your Library

The 'Healthy Ireland at Your Library' Programme is part of the national Healthy Ireland strategy the aim of which is to improve health and wellbeing by placing a focus on prevention, individual awareness and keeping people healthy for longer. The library programme centres on supporting people to become informed in managing their health, providing an enhanced collection of health and wellbeing books and magazines. Physical book stock, e-magazines, and both eBooks and audiobooks are available for the public to borrow. The aim of this programme is to support people to 'Eat Well, Think Well, Be Well'. Wexford public libraries held a variety of talks, discussions and workshops throughout the branch library network in 2024. Wexford libraries are also participants in the Healthy Wexford campaigns – Happy to Chat & Not around Us.

The library service hosted numerous informative events including Nutrition and Ageing: how to Prevent Muscle Loss, Supporting People with Communication Disorders with Primary Care Service and hosted six sessions with the Irish Heart Foundation. A series of HSE Webinars was hosted in Enniscorthy Library. Wexford Mental Health Association co-hosted an Informal Information Day in Wexford Library.

Right to Read at Your Library

- **Children's Services** - Right to Read promotes reading development and literacy for all ages and backgrounds. Programmes for children included Spring into Storytime, Summer Stars, Children's Book Festival and Family Time at Your Library. Wexford Libraries Children's Services also offered digital licences to support numeracy and literacy development.



Children's Book Festival, Bunclody Library

Inclusive technology was added to the STAR (Sensory Toys & Assistive Resources collection) to help further support children and young people with additional needs and disabilities living in County Wexford. Special collections of books to support family reading, bibliotherapy, and educational resources to support early childcare students, teachers, SNA's, health care professionals and families were further expanded in 2024. Story sacks, puppets, sensory items, and tummy time resources were added to branch stock to facilitate the continuing development of events for children of all ages and abilities.

Branches, mobiles, ELC's, schools, outreach visits and community groups were supported in response to needs identified at local level. Science Week events were hosted in all branches. A new **Read for Empathy Collection** was introduced.

To help children to navigate starting school, libraries have put together a bag with a book just for them that can be collected at any library. **My Little Library Book Bags** were distributed to children starting school in County Wexford in 2024. The 'My Little Library Book Bag' initiative is a collaboration between libraries, the Department of Rural and Community Development, and the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth as part of the First 5 Strategy.

- **Reading and Literary Events** - Ireland Reads 22nd February, World Book Day, 7th March and Poetry Day Ireland 25th April were included in library programming in 2024.

- **The Art of Reading Book Club** - Hosted by Colm Tóibín, the Laureate for Irish Fiction, this is club is offered as an online library book club event for readers everywhere on the last Thursday of every month. In October 2024 the film event was recorded in Enniscorthy Library with a live audience. The Laureate for Irish Fiction met with Elaine Feeney to discuss her novel 'How to Build a Boat'. Sean-nós singer Róisín Chambers also performed at the event. It was fitting that the final event in the series was hosted in Colm Toibín's hometown of Enniscorthy.



Library Staff with Laureate for Irish Fiction, Colm Toibín and author Elaine Feeney in Enniscorthy Library

Digital Skills for Everyday Life

Digital skills event, Wexford Library - This digital skills course continued in library branches in 2024. It was aimed at those who feel they are being left behind because everything is online. Topics covered included Everyday Essentials, Money Matters, Health and Wellness and Good Advice and Travel. This programme is funded through the Collaboration and Innovation Fund which aims to fund projects and activities that support adults with unmet literacy, numeracy, digital and financial literacy needs.

The Digital Help Hub was an initiative with the libraries where WWETB Tutors were available to help members of the public use their own devices (phone, tablet, laptop), get online and use apps. Tutors also gave guidance on how to fill in online forms, how to use egov.ie. An initiative of the ALL (Adult Literacy for Life) national strategy, the WWETB, WLD, and Wexford County Council Library Service have all worked together to bring this to County Wexford.

Media Literacy - This talk in Wexford Branch in April 2024 focused on the Be Media Smart campaign from Media Literacy Ireland. Martina Chapman, National Coordinator of Media Literacy Ireland, and fellow contributor Adrian Smyth highlighted the important role that media has in our lives and gave tips and advice on how to manage our relationship with media. The facilitators also offered guidance on how to avoid misinformation. The session further included discussion on sources of support available for older people on misinformation and how to Be Media Smart.



My Open Library - My Open Library Service is operational at New Ross and Gorey Libraries. After an induction, members can access the library on a self-service basis from 8am-10pm, 7

days a week. My Open Library users can use the study space, a public PC or laptop, printing services, the internet, the library Wi-Fi. They can also borrow and return items and collect requests. Gorey had 899 MOL members at the end of 2024, New Ross had 424.

Age Friendly Libraries

Wexford Library Service continues to support and work towards making libraries a place where older people are valued and supported. Libraries in County Wexford each hold Age Friendly status along with provision of an Age Friendly Champion in every branch.

Libraries in County Wexford provided a range of age friendly events throughout 2024 to include, Digital help Hubs, Health and Well-being talks and Bealtaine events. Activator pole sessions saw some 88 attending. Wexford libraries continue to provide classes to facilitate one to one digital learning for older people.

Commemoration 2024

As a follow-up to Decade of Centenaries programme, all local authorities were allocated €15,000 for Commemoration 2024, which was used for the following projects:

- **Wexford Artist Bursary** - Traditional singer, songwriter and composer Aileen Lambert was awarded the Commemorations Bursary 2024 from Wexford County Council. At an event titled 'New Songs – To Tell the Story' in Wexford Town Library, Aileen shared new songs she has written which attempt to tell the story of ordinary people's lives and experiences around the time of the Irish Free State formation. The bursary is part of Wexford County Council's 2024 Commemorations Programme and is supported by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media.



Traditional Singer, Aileen Lambert in Wexford Library

- **Public Lecture Programme** - Wexford Libraries held a series of lectures in library branches including a mixture of local and national speakers:
 - "Industry and Policy in Independent Ireland, 1922-1972" – Professor Frank Barry, Trinity College – Wexford town library – June 6
 - "Society and State: 1920s Ireland through its records" - John Gibney, Royal Irish Academy – Wexford town library – September 3
 - "What were they talking about? A review of the 1924 County Council Minute books" - Barry Lacey – in all five library branches in Autumn

Essential cleaning, maintenance, or restoration of memorials and monuments relating to the War of Independence and the Civil War took place in various locations throughout the county.

Archives

The Archive has a wide-reaching remit as part of its collections policy. Of the sixteen collections acquired during the year, two represented historically significant holdings which were acquired by the Archive via an official handover.

The extensive photographic collection from Gustavus (Gus) Handcock, a late 19th century amateur photographer from Coolbrook, Wellingtonbridge, includes family and farming images taken at Colebrook House, other photos taken in the environs of the parish of Bannow, and photos taken elsewhere in County Wexford and beyond. The collection was deposited by Gus' grandnephew, Jack Handcock in a ceremony in Wexford library on 16 May.



Gráinne Doran, Archivist; Jack Handcock; Monica Wallace; Cllr. Maura Bell

An event to mark the official handover of New Ross Workingmen's Club historic collection to the Archive was held in the Tholsel, New Ross on 21 October. A box containing minute books and accounts was presented by the club's chairman to the Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Bridín Murphy of New Ross Municipal District on behalf of the Archive. The club, which was founded in 1899 in the Tholsel celebrated its 125th anniversary in 2024. Included in the collection is a rare banner bearing the motto 'Awaken your courage, Ireland'.

Digitisation is undertaken on a phased basis each year by the Archive to provide enhanced public access to some of its more popularly requested collections. During 2024, the remaining minute books for Enniscorthy poor law union (1890-1907) were digitised and made freely available on the Archive's website.

Outreach is an invaluable means of publicising the Archive and its historic and varied holdings. The Archivist participated in the 1798 Summer School weekend in June to mark the 226th anniversary of the rebellion. An illustrated talk, 'Showcasing 1798 – a look at key documents, artwork, textiles and artefacts relating to the period from collections in Wexford County Archive' was delivered and accompanied by a display of some of the items featured in the talk.

To coincide with Fleadh Cheol na hÉireann, a 180-year-old set of Uilleann pipes from the Archive's holdings were exhibited in Wexford library, that belonged to master piper Tom Moore from The Shannon, Enniscorthy who left behind a rich piping legacy by the time he passed away in 1993. Material from the collection of Wexford County Board of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann at Wexford County Archive was showcased in a display case in County Hall which included the inaugural minutes of the board (16 July 1959) and a small collection of CCE medals and lapel pins.

As part of Heritage Week, the Archivist presented at an event, 'Towards a National Circus and Fairground Archive' in Wexford library organised by the Irish Street Arts, Circus and Spectacle Network (ISACS) on 22 August. She also co-presented an illustrated talk, 'A place to call home

- the conservation of a collection of rural housing minute books, 1883-99' with Dr Pat McBride, paper conservator who carried out a major conservation project on the books. This project was part-funded by the Heritage Council Stewardship Fund 2024.



An event was held in Wexford library on 5 November to launch the publication, Wexford County Archive: 25 objects from the Irish revolution, 1916-23. Part-funded by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport & Media, this flagship project ensured that there would be a lasting physical record in the leadup to the culmination of the Decade of Centenaries.

Hazel Percival, Senior Executive Librarian, Wexford Library; Cathaoirleach of Wexford County Council, Cllr. Pip Breen; Aaron Ó Maonaigh, historian/author; Gráinne Doran, Archivist; Eileen Morrissey, County Librarian

The Archivist contributed an article to the September issue of the History Ireland magazine. Entitled 'The John Ivory Endowed School, New Ross', the article provided an overview of a small collection of handwritten applications from nineteen prospective candidates for the post of schoolmaster in the school in New Ross during the 1860s-70s – a collection which forms part of the New Ross municipal archive.

Creative Ireland

Funding

- Core funding: **€207,149**
- An additional **€131,200** was awarded for projects in the areas of Health and Wellbeing, Climate Action and the Nighttime Economy.

Engagement

- **20,249** community members and participants.
- **184** creative practitioners.
- **34** projects.

Culture Team Projects

Culture Team Grants: In 2024, ten community-focused grants were awarded through collaborations between members of Wexford County Council's Culture Team.

- Threads of Friendship in Action: An outreach and recruitment project that engages the next generation of stitchers, and raises awareness and understanding of the Ros Tapestry as an important cultural artifact for County Wexford



- Country Connects Photography: A county-wide photography project with Wexford Walking Trails and Irish Farmers Association (Wexford) exploring mindfulness and the environment
- Traditional Song and Folklore: A traditional music and storytelling project with older people in Taghmon
 - Sculpting with Imogen Stafford: Imogen Stafford led sculpture workshops for teenagers attending CAHMS in Wexford Town who were experiencing anxiety.
 - Southend Singers: A choral project with Southend Family Resource Centre in Wexford Town
 - Social Dancing Classes: A series of county-wide dancing classes designed to tackle loneliness and bring communities together
 - Global Youth Quest – a creative environmental project across south County Wexford with teenage girls living in Direct Provision Centres
 - Creative Laneways Wexford Town: A mosaic project for the laneways of Wexford with the Tidy Towns group
 - The Big Dig: An archaeological dig experience for children which took place outside Wexford Library in June
 - Lyrical Rain: A project for the Fleadh which uses invisible paint to write lyrics of traditional songs on the pavement that appeared when it rained



Culture Team: Partnerships with Wexford LEO - Economic development is one of the major strategic aims of the Creative Ireland programme. Projects with the Wexford LEO fall under priorities 3 and 4 of Wexford's Culture and Creativity Strategy.

1. Creativity for Young Entrepreneurs (County-wide) - Working with the Student Enterprise Programme run by Wexford's LEO, this project encourages imaginative and innovative ideas for developing processes, products and materials for business. Facilitated by Leebow Arts, Education and Training, the young entrepreneurs engaged in creative processes that led to new business generation and collaborative work environments. Using collage, storytelling and abstract art practices, the students considered self-expression when designing their businesses.

This project used creativity to promote an enterprise culture, enabling young people to arrive at ideas that are meaningful and exciting to them.

2. HPBA Artist in Residence Workshop (Enniscorthy) - On 19th February a workshop was held in Enniscorthy Library with businesses from the HPBA and Senan House at the Green Tech Hub and a group of Wexford-based artists. The workshop explored the potential for an artist in residence programme at Senan House and worked up a call out for artists to take up the post.
3. Creativity in Tech (Wexford Town) - Wexford Tech Meetup was supported to invite speakers and host workshops that highlight the value that engaging in abstract ways of creative thinking has for problem solving in tech and business. Speakers and workshop leaders led these monthly sessions, using different media and artforms to demonstrate their ideas and theories.

Culture Team: Who Am I Now (Wexford Town and Rosslare) - The *Who Am I Now* project was a new music and dance composition that supported the exchange of cultural knowledge. It was a

creative partnership between residents of Direct Provision Centres in south County Wexford and The National Opera House education and outreach programme supported by Creative Ireland Wexford and the Local Authority Integration Team.

Accompanied by a musical score composed and performed by traditional Irish music band Tulua, the performance was showcased by our new communities as part of the Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann in August 2024.

Culture Team: Climate Action and Adaption - As per our strategic ambition to 'support artists, creatives and filmmakers through relevant upskilling and development' in climate adaptation and action, Creative Ireland Wexford provided two climate adaptation and action workshops for 26 creative practitioners living in County Wexford.

Additionally, Creative Ireland Wexford provided twelve bursaries for creative practitioners living in Wexford to activate climate action into their work.

Creative Communities

In 2024, Creative Ireland funded four Creative Community projects through open call

- St. Aidan's Advocacy Group (STAAG) with filmmaker Michael Benson: This group of adults with intellectual disabilities created a short film sharing their day-to-day experiences. Working in front of and behind the camera, the group experienced pre-production, scripting, casting, using a camera, acting, editing, and post-production. The film was shown to the public in autumn 2024 and can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/XgDKnzAwE40> ;
- Gorey Youth Needs with Theatre Practitioner Amy Redmond: Experienced theatre practitioner and mindfulness expert, Amy Redmond led the group through weekly performance and writing workshops. In Autumn 2024, the sessions culminated in a showcase of new creative work performed by the group.
- Wexford Women's Refuge with artist Fernanda Ferrarai: Using a therapeutic approach, artist Fernanda Ferrari facilitated four arts and crafts workshops with the residents of the refuge to promote healing and recovery. Participants engaged with and made puppets, pop-up books, self-portraits and vintage toys.
- Wildsong Ensemble with musician Laura Hyland: The Wildsong Ensemble is an experimental choir, focused on singing and vocal improvisation. In 2024 the choir moved away from the performance of fixed compositions and instead shared its improvisatory practice. A public presentation was shared at the Late-Night Art event at Wexford Arts Centre on October 3rd, 2024.

Open Call: Community Creativity Challenge Fund

The Community Creativity Challenge invited applications from communities, artists, creatives, producers, cultural and heritage organisations, creative industry professionals, scientists, architects, historians, archaeologists and businesses for creative projects that promoted inclusion, connection, and climate action. In 2024, the following six projects were awarded funding:

- *The Hall for All* by KN Films: Focusing on Saint Mary's Community Hall in the south-Wexford village of Fethard-on-Sea, this placemaking film project worked with the community to document the activities that take place in The Hall. A public showing of the documentary took

place in Fethard on 11th November. The film can be viewed here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wYsJUaNUrnQ>

- *What's In My Bag* by Templeshannon Community Centre: Working with women from refugee communities in Wexford, *What's in My Bag* explored the changing perceptions of journey, ownership and possessions when refugees flee their homes and countries. Taking the symbol of the bag to examine these themes, the communities considered what they left behind, what they brought and what they found along the way. The group embroidered patterns and pictures upon the bags, using needlework traditions from their countries of origin. The project concluded in August 2024.

- *My Wexford* by Calmast and poet Stephen James Smith: Poet and Spoken Word Artist Stephen James Smith worked with TY students from Selskar College and The Presentation schools, encouraging exploration of their connections with climate change and their sense of place and belonging through the medium of spoken word. The workshops took place over September and October 2024 and culminated in a showcase performance at Wexford Arts Centre on 12th November 2024.
- *A Flock of Flags* by The Ways of Water Artist Collective: A Flock of Flags is a climate action project that harnessed creativity to encourage local people to connect with the array of migratory birds found in Wexford. In July, the project held two flag-making workshops at Wexford Wildfowl Reserve. The flags were then flown by community members on 20th July at Rosslare Strand, Our Lady's Island, Kilmore Quay, and on 27th July at and Blackhall Beach and Hook Lighthouse.
- *Earthly Kaleidoscope* by Enniscorthy Community Allotments: The gardeners and famers from Enniscorthy Community Allotments worked with mosaic artist Helen McLean to design and develop patterns and images for a mosaic for the floor of the allotments Dome building, celebrating nature and local wildlife. Forming a creative collective, the working group supported friendships and developed a strong social network.
- *Environment Enhancement Project* by Tomhaggard Women's Shed: This placemaking project saw the community groups that use Tomhaggard Community Centre revamp and revitalise a dreary outdoor space. Learning new creative skills such as mural making, painting, and construction of planters, the user groups (Scouts, The Clean Coasts Group, Tomhaggard Women's Shed, The Women's Craft Group, The Ballycogley Players, local Ukrainian residents, the Creative Writing Group) came together to develop a unique outdoor space that promotes social gathering and helps to combat rural isolation. The newly designed space was officially opened in October 2024.



CREATIVE HEALTH AND WELLBEING PROJECTS

Health and Wellbeing is one of Creative Ireland major strategic aims. In 2024 additional funding was released for local authorities to develop projects under this stream.

The Rí Rá Sessions: *The Rí Rá Sessions* is Creative Ireland Wexford's Live Music in Nursing Homes project. It was a Traditional Irish Music and Dance programme for three HSE-managed

nursing homes across the county. The **Rí Rá Sessions** acted as outreach for the concerts and sessions strand of Fleadh Ceoil na hÉireann. An evaluation of the programme can be found here: [Evaluation of The Rí Rá Sessions 2024 – Live Music in Residential Care Home Settings Project | Wexford County Council](#)

Additionally, choreographer and dancer Vivian Brodie Hayes was commissioned to creatively interpret the evaluation of The Rí Rá Sessions. Using dance and movement, Vivian emphasises the emotionally resonant aspects of the project and asks what happens to the organisational culture of a nursing home when relationships are disrupted with music and dance. This commission will be presented in various settings in 2025.

Good Grief: In 2024 through funding from the Creative Ireland Health and Wellbeing Fund, Creative Ireland teams in Waterford and Wexford developed **Good Grief**, a free programme to assist people who are in the second year following a bereavement. The programme ran for eight weeks and concluded in November 2024. 36 participants began the programme, and it finished with 33.

Many participants described the project as transformative, offering them new tools and perspectives on grief. Some continued practicing the creative exercises independently, suggesting a sustained impact. A full report will be released in 2025, along with follow-up activity.

A Garden with Many Uses: was a wellbeing project created with young people with additional needs who attend St. Patrick's School in Enniscorthy. Beginning with one of the core themes of permaculture which is 'people care', artist Laura Flood worked with the young people to create and develop an outdoor permaculture garden space that supports their wellbeing and learning.

IRISH LANGUAGE

Focus group for Irish Speaking Artists – Enniscorthy - Wexford's Creative and Cultural Strategy states that it will 'provide support for projects that promote the love and use of the Irish language in our community'. To achieve this goal, groundwork with communities of Irish speakers is being developed.

On 5th September, a bi-lingual session brought together 14 Irish speaking artists and creatives living and working in County Wexford. Through discussion, the group shared their experience of the barriers they currently face to making creative work in Irish in Wexford. They explored opportunities to develop collaborative projects that promote creative ways for people to speak, think and feel in Irish. Cill Dara le Gaeilge presented to the group on its efforts to develop the language in a county that, like Wexford, does not have a Gaeltacht area.

The session enabled Creative Ireland Wexford to understand the issues these artists face when making work in the Irish language, and what needs are to be met if impactful investments are to be made. Growing this network is groundwork for Creative Ireland Wexford's 2025 programme, when specific funding for Irish language projects will be made available.

CRUNNIÚ NA nÓG – A DAY OF CREATIVITY FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE- County-wide

The Nature Games – Cruinniú na nÓg Wexford 2024 - Entitled *The Nature Games* this year's Cruinniú na nÓg (a free day of creativity for young people) took place across county Wexford on 15th June. Centring on the themes of gaming and climate action, over 50 free events were organised for children and young people aged 0-18. Through the gaming workshops, partnerships with Galway Game Jam and Imirt (the national representative body for games and gaming) were developed. This builds the foundation for linking Wexford with the Roadmap for Creative Digital Industries released by Creative Ireland earlier this year.

Shared Island Funding - In the lead up to Cruinniú na nÓg, ten teenagers in Wexford and ten teenagers in Belfast came together via video conferencing technology to develop five video games in two days. Funding for this event was awarded by the Shared Island for Cruinniú Fund, promoting cross-border communication and sense of shared issues through community. Partners for this stage were Wexford Arts Centre and the MAC, Belfast.

Furthering the Creative Ireland Wexford Shared Island for Cruinniú project, 14 people from Belfast, including 10 students from Ulster University and Belfast School of Art, travelled to Gorey School of Art on 29th November. They met a cohort of Wexford students, and through AI and VR collaboratively explored the interwoven effects of climate change and health. Gorey School of Art students travelled to Belfast in December to continue this conversation and take part in a workshop led by Oscar-winning director Ross White. The results have formed the basis for a phase 2 project, that further develops meaningful Shared Island links between communities in County Wexford and Belfast.

Youth Consultations - To prepare for Cruinniú 2025, workshops were held with young people from thirteen 'seldom heard' or marginalised backgrounds. The artists leading the workshops encouraged the young people to use creativity to explore what they would like from Cruinniú 2025 and share what these seldom heard groups need to meaningfully take part in the event. Coming from similar identities and circumstances as each of the seldom-heard groups, the artists leading these workshops were matched accordingly.

ARTS

1. Enrich the quality of life for the citizens in Wexford through the next County Wexford Arts Plan 2023-2027, driving forward its strategic objectives.

Information clinics countywide: As part of the second year of implementing the Wexford County Council Arts Plan 2023–2027, and Culture and Creativity Strategy (2023-27) the Arts Office and Creative Ireland Wexford partnered on a series of information clinics countywide in February and November 2024, promoting the work of the Arts office, its strategic objectives and funding and other opportunities. These sessions took place countywide with over 120 attendees

2. Promote excellence in creativity and educational attainment for young people

Music Generation Wexford is a partnership between Wexford County Council, Wexford & Waterford ETB, and Music Generation, providing high-quality performance music education for young people in schools and community settings. In 2024, 25 schools took part, offering Vocal and Instrumental programmes with over 2,500 school children participating. Additional youth programmes for 150 teenagers ran in partnership CAMHS, Wexford Local Development, and venues like the National Opera House and community hubs: Bunclody, Music Hub, Gorey Youth Jam, Wexford youth Opera, Yello Bellows singing group, Wexford jammers, Uke N Pay and Bunclody Travellers Singing groups.

Highlights included

- National Music Generation Trad jam hosted by Music Generation Wexford for Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann 2024 – Wexford where 12 Music generation programme took apart involving the participation of over 700 young people across the country.
- Twelve young people from Music Generation Wexford Yello Bellows performed at the international Creative Connections Celtic festival in 2024 in Sitges norther Spain.

For more information musicgenerationwexford@wwetb.ie

Living Arts in Schools Programme is a partnership between Wexford County Council Arts Department and Wexford Arts Centre, it was delivered in 2024 across five primary schools. The programme, which aims to promote children's understanding of contemporary visual art, employed nine artists for 8 to 15-week residencies. A mentorship programme accompanied the residencies, enhancing project outcomes and supporting the artists' development. For more information www.livingartsproject.ie.

County Wexford Youth Film based at St. Michael's Theatre, New Ross, the County Wexford Youth Film Project offer training to over 50 young people countywide aged 13–20 in the art of filmmaking. Led by filmmaker Therese Dalton and a team of invited guest film makers the programme offers an accessible and exciting programme for creative expression in all aspects of film making including scriptwriting, directing, editing, acting, producing etc In 2024, workshops were delivered in person at various locations across the county and culminated in a film festival in St Michaels theatre in December 2024.

County Wexford Youth Theatre (CWYT) facilitated by Bare Cheek Theatre Company and based in Wexford Town, CWYT provides training to over 50 young people aged 12 – 18-year-old in all aspects of theatre production, including acting, writing, directing, stage management, and technical theatre. Members devise most stage productions, which are scripted by professional playwrights. Bare Cheek's Envy film premiered in February at Wexford Arts Centre. The film has received multiple nominations and awards, including Paris Indie Film

Festival: Best Score (Wallis Bird), Best Screenplay (Marnie), and Best Debut. New Port Film Festival (India): Best International Feature. Berlin Lift-Off Film Festival: Official Selection.

Creative Places Enniscorthy is a three-year arts programme designed to engage communities and artists in Enniscorthy, making the arts more accessible and encouraging community participation in creative processes. There is a strong youth focus. This initiative, led by the Arts Council | An Chomhairle Ealaíon, is supported by Wexford County Council and Wexford Arts Centre. 2024 Youth Projects included: Rí Rá – Festival of Children’s Arts, Outrage – Music Festival, The Night Belongs to Youth, Social Canvas a SETU / CPE Partnership.

For more information: <https://creativeplacesenniscorthy.ie/>

3. Support social inclusion, mental well-being and diversity and equality in partnership with key stakeholders

Arts In Health Care – Art Ability Programme running since 2003, the Arts Ability Programme provides long-term access to high-quality creative experiences in visual arts, creative writing, and music for people with mental health challenges or intellectual disabilities. Led by five artists and supported by five artist assistants, it operates across countywide residential and day care settings. The programme is a partnership between Wexford County Council, the HSE, and Wexford Mental Health Association. Arts Ability 20th Anniversary Publication was officially launched in September, celebrating the creative achievements of participants in the Arts Ability Programme.

The Centre of Everything Exhibition (August-September): This group exhibition showcased the work of artists involved in the Arts Ability Programme, an initiative supported by Wexford County Council, the HSE, and the Wexford Mental Health Association.

Cultural Companions Relaunch Event on December 5, 2024, the Arts Office hosted the relaunch of the Cultural Companions network in partnership with the Communities Department, Age Friendly Coordinator, and Sláinte Care. Held at County Hall, the initiative supports adults of all ages in attending arts and cultural events together, fostering community and combating social exclusion and loneliness throughout the County. For the launch, music group, the Session Sisters played, and dancer Hannah Scully performed to their music. Poet, writer and playwright, Stephen James Smith performed, and land artist Mayumi Nakabayashi was doing interactive work with the attendees. Over 50 people were in attendance and over 80 people have signed up to a member of the network.

Bealtaine Festival 2024 in May 2024, Wexford Arts Department hosted four Sing Along Songs as part of Age & Opportunity’s Bealtaine Festival, which celebrates creativity in aging. Sessions were held at Templeshannon Community Centre, Saint Mary’s GAA Hall, National Opera House, and Maudlin, facilitated by singer Aileen Donohue and actor Pete McCamley. The events were well received, with 80 participants who booked to attend.

Creative Community Programme The open call for the 2024 Creative Community Programme closed on 1 March, with a total fund of €40,000. This funding supports creative programmes featuring a panel of artists working with communities of place or interest. €30,000 was provided by the Arts Office, and €10,000 by Creative Ireland. Community groups could apply for grants of €1,000–€5,000, with 15 applications successfully funded countywide.

Community Dates for National Opera House 2025/26 through an open call in September 2024, Wexford County Council and the National Opera House invited local community groups, arts organizations, and schools to apply for subsidized community dates at the Opera House.

These dates are intended for staging events that serve community or fundraising purposes, helping bring community-driven arts initiatives to life in a world-class venue.

4. Support artists and creatives in their careers

Artlinks Artists Bursaries offers annual professional development support to emerging and established artists in the Southeast region, in collaboration with the arts offices of Wexford, Carlow, Kilkenny, and Waterford. In 2024, Wexford awarded 12 bursaries to local artists from a pool of 46 applicants. A total of €30,000 was allocated to support artists across various disciplines, including visual arts, literature, music, drama, film, and street arts

New Artists Workspaces: In 2024, the Arts Office took over the management of Westgate Heritage Centre and adjacent Computer Centre, converting them into workspaces for visual artists and a music rehearsal space. Wexford Arts centre was contracted by the Arts office to manage this space. Following an open call in August, four visual artists were selected to lease studio spaces, with occupancy beginning October 1, 2024. The music rehearsal space was fully renovated in 2024 and ready to open for 2025. The Centre also hosted pop-up exhibitions, which started with the Wexford Opera Festival Exhibition in October. Heritage tours continue in Wex Walks and Lions Club.

Tyrone Guthrie Artists Residencies 2024 two visual artists, Kate Murphy and Mirona Mara, were awarded bursaries to attend the Tyrone Guthrie Centre in Monaghan. This award supports Wexford-based artists across all disciplines, offering a two-week residency with accommodation, meals, studio access, and a €300 stipend for expenses.

Drama League of Ireland Scholarships 2024 the Arts Office awarded these scholarships to Nancy Rochford Flynn (New Ross Drama Workshop) and Therese O'Connor (Tintern Drama Group) for the Drama League of Ireland's Residential Summer School. The program took place at the University of Limerick from 20th to 27th July 2024.

The Irish Writers Centre National Mentoring Programme the Arts Office funds the literary mentorships along with the Arts Council of Ireland. Two Wexford writers Adana Keane and Ryan Murphy were selected to take part. This Programme provided writers with sustained creative and professional mentoring from an acclaimed Irish writer of their choosing in 2024.

Cowhouse Studios Parenting Artist Residency supported by the Wexford County Council Arts Office; offers an annual two-week residency specifically for parenting artists. This initiative provides the necessary resources and support to help awarded artists focus on their work while balancing family life. The residency aims to assist parenting artists in maintaining productive and fulfilling careers.

ISACS LIFT Residency the Arts Office supported the 4th LIFT residency organized by ISACS (Irish Street Arts, Circus, and Spectacle Network) and the Arts Council of Ireland. Italian artist Elisa Gallororosso presented her work-in-progress at Wexford Arts Centre on November 15 and returned in December to continue her research utilizing ISACS' hot desk facilities.

International Residency Opportunities - Centre Culturel Irlandais Paris (CCI) Arts Office partnering with CCI Paris in 2024 to support fully funded artist residency for a Wexford based artist in Paris in 2024. Residencies of 1 to 3 months were awarded for the period September 2024 - December 2024. Open to artists across all artforms. Wexford Artist awarded for 2024 was poet and spoken word artist Stephen James Smith.

Breaking the Patterns Residency for Emerging artists Seville & Lisbon 2024 a 3-month artist residency and work placement program for emerging visual artists. This residency is designed to support emerging artists, particularly those facing social barriers. The initiative is managed by ArtLinks (representing the Carlow, Kilkenny, Waterford, and Wexford Local Authority Arts Services) and led by Carlow County Council Arts Service under the Arts Council of Ireland's Invitation to Collaborate scheme and funded by Capacity Ireland through a Creative Europe Project and the Erasmus+ programme. Following an open call four Wexford based artists were selected to take part in the programme and travelled to Seville and Lisbon.

Emergence Award 2024-25 Wexford County Council Arts Department and Wexford Arts Centre, in partnership with South-East Technological University, selected Blaine O'Donnell as the 2024 EMERGENCE Visual Art Award recipient. This biannual award, valued at €15,000, supports visual artists through funding, mentorship, and a solo exhibition at Wexford Arts Centre, along with access to university resources. O'Donnell is creating a new body of work combining sculpture and expanded photography, inspired by the Wexford Arts Centre's architectural heritage and its local landscape. He will also collaborate with students from Southeast Technological University on workshops exploring sustainability, site-specificity, and the artistic potential of local natural processes.

Gorey School of Art: Peripheries Pair Exhibition supported by the Arts Office, this project brought together local and national artists to collaborate with international curators and artists. Wexford-based artists Ciara Roche, Patrick Redmond, and Tamara Gangnus were selected to participate. The resulting works were showcased in a group exhibition at Gorey School of Art's Peripheries Space from 2nd to 5th August 2024.

Theatre Forum Bursaries to Wexford artists Sligo Gathering 2024 the Arts Department with Theatre Forum awarded two bursaries for professional theatre practitioners based in Wexford to attend the Theatre Forum Gathering in Sligo on 28th and 29th May 2024.

5. Make Wexford a Great Place to live, work and visit

Small Arts Festival & Fáilte Ireland Festival Grant Scheme 2024

A total of €50,000 was awarded to 20 festivals, selected from 37 applications. Grants ranged from €1,000–€3,000 and were divided into two strands:

- Strand 1: Small Arts Festival Grant - Supports diverse, high-quality arts festivals with an emphasis on public engagement, artistic collaboration, and experimentation.
- Strand 2: Fáilte Ireland Festival Grant- Supports festivals that enhance domestic tourism and the visitor experience, with a focus on historic, traditional culture, and food culture festivals.

Culture Night County Wexford 2024 took place on Friday the 20th of September and was the largest one to date with 68 free events taking place countywide across the 5 municipal districts. Run by the arts offices in partnership with the Arts Council and municipal districts, Culture night highlights the quality and diversity of Ireland's arts and cultural offering, while also introducing audiences to new arts venues and emerging creative talent all for free. 27 in Wexford town, 10 in Enniscorthy, 19 in Gorey-Kilmuckridge, 10 in New Ross and Rosslare hosted their very first event Filling the Well at Rosslare Strand National School. A major light projection celebrating Arts & Culture with live spoken word and music took place outside Wexford Arts centre for Culture night – funded through the Department's Culture Late Night grant.

County Wexford Art Collection established in 1994, the County Wexford Art Collection now includes over 500 works acquired through purchases, donations, and loans. Managed by the Arts Department, the collection continues to grow its educational and outreach initiatives. Artworks are displayed in Wexford General Hospital, libraries, schools, municipal district offices, and County Hall. Free public tours of the collection are regularly conducted by a panel of local artists.

County Hall Exhibition Programme

The Centre of Everything Exhibition (August-September): This group exhibition showcased the work of over 50 artists involved in the Arts Ability Programme, across visual arts, new writing, sound installation and music performance. Curated by guest curator Mary Grehan in partnership with Wexford Arts Centre. Arts Ability is a partnership between Wexford County Council, the HSE, and the Wexford Mental Health Association.

Adrift Exhibition on the Street, County Hall by visual artist Els Dietvorst (October-December): Dietvorst presented this exhibition which explored the boundaries of human existence. The work reflected on our relationship with nature and each other, emphasizing that the quality of these connections shapes the possibilities for our collective future. 23 people were taken on private tours over the course of the exhibition. Part of a national touring exhibition supported by the Arts Council

6. Develop employment and business opportunities for Wexford via ‘Screen Wexford’ in partnership with Economics Department, which works to promote the film & AV industry in the region.

Screen Wexford is strategic partnership between the Arts and Economic Departments of Wexford County Council and aimed at fostering film development in County Wexford. Its goal is to increase local and international film production while providing training and support for new and existing talent in the film and screen sector. A €20,000 Stakeholder Fund from Screen Ireland was awarded in 2024 to deliver a filmmaker training programme through webinars and in-person events at Gorey School of Art.

Other key initiatives in 2024 included:

New Voices 2024 – Biannual award launched in May to support three emerging filmmakers funded through the Arts office. Monthly Crew Networking Café – Countywide networking events. Cinematography for Low Budget Film workshop – Short course in partnership with the National Talent Academy. The Shadowing Fund – Supports emerging filmmakers by providing on-set experience in roles such as Director, Producer, DOP, and Editor. Finishing Fund Support – Offers post-production grants for four short films annually. Remote working in Postproduction for the Future – A hybrid workshop and conference series on remote work in postproduction, covering VFX, editing, and sound, held in November at Gorey School of Art and supported by Wexford County Council, Screen Wexford, and Screen Ireland.

7. Promote Climate action and sustainable development to protect Wexford’s unique natural, built, and cultural heritage.

Roots for the Future – Climate Artist Assembly In 2024, Wexford Arts Office received a €30,000 Arts Council Invitation to Collaborate Research Grant to explore the development of a national Climate Arts Assembly for 2025/2026. The initiative aims to advance innovative methodologies within the arts and culture sector to foster behaviour change in climate adaptation and mitigation.

The research was led by the arts collective Roots for the Future in partnership with five local authorities: Offaly, Clare, Cavan, Galway, and Kilkenny. This phase included artist residencies in each county, started in Wexford from March 18–21, where artists engaged with the Arts Office and the Climate Action Team to discuss key climate issues and refine their research approach.

Findings from the residencies were presented in December 2024, first to Wexford's Climate Action Team and creatives at Cow House Studios, and later to the public at the Project Arts Centre in Dublin.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

The FOI office is responsible for the following:

- Freedom of Information
- GDPR Implementation
- Data Protection including CCTV
- Customer Complaints
- Ombudsman Complaints
- Irish Language Complaints
- Access to Information on the Environment
- Secretariat to the Records Management Group
- Secretariat to Women's Coalition

Type	Number of Requests 2024	Number of Requests 2023
FOI Requests	139	122
Formal Complaints	27	13
Customer Complaint	224	115
Ombudsman Complaints	24	29
AIE Requests	15	20
Data Access Request	14	15
Total	443	314

Issues Advanced in 2024:

- Implemented an Online Submission Platform for the Annual Service Delivery Plan
- Sourced "Women for Election" Training for Local Election Candidates

Proposals for 2025

- Update the Record of Processing Activities across the organisation
- Non personal FOI requests to be published on website

FRANCHISE

2024 was a particularly busy year for the Franchise Section with three electoral events held and a revision of the Dáil Constituency Boundary, both of which resulted in exceptional levels of activity in the Register of Electors.

Electoral and Register of Electors Activity

There were 3 electoral events in 2024:

- 2 Constitutional Referendums held on March 8
- Local and European Parliament Elections held on June 8
- General Election held on November 29

These events, coupled with the fact that the last prior electoral event was held in early 2020, resulted in exceptional numbers of applications to register and update elector details on the Register of Electors. Staff in the Franchise Section processed an unprecedented 25,000 applications during the year, requiring 34,000 individual transactions to be carried out in the Register Management IT System, iReg.

An additional 10,600 electors were added to the Register of Electors in 2024 to bring the number of electors to 127,350 at 31 December 2024.

Local Electoral Areas	Local Government Electors
Enniscorthy	23,295
Gorey	22,900
Kilmuckridge	15,029
New Ross	23,634
Rosslare	18,623
Wexford	23,869
	127,350

Dáil Boundary Revision

The Dáil Constituency boundary for County Wexford was revised in 2024 in accordance with provisions of the Electoral Amendment Act 2023. The Act provides for the creation of a new Wicklow-Wexford Constituency made up of the electoral divisions in the northern part of County Wexford and those in the southern part of County Wicklow. As a result, there are now two Dáil Constituencies in County Wexford – Wexford in the south and Wicklow-Wexford in the north.

The number of TD's for the County was also revised in 2024. Previously, County Wexford had 5 TD's but following the boundary change, the Wexford Constituency now has 4 and the new Wicklow-Wexford Constituency has 3.

As part of the work of implementing the new boundary structure in the Register of Electors, a review of the number of electors assigned to each Polling Station was carried out. This resulted in an increase in the number of Polling Stations in the County from 192 to 242.

The ICT work programme was agreed at the start of the year and the following projects were completed as part of the work programme for 2024.

CRM & Online Services

The CRM and Online Services team continues to develop online access to Council services in line with the commitments in *Connecting Government 2030*, promoting a '*Digital-first but not Digital-only*' approach to business process improvement for members of the public, staff and elected representatives.

Services to the public are published on the ***My Online Services*** portal, where almost 7,000 users have now registered. These services include various grant schemes and has simplified the application process as well as making the processing of the grants more efficient.

Some of the high-usage services for 2024 included:

Grant Schemes, including:

- Amenity and Arts Grants
- Residents Association Grants
- Local Enhancement Programme

Illegal Dumping Reporting

Roads Faults Reporting

Residential Parking Permit Applications

Sports Active Event Registrations

Housing Repair Requests

Online Payments

Contact Us

Pre-planning Meeting Requests

Ethics Register

The Ethics Register is a system designed to facilitate the digital submission of annual declaration of interests by elected members and relevant employees, which is a requirement under the *Local Government Act 2001*, which sets out an ethical framework to operate within local government.

Once all declarations have been submitted a publicly accessible register is then compiled and is available for inspection.

Audit Tracker

The Audit Tracker is a tool developed to assist our Internal Audit Section. The Internal Audit section routinely perform audits of functions in various business areas to monitor procedures and to ensure that best-practices are implemented and adhered to.

This system enables Internal Audit staff to set up an audit, make recommendations to the business area involved and has been hugely successful in providing a means of tracking progress on the implementation of those recommendations.

A suite of reports has also been developed to enhance management of the system, ensuring that recommendations outstanding and implemented, are clearly evident.

Annual Service Delivery Plan

The Annual Service Delivery Plan is a comprehensive plan that is developed by the different business areas within the Local Authority, based on the goals and objectives outlined in the

Corporate Plan 2025-2029. It outlines the principal services which each business area will deliver for the coming year.

This system was developed to provide a facility for each department to input their objectives for the coming year. These objectives are then approved by the relevant Director of Services. Digitising this process has enabled the Council to accelerate the production and publishing of the annual plan, making it available at the start of the calendar year.

Online Payments

Roads and Service ('In charge') payments are now accepted online in addition to various other online payments.

A Roads in Charge letter confirms whether or not a road is in charge of Wexford County Council. For conveyancing purposes, a solicitor or an individual may request this letter when selling or purchasing a second-hand property. This service is now available online.

DMS & Development

Document Management System (DMS)

Continue the migration of planning-related documents and metadata from the existing document store to SharePoint online as part of a larger e-Planning implementation project.

Integration with national e-Planning Portal

Work is on-going to integrate the APAS system which is used to manage planning applications and other planning related matters, with the national e-Planning portal. This will allow Planning staff to process electronic planning applications submitted via the national e-Planning portal (<https://planning.localgov.ie>).

Support and maintenance of various in-house system

Technical support is provided for a range of bespoke software systems and related databases. Support includes applying updates, integrating with other systems and resolving technical problems that can arise occasionally.

GIS, Business Applications & Process Improvement Team

The Business Applications team deliver and support new and existing business software solutions. They deliver data analytics and business intelligence reports to support decision making at all levels.

In their work the team are ever mindful of the need to continue to improve business processes to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of our staff and services.

Centros Business Applications

In 2024 the ICT section provided support for the following Centros Business Applications:- Rates, Rents, Grants, Loans Payable, Loans Receivable and Travel Expenses. Support was also provided for the following financial interface processes Billpay, Household Budget, and Bank Standing Orders.

ICT worked with the Finance Department on implementing a new *Key Enhanced Reporting Requirement* solution and a replacement solution for a legacy *Loans Payable* application.

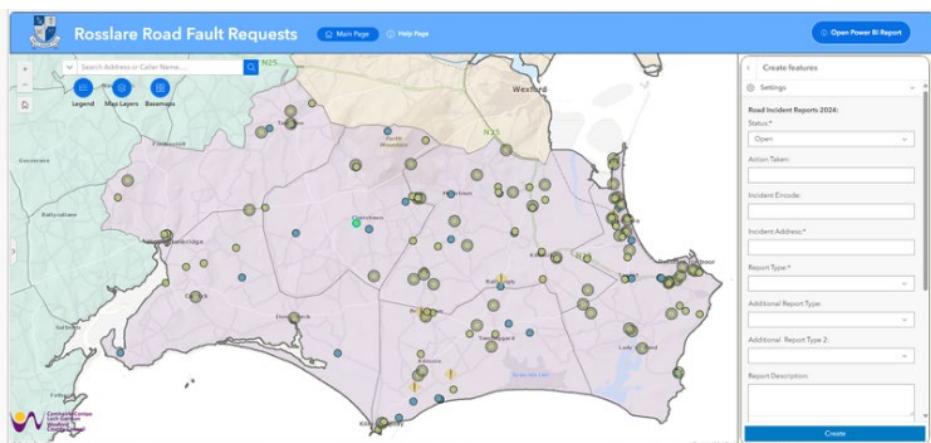
MS Power Platform

During 2024 the department continued to utilise the MS Power Platform suite of tools in order to build custom business applications and assist with the analysing and visualisation of data.

- A **Power Apps Climate Action Tracker Application** was developed in conjunction with the Climate Action Team to monitor and track the progress on 133 actions (broken down to 240 KPIs) contained within Wexford County Council's Climate Action Plan.
- The **Power BI** analytics tool was used to create a *Management Reporting Dashboard* for the Senior Management Team, it reports on
 - Flexi Time
 - Overtime
 - Employee Travel
 - PMDS
 - MetaCompliance
- **Power BI** was also used to produce Housing reports:- *Current Demand* and *Vacant Properties*. These on demand reports extract, compile and display data in a matter of minutes compared to a manual process that previously took the Housing Section three days to complete.

GIS (Geographic Information System)

The GIS Team use mapping software (ArcGIS Online and ArcPro) to capture and analyse spatial data, design digital and hardcopy maps and create GIS applications. The GIS team play an essential role in maintaining the digital databases that house geospatial information, ensuring accuracy and reliability of information for use by customers and staff.



In 2024 the GIS Team worked with the Rosslare Municipal District to develop and roll out a *Roads Fault Reporting System* to log and manage road calls from the public. It has been well received by the staff in the Municipal District and will be rolled out across the remaining Districts in 2025.

Other GIS projects during the year included:-

- A *Flooding Info Web App*
- Boundary Extension/Election Prep

SharePoint

SharePoint is a collaboration platform for document management and sharing. This platform enhances collaboration among staff, provides easy access to documents and information, and helps organize and manage documents efficiently.

Wexford County Council's SharePoint journey started in May 2024 with the commencement of the SharePoint Data Migration Project. The data for two directorates was cleansed and migrated from an on premise file server to a cloud based SharePoint solution (WexDocs) in 2024 with the remaining four directorates data being migrated in 2025.

During 2024 the GIS and Business Applications team continued to provide support services, including the upgrading of business systems based on update and service release patterns of our software suppliers, for the following systems:-

- **Canto**:- a digital asset management system used to centralise and organise digital assets.
- **MapAlerter**:- provides geographical based alerts and notifications to the public.
- **Choice Based Letting**:- a housing system that allows applicants to express an interest in available properties.
- **iHouse**:- The Housing section of Wexford County Council uses the iHouse System to manage Housing Applications/Allocations and Property Management. Three software upgrades were completed to the iHouse system during 2024.
- **iReg Support**:- The iReg system is a national system used by Local Authorities to manage register of elector related information. ICT are responsible for the day-to-day support of the system, in 2024 there were six software upgrades installed.
- **GeoPal Field Worker** is used to provide data capture functionality for field workers. Using GeoPal helps to ensure consistent data collection and reporting, simplify processes for field workers, saving time, and improve the accuracy of data collected in the field. ICT continued to support the 79 templates and 165 users of GeoPal during the year.

Technical Services - Infrastructure & Business Continuity

Upgrade of Network Switches

The upgrade of network switches involves replacing or upgrading network switches to improve network performance and reliability. This enhances network speed and efficiency, reduces downtime and network issues, and supports future growth and increased network demands.

Zero Trust Network. Enhanced Security

Implementing a Zero Trust network enhances security by requiring strict identity verification for every person and device trying to access resources. This significantly reduces the risk of data breaches, provides better control over who has access to what resources, and helps meet regulatory and compliance requirements.

Over 90% of all email is blocked due to malicious content by implementing advanced email filtering to block malicious emails. This protects staff from phishing attacks and malware, reduces the time staff spend dealing with spam and malicious emails, and ensures a safer email environment for all users.

Managed Print Tender:

The managed print tender involves outsourcing print services to a managed print service provider, which reduces printing costs through efficient management, ensures reliable and high-quality printing services, and provides staff with support and maintenance for printing needs. This next iteration of managed print will see us rollout managed print to all offices across the County.

Phone System Migration:

Phone system migration involves upgrading or migrating to a new phone system, which improves communication capabilities, provides advanced features like voicemail-to-email, call forwarding, and conferencing, and ensures a more reliable and modern phone system.

Operations

In 2024, the ICT Helpdesk handled 11,312 calls, demonstrating the availability and responsiveness of the ICT support team. This ensures staff issues are resolved promptly, minimizing downtime, and enhancing staff satisfaction with IT services.

Upgrade of All PCs, Laptops to Windows 11:

The upgrade of all PCs and laptops to Windows 11 improves system performance and user experience, provides enhanced security features, and ensures compatibility with the latest software and applications.

Councillor Support

Providing IT support specifically for councillors ensures they have the tools and support needed to perform their duties efficiently, offers dedicated support for quick issue resolution, and enhances councillor satisfaction with IT services.

End User Support :

General IT support for all staff provides assistance with technical issues and questions, ensures staff can work efficiently without technical disruptions, and offers training and resources to help staff use technology effectively.

Meeting Rooms Upgrade & Support:

Upgrading and providing support for meeting room technology ensures meeting rooms are equipped with the latest technology, enhances the efficiency of meetings with reliable equipment, and provides ongoing support to resolve any technical issues quickly.

Mobile Device Support:

Providing support for mobile devices used by staff supports those who work remotely or on the go, ensures mobile devices are secure and compliant with policies, and helps staff stay productive with reliable mobile device support.



APPENDICES

CONFERENCES AND TRAINING ATTENDED BY ELECTED MEMBERS

Conferences 2024

Date	Conference	Attendees
12th, 13th & 14th January	Celtic Conferences: "The Finance Act 2023" Carlingford, Co. Louth	Joe Sullivan
2nd, 3rd & 4th February	Celtic Conferences "The Irish Housing Crisis – A Sustainable Option" - Clonakilty, Co. Cork	Fionntán O'Súilleabhaín
8th March	Online Conference – Offshore Renewable Energy Ireland 2024. The Future for the Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE) Sector in Ireland	Jim Moore
18th & 19th April	Local Government Tourism Conference 2024 – Killashee House, Naas.	Jim Moore
5th September	Changing Our Housing System (Threshold), Event Centre at Smithfield, Dublin.	Michael Sheehan
11th, 12th & 13th October	Celtic Conferences "A Practical Guide to Budget 2025" – Carlingford, Co. Louth.	Michael Sheehan John Fleming
13th, 14th & 15th December	Celtic Conferences "Health Service Entitlements" – Cork.	Pat Barden Donal Kenny Garry Laffan

Training 2024

Date	Training Course	Attendees
19th & 20th January	LAMA Spring Seminar "Building for Success", Donegal Town	Pip Breen John Fleming Donal Kenny Garry Laffan Michael Sheehan Joe Sullivan
25th January	AILG Module 1 Training "Elected Members briefing: Annual Declarations, Donations, Code of Conduct, and Local Representation Allowance update" – Dundalk, Co. Louth. (out of region)	Garry Laffan
27th January	AILG Module 1 Training "Elected Members briefing: Annual Declarations, Donations, Code of Conduct, and Local Representation Allowance update" – Limerick	Pat Barden Cathal Byrne Anthony Connick John Fleming Donal Kenny Michael Sheehan Joe Sullivan

6th, 7th & 8th February	AIR Annual Training “Building Capacity to address the challenges of a Changing Ireland” – Limerick	Cathal Byrne John Fleming Donal Kenny Garry Laffan Jim Moore Joe Sullivan Oliver Walsh
14th & 15th February	AILG Annual Training Conference – Arklow, Co. Wicklow.	Pip Breen Mary Farrell Garry Laffan Joe Sullivan Michael Whelan
13th & 14th March	2024 Annual Suck Valley Way Training Conference – Roscommon	Donal Kenny Garry Laffan Joe Sullivan
21st March	AILG Module 2 Training “Local Election 2024 Preparation – A briefing from the Electoral Commission” – Kilkenny	Garry Laffan Joe Sullivan Oliver Walsh
23rd March	AILG Module 2 Training “Local Election 2024 Preparation – A briefing from the Electoral Commission” – Athlone (out of region)	Fionntán O’Súilleabhbáin
13th July	AILG Elected Member Induction Training – Cork	Nicky Boland John Fleming Pat Kehoe Donal Kenny Garry Laffan Marty Murphy Fionntán O’Súilleabhbáin Raymond Shannon Michael Sheehan Joe Sullivan Oliver Walsh
11th & 12th September	AILG Autumn Training Seminar – Monaghan	Pat Barden Nicky Boland John Fleming Pat Kehoe Donal Kenny Garry Laffan Raymond Shannon Joe Sullivan
26th September	AILG Training “An Overview of the Planning System” – Tipperary	Pat Kehoe Donal Kenny Garry Laffan Oliver Walsh
28th September	AILG Training “An Overview of the Planning System” – Tullamore (out of region)	John Fleming Michael Sheehan Joe Sullivan
17th & 18th October	LAMA Autumn Seminar – Navan, Co. Meath	Pat Barden Donal Kenny Garry Laffan Frank Staples Michael Sheehan Joe Sullivan Oliver Walsh

24th October	AILG Training “Local Authority Finance & Budget” – Sligo (out of region)	Donal Kenny Garry Laffan
2nd November	AILG Training “Local Authority Finance & Budget” – Limerick.	Nicky Boland Frank Staples Joe Sullivan
16th November	AILG Training – “Government Legislation Policy Programme 2024 – A Briefing for Elected Members” – Galway	Donal Kenny Garry Laffan Frank Staples

ELECTED MEMBERS MEMBERSHIP OF OTHER BODIES

Body	Elected Representatives Jan-May 2024				
3 Counties Energy Agency	G. Carthy	J. Fleming			
Age Friendly Alliance	Cathaoirleach Ex-Officio				
Apex - New Ross Sport & Leisure Ltd.	A. Connick	M. Sheehan			
Association of Irish Local Government	A. Connick	D. Kenny	A. Bolger		
County Wexford Drugs & Alcohol Task Force	D. Hynes				
High Performance Building Alliance	B.A. Murphy				
Hook Heritage	M. Whelan	P. Barden			
Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurances	G. Lawlor				
JFK Trust	J. Fleming				
KIMO International	J. Moore				
Local Authority Members Association	M. Whelan				
Model County Enterprise Group CLG	B.A. Murphy				
National 1798 Historical Centre	B.A. Murphy	C. Byrne			
New Ross Coarse Angling Ltd.	A. Connick				
Regional Health Forum (South)	D. Kenny	P. Barden	G. Laffan	C. Byrne	
South East Drugs & Alcohol Task Force	D. Hynes				
South East River Basin District Advisory Council	M. Farrell				
Southern Regional Assembly	P. Breen	M. Bell	O. Walsh		
Sports Active Wexford	G. Laffan				
St. Michael's Theatre	B. Murphy				
St. Stephen's Cemetery Committee	P. Barden	A. Connick	M. Sheehan	J. Fleming	M. Whelan
Wexford Comhairle na nÓg Steering Group	Cathaoirleach Ex-Officio				B. Murphy

Wexford Heritage Trust Ltd.	B.A. Murphy	G. Laffan				
Waterford & Wexford Educational Training Board	B.A. Murphy	M. Farrell	K. Codd Nolan	A. Browne	G. Laffan	F. Ó'Súileabháin
Wexford Monument Trust Ltd.	P. Barden					F. Staples
Wexford Swimming Pool and Caravan Park Ferrybank	D. Hynes	M. Bell				

Body	Elected Representatives Jun-Dec 2024					
Age Friendly Alliance	Cathaoirleach Ex-Officio					
Apex - New Ross Sport & Leisure Ltd.	J. Dwyer	M. Sheehan				
Association of Irish Local Government	G. Laffan	P. Kehoe	O. Walsh			
County Wexford Drugs & Alcohol Task Force	J. Codd					
High Performance Building Alliance	G. Laffan					
Hook Heritage	B. Murphy	M. Sheehan				
Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurances	B.A. Murphy					
JFK Trust	J. Fleming					
KIMO International	B.A. Murphy					
Local Authority Members Association	D. Kenny					
Model County Enterprise Group CLG	D. Kenny					
National 1798 Historical Centre	B.A. Murphy	C. Byrne				
Regional Health Forum (South)	J. Sullivan	J. Fleming	F. Staples	C. Byrne		
South East Drugs & Alcohol Task Force	J. Codd					
South East Energy Agency	F. Staples					
South East River Basin District Advisory Council	B.A. Murphy					
Southern Regional Assembly	P. Breen	B.A. Murphy	O. Walsh			
Sports Active Wexford	G. Laffan					
St. Michael's Theatre	B. Murphy					
St. Stephen's Cemetery Committee	P. Barden	J. Dwyer	M. Sheehan	J. Fleming	M. Murphy	B. Murphy
Wexford Comhairle na nÓg Steering Group	Cathaoirleach Ex-Officio					
Wexford Heritage Trust Ltd.	B.A. Murphy	G. Laffan				
Waterford & Wexford Educational Training Board	J. Codd	A. Browne	D. McDonald	B. Murphy	P. Kavanagh	M. Farrell
Wexford Monument Trust Ltd.	J. Fleming					M. Sheehan

ANNUAL ALLOWANCES PAID TO ELECTED MEMBERS WHO HOLD PARTICULAR OFFICES

Payments to Elected Members	2024
Total Representational Payments	€1,008,207.95
Total Annual Expenses Allowance Payments	€171,094.94
Total Local Representation Allowance Payments	€88,758.37
Total Expenses paid to Members in respect of attendances at Training Events	€35,072.48
Total Expenses paid to Members in respect of attendances at Conferences and Other Events	€8,215.08
Conference and Training Fees (Paid to Conference/Training Providers)	€5,620.15
Total Expenses paid to or behalf of Members in respect of attendances at Events Abroad	€51,234.09
Total Expenses paid to Members in respect of Members Security Allowance	€3,740.00
Total Payments in respect of the Chairperson of Wexford County Council Annual Allowance	€35,186.94
Total Payments in respect of the Vice-Chairperson of Wexford County Council Annual Allowance	€5,979.48
Total Payments in respect of the Strategic Policy Committee Chairperson Annual Allowance	€23,457.96
Total Payments in respect of the Chairperson of Municipal District Annual Allowance	€23,572.93
Total Payments in respect of the Chairperson of Borough District (Mayoral) Allowance	€10,763.06
Chairperson's Allowances Payable	2024
Chairperson of Wexford County Council Annual Allowance	€30,000.00
Vice-Chairperson of Wexford County Council Annual Allowance	€6,000.00
Strategic Policy Committee Chairperson Annual Allowance	€6,000.00
Chairperson of Municipal District Annual Allowance	€6,000.00
Chairperson of Borough District (Mayoral) Allowance	€12,000.00

COMMITTEES AND MEETINGS

Council Committees and Meetings 2024						
Title	Purpose	Total Number of Members (Jan to May 2024)	Number of Meetings Held (Jan to May 2024)	Total Number of Members (June to Dec 2024)	Number of Meetings Held (June to Dec 2024)	Total number of Meetings held in 2024
Wexford County Council		34	7	34	8	15
Enniscorthy Municipal District		6	5	6	8	13
New Ross Municipal District		6	5	6	6	11
Wexford Borough District		7	5	7	6	11

Gorey-Kilmuckridge Municipal District Rosslare Municipal District Corporate Policy Group (CPG)		10	7	10	6	13
		5	5	5	7	12
	To act as a mini-cabinet for Council Business, to link and co-ordinate the work of the different SPCs and to provide a forum where policy positions affecting the whole Council can be discussed and agreed for submission to the full County Council.	8	4	7	5	9
		11	1	11	0	1
		17	2	17	0	2
		7	2	7	0	2
	To formulate, develop, monitor and review policies which relate to the functions of Wexford County Council and to advise the Council accordingly.	12	2	12	0	2
		14	2	14	0	2
		10	1	11	1	2
		4	1	4	1	2
Transportation and Water Services Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) Economic Development and Enterprise Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) Planning and Building Control Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) Housing and Community Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environment Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) Protocol Committee Protocol Committee WBD Local Traveller (Accommodation) Consultative Committee	To advise in relation to the preparation and implementation of any accommodation programme for the functional area of the appointing authority concerned.	11	2	7	1	3

Audit Committee	To review the Council's financial reporting practices and procedures; To foster the development of best practice in the local authority internal audit function; To review the Council's financial reports and report to that authority on its findings; To assess and promote efficiency and value for money; To review systems that are operated by the local authority for the management of risks.	5	1	5	2	3
Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)	To have primary responsibility for co-ordination, governance, planning and oversight of local development spend, whether that spend is delivered by local authorities or on behalf of the State by other local development agencies and structures; To bring a more coherent approach to the implementation of local and community development programmes and interventions, seeking to ensure an integrated approach to local community and local development services between providers and delivery structures; To develop approaches that focus on learning and feedback, enhancing the links between practice and policy development; To explore and pursue opportunities for additional funding resources for the area, whether Exchequer, EU, private or other resources.	19	4	19	0	4
Joint Policing Committee (JPC)	To develop greater consultation, co-operation and synergy on policing and crime issues between An Garda Síochána, Wexford County Council and its elected representatives, and the community and voluntary sector.	30	1	30	0	1

Joint Policing Committee (JPC) New Ross Municipal District	To develop greater consultation, cooperation and synergy on policing and crime issues between An Garda Síochána, New Ross Municipal District and its elected representatives, and the community and voluntary sector.	11	1	0	0	1
Joint Policing Committee (JPC) Borough District of Wexford	To develop greater consultation, cooperation and synergy on policing and crime issues between An Garda Síochána, the Borough District of Wexford and its elected representatives, and the community and voluntary sector.	22	1	0	0	1
Rural Water Monitoring Committee	To monitor and advise on the development and implementation of policy in relation to the locally devolved rural water programme.	5	0	5	2	2
Enniscorthy MD Civic Memorial Sub Committee Budget Working Group		3	1	3	0	1
Women's Coalition		10	0	9	1	1
	To support an increase in the number of women in politics, to support each other as female members of the Council, and to encourage other women who are interested in politics to get involved.	6	0	6	3	3
Environmental Monitoring Committee		2	0	2	0	0
Total		60		57		117

FOREIGN TRAVEL

Date	Destination	Delegation
February 2024	Jiangxi, China	Cllr John Fleming, Cathaoirleach Carolyne Godkin (Council Official) Breege Cosgrave (Council Official) Xiaohong Wei
March 2024	New York	Cllr Ger Carthy Eamonn Hore (Council Official) Michael Drea (Council Official)
March 2024	Savannah	Cllr John Fleming Cllr Pip Breen Cllr Jim Moore Cllr Leonard Kelly Elizabeth Hore (Council Official) Billy Byrne (Council Official) Angela Lawless (Council Official)
March 2024	Harteford, Connecticut	Cllr Pat Barden

April 2024	London Wexford Association Dinner Dance	Cllr Michael Sheehan Alan Fitzhenry (Council Official) Cllr Pip Breen Cllr Anthony Connick Cllr Jim Moore Cllr John O'Rourke Claire Lawless (Council Official) Alan Fitzhenry (Council Official) Philip Knight (Council Official) Eamonn Hore (Council Official) Noirin Cummins (Council Official)
May 2024	Dunkirk, France	Cllr Jim Moore Noirin Cummins (Council Official)
July 2024	Moncoutant, France	Cllr John Dwyer Cllr Bridin Murphy Alan Fitzhenry (Council Official)
September 2024	Danville, California	Cllr Bridin Murphy Cllr Michael Sheehan Eamonn Hore (Council Official) Alan Fitzhenry (Council Official)
September 2024	Fron-goch, Wales	Cllr Pip Breen
October 2024	KIMO International AGM & Conference, Amsterdam, Netherlands	Cllr Barbara Anne Murphy Cpt Phil Murphy (Council Official)
October 2024	London Wexford Association Event, Cricklewood	Cllr Aidan Browne Cllr John Dwyer Cllr Lisa McDonald Cllr Oliver Walsh Claire Lawless (Council Official) Alan Fitzhenry (Council Official) Eamonn Hore (Council Official) Noirin Cummins (Council Official)
October 2024	Caen, France	Cllr John Fleming Cllr Michael Sheehan Billy Byrne (Council Official) Eamonn Hore (Council Official) Alan Fitzhenry (Council Official)

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME (INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT STATEMENT)
FOR YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2024

The Income and Expenditure Account Statement brings together all the revenue related income and expenditure. It shows the surplus/(deficit) for the year.

Note 16 allocates transfers by service division in the same format as Table A of the adopted Local Authority budget.

Expenditure By Division	Note	Gross Expenditure 2024	Income 2024	Net Expenditure 2024	Net Expenditure 2023
		€	€	€	€
Housing and Building		45,674,566	50,606,559	(4,931,993)	(4,717,865)
Roads, Transportation & Safety		44,089,960	30,351,889	13,738,071	12,374,305
Water Services		13,336,889	11,608,456	1,728,433	568,550
Development Management		31,468,410	20,414,504	11,053,906	10,221,245
Environmental Services		19,147,679	5,481,288	13,666,391	12,148,786
Recreation & Amenity		12,565,957	1,456,698	11,109,259	9,748,371
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare		2,872,032	1,318,291	1,553,741	1,077,231
Miscellaneous Services		13,090,784	15,347,159	(2,256,375)	3,605,934
Total Expenditure/Income	15	182,246,277	136,584,845		
Net Cost of Division to be funded from Rates and Local Property Tax				45,661,432	45,026,557
Rates				41,603,065	41,057,314
Local Property Tax				16,985,610	15,272,231
Surplus/(Deficit) for Year before Transfer				12,927,243	11,302,988
Transfers from/(to) Reserves	14			(12,869,288)	(11,253,469)
Overall Surplus/(Deficit) for Year	16			57,955	49,519
General Reserve at 1st January				134,937	85,417
General Reserve at 31st December				192,891	134,937

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION (BALANCE SHEET) AS AT 31st DECEMBER 2024

	Notes	2024	2023
		€	€
Fixed Assets	1		
Operational		1,053,551,390	998,707,824
Infrastructural		1,785,831,520	1,785,006,015
Community		65,352,891	65,991,083
Non-Operational		16,719,052	16,728,342
		2,921,454,852	2,866,433,263
Work-in-Progress and Preliminary Expenses	2	63,839,044	46,413,536
Long Term Debtors	3	142,274,851	113,238,136
Current Assets			
Stock	4	545,234	578,395
Trade Debtors & Prepayments	5	44,130,258	27,047,889
Bank Investments		48,767,178	53,597,147
Cash at Bank		4,023,049	7,932,174
Cash in Transit		2,900	800
		97,468,619	89,156,405
Current Liabilities			
Bank Overdraft		-	-
Creditors & Accruals	6	44,783,565	45,008,435
Finance Leases		-	-
		44,783,565	45,008,435
Net Current Assets / (Liabilities)		52,685,054	44,147,970
Creditors (Amounts greater than one year)			
Loans Payable	7	140,810,792	138,173,970
Finance Leases		-	-
Refundable Deposits	8	13,767,078	10,697,047
Other		80,946,021	50,303,028
		235,523,890	199,174,044
Net Assets / (Liabilities)		2,944,729,913	2,871,058,862
Represented By			
Capitalisation	9	2,921,454,853	2,866,433,263
Income WIP	2	59,464,539	48,580,817
General Revenue Reserve		192,891	134,937
Other Specific Reserves		1,141,714	789,714
Other Balances	10	(37,524,084)	(44,879,869)
Total Reserves		2,944,729,913	2,871,058,862

STATEMENT OF FUNDS FLOW (FUNDS FLOW STATEMENT)

AS AT 31ST DECEMBER 2024

		2024	2024
	Note	€	€
REVENUE ACTIVITIES			
Net Inflow/(outflow) from Operating Activities	17		(17,216,123)
CAPITAL ACTIVITIES			
Returns on Investment and Servicing of Finance			
Increase/(Decrease) in Fixed Asset Capitalisation Funding		55,021,589	
Increase/(Decrease) in WIP/Preliminary Funding		10,883,722	
Increase/(Decrease) in Reserves Balances	18	1,650,267	
Net Inflow/(Outflow) from Returns on Investment and Servicing of Finance			67,555,577
Capital Expenditure & Financial Investment			
(Increase)/Decrease in Fixed Assets		(55,021,589)	
(Increase)/Decrease in WIP/Preliminary Funding		(17,425,508)	
(Increase)/Decrease in Other Capital Balances	19	10,703,508	
Net Inflow/(Outflow) from Capital Expenditure and Financial Investment			(61,743,590)
Financing			
Increase/(Decrease) in Loan & Lease Financing	20	4,243,100	
(Increase)/Decrease in Reserve Financing	21	(4,645,989)	
Net Inflow/(Outflow) from Financing Activities			(402,889)
Third Party Holdings			
Increase/(Decrease) in Refundable Deposits			3,070,031
Net Increase/(Decrease) in Cash and Cash Equivalents	22		(8,736,994)

STATEMENT OF INTERNAL FINANCIAL CONTROL (SIFC)

[for transitional use only in advance of full implementation of the Code]

Introduction

I, Eddie Taaffe, Chief Executive (CE) of Wexford County Council am responsible for the annual financial statement (AFS), prepared by the Director of Finance, in accordance with the accounting code of practice issued by the Minister under section 107 of the Local Government Act, 2001.

I certify that the financial statements of Wexford County Council for the year ended 31 December 2024, are in agreement with the books of account and have been prepared in accordance with the accounting requirements of the Minister of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

The AFS is subject to external audit, by an auditor of the Local Government Audit Service, whose purpose is to form an independent opinion of the accounts and state whether the annual financial statement presents fairly the financial position of the local authority and of its income and expenditure for the period in question, and whether the transactions of the audited body conform with the statutory or other authorisation under which they purport to have been carried out.

The AFS reports on the day-to-day activity of Wexford County Council in the form of the Statement of Comprehensive Income & Expenditure, summarised by Division. The Statement of Financial Position outlines the Wexford County Council overall financial position as of the 31st of December 2024.

The *Statement of Comprehensive Income* represents expenditure and income on the day-to-day running of the Wexford County Council.

The key sources of income for Wexford County Council are as follows:

	Current Year	Previous Year
	€	€
Goods & Services	42,506,654	43,736,474
Grants & Subsidies	93,552,057	63,145,621
Other Contributions (as appropriate)	526,134	471,663
Rates	41,603,065	41,057,314
Local Property Tax	16,985,610	15,272,231

Activity on the Income and Expenditure account for 2024 is as follows:

Income and Expenditure upward movements compared to 2023 are accounted for by increased activity across all programme groups. However, once off grants for certain cohorts of the commercial rates sector did increase income and expenditure equally. Two “Increase Cost of Business” (ICOB) grants and “Power Up Grant” (PUG) increased operational expenditure and income by €15,508,598.

	Current Year	Previous Year
	€	€
Income	195,173,520	163,683,303
Expenditure	182,246,277	152,380,315
Transfers to Capital	12,869,288	11,253,469
Exceptional Item	0	0
Surplus (Deficit) for	57,955	49,519
Prior Year Adjustment	0	0
Opening Revenue Reserve	134,937	85,417
Closing Revenue Reserve	192,891	134,937

The performance of the operational/revenue account during 2024 resulted in €57,955 surplus being reported for the financial year. This was largely achievable by the financial support from Central Government in respect of the FEMPI allocation which assists with the increased pay costs arising from the National Pay Agreements. The ongoing support of this grant is imperative to ensure that these non-discretionary costs do not negatively impact on service delivery for the County.

The *Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet)* represents the total financial activity of the council for the year together with comparative year figures as appropriate.

The statement includes assets and liabilities as follows:

- Assets both recently constructed/purchased and historical assets
- Work in progress and preliminary schemes- mainly roads and housing
- Long Term Debtors – housing loans
- Current Assets- including Stock, Debtors, Cash at bank
- Current and long term liabilities- mortgage and non-mortgage loan borrowings
- Various Reserves/Balances

The Net Assets of Wexford County Council, at the end of 2024 total €2,944,729,913 and are as follows:

	Current Year	Previous Year
	€	€
Fixed Assets	2,921,454,852	2,866,433,263
Works in Progress	63,839,044	46,413,536
Long Term Debtors	142,274,851	113,238,136
Current Assets	97,468,619	89,156,405
Current Liabilities	44,783,565	45,008,435
Net Current Assets / (Liabilities)	52,685,054	44,147,970
Creditors (Amounts greater than 1 year)	235,523,890	199,174,044
Net Assets/(Liabilities)	2,944,729,913	2,871,058,862

A *Statement of Funds Flow* was introduced as part of AFS 2011. While the guidance of International Accounting Standard 7 Statement of Cash Flows has been followed, the business of local authorities is substantially different to most private sector organisations and therefore some minor changes to the format have been agreed to ensure the data displayed is meaningful and useful within the local government sector.

System of Internal Financial Controls

As Chief Executive of Wexford County Council, I acknowledge my responsibility for ensuring that an effective system of internal financial control is maintained and operated by the Wexford County Council. This responsibility is exercised in the context of the resources available to Wexford County Council. Also, any system of internal financial control can provide only reasonable and not absolute assurance that assets are safeguarded, transactions authorised and properly recorded, and that material errors or irregularities are either prevented or would be detected in a timely manner. Maintaining the system of internal financial controls is a continuous process and the system and its effectiveness are kept under ongoing review.

Financial control environment

As Chief Executive of Wexford County Council, I confirm that a financial control environment containing the following elements is in place:

- Financial responsibilities have been assigned at management level with corresponding accountability.
- Reporting arrangements have been established at all levels where responsibility for financial management has been assigned.
- Formal procedures have been established for reporting significant control failures and ensuring appropriate corrective action.
- There is an Audit Committee which as part of its work programme regularly review the internal financial control system.

- Procedures for all key business processes have been documented.
- There are systems in place to safeguard the assets.

Administrative Controls and Management Reporting

As Chief Executive of Wexford County Council, I confirm that a framework of administrative procedures and regular management reporting is in place including segregation of duties and a system of delegation and accountability and, in particular, that:

- procedures for key business processes have been documented
- there are systems aimed at ensuring the security of the ICT systems
- there are systems in place to safeguard the assets of the local authority and
- there are appropriate capital investment control guidelines and formal project management disciplines in operation.

Procurement compliance

Wexford County Council ensures that there is an appropriate and ongoing focus on good practice in tendering and purchasing and that procedures are in place to ensure compliance with all relevant procurement guidelines.

Internal audit and Audit Committee

As Chief Executive, I can confirm that Wexford County Council has an internal audit function with appropriately trained personnel, which operates in accordance with a written charter. Its work is informed by analysis of the financial risks to which Wexford County Council is exposed and its annual internal audit plans are based on this analysis. I am satisfied that there are procedures in place to ensure that the reports of the internal audit function are followed up.

I can confirm that Wexford County Council has an effective audit committee which carries out an annual effectiveness review of their activities. I can also confirm that an Audit Committee is in place

in accordance with the requirements of Section 122 of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended).

The statutory functions of audit committees as set out in section 59 and 60 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 are as follows:

- i. to review financial and budgetary reporting practices and procedures within the local authority that has established it;
- ii. to foster the development of best practice in the performance by the local authority of its internal audit function;
- iii. to review any audited financial statement, auditor's report or auditor's special report in relation to the local authority and assess any actions taken within that authority by its chief executive in response to such a statement or report and to report to that authority on its findings;
- iv. to assess and promote efficiency and value for money with respect to the local authority's performance of its functions; and
- v. to review systems that are operated by the local authority for the management of risks.

I recognise that the audit committee plays a crucial role in the governance framework of local authorities, particularly in the context of increased public sector accountability. They have an independent role in advising the Council on financial reporting processes, internal control, risk management and audit matters as part of the systematic review of the control environment and governance procedures of the local authority.

I acknowledge the Audit Committee's role in the risk management process and in the continuing review of the control environment and governance procedures in Wexford County Council.

Risk and control framework

Wexford County Council has implemented a risk management system which identifies and reports key risks and the management actions being taken to address and, to the extent possible, mitigate those risks.

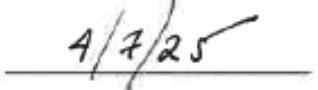
A corporate risk register is in place which identifies the key risks and evaluates and grades them according to their significance. The register is reviewed and updated by the Management Team on a regular basis. There is currently a work programme in place to develop risk registers for each service division and those will also be reviewed and updated, when complete, on a regular basis.

The outcome of these assessments is used to plan and allocate resources to ensure risks are managed to an acceptable level. The risk registers which detail the controls and actions needed to mitigate risks and responsibilities for the operation of controls are assigned to specific staff.

As Chief Executive, I confirm that key risks and related controls have been identified and processes have been put in place to monitor the operation of those key controls and report any identified deficiencies.

Signed by: 

Chief Executive

Dated: 

Performance Indicators

01/01/2024 - 31/12/2024 (Annual)

Wexford County Council

Topic	Indicator	Value	Comment
Housing: H1, H2 & H4 Approved	A. Number of dwellings in the ownership of the local authority at 1/1/2024	4,851	
	B. Number of dwellings added to the local authority owned stock during 2024 (whether constructed or acquired)	158	
	C. Number of local authority owned dwellings sold in 2024	24	
	D. Number of local authority owned dwellings demolished in 2024	0	
	E. Number of dwellings in the ownership of the local authority at 31/12/2024	4,985	
	F. Number of local authority owned dwellings planned for demolition under a DHLGH approved scheme at 31/12/2024	0	
	A. The percentage of the total number of local authority owned dwellings that were vacant on 31/12/2024	0.94 %	
	The number of dwellings within their overall stock that were not tenanted on 31/12/2024	47	
	A. Expenditure during 2024 on the maintenance of local authority housing compiled from 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024, divided by the no. of dwellings in the local authority stock at 31/12/2024, i.e. the H1E less H1F indicator figure	€2,170.66	
	Expenditure on maintenance of local authority stock compiled from 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024, including planned maintenance and expenditure that qualified for grants, such as Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) grants for energy efficient retrofitting works but excluding expenditure on vacant properties and expenditure under approved major refurbishment schemes (i.e. approved Regeneration or under the Remedial Works Schemes).	€10,820,740	

Housing: H3 & H5	
Approved	
A. The time taken from the date of vacation of a dwelling to the date in 2024 when the dwelling is re-tenanted, averaged across all dwellings re-let during 2024	35.30 wk.
B. The cost expended on getting the dwellings re-tenanted in 2024, averaged across all dwellings re-let in 2024	€16,420.72
A. Total number of registered tenancies in the LA area at the end of June 2024	6,635
B. Number of rented dwellings inspected in 2024	1,554
C. Percentage of inspected dwellings in 2024 not compliant with the Standards Regulations	74.42%
D. Number of dwellings deemed compliant in 2024 (including those originally deemed non-compliant)	509
E. The number of inspections (including reinspections) undertaken by the local authority in 2024	1,648
Housing: H6	
Approved	
A. Number of adult individuals in emergency accommodation that are long-term (i.e. 6 months or more within the previous year) homeless as a percentage of the total number of homeless adult individuals in emergency accommodation at the end of 2024	59.32%
Housing: H7	
Approved	
A. (1) Total number of houses retrofitted between 01/01/2024 and 31/12/2024 under the Social Housing Retrofit Programme	118
A. (2) Number of houses that achieved a BER rating of B2 or above between 01/01/2024 and 31/12/2024 under the Social Housing Retrofit Programme	118
A. (3) Number of heat pumps installed in those houses between 01/01/2024 and 31/12/2024 under the Social Housing Retrofit Programme	117
B. Total annual energy savings in MWh from houses retrofitted between 01/01/2024 and 31/12/2024 under the Social Housing Retrofit Programme	2,006.50 MWh
C. Total carbon emission reduction tCo2 from houses retrofitted between 01/01/2024 and 31/12/2024 under the Social Housing Retrofit Programme	567.80

Roads: R1 & R2 Approved	A. (b) The percentage of Local Primary roads that received a PSCI rating in the 24 month period prior to 31/12/2024	93.06%
	A. (c) The percentage of Local Secondary roads that received a PSCI rating in the 24 month period prior to 31/12/2024	92.80 %
	A. (d) The percentage of Local Tertiary roads that received a PSCI rating in the 60 month period prior to 31/12/2024	92.28 %
	B. (b.1) The percentage length of Local Primary roads that received a PSCI rating of 1-4 in the 24 month period prior to 31/12/2024	17.46 %
	B. (b.2) The percentage length of Local Primary roads that received a PSCI rating of 5-6 in the 24 month period prior to 31/12/2024	16.45 %
	B. (b.3) The percentage length of Local Primary roads that received a PSCI rating of 7-8 in the 24 month period prior to 31/12/2024	32.01 %
	B. (b.4) The percentage length of Local Primary roads that received a PSCI rating of 9-10 in the 24 month period prior to 31/12/2024	27.15 %
	B. (c.1) The percentage length of Local Secondary roads that received a PSCI rating of 1-4 in the 24 month period prior to 31/12/2024	32.84 %
	B. (c.2) The percentage length of Local Secondary roads that received a PSCI rating of 5-6 in the 24 month period prior to 31/12/2024	15.84 %
	B. (c.3) The percentage length of Local Secondary roads that received a PSCI rating of 7-8 in the 24 month period prior to 31/12/2024	21.29 %
	B. (c.4) The percentage length of Local Secondary roads that received a PSCI rating of 9-10 in the 24 month period prior to 31/12/2024	22.83 %
	B. (d.1) The percentage length of Local Tertiary roads that received a PSCI rating of 1-4 in the 60 month period prior to 31/12/2024	32.95 %
	B. (d.2) The percentage length of Local Tertiary roads that received a	10.30 %

	PSCI rating of 5-6 in the 60 month period prior to 31/12/2024		
	B. (d.3) The percentage length of Local Tertiary roads that received a PSCI rating of 7-8 in the 60 month period prior to 31/12/2024	26.56 %	
	B. (d.4) The percentage length of Local Tertiary roads that received a PSCI rating of 9-10 in the 60 month period prior to 31/12/2024	22.48 %	
	A.1 Kilometres of regional road strengthened during 2024	14.60 km	
	A.2 The amount expended on regional roads strengthening work during 2024	€3,338,300	
	A.3 The average unit cost of regional road strengthening works per square metre (€/m ²)	€33.41	
	B.1 Kilometres of regional road resealed during 2024	12.00 km	
	B.2 The amount expended on regional road resealing work during 2024	€406,151	
	B.3 The average unit cost of regional road resealing works per square metre (€/m ²)	€5.10	
	C.1 Kilometres of local road strengthened during 2024	111.60 km	
	C2. The amount expended on local road strengthening work during 2024	€14,355,637	
	C.3 The average unit cost of local road strengthening works per square metre (€/m ²)	€26.05	
	D.1 Kilometres of local road resealed during 2024	100.50 km	
	D.2 The amount expended on local road resealing work during 2024	€2,490,790	
	D.3 The average unit cost of local road resealing works per square metre (€/m ²)	€4.95	
Motor Tax: R3 Approved	A. The percentage of motor tax transactions which were dealt with online (i.e. transaction is processed and the tax disc is issued) in 2024	83.64%	
Water: W1 & W2 Approved	Percentage of drinking water in private schemes in compliance with statutory requirements	94.97 %	
	The number of registered schemes monitored by each local authority as a percentage of total schemes registered	98.82 %	

Waste: E1 Approved	A. The number of households which availed of a 3-bin service offered by a licensed operator at 31/12/2024	38,799
	B. The percentage of households within the local authority that the number at A represents (based on agglomerations of more than 500)	66.00 %
Environmental Pollution: E2	A. Total number of pollution cases in respect of which a complaint was made during 2024	2,869
	A. Number of pollution cases closed from 1/1/2024 to 31/12/2024	3,811
	A. Total number of pollution cases on hands at 31/12/2024	175
Litter Pollution: E3	A1. The percentage of the area within the local authority that when surveyed in 2024 was unpoluted or litter free	
	A2. The percentage of the area within the local authority that when surveyed in 2024 was slightly polluted 57.00 %	
	A3. The percentage of the area within the local authority that when surveyed in 2024 was moderately polluted 7.00%	
	A4. The percentage of the area within the local authority that when surveyed in 2024 was significantly polluted 1.00%	
	A5. The percentage of the area within the local authority that when surveyed in 2024 was grossly polluted 0.00 %	

Green Flag Status: E4	A. The percentage of schools that have been awarded/renewed green flag 50.00 % status in the two years to 31 December 2024	
Energy Efficiency: E5	A. The cumulative percentage of energy savings achieved by 31/12/2024 relative to baseline year (2009) - 40.69	
Public Lighting: E6	<p>A. Total annual consumption of the public lighting system 2,595 MWh</p> <p>B. Average wattage of each public light 45.43 W</p> <p>C. Percentage of the total system that LED lights represent 93.14 %</p>	
Climate Change: E7	<p>1 a) Does the local authority have a designated (FTE) Climate Action Coordinator? Yes</p> <p>1 b) Does the local authority have a designated (FTE) Climate Action Officer? Yes</p> <p>2. Does the local authority have a climate action team? Yes</p>	
Planning: P1	A. Buildings inspected as a percentage of new buildings notified to the local authority 23.45 %	
Planning: P2 & P3	<p>A. Number of local authority planning decisions which were the subject of an appeal to An Bord Pleanála that were determined by the Board on any date in 2024 73</p> <p>B. Percentage of the determinations at A which confirmed (either with or without variation of the plan) the decision made by the local authority 68.49 %</p> <p>A. Total number of planning cases referred to or initiated by the local authority in the period 1/1/2024 to 31/12/2024 that were investigated 287</p> <p>B. Total number of investigated cases that were closed during 2024 232</p>	

	C. Percentage of the cases at B that were dismissed as trivial, minor or without foundation or were closed because statute barred or an exempted development	38.36 %	
	D. Percentage of the cases at B that were resolved to the local authority's satisfaction through negotiations	0.86 %	
	E. Percentage of the cases at B that were closed due to enforcement proceedings	60.78 %	
	F. Total number of planning cases being investigated as at 31/12/2024	415	
Planning: P4 & P5			
	A. The 2024 Annual Financial Statement (AFS) Programme D data divided by the population of the local authority area per the 2022 Census	€28.67	
	A. The percentage of applications for fire safety certificates received in 2024 that were decided (granted or refused) within two months of their receipt	51.67 %	
	B. The percentage of applications for fire safety certificates received in 2024 that were decided (granted or refused) within an extended period agreed with the applicant	44.17 %	
Fire Service: F1			
	A. The Annual Financial Statement (AFS) Programme E expenditure data for 2024 divided by the population of the local authority area per the 2022 Census figures for the population served by the fire authority as per the Risk Based Approach Phase One reports	€49.47	
Fire Service: F2 & F3			
	A. Average time taken, in minutes, to mobilise fire brigades in Full-Time Stations in respect of fire	No fulltime service in Wexford	

	B. Average time taken, in minutes, to mobilise fire brigades in Part-Time Stations (retained fire service) in respect of fire	6:36 min
	C. Average time taken, in minutes, to mobilise fire brigades in Full-Time Stations in respect of all other (non-fire) emergency incidents	No fulltime service in Wexford
	D. Average time taken, in minutes, to mobilise fire brigades in Part-Time Stations (retained fire service) in respect of all other (non-fire) emergency incidents	6:46 min
	A. Percentage of cases in respect of fire in which first attendance at scene is within 10 minutes	30.08 %
	B. Percentage of cases in respect of fire in which first attendance at the scene is after 10 minutes but within 20 minutes	48.33 %
	C. Percentage of cases in respect of fire in which first attendance at the scene is after 20 minutes	21.59 %
	D. Percentage of cases in respect of all other emergency incidents in which first attendance at the scene is within 10 minutes	21.37 %
Library Service: L1	E. Percentage of cases in respect of all other emergency incidents in which first attendance at the scene is after 10 minutes but within 20 minutes	53.74 %
	F. Percentage of cases in respect of all other emergency incidents in which first attendance at the scene is after 20 minutes	24.89 %
	A. Number of visits to libraries per head of population for the local authority area per the 2022 Census	3.01
	B. Number of items issued to library borrowers in the year	620,209
	C. Library active members per head of population	0.21

	D. Number of registered library members in the year	34,760
Library Service: L2	A. The Annual Financial Statement (AFS) Programme F data for 2024 divided by the population of the local authority area per the 2022 Census	€36.14
	B. The annual per capita expenditure on collections over the period 1/01/2024 to 31/12/2024	€2.32
Youth and Community: Y1 & Y2	A. Percentage of local schools involved in the local Youth Council/Comhairle na nÓg scheme	73.91 %
	A. The number of organisations included in the County Register at 31/12/2024 and the proportion of those organisations that opted to be part of the Social Inclusion College within the PPN	14.88
Corporate: C1, C2, C4 & C5	A. The wholetime equivalent staffing number as at 31 December 2024	853.19
	A. Percentage of paid working days lost to sickness absence through medically certified leave in 2024	4.44 %
	B. Percentage of paid working days lost to sickness absence through self-certified leave in 2024	0.43 %
	A. All ICT expenditure in the period from 1/1/2024 to 31/12/2024, divided by the WTE no.	€3,401.10
	A. All ICT expenditure calculated in C4 as a proportion of Revenue expenditure	1.59
Corporate: C3	A. The per capita total page views of the local authority's websites in 2024	8.56
	B. The per capita total number of followers at end 2024 of the local authority's social media accounts (if any)	0.76

Finance: M1 to M4	B. Cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2020 in the Revenue Account from the Income & Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	-€873,153
	C. Cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2021 in the Revenue Account from the Income & Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	€36,684
	D. Cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2022 in the Revenue Account from the Income & Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	€85,417
	E. Cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2023 in the Revenue Account from the Income & Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	€134,937
	E. Cumulative surplus/deficit balance at 31/12/2024 in the Revenue Account from the Income & Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	€192,891
	F. Cumulative surplus or deficit at 31/12/2024 as a percentage of Total Income in 2024 from the Income and Expenditure Account Statement of the AFS	0.10 %
	G. Revenue expenditure per capita in 2024	€1,111.81
	H. Revenue expenditure per capita in 2024 excluding significant out of county/shared service expenditure	€0
	A. (a) Collection level of Rates in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2020	84.00 %
	A. (b) Collection level of Rent & Annuities in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2020	93.00 %
	A. (c) Collection level of Housing Loans in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2020	104.00 %
	B. (a) Collection level of Rates in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2021	89.40 %
	B. (b) Collection level of Rent & Annuities in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2021	95.10 %

Economic Development: J1 to J5	B. c) Collection level of Housing Loans in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2021	104.60 %
	C. a) Collection level of Rates in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2022	92.00 %
	C. b) Collection level of Rent & Annuities in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2022	94.00 %
	C. (c) Collection level of Housing Loans in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2022	105.00 %
	D. (a) Collection level of Rates in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2023	94.40 %
	D. (b) Collection level of Rent & Annuities in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2023	92.80 %
	D. (c) Collection level of Housing Loans in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2023	106.20 %
	E. (a) Collection level of Rates in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2024	96.00 %
	E. (b) Collection level of Rent & Annuities in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2024	93.00 %
	E. (c) Collection level of Housing Loans in Appendix 7 of the AFS for 2024	107.00 %
	A. Per capita total cost of settled claims for 2023	€4.17
	A. Overall central management charge as a percentage of total expenditure on revenue account	14.10 %
	B. Total payroll costs as a percentage of revenue expenditure	34.56 %
	A. The number of jobs created with assistance from the Local Enterprise Office during the period 1/1/2024 to 31/12/2024 per 100,000 of population	99.44
	A. The number of trading online voucher applications approved by the Local Enterprise Office in 2024 per 100,000 of population	71.38
	B. The number of trading online vouchers that were drawn down in 2024 per 100,000 of population	22.57

A. The number of participants who received mentoring during the period 1/1/2024 to 31/12/2024 per 100,000 of population	222.06	
A. Does the local authority have a current tourism strategy?	Yes	
B. Does the local authority have a designated Tourism Officer?	Yes	
The spend on local economic development by the local authority in 2024 per head of population	€245.63	

Governance Statement of Wexford County Council

Purpose

The purpose of this governance statement is to provide relevant information on the governance structures and governance arrangements within the local authority including on council, committees, senior management and related areas. It demonstrates our commitment to effective governance, recognises key legislative and good governance requirements and affirms the Council's compliance with the Local Government Code of Governance obligations.

Good Governance

Fundamentally, good governance in the local government sector and wider public sector is about delivering priorities, achieving objectives, behaving with integrity and acting in the public interest, in ways that are consistent with legal, regulatory and government policy obligations. Governance refers to the framework of rules, relationships, systems and processes by which the local authority is directed, controlled and held to account and whereby authority within an organisation is exercised and maintained. It encompasses authority, accountability, stewardship and leadership, direction and control.

Good Governance Principles

CORE PRINCIPLE 1 - Good governance means focusing on the purpose of the authority, on outcomes that deliver sustainable economic, community and wider societal benefits and on implementing a vision for the local authority.

CORE PRINCIPLE 2 - Good governance means promoting and demonstrating public service values through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour.

CORE PRINCIPLE 3 - Good governance means members and officials working together to achieve a common purpose within a framework of clearly defined functions and roles.

CORE PRINCIPLE 4 - Good governance means developing the organisational capacity and the leadership capability and competencies of members and officials to operate effectively and fulfil the purpose of the organization.

CORE PRINCIPLE 5 - Good governance means taking well-informed and transparent decisions and managing risks and performance.

CORE PRINCIPLE 6 - Good governance means engaging openly and comprehensively with local people, citizens and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability.

CORE PRINCIPLE 7 - Good governance means actively contributing to the furtherance and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by delivering on the priorities and actions within the Climate Action Plan and the provisions of the Climate Act.

Our Commitment to Good Governance

As the Cathaoirleach and Chief Executive of the council, and on behalf of the elected members, management and staff we confirm that;

1. We have adopted the governance principles as the fundamental bedrock and philosophy on how we operate as a governing body and as an executive.
2. The Local Government Code of Governance has been adopted and the extent to which the Council is in compliance with the Code has been reviewed and assessed.
3. The Statement of Internal Financial Control is submitted by the Chief Executive to the Elected Members and to the Audit Committee. The Audit Committee reviews the SIFC and provides an assurance on an annual basis to the Elected Members. Mechanisms are available to the Audit Committee to notify the Elected Members of any issues that arise outside of the normal annual reporting.
4. Compliance with legal and regulatory obligations are acknowledged and adhered to.
5. There is clarity of roles and responsibilities based on the reserved and executive functions and based on committee terms of reference.
6. Codes of Conduct and ethics declarations for members and employees are in place.
7. Procedures are in place for the making of protected disclosures in accordance with section 21(1) of the Protected Disclosures Act 2014 and confirmation that the annual report required under section 22(1) of the Act has been published.
8. The Council and Committees review their own performance on a periodic basis.
9. We have instituted appropriate governance oversight arrangements in respect of subsidiary, associated and related companies.

10. As part of our commitment to effective oversight and accountability, we have developed and continue to enhance our overall assurance framework utilising external and internal assurance sources to ensure good performance as part of our governance culture.



Chief Executive



Cathaoirleach