

# ANNUAL REPORT 2017 KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL



Kilkenny County Council,  
County Hall,  
John Street,  
Kilkenny  
R95 A39T

(T) +353 (0) 56 7794000  
(F) +353 (0) 56 7794004  
info@kilkennycoco.ie  
www.kilkennycoco.ie

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## MISSION STATEMENT

*“Kilkenny County Council aims to work in partnership with the People of Kilkenny and relevant agencies to deliver quality services and to promote sustainable economic, social and cultural development for current and future generations”*

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County Hall, John Street, Kilkenny

Tel: + 353 (0) 56 7794000 Fax: + 353 (0) 56 7794004 Email: [info@kilkennycoco.ie](mailto:info@kilkennycoco.ie)

Emergency Outside Office Hours: 1890 252 654

### **Direct Dial Numbers**

Motor Taxation: + 353 (0) 56 7794100 County Library: + 353 (0) 56 7794160 Fire Service: 112

## STATEMENT OF AN CATHAOIRLEACH



It is a great privilege for me to introduce the Annual Report for 2017. This Annual Report details the wide variety of services provided by Kilkenny County Council to the people of Kilkenny City and County. We, the Council, play a key role in providing essential core services such as housing, roads, water, fire and emergency services and in supporting local communities through the arts, heritage, conservation, libraries and community and enterprise functions.

In response to the growing crisis in housing I set up a Homes Task Force during the year consisting of elected members and housing staff. We have worked together to progress the urgent delivery of much needed additional accommodation.

In May 2017, Kilkenny hosted a royal visit. His Royal Highness Prince Charles and Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Cornwall, Camilla Parker Bowles. Their Royal Highnesses were accorded a civic reception in Kilkenny Castle. They spent the day visiting Kilkenny City and Thomastown.

During the year the new Medieval Mile Museum in the renovated St Mary's Church was officially opened. This museum will be an additional attraction for tourists visiting Kilkenny.

This Council is intent on maximising Kilkenny's attractiveness as a centre of tourism excellence and is determined to take every opportunity to promote Kilkenny as a place to live, work or visit. Much progress was made on the Abbey Creative Quarter. Work on the detailed design for the re-development of the Mayfair and Brew-house Buildings and also the Linear Park was progressed during 2017. I look forward to seeing these projects come to fruition and to see the Abbey Creative Quarter becoming a hub of economic activity, a place of employment for many, an additional experience for our visitors and a place to call home.

The allocation of funding under a number of schemes such as Town and Village Renewal, CLÁR etc is giving a much needed boost to our smaller communities.

I thank all Elected Members and those who serve on the various committees and sub committees of the Council. They dedicate their time to the business of the Council and to representing their particular and general interests on the committees. The extensive range of business discussed and decided is outlined in the report and is testament to their ongoing dedication and service.

Finally, I would like to sincerely thank all the Council's staff for their work for the people of Kilkenny. I commend their commitment and dedication and we look forward to continued progress, working with all of the people of Kilkenny in making Kilkenny a better place to live in, work and visit.

Whilst we have come through very difficult times and many people are still experiencing the consequences of the recession, there is a slight increase in economic activity. Kilkenny can look forward to 2018 when we will see many important projects complete and new ones commence.

**Cllr. David Fitzgerald**  
**Cathaoirleach.**

## CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S STATEMENT



I am pleased to be associated with this Annual Report for 2017 which outlines the extensive range of services provided directly or indirectly by this Council. Within the main body of this report the various activities and delivery of services and infrastructure projects being progressed by Kilkenny County are outlined.

I wish to draw attention to the following highlights for 2017:

- Opening of St Mary's Medieval Mile Museum.
- Opening of Central Access Scheme and St Francis Bridge.
- Redevelopment of Invest Kilkenny website and promotional material.
- Launch of #taste Kilkenny website, videos and imagery.
- Second successful Yulefest festival.
- Detail design progressed for the Mayfair and Brew house buildings and for the Linear Park. It is expected work will commence on these projects in 2018.
- Plans progressed for the redevelopment of Evans Home as a home for the Butler Gallery, work to commence in 2018.
- 80 additional units provided by Kilkenny County Council and Voluntary Bodies.
- 264 housing grants paid for adaptation to houses to the value of €1.86 m
- Resettlement Working Group established for the Irish Refugee Protection Programme.
- Winter Garden in Woodstock partially restored with REDZ funding.
- Construction commenced on a new fire station in Graiguenamanagh.
- Significant progress made on works on the Callan Rd Realignment.
- Pilot project commenced on retrofitting public lights under energy efficiency funds.
- Funding of €1.1m provided to Communities under various initiatives such as Town and Village Renewal Scheme, RAPID, Healthy Ireland etc.
- Allocation of €15,160 for 3 projects under the CLAR Programme 2017 (CLAR -Ceantair Laga Árd-Riachtanais)
- Grant funding of €29,000 received for self service technology in the Libraries.
- Grant funding of €5.4m awarded under LIHAF for 2 projects in the Western Environs, Kilkenny City and Ferrybank.
- Provided €105,000 to festivals in the City and County.
- Provided €300,000 to groups under the Community and Cultural Grant Scheme.
- Ferrybank Local Area Plan adopted.
- Tourism Strategy 2017 – 2022 adopted.
- Commenced work on Thomastown Age Friendly Town Plan.
- 98 events held during Heritage week.
- Competent response to Storm Ophelia.
- Increase in use of social media platforms and improved communications.
- Continuous emphasis on improving collection rate across all of our income sources and reducing the arrears.
- €1.9m collected in development levies.
- Small surplus achieved in the Revenue Budget in 2017.

There was a high level of commitment across all Departments to delivering the 2017 Service Delivery Plan and in achieving the Objectives of the Corporate Plan. Most areas met all of their stated objectives and where the level of achievement was less than 100% it will not have any impact on the Council meeting the objectives of its Corporate Plan. I am satisfied therefore that the Council

substantially delivered the objectives as set out at the commencement of 2017 in the Service Delivery Plan and that it did so within the parameters set out in the 2017 budget.

I wish to pay tribute to the work being done at Municipal District level and at SPC level. These committees are invaluable in assisting the Council in pursuing its objectives and getting through its business. The Commitment of the Councillors and external members is evident from the activities outlined in the report. I express my appreciation for the dedication and hard work of the Elected Members, my colleagues on the Management Team and the staff of the Council. I am confident, given the abilities and spirit of cooperation that is consistently shown by the Elected Members and staff that we should be in a position to meet the challenges that lie ahead. We can look forward to a positive 2018.

Finally I would like to particularly thank the Cathaoirleach Cllr. David Fitzgerald and his predecessor Cllr Matt Doran, the Municipal District Cathaoirleach- Cllr's John Brennan and his predecessor Cllr Pat Fitzpatrick, Cllr Fidelis Doherty and her predecessor Cllr Ger Frisby and Mayor Michael Doyle and his predecessor Mayor Pat O Neill, who have distinguished themselves in their respective roles.

I commend this Annual Report for adoption by the Elected Members.

I am confident that it will give an overview to the people of Kilkenny and beyond, of the broad range of activities undertaken and of the Council's achievements in 2017.

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

## NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2017

### **Age Friendly**

- Commenced work on the Thomastown Age Friendly Town Plan.

### **Arts**

- 38 Bursaries and mentoring opportunities awarded in 2017.
- 10,276 people engaged with and attended arts events organised by the Council.

### **Civil Defence**

- Assistance provided during severe weather incidents and river search and recovery.
- Assistance provided to 20 organisations for community events.

### **Community Development**

- Launch of Local Economic Community Plan
- 4 community newsletters issued
- €300,000 awarded to groups under the Community and Cultural Grant Scheme
- Funding of €1.1m provided to communities under Town & Village Renewal Scheme, RAPID, Healthily Ireland, Play & Recreation.
- Multi-agency Resettlement Working Group established for the Irish Refugee Protection programme.

### **Corporate/Human Resources**

- 637 personnel employed by Council, whole time posts are 520.41
- An increase of 8.9% activity on all Council's websites. All Face book followers increased by 44.7% and Twitter by 14%.

### **Economic Development**

- Redevelopment of Invest Kilkenny website and promotional material.
- Detailed design progressed for Linear Park, Brewhouse and Mayfair buildings in the Abbey Quarter.
- 38 Applications approved for financial assistance from the Local Enterprise Office with a potential to create 149 new jobs over 3years.
- 594 entrepreneurs participated in 49 core enterprise and training programmes
- 112 people completed a Start your Own Business programme.
- 381 entrepreneurs availed of mentoring support.
- 539 students from 12 second levels schools participated in the Student Enterprise Programme.
- 28 more Trading on Line Vouchers approved.
- Assisted Cartoon Saloon in their open day for recruitment of 140 jobs in Kilkenny.

### **Fire & Emergency Response**

- Numerous Community Fire Safety events held including Fire Station Open days, Communities Groups talks, and School visits.
- 60 Home Fire Safety visits.
- The Primary Schools programme delivered to 1300 primary school children.
- 108 Fire safety Inspections carried out.
- Review of Major Emergency Plan and severe Weather Plan

### **Heritage**

- Kilkenny Culture & Creativity plan launched by Taoiseach as part of Creative Ireland programme.
- Kilkenny Field Name Project – Film launched in December.
- Moments with Monuments - Radio series broadcast on KCLR.
- 98 events held during Heritage week.

## **Environment**

- Kilkenny City awarded a gold medal in the National Tidy Towns competition. Inistioge & Tullahought retained their silver medal. Goresbridge received an Endeavour award.
- Kilkenny City assessed as cleaner than European norms- 6<sup>th</sup> in the IBAL league table.
- 120 Community groups involved in National Spring Clean.
- 71 schools retained their green flag for the environmental education programme.
- 54,000 customers used the Dunmore Recycling & Waste Disposal Centre.
- New Recycling & Waste Disposal Centre opened in Granny in November.
- 1,055 environmental complaints received in 2017.
- RMCEI Plan – Kilkenny received an overall grade of excellence for efficient monitoring and implementation of environmental legislation.
- Local Authorities Water and Communities Office (LAWCO) engaged in a public consultation for the River Basin Management Plan.
- Ongoing provision of lifeguard service supervising in public bathing areas in the County for the months of June, July and August.
- Dog shelter in Paulstown upgraded and new facilities provided.

## **Housing & Estate Management**

- Support for 67 Resident Associations-€100,000 grants paid.
- Issue of 4 interactive e magazines for community groups.
- Tenant's Handbook revised and circulated.
- 4 Large Scale Community Enhancement projects undertaken.
- 41 sales agreed under the Social Housing Investment Programme.
- 18 new builds provided, 21 voluntary houses provided.
- 548 properties now in the Rental Accommodation Scheme.
- 901 private rented inspections.
- 4 units at St Catherine's Group Housing Scheme under construction.
- 5,649 maintenance calls received.
- 29 Council houses adapted to meet the needs of disabled and to address overcrowding
- 74 Adaptation Grants paid to the value of €58,635.
- 162 Housing Aid for Elderly grants paid totalling €69,021.
- 28 Mobility Aid grants paid totalling €134,837.

## **Library Services**

- 12,111 members in the Library.
- Library visits are up by 4% to 296,901
- Joined new national library system – access to stock anywhere in Ireland.
- Grant of €129,000 received for self service technology.
- 1,017 Children's participated in Summer Reading Literacy challenge.
- Provision of comprehensive programme of social, cultural , educational, literacy, wellbeing and digital events across all Branch Libraries.

## **Parks & Amenity**

- Maintenance and support for 26 playgrounds in the City and County
- Part 8 Planning approved and funding in place (LIHAF)for Neighbourhood Park at Ferrybank, work to commence in 2018.
- 130 groups availed of Amenity Grants.
- Exercise equipment installed in 3 City parks under Sports Capital programme.
- Winter Garden at Woodstock Gardens partially restored under REDZ funding.



## **Planning & Development**

- Ferrybank/Belview Local Area Plan adopted.
- 827 Planning Applications received.
- €1.9m collected in development levies.
- 18 Housing Estates taking in charge.
- Vacant Site Register populated.
- €160,620 paid in Build Heritage and Structures at Risk fund Grants

## **Roads & Transportation**

- Work ongoing on the New Ross By Pass.
- Pavement Improvement Works undertaken on the N24 – Granny & New Aglish and Ballycomy to Castlecomer.
- Opening of the Kilkenny Central Access Scheme and St Francis Bridge
- Low Cost Safety works- Traffic Calming at St Luke’s Hospital/Freshford Road.
- Significant works completed on the Callan Rd Realignment

## **Tourism**

- A second successful Yule Fest Christmas Festival was held.
- Opening of The Medieval Mile Museum at the former St Mary’s Church in April.
- Tourism Strategy 2017 – 2022 adopted.
- Launch of #taste Kilkenny website, videos and imagery.
- Kilkenny named as one of the top 3 foodie destination by RAI.
- €105,000 was provided in Festival and Event Grants.

## **Water Services**

- Management and maintenance of 24 public drinking water supplies and 35 wastewater treatment schemes on behalf of Irish Water.
- 9.7 billion Litres of water supplied.
- 100% compliance with microbiological compliance (2016 Results).
- 99.7% compliance with chemical parameters (2016 Results).
- Commencement of improvement works on Inistioge Waer Supply Scheme.
- Completion of upgrade to waste water treatment plants in Castlecomer, Stoneyford, and Urlingford.
- Replacement of backyard services in Freshford.
- Water Mains rehabilitation at Ballygriffin, Owing, belline, Doorane, Jerpoint Abbey.
- Inlet works improvements completed at Callan & Piltown waste water treatment plants.
- €341,690 funding for Group Water Schemes for improvement works.
- €42,464 paid to groups for subsidy towards operational costs of group schemes
- 99 well grants paid-value €160,083.

# ELECTORAL REPRESENTATIONS

## ELECTED MEMBERS

Kilkenny County Council's membership consists of twenty four members, elected for a five year term of office. The current Council was elected in May 2014 and membership at 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2017 is as follows:

### Castlecomer Electoral Area

Mary Hilda Cavanagh (FG), *Whiteswall, Crosspatrick, Via Thurles, Co Kilkenny*

Patrick Millea (FF), *Gaulstown, Tullaroan, Co Kilkenny*

Maurice Shortall (Lab), *42 Maryville, Castlecomer, Co. Kilkenny.*

John Brennan (FG), *Crutt, Clogh, Castlecomer*

Michael McCarthy (FF), *Buncrusha Street, Freshford, Co. Kilkenny.*

Pat Fitzpatrick (FF), *Cloghpook, Ballyfoyle, Co. Kilkenny.*

### Kilkenny City East

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

Peter Cleere (FF), *Aughiletuan, Skeoughvosteen, Co. Kilkenny.*

Michael Doyle (FG), *Ballinbarna, The Rower, Co. Kilkenny.*

Patrick O'Neill (FG), *2, Hillview Crest, Bennettsbridge, Co. Kilkenny.*

Breda Gardner (NP), *Cloghabrody, Thomastown, Co. Kilkenny.*

David Kennedy (SF), *Ballyvool, Inistioge, Co. Kilkenny.*

### Kilkenny City West

Matt Doran (FF), *Shrughawadda, Kilmoganny, Co. Kilkenny.*

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

Malcolm Noonan (GP), *38 Cedarwood Drive, Loughboy, Kilkenny*

Patrick McKee (NP), *48 St. Fiaccres Place, Kilkenny.*

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

Sean Tyrrell (SF), *31 Cypress Grove, Loughboy, Kilkenny*

### Piltown Electoral Area

Melissa O'Neill (NP), *40 Abbeylands, Ferrybank, Co. Kilkenny.*

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

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

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

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

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

## MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The Council's Management Structure is:

**Colette Byrne**  
*Chief Executive*

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

**Tim Butler**  
*Director of Services*

**Sean McKeown**  
*Director of Services*

**Martin Prendiville**  
*Head of Finance*

## Committees & Subsidiary Bodies

There is a legal obligation on Local Authorities to establish certain Committees such as Strategic Policy Committees. Local Authorities have discretionary authority to establish other Committees to assist them in performing their roles as Elected Members.

### Strategic Policy Committees

Kilkenny County Council has a Strategic Policy Committee Scheme which parallels the lifespan of the newly elected Council 2014 to 2019. The role of the Strategic Policy Committees [SPC's] is to assist the Council in the formulation, development and review of policy. Their composition reflect the major functions of the Council within the broader context, are tailored to the size, membership and administrative resources of the Council and have one third of their membership drawn from sectors relevant to the committees' work.

The SPC's bring together both Elected Members and people actively working with social, economic, cultural and environmental bodies to develop and review policies related to Council's services. The SPC's provide Elected Members with external views as they discharge their strategic role in the development of the local authority, including their policy development and oversight roles within the local authority.

The overall configuration and membership of the Kilkenny County Council's Strategic Policies in 2017 was as follows:

#### SPC 1: Economic Development Enterprise Support & Tourism

Elected Members [7]	Members from External Sectors [6]
Pat Millea	Agriculture/Farming: John Bambrick [IFA]
Pat Fitzpatrick	Development/Construction: Mark Kennedy [Chambers Ireland]
Peter Cleere	Business/Commercial: Deirdre Shine [Chambers Ireland]
Patrick McKee	Trade Union: Phil Funchion [ICTU]
Patrick O'Neill	Social Inclusion: Charles Wani [PPN]
Michael Doyle	Environment/Conservation: Theresa Delahunty [PPN]
John Brennan	

#### SPC 2: Infrastructure Policy, Transportation, Fire & Emergency Services

Elected Members [7]	Members from External Sectors [6]
Matt Doran	Agriculture/Farming: Michael Rice [IFA]
Eamon Aylward	Business/Commercial: Gary Graham [Chambers Ireland]
Michael McCarthy	Development/Construction: Barry Lynch [Chambers Ireland]
Fidelis Doherty	Trade Union: Patrick Kavanagh [ICTU]
Michael Doyle	Community/Voluntary: Anton Mazer [PPN]
Sean Tyrrell	Social Inclusion: Mairead Phelan [PPN]
Tomás Breathnach	

#### SPC 3: Planning & Development Policy, Heritage, Community Arts & Culture

Elected Members [7]	Members from External Sectors [6]
Patrick McKee	Agriculture/Farming: Paul O' Brien [IFA]
Pat Fitzpatrick	Business/Commercial: John Hurley [Chambers Ireland]
Pat Dunphy	Development/Construction: Denis Carroll [Chambers Ireland]
David Kennedy	Environment/Conservation: Mary T. Brennan [PPN]
Malcolm Noonan	Community/Voluntary: John Bourke [PPN]
John Brennan	Social Inclusion: Martin Brennan [PPN]
Andrew McGuinness	

#### SPC 4: Housing

Elected Members [6]	Members from External Sectors [5]
Andrew McGuinness	Development/Construction: Brian Dunlop [Chambers Ireland]
Joe Malone	Environment/Conservation: Declan Murphy [An Taisce]
Michael McCarthy	Trade Union: Yvonne Moriarty [ICTU]
Melissa O' Neill	Community/Voluntary: Mary Egan [PPN]
Fidelis Doherty	Social Inclusion: Linda Tierney [PPN]
Maurice Shortall	

#### SPC 5: Environmental Protection, Water Services & Energy

Elected Members [6]	Members from External Sectors [5]
Ger Frisby	Agriculture/Farming: James Murphy [IFA]
Joe Malone	Development/Construction: Clare Murray [Chambers Ireland]
Pat Dunphy	Business/Commercial: Owen Sweeney [Chambers Ireland]
Tomás Breathnach	Environment/Conservation: Sadhbh O' Neill [PPN]
Breda Gardner	Community/Voluntary: Shem Caulfield [PPN]
Maurice Shortall	

## MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL

The Council holds Ordinary meetings on a monthly basis. It also holds special meetings to consider and adopt its annual budget. The Council may hold as many meetings as it considers necessary to discharge its functions.

### PLENARY MEETINGS OF KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL

*Number of Meetings held in 2017: 18*

- Election of Cathaoirleach and Leas Cathaoirleach.
- Appointments of members to SPC, Committees and other Boards.
- Adoption of Budget.
- Annual Financial Statement 2016.
- 3 Year Capital Programme.
- Local Property Tax.
- Approval to overdraft and loan facility.
- Annual Audit Committee report.
- Local Government Statutory Audit Report 2016.
- Annual Report 2016.
- Service Delivery Plans 2017.
- Chief Executive's Monthly/Quarterly Report.
- Update on Waterford Boundary.
- Housing Programme/Schemes Update.
- Housing and other Land/Property Disposals.
- Road Grant Allocations and Road Works Programme.
- Road Traffic Speed Limit/Parking/Intoxicating Liquor Bye laws.
- Winter Maintenance Plan 2017/2018.
- Street Lighting Pilot Programme.
- Kilkenny Central Access Scheme Update.
- Community Flood Resilience Projects.
- CLAR, REDZ, Town & Village Renewal Projects.
- Part 8 reports for various projects.
- Section 85 Agreements with other Local Authorities.
- National Planning Framework.
- Ferrybank Local Area Plan/Hebron Road Urban Design Strategy.
- Variations/Material Contravention to County and City Development Plans.
- Vacant Site Levy.
- Taking in Charge of Housing Estates.
- Declaration of public roads.
- Tourism Strategy.
- Abbey Quarter Update.
- Invest Kilkenny.
- Skate Park Project.
- Sustainable Energy Action Plan 2016-2020.
- Waterford to New Ross Greenway.
- Allocation for Graveyard, Arts and Festival Grants ,Amenity Grants, Cultural Support Grants, Great War Memorial.
- Community and Cultural Facilities Capital Grant Scheme 2015-2017.
- Strategic Plan – Libraries/Heritage/Biodiversity/Arts.
- New City Library.
- Creative Ireland programme 2017-2022.
- Music Generation 2016-2021.
- St Patrick's Day Civic Event.
- Fire Safety.

#### Presentations made by External Groups

- Watershed Sports & Leisure Complex.
- Waterford Institute of Technology (PACE).

## MEETING OF COMMITTEES, SUB COMMITTEES

### MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF KILKENNY MEETINGS

*Number of Ordinary/Monthly Meetings held in 2017: 13*

- Election of Cathaoirleach & Leas Cathaoirleach.
- General Municipal Allocation and Multi Annual Allocation.
- Adoption of Draft Schedule of Municipal Works including Draft Road Works Scheme.
- Budget Plan for 2017 for the Municipal District of Kilkenny.
- Adoption of Schedule of Municipal Works.
- Twinning Arrangements with Malbork, Poland and Formigine, Italy
- Road Works Scheme 201
- Proposal for Kilkenny City Bus Service by National Transport Authority.
- Review of Traveller Accommodation Programme 2014-2018.
- Roads issues in the Municipal District Area.
- Commemoration of the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the “1917 Kilkenny Bye Election”.
- Housing and Planning Quarterly Reports.
- Callan Road Re-alignment (N76).
- Review of Parking Bye Laws.
- Roads issues raised under recurring item “Roads”.
- An information heritage marker by The James Hoban Memorial Society at Callan, Co. Kilkenny.
- Kilkenny Tourism Strategy – Establishment of Sub-County Hubs.
- Control of Skips on Public Roads Bye Laws.
- Town Twinning.
- Mobility Management Plan.
- Review of Community and Cultural Facilities Grant Scheme.
- Report on Tidy Towns in the Municipal District.
- General Municipal Allocation – Funding Allocation.
- National Commemorative Programme 2018 to 2023.
- Signage in Kilkenny City.
- Upkeep of Clock Tower at City Hall.

#### **Presentations were made at the Meetings by the following groups during the year:**

- Representatives from SIRO gave a presentation on SIRO’s 100% fibre broadband which is a joint venture between ESB and Vodafone and is being rolled out in major urban centres including Kilkenny City.
- Community First Responders Ireland and the National Ambulance Service.
- Kilkenny City Bus Network explaining the role of the National Transport Authority, Network Planning, Public Engagement, Procurement, Infrastructure and Launch of the Service.

## MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF CASTLECOMER MEETINGS

*Number of Meetings held in 2017: 16*

*Number of Deputations Received: 3*

- Election of Cathaoirleach & Leas Cathaoirleach.
- General Municipal Allocation and Multi Annual Allocation.
- Adoption of Draft Schedule of Municipal Works including Draft Road Works Scheme.
- Budget Plan for 2017 for the Municipal District of Castlecomer.
- Road Works Programme – Progress reports and roads issues.
- Winter Maintenance Programme.
- Castlecomer Local Area Plan.
- Traffic and Parking issues in Castlecomer.
- Hedge cutting and roadside trees.
- Flood relief scheme – Parksgrove, Ballyragget.
- Public lighting.
- Control of weeds including Japanese Knotweed – Urban and Rural.
- Community Grant Schemes – information and updates provided.
- Taking-in charge status of housing developments.
- Briefing on library services.
- Housing Capital Programme.
- Housing demand and supply.
- Private housing - grants, loans and rented accommodation.
- Traveller Accommodation and Homeless Services.
- Community and Estate Management.
- Bring bank facilities and illegal dumping.
- Provision of car park – Freshford burial ground.
- Galmoy Mines and future development at the site.
- Galmoy Rural Water Supply Scheme.
- Tourism.
- Heritage and Cultural Projects.

## MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF PILTOWN MEETINGS

*Number of Meetings held in 2017: 18*

*Number of Deputations Received: 2*

- Election of Cathaoirleach & Leas Cathaoirleach.
- Roadworks Programme, Winter Maintenance & Roads Issues.
- Flooding – Flood Investigation Works.
- Local Discretionary Fund Allocation.
- Schedule & Adoption of Municipal District Works for 2017.
- Enhancement of Approach Roads into Waterford City.
- Driver Feedback Signs.
- N24 Piltown Bypass – Tower Road Junction Improvements.
- N24 Granny Pavement Improvement Scheme.
- N25 New Ross Bypass.
- N25 Safety at Junctions.
- 24/7 Cardiac Service for Waterford.
- National Broadband Plan.
- National Planning Framework.
- Community & Cultural Facilities Grant Scheme.
- Town & Village Renewal.
- Local Enterprise Office Incentives.
- Library Services.
- Pedestrian Facilities at Slieverue Roundabout.
- Housing Developments / Unfinished Estates / Taking in Charge.
- Homeless & Other Housing Matters.
- Traveller Accommodation Programme Review.
- Waterford Boundary Review.
- Waterford to New Ross Greenway.
- Tourism Strategy.
- Ferrybank District Centre.
- Ferrybank-Belview Local Area Plan.
- North Quays Strategic Development Zone.
- Ferrybank Neighbourhood Park Project.
- Naming of Infrastructure – New Ross Bypass Bridge.
- Provision of Public Lighting.
- Water Mains & Water Schemes.
- South Kilkenny Recycling Centre – Newrath.
- Active Travel Strategy.
- Meetings with TII.
- CLÁR funding.
- Policing Issues (Gardaí in attendance).
- Speeding in Mooncoin & other villages.
- Traffic / Speed Surveys.
- Bus Stops – Glenmore & Piltown.
- Community Involvement in Roadworks Schemes & Local Improvement Schemes.
- Mullinavat Playground & Amenity Area.
- Taking in charge – O’Connor’s Lane / Clonconey Lane / Owing Hill.
- Former Council Offices at Newrath.
- Poulanassa Waterfall.
- Provision of Life Buoys.

### **JOINT MEETINGS HELD WITH:-**

- New Ross Municipal District: 1
- Waterford Metropolitan District: 4
- Carrick-on-Suir Municipal District: 1

A site visit was also made to the toepath in Kilsheelan with elected members of Carrick-on-Suir Municipal District on 7<sup>th</sup> June.

### **SPC 1: Economic Development Enterprise Support & Tourism**

<b>Number of Meetings Held</b> 4	<b>Main Policy Issues Considered</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Monitoring of the economic elements of the LECP Annual Action Plan 2016 - 2017 [49 in total].</li><li>▪ Adoption and monitoring of the delivery of the LEO Local Enterprise Development Plan for 2017, on behalf of the Council [as per SLA with Enterprise Ireland].</li><li>▪ Nominations to the LECP Advisory Group</li><li>▪ Abbey Creative Quarter</li><li>▪ Failte Ireland's National Tourism Policy</li><li>▪ Vacant Premises Incentive Scheme.</li><li>▪ South East Action Plan for Jobs Initiative.</li></ul>
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### **SPC 2: Infrastructure Policy, Transportation, Fire & Emergency Services**

<b>Number of Meetings Held</b> 4	<b>Main Policy Issues Considered</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ City Bus Network.</li><li>▪ Road Management Office.</li><li>▪ Fire Services.</li><li>▪ School Safety Programme.</li><li>▪ Car Parking.</li><li>▪ Parking areas at motorway junctions.</li><li>▪ Local Improvement Scheme.</li><li>▪ Broadband.</li></ul>
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### **SPC 3: Planning & Development, Heritage, Community, Arts & Culture.**

<b>Number of Meetings Held</b> 5	<b>Main Policy Issues Considered</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Protected Structure</li><li>▪ The Local Infrastructure Housing Activation F application.(LIHAF)</li><li>▪ Farm Villages in south Kilkenny.</li><li>▪ Abbey Quarter urban design criteria and development code</li><li>▪ Ferrybank Local Area Plan update on progress..</li><li>▪ All Ireland Pollinator Plan.</li><li>▪ Kilkenny Cultural Strategies &amp; Creative Ireland Programme.</li><li>▪ Department response to request for review of CLÁR areas.</li><li>▪ Update Ferrybank LAP</li><li>▪ Ferrybank Park progress report</li><li>▪ LIHAF/Variation 3 update</li><li>▪ Castlecomer LAP progress report</li><li>▪ Town and Village renewal update on progress &amp; overview of applications.</li><li>▪ Hebron Road Urban Design framework – Update.</li><li>▪ Derelict Sites/Vacant Sites – Update.</li><li>▪ Kilkenny Cultural Strategies.</li><li>▪ Community &amp; Cultural Facilities Grant Scheme Review National Planning Framework/Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy.</li><li>▪ County Development Plan/Local Area Plans update.</li><li>▪ Derelict Sites/Vacant Sites – Update.</li><li>▪ Community and Culture Facilities Grant Scheme 2018</li></ul>
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#### SPC 4: Housing

<b>Number of Meetings Held</b> 5	<b>Main Policy Issues Considered</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Review of the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2014-2018.</li><li>▪ Kilkenny Strategic Plan for people with a Disability Strategy 2016-2020.</li><li>▪ Homelessness and monthly analysis.</li><li>▪ Annual Report 2016.</li><li>▪ Repair &amp; Leasing Scheme.</li><li>▪ Tenant Handbook.</li><li>▪ Capital Programme 2017-2021.</li><li>▪ Housing Needs Assessment 2017.</li><li>▪ Over the Shop Residential Development - Living Cities Initiative.</li><li>▪ Refugee Resettlement Programme.</li></ul>
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#### SPC5: Environmental Protection, Water Services and Energy

<b>Number of Meetings Held</b> 4	<b>Main Policy Issues Considered</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Carlow/Kilkenny Energy Agency</li><li>▪ Local Authority Waters &amp; Communities Office (LAWCO)</li><li>▪ Dog Shelter Tender and Improvement Works</li><li>▪ Litter Enforcement Procedures</li><li>▪ Information on Graveyard Grants</li><li>▪ Draft River Basin Management Plan</li><li>▪ Waste Management – continued use of prepaid refuse and recycling bags</li><li>▪ Litter Management Plan 2018 -2020</li><li>▪ Water Services Projects – Minor Capital and Major Capital</li><li>▪ Draft Animal Welfare Charter</li><li>▪ Dunmore Recycling Centre</li></ul>
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#### KILKENNY JOINT POLICING COMMITTEE

*Number of Meetings held in 2017: 4*

*Number of Public Meetings held in 2017: 1*

The following matters were discussed at the Joint Policing Committee Meetings:

- Amendment to Kilkenny County Council Intoxicating Liquor Bye Laws.
- Update on Kilkenny Road Safety Plan 2015 – 2020.
- Presentations by An Garda Síochána on Crime Statistics, Traffic and Road Safety.
- Policing Plan.
- Animal Welfare Issues.
- CCTV.
- Purple Flag Initiative.

## CIVIC OCCASIONS AND EVENTS 2017

Kilkenny County Council incurred expenditure in the amount of €62,000 in 2017 for the hosting of civic occasions and events, which includes expenditure incurred for the Royal Visit to Kilkenny in May, 2017.

The following is a representation of the events which were hosted by the Cathaoirleach and Mayor during 2017.



**Launch of St. Patrick's Weekend Festivities - 9/2/2017**



**Cathaoirleach visits New York for St. Patrick's Day**



**St. Patrick's Day Parade Kilkenny City-17/3/2017**



**Official Opening of the Medieval Mile Museum By Patrick O'Donovan, T.D., Minister of State for Tourism and Sport-4/4/2017**



**Civic Reception for HRH Prince Charles and HRH the Duchess of Cornwall, Camilla Parker Bowles- 1/5/2017**



**Official Opening of Saint Francis Bridge-23/5/2017**



**Reception for Unity Singers by Mayor or Municipal District of Kilkenny City-12/6/2017**



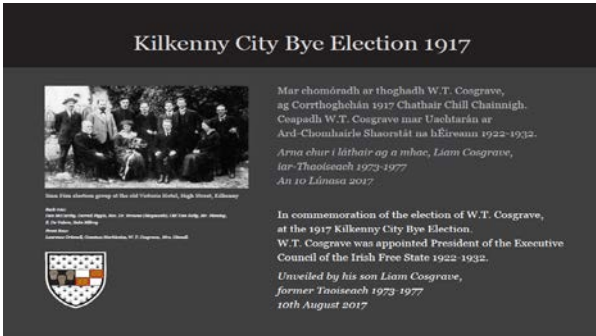
**Mayor of Municipal District of Kilkenny City hosted "Tea for MND" morning in City Hall-21/6/2017**



**Civic Reception for FAI Festival of Football and AGM-20/7/2017**



**Official Opening of Connollys Red Mills Facility at Cílín Hill, Kilkenny-23/6/2017**



**Commemoration of the Election of Mr. W.T. Cosgrave in Bye Election 1917-12/8/2017**



**Civic Reception for Homecoming of Kilkenny Senior Camogie Team-11/9/2017**



**Reception in Medieval Mile Museum for Delegates attending RURALIA Conference-11/9/2017**



**Reception for Arís Choir by Mayor of Municipal District of Kilkenny City-22/9/2017**



**Festival Grants Awards Presentation Night-23/10/2017**



**Kilkenny County Council hosted an event in the Parade Tower in Kilkenny Castle to congratulate the winners of the 2017 Kilkenny County Council Tidy Estates Awards-25/10/2017**

# Directorate of Corporate & Infrastructure

**Corporate**

**Human Resources**

**Roads & Transportation**

**Water Services**

**Communication**

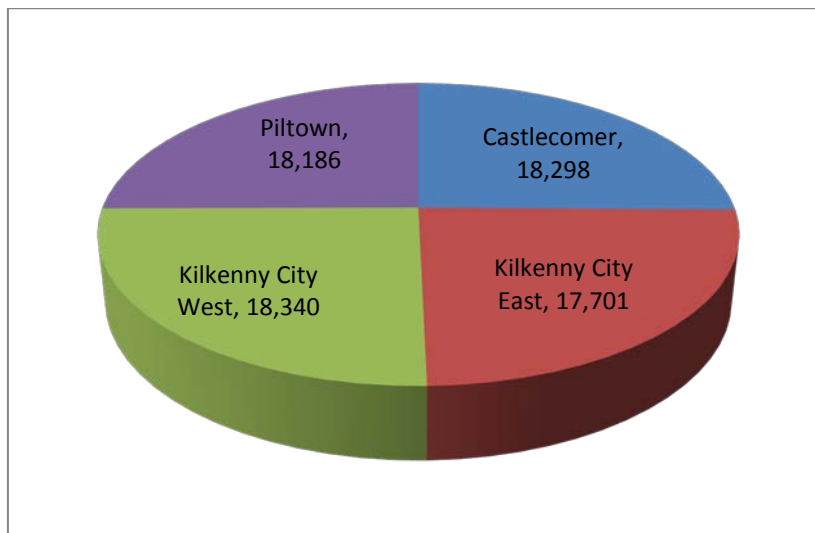
**Health & Safety**



### REGISTER OF ELECTORS

The Annual Register is published on 1<sup>st</sup> February each year and is a list of all persons aged 18 years or over, resident in the State, who are entitled to vote in Elections to the Dail, European Assembly, Presidential, Local Elections and Referenda.

The total number on the Register on the 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2017 is 72,535.



There are 24 members in total elected to Kilkenny County Council.

The Electoral areas are as follows:

- Castlecomer,
- Kilkenny City East,
- Kilkenny City West,
- Piltown.

Each of the Electoral Areas have 6 members.

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

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

### TOWN TWINNING

#### *Current Twinning Agreements/Arrangements With Kilkenny City & County*

- Kilkenny is currently twinned with Moret sur Loing (France), Kilkenny (Minnesota), U.S.A. , Suzhou (China) and Malbork Poland.
- Kilkenny County Council has a twinning arrangement with Leicestershire County Council.
- Castlecomer, Co. Kilkenny, is twinned with Pennevenan (France).
- Piltown, Co. Kilkenny, is [twinned](#) with the village of [Mellac](#) in France.
- Kilkenny has developed a relationship with Formigine (Italy) through an initial contact via the Urbact LINKS project. The relationship was principally fostered through Ossory Youth. Kilkenny proposes to finalise twinning arrangements with Formigine in 2018 with the signing of a Twinning Charter.

On 17<sup>th</sup> March, 2017, the Mayor of Municipal District of Kilkenny, Cllr. Patrick O'Neill and Mayor of Malbork, Marek Charzewski signed a Twinning Charter officially twinning Malbork, Poland with Kilkenny City

Expenditure of €2,868.89 was incurred by Kilkenny County Council on Twinning Arrangements in 2017.

## ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE 2017

At the heart of the Kilkenny St. Patrick's Day celebrations, is our annual parade which is civic event hosted and funded by Kilkenny County Council and organised by the St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee. Local community groups and organisations, as well as clubs, schools and businesses take part in what is always a fantastic day of celebration and entertainment, celebrating all that is great about Ireland and the Irish, at home and across the world.

The theme of the Parade for 2017 was "Jonathan Swift". 2017 marked his 350<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and Grand Marshall for the Parade was the Kilkenny Senior Camogie Team.



Kilkenny County Council allocated funding to the amount of €35,000 for the St. Patrick's Day Parade in 2017.

## KILKENNY RECEIVES A ROYAL VISIT

Prince Charles and the Duchess of Cornwall visited Kilkenny City and Thomastown on 11<sup>th</sup> May, 2017. This was a wonderful occasion for the citizens of Kilkenny who welcomed the Royal Couple on the streets of Kilkenny and Thomastown.

Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Matt Doran, hosted a Civic Reception for the Royal Couple in the Picture Gallery, Kilkenny Castle where they were introduced to local dignitaries and representatives from various sectors of the community.



## STORM OPHELIA

Storm Ophelia arrived in the middle of October 2017 to Kilkenny. Status Red weather alert was issued of Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2017 and was not lifted until Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2017. Crisis Management Team was activated. Call centre was established for a period of 3 days.

The storm affected all of our services with large number of roads blocked, power outages which affected our water supplies and waste water treatment plants.

All services closed down for approximately 1 day.

Due to the severity of the wind and rain, 41 media messages were issued to Local & National Media Outlets. Kilkenny County Council extensively used social media during this time to keep the citizens up to date on blocked roads, loss of water supply and general road safety messages.

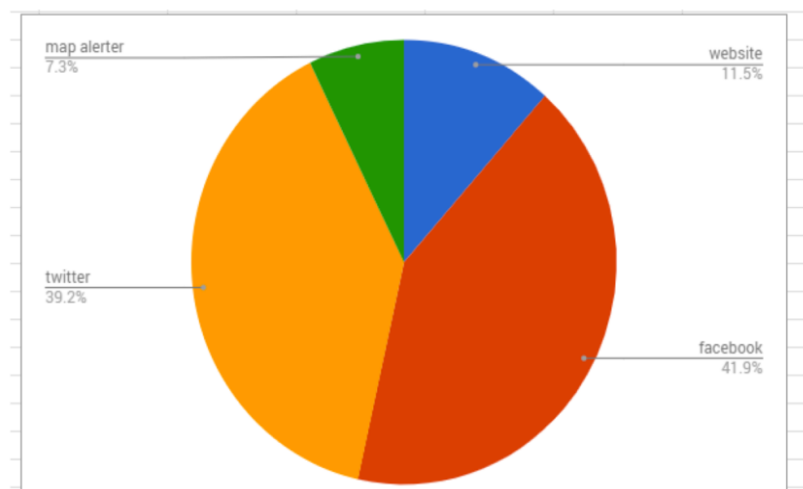


## Comparison of Communications Channels by impressions

(Impressions is a measure of the number of times a post is presented to a person.)

Twitter 39.2%  
Website 11.5%  
Facebook 41.9%  
Map alerter 7.3%

Map Alerter  
breakdown:  
13,765 sms  
14,315 email  
519 app



## COMMUNICATIONS & SOCIAL MEDIA 2017

The Council communicates its message through a number of outlets including newspapers, radio and social media. Social Media is playing a growing importance in the Council's communications.

The Council directly manages 15 websites in addition to overseeing a number of externally provided sites and services.

The cumulative number of page views for the Council's websites in 2017 was 2,714,698 an increase of 8.9% over the 2016 figure of 2,492,663

	2016	2017
<a href="http://kilkennycoco.ie">kilkennycoco.ie</a>	1,108,658	1,334,687
<a href="http://visitkilkenny.ie">visitkilkenny.ie</a>	1,032,563	1,003,774
<a href="http://kilkenny.ie">kilkenny.ie</a>	155,373	169,919
<a href="http://kilkennylibrary.ie">kilkennylibrary.ie</a>	122,892	150,855
<a href="http://kilkennycity.ie">kilkennycity.ie</a>	37,653	26,570
<a href="http://kilkennyheritage.ie">kilkennyheritage.ie</a>	15,470	10,023
<a href="http://investkilkenny.ie">investkilkenny.ie</a>	9,131	11,296
<a href="http://kilkennyagefriendlycounty.ie">kilkennyagefriendlycounty.ie</a>	4,486	3,654
<a href="http://kmhp.ie">kmhp.ie</a>	5,202	1,682
<a href="http://rhymerag.net">rhymerag.net</a>	1,235	2,238
	<b>2,492,663</b>	<b>2,714,698</b>

During 2017 total Website Page views increased by 222,035 views compared to 2016.

The total number of Face book followers across all of the Council's Face book accounts is 35,491 an increase of 44.7% on the 2016 figure of 24,531

	2016	2017
<b>Tourism</b>	20,000	28,121
<b>Main County Council</b>	1,695	3,676
<b>Kilkenny Heritage</b>	2,150	2,535
<b>Environmental Awareness</b>	282	588
<b>Invest Kilkenny</b>	222	322
<b>Dunmore Recycling</b>	182	249
	24,531	35,491

Total Facebook Followers Increased by 10,960 people.

### **Kilkenny County Council Main Facebook page total reach**

*(reach is the number of times a post on the main Kilkenny County Council Facebook page was viewed)*

The total reach for the primary Kilkenny County Council Facebook page was 587,742 an increase of 138.9% on the 2016 figure 246,045

	2016	2017
<b>Quarter 1</b>	116,679	112,941
<b>Quarter 2</b>	24,869	96,449
<b>Quarter 3</b>	77,610	86,611
<b>Quarter 4</b>	26,887	291,741
	246,045	587,742

Reach for primary Facebook page increased by 341,697 post views



The total number of Twitter followers across all of the Council’s Twitter accounts is 22,719 an increase of 14% on 2016 figure of 19,996.

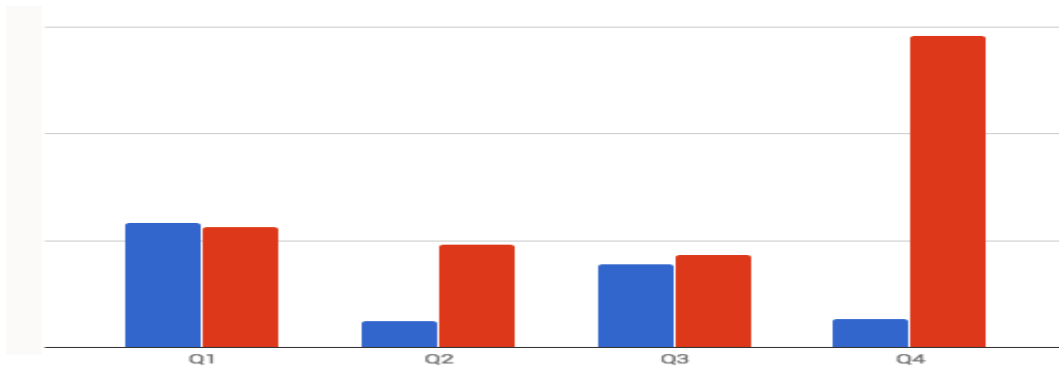


Figure 1 Primary Facebook Page Reach 2016/2017

Twitter Followers

	2016	2017
<b>Kilkenny</b>	6,754	<b>7545</b>
<b>Visit Kilkenny</b>	4,731	<b>5439</b>
<b>Kilkenny Notices</b>	3,358	<b>3908</b>
<b>Kilkenny Arts Office</b>	2,132	<b>2360</b>
<b>Invest Kilkenny</b>	1,630	<b>1837</b>
<b>Kilkenny Library</b>	1,391	<b>1630</b>
	<b>19,996</b>	<b>22719</b>

Total Twitter follower number has increased by 7,723 people.

**STORM OPELIA RESPONSE 15<sup>TH</sup>-17<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2017**

**Twitter**

15 <sup>th</sup> October	16 <sup>th</sup> October	17 <sup>th</sup> October
5.2 K Impressions	101.3 K Impressions	15,963 Impressions
5 Tweets	39 Tweets	23 Tweets
		184 New Followers
<b>Total Impressions 15th-17<sup>th</sup> October 122K</b>		
<b>Total Tweets 67</b>		

<p><b>Facebook 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> October.</b>            Facebook Total Impressions 164,448            Facebook Total reach 101,177            18,555 post engagements            540 new page followers            524 new page likes            51 Posts</p>	<p><b>Website 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> October</b>            45,301 page views.</p>
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**MEMBERS TRAINING & EXPENSES**

Members Training 2017						
DATE	CONFERENCE	LOCATION	COUNCILOR	FEES	EXPENSES	
12th - 14th January 2017	IA & Waste Management	Galway	Andrew McGuinness	100		360.12
13th - 15th January 2017	The Finance Act	Louth	David Kennedy	100		479.36
20th - 21st January 2017	Supporting Safer Communities	Galway	Maurice Shortall, John Brennan, Andrew McGuinness	300		864.26
20th - 20th January 2017	Local Leadership in the Countryside	Wexford	Fidelis Doherty	140		170.68
27th - 29th January 2017	Japanese Knotweed, Functions for LA's & NIA	Cork	Breda Gardner	100		159.77
13th February 2017	AUG In Service Members Training Programme Module 1 A briefing on National Planning Framework 2040	Waterford	Maurice Shortall, MH Cavanagh, Pat Millea, Gerard Frisby, Michael McCarthy, John Brennan, Andrew McGuinness, Peter Cleere, Michael Doyle, Joe Malone, Pat Dunphy, Eoghan O'Connell, Pat Fitzpatrick, Breda Gardner, Thomas Breathnach	470		495
23rd February 2017	Social Media Training	Cork	Melissa O'Neill	€150	€346	
23rd - 26th February 2017	20th Centennial Winter School	Donnegal	Maurice Shortall, John Brennan	€300	€900	
12th - 24 February 2017	Co-ordinating Tax Installments	Cork	MH Cavanagh	€100	€362	
8th March 2017	Fast Poverty & Climate Action	Dublin	Breda Gardner, Joe Malone, Malcolm Noonan	€270	€441	
13th - 13th March 2017	The Deal Scheme	Louth	Michael McCarthy, Peter Cleere, Ger Frisby	€300	€1,604	
24th March 2017	Norfolk Free Local Authorities	Down	Pat Millea		€467	
30th - 2nd April	What does hard brexit mean for Ireland	Louth	David Kennedy, Sean Tyrrell	€200	€1,058	
5th April 2017	Cross Border Tourism	Louth	Maurice Shortall, Pat Fitzpatrick, Patrick McKee	€74	€98	
6th - 7th April 2017	Re-imagining the Planning System	Mayo	Michael McCarthy, Gerard Frisby, John Brennan, Maurice Shortall, Peter Cleere	€1,495	€2,631	
6th - 7th April 2017	AUG Annual Training Conference 2017	Csre	David Fitzpatrick, MH Cavanagh, David Kennedy, Breda Gardner, Patrick McKee, Sean Tyrrell, Melissa O'Neill, Andrew McGuinness, Michael McCarthy, John Brennan, Andrew McGuinness, Eamon Aylward, Pat Dunphy, Fidelis Doherty, Fionnuala Doherty, Mary Hilda Cavanagh, John Brennan, Maurice Shortall, Sean Tyrrell, Andrew McGuinness, Peter Cleere, Gerard Frisby, Michael Doyle, Pat Dunphy	€2,000	€6,337	
28th - 29th April 2017	LAMA Spring Training Conference	Meath	Fidelis Doherty, Breda Gardner	€2,840	€5,217	
8th May 2017	AUG In Service Members Training Programme Module 2 A briefing on Community Development Initiatives (Urban and Rural)	Wicklow	Fidelis Doherty, Breda Gardner	€100	€377	
13th May 2017	AUG In Service Members Training Programme Module 2 A briefing on Community Development Initiatives (Urban and Rural)	Mayo	Peter Cleere, Michael McCarthy, Gerard Frisby, Matt Doran, John Brennan, Maurice Shortall, MH Cavanagh	€350	€1,823	
18th May 2017	AUG In Service Members Training Programme Module 2 A briefing on Community Development Initiatives (Urban and Rural)	Tipperary	Pat Fitzpatrick, Pat Millea, David Kennedy, Joe Malone, Sean Tyrrell, Pat Dunphy, Melissa O'Neill, Eamon Aylward	€400	€2,365	
13th - 21st May	The Fast Deal Scheme	Cork	MH Cavanagh	€100	€661	
6th June 2017	AUG In Service Members Training Programme Module 3 A briefing on Commercial Rates, Rating Law, Valuations and Revaluations	Kerry	Maurice Shortall, MH Cavanagh, Pat Fitzpatrick, Pat Millea, Michael McCarthy, John Brennan, Andrew McGuinness, Peter Cleere, David Kennedy, Breda Gardner, Matt Doran, Joe Malone, Sean Tyrrell, Gerard Frisby	€700	€6,041	
10th June 2017	AUG In Service Members Training Programme Module 3 A briefing on Commercial Rates, Rating Law, Valuations and Revaluations	Louth	Michael Doyle, Eamon Aylward, Pat Dunphy	€150	€980	
14th September 2017	AUG In Service Members Training Programme Module 4 A briefing for Member on minding their Mental Health & Wellbeing	Meath	Joe Malone, David Kennedy	€100	€740	
23rd September 2017	AUG In Service Members Training Programme Module 4 A briefing for Member on minding their Mental Health & Wellbeing	Cork	Maurice Shortall, Pat Millea, Pat Fitzpatrick, Michael McCarthy, John Brennan, Peter Cleere, Matt Doran, Patrick McKee, Gerard Frisby, Eamon Aylward, Pat Dunphy, Joe Malone	€700	€1,501	
29th - 30th September 2017	LAMA Autumn Conference	Tipperary	Patrick McKee, Pat Millea, Maurice Shortall, John Brennan, Melissa O'Neill, Peter Cleere, David Kennedy, Michael McCarthy, Gerard Frisby, Joe Malone, Fidelis Doherty, Pat Dunphy, MH Cavanagh, Pat Fitzpatrick, Breda Gardner	€2,568	€3,473	
6th October 2017	RI Autumn Conference 2017	Dublin	22			
12th - 13th October 2017	AUG Autumn Training Seminar	Sligo	Peter Cleere, Michael McCarthy, Gerard Frisby, Maurice Shortall, MH Cavanagh, Pat Fitzpatrick, Pat Millea, Michael McCarthy, John Brennan, Andrew McGuinness, Peter Cleere, David Kennedy, Breda Gardner, Matt Doran, Patrick O'Neill, Michael Doyle, Pat Dunphy, Gerard Frisby	€185	€1,233	
21st October 2017	AUG In Service Members Training Programme Module 5 A briefing on National Public Library Strategy 2018-2022	Letchin	Pat O'Neill, Breda Gardner, Maurice Shortall, John Brennan, Pat Fitzpatrick, Peter Cleere, Gerard Frisby, Michael McCarthy, Eamon Aylward, David Kennedy, Michael Doyle	€750	€3,689	
26th October 2017	AUG In Service Members Training Programme Module 5 A briefing on National Public Library Strategy 2018-2022	Kilkenny	MH Cavanagh, Fidelis Doherty, Pat Dunphy, Pat Fitzpatrick	€200	€167	
10th - 12th November	The Institute of Professional Training Module 6 A Briefing on the role of the Councilor	Wexford	Fidelis Doherty	€145	€174	
14th November 2017	AUG In Service Members Training Programme Module 6 A Briefing on the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management	Wexford	Joe Malone, Malcolm Noonan, Maurice Shortall, Pat Fitzpatrick, MH Cavanagh, Breda Gardner, Fidelis Doherty, John Brennan, Pat Dunphy	€450	€1,330	
18th November 2017	AUG In Service Members Training Programme Module 7 A briefing on the recent experience of Local Authorities in gear weather	Meath	Pat Fitzpatrick	€50	€399	
10 - 10th December 2017	Audit Committees in the Local Government System	Louth	Michael Doyle, Matt Doran	€200	€1,191	
<b>TOTAL</b>					<b>€18,400</b>	<b>€61,087</b>

Payments Made to Members in 2017						
NAME	REPRESENTATIONAL PAYMENTS	MONTHLY ALLOWANCE	EXPENSES Conferences/Training incl, Fees Telephone	SPC Chairpersons Allowance	Municipal District Chairpersons Allowance	Chairpersons/ Vice Chairpersons Allowance
MH Cavanagh	€16,568.04	€5,388.42	€5,696.68			
Pat Millea	€16,568.04	€3,911.98	€4,513.41	€750.00		
Maurice Shortall	€16,568.04	€4,162.66	€5,820.91	€2,000.00		
John Brennan	€16,568.04	€4,070.93	€6,317.29	€3,449.70	€3,250.00	
Michael McCarthy	€16,568.04	€4,355.80	€5,950.48			
Pat Fitzpatrick	€16,568.04	€4,065.35	€4,810.91	€1,250.00	€2,529.78	€1,763.18
Andrew McGuinness	€16,568.04	€4,138.80	€3,770.27	€3,500.00		
Peter Cleere	€16,568.04	€4,361.64	€6,018.89			
Michael Doyle	€16,568.04	€5,127.21	€3,964.25		€6,117.46	
Patrick O'Neill	€16,568.04	€3,927.75	€1,608.64		€5,841.50	
Breda Gardner	€16,568.04	€4,100.34	€4,992.76			
David Kennedy	€16,568.04	€4,616.14	€5,672.90			
Matt Doran	€16,568.04	€4,181.29	€4,459.12	€3,500.00		€8,815.90
Joe Malone	€16,568.04	€2,759.50	€5,119.01			
Malcolm Noonan	€16,568.04	€3,847.39	€568.32			
Patrick McKee	€16,568.04	€4,355.80	€2,263.03			
David Fitzgerald	€16,568.04	€4,065.30	€576.56			€11,115.70
Sean Tyrrell	€16,568.04	€3,885.18	€2,950.54			
Melissa O'Neill	€16,568.04	€5,805.64	€1,935.61			
Pat Dunphy	€16,568.04	€5,830.02	€3,803.32	€1,750.00		€2,223.14
Fidelis Doherty	€16,568.04	€5,437.73	€2,755.98		€3,380.70	
Eamon Aylward	€16,568.04	€5,203.32	€4,497.97			
Tomas Breathnach	€16,568.04	€5,378.64	€418.88			
Ger Frisby	€16,568.04	€5,816.47	€5,748.40		€2,598.77	
<b>Total</b>	<b>€397,632.96</b>	<b>€108,793.30</b>	<b>€94,234.13</b>	<b>€16,199.70</b>	<b>€23,718.21</b>	<b>€23,917.92</b>

## HUMAN RESOURCES

The Human Resources Department deals with the following areas:

- Human Resource Strategy
- Workforce Planning
- Recruitment and Selection
- Payroll and Superannuation
- Employee Training and Development
- Performance Management
- Leadership Development
- Equality
- Diversity Management
- Work-Life Balance
- Industrial Relations
- Employee Health, Safety and Welfare

### **Staffing Levels**

The number of staff employed at 31/12/2017 was 637 (*Headcount*) or 516.31 (*Whole-Time-Equivalent*).

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

This service is delivered by My Pay the Local Government Shared Services Provider from its offices in Portlaoise Co Laois. Kilkenny County Council has commenced a Superannuation Project for the Shared Service in 2018.

### **Training & Development**

Kilkenny County Council is committed to ensuring the professional and personal development of all employees. Training and development is aimed at helping employees to become more effective in their jobs and developing their potential, while also meeting the goals and objectives of the Council. A comprehensive training programme was delivered in 2017 which incorporated Health & Safety training, Third level Open Learning Programmes and various Seminars/workshops.

### **Attendance Management**

The Local Government Sectors Attendance Management Policy was revised in 2013 and revised sick pay schemes were introduced for the Sector. Absenteeism levels continue to be managed in accordance with these policies.

### **Gateway Scheme**

The Local Government Sector committed to providing 3,000 places on its Social Employment Scheme entitled Gateway. The Gateway Scheme is provided by Local Authorities country wide and it is an opportunity for long term unemployed persons to work for 19.5 hours per week over a 22 month period. Kilkenny County Council has provided 71 placements to date, 56 of which have completed their contracts, 13 of which left the scheme early to take up employment in the private sector or to return to education. There are currently 2 people still on the Scheme. In addition the Council provided temporary employment to 16 people following completion of their Gateway contracts.

Participants have been engaged in a variety of work, building walls and pathways, landscaping and tree maintenance, tidying up village approach roads, cleaning graveyards, information technology, marketing, tourism promotion and administration.

During the time spent on the scheme most people have had a positive experience where they learned new skills or honed their existing skills, undertook health and safety courses and certificates and were working as part of a team or on their own but under the umbrella of Kilkenny County Council doing good quality work in the community.

## INTERNAL AUDIT

The Audit Committee is made up of three external members and two elected members.

Its role is:

- To review the Council's financial reporting practices and procedures
- To foster the development of best practice in the local authority internal audit function
- To review the Council's financial reports and to report on its findings
- To assess and promote efficiency and value for money
- To review systems that are operated by the local authority for the management of risks.

There were four Audit Committee meetings held in 2017. The main issues considered were as follows:

- Draft Annual Financial Statement 2016
- Outward Payments
- Protected Disclosures Policy
- Cash Handling
- Local Government Auditors Report
- Housing Programme

## ROADS & TRANSPORTATION

The Elected Members adopted the 2017 Roadwork's Scheme for County Kilkenny in March 2017. The total value of Maintenance and Improvement Schemes amounted to €20,637.159. Kilkenny County Council successfully secured €2,897,427 in additional funding from Transport Infrastructure Ireland [TII], during the course of the year which allowed for additional design, improvement and maintenance works on the National Road Network.

Kilkenny County Council was also successful in 2017 in securing funding under the CLÁR Programme and Village Renewal Scheme, whereby allocations amounting to €161,932 and €73,364 were allocated respectively. Funding under both these initiatives allow for investment in enhancement, permeability and safety improvement works in towns, villages and the rural areas within the County.

### Roads Capital Projects and Improvements

The past decade has seen capital expenditure in excess of €1 billion invested in roads and motorway schemes in Co. Kilkenny.

### Major Projects

#### N25 New Ross By-pass

TII awarded the PPP Contract to a BAM Iridium consortium (the PPP Co.) in January 2016. The PPP Co's contractor for the works is a BAM Civil Ltd and Dragados Ireland Limited joint venture works commenced on site in February 2016. In 2017 earthworks operations progressed apace during the summer months with in excess of 80% completed by end of the year. Significant progress was also made on the Barrow Bridge and other bridge structures and underpasses throughout the year. Drainage, accommodation works, services works and other associated works were also progressed. Construction works also commenced on the N25 Glenmore intersection and Glenmore Road Underpass and it is anticipated that this element of the project will be completed in Qtr 2 2018. The overall delivery of the Scheme remains on programme to open in 2019.



*Works at Glenmore Roundabout and road underpass*



*Barrow Bridge at Pink Rock – central deck cast and struck for spans 1 & 2, false work removed from span 1.*

Quarterly project newsletters were published and circulated widely at public buildings, in local conveniences, shops and on a dedicated project website which provided progress updates as well as information on traffic management and road works.

### Pavement Improvement and Minor Works Programme

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

a) **N24 Granny & New Aglish Pavement Improvement Scheme;**

This project consisted of a 2km pavement improvement overlay and other associated works. The project was completed in Qtr 4 2017 and the contract value of same was €709,000.

b) **N24 Carrick Road Minor Improvement Scheme;**

An allocation of €37,000 was provided in 2017 to advance the design stage of this Scheme. It is anticipated that a Project Appraisal Report along with a Scheme Feasibility & Options Report will be completed in Qtr 1/2 2018.

c) **N24 Piltown Fiddown Bypass – Tower Road Junction & Inkbottle Junction;**

A Road Safety Impact Assessment and Options Report recommendation was submitted to TII with respect to these junctions. On foot of this report, TII gave approval to Kilkenny County Council to engage the services of an engineering consultant to advance the planning and design stage of this Scheme. A design brief was prepared and tendered and it is anticipated that a consultancy firm will be appointed by in early 2018. Planning, detailed design, land acquisition and the preparation of contract documents will be advanced in 2018. Interim safety measures, at a cost of €37,000, were also completed in 2017 at the Tower Road Junction.

d) **N25 Graiguenakill (New Ross By-pass tie-in) to Gaulstown (length 3.60km plus an additional 0.53km section from Luffany to the Rhu Glen, combined length 4.13km);**

Kilkenny received a funding allocation from TII in 2017 to advance the detailed design and preparation of contract documents for this pavement improvement scheme. Subject to the necessary TII design and funding approvals, it is anticipated that tenders for this scheme will be advertised in Qtr 1 / 2 2018 with a view to commencing works in Quarter 2 2018.

e) **N76 Callan Road Realignment: 4.38km - €8.75m;**

The N76 Callan Road Realignment Scheme extends from the N76 Ring Road Callan Road Roundabout to just south of the Brownstown Junction. The Scheme provides for the introduction of on-line footpaths/cycle tracks and public lighting from the Ring Road to Tennympark Cross and off-line road realignment between Tennympark Cross and Brownstown. The works contract commenced in early 2017 and progress on site has been steady. It is expected that the project will be completed in Quarter 2 2018.



*December 2016 - North of Brownstown Junction - December 2017*



*Callan Road Realignment Scheme*

f) **N77 Ballyragget to Ballynaslee Minor Improvement Scheme;**

An allocation of €38,000 was provided in 2017 to advance the design stage of this Scheme. It is anticipated that a Project Appraisal Balance Sheet and Design Report will be completed Qtr 1 2018. Planning under Part 8 and the acquisition of lands required to deliver this Scheme will be advanced in 2018 subject to funding.



**g) N78 Ballycomy to Castlecomer Pavement Improvement Scheme;**

This project consisted of a 1.4km pavement improvement overlay and other associated works. The project was completed in 2017 and the contract value of same was €665,000.

**h) N78 Castlecomer Bridge to Coolbaun South & Coolbaun North to Crettyard, (length 6.73km)**

Kilkenny received a funding allocation from TII in 2017 to advance the detailed design and preparation of contract documents for this pavement improvement scheme. Subject to the necessary TII design and funding approvals, it is anticipated that tenders for this Scheme will be advertised in Qtr 1 2018 with a view to commencing works in Quarter 2 2018.

**Non- National Road Network**

**a) Restoration Improvement and Restoration Maintenance Programme 2017**

The main road improvements on the Non-National road network are funded from the Road Restoration Improvement and Maintenance Grant Scheme. The Council received a grant allocation of €6.713m in 2017. Works under this Scheme are prioritised on a basis of providing for enhancements to the road condition rating, skid resistance and impermeability. In 2017, 100.3 km's were improved under this Scheme, 46.3 km's were improved under the Restoration Programme and 54 km's improved under the Restoration Maintenance Programme (Surface dressing). Significant progress has been made on the Non-National road network over the years since the Restoration Grant was introduced and the condition rating of the roads in County Kilkenny compares favourably with any other County.

**b) Non- National Low Cost Safety Programme**

The Non- National Low Cost Safety Programme is targeted at locations along the non-national road network which have been identified as collision prone zones. The works carried out under this programme include improved junction delineation and visibility splays, traffic calming, enhanced roadside delineation and pedestrian crossing facilities within urban areas. In 2017 seven schemes were completed under this programme at a cost of €249,000.

One of the projects undertaken in 2017 under the Programme was Freshford Road Traffic Calming Route Treatment, Phase 1, which provided for the introduction of a mini-roundabout at the entrance to St. Luke's Hospital and the installation of a signalised pedestrian crossing on the Freshford Road.



*Low Cost Safety Improvement Works on the Freshford Road*

**Key Infrastructure Improvement Schemes:**

**Kilkenny Central Access Scheme**

Phase 1 of the scheme incorporating primarily the construction of the new Central Access Scheme Bridge (Saint Francis Bridge) over the river Nore was completed by the appointed

contractor, John Cradock Limited, in July of 2016. Phase Two of the scheme, namely, the construction of the Central Access Scheme roadway from the west side of the new bridge to St. Canice's Place, and from the east side of the bridge to the Castlecomer Road, including the widening of the existing Castlecomer Road, and the reconfiguration of the existing New Road roundabout, was completed by the appointed contractor, Fox Building and Civil Engineering Limited in May 2017. The scheme was officially opened on May 23<sup>rd</sup> 2017.



*Walkway through trees at Peace Park*



*Castlecomer Road*

### **Patrick Street Enhancement Scheme**

Works continued in 2017 on the Patrick Street Enhancement Scheme which provided for the upgrade of existing footpaths, the installation of a pedestrian crossing, the erection of ornate street lighting and the removal of overhead service wires. The end product greatly improves the attractiveness of the streetscape whilst also providing for better pedestrian connectivity.



*Patrick Street Enhancement Scheme*

### **Kilkenny Northern Ring Road Extension: 1.5 km**

The Environmental Impact Statement, Compulsory Purchase Order for this scheme issued to An Bord Pleanála on 13<sup>th</sup> December, 2013. An Bord Pleanála approved the EIS and the CPO in the second quarter of 2014. A Judicial Review of that decision was sought by local landowners. In May 2017 the High Court referred the case to the European Court of Justice and Kilkenny County Council awaits a decision, in advance of being in a position to advise Members as to the next stage for the Scheme.

### **Road Safety**

The Council continues to fund this important function through road safety awareness, the school warden system and the support of community focussed road safety campaigns.

The Kilkenny Road Safety Plan 2015 to 2020 was adopted by the Elected Members in July 2015. This Plan sets out a clear blueprint for progress in the area of road safety up to the end of 2020. The Plan is underpinned by a series of defined projects and actions across the core areas of intervention namely, Engineering, Education, Enforcement and Engagement. The plan sets out 45 individual projects with 54 Actions /Targets for the period up to 2020 and the relevant lead agencies are working to deliver same.

Kilkenny County Council and An Garda Síochána will continue to cooperate to ensure improvements in road safety in the county.

## Public Lighting

Kilkenny County Council maintains approximately 10,000 public lights throughout the County.

Following a tendering process Kilkenny and Carlow Local Authorities entered into a new contract with SSE Airtricity in April 2017 for the maintenance of public lighting. The period of this contract is two years with the possibility of a further two year extension. SSE Airtricity was awarded this contract which is structured as a Schedule of rates maintenance service contract. The introduction of this new maintenance contract will generate savings to both Local Authorities. It is Kilkenny's intention to reinvest this saving into essential public lighting infrastructure and energy efficiency projects.

The energy supplier for unmetered public lighting stock is Energia whilst metered public lighting stock is SSE Airtricity. Both supply contracts are overseen by the National Procurement Service.

The annual investment in public lighting provision per annum is €1.13m. Maintenance and capital works now approximately accounts for 20% and energy accounts for 80%. Approximately €900,000 was spent on the energy account and the balance €230,000 was spent on maintenance and capital works.

### Kilkenny Ring Road N77 lighting upgrade

The Roads Office and Energy Office applied to Transport Infrastructure Ireland for grant funding to retrofit 310 lights on the N77 from the Castlecomer Road roundabout to the Dublin Roads roundabout. This project was completed in December and will garner saving of approximately €35,000 per annum and energy savings of 67%.



*N77 Kilkenney Ring Road before and after*

Kilkenny County Council is actively encouraging the use of LED lighting technology in new public lighting installation and retrofits. In addition, the use of energy efficient technology is being recommended in new planned developments in the County.

## WATER SERVICES

Since 2014, Irish Water has been the Water Services Authority for all public water and waste water schemes. Kilkenny County Council continues to be the Water Services Authority for the Rural/Group Water Sector.

Under the twelve year Service Level Agreement between Irish Water and Kilkenny County Council, the Council undertakes the day to day delivery of the public water and waste water services on behalf of Irish Water. Irish Water funds and macro manages the service delivery, while the Council provides the staff and micro manages the service delivery.

The Service Level Agreement covers:

- public water and waste water treatment,
- public water and waste water networks,
- Project management of and waste water capital projects.

### **Operation and Maintenance:**

Kilkenny County Council manages 24 public drinking water supplies and 35 public waste water treatment schemes on behalf of Irish Water. In 2017, 9.7 billion litres of water (26.5 million litres/day) was supplied through Kilkenny's public water supply network to approximately 65,000 customers.

2016 is latest year for which the EPA has published its Drinking Water Quality Report. The 2017 report will be published later in 2018.

In 2016, for the sixth year in a row, Kilkenny's Public Water Schemes achieved 100% microbiological compliance (National average 99.9%). 99.7 % compliance was achieved for chemical parameters (National Average 99.4%).

In line with recent years, the level of environmental compliance achieved at Kilkenny's waste water treatment plants has continued to improve. This overall trend is illustrated by the improvement in results recorded in the EPA's Annual Urban Waste Water Reports.

### **Capital Programme:**

Irish Water has a five year (2017 – 2021) Capital Investment Programme of €3.5bn, with in excess of €60m included for investment in the following projects in County Kilkenny during the lifetime of the programme.

### **Kilkenny City Regional Water Supply Scheme:**

Current daily demand for drinking water supply to Kilkenny City (approx 11,000m<sup>3</sup>/day) has traditionally been met by way of 50% supply from Troyswood (sourced from the Nore) and 50% supply from Radestown (sourced from the Dinan and the Douglas rivers).

In December, 2016, Irish Water lodged a planning application for a proposed upgrade. The proposal outlined in the planning application envisages the entire City supply being sourced from the Nore. An upgrade and extension to the Troyswood Water Treatment Plant, together with a treated water pump station and 2.8 km of treated water rising main from Troyswood to Radestown are proposed. The proposed scheme will provide for the production of all drinking water for Kilkenny City at the Troyswood facility with distribution from the existing reservoirs at Thornback and Radestown. Planning Permission has been granted by Kilkenny County Council but the decision has been appealed to An Bord Pleanala. The expected decision date by an Bord Pleanala is April 2018.

### **Out Rath Reservoir Upgrade**

- Works substantially completed on upgrade works in 2017.

### **Replacement of Backyard Services – Creel Street, Freshford**

- Replacement of 19 backyard services on Creel Street Freshford and the laying of a new 110mm PE Watermain.
- Works completed in 2017. Project Cost: €70,000.

### **Water Mains Rehabilitation (Ballygriffin, Owing and Belline)**

- Approximately 4.5 km of water main was replaced under this contract in 2017. Project Cost: €50,000

### **Water Mains Rehabilitation (Stoneyford and Goresbridge-2 schemes 1 contract)**

- Replacement of 950m of water main in Goresbridge and replacement in Stoneyford of 2.7Km of water main and 56 connections was completed in 2017.

### **Water Mains Rehabilitation - Doornane**

- The works which include the replacement of 1.3km of watermain with 30 new connections. Works tendered and due to start in Q1\Q2 2018.

### **Jerpoint Abbey Water Mains Rehabilitation**

- Phase 1 (Route Proving and Archaeological trenching) works completed in 2017
- Phase 2 750m of mains rehabilitation is under review

### **Glenmore Reservoir Refurbishment Programme**

- The proposal is to install a new reservoir above Glenmore and to decommission the existing underground reservoir.
- Works commenced on site in 2017.



*Roof installed on the reservoir at Kilmacshane, Inistioge*

### **Inlet Works Programme at Piltown and Callan Waste Water Treatment Plants:**

- Works complete on both plants in 2017.
- The contract consisted of the design, supply, and commissioning of inlet screens for both Callan and Piltown.
- Works also included the design, supply, installation and commissioning of trickling filter medium at Piltown

### **Castlecomer Stoneyford Urlingford Wastewater Treatment Plants:**

- Upgrade of these three plants were completed in 2017, at a cost of €3m.

### **Inistioge Water Supply Scheme:**

- Works commenced on the above project in Q4 2017 with a target date of Q4 2018 to complete. The project value is €6m. Ground water will be sourced and treated in Thomastown and pumped into supply in the Inistioge network. The existing treatment plant at Ballygub will become redundant and the Ballygub site will be used as a reservoir site only.

### **Mains Rehabilitation Phase 2**

*Leggettsrath, Newrath, Cherrymount/Knocktopher and Graiguenamanagh.*

This project includes for the replacement of approx 8km of poorly performing water main. The project is expected to deliver a saving of 250m<sup>3</sup> of water per day. The project is due to be commence in Q1\Q2 of 2018. The estimated cost of this project is circa €2.5m.

### **Pressure Management (Kilkenny City)**

This Project involves the provision of 2.8km of new trunk main to provide for improved distribution and pressure management at the following city locations:

- Dean Cavanagh Place to Emmet Street.
- Fr. Murphy Square to Ormonde Road
- College Road to Patrick Street.
- James Street to High Street.

Preliminary estimates indicate a project value of circa 5m. Phase 1 Patrick Street works were tendered in 2017 with works due to start in Q1/Q2 2018.

#### **Purcellsinch Waste Water Treatment Plant:**

Contract has been awarded to commence inlet works and grit removal system in Q2 2018. The value of the works is €600,000. Target completion date Q4 2018

#### **Mullinavat and Inistioge Waste Water Treatment Plants:**

Planning applications for the upgrade of the above two plants were lodged in 2017. The estimated value of the upgrades is approximately €3m

#### **Disinfection and PH Programme (Kilkenny, Wexford and Carlow Bundle)**

This programme is a bundle type contract including treatment facilities in Kilkenny, Wexford and Carlow.

The scope of the project is in two Phases. Phase 1 detailed assessments of existing disinfection and pH correction mechanisms together with the identification of relevant upgrade works for each site. Phase 2 is the implementation of the upgrade and associated works so as to ensure that high standards of disinfection are achieved.

County Kilkenny has 23 Water treatment facilities included in this programme. Phase 1 started late 2016 and is ongoing.

#### **Flow Monitoring and Sampling Programme for Kilkenny:**

Waste Water Treatment Plants in County Kilkenny were included under this programme and all works are complete.

The works involved the installation of flow monitoring equipment both on the inlets and outlets of selected sites, provision of new samplers where required and event recording equipment with all the recorded data hosted on a cloud based software package.



*Two new Reservoirs at Grennan Water Treatment plant*



*Trench works in the village of Inistioge, Archaeologist mapping portion of town wall/ gate.*

#### **Rural Water Programme:**

While the EPA is the Supervising Authority for public water supplies, Kilkenny County Council is the Supervising authority for private water supplies in County Kilkenny, which fall under the Drinking Water Regulations.

This includes 134 small Private Supplies (SPS), which typically include schools, food premises and rural housing estates.

The Council also manages and allocates Government grants approved under the Rural Water Programme for group water and waste water schemes, as well as grants for private wells.

In 2017 approx €341,690 was paid by the Department of Housing & Local Government to Kilkenny County Council for works undertaken as part of the Rural Water Programme as follows:

- €143,077 for Group Water Scheme network conservation and management
- €31,198 for Group Water Scheme water quality improvements,
- €146,478 was spent on the takeover of schemes,
- €3,087 on lead replacement
- €17,850 Specific Source Protection grants

Group Subsidies towards the operational running costs of Water Schemes totalling €242,464 were administered and paid to 51 Group Schemes.

Approvals were issued for grant applications for the provision of wells to private houses and the sum of €160,083 was paid out in 99 well grants.

Costs Staff totalling €43,630 were recouped from the Department to cover the supervision and administration of the Rural Water Programme

In 2017, Kilkenny County Council was the Supervising Authority for the following:  
195 Group Water Schemes, 125 of which are served own sources and 70 which are served from public mains.

# Directorate of Housing, Social, Community & Cultural Services

**Housing**

**Community**

**Library**

**Arts**

**Heritage**

**Fire Services**





# HOUSING

## HOUSING & ACCOMMODATION

The Directorate of Housing incorporates a wide range of services for applicants and tenants to facilitate and support the provision of independent and supported accommodation. This is achieved by offering a variety of social housing supports by the Housing Authority, Voluntary and private sector.

The Core Housing Services Are:

### HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2017

The Minister for Housing notified Kilkenny County Council of its delivery targets under Rebuilding Ireland i.e. 627 units for the period 2017 to 2021. During 2017 housing capital schemes advanced and progressed as follows:

- Acquired 39 units of accommodation and 2 units in progress at year end.
- 18 New Builds were delivered in 2017 i.e. Seven (7) The Haven, Newpark and 11 houses at Togher Way, Urlingford.
- 17 units are under construction and expected to be completed in the first week of January 2018 i.e. 4 units at Wetlands, 8 units at Abbeygate, Ferrybank and 5 further Units at Urlingford.
- Part 8 granted for 40 units at Greensbridge, Kilkenny (5), Donaguile, Castlecomer (33), Hebron Road (1) and Blackstaff, Callan (1).
- Tenders were issued for the construction of 38 houses at Bolton, Callan.
- 21 Units of Accommodation were completed at Thomastown (10), Callan (1), Kilkenny (6) and 4 units acquired under the Capital Assistance Scheme to meet special category of housing need (CAS).
- CAS scheme opened for new applications for the categories of homeless, elderly and special needs.
- Works to 14 Voids were completed with 3 still under construction at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017.



7 units at Newpark (The Haven) , completed in 2017 under a turnkey scheme

### Rental Accommodation Scheme [RAS] & Housing Assistance Payment [HAP]

- Expenditure for RAS in 2017 was €6.5 million.
- 548 RAS Properties now form part of social housing options.
- 27 properties were taken on in 2017 and 30 left the RAS Scheme in 2017.
- HAP was introduced in Mid October, 2014. 1160 tenancies were set up since the scheme commenced and 836 remain at 31/12/2017.
- There were over 250 households on rent supplement in Kilkenny at year end.

### Homeless Services 2017

- 319 homeless presentations during 2017, a decrease of 30 on the same time last year.
- 49 persons availing of emergency accommodation at 31<sup>st</sup> December, of which 5 were families.
- There were no persons found rough sleeping in Kilkenny City & Environs on the night of the Official Rough Sleepers Count carried out on Tuesday 28th into Wednesday 29th December.

### Private Rented Accommodation

- 901 inspections carried out by Kilkenny County Council on private rented accommodation during 2017 compared to 414 in 2016.
- Target inspection rate of 114% was achieved in 2017.

## **Traveller Accommodation Programme 2014 - 2018 [TAP]**

- 198 Traveller families were known to be resident in the County on the day of the annual count, an increase of two families compared with 2016.
- 56 units of accommodation delivered in 2017. This exceeds the target of **54** units of accommodation set out in TAP.
- 4 houses - Phase 2 of St. Catherine's Halting Site near completion. The design of the third and final phase to commence i.e. 3 units.



## **Assessment of Needs**

- Annual Statutory Summary of Social Housing Assessment (HNA) was carried out in June 2017 and returned to the Department in July, 2017.
- 8 applicants/households were removed from the list.
- 2,180 applicants remain on the Social Housing List as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017.
- 61% of applicants want to live in Kilkenny City & Environs.
- 39% approved applicants and seeking 1 bed accommodation.
- 36% approved applicants and seeking 2 bed accommodation.
- 436 Housing Need Assessment appointments were held in 2017.
- 154 offers of accommodation made during 2017.
- 42 Offers of transfer of accommodation were made during 2017.
- 16 Offers of accommodation were made to applicants who were homeless/potentially homeless.



*Estate Management  
Woodlands Estate Graiguenamanagh*

## **Maintaining Housing Stock**

- 29 local authority houses were upgraded with adaptations/extensions.
- 180 houses received energy efficiency works (retrofitted) during 2017.
- 28 vacant units (11 new purchases) at year end. 16 units, contractor currently on site, 9 at pre tender stage and 3 Awaiting Funding.
- 5,649 maintenance calls were received during 2017.
- Tenant Handbook was updated and circulated to all elected members in November and issued to all tenants on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> December.

## **Estate Management Grants**

- National Pride of Place Awards to Newpark Close under the Urban Neighbourhood Category and the Ballykeefe Amphitheatre (Special Recognition Community Award).
- Support given to 67 Resident Associations/Community Groups - €150,000 grants paid
- 4 Large Scale Community Enhancement projects undertaken.
- Tidy Estates competition - Kilkenny County Council hosted an event in the Parade Tower in Kilkenny Castle on Wednesday the 25<sup>th</sup> of October to congratulate the winners.
- RAPID Programme 2017 - €64,500 was awarded to Kilkenny County Council by the Department of Rural and Community Development for RAPID projects in County Kilkenny.

## **Housing Loans & Tenant Purchase Scheme**

- €20,029 was the average home loan paid out in 2017.
- 56 loans applications were received.
- 46 loans approved in 2017.
- 42 Loans were advanced in 2017 amounting to €4,279,134.
- Eight houses were sold under the Tenant (Incremental) Purchase Scheme total - value of €500,911.

## **Anti Social Behaviour**

- 155 complaints were received during 2017, a decrease of 11 on the previous year.

### **Refugee Resettlement Programme**

- Kilkenny notified of an allocation of 140 Syrian Refugees to be resettled in Kilkenny along with 6 other Local Authorities.
- Statutory Local Interagency Committee set up.
- EU and national funding secured to recruit a Resettlement worker and Intercultural worker to assist the resettlement programme.

### **Housing Private Grants:**

- Allocation of €1,812,486 made by Department of which 20% is to be funded by Kilkenny County Council
- €1,862,494 was paid out to 264 applications covering the three grant schemes in 2017.
  - ❖ Housing Adaptations Grant - €58,635 paid out to 74 applicants averaging €1,603 each
  - ❖ Housing Aid for Older Persons Grant (HOP) - €69,021 paid out to 162 applicants averaging €,364 each.
  - ❖ Mobility Aid Grant - €134,837 paid out to 28 applicants averaging €4,816 each
- HOP grants accounts for 47% of applications paid in 2017
- Advertised the opening of HOP applications in October 2017 with 227 applications received.

## COMMUNITY

### **Community Funding**

**Town & Village Renewal Scheme:** €873,364 was awarded to Kilkenny County Council in respect of 11 projects which were developed with local communities.

**Community Facilities Grant Scheme:** €64,500 (LCDC) Allocated & paid to 36 community groups Community Cultural Facilities Capital Scheme : €300,000 awarded in respect of 8 community groups projects.

**RAPID Funding(LCDC):** €64,500 awarded to 6 Community Group projects in disadvantaged areas. Kilkenny County Council also awarded €30,000 to projects in disadvantaged Kilkenny City areas.

**Healthy Ireland:** €89,000 awarded to Kilkenny LCDC in respect of 6 Community Projects. A further €38,000 was awarded to the Children's and Young Peoples Services Committee (CYPSC) in respect of 6 projects.

**Play & Recreation:** Awarded €5,650 in respect of Toys, Technology & Training at Ferrybank Library & €4,000 in respect of an Inclusive Merry Go Round at Talbot Court.

Financial Contributions: The Council continues to provide a financial contribution to Ossory Youth, Garda Youth Diversion Project, Drugs Outreach Programme, Rehab People of the Year, Ring-a Link Rural transport service, Dail na NÓg, Kilkenny Traveller Community Movement and Castlecomer Enterprise Centre.

### **Local Community Development Committee [LCDC]**

A separate Annual Report for 2017 is prepared in respect of the LCDC which is a Committee of the Council comprising of Community, Voluntary and State Agency representatives and is independent in the performance of its functions. The LCDC Annual report for 2017 outlines the key achievements of the LCDC in 2017 which included monitoring and oversight of the implementation of the Local Economic and Community Plan by 22 Agencies. There is also ongoing focus and formal engagement with stakeholders in the planning, monitoring and oversight of the Contract for the provision of the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme. (SICAP) for County Kilkenny, the procurement of a Programme Implementer for SICAP for the period 2018-2022, the provision on ongoing support to the Public Participation Network (PPN) which now has a membership of 245 groups across the County and the provision and exchange of information amongst LCDC members.

### **Age Friendly County**

The Council also commenced the Thomastown Age Friendly Town project where the aim is to encourage Thomastown to be age friendly in respect of its transportation and accessibility infrastructure, its outdoor spaces and buildings, its housing provision, respect and social inclusion, participation of older people in society, community support and health services, communication and information sharing, civic participation and in employment. A local multiagency team has been formed and it is expected that the Thomastown Age Friendly Action Plan will be prepared by mid 2018.

### **Kilkenny Age Friendly Alliance**

#### **Kilkenny Age Friendly County Strategy**

The Age Friendly Plan of Action has been developed as a result of consultation with the older people of Kilkenny and with the agencies and service providers involved in the delivery of services to older adults throughout the County.

Kilkenny Age Friendly Alliance oversees the implementation of the objectives set down in the County Strategy. In 2017, the Alliance held 4 no. meetings at which all agencies and service providers gave updates on the following initiatives:

<b>AGENCY/ SERVICE PROVIDER</b>	<b>AGE FRIENDLY INITIATIVE</b>
<b>Kilkenny County Council</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Age Friendly Car Parking Spaces provided at County Hall.</li> <li>▪ Kilkenny City Bus Route – update.</li> <li>▪ Rural Bus Pull-In Area/Shelter Programme.</li> <li>▪ Housing Initiatives.</li> <li>▪ Planning – Public Consultations on Hebron Road Urban Design Strategy and Fair Green Regeneration Project.</li> <li>▪ Heritage News - Engagement with and support communities and older people on a range of cultural heritage programmes, projects and services.</li> <li>▪ Kilkenny County Library Services - Bealtaine Festival celebrating creativity in older age.</li> <li>▪ Public Realm Improvements.</li> <li>▪ Kilkenny City Bus Service.</li> <li>▪ Age Friendly Town and Villages in Kilkenny.</li> <li>▪ National Planning Framework and Castlecomer Draft Local Area Plan.</li> <li>▪ National Convening of Older Persons Forum AGM Limerick.</li> <li>▪ Public Lighting in John Street, Kilkenny.</li> </ul>
<b>An Garda Síochána</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Appointment of an Old Persons Champion</li> <li>▪ One stop shop for Victim Support and Age Friendly Clinics.</li> <li>▪ Community Meetings.</li> <li>▪ Participation of Older Persons Forum on local policing partnerships.</li> <li>▪ Community Road Show – fear of crime amongst older people.</li> <li>▪ Text Alert Scheme.</li> <li>▪ Visit to Garda Station on 3<sup>rd</sup> October, 2017, by Kilkenny Seniors Forum.</li> <li>▪ KCLR Crime Slot – messages for Older People.</li> <li>▪ Connecting with people living on their own.</li> <li>▪ Awards Night to acknowledge contribution people are making to the community.</li> </ul>
<b>Kilkenny Seniors Forum</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Engagement with Public Participation Network</li> <li>▪ Volunteer service at St. Luke’s General Hospital</li> <li>▪ Submission to Waterford Boundary Review.</li> <li>▪ Meeting in Newpark Close Resource Centre.</li> <li>▪ Annual Forum – Early September.</li> <li>▪ Connect with Comhairle na nÓg.</li> <li>▪ Kilkenny Seniors Forum Conference.</li> <li>▪ Visit to McAuley Place Housing Project in Naas, Co. Kildare.</li> </ul>
<b>Kilkenny Leader Partnership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Housing Aid Programme.</li> <li>▪ Sustainable Energy Communities Network</li> <li>▪ Computer Training Courses for the Elderly</li> <li>▪ Digital Skills for Citizens.</li> <li>▪ Volunteering Information Service.</li> <li>▪ Water Quality – Nore Vision.</li> </ul>

AGENCY/ SERVICE PROVIDER	AGE FRIENDLY INITIATIVE
<b>Service Providers – Health Service Executive</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Items discussed at Service Providers Forum Meeting.</li> <li>▪ Getting information out on how Older People can access services.</li> <li>▪ Providing information on special offers that businesses are providing for Older People, i.e. getaway breaks.</li> <li>▪ Personal Alarms/Security Alert Scheme.</li> </ul>
<b>Kilkenny Recreation and Sports Partnership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Older Adults Activity Classes.</li> <li>▪ Walking Programmes</li> <li>▪ Men on the Move</li> <li>▪ Get Back on your Bike</li> <li>▪ Couch to 40k Cycling</li> <li>▪ Outdoor Spaces and Buildings.</li> <li>▪ Transport.</li> <li>▪ Social Participation, Respect and Social Inclusion.</li> <li>▪ Communication and Information.</li> <li>▪ Community Support and Health Services.</li> </ul>

### Youth

The Council continued to support the Children and Young Persons Services Committee (CYPSC), Kilkenny Comhairle na nÓg works towards a strong inclusive organisation coordinating the inter-agency steering committee of the Comhairle and supporting the implementation of the annual action plan of Kilkenny Comhairle na nÓg. The Council also provided a financial contribution of €50,000 to The Drum Youth Facility.

### Africa Day

Africa Day is an initiative of the African Union, which celebrates African diversity and success and the cultural and economic potential of the continent. In Ireland, events to celebrate Africa Day are supported by Irish Aid – the Government’s overseas aid programme, managed by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

In 2017 Kilkenny County Council were successful in their work with the Kilkenny African Community in accessing €10,000 from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to support the organisation and running of Africa Day events on June 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

A very successful and energetic football match was held on June 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Waterbarrack, made up of over 100 participants from local football Clubs and the Kilkenny African Community. The public celebration at the Castle Park grounds on June 4<sup>th</sup> featured traditional dances from Nigeria, South Sudan and the Congo as well as live performances, fashion shows, talent shows, face-painting, traditional African food samples and more. . It was a colourful spectacle with superb display of African culture. An estimated 1000+ locals and tourists visiting the city were privileged to be a part of.



### **Kilkenny Resettlement Programme (*Irish Refugee Protection Programme*)**

Kilkenny County Council is participating in the Irish Refugee Protection Programme, which is an Irish Government response to the humanitarian crisis that has developed in Southern Europe arising from mass migration from areas of conflict in the Middle East and Africa. The Council agreed to support and resettle a group of 140 people as part of the Irish Refugee protection programme and be in a position to offer safety and the opportunity to make Kilkenny their home.

Kilkenny County Council established a Statutory Interagency Multi Agency Resettlement Working Group and secured € 338,385 from the Department of Justice and Equality to employ a Resettlement Worker, and an Intercultural Worker and to undertake the implementation of a resettlement programme over a 2 year period.

### **Community Newsletter**

The Council's on line community newsletter was further expanded in 2017 with the inclusion of several sources of community funding. Four newsletters were issued in 2017.

### **The Outdoor Tourism Hub, Graiguenamanagh**

This outdoor pursuits and service hub project is being delivered through Community (Barrow Valley Community Developments Ltd.), in co-operation with Kilkenny Leader Partnership and Kilkenny County Council on Council lands previously used as the Pitch and Putt course with an area of 5.5 acres on the western side of the River Barrow. Permission was granted in 2014 for the construction of a multi-use building ("The Hub") which would focus on supporting recreational and training / educational activities on the river and its environs, along with a high ropes course, a series of cycling tracks crisscrossing the site and an area for camping. The Hub building was near complete in 2017 but funding was required to finish it and complete the emergency access road, footpaths and lighting which were necessary to allow the use of the building to generate funding. To complete the project, Kilkenny Leader Partnership & Barrow Valley Community Development agreed to undertake the internal fit-out of the building, whilst the Kilkenny County Council agreed to fund and carryout the external works.

In late 2017, the Council received approval from the Department to transfer allocated REDZ funding, in the amount of €103,400, to undertake these works.

The remaining outdoor facilities or indeed new facilities to compliment the Hub building will be provided as revenue is generated or funding allocated.



# LIBRARY SERVICES

- Items borrowed increased by 8% to 338,477 and library website users increased by 23% to 31,161.
- Increase in opening hours in Callan Library.
- 1,017 children completed our Summer Reading Challenge, reading over 8,000 books.
- Almost 1,900 children attended the new Bookville Festival for families supported by Creative Ireland.
- Joined a new national Library System, giving members access to stock from all over Ireland– this is the first such national service anywhere in the world.
- Refurbishment of Loughboy Library to create a welcoming, attractive and functional modern library space.



## Creating Opportunities and Community Hubs

Kilkenny Library Service provides spaces for people to be creative, for groups to meet and pursue a shared interest or explore new ways of communicating. Through our collections, our online resources and regular event programming, we continue to foster cultural experiences as a powerful agent for strengthening community identity, promoting civic participation and assisting in the integration of all citizens in our community.



 <p>celebrating creativity in older age <b>Kilkenny</b></p> <p>Events: 80 Attendance: 636</p>	 <p><b>YULEFEST</b> KILKENNY</p> <p>Christmas Events: 14 Participants: 734</p>	 <p>1,017 children read over 8,000 books</p>
 <p><b>BOOKVILLE</b> A FESTIVAL FOR FAMILIES AND CHILDREN KILKENNY OCTOBER 13th - 15th 2017</p> <p>Attendance: 1,899 School classes: 58</p>	 <p><b>NATIONAL HERITAGE WEEK 2017</b> 19-27 AUG</p> <p>Events: 16 Attendance: 330</p>	 <p><b>INTERNATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH WEEK - KILKENNY</b> OCTOBER 4th - 12th 2017</p> <p>Events: 8 Attendance: 217</p>
 <p><b>SCIENCE WEEK</b></p> <p>Events: 12 Attendance: 303</p>	 <p><b>The Voice of Adult Learning</b></p> <p>Events: 8 Attendance: 72</p>	



## Education & Literacy

From story times and academic support for children to digital training and job search help, we provide a wide range of free educational services and resources for all ages. Educational programming to support lifelong learning and literacy includes:

- Summer Reading Challenge for children with 1017 participants in 2017 – an 18% increase in numbers
- A Right To Read Network has been established with the ETB, Education Centre, Childcare Committee and KCC Community Section to develop a coordinated framework for literacy support.
- Opportunities to join language circles, book clubs, creative writing groups, storytimes and knitting groups.

## Coderdojo Pop Up Workshops

- Work Matters supporting the information and research needs of businesses and job seekers.
- National Science Week events supported by Science Foundation Ireland.
- Rollout of Aistear - a locally led literacy programme in partnership with primary schools and crèches.

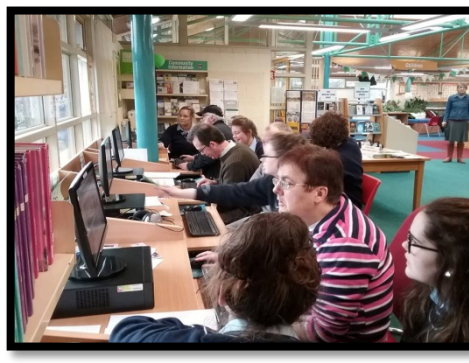


## Digital Literacy, Technology and Social Media.

The library provides essential resources for those who lack the technological confidence and skills to use internet enabled services that may help them find jobs, interact with government or achieve educational goals.

- We had over 31,000 public internet sessions and over 200 computer classes facilitated.
- Continued upgrade of ICT infrastructure and ongoing investment in the development of digital technology. A grant of €129,000 was received in 2017 as part of Libraries Ireland Grant to enable the rollout of RFID self service technology to enhance the customer experience.
- All branches are Wi-Fi enabled with mobile printing available in the City and Graigueenamanagh Library.
- A suite of online services are available providing opportunities to learn a language, download an eBook or magazine and complete a training course. In 2017 over 6,000 magazines were accessed online.
- Social media usage also increased across all platforms- Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

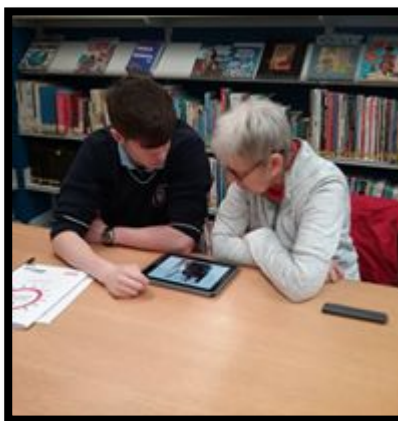
Kilkenny Library Services also continues to seek new ways to extend technology access beyond the branches.



## Wellbeing

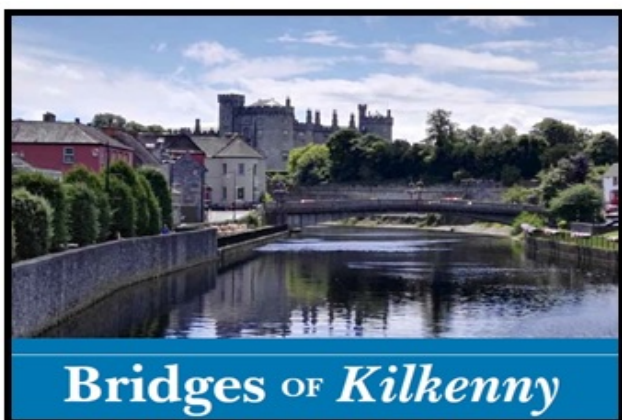
Along with providing educational, cultural, recreational opportunities for all ages, the service also contributes to the quality of life of people and communities. Kilkenny Library Service creates opportunities for individuals and groups to come together, share information in a free and trusted space.

- Mental Health Week talks and workshops
- Intergenerational technology classes
- Rollout of Healthy Ireland At Your Library
- Opportunities to learn new skills and re-engage with communities by participating in national festivals such as Bealtaine, Aontas, First Fortnight as well as local programmes and events.



## History & Heritage

- Our local studies collection contains a highly significant record of the County's heritage and collective memory.
- In 2017 there were over 700 visitors to the service. Additional queries were also dealt with over the phone and by email.
- Outreach events facilitated by library staff included genealogy workshops, research workshops and primary and secondary school visits.
- A self help guide to genealogical research was developed by staff to assist customers who are on their family tree journey.
- The publication of "Bridges of Kilkenny" by staff also provided a brief historical review of the main bridges in the county.
- Two collections have been digitised in 2017:
  - ❖ Kilkenny Historic Postcards.
  - ❖ Graiguenamanagh memories sourced from the library's collections and from public donations in partnership with Kilkenny Leader Partnership.
  - ❖ These will be available on a dedicated Digital Archive online via the library's website.



# ARTS

The Arts Office is part of the Cultural Services Section (CSS) of Kilkenny County Council, alongside the Libraries, Heritage, Community, Architect and Conservation

## Literature

We focus on ensuring a balanced approach to the development of our literary programmes and activities across the City and County.

- 2017 marked another successful year for the Kilkenny Poetry Broadsheet.
- Rhyme Rag continued to publish the poetry of young Kilkenny writers (age 12- 21) on [www.rhymerag.net](http://www.rhymerag.net).
- This year the Rhyme Rag Ensemble was initiated to further support the expansion, stability and sustainability of Rhyme Rag and the community of young writers.

## Community, Education & Inclusion

The design and delivery of high quality community and education programmes to suit this diverse sector.

- Open Circle Community Arts Collective - Developing quality arts engagement for women in Kilkenny both through membership and outreach programmes
- Siamsa – annual children’s programme
- School Subsidy to primary schools to attend a Barnstorm Theatre Production
- National Drawing Day at the Butler Gallery – celebrating the visual arts
- Culture Night – national event promoting and celebrating the arts in all its guises
- Our inaugural Bookville Festival- a book and literature festival for children and families. Partnership with Kilkenny Library Service Fairytale Festival Shankill Castle

## Community & Artist Supports

We continued to work to support group and practitioner development through providing awards and opportunities, by supporting projects, partnerships, providing funding, marketing, advocacy, time and advice.

- Arts Act Grants – individual and organisational grants for those promoting and developing arts initiatives and projects
- Tyrone Guthrie Centre Residency Bursary Scheme
- The Moth Bursary young artists and writers bursary
- Music in Kilkenny
- Exhibitions at Arts Office Gallery – a series of solo and groups shows including CPD elements
- Blackstack Fine Art Print Studio – ongoing support to the studio
- Alternative Kilkenny Arts - ongoing support to the Fringe Festival
- ArtLinks Professional development opportunities for emerging and professional artists in all disciplines. Partnership with Carlow, Wexford, Waterford Local Authorities

## Communication

### Social Media and Direct Mailing

Kilkenny County Council's Arts Office mainly communicates with its audience via social media platforms Facebook and Twitter and by direct e mail. These tools provide opportunities to connect us further with the wider artistic community in presenting information relating to events, activities, awards, projects, etc. which may be of interest. Kilkenny Arts Office currently has 1,810 likes on Facebook.

## HERITAGE

Kilkenny County Council Heritage Office provides a professional heritage service including providing advice and information on heritage issues; developing policies and priorities for the identification, protection, conservation and enhancement of Kilkenny's heritage; collecting and collating heritage data and promoting heritage awareness and education. Key objectives include working with the Kilkenny Heritage Forum to prepare and implement the County Heritage Plan and County Biodiversity Plan, and co-ordinating and implementing the Kilkenny Creative Ireland programme.

### Kilkenny Field Names Project Film Launch

'Naming Ground', a new short film inspired by the Kilkenny Field Names Project, was commissioned and project managed by the Heritage Office, with funding from Creative Ireland. The film is a celebration of local heritage and the relationship between people and place, language and landscape, in the Inistioge and Clonamery area. It was launched on the 5th December in Inistioge.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s7C0hpKwRJ4&feature=youtu.be>

The Heritage Office also delivered 2 public training workshops for volunteers taking part in

the Kilkenny Field Names Project in The Rower (13th Sept) and Kilkenny City (19th Sept). 70 people attended.



*At the launch of the film were: Director of Services Mary Mullholland, Cllr. Michael Doyle, Alan Counihan, Jack Knox, Shane Hatton, Carmel Cummins, Dearbhala Ledwidge, Nora Brennan, Cllr. Fidelis Doherty.*

### Creative Ireland

The new national Creative Ireland programme was launched in 2017 and the Heritage Officer was appointed as County Kilkenny Co-ordinator. In April 2017 an enthusiastic crowd of over 120 people involved in heritage, arts, libraries and the cultural and creative industries in Kilkenny attended an open meeting, organised by the Cultural Services Team, to voice their suggestions and ideas for Creative Ireland programme in Co. Kilkenny.

Kilkenny Culture & Creativity Plan 2017, prepared by the Cultural Services Section of Kilkenny County Council as part of the Creative Ireland Programme, was launched by An Taoiseach Mr. Enda Kenny T.D. in May 2017. The plan was also launched locally at the June meeting of Kilkenny County Council. The plan, funded by an allocation of €65,000 from Creative Ireland, implemented a number of projects including Bookville, Naming Ground, Rhyme Rag, McDonagh Famine

Experience, Mayfair Memories and Cruinniú na Cásca.

<https://creativeireland.ie/en/local-plans/kilkenny>



*An Taoiseach, Mr Enda Kenny T.D., Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, Ms Heather Humphreys, T.D., Cllr. Matt Doran Caoithearlach, Kilkenny County Council & Dearbhala Ledwidge, Heritage Officer launch the Kilkenny Culture & Creativity Plan 2017 at Dublin Castle on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2017*

## Heritage Week a great success with the people of Kilkenny

98 events took place in Co. Kilkenny for Heritage Week (19th-26th Aug). 780 people organised events including community groups, historical societies, Kilkenny County Council, the OPW and Kilkenny Civic trust. The Heritage Office partnered with St. Lachtain's Select Vestry, Co. Kilkenny Childcare Committee, Kilkenny Education Centre, Woodstock Gardens, Thomastown Community Network, St. Pauls Piltown, Barrowvale Local History Group and Conahy Heritage Society to host and/or support events including Kids Heritage Trail Freshford, Wild Child Day film event, Forest School, River Walk, Heritage Exhibitions, Videos and Open Days. The Heritage Office also partnered with KCLR, BEAT FM, and Kilkenny People to run programmes, adverts and promotions.



*Caithaoirleach of Kilkenny County Council, Cllr. David Fitzgerald, Cllr. Malcolm Noonan, Chair Kilkenny Heritage Forum and Dearbhala Ledwidge Heritage Officer launch Kilkenny Heritage Week*

## Kilkenny County Council Cultural Strategy- Arts, Heritage and Libraries 2018-2022

The Cultural Services Team commenced the review of the Kilkenny County Council Arts, Heritage, Biodiversity and Library Plans. This new 5 year strategy combining heritage, arts and library, will inform Kilkenny's input to the national Creative Ireland programme. A stakeholder working group meeting was held in May, followed by a series of public consultation meetings in June in Ferrybank, Castlecomer and Kilkenny City. 148 people took part in the public consultation. The draft plan will be presented to SPC3, Management Team and the full Council for approval.

**TELL US WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT...**

**CULTURE IN COUNTY KILKENNY**

**CULTURAL SERVICES**

The Cultural Services Section (Heritage, Arts and Libraries) of Kilkenny County Council are creating a Cultural Strategy for County Kilkenny. As part of this we want to understand and hear your thoughts. We would love you to pop-in to see us and share your ideas at one of our three drop-in events (see below).

**WHO SHOULD GET INVOLVED....**

Anyone living, working or connected to County Kilkenny, who is interested in our arts, heritage and libraries and who would like to be part of its cultural future

We want to know your thoughts so join us at our

**DROP IN EVENTS**

Meet and chat with us at the following locations:

<b>Ferrybank</b> Ferrybank Library Wed 14 <sup>th</sup> June 2017 5pm - 7pm	<b>Kilkenny City</b> Rivercourt Hotel Wed 21 <sup>st</sup> June 2017 12:30pm - 2:30pm	<b>Castlecomer</b> Castlecomer Library Wed 21 <sup>st</sup> June 2017 5pm - 7pm
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If you can't join us to chat why not complete our **on-line survey**:  
**SURVEY**  
[www.surveymonkey.com/r/KilkennyCS](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/KilkennyCS)  
 Survey open 5<sup>th</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> June 2017

**EMAIL**  
 Message us at [kilkenny@kcc.ie](mailto:kilkenny@kcc.ie)



*Cllr. David Fitzgerald, Cathaoirleach, Collette Byrne C.E.O., Dearbhala Ledwidge Heritage Officer, Josephine Coyne County Librarian and Mary Butler Arts Officer launch the Kilkenny Culture & Creativity Plan 2017 at the Kilkenny County Council meeting on June 19<sup>th</sup> 2017*

## **Moments with Monuments – the stories behind Kilkenny’s Plaques and Monuments**

The Heritage Office and KCLR, funded by the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland’s Sound & Vision scheme and Kilkenny County Councils Heritage Office, developed a radio series ‘Moments with Monuments’ which highlighted the stories behind these monuments and plaques. 50 programmes were broadcast every Wednesday on KCLR’s ‘The Way it is’. These programmes focused on 50 of the 300 sites that were recorded and mapped by the Heritage Office in 2015. According to presenter Sue Nunn “Of all features this is the one that gets most comment from all ages”.



*Plaque at Bennettsbridge Creamery: one of the 50 plaques whose story was told in “Moments with Monuments”*

## **All Ireland Pollinator Plan - Local Authority Award**

The Local Authority Pollinator Award committee in partnership with the Local Authority Heritage & Biodiversity Officers and the National Biodiversity Data Centre, runs a special award in the national Tidy Towns competition. The award encourages Tidy Towns groups to manage their areas to protect bees and other pollinators which are under serious threat.

74 Tidy Towns groups entered the award in 2017, including three groups from Co. Kilkenny (Keep Kilkenny Beautiful, Tullahought and Kells).



*Local Authority Pollinator Award Committee with Offaly County Council Chief Executive, Anna Marie Delaney, and winners Geashill Tidy Towns, The Helix, Sept 2017.*

## **Bat Recording & Training**

The Heritage Office partnered with Bat Conservation Ireland to sponsor free training courses for the public on the identification and recording of bats, as part of the national BATLAS 2020 survey. Three workshops were held during the summer in Kilkenny City and Thomastown, with 25 people attending.

## **Out to Play Workshop**

The Heritage Office co-funded with Kilkenny County Childcare Committee a “Natural Play Outdoors” training workshop for pre & after school practitioners in April to encourage & train practitioners to include nature and biodiversity in teaching activities.



### **Providing Advice**

Throughout the year the Heritage Officer provided advice to and answered hundreds of queries from the public, local authority colleagues, community groups, students and Elected Representatives on a diverse range of heritage topics including graveyards, hedgerows, archaeology, grants, invasive species, geology, historic gardens, wildlife, genealogy, museums, bridges, fieldnames, folklore, mass paths, city walls, street names, holy wells, bats, oral history, trees, water pumps, monuments and interpretive signage.



### **“Kilkenny Heritage News” E-zine**

The Heritage Office disseminates regular (weekly/2 weekly) “Kilkenny Heritage News” e-zines with information on grants, projects, policies and events, to heritage groups, Tidy Towns groups, local authority staff and Elected Representatives (approx 700 recipients). The e-zine was also uploaded to the [kilkennyfacebook](#) page and is shared with the Kilkenny County Council Community Newsletter.

### **Kilkenny Heritage Facebook Page**

The Heritage Office manages the Kilkenny Heritage Facebook page, and website [www.kilkennyheritage.ie](http://www.kilkennyheritage.ie) to communicate with and disseminate information to the public.

### **Heritage Submissions to Strategies & Plans**

The Heritage Office made heritage submissions to National Biodiversity Action Plan 2017-2021 and the County Kilkenny Tourism Plan 2017.

## FIRE SERVICES & MAJOR EMERGENCY

### **Kilkenny Fire & Rescue Service Main Functions Are:**

- To engage with the community to inform and educate citizens in how to reduce the risk of fires and other emergencies.
- To influence and regulate the built environment to protect people, property and the environment from harm.
- To plan and prepare for emergencies that may happen, and making a high quality, effective and resilient response to them.
- To work together to deliver the highest quality services within a safe and positive environment for everyone in the organisation.

### **Capital Projects.**

- Two second hand fire engines were purchased for Castlecomer and Graiguenamanagh Fire Brigades.
- Kilkenny City and Thomastown Fire Brigades took the delivery of 2 No 4 wheel drive jeeps.



*Picture shows the Official Handover of 2 4wheel drive jeeps for Kilkenny City & Thomastown Fire Brigade*



*Construction of the new fire station for Graiguenamanagh taking shape*

### **Fire Safety Certificates**

- 99 applications for fire safety certificates were received in 2017. These applications were dealt with in-house by the fire prevention staff. This is an increase from 2016 when 78 applications were received.

### **Fire Services Act**

- Fire Prevention staff made a considerable number of visits to premises both to provide advice and to enforce legislation.
- 5 Fire Safety Notices under the Fire Services Act were served in 2017.
- 1 Closure Notice under the Fire Services Act was served in 2017.
- Two day Fire Safety Seminar on Fire Doorsets was delivered with over 40 participants from the construction industry attending.
- 108 fire safety inspections were carried in 2017.
- Over 280 Hydrants were checked in 2017.

### **Community Fire Safety**

Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service held Fire Station Open Days in 2017 in all seven Fire Stations.

Ongoing public messaging campaigns are maintained to encourage members of the public to install smoke alarms and to test their smoke alarms once a week to ensure that they are working. Social media (twitter and Facebook) used on Fire Safety at Christmas in 2017.





*Urlingford Fire Brigade carrying out a Chip Pan fire Demonstration at a community event*



*Road traffic collision demonstration in Gowran Race Course*

Talks given to various communities such as Secondary Schools re Halloween/fireworks, Kilkenny Text Alert AGM, Older Peoples Forum, Mental Health Week, Information Fair in Kilmacow, Health and Wellbeing Seminar by Kilkenny GAA, etc.



*Presentation Secondary School TY students on work experience in Kilkenny City Fire Station*



*Picture shows Road traffic collision demonstration to TY students in Abbey Community College*

We have completed over 93 Home Fire Safety Visits, where Smoke alarms and Carbon Monoxide detectors were installed.

Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service continue to deliver the NDFEM Primary Schools Programme throughout the City and County of Kilkenny to over 1860 primary school children each year.

### **Training**

The following training was provided by Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service in 2017:

In addition to the on station training the following courses were delivered: ESDS Emergency Services Driving Standard, CFBT –Compartment Fire Behaviour Training, EFR- Emergency First Responder, Bronto Maintenance Course, Chainsaw Refresher, EFR Refresher, Manual Handling, Compressed Air Foam System (CAFS) Refresher, Recruits Course, Breathing Apparatus Wearers course.



*Compressed Air Foam System Refresher training*



*Road traffic collision training*

## **Major Emergency Management**

The Major Emergency Management Plan was reviewed in 2017. The External Emergency plan for Grassland Fertiliser was reviewed and tested under the Seveso Regulations in 2017.



*Emergency Response Team*



*Princes Charles Fire Response Team at Kilkenny Castle  
May 2017*

The Flood Emergency Response Plan and the Severe Weather Plan (*excluding Flooding*) was reviewed. All seven Fire Brigades were involved in Kilkenny County Council's response to the activation of its Severe Weather Plan to Storm Ophelia.

## CIVIL DEFENCE

Kilkenny Civil Defence is a volunteer based organisation that supports the Principal Response Agencies (County Councils, Gardai and HSE) in dealing with severe weather, flooding, major incidents and searching for missing people. It also assists our local communities in events including large events such as homecomings, concerts and festivals and smaller local events such as parades and sports events.

Volunteers are trained in Casualty, Search & Rescue, Auxiliary Fire Service, Welfare and Communications.

### **Callouts**

During 2017 Kilkenny Civil Defence were called out to assist with River Search & Recovery and severe weather incidents.

### **Community Events**

During 2017 Kilkenny Civil Defence provided assistance to over 20 community events ranging from ambulance cover for equine related events, sports events, charity based events and local concerts. We also provided Safety Boat cover for river based charitable events.

### **Vehicles and Equipment**

During 2017 Kilkenny Civil Defence received funding to purchase a Communications Control Unit which will assist them in searches and training and also provide a control room for liaising with gardai, health service executive etc. during major incidents.

### **Training**

Kilkenny Civil Defence operates multi-skill training out of its training centre in Kilkenny City. The areas of training we provide for our volunteers are as follows:

- Casualty / First Aid Service
- Rescue - Open Country Search and River-based Search & Recovery
- Auxiliary Fire Service and Flooding
- Welfare Service
- Civil Defence Communications

### **Recruiting**

Kilkenny Civil Defence are continuously recruiting new volunteers.

# Directorate of Planning, Economic & Environmental Services

**Planning**

**Environment**

**Parks**

**LEO/Economic Development**

**Tourism**

**Veterinary Services**



## PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

The role and function of Kilkenny County Council's Planning Department is to determine the most appropriate physical planning policy of the County, new development and building and the promotion of industrial, commercial and other development.

### FORWARD PLANNING

- The Ferrybank/Belview Local Area Plan was completed and adopted.
- The draft Castlecomer Local Area Plan went on display.
- Various Variations to both County and City Development Plans were completed
- Work progressed towards completion of the Abbey Quarter design code, since adopted
- Urban Design guidelines for Hebron Road, Kilkenny was completed and adopted
- The Vacant Sites Levy register was populated and notices issued
- The planning phase for both the County and City Development Plan reviews commenced.



### CONSERVATION 2017

Kilkenny County Council continues to provide a planning consultancy / advisory system in respect of works to buildings of architectural heritage significance and protected structures in County Kilkenny.



*Kilrush House – Removal of defective plaster and replacement with appropriate lime plaster*

- Built Heritage Investment Scheme – Initial allocation of €88,000 was increased to a total of €138,270. The funding was divided between 14 projects which included repairs to windows, roofs repair and re-plastering of architecturally significant structures within County Kilkenny
- Overall allocation under the Fund was €22,350.00., namely Structures at Risk Fund – €1,000.00 repair of the water tank, Woodstock Gardens and a further €1,350.00 towards work on the Session House, Thomastown.
- Total Allocation under both Conservation Grants were €160,620.00
- Under a partnership between the Heritage Office and the Conservation Office, €4,000.00 funding was secured from the Heritage Council for the City Wall Interpretative signage to be located at James Street, Kilkenny City
- Record of Protected Structures: A number of suitable structures were identified throughout the City and County for inclusion in the Record of Protected Structures. This process commenced early in 2017.
- Other:
  - Applicants under the Living City Initiative increased
  - Member of Civic Memorial Sub Committee

## DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

- 872 planning applications were received in 2017.
- €437, 587 was received in planning application fees.
- 311 Commencement Notices under the Building Regulations were received.
- 48 developments were inspected under Building Control Regulations in 2017
- The Planning Clinic system continues to operate successfully in each of the Area Offices.

## DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS

- Total of €1.9 m was collected in 2017.

## ENFORCEMENT

- A total of 108 new complaints were received during 2017.
- The Council issued 103 warning letters during 2017.
- The Council issued 35 Enforcement Notices during 2017.
- A total of 97 enforcement cases were resolved and closed in 2017.

## RESIDENTIAL ESTATES

- 18 Housing Estates were taken in charge during 2017 consisting of 962 houses.
- Bonds claimed and agreements reached on 5 residential developments totalling payment of funds to KCC of €433,000. Some works were carried out during 2017 with the remainder scheduled for 2018. Other claims lodged under discussion.
- Number of unfinished developments in Kilkenny at the end of 2017 on the National Survey is 15.



*Inis Alainn Before*



*Inis Alainn After*



*Aylesbury Access Road Before*



*Aylesbury Access Road After*

## ENVIRONMENT

The key aims of the Councils Environment Department are:

- To promote sustainable development, to provide an efficient and environmentally sound waste management infrastructure, to implement the Joint South East Waste Management Plan and to maintain proper regulatory and monitoring systems for environmental protection and control of pollution
- The Council has responsibility for over 500 statutory environmental functions, which are contained within over 100 pieces of legislation. The key areas dealt with include:
  - Waste Management
  - Waste Management Planning
  - Recycling and Waste Disposal Centres
  - Recycling
  - Enforcement
  - Litter Management
  - Education and Awareness
  - Water Quality and Pollution Control
  - Water Framework Directive
  - Pollution Control and Enforcement
  - Coastal Pollution Planning
  - Water Safety
  - Veterinary Services
  - Burial Grounds

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

The RMCEI Plan 2017 was approved by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and ensures the efficient monitoring and implementation of environmental legislation. It should be noted that during the course of the year, the EPA published the “Local Authority Environmental Performance Assessment Report 2014 – 2016.” This Report measures the performance of local authorities in delivering their environmental enforcement activities. In the case of Kilkenny, the County Council received an overall grade of ‘Excellent,’ which was a grade above national average assessment of ‘Above Target’.

### **Waste Management**

#### **Southern Region Waste Management Plan**

- Kilkenny County Council continues to work towards achieving the objectives set out in the Southern Waste Management Plan which was adopted in 2015.
- Kilkenny County Council commenced working to advance the current repair directory with a national steering group to bring the directory to an online format to promote the re-use of materials.
- Two public lectures were organized for national Re-use Month, both lectures focused on the “Art of De-Cluttering” to encourage households to live minimalistic lifestyles.
- During Re-Use Month, 10 Re-Use Swap Boxes were distributed to different communities to encourage the reuse of books, dvd’s and small household items.
- The Environment Section partnered with the Arts and Library Services to host a significant up-cycling area at the Shankhill Fairy Day in association with Beat FM and also partnered for the new Bookville Festival to bring Up-Cycling to a wider audience.
- Kilkenny County Council sponsored and had a presence at the Thomastown Community Network “Pumpkin in the Park” event on the 1<sup>st</sup> of November. 50 families received information on waste prevention and the roll out of the 3<sup>rd</sup> bin for food waste.

## Dunmore Recycling and Waste Disposal Centre 2017

Dunmore Recycling Centre continued to serve the community and providing them with an accessible waste management service.

- 1384 tonnes of recyclable material was collected in 2017 which is up from 1174 in 2016. This represents a 17.9% increase in recycled material. 220 tonnes of this was WEEE.
- Waste quantities received at the site were up from 2926 tonnes in 2016 to 3047 tonnes in 2017. This represents a 4.1% increase in waste disposed of at the facility. While the aim is to reduce the amounts of MSW waste, this increase was due to the growth in customers using the site. 2017 saw an approximate 54,000 customers use the facility to avail of the disposal and recycling of many different waste streams on site.
- 698 tonnes of leachate was disposed of to the waste water treatment plant from the capped landfill which is down from 2458 tonnes in 2016.
- The use of social media to advertise the site was adopted in 2015 and continues to be used during 2017; the Facebook site currently has 250 followers.
- 2399 people were reached through social media across 8 posts relating to the site.



*Launch of the new Dunmore Leaflet*



*Staff from Dunmore Recycling and Waste Disposal Centre*

## Council Recycling Services

- Saturday recycling service continues to operate each Saturday at Dunmore between 8am-12noon accepting mixed paper, cardboard and plastics.
- The Council has awarded a contract to Crystalhill Inns Ltd, t/a CHI for a privately run recycling and waste disposal centre, located at Granny, in South Kilkenny. Kilkenny County Council will be contributing towards the costs of operating this facility. The Granny recycling and waste disposal centre opened on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2017. This new facility accepts a wide variety of waste for recycling and disposal, comparable to that available at the Dunmore Civic Amenity Facility. The temporary Piltown Saturday recycling service, with its limited range, ceased in 2017.
- A network of 42 Bottle Banks operate throughout the County and are serviced by a cleaning contractor to ensure they do not negatively impact on the local environment.
- Just over 1,546 tonnes of glass and 105 tonnes of cans were collected from these sites in 2017. These figures have increased on the previous year. The regional tender for servicing of the recycling facilities continued in 2017.
- WEEE Ireland in partnership with Kilkenny County Council completed a number of mobile collections throughout the County to assist the public to recycle their electrical appliances. In 2017 nine collections were completed.



## Litter Management Plan

Preparations were undertaken to review and commence the draft of a new Litter Management Plan in the Autumn. A number of anti-litter campaigns were run to achieve targets and objectives set in the Plan.

- Kilkenny participated in the national Gum Litter Taskforce Campaign.
- The anti dog fouling campaign to highlight the health risks associated with dog faeces continued.
- The National Spring Clean ran throughout the spring with over 120 groups participated throughout the county. Libraries became involved in 2017 with each branch offering members to avail of litter picking packs including litter pickers, hi vis vests, gloves and bags.
- Two anti litter murals were completed by youth groups associated with two family resource centres.



## Enforcement

- 1055 Environment Complaints were received in 2017, all were inspected and appropriate action was taken to resolve each issue.
- The following inspections were completed under the RMCEI plan in 2017.
  - 693 routine and non routine waste inspections
  - 904 routine litter inspections
  - 1833 routine and non routine water/wastewater inspections
  - 133 routine and non-routine air and noise inspections
  - 71 producer responsibility inspections
  - 605 inspections in relation to planning applications
  - 131 enforcement actions were taken as a result

## Education Awareness

- In 2017, 71 schools retained their green flag and the Environmental Awareness Officer continues to provide support to schools across the County. In 2017, the annual green school information evening was well attended with a number of new schools attending for the first time which is promising for additional schools joining the programme.
- To complement Science Week, the Council facilitated and organized SEAI energy educators to come to Kilkenny to deliver 15 energy workshops to approx 450 pupils. The SEAI Energy Guzzler Game was provided to 3 scouting groups throughout November to increase the awareness of climate change through a fun yet educational game.

## 2017 Awards and Achievements IBAL

Kilkenny was assessed as cleaner than European norms and came joint sixth in the Irish Business against Litter (IBAL) League table.

## Tidy Towns and Community Awards

- The Kilkenny Tidy Towns Forum continued to provide support to active tidy town groups across the County. 2 forum meetings were held and a tour to Carlow to visit Clonegal and Ballon took place in August. This tour was organized in partnership with Carlow County Council.
- The national tidy town results for groups across the County saw an encouraging increase of scores. Kilkenny City retained its gold medal, Tullahought and Inistioge retained their silver medal. Goresbridge received an Endeavour Award.

## WATER QUALITY & POLLUTION CONTROL

### Pollution Control

- 25 premises which hold a Section 4 Discharge Licence were inspected in 2017.
- 148 First time Farm Inspections were undertaken by Kilkenny County Council under the European Communities (Good Agricultural Practice for the protection of Waters) Regulations, 2014. Approximately 23% were found to be non-compliant with the regulations. This resulted in the issuing of 33 warning letters which were subsequently resolved and 1 cross compliance notification to Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine [DAFM] which would be subject to a sanction resulting in a percentage reduction on their single farm payment. 36 other farm inspections including Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) follow up inspections were carried out.
- A further 72 Farm Inspections were undertaken by DAFM on behalf of Kilkenny County Council in 2017. 24 were found to be non compliant and would have been subject to sanctions on their single farm payments.
- 34 septic tank inspections were undertaken.
- Extensive Surface Monitoring Programme for the Water Framework Directive was continued
- 22 rivers monitored at 66 different sites throughout the County as part of the requirements for the Water Framework Directorate National Sampling Program. There were 446 samples taken at these sites for analysis over the course of 2017.
- 22 Nutrient Management Plans were received, assessed and approved with conditions in relation to the use of sewage sludge in agriculture.
- 561 written recommendations – primarily providing for the protection of or improvement to water quality were issued to the Planning Department in 2017. 44 site inspections were undertaken as part of this work.

The Water Team spent two days giving talks and demonstrations to National and Secondary School students in Thomastown on the importance of having a clean unpolluted water resource, our work in the area and their role in preserving the resource.



The Water Team also met with a group of farmers and their agricultural advisor and gave a talk on farm inspections, what to expect and common faults found during inspections.

### Water Safety

A total number of fifteen lifeguards worked on a rota basis for the months of June, July and August 2017 at the following locations:

- The Meadows, Kilkenny City.
- The Weir, Bleach Road, Kilkenny City.
- Graiguenamanagh.
- Initioge.
- Thomastown.

## LIFEGUARD STATISTICS FOR SUMMER SEASON 2017

<i>Rescue</i>	<i>First Aid</i>	<i>Advice Given</i>	<i>Accident Prevented</i>	<i>Other</i>
2	59	695	193	4

### Ringbuoys

Constant checking and monitoring of ringbuoys in Kilkenny City and Environs over the summer months has resulted in reduced incidences of damaged or burned ringbuoys. A number of ringbuoys have recently been left in to Kilkenny County Council by boat users and other concerned citizens.

### Burial Grounds

Kilkenny County Council has 14 open burial grounds across the County with each having a caretaker in place to manage the record keeping.

Upgrading works were carried out to the following burial grounds as part of the minor capital works programme.

Castlecomer– Reparatory works to footpaths, construction of bays for designated waste, restoration and re-painting of centrepiece.

Cappagh – Tree surgery and removal, landscaping works.

Paulstown– Construct concrete bay and install IBC water supply.

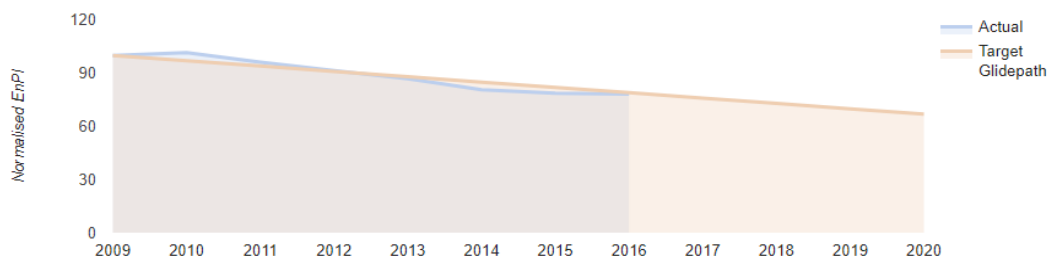


# ENERGY EFFICIENCY, CONSERVATION & CLIMATE CHANGE

## Energy Efficiency Projects:

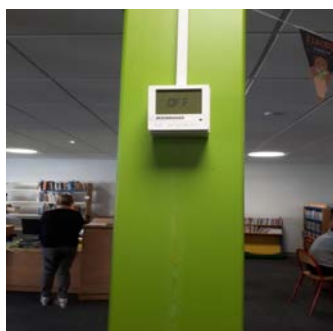
### Monitoring & Reporting 2017

The Public Sector in Ireland is tasked with reducing their energy consumption by 33% by 2020 from their baseline year. The baseline year for Kilkenny County Council is 2009. Kilkenny County Council reports their energy usage annually to the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) which manages the reporting process on behalf of the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCA). SEAI prepare a report on energy efficiency in the public sector to DCCA annually. This report entitled “Annual Report 2017 on Public Sector Energy Efficiency Performance” details the entire energy performance of the public sector. Based on the 2016 report, Kilkenny County Council is currently at 22%. As a result of this the council is currently more efficient than the baseline year and is on track to reach the 2020 targets. The pilot streetlight project in Kilkenny will increase this by a further circa 3%. The energy consumption across the 31 local authorities accounts for 25% of all Public Sector energy use. The local authority sector as a collective is currently at 20% and it is envisaged that further developments towards energy efficient street lighting projects, such as the pilot project developed in Kilkenny will help the group to achieve their targets.



### Loughboy Library

The Library Service undertook an upgrade of Loughboy Library in 2017. This also included a number of energy upgrades including; insulation upgrade, lighting upgrade, boiler upgrade and heating controls.



The LED lighting upgrade will reduce the electricity consumption by 80% when compared with the previous inefficient lighting system.

### Kilkenny Machinery Yard

The machinery yard has continued their energy reduction targets by installing an LED lighting system in the car park and yard. The machinery yard has previously installed a solar photovoltaic system and internal lighting controls.

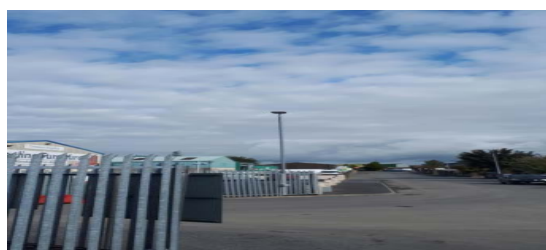


Figure 2: Machinery Yard LED Lighting

### **Freshford Fire Station**

The Fire Service is currently in its fifth year of implementing energy efficiency projects across the buildings operated by the Fire Service. Freshford Fire Station was upgraded in 2017 with the installation of a new LED lighting and heating system.

### **Real Value Project**

Kilkenny County Council are piloting the use of smart phone applications to control the Dimplex Quantum storage heaters installed as part of energy efficiency works in fire stations, libraries and corporate buildings since 2013.

The RealValue project will use a combination of physical demonstrations in Ireland, Germany and Latvia along with innovative modelling techniques, in order to demonstrate how local small-scale energy storage, optimised across the whole EU energy system, with advanced ICT, could bring benefits to all market participants. RealValue will provide an innovative means to mitigate the challenges associated with, and maximise the value of clean energy from renewable sources. This project will be further advanced in 2018.

### **Kilkenny Better Energy Communities 2017**

Kilkenny County Council were successful in an application to the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) for grant funding through the Better Energy Communities programme. The Council acted as the lead applicant with 3 counties energy agency (3cea) administering and project managing the programme.

The Council project's consisted of public lighting retrofit, library upgrade, fire station upgrade and outdoor lighting retrofit. The community organisations involved in the grant scheme were a day home for the elderly, public house, parish organisation and facility for people with intellectual disabilities.

The total energy spend on all projects was €760,000 with SEAI grant aid of approximately €240,000 and anticipated energy savings of 839,157kWh. Kilkenny will lead another SEAI BEC project in 2018.

### **Covenant of Mayors**

Kilkenny signed up to the Covenant of Mayors in April 2015. The covenant is a European initiative to reduce carbon emissions by 2020 and 2030. The Covenant of Mayors requires signatories to compile a sustainable energy action plan to meet the carbon reduction target of 20% by 2020. Kilkenny County Council adopted the action plan at the January 2017 meeting and it was submitted to the Covenant of Mayors office for review by the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission. This review process is still ongoing and will be further advanced in 2018.

### **Energy Awareness**

During Science Week 2017 the Energy Office and 3cea partnered with the library service to deliver "energy talks" to schools these were held in the local libraries. This involved a PowerPoint presentation to the school children and an interactive display of Lego and K'NEX solar energy kits.

## PARKS & AMENITY

The Parks Department oversees the development and maintenance of recreational amenities in Kilkenny City and County. Since its establishment in 2004 the Parks Department has delivered a range of high quality recreational amenities including playgrounds, parks and sports pitches which are available for use to people of all ages. The Parks Department is also responsible for on-going developments, visitor management and maintenance of Woodstock Gardens and Arboretum in Inistioge which has become a major tourist attraction in the south east.

### **Playground Development & Maintenance**

There are currently 26 playgrounds around the County. These play facilities were developed in conjunction with local communities and many are also maintained with assistance from local communities and local community employment schemes. All playgrounds are inspected each week by our own in-house playground inspector for any potential safety issues and are also cleaned each week, or more often where required, to ensure they continue to be safe and clean for use by children.



*Thomastown Playground*

The Parks Section have responsibility for development and maintenance of parks in the City and County. The River Nore Linear Park along with Newpark Marsh and Garringreen neighbourhood park and the recently developed Bishops Demesne are the main city parks. The parks provide a range of amenities both passive and active for people to enjoy. The parks are maintained and cleaned by litter picking crews weekly and grass is cut frequently in the growing season. Facility within the parks such as playgrounds and exercise equipment are maintained and added to regularly.

### **Pitches Development & Maintenance**

The Parks Department operate a pitch leasing facility on a number of pitches in the City and Environs. These pitches are leased out to clubs for training and matches. We also have a number of very popular all weather mini pitches which are free to use at any time at Newpark, Garringreen and Bishops Demesne.

### **Woodstock Gardens Project**

Since the historic victorian gardens at Woodstock were restored over the past number of years they have become a major tourist destination in the south east and now attract in the region of 35,000 visitors per year. With the assistance of REDZ funding the Winter Gardens were partially restored in 2017 adding to the features of interest in the gardens. The Parks Department were also successful in sourcing funding towards the conservation of an important water tank building in the boundary wall through the Structures at Risk fund.

Parks staff continue to organise events, promote and manage visitors coming to the gardens in addition to carrying out high quality maintenance. The garden staff hosted a very successful Family Fun Day School in the gardens in 2017 along with a number of events such as orienteering, foraging walks, Operation Transformation Walks and other family events for Heritage Week. Woodstock is

becoming popular for civil ceremonies and in 2017 Woodstock hosted a number of weddings for couples on their big day.



*Bui Bolg performers at the Woodstock Family Fun Day*



*Aerial view of Woodstock in summer 2017*

### **Administration of Amenity Grants**

The Parks Department administered the amenity grants scheme which is available to voluntary community organisations to enhance or maintain local amenities. Over one hundred and thirty groups were in receipt of grant assistance in 2017.

### **Waterford to Kilkenny New Ross Greenway**

Two relevant planning applications to facilitate the development of the Waterford to New Ross Greenway along the old disused railway are underway in 2017 with a decision due in 2018. The Greenway will encompass an entirely off road facility for cyclists and walkers connecting Waterford to New Ross and in time including for connectivity to the Waterford Greenway and other proposed Greenways in the South East.

The project will be developed in conjunction with the South East Regional Greenway office which is staffed by employees of Wexford, Kilkenny and Waterford County Councils.



*A section of the old railway line from Waterford to New Ross*

### **Ferrybank Neighbourhood Park**

In 2017 work began on the development of a neighbourhood park for Ferrybank in the Aylesbury area. Part 8 for a neighbourhood park at Ferrybank was approved in September 2017 following extensive consultation with the local community, developed with financial assistance from the LIHAF fund together with matching funding from Kilkenny and Waterford Local Authorities. Construction work is expected to take place in 2018 to deliver the play ground with all associated facilities.

### **Invasive Species Control**

The Parks Department is involved in the stopping the spread of invasive species on public lands across the County. A programme of Giant Hogweed eradication is continuing in Kilmacow whilst in Kilkenny efforts to eradicate invasive species, particularly Himalayan Balsam are continuing along the River Nore, along the Lacken Walk and Canal Walk in conjunction with Keep Kilkenny Beautiful Biodiversity Committee.



*Taking on Giant Hogweed in Kilmacow*

### Sports Capital Projects

The Parks Department were successful in their application for three grants for the provision of outdoor gym equipment at locations across the city. This exercise equipment is proving very popular particularly when sited adjacent to existing facilities. Following formal approval by the Department of Tourism Transport and Sport under the Sports Capital Programme the outdoor gyms were installed in early 2017 at Pocke Valley, Fair Green and Riverside Drive (River Nore Linear Park)



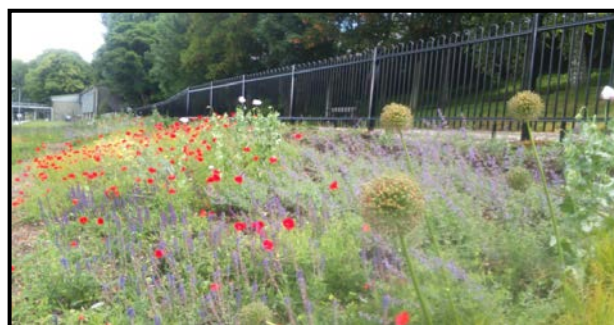
*Outdoor exercise equipment at The River Nore Linear Park*



*New Outdoor Gym located at Riverside Drive at the entrance to the River Nore Linear Park*

### Pollinator Project at Noonan’s Folly

Supporting Pollinating Insects is very much the theme in the Peace Garden Planting. The planting at this location has been designed to provide pollen and nectar from early spring onwards with a selection of bulbs flowering from February to June. The planting will flower and provide a very concentrated resource for insects. It has been positively praised in the Tidy Town’s Adjudicators comments in 2017 reports



*Pollinator plants in bloom July 2017*



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The role of the Economic Development Unit is to promote Kilkenny as a location in which to invest and to conduct business. Economic Development is a combination of the business environment and the social setting as a place to live, work and play. The Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2021 (LECP), adopted by Kilkenny County Council, is the strategic plan for aligning all economic development and community development activity over the life of the plan. The overarching theme of the economic element of this plan is job creation and to foster a high employment economy. This element of the plan outlines 9 strategic goals and 64 actions for implementation between 2016 and 2021. In 2017 49 actions of the 64 were targeted.

### **Invest Kilkenny:**

The Invest Kilkenny promotional material has been revamped and updated. This has involved a full redevelopment of the Invest Kilkenny website <https://www.investkilkenny.ie/> with the objective of showcasing Kilkenny as an attractive area in which to invest and do business. A key element of the website are eight specially commissioned videos which showcase Kilkenny as a business destination and tell the stories of a number of successful companies, some indigenous and some foreign – all of which have substantial operations in Kilkenny and are global players in their respective sectors. A new information pack and fact-sheet was also designed.

These new Invest Kilkenny materials were launched on November 24<sup>th</sup> in the Medieval Mile Museum by Minister Pat Breen. These materials are now being used by IDA as part of their sales pitch for the South East. <https://www.idaireland.com/doing-business-here/locations/south-east>



### **Bank of Ireland Enterprising Town Awards 2017**

Bank of Ireland's National Enterprising Town Awards aims to assist in the promotion of enterprise in towns and villages across the country. The 2017 Competition was organised with the support of local authorities who assisted in the nomination of towns and villages on behalf of their own city / county. In total over 80 applications were received by Bank of Ireland under this initiative.



*L-R; An Cathaoirleach Cllr. David Fitzgerald, Deirdre Shine Bank of Ireland, Gerri Hickey, Anne Marie Piltown Community Enterprise, Bríd Hynes Kilkenny County Council; Mark Connolly Piltown Community Enterprise.*

Following submission of applications, three towns in County Kilkenny - Graiguenamanagh, Piltown and Castlecomer met with a Judging Panel across a two day period in September where each community showcased the enterprising spirit of their town /village.

The Awards Night took place on November 15th in Tullamore. Piltown were named winner of the 'Regional Small Town in Leinster' taking home a cash prize of €3000 and a Crystal Trophy. Congratulations to all in Piltown for a well deserved recognition.

For Castlecomer and Graiguenamanagh, while disappointed in not bringing home the spoils, it must be acknowledged that both did a great job in showcasing their local areas and demonstrating the strong enterprising spirit that these communities live and breathe.

## Major Jobs Boost for Kilkenny as 130 Jobs Announced:

Two companies - Taxback International and Fund Management services provider Carne announced new jobs for Kilkenny in October.

Taxback International, part of the Taxback Group, announced the creation of 80 new jobs at its Kilkenny headquarters to deal with increased demand from its Irish and global customers. This company operates in the fintech sector and is a global provider of VAT recovery services. Within the last 12 months, the company has opened new sales offices in Australia, China, Japan, UK and US. It has also relocated to four larger processing and operations locations in Europe.



Pictured, L-R: Brendan McCormack, Senior Development Adviser, Enterprise Ireland; Martin Corkery, Regional Director, Enterprise Ireland; Minister Pat Breen TD; Catherine Quirke, Chief Commercial Officer, Taxback International; Terry Clune, CEO & Founder of Taxback Group and Eamon Clunen Operations Director, Taxback International

Meanwhile, Fund Management services provider Carne will hire up to 50 staff at its new centre of excellence in Kilkenny for bespoke regulatory technology, development and operations.

Carne is expanding to meet the market demands created by the Brexit vote in the UK. The new jobs which are supported by Enterprise Ireland, include management and graduate positions in compliance, risk management, technology and operations. Carne, founded by businessman John Donohoe in 2004 has nine offices in Ireland, the US, Luxembourg and the UK serving the fund management industry.



Pictured, L-R: Martin Corkery, Regional Director, Enterprise Ireland; Minister Pat Breen TD; John Donohoe, Founder, Carne Financial Services; Yvonne Connolly, CEO Ireland, Carne Financial Services; Billy Hanley, Senior Development Adviser, Enterprise Ireland; Minister Michael D'Arcy TD, Minister John Paul Phelan TD

### **Small Business Vacant Premises Incentive Scheme**

The scheme launched in 2016 to assist new and expanding business through a grant payable for the businesses first 3 years of operation continues to be rolled out. A PR campaign was undertaken in mid 2017 to promote the initiative, create greater awareness of the scheme and encourage take up of the scheme.

### **Commercial Property**

The Economic Development Unit works with commercial property owners to assist in identifying opportunities for potential investors and local businesses. A database of vacant commercial premises has been created. This database is an important reference when inquiries come through from IDA and Enterprise Ireland regarding property specs. It is also used in dealing with queries that come through from existing businesses in Kilkenny who are seeking premises. The unit also provides assistance for property developers to discuss plans in the context of the local business environment.

### **Cartoon Saloon Open Day**

The Economic Development Unit was among a number of Council Departments involved in supporting Cartoon Saloon as they held an Open Day in April last. This Open Day was organised by the animation company to start recruitment for the 140 jobs announced earlier in the year for Lighthouse Studios. More than 300 budding and established animators travelled to Kilkenny to get a tour of both the animation studios and to interview for the posts.



### **South East Action Plan for Jobs**

The unit is involved in implementing the South East Action Plan for Jobs, with actions assigned in the plan to Kilkenny.

## LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE

The Local Enterprise Office (LEO) helps small businesses to start, to develop and to grow. It provides a 'first stop shop' business support service to anyone in business or thinking of setting up a business. They operate under the terms of a service level agreement between the Council and Enterprise Ireland (EI). The LEO is required to develop and implement an annual action plan setting out the key services, actions, projects, programmes and targets it intends to deliver each year.

The annual action plan is submitted to the Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) for Economic Development, Enterprise Support and Tourism, and the SPC provides oversight of the implementation of the action plan on behalf of Kilkenny County Council. LEO staff provides progress reports on the implementation of the Development Plan to the SPC at their quarterly meetings. The LEO also submits an annual metrics return to EI. The LEO has the services of a specialist Approvals & Evaluation Committee to assess applications for financial support. The LEO delivers a wide range of supports and services to start-up and established business owners, while nurturing the development of a supportive environment for enterprise in the County.

The supports provided by the LEO are divided into 2 main Measures, namely Measure 1 (financial supports) and Measure 2 (soft supports).

### NATIONAL ENTERPRISE AWARDS

A high precision engineering business based in Mullinavat represented County Kilkenny at the National Enterprise Award ceremony on 25<sup>th</sup> May in the Mansion House, Dublin. Mark Boyne and Richie Keneally from Greensbridge Engineering Ltd won the top prize at the County Enterprise Awards competition. Greensbridge Engineering Ltd. established in 2011 and currently employing 7, based in the Old Creamery in Mullinavat, produces high precision stainless steel, super alloy and aluminium components for supply into the oil and gas, medical device and semi conductor technology industries.



Pictured at the presentation of the County Enterprise Awards competition L to R: Aileen McGrath, Senior Enterprise Development Officer, LEO Kilkenny; Cllr. Pat Millea; Catherine Hennessy, Business Advisor, LEO Kilkenny; Cllr. Pat Fitzpatrick, Chairman of SPC on Enterprise, Tourism and Economic Development; Mark Boyne & Richie Keneally, Greensbridge Engineering Ltd; Fiona Deegan, Head of Enterprise, LEO Kilkenny; Marv Mulholland, Director of Services, Kilkenny County Council.

### STUDENT ENTERPRISE AWARDS

Eleven teenage entrepreneurs from 3 local secondary schools visited Croke Park in May to represent the County and their Local Enterprise Office at the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual National Final of the Student Enterprise Programme. Every September, budding secondary school entrepreneurs set up and run their own enterprises, leaning about the world of business with help from their teachers and the Local Enterprise Office. The students all competed in the Kilkenny County Final at the Newpark Hotel on 29<sup>th</sup> March. A total of 539 students from 12 county schools took part in the programme in 2017.



Intermediate Category Winners Kian Maher and Tomas Sibok, from 'TK Ceramics Ltd.' at Coláiste Eanáir, Ros, Co. Wick.

Senior Category Winners Tyler O'Callaghan, Jade Spomes, Christian Neagu and Sophie Hartford Preece from 'Seasonal Sensations' at Kilkenny City Vocational School.

Junior Category Winners Almee O'Brien, Clara Treacy, Moly Dunne, Emma Cahill, and Harriah Wallace from 'Fresh Minds' at St. Brigid's College, Callan.

## REVIEW OF ACTIVITY IN 2017

### Measure 1

Measure 1 supports refer to the provision of direct financial assistance to eligible projects. 38 applications were approved a cumulative total of almost €507,901 (see Table 1). 22 Priming & Business Expansion Grant projects supported have the potential to create 149 jobs over a 3-year period. The LEO paid out approximately €346,981 in grant payments in 2017.

*Table 1: Summary of Measure 1 Activity 2017*

<b>Measure 1 Financial Assistance</b>	<b>2017 Output</b>
Number of Feasibility Study Grant Applications Approved	4
Number of Priming Grant Applications Approved	8
Number of Business Expansion Grant Applications Approved	14
Number of Technical Assistance for Micro Exporter Grant Applications Approved	12
<b>Total Amount Approved</b>	<b>€507,901</b>
Number of Jobs Associated with Priming/Business Expansion Grants Approved within 3 years	149

### Measure 2

Measure 2 supports refers to the provision of ‘soft’ supports covering the full spectrum from the provision of business information and advice, through enterprise training and management development programmes to the provision of mentoring services. The LEO expended almost €331,100 on Measure 2 supports in 2017 (see Table 2).

*Table 2: Summary of Measure 2 Activity 2017*

<b>Measure 2 Supports</b>	<b>2017 Output</b>
Number of Entrepreneurs availing of Business Advisory Session	411
Number of Start Your Own Business (SYOB) Programmes Run	6
Number of Participants on SYOB Programmes	112
Number of Entrepreneurs availing of Mentoring Support	381
Number of Schools participating in Student Enterprise Programme	12
Number of students participating in Student Enterprise Programme	539
Number of core Enterprise Training Programmes Run	49
Number of Participants on core Programmes	594
Number of Participants attending Business Seminars	282
Number of Participants participating on Lean for Micro Training	4
<b>Total Measure 2 Spend</b>	<b>€331,100</b>

594 entrepreneurs participated in the 49 core enterprise training and management development programmes organised and delivered in 2017. 112 people completed a Start Your Own Business (SYOB) Programmes run by LEO Kilkenny in 2017. The SYOB Programme gives participants an introduction to all of the main issues encountered when starting and running a business, from researching and planning their idea through to developing a sales strategy and preparing financial projections. 381 entrepreneurs availed of mentoring support from LEO Kilkenny in 2017. We maintain a panel of specialist mentors and their role is to share their experience and learning to help clients develop the capability to solve their own problems. The mentor helps clients explore their goals and ideas for the future and helps them to realistically appraise their current situation. 539 students from 12 second level schools in the county participated in the Student Enterprise Programme (SEP) in the 2016/2017 academic year. The SEP is the primary vehicle for exposing young people to enterprise and giving them a better understanding and appreciation of what is involved in running a business.

## Other Initiatives

The LEO was involved in supporting a range of other initiatives in 2017 as follows:

- Microfinance Ireland: assisted 8 businesses to make application for loan finance to MFI.
- Smart Options Loans: continued the partnership (begun in 2009) with St. Canice's Kilkenny Credit Union and assisted a further 14 businesses to make application for a Smart Options Loan.
- IBYE Competition: assisted 31 entrepreneurs with their applications under Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur Competition in 2017.
- Trading On-Line Vouchers: approved a further 28 TOVs to local businesses in 2017.
- The LEO supported a number of national initiatives undertaken collectively by the LEO Network, including the Student Enterprise Programme Final held in Croke Park in April, the National Enterprise Awards Final held in Dublin in June, the Enterprise Village Stand at the National Ploughing Championships held in Tullamore, Co. Offaly in September, and the National Women's Enterprise Day Conference held in Carlow in October. We will continue to support national events organised by the LEO Network as an effective means of raising the profile of the supports and services we offer.

*Table 3: Summary of Other Initiatives Supported in 2017*

Summary of Other Initiatives	2017 Output
Number of Entrepreneurs assisted to apply to MFI	8
Number of Entrepreneurs assisted to apply to Smart Option	14
Number of applications under IBYE 2017	31
Number of Trading On-Line Vouchers (TOV) Approved	28

## IRELAND'S BEST YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR #IBYE

Kilkenny's best young entrepreneurs were announced at the County Final of Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur (IBYE) competition. Run by the Local Enterprise Offices, IBYE is supported by the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation and Enterprise Ireland. Now in its 4<sup>th</sup> year, this year attracted almost 1,500 applications nationwide.

## TOURISM INCLUDING FESTIVAL SUPPORT

In 2017, Kilkenny Tourism continued to invest in developing Kilkenny's profile as a Cultural, Design and Heritage destination, continuously refreshing the market offering and developing visitor experiences. Key actions delivered in 2017 include:



*Launch of #tastekilkennyin May 2017*

- Adopting a 5 year Tourism Strategy (2017 – 2022) in order to develop a “**One Kilkenny**” approach to tourism development.
- Creating a dedicated team within Kilkenny County Council to meet the needs of the sector and push the agenda
- Hosting the world’s foremost networking event for travel writers and editors - 'Travel Classics International Writers Conference 2017', which brought together editors from high profile publications including Condé Nast Traveller, National Geographic Traveller and Harper’s Bazaar with a combined circulation of 87 million
- Assessing Festivals and Event Grants to the value of €105,000.
- The grand opening of the Medieval Mile Museum was held in April and officiated by Minister Patrick O’Donovan, Minister of State for Tourism
- Launch of #tastekilkenny website- First established by the Local Enterprise Office #tastekilkenny is a collective marketing initiative for Kilkenny based food producers. Kilkenny Tourism worked with #tastekilkenny to launch a new website, videos and imagery content pool, raising the profile of artisan Kilkenny
- New exhibition displays showcasing the food journey from pip to sip and field to fork were commissioned with video endorsements by cafés, Michelin star chefs and a fresh vibrant suite of images for #tastekilkenny
- Kilkenny Tourism retains professional expertise to assist with marketing and PR plans throughout the year. The festival calendar delivered another strong performance; attendances were higher with Savour Kilkenny 2017 Food Festival drawing 25,000 to Kilkenny.
- Kilkenny’s Christmas festival Yulefest ran a bigger event throughout December, embedding this festival as a firm favourite with a new Festival Manager and support network.
- Festivals such as The Kilkenny Arts Festival, Kilkenomics and Subtitle Film Festival continue to attract greater visitor numbers.
- Kilkenny Tourism exhibited at WTM London, Berlin trade show, Bloom in the Park, Holiday world Dublin and Belfast, as well as the Iverk Show and the Ploughing Championships. New exhibition material showcased Kilkenny at a number of Conferences including the Ruralia European Archaeological symposium
- Kilkenny was named one of the top 3 Foodie Destinations in Ireland by the RAI in association with FBD Insurance.
- Yulefest 2017 saw the further expansion of the profile of Kilkenny's Christmas Festival. Events in 2017 focused on community cohesion with the county wide “STAR” project and the first Medieval Mile Run. Events were held in Callan and Castlecomer as part of the celebrations as well as in Kilkenny City. A full programme of diverse events resulted in busy streets over the December weekends. One of the highlights of Yulefest 2017 was the Italian Flagwavers from



Florence who provided entertainment around Kilkenny during the first weekend of the festival. This festival is about the promotion of Kilkenny as a seasonal destination and the development of community cohesion events. The Yulefest website launched in 2017 raised the profile of the festival regionally and nationally and the holding of inclusive events successfully engaged all audiences locally. A focus on the objectives of the promotion of Kilkenny and inclusive family and community events proved successful in 2017 and will be continued in 2018.

## VETERINARY SERVICES

The Veterinary Service manage the food safety service contract between the FSAI and Kilkenny County Council which includes responsibility for the Food Safety Section of the Local Authority Veterinary Service in the Carlow area .The veterinary public health and animal welfare functions include providing official controls/ regulation in small to medium slaughterhouses and small meat processing plants and the regulation of small poultry slaughtering plants (including on farm slaughter of poultry i.e. seasonal slaughter ,etc ).

All animals slaughtered for human consumption in premises approved under food legislation must undergo an Ante Mortem and Post Mortem inspection . All premises supervised under food legislation must have a Food Safety Management System i.e. generally based on HACCP principles with a prerequisite programme which would include traceability and recall , cleaning and sanitation, pest control etc . Inspections and audits are carried out on a risk basis on supervised premises to verify compliance with legislation . Samples are taken as part of National Control Sampling Plans and sometimes as part of investigations . The County Veterinary Officer is involved in interagency planning at regional and national level.

- Approved Slaughterhouses under the service's supervision in 2017 slaughtered 5712 Cattle, 16,404 Sheep, 138,623 Poultry and 5,000 Turkeys.
- 20 Food Businesses were under the supervision of the service in 2017.
- 27 Residue Samples were taken as part of the National Residue Control Plan.
- 61 Meat Swabs and Water Samples were taken as Official Controls.
- 227 Hygiene Inspections (other than AM/PM Inspections) were done in food premises under the services supervision.

It should be noted that there are continuous consultations with new food business start ups, and sometimes with currently supervised food businesses on expansion plans . In these cases the regulatory requirements under food legislation are discussed with businesses and they are often referred onto other relevant state agencies if they require other supports e.g. business mentoring from the Local Enterprise Office etc. In 2017 the Veterinary Service had consultations with 3 small food businesses who wish to either open new businesses or expand present activities.

### **Control of Dogs**

Together with the Dog Warden Service , the Veterinary Service is involved in the implementation of the Control of Dogs Act 1986 as amended and the Dog Breeding Establishments Act 2010.

- In 2017, Dog Warden Service was involved in the licensing of 5,416 individual dogs, 4 general dog licences and lifetime dog licences.
- There were 17 premises registered on the Dog Breeding Establishments [DBE] Register on the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017 . There were 20 DBE inspections completed in 2017

There is a Consultative Committee on Dog Re-homing and Welfare which is multidisciplinary in makeup including Elected Representatives, Council Officials from Carlow and Kilkenny including the County Veterinary Officer, representatives from Animal Welfare organisations and the IFA. The focus of the committee is to maximise dog re-homing and to assist in maintaining dog welfare standards at the Dog Shelter. There was a 90% rehoming rate of dogs from the Shelter in 2017.



### **Upgrade Works to Dog Shelter at Paulstown**

Extension works to the Carlow Kilkenny Dog Shelter at Garryduff, Paulstown were completed in May 2017. The upgrade included the construction of a new facility with the addition of a further five kennels, fully insulated and ventilated, where the dogs can freely move from indoor to outdoor areas of each pen. The facility has been fitted with its own kitchen and food prep area and a state of the art infra-red heating system. The capacity of each pen will be 1 large or 2 to 3 small dogs. An exercise area for the isolation unit has also been provided along with a new agility area fitted with a training platform to provide an exercise and recreational outlet for boarding dogs.



The support of the Dog Consultative Committee is recognised and appreciated in making sure the welfare of animals at the shelter is paramount and ensuring their best chance of re-homing.



# LAWCO

## **Local Authority Waters and Communities Office (LAWCO)**

In 2017, Kilkenny and Tipperary County Councils, operating jointly as LAWCO, were successful in their bid to become joint Lead Authorities for the additional Local Authority staff resource to support implementation of the River Basin Management Plan. Recruitment has commenced for a core team of 35 scientific staff that will be based in 10 local authority offices around the country, including the offices of Kilkenny County Council. They will operate under the Regional Water and Environment Management Committees set up in 2016. The 5 Committees are preparing work programmes for the new scientific staff. The programmes contain a number of water bodies in Areas for Action which will be assessed by the new teams and for which measures will be recommended to help them meet their Water Framework Directive environmental objectives. The staff will then provide support and advice to those charged with implementing those measures.

The two local authorities also continued in their role as joint Lead Authorities for the Local Authority Waters and Communities Office (LAWCO). The office has 3 regional co-ordinators, 3 support staff and 12 community water officers, including one based in Kilkenny County Council serving the South East region.

## **LAWCO Community Water Officer**

In 2017, the Kilkenny based Community Water Officer worked with local communities to support the implementation of the River Basin Management Plan (RBMP). Particular projects include working with Leader on the Nore Vision project which is looking at a holistic approach to catchment management along the River Nore, attending the Iverk Show in Piltown, the regattas on the River Barrow at Graiguenamanagh and Thomastown Trust Community Group for World Rivers Day on the River Nore. Grant funding enabled a very successful River Clean Up on the River Barrow in September. Empty alcohol bottles, cans, plastics bottles, paint cans, traffic cones, a bicycle and tricycle were pulled from the river and its banks.



A particular activity for 2017 was carrying out Community Engagement on the draft RPMP. A series of public consultation meetings took place across the County; in Kilkenny City, Ballyragget, Mooncoin, Thomastown and Graiguenamanagh. These were “Town Hall” type events, asking members of the public who attended “What did their Local River mean to them” . The meetings were conducted between April and July with submissions on the RBMP accepted from attendees. A second round of engagement and feedback took place between September and October 2017, to report back to Elected Members and members of the public on the 16 Areas for Action in Kilkenny that have been recommended for targeting in Cycle 2.



LAWCO, in partnership with the Heritage Council, launched Water Heritage Day on Sunday 27th August as part of Heritage Week. The main Kilkenny event that day was a River Biodiversity Walk and Write by the River Barrow diving boards on the Quay in Graiguenamanagh. The event was led by biodiversity officer and children's author Shane Casey.



# Directorate of Finance, Information Technology & Facilities

**Finance**

**Information Technology**

**Procurement**

**Special Projects**



## FINANCE

The Finance Department is responsible for the overall control and management of the Council's finances. The main services being provided under this directorate are Financial Planning and Control, Income Collection, Treasury Management, Property Management, and Motor Taxation.

### **Income and Expenditure Account Statement**

The Income and Expenditure Account summarises the expenditure on the day to day services provided by the Council and provides details of how this expenditure is funded [Appendix 2]. There was a surplus in the year of €5,431 which resulted in a cumulative surplus at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017 of €10,661. Strict budgetary controls were maintained on a total expenditure budget of €75.2 million.

### **Capital Project Funding Arrangements**

The total cost of capital projects delivered under the Capital Programme in 2017 was €38.9m, Housing and Roads Projects accounted for 85% of the expenditure. The outstanding commitments on completed capital projects amounts to €12m as at 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2017. The annual budget provides for repayment of this commitment over a period of 8 years.

The Council adopted a Capital budget for the three year period 2017 to 2019 in June 2017. This budget sets out the estimated cost of the capital projects under consideration and the related funding sources.

The Council can only initiate capital projects that have an identified funding source.

### **Balance Sheet at 31st December 2017**

The Council has maintained a relatively strong balance sheet as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017. There was no additional non-mortgage loan finance required, however the net cash on hand has been reduced by €4.4m to €10.4m as at December 2017.

The overdraft facility was not utilised during the year.

Further progress was made on reducing income arrears in 2017. The collection rates historically in the main income categories are set out in Table 1.

	<b>Collection %</b>	<b>Collection %</b>	<b>Collection %</b>	<b>Collection %</b>
	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>
Commercial Rates	89	92	94	95
Rents & Annuities	92	92	93	92
Housing Loans	77	82	80	85

These collection rates are among the highest in the country. Total arrears have been reduced by almost €2.2m over this period.

The total bank loans (excluding housing related loans) outstanding as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017 were €12.9m.

## FINANCIAL TABLE

		Gross Expenditure 2017	Income 2017	Net Expenditure 2017	Net Expenditure 2016
<b>Expenditure By Division</b>	<b>Note</b>	€	€	€	€
Housing & Building		17,851,361	18,474,030	(622,669)	534,122
Roads, Transportation & Safety		19,912,758	14,435,413	5,477,345	5,348,547
Water Services		6,600,372	6,626,229	(25,857)	93,573
Development Management		8,067,815	3,308,889	4,758,926	4,278,716
Environmental Services		9,453,985	1,994,972	7,459,012	7,404,745
Recreation & Amenity		5,549,089	390,480	5,158,609	4,941,377
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare		645,358	475,804	169,554	207,314
Miscellaneous Services		7,160,640	3,509,083	3,651,557	4,119,468
<b>Total Expenditure/Income</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>75,241,377</b>	<b>49,214,900</b>		
Net Cost of Division to be funded from Rates and Local Property Tax Rates				26,026,477	26,927,861
Local Property Tax				19,408,708	18,980,383
Pension Related Deduction				-	942,095
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) for Year before Transfer</b>				<b>4,056,143</b>	<b>2,616,280</b>
<b>Transfers from/(to) Reserves</b>	<b>14</b>			<b>(4,050,712)</b>	<b>(2,592,816)</b>
<b>Overall Surplus/(Deficit) for Year</b>	<b>16</b>			<b>5,431</b>	<b>23,464</b>
<b>General Reserve at 1st January</b>				5,231	(18,233)
<b>General Reserve at 31st December</b>				<b>10,661</b>	<b>5,231</b>

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Kilkenny Local Authorities are committed to the use of information systems to expand and increase the efficiency and quality of service delivery to the public. The Information Services Department looks after the Information Systems requirements of the County Council and County Library.

Key achievements for 2017 included the following:

- Completed the procurement of new telephone system.
- Expanded the use of mobile devices.
- Expanded the network to include the PPN office.
- Completed the upgrade of Library Public PC reservation System.
- Ongoing additions and updates to the various local authority web sites.
- Developed Kilkenny Digital Archive for Library Service.
- Ongoing updates to servers and PCs to maintain security of the network.
- Collaborated on development of Health and Safety Project Management and Document Management Applications.
- Implemented and configured CRM using MS Dynamics 365.
- Ongoing management of Social Media including social media response to storm event.
- Commenced new domain migration project.
- Implemented new WebPay (Online Payments) and IVR (Automated Telephone Payments) systems.
- Upgraded to new version of HR/Payroll System.
- Completed the Rates Revaluation in our Financial Management System.
- Completed the IT fit out of the Medieval Mile Museum.

# PROCUREMENT

During 2017 the Procurment Unit oversaw:

- 26 Tenders advertised on the eTenders procurement portal.
- 51 Mini tenders and Quotations advertised on the SupplyGov portal.
- Revision of Procurement Procedures
- Introduction of simplified sub threshold tender documentation

## PROCUREMENT HIGHLIGHTS BY SERVICE AREA

### *Abbey Creative Quarter - Diageo site*

- Consultant for provision of Property Services procured.
- Consultancy for Archaeological Services and test trenching services procured.
- Architect Led Design Team for Refurbishment of Mayfair Building procured.

### *Corporate Services*

- Design Team including Conservation Architect for Renovation of Tholsel/City Hall procured.

### *Community and Enterprise*

- Service Provider for Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) procured.
- Service Provider for Kilkenny Refugee Resettlement Programme procured.
- Local Enterprise Office - 3 year Mentoring Services Panel procured.

### *Fire Services*

- Contractor for construction of new Fire Station at Graiguenamanagh procured.

### *Housing Technical*

- Architect Led Design Teams for Design of proposed new Social Housing Developments at Ballyragget, Piltown and Croker's Hill, Kilkenny procured using the OGP Professional Services Framework.

### *Municipal District of Kilkenny City*

- Contractor for replacement of car parking barriers at 3 car parks in Kilkenny City procured.

### *Roads*

- Contractors for various overlay and Streetlight Public Lighting Retrofit schemes and for N76 Callan Road Improvement Scheme procured.



## SPECIAL PROJECTS

### LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE HOUSING ACTIVATION FUND (LIHAF) SCHEMES

In October 2016, the Council submitted an application to the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government, for funding to deliver two projects, the Kilkenny Western Environs Infrastructure, and Ferrybank Recreational Park, under the Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund. This application was successful with grant funding of €5,070,000 for Western Environs and €350,000 for Ferrybank awarded respectively in March 2017 for infrastructure provision.

#### **Kilkenny Western Environs Phase 1 Infrastructure Scheme**

*(Total estimated cost €10.94 million)*

The infrastructure required to remove the infrastructural impediment to enable the development of the Western Environs in Kilkenny City consists of the following key elements:

- Construction of a roundabout on the N76 Callan Road at the intersection of the proposed Western Environs distributor road.
- 1.3km Western Environs distributor road, linking the N76 with the existing Circular Rd at Robertshill junction and the upgrade of the existing Circular Road from Robertshill to the R695 Kilmanagh Road.
- Construction of a roundabout on the R695 Kilmanagh Road at the proposed intersection with the Western Environs distributor road.
- 1.3km upgrade of the R695 Kilmanagh Road from the proposed intersection with the Western Environs distributor road to the north western extremity of the Western Environs footprint.
- Provision of Linear Park.

The detailed design and preparation of contract documents was advanced during 2017 and negotiations commenced with the affected landowners. It is anticipated the contract to construct the road infrastructure will be awarded in Qtr2 2018 with works commencing shortly thereafter.

#### **Ferrybank Recreational Park (Total Est. Cost 0.624million)**

This proposal is for a Neighbourhood Park at Aylesbury in Ferrybank County Kilkenny. The balance of funding for this scheme is funded jointly between Kilkenny County Council and Waterford County Council. The Park will include the following:

- Landscaping and Planting;
- Children's Playground;
- New footpaths, seating, lighting;
- Playing Pitch.
- Car Park;

A 2.1 hectare site for this project was purchased by Kilkenny County Council in 2014. Planning for this scheme, under Part 8, was obtained in September 2017. It is anticipated that this project will advance to construction stage in 2018.

### **ABBEY QUARTER**

Following Kilkenny County Council taking possession of the former Smithwicks Brewery site in November 2016, work has continued on the implementation of the Abbey Creative Quarter Masterplan in 2017.



Kilkenny County Council has entered into a Partnership with the National Treasury Management Agency, through the Ireland Strategic Investment Fund, for the development of 6 no. development plots on the Abbey Quarter Site. This Partnership, named Kilkenny Abbey Quarter Development Ltd, appointed a Chief Executive Officer in May 2017. Property Agents, Lisney, were also appointed in 2017 and they have commenced the marketing of the proposed development to prospective tenants. In order to facilitate this marketing of the proposed development, branding has been prepared including the following logo, which will appear on all marketing materials, including the advertising billboards that have been erected on the site.

Work has progressed on a number of specific projects within the Abbey Quarter in 2017. Significant work has been undertaken on the detailed design of the **Brewhouse Building**. Investigative works



including Site Investigation, Structural Opening up and material testing works, archaeological test excavations and a detailed survey of the building were all undertaken in 2017. Following a detailed review of the details of the existing structure and with input from the property agents, some modifications were made to the original proposed design for the renovated Brewhouse building. Whilst the individual changes were not considered significant in their own right, having considered the cumulative nature of the proposed changes and on the advice of the planning authority, it was decided to undertake further public consultation for the proposed development by way of a new Part VIII Planning consultation. Following this public consultation, the details of the revised Part VIII

planning were approved by the elected members at the December meeting of Kilkenny Co. Co.. It is expected that construction on the proposed development will commence in 2018.

Work has also progressed on the detailed design of the **Mayfair Building** in 2017. The ad hoc extensions to the building were demolished in 2017, facilitating site investigation and archaeological test excavation works. Structural testing and opening up works were also undertaken in 2017. It is expected that construction of proposed development will also commence in 2018.



Whilst the Partnership between Kilkenny Co. Co. and the National Treasury Management Agency will be responsible for the development of these buildings, Kilkenny Co. Co. will be responsible for the development of the extensive public realm areas around the site. This will include the public realm areas associated with the Brewhouse Building (including Horse Barrack Lane) and the Mayfair Building. The design of these areas has been progressed in 2017 along with the design of the buildings.

Archaeological Test Excavations on the proposed **Riverside Garden Project** were completed in 2017 and the detailed design of this project has been completed. It is expected that works on this project will commence once funding details have been confirmed. This project will also include an outdoor teenage activity area, incorporating a skate park. Consultations were undertaken in 2017 in partnership with Kilkenny Recreation & Sports Partnership (KRSP) with the teenage community in relation to their expectations of what should be included in this space. Following these consultations, it is now intended in 2018 to proceed to the detailed design of this space.

In addition to the specific development projects that have been progressed in 2017, significant work has also been undertaken on the various strategies associated with the implementation of the Abbey Creative Quarter Masterplan. These include the preparation of an Archaeological Assessment strategy (which has been agreed with the National Monuments Service), a Preliminary Design of the Utility Services for the development of the site and the preparation of Urban Design Criteria and a Development Code for the proposed development.



A very successful open day was held in May 2017, allowing members of the public access to the site for the first time. Memorabilia associated with the former Brewery and the Mayfair Ballroom were on display and some of the showbands performed on an outdoor stage. The event also included an outside broadcast by KCLR with interviews with former Brewery workers, the show bands and people who had danced in the Mayfair Ballroom. The site also hosted performances during the Arts Festival with performances held each night of the festival in the Brewhouse Building.



Bridge at Inistioge, Kilkenny