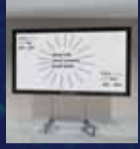


**New  
Cathaoirleach  
and Municipal  
District Chairs  
Elected - Page 2**



**Public  
Consultation  
and Part 8  
Explained  
- Page 10**



**World  
Leaders  
in Craft!  
- Page 11**

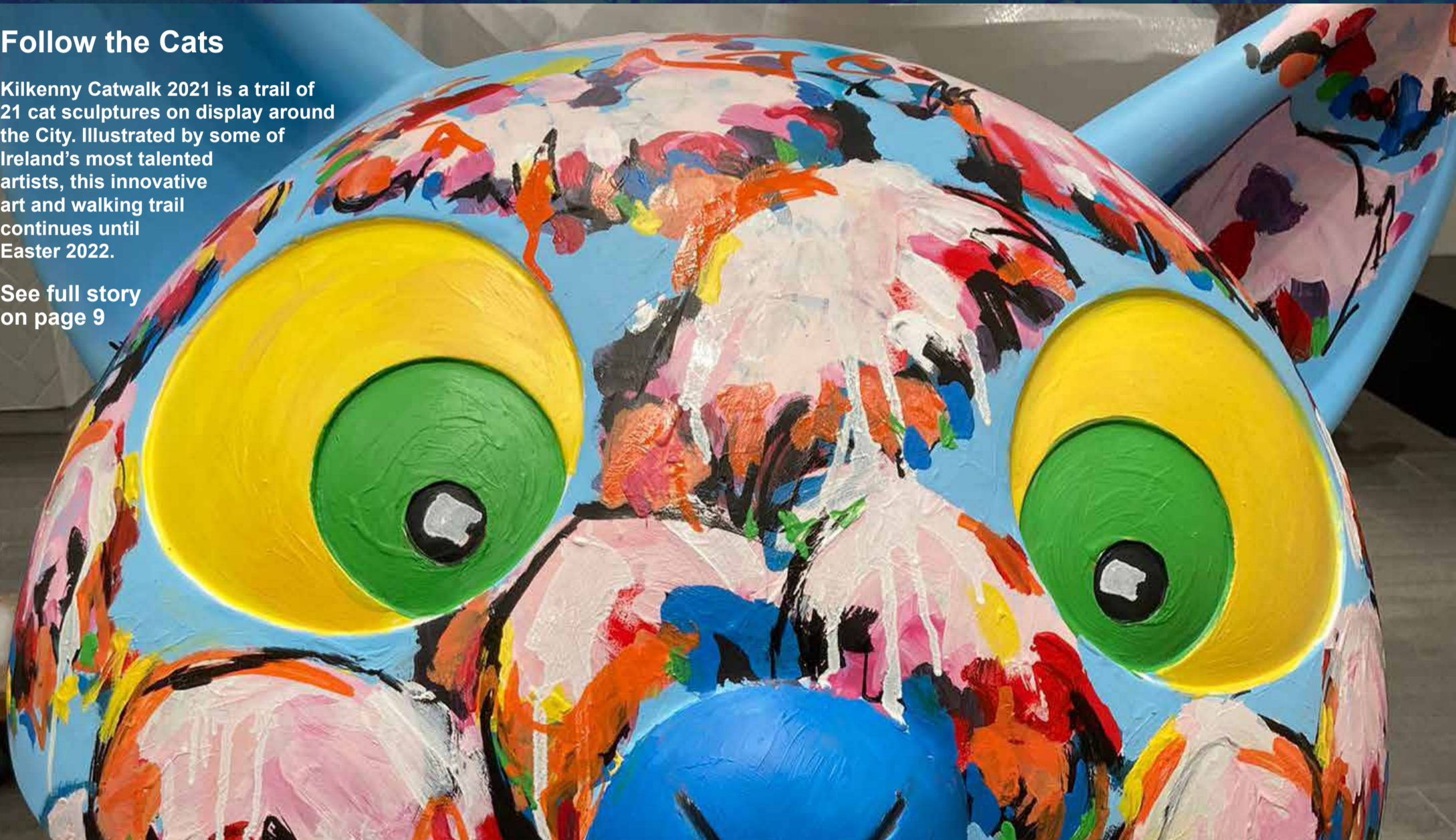


**Kilkenny's  
Unsung  
Heroes  
Awarded  
- Page 13**

## Follow the Cats

Kilkenny Catwalk 2021 is a trail of 21 cat sculptures on display around the City. Illustrated by some of Ireland's most talented artists, this innovative art and walking trail continues until Easter 2022.

See full story  
on page 9



## Full Steam Ahead for South East Greenway

Kilkenny County Council is collaborating with its neighbouring Councils of Waterford and Wexford to develop the South East Greenway. This is a game changing 24km off-road cycling and walking trail through South Kilkenny, which will also connect Waterford City to New Ross.

Planning permission and funding is firmly in place so now it is full steam ahead for the construction of the South East Greenway.

The route follows the abandoned railway line and is designed to be used by as many people as possible, including walkers of all ages, wheelchair users and cyclists of all abilities. The Greenway will support the people of Kilkenny to engage in healthy outdoor activity and will provide an alternative transport choice for commuters and school children.

See full story on page 4



South East Greenway passing over the Victorian Red Bridge over the River Barrow

## Kilkenny Open for Business

### Investing in our outdoor spaces

During 2020, Kilkenny County Council developed plans to deliver continued capital investment in our public spaces throughout the City and County. Two successful grant applications were made, to Fáilte Ireland and to the Department of Arts, Tourism, Culture, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, to enhance two key outdoor spaces in the City for citizens and visitors alike to enjoy. These resulted in the Council securing €900,000 in grants for key projects.

See full story on page 8



Kilkenny Welcome Team with Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Fidelis Doherty and Mayor, Cllr. Andrew McGuinness

## A Big Kilkenny Welcome!

**A**fter a difficult year for tourism and hospitality, Kilkenny County Council's Cathaoirleach, Councillor Fidelis Doherty, and Mayor of Kilkenny Municipal District, Councillor Andrew McGuinness, have officially launched our 'Kilkenny Welcome Team', a group of 21 trained volunteers who meet visitors to Kilkenny over the summer months.

The Kilkenny Welcome Team programme has been developed with Kilkenny Tourism and the Kilkenny Tourism Recovery Taskforce. The initiative demonstrates our commitment to supporting local economic recovery and helping businesses to make the most out of the remainder of the 2021 tourist season.

The team, who are fully trained in Covid-19 safety protocols, worked in popular locations around the City throughout the summer months to provide information to visitors, such as the opening times for popular attractions, nearby toilet facilities and train and bus timetables.

Our beautiful County has always been renowned for giving visitors a warm welcome. We are extremely grateful to the fantastic team of volunteers who gave their valuable time to help support the recovery of Kilkenny City and County by donning the Kilkenny colours and showing how much we care about our visitors.

The Kilkenny Welcome team is a great example of how our communities can come together to support tourism and hospitality. We are looking forward to welcoming visitors back to Kilkenny!



Housing development at Station Avenue, Ballyraggett, Co. Kilkenny

## Providing a place to call 'Home'

**T**hrough our Housing Delivery Team, we are working hard on one of the most important activities we do as a Council – providing safe and secure places that families can call 'home'.

In 2020, we provided 183 homes at developments including Breaghagh Place in Piltown, Nunico Road in Kilkenny City and Hoban Park in Callan.

We are improving the energy efficiency of our housing stock, with Hoban Park, Callan being the first Near Zero Energy development in the entire country, ensuring all homes here are highly energy efficient.

We are also making more houses accessible for people with disabilities and are working to provide a greater variety of house type through our building programme.

Through our current housing plans, we aim to deliver 37 high quality housing projects, which means more than 400 homes will be provided to people across the County.

Housing delivery is supported by the Government's Housing For All Programme, with an investment of more than €100 million in Kilkenny County.

## Welcome from our Chief Executive



Colette Byrne, Chief Executive, Kilkenny County Council

We have all experienced a challenging 18 months and as we come to the close of 2021, we all hope that the New Year and 2022 will bring a fresh start and that the impact Covid-19 has had on our lives will lessen.

Following on from our first household newsletter in 2020, this edition provides updates on the projects completed and being undertaken by the Council.

Despite the challenges we faced with the Covid-19 pandemic, many of our projects were advanced during 2021. Good progress was made on the Abbey Quarter site. The Riverside Park and Skateboard park opened in May. The renovation of the Tea Houses at Bateman Quay has commenced and the development of new public spaces at Horse Barrack Lane and Brewhouse Square are nearing completion, with plans advancing to deliver the next Phase of the development. It was great to see the completion of new roads in the Breaghagh Valley, which will open up a new neighbourhood in the City for significant housing development. The early delivery of new homes is essential for the social and economic wellbeing of Kilkenny and our people.

Thanks to the dedication of our staff we have progressed projects across the County to enhance our rural communities. These include the Kilkenny Greenway, mobility improvement works under Active Travel Programme,

projects under Town and Village Renewal Scheme and CLÁR Scheme. We continued to deliver new homes under our Housing Capital Programme for households in need of social housing and supports. Works completed include the access road at the Barrow Valley Activity Hub Graiguenamanagh which welcomed many visitors during the Summer. The refurbished Tea Rooms at Woodstock and Parks and Playgrounds across the County experienced increased usage as we all enjoyed our local amenities.

Over the last 12 months, the Council has supported local businesses and communities as Kilkenny reopened for business and visitors. Funding provided through Government streams allowed us to provide infrastructure to facilitate outdoor dining areas in Kilkenny City and in our rural towns and villages. These spaces allowed people to begin to meet, connect and enjoy outdoor dining with friends and extended family. In addition, we delivered many supports to local communities through the Community Wellbeing Programme which supported your physical and mental wellbeing during the restrictions.

In partnership with the Elected Representatives, the staff of Kilkenny County Council will continue to plan for the future development of the City and County while facing and dealing with the current challenges.

I hope you enjoy the latest edition of the Council's newsletter "Kilkenny Connects".

Colette Byrne Chief Executive



Kilkenny County Council Elected Representatives for 2021/2022. Front Row (L-R): Cllr. Michael Doyle, Cllr. Deirdre Cullen, Cllr. Fidelis Doherty, Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Michael McCarthy, Leas Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Andrew McGuinness, Cllr. Denis Hynes and Cllr. Eugene McGuinness. Back Row (L-R): Cllr. Pat Dunphy, Cllr. Matt Doran, Cllr. Peter 'Chap' Cleere, Cllr. Joe Lyons, Cllr. John Brennan, Cllr. David Fitzgerald, Cllr. John Noonan, Cllr. Michael Delaney, Cllr. Maria Dollár, Cllr. Joe Malone and Cllr. Pat Fitzpatrick. Also in virtual attendance were Cllrs. Mary Hilda Cavanagh, Eugene McGuinness, Patrick O'Neill, Ger Frisby and Eamon Aylward.

## Election Day 2021

### New Cathaoirleach and Municipal District Chairs Elected

On 8th June, Kilkenny County Council held the Annual General Meeting for the election of the First Citizen – or Cathaoirleach – for the 2021/2022 term. The meeting was held in the Watergate Theatre and saw the election of Cllr. Fidelis Doherty as Cathaoirleach of Kilkenny County Council. Cllr. Michael McCarthy was elected as Leas-Cathaoirleach.

The Municipal Districts (MD) across the County also held their Annual Meetings, where members elected the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson for each Municipal District. Cllr. Pat Dunphy and Cllr. Fidelis Doherty were

elected Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson for Piltown MD respectively. Cllr. Michael Doyle and Cllr. Joe Lyons were elected for Callan-Thomastown MD and Cllr. Pat Fitzpatrick and Cllr. Mary Hilda Cavanagh took up the roles in Casltecomer MD.

Members in Kilkenny City elected Cllr. Andrew McGuinness as Mayor and Cllr. Martin Brett as Deputy Mayor for the 2021-22 term.

See page 16 for a full listing of your Kilkenny County Council Elected Members.

## Meet your Cathaoirleach: Cllr. Fidelis Doherty



In June, Cllr. Fidelis Doherty was elected Cathaoirleach, or First Citizen, of Kilkenny County Council. It is just the sixth time a woman has worn the chain of office here in Kilkenny, in over 120 years.

Cllr. Doherty was first elected to Kilkenny County Council in 2009. Fidelis represents the Piltown Municipal District and lives in Glenmore with her husband Andy and their three children. We met up with the Cathaoirleach to find out about a typical day and what the job involves.

"It is such a great privilege to be elected to the position of Cathaoirleach for this term. It is an honour to have this opportunity to represent the people of Kilkenny, and I promise to do my best in the role. That's a promise I made at the start of this journey and one that I intend to keep.

There is no typical day as Cathaoirleach: every day brings new experiences and challenges, and one can expect the unexpected. I have an early start every day to catch up on emails, take calls from my constituents, prepare for meetings and there is always lots of reading.

As Cathaoirleach, I also have the privilege of attending lots of events across the County, and it is very important that I prepare for these by having my speech ready in advance and being on time for everything.

I absolutely love my job as an elected representative on Kilkenny County Council and the opportunities it gives me to help people and my community. I have always had a great community spirit. The time I spent volunteering with Citizens Information helped me understand how daunting some issues can be for people and how difficult it can be to know where to start. That's why I believe the role of Councillors is so important, as we are often the first point of information for many people.

I am honoured to be just the sixth woman in over 120 years to wear the Cathaoirleach's chain. My advice to anyone curious about a career in politics is that if you are interested – go for it!

My greatest motivation is the love I have for my work. The many years I have worked as a Councillor have taught me a lot, but my greatest piece of advice would be to learn how to actively listen to others, and to understand another person's point of view.

Having a support network around you is also so important. While it is great to be confident and able to mind yourself, it is important to know that there are people around you too.

It is important to give yourself the time and space to think and plan ahead, and to have a good balance between work and personal life. I am very busy but to relax, I enjoy painting, gardening, and watching my favourite Netflix shows with my family.

I am especially delighted to see the resumption of GAA fixtures and some community events which we sorely missed during Covid-19 lockdowns.

I think it is important that as restrictions ease, we learn to talk to each other again. I am certainly looking forward to meeting people again after a long time and popping down to my local for a chat with friends and neighbours.

I thank the people of Kilkenny for their resilience throughout the pandemic, particularly to our healthcare and other frontline workers who kept the show on the road and the shelves filled throughout the crisis. Without doubt, it was a shocking time, but everyone adjusted.

I want to acknowledge the tremendous work of our local communities and the different groups that were set up throughout Kilkenny to provide support to their communities. Simple actions to help vulnerable people, such as fetching the shopping for an elderly neighbour, made all the difference. As difficult as this time has been, it has no doubt brought out the best in our people.

I am very grateful for the support I enjoy in doing this job - from my family, neighbours, and community, as well as from my fellow Elected Members and the Executive and Staff at Kilkenny County Council.

I look forward to the remainder of my term, and to meeting many more of my fellow Kilkenny people over the coming months".



Kilkenny County Council Road Maintenance - Piltown Municipal District crew

## #YourCouncilDay

Across our Social Media platforms on July 1st, Kilkenny County Council showcased the work of our committed and passionate employees who make a difference to the lives of the people in their communities every day.

From our roads maintenance staff who are out in all weathers, to the administrative staff who keep everything running, Kilkenny County Council staff have continued to work throughout the pandemic to provide essential services and deliver social and economic improvements across the County.

Just some of the work we have been involved in includes providing supports to businesses to get back on their feet, facilitating outdoor dining, and continuing to maintain and enhance safe outdoor spaces such as parks and pedestrianised zones in our City and towns for people to enjoy.

Read on in this newsletter to see just some of the work that your Council has been up to this past year. Follow Kilkenny County Council on social media for regular updates @KilkennyNotices on twitter and @KilkennyCoCo on Facebook and Instagram. Check out the hashtag #YourCouncilDay / #DóLásaChomhairle to find out more about how your Council is working for you.



Cllr. Andrew McGuinness, Cathaoirleach of Kilkenny County Council in 2020-21 and Cllr. John Conran, Mayor of Kilkenny Municipal District in 2020-21, with members of staff from the Council's Parks Team

## Pardon the weeds – we're feeding the bees

**K**ilkenny County Council's Parks Department is aiming to reduce the frequency of mowing to support our pollinators. Reducing mowing allows wildflowers to bloom and provides an important food source for bees and other pollinators.

There are now several areas where we will reduce mowing to encourage the growth of wildflowers and hedgerows. We are working closely with Keep Kilkenny Beautiful, Tidy Towns Groups and Residents Association to implement this change in how we manage our green spaces.

Flowers we might usually consider weeds such as dandelions and clovers in lawns and road verges, and willow, blackthorn and hazel in hedgerows are so important. These flowering plants provide essential early season food for hungry bees emerging from hibernation.

Kilkenny County Council is a supporter of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan for 2021-2025, a new five-year road map that aims to help bees, other pollinating insects and our wider biodiversity. Kilkenny County Council is looking forward to continuing to work in partnership with communities and Tidy Towns Groups to encourage and support a better way of managing our whole landscape to support our struggling biodiversity.



St. Lachtain's Church, Freshford, Co. Kilkenny

## Protecting our heritage

**T**he 2021 Community Monuments Fund will invest €60,000 in support for conservation plan for St. Francis Abbey, St. Francis Well and Evans Turret in the Abbey Quarter as well as St. Lachtain's Church in Freshford. The Kilkenny County Council Heritage Officer administers the Community Monuments Fund, coordinated nationally by the National Monuments Service.

Proposed works include the future conservation, maintenance, and presentation of the iconic structures in the Abbey Quarter. St. Lachtain's Church is set to receive a renewable energy heating system and to improve the interpretive facilities here which tell the story of the ancient site and church. This will support the programme of events planned for 2022 to commemorate the 1,400th anniversary of the death of St. Lachtain.

*In September, KCLR aired a special feature on the Abbey Quarter Conservation Plan in its series "The History Fix". This behind-the-scenes look at what is involved in preparing a Conservation Management Plan for this unique site, included fascinating interviews with all the experts and partners involved - Engineers, Conservation Architects, Archaeologists, Ecologists. You can listen back at [kclr96fm.com/the-history-fix/](http://kclr96fm.com/the-history-fix/)*

## Abbey Quarter transforming the City

**W**e are continuing to work hard to deliver the highly anticipated 'Abbey Quarter'.

The conversion of this former industrial site into a mixed-use development will transform the City Centre and provide an inclusive place for all our communities to live, work and play. It will connect the former industrial site to the City Centre, creating welcome spaces for pedestrians and cyclists.

Work on the site is making good progress. The long-awaited Riverside Garden and Skatepark officially opened to the public in May this year, providing a riverside walk from the historic Tea Houses at Bateman Quay to Greensbridge. The skatepark has already proved hugely popular, with skaters of all ages and abilities now using the park to practice and show off their skills.

Works on converting the Tea Houses at Bateman Quay and developing the Brewhouse for office use continues. This phase also includes the upgrade of Horse Barrack Lane and new Brewhouse Square. These works are expected to be finished by the end of 2021 and will add valuable public spaces to this extensive site.

The conversion of the old Mayfair Ballroom into a new City library will commence in October this year. The urban park and street around St. Francis Abbey will commence in 2022, opening up the remainder of the former Brewery site for the development of new buildings. These works will provide visitor access to St. Francis Abbey and the City



Riverside Garden at Abbey Quarter, Kilkenny City, officially opened this year

Walls, incorporating Evans Turret, and integrating them into a modern public space.

This is a transformational project for Kilkenny City that is being delivered by Kilkenny County Council with funding support from the Urban Regeneration Development Fund, the European Regional Development Fund and Fáilte Ireland.



Newly opened Skatepark at Riverside Garden, Abbey Quarter, Kilkenny City



Cyclists enjoying the Greenway

Continued from page 1:

### Full Steam Ahead for South East Greenway

The South East Greenway will include a number of stunning sites, including the 680-metre long Mountelliot Tunnel, the Victorian Red Bridge over the Barrow, Ballinlaw Castle and a spectacular view of the Rose Kennedy Fitzgerald Bridge.

We expect the Greenway to be fully completed and open to the public by August 2023.

Further funding is already in place to connect the South East Greenway to the Waterford Greenway, providing a continuous link between Dungarvan and New Ross.

For further information visit [www.southeastgreenway.net](http://www.southeastgreenway.net).



Musical Bin outside Kilkenny Castle

## Love this place, leave no trace

**A** new 3-year Litter Management Plan has been adopted by the Elected Members of Kilkenny County Council. The ambitious plan, which is intended to help combat the increasing number of litter complaints being received by the Council for investigation, involves a wide spectrum of measures including upgrading and expanding the Council's network of bring centres, continuing the roads sweeping programme and investigating illegal dumping.

The Council will further support the Green School Programme, Tidy Town Groups and the installation of new litter bins as part of wider Town and Village Renewal Schemes.

The plan noted that cigarette litter, dog fouling and sweet and food packaging and paper were the main

types of litter found throughout County Kilkenny and that pedestrians and passing motorists were the County's main sources of litter.

In other litter news, we introduced musical bins to Kilkenny City for a short time during the summer months! These bins were transformed to entertain and reward those who do the right thing by giving them a musical treat when they put their litter in the bin!

Kilkenny also won the Irish Business Against Litter National Litter League this year, thanks to all our residents, businesses and visitors being responsible with their waste. The plan aims to tackle the scourge of litter throughout our beautiful County and encourage more people to 'bin it, don't fling it!'



Before and after: New cycle way at O'Loughlin Road, Kilkenny

## On your bike!

### Millions in Funding for Active Travel

**K**ilkenny County Council is making walking and cycling attractive, safe and accessible to everyone, connecting communities and encouraging healthier forms of travel.

We are working on several projects to make our roads and footpaths safer for pedestrians and cyclists and to improve connectivity in our urban areas.

Some of the projects we are working on include improving public lighting on footpaths and cycle ways, new footpaths and pedestrian crossings and safe school zones.

As well as supporting active and healthy travel options, switching to active travel will also reduce Kilkenny's dependency on cars, which will help us to tackle Climate Change.

Through the National Transport Authority and the Department of Transport, we have received over €4.3 million for projects to support Active Travel across the County. A number of these projects are already underway and will be complete by the end of this year.



## Grants for 181 local groups

**C**ouncillors in Kilkenny County Council have approved €140,000 in grants for 181 groups, including Resident Associations, Tidy Towns Groups and other Community Organisations across Co. Kilkenny from the 2021 Amenity Grant fund.

The Amenity Grant Scheme is designed to support local communities to carry out projects including the upkeep, maintenance and enjoyment of public amenities, landscaping and development of open spaces, and small-scale improvement works. Groups across our County carry out outstanding work every year to improve our local environment and we are proud to support the variety of works carried out through the Amenity Grant Scheme.

#### Did you know?

*Every year Kilkenny County Council provides a range of grants for local communities. Visit the 'Grants' section of our website for the interactive grants booklet and to become familiar with the numerous grants and programmes available.*



Newly refurbished Tea Rooms Conservatory at Woodstock Gardens, Inistoge, Co. Kilkenny

## Teatime in Woodstock

**K**ilkenny County Council is delighted to have officially reopened the much-loved Tea Room Conservatory in Woodstock Gardens and Arboretum in July of this year. Overseen by Cathaoirleach Cllr. Fidelis Doherty, the opening unveiled the spectacular mural capturing Woodstock garden in its prime.

The Tea Room had been closed to the public while the Parks Department of the Council undertook a number of significant enhancements to the structure. Some of the improvements carried out included sealing of the curved glass roof and repainting the ironwork. Other works

included the installation of Victorian style lighting and planting along with a new stone patio for outdoor dining.

These works build on several improvements made to Woodstock Gardens and Arboretum over the past number of years, including playground enhancements, a pergola seating area and information plaques. By the end of 2021, Kilkenny County Council will also have restored over six kilometres of Victorian Pathways in Woodstock Estate.

We look forward to welcoming you back to the Tea Room for refreshments!



Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Fidelis Doherty, with Cllr. Deirdre Cullen at launch of Graiguenamanagh Audio Guide

## Listen Up! Graiguenamanagh launches Audio Guide

**T**he Graiguenamanagh Audio Guide is a new guided tour of the town developed by Kilkenny County Council with the help of the local heritage society. The new guide allows listeners to find out something new around every corner!

This audio tour provides plenty of great information on the sights and sounds of this historic town, including a visit to Duiske Abbey, stories of the powerful Butler Family, the castle of Tinnahinch and many more.

Why not take a trip to Graiguenamanagh to explore the history of the town, as well as all the outdoor activities on offer! Available for download at [kilkenny.ie](http://kilkenny.ie), [visitkilkenny.ie](http://visitkilkenny.ie), or [abartaheritage.ie](http://abartaheritage.ie), it can also be downloaded across most podcast apps on your smartphone.



Kilkenny County Council Road Maintenance - North Callan Roads Crew

## Managing Kilkenny's roads

**I**n 2021, over €16 million was allocated towards road improvements, restoration and maintenance in the City and County for local and regional road networks. This will enable works to be carried out across the City and County and allows for some long-awaited projects including bridge rehabilitation and safety improvement works.

Kilkenny County Council is continuing to work in close cooperation with other Local Authorities, Transport Infrastructure Ireland and the public to deliver new roads projects and upgrades that will benefit the County by making our roads safer, shortening journey times,

alleviating congestion and providing better connections between key locations.

In 2021, the public were given the opportunity to provide feedback on plans for the N24 Waterford to Cahir route and rerouting of the N25, completing the connection between Waterford City and Glenmore/New Ross Bypass. Progression of these projects is subject to approval and provision of Government funding.

Road improvements will benefit all residents and visitors to Kilkenny, boosting tourism and making our road network safer for all users.



## September Sounds

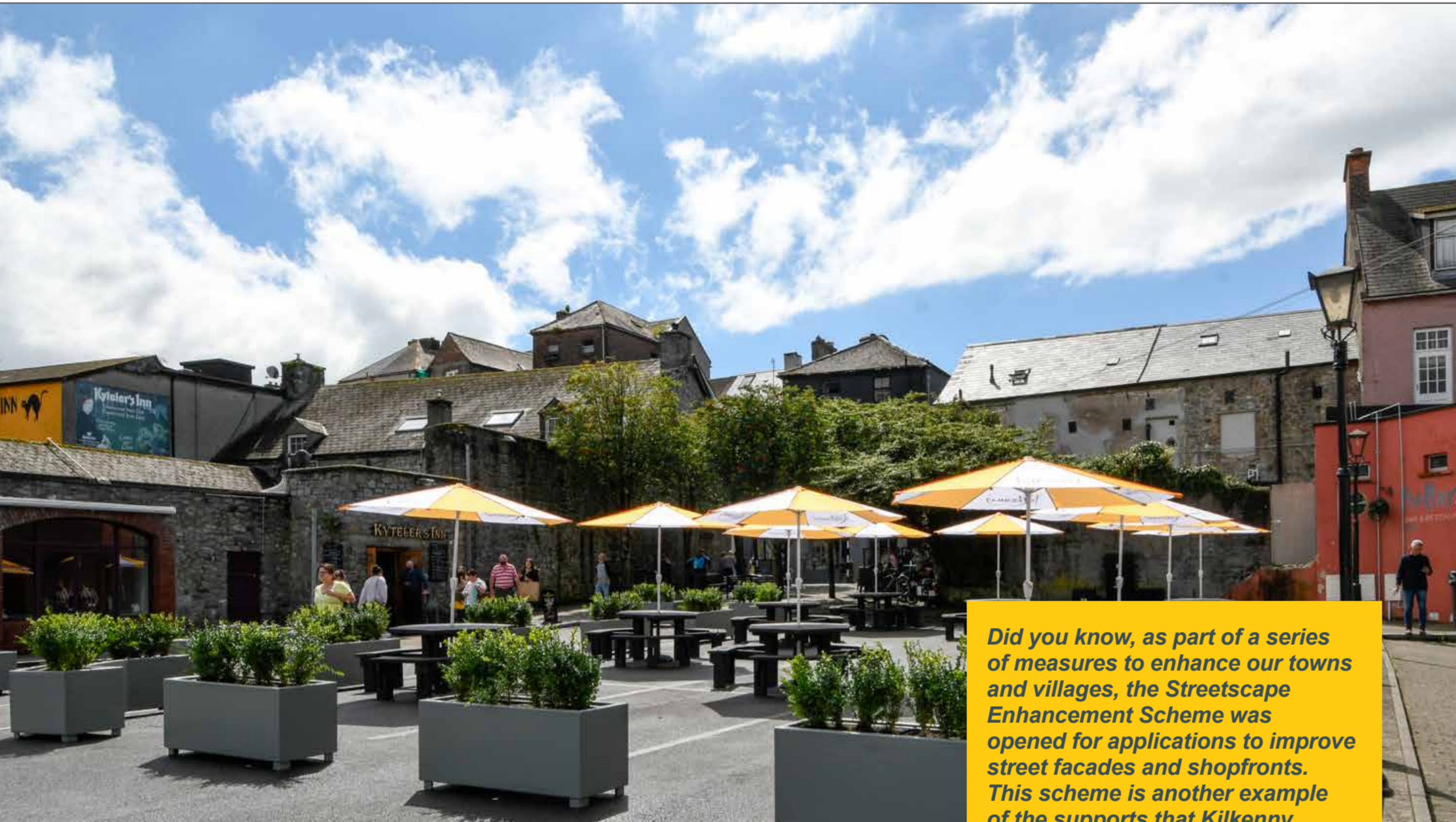
**K**ilkenny was alive with music this September. Sounds of classical, jazz, pop, rock, indie, folk and traditional music took place in venues across our beautiful City and County settings on the weekend of 24th - 26th September. Musicians were on stage in Woodstock Gardens, Ballykeeffe Amphitheatre and Butler Gallery Courtyard and they will also be participating in Kilkenny Day on Sunday, 10th October 2021.

The response to a call-out for applications from local performers was overwhelming. The quality and variety of the concerts inspired both audiences and musicians alike and was a sign of real hope for the future of the industry. The initiative is being rolled out nationwide under the Live Local Public Performance Scheme, to help with the reopening of the music sector and get musicians back to work. Kilkenny County Council's Arts Office and the Watergate Theatre delivered September Sounds, with funding provided by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media.

Performer and Local musician, Patrick Rafter taking part in September Sounds

## Smartphone App launched for the Linguan River Valley

**T**he Council is proud to be a funding partner with Kilkenny Leader Partnership and Tomar Trust, in a very innovative tourism and heritage App which will become an important part of the tourism offering provided to visitors to the very beautiful Linguan River Valley area. The App will provide a visitor experience using augmented reality technology through the visitor's own smart phone or tablet for three Kilkenny Heritage Sites located in the region, Kilkieran High Crosses, Knockroe Passage Tomb and Killamery High Cross. These sites are always a pleasure to visit, and the addition of the App will further enhance these first-class tourist attractions.



Outdoor Dining area at the Market Yard, Kilkenny City

*Did you know, as part of a series of measures to enhance our towns and villages, the Streetscape Enhancement Scheme was opened for applications to improve street facades and shopfronts. This scheme is another example of the supports that Kilkenny County Council is providing to help the recovery of our County's economy. The scheme is set to support a number of projects across Kilkenny, and will include initiatives such as enhanced planting, painting of buildings/shopfronts, painting of murals, the decluttering and repair of shopfronts, illumination of buildings, replacement of signage, provision of canopies, awnings or street furniture, and replacement of existing shopfronts. Investment will be made through the Streetscape Enhancement Scheme in the towns of Thomastown, Mullinavat, Goresbridge, Castlecomer and Urlingford.*



Walk at Woodstock Gardens, Inistigoe, Co. Kilkenny

## Kilkenny is open for business

Continued from page 1:

### €250,000 for Outdoor Performance Area

The Urban Park beside the Watergate Theatre will deliver a high quality outdoor live performance space for use by local artists and musicians, along with our Festivals and Events. When not being used for live performance, the space will transform into a lively outdoor seating area for all to enjoy. It will provide direct connectivity to the Abbey Quarter. The Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media provided grant funding of €250,000 towards these works; and this is supplemented by Urban Animation funding from Fáilte Ireland.

### Funding for Permanent Outdoor Dining

Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Catherine Martin, T.D. and Fáilte Ireland recently announced funding of €649,000 for a permanent Outdoor Dining facility to be developed in Kilkenny City. The Market Square in the Market Yard outdoor dining area was developed with the aid of national funding at the height of the pandemic last year. This will be further enhanced with weatherproofing, redesign of paving and additional improvements to the seating area to provide a permanent outdoor dining area in the City. Developing this area as a permanent Outdoor Dining Facility will make it suitable for use in a wider range of weather conditions for longer periods of the year, helping businesses towards sustainable recovery. Consultants have recently been appointed to prepare designs for Market Square and Kieran Street for consideration, that will be subject to public consultation in due course.

## Looped walks

Government Funding of over €70,000 has been awarded to Kilkenny County Council to enhance walking trails across the County. This funding will improve the Woodstock Looped Walk, the Brandon Hill Looped Walk, the Freshford Looped Walk and the Cois Bearbha Riverside Loop Walk.

Kilkenny Leader Partnership were also allocated funding to carry out works on the Kilmacoliver Loop Walk and the Gathabawn Loop Walk.

This funding is to improve our outdoor facilities, which are so important for our physical and mental wellbeing. Hope you are getting out to enjoy your local amenity.

## Outdoor Seating and Accessories Scheme for Businesses

Throughout 2021, Kilkenny County Council continued to administer the Outdoor Seating and Accessories scheme funded by Fáilte Ireland. The objective of this scheme is to provide individual businesses in the tourism and hospitality sector with opportunities for outdoor dining and to increase their capacity, while restrictions on indoor dining remain. Grants have been made available to businesses. June 2021 saw the re-opening of many businesses and wonderful outdoor seating has sprung up throughout the City and County with the Council's support.

Kilkenny's Tourism Recovery Taskforce was established in June 2020 as an emergency response to the drastic decline in Tourism business due to Covid-19. Fáilte Ireland and Kilkenny County Council engaged with stakeholders from local agencies, local businesses and tourist attractions to inform the Council's response to the pandemic.



Artwork commissioned by the Council under Per Cent for Art Scheme located on Callan Road, Kilkenny. *Derdimus* by Michelle Byrne

## Public art policy

Councillors have approved a new policy that will inform future public artworks to be purchased. The policy ensures that there is a clear process in place when it comes to deciding on future art works to be funded through the Council.

Stakeholders from across the County's community and arts sectors will be invited to participate, including artists, art organisations and local communities, as well as staff from within Kilkenny County Council and Councillors.

Public art is incredibly important to our communities, adding value to the culture, economy, vitality and the aesthetic of our County. An iconic and well-loved piece of artwork contributes to a community's identity, fosters community pride and enhances our quality of life.

This policy will inform how we use the 'Percent for Arts' Scheme, which makes funding available exclusively for public art. It is used to fund temporary and permanent arts projects and covers a range of artforms. The scheme supports the commissioning of artists across all contemporary art forms including Visual Art, Opera, Traditional Art and Circus/Street Artistry.



Pangur Bán - The Original, designed by Bonnie Mier, Cartoon Saloon.

## Catwalk art trail

This project is a partnership between Kilkenny Civic Trust and Kilkenny County Council. The outdoor Catwalk Art Trail was designed to support and bring local businesses, arts and the community together, and attract visitors to Kilkenny. It provides a new and exciting activity and walking route around the City for families and people of all ages to enjoy.

### The model - Kilkenny's most famous cat

The model is a 5ft tall fibreglass resin sculpture based on The Secret of Kells character, Pangur Bán, created by four-time Academy Award®, Golden Globe®, BAFTA and Emmy nominated Kilkenny-based animation studio, Cartoon Saloon.

### Art and Artists

Most of the work has been undertaken by local artists. Along the Catwalk of 21 sculptures there are a number of fantastic themes including; an age-friendly cat, a cat designed by a local youth group, a Cartoon Saloon designed cat and a hurling & camogie themed cat signed by both Kilkenny Teams.

### Stories behind the creations

Keen to engage with the local community during lockdown earlier this year, the project team offered an outlet for various groups to immerse themselves in a unique project.

- Our local Age Friendly group worked with artist, Paul Bokslag to design and develop the wonderfully themed Age Friendly Cat!
- Local Youth Group, Ossory Youth came on board and immersed themselves in the design and creation of a young peoples' cat in collaboration with artist, Joanne Moore.
- Cartoon Saloon themselves got their own wonderfully talented illustrators to work on a Pangur Bán model and produced the Catwalk Cat.
- We also put out a call for emerging artists to come on board and exciting emerging artist Graham Carew has produced a delightful cat for the trail.



Launch of Kilkenny Day - Performances under Local Live Public Performance Scheme. L-R: Joanna Cunningham, Watergate Theatre, Tim Butler, Kilkenny County Council, Cathaoirleach Cllr. Fidelis Doherty and Mary Butler, Arts Officer, Kilkenny County Council

## Kilkenny Day explained

Kilkenny Day is about celebrating everything that is wonderful about Kilkenny City and County; our communities, our heritage, our environment, our commerce, our creativity, our food, our hospitality, our sport and above all, our people.

Kilkenny (*Cill Channigh* | *Church of Canice*) derives its name from its patron Saint - Canice (Cainech). Tradition asserts that in 597, St. Canice led a Christian force to Kilkenny to eliminate the last bastion of Druidic rule in Ireland.

Kilkenny Day falls on the Sunday closest to St. Canice's feast day. This year, 2021, Kilkenny Day is the 10th October. It is based on the traditional 'Pattern'

(Patron / Patrún) Day which dates back to the 1540's. Communities are encouraged to use the day to celebrate everything that is wonderful about Kilkenny. With such a wealth of places to see and things to do, locals and visitors can explore new places and activities, 'don' the black and amber and enjoy a host of free activities.

Join the Conversation and follow our social media pages to find out more: Facebook: @KilkennyDay, Twitter: @kilkennyday and Instagram: @kilkennyday.

The Council hosts this as an Annual event in celebration of everything Kilkenny. If you didn't get a chance to be involved this year there will be plenty of opportunity in the years to come.



Kilkenny County Council virtual consultation room

# Have your say

Your feedback is highly valued - it helps us better understand what our communities want so that we can set the right priorities and future directions as a Council. We're a listening Council and often need to ask you for your views and what you think about future developments. We are continuing to establish better ways for you to have your say on the way we work and the projects we carry out.

Sometimes the way we engage with you is set by legislation, and there are many steps to follow. Sometimes we can choose. Even if consultation is not required, we may decide that some other form of engagement is helpful and appropriate. There is a wide range of tools for engagement. Differing levels of engagement may be required during different stages of decision-making on an issue or a project. Levels of engagement may also be different for different stakeholders.

The Council engages with the community on many levels. This can be by way of a statutory consultation process or to communicate or seek feedback in a more informal way. "Statutory" means processes and timelines are defined in law, and this includes planning and compulsory purchase processes.

Examples of communications and engagement channels used by the Council are:

- Website | Public notices | Newspaper | Media releases
- Social media | Radio | Face-to-face presentations | Community Newsletter and Annual Newsletter.

## Public Consultation

The County Council engages in a number of different types of public consultation. The Council uses an innovative online consultation portal, [consult.kilkenny.ie](http://consult.kilkenny.ie), where you can view all the current consultation processes in one place. You can make a submission directly online, and you can see what other submissions have been made.

If you register for a [consult.kilkenny.ie](http://consult.kilkenny.ie) account, you can also choose to be kept informed of all the relevant consultations that matter to you. At the end of the consultation, a report is published on the [consult.kilkenny.ie](http://consult.kilkenny.ie) site, outlining what decisions have been made and why.

Public consultation processes can be divided into statutory consultation processes and non-statutory processes. Three of the most common statutory processes are Part 8s, Development Plan and Local Area Plan processes.

There are also other processes, not defined in law, such as Mobility Management Plans and Masterplans.

## What is a Part 8?

Most developments by a local authority itself are subject to a public consultation process as set out in the Planning & Development Regulations, 2001 - 2012. This procedure is commonly referred to as a 'Part 8'. Notice of a Part 8 proposal is given in the press, a site notice is erected, and Part 8s are also made available on the [consult.kilkenny.ie](http://consult.kilkenny.ie) website. Following consideration of any submissions or observations, the Chief Executive presents a report to the Elected Members of the Council. The issues raised during the consultation process are a vital input, as they provide valuable local insight to inform the decision-making process. The Elected Members decide on Part 8s, this is called a reserved function as it is reserved to the Elected Members to decide.



Local craftspeople celebrating Kilkenny's designation as a world leader in craft with Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Fidelis Doherty



Craft designed by Ken Foley, Heike Kahle, Catherine Conroy and Artefakt Rugs

# It's official: Kilkenny is world leader in craft

Kilkenny is one of just four regions in Europe to have been designated a World Craft City and Region. This international award is the result of the dedication of MADE in Kilkenny, a craft collective of designers and makers, in collaboration with Kilkenny County Council.

This is fantastic recognition of Kilkenny as a top-quality craft destination has put our County on the international map, thanks to the MADE in Kilkenny volunteers who demonstrated Kilkenny's wealth of creativity.

Kilkenny has always had a reputation for being a centre for creativity. MADE in Kilkenny has worked for nearly a decade to bring together the amazing array of talent in Kilkenny and to promote the region as the number one destination for authentic Irish craft of exceptional quality.

We are delighted to see Kilkenny recognised on the international stage for its artistic talent. Kilkenny is

also well known for creative areas including fine-art, animation and its many music, film, comedy and food festivals. These awards are so important to boost our national and international reputation and encourage participation in the arts.

The title was awarded to Kilkenny by the World Crafts Council, a non-governmental organisation aiming to promote crafts as a vital part of cultural, social, and economic life through a global network of members and affiliates.

More information on the MADE in Kilkenny group is available at [www.madeinkilkenny.ie/](http://www.madeinkilkenny.ie/).



Local Enterprise Office out and about with KCLR FM promoting #ShopKilkenny

# Shop Kilkenny

It's been a tough couple of years for businesses across Kilkenny who have been disrupted by COVID-19 restrictions. For this reason, the Shop Kilkenny Platform has been developed to support local businesses in the City and County.

There are many reasons for us to shop local and support local businesses – they keep our towns and villages vibrant and busy, support local economies and provide jobs in our locality. We urge the people of Kilkenny to enjoy and shop local and spread the word on Shop Kilkenny!

This summer, Kilkenny County Council organised a 'Tour of the County' campaign with our local radio station, KCLR. We visited towns across the County, exploring local crafts, retail and other services. Most importantly, we heard from the people behind these businesses who shared their stories.

We would love to hear about your business, if you or someone you know wishes to be included in the Shop Kilkenny platform or if you wish to share news or information on your business, just let us know! You can contact us on Instagram @shop\_kilkenny, or on Facebook @shopkilkenny and don't forget to follow and share using the hashtag #ShopKilkenny.



# Look for Local

Kilkenny County Council's Local Enterprise Office continues to promote the 'SHOPKILKENNY' campaign, which aims to raise awareness of the benefits of shopping local.

Small businesses and retailers are the lifeblood of our cities, towns and villages, and we are proud to continue to offer support to them. The supports provided through the Local Enterprise Offices have helped thousands of businesses to continue to trade and prepare to reopen their doors to the public.

One of the supports that saw a huge uptake over the past year has been the Trading Online Voucher Scheme, which enabled small businesses to set up an online presence while their physical doors were closed. Over 300 of these vouchers were issued in 2020 to local businesses.

Since the onset of Covid-19, your Local Enterprise Office has been working closely with small and medium businesses across Co. Kilkenny to support them with financial assistance, training and mentoring and consultancy support across all areas of their business.

**Did you know that every €10 spent in County Kilkenny generates more than €40 of benefit in your Local Community? Shopping locally supports jobs and businesses in your community and makes a positive environmental, economic and societal impact.**



Bridget Power, Belle Femme Lingerie, Kieran Street, Kilkenny ([bellefemmelingerie.ie](http://bellefemmelingerie.ie))



Pat Walsh Memorial at Dunnamaggin, Co. Kilkenny

# A Decade of Centenaries

Across the country, we are celebrating the Decade of Centenaries, commemorating key events from our history. In 2021, the Kilkenny County Council Decade of Centenaries Programme has been working to raise awareness and encourage engagement with the number of significant events and historical figures from Co. Kilkenny associated with the year 1921.

A number of projects were developed with Community groups through a publicly available grant scheme. Further projects were developed through our Heritage Office with support from the Arts Office and Library Service. Some of the projects supported in 2021 include:

- History Ireland Hedge School Podcast about the role of Kilkenny in our revolutionary era.
- TADA Theatre Group – “A Woman’s Culm” – a drama about 3 women and their relationship to their Collbawn Ambush
- Kevin Hughes/Wallslough Studios – “The Reburial of Jackie Brett” – a film about the accidental shooting of a member of the South Kilkenny Flying Column by a teenage boy in 1921

- South Kilkenny Historical Society – a series of 8 online lectures about the Decade of Centenaries in Kilkenny
- Kilkenny Archaeological Society – Digitisation of letters written in 1921 to the American Committee for Relief in Ireland
- KCLR and Kilkenny County Council – ‘The History Fix’ – 25 programmes about Kilkenny’s history and heritage, broadcast weekly.
- Callan Tidy Towns – New Callan Garden of Remembrance at the Fair Green
- Kilkenny County Council Library Service – 13 Podcasts about events in Kilkenny in 1921
- Kilkenny County Council – Friary St. Ambush commemoration
- Keep Kilkenny Beautiful – Signing of the Truce commemoration at The Closh

The Decade of Centenaries continues until 2023, and we’re very much looking forward to the projects, events, and remembrances still to come.

# Read all about it! Two new libraries for Kilkenny

Kilkenny County Council is delighted to announce that funding has been approved for two new libraries for the County.

Thomastown is set to benefit from funding of €2.5 million for a new library building and community facilities for the town. Additionally, the iconic Mayfair building in the Abbey Quarter of Kilkenny is to be transformed into the new City library with €4.9 m of funding secured. Our libraries are one of the most important services we deliver for you as a Council and the new facilities will be designed to be as open and accessible as possible.



Minister for Justice, Social Protection, Community and Rural Development and the Islands, Heather Humphreys, T.D. with Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Fidelis Doherty and Cllr. David Fitzgerald at the Mayfair site at Abbey Quarter, the future home for new library in Kilkenny City

# There’s more to our libraries than reading

Despite our doors being closed for much of the year, your local library team never stopped. Throughout 2021, we became flexible to continue delivering library services including Contact and Collect and Book and Browse. Our Door-to-Door delivery service to the over 65s also remains popular, with over 6,000 items delivered across the County. Our Door-to-Door service users also received our ‘Art of Writing’ stationary kits, to encourage people to stay connected through the art of letter writing.

We have also seen a huge increase in the popularity of the library’s online services including a range of eBooks, eMagazines and other services. A new library app was also launched in 2021, to provide an easy way for people to access online library services 24/7. Another digital initiative saw the library’s Age-Friendly Digital Ambassador Programme launched, where library staff provided 1-1 remote training to older people on how to use our online services.

Library staff continued to prepare content including online story times for kids, craft workshops, book recommendations and even book clubs. The ‘Dial a



Virtual story time with Majella Byrne at Graigueanamanagh Library

Story’ freephone number was also available for people to enjoy stories by local authors from the Loughboy and Thomastown Creative Writing Groups. Nearly 500 younger library members aged 3-5 received our ‘Sending a Smile’ postcard kit to design and send cards to their friends and family.

830 growing kits were distributed throughout Kilkenny under the Grow it Forward initiative in partnership with Grow It Yourself. The free growing kits contained 5 packs of seeds –

tomatoes, peas, carrots, oriental leaves and beetroot - and those who received the kits were asked to “Grow it Forward” by giving some seeds, seedlings or produce to another 10 people. The response was phenomenal as so many people have embraced the opportunity to get involved in growing their own vegetables at home.

We are delighted for our doors to be open again and to be welcoming our members back to their local library. We continued to improve our reading resources and selection of books. Call into your local public library to see all that is on offer!



Tom Kirwan from the Kilkenny mobile library

# Kilkenny woman is a national unsung hero

Kilkenny’s Civil Defence played a crucial role in the emergency response to the Covid-19 pandemic over the past 18 months. The Civil Defence is a volunteer service provided by Kilkenny County Council. We caught up with Katherine Peacock, Civil Defence Officer for Kilkenny, who recently won the Irish Pensions and Finance Public Service Unsung Hero Award.

“Typically, I’ll start the day by responding to emails and then I’d usually have something to organise, be that training, maintenance or planning for an event. I’m in and out of the unit so much throughout the day, there’s always someone to meet or something to organise. It’s really varied. I might have something planned for my day and in the middle of it get an emergency call out, so you really don’t know what to expect.”

Covid-19 changed the service provided by Kilkenny Civil Defence.

“We went from training and supporting planned events every week to supporting the HSE and Kilkenny County Council in their response to the pandemic. This included bringing people for tests or transferring Covid-19 patients to special HSE units. On top of that we delivered care packages and we ran a Covid-19 helpline. Sometimes we felt a bit like Ghostbusters on the helpline, so many calls came through that we didn’t know what to do with! People needed lightbulbs changed or tiles had blown off their roof. But the point wasn’t whether we could solve the issue, it was to be the eyes on the ground, to organise the support that they needed and just to reassure people.

“We’ve built amazing relationships with other organisations like the HSE, the Gardaí, Community Care services, Children’s services and nursing homes. It was a great opportunity to demonstrate what we can do, and hopefully continue to work collaboratively to serve the community in the future.”

Katherine wants to thank everyone who has supported Kilkenny Civil Defence over the past 18 months, particularly the many committed volunteers.



Kilkenny Civil Defence Officer, Katherine Peacock, with her Unsung Hero Award

“Kilkenny’s Civil Defence volunteers are amazing. They volunteered over 4,000 hours during the height of the Covid-19 period. At a time when everyone was staying at home to protect themselves, the Civil Defence volunteers stepped up and put themselves on the front line. That was incredible. Our volunteers were always here when we needed them.”

Volunteering gives people a sense of purpose and self-confidence. For Katherine the most rewarding aspect of her job, leading the Civil Defence, is seeing the volunteers develop and grow.

“It’s nice to know that you’re helping people and that you’ve made a difference. We met so many vulnerable members of the community during Covid. We called to check in on them and we still look out for many of them today. The relationships started out of necessity, because they needed a service from us, but they developed into so much more.”

Kilkenny Civil Defence has a strong base of volunteers, but there’s always turn-over. Katherine hopes to grow the County’s volunteer base further.

“If anyone is interested in joining the Civil Defence, I encourage them to contact me directly,” she says. “It’s quite a long process that requires a lot of time and training before

you can get started so definitely talk to us first, because it’s a really big commitment.”

Over the coming years Katherine hopes to introduce new initiatives to the service, like drones and more water-based disciplines. Kilkenny Civil Defence lost a lot of its equipment in a fire a number of years ago, so it has been rebuilding the service ever since.

Ultimately, Katherine says she hopes that Kilkenny Civil Defence remains an integral and valued service in the community.

Facebook: ‘Kilkenny Civil Defence’

Twitter: @KCCivilDefence

Interested in volunteering? Visit [www.civildefence.ie/join/](http://www.civildefence.ie/join/)



Civil Defence Volunteers delivering toys during the COVID-19 pandemic

# Enhancing Kilkenny’s fire and rescue service

The Kilkenny County Council Fire Service is continuing to grow and improve, with investment of more than €8 million planned for new fire stations and an additional fire engine.

A new fire station is to be constructed in Urlingford, incorporating state of the art new facilities and training capabilities. This new station will replace the current facility which has been in operation since the 1970s and is limited in its ability to cope with the demands of a modern Fire and Rescue service.

With plans for Urlingford Station progressing, the process of selecting a site for the development of a new fire station in Kilkenny City will progress, to ensure the provision of a cutting-edge service for the City and its environs long into the future.



Kilkenny Fire Service



Cllr. Andrew McGuinness, Mayor of Kilkenny with the Home Energy Saving Kits

## Acting on climate change

**Kilkenny County Council is committed to acting on Climate Change to support our people, ecosystems, environment and infrastructure.**

We have upgraded approximately 40% of the almost 11,000 public lights across Kilkenny to more energy efficient LED lights and we intend to continue with these upgrades to make sure our county is shining bright in a greener fashion!

We are also undertaking a deep retrofit of our older Council buildings to improve their energy efficiency and installing solar panels on Council buildings to produce renewable energy.

In addition to reducing our carbon footprint, we are working on an extensive tree planting programme to help capture and remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. We are also developing biodiversity friendly open spaces and

parcs, such as the development of a new Countryside & Biodiversity park at the disused landfill at Dunmore.

Another impact of climate change that many people in our County are unfortunately too familiar with is increased flooding. To reduce the risk that flooding poses to our county we are working to deliver a number of flood relief schemes, funded by the Office of Public Works, in our villages and towns.

We also want to help people to make behavioural changes and live more sustainable lifestyles. Home Energy Saving Kits are available to homeowners through our library branches, and we are also supporting several educational initiatives to promote reduction of waste, particularly food waste, and to encourage recycling and reduction of single use plastics.

## Relieving flooding

**A Flood Relief Capital Office was set up in 2019 by Kilkenny County Council, in collaboration with the OPW as the funding authority. A total of €29.8 million was approved for Kilkenny to implement six Schemes across the County over ten years. Towns earmarked for Flood Relief Schemes include Graigueanagh, Ballyhale, Freshford, Thomastown, Inistioge and Piltown.**

The project aims to identify, design, and build Flood Relief Schemes; that are technically, socially, environmentally, and economically acceptable; to alleviate flood risks to the communities of Graigueanagh, Tinnahinch and Ballyhale.

Work on the first Schemes commenced in March 2020 which sees over €9 million being invested in a Flood Relief Scheme in Graigueanagh and €430,000 in Ballyhale.

For Ballyhale, consultants have undertaken a series of studies to establish environmental and flood conditions. Their reports have determined the impact of flooding throughout the area, identified areas at risk and proposed potential suitable flood alleviation measures. These measures have been assessed in more detail in terms of cost, feasibility & environmental impact and an emerging preferred option has been identified. Public Consultation on the option selection was held online in August (see [www.consult.kilkenny.ie](http://www.consult.kilkenny.ie).) The Final Stage 1 Report will be completed later this year (2021). Once complete and approved a planning application will be made to An Bord Pleanála.

In March 2020, consultants were appointed to develop a Flood Relief Scheme for Graigueanagh & Tinnahinch. The project area includes the River Barrow, Duiske and tributaries. Kilkenny County Council is the lead authority for the project across Counties Kilkenny and Carlow.

Work completed to date includes environmental, underwater archaeology, topographical, and other surveys. The technically feasible options for the Scheme are being assessed and ranked to identify a preferred option. Site Investigation works are required to determine ground conditions for potential flood defence measures, and these are expected to be completed early in 2022. Potential flood mitigation measures will then be developed and presented for public consultation. Stage 1 of the Project is currently projected to be completed in April 2022. Stage 2 will involve making a planning application to An Bord Pleanála.



**Kilkenny County Council supported the One Million Stars project to raise awareness of Gender Based Violence. This is the first project of its kind in Ireland that is helping to raise vital funds for the Amber Women's Refuge to provide a range of supports to people suffering violence in the home. Donations can be made via [www.amberwomensrefuge.ie](http://www.amberwomensrefuge.ie)**

## Let's play

**Parks and playgrounds across the County are in excellent condition following an extensive programme of repairs and maintenance over the summer months.**

Repairs have recently been carried out to playgrounds in Thomastown, Garringreen, Paulstown, Graigueanagh and Windgap with new equipment added to Thomastown and Castlecomer. Funding for these replacement components was secured from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY).

A new playground opened in Piltown, on 29th August. The site, which is also home to a protected structure, is located on the Main Street behind the Garda Station and immediately adjacent to the River Pii. This playground was developed by the local community with assistance from the Parks Department and with funding from the Council's Community and Cultural Capital Facilities Scheme.



New playground at Piltown, Co. Kilkenny



Sensory area in Piltown's new playground

**Did you know?**

**Kilkenny County Council host three civic festivals each year: St. Patrick's Festival, Kilkenny Day and Yulefest. In addition, the Council supports other events through its Festivals and Events Grants Assistance Scheme.**



Before and after: Refurbished Basketball court at Thomastown Recreational Amenity



## Thomastown amenity a big hit

**A partnership approach between the local community and Kilkenny County Council resulted in a fantastic new recreational space in the centre of Thomastown for all the community to enjoy.**

Minister for Justice, Social Protection, Community and Rural Development and the Islands, Heather Humphreys T.D., and the Cathaoirleach of Kilkenny County Council, Cllr. Fidelis Doherty, opened the new outdoor multipurpose amenity in Thomastown.

The project involved enhancing the previously underutilised and derelict amenity area behind the town's Community

Centre. It included resurfacing existing run-down basketball and tennis courts, removing old fencing, landscaping and building an amphitheatre and seated area. LED lighting was installed over the courts and an outdoor accessible shelter was added to provide seating and picnic benches.

This wonderful new recreation park and outdoor leisure facility in the centre of Thomastown provides opportunities for active living and recreation for adults and older children and complements the existing children's playground. A hub of activity, the new outdoor space is being enjoyed by teenagers, children and adults alike to meet-up outdoors and play tennis, basketball and badminton.

The project was developed by Kilkenny County Council in partnership with recently established local volunteer group: Thomastown Community Recreational Area Group (TCRAG) and the Thomastown Community Centre. This state-of-the-art amenity secured €100,000 under the 2020 Town & Village Renewal Scheme. Kilkenny County Council delivered the Project and contributed funding towards the facility, with Kilkenny Leader Partnership.

A huge congratulations to all involved in delivering this great project for the people of Thomastown.

## ENGAGE WITH US

### Stay Connected

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### Social Media

We are widely available across social media for various departments.

- [f](#) @KilkennyCoCo
- [i](#) @kilkennycoco
- [t](#) @kilkennynotices
- [in](#) Invest Kilkenny
- [f](#) @kilkenny.ie
- [i](#) @eokilkenny
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**Register for Kilkenny Alerts** →

**Kilkenny County Council has a FREE text message and email alert service which issues alerts relating to water supply, weather warnings, road works, etc.**

**You can register by going to our website at [alerts.kilkennycoco.ie](http://alerts.kilkennycoco.ie) Registration requires that you supply your mobile number and email address so that Kilkenny Alerts can deliver alerts to you.**

### JOIN OUR ONLINE CONSULTATION PORTAL:

Using this site you can participate in public consultations. Use the Consultations at [consult.kilkenny.ie](http://consult.kilkenny.ie) to view or search for open and upcoming consultations.

Some consultations require you to register before you can make a submission. The registration process is a one-time process and your account can be used for all of the Council's online public consultations. This will enable you to record your submissions across multiple consultations and save the progress of partially completed submissions to complete at a later date.

Other than required by law, your personal information such as contact details collected as part of the consultation process is protected by data protection. They will remain confidential and will not be published or shared with third parties.



# Kilkenny County Council Elected Members

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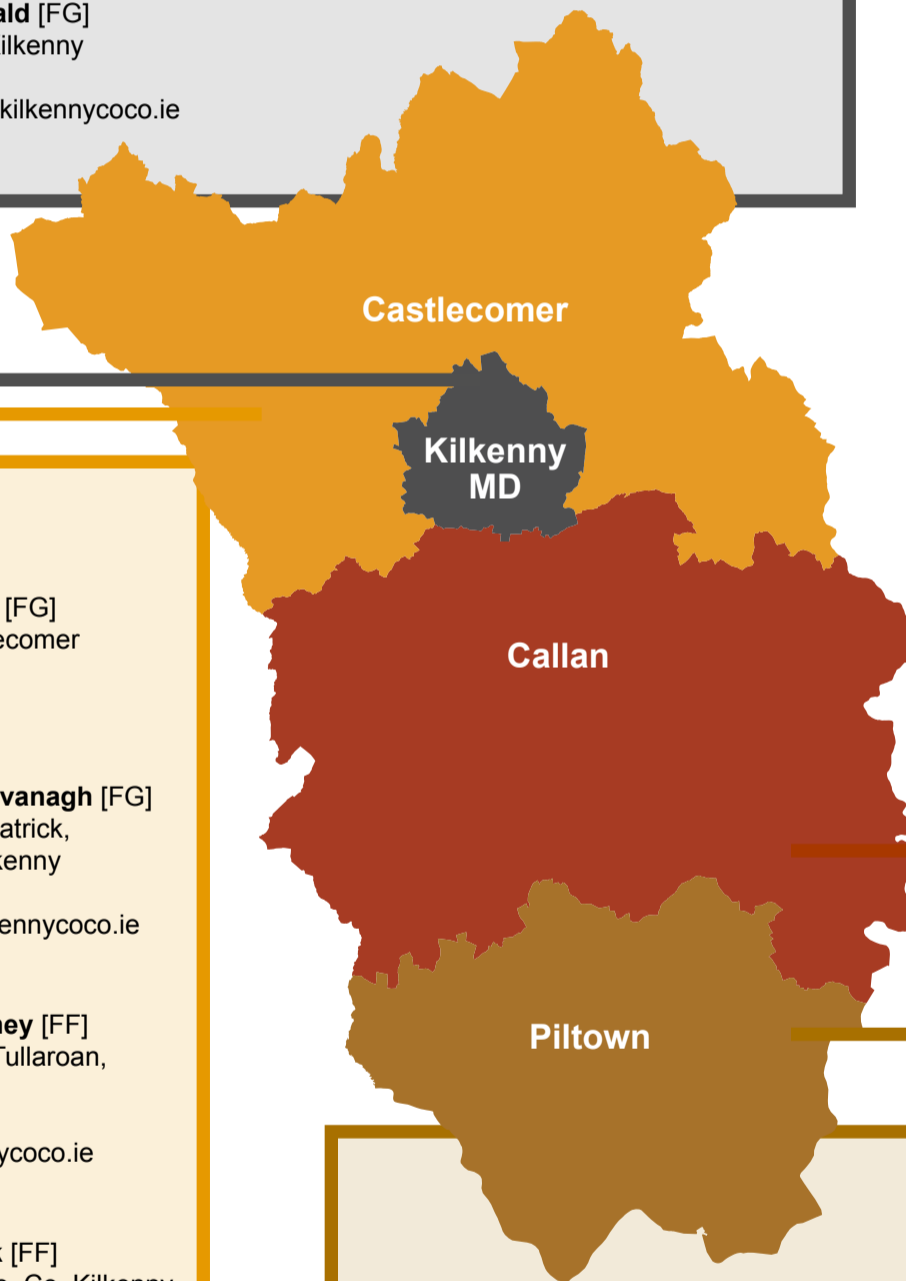
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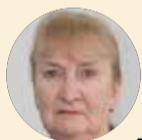
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## Castlecomer



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