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EDITORIAL

April, come she will. When streams are ripe and swelled with rain'. So goes the Paul Simon song.

It's been swelled with rain so far, but the optimists still predict a dry hot summer. We shall see!

Whatever the weather Little Village will be here to bring you the latest stories from your area.

Our readers like to hear about local history and local events so if you have stories to tell or upcoming events we would be delighted to share them on our widely distributed and well-read magazine.

Send by email to littlevillagenewsdesk@gmail.com

Kind Regards

Little Village



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LITTLE VILLAGE MAGAZINE

All correspondence should be addressed to:

Little Village Magazine, 11 Cherryhill Avenue, Kells, Co. Meath.
Creative Top Publishing Ltd. publishes Little Village Magazine.

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Kildare County Council Announces the Publication of the Draft Kildare Town Local Area Plan

Kildare County Council has announced the publication of the Draft Kildare Town Local Area Plan 2023-2029 for public Consultation.

This important Plan sets out the vision and overarching land use strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of Kildare Town over the lifetime of the Plan to 2029.

The Plan and supporting documents are available to download online at: <https://consult.kildarecoco.ie/en/browse>

Kildare County Council would like to take the opportunity to invite the public to have their say in relation to the future development of Kildare Town.

A 'drop-in' event will take place at Áras Bhríde, Bride Street, Kildare Town on Wednesday 19th April from 4pm to 8pm. Representatives from Kildare County Council will be available on the evening to answer queries in relation to the draft Plan and provide guidance on the consultation and plan-making process.

Submissions are invited from interested parties in relation to the draft Kildare Town Local Area Plan over the next 6 weeks, up to 4pm on Wednesday 3rd May 2023.



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Kildare Students Set for Croke Park Entrepreneurship Final

Local Enterprise Office, Kildare have announced that Caoimhe Lynch, Grace Donoghue, Lalita Geoghegan, Laura McLoughlin and Sienna Field from Slates & Co. at St. Wolstan's Community School, Celbridge will represent Kildare in the Senior Category at this year's Student Enterprise Programme National Finals on Friday 5th May, Croke Park.

In the "My Entrepreneurial Journey" category open to junior and intermediate students, Heidi Beary of Le Petit Hibou at Newbridge College will represent Kildare in the National Finals.

The students all took part in the Kildare Final

on Thursday 23rd March 2023, which was held at the Killashee Hotel, Naas. An estimated 1280 students from participating secondary schools across Kildare took part in the annual programme locally.

The enterprise education initiative, funded by the



Government of Ireland through Enterprise Ireland and delivered by the 31 Local Enterprise Offices in local authorities throughout the country, saw over 25,000 students from just under 500 secondary schools across the country take part in 2021 / 2022.

Since the Student Enterprise Programme began in 2003, over 350,000 students have taken part, learning key skills on how to create a business idea, start a business and grow a business, all with the hope of reaching the National Finals.

Special guests at the Kildare County Final included Gavin Lawler, CEO & Founder Innov8 Creative Academy and Co-Founder of The Irish Fairy Door Company, Deputy Martin Heydon TD, Leas Cathaoirleach of the County of Kildare Joe Neville along with Kildare County Council Elected Representatives Anne Breen and Anne Connolly.

Speaking at the county final, Jacqui McNabb, Head of Enterprise of Kildare County Council's Enterprise Office congratulated the students, saying "We have a very successful student enterprise programme here in County Kildare, with over 1200 students from 16 local schools taking part this year. Our national finalists are excellent

ambassadors for the programme and we wish them the very best of luck on Friday 5th, and we will all hope to be there to support them. In what has been a particularly challenging couple of years for students the programme has offered them an outlet outside of the usual school demands. What our students are learning from the programme is that with the right supports and encouragement, they can take an idea from the classroom and develop it into a real-life business. The skills they learn along the way, such as business planning, market research, selling and team-work, will help them become more entrepreneurial throughout their future careers".

Further information around the Student Enterprise Programme and to view the new range of online resources for 2022/2023, which will feature regular blogs and houses a full range of Student Enterprise resources for students and teachers, is available from www.studententerprise.ie and by searching #studententerprise on social media.

Kildare County Council announces 2023 Commercial Incentive Grant Scheme

Kildare County Council has today opened applications for the Commercial Incentive Grant Scheme for 2023



The scheme, which aims to encourage reoccupation of vacant commercial premises in Kildare, offers a three-year grant to eligible entrepreneurs/businesses who occupy a property that has been vacant for a period of at least two years.

An attractive, vibrant commercial area contributes positively to a location's retail and economic growth, by boosting footfall and encouraging a longer stay by shoppers and visitors.

This scheme, which will complement the highly successful Shop Fronts Grants Scheme already available through Kildare, aims to promote business creation, enhance the prosperity of our commercial spaces and improve the economic welfare of Kildare's towns and villages.

Further details and the on-line application form can be accessed through Kildare County Council's website on <https://kildare.ie/countycouncil/YourCouncil/Finance/CommercialRates/>.

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Kildare County Council Launches Celbridge as an Age Friendly Town

Kildare County Council was delighted to officially launch Celbridge as an Age Friendly Town this week. An Age Friendly Town is one in which older people are actively involved in social, economic and cultural life and in creating a better local environment, to everybody's benefit. Age Friendly Towns respond to what the older community needs.

The local community in Celbridge has worked with Kildare County Council, and the Kildare Regional Age Friendly Programme to achieve this Age Friendly status. The main street in Celbridge is now fully accessible, safer, and more pleasurable for older people in the town.

Older people can walk safely, park their cars in the designated Age Friendly parking space, shop, socialise and rest of any one of the new Age Friendly seats that have been installed in the town. The community in Celbridge is delighted to receive the national status of Age Friendly from Age Friendly Ireland. Celbridge is one of many Age Friendly projects in Kildare.



Wordsearch

Crookstown	Celbridge
Johnstown	Rathmore
Leixlip	Maynooth
Kilkea	Lucan
Athgarvan	Athy
Ladytown	Kill
Naas	
Sallins	

(Answers on Next Page)

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C U K L B D P H P Z G U C K G
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Newly open Celbridge Link Road to help relieve local traffic congestion

Fine Gael TD for Dublin Mid West, Deputy Emer Higgins, has welcomed the much-anticipated opening of the Celbridge link road which is set to relieve traffic congestion in the area by providing an alternative route to the N4.

Deputy Higgins said: “We’ve all been waiting for the opening of the Celbridge Link Road to help alleviate traffic congestion in Lucan.

“This new route was funded through an overall allocation of over €10m from Government for parks and roads in Adamstown.

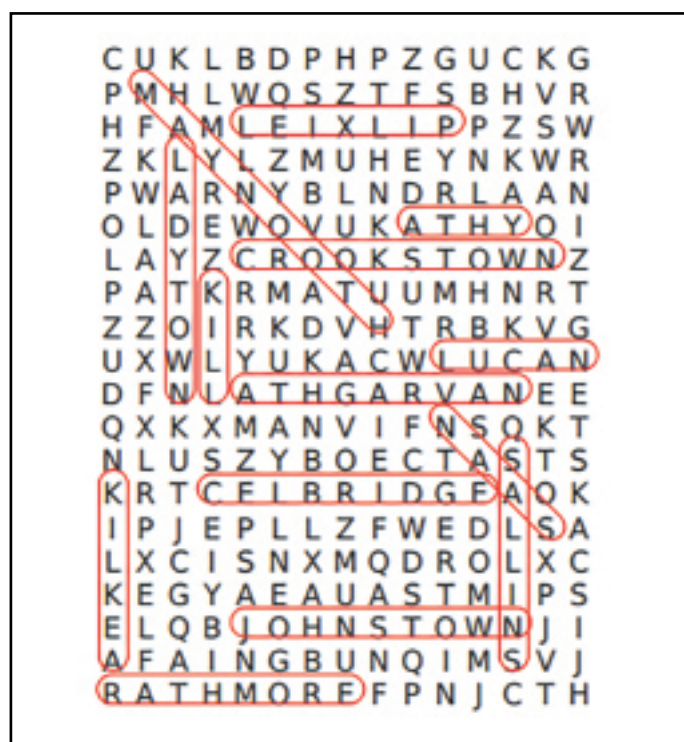
“It will offer an alternative route to the N4 which

many commuters may opt to use which in turn will reduce pressure on places like Dodsboro and the Newcastle Road.

“The road was due to open before Christmas but hit a couple of construction issues and it’s great to have it now available for use by local residents and commuters,” concluded Deputy Higgins

Wordsearch Answers

Crookstown	Celbridge
Johnstown	Rathmore
Leixlip	Maynooth
Kilkea	Lucan
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Minister O'Gorman publishes Spotlight report on Young People's Participation in Youth Organisations

Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Roderic O'Gorman, has today (28 February 2023) published a report, which collates available data on young people's participation in youth organisations.

Speaking about this report, Minister O'Gorman said "We know that participation in youth services is one of the key ways to enable young people to overcome adverse circumstances, and achieve their full potential, by strengthening their personal and social competencies. Today's report provides us with key data on young people's participation in youth organisations based on factors such as financial situation, housing tenure and disability, that will inform the ongoing implementation of youth-related policies and strategies. It also helps us track how we compare with our European Union neighbours and I am happy to note that young

people's participation in youth organisations in Ireland over the last decade has remained relatively high compared to European averages."

This report on Young People's Participation in Youth Organisations is the ninth report in a series of Statistical Spotlights. These Spotlight publications are topical in nature and of interest to both specialist and general readers. The data is sourced from European surveys and from Growing Up in Ireland, the national longitudinal study on children and young people.

Some of the key findings from the report are:

Young people's participation in youth organisations in Ireland

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€499 to €699
 (40 yards)
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over the last decade has remained relatively high compared to European averages.

In 2021, 23% of 16-30-year-olds in Ireland reported having ever joined a youth organisation, compared to 14% in the EU27 as a whole.

In Ireland and the EU27, males and females had similar rates of participation in youth organisations, with participation slightly higher for males than females in 2021, the most recent survey year.

In both Ireland and the EU27, younger people (15-19-year-olds) had higher percentages of participation in youth organisations than those who were older (20-30-year-olds).

In both Ireland and the EU27, young people who were still studying had higher percentages of participation in youth organisations than those whose education had ceased.

In the EU27, a higher percentage of self-employed respondents reported that they had ever joined a youth organisation compared to other groups of respondents – employee, manual worker, or not working.

The percentage of 15-30-year-olds in Ireland who participated in a youth organisation was highest for respondents living in small/ mid-size towns when compared to those living in rural villages or

large towns.

In Ireland, where the household financial situation was categorised as “not enough money for basic bills”, a higher percentage of respondents reported that they had ever joined a youth organisation compared to those in other household financial situations.

In the EU27, the percentage of 16-30-year-olds who had ever joined a youth organisation was significantly higher among respondents who speak more than one European language than among those who speak only one or none.

From young people in the “Growing Up in Ireland” study:

More 13-year-old females (36%) participated in youth clubs compared to males (32%). 17/18-year-old and 20-year-old males and females reported similar levels of participation in youth clubs.

Children from households with lower annual incomes reported more participation in youth clubs than children from households with higher annual incomes.

Young people's participation in youth clubs was greater for those living in rented housing than those living in owned housing.

More 17-year-olds and 20-year-olds with no disability participated in youth clubs compared to those with a disability.



INCREASED NATIONAL CHILDCARE SCHEME SUBSIDIES

Since January, subsidies under the National Childcare Scheme increased to €1.40 per hour of childcare, per child. This is an increase of 90c on the previous rate and means that parents using full-time registered early learning and childcare services will benefit from an average 25% reduction in their childcare costs.

Welcoming the increased subsidies under the National Childcare Scheme, Minister Roderic O’Gorman said:

“Since being appointed Minister for Children, I made clear my intention to make childcare more affordable for parents, and with this increase in the National Childcare Scheme subsidy, due to the additional €121m I secured in Budget 2023, I am delivering on that promise.

This week, I announced that more than 105,000 children, and their families, are benefitting from the National Childcare Scheme – an increase of 95%

compared to this time last year. I’m delighted that the increased subsidies have led to a huge growth in demand for the NCS, meaning more parents than ever are getting more affordable childcare.

I’ve spoken to a number of parents across the constituency who have told me how beneficial these increased savings on childcare are for them and their family. Many parents who felt they had to choose between childcare and returning to work have said that they now feel that they can do both. I want to continue supporting families with children, and will be working within Government on how we can bring even further affordability for parents in future budgets.”



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MINISTER O'GORMAN LAUNCHES PARENT AND TODDLER GROUP GRANTS INITIATIVE 2023

Minister for Children, Disability, Equality, Integration and Youth, Roderic O'Gorman, today launched the Parent and Toddler Group Grants Initiative 2023. The Minister has secured funding of €250,000, which will be allocated to Parent and Toddler Groups nationwide through local City/County Childcare Committees (CCCs). From today, Parent and Toddler Groups are invited to make an application for funding under this Initiative through their local CCC.

This year the emphasis will be on supporting Parent and Toddler Groups that offer a welcome to families who are newly arrived in Ireland.

Following from the success of the additional

funding streams in last year's Initiative, the Parent and Toddler Group Grants Initiative 2023 will again offer three streams of funding:

1. Funding of €800 for existing groups and €1,100 for the establishment of new groups.
2. Funding of up to €300 is available to establish

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and operate Buggy Walking Groups. These Buggy Walking Groups are organised social walks for parents/guardians and young children. The grant is open to any existing or new organisations or groups who wish to offer a minimum of six organised walks within their community

3. Additional funding of up to €300 is available for new or existing Parent and Toddler Groups to provide a second session to meet demand.

Conditions apply and the CCCs are available to discuss requirements with new and existing groups.

In announcing this year's Parent and Toddler Grant

Minister O'Gorman said:

"Parent and Toddler Groups provide a great meeting place for parents/guardians with young children to relax and chat together in a supportive environment while their children play. I want to thank all the groups that are offering a welcome and friendship to parents and children in their

communities as well as those newly arrived to Ireland. I am delighted to be able to support this work."

Groups, including many Family Resource Centres across the country, have opened their doors to families from Ukraine. Kenmare Family Resource Centre runs a weekly successful and inclusive Parent and Toddler Group.

Máire Ui Leime the Centre's coordinator shared some feedback from Ukrainian parents using the group:

"Ukrainian parents have told me that they find it great to come to the Parent and Toddler Group as it is so welcoming and they can either sit quietly or take part.

"We can forget the war'; 'we can leave our troubles outside the door' and 'it is great to hear the children laughing while playing with other children' are some of the other positive comments."



Much Needed New Housing and Community Centre Progress Welcomed

Sinn Féin Councillor for Lucan-Palmerstown-Balgaddy & North Clondalkin, Derren Ó Brádaigh, has welcomed the progress underway that will now see the delivery of some long-awaited social housing and a new community centre to be located in the heart of Balgaddy.

Cllr Ó Brádaigh said; “Whilst early ground works commenced in January of this year, on site work is now steadily progressing with actual construction soon to begin and ahead of next week’s sod turning ceremony. The project will deliver 69 units, comprising of a mix of one-, two- and three-bedroom properties. The housing crisis is particularly acute in Dublin Mid-West and these council-built properties will provide desperately needed homes for some families. With the contractor already on site and the construction period approximately 20 months in total, the completion date is expected for August 2024.

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“The development will include a badly needed community centre, long sought after by local people and resident groups working and advocating on the needs for greater amenities in the area. Down the years Sinn Féin have worked in support of the residents of Balgaddy and indeed the wider community, to help bring about an improvement in existing living conditions and a better living environment. This has involved working directly with the council’s housing and community department to help better inform and deliver upon this overdue project.

“As with the development of any new community facility, it is essential that the council community team engage with residents and community groups to undertake local consultation and to provide a full analysis of community needs in advance of facility usage planning. It is expected that consultation will take place in advance of, and during the early construction of the community centre.

“The existing estate of Balgaddy was built 16 years ago and quickly became a forgotten community,

following the emergence of a litany of structural defects that have continued to blight homes to this day. Progress to address long awaited remedial works, some of the more challenging roof repairs, insulation, electrical and plumbing repairs has been painstakingly slow, but with some results finally beginning to unveil. Initiatives such as the ‘Better Blocks’ project last year, seeking to empower communities was hugely welcome and need to be broadened out.

“With this new development and extension of Balgaddy finally off the ground, hopefully this will help focus minds further in addressing all the existing challenges and issues faced by residents daily, and equipping the needs of the community both now and into the future through the provision of adequate services, amenities and investment.”



Kildare County Council Signs Declaration on Public Service Innovation

Pledging commitment to supporting new ways of delivering services

Kildare County Council is pleased to partner with the One Town One Voice initiative in establishing a multicultural singing group to reflect cultural diversity in Kildare town.

Kildare County Council has signed the Declaration on Public Service Innovation in Ireland, declaring continued commitment to embracing innovation as one of the ways that we can achieve our goals and deliver effective public services for our citizens.

Embracing innovation within Kildare County Council is about finding new or different ways of delivering services that can add value to the people of Kildare, including designing services to be more effective, accessible and simpler.

The six key actions of the declaration are to:

- Further endorse innovation as the responsibility of every public servant
- Enable, support, inform and equip our public servants to innovate in their roles
- Cultivate new partnerships and involve diverse views in problem-solving and designing and delivering our public services
- Generate multiple options for existing and potential problems through exploration, experimentation, iteration and testing

- Provide insights into our experiences, best practices and lessons learned with other public servants in Ireland and abroad
- Share knowledge and data with citizens in an open and transparent way

By opting to sign the Declaration, Kildare County Council is pledging continued commitment to supporting our staff to innovate in their everyday roles, cultivate new partnerships, share best practice and include diverse views when designing and delivering services.

Speaking at the signing of the Innovation Declaration, Kildare County Council Chief Executive, Sonya Kavanagh, said: "I am delighted to sign this declaration which reaffirms our commitment to realise new ways of working that deliver effective public services for the people of Kildare." "Recent events remind us that we are often required to pivot dramatically and quickly change how we serve our public. We have demonstrated our resilience, commitment and willingness to innovate in responding to these unprecedented and complex challenges. We will continue to innovate, to adapt, be creative and collaborate to deliver high quality services for all our stakeholders."

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KILDARE PRIDE OF PREMISES *Awards* 2023

Kildare County Council to Host Pride of Premises Awards

Kildare County Council is delighted once again to host the Kildare Pride of Premises Awards. The awards will be presented to winners on Tuesday 28th March in the MERITS Building adjacent to Aras Chill Dara, Naas, Co. Kildare.

The Kildare Pride of Premises Awards recognises the efforts business owners across the county have made in enhancing their shop front and streetscapes using Kildare County Council's Retail Support Schemes. Through the Shopfront, Accessibility & Age Friendly Grant Scheme and the Retail Window Merchandising schemes businesses across Kildare have been awarded funding to carry out works that have improved the appearance of their shop fronts or commercial properties.

In launching the Awards, the Cathaoirleach of the County of Kildare, Cllr Fintan Brett, stated "Kildare County Council established the Shop Front/Town Centre Improvement Grant Scheme to financially assist and support independent business owners to improve the appearance of their shopfronts/commercial properties. Shopfronts help form people's first impressions of a town centre, so their condition can really affect a town's image. Smart shopfronts make a town feel more prosperous, improve its image and contribute towards a stronger sense of identity and good accessibility provides equality for all citizens.

The awards are an excellent opportunity to recognise the efforts of the business community to promote and develop an enhanced customer experience."

Speaking about the initiative, Jacqui McNabb Head of Enterprise and Economic Development, Kildare County Council said "we are delighted to host these awards once again for the business community of county Kildare. The funding from these schemes has been directly invested in improving the streetscape and appearance of the towns and villages in Kildare. We have assembled an excellent panel of judges that have considerable expertise in retail, heritage and design who will shortlist the finalists across the various categories."

The award categories include:

- Best Shop Fronts,
- Retail Window, and
- Accessibility

Kildare County Council is also delighted to announce the opening of the 2023 Retail Support Schemes, expressions of interest can be made through our website: <https://www.localenterprise.ie/Kildare/Enterprise-Development/Shop-Front-Improvement-Scheme/>

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Kildare County Council invites singers to join ‘One Voice Singers - Kildare’

Kildare County Council is pleased to partner with the One Town One Voice initiative in establishing a multicultural singing group to reflect cultural diversity in Kildare town.

The One Town One Voice initiative seeks to establish secular community singing groups made up of Irish people and those who have moved to towns in Kildare from other countries in recent years.

‘The One Voice Singers - Kildare’ aims to be a true community group, led by members of the community, in partnership with the community. The goal is to enable and encourage connections between people who might otherwise not meet or would not feel part of the same community, and then to help those connections flourish, all while having great musical fun!

The singing group is open to all (no audition required!) and seeking a diverse membership that reflects the beautiful cultural diversity of Kildare Town (ages 18+).

The group will meet on Monday nights from 7:30-8:30pm starting April 17th, at Kildare Community Development Centre, Meadow Road, Kildare Town. The first night will kick off with some singing and an info session, with plenty of singing and socialising in the weeks to follow.

Anyone interested in singing alongside your fellow community members can via the online registration form – Register at https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScq-UfGe3hhI5ZnIH0G0HaF1NlFv_fxpKq9RDpBCRZ6G4FBgg/viewform or come along on the night.

The group is seeking a Musical Lead, as well as community volunteers interested in helping organisationally or with member recruitment. If you are interested, please contact Carmel Cashin at ccashin@kildarecoco.ie or phone 087 721 2966.

Childcare Services Must Become a Priority in Growing West Dublin Suburb

A Dublin Mid-West Sinn Féin councillor has expressed alarm at the inadequate level of childcare services to meet the needs of families in rapidly expanding parts of the constituency.


Councillor Derren Ó Brádaigh said; “Whilst population continues to grow amid ongoing development in West Lucan, we are not seeing the arrival of essential childcare services to meet demand in real time. I see childcare services as a public service for both children and parents. When it works, a State’s childcare system can be a huge employer; help with health and mental development of our smallest children; facilitate parents, especially women, to access the workforce and be a positive component of economic growth.

“We know that South Dublin’s population grew above the national average in both the 2016 and 2022 census counts and is now at 300,000, with close to 60,000 people in Lucan alone. We also know that national and regional plans project a further 50,000 people to live in South Dublin by 2031, and a significant number of these families will take up residency within the strategic development zones of Adamstown and Clonburris.

“Accessible and affordable childcare is a huge issue in many parts of Ireland but has become particularly acute in Lucan now. The limited number of creche facilities are in most instances akin to the cost of a second mortgage, without any availability, even if parents can afford them. At a local area committee meeting last year, I learned that the community team in South Dublin County Council have recently consulted with their planning colleagues to confirm the model used for creche planning. The standards for creches are set out within Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities June 2001 published by the Department. These standards are reflected in the County Development Plan and seek one childcare facility with a minimum of 20 places for each 75 units for new residential development. The reality on the ground and in the community falls far short of anything even near this criterion.


“It is vital that we begin to see new public creche facilities in tandem with the arrival of any further development, that so many young ordinary working parents and families in Lucan now so badly need. Ultimately, I believe we need to invest considerably more in childcare, and early years learning needs to become an essential public service – we should be looking at pre-school and early education being free along the same model as primary school, and when secondary school moved this way in the 1960’s. Our children are the next generation and represent the

future. It is up to us just what kind of society we wish to see – one restricted by poor services, accessibility and for only those that can afford, or one that will enable entire families to flourish and give back.”

**Sinn Féin**

Cllr
Derren Ó Brádaigh

Lucan-Palmerstown
Nth Clondalkin
Balgaddy-Fonthill



Phone: 087 213 6345
Email: dobraidaigh@cllr.s.dublincoco.ie
Clondalkin Civic Offices, Clondalkin, Dublin 22



RENEWED CALL FOR PROPERTIES IN KILDARE TO HOUSE PEOPLE FROM UKRAINE

1500 homes offered nationally so far

Kildare County Council is renewing a call out to those who have unoccupied properties across the county to offer them as temporary homes for those fleeing war in Ukraine.

'Offer a Home' is part of a government initiative, led by local authorities, to make use of unoccupied houses, apartments or holiday homes to house

Ukrainian people and families.

A tax-free recognition payment of €800 per month is available for properties used to house those arriving from Ukraine. More than 70,000 people have arrived to Ireland from Ukraine seeking safety and the vast majority need accommodation.

Under the 'Offer a Home' programme, Kildare County Council will take offers of houses, apartments



or holiday homes for temporary accommodation, liaise with owners to assess suitability, and arrange for their use by Ukrainian individuals and families.

Property owners can offer homes at gov.ie/offerahome or by contacting the local authority in which the property is located. For properties in Kildare, Kildare County Council can be contacted via email at offerahome@kildarecoco.ie

Those who offer a property can expect to be contacted by the local authority within 5 working days of making their offer and an assessment of the property will be carried out by the local authority shortly after. The assessment is to ensure the property is habitable and to get some details so it can be matched to the most appropriate person or family.

Anybody who offers a property will be able to check the status of their offer at any stage through the website www.gov.ie/offerahome

This is a call for stand-alone properties that are not occupied by others. Properties should be in liveable condition and, ideally, available for at least 6 months. While rent will not be payable to those who offer properties, a tax-free recognition payment of €800 per month is available from the Department of Social Protection to those who offer accommodation to Ukrainians.

The Offer a Home programme began in late November last year and to date, more than 1500 offers have been made to local authorities nationally.

Appealing to the people of Kildare to offer unused properties, Kildare County Council said:

“The welcome that Irish people have shown to those arriving from Ukraine has been exceptional, and we are so thankful to those who have already offered homes. We know that people are keen to help where they can so we’re appealing to anybody who has a suitable property and hasn’t been able to offer it before now to please consider getting in touch with us to find out what is involved.

“We understand that it can be daunting to offer a property to someone you don’t know. That is why local authorities will work with you throughout the process and be there to offer support while your property is being used.

“If you have a property that is otherwise going to be empty over the coming months, please consider offering it for those who badly need a safe home for a while.”

To offer a property or for more information, visit www.gov.ie/offerahome

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Affordable Housing

Kildare County Council has issued Advance Notice of a new Affordable Housing Scheme. The Local Authority Affordable Housing Purchase Scheme aims to help people on moderate incomes to buy new homes at reduced prices.

In the coming months, Kildare County Council intends to make new homes available for purchase in Kildare under the Local Authority Affordable Housing Purchase Scheme. In return, Kildare County Council will take a percentage equity interest in the home that covers the reduction in price.

The scheme is aimed at first-time buyers, but there are some exceptions for fresh start applicants.

You are a first-time buyer if:

- You have not previously bought or built a property to live in
- You do not own or have an interest in any property in Ireland or abroad

You are a fresh start applicant if:

- You previously owned a home, but you no longer have a financial interest in it because:
- You are now divorced, separated, or your relationship has ended

- You have gone through personal insolvency or bankruptcy

Eligible applicants are encouraged to take the time during this advance notice period to familiarise themselves with the application process and documentation, such as Mortgage Approval in Principle are advised. A minimum deposit of 10% of the purchase price of the property will also be required.

An online application system will be available as each affordable housing scheme is launched, meaning, there is no general application form or waiting list.

Eligible applicants can use the Local Authority Home Loan or a mortgage from any private lending institution, to finance their purchase.

A full list of required documentation and eligibility criteria are available at Affordable Housing – Kildare County Council (kildarecoco.ie).

All queries can be sent via email to affordablehousing@kildarecoco.ie

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RETROFITTING YOUR HOME

What is a Retrofitting?

A whole house energy retrofit involves carrying out several energy upgrade measures in one installation to achieve a warmer, more comfortable, energy efficient home with a BER rating of between B2 and A1.

Home energy upgrade looks at the overall effect of a combination of energy measures, which are designed in such a way that they work together successfully. The retrofit is done once, and it is done right and starts with an assessment of your home's current energy performance. The next steps are:

Renewable Energy Heat Pump

An air source heat pump is a tried and trusted renewable technology that extracts energy from the air outside, even in temperatures of -20 degrees, which is converted to heat and distributed throughout your home and fills your hot water cylinder.

Insulation

We measure the u-Value of every element of your building fabric – walls, floor, attic, windows, and doors – to ensure that the overall thermal performance meets minimum standard. If this falls short, several insulation measures are available – wall insulation, roof insulation, floor insulation, window, and door upgrades.

Airtightness

Insulation will seal the house from a thermal point of view, but unwanted draughts can undo much of the hard work and expense of this insulation upgrade. A leaky house, particularly in the winter months, means cold spots and higher bills. An airtightness test will confirm if the retrofit is meeting required standards.

Ventilation

A well-ventilated home is a healthy home. The purpose of sealing a draughty house is not to stop the exchange of fresh air but rather to control it. There are two distinct options – demand-controlled ventilation and mechanical heat recovery – and the choice of which to install depends on the home and budget. Both systems provide fresh air and moisture control to kitchens and bathrooms, as well as neutralising many unwanted odours.

What does it cost?

Costs range from €25,000 for a typical house built since 2000 to €75,000 or more for older, larger, or more complex homes. It's a significant investment so an SEAI grant is available to support you to do this. This can reduce the cost by more than €25,000.



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NEW FULLY ACCESSIBLE 'CHANGING PLACES' FACILITY OPENS IN NEWBRIDGE

Second Facility Installed by Kildare County Council

Kildare County Council has today opened a second fully accessible 'Changing Places' facility for people with complex disabilities. Located in Newbridge Sports Centre, Station Road, Newbridge, the facility includes many features and additional equipment making it more accessible than the standard accessible toilets we are all familiar with.

Newbridge is the location of the second Changing Places facility to be opened by Kildare County Council following the launch of the facility in the Council Offices, Devoy Park, Naas last year.

Disabled accessible toilets often do not meet the needs of all people with complex disabilities. For example, individuals with conditions such as cerebral palsy, spina bifida, multiple sclerosis, and older people with physical disabilities may need extra equipment facilities to enable them to use the toilet, maximising independence, and comfort. Sadly, many people with disabilities are often faced with the indignity and unhygienic option of being changed on the floor of a public toilet as the correct facilities are not available in public places.

The Changing Places facility addresses these issues as it provides 12m² of floor space and includes both a full room coverage ceiling track hoist, a centrally located toilet bowl with space

either side for transfers or assistants, and a height-adjustable adult sized changing bench.

Changing Places facilities are designed to enhance the health, safety, comfort, and dignity of someone who may need extra support and additional equipment during personal care tasks. Changing Places facilities also offer added safety and support features for assistants.

Speaking at the opening of the new facility, Michael Hurley, Access Officer, Kildare County Council said; "I am incredibly excited about the opening of this new state of the art public service facility for people with disabilities and additional physical needs. This new facility represents another significant step forward and is a positive contribution to the full inclusion, equality, and rights of disabled people within our community.

Aisling McNiffe, Changing Places Ireland said; "We are delighted to see that Newbridge Sports Centre have installed a changing places toilet. It will open up the world for many people with



disabilities. Accessibility and inclusion are vital. To be able to access a bathroom suitable for your individual needs is a basic human right. So many people have been excluded from society because of the lack of a changing places toilet. Thanks to Michael Hurley & Kildare County Council for their commitment to date.”

Speaking about her own family’s experience, Aisling added; “I am writing this on behalf of my son Jack who has an intellectual & physical disability. He does not get to participate in the world as most of us do, he is restricted by his mobility and always has been. He is nearing 18 years old and I hope the future will be brighter for him & his friends. He deserves to be able to access the world just as the majority of us do. He deals with so much on a day-to-day basis & something as basic as an appropriate toilet/ bathroom would change his life. This is a human rights issue. We need to give children & adults like my son respect and dignity.

Providing an appropriate bathroom is just the start.”

The Changing Places facility in Newbridge Sports Centre is now open to the public and is the second in a series of 3 planned facilities with another one planned for the new library in Naas.





KILDARE BREWING COMPANY WINS COUNTY ENTERPRISE AWARD

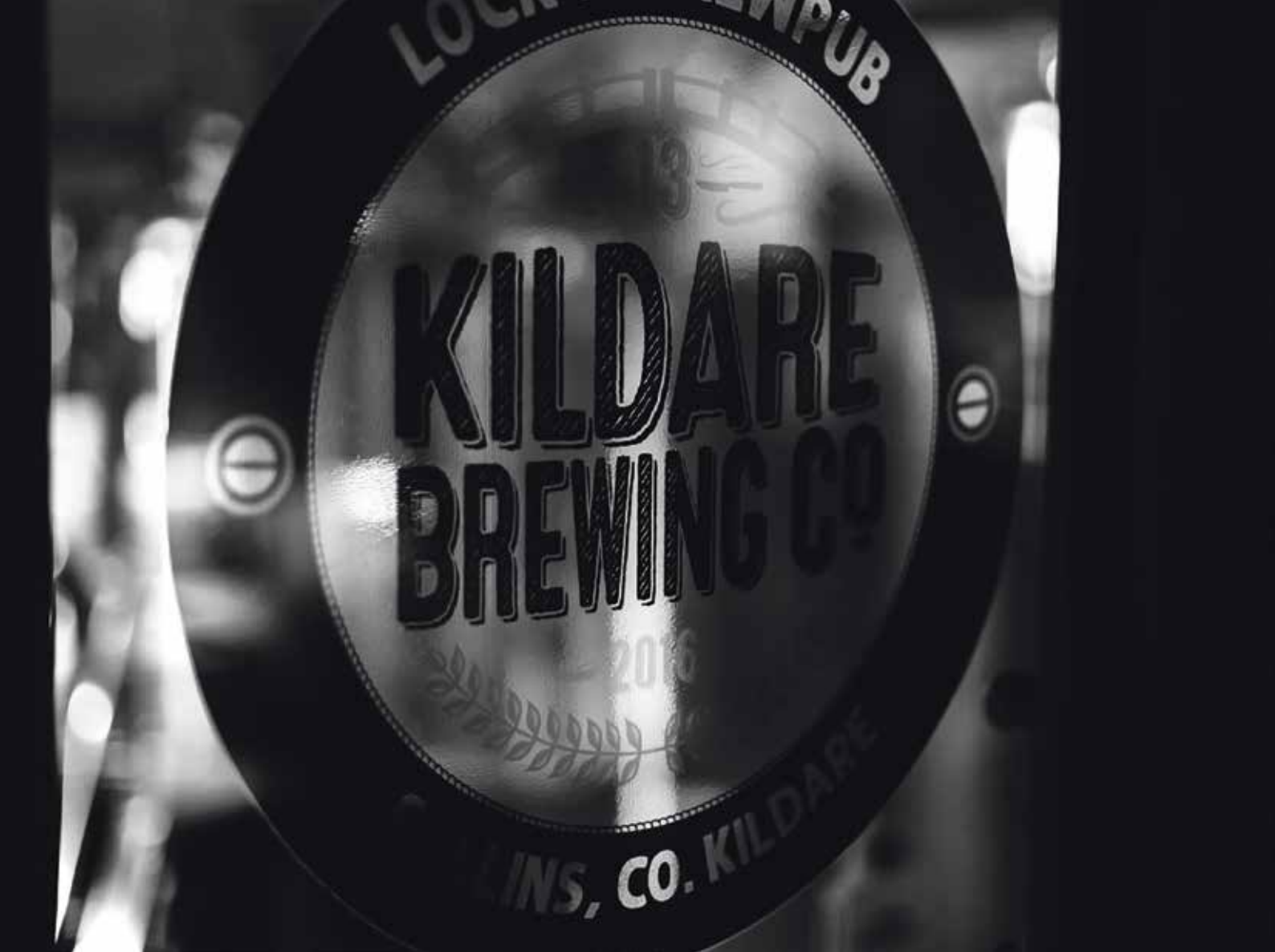
Successful Local Enterprise Week for Kildare

A renowned and innovative brewer from Sallins is this year's winner of the Kildare Enterprise Award for 2023, Local Enterprise Office Kildare has announced.

Barry Flannagan, Kildare Brewing Company will now represent Local Enterprise Office Kildare at the

23rd National Enterprise Awards at the Round Room in Dublin on the 1st June.

Having started Kildare Brewing Company and created Kildare's first ever Brewpub based at Lock 13, Sallins, Barry identified an opportunity to review his product offering as consumer trends moved increasingly towards healthy and non-alcoholic



beverages.

ProKulture Organic Kombucha was initially brewed onsite in Kildare Brewing Company but now has its own 4,000L bespoke brewery in Naas. It is one of four kombucha breweries in Ireland, brewed with 100% Organic ingredients.

Kildare Brewing Company will now be competing against 30 other finalists from every local authority area for a share of the €35,000 prize fund as national judging gets underway in May. Categories this year include 'Best Export Business,' 'Best Start-Up' and 'Innovation,' along with "One to Watch" and a "Sustainability / Green" award in addition to eight regional awards.

Kildare has a successful track record at the National Enterprise Awards, winning the national title in 2019 for the second year running. Pestle & Mortar, a global skincare company from Newbridge won the top prize in 2019, and Terra NutriTech of Athy won the top prize in 2018.

This announcement comes as part of Local Enterprise Week programme of events running

from March 6th to 10th. Local Enterprise Week is organised every year by the Local Enterprise Offices and supported by Enterprise Ireland, local authorities and the Government of Ireland with over 300 events taking place nationwide this year.

Speaking during Local Enterprise Week Jacqui McNabb, Head of Enterprise and Economic Development, Kildare County Council said: "We are extremely proud of the ambition and commitment to diversification deployed by Barry and his team. A commitment to sustainability was one of the key drivers for this brewing pivot. Supported by the Local Enterprise Office's Green for Micro Programme, Barry found that brewing kombucha used significantly less water than to brew beer. His market traction and success on the shelves of Aldi make Kildare Brewing Company a strong competitor for the National Enterprise Awards."

Business owners keen to look at sustainability issues or diversification in their business should engage with the Local Enterprise Office via localenterprise@kildarecoco.ie / 045 980 838

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