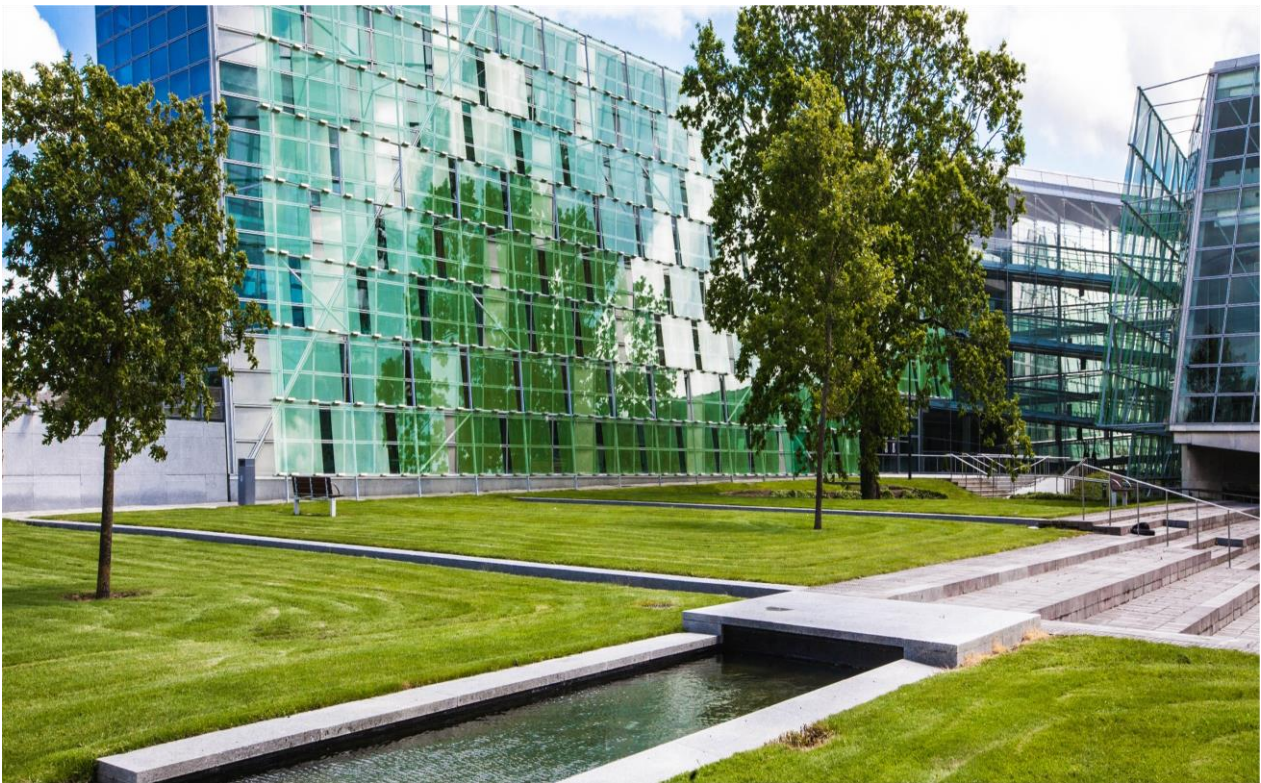




Kildare County Council

Chief Executive’s Management Report – January 2024





News Items

Kildare County Council Publishes 2023 Gender Pay Gap Report

Kildare County Council has published its Gender Pay Gap Report for 2023, highlighting the percentage difference between what men and women are paid on average in the organization, irrespective of roles or levels (see page 8).

LPT

The tracking of LPT allocations by the Municipal District's will be transferring from the current LPT co-ordinators to the Executive Suite from 2024 (see page 9).

Municipal Art Collection installed at the new Naas Library and Cultural Centre

Twenty-nine pieces of artwork from the Kildare MAC have been installed in their beautiful new home at the new Naas Library and Cultural Centre (see page 15).

Rates

New legislation regarding commercial rates took effect from 01 January 2024 (see page 18).

Amendments to the Incremental Tenant Purchase Scheme

From the 29 January 2024 the Incremental Tenant Purchase Scheme will be amended (see page 22).

Housing Allocations

For the period January to December 2023, the council allocated a total of 1,250 social properties of which 432 were Choice Based Lettings (see pages 21/22).

Irish Business Against Litter

Maynooth has topped the rankings as the cleanest town in Ireland by Irish Business Against Litter (IBAL) in their 2023 survey (see pages 42/43).



Kildare County Council Climate Action Plan

Kildare County Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2029 was officially the first plan to be adopted in the country as of the 18 December 2023 (see page 49).

Leader Programme

Kildare LCDC have signed a contract with CKLP to implement the new EU-funded Rural Development LEADER Programme 2023-2027. Funding of €5.44 million has been allocated to Kildare over the lifetime of the Programme (see page 53).

Municipal District Works

Roads Works Programme 2023 is complete – all records uploaded onto MapRoad and claims submitted to Department of Transport (see pages 59/60).

Into Kildare

Into Kildare are very happy to announce the Taste of Kildare Festival will return in the summer of 2024 (see page 68).

Economic Support Services

The General Shopfront Improvement Scheme Grant for 2024 is due to open in the early Spring while the Brigid 1500 Retail Window Merchandising Grant is open for January and February (see page 73).



Diary/Calendar

Ethics Declarations

Completed forms must be furnished to the Ethics Registrar by 29 February 2024 (see pages 9/10).

Book Club

Kildare Library supporting Down Syndrome Ireland with a new Book Club – books supplied by the library and facilitated by staff and starting early in January (see page 13).

Arts Grants and Bursaries

Kildare County Council Arts Service has announced Creative Ireland, Arts Grants, Commissions and Bursary Award opportunities for 2024. The deadline for receipts of applications for all awards is 12:00 p.m., Wednesday 28 February 2024 (see page 15).

Innovation

HacktheClimate – Collaboration between Climate/LEO/MERITS/Innovation rescheduled for 23 February 2024 (see page 19).

Community Grants

Applications for Community Grants, Festival Grants, Local Authority Residents Association Grants, Private Residential Association Grants and Drehid Grants for 2024 will open on Monday 22 January 2024. Closing date for receipt of completed applications will be Friday, 15 March 2024 at 17:00 (see page 41).

Community Climate Action Program Fund

Applications are to be submitted by 06 March with €897,000 grant funding available for award in the county (see page 51).



Awards

The Grass2Gas project is shortlisted for the Green Awards under the Green Technology Award which will be held on 27 February 2024 (see page 52).

Local Community Development Committee

The next meeting of the LCDC is scheduled for Wednesday 31 January 2024 (see page 55).

Women in Business

Join us as we celebrate St. Brigid and her legacy on Thursday 01 February in Kilkea Castle from 12pm – 2.30pm (see page 72).



February Calendar

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<p>29 Jan</p> <p>15:00 Full Council Meeting; Council Chamber; Members Calendar</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p> <p>10:00 LCDC</p>	<p>1 Feb</p> <p>14:00 Transportation, Safety & Emergency Services SPC</p>	<p>2</p> <p>09:00 Clane-Maynooth JPC Meeting</p> <p>10:00 Clane Maynooth Monthly Meeting ; Members Calendar</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7</p> <p>10:00 Climate Action SPC; Boardroom; Members Calendar</p> <p>14:30 Environmental Services & Water SPC</p>	<p>8</p> <p>10:00 Local Community & Cultural SPC</p> <p>11:30 County Twinning Committee</p>	<p>9</p>
<p>12</p>	<p>13</p> <p>14:30 Naas JPC Meeting</p> <p>15:30 Naas MD Meeting; Council chamber ; Members Calendar</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15</p>	<p>16</p> <p>09:00 Celbridge-Leixlip JPC Meeting</p> <p>10:00 Celbridge Leixlip monthly municipal district meeting ; Council Chamber; Members Calendar</p>
<p>19</p> <p>09:00 Athy JPC Meeting</p> <p>10:00 Athy MD Meeting February ; Council Chamber; Members Calendar</p> <p>14:00 Corporate Policy Group Meeting; Members Calendar</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p> <p>09:00 Kildare-Newbridge JPC Meeting</p> <p>10:00 Kildare Newbridge MD Monthly Meeting; Council Chamber; Members Calendar</p>	<p>22</p> <p>11:30 Kildare Interagency Integration Committee</p> <p>14:30 Housing SPC</p>	<p>23</p>
<p>26</p> <p>15:00 Full Council Meeting; Council Chamber; Members Calendar</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>1 Mar</p> <p>10:00 Clane Maynooth MD Monthly Meeting; Council Chamber; Members Calendar</p>



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Corporate, People and Cultural Services

Corporate Services

Communications

Kildare County Council announces Creative Ireland, Arts Grants, Commissions and Bursary Award opportunities for 2024

Kildare County Council has published details of 18 separate grants, commissions and bursary award opportunities to support the development and presentation of creative and artistic projects in the county in 2024. Applications will be accepted from individual artists and creatives, arts collectives, community groups, youth groups and schools.

Kildare County Council Publishes 2023 Gender Pay Gap Report



Kildare County Council has published its Gender Pay Gap Report for 2023, highlighting the percentage difference between what men and women are paid on average in the organization, irrespective of roles or levels.

The 2023 report shows a Gender Pay Gap of -4.69% mean and -13.64% median.

Employers with more than 250 employees in Ireland are required to publish their gender pay gap data before the end of 2023 and within six months of their reference date. Kildare County Council and all local authorities in the country chose 30 June 2023 as the reference date.

Kildare County Council sign works contract for the construction of 33 residential units at the former Ambassador Hotel site in Kill



Kildare County Council has signed a contract with K & J Townmore Construction Ltd. of Clonminch House,



Clonminch Hi-Tech Park, Tullamore, Co. Offaly for the construction of 33 new social housing units and associated siteworks at the former Ambassador Hotel site, Kill, Co. Kildare.

Works are due to commence on site early in the new year with an expected completion date in March 2025. The project is funded under “Housing for All – a New Housing Plan for Ireland”.

Refurbishment Works Commence at Shackleton Museum Athy



Kildare County Council recently hosted Minister of State, Martin Heydon in the presence of the Cathaoirleach of the County of Kildare, Councillor Daragh Fitzpatrick to mark the commencement of refurbishment works at the Shackleton Museum, Athy. The Museum will provide visitors with a unique insight into human spirit, the great unknown and the challenge of escape and endurance through the experiences of the world’s greatest

polar explorer. Additionally, the refurbished space will offer a research space for interested visitors to steep themselves more deeply in the history of the Shackleton explorations and stories and provide opportunities to understand climate change and how the great polar regions play their part in the world’s greatest current day challenge.

Public Sector Duty

The Framework document will be shared and discussed with stakeholders over the coming weeks after which it will be presented to CPG before final publication online.

LPT

The tracking of LPT allocations by the Municipal District’s will be transferring from the current LPT co-ordinators to the Executive Suite from 2024. Staff from the executive suite will attend the Municipal District meetings when LPT is on the agenda.

Annual Ethics Declaration

On 08 January 2024, the Ethics Registrar issued notices to all Councillors and Relevant Employees via email regarding their obligation



under the Local Government Act 2001 to submit an annual written declaration containing particulars of their declarable interests. Copies of the Code of Conduct for Councillors and blank 2024 declaration forms were appended to her email.

The annual declaration form includes a declaration that Councillors have read the Code of Conduct for Councillors and that they understand its meaning, and an undertaking to have regard to and be guided by the Code of Conduct for Councillors in the exercise of their functions.

The legislation requires that completed forms must be furnished to the Ethics Registrar by 29 February 2024.

Political Donation Statements 2023

Under Local Elections (Disclosure of Donation and Expenditure) Act 1999 elected members are required to submit statements of any Political Donations received in the previous calendar year. Political Donation Statements for 2023 were issued to Elected members for completion.

The legislation requires that completed forms must be returned by the 31 January 2024.

New Councillor

Councillor Rupert Heather was Co-opted as a member of Kildare County Council at a special meeting of Kildare County Council on the 09 January. He has replaced Councillor Ciara Galvin Celbridge Leixlip Municipal District who has stepped back from her role.

Register of Electors

Review of Polling Places

A review of polling places has been undertaken with the County Registrar and changes agreed to redistribute electors amongst polling locations, by the addition of extra rooms in existing locations where necessary. In addition, due to the increase in population in Naas and Newbridge two new polling stations will be put in place for the referendum and any future electoral events.

The new locations are

NAAS - Holy Child National School, Ballycane, Naas W91 Y266

NEWBRIDGE - Scoil na Naomh Uilig, Rickardstown, Newbridge W12 FK10

Some Electors in Naas and Newbridge will be moving to these new stations for the forthcoming referendum.



Information on where people should attend to vote will be on the polling cards issued for the referendum and is also available by going to CheckTheRegister.ie and looking up their registration.

Information on the changes will also be provided on the council website and social media and in local papers.

The call-to-action campaigns by Kildare County Council and Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) have driven high levels of Register activity and staff continue to process the backlog of additions and amendments which arose in December.

It should be noted that anyone who is already on the register does not need to do anything further at this time and they will be eligible to vote as normal. New applications can be received up until the 20 February 2024 for inclusion on the balancing list (replaces the supplement) for the referendum. Applications for special and postal votes can be accepted up until 12 February, 2024.

It should be noted that while new applications and amendments to

existing registration are processed through checktheregister.ie these entries do not automatically update the register in each local authority area. Local authorities must process each application based on the information provided through the checktheregister.ie online system. Forms where required are available from the local authority. Every effort will be made to process the applications received by the national deadlines.

THE EASY WAY TO SECURE YOUR SAY

Do you want to vote? You must register to do so.
Moved address? You must update your registration.
Now most people can register online!
Join the register or update your details on

checktheregister.ie

If you cannot access this information online, please email register@kildarecoco.ie, phone 045 980 201 or visit:

Kildare County Council
Áras Chill Dara
Devoy Park
Naas
Co Kildare
W91X77F

Hard copy forms are also available in:
Local Libraries
Garda Stations
Post Offices

Comhairle Contae Chill Dara
Kildare County Council

Riailtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Referendum

An Coimisiún Toghcháin's information campaign to inform electors about the upcoming referendums on 08 March 2024 commenced on Thursday 04



January 2024 with radio and social media advertisements.

DHLGH Grant

The DHLGH has awarded grant funding to Kildare County Council of €6,768 to increase the participation of women and diversity in Local Government.

Funding has been provided to enable Community Outreach: Voter Registration - Enhancing political engagement and awareness in our diverse communities through translation of check the register information into a number of languages relevant in Kildare. Provision for members of a training course on Social Media and Resilience and also to provide female members with the opportunity to attend the Women for Election operated EQUIP Campaign School. Dates for this training are yet to be confirmed.

FOI, Data Requests and Ombudsman

	Total received Quarter 1, 2023	Total received Quarter 2, 2023	Total received Quarter 3, 2023	Total received Quarter 4, 2023	Total 2023
Freedom of Information requests	39	20	33	27	119
Freedom of Information appeals	5	5	3	0	13
Information Commissioner Appeals	0	0	0	0	0
Data Access Requests	4	3	2	3	12
Ombudsman	11	7	6	9	33



Library and Arts Service

News and Highlights – Library

“The library was a doorway to freedom, to free thought. When you are being taught, “you can’t, you can’t, you can’t” ... the library says, “you can, you can, you can.” And I did.” Patricia McKissack

Celbridge Library

Celbridge Library hosted a variety of their own ‘Toy Shows’ in the days leading up to the popular ‘Late Late Show’ event. Miriam O’Keeffe Ahern and Christina Kearney from the County Kildare Access Network brought along dolls, Playmobil figures and teddies from the ‘Our World Toys’ collection, which recently won the Creative Place award in the National Pride of Place competition. There was one public event and two events for children from Scoil na Mainistreach, all of which included an inclusive Storytime with library staff. The show also included Lego Minifigures which were donated to all the main libraries from County Kildare Access Network (CKAN) and Councillor Michael Coleman to add diversity to our existing Lego collections.

Kildare Town Library

Kildare Town Library were delighted to accept an invitation to meet with HEADSUP, supporting men in the community for an information sharing session with a variety of local support services.

Twelve men age ranging from thirties to sixties, from a variety of geographical locations from Kildare town, Athy, Newbridge and Naas. Some of the men are linked in with their local Mental Health Team, the other men access other forms of support around their mental wellbeing. They are a very supportive group to one another and share reasons for attending the programme including wanting to understand/manage their mental health better as well as make social connections /return to work and explore possibilities for a different future.

Book Club

Kildare Library supporting Down Syndrome Ireland with a new Book Club – books supplied by the library and facilitated by staff and starting early in January.



Kildare Town Library Climate Action Workshops

Events included: an exhibition of Christmas Cribs and Traditions supporting world culture / Wall of Wool promoting creativity, Irish Heritage and Wellbeing while championing the country's indigenous wool industry / Zero waste sewing workshops / 'Green Your Eats' Vegan Cookery Demonstration / Zero Waste Sewing workshops.

Kildare Community School

Schools are supported through App Coding workshop and a weekly Art and Craft workshop for Kildare Town Community School Acorn Group with special needs.

Newbridge Library

Newbridge Library supported members of the Platinum Club by giving them demonstrations of our Reader Pens and by loaning them the pens to assist in their Health Literacy course. Filming of an action video about the course and the use of the Reader Pen took place in the Library in December and the video will be available on National Adult Literacy Agency's (NALA's) website.

Creative Ireland activities

December 2023 included multiple creative cultural engagement activities for the community, organised by the Culture and Creativity Team. Activities included: eco-art workshops for the Wall of Wool community project in Kildare Library, attended by over 250 school children and community members; nature-themed animation workshops as gaeilge for children ages eight to twelve in three libraries; launch of 'Investigating Direct Provision' a new Writer-in-Residence for Arts and Minds Festival in partnership with Maynooth University English Department.

Kildare County Archives and Local Studies

The collections were moved to the former Naas Library at Harbour View, the week before Christmas. The process of unpacking and preparing the building to function as the new County Archives and Local Studies has now begun. The archival shelving from Newbridge is currently being re-installed in Naas. Both services are currently closed to the public, although emails and calls are being dealt with by staff where possible.



Planning is underway for the annual Irish Military Seminar in May and John Devoy commemorative event in September, as well as a retrospective art exhibition in Riverbank Arts Centre.

Suite of Arts Grants and Bursaries Announced

Kildare County Council Arts Service has announced Creative Ireland, Arts Grants, Commissions and Bursary Award opportunities for 2024. We have published details of 18 separate grants, commissions, and bursary award opportunities to support the development and presentation of creative and artistic projects in the county in 2024. Submissions can now be made to any of these awards through the online portal at Kildarecocoarts.submit.com. The deadline for receipts of applications for all awards is 12:00 p.m., Wednesday 28 February 2024.

Grant Information Sessions

This week we are hosting information sessions re. applying for Creative Ireland, Arts Grants and Bursary Awards in venues across the county. Monday 08 January, Athy Library, 11.30 a.m. - 12.30 p.m. Tuesday 09

January, Maynooth Library, 6.30 p.m. – 7.30 p.m. Saturday 13 January, Riverbank Arts Centre, Newbridge, 10.00 a.m. – 11.00 a.m. In addition, information videos and application guides will be made available via Kildare Arts Service’s YouTube and social media channels from Monday 22 January 2024.

Municipal Art Collection (MAC) installed at the new Naas Library and Cultural Centre

Twenty-nine pieces of artwork from the Kildare MAC have been installed in their beautiful new home at the new Naas Library and Cultural Centre. Four works were also installed at MERITS and a large painting by Brian Bourke was installed outside the Council Chamber at Aras Chill Dara.

First Fortnight Events Supported by Kildare County Council Arts Service

First Fortnight hosts an annual mental health, arts and culture festival throughout January, throughout Ireland. The festival celebrates the arts as a powerful catalyst for sparking unscripted conversations around mental ill health and serves to challenge the stigma associated with



mental ill-health. The Creative Well team will host a gathering in Riverbank Arts Centre on 20 January 6.00 p.m. – 8.00 p.m. for the First Fortnight Festival reflecting on the work done in Kildare over the last ten years. Former Arts and Health Coordinator Carolann Courtney will lead a round table discussion exploring the impact this work has had on all who took part. The ‘Creative Well’ book will also be launched.

Other First Fortnight projects supported by Kildare Arts Service taking place this month: Artist Rosemary Noonan’s exhibition on themes of fertility issues will open at the No. 8 Gallery in Kildare on Saturday the 06 January with a panel discussion taking place on the 10 January. Artist Martina McDonald has created a number of free activity packs that will be distributed around the county and will be hosting a series of fun interactive workshops at Riverbank Arts Centre.

Health and Safety

1. Site Inspections:
Two inspections completed in the following areas:
 - Athy Library.
 - Tenant Liaison Team.
2. DSE (Display Screen Equipment) Assessment:
 - a. Three completed – Housing, Community, Athy Library.
3. Health and Safety Management Committee Meeting.
4. Disability awareness workshop on ‘Mental Health and Human Rights in the Workplace’.
5. Local Authority Safety Officers Group (LASOG) Meeting.
6. HSE Covid Vaccination Booster Clinic- 11 Flu vaccines and 58 Covid vaccines administered.
7. Review of arrangement sections following Aras based visits – prompt line managers for close off-update of shared folder content.
8. Briefing sessions:
 - a. National Roads Office on the duties of client and appointment of PSDP/PSCS.
 - b. Safety statement briefing session – Property Management/Procurement.



9. Supervisory Management, Performance and People Training.
10. Safety Committee Meeting with safety representatives.

Accessibility:

1. Meetings:
 - a. Naas Disability Access Group Meeting
 - b. County Kildare Access Network (CKAN)
 - c. Athy Disability Access Group
2. Kildare Disability Week and International Day of Persons with Disabilities.
 - a. Event in Aras on 01 December 2023 included:
 - i. Launch of Childrens Disability Book.
 - ii. Display of Our World Toy Resource and a celebration of their recent win at National IPB Pride of Place Awards.
 - iii. Recommunication piece around video highlighting the key accessibility initiatives delivered.

- iv. Display of Athy Billboard Project
- b. Signs placed on the main thoroughfares into the main towns – highlighting Kildare Disability Week.
- c. CKAN flag flown in prominent locations around the county- c. 250 in total.
- d. Light up Kildare Purple Virtual Campaign
- e. Athy Billboard Project - series of billboards highlighting the issue of accessibility running until the end of February 2024.



Finance

Revenue Account

The 2023 Annual Financial Statements (AFS) are currently being prepared. The draft AFS will be brought to the Members once complete.

Cashflow / Overdraft

Kildare County Council manages its cashflow requirements daily and did not avail itself of its overdraft facility in 2023.

Rates

New legislation regarding commercial rates took effect from 01 January 2024. The Local Government Rates and Other Matters Act 2019 effects the following changes:

- Replaces the payment of rates in two moieties with one rates amount due on the first of the year
- Replaces the issuing of Property Entry Levy (PEL) and valuations taking effect the year after issue of a schedule (by Tailte Eireann) with immediate billing through the calendar year.

- Provides for the application of interest on unpaid rates from 2025. Interest will be added to rates bills issued from 2026.
- Removes the requirement for public notice to be given regarding Kildare County Council's intention to 'make the rate'. This is replaced by a notice advising that a 'rate has been levied'.
- Removes the requirement for the rate book to be available for inspection, either in paper form or electronically.

Kildare County Council Finance Department wrote to all rates customers in December to advise them of these changes, particularly the transition from two moieties to one and advising of their payment options, including Direct Debit to facilitate payment across the calendar year. Should customers have any queries regarding their accounts, they should contact the rates office on 045 980 656 or rates@kildarecoco.ie



Innovation

- HacktheClimate – Collaboration between Climate/ LEO/ MERITS/ Innovation rescheduled for 23 February 2024. Climate Hackathon to focus on how we can capture and report on climate data so that we can report on performance against actions contained in Climate Action Plan (CAP) / Decarbonising Zone (DZ).
 - We were also successful in the Open Data Engagement Fund - €5,000 – maximum award – this will be used to fund prize money and development of winning solutions.
- MyCoCo – First key service scheduled went live 11 December 2023 – Roads and Services Solicitor requests (Taken in charge requests) approx. 1,200 per annum transactions. Move from paper process to online submission and payment. This is another step in the national government’s priority to make

90% of services available digitally by 2030.

- Innovation, together with Building and Development Control were also successful in the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) / Local Government Management Agency (LGMA) Digital Transformation Fund and were awarded €15,000. This will assist in the digitisation of TIC Status which was a key recommendation of Office of Planning Regulator report.

Motor Tax

Customers are encouraged to use the online motor tax facility at www.motortax.ie. If they are not in a position to use the online facility, we accept and continue to process postal applications or an appointment can be booked online or by telephone on 045 980 920. Most customer queries regarding motor tax matters can be found by visiting www.motortax.ie. Alternatively, customers can email motortax@kildarecoco.ie or contact the office by telephone on 045 980 920.



Housing and Regeneration

Housing

Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection

The Government recently announced changes to state accommodation being offered to Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection (BOTP) from Ukraine. Under the revised approach, newly arriving BOTP from Ukraine, who seek State accommodation, will be provided with accommodation for a maximum of 90 days, during which time they will also receive reduced social protection payments. Arrival Centres for newly arrived BOTP will be larger sites offering meals and laundry, health assistance and a programme of activities for children and young people. The Centres will also provide information on entitlements and accommodation to help arrivals to find their own independent accommodation and to integrate with local communities. BOTP will be entitled to a daily expenses allowance of €38.80 per adult and €29.80 per child, so long as they remain in an Arrival Centre. Within 90 days BOTP will be required to source their own accommodation or avail of pledged accommodation. No

State-supported accommodation will be provided after the 90 days elapse, other than the supports provided through the Offer a Home or pledged accommodation schemes. Legislative amendments are required to give effect to these changes from January 2024. The Temporary Protection Directive has been extended to March 2025.

Homeless Services

Street Work / Outreach Clinics

During December, the Outreach Team visited all Municipal Districts on a regular basis to identify rough sleepers.



The Outreach Team continues to facilitate monthly housing advice clinics (in each Municipal District) for individuals and families who cannot attend the council offices in person. The team also conducted assessments with hospital and prison discharges.



Visits to Service Providers

Meetings were held with The Peter McVerry Trust in Eyre Street, Newbridge and Kerdiffstown, Mount Offaly in Athy and Tiglin in Jigginstown to review clients' housing needs and to discuss exit strategies.

Exits from Emergency

Accommodation

In 2023, a total of 199 households left emergency accommodation, comprising 61 families and 138 singles. Placements were facilitated primarily through social housing allocations (Council and AHB), HAP tenancies and applicants returning to family. Eight such 'move-ons' were completed in December.

Tenancy Sustainment

At present there are 29 active tenancy sustainment cases receiving TSO support (five cases closed in December). Tenancy Sustainment Officers have ongoing engagement with clients referred to the service and also through the two housing monthly clinics (Family Hubs in Prosperous and Athy).

Homeless HAP

The Homeless HAP scheme helps people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. The scheme offers additional support to applicants, including assistance in locating a property. Seventy-three (73) applications were processed in 2023. Three (3) applications are being processed this month.

Cost Rental Tenant in Situ Scheme (CRTiS)

The scheme (introduced in April last year following the end of the winter eviction ban) allows the Housing Agency to buy rental properties from private landlords who are selling. The Agency rents these properties to the tenants who are living there. To date, 8 applications have been received by the Council and submitted to the Housing Agency. Of these, three properties are at contract purchase stage, two are at purchase offer stage and a further two are awaiting inspection/ valuation. One application has been withdrawn.

Housing Allocations

For the period January to December 2023, the council allocated a total of



1,250 social properties of which 432 were Choice Based Lettings (34.5%). There were 274 Homeless/Homeless Prevention allocations. A total of 305 refusals of properties for various reasons were recorded during the year.

Traveller Accommodation

The Annual Estimate of Accommodation of Traveller families was carried out on 24 November 2023. The estimate provides a measure of the accommodation position of Traveller families, and changes to that position, year on year. The deadline for the submission of the annual estimate of accommodation of Traveller families to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage [DHLGH] is 24 January 2024.

Sixth Traveller Accommodation Programme 2025 -2029

The DHLGH issued guidelines to assist housing authorities in the preparation, adoption and implementation of the sixth Traveller Accommodation Programme [2025 – 2029] under the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998.

Preparation for the new programme will commence in Q1 2024.

Amendments to the Incremental Tenant Purchase Scheme

From the 29 January 2024 the Incremental Tenant Purchase Scheme will be amended as follows:

- The minimum qualifying household income decreases from €12,500 to €11,000.
- The requirement of joint tenants to have been in receipt of social housing support for ten years each, is being amended; only one tenant will be required to have reached the minimum threshold amount.
- The following payments are now included as a primary source of income:
 - Widow's, Widower's, Surviving Civil Partner's (Contributory and Non-contributory) Pension
 - Blind Pension
 - Invalidity Pension
 - Disability Allowance
- The following payments will now be considered as a secondary source of income:
 - Working Family Payment
 - Age 80 (Pension) increase



- Rural Social Scheme

Further details are available on the council's website.

Operation of the Private Grant Scheme

The operation of the private housing grant scheme has been reviewed by the Housing Strategic Policy Committee. The council operates three such schemes:

- The Housing Aid grant is available to householders aged 66 and over, it funds essential repairs to properties. The maximum grant payable is €8,000, a sliding scale applies based on household income.
- The Housing Adaptation Grants is available to people with a disability. The maximum grant payable is €30,000, sliding scale applies based on household income. Grants are available for: ramps, extensions, bathroom facilities, stair lifts, grab rails, fixed track hoists.
- Mobility Aid Grant funds works which address mobility issues. Grants are available for: grab rails, accessible shower facilities, ramps, stair lifts, fixed track hoists. The

maximum grant payable is €6,000, only available to applicants with a household income of less than €30,000.

In 2023, the council received an initial allocation of €3.2 million to deliver the private grant scheme. With the assistance of the elected members and due to the number of applications and improvements in processing time, we received revised funding, increasing the allocation to €5.4 million. This increase in funding has allowed the council to significantly increase the number of grants being approved. 56% of the available funding was paid to Housing Aid applicants, with the balance paid to Housing Adaptation applicants (few applications are received for Mobility Aid). To ensure that applicants with the greatest priority received funding, we intend to:

- Ring fence 60% of the funding allocation in 2024 for Housing Adaptation Grants
- Prioritise Housing Aid applications for essential repair items such as roof, chimney, electrical and heating repairs.



- The replacement of all single glazed and wooden framed windows in a property
- The replacement of double-glazed windows will be limited to habitable rooms, typically four windows, (bedroom, bathroom, kitchen, living room) with an allowance of €800 per window.

Greenway Phase 1: Aylmer Bridge to Sallins

Phase one of the Greenway from Aylmer Bridge to Sallins was officially opened by Minister Eamon Ryan on

Wednesday, 10 January. The official opening marks the completion of an 11km section of the Grand Canal Greenway extending from Sallins to Aylmer Bridge, as well as a new pedestrian bridge in Sallins



Capital Programme

Location	No. of Units	Updated Status
Approval Stage 4		
Athgarvan Village	18 units	Works progressing well on site. Expect substantial completion September 2024.
Coill Dubh	10 units	Works progressing well on site. Substantial completion projected for Q1 2024.
Ambassador Site, Kill	33 units	Works commenced on site 2 January 2024
Old Greenfield, Maynooth	65 units	Stage 4 approval received; contract documents being prepared
Approval Stage 2		
St. Patrick's Park Rathangan	Demolition of 15 units, refurb of 25	Further information requested by DHLGH in relation to Stage 3 application; response being prepared for submission.



Remedial Works (Phase's 2 and 3)	units, construction of 7 units.	
Ardclough Road, Celbridge	39 units	Awaiting feedback from An Board Pleanala.
Dispensary Site Carbury	5 units	Part 8 being prepared.
Clane Road, Sallins	4 units	Site previously allocated to The Peter McVerry Trust will now be developed by KCC.
Approval Stage 1		
St Evin's Park, Monasterevin	15 units	Civil/Structural Engineering Consultants appointed. Part 8 being finalised.
Caragh Road, Naas	73 units	Development of 73 units [to include 15 no. affordable units]. Retender for design team required on the advice of DHLGH.
Andrew Halting Site, Athy	8 units	ESB have removed poles and overhead line. ESB to return to remove redundant underground cable crossing PPP site and halting site extension. Section 179A application being prepared.
Station Road, Kildare.	28-30 units	Design Team meetings ongoing. Stage 2 planned for submission to DHLGH in January 2024.
Craddockstown, Naas	28 units	Stage1 funding application submitted to DHLGH.
Single Stage Approval		
Shamrock Stores, Athy	2 new unit + refurb of 2 existing units	Section 179A proposed to launch Q1 2024.
Inniscarra, Athy	5 units	Design Team tender being prepared.
Ballitore Garda Station	5 (2 x refurb + 3 new)	Tender recommendation report for the appointment of consultants issued, result letters to follow.

Pre-Approval		
Sarto Road, Naas	7 units	Feasibility complete on brownfield site. Single stage application being prepared for submission to DHLGH.
Tanyard, Ballitore	4 units	Feasibility complete. Single Stage funding application progressing.



Infill Schemes

Location	No. of Units	Updated Status
Newtown House, Leixlip	4 units	Preparation of contractor tender documents progressing.
Glandore, Athy	5 units + 1 refurb	Detailed design and tender documents being prepared for construction tender. Stage 3 application to be submitted to DHLGH by end of January 2024.
Patrician Ave, Naas	2 new + 1 refurb	Tender accepted and progressing to commencement on site.
25 Corbans Place Naas	1 major refurbishment and extension	Works progressing on site. Substantial completion expected Q3 2024.
Skenagun, Castledermot	1 major refurb & extension & 1 new build	Draft Design drawings received, EIA and AA screening reports being prepared. Part 8 consultation in Q1 2024

PPP Schemes

Location	No. of Units	Updated Status
Andrew, Athy	73 Housing units + Community unit.	PPP Bundle 3: tender dialogue stage ongoing, tender deadline end of May
Oldtown Mill, Celbridge	60 units	PPP Bundle 5: Finalising design documents for Part 8. Target Part 8 launch early in Q1 2024.
Coolaghknock Glebe, Kildare	99 social units/ 32 affordable	PPP Bundle 5: Finalising design documents for Part 8 Target Part 8 launch early in Q1 2024.
Rickardstown, Newbridge	80 social/ 40 affordable units	PPP Bundle 6: Design team to be appointed in January 2024 and commence design.
Rathasker Road, Naas	80 units	PPP Bundle 6: Design team to be appointed in January 2024 and commence design.

Approved Housing Body Schemes - CALF

Location	No. of Units	Updated Status
Cluid, ESB site Leixlip	36 units	Draft Section 179A documents received for review. Briefing to be arranged with Celbridge-Leixlip MD members early 2024



Approved Housing Body Schemes - Capital Assistance Scheme

Approved Housing Body	No. of Units	Updated Status
Sofia Housing- St. John's Convent, Rathangan	27 units	Draft Part 8 being prepared.
Cluid Dominican Lands Athy	34 units	Decision to grant issued on 22 June 2023. Cluid progressing detailed roads design with Transportation. Tender documents being prepared.

Families in PEA including Supported Temporary Accommodations and Family Hubs as of 31 December 2023

Duration	No. of Households with Dependents	Adults	Dependents
0 - 6 Months	14	18	22
6 - 12 Months	13	24	22
12 - 18 Months	5	9	8
18 - 24 Months	2	4	2
24 - 30 Months	1	2	1
36 Months +	0	0	0
	35	57	55

Families in Own Front Door Accommodation as of 31 December 2023

Duration	No. of Households with Dependents	Adults	Dependents
0 - 6 Months	4	8	7
6 - 12 Months	5	11	11
12 - 18 Months	4	6	9
18 - 24 Months	1	1	2



24 - 30 Months	0	0	0
+ 36 Months	0	0	0
	14	26	29

Homeless Presentations

2022	Cases	Unique	Repeats
Total	1357	506	851
2023	Total	Unique	Repeats
Quarter 1	441	153	288
Quarter 2	497	119	378
Quarter 3	513	172	341
Quarter 4	459	172	287
Total	1910	616	1294

Homeless Presentations: Unique Presentations Breakdown

2022	Adults	Dependents
Total	595	438
2023	Adults	Dependents
Quarter 1	182	147
Quarter 2	138	102
Quarter 3	197	110
Quarter 4	191	93
Total	708	452

Housing Adaptation Grants

	Housing Adaptation Applications Received	Housing Adaptation Grants Approved	Mobility Aid Applications Received	Mobility Aid Applications Approved	Housing Aid for Older Persons Apps Recd	Housing Aid for Older Persons Grant Approved
2022	309	241	7	7	362	378
Q1 2023	89	56	2	2	118	80
Q2 2023	78	37	1	1	119	72
Q3 2023	76	37	2	2	74	35
Q4 2023	77	78	10	10	125	85



Total	320	208	15	15	436	272
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Rent Assessments

Year	LA Rents	LA New HAP	LA Hap Review
2022	1336	334	479
2023 Q1	541	98	109
2023 Q2	529	123	95
2023 Q3	600	122	129
2023 Q4	535	115	80
Total 2023	2205	458	413

Energy Efficiency Retrofitting Programme

Programme	No. of Units	Updated Status
2023 EERP	86	31 units in Clane/Maynooth MD: Commenced November 2023 - 8 units completed by end of 2023. 55 units identified in Naas/Ballymore Eustace: Tender to be published Q1 2024.

Acquisitions

	Completed 2019	Completed 2020	Completed 2021	Completed 2022	Completed 2023
Housing Acquisitions	231	39	13	41	96
Housing Turnkeys	81	107	27	82	42
Part V Acquisitions	67	41	70	86	109
Total complete	379	187	110	209	247

Regeneration

Total No. CPOs	CPOs with ABP	CPOs confirmed	CPOs Withdrawn	Acquired by agreement	Vacant Property Grant Applications	Vacant Property Grants Approved
22	1	16	4	1	144	106

Vacant property inspections in 2023	Properties identified as requiring further investigation	Property Owners engaged with 2023	Pre CPO Notices Erected 2023
1,006	301	128	47



Acquisitions and Leasing by Municipal District	Athy	Celbridge-Leixlip	Clane-Maynooth	Kildare-Newbridge	Naas
Acquisitions in 2023	26	70	38	68	15
Properties Leased Year to Date (includes AHB leasing and MTR Leasing)	13	77	7	67	3

Local Authority Home Loan

Year	Approval No.	Approval Amount	Approval Drawdown No	Approval Drawdown Amount	Expired No	Expired Amount
2022	31	€6,566,236	3	€611,550	6	€1,256,375
Q1 2023	8	€2,212,970	3	€632,000	6	€1,090,750
Q2 2023	11	€2,201,857	5	€931,000	7	€1,507,607
Q3 2023	13	€2,222,400	5	€1,0985.30	2	€380,000
Q4 2023	9	€1,689,900	6	€1, 105,780	4	€776,357
Total 2023	41	€8,327,127	19	€2,679,765.30	19	€3,754,714

Tenant Purchase Scheme

Year	Applications	Ineligible	Approved
2022	24	1	6
Q1 2023	17	1	2
Q2 2023	15	1	7
Q3 2023	13	2	2
Q4 2023	8	0	14
Total 2023	53	4	25



Social Housing Assessments - Quarterly

Period	Existing Housing File Updates	Transfer Requests	New Valid Applications	Mortgage to Rent Apps	Refusals
2022	157	42	642	7	286
Q1 2023	106	3	210	5	61
Q2 2023	94	18	278	11	67
Q3 2023	65	2	400	0	107
Q4 2023	58	3	161	0	94
Total 2023	323	26	1,049	16	329

Housing Maintenance

Year	Vacant House Turnarounds	New House Purchases Upgrades	Number of Response Maintenance Requests Logged	Number of Response Maintenance Requests Completed
2022	127	45	9,361	8,275
Q1 2023	42	5	3,157	2,407
Q2 2023	29	8	2,342	1,535
Q3 2023	35	5	2,437	1,485
Q4 2023	21	1	3,200	3,449
Total 2023	127	19	11,136	8,876

Housing Assistance Payment – HAP

Year	Applications Received	Applications Rejected	Applications Approved
2022	383	98	324
Q1 2023	85	3	79
Q2 2023	116	3	105
Q3 2023	98	7	133
Q4 2023	98	3	97
Total 2023	397	16	414



Public Realm

Capital Works – Strategic Priorities

Municipal District	Project Name	Estimated Value	Funding Awarded	Project Stage	Notes
Countywide	Barrow Blueway	€10,548,455 (incl additional costs)	RRDF €8,858,455 (incl add funding requested)	Construction	Contractor continues to work South to North: Fisherstown, Courtwook and Vicarstown substantially complete. Works underway at the M7 underpass (Laois), Monasterevin, Clogheen Bridge, Cardington Bridge and Lennons Bridge. Milltown Bridge is complete. Discussions ongoing with Irish Rail regarding works at the Railway Bridge in Monasterevin. Additional funding request with DRCD; response awaited.
	Greenway – Phase 1 Aylmer Bridge to Sallins	€3,000,000	€3,000,000	Construction	The Grand Canal Greenway Phase 1 – Aylmer Bridge to Sallins and new footbridge was officially opened by Minister Eamonn Ryan on 10th January. Sallins tie-in of Phase 1 and 2 to streamline route requires Part 8, which will be published during January.
	Greenway – Phase 2 Sallins to Clonkeen	€213,000	€213,000 DoT and Carbon Tax Fund	Detailed Design	Constructive engagement with WWI ongoing. Ground investigation works continue. Meeting held in November with TII Structures Section to agree requirements to progress from design to delivery. This project is



					currently at Phase 4: Statutory Processes. New Part 8 Planning consent is required for a structure proposed for Lowtown to facilitate taking Greenway users off the public road and coming into Robertstown on the town side. Bridge proposed on the eastern side of existing Bonyng Bridge, providing access to the southern side of the canal and proposed Greenway, without users crossing over the existing bridge. Tender process will take place subject to Part 8 and TII approval.
Kildare-Newbridge	Kildare Square (Phase 2)	€2,190,000	€1,750,000 RRDF €440,000	Part 8	Phase 2 and Pedestrian Link from Kildare Village Retail Outlet: Stage 1 design and consultation completed. RRDF funding of €1.75m for site acquisition and design.
	Kildare Square (Phase 1)	€1,500,000	€500,000 Destination Towns – Failte Ireland €1,000,000 KCC/LPT	Part 8	Failte Ireland drawdown deadline extended to May 2024. MD office delivered some interim works to secure The Square and provide additional short-term parking. Planting has been refreshed around the Square. Kildare-Newbridge MD members received briefing on Part 8 on 10 th January; expected



					publication date of 17 th January.
	Curragh Plains Strategy	€148,600		Land Observation Plan & Interpretative & Branding Plan.	Review of the draft document ongoing, including fact check completed on the historical and archaeological references.
	Kilcullen Market Square	€1,421,207 (Aug 2023)		Part 8	Part 8 approved. A new funding application required to advance this project. The MD office is planning to commence a small element of the works to improve the footpath; scheduled for February 2024.
	Rathangan Market Square	€1,760,849 (Aug 2023)		Part 8	Part 8 approved. A new funding application required to advance this project.
	Athgarvan Health Check/ Urban Analysis	€30,500	€20,000 T&V €10,500 LPT	Town Renewal Plan	Small edits to be completed. It has been agreed that a presentation on the document will be given to the members in advance of publication.
	Kildare Town Renewal Plan	€126,500	€95,000 T&V €31,500 LPT	Town Renewal Plan	Briefing on final document presented to the Kildare-Newbridge MD members on 10 th January in advance of publication.
Athy	Emily Square	€3,026,177	€980,000 (KCC)		Tender documents have been received. A funding request has been submitted to the Failte Ireland Just Transition Fund and a decision is awaited.
	Shackleton Museum (RF0024)	€6,964,937	€5,207,500 (RRDF)	Construction	Contractor commenced on site, no issues to report, project is



			€1,500,000 (KCC)		progressing as planned. 18 th December saw the official launch of the project by Minister Heydon.
	Dominican Lands Masterplan	€100,000	€80,000 RRDF €20,000 (LPT)	Masterplan	RPS appointed to deliver SSFRA (Site specific flood risk assessment). RPS are also delivering the Flood Alleviation Scheme for Athy. Work is now underway to complete the assessment which will then feed into completing the Masterplan.
	Edmund Rice Square	TBC	€500,000 KCC Capital Prog €50,000 LPT	On Hold	On hold pending the Emily Square project being delivered.
	Athy Dry Dock		€40,000 LPT for feasibility study in 2023	Not commenced	WWI have confirmed that this dock is still operational. Education facilities, as suggested by the members, have been provided at other dry docks no longer in use. Clarification sought from the members around the works they would like to see undertaken.
	Castledermot Health Check/Urban Analysis	€30,500	€20,000 T&V €10,500 LPT	Town Renewal Plan	A review of the document is underway.
Celbridge-Leixlip	Wonderful Barn			Economic Business Case and Pre-Tender	Expected Part 8 publication in January 2024
	The Acre Project	TBC	€10,000 LPT for feasibility	Feasibility Study	Tender closed 17 November with one



			study in 2023		submission. Letter of Acceptance has issued.
	Celbridge Town Renewal Masterplan	€73,585	€73,585 LPT	Town Renewal Masterplan	Presentation to the elected representatives has taken place. Document will be published later in 2024.
	Leixlip Town Renewal Masterplan	€60,974	€60,974 LPT	Town Renewal Masterplan	Presentation to the elected representatives has taken place. Document is being prepared for publication.
	Ardclough Health Check/Urban Analysis	€30,500	€20,000 T&V €10,500 LPT	Village Renewal Plan	Some edits to be completed.
Clane-Maynooth	Maynooth Town Centre Master Plan	€3,438,500	€2,574,375 URDF €858,125 KCC/LPT €1,908,750 URDF approved. Updated costings to include VAT to be submitted to the Dept with additional funding considered upon receipt of a tender report as part of Final Business Case for sub projects A,	Town Centre Masterplan	Preliminary Business Case approved to prepare a Masterplan. Sub Project A: Maynooth Town Centre Renewal – Strengthening the Grid Approved to proceed to tender for the preparation of the TRMP, subject to addressing several points raised by the DHLGH. Sub Project B: District Heating Exploration project in the historic grid town centre – Feasibility study and report on the potential for a scheme to serve the commercial and residential community. Approved to proceed with consultation with residents and building owners and to tender for the preparation of a feasibility study and



			B, C and F.		<p>report. SPPR will liaise with CARO to investigate further.</p> <p>Sub Project C: Potential Pilot Project – participatory urban design with NUIM academics and students – may include development of an online platform.</p> <p>Approved to proceed with consultation with residents and building owners and to tender for the preparation of a feasibility study and report.</p> <p>Sub Project E: Development of Key Town Renewal projects.</p> <p>Subject to completion of the Masterplan process, KCC are requested to submit a copy of the Masterplan and a Preliminary Business Case to the DHLGH on the priority projects identified through that process for further development.</p>
	Harbourfield, Maynooth			Detailed Design & Works	<p>Sub Project F: Harbourfield Park – redevelopment of existing park and canal walkway.</p> <p>Approved to tender for the design team and subsequently detailed design and secure all necessary permissions/ consent. Part 8 approved. Additional funding will be required to bring the project</p>



					through the construction stages. Working with Open Spaces to link in with their frameworks to tender for a landscape architect.
	Bawnogues Community Centre	€3,327,919	100% KCC funded	Handover	Valuation being completed. Building has been handed over to K-Leisure.
	Derrinturn Health Check /Urban Analysis	€30,500	€20,000 T&V €10,500 LPT	Village Renewal Plan	Some edits to be completed.
	Johnstown Bridge Health Check/Urban Analysis	€30,500	€20,000 T&V €10,500 LPT	Village Renewal Plan	Some edits to be completed.
	Straffan Health Check/Urban Analysis	€30,500	€20,000 T&V €10,500 LPT	Village Renewal Plan	Some edits to be completed.
	Allenwood Small Village Renewal Masterplan	€30,000	100% LPT	Small Village Renewal Masterplan	Public consultation took place on 23 November in person and online. All plans shared with internal departments for comment.
	Robertstown Small Village Renewal Masterplan	€30,000	100% LPT	Small Village Renewal Masterplan	Public consultation took place on 30 November in person and online. All plans shared with internal departments for comment.
	Kilmeague Small Village Renewal Masterplan	€30,000	100% LPT	Small Village Renewal Masterplan	Public consultation took place on 30 th November in person and online. All plans shared with internal departments for comment.
	Coill Dubh Small Village Renewal Masterplan	€30,000	100% LPT	Small Village Renewal Masterplan	Public consultation took place on 23 November in person and online. All plans shared with internal departments for comment.



Naas	Potato Market	€248,931	Historic Towns Initiative grant €248,931	Phase 1 delivered.	Farmers Market operating on Saturdays 10:00 – 15:00. Contractor on site carrying out electrical and drainage works.
	Naas Town Centre Masterplan	€4,662,000	€3,500,000 URDF €1,165,000 LPT/KCC Updated costings to include VAT to be submitted to the Dept with additional funding considered upon receipt of a tender report as part of Final Business Case	TBC	Preliminary Business Case approved by URDF Team. Sub Project A: Naas Town Renewal Masterplan – approval granted to proceed to tender for the preparation of the Masterplan subject to the provision of updated costs and addressing points raised in the letter received. Agreed at the last Naas MD meeting to hold a non-statutory public consultation piece to seek comments on proposed use of the Castle area. Sub Project B: Background Assessments. KCC to submit clarification to the Department regarding the impact of the sale of St. Davids Castle on the proposal. The Dept notes that St. Davids Castle and grounds has been privately purchased since Call 2 was submitted. KCC to confirm the impact the acquisition will have on the Feasibility Study for the Castle Quarter, Conservation Management Plan and Archaeological Survey for St. Davids Castle



					<p>and Grounds which were planned under sub project B.</p> <p>Sub Project C: Acquisition of key sites in the town centre. KCC to provide an update on the proposed acquisition of key sites, the current status of planned acquisitions.</p> <p>Sub Project D: Transportation Interventions. Proceed to tender for the design team and subsequently the detailed design and secure all necessary permissions for Poplar Square to progress to detailed design stage only. Proceed to develop Murtagh's Corner and Corbans Lane to Part 8 stage only.</p>
	Market House Naas (Canal Quarter)	As above	As above	TBC	Proposed water-based hub/bike hub.
	Sallins Town Renewal Masterplan	€70,000	€70,000 LPT	Masterplan	Review ongoing.



Climate, Community, Environment and Water

Community Grants

Applications for Community Grants, Festival Grants, Local Authority Residents Association Grants, Private Residential Association Grants and Drecht Grants for 2024 will open on Monday 22 January 2024. Closing date for receipt of completed applications will be Friday, 15 March 2024 at 17:00

Water Services

Uisce Éireann Councillor Clinics

Uisce Éireann quarterly Councillor Clinics are held online for local representatives on selected dates throughout the year.

Uisce Éireann is formulating responses to any outstanding queries via the Local representative Support Desk.

Uisce Éireann Regional Communications team provide regular updates concerning upcoming projects in the area and planned works on the Uisce Éireann website at www.water.ie/?map=supply-and-service-updates

Uisce Éireann Framework

The Framework for the Future Delivery of Water Services was published in June 2022, setting out the Government policy with Uisce Éireann taking full control of all aspects of the delivery of water and wastewater services.

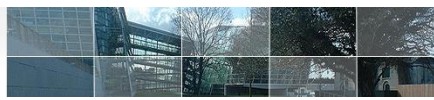
Uisce Éireann is engaging with key national bodies and representative groups to prepare for the implementation of the Framework provisions.

The existing Service Level Agreement will be replaced by a Master Agreement for all local authorities and an individual support service agreement per local authority, taking into consideration changes included in the new Framework. In this regard, the Master Cooperation and Data Sharing Agreements were signed by Kildare County Council in May 2023.

Environment

Draft National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy.

The Waste Management Act 1996, as amended requires each local authority to make a Waste Management Plan. The Regional Waste Management Planning Offices, under the auspices of the County and City Management Association, are co-ordinating the preparation of a new Plan on a



national basis, titled “National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy.” A copy of the latest update was recently circulated to each Chief Executive.

The Plan sets out a framework for the prevention and management of waste in Ireland for the period 2023 – 2029, and it is expected that the new Plan will be implemented in Q1 2024 by Chief Executive Order in each of the Local Authorities.

Details are on www.mywaste.ie

A National Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) has been launched by the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC). The Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) being introduced is a circular economy initiative, focused on plastic bottles and aluminium/steel cans. Latest info suggests a go live date in February 2024.

Irish Business Against Litter



Maynooth has topped the rankings as the cleanest town in Ireland by Irish Business Against Litter (IBAL) in their 2023 survey.

Maynooth was commended for attaining a level of cleanliness over the course of 2023 which ‘IBAL “have not encountered in two decades of surveying”. Maynooth University campus was given mention, being described as ‘spotless’, with the main street achieving an ‘excellent result for a busy shopping environment.’”

Naas, the top ranking town in 2021 and 2022 also performed well achieving status ‘cleaner than European norms.’”

Cathaoirleach of the Clane/Maynooth Municipal District, Councillor Tim Durkan accepted the award in Courthouse Square, Maynooth. Speaking at the presentation he said, “It’s a wonderful start to 2024 for Maynooth, to achieve such fantastic results. To be acknowledged for achieving standards that have never been seen in the 21-year history of the IBAL survey is a great honour. This award is a great acknowledgement of the work of Maynooth Tidy Towns volunteers, the local retail community,



Maynooth University, Kildare County Council and many others.”



Water Framework Directive

Monitoring and investigation work continue in the water priority areas under the Water Framework Directive.

The council awaits the publication of the third cycle of the River Basin Management Plan for the period up to 2027.

This document is expected to be published this year and will set the priorities and areas for action over the next cycle.

Enforcement Priorities 2024

The National Waste Enforcement Priorities 2022-2024 were recently reviewed by the National Steering Group and a number of changes were made to reflect these discussions. The following remain as high-level priorities in the area of waste enforcement:

- Tackling significant illegal waste activity,

- Construction and Demolition activity,
- End-of-Life Vehicles,
- Waste collection,
- PRI initiatives.

The Kildare County Council Recommended Minimum Criteria for Environmental Inspections (RMCEI) and the 2023 Plan submitted to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Kildare County Council was judged as one of the top performers Nation-wide in terms of environmental inspections.

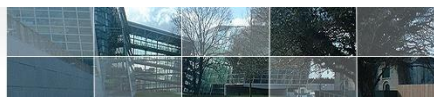
Environment Complaints

Pollution complaints continue to be investigated in accordance with national guidelines.

Domestic/Commercial Refuse Collections

Domestic and commercial waste collections are continuing as normal.

Details of approved operators are available via the National Waste Collection Permit Office (NWCPO) website: www.nwcpo.ie



GAA Green Clubs Initiative



Cappagh GAA club is the pilot club for Kildare for this national initiative.

The next phase of the project involves reducing waste arisings within the clubhouse and work on this is proceeding.

New Initiatives – Civic Amenity Site North – Near Celbridge

A joint project of the civic amenity in conjunction with the proposed Municipal District depot is being assessed.

Catchment Flooding

Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study (CFRAMS)

A steering group with the Office of Public Works (OPW) has been established to progress the consultant's brief for schemes within Kildare. The municipal districts will be briefed as schemes from the Catchment Flood Risk Assessment Management (CFRAM's) Programme commence.

Morell Flood Management Scheme

Construction of this scheme is continuing.



Further details of the scheme can be found at: <https://www.morellfms.ie/>

Athy Flood Relief Scheme

RPS Consulting Engineers have been appointed as the design consultants for the Athy Flood Relief Scheme (FRS). Specification of survey work and investigation contracts have begun. A Public Participation Day is scheduled for late February.

Naas Flood Relief Scheme

Detailed hydraulic modelling work continues for the Naas FRS. Details of the scheme can be found at: <https://www.floodinfo.ie/frs/en/naas/home/>

Kerdiffstown Park project

The construction of Kerdiffstown Park is at an advanced stage and it is anticipated that the park will be operational in Q1 2024.



The 3D Visualisation Model of the proposed park can be viewed on Kildare County Council website: <http://kildare.ie/CountyCouncil/KerdiffstownPark/KerdiffstownParkVisualisation/>

The local community is being kept informed of progress through the Community Liaison Group (CLG) meetings and the wider public have access to updates on the council website: <https://kildarecoco.ie/AllServices/KerdiffstownPark/>

Cemetery Capital Programme

This programme, which includes cemetery extensions, capital type internal improvements and proposals for columbarium walls is currently being reviewed in line with funding availability.

Columbarium Walls

New Columbarium walls were completed in Crookstown and Rathangan cemeteries.

It is proposed to install further Columbarium Walls in St. Michaels

Athy, Leixlip Confey, and St. Conleth's Newbridge cemeteries as part of the current capital programme of works. Detailed design drawings and draft plans will be presented to each of the relevant Municipal District's for approval during January 2024.

Cemetery Works

Allen

Works have been completed on a cemetery extension.

Staplestown

Landscape improvement works are expected to commence during Q1 2024 to open the lands to the rear for future internments.

Confey

Works have been recently completed to allocate additional plots for internments within the cemetery.

Athy Cemetery Boundary Wall

Works completed on new boundary wall between the cemetery and the new Athy Southern Distributor Road. Boycetown, Kilcock

Tenders have issued for major drainage improvement works and a letter of intent has issued to a preferred contractor. It is hoped to commence works in March 2024.



Newbridge

Works were completed on Newbridge Cemetery car park in December 2023 providing a new surfacing, delineated parking, fencing and improved drainage.

Monasterevin

Works have been carried out on cutting back shrubs and bushes within the cemetery. Removal of rubbish (stone, clay etc) from the cemetery has also taken place.

Climate

Climate Action Regional Office



The Climate Action Regional Office (CARO) works to support local authorities to drive climate action in their jurisdictions and coordinate activities to promote effective climate action across the local government sector. For more information on the work of the CARO, see our website at www.caro.ie

Local Authority Climate Action Training Programme



The training programme 2020-2023 is nearing the end of its term. The programme maintains an objective to build capacity of the c.29,000 staff and 949 elected members on climate change, climate action and the role of local authorities on climate action.

Through six unique training pillars the programme has to date, provided some 25,000 training places to almost 23,000 participants (figures correct as of end of December 2023). Training continues with outdoor staff until the end of March 2024 under an extended SLA with the Department. Training will also include fire services staff.

A high level steering group chaired by a representative of the Climate Action, Transport, Circular Economy and Network (CATCEN) committee will meet for its first meeting on 17 January 24 to oversee the development of a training plan guiding future training needs and priorities in the area of local authority climate action.

Local Authority Climate Action Plans (LA CAP)

Local authorities continue to engage with the process of developing their LA CAPs for adoption on or before the 23 February 2024.



Kildare County Council adopted their LACAP on the 18 December 2023. Currently local authorities are at the third and final stage preparing the final draft for adoption by resolution with the elected members of the council.

Elected members will have the opportunity to consider all documentation including adaptation and mitigation evidence base, draft plan, SEA and AA reports and submissions of stakeholders before adopting the plan by way of resolution.

Local Authority Progress Reporting

– Climate Adaptation Strategies:

Annual reporting on progress of the implementation of Local Authority Climate Adaptation Strategies / Plans has been undertaken by all Climate Action Officers/Leads in all local authorities. A sectoral report collated by CARO for progress in the 2022 – 2023 period was submitted to the Department in November 2023.



Sub-Regional Energy Projects

The CARO are working with local authorities in each of the four sub-regions to develop regional energy

units to avail of funding for projects that support the decarbonisation of local authority buildings. The energy units comprise:

Mid-east (Kildare, Meath, Wicklow and Louth), commencing projects and accessing Pathfinder support from SEAI.

Midlands (Laois, Offaly, Westmeath, Longford, Roscommon), have developed their project pipeline and sourced funding to match Pathfinder support.

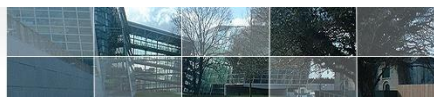
Border (Cavan, Monaghan, Leitrim) are working with project manager assistance from SEAI to build a project pipeline.

South-east (Carlow, Kilkenny, Tipperary, Wexford, Waterford City and County) have prepared a position paper and issued to SEAI for their consideration. Further discussion will continue to progress to MOU stage.



Reimagining Local Authority Fleet

The CARO supports the reconfigured working group established to explore support and options for local authorities on fleet decarbonization.



A survey was distributed to local authorities recently to gauge their alignment with Avoid-Shift-Improve principles. The findings of this survey was compiled for the CATCEN committee meeting in December and will be used as the basis for a fleet manager network meeting on March 2024.

Development of Local Authority Key Performance Indicators on Climate Action



Data collation for 2022 was published in December 2023. Data collection for 2023 will be undertaken in March 2024. Thereafter, data collection will be undertaken every March.

GAA / CCMA Green Clubs Programme:



The CARO continues to work with the GAA and expert partners to advance the Green Club Programme. Phase two of the Programme commenced in

early 2023 increasing the number of participating clubs to approximately 200. During phase two of the Programme clubs are working their way through a range of sustainability and climate action related projects as provided for by Green Club Toolkits covering the five themes of Energy, Water, Waste, Biodiversity and Travel.

Participating clubs are working to implement actions and projects detailed within the toolkits towards supporting the pursuit of climate action initiatives at club and community level. Kildare County Council's continued support of Green Clubs will help to achieve climate actions and targets set out in the Council's new Climate Action Plan.

Kildare County Council Climate Action

Kildare Climate Action Office



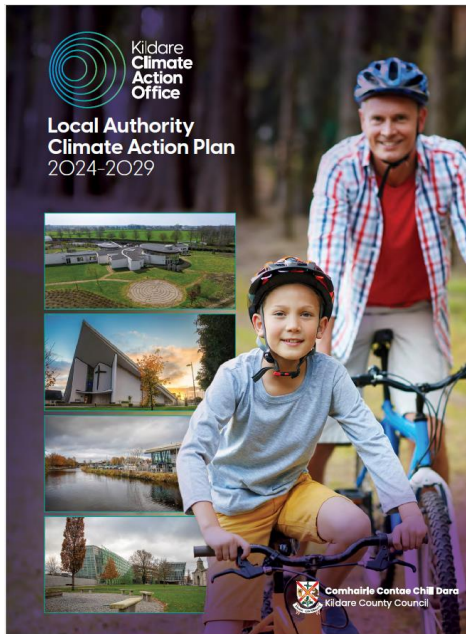
Inspiring change, shaping tomorrow

The CARO office provides support to the Climate Action Office (CAO). In turn the CAO assists the functional areas of the council to decarbonise



their roles and work through the members of the Climate Action Team and Energy Management Team together with the Senior Management Team.

Kildare County Council Climate Action Plan (with DZ and SECAP)



Kildare County Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2029 was officially the first plan to be adopted in the country as of the 18 December 2023. The plan and associated documentation will be digitally available on our Council website from 17 January 2024 as statutorily required. The plan will also be available digitally in Irish. The challenging work of all contributors is acknowledged, and we look forward to continuing to work together to reach the targets set.

Decarbonising Zone Maynooth



Chapter five of the Climate Action Plan is dedicated to the Decarbonising Zone (DZ), a test bed or living laboratory to test solutions to decarbonising society. To promote this essential element that will inform other towns and villages known as fast followers, a logo and byline as depicted above has been developed to market and brand the associated research, actions and resulting outcomes.

The Mid East Energy Unit (MEEU)

SEAI have agreed to pilot Pathfinder funding for the installation of approx. 220 Photo Voltaic (PV) solar panels at the Cotton Mills, PV and Geothermal heat pumps for heating at K Leisure pools facilities at Naas and Athy in conjunction with works on swimming pools in Meath and Wicklow. There may also be funding available for upgrading works to some of the library buildings. The work will enable retrofit works (energy efficiency and decarbonisation) on existing buildings, thus reducing energy utility bill costs.



Given the potential for future district heating in Naas the unit is working to ascertain the capacity to undertake a district heating feasibility study in the first half of 2024. SEAI have agreed to pay towards this initiative.

Kildare County Council hopes to apply for ISO 50001 (Energy Management System) certification in Q3/Q4 of 2024, for the organisation as a whole.

Climate Action SPC:

The scheduled meeting on 06 December 2023 took place and included very informative presentations from Fergus Sharkey, (Head of Business Supports and Transport, SEAI) on SEAI Supports for Business Low Carbon Transition, followed by a presentation from Meabh Boylan (Kildare County Council Biodiversity Officer) on Kildare County Council Biodiversity and Climate Change and an update from Paula O'Rourke (Climate Action Coordinator) on the Draft Climate Action Plan and Maynooth DZ. The next meeting is scheduled for the 06 February 2024.

Climate Action Community Initiatives

Funding Aids and Projects:



An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais, Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige
Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth

The successful implementation of Gnáthóga Nádúrtha (Natural Habitats) - initiative as part of the Arts Council's Invitation to Collaboration scheme has been completed.

The ambitious arts led inquiry, an interdisciplinary, collaborative intervention, sited across three natural heritage peatland habitats in Carlow, Kildare and Meath brought the urgency of climate action to the forefront.

An application to the Arts Council for a continuation / Phase two of the project that focusses specifically on the artists has been successful and provides an additional €35,000 in funding.

People's Patches for Community Climate Action:

Kildare, Longford and Laois County Council along with Maynooth University, The Useless Project and Neighbourhood Network (lead) have been awarded by Pobal €271,000 funding for the Community Climate Action project submitted in January 2022. The project is to inform in communities how to source and grow



quality local food and increase cooking skills to enable meaningful dietary skills to combat poor nutritional uptake especially within deprived neighbourhoods.



**‘Climate Design Lab: Where Creativity In Practice Meets Climate Action’
Under Creative Climate Action Fund II:**

‘Agents for Change Creative Ireland’ informed Kildare County Council on 12 July that a conditional award of funding of €250,000 has been approved. This conditional offer is subject to a Service Level Agreement (SLA).

Climate Design Lab: Where Creativity In Practice Meets Climate Action

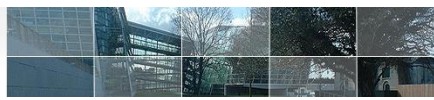
Kildare County Council along with the Design Innovation Department in Maynooth University and Riverbank Arts Centre will pilot a Climate Design Lab that aims to use design-thinking and behavioural economics to co-create fun theory solutions for Maynooth, the decarbonising zone for the county. Preliminary work has commenced with Maynooth University.

Community Climate Action Program Fund:

Our Community Climate Action Officer has undertaken a scheduled program of outreach to gain appropriate submission by the end of February deadline. To date the information has been received well and potential projects are being put forward by interested parties. The official launch by the Department was rescheduled to 13 December 2023 based on the need to program in GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) requirements specific to the fund. Applications are to be submitted by 06 March with €897,000 grant funding available for award in the county.

Open Data Engagement Fund:

In collaboration with the innovation Team and MERITS we have successfully been awarded €5,000 from the Open Data Unit in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. The funding is to sponsor prizes for our hackathon called ‘Hacktheclimate’ in February which should place us firmly on the map for participants.



Research

Gas Innovation Fund and Public Service Innovation Fund:

This project aims to assess the potential for green spaces to generate biomass e.g., grass-clippings as a feedstock for energy generation in Kildare with the potential of scaling the study up to different county councils and state bodies nationwide. An agreement has been formulated with Maynooth University to enable the research to commence and the work is progressing at a pace. It is expected that the project will be completed by Q2/3 of 2024.

Alternatives to Herbicides Project

Kildare County Council's research project - alternatives for pesticides - continues with the help of our collaborating partners, Maynooth University, Trinity College Dublin, National Biodiversity Data Centre and Teagasc. The finalised data report and practical guide for the maintenance of open spaces have been disseminated to all partners. Analysis of soil biomes continues with additional experiments being undertaken to finalise maintenance aspects. Sophia Couchman has commenced her PhD and it is expected she will have the work

completed Q1/2 of 2025. It is with thanks to partners the findings will inform the National Biodiversity Data Centre latest brochures. Presently the short guidance document is to be graphically designed and published with copies provided to each partner.

Awards

The Grass2Gas project was shortlisted for the Chambers Ireland – Excellence in Local Government Awards 2023, Sustainability Environment and Biodiversity Award held in November 2023.

The project is shortlisted for the Green Awards under the Green Technology Award which will be held on 27 February 2024.

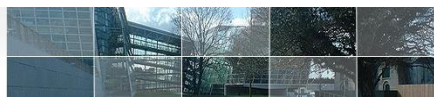
Local Community

Development Committee

The last meeting of the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) was held on the 29 November 2023 in the Merits building.

SICAP - Social Inclusion Programme

Kildare LCDC has appointed County Kildare LEADER Partnership (CKLP)



to implement the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) 2024-2028 following an open procurement process.

SICAP focuses on responding to priorities agreed by Kildare LCDC that fit with current national priorities.

For further information contact: County Kildare LEADER Partnership

www.countykildarelp.ie or telephone 045-895450

LEADER Programme

Kildare LCDC have signed a contract with CKLP to implement the new EU-funded Rural Development LEADER Programme 2023-2027, following the recent approval of the Kildare LEADER Local Development Strategy by the Department of Rural and Community Development. Funding of €5.44 million has been allocated to Kildare over the lifetime of the Programme. Details on the process and how to apply for and access LEADER grant aid is currently being finalised by the Department.

The current LEADER programme is at the final stages with projects having until 31 March 2024 to complete their work.

For further information contact: County Kildare LEADER Partnership

www.countykildarelp.ie, or telephone 045-895450

Sláintecare Healthy Communities

Work is progressing very positively in Athy to roll out a range of evidence-based health programmes in addition to local supports to engage people in healthy activities.

A range of programmes are available in Athy through Slaintecare. The four themes of Dept of Health Funded Projects of €75,000 in 2023/2024 are

- (1) Food Insecurity
- (2) Traveller Wellbeing
- (3) Supporting vulnerable children and young people
- (4) Woodstock Artist in Residency.

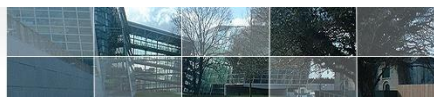
Service Level Agreements are in place with the various project partners and agreed actions under each of the four themes are ongoing.

For further information contact Maria Healy, Local Development Officer phone 087-9974155 or email

mhealy@kildarecoco.ie

Healthy Ireland

Healthy Ireland funding continues to be rolled out under the LCDC on behalf of the county. Pobal announced additional funding of €35,000 towards the 2024 budget which will fund new initiatives agreed



by the LCDC. Priorities of the overall programme for 2023-2025 focus on mental health and physical activity initiatives.

Service Level Agreements are in place with the five project partners in the HI Round 4 Programme 2023 – 2025 and programmes are ongoing.

For further information contact Claire Morrissey, Healthy Ireland Co-ordinator: phone 086-8858505 or email cmorrissey@kildarecoco.ie

Empowering Communities Programme Athy

Athy has been selected by the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) as a target area for a new community development programme 'Empowering Communities Programme' (ECP) with a funding allocation of €140,000. County Kildare LEADER Partnership are the programme lead on this work and employ the project staff. The Department have confirmed that the programme will be continued into 2024 with the same budget allocation.

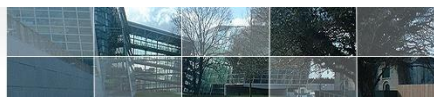
Local Economic and Community Plan

The Consultation Stage two in developing the LECP is concluding. Over 1,300 individuals engaged

directly in consultation through targeted meetings, survey and focus groups. The outcomes of the consultation were considered by the Advisory Steering Group, and amendments to the draft vision and high-level goals were agreed by the LCDC and the Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning SPC at their meetings at the end of 2024. Work is commencing to draft the plan based on the analysis and consultations that took place in Stages one and two. AIRO in Maynooth University are finalising updating and analysing Census 2022. The plan is on track to be finalised in early 2024. For further information contact: Susan Bookle, LECP Co-ordinator ph. 087 6687808 or email sbookle@kildarecoco.ie

LGBTI+ Dormant Account Funding

Kildare LCDC has been awarded Dormant Account funding of €16,852 to support LGBTI+ Community Organisations. Funding will be allocated to help provide services to LGBTI+ organisations targeting marginalised people experiencing exclusion on account of their LGBTI+ identities.



Local Enhancement Funding

Kildare has been allocated Local Enhancement Funding in 2024 to support community groups for capital type costs. Funding is allocated as follows: €163,322.51 towards community groups and €34,749.47 will be ring fenced for women's groups. Further details will be circulated in the coming month.

The next meeting of the LCDC is scheduled for: Wednesday 31 January 2024

Transport, Mobility and Open Spaces

Transport

M4 Maynooth to Leixlip M4 Eastbound Bus Priority Measures

The Part 8 for the M4 Eastbound Bus Priority Measures was presented at the February 2023 Council meeting and was approved. Work is ongoing with Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) to progress to construction.

M4 Westbound

The Westbound project will progress to the end of Phase two. It is likely at that stage that the project will be divided into three areas- Westbound

Bus Running, Active Travel and Safety Measures.

Athy Main Street (N78)

Kildare National Roads Office (KNRO) have undertaken a pavement design and safety improvement for pavement improvement works on the existing N78 through Athy town and have also been liaising with Public Realm and Kildare County Council Roads with regard to the Emily Square project. Now that the Athy Distributor Road (ADR) is open, TII are being asked by Department of Transport (DoT) to contribute to a more significant public realm type project through Athy Main street. If agreement can be reached then Kildare County Council Roads Project team will assume responsibility for delivery.

Existing N78 to be reclassified - new ADR will become N78 in Athy – DoT / TII in discussion as to further requirements.

Leinster Road Bridges

Rehabilitation Contract Scheme involves rehabilitation works to M7, Junction 10 Overbridge; M7, Newhall Overbridge; M7 Greatconnell Overbridge; M7 Corbally Overbridge; M9, Kineagh Road Overbridge. Glas



Civil Engineering Limited has been awarded this contract.

Athy Distributor Road (ADR)

The ADR is now open (31 October 2023). BAM has achieved substantial completion, however snagging work still continues.

New Machinery Yard Relocation and Regional Salt Barn

Project is nearing completion. Regional Salt Barn is 99% complete. Yard is 99% complete. Admin Building is 95% complete. Project has largely transferred from Capital Project to Implementation phase.

The construction phase of the project is due to be completed by End January 2024. The IT department will then commence the delivery of IT to the facility in February, with commencement of staff moving to the new offices in March. Insurances (IPB) are in place, furniture has been ordered and arrangements being made for security.

A tender is being prepared for consultancy services for traffic management and operational plans for the site. It is expected that the machinery yard operatives will commence moving into the new facility in May 2024.

Maynooth Eastern Ring Road

The Oral Hearing for the CPO went ahead on 04 May 2023. A decision is expected in due course.

Celbridge Hazelhatch Mobility Corridor

It is expected CPO and Planning Consent will be submitted in Q2 2024.

Maynooth Transport Strategy

The Area Based Transport Assessment (ABTA) is at final draft and has been referred initially to Meath County Council, TII and NTA for noting. It will then issue to councillors for information before being published.

Newbridge Transport Strategy

AECOM have started modelling and option development for Newbridge. Phase two consultation will be scheduled for later this year.

Junction Programme

Phase 1A of the Rural Junctions Improvement Project is for the delivery of five separate schemes, which are to be delivered in tandem. These schemes are listed below. Consultants are O'Connor Sutton Cronin.

1. Dagwelds Cross R403/R409
2. Prosperous Main Junction R403/L2002
3. Allenwood Cross Roads R403/R415



4. Berts Cross, Athy R417/ L8-68/7

5. Watchhouse Cross, Naas R411/
L2023

Surveying at these locations has commenced.

Phase 1B tender assessment is complete and has been awarded for design. Consultants are Clandillon Consulting. Clandillon Consulting are in the process of familiarisation with their phase of the programme.

Newbridge Southern Orbital Relief Road.

Planning permission 22/1504 for part of relief road and second bridge over the Liffey has been granted by Kildare County Council to Aston Ltd. Kildare County Council is in touch with Department of Transport in relation to a funding application.

Sustainable Transport Section - Projects Update

Maynooth North-South Corridor (Phase 5)

Project ready for construction.

Royal Canal Greenway (Maynooth- Leixlip)

Section one is open to the public. The rest of the scheme, from Louise Bridge to Maynooth is being retendered.

Naas to Kill Active Travel Scheme
Project stopped.

Green Lane Active Travel Scheme
Project ready for construction, pending land transfer agreements.

Naas to Sallins Greenway

Consent to proceed to Part 8 Public Consultation Process is awaited from Waterways Ireland. Part 8 to commence in Q1 2024 on section of project along the public road.

Sallins Village Active Travel Scheme

Design of permanent scheme awaiting an evaluation of rapid build options for the scheme, as requested by the NTA.

Celbridge Road Active Travel Scheme

Submission of Phase two Option Selection/Rapid Build Report due to NTA in January 2024.

Kilcock Road Active Travel Scheme

Approval from the NTA required prior to starting Public Consultation.

Craddockstown Active Travel Scheme

Project ready for construction.



Kilcullen Road Active Travel Scheme

Works progressing well and due to finish in Q2 2024.

Celbridge Active Travel Bridge

Detailed design of bridge structure and ancillary works are continuing.

Athy College Campus to Southern Distributor Road Active Travel Scheme

Project stopped.

Monread Road (Naas) Active Travel Scheme

Preliminary design awaiting an evaluation of rapid build options for the scheme, as requested by the NTA.

Dublin Road (Naas) Active Travel Scheme

Project ready for construction.

Monasterevin Active Travel Scheme

Approval from the NTA required prior to starting Public Consultation.

Newbridge Road (Naas) Active Travel Scheme

Preliminary design awaiting evaluation of rapid build options for the scheme, as requested by the NTA.

Naas to Newbridge Interurban Active Travel Scheme

Preliminary design awaiting evaluation of rapid build options for the scheme, as requested by the NTA.

Newbridge Main Street and Station Road Active Travel Scheme

Preliminary design awaiting evaluation of rapid build options for the scheme, as requested by the NTA.

Cycle Safety Infrastructure at Signalised Junctions

Construction completed.

Blessington Road Active Travel Scheme

Construction completed.

Meadowbrook Active Travel Scheme

Project ready for construction.

R418/R408 Maynooth Active Travel Scheme

Insufficient funding to commence project.

Safe Routes to School Round 1 Schemes

€50,000 allocation – Straffan National School.

€50,000 allocation – St. Brigid's Primary School, Kildare Town –

Section 38 proposals being prepared.



€50,000 allocation – Holy Child School Ballycane – Section 38 proposals being prepared.

Safe Routes to School Round 2 Schemes

€20,000 allocation – Patrician Primary/St. Conleth’s Schools, Newbridge.

€20,000 allocation – Scoil Bhríde/Scoil Phadraig, Clane.

€20,000 allocation – Scoil Mochua, Celbridge.

Poplar Square Naas Active Travel Measures

Project stopped.

Supplementary Projects

Funding provided by NTA for funding for several projects and construction of these are completed.

Naas Mobility Network Integration Project

Topographical survey and Traffic surveys completed. Department of Transport has removed the Project from the Pathfinder Programme.

Speed Limit Review

No update from the Department of Transport at present.

Municipal District Works

Roads Works Programme 2023 is complete – all records uploaded onto MapRoad and claims submitted to Department of Transport.

Restoration Improvement schemes to value of €11.1 million on 67 Km of Local and Regional Roads.

Restoration Maintenance i.e. Surface Dressing work carried out by direct labour on 104 km of roads – 4% of non-national road network (€2.64 million).

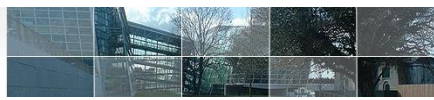
€500,000 of road works carried out under Climate Change Adaptation Resilience Grant on 3 sites and a similar amount under Former National Roads Grants.

Safety Improvement schemes completed at 10 sites countywide to value € 260,000.

Annual call from DoT for grant funding requests on Bridge Rehabilitation, Road Safety works, CCAR (Climate) and former National roads (FNR) for 2024 have been submitted to DoT.

TII Road Surfacing grant to value €67,500 to be drawn down via PRS to cover works carried out on N78 (Athy – M9 Roundabout). Other maintenance monies will be utilised on both N78 and N81 before year end.

Winter Maintenance season commenced on 16 October. 705 km of



roads now being treated and allowing for National Primary roads covered by TII – 31.5 % of all public roads included in county Winter Maintenance programme – higher than neighbouring counties. Salting route map is available to view on the Council website.

Public Lighting

PLEEP Survey commencing in Q1 2024 with detailed design to follow. Works on site to commence in Q3 2024. Contract duration is for eight months and due for completion in Q2 2025 which will lead to annual savings of approx €750,000 on energy and maintenance costs going forward.

Open Spaces (Parks)

News and Highlights

Allenwood Playground

Works are continuing on the site. The playground equipment is being installed at the moment.

Newbridge – Natural Play Area

A tender has been issued for the construction of a natural play area in ‘The Strand’ area of the Liffey Linear Park. Closing date for the tenders is 9th February.

Tree Planting

A tender to carry out tree planting around the county in housing estates, and in parks and open spaces is being prepared. It is planned to carry out planting in February and March.

Planning, Enterprise, Economic Development and Emergency Service

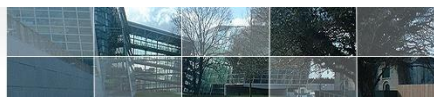
Planning

Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029:

The Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029 came into effect on 28 January 2023.

Work is underway on implementing a series of objectives and actions for 2023/2024 with work started on:

- Sustrainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) Guidelines
- Permeability Guidelines
- Masterplan: Naas NWQ / appointment
- Strategic Employment Locations Study
- Allotments Strategy
- County Kildare Urban and Regional Parks Strategy; and
- Liffey Valley Park (Phase One) Feasibility Study; and



- Corbally Canal / River Liffey enhancement (Kilcullen to Newbridge) Feasibility Study

and Town Renewal Masterplan (TRMP) finalised and will inform the Plan.

Local Area Plans (LAP)

Joint Maynooth and Environs LAP

Envisaged to publish Draft LAP in Q1 2024.

MEABTA – Maynooth and Environment Area Based Transport Assessment complete. Members briefing undertaken in January 2024. Ongoing meetings with Meath County Council.

Newbridge

Pre-draft (non-statutory) consultation commenced on 10 October 2023 and concluded on 28 November 2023. 95 submissions received. The Area Based Transport Assessment (ABTA)

Naas

Maudlins Traffic Modelling and Access Strategy prepared. Will assist the developers to enter into pre-planning consultation on Donnelly Mirrors and Cemex sites. The strategy will appear on the council website under Naas LAP.

Leixlip

Proposed Alteration to the Leixlip LAP:

Confey Masterplan on public consultation to 06 February 2024.

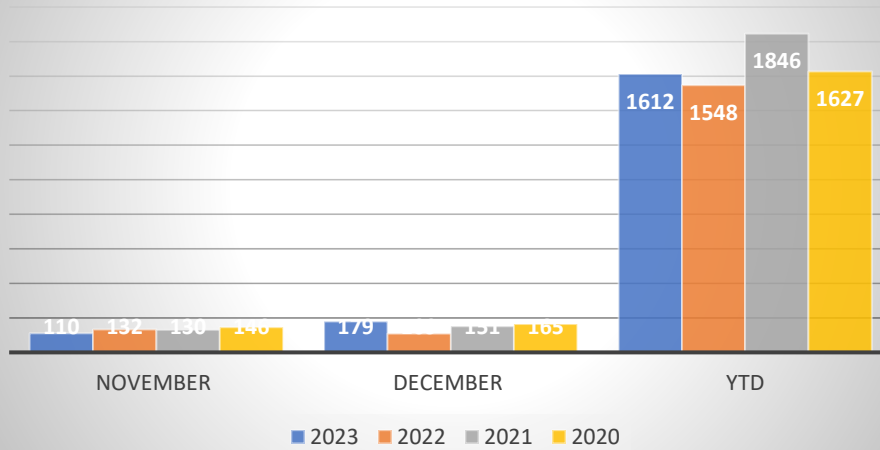
Development Management

ePlanning

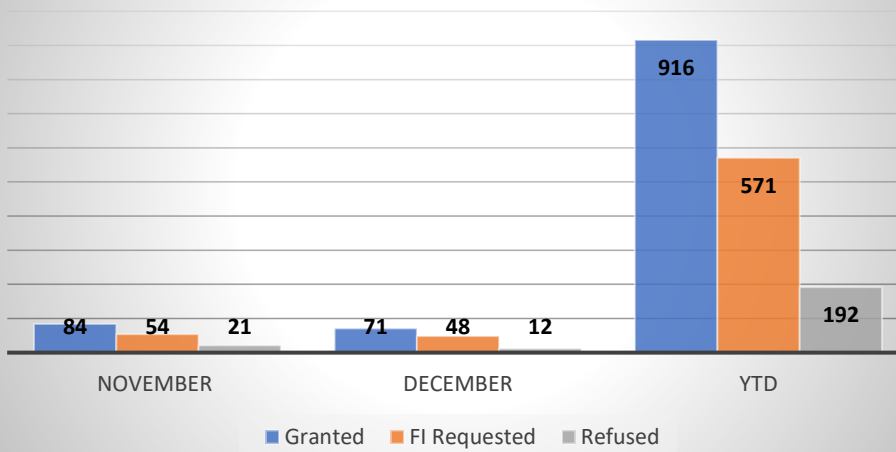
ePlanning went live in Kildare on 27 June 2023. This enables applications and submissions/refs to be submitted via the online planning portal. Confirmation of our live status was communicated to planning agents and Elected Members and positively acknowledged. To date we have seen a steady rate of applications and submissions coming through the online portal, with electronic applications representing c.60.8% of all applications received.



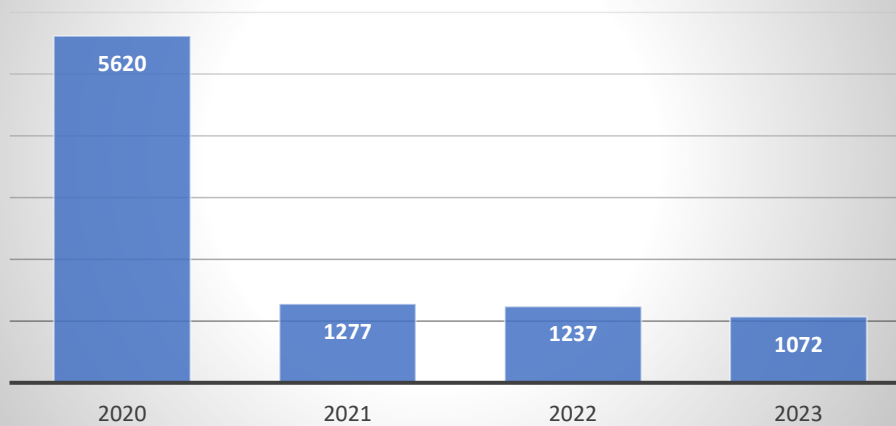
Applications Received



Applications Processed 2023



Units Granted YTD





Strategic Housing Development Applications to An Bord Pleanála (SHD)

Decisions Five SHD applications due between June 2022 – January 2023, remain outstanding with ABP.

Large-scale Residential Development (LRD)

LRD applications must be submitted within six months of the issue date of the LRD Opinion.

LRD Applications Submitted					
Ref No.	Date Lodged	Developer	Location	No of Units	Decision
23/416	20/04/2023	Pousterle Ltd	South Green, Kildare Town	168	Appealed Refuse 12/10/2023
23/494	10/05/2023	Ladas Property Co Ltd	Mill Street, Maynooth	115	Appealed & Appeal Withdrawn: Grant 04/07/2023
23/510	12/05/2023	MRP Oakland Ltd	Ruanbeg & Coolaghaknock, Kildare Town	295	Appealed: Refused 12/11/2023
23/513	12/05/2023	Glenveagh Homes Ltd	Leixlip Demense	237	Appealed: Granted on appeal. Grant 04/08/2023
23/656	15/06/2023	ESJ Blackparks Ltd	Blackparks, Athy	132	Decision Date Appealed Grant 12/10/2023
23/972	31/10/2023	Debussy Properties Ltd	Prosperous Road & Crockaun commons Clane	190	Decision Date 03/01/2024: Further information requested



Heritage, Biodiversity and Conservation

A. Heritage - Progress Updates

1. Community Monuments Fund

Community Monuments Fund dates have been announced with a closing date of 01 February 2024 with two streams.

2. Community Heritage Fund (KCC)

Scheme has been advertised, with a closing date of 08 March 2024.

3. Irish Walled Towns Network

Works being considered in any/all of the four walled towns in Kildare to avail of IWTN funding in 2024.

4. Turas Columbanus

Meeting held on 21 November with all local authorities in ROI and NI to discuss the Shared Island Funded Feasibility Study and Business Case. Consultants will now amend the documents based on feedback received.

5. Historic Monuments Advisory Committee (HMAC)

Final meeting of 2023 took place on 13 December followed by a Christmas lunch.

6. Brigid 1500

Events/conferences have been organised by Maynooth University for 13-15 September.

B. Biodiversity – Progress Updates

Projects currently being prepared for 2024 to avail of the Local Biodiversity Action Plan fund, run by the Department.

C. Conservation– Progress Updates

1. Built Heritage Investment Scheme 2024

The 2024 BHIS scheme has been advertised with a closing date of 19 January.

2. Historic Structures Fund 2024

The 2024 HSF scheme has been advertised with a closing date of 19 January.

3. Conservation Management Plan for St. David’s Castle, Naas

Consultants (Carrig) have been appointed to undertake the Conservation Management Plan a draft of which is expected in January 2024.

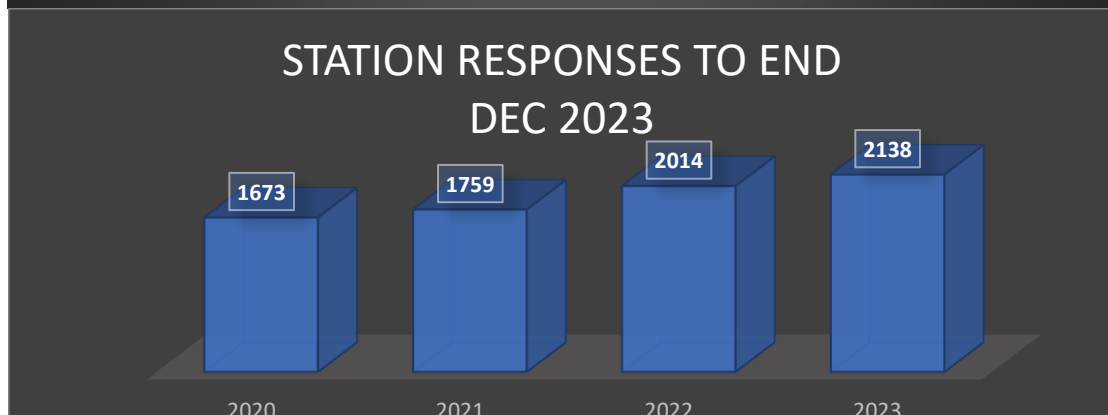


**5. Cassidy’s Distillery –
Conservation Management Plan**
Consultants (Howley Hayes Cooney)
have been appointed to prepare a

Conservation Management Plan for
the Cassidy Distillery Complex in
Monasterevin. Report due for
completion March 2024.

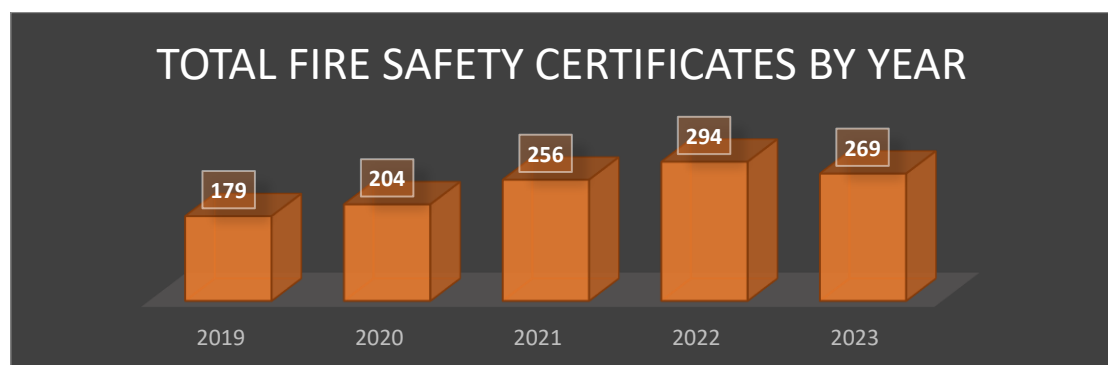
Fire Service Operations:

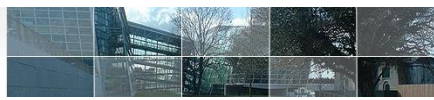
2023 Summary



Fire Safety Certificates

Applications received to the end of December 2023 compared with the totals received in previous years.

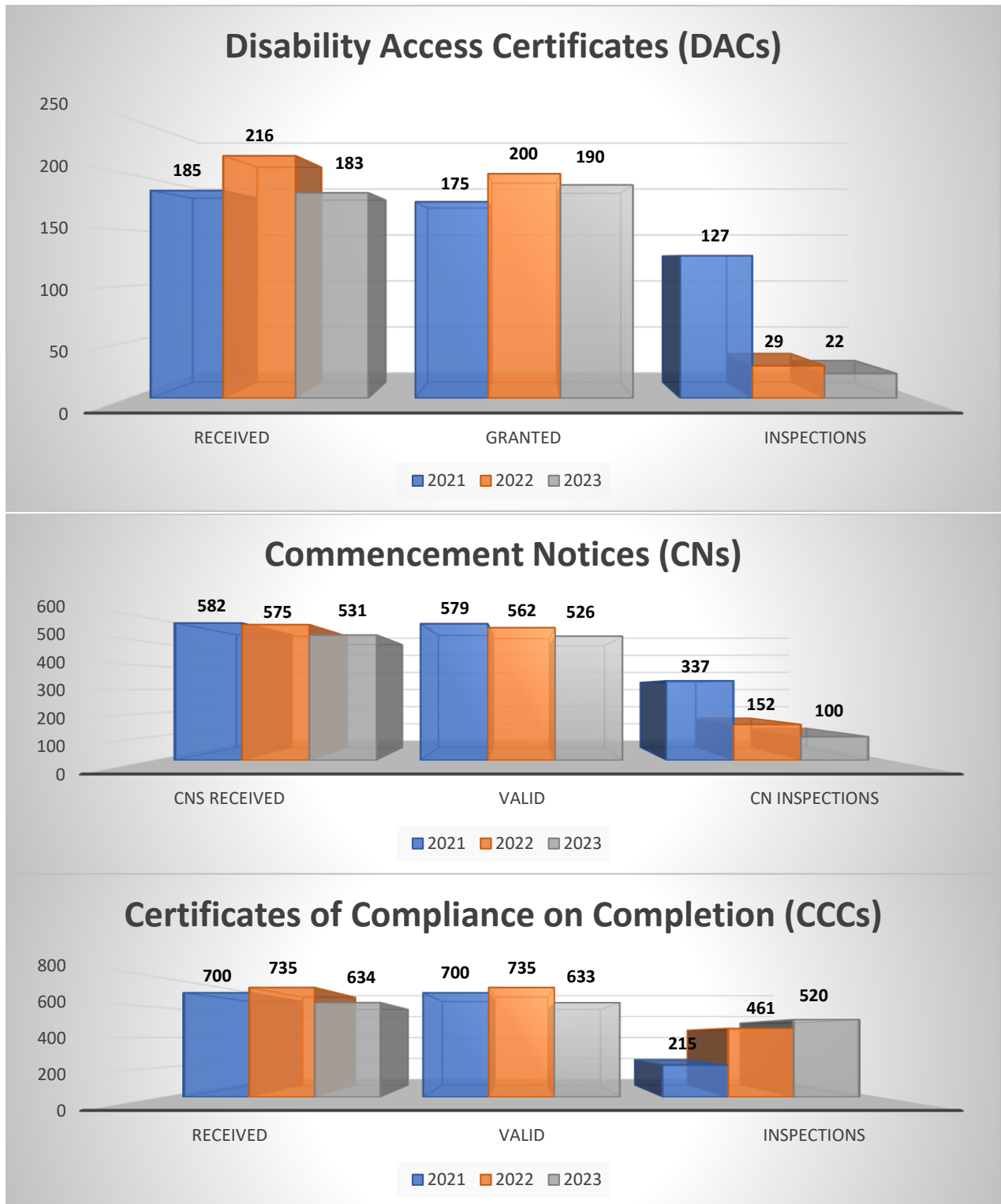


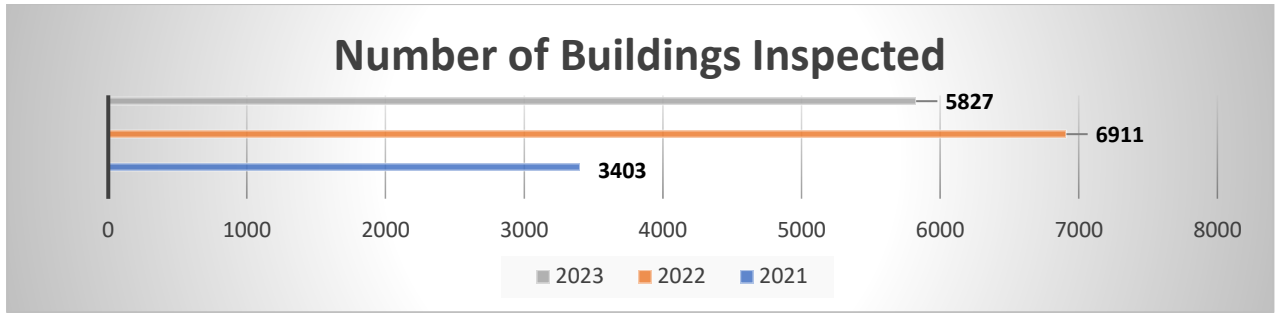
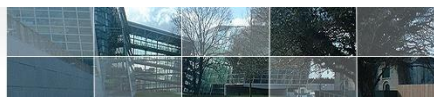


Building and Development Control

The following figures are cumulative up to end of December 2023 set against full year figures for 2021 and 2022.

Building Control





Note: Please note the reduction in building inspection numbers in 2023 is due to staff shortages.

Kildare Fáilte

Key Activities

In December, Into Kildare were happy to promote the extensive range of Festive offerings from all over the county. Kildare celebrated the season with Christmas markets, festive dining and parties, Santa workshops and experiences for all the family. Many of our hotels offered great Christmas breaks including New Year's Eve Balls.



Into Kildare welcomed the Springfield Hotel, Leixlip as a new member and attended their relaunch early in the month. The hotel is now part of the iNua Collection and an extensive refurbishment is underway.



Chloe Kimmins, Sean O'Keeffe Manager Springfield Hotel, Karen Lynch and Sean O'Driscoll CEO iNua

Kildare Fáilte promoted various members on the RTE Today Show as part of our plan to promote County Kildare. With access to the show's large viewership numbers, our two-



minute video provided great coverage and feedback.



We were happy to cover the Sod Turning Ceremony in the Clanard Court Hotel to mark the commencement of refurbishment works to the Shackleton Museum Project.

Preparations are well underway for Brigid 1500 celebrations. Into Kildare will attend event in the Irish Embassy in London and will host reception in the House of Lords. With many events and activities in the planning process, our aim is to maximise this opportunity to market and promote the message of St. Brigid nationwide and overseas. All the while encouraging visitors to the county.



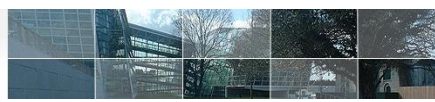
Into Kildare are very happy to announce the Taste of Kildare Festival will return in the summer of 2024. Planning is in place to expand on previous festivals, offering a wider range of food and dining experiences to delight the palate.



Visitor engagement across all social media channels continues to be strong. Into Kildare once again is in the top five search results for many of the Festive events and experiences.

As the year end approached, Into Kildare reviewed activity from 2023 and have put plans in place for 2024 to progress the objectives of the Strategic Plan for Tourism in Kildare.





Local Enterprise Office

Total LEO Financial Supports direct to Clients in 2023.	No. Businesses	Amount Approved (€)
Web Development Grant .	71	€160,900
Priming Grant	11	€320,977
Business Expansion Grant	9	€244,785
Feasibility Study Grant	4	€50,230
Technical Assistance for Micro Exporters	18	€30,591
Agile Innovation Fund	1	€41,235
IP Start grant	4	€8,640
IP Plus grant	2	€35,100
Gradstart grant	2	€60,000
Total		€952,458

Priming Grants Approved (Businesses established less than 18 months)in December 23 Evac meeting .

Noel and Ryan Casey T/A C11 Recovery of Naas Municipal District

was approved €29,158 to support the recruitment of two new employees plus support towards marketing consultancy. C11 provides a renewable energy operated mobile recovery room that travels to all sporting events locally and internationally.

DJ Woodcraft Limited of Naas Municipal District were approved €40,000 to support the recruitment of two new employees. DJ Woodcraft Limited provide a bespoke manufacturing and furniture design service.

Aisling's Taste of Home Limited of Naas Municipal District was approved €18,500 to support the recruitment of one new employee plus support towards marketing consultancy. Aislings Taste of Home Limited is a food manufacturer specializing in Brown Bread.

Helen Corrigan T/A Cill Dara Customized Clothing of Naas Municipal District was approved €17,174 to support the recruitment of one new employee plus support toward equipment purchase. The business provides a range of clothing products that prioritize



environmental and social responsibility while also catering for sensory needs.

**Business Expansion Grants
(Businesses established more than
18 months) Approved in December**

Panabridge Holdings Limited T/A RTS of Kildare/Newbridge Municipal District was approved €30,062 to support the recruitment of two new employees plus support towards software development and purchase of equipment. RTS are a logistic and customs clearance business operating on an international level.

NS Motion Limited of Clane/Maynooth Municipal District was approved €45,000 to support the recruitment of one new employee plus support toward equipment purchase. NS Motion Limited specialize in the fabrication and installation of aluminum systems and automatic entrances.

Isobel Tighe T/A Isobel Egan Ceramics of Naas Municipal District was approved €2,800 to support the purchase of equipment. Isobel is a ceramic artist who works exclusively in porcelain.

**FOCUS ON INNOVATION:
Intellectual Grants Approved
December 23**

IP Start Grant Approved
Faick company Limited of Naas Municipal District was approved €2,160 to assist the company advance their Intellectual Property protection by undertaking patent research and filing.

FOCUS ON EXPORT:

Ten established tech companies are nearing completion on our Export Development Programme with an open Showcase event planned in MERITS on 24 January. Suppliers or entrepreneurs wishing to attend should RSVP to localenterprise@kildarecoco.ie

**Entrepreneurship Guidance Support
ACHIEVEMENT OF 2023 KPIS:**

	2023 TARGET no of businesses	2023 ACTUAL no of businesses
Training clients	1224	1758
Start your own business clients	144	216
Management Development Support	70	103



Mentoring supports to clients	468	673
Digital supports to clients	7	7
Lean supports	18	46
Green supports	20	40

FOCUS ON START-UPS:

Many new year's resolutions center on the leap into entrepreneurship. Our next Start Your Own Business Programme is open for bookings on line [HERE](#) and kicks off on 01 February 2024.

Our Business Advice Clinics run weekly for 1-1 confidential advice for start-ups. Appointment request can be made [HERE](#).

FOCUS ON CRAFT:

GATHER, a collection of gifts created in Kildare, launched as a pop-up in Kildare Village on 26 October and ran until New Years Eve. 24 creative businesses based in Kildare took part in this vibrant craft retail initiative.



The pop-up achieved €206,440.78 in total sales over the ten-week project and welcomed over 35,000 visitors to the store.

The display fixtures designed for Gather have now been relocated to Southwell's, a retail unit on the Square in Kildare Town. Pilot planning is underway to create a retail space for craft at this location.

Kildare Local Enterprise Office are hosting a food brokerage meet the buyer event on 31 January 2024 in MERITS

1. Currently over 180 FOOD suppliers registrations, both Irish and European.
2. Currently 157 meetings already booked.
3. 21 buyers internationally confirmed buyers and a few additional being pursued and will hopefully be confirmed in advance.



FOCUS ON MANUFACTURING:

MEET THE BUYER

Construction, Engineering and Sustainable Energy

REGISTER TODAY.

9th February 2024
National Construction Training Centre, Mount Loken, Dungannon, Co Offaly #33 AW10

FREE full-day event that aims to create impactful commercial opportunities for construction, energy and engineering companies. Meet with some of Europe's and the UK's leading industry buyers.

Sponsored by: [Logos for various sponsors including Kildare County Council, Kildare Chamber of Commerce, etc.]

Meet the Buyers Event for the Construction, Engineering and Sustainable Energy industry taking place on the 09 February 2024. With a host of Ireland and Europe's most innovative and rapidly scaling companies set to attend, and some of Europe and the UK's leading industry buyers present, the event provides a unique opportunity to meet and connect with innovative companies and leading buyers who are ready to do business in 2024. Registration is currently open [here](#) although places are limited.

FOCUS ON WOMEN IN BUSINESS:

Join us as we celebrate St. Brigid and her legacy on Thursday 01 February in Kilkea Castle from 12.00 p.m. – 2.30 p.m. This is a wonderful opportunity to connect with Kildare's Women in Business a enjoy lunch in the beautiful setting of Kilkea Castle.

Women in Business are celebrating

BRIGID 1500

1st February 12:00PM - 2:30PM
Kilkea Castle Hotel, Castledermot, Co-Kildare, R14 XE97.

Kildare County Council's Local Enterprise Office are hosting the Women in Business 'Brigid 1500 Luncheon,' to celebrate and commemorate St. Brigid, the woman, the life, the legacy.

Featuring the inspirational guest speaker and best selling author of 'Poor,' Dr Katriona O'Sullivan.

**PLACES ARE LIMITED
BOOK NOW**

Willy Fleming Asset Management, Kildare Chamber of Commerce, Kildare County Council, in association with County Kildare Chamber, Network 43.000 Ireland.

We are proud to have as our guest of honor Dr. Katriona O'Sullivan, best-selling author of 'Poor,' who will share insights of her life and wisdom at this empowering gathering. Poor is her extraordinary story - moving, funny, brave, and sometimes startling - of how Katriona turned her life around in the face of so many challenges . bookings can be done online [.BOOK HERE.](#)



Economic Support Services

MD Applications as of end of year 2023	No. of Apps	Value of App Approved
Under shopfront and window display.		
Kildare/Newbridge	24	€44,639.00
Athy	25	€32,484.00
Naas	29	€36,965.00
Clane/Maynooth	10	€15,478.20
Celbridge/Leixlip	19	€30,285.25

The General Shopfront Improvement Scheme Grant for 2024 is due to open in the early Spring while the Brigid 1500 Retail Window Merchandising Grant is open for January and February. The Economic Development team continues to visit retailers across the county providing them with information on all the supports available.

Skills Audit

Kildare County Council published a request for quotation for a suitable consultancy to undertake a skills audit of County Kildare; responses are under review at present.

The audit will comprise a detailed analysis of the existing talent and skills within the county and the skills requirements across the county over the medium term. It is anticipated the

audit will be completed by April 2024 when, at this point, it will inform Kildare County Council's strategic employment/ industrial land study (currently being undertaken by the Forward Planning Department) and the tenderer will then work to deliver a comprehensive report to determine a strategy for the County by June 2024.

Kildare Diaspora Engagement Strategy:

Kildare County Council will publish its first Diaspora newsletter with a New Year message from Ms. Sonya Kavanagh, Chief Executive; the newsletter will comprise topical stories of interest to Kildare's global population.

The Irish World will conduct an interview with Ms. Marian Higgins, Director of Services; the Irish World is a leading diaspora publication in the UK.

Athy Food, Beverage and Skills Innovation Hub

The procurement process is currently underway with a submission date for proposals end-January. The successful bidder is anticipated to be appointed by late-March once the tender validation and evaluation process has been completed. It is



anticipated that the project will be completed in 18 months upon commencement.

Kilcock Green and Sustainable Enterprise Park Feasibility Study

Upon the completion of a feasibility study, Kildare County Council identified the Just Transition Fund as a potential funding mechanism for the proposed development. Following feedback from Pobal regarding a concept note submitted, Kildare County Council is now in a position to submit an application for the proposed development. Progression will be very much subject to the appropriate planning and development regulations be in order.

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planning and development regulations be in order.

Kildare County Council Industrial Estate Enhancement

A project manager and contractor has been procured to deliver enhancement works on four industrial estates owned by Kildare County Council in Newbridge, Kilcullen, Rathangan and Celbridge; the works have commenced and will enhance the exteriors and signage of the respective estates.

K-Hub Activity future and existing . Kildare Craft, Creativity and Design Hub, Courthouse Kildare

The consultants have completed the stakeholder analysis and are finalising the draft feasibility study at present. Kildare County Council has reached a lease agreement for the deployment of a pilot on a smaller footprint in two retail units in Kildare Town's Market Square.

Fashion, Textiles and Design Hub (former BOI Monasterevin)

The consultants have submitted the feasibility study for the building; funding mechanisms are now being investigated, should the appropriate planning and development regulations



be for the proposed development we will commence work in Q1 2024. MERITS in Naas hosted a number of training and capability-development programmes recently including Skillnet training courses at weekends and a Tech Pre-Accelerator programme commenced in December which will run for 12 weeks.

In February, MERITS will facilitate a pilot programme of Coder-Dojo to encourage young people in the Kildare community to develop their knowledge and expertise around technology and software development.

The Athy Enterprise Centre continues to develop and is being considered by local businesses as a base to facilitate their expansion which will help to increase the number of local jobs available in Athy.

K Hubs Featured in Kildare Sunday Business post 21 January 2023

In order to promote the wealth of Hub space both Private and Public available in County Kildare we are

taken a two page spread in the Sunday Business Post.

Appendix: Business Supports

Please advise your constituents of the following business supports available in response to their ongoing business needs **from All Government Bodies Outlined on the Kildare LEO**

[Website Localenterprise.ie/Kildare](http://Localenterprise.ie/Kildare)

**Sonya Kavanagh
Chief Executive**