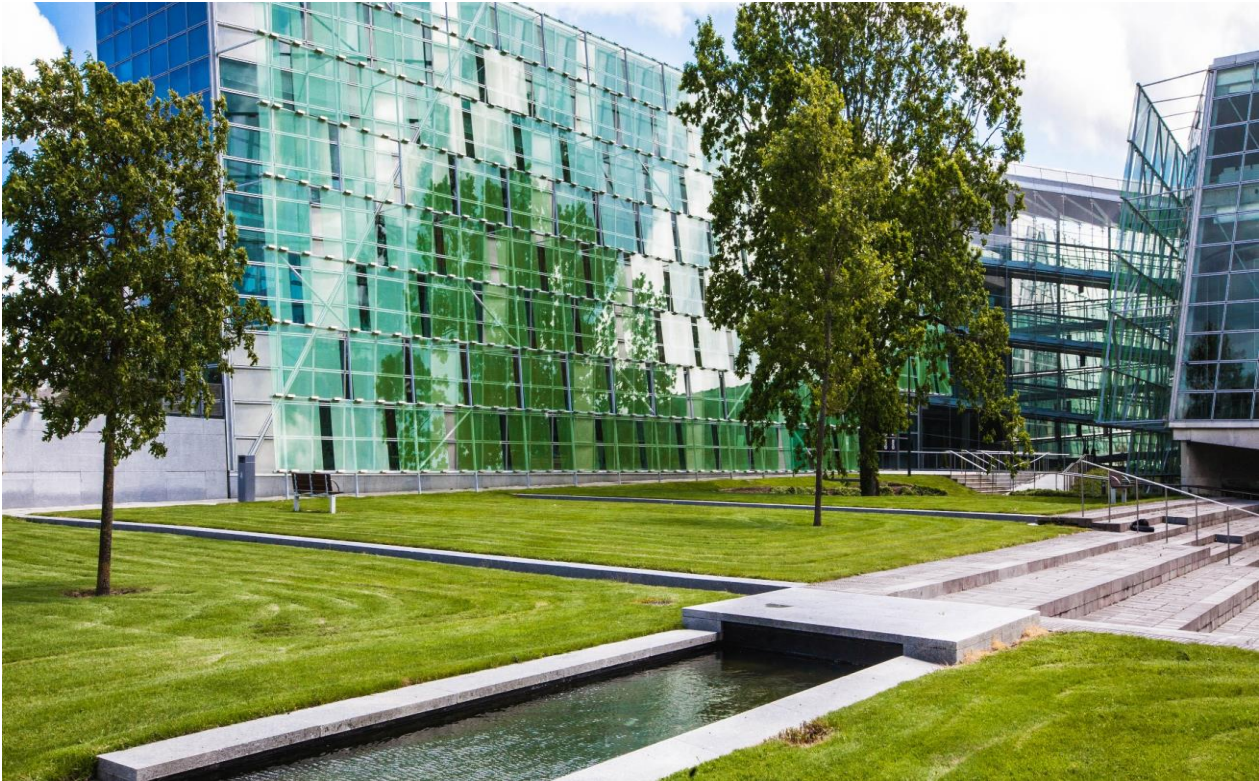




Kildare County Council

Chief Executive’s Management Report – March 2024





News Items

Update on Kerdiffstown Park Development

Kildare County Council issued an update on the final stages of the Kerdiffstown Park development, as it prepares to open to the public (see page 8).

Naas Library and Cultural Centre

The LookInside virtual tour of Naas Library and Cultural Centre, and the virtual tour is now available to view on our library website (see page 10).

Rates Demands 2024

The Rate Demands for 2024 have issued in February to all ratepayers (see pages 16/17).

Integration Team

David Creighton was appointed A/Director of Services for Integration in January 2024. He will lead the Ukraine Response in Kildare County Council including the Offer a Home Scheme, the Refurbishment Programme, offers of Commercial Modular Accommodation and the establishment of new Designated Accommodation Centres (see page 18).

Street Work / Outreach Clinics

During February the Outreach Team visited all Municipal Districts on a regular basis to identify rough sleepers (see page 20).

Funding opportunities under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme

Kildare County Council is seeking expressions of interest for funding under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme (see page 22).



Community Grants

Applications for funding in relation to Community, Festival, Residents Association and Dredge Grants close on 15 March. Assessments will commence in mid-March with reports to members in April. (see pages 37).

‘HacktheClimate’ and Open data Engagement Fund:

The HacktheClimate Hackathon in collaboration with the innovation Team and MERITS held on 23 February was a resounding success (see page 44).

National Deposit Return Scheme

A National Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) has been launched by the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications. The DRS is a circular economy initiative, focused on plastic bottles and aluminium/steel cans (see page 47).

Kildare Fáilte

In February, the activities revolved around Brigid 1500 events, which aimed to promote St. Brigid of Kildare and highlight all upcoming events in the County. (see page 65).

Economic Support Services

The General Shopfront Improvement Scheme Grant and Retail Window Merchandising Grant for 2024 have opened (see page 74).

Age Friendly Ireland Business Recognition Programme

Kildare’s Age Friendly Programme was launched at the Pride of Premises on 05 March (see page 77).



Diary/Calendar

National Tourism Conference

The National Tourism Conference will be held in Killashee Hotel on 18 & 19 April (see page 9).

Irish Military Seminar

The eight annual Irish Military Seminar will be held on 10/11 May (see page 11)

“Brigid’s World” history Conference

‘Brigid’s World’ history conference is being organised by Maynooth University and Kildare County Council from 13-15 September 2024. (see pages 11).

Health and Safety

Health and Safety Roadshows scheduled for: Athy Municipal District- 28 March, Maynooth Municipal District – 16 April and Naas Municipal District and Machinery Yard- 17 April (see page 13).

Increased Cost of Business Grant

As part of Budget 2024, the Government announced a €257m package to help small to medium businesses deal with the rising costs facing businesses. Guidance is to issue from the Department on this grant scheme and it is expected to roll out in March 2024 (see page 16).

Housing Clinics

The Housing Department is rolling out a series of pilot housing clinics across all Municipal Districts. The first clinic is scheduled to take place in Leixlip Library on the 25 March from 2.30 p.m. to 4.30 p.m.; staff will be available to deal with a range of queries including (see page 23).



Climate Action SPC

The next meeting is scheduled for the 08 May 2024 (see page 42).

LCDC

The next meeting of the LCDC is scheduled for: Wednesday 27 March 2024 (see page 53).

Focus On Women In Business:

The next event designed for female entrepreneurs takes place on 09 April (see pages 70/71).

Student Enterprise Programme:

Local Enterprise Office Kildare have announced that teenage entrepreneurs from St. Wolstan's Community School, Celbridge will represent Kildare at this year's Student Enterprise Programme National Final on Thursday 09 May (see page 71).



April Calendar

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1 Apr	2	3	4	5 10:00 Clane Maynooth MD Monthly Meeting ; Council Chamber; Members Calendar
8 14:30 Protocol Committee Meeting; Microsoft Teams Meeting; Members Calendar	9 15:30 Naas MD Meeting; Council Chamber ; Members Calendar	10	11 10:00 Twinning Liaison Committee	12
15 10:00 Athy MD Meeting April ; Council Chamber; Members Calendar	16	17 10:00 Kildare Newbridge MD Monthly Meeting; Council Chamber; Members Calendar	18	19 10:00 Celbridge Leixlip monthly municipal district meeting ; Council Chamber ; Members Calendar
22 14:00 Corporate Policy Group Meeting; Council Chamber; Members Calendar	23	24	25 11:30 County Twinning Committee	26
29 15:00 Full Council Meeting; Members Calendar	30	1 May	2 10:00 Local Community & Cultural SPC 14:00 Transportation, Safety & Emergency Services SPC	3 09:00 Clane-Maynooth JPC Meeting 10:00 Clane Maynooth MD Monthly Meeting; Council Chamber; Members Calendar



INDEX

News Items	2
Diary/Calendar	4
Corporate, People and Cultural Services	8
Corporate Services	8
Library and Arts Service	9
Health and Safety	12
Finance	15
Integration Team	18
Housing and Regeneration.....	20
Housing.....	20
Public Realm	28
Climate, Community, Environment and Water	37
Community.....	37
Climate.....	37
Water Services	46
Environment	47
Local Community Development Committee	50
Transport, Mobility and Open Spaces	53
Transport	53
Open Spaces (Parks)	57
Planning, Enterprise, Economic Development and Emergency Services.....	58
Planning.....	58
Fire Service Operations.....	63
Building and Development Control	63
Kildare Fáilte.....	65
Enterprise and Economic Development	69



Corporate, People and Cultural Services

Corporate Services

Communications

Public Lighting Energy Efficient Project

Kildare County Council confirmed that phase one of a countywide Public Lighting Upgrade programme got underway the last week in February with countywide survey of assets commencing in Athy Municipal District. Following the completion of the field survey the replacement of less energy efficient public street lighting will commence later this year.

There are approximately 23,000 public lights across the county, all of which will be surveyed as part of the project. The Public Lighting Upgrade programme will take place across four phases – Survey, Design, Testing and Retrofit replacement of non-LED public lighting with LED upgrade.

Update on Kerdiffstown Park Development



Kildare County Council issued an update on the final stages of the Kerdiffstown Park development, as it prepares to open to the public. The Kerdiffstown Landfill Remediation Project commenced in November 2020, with a contract date for completion of construction set for April 2025. Kildare County Council is delighted to confirm that the project is at the final stages of development, almost a year ahead of schedule. The landfill infrastructure element of the works is currently in the final stages with snagging and commissioning works currently taking place on site. It is expected that 'Substantial Completion' of these works will be reached in the coming weeks. At that stage, full running of the park and ongoing landfill management, will move from the contractor, Wills Bros, to Kildare County Council.



Referendum- Polling Stations

Kildare County Council published notifications for voters in Kildare North and Kildare South regarding new polling locations. Notifications also advised voters who applied after Monday, 22 January 2024 to have their address within the county of Kildare changed, that the change of address would not come into effect until after Friday, 08 March 2024 as they were already on the rolling register and polling cards had already been generated for them at their old address and they could vote based on that entry on the register.

Register of Electors

Over 5,800 additions were made to the balancing list for the register of electors following the closing date for new applications for the Referendums. These have now been transferred to the Rolling Register and work is continuing on further new applications and updates including more than 2,800 applications for change of address within County Kildare.

National Tourism Conference

The National Tourism Conference will be held in Killashee Hotel on 18/19 April. The executive suite are working

with the LGMA to finalise arrangements.

New York Visit – St. Patrick’s Day

Preparations have been finalised for the visit to New York for St. Patrick’s Day. The Cathaoirleach and Chief Executive will be meeting with the Kildare Association in New York.

Carbon Tax

Payment of Kildare County Council’s Carbon Tax Liability to the end of 2023 has been submitted to the Department.

Library and Arts Service

News and Highlights – Library

“With a library you are free, not confined by temporary political climates. It is the most democratic of institutions because no one – but no one at all – can tell you what to read and when and how.” – Doris Lessing

St. Brigid’s Day

Kildare Library Service hosted 27 family events to celebrate St. Brigid’s Day, some of these events included making St. Brigid’s crosses, Brat Bríde print making and Embroidery



workshop, The Code of St. Brigid Talk – Eoghan Corry, Day Imbolc Letterpress Workshop where families created St Brigid’s bookmarks, Go Fly Your Kite and many more. Over 487 adults and children attended these library events.

Ireland Reads

Ireland Reads is a campaign to get the whole country reading for the month of February in the lead up to a National Day of Reading on Saturday, 24 February.

Libraries teamed up with libraries nationwide, publishers, booksellers, authors, and others for the campaign, which aims to celebrate reading and all the benefits it can have for wellbeing and enjoyment.

Kildare Library service hosted over 17 events with over 110 people attending events for this initiative.

Naas Library and Cultural Centre

The LookInside virtual tour of Naas Library and Cultural Centre, and the virtual tour is now available to view on our library website. At present we are tagging items of interest including our Municipal Art Collection which adds real value to the virtual tour. The virtual

tour is a real benefit for those planning to visit who might have certain accommodation or other requirements.

Library Development Plan

We have completed all strands of our consultation. We did an Ideation session with our staff to look at ways we could address or action the feedback held in previous surveys and other consultations regarding Library Development Plan 2024-2028.

Kildare County Archives and Local Studies

The process of unpacking both collections in the new location at Harbour View, Naas is ongoing. Both services are currently closed, although emails and phone calls are being dealt with by staff. Access to digitised material from the County Archives (currently 135 volumes) and Local Studies content is provided via our website. There is free access to the Irish Newspaper Archives, including much of the Leinster Leader and Kildare Nationalist, available in all branch libraries in Kildare.

The archivist facilitated the first of four Life Writing workshops which will take place around the county with the Co.



Kildare Writer-in-Residence, Dr. Francesca Bratton, in Maynooth Library on 21 February, focusing on the Teresa Brayton collection. Local Studies staff delivered local history presentations in Monasterevin Library and to St Mochua's Historical Society (Staplestown) during February. The speakers for the eight annual Irish Military Seminar (10/11 May) have been confirmed. Planning for a retrospective art exhibition of works funded under the County Kildare Decade of Commemorations programme 2012-2023 in Riverbank in May, as well as a John Devoy commemorative event in Naas in September is ongoing. The Local Studies Librarian is assisting with planning for the 'Brigid's World' history conference being organised by Maynooth University and Kildare County Council (Brigid 1500) from 13-15 September 2024.

Rebel Hearts, A biographical list of republican women activists in County Kildare 1913-1923 by archivist Karel Kiely was launched in Naas Library and Cultural Centre on 15 February. The publication was distributed via the

Kildare Library Service branches, website and BorrowBox app.

Arts and Creative Grants and Bursaries Deadline has passed.

Applications to all awards and bursaries are currently being assessed.

Kildare Dance Artist in Residency – Stepping the Land

Kildare dance artist in residence Philippa Donnellan has been leading taster workshops in Athy and Newbridge. The project will culminate in public performances by participants on a local farm in Kildare in May 2024.

Gnáthóga Nádúrtha Eco-literacy Training Day in Carlow

Acting Arts Officer Eláine Donnelly and Assistant Arts Officer Paula Barrett attended eco-literacy training for Carlow County Council staff as part of the Arts Council funded Invitation to Collaboration Project Gnáthóga Nádúrtha. This training will be offered to Kildare County Council staff after Easter.



Athy Access Billboard Project

continues to raise awareness about accessibility barriers people face every day. The seventh and last in the series is currently on view at Leinster Street, Athy.

Cruinniú na nÓg youth consultation

A consultation process with youth ages 12-18 has been completed over the past month, with surveys and interactive workshops completed by 227 young people in Kildare. Results will inform programming decisions for the Cruinniú na nÓg festival on 15 June.

Health and Safety

1. Site Inspections:

11 inspections completed in the following areas:

- Housing Team (two)
- Architects' Team
- Architects Team -Capital works
- Facilities -Kildare courthouse
- Library Services
- Roads Team
- Community Warden- Kilcock
- Water Services- Carragh Road
- Architects Team -Naas

- Housing Team/Clerk of Works - Athy

2. VDU (Visual Display Unit)

Assessments:

Four assessments completed in the following areas:

- Housing (two)
- Library Service
- Transportation

3. Three Health and Safety Inductions completed for new starts (17 attendees)

4. Health Talks Scheduled:

a. Breast Cancer Awareness Talk from Breast Cancer Ireland scheduled for:

- i. Aras Chill Dara – 08 March – International Women's Day

b. Let's Talk About Menopause Talk by Dr Caoimhe Hartley scheduled for:

- i. Aras Chill Dara – 26 April.

c. Men's Health Talks scheduled with Irish Cancer Society scheduled for:

- i. Athy Municipal District - 28 March.
- ii. Maynooth Municipal District - 16 April.



- iii. Naas Municipal District and Machinery Yard -17 April.
 - iv. Aras Chill Dara – 23 April.
5. Pregnancy Risk Assessment
One assessment completed in:
- a. Housing
6. Update of Accident Database and Accident investigation completed:
- a. Environment
7. Health and Safety Roadshows scheduled for:
- a. Athy Municipal District- 28 March
 - b. Maynooth Municipal District – 16 April
 - c. Naas Municipal District and Machinery Yard- 17 April
8. Presentations created and supplied to external consultant for:
- a. Online Induction
 - b. Online -Safety Statement training
9. Workshop with Eazysafe on development of online induction and safety statement training
10. Tendering for development of online presentations for:
- a. Safety Statement training
 - b. Induction
11. Proworks App
- a. Workshop with Proworks Team on Health and Safety input onto Proworks – accident reports, investigations, toolbox talks, risk assessments etc.
 - b. Workshop with Proworks Team on assigning of administration controls and rollout across organisation.
12. Meeting with Human Resources on Vaccinations for staff
13. Four ESB briefing sessions delivered in:
- a. Athy
 - b. Barrogstown
 - c. Toughers
 - d. Naas
14. Health and Safety Management Committee Meeting
15. Health and Safety Committee Meeting with Safety Representatives
16. Meeting with Human Resources Training Section on schedule of Health and Safety training for 2024
17. Preparation of Meet and Greet Schedule 2024.
18. Meeting with Occupational Health on vaccination program.



19. Local Authority Safety Officers
Group Meeting

Accessibility:

1. Working on marketing brief with communications team on the engagement of marketing consultant.
2. Review of Access Audit completed for Leixlip library – action plan drawn up for closure of outstanding items.
3. Review of Access Strategy completed, and action plan drawn up to close outstanding actions.
4. Populating County Kildare Access Network (CKAN) Website:
 - a. New website created – populating with content before going live.
5. Meetings:
 - a. Newbridge Disability Access Group
 - b. Naas Disability Access Group
 - c. County Kildare Access Network (CKAN)
 - d. Athy Disability Access Group
 - e. Celbridge Disability Access Group
6. Meeting on the Public Sector Duty Implementation Framework

7. Review of Accessibility entrants in Pride of Place Awards-Local Enterprise Office.
8. Agreed to site on a Project Advisory Group with Disability Federation of Ireland examining Local Authority implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, UN (CRPD). The project aims to examine ongoing work to support the conventions implementation at a local level.

The project objectives are to:

- Identify good practice example of structural approaches to UN CRPD implementation by local government in Ireland.
- Identify good practice models in other jurisdictions.
- Identify current structural gaps in the delivery of UN CRPD at local community level in Ireland.
- Identify existing fora, structures and stakeholders who currently, or have the potential to, support and/or lead UN CRPD implementation at a local level.
- Investigating with stakeholders, the potential for a national formal and standardised



approach for local government implementation of the UN CRPD.

- Provide a series of recommendations which outline next steps to facilitate local government implementation of UN CRPD.

9. Meeting with Disability Federation of Ireland and Local Authority Access Officers re developing a support network for sharing of best practice.

10. Meeting with Toys, Technology and Training (TTT) Coordinator re TTT Collection- plan for 2024:

- a. Review of catalogue by Occupational Therapist.
- b. Purchase of new items.
- c. Decommissioning and replacement of worn or broken stock.
- d. Update/refresh TTT Catalogue
- e. Over 100 items in catalogue – three of everything to cover the three libraries holding the items – Naas, Leixlip, Athy.

11. Review Of My Chronic Pain Diary - Ciara Chapman (Artist) with the

view of possibility of completing a similar project with CKAN.

12. Meeting with Communications

Team:

- a. Information for Voters with Disabilities
- b. Communication around new changing place facilities
- c. Engaging a marketing consultant -promotion of projects and brand

Finance

Financial Reports

Annual Financial Statement

The Annual Financial Statement for year ended 31 December 2023 is currently being prepared and will be completed and submitted to the Department of Housing Local Government and Heritage by 31 March 2024 in accordance with statutory requirements. The Annual Financial Statement will be brought to the April meeting of Council.

Cashflow / Overdraft

Kildare County Council manages its cashflow requirements daily and did not avail itself of its overdraft facility in January or February 2024.



Monthly Management Reports

Actual expenditure v budget reports for 2024 will be submitted to Council as part of the monthly management report from April onwards.

Rates Demands 2024

The Rate Demands for 2024 have issued in February to all ratepayers.

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 2023 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

Increased Cost of Business Grant (ICOB)

As part of Budget 2024, the Government announced a €257m package to help small to medium businesses deal with the rising costs facing businesses. Guidance is to issue from the Department on this



grant scheme and it is expected to roll out in March 2024.

The grant is for commercially trading businesses operating from a rateable premises. The grant is as follows:

- For qualifying businesses with a 2023 Commercial Rate bill of <€10,000, the ICOB grant will be paid at a rate of 50% of the business's Commercial Rate bill for 2023.

- For qualifying businesses with a 2023 Commercial Rate bill of between €10,000 and €30,000, the ICOB grants will be €5,000.

- Businesses with a 2023 Commercial Rates bill greater than €30,000 are not eligible to receive an ICOB grant.

A letter outlining the details of the ICOB grant was included with rates demands issued to customers in February.

- Further communications on the scheme will follow on social media, Kildare County Council website and in papers circulating in Kildare.
- A letter detailing how to apply for the grant will be sent to ratepayers in mid-March.
- The ICOB Portal will be accessible to businesses to

apply for the grant by the middle of March.

- Kildare County Council will commence processing grants in April.
- The deadline for applications for the ICOB grant scheme is 01 May 2024.

Digital Services

- After using the Office of Government Procurement (OGP) print framework, IT have selected Opogee Corp to provide and support our new print, scanning and copying solution for the next three years (including option to extend by three years).
- This deployment of new devices will ensure all devices used by Council staff in all locations will be using the same printers and same support contract.
- Deployment of the new devices should start in Q2 2024.



Integration Team

General:

David Creighton was appointed A/Director of Services for Integration in January 2024. He will lead the Ukraine Response in Kildare County Council including the Offer a Home Scheme, the Refurbishment Programme, offers of Commercial Modular Accommodation and the establishment of new Designated Accommodation Centres. The area of responsibility will also extend to appraisal of properties signposted to Kildare County Council by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) for International Protection Applicants (IPA) and people with temporary status to remain in the country. Kildare County Council has also committed to resettle people in Kildare under the International Refugee Protection Programme (IRPP). He will also manage the implementation of the Local Authority Integration Programme.

The Director of Services for Integration will also chair the Community Response Forum – to be renamed the Community Integration Forum.

Local Authority Integration Team:

Kildare County Council has started the process of establishing a Local Authority Integration Team (LAIT) as part of its Integration Programme, following national policy guidance from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. The LAIT (a Coordinator, two Support Workers and one Admin Support) will be fully in place by mid-April. The key function of the LAIT is to signpost mainstream and community/voluntary services and integration supports available locally to beneficiaries of temporary protection (BOTP's), international protection applicants, those with refugee, subsidiary protection, or permission to remain status, as well as programme refugees resettled in county Kildare. The LAIT does not intend to replace existing service provision but to facilitate and support accessing services appropriate to needs, particularly of those in State-funded accommodation with minimal or limited supports.

All county and city councils will have a permanent Local Integration Support Team following the government commitment to end the system of



Direct Provision (White Paper to End Direct Provision) that advocates for supporting local integration from day one and empowering individuals within the targeted groups to ultimately live independently in the community.

Ukraine Response:

The number of Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection (BOTP) from Ukraine is trending downwards and is currently averaging about 20 new arrivals per day. Legislation will be introduced in early March to facilitate changes in the offer to BOTP’s, reducing the provision of state-supported accommodation to 90-days. New arrivals after the introduction of the legislation will be accommodated in Designated Accommodation Centres.

Updated Statistics

(LGMA 01 March 2024)

Total Number of Arrivals: 104,800
Total Number in Kildare: 2,020

Offer a Home

(05 March 2024)

Properties occupied	49
Properties in progress	36
Properties withdrawn	<u>26</u>

Total properties offered to date 91

Rest Centre at Liffey Lodge, Newbridge

(07 March 2024)

Total number accommodated 284

Designated Accommodation Centres (DAC)

DAC’s are being established in Kildare at Punchestown (378 capacity) and Newhall (985 capacity) under contract with DCEDIY. It is expected that these centres will be open to receive new arrivals in early to mid-March.

The LAIT has met with the operators of DAC’s at Punchestown and Newhall and has activated elements of the Community Response Forum in preparation for the opening of these centres.

Refurbishment Projects and Commercial Modular Housing

The Integration team is currently assessing applications for Refurbishment Projects and offers of commercial modular housing referred to Kildare County Council by DCEDIY through the LGMA and has established a Technical Working



Group to assess any applications received.

International Protection Applicants (IPA's)

The LAIT is arranging to visit accommodation centres for IPA's to assess the level of services being provided and to identify gaps in service provision

International Refugee Protection Programme (IRPP)

Kildare County Council is scheduled to receive 60 people for resettlement in Kildare under the IRPP. Kildare County Council will accommodate these people directly or in conjunction with an Implementing Partner such as an Approved Housing Body (AHB). The people identified under this programme are pre-assessed and are currently in Direct Provision accommodation.

Housing and Regeneration

Housing

Homeless Services

Homeless Action Plan 2024 - 2026

The Draft Homeless Action Plan 2024 -2026 (Mid-East Region) has been

agreed by the Homeless Forum (Mid-East Region) at their meeting on 29 February. The plan will be presented to the Council for consideration at the March Monthly Meeting. As this is a regional plan, it will also be considered by the members of both Wicklow and Meath County Council.

The plan seeks to address issues relating to the prevention of homelessness; reduction of homelessness in its extent or duration; the provision of services, including accommodation, to address the needs of homeless households; the provision of assistance to persons who were formerly homeless; and the promotion of effective co-ordination of activities by relevant agencies and stakeholders in the county.

Street Work / Outreach Clinics

During February the Outreach Team visited all Municipal Districts on a regular basis to identify rough sleepers. The areas covered were Leixlip, Kilcock, Celbridge, Maynooth, Naas, Newbridge, Sallins, Kilcullen, Athy and Kildare Town.



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. In March, these clinics are being facilitated in Athy, Celbridge, The Curragh, Kildare Town and Newbridge. 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

There have been 17 move-ons year to date (eight in February), facilitated

through HAP, social housing and some clients returning to family.

Tenancy Sustainment

At present there are 44 active tenancy sustainment cases receiving Tenancy Sustainment Officers support (24 cases closed in February). Tenancy Sustainment Officers have ongoing engagement with clients referred to the service and 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. Fifteen applications received in January and February are being processed. A total of 74 applications were processed in 2023.

Housing Allocations

There have been 250 allocations to end February, of which 147 were council properties and 103 were nominated to AHBs. Throughout February there were 20 refusals of an allocation. A total of 76 properties



were allocated through the Choice Based Lettings system.

Affordable Housing Ready to Build/Serviced Sites Scheme

Work on preparing the Clogherinkoe serviced sites has started, vegetation mulching is complete. A sewer upgrade is required and we are liaising with Uisce Eireann on this matter. We will keep the elected members updated as the scheme progresses.

Traveller Accommodation

A Notice of Intention to prepare a new Traveller Accommodation Programme 2025–2029, and to carry out an assessment of existing and projected Traveller accommodation needs, has been published. The closing date for public submissions is Thursday, 28 March 2024 (12:00 noon).

Submissions may be made online via the Council’s Consultation Portal or in writing.

Town Centre First

The second public workshop was held for the Clane Town Centre First Plan on 27 February, this was well

attended. A second public survey will also be launched in the coming days.

The next 26 towns across the country who will receive support, with funding of €30,000 each to complete a comprehensive town plan to help develop their town centres, has also been announced, Castledermot will receive this funding in Kildare.

Funding opportunities under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme

Kildare County Council is seeking expressions of interest for funding under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme. The Department of Rural and Community Development recently announced funding for local authorities to support the development of projects designed to breathe new life into rural communities. As part of the scheme, Kildare County Council can make two applications, with up to €50,000 available for each project. Kildare County Council is inviting expressions of interest from eligible groups for projects that meet the criteria and objectives of the scheme, interested groups are invited to submit an expression of interest form to towncentrefirst@kildarecoco.ie.



Further information is available at [Town Centre First - Kildare County Council \(kildarecoco.ie\)](https://www.kildarecoco.ie)

Housing Clinics

In response to customer service issues raised by the members in 2023, and as part of our commitment to the provision of good customer service, the Housing Department is rolling out a

series of pilot housing clinics across all Municipal Districts. The first clinic is scheduled to take place in Leixlip Library on the 25 March from 2.30 p.m. to 4.30 p.m.; staff will be available to deal with a range of queries including Allocations, Assessments, Loans, HAP, Grants. The elected members will be updated on the roll out of the clinics

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 March 2024.
Ambassador Site, Kill	33 units	Works are progressing on site, with piling works now complete. Drainage works in Embassy Manor to follow.
Old Greenfield, Maynooth	65 units	Stage 4 approval received; letter of acceptance issued and acknowledged.
Approval Stage 2		
St. Patrick's Park Rathangan Remedial Works (Phase's 2 and 3)	Demolition of 15 units, refurb of 25 units, construction of 7 units.	Stage 3 approval received from the Department 19/2/24. The Design Team instructed to finalise and issue tender.
Ardclough Road, Celbridge	39 units	Decision awaited from An Bord Pleanala.
Dispensary Site Carbury	5 units	Part 8 launch - March 2024.
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	Part 8 being finalised. Revised Stage 2 application submitted to to DHLGH
Caragh Road, Naas	73 units	Development of 73 units [to include 15 no. affordable units]. Tender for Framework Agreement being prepared.
Andrew Halting Site, Athy	8 units	Stage 2 application submitted to DHLGH.
Station Road, Kildare.	28-30 units	Stage 2 application submitted to DHLGH.
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 Q3 2024.
Inniscarra, Athy	5 units	Design Team tender uploaded to eTenders; tender return date 7 March 2024.
Ballitore Garda Station	5 (2 x refurb + 3 new)	Design team appointed; preparation of Part 8 documents to follow.

Pre-Approval		
Sarto Road, Naas	7 units	Feasibility complete on brownfield site. Single stage application being prepared for submission to DHLGH. Site investigation works ongoing.
Tanyard, Ballitore	4 units	Pre-funding application submitted to the DHLGH.

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	Stage 3 application submitted to DHLGH.
Patrician Ave, Naas	2 new + 1 refurb	Work due to commence 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	Consultants finalising drawings and planning reports. Briefing for Athy MD members scheduled for 11 th March in advance of Part 8 progressing.



PPP Schemes

Location	No. of Units	Updated Status
Ardrew, 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 March 2024.
Coolaghknock Glebe, Kildare	99 social units/ 32 affordable	PPP Bundle 5: Finalising design documents for Part 8 Target Part 8 launch March 2024
Rickardstown, Newbridge	80 social/ 40 affordable units	PPP Bundle 6: Design team appointment imminent. Site design kick off meetings to take place in March
Rathasker Road, Naas	80 units	PPP Bundle 6: Design team appointment imminent. Site design kick off meetings to take place in March

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	Tender documents being prepared.



Families in PEA including Supported Temporary Accommodations and Family Hubs as of 29 February 2024

Duration	No. of Households with Dependents	Adults	Dependents
0 - 6 Months	14	22	28
6 - 12 Months	11	20	21
12 - 18 Months	5	9	9
18 - 24 Months	1	1	0
24 - 30 Months	1	2	1
36 Months +	0	0	0
	32	54	59

Families in Own Front Door Accommodation as of 29 February 2024

Duration	No. of Households with Dependents	Adults	Dependents
0 - 6 Months	3	6	3
6 - 12 Months	5	11	12
12 - 18 Months	2	3	6
18 - 24 Months	1	1	2
24 - 30 Months	0	0	0
+ 36 Months	0	0	0
Total	11	21	23



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
2023	320	208	15	15	436	272
Q1, 2024	33	37	3	5	71	106

Energy Efficiency Retrofitting Programme

Programme	No. of Units	Updated Status
2023 EERP	86	<p>20 units out of 35 completed to date on KCC Clane/Maynooth MD 2023 EERP.</p> <p>Survey work for 55 Units identified in Naas/Calverstown/Ballymore Eustace is ongoing. We would expect to commence works to these Units in Q2.</p> <p>7 No Traveller Units in Blacklion were identified by the Traveller Accommodation Unit for Retrofit Works. Surveys are progressing on these units. In addition these units are in the Maynooth Decarbonisation Zone.</p>

Acquisitions

	Completed 2021	Completed 2022	Completed 2023	Completed 2024
Housing Acquisitions	13	41	96	5
Housing Turnkeys	27	82	42	0
Part V Acquisitions	70	86	109	11
Total Complete	110	209	247	16



Acquisitions and Leasing by Municipal District	Athy	Celbridge - Leixlip	Clane-Maynooth	Kildare-Newbridge	Naas
Acquisitions in 2023	31	71	42	85	18
Acquisitions in 2024 to date	3	1	1	2	9
MTR Delivery in 2024 to date (via CALF and leasing)	0	0	1	0	0

Public Realm

Proposed Sallins Grand Canal Greenway Link – Phase 1 and 2 tie in

The Part 8 proposal for the Sallins Grand Canal Greenway Link, which will tie in Phase 1 and 2 in Sallins, is progressing through the statutory process. The final date for receipt of submissions was 22 February 2024 at 5:00 p.m. with over 450 submissions received.

Proposed Public Realm Improvement Works to Market Square, Kildare Town

The proposal includes the public areas North and South of Bride Street, Church Lane extended to Heffernan’s Lane and the pedestrian laneway to Nugent Street carpark. A recent non-statutory public information session was held in Kildare Library where

approximately 110 people attended and engaged with the Strategic Projects and Public Realm (SPPR) Team and Metropolitan Workshop. SPPR are running a survey via a QR code which will run alongside the consultation portal. The final date for receipt of submissions was 29 February 2024 with a total of 45 surveys and 47 submissions received.

Town and Village Renewal Plans

Leixlip Town Renewal Plan is now ready for publication. Kildare Town Renewal Plan is now ready for publication. Ardclough; Derrinturn; Johnstownbridge; Straffan; Castledermot and Athgarvan: briefings to the relevant municipal districts have been carried out in the last month.



Capital Works – Strategic Priorities

Municipal District	Project Name	Estimated Value	Funding Awarded	Project Stage	Notes
Countywide	Barrow Blueway	€10,711,698 (incl additional costs)	RRDF €5,067,000 DHLG €1,690,000	Construction	Waiting on RRDF Call 5 funding to progress; announcement due in May 2024
	Barrow Blueway Trailhead	€80,000	€80,000 Community Recognition Fund		The purchase of land at Canal Side Athy has been progressed, to provide a trailhead for the Barrow Blueway. Potential facilities could include parking, bicycle hire, seating with all options currently being examined.
	Greenway Phase 1 and 2 tie- in			Part 8 Ongoing	Phase 1 is complete. The Part 8 proposal for the tie in of Phase 1 and 2 will see additional improvement works in Sallins. The public consultation stage closed on 22 nd February with over 450 submissions received.
	Greenway – Phase 2 Sallins to Clonkeen	€10,102,080	€400,000 DoT and Carbon Tax Fund	Developed Preliminary Design	Detailed design ongoing. Meeting held in November with TII Structures Section to agree requirements to progress from design to delivery. Structural surveys have been carried out by WWI but information has yet to be received by the Project Team. This project is currently at Phase 4: Statutory Processes. Part 8 consent is already in



Municipal District	Project Name	Estimated Value	Funding Awarded	Project Stage	Notes
					place for the scheme but a new Part 8 Planning consent is required for a bridge near Robertstown with a second bridge also required near Bonyngue.
Kildare-Newbridge	Kildare Square (Phase 1)	€1,500,000	€500,000 Destination Towns – Failte Ireland €1,000,000 KCC/LPT	Part 8 Ongoing	Failte Ireland have granted an extension to the funding deadline of end May 2024. Part 8 proposal was published on 17 th January with a briefing given to the elected members on 10 th January. Closing date for receipt of submissions was 29 th February. A total of 45 surveys were completed, with 47 submissions received.
	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)		Post Part 8	Part 8 approved. The MD office is planning to commence a small element of the works to improve the footpath; scheduled for February 2024. An application for funding has been submitted to RRDF Call 5 with an announcement expected in May 2024.
	Rathangan Market Square	€1,760,849 (Aug 2023)		Post Part 8	Part 8 approved. An application for funding has been submitted to RRDF Call 5 with an announcement expected in May 2024
	Athgarvan Health	€30,500	€20,000 T&V	Town Renewal	Final document will be published on the website



Municipal District	Project Name	Estimated Value	Funding Awarded	Project Stage	Notes
	Check/Urban Analysis		€10,500 LPT	Plan	Friday, 8 March 2024.
	Kildare Town Renewal Plan	€126,500	€95,000 T&V €31,500 LPT	Town Renewal Plan	Briefing has been provided to members, edits will be incorporated into the documents and a publication date confirmed.
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) €1,500,000 (KCC)	Construction	Contractor commenced on site, no issues to report, project is progressing as planned.
	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.
	Castledermot Health Check/Urban Analysis	€30,500	€20,000 T&V €10,500 LPT	Town Renewal Plan	Final document will be published on the website Friday, 8 March 2024.
Celbridge-Leixlip	Wonderful Barn	€3,488,370		Economic Business Case and Pre-Tender	Expected Part 8 publication in March/April 2024
	The Acre Project	€13,500	€10,000 LPT for	Feasibility Study	The Study has commenced with draft



Municipal District	Project Name	Estimated Value	Funding Awarded	Project Stage	Notes
			feasibility study in 2023		document almost complete.
	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	Ready for publication.
	Ardclough Health Check/Urban Analysis	€30,500	€20,000 T&V €10,500 LPT	Village Renewal Plan	Briefing has been provided to members, edits will be incorporated into the documents and a publication date confirmed.
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, B, C and F.	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 report. SPPR will liaise with CARO to investigate further. Sub Project C:



Municipal District	Project Name	Estimated Value	Funding Awarded	Project Stage	Notes
					<p>Potential Pilot Project – participatory urban design with NUIM academics and students – may include development of an online platform. Approved to proceed with consultation with residents and building owners and to tender for the preparation of a feasibility study and report. Engagement with NUI Maynooth in coming weeks to revisit previous discussions with SPPR team.</p> <p>Sub Project E: Development of Key Town Renewal projects. 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> <p>Work has commenced on preparing the tender documents; tender to be published in March.</p>
	Harbourfield, Maynooth			Detailed Design & Works	<p>Sub Project F: Harbourfield Park – redevelopment of existing park and canal walkway. Part 8 approved. Tender documents being finalised to procure a Landscape Architect to bring the project to Detail Design and Tender stages,</p>



Municipal District	Project Name	Estimated Value	Funding Awarded	Project Stage	Notes
					securing all necessary planning permissions/consents. SPPR are in receipt of URDF funding to progress with this element, aiming to publish the tender in early March. A future funding resource will need to be identified to progress to construction
	Derrinturn Health Check /Urban Analysis	€30,500	€20,000 T&V €10,500 LPT	Village Renewal Plan	Preparing for publication and implementation.
	Johnstown Bridge Health Check/Urban Analysis	€30,500	€20,000 T&V €10,500 LPT	Village Renewal Plan	Preparing for publication and implementation.
	Straffan Health Check/Urban Analysis	€30,500	€20,000 T&V €10,500 LPT	Village Renewal Plan	Preparing for publication and implementation.
	Allenwood Small Village Renewal Masterplan	€30,000	100% LPT	Small Village Renewal Masterplan	Public consultation took place on 23rd November in person and online. All plans shared with internal departments for comment. This is now on hold pending the design from Transport for the proposed Junction Upgrade at Allenwood Cross.
	Robertstown Small Village Renewal Masterplan	€30,000	100% LPT	Small Village Renewal Masterplan	Final draft of document being prepared.
	Kilmeague Small Village Renewal Masterplan	€30,000	100% LPT	Small Village Renewal Masterplan	Final draft of document being prepared.
	Coill Dubh Small Village Renewal Masterplan	€30,000	100% LPT	Small Village Renewal Masterplan	Final draft of document being prepared.



Municipal District	Project Name	Estimated Value	Funding Awarded	Project Stage	Notes
Naas	Potato Market	€248,931	Historic Towns Initiative grant €248,931	Phase 1 delivered.	Final works completed on 27 th February.
	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	<p>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. SPPR preparing the tender document which we aim to publish early March.</p> <p>Sub Project B: Background Assessments. KCC to submit clarification to the Department regarding the impact of the sale of St David's Castle on the proposal. The Department notes that St David's 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</p>



Municipal District	Project Name	Estimated Value	Funding Awarded	Project Stage	Notes
					<p>St David's Castle and Grounds which were planned under sub project B. The Heritage and Conservation Team are managing the Conservation & Management Plan.</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 and screenings to be carried out also.



Climate, Community, Environment and Water

Community

Community Grants

Community Section, in conjunction with Kildare Public Participation Network (PPN), held its annual Grants Information Evening on Wednesday 21 February 2024 in the Council Chamber of Aras Chill Dara. A total of 147 people attended the Information Evening with 62 attending in person and 85 attending online. A presentation in relation to Community, Festival and Residents Association grants along with details on the Local Enhancement Programme was provided by staff from the Community Department followed by a 30-minute question and answer session from both in person and online attendees.

Applications for funding in relation to Community, Festival, Residents Association and Drehid Grants close on 15 March. Assessments will commence in mid-March with reports to members in April.

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 27,000 training places to almost 23,000 participants (figures correct as of end of January 2024). Training



continues with outdoor staff until the end of March 2024 under an extended Service Level Agreement (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 has progressed the development of a training plan to guide future training needs and priorities, in the area of local authority climate action.

Quantitative and qualitative data is currently being explored to help inform the training plan with an anticipated timeframe for completion in April 2024.

Local Authority Climate Action Plans (LA CAP)

Kildare County Council adopted their LACAP on the 18 December 2023 and 15 other local authorities in the EM region have adopted their plan (as of 08 March).

Focus for both the CARO and local authorities now turns to implementation planning.



Sub-Regional Energy Projects

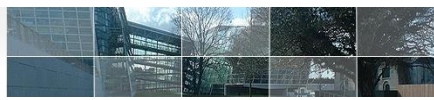
The CARO are working with local authorities in each of the four sub-regions to develop regional energy units to avail of funding for projects that support the decarbonisation of local authority buildings. The energy units comprise:

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 decarbonisation. A fleet manager network meeting will take place on 27 March 2024 in LGMA offices. This event seeks to support fleet managers in their role in exploring decarbonisation interventions to achieve 2030 targets of 51% emission reductions.

Development of Local Authority Key Performance Indicators on Climate Action



Data collation for 2022 was published in December 2023. Data collection for 2023 is currently underway from 26 February to 09 March from all local authorities.

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.



Points of Contact have been identified in each local authority and CARO has undertaken two webinars to support points of contact in engaging with clubs in their area.

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)



The official launch of the CAP occurred as part of 'Hacktheclimate' on 23 February 2024.



The Decarbonising Zone – 'Show and Tell' house:

With thanks to the SMT we are working closely with the housing section, accessibility officer and Maynooth University to refurbish a house and associated garden to enable a 'Show and Tell' home in which the story of fabric retrofitting, biodiversity measures, Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and potential for the



use of Internet of Things (IoT) to create a full accessible future proofed home. Local permeability and access to public and private transport modes are also going to be assessed.

The Mid East Energy Unit (MEEU)

SEAI have agreed to pilot Pathfinder funding (approx. €20million between the four Mideast Energy Unit (MEEU) LA's) for various Energy/Carbon savings related projects at scale. This matched grant funding includes projects such as:

1. The installation of approx. 220 Photo Voltaic (PV) solar panels at the Cotton Mills. This contract has been awarded and an application for the generation connection has been made to ESB networks.
2. 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, Wicklow and Louth.
3. The appraisal of the Aras and K-Leisure buildings' heating systems is at an early stage and is being undertaken by our MEEU consultants Codema.
4. Pathfinder funding is potentially available for upgrading works to some of our library buildings. This may

include energy-related elements of the new Clane Library.

These projects will enable retrofit works (energy efficiency and decarbonisation) on our existing buildings, thus reducing energy utility bill costs.

District Heating

Given the potential for a future district heating scheme (DH) in Naas, a DH feasibility study will be undertaken by Codema in Q2/Q3 of 2024. SEAI have agreed to 100% fund this Naas study. A more in-depth discussion into the sustainable sources of the supplied heat for this DH scheme will be required. There may also be scope to undertake a similar DH study for Maynooth later in 2024/early 2025, this to be funded directly by our planning department.

Display Energy Certs

All public buildings with a floor area over 250 m² require Display Energy Certificates (DEC). A DEC was recently procured through our facilities department, for the Aras, the grade received for the building was a D2 grade.

An in-depth energy audit and BER survey will be taking place of the Aras



building by a company called IES over the next two months.

ISO 50001 Energy Management System

Kildare County Council hopes to apply for ISO 50001 (Energy Management System) certification in Q3/Q4 of 2024, for the organisation as a whole. Our Energy Officer and the SEE of Property Management will be attending the SEAI ISO50001 accelerator training from 12 March as part of this process.

Climate Action Strategic Policy Committee (SPC):

The scheduled meeting on 07 February 2024 took place in the newly refurbished Naas Library previously the offices of Naas Town Council. All Councillors and members of the six SPC's were invited to attend.

The meeting gave an overview of the work of the Climate Action Office to explain the basis of the plan for the next five years including:

Victoria Kavanagh (Community Climate Action Officer) presenting on the Community Climate Action

Programme Fund,

Paddy Lynch (Energy Efficiency Officer) presenting on the Kildare County Council's Energy Efficiency Plan to reach the National Objective of

50% increase in energy efficiency within the council and his experience in the field,

Mary Morrissey (Climate Action

Officer) presented on her work and expertise in built environment,

Paula O'Rourke (Climate Action Coordinator) presented on the

monitoring and reporting of CA SPC's work plan together with Kildare's Climate Strategy 2019-2024, CARO, the Climate Action Plan and Decarbonising Zone.

This was complimented, given the biodiversity crisis, with a presentation by Meabh Boylan (Kildare County Council Biodiversity Officer) on Biodiversity and Climate change. The information was actively discussed and well received.

The next meeting is scheduled for the 08 May 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.

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/'Our Shared Plate Project' 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 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.

The name of the project has changed to 'Our Shared Plate Project' to reflect the community cohesion through the celebration of food. We await the outcome of the County Community Gardens/Allotment proposal to inform the sites proposed in Kildare.



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).

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 at Maynooth University. To advance understanding of the 19 Ignite projects Creative Ireland held a four day workshop for project teams in Borris House from 30 January to 02 February.

The core team is meeting to discuss the next steps given the resignation of



one team member and the installation of another as Principal Investigator.

Community Climate Action Program Fund:

As of the closing date 06 March, 44 applications were received with 19 remaining in draft format. Kildare at county level has been awarded €897,000 grant funding and the total applications received are estimated at over €2 million.

The work of provisionally assessing the applications has commenced.

‘HacktheClimate’ and Open data Engagement Fund:

The HacktheClimate Hackathon in collaboration with the innovation Team and MERITS held on 23 February was a resounding success. Ten very exciting solutions were presented on the day and the winning team led Ben Foran explains the idea “ ‘Proactive Paths’ utilises AI to revolutionise route planning. The algorithm is able to anticipate irregular disruptions such as future road works, protests or public events. By forecasting and navigating around potential delays ahead of time, it significantly improves efficiency, lowering costs for businesses while also taking congestion off our roads! “ Congratulations to all 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.

Stakeholders are arranging to meet in Maynooth University in April to advance aspects.

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 late summer 2025. It is with thanks to partners the findings will inform the National Biodiversity Data Centre latest brochures. Presently the short guidance document is gone to print and will be disseminated to all partners.

IRESI - International Renewables and Energy Systems Integration

A workshop was held in February with IRESI led by Fabiano Pallonetto and Amy Fahy of Maynooth University and their team, to balance energy grid usage and potential Kildare County pilot project for up to 500 houses (social and private).



Smart Energy Solutions for Sustainable Futures S3SF



Insightful discussions were had at the Smart Energy Solutions for a Sustainable Future S3SF workshop in Thurles in February on the importance of further education and training for both industry and civil society on the topic of retrofitting homes.

The Climate Action Office was joined by the leads from IRESI and the Science Foundation Ireland RENEW challenge project at School of Business Maynooth University to look at possible collaboration efforts and acceleration change in energy utilisation.



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 was also shortlisted for the Green Awards under the Green Technology Award which will be held on 27 February 2024. The stakeholders in the project met collectively for the first time at the event.



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

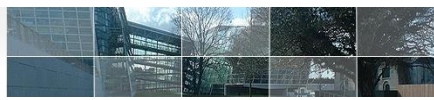
Communications team provide regular updates concerning upcoming projects in the area and planned works on the Uisce Éireann website at www.water.ie/?map=supply-and-service-updates

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

National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy.

The Waste Management Act 1996, 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, have coordinated preparation of the “National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy 2024-2030.” The Plan sets out a framework for the prevention and management of waste in Ireland up to 2030.

The National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy 2024-2030 was officially launched on Friday 01 March.

National Deposit Return Scheme

A National Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) has been launched by the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications. The DRS is a circular economy initiative, focused on plastic bottles and aluminium/steel cans. The scheme went live on 01 February 2024.

The scheme is operated by Deposit Return Scheme Ireland (DRSI) CLG trading as Re-turn.

Larger retailers have installed Reverse Vending Machines (RVM's) at their premises to automate the deposit return process. Smaller retailers will operate the scheme on a manual, over-the-counter basis.

From 01 June, all stock not branded with the Re-turn logo will be phased out of shops and consumers will only be able to buy drinks for which a deposit is payable.

Further details can be found at www.re-turn.ie

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 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) saw Kildare County Council 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: <https://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 arising 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, with 58% of the scheme completed.



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

Athy Flood Relief Scheme

RPS Consulting Engineers have been appointed as design consultants for the Athy FRS. Site surveys, including structural and CCTV surveys will begin this month. A Public Participation Day was held on 27 February in Athy Library. This was the first of a series of community engagement and collaboration workshops.

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: <https://kildarecoco.ie/AllServices/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 were presented to each of the relevant Municipal District's for approval.

Cemetery Works

Allen

Works have been completed on a cemetery extension. Bollards have been installed to limit vehicular access.

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 completed to allocate additional plots for internments within the cemetery.

Athy Cemetery Boundary Wall

Works were 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. Works commenced in February 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.

Local Community

Development Committee

The last meeting of the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) was held on the 31 January 2024 in Aras Chill Dara.



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 (DRCD). 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 <http://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 project partners and agreed actions under each of the four themes are ongoing.

For further information contact Maria Healy, Local Development Officer phone 087-997 4155 or email mhealy@kildarecoco.ie

Healthy Ireland (HI)

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 086-885 8505 or email cmorrissey@kildarecoco.ie

Empowering Communities

Programme Athy

Athy has been selected by 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 programme has continued for 2024 with the same budget allocation.

Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP)

The draft LECP and objectives were approved by the Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning

Strategic Policy Committee and LCDC at their meetings in February. The Eastern Midlands Regional Assembly are currently reviewing the draft plan for consistency with Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy (RSES) and the County Development Plan. A meeting with elected members is being scheduled. Work is commencing to develop the implementation plan and the plan is on track to be finalised in April.

For further information contact: Susan Bookle, LECP Co-ordinator phone 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 for women's groups. The closing date for applications to the fund was 29 February.

The next meeting of the LCDC is scheduled for: Wednesday 27 March 2024

Transport, Mobility and Open Spaces

Transport

M4 Maynooth to Leixlip M4

Eastbound Bus Priority Measures

A speed limit reduction will be in place from April to December 2024 from Junction 6 to Junction 5 on the M4 Eastbound to enable these works to commence.

Athy Distributor Road

The Athy Distributor Road 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 was due to be completed by Mid-February 2024 (There was a slight delay due to ESB connection of distribution board – which is now in hand). The IT department will commence delivery of IT to the facility thereafter, with commencement of staff moving to the new offices in March/April. 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 Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) has been approved by An Bord Pleanála. The project team is now focusing on completing the CPO administrative procedures, completing detailed design and compilation of tender documents.

The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH)



(administrators of the Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund (LIHAF) element of the scheme) have been informed accordingly. It is intended to meet the landowners during February 2024 for an update.

Celbridge Hazelhatch Mobility Corridor

It is expected Compulsory Purchase Order and Planning Consent will be submitted in Q2 2024. Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) / Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) team have been kept informed. They require a business case to be submitted which will be complete end of March 2024.

Murtagh's Corner.

The design team are in the process of putting a brief together, to expedite this project.

Maynooth Transport Strategy

The Area Based Transport Assessment (ABTA) is in the final stages of being published.

Newbridge Transport Strategy

AECOM have started modelling and option development for Newbridge. Phase 2 consultation will be scheduled for later this year.

Junction Programme

Phase 1A and 1B of the Rural Junctions Improvement Project is for the delivery of five separate schemes each (ten in total), which are to be delivered in tandem. Consultants are O'Connor Sutton Cronin (1A) and Clandillon (1B). Option reports have been completed for phase 1A.

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 Limited. Kildare County Council is in touch with the Department of Transport in relation to a funding application.

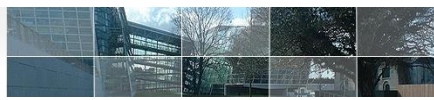
Sustainable Transport Section - Projects Update

Maynooth North-South Corridor (Phase 5)

An allocation of €1,500,000 has been received from the National Transport Authority (NTA) to start construction of this scheme in 2024. The scheme is being tendered in Q1 2024.

Royal Canal Greenway (Maynooth-Leixlip)

An allocation of €2,750,000 has been received from the NTA to restart



construction of this scheme in 2024. The scheme has been tendered and the award process of a successful contractor is in progress.

Green Lane Active Travel Scheme

An allocation of €1,200,000 has been received from the NTA to start construction of this scheme in 2024. The scheme is being tendered in Q1 2024.

Naas to Sallins Greenway

An allocation of €225,000 has been received from the NTA in 2024. A Section 38 public consultation process will commence in April 2024 on the section of project along the public road (from Abbey Bridge to Osberstown Bridge).

Sallins Village Active Travel Scheme

An allocation of €50,000 has been received from the NTA in 2024. The design of the permanent scheme is awaiting an evaluation of rapid build options for the scheme, as requested by the NTA.

Celbridge Road Active Travel Scheme

An allocation of €75,000 has been received from the NTA in 2024. The

Phase 2 Option Selection/Rapid Build Report was discussed with and re-submitted to the National Transport Authority (NTA) in February 2024. A tender process to appoint a consultant to progress the Preliminary Design to public consultation will commence in March 2024.

Kilcullen Road Active Travel Scheme

Works progressing and due to finish in Q2 2024.

Celbridge Active Travel Bridge

An allocation of €225,000 has been received from the National Transport Authority (NTA) in 2024. Detailed design of bridge structure and ancillary works are continuing.

Monread Road (Naas) Active Travel Scheme

An allocation of €10,000 has been received from the NTA in 2024. Preliminary design awaiting an evaluation of rapid build options for the scheme, as requested by the NTA.

Monasterevin Active Travel Scheme

An allocation of €75,000 has been received from the NTA in 2024. Approval from the NTA required prior to starting Public Consultation. A



tender process to appoint a consultant to progress the Preliminary Design to public consultation will commence in March 2024.

Newbridge Road (Naas) Active Travel Scheme

An allocation of €50,000 has been received from the NTA in 2024. 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

An allocation of €150,000 has been received from the NTA in 2024. Preliminary design awaiting evaluation of rapid build options for the scheme, as requested by the NTA.

Safe Routes to School Round 1 Schemes

€140,000 allocation – Straffan National School.
€200,000 allocation – St. Brigid’s Primary School, Kildare Town – Section 38 proposals being prepared.
€150,000 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 Bhride/Scoil Phadraig, Clane.
€20,000 allocation – Scoil Mochua, Celbridge.

Poplar Square Naas – Interim Bus Stop

An allocation of €50,000 has been received from the National Transport Authority (NTA) in 2024.

Bus Stop Enhancement Programme

An allocation of €500,000 has been received from the NTA in 2024. Details of how to progress this work is awaited from the NTA.

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 104km 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 three sites and a similar amount under Former National Roads Grants.

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

Annual call from Department of Transport (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. 705km 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

The remaining work on the playground are completion of the entrance and arrival plaza and hangout shelter. The multi-use games area has been completed. It is hoped all works will be completed by the end of March.

Sallins Amenity Land

The award of the works to carry out the detail design of phase one is currently being completed.

DeBurghs Woodland Garden

Work is ongoing to prepare the garden for opening. Works have been carried out to make trees safe on the grounds. Work is also being done for the tenders to resurface the paths and securing the perimeter of the site.



Newbridge Playground

The award of the tender for the construction of a natural play area in the Strand Area of Newbridge Linear Park are being completed. It is anticipated that construction will commence in July.

Leixlip Playground

A tender for the design and construction of the new playground in Leixlip Amenities Centre has been advertised. Work is continuing on the completion of a tender for the upgrade of the car park.

Planning, Enterprise, Economic Development and Emergency Services

Planning

Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029:

The Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029 came into effect on 28 January 2023. Several variations to the development plan are likely to be brought forward in 2024, including: An update to the Core Strategy in response to an update to the National Planning Framework; Car Parking Standards; new s28 GPA on

Sustainable Residential development and Compact Settlements; and a Landscape Character Assessment.

Work is underway on implementing a series of objectives and actions, including the following:

- Annual Monitoring Report for 2023.
- SuDS Guidelines.
- Allotments Strategy.
- Strategic Employment Locations Study
- County Kildare Urban and Regional Parks Strategy; and
- Liffey Valley Park (Phase One) Feasibility Study.
- Active Recreational Infrastructure Study.
- Corbally Canal / River Liffey enhancement (Kilcullen to Newbridge) Feasibility Study.
- Permeability Guidelines

Naas North-West Quadrant masterplan:

Project launch week 04 March 2024. Masterplan under preparation for 18-month period.

Collinstown Masterplan, Leixlip: Landowner consultation underway.



Local Area Plans (LAP)

Joint Maynooth and Environs LAP

The Draft LAP and environmental assessments are being finalized. It is envisaged that the draft will be published in June 2024.

Newbridge LAP

The Chief Executive's Report on submissions received to pre-draft consultation is being finalised and will be circulated to the Members in March.

Sallins LAP and Monasterevin LAP

Work has commenced on the review of the Sallins Local Area Plan and the Monasterevin Local Area Plan, including consideration of pre-draft public consultation.

Leixlip LAP

Proposed Alteration No.1 (Confey Masterplan) to Leixlip LAP

Chief Executive's Report issued 28 February 2024. An in-person Special Planning Meeting has been scheduled for the 25 March 2024 at 12:00pm to consider the proposed alteration.

Development Management

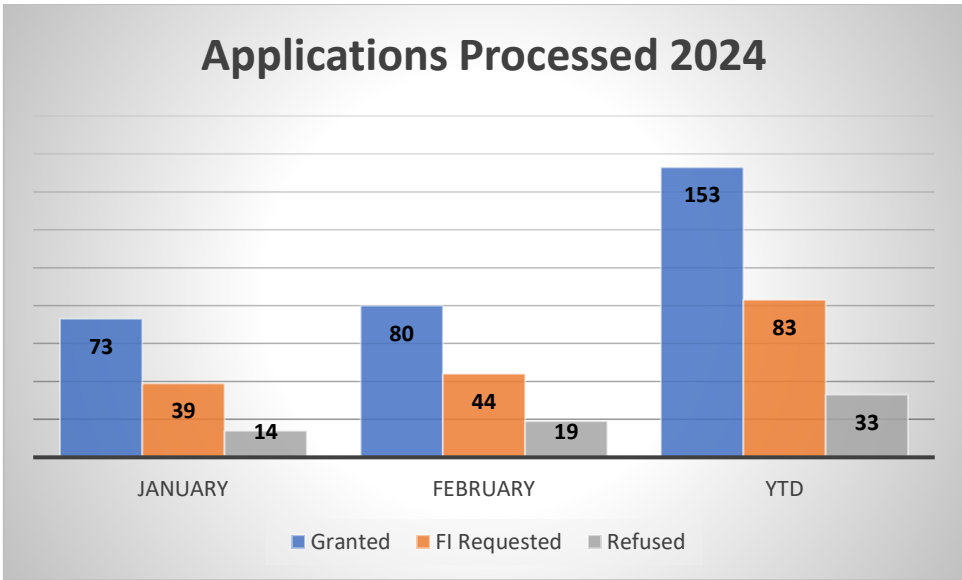
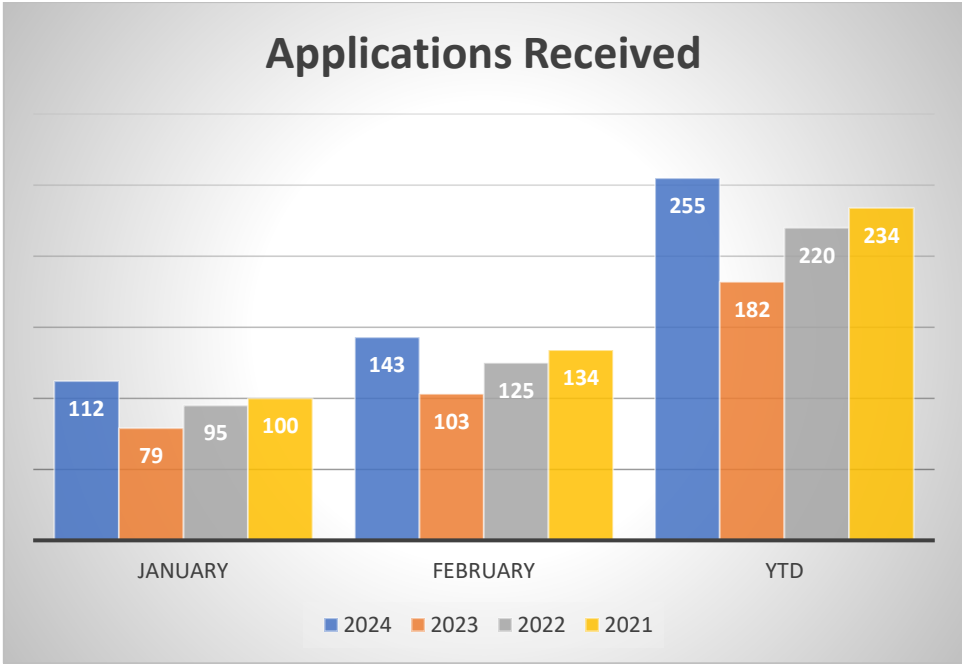
ePlanning

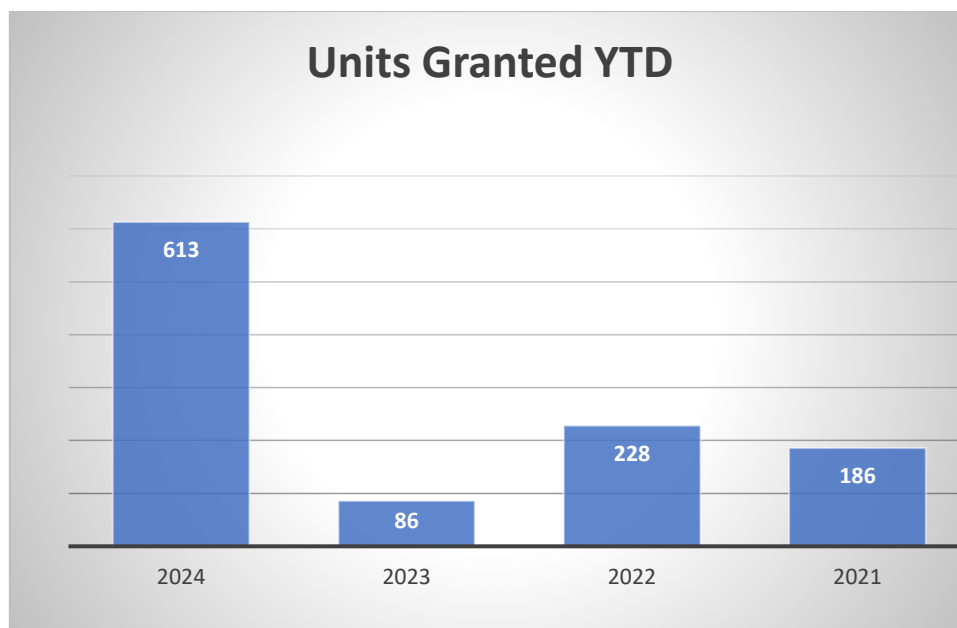
ePlanning went live in Kildare on 27/06/2023, enabling applications and submissions/refs to be submitted via the online planning portal.

Confirmation of our live status was communicated to planning agents and Elected Members and positively acknowledged.

In 2023, 60.8% of all applications received were submitted online.

In 2024 to date, 70.4% of all applications received are via the online planning portal.





Strategic Housing Development Applications to An Bord Pleanála (SHD)

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: Granted on Appeal
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 Due Date 18/03/2024
24/60055	29/01/2024	Cairn Homes properties Ltd	Harpur Lane, Castledown	Amendments to ABP-307223-20	Decision due 24/03/2024
24/60029	22/01/2024	Ballymore Land Ltd	Stonehaven, Blessington Road, Naas	Amendments to 21/777 Phase 1B	Decision due 17/03/2024
23/60485	14/12/2023	Cairn Homes Properties Ltd	Leixlip Gate, Castledown	229	FI requested 12/02/2024

Heritage, Biodiversity and Conservation

A. Heritage - Progress Updates

All heritage grant applications have been submitted and decisions on same are expected in March.

B. Biodiversity – Progress Updates

All biodiversity grant applications have been submitted and decisions on same are expected in March.

C. Conservation– Progress Updates

1. Conservation Grants

All conservation grant applications have been submitted and decisions on same are expected in March.

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

A draft Plan has now been received and is being considered.

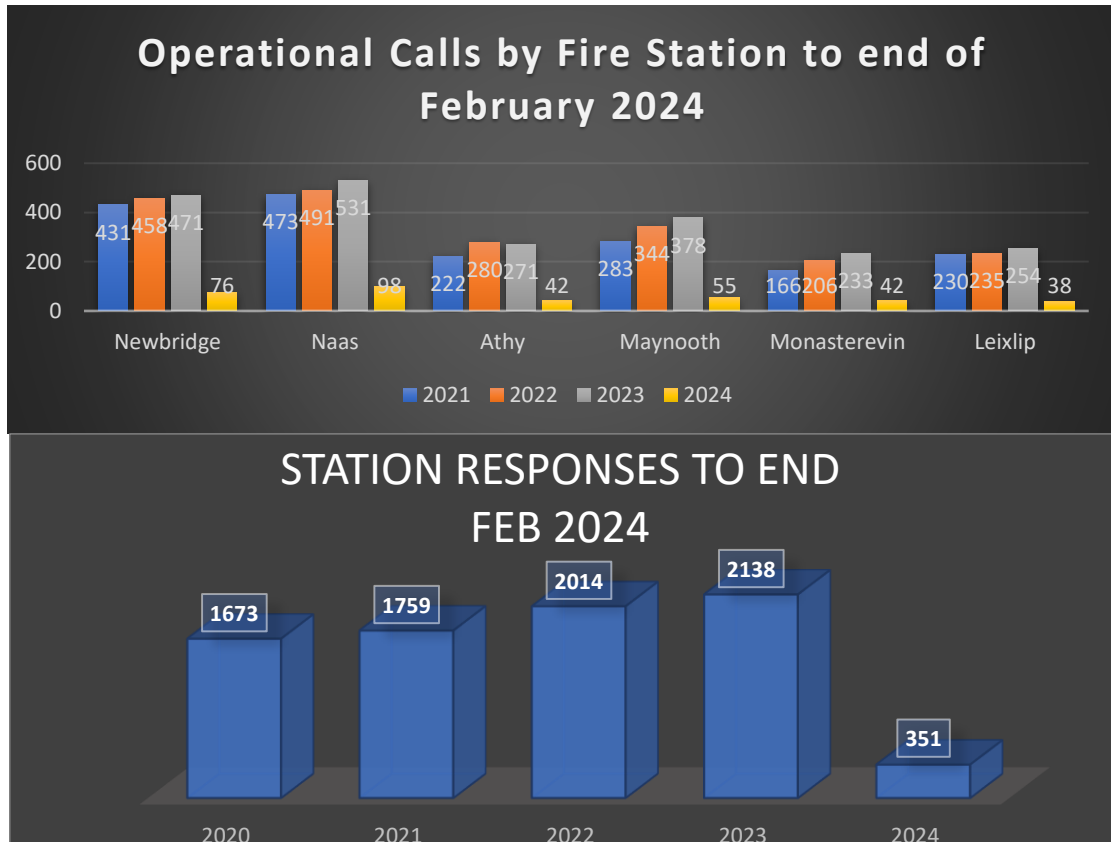
3. Cassidy’s Distillery – Conservation Management Plan

A draft Plan has now been received and is being considered. A further site visit is taking place on 07 March with the project team and landowners. The third in a series of meetings with the landowners will take place at Kildare County Council offices on 13 Wednesday where the project consultant will present the findings of the CMP to date. The final CMP must be completed by the end of March. The initial feedback is that the Cassidy’s site is of national significance by reason of its industrial heritage.



Fire Service Operations

2024 Summary



Fire Safety Certificates

Applications received to the end of February 2024 compared with the totals received in previous years.



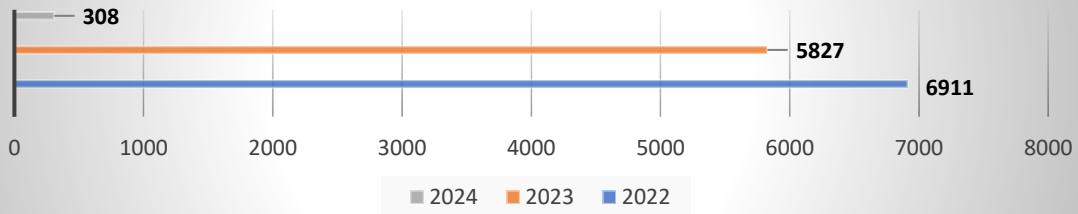
Building and Development Control

The following figures are cumulative up to end of February 2024 set against full year figures for 2022 and 2023.

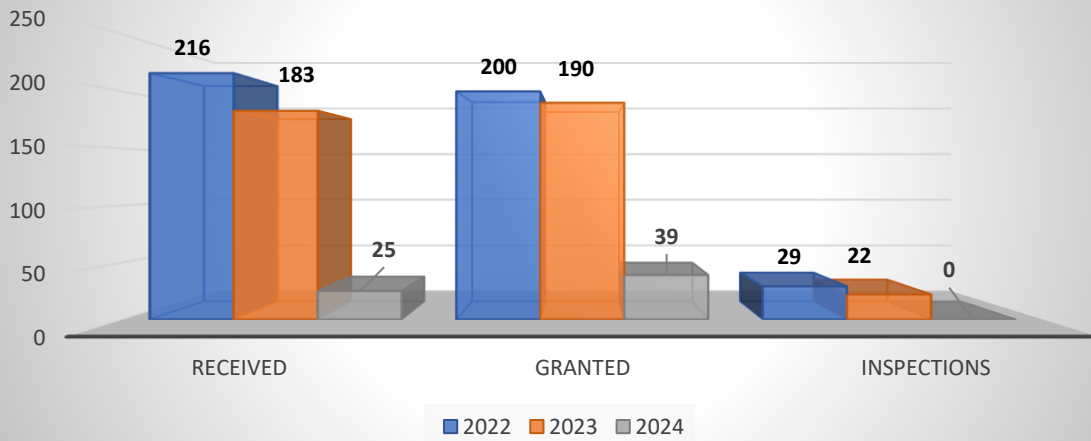


Building Control

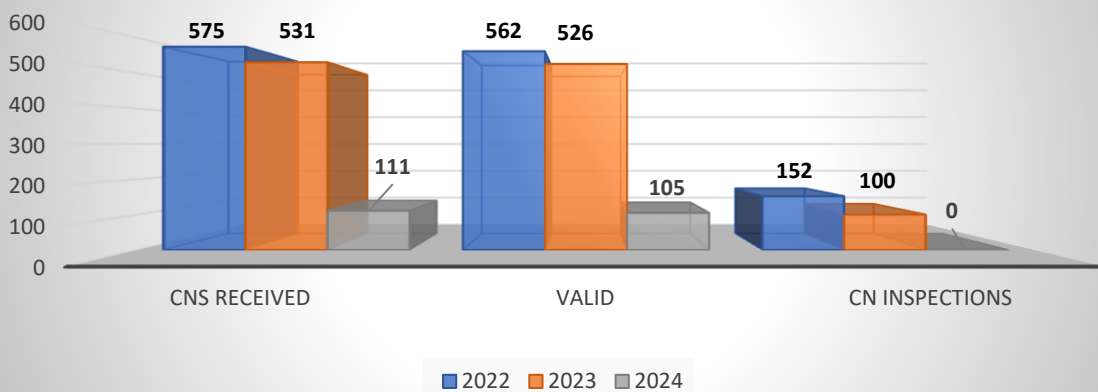
Number of Buildings Inspected

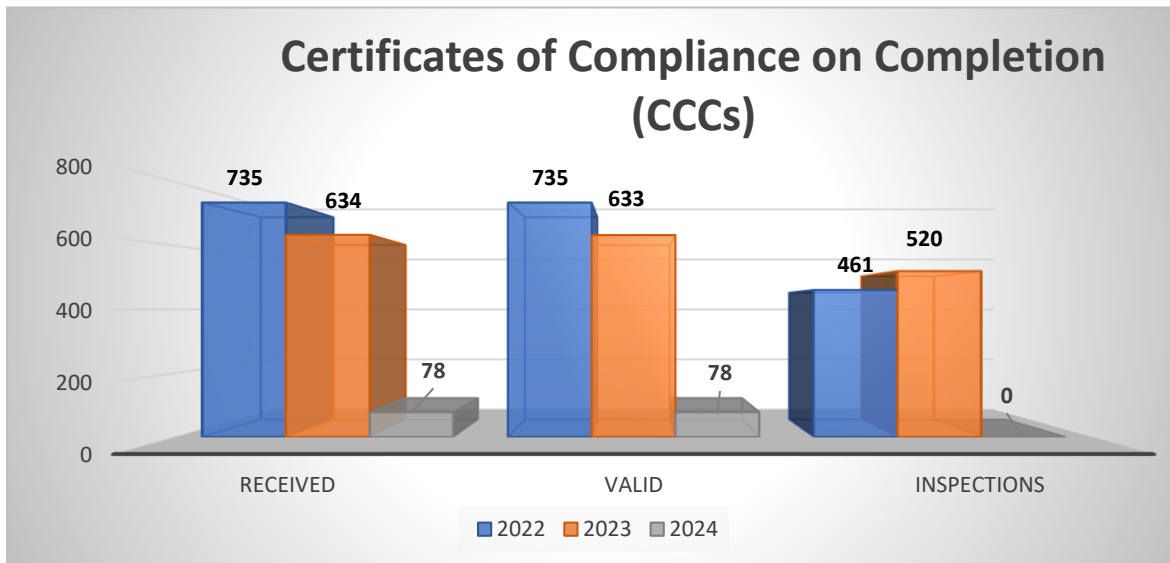


Disability Access Certificates (DACs)



Commencement Notices (CNs)





Kildare Fáilte

Key activities

In February, the activities revolved around Brigid 1500 events, which aimed to promote St. Brigid of Kildare and highlight all upcoming events in the County.



Into Kildare and Solas Bhríde collaborated with students across Kildare to inaugurate the second iteration of the global 'Pause for

Peace' initiative. Thirteen secondary schools in County Kildare, in partnership with Into Kildare and Solas Bhríde, issued a global call urging individuals worldwide to pause for a moment of silence at noon on 01 February, St. Brigid's Day 2024.

Into Kildare expanded the St. Brigid's Trail audio guide by commissioning German as a third language option alongside English and Irish. This enhancement is prominently promoted on our website, featuring a QR code that directs consumers straight to the guide.



Into Kildare spearheaded the promotion of Religious Tourism, marking the return of the sacred relics of St. Brigid to County Kildare after nearly a millennium. We bolstered this initiative by executing campaigns, engaging in strategic PR efforts, and inviting media coverage to ensure broad exposure and entice visitors to explore Kildare.

The sacred relics of St. Brigid were prominently featured on various media platforms, including RTÉ News TV, Virgin Media News, Afternoon Tea Newstalk, and the press association syndicated the event throughout the UK and Ireland, airing on all regional news stations hourly.



The Light Up Kildare video, on the Hill of Allen and Cupidstown Hill achieved significant reach, impressions, and engagement across various social media platforms, underscoring its impact on our initiative to illuminate Kildare. The video resonated widely across numerous social channels, reflecting a robust sense of community engagement and collaboration. During the lighting-up ceremony, Kildare native singer-songwriter Luka Bloom delivered a heartfelt performance of one of his original songs at the base of the tower. Titled 'Don't Be Afraid of the Light That



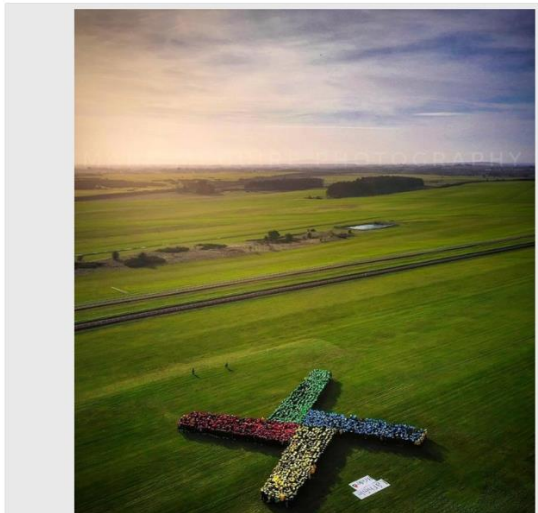
'Shines Within You,' the song narrates the story of St. Brigid and her enduring legacy of grace, hope, and illumination to the world.

Into Kildare supported Solas Bhríde, John Hayes principal of Kildare Town Community School, and the students of Kildare in their collaborative project, which saw 10,000 students gather on St. Brigid's Day to form a human cross.

IK contributed to this initiative by offering PR, photography, and marketing assistance, amplifying its visibility and impact.

THOUSANDS OF STUDENTS FORM A HUMAN BRIGID'S CROSS ON THE CURRAGH!

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 01, 2024



Into Kildare orchestrated a delegation from Kildare to participate in a service held at St. Bride's Church, Fleet Street, London, commonly known as the Journalists' Church. This ceremony was in honour of St. Brigid and to

commemorate our global Pause for Peace Movement at noon.

IK presented a specially commissioned piece of bog oak, representing the flame of our Patroness Saint, and now it stands as a permanent fixture in the church. This symbolic gift, bestowed by Into Kildare the previous year, signifies our enduring reverence for St. Brigid's legacy.



On St. Brigid's Day, a Kildare delegation hosted a reception at the Palace of Westminster alongside Conor McGinn MP. At 12:00 noon, a moment of silence was observed, marking our global Pause for Peace movement.



Following the Palace of Westminster event, the delegation were invited to



attend a reception at the Irish Embassy in London. During the reception, Áine Mangan delivered a presentation to over 250 guests, shedding light on the remarkable life and enduring legacy of St. Brigid.



Into Kildare presented the guests with a St. Brigid's Cross and sponsored a luxury prize of a trip to County Kildare, including a two-night stay in the Killashee Hotel and two nights in Kilkea Castle.



Into Kildare secured the Late Late Show viewers competition which aired on 02 February featuring many contributors from the county including

Carton House, Kildare Village and Newbridge Silverware.

We also secured three competition slots on The Today Show ahead of St. Brigid's Day to promote County Kildare.

We promoted three of Kildare's Hotels ahead of the bank holiday: Killashee Hotel, Kilkea Castle, and the K Club.





Enterprise and Economic Development

Total LEO Financial Supports direct to Clients at 28.02.2024	No. Businesses	Amount Approved (€)
Web Development Grant.	18	€39,843
Business Expansion Grant	1	€26,580
Feasibility Study Grant	1	€14,953
Technical Assistance for Micro Exporters	6	€14,361
IP Start grant	1	€2,160
Total	27	€97,897

Business Expansion Grants

Approved in February:

Salon Nutri Limited of Athy Municipal District was approved €26,580 to support the recruitment of two new employees plus support towards capital expenditure. The business provides 100% Natural, Irish made supplements for the hair and skin market.



Feasibility Study Grants approved in February:

The Domestic Food Waste Company Limited of Kildare/Newbridge Municipal District was approved €14,953 to undertake a feasibility study to develop a new and innovative waste to compost solution.



Focus On Innovation:

Intellectual Grants Approved in February. IP Start Grant Approved Waggi Connected Pets Limited of Naas Municipal District was approved



€2,160 to assist the company advance their Intellectual Property protection by undertaking trademark research and filing.

Micro finance Ireland (MFI)

Four loan applications in progress with Local Enterprise Office Mentors providing support to clients prior to submission of loan request to MFI.

Grant support online briefing:

Our last online briefing was on 07 March. The briefing was aimed at new and existing business owners who intend to apply for grant support or loan support for their business. Also included access to a step-by-step tutorial on how to prepare financial projections for your business.

Entrepreneurship Support

Achievement of KPIs:

	TARGET	ACTUAL
Training	1200	328
SYOB	160	86
MDP	72	12
Mentoring	468	108
Digital	7	-
Lean	20	10
Green	20	14

Focus On Start-Ups:

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

Municipal District Roadshow:

The LEO Team hosted an out-reach advisory clinic at the Athy Enterprise Hub on 04 March.

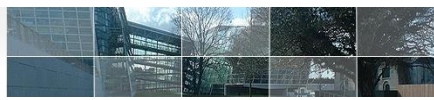
The KFM Road-caster was onsite to promote the local business community in Athy. The Bradbury's team, Des Grufferty from House of LA, Mani in Pasta and Kevin Connolly from Healthy Living each had the opportunity to speak on KFM about their businesses.

Focus On Entrepreneurship:

Year to date 328 clients have completed business-specific training programmes/workshops with LEO. An additional 86 individuals have completed Start-Your-Own-Business or Entrepreneurship 101. All upcoming training opportunities are available to book [HERE](#).

Focus On Women In Business:

The schedule of events for She Succeeds is available [HERE](#).



she succeeds

Empowering Kildare's Women in Business

The next event designed for female entrepreneurs takes place on 09 April. The theme is value-based pricing with the objective of ensuring that clients are not underselling their skills/service.

Focus On Export:

As part of the CreaTech trade mission to Northern Ireland we hosted a Networking Breakfast and client showcase in Gasworks Hotel, Belfast with 20 participants.



Accessing the Enterprise Europe Network as a support for entering new export markets was the key theme.

Focus On Tech:

The LEO/MERITS team hosted a two-day EEN Trade Mission to Belfast for CreaTech clients across the region.

This included access to RendR festival where clients met industry leaders from Netflix and Pixar.

It also included a briefing from Intertrade Ireland on the upcoming [Seedcorn funding opportunity](#) and a tour of the Studio NI production facilities at University of Ulster.



Student Enterprise Programme:

Local Enterprise Office Kildare have announced that teenage entrepreneurs from St. Wolstan's Community School, Celbridge will represent Kildare at this year's Student Enterprise Programme National Final on Thursday 09 May.



The students all took part in the



County Final on 29 February, which was held at the Killashee Hotel, Naas. 122 students from 34 schools took part.

Category winning schools:

- Idea Award – Runner-up – J & D Chrimbo Trees, Ardscoil na Tionóide, Athy
- Idea Award – Winner – Compostable Creations, Coláiste Chiaráin, Leixlip
- Finance Award – Runner-up – Panco, St. Conleth’s Community School, Newbridge
- Finance Award – Winner – Evil Eye, Newbridge College
- Business Plan Award – Runner-up – Machesstic, Naas Community School
- Business Plan Award – Winner – Cozy Creatures, Colaiste Chiaráin, Leixlip
- Sales Award – Runner-up – New Leaf, Coláiste Lorcáin, Castledermot
- Sales Award – Winner – Boardz, Patrician Secondary School, Newbridge
- Innovation Award – Runner-up – Pyne, Salesians College, Celbridge
- Innovation Award – Winner – Comfy Creatures, St. Wolstan’s, Celbridge
- Marketing Award – Runner-up – Keep it Resin, St. Wolstan’s, Celbridge
- Marketing Award – Winner – Scrubadub Ducky, St. Mary’s College, Naas
- Sustainability Award – Runner-up – Saol Nua, Coláiste Chiaráin, Leixlip
- Sustainability Award – Winner – Landscaped – Patrician Secondary School, Newbridge
- Two Special Merit Awards – Uaimse Chugat, Newbridge College and Plagues and Keyrings, Kildare Town Community School
- Second Runner-up – I Fold, Scoil Dara, Kilcock
- First Runner-up – Seo Í Éire, St. Paul’s Secondary School, Monasterevin

Local Enterprise Week

This took place 04 to 08 March. LEO Kildare hosted 20 events across the county, with over 400 clients engaging



in services and events over the week.

MONDAY MARCH 4TH

- 8am - 5pm** ACCESS ALL AREAS at MERITS, Naas
- 9am - 5pm** Focus on Tech: Selling in the Digital World, MERITS Naas
- 12pm - 3pm** KFM broadcast from Athy Enterprise Hub
- 7pm - 9pm** Start Your Own Food Business

TUESDAY MARCH 5TH

- 8am - 5pm** ACCESS ALL AREAS at MERITS, Naas
- 9am - 5pm** 1:1 Business Advice for Start-Ups [Online]
- 11am - 1pm** Lean Leadership: Transformation through Continuous Improvement, Osprey Hotel, Naas
- 6pm - 7pm** Coder Dojo: coding camp for kids & teens at MERITS, Naas
- 6pm** Pride of Premises Awards

WEDNESDAY MARCH 6TH

- 8am - 5pm** ACCESS ALL AREAS at MERITS, Naas
- 9am - 5pm** 1:1 Business Advice for Start-Ups [Online] and 1:1 Strategic Marketing Clinics
- 12 - 5 pm** 1:1 Digitisation Clinics [MERITS or Online]
- 2pm - 4pm** **NATIONAL SPOTLIGHT EVENT★**
Understand and Leverage Future Trends for your Business

THURSDAY MARCH 7TH

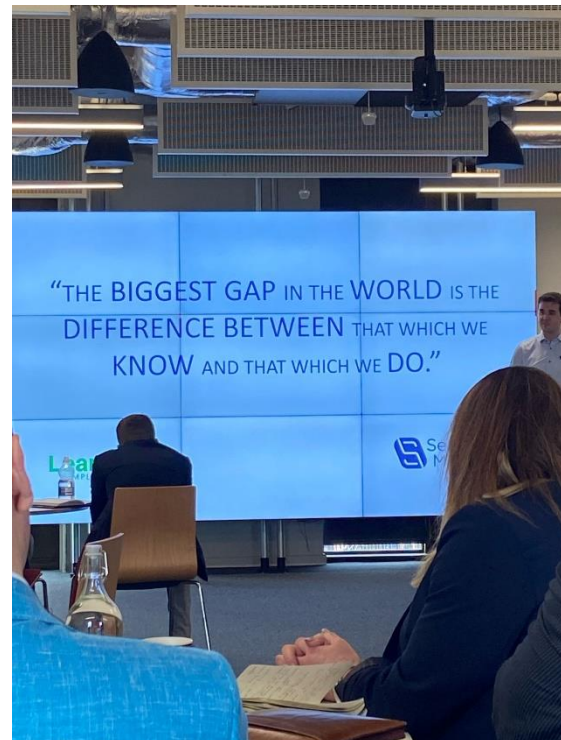
- 8am - 5pm** ACCESS ALL AREAS at MERITS
- 11.15am - 2pm** **NATIONAL SPOTLIGHT EVENT★**
The Sustainability Imperative for your Business Success - a live audience with Liz Bonnin, world renowned Natural History and Environmental broadcaster [Live Stream Available]
- 2pm - 4pm** Understanding the grants process and preparing financial projections [Online]

FRIDAY MARCH 8TH

- 8am - 5pm** ACCESS ALL AREAS at MERITS
- 9am - 5pm** Website Review Clinics [MERITS Naas or Online]

Focus On Lean:

25 clients joined a workshop with Martin Tierney in MERITS on 05 March. His company, Seating Matters is a Red Dot Design winner and is recognised as a world leader in the adoption of lean principles company wide.



The culture of continuous improvement and employee empowerment that Martin and his brothers instilled in their company through lean principles was hugely inspiring.

Through our Lean for Business consultancy support and our Advanced Lean Program we are keen to support Kildare based companies on the same journey.



To avail of our fully funded Lean for Business support, applications can be made online [HERE](#).

Companies can also join our Advanced Lean Program which includes Yellow Belt certification for two members of the team. Applications are open [HERE](#). Places are extremely limited for this program, therefore booking is required.

Focus On Sustainability:

Businesses are encouraged to apply for a fully funded [Energy Efficiency Assessment](#) to identify suitable upgrades as part of the [Energy Efficiency Grant](#).

Economic Support Services

MD Applications to Retail Support Grants	No. of Apps Approved	Value of App Approved
ATHY	1	€40
CELBRIDGE LEIXLIP	0	€0
CLANE MAYNOOTH	1	€280
KILDARE NEWBRIDGE	9	€1,988
NAAS	2	€400

The General Shopfront Improvement Scheme Grant and Retail Window

Merchandising Grant for 2024 have opened. The Brigid 1500 window grant concluded at end-February with 13 approved projects. The Economic Development team continues to visit retailers across the county providing them with information on all the supports available.

Skills Audit

After a competitive competition, KPMG has been appointed to undertake the skills audit of County Kildare.

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 Kildare County Council's Forward Planning Department) and the tenderer will then work to deliver a comprehensive report to determine a strategy for the County by July 2024.

Kildare Diaspora Engagement Strategy:

Kildare County Council (KCC) published its first Diaspora newsletter with a New Year message from Ms.



Sonya Kavanagh, Chief Executive Kildare County Council; the newsletter will comprise topical stories of interest to Kildare's global population.

The Irish World conducted an interview with Ms. Paula O'Brien, Senior Executive Officer, Kildare County Council; the Irish World is a leading diaspora publication in the UK.

Athy Food, Beverage and Skills Innovation Hub

The evaluation of the tender documents for the construction of the Hub is due to be completed in the coming days by the design team as appointed by Kildare County Council. Once completed, the council will submit the proposed contractor and supporting documents to the Department of Rural and Community Development for review and approval. It is proposed that the project will be completed in 13 months upon commencement.

Kildare Craft, Creativity and Design Hub, Courthouse Kildare

The Economic Development Unit will seek a detailed design for the Courthouse in Q2, 2024. 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.

Kildare County Council has procured a consultant to undertake a strategic review of the 'Gather' popup shop that operated in Kildare Village (Q4 2023).

Fashion, Textiles and Design Hub (former BOI Monasterevin)

The consultants have submitted the feasibility study for the building. The Economic Development Unit has secured capital funding from Kildare County Council for its development; subject to the appropriate planning and development regulations for the proposed development being in place, we will commence work in Q1 2024.

Kilcock Green and Sustainable Enterprise Park Feasibility Study

On foot of the feasibility study to examine the use of lands at Duncreevan Townland, Kilcock, (as completed by a consultancy firm in H2 2023) Kildare County Council submitted an application to the EU Just Transition Fund: Local and Regional Economic Strategies Support Scheme, as managed by POBAL. The application seeks to commission a master plan and technical support to achieve full planning, procurement, and a strategic business plan for the



proposed development of the site as a 'Sustainable Growth Business Park'.

Kildare County Council submitted the application on 23 January 2024 seeking funding of €815,000; POBAL anticipates its notification of decisions to occur in April.

Progression will be very much subject to the appropriate planning and development regulations being in order.

Athy Green and Sustainable Enterprise Park Feasibility Study

On foot of the feasibility study to examine the appropriate lands in Athy, (as completed by a consultancy firm in H2 2023) Kildare County Council submitted an application to the EU Just Transition Fund: Local and Regional Economic Strategies Support Scheme, as managed by POBAL.

The application seeks to commission a technical team to finalise site selection, an initial site design and a business plan including financial modeling.

Kildare County Council submitted the application on 23 January 2024 seeking funding of €85,000; POBAL anticipates its notification of decisions to occur in April.

Progression will be very much subject to the appropriate planning and

development regulations being in order.

Pride of Premises Awards

The Economic Development Team hosted the Pride of Premises Awards at the Keadeen Hotel, Newbridge, on Tuesday 05 March. The Awards were attended by 74 people including Kildare's businesses, Elected Members, the Chamber of Commerce, invited guests and judges, and KCC staff. The night acknowledged the great work done by businesses to enhance their premises in 2023 by way of employing Kildare County Council Retail Supports.

Sonya Kavanagh, Chief Executive, Kildare County Council, and Councillor Daragh Fitzpatrick, Cathaoirleach Kildare County Council, led the presentation of the awards which comprised:

Category	Winner	Runner Up
Overall Shopfront	Square Coffee Bar, Athy	Judge Roy Beans, Newbridge
Athy MD Shopfront	Square Coffee Bar, Athy	Gillen Jewelers, Athy
Celbridge Leixlip	Sketch - The Label,	So Coffee, Leixlip



Shopfront	Leixlip	
Kildare Newbridge Shopfront	Judge Roy Beans, Newbridge	Violets, Kildare Town
Naas Shopfront	Hairography Naas	Jam Music, Naas
Clane Maynooth Shopfront	L'Art Du Chocolat, Maynooth	Sarah Warren Skin, Maynooth
Overall Window Display	Lips&P's, Naas	So Coffee, Leixlip
Accessibility Winner	The Castle Inn, Carbury	The Spout, Kilcullen
Retail E-Commerce Champion 2024	Sundae Scoops, Newbridge and Naas	N/A
Retail Sustainability Champion 2024	The Maynooth Bookshop, Maynooth	N/A

Age Friendly Ireland (AFI) Business Recognition Programme

Councillor Daragh Fitzpatrick, Cathaoirleach Kildare County Council, and Orlaith Carmody, Principal Advisor for Age Friendly Ireland's (AFI) Business Recognition Programme, launched Kildare's Age Friendly

Programme at the Pride of Premises on 05 March.

As part of its Shopfront, Universal Accessibility and Age-Friendly Grant, Kildare County Council's Economic Development Unit will deliver a series of supports and guidelines to businesses to assist in the enhancement of Age Friendly county-wide. Businesses will receive training and the attainment of Age Friendly accreditation in partnership with AFI.

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:

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 2023 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.

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 <https://www.localenterprise.ie/Kildare>

Sonya Kavanagh
Chief Executive