

KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE CHILL CHAINNIGH



ANNUAL REPORT

2019

Adopted by Kilkenny County Council on Monday, 18th May, 2020

STATEMENT OF AN CATHAOIRLEACH



It is a great privilege for me to introduce the Annual Report for 2019. This Annual Report details the wide variety of services provided by Kilkenny County Council to the people of Kilkenny City and County. We, the Council, play a key role in providing essential core services such as housing, roads, water, fire and emergency services and in supporting local communities through the arts, heritage, conservation, libraries and community and enterprise functions.

In 2019, the provision of additional housing continued to remain a priority for Kilkenny County Council. The Housing Task Force set up in 2017 continued to play an important in working with the Executive to progress much needed new housing units.

In 2019, the Council welcomed many dignitaries to the City & County both from home and abroad. This is an opportunity for us to showcase what is best in Kilkenny. In particular, we were pleased to welcome delegations from Moret-sur-Loing and Formigine to celebrate our St Patrick's festivities.

I also welcome the many awards bestowed on Kilkenny throughout the year. This is a recognition of the hard work of many communities across the County working in collaboration with Kilkenny County Council and many statutory agencies. These awards are a boost to many rural communities and also fosters greater community engagement and encourages other towns and villages to develop projects in their own communities. The allocation of funding under various schemes greatly assists in the development of our towns and villages. Schemes such as CLAR, Town & Village Renewal, local funding from Kilkenny County Council gives communities a much needed boost. In particular, I would like to pay tribute to all those involved in organising the wonderful night held in the Lyrath Hotel to honour all communities from all over Ireland who entered the National Pride of Place competition.

Following the May local elections, we welcomed 7 new members to the Council. I thank all Elected Members and those who serve on the various committees and sub committees of the Council. They dedicate their time to the business of the Council and to representing their particular and general interests on the committees. The extensive range of business discussed and decided is outlined in the report and is testament to their ongoing dedication and service. I sincerely thank the 7 outgoing members for their work over the last 5 years with the Council and in their communities. I wish them well for the future.

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

Whilst we have come through very difficult times and many people are still experiencing the consequences of the recession, there is a slight increase in economic activity. Kilkenny can look forward to 2020 when we will see many important projects complete and new ones commence.

Finally, it has been my privilege as Cathaoirleach to lead my fellow Elected Members in meeting those challenging and sometimes controversial and often courageous decisions, as we work together with the Executive and staff for the betterment of Kilkenny and the communities that we all live in.

Cllr. Peter 'Chap' Cleere
Cathaoirleach

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S STATEMENT



I am pleased to be associated with this Draft Annual Report for 2019 which outlines the extensive range of services provided directly or indirectly by this Council. Within the main body of this report the various activities and delivery of services and infrastructure projects being progressed by Kilkenny County are outlined.

There was a high level of commitment across all Departments to delivering the 2019 Service Delivery Plan and in achieving the Objectives of the Corporate Plan. Most areas met all of their stated objectives and where the level of achievement was less than 100% it will not have any impact on the Council meeting the objectives of its Corporate Plan. I am satisfied therefore that the Council substantially achieved the objectives as set out at the commencement of 2019 in the Service Delivery Plan and that it did so within the parameters set out in the 2019 budget.

I wish to pay tribute to the work being done at Municipal District level and at SPC level. These committees are invaluable in assisting the Council in pursuing its objectives and getting through its business. The Commitment of the Councillors and external members is evident from the activities outlined in the report. I express my appreciation for the dedication and hard work of all the Elected Members both current & former, my colleagues on the Management Team and the staff of the Council. I am confident, given the abilities and spirit of cooperation that is consistently shown by the Elected Members and staff that we should be in a position to meet the challenges that lie ahead. We can look forward to a positive 2020.

Finally, I would like to particularly thank the Cathaoirleach Cllr. Peter Cleere and his predecessor Cllr Eamon Aylward, the Municipal District Cathaoirligh Cllr's John Brennan and his predecessor Cllr Michael McCarthy, Cllr Eamon Aylward and his predecessor Cllr Ger Frisby, Mayor Martin Brett and his predecessor Mayor Peter Cleere, and Cllr Pat O'Neill who have distinguished themselves in their respective roles.

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

I am confident that it will give an overview to the people of Kilkenny and beyond, of the broad range of activities undertaken and of the Council's achievements in 2019.

Colette Byrne
Chief Executive

HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2019

- Success achieved in National Enterprising Town Awards.
- Fourth successful Yulefest festival.
- Further development of St Patrick's Day Festivities as a civic event.
- Hosted "Ras na mBan" cycling race for the 4th time in Kilkenny.
- Hosted the National Pride of Place Awards night.
- Construction commenced on Brew House building and Linear Park. Funding secured under the Urban Regeneration & Development Fund.
- Work progressed on the redevelopment of Evans Home as a home for the Butler Gallery.
- Development works on 2 LIHAF funded projects in the Western Environs, Kilkenny City and Ferrybank commenced in 2019.
- 112 new housing units completed by Kilkenny County Council and Voluntary Bodies.
- 153 housing units purchased by Kilkenny County Council and Voluntary Bodies.
- 5,519 calls were made seeking housing repairs in 2019
- 24 housing loans paid out to a value of €3,007,655.
- 305 housing grants paid for adaptation to houses to the value of €1,998,466 m
- 709 Private Rented Inspections carried out.
- Resettlement Working Group established for the Irish Refugee Protection Programme - resettled 25 Syrian families.
- Traveller Accommodation Programme 2018-2022 approved.
- 90 Traveller families provided with accommodation during the period 2014-2019
- €23.8m spent on improving and maintaining our entire road network.
- Completed 4.5km pavement improvement on N25 Graiguenakill- costing €2.04m.
- Retrofitted 1,553 public lights under energy efficiency funds in 2019.
- Works commenced in Callan and Thomastown under the Rural Regeneration & Development Programme.
- Set up Project team and commenced design work for the 6 Flood Relief Schemes.
- Supplied 10.4 billion litres of water through the public water schemes.
- Complied 100% on microbiological & 99.6% on chemical parameters for water supply.
- Works progressed on major improvement to the Inistioge Water Supply
- Progressed work for the 2020 -2026 City & County Development Plan.
- Callan and Thomastown Local Area Plans adopted.
- *"Kilkenny Shopfronts Through the Ages"* launched in 2019.
- 976 planning applications received during 2019.
- 44 sites on the Vacant Sites Register at 31/12/2019.
- €263,000 in conservation grant funding awarded in 2019.
- 5 Housing Developments taken in charge.
- Funding of €17,634 secured to prepare a communications and marketing strategy for Woodstock gardens in 2020
- 27 public playgrounds are now open and maintained by the Council.
- Fire Brigades responded to 815 incidents in 2019

- Civil Defence provided assistance to 34 communities for various events.
- Over 1,400 tonnes of recyclable material and over 3,000 tonnes of residual waste were collected throughout the County.
- 1,775 tonnes of glass and 106 tonnes of aluminium and steel were collected across the 46 Bring Centres.
- 1,066 environmental complaints were received.
- Over 150 Community groups actively participated in the National Spring Clean.
- Dog licence increase – from 4,630 in 2018 to 5,472 in 2019.
- 41 Grants were awarded under the Graveyard Grant Scheme.
- Funding of €396,600 provided to Communities under Town and Village Renewal Scheme. & Healthy Ireland.
- Funding of €245,548 provided to Communities under Healthy Ireland.
- Allocation of €114,770 for 3 projects under the CLAR Programme 2019 (*CLAR -Ceantair Laga Árd-Riachtanais*)
- 26% increase in library membership.
- Grant funding of €26,250 received from Dormant Accounts for developing library supports for marginalised, socially excluded and disadvantaged communities.
- Paid total of €95,000 to festivals in the City and County.
- Paid a total of €288,520 to groups under the Community and Cultural Grant Scheme.
- Launched Thomastown Age Friendly Town Plan.
- Launched Callan Town Improvement Plan
- 70 events held during Heritage week.
- Increase in use of social media platforms.
- Continuous emphasis on improving collection rate across all of our income sources and reducing the arrears.
- €2.29m collected in development levies.
- Surplus of €14,047 achieved in the Revenue Budget in 2019.

ELECTORAL REPRESENTATIONS

Kilkenny County Council's membership consists of twenty-four Members, elected for a five-year term of office. The current Council was elected in May 2019 and membership at 31st December, 2019 is as follows:

CALLAN - THOMASTOWN		CASTLECOMER	
	<p>Peter Cleere (FF) <i>Aughiletuan, Skeoughvosteen, Co. Kilkenny.</i></p>		<p>John Brennan (FG) <i>Crutt, Clogh, Castlecomer, Co. Kilkenny</i></p>
	<p>Deirdre Cullen (FF) <i>Kilree, Bennettsbridge, Co. Kilkenny.</i></p>		<p>Mary Hilda Cavanagh (FG) <i>Whiteswall, Crosspatrick, Via Thurles, Co Kilkenny</i></p>
	<p>Matt Doran (FF) <i>Shrughawadda, Kilmoganny, Co. Kilkenny</i></p>		<p>Michael Delaney (FF) <i>The Village Shop, Tullaroan, Co. Kilkenny</i></p>
	<p>Michael Doyle (FG) <i>Ballinbarna, The Rower, Co. Kilkenny.</i></p>		<p>Pat Fitzpatrick (FF), <i>Cloghpook, Ballyfoyle, Co. Kilkenny.</i></p>
	<p>Joe Lyons (FG) <i>Bauntha, Callan, Co. Kilkenny</i></p>		<p>Denis Hynes (LAB) <i>Ballyellen, Goresbridge, Co. Kilkenny.</i></p>
	<p>Patrick O'Neill (FG) <i>2, Hillview Crest, Bennettsbridge, Co. Kilkenny.</i></p>		<p>Michael McCarthy (FF) <i>Buncrusha Street, Freshford, Co. Kilkenny.</i></p>

KILKENNY CITY WEST



Martin Brett (FF)
Callan Road,
Kilkenny City



John Coonan (FF)
17 Willow Close,
Ardnore,
Kilkenny



David Fitzgerald (FG)
24 Patrick Street,
Kilkenny.



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



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



Eugene McGuinness (NP)
40 Bishop Birch Place,
Kilkenny



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

PILTOWN



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



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



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



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



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

The following were Elected Members from May 2014 to May 2019:



Breda Gardner



David Kennedy



Patrick McKee



Pat Millea



Melissa O'Neill



Maurice Shortall



Sean Tyrrell

MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

Kilkenny County Council's Management Structure is:

Colette Byrne
Chief Executive



Mary J. Mulholland
Director of Services

Housing, Community, Library, Arts, Heritage, Fire Service

Municipal District of Callan - Thomastown



Tim Butler
Director of Services

Corporate, Human Resources, Roads & Transportation, Water Services, Communication, Health & Safety

Municipal District of Kilkenny City



Sean McKeown
Director of Services

Planning, Environment, Building Control, Parks, LEO/Economic Development, Tourism Marketing & Veterinary Services

Municipal District of Piltown



Martin Prendiville
Head of Finance

Finance, Information Technology, Facilities Management, Procurement & Special Projects

Municipal District of Castlecomer



COMMITTEES & SUBSIDIARY BODIES

Committees & Subsidiary Bodies

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

Strategic Policy Committees

Kilkenny County Council adopted a Strategic Policy Committee Scheme on 16th September, 2019 for the newly elected Council 2019 to 2024. The role of the Strategic Policy Committees [SPC's] is to assist the Council in the formulation, development and review of policy. Their composition reflect the major functions of the Council within the broader context, are tailored to the size, membership and administrative resources of the Council and have one third of their membership drawn from sectors relevant to the committees' work.

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

The overall configuration and membership of the Kilkenny County Council's Strategic Policy Committees is as follows from June 2019:

SPC 1: Economic Development Enterprise Support & Tourism

Elected Members [8]	Members from External Sectors [7]
John Coonan	Agriculture/Farming: John Bambrick [IFA]
Michael Doyle	Development/Construction: Marion Acreman [Chambers Ireland]
Pat Fitzpatrick	Business/Commercial: Deirdre Shine [Chambers Ireland]
Ger Frisby	Trade Union: Eileen Moyles [ICTU]
Michael McCarthy	Social Inclusion: Annette Jolly [PPN]
Eugene McGuinness	Environment/Conservation: Brian Hamilton [PPN]
Malcolm Noonan	Community & Voluntary: Paul Brophy [PPN]
Patrick O'Neill	

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

Elected Members [8]	Members from External Sectors [7]
Tomás Breathnach	Agriculture/Farming: Paul O'Brien [IFA]
Peter Cleere	Business/Commercial: Gary Graham [Chambers Ireland]
Deirdre Cullen	Development/Construction: Barry Lynch [Chambers Ireland]
Michael Delaney	Trade Union: Ger Mooney [ICTU]
Fidelis Doherty	Community/Voluntary: Gerard Ferris [PPN]
Matt Doran	Social Inclusion: Eileen Ryan [PPN]
Pat Dunphy	Environment/Conservation: Alan Sullivan [PPN]
Patrick O'Neill	

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

Elected Members [8]	Members from External Sectors [6]
Eamon Aylward	Business/Commercial: John Hurley [Chambers Ireland]
Martin Brett	Development/Construction: Brian Dunlop [Chambers Ireland]
Pat Fitzpatrick	Environment/Conservation: Mags Morrissey [PPN]
Denis Hynes	Community/Voluntary: John Bourke [PPN]
Joe Lyons	Social Inclusion: Lisa Morris [PPN]
Andrew McGuinness	Trade Union: Yvonne Moriarty [ICTU]
Eugene McGuinness	
Joe Malone	

SPC 4: Housing

Elected Members [6]	Members from External Sectors [5]	
Mary Hilda Cavanagh	Agriculture/Farming	James Murphy <i>[IFA]</i>
Deirdre Cullen	Development/Construction	John Hurley <i>[Chambers Ireland]</i>
David Fitzgerald	Business/Commercial:	Laurence Conroy <i>[Chambers Ireland]</i>
Denis Hynes	Community/Voluntary:	Noel O'Donoghue <i>[PPN]</i>
Joe Lyons	Environment/Conservation:	Shem Caulfield <i>[PPN]</i>
Malcolm Noonan		

SPC 5: Environmental Protection, Water Services & Energy

Elected Members [6]	Members from External Sectors [5]	
Tomás Breathnach	Agriculture/Farming:	Michael Rice <i>[IFA]</i>
John Brennan	Business/Commercial:	Kathy Purcell <i>[Chambers Ireland]</i>
Martin Brett	Community/Voluntary:	Denis Brophy <i>[PPN]</i>
Peter Cleere	Social Inclusion:	Martin Brennan <i>[PPN]</i>
John Coonan	Trade Union:	Fergal Canton <i>[ICTU]</i>
Pat Dunphy		

MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL

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

PLENARY MEETINGS OF KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL

Number of Meetings held in 2019: 22

Ordinary Monthly Meetings - 11, Workshops - 8 & Special Meetings - 3

- Adoption of Budget
- Affordable Housing Scheme
- Amenity Grants
- Annual Financial Statement
- Annual Report 2018
- Anti-Litter/Anti-Graffiti Grants
- Appointments of Members to SPC, Committees and other Boards
- Approval for 2020 Bank Overdraft Facility.
- Approval of Loan from Housing Finance Agency for Housing Loan purposes.
- Arts Act Grants
- Audit Committee Annual Report 2018
- Audit Committee Report on AFS & Audit Report 2018
- Capital Budget 2019 - 2020
- CFRAMS [*Catchment Flood Risk Assessment & Management*]
- Chief Executive's Monthly/Quarterly Report
- CLAR Projects
- Climate Adaptation Strategy.
- Community & Cultural Facilities Capital Grant Scheme 2018 - 2020
- Corporate Plan 2019-2024
- Creative Ireland Fund
- Delegation of Reserved Functions to Municipal Districts
- Economic Monitor
- Election of Cathaoirleach & Leas Cathaoirleach.
- Festival & Event Grants 2019
- Graveyard Grants 2019
- Incremental Purchase Scheme
- Kilkenny Shopfronts Through the Ages
- Language Scheme 2019-2022
- LCDC Annual Report 2018
- Local Area Plans - Callan & Thomastown
- Local Government Audit Service - Statutory Audit Report
- Local Property Tax
- Naming of Infrastructure
- Part 8 Reports for Various Projects
- Performance Indicators Report 2018
- Register of Electors
- Residential Regeneration
- Road Works Programme 2019
- Section 183 - Disposals
- Section 38 - Road Improvements
- Section 85 Agreements with other Local Authorities.
- Service Delivery Plan 2019
- Severe Weather Report
- Small Business Vacant Premises Incentive Scheme
- St. Patrick's Day Festivities
- Standing Orders for Plenary Council

- Strategic Planning Update
- Submissions to Local Area Plans
- Taking in Charge of Housing Estates.
- Town & Village Renewal Update
- Traveller Accommodation Programme 2018-2023
- Update on Regional Spatial & Economic Strategies [RSEs].
- Variations/Material Contravention to County and City Development Plans
- Winter Maintenance Plan

Presentations made by External Groups

- Comhairle na nÓg
- Kilkenny Civic Trust
- Ras na mBan
- Sports Partnership
- Watergate
- Watershed
- Yulefest

MEETING OF COMMITTEES

MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF KILKENNY MEETINGS

(including City, Callan and Thomastown) (Pre May 2019)

Number of Ordinary/Monthly Meetings held in 2019: 5

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Update from City Wall Steering Committee.▪ Callan and Thomastown LAP▪ Footpath completion and upgrade around the City, Callan and Thomastown area▪ Taking in charge of Brookfield, Ballyhale, Kingscourt Callan and The Green in Thomastown▪ Second Phase of Fairgreen Regeneration in Callan▪ Mobility Management Plan for Callan and Thomastown▪ Culvert in Thomastown▪ Medieval Mile footpaths and associated street enhancements▪ Installation of mobile cameras the river access points in City | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ LIHAF Project▪ Adoption of Draft Schedule of Municipal Works including Draft Road Works Scheme.▪ Road Works Scheme 2019▪ Kings River Project – Callan▪ Roads issues raised under recurring item “Roads”.▪ Housing and Planning updates.▪ Funding approved for commencement of engineering works to facilitate the introduction of the new bus stops.▪ Installation of CCTV around War Memorial and confirmation that Garda Station will Monitor▪ Ormonde Street Refurbishment |
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MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF KILKENNY CITY MEETINGS

Number of Ordinary/Monthly Meetings held post May 2019: 7

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Election of Mayor and Deputy Mayor▪ Part 8 Housing Developments at Parcnagowan & Old Golf Links Road▪ Creating and developing a strong cycling culture in Kilkenny City▪ Traffic calming in residential estates▪ Road safety at key Junctions▪ Appointment of Members to Twinning Committee▪ City Centre Trask Force▪ 5-year funded programme for footpaths.▪ Town Twinning trips to Minnesota USA and Formigine Italy. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Litter Management Plan 2018-2020▪ Casual Trading bye-laws▪ Noise Pollution▪ Busking bye-laws▪ December Municipal meeting held in St. Canice’s Cathedral▪ Tidy Town success for Kilkenny City▪ Adopted Municipal Budget plan for 2020▪ Appointment of St. Patrick’s Day Festival Committee.▪ Tree survey and Tree planting programme to be undertaken▪ Kilkenny City Bus Services |
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MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF CALLAN - THOMASTOWN

Number of Meetings held in 2019: 14 & Number of Deputations Received: 1

<i>Fair Green, Callan:</i>	Rural Regeneration Project works commenced 2019
<i>Chapel Lane, Callan:</i>	Discretionary Improvement Works - Footpath installation completed 2019
<i>Prologue Callan:</i>	Discretionary Improvement Works - Footpath installation completed 2019
<i>Thomastown Age Friendly Town:</i>	Kilkenny Age Friendly Programme
<i>Thomastown Quayside Car Park:</i>	Rural Regeneration Project works commenced 2019
<i>R448 Berkley Lawns, Thomastown:</i>	Discretionary Improvement Works - Footpath installation completed 2019
<i>R448 Maudlin Street, Thomastown:</i>	Low Cost Safety Scheme - Pedestrian crossing & footpath completed 2019
<i>R700/R705 The Stripes:</i>	Restoration Improvement Scheme 2018

MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF CASTLECOMER MEETINGS

Number of Meetings held in 2019: 14 & Number of Deputations Received: 1

<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Budget 2020 for the Municipal District of Castlecomer▪ Bring Banks - Johnstown & Urlingford▪ Castlecomer Destination Branding▪ Castlecomer Pedestrian Bridge▪ CLÁR Funding & Submissions▪ Clogh / Moneenroe Water Supply Scheme▪ CCTV Cameras & Data Controller▪ Community Grants▪ Community Involvement in Road Works Schemes & Local Improvement Schemes▪ Election of Cathaoirleach & Leas Cathaoirleach▪ Hedge Cutting & Roadside Trees▪ High Speed Broadband Delivery & National Broadband Plan▪ Housing Developments - Unfinished Estates - Taking in Charge process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Housing Report▪ Litter Management Plan 2018 - 2020▪ Meetings with TII▪ Pollinator Programme▪ Provision of Car Park in Urlingford▪ Public Lighting & Retrofit Program▪ Public Participation Network▪ Revision of Municipal District Boundaries▪ Road Works Programme, Winter Maintenance and Roads Issues.▪ Street Cleaning & Weed Control▪ Town & Village Renewal▪ Traffic Control Measures▪ Village Health Checks Johnstown/Urlingford, Goresbridge & Castlecomer
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MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF PILTOWN MEETINGS

Number of Meetings held in 2019: 15

(including Joint Meeting with WCCC)

- Election of Cathaoirleach & Leas Cathaoirleach
- General Municipal Allocation / Adoption of Municipal Budget Plan
- Adoption of Road Works Scheme
- Roadworks Programme Updates & Roads Related Issues
- Winter Maintenance Programme / Salting Operations
- N24 Piltown Bypass - Tower Road Junction Improvements
- Low Cost Safety Improvement Schemes
- N25 New Ross Bypass
- N25 Safety at Junctions
- N25 Waterford to Glenmore Scheme
- Piltown Village Traffic Calming / Management Scheme
- Tower Road Footpath, Piltown
- Mill Road Footpath, Mullinavat
- Kiln Road, Slieverue
- Provision of Footpaths Piltown Municipal District
- Community Involvement in Roadworks Schemes & Local Improvement Schemes
- CLÁR funding & Submissions
- Speeding issues in the Piltown Municipal District
- Traffic / Speed Surveys
- Hedge Cutting
- Flood Investigation Works
- Dunkitt Flood Relief Scheme
- Bus Stops / Shelters - Piltown Municipal District
- Glenmore Bus Stop & Weighbridge
- Meetings with TII
- Engineering Areas - Changes to Municipal Districts
- Kilkenny Greenway
- Tourism
- Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy & Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan
- North Quays Strategic Development Zone
- 24/7 Cardiac Service for Waterford
- Ferrybank District Centre
- Newfoundland Ireland Festival
- Town & Village Renewal Schemes - Hugginstown & Kilmacow
- Ferrybank Neighbourhood Park & Playground
- Taking in Charge Process / Unfinished Estates
- Poulanassy Waterfall
- Public Participation Network
- Litter Management Plan 2018-2020
- Plastic Litter in River Barrow
- All Ireland Pollinator Plan
- Policing Issues (Gardai in Attendance)
- Launch of the Local Policing Partnership

Belview Port

A site visit was arranged to Belview Port on the 6th November, 2019. Elected members and officials were given a tour of the Port to view developments and the various operations at the Port. After the tour, a presentation was also made to the members by Frank Ronan, Chief Executive.

SPC 1: Economic Development Enterprise Support & Tourism

Number of Meetings Held	Main Policy Issues Considered
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Adoption and monitoring of the delivery of the LEO Local Enterprise Development Plan for 2018, on behalf of the Council [per SLA with Enterprise Ireland];▪ Monitoring of the economic elements of the LECP Annual Action Plan 2017 – 2018;▪ Nominations to the LECP Advisory Group;▪ South East Action Plan for Jobs.▪ The Abbey Quarter;▪ Vacant Premises Incentive Scheme;

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

Number of Meetings Held	Main Policy Issues Considered
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Car Parking▪ Electric Vehicles▪ Fire Service – water supplies/hydrants▪ Major Emergency Plan▪ Mobility Plan▪ Road Safety Plan▪ Winter Maintenance Plan

SPC 3: Planning & Development, Heritage, Community, Arts & Culture.

Number of Meetings Held	Main Policy Issues Considered
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ All Ireland Pollinator Plan▪ Architectural Conservation & Record of Protected Structures▪ Callan & Thomastown Local Area Plan Reviews▪ County Development Plan Review▪ ePlanning Update▪ Hinkley Point C Nuclear Power Station – Kilkenny County Council conduit for public consultation▪ Kilkenny County Council Development Contribution Scheme▪ Kilkenny Cultural Strategy 2018-2022▪ National Planning Framework & Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy▪ Our Public Libraries 2022▪ Solar Energy▪ Vacant & Derelict Sites

SPC 4: Housing

Number of Meetings Held	Main Policy Issues Considered
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Capital Programme 2017 – 2021▪ Acquisition Policy▪ Homelessness and monthly analysis▪ Housing Needs Assessment 2018▪ Scheme of Letting Priorities▪ Refugee Resettlement Programme▪ Differential Rent Scheme and Rent Review 2020▪ Incremental Purchase Scheme,▪ Affordable Housing Policy & Scheme

SPC5: Environmental Protection, Water Services and Energy

Number of Meetings Held	Main Policy Issues Considered
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Action Plan for SPC 5▪ Climate Adaptation Plan▪ Draft Animal Welfare Charter▪ Draft Horse Bye Laws▪ Dunmore Civic Amenity Site▪ Environmental Noise Regulations - KCC - Implementation Plan 2019/2023▪ LAWCO - Local Authority Water Communities Office▪ Litter Management Plan 2018 -2020▪ Solar Energy▪ Use of Glyphosphate▪ Waste Management - Draft Waste Bye Laws

KILKENNY JOINT POLICING COMMITTEE

Kilkenny County Council has established a Joint Policing Committee in accordance with the Garda Síochána Act 2005



*Chairperson: Cllr. Fidelis Doherty
(to May 2019)*



*Chairperson: Cllr. Patrick Fitzpatrick
(from June 2019)*

MEMBERS OF JOINT POLICING COMMITTEE (from June, 2019): -

Cllr. Martin Brett, Callan Road, Kilkenny.
Cllr. Deirdre Cullen, Kilree, Bennettsbridge, Co. Kilkenny.
Cllr. Pat Dunphy, Ballygorey, Mooncoin, Co. Kilkenny.
Cllr. Michael Delaney, Tullaroan, Co. Kilkenny.
Cllr. Tomas Breathnach, Forge Road, Narabane, Kilmacow, Co. Kilkenny.
Cllr. Denis Hayes, Ballyellen, Goresbridge, Co Kilkenny
Cllr. Joe Lyons, Bauntha, Callan, Co. Kilkenny.
Cllr. Patrick O'Neill, Hillview, Bennettsbridge, Co. Kilkenny.
Cllr. Michael Doyle, Ballinbarna, The Rower, Co. Kilkenny.
Cllr. Mick McCarthy, Buncrusha Street, Freshford, Co. Kilkenny.
Cllr. Joe Malone, 11 Maiden Hill, Kells Road, Kilkenny.
Cllr. Andrew McGuinness, O'Loughlin Rd., Kilkenny.
Chief Superintendent Dominic Hayes, Kilkenny Garda Station.
Superintendent Derek Hughes, Kilkenny Garda Station.
Superintendent Carmel Banville, Thomastown Garda Station.
Deputy Bobby Aylward. TD, Knockmoylan, Mullinavat, Co. Kilkenny.
Deputy Kathleen Funchion, 3rd Floor, Lower New Street, Kilkenny
Deputy John McGuinness, O'Loughlin Rd, Kilkenny
Deputy John Paul Phelan, 25 Market St., Thomastown, Co. Kilkenny
Samual Morgan, PPN, Kilkenny.
Helena Power, PPN, Kilkenny

Number of Meetings Held

4

& 1 Public Meeting

Summary of issues discussed in 2019:

- ✓ Crime Statistics, Traffic and Road Safety
- ✓ Divisional Protected Service Unit/Victim & Community Office
- ✓ Community Engagement /Policing Partnerships
- ✓ Operation City Safe/Sweeper.
- ✓ Garda Youth Project/Achievement Awards
- ✓ New Divisional Policing Model
- ✓ Urlingford CCTV
- ✓ Local Policing Partnership Castlecomer and Piltown
- ✓ Election of new Chairperson and Vice Chairperson

CIVIC OCCASIONS & EVENTS 2019



Reception for Dunnamaggin Hurling Club on winning the All Ireland Intermediate Senior Club Championship



Reception for Ballyhale Shamrocks Hurling Club on winning the All Ireland Senior Club Championship



Reception for Comhaltas Ceoltoirí Eireann



Reception for the Rose of Tralee



Reception for Garda Caroline O'Brien



Election of New Mayor for Kilkenny City



Reception for Order of Malta



Reception for Kilkenny City Harriers



National Day of Commemoration



Commemoration of 1st Dáil



Reception for Garda Caroline O'Brien



Taoiseach Leo Varadkar visits Abbey Quarter Site



Kilkenny Age Friendly Initiative at St. Luke's Hospital



Launch of City Bus Service



Turning of Sod at Ferrybank Neighbourhood Park



National Pride of Place Awards, Lyrath Hotel

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Kilkenny Abbey Quarter Development Ltd

Development proposals for the proposed buildings on the Abbey Quarter Site have been progressed by Kilkenny Abbey Quarter Development Ltd (KAQD) in 2019. KAQD is the development company set up by the partnership between Kilkenny County Council and the National Treasury Management Agency through the Ireland Strategic Investment Fund (ISIF) for the development of the building blocks on the former Smithwick's Brewery Site. The first of these buildings to be developed is the Brewhouse Building.

Work on the implementation of the Abbey Quarter Masterplan has continued in 2019. Significant progress has also been made in 2019 on the planning, design and preparation of tender documents for a number of projects within the Masterplan area.

Brewhouse Building

Work commenced on the construction of the Brewhouse Building in July 2019, with Mythen Construction appointed as main contractors for the project. The project is due for completion by the end of 2020 and includes the development of the adjoining public realm areas, specifically Horse Barrack Lane and the Brewhouse Courtyard.

The project was officially launched by Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar, with Ministers Eoghan Murphy and John Paul Phelan, Oireachtas Members, Elected Members, ISIF Representatives and invited Guests in attendance.



The development of the Brewhouse will provide 4,500m² of Grade A office space in the heart of the City Centre and will be ready for occupation from 2021.



With the commencement of construction works, the active marketing of the building to prospective tenants is being pursued by letting agents Lisney. Interest in the development has been strong and it is expected that lease agreements will be concluded for the building during 2020.

New Buildings

Work has also progressed in 2019 on the procurement of design teams to progress the development of some of the new buildings on the Abbey Quarter Site. It is expected that the first design team will be appointed in early 2020, with a planning application for the first of the new buildings to be lodged during 2020. New buildings on the Abbey Quarter will be for mixed uses as set out in the Abbey Quarter Urban Design Criteria / Development Code.

Mayfair Library

Kilkenny County Council is responsible for the redevelopment of the Mayfair Building. Following the Council's decision to locate the new City Library in the Mayfair Building, Part VIII Planning for the proposed Library use of the building was approved in 2019. The Mayfair Building is a very significant building in the social heritage of Kilkenny, having housed the Mayfair Ballroom from 1943 to 1973.

A new Design Team was appointed to the project for the detailed design, including fit out, of the Library in 2019 and significant progress has been made during the year. It is expected that this project will proceed to tender in 2020 and will be completed in mid-2021.



Public Realm Areas

As per the partnership agreement with the NTMA through ISIF, Kilkenny County Council are responsible for the development of the public realm areas in the Abbey Quarter Site. The development of areas of High Quality Public Realm through the site is considered to be critical to the integration of the former Brewery site into the City Centre.

Funding for these works will be provided through the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) (initial funding allocation of € 4.764M), the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) for Designated Urban Centres Grant Scheme (funding allocation of € 1.0M) and own funds.



Tionscaldal Éireann
Project Ireland
2040



Ireland's European Structural and
Investment Funds Programmes
2014-2020
Co-funded by the Irish Government
and the European Union



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund

The current funding will allow Kilkenny County Council to proceed with the development of the first phase of public realm works in the Abbey Quarter including:

- Horse Barrack Lane
- Brewhouse Square
- Mayfair public square
- Riverside Garden including Skate Park
- Cultural Hub in the area of the former Squash Court

Horse Barrack Lane & Brewhouse Square

The contract with Mythen Construction for the redevelopment of the Brewhouse Building includes for the redevelopment of Horse Barrack Lane and Brewhouse Square. These projects are due to be completed in 2020.



Riverside Garden Project including Skate Park

The detailed design and tender documents for the Riverside Garden Project were completed in 2019 and the contract for the development was awarded to Niall Barry & Co. in December 2019. The development is due to commence in January 2020 and is due to be completed in Summer 2020.



Phase 1 Public Realm Works - Other Projects

Work has progressed on the design and preparation of the tender documents for the remainder of Phase 1 public realm projects. These projects are expected to go to tender and construction in 2020.

The URDF grant provides funding for the integration of the Abbey Quarter site into the City Centre. These works include the completion of the Medieval Mile to Irishtown, the refurbishment of Vicar Street, the development of City Gateways, Smarter City Travel connectivity with the Eastern Environs and the lighting of Heritage Structures along the Medieval Mile. These projects have been progressed by the Kilkenny City Area Office in 2019 and are expected to be completed in 2020.

Urban Street & Park Project

Work has progressed in 2019 on the design to planning of the Urban Street & Park in the Abbey Quarter site.

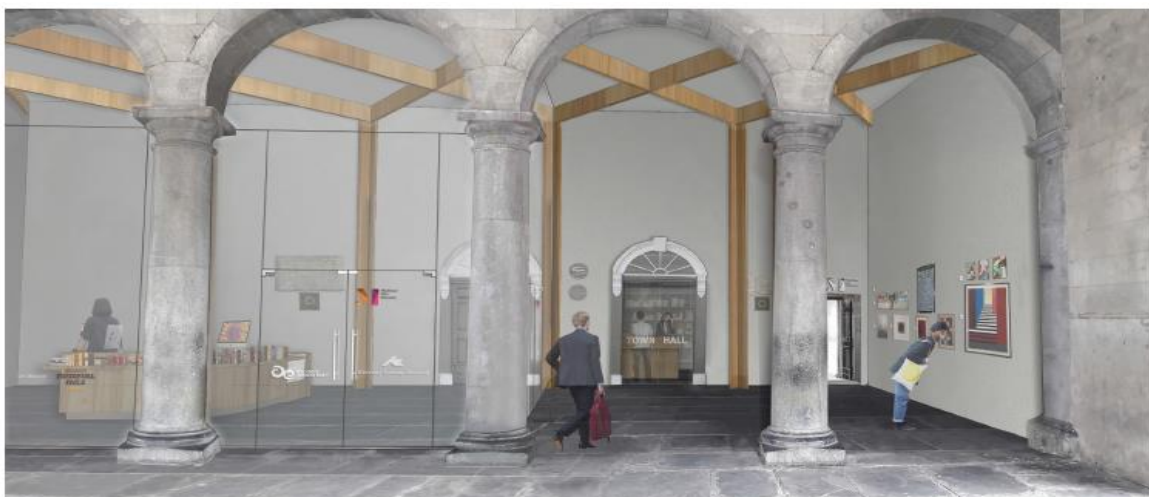
The urban park, centred around the National Monument of St Francis Abbey will be the central focus of the Abbey Quarter site and will be designed to accommodate outdoor events associated with the many festivals held in the City throughout the year. The development of the urban street, which will be of pedestrian and cyclist priority, will facilitate the development of the proposed new buildings within the Abbey Quarter site. It is expected that a planning application will be made to An Bord Pleanála for the street and park project in Spring 2020.



Tholsel Project

Work progressed on proposals for the redevelopment of the Tholsel Building in 2019, with Part VIII Planning consent approved in May 2019.

The redevelopment of the building and the opening up of the building for tourism use, whilst retaining its important civic use in the City was provided for in the Tourism Strategy for the City in 2013. The project is to be part funded by Failte Ireland as the centre piece of the Medieval Mile and planning for the project has been progressed with Failte Ireland in 2019. A funding application for the development of the project will be made to Failte Ireland in 2020. The project includes work to the structure of the Tholsel and the development of a tourist exhibition, which will be based on the telling of the historical development of the City of Kilkenny through the Mayors of Kilkenny.



Evans Home/Butler Gallery

The renovation of Evans Home is a Kilkenny County Council project, the delivery of which is funded from €3 million in grant aid from national funding, Department of Arts and Fáilte Ireland, with the remainder coming from Council sources. The refurbished building will serve as the new home for the Butler Gallery who currently operate from the basement in Kilkenny Castle. The proposed development comprised of the following components:

- The refurbishment and carrying out of conservation work to the existing Evan's Home, a Protected Structure, for use by the Butler Gallery as education rooms, archive storage, café and offices.
- The construction of 140sqm in two small blocks for a media gallery, WC accommodation, lift and staircase.

The estimated €6m refurbishment of Evan's Home commenced in June 2018. Butler Gallery is due to open in its new home around Easter 2020.

Insert Photo

**DIRECTORATE OF
CORPORATE & INFRASTRUCTURE**

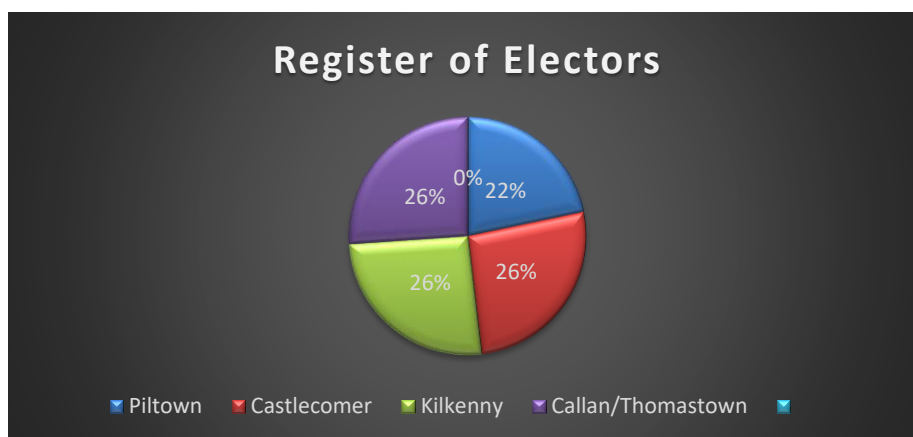
Director of Services: Mr. Tim Butler

CORPORATE SERVICES

REGISTER OF ELECTORS

The Annual Register is published on 1st February each year. It is a list of all persons aged 18 years or over, resident in the State, who are entitled to vote in the following elections:

- ❖ Local Elections (*County Council*),
- ❖ General Elections (*Dáil*),
- ❖ European Elections (*EU Parliament*),
- ❖ Presidential,
- ❖ Referenda.



The total number on the Register on the 31st of December 2019 is 73,994.

The Register is available in Libraries, Post Offices and Garda Stations. Any member of the public can check if they are on the register on the following website: www.checktheregister.ie. or can contact the Corporate Services Department in the Council.

Corporate Policy Group

The Corporate Policy Group (CPG) is a committee of the Council consisting of the Cathaoirleach of the Council and the chairperson of each of the five Strategic Policy Committees (SPCs).

The CPG links the work of the different SPCs and provides a forum where proposed items for Council meeting agendas and policy matters are discussed. The CPG also monitors the performance of the local authority and plays a key role in the budgetary process. The CPG met on 11 occasions in 2019.

Irish Language Scheme

Kilkenny County Council's Irish Language Scheme 2019-2022 was confirmed by the Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and came into effect on 8th April 2019. The scheme is available to view on our website - www.kilkennycoco.ie.

Kilkenny County Council recognise that our customers have the right to choose to do business with us in their preferred language and they are facilitated in their dealings with us as far as practicable, whether that is through Irish or through English.

If you wish to contact the Council in Irish, please send an e-mail to gaeilge@kilkennycoco.ie

During 2019, Kilkenny County Council dealt with 1 formal Irish complaint.

Performance Indicators

Section 126(c) of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 sets out the functions of the National Oversight and Audit Commission (NOAC) which includes examination of the performance of local government bodies against thirty-seven indicators.

The report in respect of 2018 was published by NOAC in October, 2019.

Kilkenny County Council's performance in each area in 2018 compared to other local authorities is available for viewing on www.noac.ie

Data Protection

Kilkenny County Council processes all personal information in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 and the Data Protection Acts, 1988 to 2018.

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) applies from 25th May 2018. It has general application to the processing of personal data in the EU, setting out more extensive obligations on data controllers and processors, and providing strengthened protections and rights for data subjects.

In 2019, Kilkenny County Council dealt with 6 data subject access requests made under the Data Protection Acts for access to personal data held by Kilkenny County Council.

Privacy Statement

At Kilkenny County Council we are committed to protecting and respecting your privacy. The Privacy Statement lets you know how we look after your personal data. It also informs you as to our obligations and your rights under data protection law. Kilkenny County Council's privacy statement can be found on our website at www.kilkennycoco.ie.

Customer Care

The Council is committed to providing a quality service to all its customers. Kilkenny County Council's Customer Charter sets out the way in which the Council endeavours to deal with its customers. The document is available on our website at www.kilkennycoco.ie.

This Charter includes a commitment to equality in service provision and a recognition of the diverse nature of the community we serve. The Charter also includes a Customer Complaints Procedure which may be availed of by any person not satisfied with the quality of service received. The Senior Executive Officer in Corporate investigates all complaints/comments received. A person not satisfied with the response provided by the Senior Executive Officer can request to have their case reviewed again by the Director of Services, Corporate Services.

In 2019, Kilkenny County Council dealt with 20 formal complaints from customers.

Ombudsman Requests

The Office of the Ombudsman was established under the Ombudsman Act 1980. The role of the Office is to investigate complaints about administrative actions, delays or inactions adversely affecting persons or bodies in their dealings with state bodies including Local Authorities.

The Office of the Ombudsman dealt with 5 Customer complaints in 2019. Kilkenny County Council liaised with the Office of the Ombudsman on each complaint. 1 case was closed. Decision was received on 3 cases - 2 not upheld and 1 agreement reached with customer. Decisions on 1 case remain outstanding.

Ombudsman For Children

In 2019, no complaint was made to the Ombudsman for Children.

Protected Disclosures

The Protected Disclosures Act 2014 became operational on 15th July 2014. The Act is intended to provide a statutory framework within which workers can raise concerns regarding a potential wrongdoing that has come to their attention in the workplace in the knowledge that they can avail of significant employment and other protections if they are penalised by their employer or suffer any detriment for doing so.

In accordance with Section 22 of that Act, Kilkenny County Council has an obligation to report on the number of protected disclosures made to the Council in the preceding year.

To 30th June, 2019, 1 disclosure was received by the Designated Officer for Protected Disclosures.

Electoral Boundary Review

The report of the Local Electoral Boundary Committee [*Committee No. 1*] was published in June 2018.

The revised make up for County Kilkenny for the Local Elections in May, 2019 consisted of changes in electoral/townland areas for the Municipal Districts. The total membership of the Council remained at 24 Members.

Following the review, the Boundary Committee recommended the following for County Kilkenny:

<i>Local Electoral Area</i>	<i>Number of Members</i>
<i>Callan - Thomastown</i>	6
<i>Castlecomer</i>	6
<i>Kilkenny City</i>	7
<i>Piltown</i>	5
<i>Total</i>	24

Local Elections 2019

<i>Polling Day</i>	<i>24th May 2019</i>
<i>Total Electorate</i>	<i>74,251</i>
<i>Number of declared candidates</i>	<i>44 candidates</i>
<i>Number of seats to be filled</i>	<i>24 seats</i>
<i>Number who voted</i>	<i>39,364 persons (53.01%)</i>
<i>Count</i>	<i>25th - 26th May 2019</i>
<i>Number of counts</i>	<i>29</i>
<i>Elected</i>	<i>17 outgoing & 7 new members</i>

First Meeting of the New Council

The first meeting of the new Council was held on Friday 7th June 2019 at which:

- Cllr Peter Chap Cleere was elected as Cathaoirleach
- Cllr Andrew McGuinness was elected as Leas Cathaoirleach.

First meetings of the Municipal Districts were as follows:

Municipal District	Date of Meeting	Elected as Cathaoirleach
Callan - Thomastown	14 th June, 2019	Cllr Pat O Neill
Castlecomer	17 th June, 2019	Cllr John Brennan
Kilkenny City	14 th June, 2019	Cllr Martin Brett (Mayor)
Piltown	11 th June, 2019	Cllr Eamonn Aylward

LOCAL ELECTIONS 2019

Section 19 Local Elections (*Disclosure of Donations & Expenditure*) Act 1999

CALLAN/THOMASTOWN MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

	Total Expenditure Incurred	Total Donations Received
Deirdre Cullen, Kilree, Bennettsbridge, Co. Kilkenny	1,773.19	700.00
John Carroll, Woodbrook, Kilmoganny, Co. Kilkenny	279.48	NIL
Peter 'Chap' Cleere, Aughiletaun, Skeoughvosteen, Co. Kilkenny	2,700.00	NIL
Matt Doran, Shrughawadda, Kilmoganny, Co. Kilkenny	5,118.00	500.00
Michael Doyle, Ballinabarna, The Rower, Inistioge, Co. Kilkenny	850.00	NIL
Trish Finegan, Rerrin House, Dunnamaggin, Co. Kilkenny	3,403.46	1,000.00
Breda Patricia Gardner, Hillview House, Cloghabrody, Thomastown	800.00	400.00
David Kennedy, Ballyvool, Inistioge, Co. Kilkenny	2,125.00	NIL
John Kelly, Rossenarra, Kilmoganny, Co. Kilkenny	3,162.98	NIL
Joe Lyons, Bauntha, Callan, Co. Kilkenny	3,180.60	350.00
Michael McGrath, 2, Fr. Sherin Place, Kilkenny	370.00	NIL
Patrick O'Neill, Ballyredding, Bennettsbridge, Co. Kilkenny	1,382.06	NIL

CASTLECOMER MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

John Brennan, Upper Crutt, Clogh, Castlecomer, Co. Kilkenny	1,450.00	NIL
Mary Hilda Cavanagh, Whiteshall, Crosspatrick, Via Thurles, Kilkenny	1,893.00	NIL
Michael Delaney, The Village Shop, Tullaroan, Co. Kilkenny	5,730.00	3,460.00
Pat Fitzpatrick, Cloopook, Ballyfoyle, Co. Kilkenny	6,656.11	500.00
Denis Hynes, Ballyellen, Goresbridge, Co. Kilkenny	2,672.00	595.00
Joseph Kavanagh, Conville House, Clogh, Castlecomer, Kilkenny	2,711.80	600.00
Michael McCarthy, Buncrusha Street, Freshford, Co. Kilkenny	1,396.00	NIL
Pat O'Neill, Ballyredding, Bennettsbridge, Co. Kilkenny	1,595.00	NIL

KILKENNY CITY MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Martin Brett, Callan Road, Kilkenny City	2,024.00	NIL
Andrea Cleere, Dama, Ballycallan, Co. Kilkenny	2,313.50	595.00
John Coonan, 17, Willow Close, Ardnore, Kilkenny City	2,490.93	500.00
David Fitzgerald, 24 Patrick Street, Kilkenny	3,338.85	300.00
Stephanie Hanlon, Viewmount, Goresbridge, Co. Kilkenny	706.50	457.07
Enya Kennedy, 5 The Cornstore, Green Street, Kilkenny	<i>Not furnished</i>	<i>Not furnished</i>
Orla Kelly, Scart, Dungarvan, Co. Kilkenny	3,316.36	3,191.72
Andrew McGuinness, 13 Hawthorn Walk, Parcnagowan, Kilkenny	6,511.45	500.00
Eugene McGuinness, 40 Bishop Birch Place, Kilkenny City	1,457.00	NIL
Joe Malone, 11 Maiden Hill Estate, Kells Road, Kilkenny City	4,123.80	500.00
Malcolm Noonan, 38, Cedarwood Drive, Loughboy, Kilkenny City	3,391.10	874.70
Luke O'Connor, 5 Ayrfield, Granges Road, Kilkenny	<i>Not furnished</i>	<i>Not furnished</i>
Seán Tyrrell, 31, Cypress Grove, Loughboy, Kilkenny	NIL	NIL
Noel Gerard Walsh, 9, St. Riach's Street, Kilkenny City	NIL	NIL

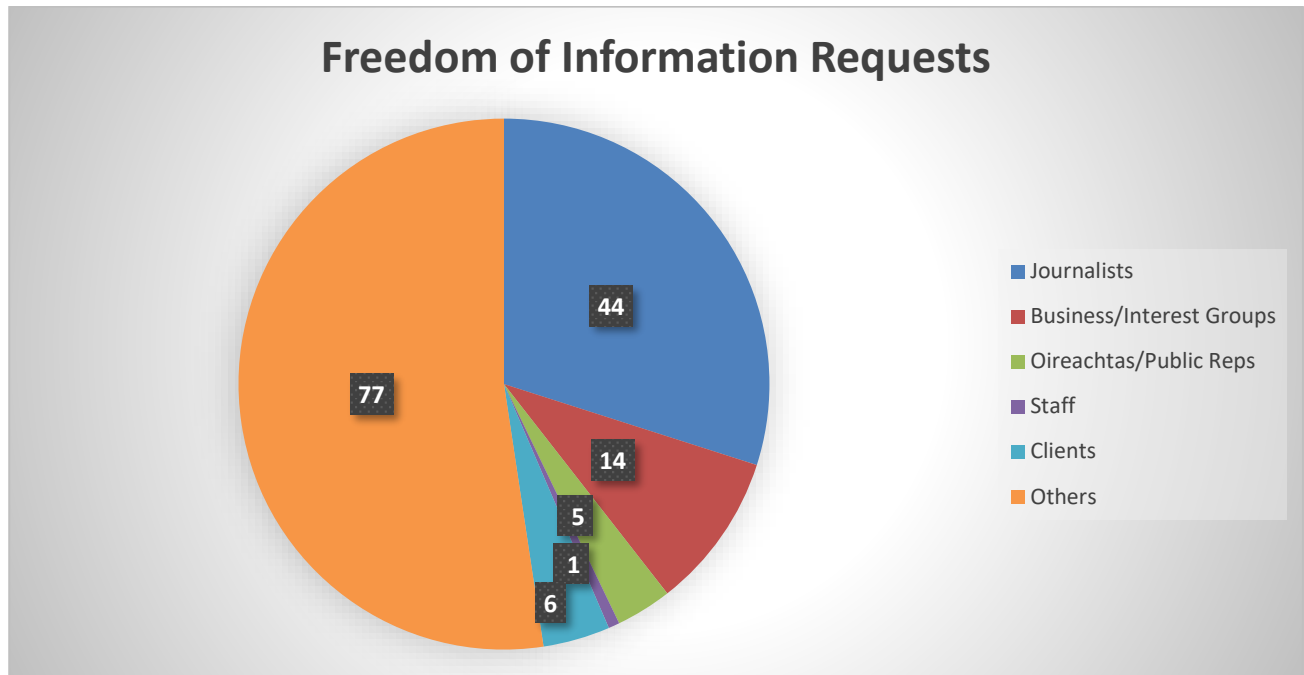
PILTOWN MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Eamon Aylward, Ballynooney, Mullinavat, Co. Kilkenny	1,466.04	800.00
Tomás Breathnach, Forge Road, Narabane, Kilmacow, Kilkenny	2,424.50	100.00
Alan Curran, Tybroughney, Piltown, Co. Kilkenny	500.00	NIL
Fidelis Doherty, Ballyfacey, Glenmore, Co. Kilkenny	2,300.00	NIL
Grace Doyle, 65 Belmont Heights, Ferrybank, Co. Kilkenny	1,160.00	1,010.00
Pat Dunphy, Ballygorey, Mooncoin, Co. Kilkenny	1,580.91	NIL
Rob Duggan, Fanningstown, Piltown, Co. Kilkenny	1,727.79	680.00
Ger Frisby, Treanaree, Slieverue, Co. Kilkenny	1,370.00	NIL
John Hayes, 21 Greenoaks, The Fairways, Ferrybank, Waterford	220.00	NIL
Melissa O'Neill, 40 Abbeylands, Ferrybank, Waterford	3,885.00	NIL

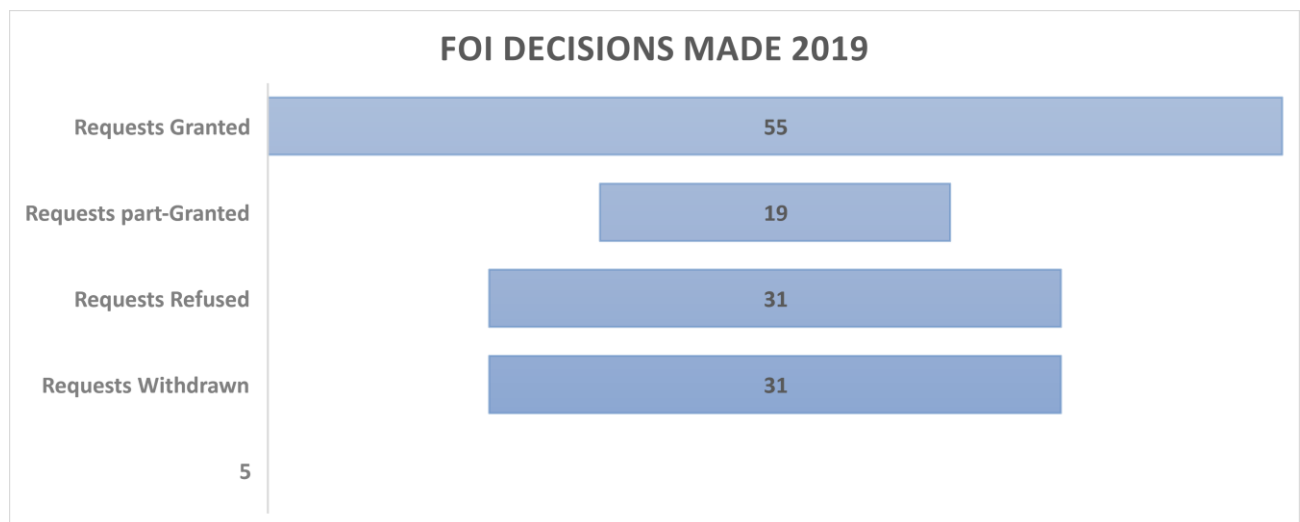
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS

The Council received 147 Freedom of Information Requests in 2019. The requests received can be broken down as follows:

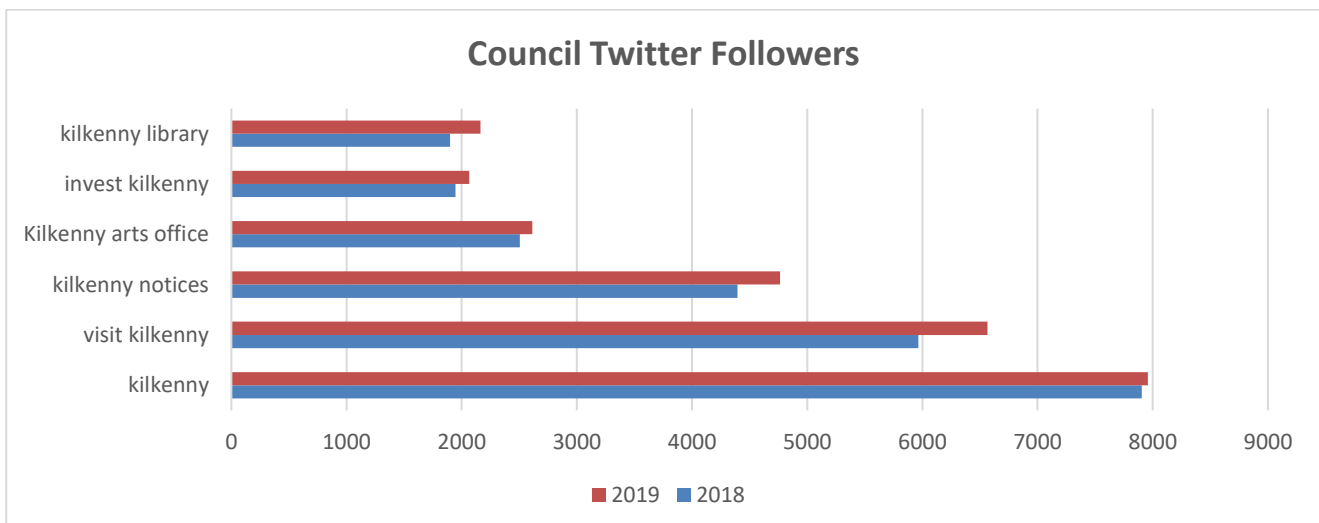
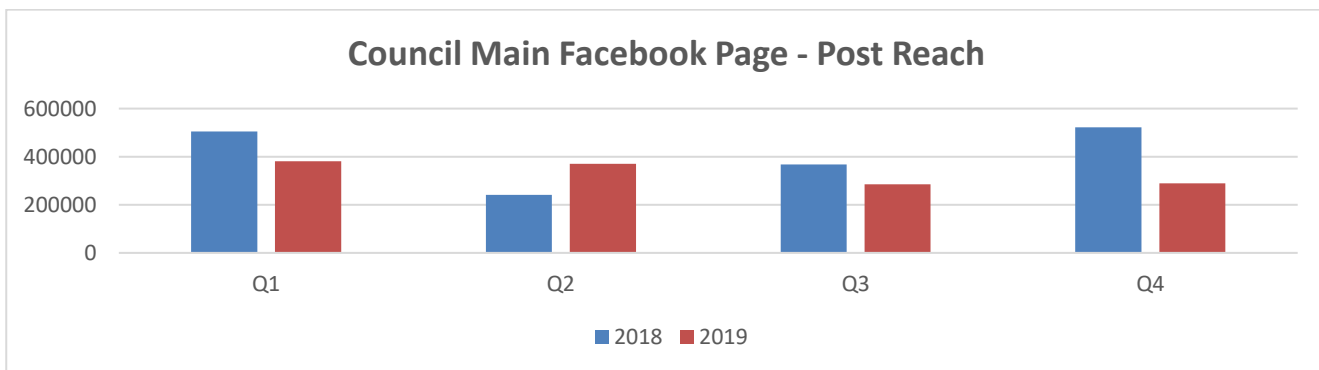
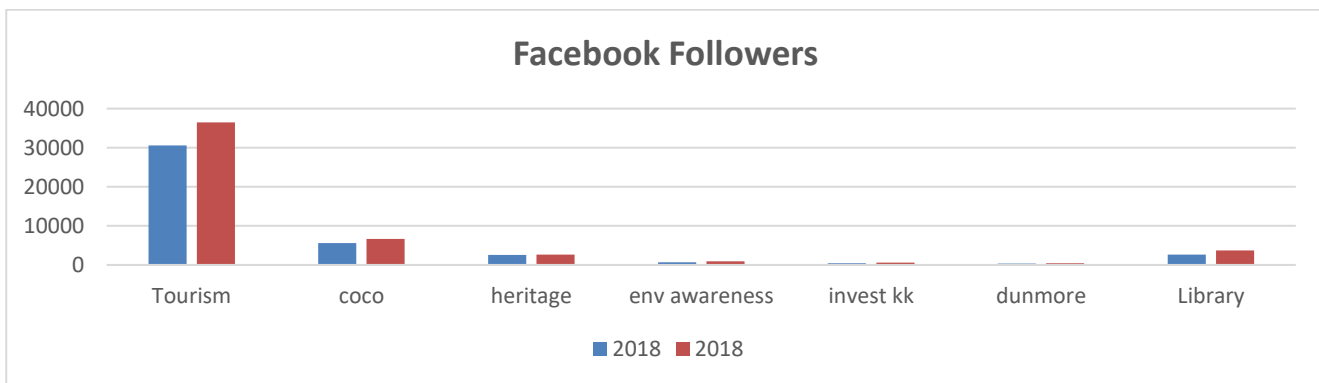
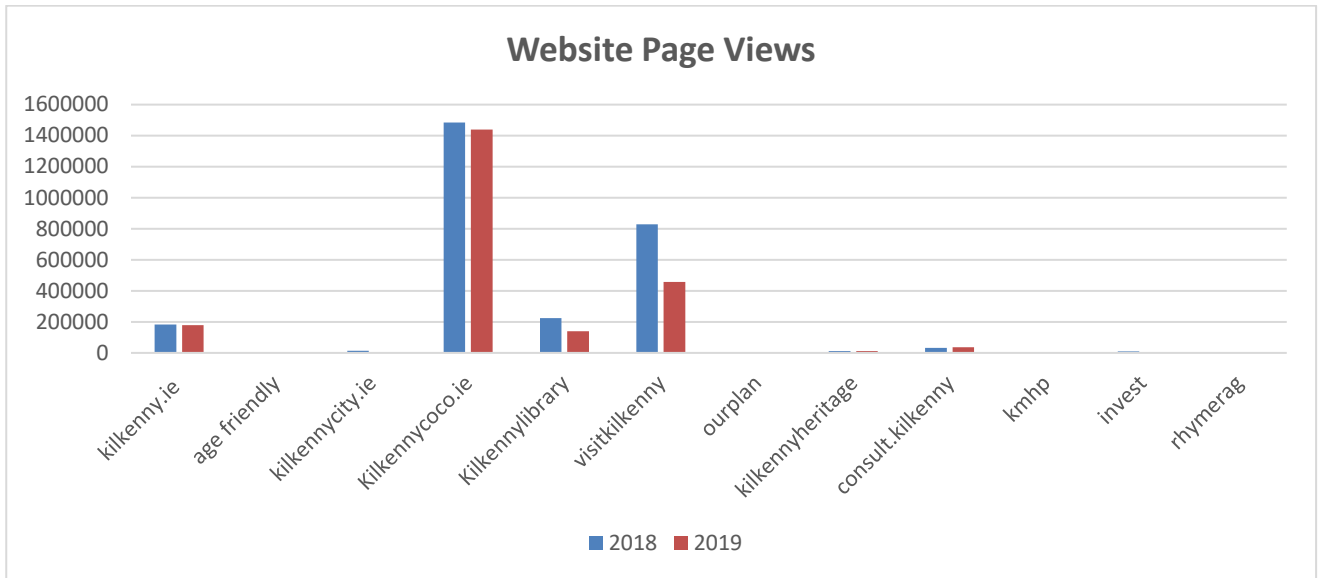


A total of 136 decisions were made by the Freedom of Information Officer in 2019 broken down as follows:



In addition, 4 applications for Internal Reviews were received following the decisions of the FOI Officer and 1 application for Appeal to the Office of the Information Commissioner was made. In the case of the appeal to the OIC, the Information Commissioner affirmed the Council's decision in this case.

COMMUNICATIONS & SOCIAL MEDIA 2019



MEMBERS TRAINING & EXPENSES

HUMAN RESOURCES

The objective of the Human Resources Department is “to ensure that there is an appropriately resourced, skilled and motivated workforce to meet the priorities and objectives of the Organisation and to ensure as reasonably practical the safety, health and wellbeing of all our staff”.

The Human Resources Department vision is to provide effective strategic and operational support as a business partner to service delivery units of the Authority.

The Human Resources Department deals with the following areas:

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

Staffing Levels

The number of staff employed at 31st December, 2019 was 691 (*Headcount*) or 581 (*Whole-Time-Equivalent*). The Human Resource Department coordinates the ongoing management of the work force plans; managing new entrants, staff transfers and staff departures with line management colleagues.

Recruitment

There was a total of 28 competitions held during the year which resulted in 67 new staff (indoor & outdoor) being employed in the organisation.

Kilkenny County Council participated in a Careers Fair held in the Medieval Mile Museum on 28th December 2019, this Fair was used to highlight the jobs on offer by Kilkenny County Council with a view to expand the reach of the Authority to talent markets.

Summer Student & Lifeguard Programme

The Council employed 54 students during the summer months of 2019 to cover the area of Litter Picking, Gardening and other seasonal work under this programme.

There were also 20 Lifeguards employed throughout the County during the summer period of 2019.

Shared Payroll & Superannuation Service

This service is delivered by My Pay the Local Government Shared Services Provider from its offices in Portlaoise Co Laois. Kilkenny County Council successfully completed the transition of the Superannuation function for the Council to the Shared Service Centre in January 2019.

Attendance Management

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

Training & Development

Kilkenny County Council is committed to ensuring the professional and personal development of all employees. Training and development is aimed at helping employees to become more effective in their jobs and developing their potential, while also meeting the goals and objectives of the Council. A comprehensive training programme was delivered in 2019 which incorporated Health & Safety training, Third level Learning Programmes and various other in-house training workshops. A sample of the training programmes provided in 2019 is as follows: -

- Staff Induction
- Manual Handling
- Safe pass
- Abrasive Wheels
- Confined Spaces
- Location of Underground Services
- CSCS Signing, Lighting & Guarding Training
- CSCS Health & Safety at Roadworks Training
- Mobile Elevated Work Platform Training
- Forklift Driver Training
- Dealing with Difficult Violent & Aggression
- Occupational First Aid
- Staff Induction Training
- Leadership Training
- Supervisory Management Training
- Local Government Studies

Kilkenny County Council endeavours, subject to available resources, to facilitate and support employees wishing to pursue Third Level Courses that are relevant to and contribute to their role and the business need of the Council.

Equality and Supporting Diversity

Kilkenny County Council is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to a broad range of policies, practices and procedures which aim to recognise individual contribution and performance, develop each individual's capability and give everyone an equal opportunity to use his/her talent and realise his/her potential.

Kilkenny County Council supports the employment of people with disabilities and meets the target as set out by the Department of Housing and Local Government.

Industrial Relations

Kilkenny County Council Human Resources engages positively with staff union representatives to address issues in a proactive positive manner.

INTERNAL AUDIT

The Audit Committee is made up of three external members and two elected members. The current audit committee was established by resolution of the Council upon nomination by the Corporate Policy Group and following consultation with the Chief Executive. The term of the committee is concurrent with that of the current Council which commenced on 1st June 2019 and will terminate on 31st May 2024. Its role is:

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

Due to the Local Elections, there were three Audit Committee meetings held in 2019. During the year the Committee met with the Chief Executive Colette Byrne and various line managers to discuss a broad range of issues.

Areas of priority included:

- Annual Financial Statement 2018
- Annual Budget 2019
- Internal Audit Reports
- Key Capital Projects
- Local Government Audit Service Statutory Report 2018
- Housing Programme
- NOAC Reports

ROADS & TRANSPORTATION

The Elected Members adopted the 2019 Roadwork's Scheme for County Kilkenny in April 2019. The total value of Maintenance and Improvement Schemes amounted to € 23.8 million.

A significant amount of works were carried out on both national and non-national throughout the year.

NATIONAL ROAD NETWORK

N25 New Ross By-Pass

The design and construction phase for the delivery of this significant infrastructure is being done under a PPP Contract. Works commenced on site in February 2016 and were substantially completed by Q4 2019. The Scheme is expected to open to traffic during Q1 2020. A very informative project website www.n25newross.ie was available for updates on progress of the scheme for the public.

N25 Glenmore to Waterford Major Scheme

Allocation of €400,000 was provided in 2019 to advance this Scheme. The planning and design (Phase 1) of the scheme is completed and is progressed through to (Phase 2) Option Selection of the TII Project Management Guidelines during 2019.

The first public consultation on potential route options is expected during late Q1 2020.

N24 Waterford to Cahir Major Scheme

In Q3 of 2019, TII gave approval to Kilkenny County Council to engage the services of an engineering consultant to advance the planning and design stage of this Scheme. Kilkenny County Council will be the lead authority on the project through a Section 85 agreement with Tipperary County Council. Tender for consultancy services is presently in train with a closing date of mid Q1 2020. The successful consultant is expected to be appointed during late Q1 2020.

Pavement Improvement and Minor Works Programme

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

N25 Graiguenakill (New Ross By-pass tie-in) to Gaulstown/Luffany/Rhu Glenn

This project consisted of a 4.5 km pavement improvement overlay and other associated works. The project was completed during 2019 with a contract value of €2,040,000.

N76 Ballymack to Castletobin/Brownstown to Ballybur/Cuffesgrange

The design and tender documentation preparation for this scheme progressed during 2019. The tender documentation will issue during early Q1 2020.

N24 Carrick Road Minor Improvement Scheme

An allocation of €200,000 was provided in 2019 to advance the design stage of this Scheme. A public consultation was held in the Mooncoin Community Hall in July 2019, where the preferred route option was outlined.

N24 Tower Road Junction Improvement Scheme

An allocation of €400,000 was provided in 2019 to advance the design stage of this Scheme. Part 8 Planning Approval for the scheme was secured in April 2019 and the scheme is presently at Compulsory Order Stage. Application was submitted to An Bord Pleanála on the 25th October 2019. Objections were lodged and it is expected that an Oral Hearing in relation to the CPO will be held during Q1 2020.

N77 Ballyragget to Ballynaslee Improvement Scheme

An allocation of €100,000 was provided in 2019 to advance the design stage of this Scheme. It is expected that a planning application and CPO application will be made to An Bord Pleanala during 2020.

N78 Castlecomer Pedestrian Bridge

Application for planning approval was submitted to An Bord Pleanala on the 4th October 2019. Oral Hearing on the project is set for Q1 2020. The earliest commencement date for construction subject to necessary approvals is in late 2020.

National Road Capital Maintenance Works.

Works to the value of €400,000 were completed on the N24 at Mooncoin & the N76 at Garryricken to Kiltallaghan during 2019.

HD15 Safety Improvement Works on the National Road Network

Kilkenny County Council secured funding of €72,000 during 2019 to undertake safety improvement works on the N76 Callan by Pass. These works were completed during Q3/4 2019.

The tender for pavement and safety improvement works (provision of right turn lanes) on the N25 at Curraghmore was issued during Q4 2019. The contract is expected to be awarded during Q1 2020.

Kilkenny LED Replacement Programme National Roads

Kilkenny County Council completed works during 2019 to the value of €250,000 in the retro fit of 548 public lights as part of energy efficiency improvements on the national road network. Locations which were addressed included: N77 Ballyragget, N78 Castlecomer, N24 Mooncoin, N10/77 Kilkenny City (Ring Road) and N76 Callan.

NON- NATIONAL ROAD NETWORK

Restoration Improvement and Restoration Maintenance Programme 2019

The road improvements on the Non-National road network are funded from the Road Restoration Improvement and Maintenance Grant Scheme. The Council received a total grant allocation of €13.8m for non-national roads with €8.7m specifically allocated for surfacing. The surfacing works are prioritised on a basis of providing for enhancements to the road condition rating, skid resistance and impermeability. In 2019, 59Km of roads were improved under this Scheme, with 78Km improved under the Restoration Maintenance Programme (Surface dressing). Significant progress has been made on the Non-National road network over the years since the Restoration Grant was introduced and the condition rating of the roads in County Kilkenny compares favourably with that of other Counties.

Non- National Low Cost Safety Programme

The Non- National Low Cost Safety Programme is targeted at locations along the non-national road network which have been identified as collision prone zones. The works carried out under this programme include improved junction delineation and visibility splays, traffic calming, enhanced roadside delineation and pedestrian crossing facilities within urban areas. Eleven [11] schemes were completed under this programme at a cost of €318,000 in 2019.

KEY INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES

Irishtown Street Enhancement Scheme

Works continued in 2019 on the Irishtown element of the Medieval Mile Street Enhancement Scheme which provides for the upgrade of existing pedestrian facilities and pavement. The completed works greatly improves the attractiveness of the streetscape whilst also providing for better pedestrian connectivity.

Kilkenny Northern Ring Road Extension

A Judicial Review of the 2014 decision by An Bord Pleanala to approve the EIS and CPO for this scheme was sought by 3 local landowners affected by the project. In May 2017 the High Court referred the case to the European Court of Justice. On foot of the European Court of Justice decision, the High Court with the agreement of An Bord Pleanala quashed the decision to approve the EIS and CPO. The Council has now recommenced the planning and design process in order to advance the project. In the time since the original Bord's decision in 2014, the planning and design process has changed. Kilkenny County Council will now be required to prepare an EIAR (Environmental Impact Assessment Report) and to re-do the route selection process (which may likely lead to the need for a revised CPO).

The first element of the planning and design process for this scheme (Submission of Preliminary Appraisal Form) was forwarded to the Department of Transport, Tourism, and Sport by Kilkenny County Council in December 2019.

Kilkenny Western Environs Phase 1 Infrastructure

Construction of the scheme commenced on March 4th 2019. Works are progressing well and are on programme to finish by the planned completion date of September 2020. Main contractor for the scheme is SIAC Construction Limited. The Circular Road is currently closed to facilitate construction of a new bridge over the River Breagagh. These works are expected to be completed in March 2020 allowing the Circular Road to reopen in advance of the completion of the remainder of the scheme.

R700 Thomastown Culvert

Works commenced on the Thomastown Cuvert during Q1 2019 and were substantially completed by the end of Q3 2019. The works were necessary as deficiencies were identified during the course of a recent Town and Village Renewal Scheme with this culvert which carries a small stream under the Regional Roads R700, R448 via Lady's Well Street, Pipe Street and Market Street. The overall cost for the works will be €800,000 with funding made available by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport through the Specific Improvement Grant.

Kilkenny LED Replacement Programme Non National Roads

The Council was awarded funding through Better Energy Communities 2019 (BEC) for the retrofit of approximately 1,005 lanterns at a cost €209,000. 30% was funded by SEAI and the remainder by Kilkenny County Council. This was the third phase of the public lighting energy upgrade and works are completed. 1,300 lanterns in 2017 and 2,240 lanterns in 2018 have been retrofitted.

Road Safety

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

The Kilkenny Road Safety Plan 2015 to 2020 was adopted by the Elected Members in July 2015. This Plan sets out a clear blueprint for progress in the area of road safety up to the end of 2020. The Plan is underpinned by a series of defined projects and actions across the core areas of intervention namely: Engineering, Education, Enforcement and Engagement. Preparation on a new Road Safety Plan will commence and will involve the Transportation SPC and the relevant stakeholders.

FLOOD RELIEF SCHEMES

In 2018, the Flood Risk Management Plans for Kilkenny were published by the OPW. In May 2018 funding was announced by the Minister for 6 No Flood Relief Schemes in Kilkenny.

€29.8 million was approved for Kilkenny as follows:

- Graiguenamanagh..... ..€ 9.06 million
- Ballyhale..... ..€ 0.43 million
- Freshford..... ..€ 3.80 million
- Thomastown..... ..€12.70 million
- Inistoige..... ..€ 1.49 million
- Piltown..... .. € 1.60 million

Q2 2019 - Flood Relief Capital Office was established. Kilkenny County Council appointed an in-house team to deliver the 6 Flood Relief Schemes over the 10-year period.

The first 2 schemes commenced were Graiguenamanagh and Ballyhale Flood Relief Schemes.

Graiguenamanagh Flood Relief Scheme

The Graiguenamanagh Steering Committee Group was formed in April 2019 with representatives from both Kilkenny and Carlow Local Authorities and the OPW. Section 85 Agreement was approved by both Local Authorities assigning Kilkenny County Council as the lead Authority to deliver the scheme.

Q4 2019 - Tender Competition was executed using the OPW Framework to secure the services of Engineering & Environmental Consultancy Services to design the scheme for Graiguenamanagh. Tenders were received in October 2019 with the successful Consultant to be appointed in early January 2020. Stage 1 of the project will commence in Q1 2020.

Q4 2019 - two new water level gauges were installed on the Duiske River at Turf Market and Coolroe to aid the collection of data to profile the Duiske River.



New Water Level Gauge – Coolroe



New Water Level Gauge – Turf Market

Ballyhale Flood Relief Scheme

Q4 2019 - Tender Competition was executed using the OPW framework to secure the services of Engineering & Environmental Consultancy Services to design the scheme for Ballyhale. Tenders were received in December 2019 with the expectation for the successful Consultant to be appointed in early February 2020. Stage 1 of the project will commence in Q1 2020.



Ballyhale River

WATER SERVICES

Operation & Maintenance

Kilkenny County Council manages 23 public drinking water supplies and 36 public waste water treatment schemes on behalf of Irish Water. 10.40 billion litres of water (28.5 million litres/day) was supplied through Kilkenny's public water supply network to approximately 67,500 customers.

2018 is the latest year for which the EPA has published its Drinking Water Quality Report. The 2019 report will be published later in 2020.

In 2018, for the eighth year in a row, Kilkenny's Public Water Schemes achieved 100% microbiological compliance (National average 99.83%). 99.6% compliance was achieved for chemical parameters (National Average 99.6%).

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

CAPITAL WORKS

Inistioge Water Supply Scheme

This €12m water supply scheme involves the construction of 18.7Km of new water mains, 2 new reservoirs, 2 new borewells and a new booster pumping station along with upgrades to existing infrastructure. Works commenced on site in August 2017 and are now substantially complete. The scheme is expected to be brought into operation in January 2020.

Mullinavat Waste Water Treatment Plant

This scheme involves the construction of a new wastewater treatment plant on a greenfield site, a new outfall to the River Blackwater, a new pumping station and some network improvements. Planning permission has been granted for this project. Negotiations are ongoing with respect to land and it is likely a compulsory purchase order (CPO) will be required to complete the required land acquisitions. Site investigation works were completed in 2019 which will allow the detailed design of the scheme to be completed once land issues are resolved. Progression of the project beyond detailed design is also contingent on funding being available.

Inistioge Waste Water Treatment Plant

This scheme involves the construction of a new wastewater treatment plant, upgrading of the existing pumping station and some network improvements. Planning Permission has been granted for the project and all land and wayleave acquisitions are complete as are the site investigation works. Detailed design of the scheme is ongoing. Progression of the project beyond detailed design is contingent on funding being available.

Kilkenny Drainage Area Plan

This project involves the mapping and modelling of the existing sewer network in the City and will allow an assessment of the capacity, condition and performance level of the sewer network. Once complete this plan will help to improve the performance of the wastewater networks, protect the environment and facilitate social and economic development over the coming years. An advanced survey of the 'Breaghagh Valley Sewer & Branches' was completed in February 2019 with subsequent hydraulic modelling carried out. The main survey works commenced in April 2019 and were temporarily ceased in September 2019. The main survey is expected to recommence in February 2020 and will take approx. 4 months to complete.

Gowran Regional Water Supply Scheme

This scheme involves the construction of a new water treatment plant, reservoir, rising mains, development of two abstraction boreholes and decommissioning of an existing plant. This project

will increase the water supply capacity to Gowran, Goresbridge & Paulstown and will enable growth and development in the local area. Planning for the scheme was granted in September 2019. Preparation of tender documents are at an advanced stage. Progression of the project to tender is contingent on funding being available.

Kilkenny City RWSS - Troyswood WTP Upgrade.

Planning permission and the Compulsory Purchase Order without modification was granted by An Bord Pleanála in late 2019. The CPO (under the PDA 2000) has to be confirmed by Irish Water within 12 weeks of the decision. The project was advertised for tender in 2018 but the tendering process was suspended due to appeals to An Bord Pleanála. It is expected that the tendering process will be completed in early 2020 with works to start subject to funding in mid-2020.

Rural Water

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

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

The Council also manages and allocates Government grants approved under the Rural Water Programme for group water and waste water schemes in addition to private wells grants.

There are 195 Group Water Schemes. 125 of which are served by own sources and 70 which are served from public mains.

Government Grant Aid for the Multi Annual Rural Water Programme 2019-2021 was not received by Kilkenny County Council until October 2019. Due to this late allocation, major capital works did not take place in Kilkenny in 2019. Major Capital works are now being planned and designed and will be completed over the next three years.

€90,855 was paid by the Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government to Kilkenny County Council for works undertaken under the Rural Water Programme.

- ✓ €38,737 for the installation of meters on 6 Private Group Water Schemes.
- ✓ €21,361 for the Taking in Charge process by Irish Water.
- ✓ €25,872 for the provision of a new 8" well at Baunmore GWS.
- ✓ € 4,855 for upgrades to water treatment and well head protection.

Taking in Charge by Irish Water

- ✓ 9 Public Group Water Schemes were officially taken in charge by Irish Water in 2019.
 - Ballyboodan, Ballydaniel, Birchfield, Clonmoran, Kilcurl, Molassy, Newtown Ballinearla, Radestown, Troyswood.
- ✓ €395,639 paid to 52 Group Subsidies - operational running costs
- ✓ €157,326 paid out in well grants.
- ✓ 91 grant applications were approved for private wells.

**DIRECTORATE OF
HOUSING, SOCIAL, COMMUNITY
& CULTURAL SERVICES**

Director of Services: Ms. Mary J. Mulholland

HOUSING

HOUSING & ACCOMMODATION

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

The Core Housing Services are:

Housing Capital Programme 2019

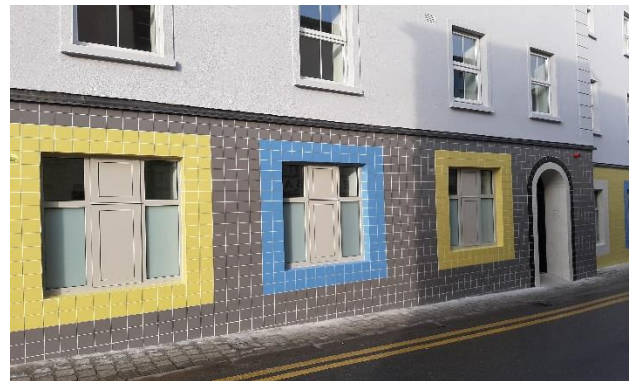
2019 was the second year of the Rebuilding Ireland housing delivery programme. The Minister for Housing notified Kilkenny County Council of its revised delivery targets i.e. 599 units for the period 2018 to 2021 and a specific target of 190 units for 2019.

Completions in 2019

- 16 Units at Friary Walk, Callan (*Cluid AHB*)
- 4 Apartments Love Lane, Castlecomer (*Co-operative Housing*)
- 54 units Ballybough Street, Kilkenny (*Respond Housing*)
- 1 house at St Mary's Group Housing Scheme, Hebron, Kilkenny
- 4 units at Blackstaff, Callan
- 27 units at Walkin Street, Kilkenny (*Oaklee Housing*)
- 6 units at Bridge Street, Callan (*Good Shepherd*)



54 units Ballybough Street, Kilkenny - Respond Housing



Bridge Street, Callan, Co. Kilkenny – Good Shepherd, Kilkenny Voluntary Housing Association.

Schemes under construction as at 31st December, 2019

- 38 units Hoban Park, Bolton Callan
- 15 units Nuncio Road, Kilkenny (*Respond Housing*)
- 17 Units at Breagh Place, Main Street, Piltown
- 33 units at Glebeside, Donaguile, Castlecomer
- 6 Units at New Road and Chapel Street, Mooncoin
- 22 units at Station Avenue, Ballyraggett
- 40 units Margaretsfield, Callan Road, Kilkenny
- 4 units (Group home) at Cloghabrody, Thomastown

Schemes at Tender Stage

- 18 units at Broguemaker, Castlecomer Road, Kilkenny
- 5 units at Grennan Villa, Thomastown (Camphill)

Schemes at Detailed Design Stage

- 6 units at Golf Links Road, (Mulhall's Shop) Kilkenny
- 2 Units at Shanganny, Jenkinstown
- 2 Units at Inchacarron, Mullinavat
- 2 Units at Old Fire Station, Graignamanagh

Schemes at Planning Stage:

- Development of 86 units (houses/apartments) and community facility at Crokers Hill, Kennyswell Road, Kilkenny
- 25 Units at Ladywell, Thomastown

Acquisitions

- 48 purchases completed by Kilkenny County Council.
- 105 purchases completed by Voluntary Housing Bodies.

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

- €6.1 million spent on RAS accommodation
- 494 RAS Properties provided for social housing options
- 8 properties were taken on and 46 left the RAS Scheme in 2019
- 1,563 units in the HAP Scheme since 2014 and 867 are live at 31st December, 2019
- Over 100 households on rent supplement (RS) in Kilkenny at 31st December, 2019

In addition to the 50,000 units which are to be delivered nationally under Rebuilding Ireland by way of Acquisition/Build and Leasing, the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) and the Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS) continues to be an immediate form of social housing support and effective mechanism to meet housing need.

The following table sets out the targets for Kilkenny County Council for 2019:

	Total RAS	Total HAP	Weekly HAP	Rent Supplement to HAP	Combined Total RS Transfers	Total New Households
Target	32	152	3	31	63	184
Delivery to-date	81	187	4	10	90	268

Homeless Services 2019

- 256 homeless presentations during 2019, decrease of 17 since 2018
- 6 persons availing of emergency accommodation at 31st December, of which 2 were children.
- No persons found rough sleeping in Kilkenny City & Environs on the night of the Official Rough Sleepers Count carried out in May and November 2019
- The reduction in homeless presentations from 2018 (6%) is as a result of the preventative measures and work done by the Homeless Team and the Placefinder Officer

Private Rented Accommodation

A target of 698 inspections was set for 2019. Target achieved and figures for year as follows:

- Total number of inspections carried out in 2019 709
- First Inspections..... 500
- Second Inspections..... 209
- Number of final inspections achieving compliance 286
- Number of Improvement Notices issued 4
- Number of Prohibition Notices issued..... 0
- Number of Legal Cases initiated..... 0

Traveller Accommodation Programme

- 90 Traveller families provided with accommodation during the period 2014-2019
- Traveller Accommodation Programme for the period 1st July 2019 – 30th June 2024 adopted by the Elected Members on 16th September, 2019
- Target of 66 housing solutions for the period up to 2024

Assessment of Needs

- The Housing Needs Assessment Summary Report was completed in 2019 and the number of approved applicants (**Net Need**) on our Housing Waiting List at 25th June 2019 was 821. (The Net Need figure excludes transfers, RAS and HAP).

Housing List

The current gross Housing Demand at 31st December 2019 is 1,988 and a comparative analysis with previous years is outlined below:

Year	Number on Housing List
December 2019	1,988
December 2018	2,070
December 2017	2,180
December 2016	2,059 <i>(Statutory Assessment 2016)</i>
December 2015	2,744
December 2014	2,456
December 2013	2,144 <i>(Statutory Assessment 2013)</i>
December 2012	3,688
December 2011	3,118
December 2010	2,876

Maintaining Housing Stock

- 37 homes adapted at a cost of €312,238
- 2 extensions completed at a cost of €97,725
- Tenders issued for 16 houses for external insulation under the Energy Retrofit Programme, works to be carried out early 2020
- 5,519 calls were made seeking housing repairs in 2019

Estate Management Grants

- 50 Grants amounting to €33,000 paid to Community Groups and Resident Associations
- Published Issue 13,14, 15 and 16 of the Council's Community Interactive e- newsletter
- Tidy Estates competition - Judging of the Council's 2019 Tidy Estates awards took place in August/early September. Winners announced in January, 2020

Housing Loans & Tenant Purchase Scheme

- 46 loans applications received
- 26 Loans approved - value €3,458,880
- 24 Loans paid out in 2019 amounting to €3,007,655
- Average home loan paid out in 2019 was €141,880
- 6 houses were sold under the Tenant (Incremental) Purchase Scheme

Anti Social Behaviour

- 438 complaints received
- Appointed an additional Tenant Liaison Officer

Refugee Resettlement Programme

- The Department of Justice and Equality notified Kilkenny County Council of its allocation to resettle 140 refugees in late 2017
- First family arrived in January 2018 and the last family was resettled on 21st November, 2019
- 25 Syrian families resettled in eight (8) towns around Kilkenny, total of 141 individuals
- Resettlement Worker and an Intercultural Worker supports the new families on their arrival in Kilkenny

Housing Private Grants

The number of Private Grants paid in 2019 as follows:

Scheme	Number	Approved Amount
Housing Grant Disability [HGD]	83	€902,744
Mobility Aid Grant [MAG]	19	€92,569
Housing Older Persons [HOP]	203	€1,003,153
Total	305	€1,998,466

Disability Strategy

The Housing & Disability Steering Group met on 4 occasions during 2019.

Issues discussed:

- De-Congregation of St. Patricks
- Mental Health Transfer Project
- Housing Delivery/Capital Schemes
- Support for Tenancy and Recovering Targets (S.T.A.R.T)
- National Disability Strategy Review
- Allocations & Assessments
- Revised Medical Application Form
- Independent Living

The de-congregation of St Patrick's is progressing where residents are relocated back into community type accommodation. Twenty-one clients (21) remain at the Centre at the end of 2019.

AGE FRIENDLY

- Annual report produced. Copies widely distributed and made available on line.
- Council provided grants for “The Big Hello” which was launched by Minister Ring.
- Council sought funding for Age Friendly seating and gym equipment in Slieverue under the 2019 Town and Village Renewal Scheme
- Active open space for older people was provided in Callan.
- Iarnród Éireann agreed an access from the shopping centre to the Train Station to be provided by MacDonagh Junction Shopping Centre
- CIE moving ahead with making Kilkenny Station an age friendly station.
- Money provided for upgrading of Low Street in Thomastown under Rural Regeneration Fund.
- Council provided additional funding to Men’s/ Women’s Shed.
- Open Circle Art provided programmes for Art enthusiast to fulfil their artistic aspirations.
- Kilkenny City Bus service commenced on 18th December.
- Council providing ongoing infrastructural works include bus stops, age friendly car parking and pedestrian crossings.
- Thomastown Age Friendly Town Plan launched by Minister Daly in July. Age Friendly Town status conferred where certain measures of the plan were implemented.
- Works started on Thomastown Car Park and Library.
- Council committed to funding additional CCTV in Kilkenny City for the next 4 years.
- Age Friendly Libraries. Graiguenamanagh Library advanced as an Age Friendly Library. All Libraries in Kilkenny offer age friendly services.

Kilkenny Recreation and Sports Partnership

- Swimming Lessons in the Ormonde Hotel.
- Monday Night walks.
- Introduction to the Gym
- New Programme “Active for Life” in partnership with TJ Reid’s Gym
- Cycling Without Age
- Chair based activities in the Hall in Thomastown.
- Older Adults Activity Classes – Callan, Kilkenny and Thomastown.
- Go for Life Games.
- Bike Week – Get back on your bike programme.
- Men on the move programme pilot project in Kilkenny, Castlecomer and Callan.
- Older People Walking Programmes from Canal Square.
- Older Adults PE Classes – in the Watershed and Callan.
- Aqua exercise in Newpark Hotel.

An Garda Siochána

- Crime spot/ Community assist on Kilkenny Community Radio, ½ hour every week.
- Local Policing Participation on going.
- Operation Home Safe launched.
- Victim & Community Engagement Office opened
- Home Helps provided crime security advice leaflets to 1,200 homes that they visit.
- Partnership with the Gardai and An Post for safer communities.
- Gardai had safety stand at Seniors Annual Conference.
- Partnership with HSE to compile list of Vulnerable People.

Kilkenny Seniors Forum

- Input into the Design of Bus Shelter seating – flat seats and not angle ones.
- Annual General meeting discussed Age Friendly Business Recognition Programme, Thomastown Age Friendly Town, Age Friendly Hospitals, Disability Focus Group, new public transport system in Kilkenny (Q4) and many other areas.
- Talks with Newpark Shopping Centre and Chamber of Commerce around the redesign of Shopping Centres and achieving Age Friendly business recognition.
- Betty Dewbery appointed Chairperson at the Forum's AGM in County Hall after John Coonan stepped down.
- Attended the National Older Persons Conference in Donegal in May.
- Attended the Seniors Conference in Hotel Kilkenny and training event in Tipperary on setting up and running an Old People's Council.
- Age Friendly Hospital steering group, receiving Age Friendly Hospital status.
- Working with ALONE towards an Age Friendly telephone service and provision of supported housing units discussed.
- Worked with ETB and Kilkenny Leader to identify what activities could be provided in areas and what Community Halls can be used.
- Annual Conference took place on the 31st October. Numerous stands provided information on age related issues including safeguarding and thinking ahead.
- Community Foundation Funding of €6,000 received by Forum to extend engagement with rural communities. Fiddown, Mulliavat, Ferrybank and Castlecomer were areas identified to concentrate on.
- Forum attended the National Age Friendly Awards in Dublin. Kilkenny Business Recognition Programme shortlisted for an award.
- Forum visited the Dundalk telephone befriending service. Engaging with Alone to roll out the service in Kilkenny.
- Attended Positive Aging Seminar, discussing Social Inclusion Older People Services, and ICPOP - integrated care for older people. Input into Positive Aging Strategy

Kilkenny Leader Partnership (KLP)

- Supported Men's Sheds around Kilkenny including Graiguenamanagh, Thomastown, Castlecomer and Bishop Birch.
- Voluntary Services – in Nursing Homes and St Luke's Hospital
- Community Garden in Castlecomer
- KLP and Ring a Link undertook a joint application for a new bus route in South Kilkenny.
- Public Transport cooperation is ongoing to purchase bus shelters and bus stops.
- Volunteering Service made an application to DRCD for a full Volunteer Centre (VC) for the County.
- Leader programmes included, broadband project, Energy Town KLP, Community shop in Windgap and Community Hall supports for upgrades in Paulstown, Ballyouskil and Windgap.
- Housing Aid Grants continued to help older people make home improvements
- Application to develop cycling in Kilkenny to include marketing, training and branding as well as a technical study.
- Leader funded programmes included Muckalee Community Shop, upgrade of computers for Fr. McGrath centre and IT upgrade for Newpark FRC, funding for a hub building in Freshford grades in Paulstown, Ballyouskil and Windgap.
- Under SICAP programme KLP committed to support 26 Community Groups. Mental Health support through Lifelink , the Involvement Centre and out of hours Crises Café.

Health Service Executive

- Launched Age Friendly Programme in Hospitals and the Geriatric Emergency Medicine Service.
- Coffee Shop in the Hospital gained Age Friendly Business recognition.
- Age Friendly programme in hospital included better seating, lighting and colour coding signs on the ground.
- Care Bear Project with TY students.
- National cost implementation plan for home support services for all the County.
- Thomastown 100 bed hospital unit approved.
- HIQA inspections on 4 Residential Units in Carlow/Kilkenny and all passed.
- Financial difficulties of Sheltered Homes in Kilkenny and Carlow and the need to ensure that they remain opened.
- Safeguarding Adults - advocating for healthcare plan directives.
- Flu vaccinations targeting people looking after elderly person or visiting hospitals.
- Integrated Care - received funding from the Department -INPOC- working with St Luke's to become a hub for streamlining/fast-tracking the over 70's into hospital/treatment.

Kilkenny Chamber of Commerce

- Age Friendly business initiatives.
- Presentation of Business Charters took place in March 2019.
- Encouraged larger print, older persons seating etc. and highlighted the "grey economy".
- Business Recognition Programme put forward for National Age Friendly and Excellence in Local Government Awards. 61 business in Kilkenny joined the programme.

Kilkenny Carlow Education Training Board

- Funded training in Local Library's and also in the Local Community.
- 2 New groups started in Windgap.
- New groups to take up programmes like Art, Knitting and Sewing.

Volunteer Centre for Kilkenny

The Department of Rural and Community Development has made provision for the establishment of a Volunteer Centre in Kilkenny.

Kilkenny Public Participation Network (PPN)

The Community Section continues to support and resource the Kilkenny PPN.

Town & Village Renewal Scheme 2019

Kilkenny County Council submitted 12 applications for funding. €391,600 was allocated to 7 town and village renewal projects at The Rower, Slieverue, Mullinavat, Goresbridge, Castlecomer, Thomastown and Urlingford-Johnstown.

Community and Cultural Facilities Capital Scheme (CCFCS) 2019

€288,520 was allocated under this scheme in 2019 to 7 projects across the county.

Kilkenny Interagency Resettlement Committee (KRIC)

The Community Section in partnership with the Housing Section have been coordinating a local resettlement programme in collaboration with statutory agencies since 2017. In 2019 KRIC resettled the last Syrian family, making a total of 25 families being resettled in rural towns and villages across the county.

Kilkenny Local Community Development Committee

A national review of Local Community Development Committees (LCDC) was undertaken by the Department of Rural and Community Development in July 2019. Kilkenny LCDC also undertook a review in December with a number of priority objectives identified for potential change.

Local Community Development Committee Funding Streams

Kilkenny County Council continues to support the LCDC in administering and monitoring a variety of funding streams for communities that experience social exclusion or disadvantage.

Community Enhancement Programme Funding:

Kilkenny LCDC's allocation under the Community Enhancement Programme (CEP) for 2019 was €136,300. 30% of the funding was ring-fenced for small grants of €3,000 or less and 70% was ring-fenced for medium grants to a maximum of €10,000.

20 small grants averaging €1,500 per grant and 20 medium grants averaging €5,500 were allocated to projects across the county totalling €39,700 for small grants and €96,600 for medium grants.

Kilkenny LCDC allocated Men's Shed Funding

In July 2019 additional funding of €0.5m was allocated nationally to the Community Enhancement Programme. The funding was ring-fenced for small capital grants for Men's Sheds. Kilkenny was allocated a total of €11,780. Applications were dispersed to 9 affiliated Men's Sheds in Kilkenny. Seven applications were received and funding was allocated to each of the 7 applicants.

Healthy Ireland

Kilkenny LCDC has been awarded €245,548 to fund three Healthy Ireland actions that include: 'Healthy Inclusive Communities', 'Supporting Outreach and Engagement with Lone Parents and building collaborations to respond to needs', and 'Regional implementation of agreed policy priority programmes (5 counties)' and one CMHF action: 'Social Prescribing', along with an action to employ a Healthy Kilkenny Coordinator, a Community Engagement Action and a Community Mental Health Fund Small Grants Scheme.

The Big Hello Grants Allocated

27 grants between €200 and €400 were allocated to different community groups with events taking place over the May Bank Holiday weekend in 2019.

Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP)

Kilkenny LCDC continues its management of the contract for the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) valued at €650,090. The 2019 Plan supported over 30 community groups in areas of disadvantage in the county. The SICAP programme also supported 529 individuals into education, employment or enterprises.

Launch of the Callan Town Improvement Plan

Callan Town Improvement Plan was compiled by the Callan Town Team in conjunction with Kilkenny County Council and was launched on the 11th of July 2019.

Community Grants Booklet

A second Community Grant information booklet was produced by the Council and launched in 2019. This booklet is available online.

Phase 2 of a ONE STOP SHOP

Phase 2 of the online ONE STOP SHOP for funding was developed. The online portal is designed to make the Kilkenny Grants Booklet more accessible to the general public.

Pride of Place 2019

Kilkenny County Council was honoured to host the 17th Annual All-Ireland Pride of Place Gala Awards Ceremony in Lyrtath Hotel Kilkenny on Saturday 30th November 2019. Kilmacow Pride of Place Group and Ballyhale Development Association picked up National Awards. Kilmacow won the National Award under the Community Wellbeing Category. Ballyhale was awarded runners up in the Population Category. Inistioge and Graiguenamanagh community groups also represented Kilkenny at the gala awards ceremony.

Community Awards Night 2019

13 communities from across Kilkenny represented their county at a number of international and national competitions – Entente Florale, The Bank of Ireland National Enterprising Town Awards, the IPB Pride of Place Awards and SuperValu Tidy Towns. On 16th January, 2019 Kilkenny County Council & An Cathoirleach Cllr. Eamon Aylward hosted the first Kilkenny County Council Community Awards night at a reception in the Parade Tower to acknowledge, congratulate and thank these groups for their dedication and hard work within their respective communities.

Community Events Grants Scheme

€19,000 was awarded under the revised Community Events Grants to 73 groups in County Kilkenny. The community events grant scheme assisted community event organisers with the development, promotion and running of small scale community events.

Comhairle na nÓg

Comhairle na nÓg prioritised transport as their key issue facing young people in Kilkenny and this was the focus for their work programme in 2019. The work resulted in developing stronger links with Rural Link for young people and Comhairle promoting the Rural Link bus service to young people.

The 2019 AGM held in the Spring Hill Hotel was very successful. 117 second level students attended on the day from 11 secondary schools across Kilkenny.

Children and Young Persons Services Committee (CYPSC)

The inter-agency committee has continued in 2019 to carry out research and developmental work for the formation of a first strategy for Children and Young People Service in Kilkenny.

Extensive works have been carried out with front line service delivery staff to develop actions that will impact in areas such as mental health, physical activity, learning and development, safety from harm, connected and respected and security & opportunity.

CYPSC - Healthy Ireland Funding

The CYPSC committee has accessed funding under the Healthy Ireland programme in 2019, which saw the completion of two projects in 2019, one in Ossory Youth and a second 'Health Streets' which was rolled out in the Newpark Family Resource Centre and the Fr. McGrath Family Resource Centre, delivering cooking and fitness sessions with 20 families.

The Committee received funding for an additional 2 year programme of almost €96,000 to support a Health Streets projects in Kilkenny City, Graiguenamanagh and Castlecomer.

CLÁR

Kilkenny received € 114,770 funding for three projects under this national funding stream in 2019.

- Windgap - A new pedestrian crossing at the renovated community hall and tea rooms
- Black & Whites GAA - To develop a new multi-use games area
- Tullogher-Rosbercon GAA - Car Park Surfacing.

Rural Regeneration Development Fund [RRDF] Thomastown

€2,080,486 has been awarded to Kilkenny County Council for a series for projects in Thomastown. These include works to the former Courthouse, the community centre and library, works on Logan Street/Lowe Street, Maudlin Street study and works to the Quayside car park.

Bike Week

Bike week was held in June. It is funded through direct Council funding and a grant of €15,000 from the Department of Transport. 19 events were held with over 1,200 participants.

National Play Day & National Recreation Week

12 events were held with over 1,000 participants for the combined national play day and national recreation week programme in 2019.

Capital Play & Recreation Grants

€22,500 was approved by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs towards the capital cost of playground equipment. One piece of equipment was replaced in each of the Thomastown, Graiguenamanagh and Castlecomer playgrounds.

Youth Work and Support

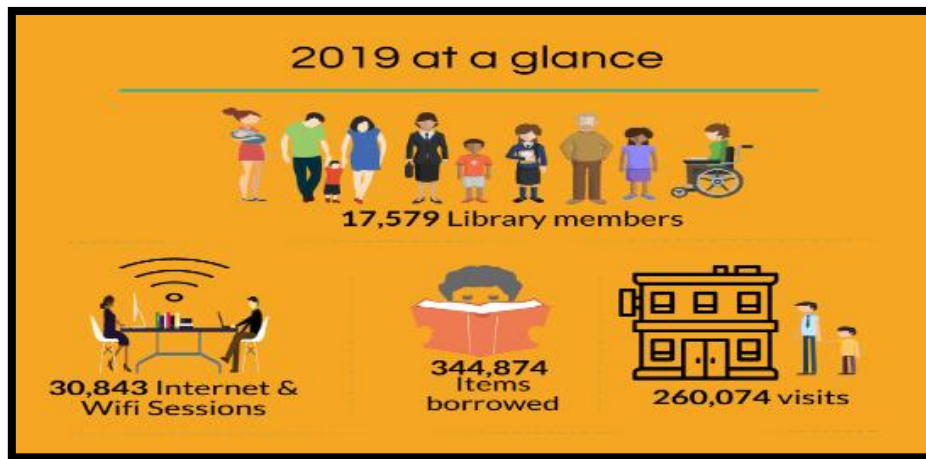
Kilkenny County Council continues to support the work of youth development throughout the county through -

- Young Social Innovator programmes for 15-18 years olds, focusing on innovation regarding social issues affecting young people
- Ossory Youth - Support for delivery of programmes
- The DRUM Youth Café - Joint funding partner with TUSLA for the DRUM youth café project based at MacDonagh Junction

LIBRARY SERVICES

Library Services

- 26% increase in people joining the library
- 36% increase in use of eBooks, eAudiobooks and eMagazines and 44% increase in wifi use
- Digital hub developed – 3D printer, Podcasting, training tablets and laptops
- My Open Library is in operation in Castlecomer, with 266 members
- 1,988 children completed the Summer Reading Challenge – an increase of 57%
- 2,294 children attended Bookville Kilkenny Festival.



Learning

Kilkenny Library Service supports and facilitates lifelong learning, helping people to develop skills to empower their development.



Bubbly Maths, Science week - Graiguenamanagh Library

- Creative Active Times Age Friendly programme of events ran throughout the year, in line with our commitments under the Age Friendly Kilkenny Strategy. 1,215 people attended 83 events from art classes to gardening, and computer classes to history lectures
- Received the Age Friendly Charter as part of the National Age Friendly Libraries Recognition Programme
- Under the Dormant Account Fund €26,250 was awarded to Kilkenny County Council Library Service towards developing library supports for marginalised, socially excluded and disadvantaged communities. €8,750 was provided by Kilkenny County Council Library Service.
- Provided range of digital classes as well as one-to-one supports from TY students from local schools



Art Classes - Urlingford Library



Age Friendly Library Charter Awarded



Magic Table, Yulefest - Loughboy Library

Information

Kilkenny Library Service continues to provide a wide range of information resources in a variety of formats and is a vital information hub within the local community.

Continued development of Kilkenny Digital Archive at <http://digital-archive.kilkenny.ie/> and additional new collections.

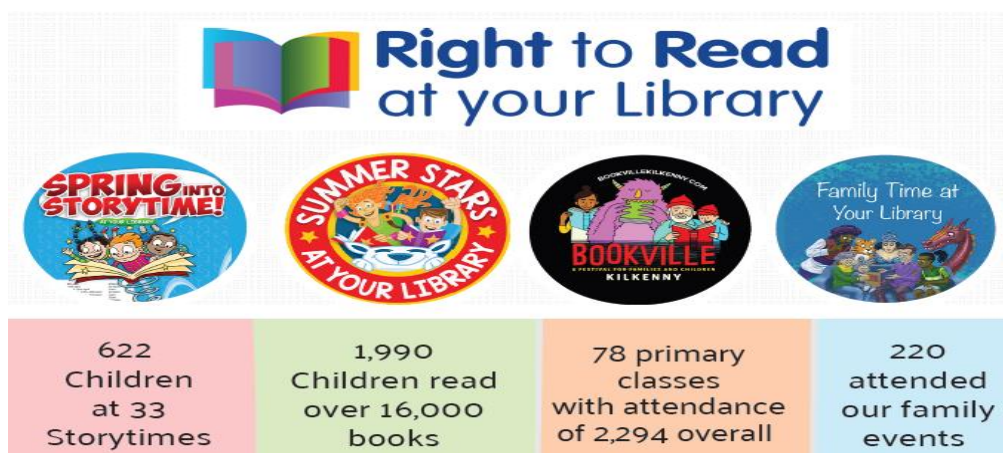
Our Decade of Centenaries programme was very successful with 125 attending lectures. 168 primary and secondary school students attended practical workshops



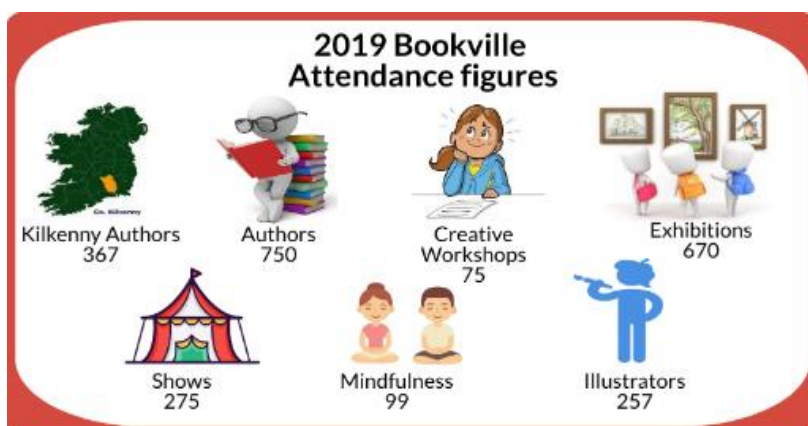
Decade of Centenaries workshop - Castlecomer Library

Reading and Literacy

Kilkenny Library Service is at the forefront of supporting and developing literacy skills, reading, creativity, innovation and helping people realise their potential. Right to Read Action Plan delivered through a variety of programmes including:



- Opportunities to join language circles, book clubs, creative writing groups and story times
- Rollout of the next phase of Healthy Ireland at your Library with a comprehensive stock and a dynamic programme of events in all library branches
- Received a Right to Read Champion Award



Right to Read Champion Awarded for Literacy work

Community and Culture

- The library is a centre of community and cultural activity. It provides a welcoming space for individuals and all communities, bringing people together, celebrating diversity and facilitating personal development
- Participated in Creative Ireland 2019 Programme including Cruinniú na nÓg and Bookville Festival

- The service continues to participate and engage with national and local festivals and programmes including: Heritage week, Science week, Bealtaine, Savour Kilkenny, Seachtain na Gaeilge, Yulefest, Culture Night
- Home Energy Saving Kits were rolled out in both rural and central locations in partnership with Kilkenny County Council Environmental Department, along with a range of other initiatives, such as Spring clean packs and upcycling events



Service Development and Infrastructure

Our public libraries are places of free civic participation and vibrant focal points of the community. We constantly strive to redesign our spaces to reflect changing community and individual need. Initiatives were as follows:

- Kilkenny's sign up month and other ongoing initiatives led to an increase of 26% in membership
- Progressed planning of new library in the Mayfair, Kilkenny City
- Created modern, vibrant and accessible spaces using modern furniture and colour and flexible shelving
- Streamlined and automated processes, increased use of ICT and digital options
- Liaised with Libraries Development Unit and the Department of Rural and Community Development
- Increased promotion of library services with a dedicated video and animated film to increase engagement



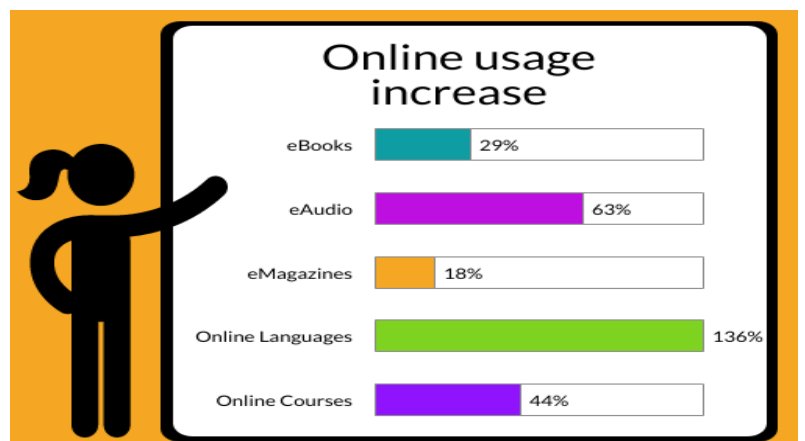
3D Printer - Loughboy Library



Urlingford Library Children's room

Workforce

Kilkenny Library Service works to contribute to the vitality and success of its public libraries and the diverse community we serve by positioning our library staff to be proactive, customer focused and well trained. A range of training and development courses were attended as well as library conferences and workshops. A workforce plan has been agreed and recruitment has commenced.



ARTS

The Arts Office develops, co-ordinates, motivates, inspires and empowers artistic activity throughout the City and County. We promote the arts as a worthwhile activity for all and work to further strengthen Kilkenny's position as a centre of excellence for the arts and ensure a successful and prosperous arts environment within the region. The Arts Officer also supports the facilitation and coordination of the Creative Ireland Kilkenny Programme.

NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS

- 13,337 people participated in and attended events organised by the Arts Office
- Rhyme Rag Ensemble members Orla Browne and Aaron O'Dea were invited to perform on RTÉ Radio 1's Christmas Poetry Programme broadcast on Christmas Day
- Rhyme Rag Ensemble members participated in the Laureate na nÓg's #WeAreThePoets programme and performed as part of Kilkenny Arts Festival's official programme
- 37 bursaries and mentoring opportunities awarded in 2019

NEW DEVELOPMENTS

- Open Circle Arts moved to their new home in the Art building on the SOS campus
- Inaugural Emerging Curator in Residence Programme 2019 was hugely successful
- Initiated a new partnership with Visual Arts Ireland delivering CPD workshops and events for visual artists
- Developed and signed Framework Agreement with the Arts Council of Ireland. Its purpose is to highlight our shared strategic priorities for arts development in Kilkenny over the period of this agreement.

Literature: To ensure a balanced approach to the continuing development of our literary programme.

- Kilkenny Poetry Broadsheet 19 edited by Jean O'Brien and Illustrated by Ale Mercado
- Rhyme Rag online journal - published the poetry of young Kilkenny writers (age 12 - 21). 15 poems were published on line in 2019.
- Annual Writing Workshops for adults - 4 programmes tutoring writers across the County.
- Rhyme Rag Ensemble - worked on a number of interesting projects including a European wide poetry project with other young people, a visit to the Lit Festival in Waterford and a number of workshops with acclaimed writers.

Community, Education and Inclusion: Design and deliver high quality community and education programmes.

- Open Circle Community Arts Collective - Develop and deliver high quality arts engagement and collective cultural experiences for women across the county of Kilkenny
- Review of Open Circle was undertaken in 2019.
- Siamsa Childrens programme - engaged children in a variety of visual arts and writing projects. "Moonrise Reasures" with Caroline Busher and Brickflicks Halloween themed workshops
- School subsidies were awarded for a spring and winter theatre production by Barnstorm Theatre
- Culture Night - National event promoting culture in all forms in 13 venues with 17 events. 3,152 adults and children attended events in the City and County.
- Music Generation Kilkenny launched on Thursday, 28th November. The launch represented a wonderful and exciting time in the musical landscape of County Kilkenny for our children and young people with wonderful performances from children from St. Brendan's NS Muckalee and the Presentation Primary School Castelcomer
- Bookville Festival 2019 - hugely successful festival celebrating books and literature through diverse events including writing, theatre, visual arts, storytelling for families and children in partnership with the Library Service

Artists Supports

- Arts Act Grants 2019 - 18 Grants awarded in 2019 enabling a number of diverse projects to take place across the county
- Bursaries:
 - (i) Tyrone Guthrie Bursary: 4 bursaries were awarded to practitioners working in Literature, Theatre and Visual Arts
 - (ii) The Moth: 1 bursary awarded to a writer to support their work in Creative Writing
 - (iii) CCI Paris: 1 visual artist was awarded the CCI Paris Visual Artists Award
- Blackstack Studio - continued to work with and support Fine Art Print studio. The studio members facilitate artists from Kilkenny, Carlow, Waterford and Wexford
- ArtLinks - CPD partnership programme including Kilkenny, Carlow, Waterford and Wexford County Councils. Bursaries: 12 bursaries awarded enabling practitioners to develop their practice and artist's careers
- Focus groups - held across the region to gather up-to-date feedback from regional artists and to plan for future programme

HERITAGE

- Kilkenny County Council was the first Local Authority to sign a framework agreement with the All Ireland Pollinator Plan – a long term commitment to support pollinators
- 3,948 children from 44 primary schools took part in free Heritage in Schools workshops – organised by the Council & Heritage Council, co-funded by Creative Ireland



Chief Executive Colette Byrne & Cathaoirleach Cllr. Eamon Aylward sign Pollinator Framework

Achievements

- 1,889 field names from 85 townlands were recorded by 25 volunteers for the Kilkenny Field Name Recording Project
- 55 pollinator actions were undertaken by Kilkenny County Council, including surveys of Council owned land, pollinator friendly planting and awareness raising events
- 51 traditional shopfronts in Kilkenny City were photographed & documented in partnership with Planning Department
- 49 primary teachers and early childhood practitioners attended training workshops for the Kilkenny Wildlife Detective – a locally based education resource developed by the Heritage Office in partnership with Kilkenny Education Centre and County Kilkenny Childcare Committee
- 50 people attended World Wetland Day event at Newpark Fen, organised by Birdwatch Ireland and sponsored by the Council
- The medieval city wall at the Black Abbey Carpark was conserved and repaired with co-funding from the Irish Walled Towns Network
- Kilkenny County Council hosted a commemoration ceremony to mark 100 years since the first meeting of Dáil Eireann, and women achieving a vote in the 1918 general election
- 6 biodiversity surveys were completed (*Thomastown; Glenmore; Moneenroe National School; Dunmore Civic Amenity Site; County Hall Grounds; Villa Maria, Talbots Inch*)



- 70 heritage week events took place in County Kilkenny to celebrate national Heritage Week
- Heritage Workshop delivered with Comhairle na n'Og to support them to make a submission to the draft National Heritage Plan "Heritage 2030"
- Civic Memorials & Naming Infrastructure Committee assessed and advised on names for 5 new local authority developments and 5 community memorials/plaques
- 2 heritage presentations were delivered to the Kilkenny Tidy Towns Forum



New Developments

- Bumblebee logo was created to symbolise the Council's adoption of the garden bumblebee as an emblem, and support for pollinators
- Two new signs, telling the story of Kilkenny's medieval City Walls were designed and installed at James Street & Tilbury Lane

Awards/Recognitions

- 2 winners in the regional Pollinator Awards in the National Tidy Towns competition - Keep Kilkenny Beautiful & Tullahought
- President Michael D. Higgin's hosted a ceremony for Local Authority Heritage Officers in Áras an Uachtaráin to celebrate 20 years of the Heritage Officer Programme



Launching the City Walls signs, Francis Coady, Cllr. Peter Cleere Mayor, Tim Butler, Cllr. Andrew McGuinness, Leas Cathaoirleach, Dearbhala Ledwidge, Simon Walton, Sean McKeown



President Higgins with Local Authority Heritage Officers, and Heritage Council Staff, at Áras an Uachtaráin

FIRE SERVICES & MAJOR EMERGENCY

Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service main functions are:

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

Our focus is on protecting the communities we serve. The determination and dedication of our staff to protect life and property are paramount. Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service provides a highly skilled response to a range of emergencies and have implemented lifesaving initiatives. Firefighting is dangerous, but we continue to improve our working practices to make responding to incidents as safe as possible.

Key Statistics for 2019

- ✓ 815 incidents responded to by Fire Personnel
- ✓ 105 applications for fire safety certificates were received
- ✓ 1 Fire Safety Notice under the Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003 was served
- ✓ 53 Fire Safety Inspections were carried out
- ✓ 1 Fire Safety Assessment was ordered under the Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003
- ✓ 2,079 children in 65 schools received the fire safety primary school programme

Capital Projects

Kilkenny Fire Service have successfully moved to TETRA digital radio technology on the National Emergency Services digital radio system. Terminals have been fitted to each fire service vehicle and training has been rolled out to all fire service personnel. TETRA radios greatly improve Kilkenny Fire Services communications throughout the county and also provide direct communication with the other principal emergency services.

Community Fire Safety

- Personnel involved in 51 community events throughout 2019 – great work, great involvement and very positive feedback from the organisers.
- 35 of our 68 fire fighters have received training in public speaking and presentation skills to deliver the fire safety message within our communities
- Ongoing public messaging campaigns were maintained to encourage members of the public to install smoke alarms and to test their smoke alarms once a week to ensure that they are working
- Awareness campaign held during National Fire Safety Week in October to highlight the importance of fire safety in the home



Chip pan demo with Thomastown N.S.



Talks and information were given to various communities such as Kilmacow Active Retirement Group, Thomastown Men Sheds, etc.



Fire Officers from the crew of Graiguenamanagh visited Gahan House local retirement home to discuss fire safety and fire prevention with the residents and the staff.

Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service continue to deliver the NDFEM Primary Schools Programme (PSP) throughout the City and County of Kilkenny. This programme has been running since 2006 and over 19,112 3rd class pupils have received the fire safety programme to date.



Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service attended the SOS Family Fun Day



Visits by various groups to the Fire Stations was also facilitated so the community get to see some of the specialist equipment and learn more about fire safety in the home.

Training

The following training was provided by Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service in 2019:

- Breathing Apparatus Refresher
- RTC
- First Responder
- ESDS
- Emergency First Responder
- CAFS
- Pump Operators.

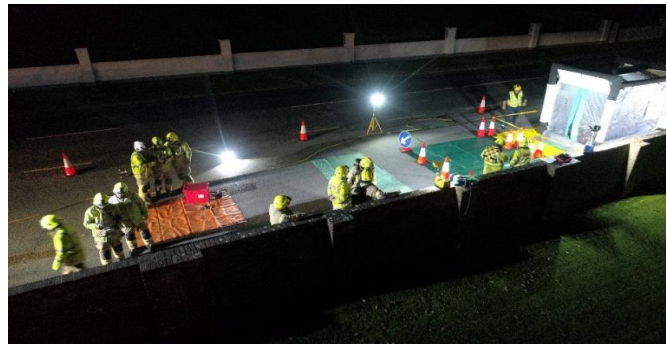
All fire service personnel have been trained to Cardiac First Response Advanced level as part of the (Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council Emergency) First Responder programme delivered by members of Kilkenny Fire Service and refreshed every 3 years.



Fire personnel from around the county attended an in-house Pump Operators 3-day course at the new Fire Station in Graiguenamanagh



Breathing Apparatus Refresher training in Hackettstown Breathing Apparatus training centre. All staff do a 2day refresher training every two years.



Kilkenny City and Freshford Fire Brigade carried out a hazardous materials exercise at Troyswood Water Treatment plant. Picture also shows our new decontamination facility.



Freshford Fire Brigade

A recognition night was held in all the fire stations. Cathaoirleach Peter Chap Cleere presented commemorative 1916-2016 medals to personnel that were in the fire service in 2016.

Operations

The Fire Service is a very resilient and useful resource to the Local Authority. Brigades (trained and equipped manpower) can be mobilised within minutes of an emergency in their area. etc.

Installation of tablets on all frontline appliances, with a new incident management software application has enabled Kilkenny Fire Service to better communicate, manage and record incidents. Incident Commanders now have access to both on line and offline real time information for safer management of incidents with time stamped risk assessments and recording of information for post incident debriefing.



Road traffic accident on the motorway

Major Emergency Management

The following documents were reviewed and updated in 2019:

- ✓ Major Emergency Management Plan and Appendix
- ✓ External Emergency Plan for Transtock under the Seveso III Directive in 2019 (also tested)
- ✓ Flood Emergency Response Plan and the Severe Weather Plan (excluding Flooding)

CIVIL DEFENCE

Kilkenny Civil Defence is a volunteer-based organisation that supports the Principal Response Agencies (County Council, Gardai and HSE) in dealing with severe weather, flooding, major incidents and searching for missing people. It also assists our local communities at large and small events including concerts and festivals, fun days and sporting events. There are currently 29 active volunteers in Kilkenny.

2019 Callouts

The Civil Defence can be activated by the Gardai and the Fire Service to assist for missing persons on land or in the rivers. They can also be requested to assist a neighbouring county during an on-going search.

River Search Callouts	Open Land Searches
5	1

Community Events

In 2019 Kilkenny Civil Defence provided first aid and safety boat cover for 34 community events including the Shamrocks adventure race, Cycle against Suicide, the Castlewarren field day, the Fairytale Festival and the Nore Triathlon. Without the health and safety cover provided a lot of these events would not take place. Over 1,000-man hours of duties were covered by the volunteers.

First Aid/Casualty	Safety Boat	Other
18	7	7



Medieval Mile Run



Coronas Concert, The Hub [November 2019]

Training

Instructor training is provided to volunteers through the National Civil Defence Training College in Roscrea. Local volunteer instructors also provide multi-skill training from our training centre in Kilkenny City for the following:

- Rescue - Open Country Search - missing persons search skills
- Casualty/First Aid
- River-based Search & Recovery- water safety and boat operators' courses
- Flooding- Swift water rescue operator course/ pumping flood water
- Civil Defence Communications
- Severe weather driving skills



Kilkenny Fire Service/ Civil Defence training, June 2019



Drone Training, August 2019

Equipment



Kilkenny Civil Defence received a new Ford Ranger in 2019 from the Department of Defence, funded through Dormant Accounts. This increases the 4-wheel drive capacity of the unit to 4 vehicles.

Recruitment

Volunteers were actively recruited throughout 2019 and recruiting is ongoing with the aim of increasing volunteer numbers by 25% in 2020.

Awards Ceremony - December, 2019



Volunteers train at least one night per week and some weekends. Multi agency and intercounty training took place throughout the year including casualty training with the Kilkenny Fire Service and Drone Training in the Nore Valley with Waterford Civil Defence.

In 2019, the volunteers undertook over 361 hours of training, 100 accredited certificates of achievement were received in 12 different disciplines. Two 10-year, long service medals were also awarded.

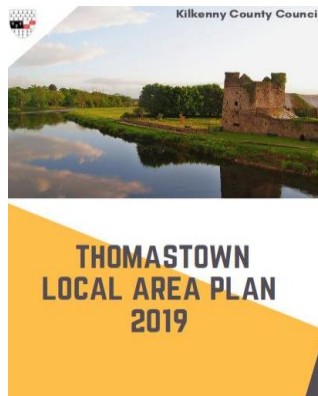
**DIRECTORATE OF
PLANNING, ECONOMIC &
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**

Director of Services: Mr. Sean McKeown

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

- 976 planning applications received during 2019 a 12 % increase on the previous year.
- €2.29m collected in development levies.

Local Area Plans



Adopted in March 2019



Adopted in April 2019

Graiguenamanagh/Tinnahinch Local Area Plan

Work commenced on the preparation of a joint Local Area Plan for Graiguenamanagh and Tinnahinch in co-operation with Carlow County Council.

A well-attended public consultation event hosted jointly by Carlow and Kilkenny County Council's took place in October 2019.



City & County Development Plan

In November 2018 the making of a new City & County Development Plan was paused while the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region was being prepared and finalised.

- The following projects were commenced in 2019 in preparation of the City & County Plan.
- Strategic Environmental Assessment
- Wind Energy/Renewable Energy Strategy
- City & County Retail Strategy
- Loughmacask Masterplan
- Fair Green Masterplan
- St. Canice's Masterplan

Vacant Sites

Sites were assessed for inclusion on the Register in late 2019. 17 sites were added to the Register for 2020.

There were 44 sites on the Vacant Sites Register at 31st December, 2019. A total of 27 of these are now liable for the 7% levy.

Conservation

€263,000 in conservation grant funding was awarded by Kilkenny Co. Co. in 2019, through the Built Heritage and Investment Scheme and the Historic Structures Fund. A further €196,159 was prioritised by the private sector, bringing the total spend on conservation funded projects to €459,159, with a total of 1,181 working days being provided for the local professionals. This represents a 25% increase in funding and a 48% increase in working days.

Before



After



Ballyduff Flour Mill, constructed in the 18th century, highlights the importance of the conservation grants in retaining our architectural heritage.

Shopfronts Project

“Kilkenny Shopfronts Through the Ages”

Kilkenny County Council launched a new online resource, entitled “Kilkenny Shopfronts Through the Ages”, available on the Library’s Kilkenny Digital Archive <https://digital-archive.kilkenny.ie/>. This initiative was the result of collaboration between the Council’s Planning Section, the Library Service, Information Systems and Heritage.



“Kilkenny Shopfronts Through the Ages” forms part of the Council’s strategy for Shopfronts and Signage, which includes awareness raising and promotion, policy and guidance, and enforcement.

Taking In Charge

The Taking in Charge statutory process was concluded for 5 no. estates in 2019 as follows:

- Kilferra Court, Bennetsbridge
- Inis Alainn Fiddown
- Chapel View Stoneyford
- Hunters Wood, Newmarket
- Archersfield, Kilmoganny

Four estates were advanced to the initiation stage of the Taking In Charge process in 2019 and these will be concluded in Q1 2020:

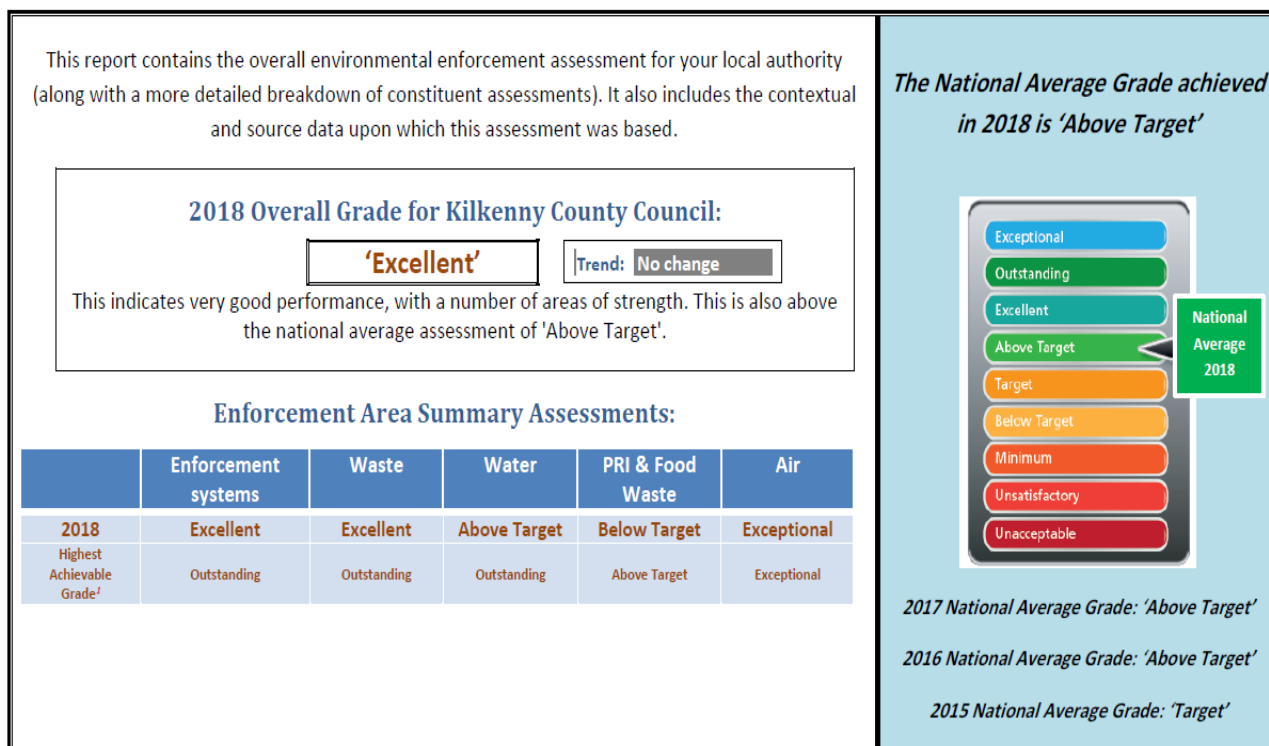
- Glenvale, Ballyragget
- Ard Glas, Ban Ard, Tuar Na mBlath, An Grianan, An Cuainin at Abbeylands Ferrybank
- Kingscourt, Callan; and
- The Greens, Jerpoint West, Thomastown (*The Realignment Section of L8203 Road only*)

Tenders for Taking in Charge works were concluded for 2 estates in Q4 of 2019 and it is anticipated that the initiation stage of the Taking in Charge process will commence on these in Q1 2020 upon completion of works at Banagher Court Piltown & The Green, Ballyfoyle.

4 new taking charge applications were received in 2019.

ENVIRONMENT

- The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) having evaluated all local authority RMCEI (Recommended Minimum Criteria Environmental Inspection) Plans, awarded an overall grade of 'Excellent' to Kilkenny County Council for the 2018 Return element of the Plan, which was ahead of the national average result of 'Above Target'. Equally under the 2019 RMCEI Enforcement element of the Plan, Kilkenny was awarded the overall Plan rating of 'High' from a score range of High, Medium or Low.



RMCEI Assessment

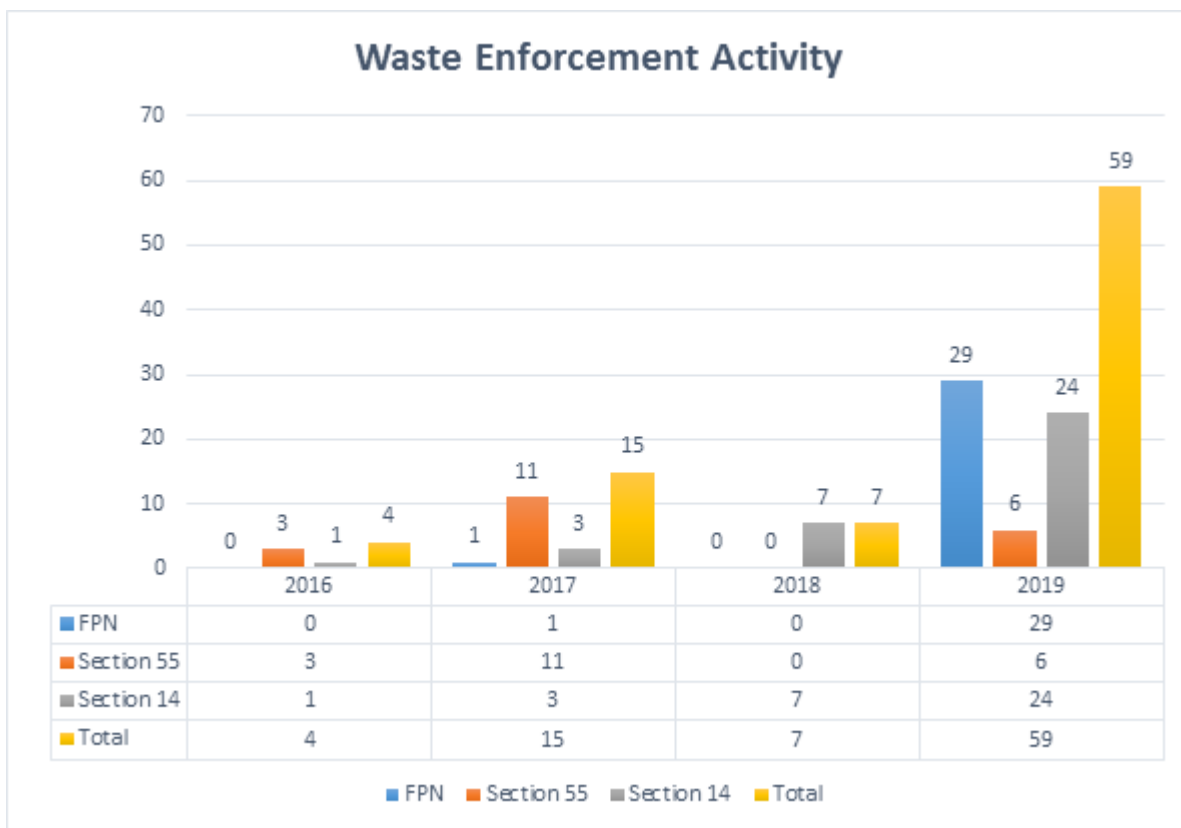
- Kilkenny City retained its gold medal in the National Tidy Towns competition. Inistioge & Tullahought also retained their silver medal. Ballyragget received an Endeavour award. Kilkenny City and Tullahought received awards under the Local Authority Pollinator Award category.
- 19 schools renewed their green flag award in March and a successful green schools co-ordinators information session was held in the autumn.
- 12 Community Anti-Litter and Graffiti grants were approved.
- 19 environmental themed projects centered on climate change and biodiversity were awarded under the Community Environment Action Fund.
- 11 waste Prevention Grants were awarded.
- 41 Grants approved under the Graveyard Grant Scheme.
- Supported the continuation of the Savour Kilkenny festival "going green" initiative.

- Kilkenny City was assessed as cleaner than European norms and topped the league table in the first assessment of 2019. It retained this position on the second assessment and was announced the overall winner in early 2020.
- Over 150 Community groups actively participated in the National Spring Clean.



- Over 1,400 tonnes of recyclable material and over 3,000 tonnes of residual waste were collected at the Dunmore Recycling & Waste Disposal Centre with 60,000 customers using the facility.
- 3 Bring Centres were provided and a total of 1,775 tonnes of glass and 106 tonnes of aluminium and steel were collected across the 46 Bring Centres in Kilkenny City and County.

- 1,066 environmental complaints were received, all of which were inspected and the appropriate action taken to resolve same.



- Held a hugely successful Household Bulky Goods Disposal Event at the Dunmore Civic Amenity Centre and at the Civic Amenity Centre in Granny in July.
- Supported the Kilkenny Rotary Club's 'Bikes to Africa' initiative, approximately 400 bikes were dropped off at Dunmore in 2019.
- Hosted a tent at the Iverk Show. The Guest speakers, ongoing demonstrations and information stands were popular with the visitors.
- Collaborated with the #BeatClimateChange initiative to improve the Beat FM Fairy Festival by undertaking waste reduction initiatives including the reduction of single-use plastics on site and providing segregated bins at the hugely successful 2019 event held in Woodstock Gardens.



- 120 Fixed Penalty Notices were issued for various offences under the Litter Pollution Act.
- Commenced door-to-door inspections under the County Kilkenny Waste Management Bye-laws to check how households are disposing of their waste.
- An Garda Síochána invited the Environment Section to participate in a number of major Operations to identify the illegal movement of waste.

- Prepared a Noise Action Plan 2019-2023.
- 2019 was a very successful year in terms of homing / re-homing dogs from the Carlow Kilkenny Dog Shelter, with in excess of 99% of all dogs finding an alternative suitable home or reclaimed
- Dog licence increase – from 4,630 in 2018 to 5,472 in 2019.
- Provided lifeguard service to supervise the public bathing areas in the County for the months of June, July and August.
- Under the 2019 Historic Landfill Remediation Project the site in Gowran was remediated and the Ballyragget site was 85% with a completion date for Qtr. 1 2020. In December 2019 the Council drew down circa. €1.55 million from the Department of Communication, Climate Action and Environment to fund these projects.



Ballyragget - December 2019

- Kilkenny and Tipperary County Councils continued to lead the national shared service Local Authority Waters Programme (LAWPRO) that supports and co-ordinates implementation of the River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2018 – 2021 (RBMP). Nationally, the RBMP requires the LAWPRO team to focus on 189 priority areas for action and anticipates water quality improvements in all of them by December 2021.
- Under the Local Authority Waters Programme (LAWPRO), the Catchment Assessment Team set up in 2018 carried out approx. 60 desk top studies. The Community Water Officer ran community information meetings in 92 of the Priority Areas for Action and carried out fieldwork assessments in 82 of the Priority Areas for Action.

VETENINARY SERVICES

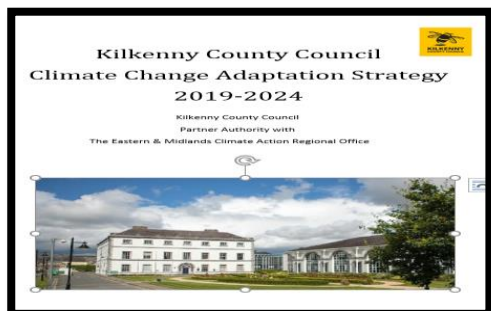
- The Veterinary Service fulfils the food safety service contract between the FSAI and Kilkenny County Council which includes responsibility for the Local Authority Veterinary Service in the Carlow area .The Veterinary public health and animal welfare functions include providing official controls/ regulation in small to medium throughput slaughterhouses and small meat processing plants, and the regulation of small poultry slaughtering plants (including on farm slaughter of poultry i.e. seasonal slaughter etc).
- It should be noted that there are continuous consultations with new food business startups, and sometimes with currently supervised food businesses on expansion plans. In these cases, the regulatory requirements under food legislation are discussed with businesses and they are often referred onto other relevant state agencies if they require other supports e.g. business mentoring from the Local Enterprise Office etc. In 2019 the Veterinary Service had consultations with 2 small food businesses who wish to open new businesses and 20 Food Businesses were under the supervision of the service.
- Each animal slaughtered for human consumption, in premises approved under food legislation must undergo an Ante Mortem and Post Mortem inspection.
- All premises supervised under food legislation must have a Food Safety Management System i.e. generally based on HACCP principles
- Approved Slaughterhouses under the service's supervision in 2019, slaughtered 4,586 Cattle, 20,132 Sheep, and 144,540 Poultry.
- 177 Hygiene Inspections (other than AM/PM Inspections) were done in food premises under the services supervision.

Dogs and Horses

- Together with the Dog Warden Service, the Veterinary Service is involved in the implementation of the Control of Dogs and the Dog Breeding Establishments Acts. 21 Dog Breeding Establishments (DBEs) were registered as at the end of 2019 and there were 62 DBE inspections completed during the year.
- The roll out of the Dog Licence Inspection Unit in 2019 saw a significant increase in the number of dog licences purchased, increasing from 4,630 in 2018 to 5,472 in 2019.
- 517 dogs were surrendered to the Carlow Kilkenny Dog Shelter in 2019 or picked up as strays by the Dog Wardens. Of these - 322 dogs were rehomed and 192 reclaimed. Regrettably 3 dogs had to be put to sleep during the year due to health issues or aggressive nature.
- 19 horses were impounded under the Control of Horses Act in 2019.

CLIMATE CHANGE & ENERGY EFFICIENCY

- Adopted inaugural 5-year Climate Change Adaptation Strategy.



- Nominated as partner authority to support Kildare County Council in the implementation of the Eastern & Midlands Climate Action Regional Office (CARO).
- The Public Sector in Ireland is tasked with reducing their energy consumption by 33% by 2020. In 2019 Kilkenny County Council achieved 33.2% and has reached the 2020 targets. The Council's energy team is currently setting out an action plan to deliver the 2030 target of 50% reduction in energy consumption.
- Commenced the process to achieve certification to ISO 50001 Energy Management. The Council's Energy Performance Officer and Energy Officer will continue and complete ISO 50001 training in 2020 and will endeavour to achieve certification to ISO 50001 by Q4 2020.
- Launched Home Energy Saving Kits for borrowing through the Kilkenny Library Service Network. The kits contain practical tools to help households save on their energy bills.
- 2 successful applications to the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) for grant funding through the Better Energy Communities programme.
- Energy efficient LED streetlights were installed across the county with support from SEAI and TII. Almost 60% of the council's streetlighting stock is now converted to LED.
- Kilkenny County Council and 3cea hosted delegations from Poland, Belgium, University of Eindhoven to learn about energy efficient and smart LED street lighting projects installed across the county.

PARKS & AMENITY

Parks & Recreation

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

Playgrounds

Development of playgrounds county-wide takes place in conjunction with local communities. A smaller number of playgrounds were provided as part of housing developments by the developer and when completed to a satisfactory standard were taken in charge by the County Council and managed thereafter by the Parks Department. 27 playgrounds in total are now open for play at the following locations across the County. All playgrounds are inspected weekly by Parks Staff and any repairs or cleaning necessary are undertaken immediately in the interest of maintaining the playgrounds in good order for safe play.



Thomastown and Clogh Playgrounds



Coon Playground

Callan – Thomastown Municipal District	Piltown Municipal District	Castlecomer Municipal District	Kilkenny Municipal District
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ballyhale ○ Bennettsbridge ○ Fair Green, Callan ○ Goresbridge ○ Graiguenamanagh ○ Kells ○ Stoneyford ○ Thomastown ○ Woodstock Gardens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ferrybank, Blackthorn Hills ○ Fiddown, Kylemore Walk ○ Mooncoin ○ Mullinavat ○ Windgap ○ Kilmacow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ballyragget ○ Castlecomer Demesne ○ Clogh ○ Coon ○ Paulstown ○ Urlingford 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Assumption Place, O’Loughlin Rd ○ Fr. McGrath Centre, The Butts ○ Newpark ○ Garringreen, Johnswell Road ○ Talbots Court Estate ○ Rose Hill, Kells Road

River Nore Linear Park: The route covers approximately 7km of river bank and provides an attractive walkway and cycleway for outdoor exercise. The riverside paths are exceptionally well used. The development of the Ossory pedestrian bridge under the existing Ring Road bridge allows for a loop of the city south of John's bridge. The linear park will be further developed with links in the near future to the river banks at the former brewery site. The long-term plan is to create a loop back to the city north of Green's bridge by means of a second foot bridge at Talbot's Inch, returning to the city on the eastern bank. This last phase would create a continuous 10km loop walk of the city, all off road.

The Parks Department manages the large grassland meadows in both Bishopsmeadows and Dukesmeadows which make up the linear park with sustainable mowing practices. The meadows are a significant wildlife habitat and home to a variety of important grass and wildflower species. Meadowgrass cutting is carried out once a year only after flowering in support of pollinators.



Tree Planting

The Parks section carried out a programme of tree planting in the city and county commencing in December 2019 to commemorate a number of special anniversaries. The planting programme is part of our commitment to increase tree planting county wide to achieve the objectives in the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy. The trees will all be native and/or pollinator friendly and will be semi mature at planting.

The anniversaries to be marked are as follows:

- 120 years of Local Government with sites at Ballyragget, Castlecomer, Piltown, Callan and Kilkenny City
- 40 years of the Rotary Club. Forty trees planted in Loughboy Neighbourhood Park
- 30 years of the Kilkenny Civic Trust. 30 Trees planted in Loughboy Neighbourhood Park
- 20 years of Woodstock Gardens Restoration Project. 20 specimen trees will be planted in the arboretum to replace storm losses from previous stormy years
- 25 Years of the Kilkenny Cat Laughs. 25 trees planted in Lintown Hall to recreate the avenue of Lime trees which were previously vandalised.



Tree Planting with children from the Gael Scoil

Woodstock Gardens and Arboretum

The Parks Department look after the day to day operations and planning of future restoration projects for Woodstock Gardens in Inistioge which has become a major attraction in the South East

attracting in the region of 35,000 – 40,000 visitors per year. These formal gardens and parkland areas are maintained to a high standard by a dedicated crew of staff. It is a popular destination for visitors from home and abroad and particularly for those with special interest in our very significant tree collection which recently was very highly commended by visiting judges from the Entente Florale. A number of events including a very popular Fairy Tale Festival, Light Up Gold, orienteering, fun runs and forest schools were held for the enjoyment of our visitors in 2019. These were very well attended and many were free of charge where possible. Woodstock is becoming increasingly popular for civil ceremonies in recent years and has hosted a number of weddings for couples on their big day with further weddings booked in for 2020.



All funding was successfully drawn down on the Woodstock Loop Walks under the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme. The footpaths which span 4.7 km are very popular with walkers including those accessing Woodstock gardens from the village of Inistioge and those travelling the section which covers the way marked trail of South Leinster Way. An application for funding has been made to the Department of Rural and Community Development to continue these type of trail works into a second phase further along the South Leinster Way which would see the development of the walks as far as the waterfall at the Red House. Funding of €17,634 has been awarded under the same ORIS grant scheme to prepare a communications and marketing strategy for Woodstock gardens in 2020. This will promote the gardens as a tourist destination of significance in the south east.

A collage of images from Woodstock Gardens



Ferrybank Neighbourhood Park

Construction of the scheme commenced on September 30th 2019. Works are progressing well and are on programme to finish by the planned completion date of March 2020. The main contractor appointed for the scheme is Tom Beckett Landscaping Limited, with Kompan Limited appointed for the supply and installation of the Park playground.



Construction of the climbing and terraced area in the new park Ferrybank

South Kilkenny Greenway

After an extensive round of consultation with local people along the route of the proposed Waterford to New Ross Greenway, the project was subsequently granted planning permission. The proposed Greenway follows the line of the old railway line from Waterford to New Ross where it will link in with the New Ross Red Bridge Trail. On the Waterford side it will link in due course to the Waterford Greenway upon development of the North Quays project. Wexford County Council are the lead authority for this regional project which involves linking up Counties Wexford, Waterford and Kilkenny.

Works have commenced on the initial stages of the South East Greenway which runs from Ferrybank in Waterford to New Ross, terminating at Mount Elliot just after the tunnel is exited. The route covers a distance of 24km in total. To enable the detail designs to be completed for the project the track has been cleared of scrub vegetation allowing access for the first time in years. Site surveys are now being carried out along with bore hole investigations at sites where underpasses may be required for certain farming operations. In tandem with this process, a team from Wexford and Kilkenny County Council are meeting with landowners along the entire route to discuss accommodation works.

Contract documents will shortly be ready to send to the Department of Tourism Transport and Sport for approval following which the procurement process can commence.

Amenity Grants

163 groups received grant assistance in 2019 amounting to a total of €127k. The range of works funded includes landscaping, grass and meadow maintenance and development of open spaces, the provision of street and outdoor furniture and small-scale improvement works. These works will help to continue to contribute to the overall amenity of County Kilkenny, and help enhance the County's reputation as a quality place to live.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) application was successful in late 2018 with an allocation of c€6m in funding announced for a number of public realm and supporting projects in Kilkenny City.
- Funding of c€1.8m was secured under the Enterprise Ireland Regional Enterprise Development Fund (REDF) towards the development of the Centre for Design - C4D. The other partners in this project include Institute of Technology Carlow, the Design & Crafts Council of Ireland and the Kilkenny Industrial Development Company (KIDCo).
- EU Commissioner Phil Hogan launched the Precision Centre of Excellence (PACE) in Kilkenny in May. PACE is a new digital innovation hub in Kilkenny that will deliver advanced ICT software to the Irish agriculture and food sector. The centre is being developed by Waterford Institute of Technology with support and assistance from Kilkenny County Council. Currently operating out of Burrells Hall, St. Kieran's College PACE will relocate to the Abbey Quarter.
- Jobs announced in 2019 for County Kilkenny:
 - 80 new jobs by Glanbia in a new €140m manufacturing facility in Belview
 - 200 jobs by Immedis, an Irish company that develops payroll and tax services and software for multinational companies, part of the Taxback Group
 - 200 additional positions announced by Cartoon Saloon & Lighthouse Studios
 - 52 jobs by Security Risk Advisors (SRA), a Pennsylvania based cyber security consulting company. This project is supported by IDA Ireland
 - 50 jobs by AB Agri - a leading international agricultural business operating across the agri-food industry. This company is also supported by IDA Ireland
 - 50 jobs by Entegro, a Kilkenny based company that designs and deploys fibre and hybrid networks.
- Over 70 stakeholders attended a series of Breakfast Briefings to provide information on the range of enterprise and economic developments underway in Kilkenny.
- LEO in collaboration with the Kilkenny Chamber of Commerce and Kilkenny retailers managed a very successful *#shopkilkenny* Christmas campaign in November and December in order to encourage Kilkenny shoppers to support and shop in local businesses.
- Kilkenny was crowned overall winner at the Bank of Ireland National Enterprise Town in November.
- Almost 1,000 prospective employees, home in Kilkenny for Christmas and those living locally turned up to check out the jobs on offer at the *#careerskilkenny* event in the Medieval Mile Museum in December. The 22 local companies exhibiting at the event had almost 650 jobs on offer.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2019

Oifig Fiontair Áitiúil
Local Enterprise Office



1,257
EMPLOYED IN
210 LEO SUPPORTED
COMPANIES IN KILKENNY



€644,960
IN DIRECT FINANCIAL
ASSISTANCE APPROVED
TO 21 BUSINESS PROJECTS



€377,273
AWARDED TO 15 EXISTING
BUSINESSES WITH A
FORECASTED JOB CREATION
OF 49 EMPLOYEES



€239,164
AWARDED TO START-UP
BUSINESSES WITH A
FORECASTED JOB CREATION
OF 52 EMPLOYEES



€28,523
AWARDED IN FEASIBILITY
STUDY GRANTS TO 4
BUSINESSES



AVERAGE COST PER JOB
€6,103



472
CLIENTS ATTENDED
CORE TRAINING
PROGRAMMES



810
STUDENTS FROM 11
SCHOOLS PARTICIPATED IN
THE STUDENTS ENTERPRISE
PROGRAMME



375
CLIENTS RECEIVED
ONE-TO-ONE MENTORING



344
BUSINESS ADVISOR
SESSIONS WERE HELD
WITH LEO STAFF



HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2019

Oifig Fiontair Áitiúil
Local Enterprise Office



314

PARTICIPANTS ATTENDED 5 SEMINARS, INCLUDING NATIONAL WOMEN'S ENTERPRISE DAY



30

APPLICATIONS RECEIVED FOR IRELAND'S BEST YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR WITH LOANITT LTD REPRESENTING KILKENNY AT THE NATIONAL FINAL



26

TRADING ONLINE VOUCHERS AWARDED TOTTALLING €57,370



17

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR MICRO EXPORTER GRANTS AWARDED TOTTALLING €25,604



28

BUSINESS PARTICIPATED ON THE BREXIT GROWTH MENTOR PROGRAMME



10

BUSINESSTO BUSINESS PARTICIPATED ON THE MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME



151

PARTICIPATED ON 9 START YOUR OWN BUSINESS COURSES



9

BUSINESSES ASSISTED TO MAKE APPLICATIONS UNDER THE SMART OPTIONS LOAN SCHEME & MICROFINANCE IRELAND FUND



5

BUSINESSES PARTICIPATED ON LEAN FOR MICRO TO ASSIST THEM TO LOOK AT THEIR COMPETITIVENESS & INNOVATION



BEST EXPORTER WINNER

MECHANICAL MODULAR SOLUTIONS WIN 'EXPORTER OF THE YEAR' AT THE NATIONAL ENTERPRISE AWARDS

Grow

Start

Pre-Start

TOURISM INCLUDING FESTIVAL SUPPORT

- Travel Channel USA filmed in Kilkenny to feature as a “legendary location” on their US show.
- Kilkenny features in the January issue of RSVP.
- Organised stakeholder familiarisation trips in Q1 2019 for hotel staff and activity providers.
- Facilitated a visit by the Mid and East Antrim Food Network in January.
- Hosted students and lecturers from Athlone Institute of Technology in March.
- Launched a brand-new Kilkenny Web-site www.visitkilkenny.ie in February.
- Fáilte Ireland CEO, Paul Kelly met with Tourism business’s in Kilkenny in February to discuss opportunities to grow tourism across the county.
- Destination Kilkenny Partnership met throughout 2019 to progress the four pillars of activity agreed.
- A visitor experience development plan for Butler Gallery at Evan’s Home was developed in co-operation with Fáilte Ireland.
- Festival Support Grants totalling to €76,000 were awarded to 15 festivals.
- An event to acknowledge the work of Festival and Event organisers was held in April hosted by Cathaoirleach Eamonn Aylward.



- Kilkenny Castle was named among the World’s Top 10 Most Beautiful Castles by Architectural Digest.
- The National Greenway Project Assessment Board visited the Kilkenny Greenway in April for a presentation which included the tourism potential for the entire South East region.
- Exhibited at the National Ploughing Championships in Fenagh, Co. Carlow.
- New promotional material featuring the entire county was designed and produced for distribution at Trade shows and events.
- A “Local Experts Workshop” facilitated by Fáilte Ireland was held in Newpark Hotel, Kilkenny in October.

- Supported and facilitated the launch of the “National Insights Report on the Tourism and Hospitality Sector” in the Parade Tower in September.
- Kilkenny’s festive traditions were celebrated in a new cook book launched by Kilkenny Tourism in December.



- Kilkenny Tourism was represented at the “International TTG Travel Experience” in Rimini, Italy to promote Kilkenny as an international destination for visitors.



- Continued work on regional tourism collaboration with our neighbours in the South East.
- Measure 1 awards for the ORIS scheme 2019 were announced in December and Kilkenny County Council secured €82,400 for 5 projects countywide.

**DIRECTORATE OF FINANCE,
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY,
FACILITIES MANAGEMENT**

Head of Finance: Mr. Martin Prendiville

FINANCE

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

Income and Expenditure Account Statement

The Income and Expenditure Account summarises the expenditure on the day to day services provided by the Council and provides details of how this expenditure is funded. There was a surplus in the year of €14,047 which resulted in a cumulative surplus at 31st December 2019 of €31,852. Strict budgetary controls were maintained on a total expenditure of €88.4 million (*revenue expenditure €83.5m plus transfers to reserves €4.9m*).

Capital Project Funding Arrangements

The total cost of capital projects delivered under the Capital Programme in 2019 was €63.7m. Housing and Roads Projects accounted for 82% of the expenditure. The outstanding commitments on completed capital projects amounted to €10.3m at 31st December, 2019. The annual budget provides for repayment of this commitment over a period of 8 years.

The Council adopted a Capital budget for the three-year period 2018 to 2020 in May 2018. This budget sets out the estimated cost of the capital projects under consideration and the related funding sources. An updated capital programme will be presented to Council in 2020.

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

Balance Sheet at 31st December 2019

The Council has maintained a relatively strong balance sheet at 31st December 2019. There was no additional non-mortgage loan finance required.

The total bank loans (excluding housing related loans) outstanding at 31st December 2019 were €11.7m.

The bank overdraft facility was utilised for 96 days during the year and the maximum overdrawn balance was €5.7m. The closing cash balance on hand at the end of December 2019 was €10.8m.

Debt Collection

Further progress was made on reducing income arrears in 2019. The historic collection rates in the main income categories are set out hereunder.

	Percentage Collection	Percentage Collection	Percentage Collection	Percentage Collection	Percentage Collection	Percentage Collection
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Commercial Rates	89	92	94	95	93	94
Rents & Annuities	92	92	93	92	93	95
Housing Loans	77	82	80	85	88	90

These collection rates on the main income streams are among the highest of all Local Authorities. Total arrears have been reduced by almost €2.1m (50%) since the end of 2013.

FINANCIAL TABLE

Expenditure By Division	Note	Gross Expenditure 2019 €	Income 2019 €	Net Expenditure 2019 €	Net Expenditure 2018 €
Housing and Building		19,676,746	21,401,660	(1,724,914)	(1,478,470)
Roads, Transportation & Safety		24,799,149	18,834,048	5,965,101	6,279,071
Water Services		6,973,828	6,854,744	119,083	(43,284)
Development Management		8,639,568	3,356,368	5,283,200	5,314,643
Environmental Services		11,521,399	3,166,445	8,354,953	8,373,830
Recreation & Amenity		6,159,105	335,490	5,823,615	5,881,772
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare		610,458	496,722	113,736	186,873
Miscellaneous Services		5,153,212	3,068,450	2,084,762	1,864,918
Total Expenditure/Income	15	<u>83,533,464</u>	<u>57,513,926</u>		
Net Cost of Division to be funded from Rates and Local Property Tax				26,019,538	26,379,352
Rates				19,655,130	19,774,173
Local Property Tax				10,673,913	10,673,913
Surplus/(Deficit) for Year before Transfer				<u>4,309,505</u>	<u>4,068,734</u>
Transfers from/(to) Reserves	14			(4,295,458)	(4,061,591)
Overall Surplus/(Deficit) for Year	16			<u>14,047</u>	<u>7,143</u>
General Reserve at 1st January				17,805	10,661
General Reserve at 31st December				<u>31,852</u>	<u>17,805</u>

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Key achievements for 2019:

- Expanded the use of mobile devices.
- Development of online environment Farm Survey form.
- Completed the rollout of new telephone system across the Council.
- Development of Household waste survey online form.
- Development of online Health and Safety incident reporting form.
- Completed the redevelopment of Kilkenny Library Website.
- Ongoing updates to servers and PCs to maintain security of the network.
- Migrations of users and applications to new domain.
- Ongoing rollout of new PCs and laptops.
- Ongoing additions, updates and security enhancements to the various local authority web sites.
- Rollout of Latest Microsoft Office Software to all staff PCs.
- Rollout of laptops to Elected Members.
- Completed development of Kilkenny Digital Archive.
- Development of in-house bulk email sending platform.
- Cumulative Historical Data loaded to the Central Credit Register.
- Installation of new internal GIS system and portal.
- Rollout of public GIS mapping portal on web site.
- Launched new Search Planning Applications viewer.
- Rollout of survey technology to Housing staff.
- Installation of Asset Register Management System.

PROCUREMENT

Key Achievements in 2019:

- Abbey Quarter - Procurement of Contractors for Mayfair and Brewhouse projects.
- Corporate/Infrastructure – Completion of appointment of Works Contractors for the Western Environs Scheme (LIHAF).
- Corporate/Legal Services – Implementation of Drawdown of Services under the new OGP Legal Services Framework.
- Housing Capital - Procurement of Building Contractors for Social Housing Schemes.
- Housing Maintenance - Drawdown of Services under the new LGOPC Electrical and Plumbing Frameworks.
- Energy Projects - Assistance to the Council’s Energy Team and CKEA in procuring energy efficient improvements in the Council offices, libraries and depots.
- Roads - Procurement of Works Contractors as required. Appointment of contractors for roads projects drawing on national and regional frameworks.
- Roads Maintenance - Drawdown of Services under the LGOPC Plant Hire DPS and procurement of road materials and suitable road marking equipment.
- Planning - Procurement of service contracts to enable the roll out of various local and countywide strategies.
- Environment - Procurement of contractors for Gowran and Ballyragget historic landfill remediation projects.
- Flood Relief Schemes - Roll out of flood relief schemes.
- Library - Capital Projects at Mayfair and Thomastown Community Hall.
- One Kilkenny - Various regeneration projects around the County.
- Electronic Procurement – implementation of arrangement for submission of tenders electronically for above EU Threshold tenders.