

# Kilkenny Rural Regeneration/ Town & Village Projects County-wide



Tionscadal Éireann  
Project Ireland  
**2040**

Town and Village  
Renewal Scheme



Kilkenny County Council  
Comhairle Chontae Chill Chainnigh

# EXAMPLES OF PROJECTS FUNDED IN COUNTY KILKENNY



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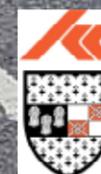
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The Town and Village Renewal Scheme was first introduced in 2016. It is managed on behalf of the Department by Kilkenny County Council for Kilkenny and the programme is funded under Project Ireland 2040. The Scheme is targeted at towns and villages with a population of 10,000 or less and all projects funded under the Scheme must be completed within a 12 to 18 month period. Since the launch of the Town and Village Renewal Scheme in 2016, over €93 million of funding has been approved for more than 1,340 projects across Ireland. The Town and Village Scheme is one of a series of national and local support measures designed to rejuvenate small rural towns and villages throughout Ireland.



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# KILKENNY TOWN & VILLAGE RENEWAL SCHEME

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**Department of Rural & Community Development's Rural Development Investment Programme**

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In 2020, the Rural Development Investment Programme, including the Town and Village Renewal Scheme, was tailored to address the emerging challenges associated with COVID-19.

For the Town & Village Renewal Scheme this meant a focus under the standard Town and Village Renewal Scheme on interventions that could respond to the new challenges associated with COVID-19 and support the economic and social recovery of our rural towns and villages;

In addition to the Standard Town and Village Scheme, a new Accelerated Measure strand was introduced for 2020 that focused on immediate interventions that could be delivered in the short-term to assist towns and villages to adapt to COVID-19.

*Building Sustainable Communities*

# WHAT TYPES OF PROJECTS HAVE BEEN FUNDED ?



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The type of projects which are being supported under the 2020 Town and Village Renewal Scheme include: Projects that can respond to COVID-19 challenges and aid the economic and social recovery over the medium term. The development of initiatives to encourage town centre living. Initiatives which attract increased footfall to the town/village, including those associated with tourism activities. Repurposing of existing buildings in town or village centres to facilitate remote working and/or other community use. Grant Levels

In recognition of the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic the maximum grant level was increased to 90% of the total cost of a project under the 2020 Scheme. The remaining 10% was provided either through community contribution and/or the local authority. Under the standard Town and Village Scheme the minimum level of grant funding available was €20,000 and the maximum available was €100,000. A higher maximum of €200,000 was available for a small number of projects which demonstrated exceptional benefit to a town.

The Rural Regeneration and Development Fund is a commitment of €1 billion by government to be invested in rural Ireland over the period 2019 to 2027. The purpose of the fund is to support job creation in rural areas, address de-population of rural communities and support improvements in our towns and villages with a population of less than 10,000, and outlying areas. Rural towns with a population of over 10,000 people are eligible to apply for funding under the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund.

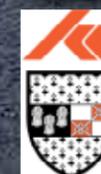
A maximum of 80% funding will be considered where community contributions form a significant element of the match-funding. To date nationally, this Fund has now provided €166 million for 139 projects across Ireland, worth a total of €237 million.

The Fund is part of the Rural Development Investment programme which will assist and support economic recovery in rural areas. It includes a number of integrated funding interventions:

- **Rural Regeneration and Development Fund**
- **Town and Village Renewal Scheme**
- **CLÁR**
- **Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme**
- **Local Improvement Scheme**
- **LEADER**
- **Walks Scheme**
- **The Department's total funding allocation for 2020 for the Rural Development Investment Programme is €149.7 million.**

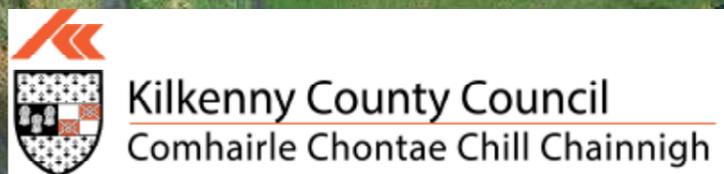


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# Motte Field Callan



The completed Motte Field under the Rural Regeneration fund is a significant accessible amenity project in Callan that incorporates a walkway/park amenity that connects the town centre to new residential areas. The project creates a public access off-road and high quality (National Trails Office Grade I) footpath through an area of a Norman Motte and Bailey. This public amenity has been a huge success and

now attracts many local people who want to go for fitness walks away from car traffic and on a good surface. It is also be attractive to visitors who want to experience something of the unique historic and natural environment of Callan. This project is also wheelchair-accessible and is in keeping with Amendment No. 2 to the Callan Local Area Plan (2016).





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# Fair Green Callan



The Fair Green project is located in Callan town and is now fully completed. This project received €291,750 under the 2018 Rural Regeneration fund.

As an open space area the Fair Green regeneration project now provides much needed amenities to this part of the town.

# BALLYHALE TO KNOCKTOPHER FOOTPATH

**Before**

Town and Village  
Renewal Scheme

**After**

Prior to the development of this footpath that now connects both communities, both villages were decimated by the economic downturn, losing numerous shops, businesses including post offices in both locations. The overall levels of commercial vibrancy of the Ballyhale-Knocktopher settlements suffered badly, particularly in Ballyhale. In 2018 the overall commercial vacancy rate was at 24%. The objective of the Town & Village application was to link both villages physically, economically, socially and from a business perspective. This incorporated linking the villages with a walkway 500m in length from Glanbia, outside Knocktopher to meet up with existing public footpaths on the outskirts of Ballyhale. The proposal also incorporated the provision of public lighting and drainage.

*“Since these works were completed, the footpath from Ballyhale to Knocktopher has been an overwhelming success and has revitalised the two neighbouring villages”.*  
David Murphy



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# BALLYHALE SHELTER



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**Before**



**After**

Funding was secured for the provision of an outdoor community meeting area outside the community Cafe in Ballyhale. This was a community led initiative which includes the provision of cycle parking and a covered seating area with tables where people can meet outdoors in the village. Existing widened footpaths will facilitate the seating area and cycle parking. The public footpaths will be adapted locally to improve accessibility to the seating areas by dropping kerbs and providing continuity to existing facilities for pedestrians, wheelchair users and older people.

# NEW LIBRARY THOMASTOWN

An allocation of over €2.56 million has been confirmed to Kilkenny County Council for the development of a modern library and community facilities in Thomastown.

The funding is part of a €75million announcement for 24 landmark regeneration projects in rural communities across the country. This development will further compliment the works being carried out to the public realm in Thomastown on Logan Street and Low Street, the upgrade of The Quay Carpark and the enhancemt of the new recreational amenity that will be located behind the new library. In addition, the Council are about to appoint Contractors to commence works on the Session House development to transform it into the new home for the School of Jewellery in partnership with the Design and Crafts Council of Ireland.

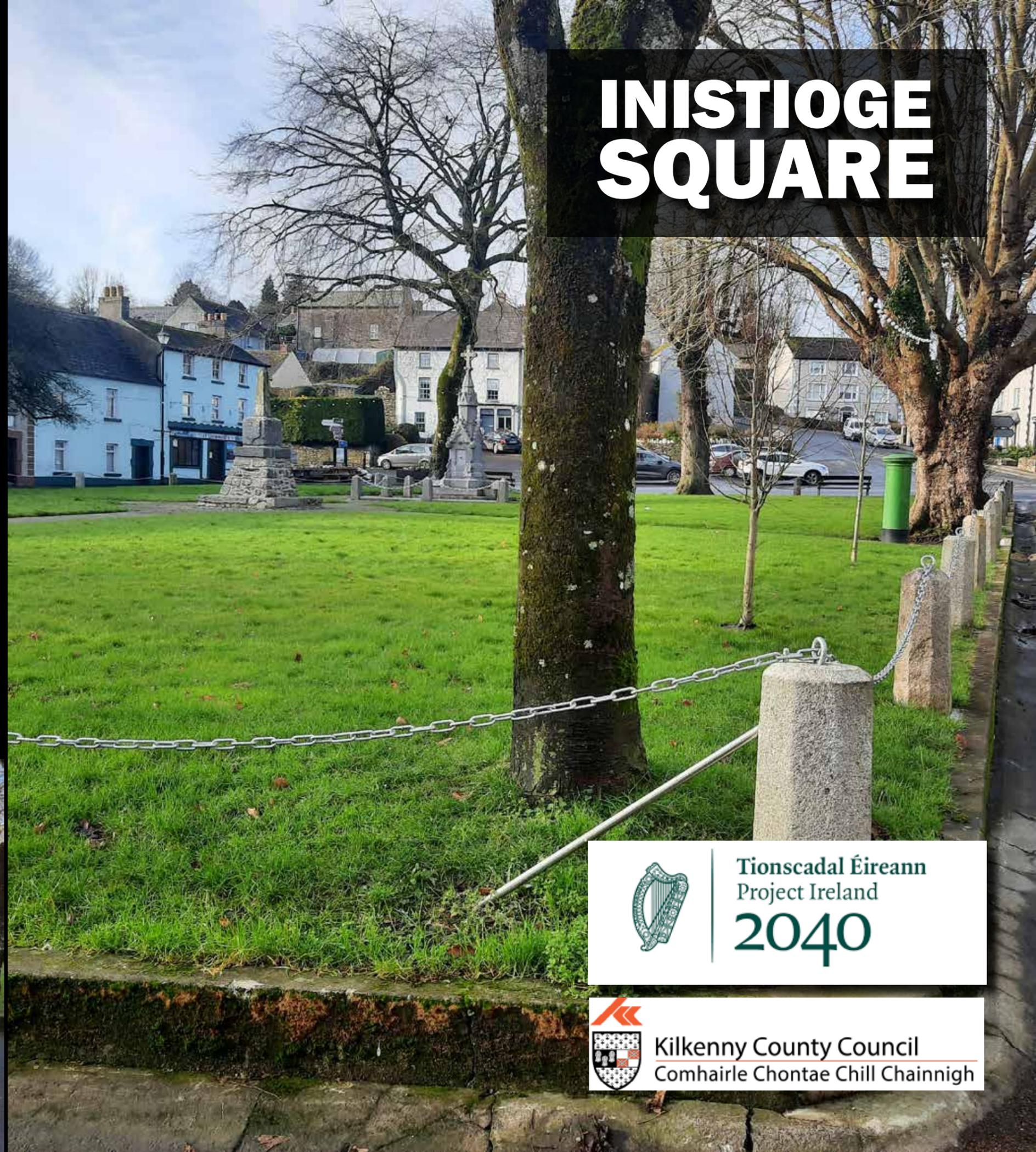
The combination of this projects will result in significant investment in Thomastown.



Funding has also been secured to develop a number of projects in Inistioge. These include the building of additional external age friendly/alternative seating and tables in the Main Square Inistioge, along with an awning / canopy in the Millennium garden Inistioge which overlooks the square to provide a base and cover for socialising and entertainment.

The awning is a temporary structure that can be erected in the summer months, using a footings system to secure the structure when in place. It is proposed that the awning / canopy will be used as a covered seating area, within the centre of the village. The area can also be used for public entertainment for music and events as a means of attracting visitors back into Inistioge and support to local businesses. Works have also been completed on the refurbishment of the square.

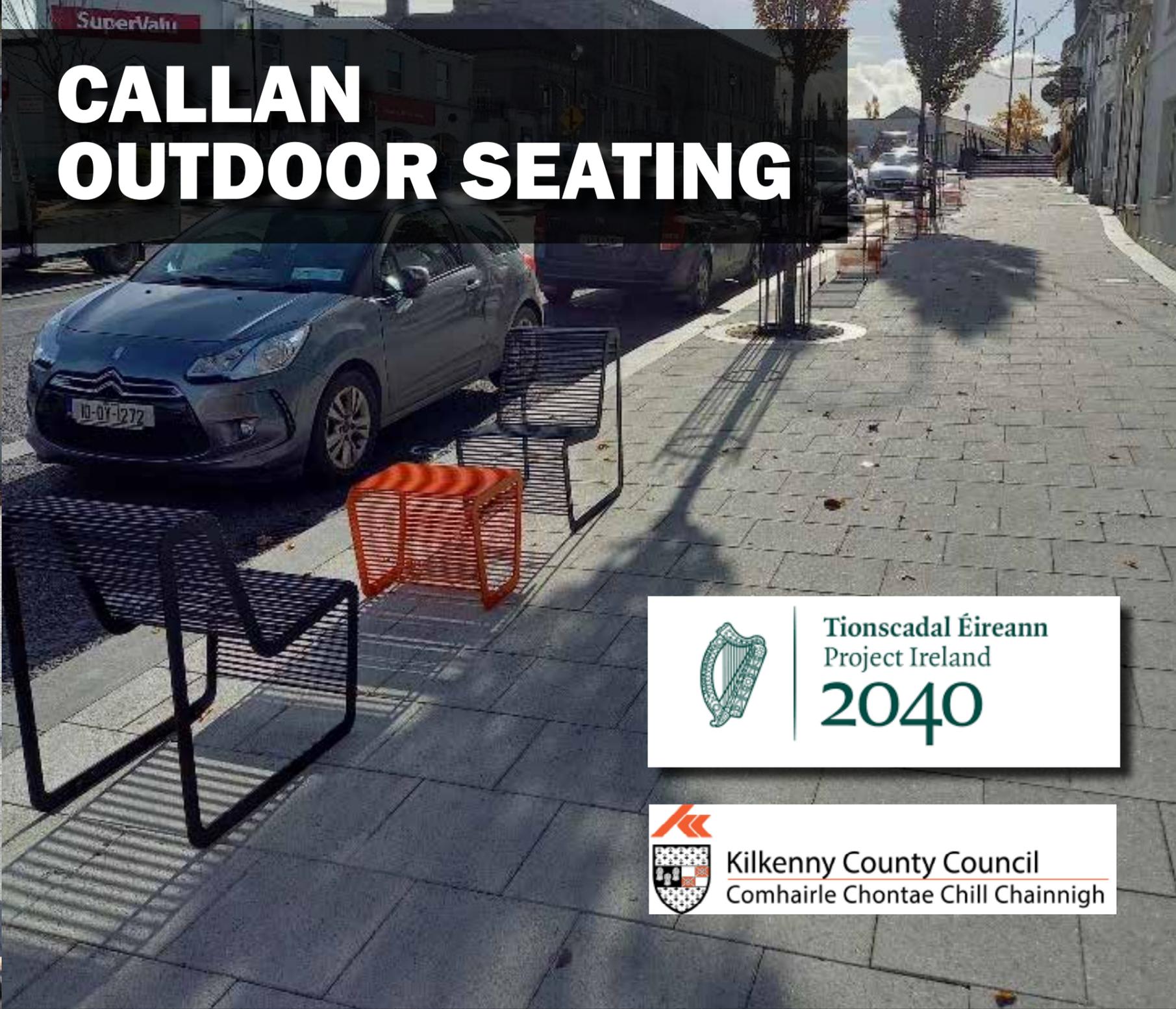
# INISTIOGE SQUARE



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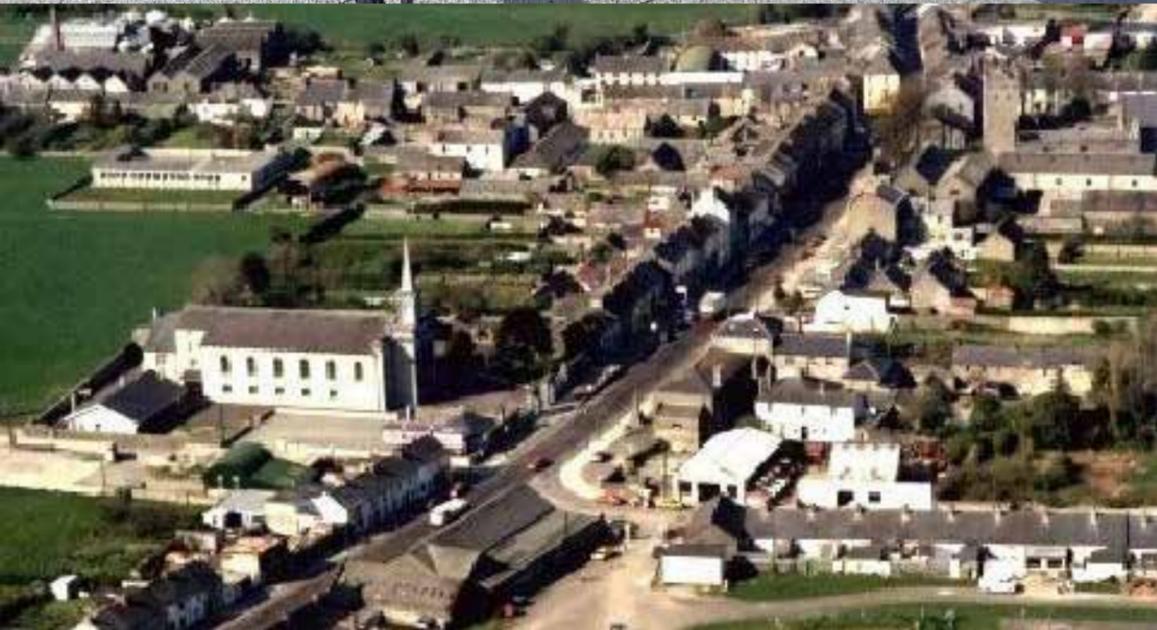
# CALLAN OUTDOOR SEATING



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Funding was been secured for the provision of new seating on the main street in Callan. Creating seating areas on the Main street in Callan now allow customers of various commercial premises to sit down at central locations in the town. These works will facilitate the return of business in Callan under Covid-19 through addressing social distancing and putting measures in place that will assist with social distancing in the town.

# THOMASTOWN RECREATIONAL PARK/AMENITY



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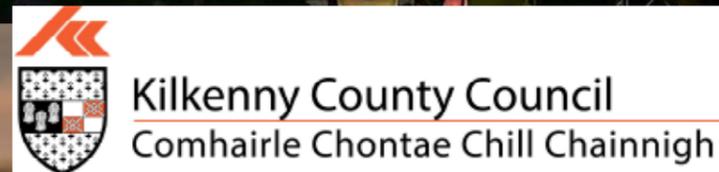
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Over €100,000 has been secured to enhance the existing designated amenity area behind the community center and the recently funded new library on Marshes St just approx. 80 meters from Market Street in the Town Center. The overall objective of the project is to resurface the existing basketball and tennis courts, enhance the green areas

by adding seating. Other works include enhancing the lighting over the courts and to build an outdoor accessible shelter and outdoor barbecue amenity that will cater for children, teenager's, adults and the elderly. This project is located beside the existing children's playground and will become a focal point for community based activities.

# CO KILKENNY OUTDOOR CINEMA



Funding has been secured for a mobile cinema/festival kit that will incorporate a 12m inflatable cinema screen with sound equipment/mixer and a Marquee. Kilkenny is renowned nationally and internationally for the number and diversity of its festivals which range from Comedy, Music, Arts, Animation, Books, Economics, Food and Film. These and other smaller scale community festivals and events are spread throughout the year giving the county a reputation as a year round festival destination.

In the era of COVID-19 and with public health restrictions on indoor gatherings likely to continue for some time, the impact on the sustainability of Kilkenny's community festivals and their capacity to contribute to the recovery of the towns and villages of the county will be severely curtailed. There is a major opportunity to support these communities with the provision of infrastructure and equipment to help them pivot from the presentation of indoor events to the safe provision of outdoor events.

# OUTDOOR FESTIVAL TENT



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As part of the Town & Village Renewal festival kit funding, we have purchased a Stretch Festival Tent that will help to successfully run outdoor events in a safe environment. The value of these festivals to the towns and villages of Kilkenny is enormous as they attract visitors from Ireland and overseas who stay in B&Bs and guesthouses throughout the county and spend in the local economy. Many festivals which have their base in Kilkenny City, host parts of their programmes in the towns and villages of the county. Other festivals are firmly rooted in towns like Graiguenamanagh (which boasts the excellent Town of Books festival), Castlecomer (which hosts the world-renowned Wellie Race), Callan (which hosted a major outdoor theatre spectacle as part of Kilkenny Arts Festival and events for Kilkenny Animated), and Thomastown (which has hosted events as part of the Cat Laughs Comedy Festival).

The value of these festivals and events is also of course in the social cohesion that cultural and artistic activity bring to these communities. Many festivals are run with big volunteer contributions from the towns and villages of the county and the community benefits from the collective effort of the people working together. The mental health benefits of these festivals and events in the towns and villages of the county is hugely significant. This festival kit will also offer a service to local community groups who want to arrange a gathering for both young and old in their communities and all within a safe environment. As part of the festival kit funding has also been secured.

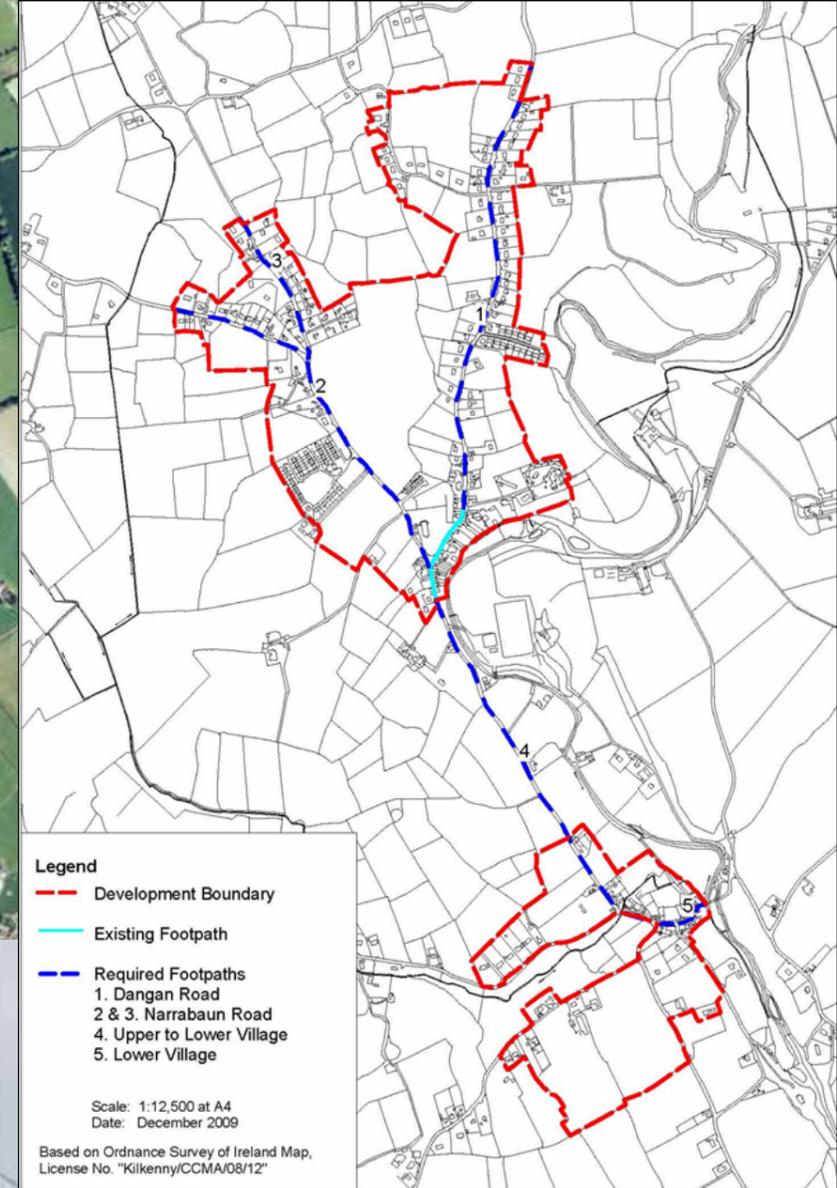
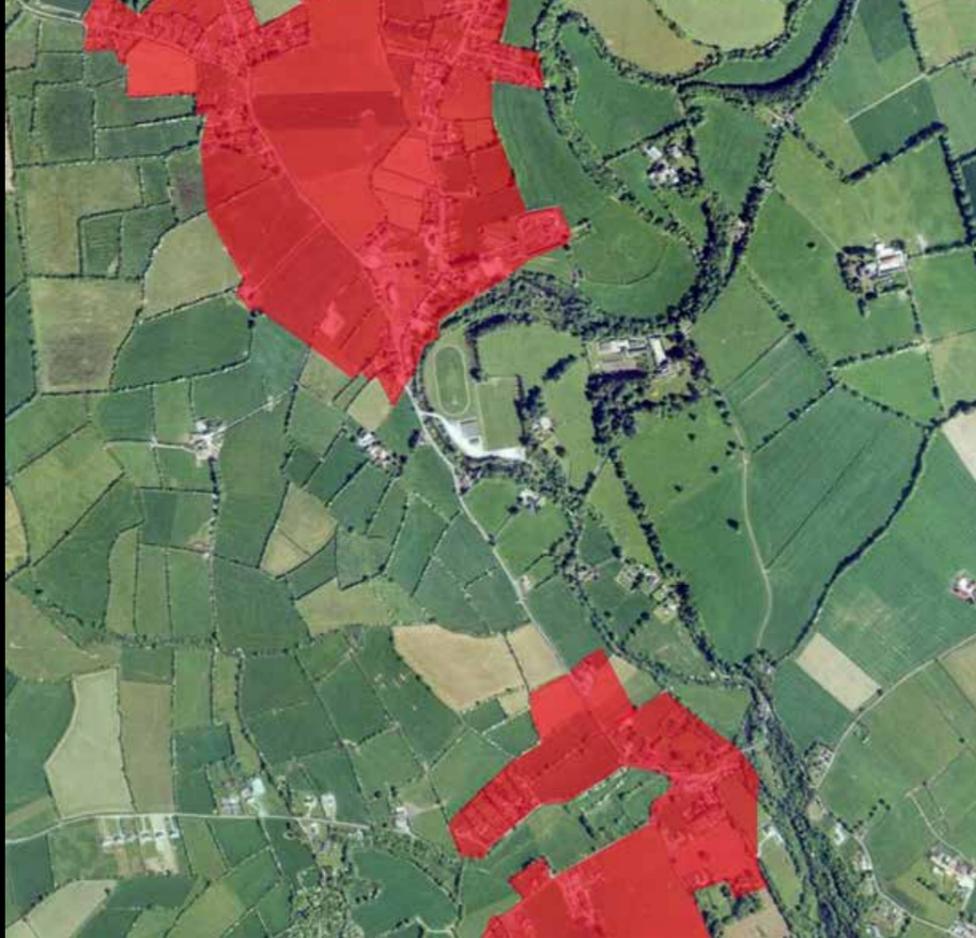
Funding was also received to upgrade the square area in Castlecomer to make it more Covid friendly with an upgrade of the square surface and the installation of Covid-19 signage and general measures. These measures include new signage, markings and the erection of bollards. These works have created a safer environment in the center of the town.

# CASTLECOMER SQUARE



# KILMACOW

Kilmacow was awarded €77,760 under the 2017 Town & Village Renewal Scheme for the construction of walkways on left and right hand side of Chapel Hill. These works are now complete. Funding was also secured for drainage, public lights and pavement improvements. This project was identified by the local community as a priority project within the Local Area Plan preparation process. Many representations were made to address connectivity issues and the safe accessibility to schools, community and sporting facilities, services and shops. The provision of this new infrastructure has encouraged a greater and more intensive use of local community and commercial facilities. An additional 100,000 was secured in 2020 for phase two of the public realm improvements.



# KILMACOW

Kilmacow was awarded €22,500 Outdoor Seating, Cycle Stop, and Signage.

Funding has been approved for the the provision of an outdoor community meeting area. This is a community led initiative which includes the provision of cycle parking, a seating area with tables where people can meet outdoors. The existing footpath will be extended and widened to facilitate the seating area and cycle parking.

Screen planters will provide screening along the kerbline to protect the area from traffic. A temporary canopy is proposed to cover the seating area to protect from inclement weather. The public footpath to be delivered under this proposal will facilitate safe access to the seating area and provide continuity to existing facilities for pedestrians, wheelchair users and older people. The works will enhance the appearance of the village centre, provide a focal point for the community to meet outdoors in a safe location and will improve accessibility to the village. It is also proposed to provide a signed cycle route linking Kilmacow with Mooncoin, approximately 9km using low traffic local secondary routes L7431, LS7428 and LS7419. This will improve the safety and enjoyment of cyclists travelling between the two villages, encourage active travel and recreation and increase footfall in the two villages.





# Mooncoin

€22,500 has been approved for outdoor seating, tables and a temporary canopy to provide a covered outdoor meeting area in Mooncoin village centre. Other works will include the enhancement of the village car park, landscaping, and plant screening. The provision of a seated meeting area in Mooncoin village car park is a community led initiative which includes the provision of a seating area with tables where people can meet outdoors, the provision of cycle parking, landscaped flower beds and reallocating space for provision of a school bus set down area near the school entrance.



€80,000 was funded towards the upgrade of the Gairdín and Gortha Community Centre in Newmarket turning it into a warm, energy efficient facility which will support local economic development, provide training opportunities, address training needs and enhance the physical attractiveness of the village and lead to improvements in social and economic circumstances of the local residents. This project will also improve the quality of life for the local community which has been proven to lead to further economic development in a locality.

# Newmarket



# Camping Bays



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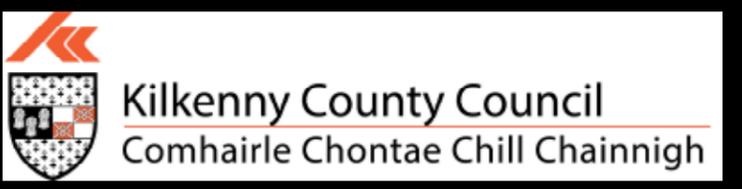
Funding was awarded under the 2020 Town & Village Renewal Scheme for the development of 12 motor-home bays to be located as a pilot in Thomastown, Castlecomer and Callan. Kilkenny County Council recognises that the provision of a select number of Motorhome Parking Bays in our Rural Towns are an important element in the provision of non-competing facilities for the expanding number of tourists traveling domestically during the Covid-19 pandemic.

A key objective for Kilkenny County Council is to assist our rural communities to fully reopen its economy and society in general. The motor-home parking bays will play a key role in helping to bring an additional tourist footfall into these communities during these difficult times.



# Kings River Callan & Footbridge

In 2017 Kilkenny County Council welcomed the announcement of funding of €72,000 under the Town & Village Renewal Scheme to undertake in-river and riverbank improvements to the Kings River in Callan.





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€120,000 was secured under the Rural Regeneration Scheme for the Quayside car park in Thomastown. The large car park also has new lighting and bus parking for tourists. Other works completed includes drainage, the upgrade of existing footpath and resurfacing of car park and markings.

This amenity now provides much needed accessible parking close to the town centre which now support residents, businesses and visitors.

# THOMASTOWN CARPARK



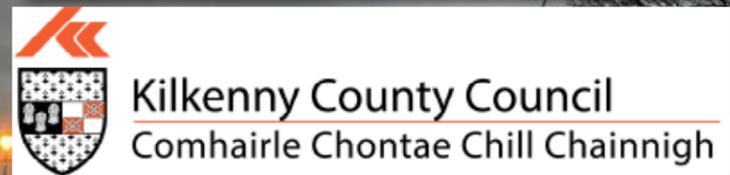
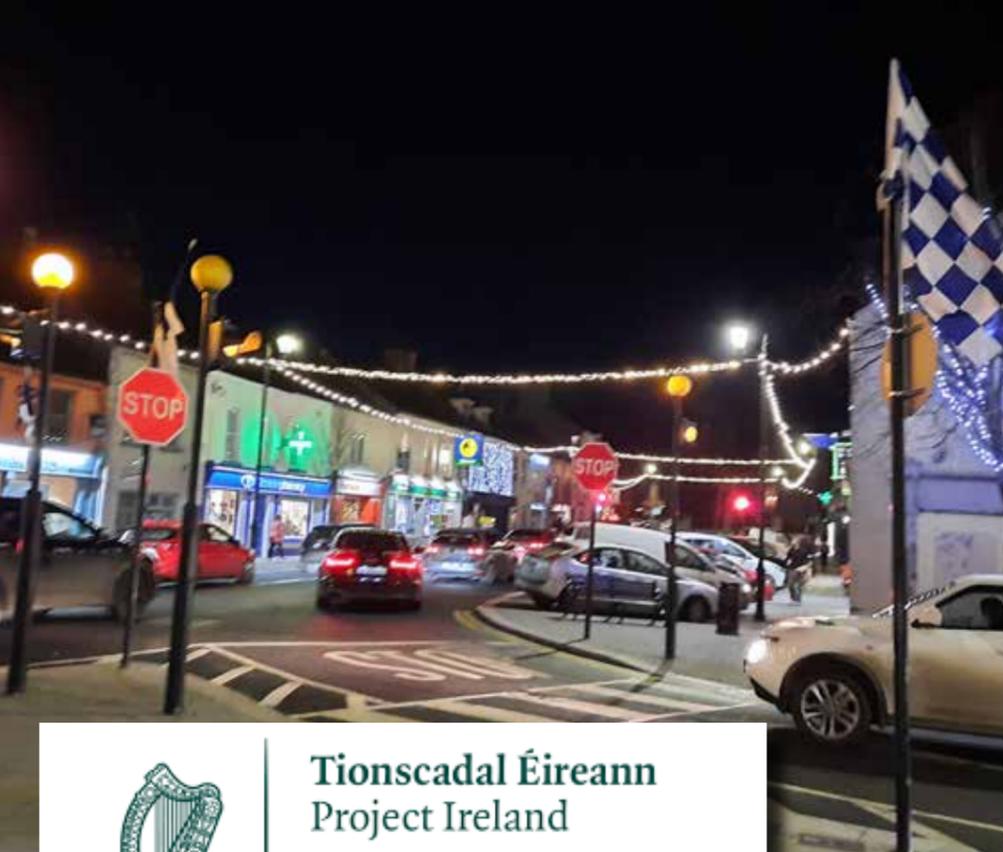
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# CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

## CALLAN, THOMASATOWN, CASTLECOMER & GRAIGUENAMANAGH



A key objective for Kilkenny County Council is to assist our district towns to fully reopen its economy and society in general. Having consulted with the town teams and community councils in each town, the upgrading of the festive lights was identified as a key priority for the four towns. Funding was secured for the provision of a much-needed upgrade of Christmas lights to more efficient LED lighting in

the four identified district towns which all play a key role in helping to bring an additional footfall into these towns this Christmas and for future years to come. Given that businesses have been hit in all of these towns by the Pandemic, it is important that we put in place the basic festive infrastructure that will not only give the town a boost in appearance during the festive seasons.

# BRIDGE STREET CALLAN

Funding was secured towards improvement to public realm space on Bridge Street Callan to accommodate cycle tracks and shared surfaces for walking, age-friendly and improving social distancing. Bollards, road markings, signage and realignment works at junction to accommodate same were all put in place.

Increasing the footpath widths and adding in cycle links all have improved social distancing and allows people to move freely in a safe manner. Bridge street also is the main link to the new Moat Field walking trail which is now opened and is a huge success.

All of these works will facilitate the return of business in Callan under Covid-19 through addressing social distancing and putting measures in place that will assist with social distancing in the town. As part of this application consultations took place with the local business community to address ways to deal with Covid-19 and issues presented.



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# DISTRICT TOWNS CLEANING

The four district towns including Castlecomer, Callan, Graiguenamanagh and Thomastown perform a key role in driving economic development in County Kilkenny. With indigenous industry, retail and tourist attractions it is essential that under the Covid-19 crisis that everything is done to maintain a sense of confidence for both the businesses, residents and tourists visiting these towns. By ensuring that we provide the necessary steps and putting in place the required Covid-19 measures we can so far as practical reduce the damage presently being inflicted on our provincial communities as a result of the pandemic.

Under the accelerated measures scheme funding was secured to ;

- Deep clean all paving, signage and street furniture on the main High Streets of all 4 district towns in Kilkenny. Works entailed power washing existing paving to enhance the paving,
- All furniture including bins, seats tree grills etc will be cleaned and touch up with paint /minor repair works where necessary.
- Entry signage to towns were cleaned, made good and replaced in some areas.
- New signage outlining free car-parking spaces for a number of car-parks in the towns were erected to encourage visitors and tourists to stop and shop and explore the towns which offer many cafes, restaurants and local heritage sites.



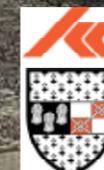
# HUGGINSTOWN TRAFFIC CALMING

In 2017, €95,000 and in 2020 €100,000 was approved under the Town & Village Renewal scheme. Works completed in the Town and Village Renewal Scheme in Hugginstown include the installation of a pedestrian safety measures including public lighting upgrades, controlled pedestrian crossings, driver feedback signage and road markings to reduce the trafficked street width. It is now proposed to provide kerbed build outs to reduce apparent road widths and delineate dedicated parking areas, provide new and improved footpaths to reinforce the public realm within the village and to augment the existing drainage system serving the village.

These measures now regularise traffic movements which prior to this was a significant issue in the village, thereby improving road safety and assign a greater proportion of the street to public realm and pedestrian use, which will in turn form the basis of additional improvements in future. The measures also assist in enhancing the overall character of the historic village and improve the safety and security of its residents and visitors.



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# TOWN HEALTH CHECKS

## **GORESBRIDGE, MULLINAVAT, JOHNSTOWN, URLINGFORD, CASTLECOMER & THOMASTOWN**

Kilkenny County Council in association with community organisations for nominated Towns & Villages received funding to undertake a health check assessment for a number of Towns & Villages in County Kilkenny, that include Goresbridge, Mullinavat, Johnstown, Urlingford, Castlecomer and Thomastown. The Health Check is to provide a “stock-take” of the current economic, social, environmental and physical situation relating to the Town or Village in order to assess the vitality and viability of town / village centres. The assessment essentially analyses the strengths and weaknesses of a town / village and is based on a quantitative analysis of factors such as the range and quality of activities in the centre, its mix of uses, its accessibility to people living in the area and its general amenity appearance and safety.

It involves community consultation and input from various sources including the community organisations, and local traders. The establishment of a Town Team and the development of a Draft Town Plan to address areas identified as needing attention or development. Following a needs assessment, recommendations / actions shall be outlined and based on factual findings and community needs / inputs.



### Get in touch

If you have any queries or comments regarding the project, there are a number of ways you can contact us:



Email [kilkenny@turleyplanning.ie](mailto:kilkenny@turleyplanning.ie)



Call the Freephone hotline: 1800-010101



Live chat with a member of the team Monday – Friday, 9am-5pm, on the website [www.mykilkennytown.ie](http://www.mykilkennytown.ie)



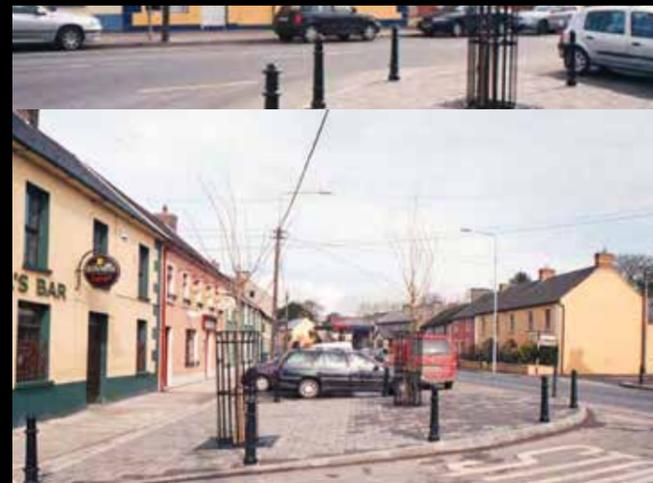
Completing the attached Freepost Postcard and returning to the team for us to get in touch with you. Alternatively you can post a letter to Turley, 4 Pembroke Street Upper, Dublin D02 VN24.



We need your to help  
**Shape Goresbridge's  
Town Plan**

Tell us about your town and help  
improve your local community

Find out more at [www.mykilkennytown.ie](http://www.mykilkennytown.ie)



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We need your to help  
**Shape Mullinavat's  
Town Plan**

Tell us about your town and help  
improve your local community



The Health Checks involves consultation workshops and information exchanges and input from various sources including various local community interests, visitors and traders. Following a needs assessment, recommendations and actions will be outlined and based on factual findings and community needs and inputs.

The Health Check reports will set out a shared vision for the identified towns, a strategy to deliver key objectives, an identification of suitable projects to address economic decline and restore vibrancy, projects to improve the psychical and social environment and also an identification of projects suitable for the town and village renewal, rural regeneration and development funding and other national and local funding streams.

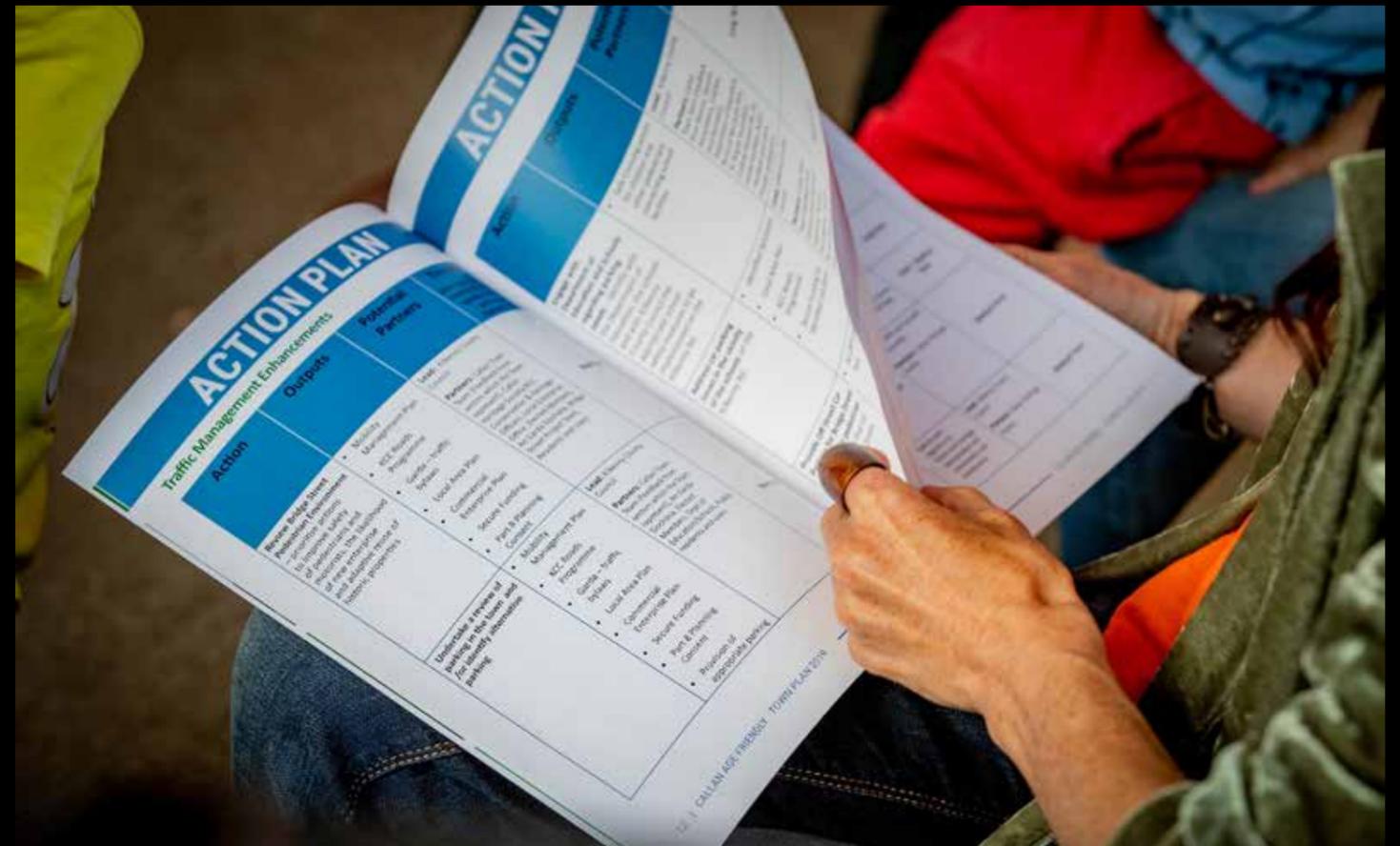
These health Checks will inform the preparation of the Town Improvement Plans which will be prepared collaboratively with local community and commercial interests, local NGO's, state and semi state organisations.

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We need your to help  
**Shape Johnstown's Town Plan**

Tell us about your town and help improve your local community



**Get in touch**  
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-  Email [kilkenny@turleyplanning.ie](mailto:kilkenny@turleyplanning.ie)
-  Call the Freephone hotline: 1800-010101
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We need your to help  
**Shape Castlecomer's Town Plan**

Tell us about your town and help



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An Roinn Forbartha  
Tuaithe agus Pobail  
Department of Rural and  
Community Development



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**KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL LOOK FORWARD TO  
CONTINUING TO WORK WITH LOCAL COMMUNITIES  
TO FURTHER DEVELOP PROJECTS IN OUR RURAL  
TOWNS AND VILLAGES**

