



Comhairle Chontae Chill Chainnigh  
Kilkenny County Council

# CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT

## JANUARY 2026 ISSUE



### EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS

- A list of Orders made in the last month will be available in the Corporate Department for inspection by the Elected Members.

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## **CIVIC EVENTS IN DECEMBER**

**Mayor John Coonan and Cathaoirleach Mary Hilda Cavanagh visting the Amber Stars Exhibition in the Shee Alms House.**



**Cathaoirleach Mary Hilda Cavanagh handing over the keys for the new Command Support Unit to Castlecomer Station Officer Eddie Brennan.**



**Mayor John Coonan and residents of Orchard Close at the planting of a pocket forest in the estate. Photo credits: Kilkenny Live**



# PLANNING

## DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

| Planning Summary                 | Total January to December |      |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|------|
|                                  | 2024                      | 2025 |
| Planning Applications Received   | 820                       | 972  |
| Planning Applications Granted    | 644                       | 745  |
| Planning Applications Refused    | 57                        | 62   |
| Complaints Received              | 134                       | 130  |
| Warning Letters Issued           | 103                       | 80   |
| Enforcements Notices Issued      | 50                        | 33   |
| Cases Closed                     | 137                       | 71   |
| Cases sent for legal prosecution | 13                        | 3    |
| Section 5's Received             | 71                        | 75   |
| Section 5's Decided Upon         | 77                        | 60   |

There has been a significant increase in the number of planning applications in the year to date compared with the same period in 2024. A 24% increase in application numbers being recorded. The figures indicate increased activity in enforcement with significant increases in the issue of warning letters and Enforcement Notices with increases of 27.5% and 61% respectively along with a 153% increase in the number of cases closed.

## FORWARD PLANNING

### Ministerial Guidelines on Housing Growth

The Minister recently published Guidelines on the implementation of the *National Planning Framework (NPF) First Revision*. These Guidelines set out the housing demand projections to 2040 for each Local Authority. Each Local Authority is required to assess the current City and County Development Plan core strategy and settlement strategy against the objective of the Guidelines.

The Council was required to prepare a report detailing how the objectives of the Guidelines will be secured and submit to the Elected Members. The '*Chief Executive's Report on NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements*' was approved at the November Kilkenny County Council meeting and is available here:

<https://www.kilkennycoco.ie/eng/services/planning/development-plans/city-and-county-development-plan/variation-8-npf-implementation-housing-growth-requirements.html>

The process of varying the Development Plan to take account of this Report will now be commenced. The preparation process for a Variation begins with the assessment of all proposals under relevant EU Directives (*Environmental Assessments*). The process will include a comprehensive public consultation which will be an opportunity for landowners and all interested parties to engage.

### Development Plan 2021 – 2027 - Update on Review

The Southern Regional Assembly recently notified the Council that they will commence the review process for the RSES (*Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy*) and MASP (*Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan*) by 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 2026.

As the RSES should be completed prior to commencing the review of the Development Plan, the date for commencement of review and preparation of the new Development Plan will be determined in consultation with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

### **Castlecomer Settlement Plan**

Material Alterations to Proposed Variation 5, to incorporate a Settlement Plan for Castlecomer into the Kilkenny City & County Development Plan (KCCDP) and align the KCCDP with the Specific Planning Policy Requirements (SPPRs) of the *Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024)* as relevant, commenced public display on the 19<sup>th</sup> December. Submissions are now invited until the 30<sup>th</sup> January.

### **Ferrybank/Belview Settlement Plan**

Proposed Variation 6 to the Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021 – 2027 commenced public display on 18<sup>th</sup> July, 2025 with the closing date for submissions being 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2025. Variation No. 6 proposes to incorporate a Settlement Plan for Ferrybank/Belview into the current City and County Development Plan. A total of 77 submissions were received.

The Chief Executive's Report on submissions was considered by Members at the December Council Meeting and it was resolved to materially alter the Proposed Variation. The preparation of the material alteration documents and associated environmental assessments are being prepared.

### **Proposed Variation No. 7 to the Kilkenny City and County Development Plan**

Proposed Variation No. 7 relating to 3 zoning changes in the City was on public display from 21<sup>st</sup> November for a 4 week period until the 19<sup>th</sup> December. A total of 7 submissions were received.

A Chief Executive's Report on submissions received will be presented at the January Plenary Meeting.

### **Proposed Variation No. 9 to the Kilkenny City and County Development Plan**

Proposed Variation No. 9 relating to wastewater treatment systems in designated settlements commenced public display on the 19<sup>th</sup> December and submissions are invited until 30<sup>th</sup> January.

### **Taking in Charge**

Works are progressing on the following estates:

- Westcourt, Callan
- Hillview, Bennettsbridge

### **Active Land Management**

#### ***Residential Zoned Land Tax***

The Residential Zoned Land Tax (RZLT) has come into effect. The Council prepare the RZLT maps and Revenue administer the tax. The settlements currently liable are Kilkenny City, Rosbercon, Callan and Thomastown. Preparation of the final map for 2026 and the Annual Draft Map for 2027 is underway.

As set out in Budget 2026, landowners subject to RZLT will have another opportunity to request a change in the zoning of their land. As a result of making such a request, landowners may qualify for an exemption from the 2026 RZLT liability.

#### ***Vacant Sites Register***

The Vacant Site Register has been replaced by the RZLT and all vacant sites are now cancelled from the Register. Any outstanding vacant site levies will remain due to the Council and the process of debt collection will continue.

## Conservation

The Conservation Office manages all protected structures in Kilkenny County and City. These structures are recognised for the following special interest: Architectural, Historical, Archaeological, Artistic, Cultural, Scientific, Technical, Social. An advisory service on conservation matters is provided to the public and colleagues while the conservation grants and funding applications are also delivered.

The Conservation grants for 2025 have now been completed.

The Table below details the amount of grant funds assigned to BHIS, HTB and HSF to Kilkenny projects in 2025, it also includes the amount of privately leveraged funds, the total project costs, and number of employment days required to complete the work.

| Grant                                   | Department Funding | Privately Leveraged | Total Project Costs | Number of Projects | Employment Days |
|-----------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS) | €253,062           | €106,157.76         | €359,219.76         | 8*                 | 606             |
| Historic Thatched Buildings (HTB)       | €23,916            | €12,233.50          | €36,150.00          | 1                  | 48              |
| Historic Structures Fund (HSF)          | €179,890**         | €131,580.41         | €311,470.41         | 1                  | 727             |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                            | <b>€456,868</b>    | <b>€249,971.67</b>  | <b>€706,840.17</b>  | <b>10</b>          | <b>1380</b>     |

**BHIS 2025:** Eight projects availed of grant funding.

Work included:

- Historic Window Repair,
- Basement Works to Period House,
- Lime Works,
- Historic Plaster Repair.

Works resulted in a total spend of €359,219.76 with 606 professional days required to deliver the work. This money was predominately spent supporting Kilkenny crafts people and other professions.

\*Seven further projects were offered money but declined the offer. These funds were allocated to the eight projects and this resulted in an average **88% increase** in funding amount from the initial offer.

**HTB 2025:** Two projects were offered funding under this scheme. One unfortunately had to decline and this resulted in the Cave Bar, Ballyfoyle receiving €23,916.50. This funding was a significant factor in saving the thatched public house which had a temporary tarpaulin in place for a number of years and has led to the property (*a rural thatch public house in Kilkenny which is something a rarity*) remain in business, while also securing Kilkenny's built heritage.

**HSF 2025:** This funding was extended over two years 2024 and 2025 for stabilisation works in Woodstock House. Work to-date involved removal of very heavy vegetation followed by conservation works on the front and rear walls of the house. Funding totalled €179,890 without such funds the project would not have proceeded.

**Conservation Grants 2025 Overview**

Overall the three schemes supported ten projects, with a total funding of €456,868.50 which released money from the applicants to the value of €249,971.67 with a total spend of €706,840.17 resulting in 1,380 employments days in Kilkenny. These funds are spent in localities across the County with an economic multiplier of approximately 1.95 (*Heritage Council 2024*) giving a local economic impact of €1.38 million directly benefiting the local economy.



*Before*



*After*

**CONSERVATION GRANTS 2026**

**Built Heritage Investment Scheme 2026:** Thirty-three BHIS applications have been received by the Conservation Office. These applications will be assessed and applicants will be notified of decisions shortly. The total funding for BHIS funding for Kilkenny is €253,062.

**Historic Thatch Building 2026:** Two HTB applications have been received by the Conservation Office. These applications will be assessed and applicants will be notified of decision shortly. The total funding for BHIS funding for Kilkenny is €23,916.50.

**Historic Structures Fund 2026:** The scheme has been launched, the closing date for submission is the 16<sup>th</sup> January, 2025. All information available on the Kilkenny County Council website and the Planning Department front desk.

For the month of December, the Conservation Officer also completed reports on the following:

|                                                    |    |
|----------------------------------------------------|----|
| Planning Referrals.....                            | 12 |
| Further Information requests .....                 | 4  |
| Clarification of Further Information requests..... | 0  |
| Section 57 Declarations.....                       | 0  |
| Section 5 Declarations.....                        | 0  |

In 2025, the Conservation Officer reported on the following Planning Files:

|                                    |            |
|------------------------------------|------------|
| Planning Files.....                | 82         |
| Further Information Requests ..... | 23         |
| Clarifications.....                | 2          |
| Section 5 Declarations.....        | 2          |
| Section 57 Declarations.....       | 16         |
| Part 8 .....                       | 4          |
| Post Planning .....                | 7          |
| An Board Pleanala.....             | 1          |
| <b>TOTAL .....</b>                 | <b>137</b> |

## Building Control

| Valid Commencement Notices Received | Disability Access Applications Received |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| December 2025.....428               | December 2025..... 64                   |
| December 2024.....461               | December 2024..... 60                   |
| December 2023.....408               | December 2023..... 67                   |
| December 2022.....411               | December 2022..... 72                   |

## TOWN REGENERATION OFFICE

The Town Centre First Plan for Graiguenamanagh is now finalised and available on our website. 16 priority actions have been identified and are included in the Plan.

### Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant

To-date the Council have paid out €6.4 million to successful applicants. The following are the full statistics up to end of December, 2025:

|                                                           |     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Number of Applications submitted to-date .....            | 370 |
| Number of Approvals/ Approvals in Principle to-date ..... | 286 |
| Grant Drawdown to-date.....                               | 114 |
| Number of Queries during the month of December .....      | 62  |

The Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage announced an extension of the Vacant Homes Grant to make it more attractive to bring back into use vacant over the shop space into residential accommodation. Further details are awaited from the Department.

### Derelict Sites

One property was added to the Derelict Sites Register in December. Initial contact was made with five other property owners regarding the condition of their property.

# ENVIRONMENT

## CLIMATE ACTION

### Community Climate Action Programme – Phase 2

Applications for Phase 2 of the Community Climate Action Programme (CCAP) are now closed. We were once again oversubscribed with 35 applications received seeking funding from CCAP to the value of €998,069.52. Kilkenny County Council has an allocation from the Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment (DCEE) of €511,000.

Phase 2 of this Programme is very similar to Phase 1 and successful applicants under this Scheme will deliver a variety of projects that have a direct climate action impact. Projects will have to address, at least one, of the following five themes:

- Community Energy,
- Travel,
- Food and Waste,
- Shopping and Recycling
- Local Climate and Environmental Action.

Applications received will be evaluated against set criteria before being submitted to DCEE for final approval. Applicants will be notified of the outcome of evaluation April 2026 and where successful in receiving funding groups will have 18 months to deliver their project.

Groups who received funding under Phase 1 of the Programme are at final stages and all projects are expected to be completed in February 2026, this Programme had been very positively received by Kilkenny Community Groups with 22 groups receiving funding.

### Excellence in Local Government Awards

The Climate Action Team were delighted to win the Climate Change award for their entry "Championing Community Climate Action, Kilkenny" at the Excellence in Local Government Awards which were held on 27<sup>th</sup> November.

### Climate Action Training

Since March of this year training has been provided to staff and members of the Climate Action Steering Committee, by the CARO under the [Local Authority Climate Action Training](#) Programme across the themes of Climate Risk Assessment, Nature-based Solutions, Biodiversity, Weather Forecasting; Green Public Procurement; Biomethane, Energy Performance and Financing of Climate adaptation and Mitigation.

All webinar recordings and presentations from the *Local Authority Climate Action Webinar Series* (under the *Building Capacity* training pillar) are accessible via the Climate Action Training Programme LMS available on the **Local Authority Services National Training Group (LASNTG)**. Training will resume in 2026.

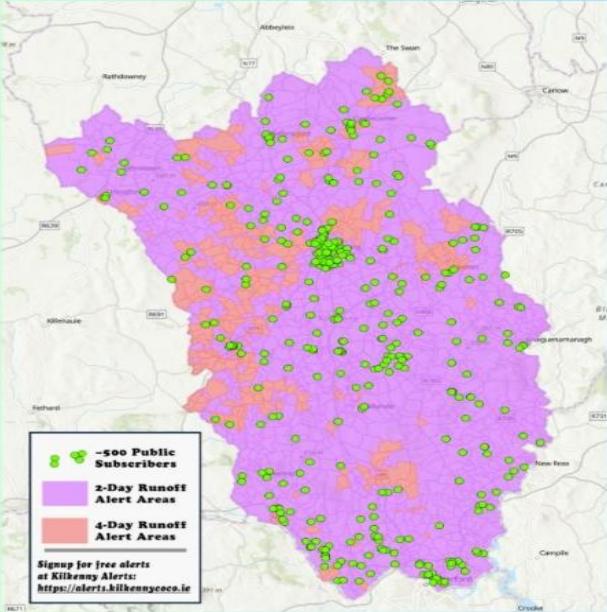
## ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

### Green Schools Programme 2025/2026

There are 85 schools registered with the Green Schools Programme, of which 71 are active (*in the process of attaining a flag*). 14 have a status of either "long term deferral" or "deferral from the previous year." The deadline for the first-time Green Schools Litter & Waste application was **Wednesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 2025**. For schools renewing their Green Flag award, the general deadline for the 2025/2026 school year is **Friday, 20<sup>th</sup> March, 2026**.

### Map Alerter

Agriculture alerts for your local area



**Attention Kilkenny Farmers**



48 hrs prior to a heavy rainfall event-chemical fertilisers and organic manures must not be spread

MapAlerter offers text alerts, notifying of date and time, when land can be assessed for spreading.

Alerts that Guide. Maps that Matter. Decisions that Deliver!

Scan the QR here and Sign Up for Free  
<https://www.mapalerter.ie/kilkenny>



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The Environment Department identified the need for a reliable, user-friendly system to communicate environmental compliance information directly to the agricultural community. Through cross-departmental collaboration between Environment, Climate Action, IT and externally with the IFA, the Council defined the technical and operational requirements of the tool.

Custom mapping layers were developed to show agricultural zones, risk areas and relevant environmental data. It comes down to a 48-hour or 96-hour runoff time. The alerting rules were programmed to align with fertiliser spreading regulations. The system monitors weather patterns, particularly heavy rainfall and automatically calculates when land is suitable for assessment or spreading again.

An email is sent asking existing Kilkenny-based subscribers to opt in to this new category and automatically an email is sent to any new subscribers that have provided a Kilkenny location.

Farmers and landowners can subscribe through the Kilkenny County Council portal, selecting preferred communication channels, SMS text or email. This ensures targeted, personalised alerts. <https://alerts.kilkennycoco.ie/>

### Approval for CCTV Pilot Project and Public Consultation

Kilkenny County Council's Waste Enforcement Section has proposed the installation of CCTV cameras for the primary purpose of preventing litter and illegal dumping and enforcement of the Litter Pollution Act, 1997, and the Waste Management Act 1996 in accordance with the Circular Economy & Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2022 at the following locations:

**Bottle Banks:**

- Aldi, Waterford Rd, Archerstreet Lot, Kilkenny, R95 K295
- Clintstown Road, Freshford, Kilkenny,
- Mooncoin Bring Centre, Church Car Park, Mooncoin, Kilkenny, X91VY36
- Urlingford Bring Centre, Petrol Station, Urlingford, Co. Kilkenny
- Bring Bank, Lidl, Johnswell Rd, Newpark Upper, Kilkenny, R95 A329

**Other:**

- Grants Wood, Old Ballyragget Road, Kilkenny

This initiative will adhere to the Codes of Practice for the Operation of CCTV for the Purposes of Prevention, Detection & Prosecution of Litter and Waste Offences as required by the 2022 Act. These locations have a history of persistent and extensive dumping resulting in ongoing removal costs.

The CCTV Oversight Board has met on a number of occasions over the last few months to discuss and review the necessary documentation including the DPIA, DPA, Business Case and associated SOPs. At a meeting on the 11th of December 2025, the Board assessed the necessity and proportionality of the proposed CCTV cameras and recommend approval of the installation of cameras at the above sites to assist in addressing the significant illegal dumping at these locations.

The cameras will be in place for an initial 6-month period and will then be reviewed. As per the Codes of Practice, we are now undertaking a public consultation in respect of the sites in question. Deadline for submissions will be on *Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> January at C.O.B.*

**Team Up to Clean Up Cheque Presentations**

On 12<sup>th</sup> December, 2025 Kilkenny County Council recognised the outstanding contribution of volunteers, schools and Community Groups at a special ceremony in the Council Chamber as part of 2025's "Team Up to Clean Up – Together for Kilkenny" initiative.

In a collaborative effort to promote environmental stewardship, Kilkenny County Council took the lead with support from leading sponsors Dawn Meats, Tirlán/Glanbia Plc, Panda, PRL and the John O'Shea Trust to build upon and promote this essential community initiative.

Six participating groups were presented with €500 cheques following a draw open to all who took part this year.

## 2025 Winning Groups & Schools

| Schools                                                                                                                                                                                   | Community Groups                                                                                                                                                              |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Kilkenny School Project, Springfield</li><li>▪ Carrigeen National School, Corluddy</li><li>▪ Lisnafunchion National School, Castlecomer</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Templeorum Village Residents Group/ Parent's Association</li><li>▪ Kilkenny Scouts</li><li>▪ Belfield Residents Association</li></ul> |

## WASTE

### RMCEI Inspection

The Waste Team have now completed inspections for 2025 working their way through the almost 2,000 inspections planned for 2025 under the RMCEI Programme (*Recommended Minimum Criteria for Environmental inspections*). Inspections were carried out in the areas of National priority which were:

- Commercial and Household Waste,
- Construction and Demolition Waste,
- Plastic and Producer Responsibility Initiatives
- Illegal Waste Activities

Inclusive of these inspections the following areas of Multi Agency Inspections, Litter Patrols, End of Life Vehicles and Metals and Inspections of Waste Facilities were conducted. The Team completed this program of works whilst also investigating complaints received by members of the public and reviewing/issuing of waste facility permits.

### Civic Amenity Site - Dunmore

The Civic Amenity Site at Dunmore continues to provide a valuable service to the public and operates from 8.00 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. through lunch five days a week whilst also providing a Saturday morning service from 9.00 a.m. to 12 noon. December 2025 saw 171 tonnes of Municipal Solid Waste and 76 tonnes of Municipal Dry Waste. The various recycling streams deposited at the Dunmore facility during the month of March and their respective tonnages can be seen in Table 1 below.

**Table 1**

| Recycling Stream           | Quantity (Tonnes) |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| Cardboard .....            | 9.0               |
| Plastic .....              | 6.0               |
| Paper .....                | 9.8               |
| Glass Bottles & Cans ..... | 2.2               |
| Food Waste.....            | 0.5               |
| Mattresses.....            | 5.3               |
| Metal .....                | 3.6               |
| Timber.....                | 11.1              |
| Tetra-Pac.....             | 0.4               |
| WEEE .....                 | 9.3               |

As part of the Landfill Aftercare the landfill gas flare continues to run 24 hours per day seven days per week extracting and burning approximately 35m<sup>3</sup> of landfill gas per hour.

## AIR NOISE WATER

### Water Quality - Farm Inspections

Council staff continue to carry out farm inspections with over 308 initial inspections completed to-date and have now reached and exceeded the annual figure set out by the EPA for 2025. Farm Inspectors are carrying out the onsite inspections and identifying sub basins that have high Nitrates and Phosphates present and focusing the inspection program in areas that are at risk from this pollution. The target for 2025 is 308 inspections.

## **Septic Tank Inspections**

Septic Tank Inspections are now finished with 59 completed to-date. The target for 2025 is 59 inspections. This means Kilkenny County Council have reached the number set out under the 2022- 2026 NIP for 2025.

## **Environmental Complaints**

All Environmental complaints received are logged on the CRM (*Customer Relations Management*) System. The number of complaints that have been received and logged for December 2025 is 52. The nature of these complaints included littering, illegal dumping, burning of waste and abandoned cars. The majority continue to be related to illegal dumping. Whilst every effort is made to bring unacceptable environmental practice into compliance, Environment Enforcement staff continue to manage significant enforcement cases progressing through prosecution cases.

## **Noise**

Several staff in the Environment Office have completed Noise Monitoring Course in the previous month. This training will enable staff to deal with noise complaints going forward and will allow Environment Section to be able to act more efficiently on noise complaints from the public. Noise monitors are currently in the process of being calibrated.

## **Air**

Two new air monitors have been installed in Butts Area and City Centre. Staff will be monitoring the information received from these air monitors. All solid fuel inspections have been completed for 2025.

## **RURAL WATER**

### **Well Grants - Improvement Works to Private Water Supply**

A total of 239 applications for grant assistance towards improvements to private water supplies were received in 2025, with funding of €487,343.63 released in respect of 181 approved applications. For comparison, 211 applications were received during the same period in 2024, and €475,735.19 was paid out in respect of 184 applications.

### **Subsidies for GWS Operations**

A total of 50 valid Group Water Scheme (GWS) subsidy applications were submitted in 2025. Of these, 45 applications have been fully reviewed, with €458,538.97 in subsidies issued by year end. The remaining applications are currently under review and are expected to be finalised in the coming weeks.

### **Introduction of On-Line Applications**

The Rural Water Section is advancing plans to introduce online applications for grant assistance for private water supply improvement works (**well grants**) and for Group Water Scheme (GWS) subsidies.

There are several benefits for both the Local Authority and applicants in introducing online applications. For the Council, the move to an online system enhances efficiency, strengthens data management, reduces administrative costs, and supports environmental sustainability. For applicants, the new online service will offer improved convenience and accessibility, provide real-time feedback and error checking, and allow for easy document uploads and application status tracking.

### **Multi Annual Rural Water Programme 2024-2026**

Group Water Schemes approved for funding by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage are advancing their planned works through the procurement phase, with some measures already completed or partially completed. Capital funding amounting to €135,616.72 was released in 2025.

## PARKS & SPECIAL PROJECTS

### The Museum of Medieval Kilkenny

The ongoing restoration and enhancement of the Tholsel building forms part of the wider “Museum of Medieval Kilkenny” (MOMK) Project which will see the unification of the Tholsel and the Medieval Mile Museum as one single visitor experience. The overall objective of this project is to develop an offering that will become one of Ireland’s top visitor attractions, while also securing the future of the Tholsel to continue in its role to act as the seat of Local Government in the City.

Works are progressing well across all levels of the building and key milestones are illustrated in the images below:



***Basement** - Restored walls, ceiling and floor and*



*construction of lift shaft & stairwell in rear annex*



***First Floor** – Stone repair works and installation of*



*steel frame for glass reception area within Loggia*



***Second Floor:** Mezzanine floor introduction removed allowing for reintroduction of window opens into*



*returning space back to double height ceilings and Mayor's Parlour*



***Roof Level:** Re-slating of roof and installation of to rear*



*heritage roof lights & removal of 20<sup>th</sup> Century flat roof annex.*

Other key milestone relating to the overall MOMK project include:

- Exhibition Interpretive Fit-out Tender advertised in December 2025.
- Planning application under Part 8, for St. Mary's Laneway & Outdoor Amenity Scheme Enhancement Scheme advertised in November 2025 and the closing date for submissions/observations is 4pm 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2026.

The Medieval Mile Museum, within St. Mary's Church, remains opens to visitors and the contractor will continue to work in manner that minimises disruption to the operation of same.

### **Ballyragget – Community Sport Facilities Fund**

A new walking and jogging track has been installed around the Fairgreen in Ballyragget. Funded under the Community Sports Facilities Fund, this project also provided for the installation of new goalposts and goalmouth repairs to the soccer pitch.



### **South East Greenway**

Of the 24km's of Greenway some 14km's are now substantially completed. The Greenway team are engaging with Waterford City & County Council in relation to a timeline for completion of an element of infrastructure on the North Quays which will facilitate the opening of the second phase of Greenway. This 6km section of greenway runs between Curraghmore and Ferrybank.

### **Woodstock to South East Greenway**

The project team are continuing to progress various deliverables required under the Transport Infrastructure Ireland - Project Management Guideline for Phase 2 - Option Selection.

During this phase:

- A second public consultation on the emerging route corridors will be scheduled;
- Landowner engagement will continue;
- Following consultation and landowner engagement, a Preferred Route Corridor Option will be proposed;
- A third public consultation will be held on the proposed Preferred Route Corridor Option.

### **Recent Tender Notices**

#### **Goresbridge Masterplan Tender**

Tenders have recently been returned for the design of a Masterplan for the Goresbridge Riverside Amenity. Funded under the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS), the project will see consultants develop a masterplan for the Goresbridge Riverside Amenity Area that sets out a roadmap to develop tourism in the area based around land and water-based outdoor recreational activities. A tender assessment will be completed in January following which the successful tenderer will be appointed.

#### **Callan Friary Complex Tender**

Tender submissions are currently being sought for design consultants to progress the detailed design and planning of the Callan Friary Complex. Funded under the Rural Regeneration Development Fund (RRDF), the project will see the regeneration of the Friary Complex incorporating the provision of modern library services, community space, flexible creative and arts spaces/theatre, improved public realm and co-habiting artist accommodation.

### Woodstock Gardens & Arboretum – Winter Works

The team at Woodstock have been busy over recent weeks with a particular focus on the restoration of the grotto and rockery area. Heavy overgrowth has been carefully cut back which has led to the rediscovery of the original Victorian pathways which link the rockery and the grotto. All spring bulb planting was completed before Christmas and the team is currently planting over 1,000 woodland



plants, including ferns, cyclamen, primulas, and other shade loving species

that will add colour and interest to the woodland floor in the Upper Terrace Gardens.



The magic of Christmas was also very evident over the festive period in the Gardens with the return of our reindeer trail, which is always very popular with our younger visitors.

### Kilkenny Countryside Park – Junior Park Run – Christmas Event

On Sunday, 21<sup>st</sup> of December, Santa Claus visited the Kilkenny Countryside Park Junior Park Run to top of a year of great running. Over 2025, the Junior Park Run, held 51 Sunday morning events within the Countryside Park and in total c.2500 kids and c.675 volunteers were in attendance over the course of the year.

Kilkenny Countryside Park Junior Park Run is a fun, free event organised by volunteers for the benefit of everyone.

The 2km course involves two and a half laps of the looped paths around the 24-acre site located just outside Kilkenny City.



  
Oifig Fiontair Áitiúil  
Local Enterprise Office

## Local Enterprise Office Kilkenny 2025 Awards to Businesses

A total of €423,439.50 in direct financial assistance has been approved for 24 manufacture /export service businesses in located throughout the county.

€256,882 awarded in Business Expansion Grant assistance and €30,000 in GradStart assistance

€60,000 awarded in start-up/priming assistance

3 Market Explorer grants awarded to support businesses in exploring new export market opportunities.

€49,074 awarded in a feasibility study grant assistance.



7 applicants have been supported to make loan applications to the Micro Finance Ireland loan fund.



44 Green for Business supports awarded with 26 businesses awarded an Energy Efficiency Grant. These schemes support businesses to becoming greener and environmentally friendly.

31 Businesses are availing of the Digital Start programme to prepare and implement a plan for the adoption of digital tools and techniques across the enterprise



1,040 people participated on focused small business training, including 134 people participating on the Starting Your Business programme



412 businesses have availed of specialised business specific mentoring on a variety of topics including finance, marketing, social media marketing and HR.



11 business have been approved a Grow Digital Voucher totalling €29,506 to support the enhancement of their online trading capacity.



16 Businesses have commenced LEAN one to one consultancy programmes to investigate possible resource efficiencies and process improvements their businesses

  
Oifig Fiontair Áitiúil  
Local Enterprise Office

## Night Time Economy – Visit from Delegation from Braga



### City to City Exchange with Braga

As part of a Urbact City to City Exchange, three Officials from Braga in Portugal visited Kilkenny from 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> December to better understand their approach to topics related to the night time economy.

As part of the 3 day visit, the team met with the Mayor and Chief Executive and received presentations from Tourism Attractions, Abbey Quarter and the Night Time Economy.

## First Event at Watergate Urban Park



The opening event at the Urban Park beside the Watergate Theatre took place on 19<sup>th</sup> December.

Jeremy Hickey, better known as RSAG, performed as part of Yulefest as part of this year outdoor performance area.

## Civic Festivals: Yulefest Kilkenny

The attractions in the 2025 Yulefest included the Christmas Market, the Yulefest Live Music Stage and the traditional carousels on the Parade area in front of Kilkenny Castle. The addition of the high-quality Made in Kilkenny shop at the old KBC building and the dozens of other events supported throughout the City and County created a fantastic festive atmosphere as over 100,000 visitors came to the City.

The Festival saw major events of light displays in the Rose Garden of Kilkenny Castle was visited by 7,227 people.

The Lux Muralis lighting display in St. Canice's Cathedral, visited by over 13,000 people and the fireworks display in the Castle Park on the 23<sup>rd</sup> December which attracted more than 3,000 visitors.



## HOUSING

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. The following information gives the up-to-date progress for December 2025 under the various support services.

### HOUSING CAPITAL



*42 unit development at Abbey Hill, Thomastown comprising of 20 social housing units and 22 units for purchase under the Affordable Housing Scheme. Completion due January 2026.*

### AFFORDABLE HOMES

#### Overview

December was a highly productive month in advancing the delivery of affordable housing under the Local Authority Affordable Purchase Scheme. With two active developments - *Abbey Hill, Thomastown and Church View, Kilmacow* the team continued to progress application assessments, issue offers and promote both schemes to prospective buyers.

#### *Church View, Kilmacow*

Kilkenny County Council, in collaboration with **Michael Murphy Building Services** and supported by the **Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage**, continues to advance this scheme.

- The application portal remains open, and applications are being reviewed for eligibility and completeness.
- **13 three-bedroom units** are available, with prices starting from **€248,475**.
- The scheme targets **First-Time Buyers** and **Fresh Starters**.
- Social media promotion remains active across Kilkenny County Council platforms, ensuring ongoing visibility of the scheme.
- Work has commenced on the development's **showhouse**, with an anticipated opening in **January 2026**, which is expected to further support sales activity.

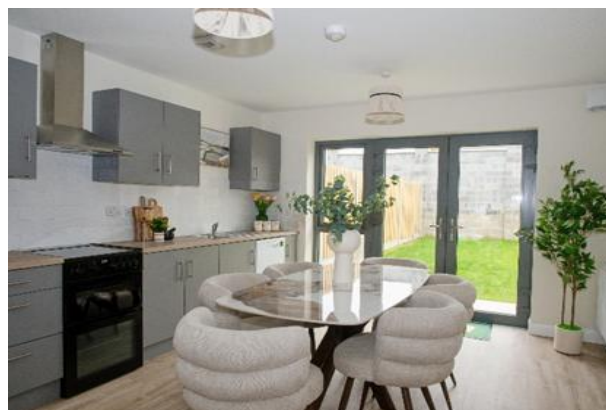
### ***Abbey Hill, Thomastown***

A Kilkenny County Council led scheme, built by **Ormonde Construction** and supported by the **Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage**, Abbey Hill comprises **22 high-quality homes** (16 three-bed and 6 two-bed units) available under the Affordable Purchase Scheme.

- The application portal for this scheme has now closed.
- Applications are currently being assessed.
- The majority of homes are reserved, and the team are busy supporting and progressing of applications.

### **Summary**

We are very encouraged by the strong level of interest in both schemes, particularly Abbey Hill, Thomastown. The response highlights the significant demand for well-designed, high-quality affordable homes within the County and reinforces the importance of continued delivery in this area.



### **HOMELESS SERVICES**

The Government have put in place a number of measures to prevent homelessness arising from the reactivation of notices of termination of tenancies in June 2023.

We are currently providing advice and directing tenants to the appropriate services required to prevent homelessness. Where a household is in receipt of a valid notice to quit and requires assistance in establishing what options are available to them to avoid potential homelessness they are advised to contact the Housing Office at its dedicated email address [NTQEnquiries@kilkennycoco.ie](mailto:NTQEnquiries@kilkennycoco.ie) . Further details are available on [www.kilkennycoco.ie](http://www.kilkennycoco.ie).

Any tenants who may have received a notice of termination or a landlord who has issued a notice of termination to their tenants or who may wish to in the coming months should direct any queries to the dedicated email provided and all queries will be responded to in a timely manner.

| <b>HOMELESS SERVICES SUMMARY DECEMBER 2025</b> |    |
|------------------------------------------------|----|
| <b>Homeless Presentations</b>                  | 56 |
| <b>Homeless Assessment Outcomes</b>            |    |
| Prevention & Interventions                     | 40 |
| Emergency Service                              | 11 |
| Not eligible/Did not avail of service          | 5  |

|                                                                                                       |     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| <b>HAP Place Finder Service</b>                                                                       |     |
| Number of Homeless HAP tenancies at first day of month                                                | 145 |
| Number of Homeless HAP tenancies created during month                                                 | 1   |
| Number of Homeless HAP tenancy breakdowns                                                             | 1   |
| Number of Homeless HAP tenancies in place at last day of month                                        | 145 |
| Other Social Housing Tenancies supported/created during month                                         | 6   |
| <b>Provision of Emergency Accommodation</b>                                                           |     |
| Households in Temporary Emergency Supported Accommodation at 31 <sup>st</sup> December                | 32  |
| Households in Temporary Emergency B&B accommodation                                                   | 10  |
| Households in Temporary Emergency B&B Accommodation that are families                                 | 9   |
| Households ( <i>singles/couples</i> ) in Transition Emergency Accommodation ( <i>Own Front Door</i> ) | 46  |
| Households ( <i>Families</i> ) in Transition Emergency Accommodation ( <i>Own Front Door</i> )        | 19  |

## SOCIAL HOUSING PROVISION

|                                                                                           |       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| <b>SOCIAL HOUSING SUPPORT APPLICATION SUMMARY DECEMBER 2025</b>                           |       |
| Number awaiting Social Housing Support on December 31 <sup>st</sup> ( <i>Gross Need</i> ) | 1,257 |
| Number awaiting Social Housing Support on December 31 <sup>st</sup> ( <i>Net Need</i> )   | 615   |
| Number of Social Housing Applications received in December                                | 64    |
| Number of applications incomplete/awaiting further information/clarification              | 38    |
| Number of applications validated and ready for assessment during the month                | 39    |
| Number of applications assessed during December                                           | 38    |
| Number of applications awaiting assessment as 31 <sup>st</sup> December                   | 61    |

|                                                               |       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| <b>HOUSING ASSISTANCE PAYMENT (HAP) SUMMARY DECEMBER 2025</b> |       |
| Total active HAP tenancies                                    | 364   |
| New HAP tenancies set up                                      | 40    |
| HAP allocated Social Housing                                  | 89    |
| Closed HAP tenancies                                          | 99    |
| HAP Rent Reviews                                              | 302   |
| HAP Other tenancy amendments                                  | 1,036 |

|                                                        |     |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| <b>HOUSING ALLOCATIONS DECEMBER 2025</b>               |     |
| LA/RAS/Leasing offers of allocations made in December  | 30  |
| LA/RAS/Leasing offers of allocations made to date 2025 | 288 |

## TENANCY MANAGEMENT

### Complaints

The Tenancy Management Section of Kilkenny County Council deals with anti-social behaviour complaints in relation to our tenants as outlined in the Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy. A total of 19 issues were recorded in December 2025.

| Complaint Type                                                                    | Number of Complaints | Number Investigated | Number Ongoing | Number Closed |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Drugs Related, Violence, Racism, Threats & Intimidation                           | 4                    | 2                   | 1              | 1             |
| Damage to Property, animal related (dog/horse/fowl);<br>Refuse/ dumping/ hoarding | 4                    | 2                   | 1              | 1             |
| Noise, Parking/Boundary Issues, Other                                             | 11                   | 4                   | 4              | 3             |

## MAINTENANCE HOUSING STOCK

The Housing Operations Team have commenced a Pilot Scheme for roll out of a new app for stock surveys to existing housing stock. The completion of stock surveys will allow Kilkenny County Council to improve the delivery of our planned maintenance programme.

| MAINTENANCE CALLS DECEMBER 2025 |       |
|---------------------------------|-------|
| Maintenance calls in December   | 591   |
| Maintenance calls year to date  | 7,539 |

## PRIVATE HOUSE GRANTS

The housing grants budget is €2,575,197, made up of €2,188,917 (85%) grant funding and €386,280 (15%) Kilkenny County Council contribution for 2025. The Housing Grants Section are currently awaiting confirmation of the 2026 allocation.

## GRANTS APPROVED & COMMITTED DECEMBER 2025

| SCHEME                              | NUMBER     | AMOUNT            |
|-------------------------------------|------------|-------------------|
| HGD - Housing Adaptation Grant      | 151        | €1,657,240        |
| MAG - Mobility Aid Grant            | 16         | €58,987           |
| HOP - Housing Aid for Older Persons | 287        | €1,744,343        |
| <b>Total</b>                        | <b>454</b> | <b>€3,473,169</b> |

## GRANTS PAID OUT DECEMBER 2025

| SCHEME                              | NUMBER     | AMOUNT            |
|-------------------------------------|------------|-------------------|
| HGD - Housing Adaptation Grant      | 99         | €1,043,110        |
| MAG - Mobility Aid Grant            | 11         | €36,588           |
| HOP - Housing Aid for Older Persons | 189        | €1,085,815        |
| <b>Total</b>                        | <b>299</b> | <b>€2,165,513</b> |

## HOUSING LOANS ACTIVITY 2025

| Loan Type                 | Received  | Approved | Amount Approved | Number Paid | Amount Paid     |
|---------------------------|-----------|----------|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Local Authority Home Loan | 28        | 5        | €545,000        | 6           | €500,678        |
| Caravan Loan              | 0         | 0        | €0.00           | 0           | €0              |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>28</b> | <b>5</b> | <b>€545,000</b> | <b>6</b>    | <b>€500,678</b> |

## VOIDS

| VOIDS ACTIVITY DECEMBER 2025                                         |    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Number of Voids Upgraded Ready for Allocation in December 2025       | 5  |
| Number of Voids in progress on the 31 <sup>st</sup> of December 2025 | 56 |
| Total Number of Voids Upgraded for Allocation to Date 2025           | 74 |

# COMMUNITY

## Community Projects

The Table below outlines in summary ongoing projects and schemes in the Community Department.

| Town & Village Scheme                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |          |                                                          |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Community Group                                            | Project Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Grant    | December Status                                          |
| Callan 2023                                                | King's River Town & Village Project - Riverbank and amenity area                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | €247,500 | In progress                                              |
| Dunnamaggin Local Community Group 2023                     | The transformation of a community green space into and events amenity for all the community knows as Madge's Garden                                                                                                                                                                     | €247,500 | Works 65% complete                                       |
| Urlingford Town Team 2023                                  | Refurbishment of Community Hall. Phase 2                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | €500,000 | 90% of works complete                                    |
| Callan Project Development Measure 2024                    | Develop plans to establish an outdoor classroom community space in Abbey Field and examine the re-development of a derelict cottage in Moate Field and complete biodiversity studies on both sites                                                                                      | €49,950  | Surveys in progress, stakeholder engagements in progress |
| Paulstown Community Group Project Development Measure 2024 | Complete feasibility and design studies for the creation of a centre point in the village, consisting of an open public green space with seating and leisure facilities. This will redevelop the village centre and provide accessibility between the main street and residential areas | €49,950  | Part 8 planning being prepared                           |
| Glenmore 2025                                              | Renovate two vacant buildings into community café & shop                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | €500,000 | Funding approved                                         |
| Johnstown 2025                                             | Public realm enhancements. Development of a public space for activities in the square, Johnstown.                                                                                                                                                                                       | €300,000 | Funding approved                                         |
| Callan 2025                                                | Refurbishment of ground floor of 18 Upper Bridge Street, Callan for general business use and the re-instatement of an original carriageway to improve pedestrian access to this Town Centre location                                                                                    | €300,000 | Funding approved                                         |

| Rural Regeneration Development Fund |                                                                                                                                  |            |                       |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|-----------------------|
| Community Group                     | Project Description                                                                                                              | Grant      | December Status       |
| Piltown                             | Phase 1 of the project comprises of main street urban renewal enhancement, parking bays, EV charging points, and bicycle bays x2 | €2,180,931 | Detailed Design       |
| Glenmore                            | Develop the Southeast Greenway Connectivity Link and Pink Rock Cycle Loop & Amenity Trail                                        | €2,356,423 | Design Team Appointed |
| Thomastown                          | Thomastown Library and upgrade to Community Centre                                                                               | €4,013,115 | Works 95% complete    |

| Community & Cultural Facilities Capital Scheme |                                                           |         |                                    |
|------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------|------------------------------------|
| Community Group/<br>Year Approved              | Project Description                                       | Grant   | December Status                    |
| Johnstown Sports Field 2022                    | Contribution to development of walkway around complex     | €40,000 | Works in progress, 20% complete    |
| Mooncoin Celtic AFC 2023                       | LED Floodlighting for extra training area                 | €20,000 | Works to commence April 2026       |
| Ballyhale Shamrocks 2024                       | Upgrade of toilets / disability access                    | €9,000  | Works 50% complete                 |
| Gowran Community Complex 2024                  | Contribution towards the refurbishment of a community hub | €27,000 | Commencing in January 2026         |
| Glenmore Camogie Club 2025                     | Contribution towards the re-instatement of walkway        | €29,000 | Not yet commenced                  |
| Mullinavat Drama Group 2025                    | Lighting, Sound, Projector, Screen, Curtains              | €11,000 | Works not yet commenced            |
| Marian Hall Kilmacow 2025                      | Installation of heating, bathrooms, kitchen               | €11,000 | Works to commence January 2026     |
| Kilkenny Girl Guides 2025                      | Emergency Lighting & Fire Alarm                           | €15,000 | Works to commence January 2026     |
| Kilkenny SOS Lawn Bowls 2025                   | Fencing, Lighting, Bicycle Bays, shed                     | €30,000 | Tender process on going            |
| Kilkenny Ambers Women's Refuge 2025            | New Playground                                            | €35,000 | Work due to commence February 2026 |
| Freshford Town AFC 2025                        | Floodlighting for all weather pitch                       | €32,000 | Works due to commence in Q1, 2026  |
| Deen Celtic Castlecomer 2025                   | Refurbishment of shower facility into girls dressing room | €26,000 | Project complete                   |
| St. Joseph's Athletic Club 2025                | Shelter and walking track                                 | €11,000 | Work in progress                   |
| Graiguenamanagh Rowing Club 2025               | Storage racking for rowing boats                          | €15,000 | Work in progress                   |
| Evergreen Football Club 2025                   | Spectator Stand                                           | €20,000 | Project complete                   |

| CLÁR                             |                                                            |         |                         |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|---------|-------------------------|
| Community Group                  | Project Description                                        | Grant   | December Status         |
| Galmoy Community Hall 2023       | Provision of a MUGA                                        | €30,015 | Not yet commenced       |
| Ballyouskill Community Hall 2024 | Upgrades to carpark, roof repairs and replacement of door. | €36,641 | Not yet commenced       |
| Windgap Handball Alley 2024      | External insulation of two outside walls                   | €29,419 | Not yet commenced       |
| Windgap GAA 2024                 | Works to include tarmacadam to driveway and parking area   | €38,307 | Procurement in progress |

| CLÁR                                              |                                                                                 |          |                              |
|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|------------------------------|
| Community Group                                   | Project Description                                                             | Grant    | December Status              |
| Naomh Aodhan Community Centre CLG 2024, Kilmanagh | Upgrade works on rebuilding and refurbishing of handball alley and ground works | €44,312  | Works in progress            |
| St. Brendan's National School, Muckalee 2025      | Pitch Development                                                               | €65,000  | Funding application approved |
| Lisdowney GAA 2025                                | Construction of new MUGA and Ball Wall                                          | €65,000  | Funding application approved |
| Coolagh Community Hall Upgrading Project 2025     | Hall and Kitchen upgrade                                                        | €77,022  | Funding application approved |
| Moin Ruadh National School 2025                   | Construction of new MUGA with carparking area and sensory garden                | €100,000 | Funding application approved |
| Killanaspick Lighting project 2025                | Roadway lighting                                                                | €22,500  | Funding application approved |
| Kilmoganny GAA 2025                               | Lawnmower for community area                                                    | €35,424  | Funding application approved |

| Community Recognition Fund |                                                                                |          |                                                                                  |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Community Group            | Project Description                                                            | Grant    | October Status                                                                   |
| Christian Youth Centre     | Development of existing building to provide community space, meeting rooms     | €390,607 | Works in progress                                                                |
| Fr. McGrath Centre         | Installation of Solar Panels, Painting of building and installation of windows | €100,474 | Painting, windows and insulation complete. Contractor appointed for Solar Panels |
| Ballyragget Community Hall | Renovation of CYMS Hall                                                        | €173,000 | Procurement process ongoing                                                      |

### Age Friendly Creative Christmas Connections

The Kilkenny Age Friendly Programme held "Creative Christmas Connections 2025" a series of free creative events throughout December in collaboration with Creative Ireland. Highlights included Tea, Tunes and Tidings offering festive treats, tea, and live music across three sessions on 8<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> December at various City locations. Additionally, Festive Flower Arranging Workshops were held on 11<sup>th</sup> December and two further sessions on 13<sup>th</sup> December.



Attendees of the Tea, Tunes and Tidings

The initiative aimed to foster community connections and encourage active ageing by engaging older people in creative activities. Feedback was very positive with more than 100 participants taking part.

## Music in Nursing Homes

In December, Kilkenny's Age Friendly Programme in partnership with Creative Ireland delivered a series of live music performances to retirement homes across the County. This initiative created moments of joy, connection, and wellbeing for older residents during the festive season.

The bespoke Outreach Programme was designed to reflect the needs and interests of our older communities. Featuring local artists Michael Creagh and Tomas Jackman performing traditional songs of the region, each event offered a warm and familiar experience tailored to individual settings. Residents were actively involved in shaping the performances, ensuring they resonated with personal memories and preferences. Supporting local talent and fostering intergenerational engagement, the programme promoted social inclusion and strengthened community connections.

## Healthy Ireland

### Foroige Supporting Health and Wellbeing in the Eastern Environs

Young people from the Eastern Environs area took part in a range of creative, physical, and skills-based activities through programmes delivered at The Drum. During the Drum Autumn/Winter Programmes, participants engaged in off-road trail biking with many trying this type of outdoor adventure for the first time. The Programme targeted young people with an interest in physical activity, supporting confidence building, personal growth, and wellbeing. Music Workshops also provided opportunities for young people to explore creativity through sound, experiment with instruments, learn new skills, and collaborate in a supportive space. Guitar workshops supported young people who experienced social challenges using music as an accessible and enjoyable way to build confidence and develop social connections.

Alongside physical and musical activities, young people were engaged in a variety of creative workshops. In partnership with local art studio The Happy Pottery, Wet Felting Workshops were delivered at The Drum Youth Centre engaging eight young people who explored fibre art using unfamiliar materials and techniques to create both two-dimensional and three-dimensional pieces. Lego making sessions brought young people together to collaboratively build a large Harry Potter Lego set, encouraging teamwork, problem-solving, and imaginative play. The familiar theme generated strong enthusiasm, and the completed piece provided a shared sense of achievement and pride and is now displayed in The Drum.



*Drum Autumn/Winter off-road trail biking*



*Harry Pottery creation from Lego making sessions at The Drum*

## INTEGRATION

The Local Authority Integration Team (LAIT) continues to play a vital role in supporting the integration of diverse communities across Kilkenny. Their work continues to focus on individuals in the following categories:

- Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection (BOTP) – Ukrainians
- International Protection Applicants (IPAs)
- Programme Refugees
- Those granted Refugee, Subsidiary Protection, or Permission to Remain status

Currently, Kilkenny is home to 385 Ukrainians accommodated in 12 properties contracted by the Department of Justice, Migration & Home Affairs. An additional 197 Ukrainians reside in *Offer A Home* properties and Irish Red Cross pledged homes, benefiting from the Accommodation Recognition Payment. Alongside them, 208 IPAs are housed in 4 Department-contracted properties. Employment figures show 29% of Ukrainians and 72% of IPAs are now registered as employed.

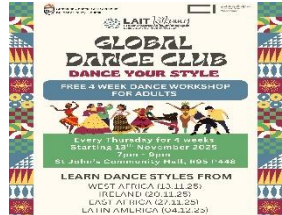
Throughout December, LAIT continued delivering information, advice, and advocacy, including:

- 133 Ukrainians supported through 143 interventions, covering signposting to wider stakeholders.
- 31 IPAs assisted with 31 interventions, addressing immigration processes, work permits, and accommodation queries.

Year-to-date, LAIT has provided 3,456 interventions to 1,910 individuals, underscoring their commitment to fostering inclusion and stability within the community.

### Events:

The Local Authority Integration Team (LAIT) continues to work closely with partner agencies. Here's a snapshot of what happened in December:

- **One Community Many Journeys** – A successful afternoon of cultural Celebration with representatives from all over the world was held at St. John's Community Hall on the 12<sup>th</sup> December, 2025. Foods from Palestine, Ukraine, Gambia, Syria, Afghanistan & Somalia were presented alongside music and dancing. 
- **Global Dance** – West African, Irish, East African, and Latin American dance styles, culminated in vibrant global fusion end of year performance, held on the 12/12/25 at St John's Community Hall. This ended our free, 4- week program of dance for adults. 
- **Weekly Drop-In Clinic** – Every Thursday afternoon, LAIT hosts an open clinic at the Neighbourhood Hall, offering advice and assistance to those seeking support.
- **Information Sessions** – Ongoing at the Wallslough Designated Accommodation Centre, these sessions help new arrivals navigate integration processes and access accommodation supports.

## One Community Many Journeys



## Global Dance



## Offer of a Home and IRC Pledged Properties at 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2025

| 31 <sup>st</sup> December, 2025.                    | Number of Pledged Properties | Number of Resident |
|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|
| Offer a Home Scheme                                 | 54                           | 184                |
| Pledged Properties ( <i>shared and not shared</i> ) | 3                            | 13                 |
| <b>Total</b>                                        | <b>57</b>                    | <b>197</b>         |

The 'Offer a Home' Scheme is managed by Local Authorities on behalf of the Government. A Government tax-free Accommodation Recognition Payment (ARP) of €600 per month is available to property owners offering accommodation to Ukrainians with Temporary Protection status. Further details are available on [www.offerahome.ie](http://www.offerahome.ie) or you can contact the Kilkenny County Council Ukrainian Response Team.

A separate programme is in place run by the Irish Red Cross which is seeking pledges of spare rooms or accommodation that would be shared with the owner or others. If an owner wishes to pledge a spare room in their house, they can contact the Irish Red Cross at (01) 6424600 or email [info@redcross.ie](mailto:info@redcross.ie).

# FIRE SERVICES



**Fire Safety Certificate and Licence applications.**

- 118 Fire Safety Certificates
- 63 Licence applications
- 6 Dangerous Substance Licences
- 95 Fire Safety inspections.



**Community Fire Safety**

- 40 Home Fire Safety Visits
- 63 Primary School Visits
- 8 Open days - callan etc
- Fire safety talks/stands
- 13 Pre Incident plans





**Fire Training**

- Fire Fighting Skills
- Breathing apparatus
- Drill training
- Compartment Fire Behaviour
- Abrasive Wheels
- Emergency First Responder



**Recruitment**

- Kilkenney
- Castlecomer
- Freshford
- Urlingford
- Thomastown
- Graigneamanagh

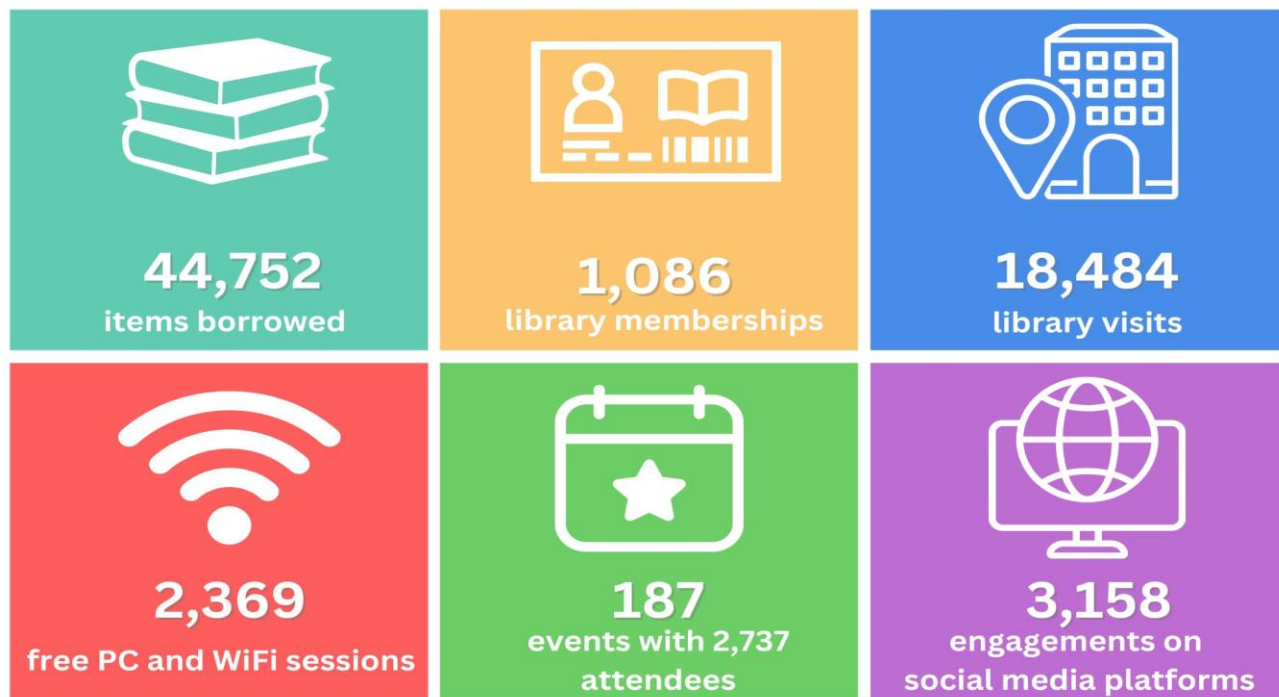


## Fire Brigade Operations

The Fire Service plays a crucial role in making our communities safer, whether it be preventing and protecting people from fire and other risks or responding swiftly and effectively to the incidents and emergencies that occur 24 hours per day/7 days per week/365 days per year. 747 incidents were responded to to-date. These incidents included a considerable number of road traffic collisions, ambulance assists, outdoor rubbish, chimney fires, and automatic fire alarm activations.

## New Command Support Unit

Kilkenny County Council's Fire & Rescue Service has a new Command Support Unit, which was brought into service to enhance the operational capabilities of the Fire Service across the county. This state-of-the-art vehicle, based at Castlecomer Fire Station, provides Incident Commanders with a modern, safe, and efficient facility to manage emergency incidents. The unit is equipped with advanced technology, including photovoltaic panels on the roof and onboard battery systems, which supply power to onboard IT and communications systems. The official commissioning of the Command Support Unit took place on Friday, 12<sup>th</sup> December, 2025. The keys for the vehicle were formally handed over by the Cathaoirleach Mary Hilda Kavanagh of Kilkenny County Council to Station Officer Eddie Brennan and his crew members of Castlecomer Fire Brigade.



## Family Time At Your Library

Family Time at your Library is a literacy initiative featuring storytimes, crafts, toddler play, book bingo, and movie nights, promoting reading and library membership as a fun family activity through the national Right to Read Programme. This month, we had 59 events with 814 people attending events ranging from Family Christmas Wreath Making Workshops to Christmas Family Bingo and lots of Christmas storytimes.



## Festive Events

Kilkenny Libraries offered a rich variety of seasonal activities throughout December, bringing communities together for creative and festive fun. Highlights included Stories and Songs with Santa in Castlecomer and Urlingford along with Christmas-themed storytime and craft sessions in Callan and Ferrybank.

Creative Workshops were a major feature with Christmas wreath-making in Urlingford, Ferrybank, Graiguenamanagh, Mayfair and Clay & Wood Angels in Loughboy. Mayfair also hosted Festive Fabric Star Weaving for Yulefest, an Adults Christmas Craft Workshop and a Festive Puppet Show for children. Additional seasonal treats included Unity Singers Carol Service, Teach Tom Choir, and cosy family film nights in Graiguenamanagh. These events fostered creativity, inclusion, and community spirit during the festive season.



## My Open Library at Mayfair

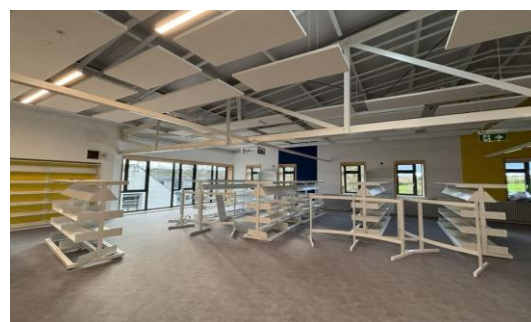
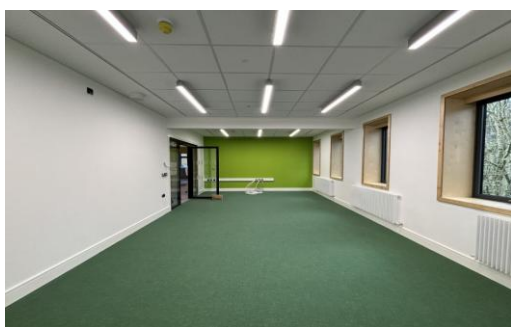
My Open Library is now firmly established at Mayfair Library offering extended self-service access from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. seven days a week, all year-round.

The facility proved particularly popular over the Christmas period while the Library was closed with December recording its busiest month to date: 243 uses (239 *unique users*) and 50 new member inductions.



## Thomastown Library Update

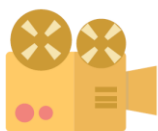
The final works are currently being completed by the Contractor on Thomastown Library with handover scheduled for the end of January. Works to be completed by the Library Service can then commence around building fitout, stocking the shelves, health and safety installations, ICT systems/equipment installation and PR and publicity to prepare for opening.



## Online Services Usage Dec 2025

|                                                                                     |                                                     |                                                                                     |                                         |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
|  | <b>3,644</b><br>eAudiobooks borrowed                |  | <b>108</b><br>online learning sessions  |
|  | <b>1,463</b><br>eBooks borrowed                     |  | <b>32</b><br>language learning sessions |
|  | <b>21,784</b><br>eNewspapers and magazines borrowed |  | <b>46</b><br>eComics borrowed           |
|                                                                                     |                                                     |  | <b>105</b><br>films and shows streamed  |

## Alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals



### Digital Engagement

Library staff prepared, recorded, edited and published 263 posts and videos on our social media platforms in December. Our engagements for the month were 3,158 and our videos and reels had 2,251 views. Our virtual newsletter was sent to 5,841 email accounts.

## Alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals



The December Programme supported global sustainability goals, with Eco Wrapping Made Easy promoting SDG 12 (*Responsible Consumption*) and Neurodiverse Friendly Messy Play reflecting SDG 10 (*Reduced Inequalities*) through inclusive activities.



## ARTS

Over 2025 the Arts Office had wonderful engagement in our various programmes across all our areas of work including Artists Professional Development, Community Programmes and Grants and Bursaries.



### 2026 Grants

The Arts Office announced their annual call out for applications for the Arts Act Grants and their various Artists' Residency Bursaries 2026 in December with a deadline for all awards of Monday 26<sup>th</sup> January, 2026.

### Arts Act Grants

The Arts Act Grants permits a Local Authority to provide financial assistance for the purposes of stimulating public interest in the arts, promoting the knowledge, appreciation and practices of the arts or improving standards in the arts. In this act, the expression 'the arts' means creative or interpretative expression (*traditional or contemporary*) in whatever form and includes in particular visual arts, theatre, literature, music, film, literature, dance and multi-disciplinary practices and events.

### Greywood Arts - Residency Bursary

Greywood Arts - Residency Bursary offers funding for one-week artists residencies, at Greywood Arts, Cork for 2026. The bursary aims to support both established and emerging practitioners by providing them with dedicated time to research and develop their practice and/or work intensively on a specific body of work relevant to the development of their current arts practice.

### **Tyrone Guthrie Centre Bursary – First Time Applicants**

Tyrone Guthrie Centre Bursary – First time applicants offer funding for one-week at the Tyrone Guthrie Centre, Annaghmakerrig, Co. Monaghan, specifically for artists who have never previously attended a residency there. This bursary is designed to give first-time applicants the opportunity to experience the unique environment of the Guthrie Centre, providing dedicated time and space to focus on your creative work, away from everyday distractions.

### **Tyrone Guthrie Centre Bursary - Performing Arts**

Kilkenny County Council's Arts Office in partnership with the Watergate Theatre is offering one-week fully funded residency at the Tyrone Guthrie Centre, Annaghmakerrig, Co. Monaghan, specifically for performing artists. This bursary is designed to give applicants the opportunity to experience the unique environment of the Guthrie Centre, providing dedicated time and space to focus on your creative work, away from everyday distractions.



### **Creative Kilkenny**

Nine internal projects have been funded through Creative Ireland for 2026. These include the Arts Office, Environmental Awareness, the Library Service, the Integration Team, Age Friendly, Biodiversity Office and the Heritage Office. The projects will engage with a wide range of groups and individuals, including local residents, young people and families, new communities, older people and artists.

### **Art of Change**

The very last of the Art of Change Workshops took place in December with Workshops in Colaiste Abhainn Rí. The group explored printed techniques and making inks and paint from natural materials. They discussed materials that were readily available to them that can be used in art making and how making small changes is important and how questioning our choices and purchases does create change.



## ArtEd

Four ArtEd Projects took place in four Kilkenny schools between November and December 2025 with a final evaluation session on 11<sup>th</sup> December. It was attended by the four participating artists, and three teachers. The following artists and schools took part, with 83 children taking part in Workshops:

- Marika Manning Miklosi: School of the Holy Spirit, Ages 10-11yrs, 16 pupils
- Luan Parle: Goresbridge NS, 6<sup>th</sup> Class, 25 pupils
- Gillian Grattan: Ringville NS, 2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> Class, 16 pupils
- Gemma Aloisi: Kilkenny School Project, 1<sup>st</sup> class, 26 pupils

Each group that took part received 10 contact hours with an artist which focused on processes and techniques, building skills and confidence in art making. Marika worked with a group of children with additional needs working with felting. Marika brought them through the process of wool production from the sheep, to carding the wool and washing and dying it and then felting with it. Luan Parle is a musician and worked with the group to write and perform a Christmas song. Gillian Grattan is a playwright and film maker was the class wrote a script and performed a play which Gillian filmed and edited. Gemma Aloisi is a visual artist who worked with the group to create their own series of mini picture books and maps.

## HERITAGE

### **2026 Community Monuments Fund**

The Community Monuments Fund 2026 has been launched. Applications are invited from private owners and custodians of archaeological monuments who wish to safeguard them into the future for the benefit of communities and public. The 2026 Fund will invest a total of €7.5m in the conservation, maintenance, protection and promotion of archaeological monuments. It will: enable conservation works to be carried out on monuments which are deemed to be significant and in need of urgent support; build resilience in our monuments to enable them to withstand the effects of climate change; encourage access to monuments and improve their presentation. For further information see:

<https://kilkennyheritage.ie/2025/12/community-monuments-fund-2026/>



*Community Monuments Fund repair works at Kilbeacon Graveyard 2025*

### **Applications Open for Heritage Stewardship Fund 2026**

Applications are now open for the Heritage Council's Heritage Stewardship Fund 2026. The scheme is designed to assist staff whose core remit may not be fully focused on heritage but whose work has a significant impact on heritage. This includes employees of state agencies and educational institutions proposing heritage-focused projects, as well as local authority-based museum curators, archivists, archaeologists, and architectural conservation officers. The application deadline is 5:00 PM on 19 January 2026. For more information see:

<https://www.heritagecouncil.ie/funding/heritage-stewardship-scheme-2>

### **Applications Open for Heritage Organisations Support Fund 2026**

The Heritage Organisations Support Fund provides core funding to non-profit organisations working in Ireland's heritage sector. Through this fund, the Heritage Council aims to support organisations to: Build long-term strength and stability; Plan for the future and grow strategically; Adopt environmentally friendly practices and contribute to climate action. This fund supports core operational work, not standalone projects. It helps heritage organisations to remain stable, plan for the future, invest in staff and governance, and contribute to climate action and public benefit. For more information see:

[https://www.heritagecouncil.ie/funding/heritage\\_orgs-fund](https://www.heritagecouncil.ie/funding/heritage_orgs-fund)

## FINANCE

The expenditure by service division to the end of December is set out in Table 1. Total Expenditure for the period was €130.4m compared with the annual budget of €120.5m.

| Table 1                                   | Actual YTD December 2025 | Budget Full Year 2025 |
|-------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
|                                           | €'000's                  | €'000's               |
| Housing & Building                        | 36,185                   | 30,784                |
| Road Transport & Safety                   | 32,974                   | 31,382                |
| Water Services                            | 6,515                    | 7,180                 |
| Development Management                    | 14,812                   | 15,417                |
| Environmental Services                    | 18,628                   | 18,991                |
| Recreation & Amenity                      | 8,916                    | 9,425                 |
| Agriculture, Education, Health, Welfare   | 476                      | 354                   |
| Miscellaneous Services                    | 9,108                    | 6,938                 |
| Central Management Charges for Allocation | 2,776                    |                       |
| <b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>                      | <b>130,391</b>           | <b>120,472</b>        |

### Finance Update

The draft Financial Statements for 2025 will be prepared in the coming weeks and will be presented to Council at the March Meeting.

The bank overdraft facility was not utilised in the twelve month period to the end of December.

### Summary of Major Revenue Collections for 2025

| Debtor Type       | Opening Arrears at 01/01/2025 | Accrued    | Vacant Property Adjustments | Total for Collection | Amount Collected | Closing Arrears at 31/12/2025 | Specific Doubtful Arrears | % Collected |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------|
|                   | €                             | €          | €                           | €                    | €                | €                             | €                         |             |
| Rates             | 2,411,467                     | 24,272,998 | 582,530                     | 26,101,934           | 23,090,985       | 3,010,949                     | 302,249 *                 | 90%         |
| Rents & Annuities | 617,225                       | 12,946,579 | -                           | 13,546,059           | 12,834,676       | 711,383                       | -                         | 95%         |
| Housing Loans     | 349,489                       | 3,136,320  | -                           | 3,485,809            | 3,010,470        | 475,339                       | -                         | 86%         |

\*Specific doubtful arrears = (i) Vacancy applications pending/criteria not met & (ii) Accounts in examinership/receivership/liquidation.