



Comhairle Chontae Chill Chainnigh
Kilkenny County Council

CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT

JULY 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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CORPORATE

Eamonn Langton was awarded the Freedom of Kilkenny City



Cllr. John Coonan with the new Mayor of Kilkenny Municipal District, Cllr. Andrew McGuinness



Cathaoirleach Cllr. Mary Hilda Cavanagh with Bill de Blasio, former Mayor of New York at the inaugural Summit of the Cities in Belfast



Cathaoirleach of Kilkenny County Council Cllr. Mary Hilda Cavanagh at the announcement of the completion of the NBP's main infrastructure build works in Co. Kilkenny

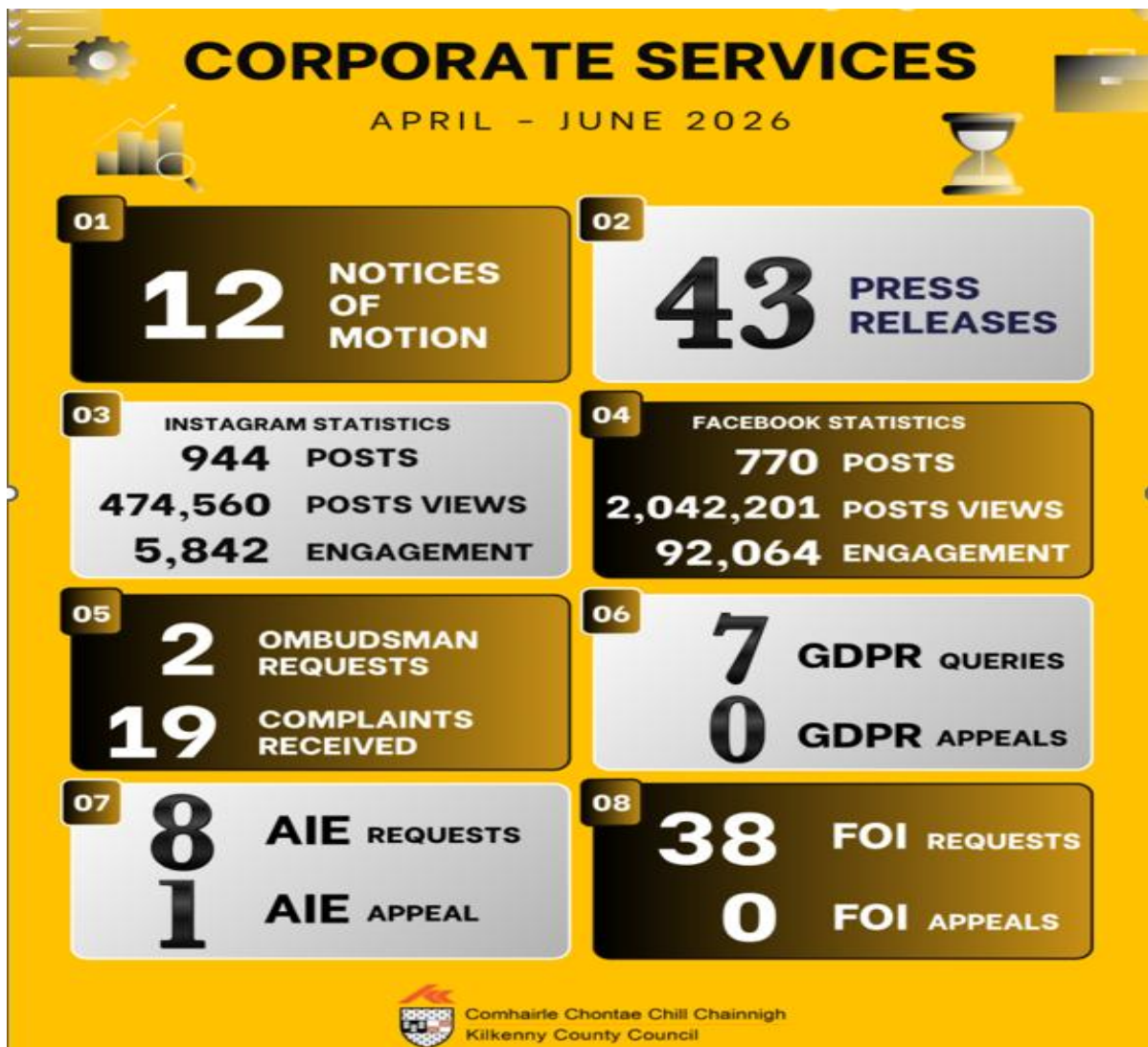


Cllr. Mary Hilda Cavanagh with the new Cathaoirleach of Kilkenny County Council for 2026-2027 Cllr. Joe Malone



Cathaoirleach Cllr. Joe Malone with Leas Cathaoirleach Cllr. Deirdre Cullen





FRANCHISE

NEW VOTER.IE SYSTEM

Electoral Reform Act 2022

The Electoral Reform Act 2022 was signed into law on 25th July, 2022 and introduced significant changes to Ireland's electoral registration system. The aim of these reforms is to make the process of registering to vote simpler, more accessible and better suited to future needs.

Key changes introduced under the Act include:

- A continuous (*rolling*) electoral register, allowing applications throughout the year.
- The option to register online.
- Simpler registration forms and processes.
- Use of Personal Public Service Numbers (PPSNs) to help verify voter information.
- Pre-registration for 16 and 17-year-olds
- New arrangements for people who do not have a fixed address.
- Provision for anonymous registration in certain circumstances.
- The establishment of An Coimisiún Toghcháin (*the Electoral Commission*).

Since the introduction of the Act, local authorities have been preparing for the transition to the new national voter registration system, Voter.ie, which is being developed and managed by Dublin City Council on behalf of all local authorities. While the system will operate on a national platform, each local authority will continue to manage and maintain its own Register of Electors.

Since 2023, Kilkenny County Council has been carrying out an extensive data cleansing exercise to improve the quality and accuracy of voter registration information. Several public information campaigns have supported this work and have resulted in updates to voter records, including additions, amendments and deletions from the Register of Electors as outlined in the following Table:

Year	Total Number of Changes	Additions	Modifications	Deletions
2023	4,026	1,478	2,228	320
2024	20,958	8,438	8,975	3,545
2025	11,858	2,525	5,142	4,191
To-date in 2026	6,032	536	4,030	1,466
TOTAL	42,874	12,977	20,375	9,522

This work is ongoing and includes updating voter records with Eircode, PPSN, Date of Birth, Contact details, where available. The following is the status of the Kilkenny Electoral Register in relation to this voter information:

Total Electorate	Total Electorate with DOB populated	Total Electorate with Eircode populated	Total Electorate with email address populated	Total Electorate with contact number populated	Total Electorate with DOB & Eircode	Total Electorate with PPSN
77,664	67,066	44,973	20,378	18,172	40,584	21,189

The Kilkenny Register of Electors is scheduled to migrate to the new Voter.ie system in August 2026. Following the migration, the current ChecktheRegister website will be replaced by the Voter.ie website for online registrations and related services.

The existing iReg System will be replaced with Voter.ie Backoffice System. As with the current system, Voter.ie will produce the Register of Electors in register book format.

One notable change is that electors within each townland will be listed in alphabetical order by surname rather than by address sequence. While this may present some challenges for canvassing during elections, Voter.ie will include a facility to generate a separate register specifically designed for canvassing purposes.

PLANNING

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

Planning Summary	Total January to June	
	2026	2025
Planning Applications Received	458	461
Planning Applications Granted	367	364
Planning Applications Refused	27	30
Complaints Received	70	73
Warning Letters Issued	53	58
Enforcements Notices Issued	19	30
Cases Closed	226	83
Cases sent for legal prosecution	6	7
Section 5's Received	50	31
Section 5's Decided Upon	47	34

FORWARD PLANNING

St. Canice's Campus/Lacken Masterplan

The Draft Masterplan for St. Canice's Campus/Lacken was published on the 22nd May and submissions are invited until the 3rd July. A drop-in public Information Session was held on Wednesday, 10th June, 2026 at the Medieval Mile Museum, which was very well attended.

Variation 8B

Variation 8B, to reflect the requirements of the Government's *National Planning Framework Implementation Guidelines*, in relation to the accommodation of growth in the settlements of Callan, Thomastown and Graiguenamanagh, was adopted at the June Council meeting and the finalised text and maps will be available in July.

Variation 10

Following the period of public display, a total of 81 submissions were received in respect of Variation No. 10, which proposes the incorporation of the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) for Kilkenny City into the Development Plan. The Chief Executive's Report is currently being prepared for consideration by the Members at the Council meeting scheduled for 20th July.

Castlecomer Settlement Plan

The Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) issued a notice in April in respect of the Castlecomer Settlement Plan (Variation 5), suspending the zoning objectives for lands in Flood Zones A and B in Castlecomer, pending an assessment of the flood risk on the lands. Representatives from the OPR attended the Castlecomer Municipal District meeting in May to outline the process. The Council will shortly commence the preparation of a Variation to incorporate flood risk mitigation measures into the Settlement Plan. The Council website will be kept updated as this process proceeds.

Taking in Charge

Works are progressing on the following estates:

- Cluain Glasan, Kilkenny
- Danville Road Industrial Estate Kilkenny

TC 201 - CBS Access Road, Kilkenny was taken in charge by resolution at Council meeting dated 15th June, 2026. TC 199 - Kilkenny County Council are seeking to initiate the taken in charge process for Friary Walk (Phase 3), Callan, Co. Kilkenny at the July Council Meeting.

Active Land Management

Residential Zoned Land Tax

The public consultation period finished on 01st April 2026. Seven submissions were received. Determinations were made and landowners were notified of the determinations in June.

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.

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

▪ Planning Referrals.....	4
▪ Further Information requests	2
▪ Clarification of Further Information requests.....	0
▪ Section 57 Declarations.....	2
▪ Post planning	1
▪ Part 8	0

The Built Heritage Investment Scheme 2026: Engagement with all successful applicants underway.

The Historic Structures Fund 2026: Engagement with all successful applicants underway.

Building Control

Valid Commencement Notices Received	Valid Disability Access Applications Received
June 2026.....204	June 2026..... 50
June 2025.....170	June 2025..... 22
June 2024.....185	June 2024..... 23
June 2023.....152	June 2023..... 22

TOWN REGENERATION OFFICE

Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant

To-date the Council have paid out €9 million to successful applicants. The following are the full statistics up to end of June, 2026:

Number of Applications Submitted to-date.....	440
Number of Approvals/ Approvals in Principle to-date	337
Grant Drawdown to-date.....	160
Number of Queries during the month of May	106

Expert Advice Grants at 30th June, 2026

Number of Applications Submitted to-date.....	1
Number of Approvals/ Approvals in Principle to-date	0
Grant Drawdown to-date.....	0
Number of Queries during the month of June	10
Value of Grants paid out do-date	€0.00

The Town Regeneration staff will have a stand at the Iverk Piltown Show taking place on the 22nd August, 2026 offering advice on the Vacant Property Grants Scheme.

Town Centre First

The refurbished Community Centre in Urlingford was officially opened by Minister Dara Calleary on the 22nd June. The event was well attended. This is a great example of a Town Team delivering on actions set out in their Town Centre First Masterplan, with the support of the Council.

THRIVE

There is a public information event being held in Carnegie on the 16th July between 5.30 p.m. and 8.00 p.m. This is a drop in event to highlight proposed works being undertaken.



Public Information Event

Date:	16 July 2026
Time:	17:30 – 20:00
Location:	Carnegie Library, John's Quay, Kilkenny, R95 YX65

Contact Information

QR Code:
Town Centre First Heritage
Revival Scheme (THRIVE)



CAPITAL DELIVERY & PARKS

2026/27 Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme Call

The Minister for Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht, Dara Calleary TD, has launched the 2026-2027 Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) with €20 million available for investment. Funding is allocated via a competitive process based on the quality of the applications put forward. To this end, we are once again endeavoring to ensure the highest quality applications are put forward for Kilkenny.

A list of eligible activities is provided; however, it should be noted that this list is not exhaustive.

Land-Based	Water-Based	Air-Based
Walking	Canoeing/Kayaking	Paragliding
Hillwalking/Hiking	Rowing	Hang-gliding
Leisure cycling	Wild swimming	
Mountain biking	Surfing	
Horse riding	Coasteering	
Running	Wind surfing/Kite surfing	
Orienteering	Sailing	
Bouldering, Scrambling, Rockclimbing, Mountaineering	Diving	
Caving	Angling	
Play in nature	Stand Up Paddleboarding	
Passive enjoyment of the outdoors		

Kilkenny County Council is now seeking Expressions of Interest for projects from the public under the following measures:

Measure 1: Small Scale Repair/Maintenance/Development/Promotion and Marketing (Grant Amounts: Up to €40,000 - Maximum 6 applications)

Measure 2: Medium Scale Repair/ Maintenance/Upgrade and New Trail/Amenity Development (Grant Amounts: Up to €200,000 - Maximum 3 applications)

Measure 3: Strategic Large-Scale Repair/Upgrade and New Strategic Trail/Amenity Development (Grant amounts: Up to €500,000 – Maximum 1 application)

Project Development Measure: Will provide funding for the detailed development of projects which would enable them to reach a standard for application under Measure 2 or 3 of ORIS - Local authorities can each submit up to four prioritised applications with a combined value of €100,000 under this Measure.

Expressions of Interest from the general public and the deadline is **4.00p.m. on Friday the 14th of August 2026**

Recently completed ORIS projects below - Countryside Park – Dunmore Link and the new Accessible Kayak Launch Pontoon in Graignamanagh



Some other ORIS Projects that are progressing:

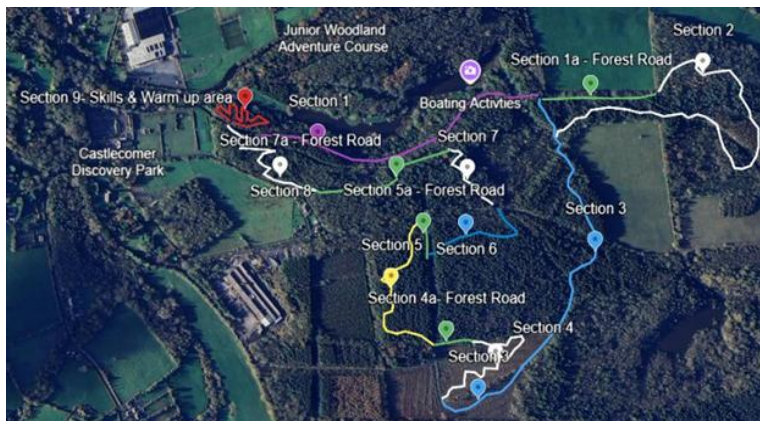
Brandon Hill Trail Enhancement and Upland Protection Scheme

Tenders were sought for the next phase of this project, the works phase. The tender assessment is now completed, and it is expected the successful contractor will be appointed in July and that works will commence on site by the end of the summer.

The primary aim of this project is to reduce the negative impact on this upland habitat caused by recreational use along the summit trails. The secondary aim is to provide users with a more defined, safer and attractive informal upland-style path to the summit and cross.

Castlecomer Discovery Park - New Mountain Bike Trail

The detailed design has been completed, and a tender notice published on e-Tenders for the construction of a 7km of a mountain bike trail within the forested area of the Castlecomer Discovery Park and adjoining Coillte woodlands. It is expected that the tender evaluation will be completed late July and the tender awarded shortly thereafter. On completion the use of this new amenity will be free to the general public.



Plan layout of proposed mountain bike trail

Kilmacow Community Complex

Funding was received under ORIS to refurbish the pedestrian footbridge over River Blackwater into the Kilmacow Community Complex, along with trail enhancements, new trail signage including distance markers and age friendly seating and parking provision.

A restricted tender package has been issued to specialist contractors to carry out the bridge refurbishment element of this project. It is anticipated that a contractor will be appointed towards the end of July with the in-river works commencing shortly thereafter.

Goresbridge Riverside Masterplan

Having secured funding under the 2025 ORIS programme, Kilkenny County Council has engaged the services of consultants to assist with the development of a Masterplan for the Goresbridge Riverside Amenity Area. The purpose of this plan is to set out a roadmap to develop tourism in the area based around land and water-based outdoor recreational activities. As part of this process the first community consultation session took place in the Goresbridge Community Centre on the 8th of July.

In addition, as part of the overall development, Kilkenny County Council assisted the Cois Bearbha Group with the design and planning of a new Motorhome Aire development within the Cois Bearbha People Park. On foot of this, a planning application was submitted by the Cois Bearbha Group in June 2026, and while subject to planning approval, the community group are actively engaged with KLP with regard to the funding of the next phase of this proposal under the Leader Programme.



South East Greenway – Opening of Second Phase.



Kilkenny County Council, with project partners, were delighted to open the second section of the South East Greenway to the public on Friday June 19th. This 7km section runs between Curraghmore and Abbey Road, Ferrybank. The opening of this section means that 13km of the 24km of the greenway is now open to the public.

Kilkenny's Riverside Water Sports Activity Facility

A planning application has been lodged by Kilkenny County Council to An Coimisiún Pleanála for a Riverside Water Sports Activity Facility to be located within the grounds of County Hall. Funded by Fáilte Ireland under their Platform for Growth programme, the proposed facility will provide community spaces, boat storage and changing facilities for water-based sports such as kayaking, canoeing and dragon boating. As part of the project, a new pontoon will be constructed to access the River Nore.



A public consultation on the planning application is now open to the public until 13th August, 2026.

Further information on the public consultation can be found on the consult website <https://consult.kilkenny.ie/en/consultation/river-nore-facilities-kilkenny>

Woodstock Gardens & Arboretum

From the first of July, the Woodstock Gardens Lady Louisa tearoom is now open 7 days a week from 11:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.



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	June Status
Callan 2023	King's River Town & Village Project – Riverbank and amenity area	€247,500	Natura Impact Statement & Planning required
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	Second round stakeholder consultation 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 awaiting approval for masterplan.
Glenmore 2025	Renovate two vacant buildings into community café & shop	€500,000	Tender Stage
Johnstown 2025	Public realm enhancements. Development of a public space for activities in the square, Johnstown.	€300,000	Due to commence August 2026
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	Housing department progressing

RURAL REGENERATION DEVELOPMENT FUND			
Community Group	Project Description	Grant	June 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	Tender Stage
Glenmore	Develop the Southeast Greenway Connectivity Link and Pink Rock Cycle Loop & Amenity Trail	€2,356,423	Pre Tender Approval
Thomastown	Thomastown Library and upgrade to Community Centre	€4,013,115	Completed, Official opening 23 rd July, 2026

COMMUNITY & CULTURAL FACILITIES CAPITAL SCHEME			
Community Group/ Year Approved	Project Description	Grant	June Status
Johnstown Sports Field 2022	Contribution to development of walkway around complex	€40,000	Works near completion
Mooncoin Celtic AFC 2023	LED Floodlighting for extra training area	€20,000	In progress
Gowran Community Complex 2024	Contribution towards the refurbishment of a community hub	€27,000	Works near completion
Glenmore Camogie Club 2025	Contribution towards the re-instatement of walkway	€29,000	Extension of time requested
Mullinavat Drama Group 2025	Lighting, Sound, Projector, Screen, Curtains	€11,000	Works in progress
Marian Hall Kilmacow 2025	Installation of heating, bathrooms, kitchen	€11,000	Completed
Kilkenny Girl Guides 2025	Emergency Lighting & Fire Alarm	€15,000	Extension of time requested
Kilkenny SOS Lawn Bowls 2025	Fencing, Lighting, Bicycle Bays, shed	€30,000	Contractor Appointed
Freshford Town AFC 2025	Floodlighting for all weather pitch	€32,000	Works Completed
St. Joseph's Athletic Club 2025	Shelter and walking track	€11,000	Works completed
Callan AFC Football Club 2024	Dressing Room upgrade	€36,000	Works completed

CLÁR			
Community Group	Project Description	Grant	June Status
Galmoy Community Hall 2023	Provision of a MUGA	€30,015	Extension of time granted by Dept, due to delays with lease
Windgap Handball Alley 2024	External insulation of two outside walls	€29,419	Change of scope of works approved by dept. Procurement process in progress
Naomh Aodhan Community Centre CLG 2024	Upgrade works on rebuilding and refurbishing of handball alley and ground works	€44,312	Works completed
St. Brendan's National School, Muckalee 2025	Pitch Development	€65,000	Contractor appointed.
Lisdowney GAA 2025	Construction of new MUGA and Ball Wall	€65,000	Contractor to be appointed in July 2026
Coolagh Community Hall Upgrading Project 2025	Hall and Kitchen upgrade	€77,022	Works in progress
Moin Ruadh National School 2025	Construction of new MUGA with carparking area and sensory garden	€100,000	Due to commence
Killanaspick Lighting project 2025	Roadway lighting	€22,500	Due for completion September 2026
Lisdowney GAA 2026	Phase 1 – Heating upgrade to main hall	€15,000	Due to commence
Castlecomer Enterprise Centre	Upgrading of the Fire Alarm System & Emergency lighting	€35,000	Due to commence

COMMUNITY RECOGNITION FUND			
Community Group	Project Description	Grant	June Status
Christian Youth Centre	Development of existing building to provide community space, meeting rooms	€390,607	Works in progress
Ballyragget Community Hall	Renovation of CYMS Hall	€173,000	Procurement process ongoing. Extension of time sought until December 2026

AGE FRIENDLY

Age Friendly Regional OPC and Vice-Chair Communications Training

Communications training was delivered to the Older Person's Council (*Chair and Vice Chair*) and Age Friendly Programme Managers across the South East Region on Tuesday the 2nd of June, 2026 in Kilkenny. The training was delivered by Communications Specialist, Orlaith Carmody.

The training provided a comprehensive and practical understanding of effective communication and public engagement. Participants were guided through preparing and delivering presentations about the OPC, including public speaking and building confidence. The Training also addressed engaging with the media and communicating key messages for the Age Friendly programme.



Attendees of the Age Friendly Regional OPC Chair and Vice-Chair Communications Training

"Songs of our Place" Songwriting Workshop

On the 10th and 17th June, Age Friendly Kilkenny partnered with singer-songwriter Luan Parle to deliver *Songs of Our Place* at St. Patrick's Community Centre, Loughboy. Funded by Watergate Theatre, the intergenerational community songwriting project enabled participants to explore local stories, history, nature and lived experiences through music. The Age Friendly group created an original song, *River of Love*, inspired by personal stories and connections to place. Guided by Luan Parle, participants collaborated in an inclusive and supportive environment, regardless of musical experience.

The project promoted social connection, wellbeing and creative expression while strengthening community engagement and celebrating Kilkenny's shared heritage through music.



Attendees of "Songs of Our Place" songwriting Workshop

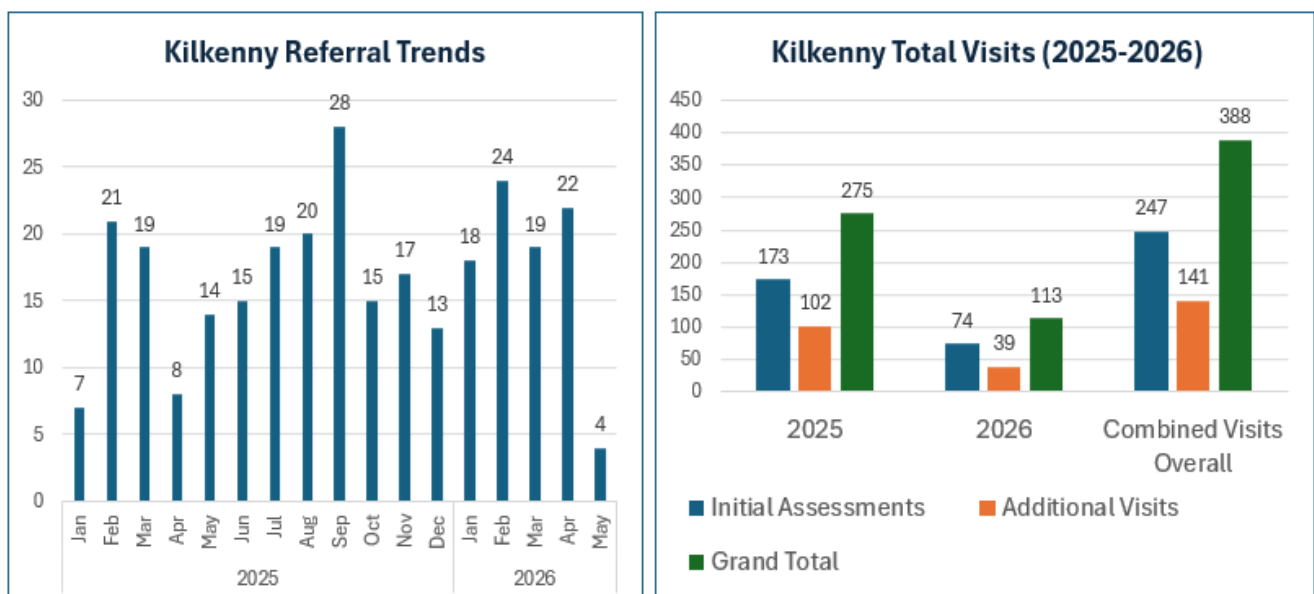
Kilkenny Older Persons Council Training

The Kilkenny Older Person's Council (OPC) Executive attended an induction training session on Wednesday, 17th June, 2026 facilitated by Regional Programme Manager, Caroline Brogan. The session provided a comprehensive overview of the National Age Friendly Programme, including its structure and governance, as well as the roles and responsibilities of the Older Person's Council Executive. Members were also introduced to the core values and ethos of the OPC and were informed of the strategic priorities and plans for 2026.

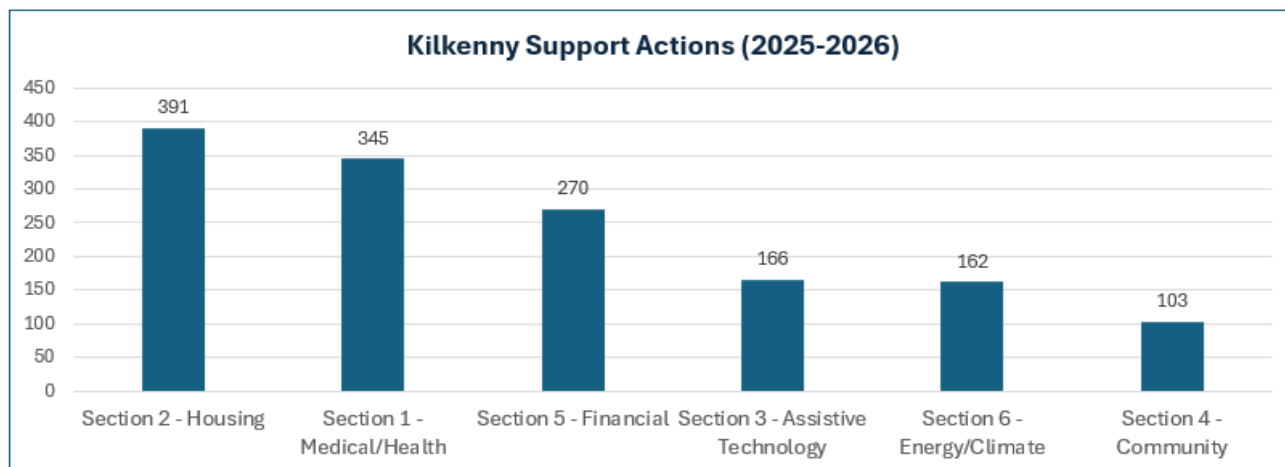
The induction was highly informative and well received by all attendees. It equipped members with the knowledge and understanding needed to effectively fulfil their roles on the Executive. The training provided a strong foundation for the OPC's work in the year ahead.

Healthy Age Friendly Homes

Outlined below are details of the number of older people in Kilkenny who have been assisted by Healthy Age Friendly Homes to continue to live in their own home with dignity and independence. Since the 1st January 2025, 247 older people across Kilkenny have benefited from support from Healthy Age Friendly Homes.



Total Number of Participants Awaiting a Visit	60
Total Supports Offered for: Medical/Health; Housing; Assistive Technology; Community; Finance and Energy/Climate (Jan 2025 – 08th May 2026)	1,437



The Local Coordinator conducts home-based assessments and works with the older person to develop an action plan across six domains which can be broken down into the following areas housing, community, health, technology, finance, climate and energy.



Programme Details:

Healthy Age Friendly Homes is a free service which is available to homeowners, private, Approved Housing Body and Local Authority tenants. Local coordinators play a critical role in ensuring older people receive timely and appropriate support and reinforce the Councils commitment to the development of age friendly communities through measurable social benefit.

The Healthy Age Friendly Homes Programme continues to support older people, over 65 years of age, to live in their home for as long as possible. The Programme accepts referrals from a variety of sources such as Self Referrals, Family and Friends, Elected Representatives, Local Authority Staff, Public Health Nurses, GP's and Occupational Therapists and Community Organisations.

Consent from the older person (verbal) must be obtained before the referral is submitted. Once the referral is received, the Local Coordinator will be in touch with the older person to arrange a free home visit.

Town & Village Renewal Scheme

Urlingford Community Centre

Minister Dara Calleary officially opened the newly refurbished Urlingford Community Centre on the 22nd June, 2026 marking a significant achievement for the local community. The extensive refurbishment has delivered a modern, accessible and inclusive facility that will support a broad range of community, social, recreational and cultural activities for all age groups.

The project was completed at a total cost of over €1 million, with funding provided through the Town and Village Renewal Scheme of €500,000, the Community Centre Investment Fund of €393,489, €100,000 from Kilkenny County Council, and a contribution of more than €55,000 from the Urlingford Town Team and the local community.

The official opening recognised the dedication and collaborative efforts of the community, committee members and project stakeholders whose commitment brought the project to fruition. The enhanced facility will serve as an important community hub, supporting social inclusion, community participation and improved quality of life for residents of Urlingford and the surrounding area.



Official opening of the newly refurbished Urlingford Community Centre

St. Kieran's Community Hall Johnstown

Minister Dara Calleary also officially opened the refurbished Johnstown Community Hall on the 22nd June, 2026. The project represents a significant investment in community infrastructure, providing a modern and accessible facility that will serve as a valuable hub for local groups, organisations and residents.

The refurbishment was completed at a total cost of €410,877, comprising €306,996 in funding from the Community Centre Investment Fund, together with contributions from Kilkenny County Council and over €50,000 raised by the Johnstown Town Team and the local community.

The official opening recognised the commitment and collaboration of all stakeholders involved in the project. The upgraded facility will continue to play a vital role in supporting community activities, strengthening social connections and enhancing quality of life in Johnstown for years to come.



Official opening of the newly refurbished St Kieran's Community Hall Johnstown

Kilkenny Local Community Safety Partnership

The Kilkenny Local Community Safety Partnership met on 16th June 2026 to review the findings of the 2025 Community Safety Survey and assess emerging community safety priorities across the County. Nearly 1,000 responses were received from members of the public, young people and local businesses, providing a strong evidence base for future planning. Key issues identified included anti-social behaviour, substance misuse, concerns regarding Garda visibility, and the need for improved lighting, CCTV and community engagement initiatives. While the majority of respondents reported feeling safe, concerns were more pronounced in urban areas and during evening and night-time periods.

The Partnership also received an update from An Garda Síochána on local crime trends. While Kilkenny continues to be regarded as a safe place to live, work and socialise, increases were noted in minor assaults, domestic incidents and drug-related offences, while burglary rates have declined. The importance of community-based initiatives such as Community Alert schemes and ongoing engagement between communities and An Garda Síochána was highlighted.

To support delivery of the forthcoming Community Safety Plan, the LCSP agreed to establish three thematic working groups: Community Safety and Policing; Youth Engagement and Prevention; and Community Wellbeing, Education and Substance Awareness. These groups will drive collaborative actions and targeted interventions in response to the priorities identified through the survey process.

The meeting also highlighted the success of recent community safety engagement events and reaffirmed the Partnership's commitment to working with statutory agencies, community organisations and local residents to enhance community safety and wellbeing throughout Kilkenny City and County.



*Bernie Mealy, Foroige,
Elaine Byrne, PCSA Chairperson,
Maria O'Shea LCSP Coordinator,
Lisa Morris, Amber Kilkenny
Inspector Alma Molloy.*

Maria O'Shea, LCSP Co-ordinator attended the launch of the Policing Priorities for An Garda Síochána 2026-2028 on the 23rd June, 2026. The Policing & Community Safety Authority is an independent, statutory agency responsible for overseeing and assessing the policing performance of An Garda Síochána in order to improve the policing services provided to communities.

Kilkenny Public Participation Network (PPN):

Kilkenny Public Participation Network (PPN) continued to expand during June, with membership increasing to 517 groups and organisations representing a diverse range of sectors, including community development, residents' associations, sport, arts, heritage and environmental initiatives.

The PPN also launched its Social Inclusion Plan 2026-2028, providing a structured framework to advance social inclusion across the County. The plan enhances mechanisms for identifying, evidencing and progressing issues affecting disadvantaged and marginalised communities through local authority decision-making processes.

Kilkenny PPN hosted its Spring/Summer Plenary and Networking Event under the theme "Building Brighter Futures Together". The event brought together community groups, organisations, and local stakeholders to share information, build connections, and promote collaboration, with a strong focus on inclusion and community funding opportunities. The event also showcased vibrant performances from Kilkenny Equal Vibes and the Kilkenny Global Dance Club.

Kilkenny PPN continued to support its members through free training opportunities, governance support, and a weekly newsletter highlighting local development, consultations, training, and funding opportunities.



Healthy Ireland

New Healthy Ireland & Age Friendly Walking Programme Launched

The new Healthy Ireland Age Friendly Walking Programme was launched on Thursday, 11th June, 2026 at the Watershed Athletics Track. The programme is led by SOS Kilkenny in partnership with Get Ireland Walking, Healthy Ireland, and Kilkenny Age Friendly. Designed to encourage older adults to become more physically active, the programme is suitable for people of all fitness levels and abilities and is fully inclusive. Participants who wish to participate can complete one lap or ten, everyone is encouraged to take part at their own pace in a welcoming and supportive environment. The programme is free of charge and takes place every Thursday from 11.00 a.m. to 12.00 p.m. at the Watershed.



Stepping out, Age Friendly Walking Group

LEO, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM

Summary of 2026 Awards to Businesses

- €246,725 in direct financial assistance was approved for 14 manufacture /export service businesses in located in throughout the County.
 - €96,161 awarded in Feasibility Study Grant
 - €65,074 awarded in Business Priming Grant Assistance
 - €85,490 in Business Expansion Grant assistance
- 4 Businesses have commenced LEAN one to one consultancy programmes to investigate possible resource efficiencies and process improvements their businesses
- 12 businesses have availed of the Grow digital programme and 12 business have availed of digital for business to prepare and implement a plan for the adoption of digital tools and techniques across the enterprise.
- 19 businesses have availed of the Energy Efficiency Grant totalling €168,127 to support investment in technologies and equipment of enterprises
- 17 business have availed of the green for business consultancy support scheme. This scheme supports businesses to become greener and environmentally friendly.
- 316 people participated on focused small business training, including 59 people participating on the Starting Your Business programme
- 129 businesses have availed of specialised business specific mentoring on a variety of topics including finance, marketing, social media marketing and HR

National Enterprise Awards – Regional Winner

Huwmo Limited who are supported by Local Enterprise Office Kilkenny, were winners of the South East regional award at the 2026 National Enterprise Awards. The awards, which took place at the Round Room in the Mansion House in Dublin, were in their 26th year and run annually by the Local Enterprise Offices.



Shane Doherty with his business, Huwmo Limited, took home the South-East regional award. Huwmo Is a SaaS platform helping independent hotels optimise pricing, fill empty rooms and earn commission. Huwmo is owned and managed by founder Shane Doherty and co-founder Micheál Dunne.

Event - Essential Financial Insights for Start - Ups, SMEs and Scaling Business with Paul Merriman of AskPaul

LEO Kilkenny ran an event called Essential Financial Insights for Start - Ups, SMEs and Scaling Business for start-up founder, SME owner, or growing business where businesses focused on practical finance strategies for start-ups, SMEs and scaling businesses. This session aimed to give business owners the confidence and clarity they need to make informed financial decisions at every stage of growth.



Winners of the Local Enterprise Office 'START' competition for start-up businesses announced



The final of the "START" competition, was held at County Hall, John Street, Co Kilkenny on Friday 12th June. This successful initiative was organised by Kilkenny County Council, Local Enterprise Office.

The initiative has launched back in April and the competition attracted entrepreneurs from right across the County with an array of innovative business ideas. The full programme involved a series of business workshops through a 6-week accelerator called Vision to Action.

Finalists were invited to pitch for a chance to win an investment fund worth €5,000

Following a series of individual pitches on Friday last 12th June to the judging panel which comprised of Aileen McGrath, Local Enterprise Office, Rosemary Ward Deputy CEO and Business Consultant – Propelor BIC and Eugene Crehan Director of Programmes and New Frontiers – SETU, the winners were announced. In first place, Niamh Butler was announced the overall winner. Her business is called YooHoo Skincare. Niamh has developed a hormone-free skincare brand created specifically for women experiencing perimenopause and menopause. In joint second place Odhran O'Shea from Second self which is premium nutrition brand producing an all-in-one wellness pouch placing multiple products with just one scoop. Also, in joint second place was Stephen Dwyer from Cloud mount. Cloud mount is an AI and regulatory compliance platform.

Kilkenny Tourism

The annual Kilkenny Tourism Summer Networking Evening will take place on Thursday 23rd July 2026 at Butler House & Garden. This is an opportunity to meet fellow tourism and hospitality businesses in Kilkenny, Based on feedback from members, the theme of this year's event will be **Collaboration & Empowerment** – focusing on how businesses can work together and empowering you to develop your business further to keep up with the changing travel demands and trends.

The speakers are:

Brian O'Flynn: Head of Ireland's Ancient East at Fáilte Ireland

Grainne Kelliher: Kerry Tourism Industry Federation sustainability committee lead

Blaise Brosnan: managing director of Management Resource Institute & author

Moderated by **Nevin Cody** – founder of Shenanigans Walks tours & director of the Retail & Business sector on the board of Kilkenny Tourism.



NIGHT TIME ECONOMY PILOT

Stakeholder Forum

The Kilkenny Night Economy Pilot held their first Stakeholder Forum of 2026 on Monday 15th June in the Council Chamber. The forum chaired by Ignacio Peregrina (Smithwick's Experience), was attended by a cross section of business, community and council representatives. New Kilkenny Night Time Economy Advisor Feargus Dunne updated the forum on actions around the night time economy in the City, including grant schemes and marketing initiatives.

Night Time Economy Diversification Grant Scheme (Call 4)

This recently launched fund will support applicants who wish to trial new and exciting concepts between Sunday and Thursday after 6pm, which can support the diversification of our night time economy in Kilkenny City. Events must take place between Sunday July 19th and Thursday 5th November.

Applications were invited under four streaming funds in this call. Closing date for applications was Tuesday 30th June.



Kilkenny City - Night Time Economy Diversification Scheme 2026 (Call 4)

Kilkenny Night Time Economy Pilot is seeking applications from local businesses, community groups, event organisers, collaborators and individuals to develop projects that will support the growth and diversity of the night time economy in Kilkenny City. This fund will support applicants who wish to try new and exciting concepts between Sunday and Thursday after 6pm that can support the diversification of our night time economy.

Note: Events must take place on dates between Sunday July 19th and Thursday 5th November 2026.



For further details including the Application Form and Guidance Note visit:
<https://www.localenterprise.ie/Kilkenny/Enterprise-Development/Night-Time-Economy/>

Return completed applications to: ntefund@kilkennycoco.ie

HOUSING

The following information gives the up-to-date progress for June 2026 under the various support services.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Executive Summary

The main focus for the LA Affordable Purchase Team in June was preparing for the Portal Opening and for the Ministerial Visit. On June 18, 2026, Minister for Housing James Browne officially launched 'An Tobar' in Freshford, Co. Kilkenny. This mixed-tenure development delivers 20 high-quality, energy-efficient homes. The development represents a major milestone in Kilkenny County Council's commitment to expanding accessible housing options under the national *Housing for All / Delivering Homes, Building Communities 2025-2030* action plan.

Development Overview

- **Development Name:** An Tobar ("*The Well*"), Freshford, Co. Kilkenny.
- **Total Units Delivered:** 20 residential homes.
- **Affordable Purchase Allocation:** 10 units (8 x 3 Bed & 2 x 2 Bed)
- **Social Housing Allocation:** 9 units.
- **Group Home:** 1 unit (*for four residents with intellectual disabilities – managed by Auora Kilkenny*)
- **Design & Build Team:** Ormonde Construction Ltd & Brian Dunlop Architects
- **Kilkenny County Council Architects:** Van Dijk Architects Ltd.
- **Sales Agent:** Boyd's Auctioneers.

Local Authority Affordable Purchase Scheme Timeline

The 10 affordable homes will be sold below open market value by utilising the Local Authority Equity Share mechanism. Applications must be submitted strictly via the Council's online application portal:

- **Application Portal Opened:** Wednesday, June 24, 2026, at 12:00 Noon.
- **Application Portal Closes:** Wednesday, July 22, 2026, at 12:00 Noon.

Launch Highlights:

The launch was attended by Minister James Browne, Cathaoirleach Cllr. Mary Hilda Cavanagh, Municipal District Chairperson Cllr. Michael McCarthy, and Acting Director of Services Ian Gardner. Kilkenny County Council Senior Management Team, Elected Members, Oireachtas Members, Housing Capital/Affordable Housing Staff, Ormonde Construction Staff, Project Team & Architects, plus Auora Kilkenny Representatives (non-profit) and HSE funded organisation, & Media Contacts.

Speaking at the event, Minister Browne said "I'm delighted to be here today with Cathaoirleach Mary Hilda Cavanagh and the Municipal District Chairperson Cllr Michael Mc Carthy to see first-hand the delivery of these new mixed tenure homes, which will provide much-needed social housing while also helping more people to achieve home ownership at an affordable price." "Backed by almost €4.5 million in Government funding, this project demonstrates our strong commitment to supporting local authorities and delivering real housing solutions for our communities."

- **Strategic Intent:** Ian Gardner, A/Director of Services highlighted that partnering with local developers provides a vital, affordable housing option for low-to-middle-income families locked out of the private market.
- **Community Impact:** These high-quality, energy-efficient homes bring long-term social stability and accessible homeownership to the Freshford community.

Next Steps & Active Operations

- **Viewing & Sales Management:** Our Sales Agents Boyd's Auctioneers are actively managing property viewings and handling all direct sales queries.
- **Application Processing:** The Affordable Purchase Team is currently checking initial submissions and preparing valid applications for assessment.
- **Customer Support:** The Affordable Purchase Team are managing a high volume of public inquiries regarding scheme process and eligibility via email and telephone and in person callers.
- **Targeted Public Engagement:** Outreach has commenced with 14 local businesses in Freshford to promote the scheme directly to people living and working in the locality. Prior to the portal closing, marketing campaigns will extend county-wide, targeting major employers in both Kilkenny City and the wider County to maximise awareness.



HOUSING OPERATIONS STATISTICS

HOMELESS SERVICES SUMMARY 2026	JUNE	To-Date
Homeless Presentations	69	385
Prevention & Interventions	43	267
Emergency Service	11	68
Not eligible / Did not avail of service	15	50
HAP Place Finder Service		
No of Homeless HAP tenancies @ 1 st day of month	38	
No of Homeless HAP tenancies created during month	0	3
Number of Homeless HAP tenancy breakdowns	1	12
No of Homeless HAP tenancies in place @ last day of month	37	
Other Social Housing Tenancies supported / created during month	12	45
Notices To Quit (NTQ'S)		
Valid NTQ's received	2	21
No. of NTQ solutions found	3	23
Provision of Emergency Accommodation		Avg Per Month
Households in Temporary Emergency Supported Accommodation @ June 30 th	32	32
Households in Temporary Emergency B&B accommodation	10	8
Households in Temporary Emergency B&B Accommodation that are families	6	7
Households (singles/couples) in Transition Emergency Accommodation (Own	46	44
Households (Families) in Transition Emergency Accommodation (Own Front	25	22

SOCIAL HOUSING SUPPORT APPLICATION SUMMARY 2026	JUNE	TO
Number awaiting Social Housing Support (<i>Gross Need</i>)	1,241	
Number awaiting Social Housing Support (<i>Net Need</i>)	696	
Number of Social Housing Applications received	95	435
Number of applications incomplete / awaiting further information/clarification	52	212
Number of applications validated and ready for assessment during the	43	168
Number of applications assessed	30	16
Number of applications awaiting assessment	63	

HOUSING ASSISTANCE PAYMENT (HAP) SUMMARY 2026	JUNE	TO
Total active HAP tenancies	311	
New HAP tenancies set up	12	31
HAP tenancies allocated social housing	48	132
Closed HAP tenancies	65	172
HAP rent reviews	210	591
HAP other tenancy amendments	240	673

HOUSING ALLOCATIONS 2026	JUNE	TO
Local Authority Social Housing offers of allocations	10	107
Approved Housing Body offers of allocations	7	48
RAS offers of allocations	0	4
LA/RAS/Leasing/ AHB offers of allocations	17	159

TENANCY MANAGEMENT

COMPLAINT TYPE	Number of Complaints	Number Investigated & Ongoing	Number Pending Investigation	Number Closed Following Investigation
Drugs related; Violence; Racism; Threats & Intimidation	32	7	1	24
Damage to property, animal related (dog/horse/fowl); Refuse/dumping/hoarding	53	22	2	29
Noise; Parking/boundary issues; Other	121	55	5	61
Total No. To Date	206	84	8	114

MAINTENANCE HOUSING STOCK

MAINTENANCE CALLS 2026	JUNE	TO DATE
Number of maintenance calls	626	3,500
Number of maintenance calls that resulted in a call out	469	2,625

PRIVATE HOUSE GRANTS

The housing grants budget is €3,349,286 made up of €2,846,893 (85%) grant funding and €502,393 (15%) KCC contribution for 2026.

GRANTS COMMITTED BUT NOT PAID		
Scheme	To Date	Amount
HGD - Housing Adaptation Grant	125	€1,478,860
MAG - Mobility Aid Grant	10	€38,900
HOP - Housing Aid for Older Persons	208	€1,423,964
Total	343	€2,941,724

GRANTS PAID OUT IN 2026		
Scheme	To Date	Amount
HGD - Housing Adaptation Grant	36	€413,820
MAG - Mobility Aid Grant	4	€16,650
HOP - Housing Aid for Older Persons	89	€556,087
Total	129	€986,557

HOUSING LOAN ACTIVITY 2026						
Loan Type	Carried Over from 2025	Received	Approved	Amount Approved	Number Paid	Amount Paid
Local Authority Home Loan	2	10	2	€262,600	2	€262,600
Local Authority Purchase and Renovate Loan	0	0	0	€0	0	€0
Caravan Loan - Budget 2026 - €80,000	0	0	0	€0	0	€0
Total	2	10	2	€262,600	2	€262,600

SOCIAL HOUSING RELETS

SOCIAL HOUSING RELETS ACTIVITY 2026	JUNE	TO DATE
Number of social housing relets completed	3	44
Number of social housing relets in progress		50

RETROFITTING

RETROFITTING ACTIVITY 2026	JUNE	TO DATE
Number of units retrofitted	6	21
Number of units in progress		34

PRIVATE RENTED INSPECTIONS

PRIVATE RENTED INSPECTIONS SUMMARY 2026	JUNE	TO DATE
Number of inspections completed by Kilkenny County Council	69	312
Number of inspections completed by external inspectors	5	26
Total Number of Inspections Completed	74	338

ENVIRONMENT

CLIMATE ACTION

Community Climate Action Programme

Phase 1 of the Community Climate Action Programme is now complete and involved 22 community groups delivering climate action projects with the support of the Community Climate Action Officer.

We are delighted to showcase an example of a completed project in Piltown AFC who installed a bike rack and shelter to encourage club members to reduce their carbon footprint by cycling to the club grounds instead of travelling by car. They also planted a native hedge on the perimeter of their soccer pitch and adjacent to the popular walking track. This hedge will attract more wildlife to the area as it provides a natural habitat for birds, and it will also help store carbon.



Kilkenny Launch of the Local Environmental Action Fund (LEAF)

The Climate Team are preparing to launch the new Local Environmental Action Fund (LEAF) on **Tuesday 7th July**. The fund is a new initiative aimed at supporting communities across the City and County to deliver practical environmental improvements and enhance local biodiversity.

The fund, sponsored by IPB Insurance and supported by the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications, will be administered locally by the Climate Team, will provide financial assistance to community groups, resident associations and voluntary organisations to undertake projects that promote environmental sustainability, climate action, and improved local amenities.

Guidelines and the corresponding application form will be available on the Kilkenny County Council website after the official launch.

WASTE & LITTER

Waste Enforcement

The End of June saw the progression of 5 additional illegal waste activities heading for prosecution. 1 existing case was closed following remediation of a site. All illegal waste activities are logged on our system and responded to in a timely manner with investigation and fines issued and enforcements taken if the correct person or landowner is identified.





An educational program is underway to make the agricultural community more aware of their responsibilities when it comes to management of waste and materials originating on their farmlands.

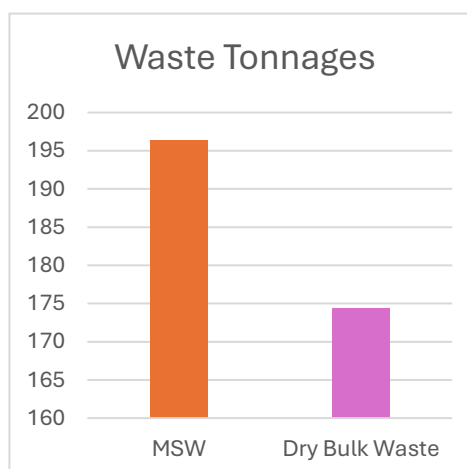
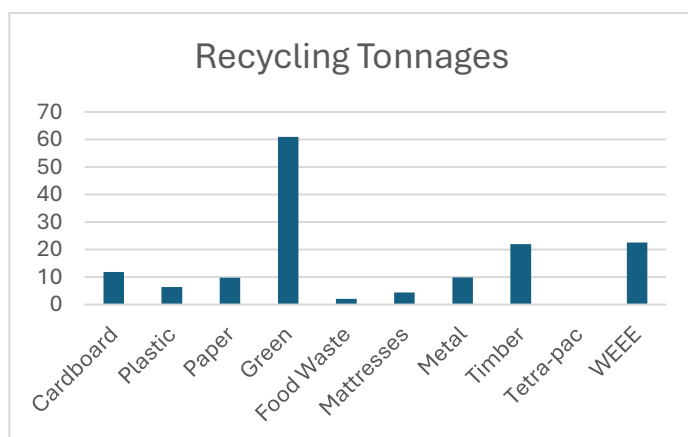
A presence will be at the Agricultural Shows that are taking place over the next few months to give guidance on how to deal with waste on farms.

Following on from the NEP results for 2025, the key areas of focus for 2026 will be household and commercial waste to ensure proper waste segregation and 3 bin systems are implemented County wide in these areas. Follow ups and fines will be issued for non compliance in these areas.

Kilkenny County Council 2025		
Waste		
Illegal Waste Activities		●
Construction & Demolition Material		●
Household Waste		●
Commercial Waste		●
Plastics & Producer Responsibility Initiatives		●

Dunmore Civic Amenity Site (CAS)

Tonnages of Waste and the various recycling streams deposited at the Dunmore facility during the month of June can be seen in the infographic below and show an increase across the board from May as the summer months continue to get busier.



June saw 196.34t of MSW accepted into the site while 174.32.5t of Dry Bulk Waste entered the site. As part of the Landfill Aftercare the landfill gas flare continues to run 24hrs per day seven days per week extracting and burning approximately 35m3 of landfill gas per hour.

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

Gum Litter Taskforce Campaign

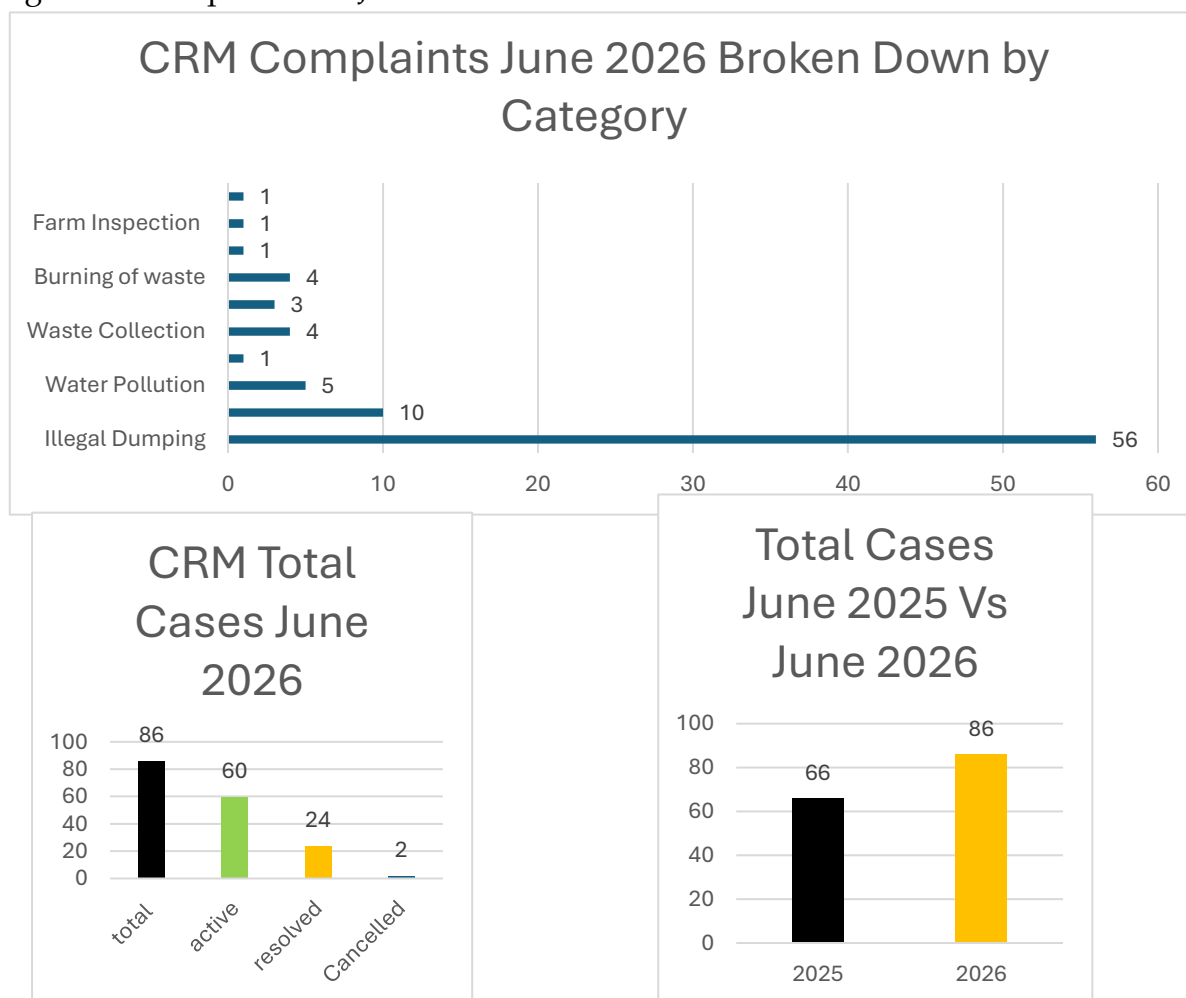
The Gum Litter Taskforce completed its Summer Roadshow in Kilkenny on the 18th of June, promoting responsible gum disposal and cleaner communities. The visit comes as research from the Gum Litter Taskforce reveals that littering is now viewed as socially unacceptable by more than 4 in 5 (82%) young people. However, almost 1 in 4 young people still do not regard chewing gum as litter, highlighting the need for continued education and awareness.



AIR NOISE WATER

Environmental Complaints

All Environmental complaints received are logged on the CRM (Customer Relations Management) System. 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. See detailed breakdown of categories below, along with a comparison to June 2025.



Water Quality – Farm Inspections

The target for 2026 is 308 inspections. Kilkenny County council staff are currently carrying out and conducting follow up and initial inspections for 2026 and highlighting sub basins to be nominated for inspections. To date, 130 initial GAP Inspections, 56 follow ups and 4 cross reports have been carried out.

Septic Tank Inspections

Kilkenny County Council have started inspections under NIP and currently have **24** inspections completed. The EPA have released the DWWTS Report for 2025. Kilkenny County Council are improving year on year with closing out historical septic tank inspections which is resulting in higher closure rates every year over all septic tank inspections. The results are inclusive of 2025 inspections so it's not specific to historical inspections.

Kilkenny County Council have jumped from 57% in 2023 to 67% 2024 and now 69% in 2025. We're going in the right direction gradually and we will have more focus this year on closing out all current ones which should put a good dent in the numbers for 2026 results next year. Kilkenny coco staff plan on carrying out NIP inspections earlier in the year so close outs can be made by year end.

Noise

Noise monitors are currently in Germany for calibration. When calibrated, these monitors will aid in identifying noise nuisance and planning enforcement .

Air

Staff will be monitoring the information received from air monitors. All solid fuel inspections have been completed for quarter 1. The remaining will be carried out in Q4.

DISCHARGE LICENCES

Kilkenny County Council are in the process of following up with non-compliances for discharge licenses from 2025 results.

RURAL WATER

Multi Annual Rural Water Programme 2024-2026

Group Water Schemes who have funding approval from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage are progressing planned works. It is expected that most works should be completed by year end. The Department is launching a new online portal for applications for the upcoming MARWP 2027-2029 programme. The portal is expected to open for applications shortly.

Well Grants - Improvement Works to Private Water Supply

	2026	Same Period 2025
Applications Received	99	109
Amount paid out as at 6/5/2026	€238,436	€216,706
Applications Finalised	93	89

Subsidies for GWS Operations

The closing date for receipt of subsidy applications was 30th June 2026. 50 applications have been received. Rural Water Section have commenced verifying and assessing applications.

Water Quality and Testing

Rural Water will shortly begin its 2026 programme of water quality sampling and analysis. Following a tender process for an INAB-accredited laboratory to undertake the 2026 testing programme, Eurofins Environment Testing Ireland Limited have been awarded the contract. The company will carry out sampling of GWSs, laboratory analysis of samples taken from GWS and Small Private Supplies and reporting in accordance with national compliance requirements.

BIODIVERSITY

The Hare's Corner Progress Report June 2026

The term 'Hare's Corner' is an old farming expression for the corner of a field or an area of rough ground which wasn't intensively farmed, so instead it was 'left to nature'. The Hare's Corner project aims to help landowners make a little more space for nature on their land by creating pocket-sized habitats which are good for wildlife. The Hare's Corner programme is co-ordinated by the Burrenbeo Trust and is funded under the Local Biodiversity Action Fund 2026 and aligns with Action 6.5 of the Kilkenny Biodiversity Action Plan 2025-2030.

The scheme sought participants in January 2026, tree and hedge planting occurred in spring, the remaining elements are to be completed over the summer. Participants could apply for a Mini Woodland (50 native trees), Wildlife Hedge (50 native species), Orchard (5 heritage varieties), a Pond (includes a site visit from an Advisor and a Plan for Water), and/or a Plan for Nature (includes a site visit from an Advisor and a bespoke report with recommendations). The tables below provide a progress report of the first 6 months of the programme in Kilkenny.

Mini Woodland, Wildlife Hedge and Heritage Orchards

	Heritage Orchard	Mini Woodland	Wildlife Hedge
Delivered	50	25	35
Total number of trees	250	1250	1750

Ponds

	Plan for Water	Approved Ponds	Completed Ponds
Delivered	22	17	0

Note: The deadline for completed ponds is the 31st of August

Plans for Nature

	Plan for Nature assigned	Plan for Nature completed
Delivered	20	6

Note: The deadline for completed Plans for Nature is 31st of August

LOCAL AUTHORITY INTEGRATION TEAM [LAIT]

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 394 Ukrainians accommodated in 12 properties contracted by the Department of Justice, Migration & Home Affairs. An additional 180 Ukrainians reside in Offer A Home properties and Irish Red Cross pledged homes, benefiting from the Accommodation Recognition Payment. Alongside them, 191 IPAs are housed in 3 Department-contracted properties.

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

- 80 Ukrainians supported through 99 interventions, covering accommodation, education, finance, immigration and signposting to wider stakeholders.
- 94 Ukrainians attended 8 group Induction Sessions upon arrival at the DAC.
- 52 IPAs assisted with 87 interventions, primarily addressing immigration concerns, work permits, and accommodation queries.

Year-to-date, LAIT has provided 918 interventions to 693 individuals, underscoring their commitment to fostering inclusion and diversity 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 June, 2026:

Refugee Week was celebrated from 15 th to 21 st June this year. This marked Ireland's fourth Refugee Week and also commemorated the 75 th Anniversary of the Refugee Convention—an international agreement affirming that people forced to flee are entitled to protection, dignity, and hope.	
LAIT contributed to the week by organising a series of events to mark the occasion and collaborating with CIF Members – Kilkenny Leader Partnership and Kilkenny Recreational Sports Partnership.	

The *Pilgrimage* photo exhibition by Philippe Lopes was launched on 15th June at the Mayfair Library, Kilkenny. The exhibition showcased powerful images depicting the experiences and challenges faced by refugees leaving their home countries. Philippe Lopes is a photojournalist whose work focuses on human rights, environmental issues, and education, and he is a member of the National Union of Journalists.



Irish-Syrian journalist and activist Razan Ibraheem delivered a moving and insightful talk at the Mayfair Library.

In addition, a successful screening of *Souleymane's Story* took place at the Watergate Theatre.



On 18th June, a friendly football match was held between Kilkenny Internationals and Carlow Community Football Team.

Kilkenny secured a 4-0 victory, and the event provided an excellent opportunity for community integration.



The Refugee Week grand finale took place on 19th June at the Watergate Urban Park. The programme featured performances by the Global Dance Club, Ukrainian Choir Grono, the South Sudanese Acholi Dancers, Irish folk duo Cré, and the Rhythm Makers, who also led a Drumming Workshop. Alongside the performances, a range of food stalls offered dishes from Palestine, Gambia, Ukraine, and Syria, celebrating the rich cultural diversity of the participating communities.



Drop-In Clinic – Every Tuesday and Thursday afternoon, LAIT hosts an open clinic at the Neighbourhood Hall, offering advice and assistance to those seeking support. Working in partnership at Tuesday clinic with HSE and Kilkenny Leader Partnership to expedite signposting to most queries.

Information Sessions – Ongoing at the Wallslough Designated Accommodation Centre, these sessions help new arrivals navigate integration processes and access accommodation supports.

Transition of Temporary Protection Supports for Ukrainians in Ireland

Ireland is transitioning its response to Ukrainians under Temporary Protection from an emergency model to a longer-term, sustainability-focused approach. Temporary Protection has been extended to March 2027, but State supports are being progressively reduced to encourage independence and labour market participation.

Key Changes

▪ **Introduction of Transition Scheme:**

A new immigration pathway (expected September 2026) will allow eligible Ukrainians to move to a longer-term status (Stamp 4-type). Eligibility will require employment history and independent housing, reinforcing self-sufficiency.

▪ **Withdrawal of State Provided Accommodation:**

Commercial accommodation (e.g. hotels) will be phased out between August 2026 and March 2027. Individuals will increasingly need to secure private or community-based housing. Support will remain in place for vulnerable cases.

▪ **Reduced Support for New Arrivals:**

Since late 2025, newly arrived Ukrainians are provided State accommodation for 30 days only, after which they must source their own housing.

▪ **Reduction in Hosting Supports:**

The Accommodation Recognition Payment will reduce from €600 to €400 per month from October 2026, which may impact the availability of hosted accommodation. This will phase out completely by March 2027.

▪ **Voluntary Return Measures:**

A Voluntary Return Programme is being developed for those wishing to return to Ukraine.

These reforms represent a significant shift towards reduced State provision and increased self-reliance. Local authorities, including Kilkenny County Council, will play a central role in managing housing demand and supporting integration during this transition period.

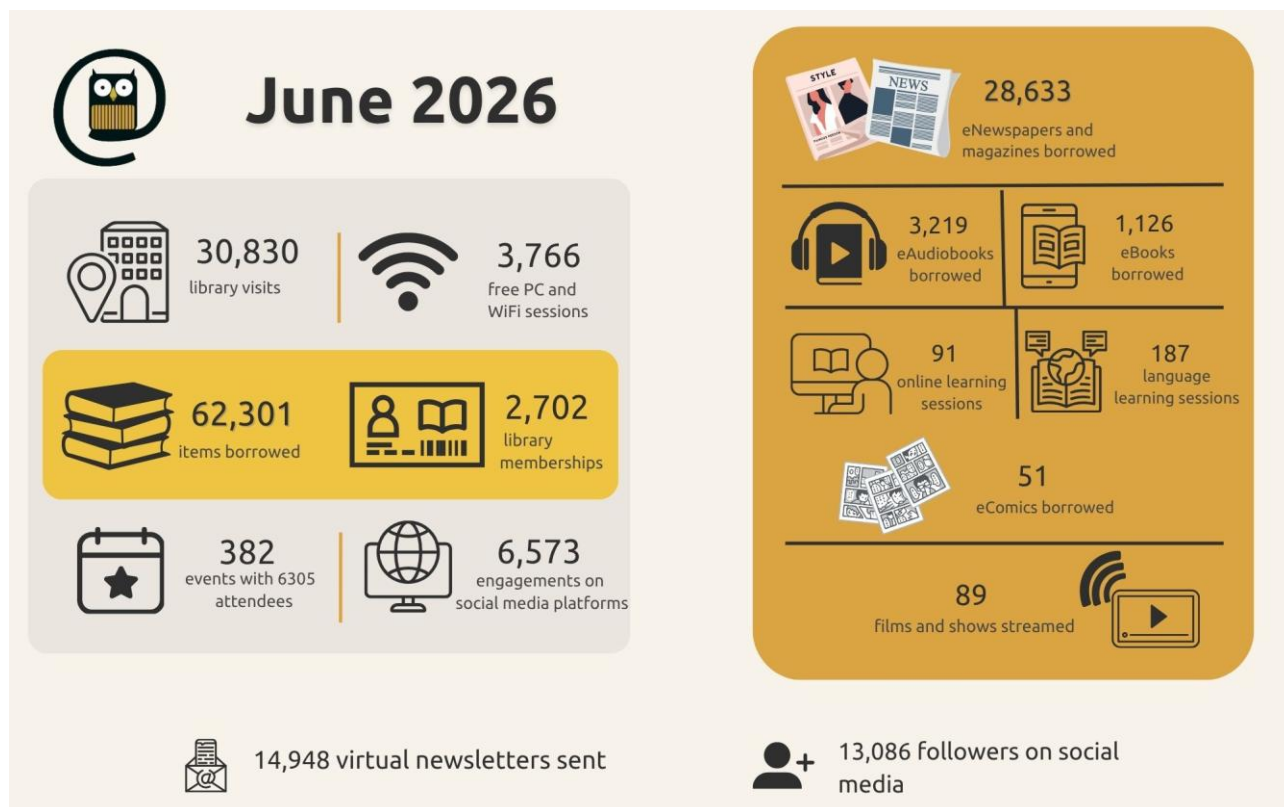
Offer of a Home & IRC Pledged Properties at 30th June, 2026	Number of Pledged Properties	Number of Residents
Offer a Home Scheme	49	168
Pledged Properties (<i>shared and not shared</i>)	2	12
Total	51	180

Offer of a Home Scheme

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. There was a reduction in the monthly ARP payment from €800 to €600, from June 2025. This reduction sought to mitigate any unintended impact on the private rental sector. It also reflects recent policy changes which aim to ensure that such temporary and timebound supports for people who are Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection are proportionate and equitable. A separate programme is 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

Accommodation Recognition Payment

Changes to the eligibility criteria for the Accommodation Recognition Payment (ARP) have been introduced under Part 3 of the Residential Tenancies (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2026. From 3rd March 2026, new applications for properties that have been registered with the Residential Tenancies Board (RTB) will no longer meet the scheme's eligibility criteria. This applies to properties registered with the RTB at any time since 4 March 2022. Tenants in rental properties will also no longer be eligible to make new applications for the scheme. A notice has now been placed on Gov.ie webpages related to ARP and on the scheme's FAQs page informing prospective applicants of the change. Further details on the Offer of a Home Scheme are available on www.offerahome.ie or you may wish to contact Kilkenny County Council's Integration Team.



Summer Stars 2026

Summer Stars 2026 has made an excellent start across Kilkenny Library Service, with **1,235 children registered to date**, representing approximately **52% of our overall target of 2,390 participants**. Staff across all branches have worked proactively to promote the programme through library visits, events and outreach activities, resulting in strong early engagement from children and families. With summer programming continuing throughout July and August, we are confident of maintaining this momentum and achieving our participation targets.



Cruinniú na nÓg 2026

Cruinniú na nÓg 2026: Kilkenny County Council Library Service delivered an extensive programme of free creative activities for children and young people across the County as part of Cruinniú na nÓg 2026. **1** Events took place in library branches from 2-6 June and were attended by **391** children and young people. Events included animation workshops led by Cartoon Saloon animator Fabian Erlinghäuser, creative writing sessions with author Debbie Thomas, Children's Books Ireland 'Book Doctor' provided personalised reading

consultations for children and families. a heat press design workshop for teens, an outdoor drumming workshop, and the immersive “Messy Adventures” role-play village for younger children. The programme highlighted the Library Service’s commitment to fostering creativity, literacy, inclusion and cultural participation, while reinforcing libraries as vibrant community hubs supporting young people throughout County Kilkenny.



Environmental Science Kits for Ecological Recording (ESKER) Kits Relaunch

Kilkenny County Council Library Service, in partnership with the Biodiversity Officer, has relaunched the ESKER (Environmental Science Kits for Ecological Recording) programme. The updated kits, available from Mayfair and Loughboy Libraries, provide user-friendly ecological recording equipment to help people explore local biodiversity. The themed kits cover bats, birds, plants, insects and water ecology, supporting citizen science, biodiversity awareness and ecological recording. Originally developed by the Heritage Council and Kilkenny Library Service, the initiative encourages community engagement with nature and contributes to biodiversity conservation and climate action objectives under the Kilkenny Biodiversity Action Plan 2025–2030.

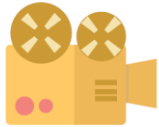


Library Activities

This month we held lots of activities and events across our libraries.

These events included:

- Age-Friendly AI Workshop – Mayfair Library
- 1926 Census Talk with Genealogist Noreen Maher – Loughboy Library
- Copper Wire Jewellery Workshop – Graiguenamanagh Library
- Decluttering for Wellness Workshop – Graiguenamanagh Library
- Adult Beginner's Sewing Workshops – Thomastown Library
- Mindful Art Sessions – Ferrybank Library
- Bridging the Past Exhibition – Urlingford Library
- A Morning with Colm Tóibín (Livestream Event) – Castlecomer Library



Digital Engagement

Library staff prepared, recorded, edited and published **237** posts and videos on our social media platforms in June. Our engagements for the month were **6,753** and our virtual newsletter was sent to **14,948** email accounts.

Alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals



SDG 4: Quality Education

Library activities this month supported **SDG 4: Quality Education** by promoting literacy, creativity and lifelong learning through the Summer Stars reading programme, Cruinniú na nÓg events, digital and creative skills workshops, genealogy talks, and hands-on learning opportunities for children, young people and adults across the County.



SDG 15: Life on Land

Library activities also supported **SDG 15: Life on Land** through the relaunch of the ESKER ecological recording kits, which encourage biodiversity awareness, citizen science participation and environmental education. By providing access to equipment and resources for exploring local wildlife and habitats, the programme helps communities engage with nature and contribute to biodiversity conservation efforts.

ARTS

LIVING VALUES LIVING FUTURES

This event was invitation only and was designed for community groups and members of the Tidy Towns groups. It was designed to enable them to share experiences and celebrate ongoing local projects. We also provided two presentations on the Earth Charter to build capacity supporting their goals, helping build stronger connections across communities. The session was designed to be engaging and creative and included opportunities for making and learning new creative skills.



Kilkenny County Council Arts Strategy Consultations

Kilkenny County Council Arts Office undertook a series of public consultations as part of the development of our new Arts Strategy. This strategy will support us, as an organisation, to sustain and strengthen artist activity throughout the City and County, ensuring Kilkenny's position as a centre for excellence for the arts and a successful and thriving arts environment. Through this consultation process, we aim to listen carefully to a wide range of perspectives, enabling us to ensure that diverse voices are heard and valued. The insights gathered will help us identify current needs, opportunities, and challenges, and will inform a strategy that is inclusive, responsive, and reflective of the rich cultural life of our communities



The Afterwords Collective returned to the Tea Houses, Kilkenny, for their second exhibition in this unique and atmospheric setting, bringing together a deeply personal and reflective body of work inspired by poetry, memory, place, and human connection.

Curated by Shane Gallagher, the exhibition opened with a soft opening on Wednesday, 10th June and continues daily until Wednesday 17th June, with the official opening taking place on Saturday 13th. The launch was attended by over 200 people.

At the heart of the collective's practice is poet Frances Moore, whose writing acts as the starting point for each artist's creative response. Members of the collective individually select one of Moore's poems and interpret its themes, emotions, and imagery through their own preferred artistic medium. The resulting exhibition is a rich and diverse conversation between poetry and visual art, spanning painting, ceramics, printmaking, thread work, sculpture, and mixed media practices.

Themes woven throughout the exhibition include the changing local environment, the movement and symbolism of water, the emotional shifts that accompany different chapters of life, and the evolving relationships between family. The groups also hosted an artist talk offering further insight into the collaborative process behind the exhibition and the individual stories, memories, and poetic connections that shape this thoughtful and moving collection of work.

Festival of Art and Experimentation

As part of our Tea House residency programme Cult Collective & Sarah Kelly have developed the Festival of Art and Experimentation, a dynamic programme of exhibitions, talks, performances and events taking place across Kilkenny from 25–27 June. Showcasing some of the most exciting emerging and established artists working in the south east, the festival celebrates creativity, collaboration and the pushing of artistic boundaries through experimentation. Whether you're an artist, arts enthusiast or simply curious, people came along to experience the work, and be part of the conversation.

The Afterwords Collective



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The exhibition also celebrates the collective itself — a group of artists and educators whose shared passion for creativity, dialogue, and community is evident throughout the work. Visitors were invited to attend an *artist talk on Tuesday 16th June from 6–7pm*, offering further insight into the collaborative process behind the exhibition and the individual stories, memories, and poetic connections that shape this thoughtful and moving collection of work.

Rachel Burke, exhibition *Blue is the Eye*

Celebrated for her evocative explorations of landscape and memory, Rachel opened her latest solo exhibition at Teahouses Kilkenny on June 20. The exhibition presented a new body of work tracing the river as it flows into the City, expanding Burke's ongoing fascination with water, line, and layered imagery. Curated by Shane Gallagher as part of a dynamic summer programme funded by Kilkenny Arts Office and Creative Ireland, the show launches with a public opening from 5 to 8pm and runs through July 3.



CULTURE NIGHT

The Arts Office received 21 applications for Culture Night funding and 19 events were awarded a total of €19,480.

This included Culture Night and Night Time Economy funds. Culture Night will take place on Friday 18th September.



Creative Kilkenny - Cruinniú na nÓg 2026

The Cruinniú na nÓg 2026 commenced on 7 May and culminated in a vibrant county-wide celebration on 6th June. Delivered in line with the Creative Ireland vision of empowering communities through creativity, wellbeing and inclusion, the programme was a resounding success, providing 37 high-quality, free creative experiences and demonstrating a strong commitment to community engagement, inclusivity and artistic excellence, ensuring young people could access meaningful and accessible creative opportunities.

A rich and varied programme celebrated youthful creativity, including the Irish language film showcase *Céad Focal* with TADA Theatre, miniature painting, drumming, creative printmaking, and animation workshops delivered across all libraries. Notably, artist Carrie Lynam's engagement with young people in the Outpatients Clinics at St. Luke's Hospital exemplified best practice in **meeting** young people where they are, providing a calming and creative distraction that helped to reduce anxiety and improve the clinical experience for both children and staff.

Targeted and Inclusive Night-Time Programme:

A series of carefully curated evening and late-night events supported older teens and targeted groups. These included sensory workshops, inclusive dance sessions in partnership with Down Syndrome Kilkenny, animation workshops in libraries, and late-night creative sessions at Happy Pottery Studio. These initiatives provided safe, welcoming and accessible spaces for participation.

Key Outputs

- **37 Cruinniú na nÓg included 4 night-time events** delivered across all four Municipal Districts
- **5,704 participants** engaged across the programme
- **31 professional artists employed**, supporting the local creative economy and ensuring a high standard of delivery

Creative Ireland funding supported a number of events throughout Kilkenny for example Shoppe Together an Intergenerational Skill Share programme, delivered at Mayfair Library, was a highly successful and in-demand initiative. This pop-up workshop series brought young people and older adults together to sew and create using recycled textiles. Led by Julia MacConville and Susanne Horsch, it promoted upcycling, skill-sharing and sustainability, while strengthening community connections and creative confidence.



Additional funding secured through the Creative Ireland Health and Wellbeing Fund supported the strong commencement of *Fuaim na Cuimhne* (Sound of Memory) in June, delivering a live arts programme across retirement homes in County Kilkenny with high levels of engagement. Through inclusive, artist-led sessions in music, storytelling and gentle movement, the initiative promotes positive ageing while reinforcing creativity as a powerful driver of social connection, emotional wellbeing and lifelong cultural participation. Sustained engagement strengthens relationships, supports memory and recall, and helps ensure older people remain meaningfully connected to the cultural life of their communities.

Key Outputs

- 9 events delivered across the County
- Performances in 7 services: IWA, Sacred Heart, Drakelands, L'Arche, Tinnapark, St. Columbas and Mount Carmel
- 7 professional artists engaged, supporting the local creative economy and ensuring a high standard of delivery
- Strong participation and audience engagement across all events



Fuaim na Cuimhne (Sound of Memory)

FINANCE

The expenditure by service division to the end of June is set out in Table 1. Total Expenditure for the period was €65m compared with the annual budget of €129m.

Table 1	Actual YTD May 2026	Budget Full Year 2026
	€'000's	€'000's
Housing & Building	18,665	36,921
Road Transport & Safety	15,002	33,045
Water Services	2,872	5,928
Development Management	7,457	16,101
Environmental Services	9,052	19,972
Recreation & Amenity	4,717	10,229
Agriculture, Education, Health, Welfare	200	348
Miscellaneous Services	5,651	6,847
Central Management Charges for Allocation	1,452	
OVERALL TOTAL	65,068	129,391

Rates Invoices 2026

The annual rate invoices for 2026 totalling €25.8 million were issued to 2883 rate customers in February. This represented an increase of 4% in the 2025 figure. A waiver of 50% of the increase was granted to all customers with a bill of €3,000 or less. 1800 customers received this waiver. Commercial rates are payable in full from 1st January 2026. A prompt payment discount of 8.3% (*capped at €300 per rate account*) is available for customers who pay bill in full before end of May 2026 or enter into a monthly payment plan before April 2026.

Rates Collection 2026

Debtor Type	Opening Arrears at 01/01/2026	Accrued	Waivers & Credits	Total For Collection	Amount Collected	Closing Arrears at 30/06/2026	Specific Doubtful Arrears	% Collected
	€	€	€	€	€	€	€	
Rates	2,672,384	25,914,667	195,555	28,279,946	19,279,806	9,000,141	595,844	70%

Finance Update

The bank overdraft facility was not utilised in the six month period up to the end of June 2026. The Local Government Auditor has commenced his audit of Annual Financial Statement 2025.