



Comhairle Chontae Chill Chainnigh
Kilkenny County Council

CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT

MARCH 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.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS 2

ROADS..... 3

PLANNING 7

CAPITAL DELIVER & PARKS 9

COMMUNITY..... 12

LEO, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM 18

HOUSING..... 20

ENVIRONMENT..... 23

INTEGRATION..... 28

FIRE SERVICES..... 30

LIBRARY..... 32

ARTS..... 35

HERITAGE 38

FINANCE 39

ROADS

Kilkenny County Council has received €7,768,216 from Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) in 2026 for works on the National Road network. This allocation supports progress on major/minor schemes, pavement improvements, and safety programmes across the County.

NATIONAL ROADS

Major National Road Schemes (*Advancing to Phase 3*)

Funding of €1.2m has been provided to progress two strategic national road projects:

- N24 Waterford to Cahir -500k
- N25 Waterford to Glenmore -700k

Both schemes will progress into Phase 3 (*Design & Environmental Evaluation*) during 2026.

Pavement Improvement Schemes (*3 Projects identified*)

The allocation includes funding of €3.86m for three pavement improvement and active travel schemes:

- N76 Callan Bypass – Pavement Renewal & Active Travel Measures
- N29 Slieverue Roundabout – Pavement Renewal
- N76 Reviewfields (*Kilkenny Ring Road*) – Pavement Renewal

Minor Safety Works (*HD15 & HD17 Programmes*)

Funding of €550k has been secured to progress the following safety works/schemes:

- M9 Danesfort Park and Share
- N25 Glenmore Rural Bus Stop
- N25 Safety Improvement Works
- N76 Cuffesgrange Junction Improvement
- N78 Castlecomer Business Park – Right Turn Lane

HD28 Wearing Course Replacement (*Additional to Main Allocation*)

Under TII's HD28 programme, the following locations have been identified for wearing course replacement in 2026:

- N78 Coolbaun
- N77 Castlecomer Roundabout
- N76 Killamery

These works are *not* included in the €7.76m allocation.

Progress on Minor Works Schemes

Funding of €635k has been received for minor schemes:

- N24 Tower Road – Close out
- N77 Ballyragget Village to Ballynaslee Road Improvement – Land Acquisition and close out
- N24 Carrick Road CPO – Currently back with An Coimisiun Pleanala for a decision on holding an oral hearing.

NON-NATIONAL ROADS

Grant allocations were also received from the Department of Transport in the amount of €21,706,125 for work on the Non-National Road Network. The key target areas for road improvement are the Restoration Improvement & Restoration Maintenance grants, amounting to 64% of the overall funding for non-national roads.



Restoration Improvement



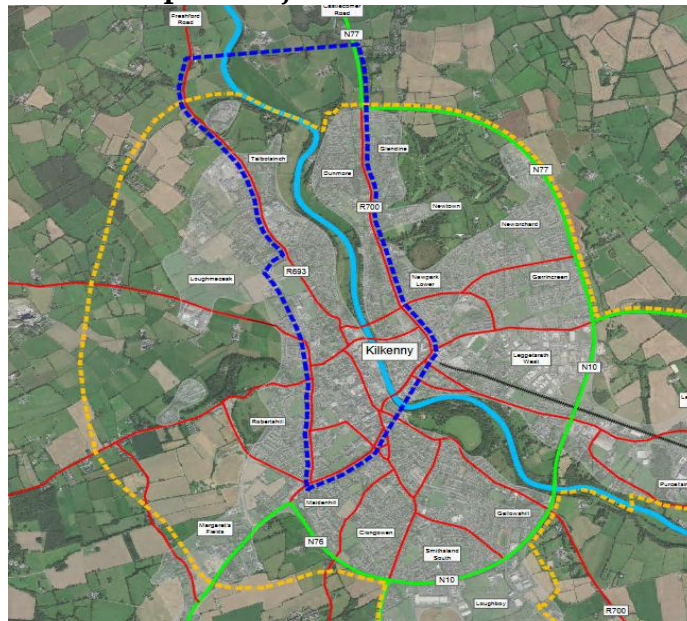
Restoration Maintenance



New Velocity Patcher (Pothole repair machine) February 2026

Other significant projects included in the grant for progressing in 2026 are:

Kilkenny City Northern Transport Project €300k



Consultants AtkinsRealis were appointed in October 2025. The first public consultation was held in March 2026. The next year will include extensive environmental surveys with a second consultation in 2027 when a preferred option is developed.

Loughmacask Sustainable links Projects €100k



Consultants were appointed in September 2025 and the 1st public consultation to get feedback on the study area is on March 12th 2026. Further consultation on the emerging preferred option is proposed in Q3 of 2026 with the PBC (*preliminary business case*) to be issued to the DoT in Q4 2026.

Ferrymountgarret Bridge €1,440,000



Currently out to tender for upgrade works. Works will commence in 2026

R700 Thomastown Quay Wall €300,000



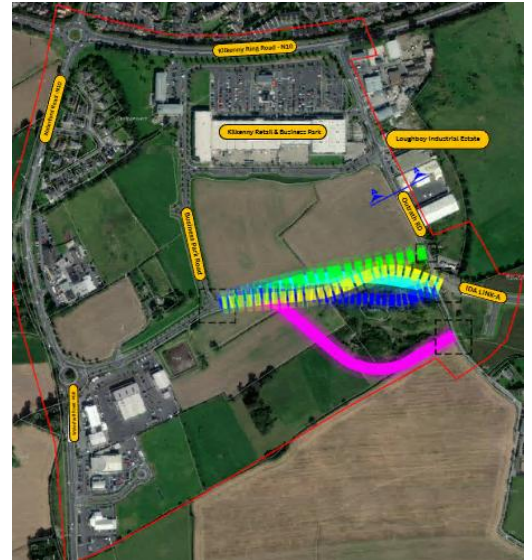
Currently working with Consultants to determine the most environmentally sensitive approach of carrying out remedial works to the Quay wall and road.

OTHER ROAD CAPITAL WORKS

IDA Relief Road

Consultants were appointed in September 2025 to progress the Objectives R2 & R3 of the County Development Plan to link the Bohernatounish Road to the N10 Waterford Road. A preliminary consultation is to be held on March 19th with the route options.

It is proposed to bring the scheme to Part 8 in Q3 2026.



CBS School - Loughmacask Link Road Phase 2

Kilkenny County Council are working with the developer of Bishops Lough housing estate to complete the Loughmacask Link Road Phase 2. Planning permission was granted for the construction of 32no. residential units and road infrastructure to link the Loughmacask Link Road Phase 1(a) to the Tullaroan. Construction is due to commence in 2026.



PLANNING

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

Planning Summary	Total January to February	
	2026	2025
Planning Applications Received	132	108
Planning Applications Granted	117	111
Planning Applications Refused	7	12
Complaints Received	21	21
Warning Letters Issued	15	16
Enforcements Notices Issued	6	13
Cases Closed	11	53
Cases sent for legal prosecution	0	0
Section 5's Received	20	9
Section 5's Decided Upon	10	5

Draft Development Contribution Scheme

A review of the Development Contribution Scheme and a Draft Scheme 2026 to 2030 is currently out for public consultation until Monday 23rd March 2026. Any submissions received during the consultation period will be considered and a report will be presented to the members for their consideration and approval with or without amendment as soon as possible thereafter.

The draft development contribution scheme can be viewed at:

<https://consult.kilkenny.ie/en/consultation/draft-development-contribution-scheme-2026-2030>

FORWARD PLANNING

Castlecomer Settlement Plan (Variation 5)

Material Alterations to Proposed Variation 5 was adopted on 16th February, 2026. A copy of the City and County Development Plan, as varied by Variation 5 will be available for inspection at the end of Q1, 2026.

Ferrybank Belview Framework Plan (Variation 6)

Material Alterations to Proposed Variation 6 was on public display until 27th February, 2026 and 22 submissions were received. The Chief Executive's Report on submissions is being prepared and will be on the March agenda.

Variation 8A

The Proposed Variation 8A to change the zoning of land in Kilkenny City, to reflect the requirements of the Government's National Planning Framework Implementation Guidelines, will commence public display on 6th March 2026 with submissions invited until the 3rd April, 2026. A further variation is being prepared for Callan, Thomastown Graiguenamanagh and Rosbercon.

Taking in Charge

Works are progressing on the following estates:

- Cluain Glasan, Kilkenny
- Berkley Terrace, Ferrybank Co Kilkenny

Active Land Management

Residential Zoned Land Tax

The Final Map for 2026 and the Annual Draft Map for 2027 are now on public display, and submissions on scope, and rezoning requests, are invited until the 1st April.

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.

Historic Structures Fund 2026: Applications have been assessed, with six projects forwarded to the DHLGH for consideration.

They are as follows:

Applicant	Works
Heritage Council	Window conservation in the Bishop's Palace
St. Canice's Cathedral	Window conservation of stained glass at St. Canice's Cathedral
Cushendale Mills	Structural and roof works at Cushendale Mills Graiguenamanagh
Derek Walshe	Works to Long Barn, Mountrothe House, Paulstown.
Kilkenny County Council	Continual conservation works at Woodstock House, Inistioge.
Kilkenny County Council	Works to Kenny's Well, Kilkenny City

The DHLGH will now assess all application put forward by all Local Authorities and score accordingly. The highest scored projects will be offered HSF funding. It is expected the DHLGH will be in contact shortly.

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

▪ Planning Referrals.....	7
▪ Further Information requests	4
▪ Clarification of Further Information requests.....	0
▪ Section 57 Declarations.....	1
▪ Part 8	0

Building Control

Valid Commencement Notices Received	Valid Disability Access Applications Received
February 2026.....44	February 2026 22
February 2025.....28	February 2025 9
February 2024.....53	February 2024 8
February 2023.....33	February 2023 2

CAPITAL DELIVER & PARKS

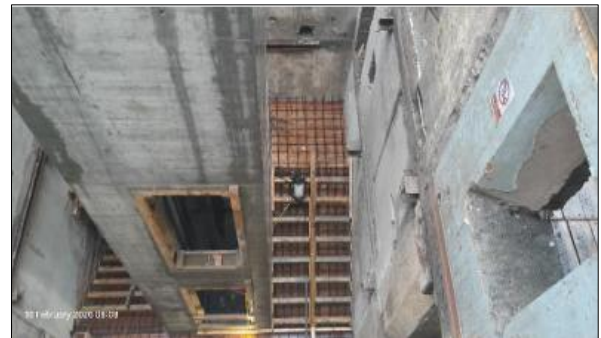
The Museum of Medieval Kilkenny

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 building to continue in its role to act as the seat of local Government in the City.

Despite the inclement weather works are progressing well on this project. The main focus over the past few months was on the construction of the lift shaft, stairwell and roof to the rear annex along with M&E installations across all floors. Provided in the images below is a sample of the progress made over the last two months:



Boardmarked concrete lift- shaft to 4th Floor



Formwork for reinforced concrete stairwell



*New pitch road to rear replacing old flat road
(Returning building back to original profile)*



*Installed raised access floor and traditional timber
sash windows in Council Chamber*



Installed raised access floor and slabbed partition looking from Mayors Parlour into Looby

Other key milestone relating to the overall MOMK project include:

- Exhibition Interpretive Fit-out Tenders were advertised in December 2025 for the following Lots:
 - **Lot 1:** *Exhibition Fit-out, Graphics & Set Dressing Services*
 - **Lot 2:** *Audio, Film, AV, and Interactive Services*
 - **Lot 3:** *Mixed-Reality Software and Hardware Service*

The deadline for the submission of tenders was the 18th of February and there was good interest in all Lots with a number of high quality tenders received for each. The tender assessment is ongoing and will be completed in the coming weeks.

- A planning application, under Part 8, for St. Mary's Laneway & Outdoor Amenity Scheme Enhancement Scheme was advertised in November 2025 and the closing date for submissions/observations was the 23rd of January. In total 9no. submissions were received which are currently being reviewed in preparation of the Planning Report and Recommendation which is expected to go before the Members for their consideration at the April Council Meeting.

LAMA All-Ireland Community & Council Awards 2026

Kilkenny County Council was delighted to have been shortlisted in **six categories** for the *Local Authorities Members Association (LAMA) Awards 2026* along with being nominated for the prestigious **Local Authority of the Year** award.

The Awards night took place at the **Dublin Royal Convention Centre** on **28th of February 2026** and, amongst very strong competition, Kilkenny were thrilled to take home two wins in the following categories:



Best Business Working with the Community
– for the important role played in the development of The Barrow Valley Activity Hub and Motorhome Aire. This category aims to find the best Irish business working in the community who has recognised a wider responsibility to their people and the communities in which they work.



Best Inclusive Public Realm & Accessibility Project for Woodstock Gardens and Arboretum. This category celebrates infrastructure that prioritises universal access, dignity, and social inclusion. This was another great accolade for Woodstock Gardens and Arboretum having won the Chambers Ireland Excellence in Local Government Awards in the Heritage & Built Environment category in November.

Tree Management

All scheduled tree surgery works for the winter programme were completed by the end of last month, ahead of the bird-nesting season. For the coming months, only emergency safety works will be carried out.

Routine monitoring in Inistioge identified a hollow within one of the sycamore trees on The Square. This internal defect, not visible from the outside, shows the value of the monitoring system in picking up hidden issues early.

Works in other areas will pause for the nesting season, with any further interventions limited to urgent safety matters.



Playground Management

As we enter into the spring, and hopefully the finer weather, maintenance and upgrade works continue on our 37 playgrounds and 5 MUGA's across the City and County to ensure same are fit for purpose and well presented. Some recent positive interventions are illustrated in the images below:



Kells Playground - Path Rehabilitation Works



Mullinavat Playground- Installation of new somersault bars and soft-surfacing

COMMUNITY

Community Projects

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

Town & Village Scheme			
<i>Community Group</i>	<i>Project Description</i>	<i>Grant</i>	<i>February Status</i>
Callan 2023	King's River Town & Village Project – Riverbank and amenity area	€247,500	Ongoing
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 95% complete
Urlingford Town Team 2023	Refurbishment of Community Hall. Phase 2	€500,000	94% 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	Professional surveys being completed
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 Documentation being finalised
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			
<i>Community Group</i>	<i>Project Description</i>	<i>Grant</i>	<i>February Status</i>
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	Pre-Tender approval stage
Glenmore	Develop the Southeast Greenway Connectivity Link and Pink Rock Cycle Loop & Amenity Trail	€2,356,423	Detailed design stage
Thomastown	Thomastown Library and upgrade to Community Centre	€4,013,115	Works 99% complete, snagging happening at present

Community & Cultural Facilities Capital Scheme			
<i>Community Group/ Year Approved</i>	<i>Project Description</i>	<i>Grant</i>	<i>February Status</i>
Johnstown Sports Field 2022	Contribution to development of walkway around complex	€40,000	Works in progress, 50% 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 complete, awaiting paperwork from community group
Gowran Community Complex 2024	Contribution towards the refurbishment of a community hub	€27,000	Works commenced
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	Partially Complete
Marian Hall Kilmacow 2025	Installation of heating, bathrooms, kitchen	€11,000	Works to commence March 2026
Kilkenny Girl Guides 2025	Emergency Lighting & Fire Alarm	€15,000	Works to commence March 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 commenced
Freshford Town AFC 2025	Floodlighting for all weather pitch	€32,000	Works commenced
St. Joseph's Athletic Club 2025	Shelter and walking track	€11,000	Works 50% complete
Graiguenamanagh Rowing Club 2025	Storage racking for rowing boats	€15,000	Work in progress
Evergreen Football Club 2025	Spectator Stand	€20,000	Project completed on the 4 th February 2026
Callan AFC Football Club 2024	Dressing Room upgrade	€36,000	Completed in 2025 Final grant payment due

Community Cultural Facilities Capital Scheme 2025

Evergreen FC received €20,000 under the 2025 CCFC Scheme toward a €46,000 project which was delivered at the end of 2025/early 2026.

Founded in 1946, Evergreen FC is one of Kilkenny's largest and most inclusive community sports clubs, catering for over 1,150 members across 80 teams, including schoolboys and schoolgirls, adult teams, Football for All, and programmes for people with disabilities. The club also provides its facilities for schools, community groups, and wider public use, including a fully lit community walkway.

The club's two full-size floodlit astro pitches enable year-round play supporting both local and national fixtures. The funded project involved the construction of a new spectator stand to provide shelter for supporters in all weather conditions and importantly to ensure accessible viewing for wheelchair users, whose visibility has previously been restricted. The 18-metre steel stand includes raised viewing steps to enhance visibility for all attendees.

This investment supports the club's ongoing commitment to inclusiveness, community access, and the provision of safe, high-quality sports facilities in Kilkenny.



Works Completed at Evergreen FC fund by CCFCS Grant

CLÁR			
<i>Community Group</i>	<i>Project Description</i>	<i>Grant</i>	<i>February Status</i>
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	Works to be done by end April, awaiting fine weather outside insulation
Windgap GAA 2024	Works to include tarmacadam to driveway and parking area	€38,307	Works 50% completed
Naomh Aodhan Community Centre CLG 2024	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	Tender stage
Lisdowney GAA 2025	Construction of new MUGA and Ball Wall	€65,000	Tender stage
Coolagh Community Hall Upgrading Project 2025	Hall and Kitchen upgrade	€77,022	Contractor due to commence April 2026
Moin Ruadh National School 2025	Construction of new MUGA with carparking area and sensory garden	€100,000	Funding approved
Killanaspick Lighting project 2025	Roadway lighting	€22,500	To commence Autumn 2026
Kilmoganny GAA 2025	Lawnmower for community area	€35,424	To be finalised April 2026

Community Recognition Fund			
<i>Community Group</i>	<i>Project Description</i>	<i>Grant</i>	<i>February Status</i>
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	Solar Panel works to commence April 2026
Ballyragget Community Hall	Renovation of CYMS Hall	€173,000	Procurement process ongoing

Age Friendly

New Guidance Document Launched to Support Older People Completing Housing Adaptation Grant Applications

The Kilkenny Older People's Council, in partnership with the Kilkenny/Carlow Adult Literacy for Life (ALL) Coalition, has completed a significant project designed to reduce the challenges older people face when completing complex application forms.

Growing reliance on online systems and multi-section documents has resulted in many older individuals having trouble when completing essential paperwork. One form identified as particularly difficult is the Housing Adaptation, Mobility Aids, and Housing Aid for Older People Grant Application issued by Kilkenny County Council.

In response, the Kilkenny Age Friendly Programme Manager facilitated collaboration between the Council's Housing Department and a specialist subgroup of the ALL Coalition to explore ways to improve accessibility. While the national application form cannot be altered, the review process identified an opportunity to provide a tailored, user-friendly guidance document to support applicants.

The guidance was informed by the extensive experience of Housing Department staff and the Healthy Age Friendly Homes Co-ordinator, who regularly assist older applicants. Key challenges identified included locating required personal information and navigating multiple form sections.

To address these issues, the new guidance document incorporates:

- **Colour-coding** to distinguish the three grant types covered by the form.
- **Clear icons and symbols** to help applicants find necessary information, such as PPS numbers
- **Straightforward, step-by-step instructions** designed to reduce stress and prevent delays.

This practical support tool will now be issued to all applicants and is expected to significantly ease the application process, enabling older people to complete the form more confidently and independently. The success of this project reflects strong collaboration between Kilkenny County Council's Housing Department, the Healthy Homes Programme, and members of the ALL Coalition. Their combined expertise ensured that the lived experiences of older people remained central throughout the development process.

The guidance will also benefit staff across the Carers Association, Disability Services, the Healthy Homes Programme, and other partner organisations who routinely support individuals with these applications. The Kilkenny Older People's Council extends its thanks to all participants from the ALL-Coalition Subgroup, including representatives from: Kilkenny Carers Association, Adult Learning Network, Disability Services, Ossory Youth, Kilkenny/Carlow ETB, the Kilkenny/Carlow Transition Year Coordinator, Kilkenny County Council Housing Department, and the Healthy Homes Co-ordinator.



Back Row L-R: Caitriona O'Shea, Kilkenny County Council, Anne Marie Shortall Kilkenny County Council, Danielle Dunne, Family Carers, Letitia Ryan, Kilkenny County Council, Linda Kerwin, Kilkenny Healthy Age Friendly Homes Co-Ordinator, Deirdre Geoghegan, Kilkenny Carlow ETB, Ashling Slattery, Kilkenny County Council, Meg Molloy, Kilkenny County Council.

Front Row L-R: Michael Delahunty, Chairperson Kilkenny Older People's Council, Mary O'Hanlon, Vice chairperson Kilkenny Older People's Council, Ian Gardner, A/Director of Services Kilkenny County Council

Kilkenny Local Community Safety Partnership – Progress Update

On Thursday, 5 February, the Chair of the Kilkenny Local Community Safety Partnership, Cllr. Pat Fitzpatrick, Maria O'Shea Community Safety Coordinator and Breda Carroll, Administrator attended the first national meeting of Local Community Safety Partnerships. The event, addressed by the Minister for Justice, Home Affairs and Migration, Jim O'Callaghan, brought together representatives from all local authorities to review national progress and outline next steps for the new partnership model.

During the meeting, the Minister confirmed that members have now been appointed to 34 Local Community Safety Partnerships, with 31 of these having already held their inaugural meetings and elected their Chairs and Vice Chairs. This marks a significant milestone in the nationwide roll-out of the new community-centred approach to safety.

The national gathering provided an important opportunity for Kilkenny representatives to engage directly with the Minister and with colleagues from across the country. The session focused on strengthening collaboration, sharing early learning, and beginning preparations for the development of each county's tailored Local Community Safety Plan.

The Kilkenny Local Community Safety Partnership welcomed the Minister's recognition of the work underway nationally and looks forward to progressing the next phase of implementation locally. The meeting reaffirmed the Government's commitment to supporting each partnership as it develops a coordinated, responsive and community-led approach to safety.



Cllr. Pat Fitzpatrick, Minister for Justice, Home Affairs and Migration, Jim O'Callaghan & Maria O'Shea Community Safety Coordinator

Kilkenny Public Participation Network (PPN):

Kilkenny PPN Hits 500 Members – A Powerful Voice for Local Communities!

Kilkenny Public Participation Network (PPN) has achieved a significant milestone, now representing over 500 community, environmental, and social inclusion groups across the County. This growth reflects the strong commitment of local organisations to engaging in policymaking and contributing to Kilkenny's development.

Kilkenny PPN continues to act as a key link between community groups and Kilkenny County Council, enabling members to elect representatives to strategic committees and ensuring community voices shape areas such as social inclusion, environmental policy, and local development.

Recent work has included contributions to the Social Inclusion Plan 2026–2029 and the County Heritage Strategy, ensuring diverse community perspectives are reflected in County policy. The PPN also delivered governance, funding, and advocacy workshops, supported new communities, and partnered with Equal Ireland to offer a scholarship opportunity for members. The Autumn/Winter Plenary in Thomastown further strengthened networking and collaboration among groups.

Kilkenny PPN continues to welcome new members. Groups can register at www.kilkennyppn.ie or contact ppnkilkenny@kilkennycoco.ie / (056) 7794255.



Cathaoirleach Mary Hilda Cavanagh and PPN staff Bortha Woudsma and Diane Seale with Kilkenny PPN member groups Foróige, Comhairle na nÓg, Kilkenny Older People's Council, Keep Kilkenny Beautiful, Irish Lebanese Cultural Foundation, Teac Tom, Kilkenny Access Group, Kilkenny Malayali Association, Fáilte Isteach, Fr. McGrath Family Resource Centre, An Taisce and One Future Carlow Kilkenny.

Training

Two grant-writing training sessions with consultant Evelyn Fitzpatrick. Over 50 groups have registered. The final session is scheduled for the last week of March.

PPN Social Inclusion Action Plan

Work is underway on a new plan to ensure social inclusion issues feature more strongly in County Council committees and boards.

PPN Sponsorship Programme

A partnership with Equal Ireland is helping PPN members work toward a degree in Business, Social Enterprise, and Community Development, creating future PPN Champions. All available places are now filled.

Current consultations, trainings and open funding opportunities are promoted through the weekly PPN newsletter.

LEO, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM

BUSINESS SUPPORT ROADSHOW

Clifig Fiontair Aitúil
Local Enterprise Office

Comhairle Chontae Chill Chainnigh
Kilkenny County Council

BUSINESS SUPPORTS ROADSHOW ACROSS COUNTY KILKENNY

12TH FEBRUARY
PAULSTOWN

11TH MARCH
FERRYBANK

15TH APRIL
CASTLECOMER

13TH MAY
GRAIGUENAMANAGH

MORE LOCATIONS
TO FOLLOW

MEET THE VARIOUS AGENCIES
AND LEARN ALL ABOUT BUSINESS
FUNDING AND OTHER SUPPORTS

In partnership with

kceth
Kilkenny County Enterprise Training Hub

KILKENNY LEADERS
PARTNERSHIP

An Rann Coláiste Scolaíoch
Department of Social Protection

The Local Enterprise Office Kilkenny in partnership with Kilkenny Carlow Education and Training Board, Kilkenny Leader Partnership and Kilkenny Intreo Office will be holding a Roadshow in various locations throughout the County.

The roadshows are an opportunity to connect with a network of support that can help navigate challenges of running a business.

Attendees will have a chance to speak directly with funding and support agencies representatives who can answer specific questions, provide advice and help to identify the support and grants that are available to those already in business or with an ambition to start a new business.

Enterprise Week 2026

Promotion commenced for Enterprise week which is taking place from Monday 2nd to Friday 6th March, businesses across Kilkenny are invited to take part in a week packed with events designed to inform, inspire, and empower. Organised by the Local Enterprise Offices nationally, this annual celebration of small businesses offers something for everyone, whether you're just starting out or looking to grow.

TOURISM

Kilkenny County Council Festival Grant Scheme

Kilkenny County Council has provided funding for festival organisers to aid with the development and promotion of festivals **with a significant tourism impact**. At its February monthly meeting the Council members approved supports for a wide -ranging calendar of festivals to take place in Kilkenny City and County throughout the year.

The funding for festivals this year is much welcomed and facilitated the award of funding to 26 festivals with an emphasis this year on supporting new and emerging events across the County. It is wonderful to support such a broad range of events from comedy to economics, music, animation and food.

Kilkenny THE BEST OF IRELAND

COME SEE
COME DO

EVENTS CALENDAR 2026

KILKENNY TRADERS Kilkenny Traditions 15th - 17th March	ST PATRICK'S FESTIVAL KILKENNY 14th - 17th March	KILKENNY MACRA Mr Personality Festival 10th - 11th April	MARBLE CITY MUSIC Festival May - December	KILKENNY ROOTS FESTIVAL Kilkenny Roots Festival 1st - 4th May	MAYHEM Mayhem 1st - 3rd May	CELTIC OPEN DOOR 21st - 23rd May	IRELANDS WOODLAND SHOW From 2nd May
THE CAT LAUGHIE FESTIVAL 29th May - 1st June	KILKENNY PRIDE FESTIVAL 23rd - 26th July	KILKENNY ARTS FESTIVAL TBC August	AKA PRINCE 1st - 31st August	STORMFEST 8th - 16th August	Iverk SHOW Iverk Show 22nd August	SONG OF THE SCYTHES NATIONAL SCYTHING FESTIVAL 21st - 23rd August	GRAIGUENAMANAGH TOWN OF BOOKS 28th - 30th August
BAILLE COMINGO 38th Festival - Ireland Edition 28th - 30th August	R&S m&an 2nd - 6th Sept	CHRISTY'S WHISKEY & SPIRITS FESTIVAL 18th September	KILKENNY LEW FESTIVAL 25th - 27th September	WITCHES & WIZARDS FESTIVAL October	DEADLY LIVING HOME OF HALLOWEEN SEASON Watch 'The Space' Oct & Nov	KILKENNY ANIMATED 2nd - 4th October	SAVOUR KILKENNY 22nd - 26th October
KEEP THE ROLL 11th Oct - 1st Nov	Yuletide November - December	KILKENNOMICS 6th - 9th November	SUBTITLE FILM FESTIVAL 2nd - 26th November	ALT EFF All Living Things Environmental Film Festival (ALT-EFF) Nov 27 - Dec 4th	WELLIE RACE 1st January 2027		

Kilkenny THE BEST OF IRELAND

For more information visit our website: [visitkilkenny.ie](https://www.visitkilkenny.ie)

Comhairle Chontae Chill Chainnigh
Kilkenny County Council

“Meet in Kilkenny”



Kilkenny County Council in partnership with Kilkenny Tourism and the Lyrath Hotel were delighted to welcome AIPCO (Association of Irish Professional Conference Organisers) to Kilkenny for their annual conference on 12th – 13th of February this year.

The theme of this year’s gathering was “ Built to Last: Forging Partnership, Driving Prosperity” and was attended by over 200 delegates. This national event not only increased business activity for the duration of the conference but also showcased Kilkenny and our partnership approach to hosting conferences and events around the City with a reception evening hosted at St. Canices Cathedral on the Thursday evening.



Kilkenny Tourism and visitkilkenny.ie



Kilkenny Tourism continued its work in preparing Kilkenny’s marketing and PR plans for 2026. “Kilkenny, Where Festivals Live” is our live campaign for the season will aim to keep Kilkenny to the forefront of the domestic visitor’s mind for booking breaks throughout the shoulder season, for St Patricks Day and beyond.

Kilkenny Tourism Connects

Kilkenny Tourism CLG supported by Kilkenny County Council will host two open evenings in the north and south of the County in the coming weeks to provide a unique opportunity for business in the sector to expand their networks, grow business and secure valuable referrals.

The sessions will include:

- An overview of marketing opportunities with Visit Kilkenny
- Insights into tourism supports available to your business
- Practical tips to help build the success of both your business and Kilkenny as a domestic and international tourism destination.
- An opportunity to explore potential visitor packages and speed-date with your local tourism neighbour.



Members will be asked to support these events locally and encourage as many to attend as possible in order to attract more visitors to the towns and villages around the County.

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 February 2026 under the various support services.

HOUSING CAPITAL

AFFORDABLE HOMES - February Overview

February saw strong progress in delivering affordable homes under the Local Authority Affordable Purchase Scheme with work focused on securing buyers for the remaining units at Abbey Hill, Thomastown and Church View, Kilmacow. Activity centred on finalising assessments, issuing offers, and supporting purchasers through sales and conveyancing.

Showhouse viewings – supported by targeted email and social media campaigns – boosted engagement, particularly at Abbey Hill. Momentum remained positive as both schemes moved toward full allocation. Key post-application actions included assessing applications, issuing provisional offers, progressing contracts with sales agents and solicitors, preparing Affordable Dwelling Purchase Agreements, and arranging equity fund releases.

Abbey Hill, Thomastown

Kilkenny County Council led scheme delivered by Ormonde Construction (22 units: 16 three-bed, 6 two-bed).

- 4 homes remain available; 18 are reserved.
- Applications are under assessment.
- Ongoing support provided to buyers and solicitors to progress contracts.
- Showhouse open each Saturday in February with private viewings via Boyd's resulting in strong buyer engagement.

Church View, Kilmacow

Delivered by Michael Murphy Building Services, 13 three-bed units are available for purchase with support of Kilkenny County Council Affordable Purchase Scheme.

- 4 homes remain available; 9 are reserved.
- Three-bed units available from €248,475.
- Target market: First Time Buyers and Fresh Starters.
- Active social media promotion continues to drive enquiries.
- Showhouse opened on 07/02/2025, supporting increased sales activity.



HOUSING OPERATIONS STATISTICS

HOMELESS SERVICES SUMMARY 2026	FEB	TO
Homeless Presentations	67	135
Homeless Assessment Outcomes		
Prevention & Interventions	47	95
Emergency Service	11	24
Not eligible / Did not avail of service	9	16
HAP PLACE FINDER SERVICE		
No of Homeless HAP tenancies at first day of month	45	46
No of Homeless HAP tenancies created during month	1	2
Number of Homeless HAP tenancy breakdowns	1	3
No of Homeless HAP tenancies in place at last day of month	45	45
Other Social Housing Tenancies supported /created during month	3	12
PROVISION OF EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION		AVG PER
Households in Temporary Emergency Supported Accommodation at last day of the month	30	58
Households in Temporary Emergency B&B accommodation	5	6
Households in Temporary Emergency B&B Accommodation that are families	5	6
Households (<i>singles/couples</i>) in Transition Emergency Accommodation (<i>Own Front Door</i>)	43	45
Households (<i>Families</i>) in Transition Emergency Accommodation (<i>Own Front Door</i>)	22	21

SOCIAL HOUSING SUPPORT APPLICATION SUMMARY 2026	FEB	TO DATE
Number awaiting Social Housing Support (<i>Gross Need</i>)	1,266	1,266
Number awaiting Social Housing Support (<i>Net Need</i>)	661	661
Number of Social Housing Applications received	79	172
Number of applications incomplete / awaiting further information/clarification	38	85
Number of applications validated and ready for assessment during the month	26	59
Number of applications assessed	38	63
Number of applications awaiting assessment	46	46

HOUSING ASSISTANCE PAYMENT (HAP) SUMMARY 2026	FEB	TO DATE
Total active HAP tenancies	361	347
New HAP tenancies set up	3	4
HAP allocated social housing	13	16
Closed HAP tenancies	14	17
HAP rent reviews	6	37
HAP other tenancy amendments	29	55

HOUSING ALLOCATIONS 2026	FEB	TO DATE
Local Authority Social offers of allocations	17	30
Approved Housing Body offers of allocations	1	5
RAS offers of allocations	1	2
LA/RAS/Leasing offers of allocations	19	37

TENANCY MANAGEMENT

COMPLAINT TYPE	NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS	NUMBER INVESTIGATED	NUMBER ONGOING	NUMBER CLOSED
Drugs related, Violence, Racism, Threats & Intimidation	7	1	6	0
Damage to property, animal related (<i>dog/horse/fowl</i>), Refuse/dumping/hoarding	10	3	6	1
Noise, Parking/ Boundary Issues, Other	15	5	10	0
Total Number to-date	77	39	33	5

MAINTENANCE HOUSING STOCK

MAINTENANCE CALLS 2026	FEB	TO DATE
Number of maintenance calls	566	1,379
Number of maintenance calls that resulted in a call out	472	1,079

PRIVATE HOUSE GRANTS

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

GRANTS APPROVED & COMMITTED 2026

SCHEME	TO-DATE	AMOUNT
HGD - Housing Adaptation Grant	77	€876,247
MAG - Mobility Aid Grant	6	€22,450
HOP - Housing Aid for Older Persons	119	€827,843
Total	202	€1,726,540

GRANTS PAID OUT 2026

SCHEME	TO DATE	AMOUNT
HGD - Housing Adaptation Grant	10	€124,099
MAG - Mobility Aid Grant	1	€6,850
HOP - Housing Aid for Older Persons	31	€203,459
Total	42	€334,408

HOUSING LOAN ACTIVITY 2026

Loan Type	Received	Approved	Amount Approved	Number Paid	Amount Paid
Local Authority Home Loan	5	1	€171,600	1	€171,600
Caravan Loan	0	0	€0.00	0	€0
Total	5	1	€171,600	1	€171,600

VOIDS ACTIVITY 2026	FEB	TO DATE
Number of voids upgraded ready for allocation	11	20
Number of voids in progress		20

RETROFITTING

RETROFITTING ACTIVITY 2026	FEB	TO DATE
Number of units retrofitted for allocation	12	12
Number of units in progress		7

PRIVATE RENTED INSPECTIONS SUMMARY 2026	FEB	TO DATE
Number of inspections completed by Kilkenny County Council staff	59	104
Number of inspections completed by external inspectors	0	0

ENVIRONMENT

CLIMATE ACTION

Community Climate Action Programme

Applications for Phase 2 of the Community Climate Action Programme (CCAP) are now closed. We were once again oversubscribed with 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.

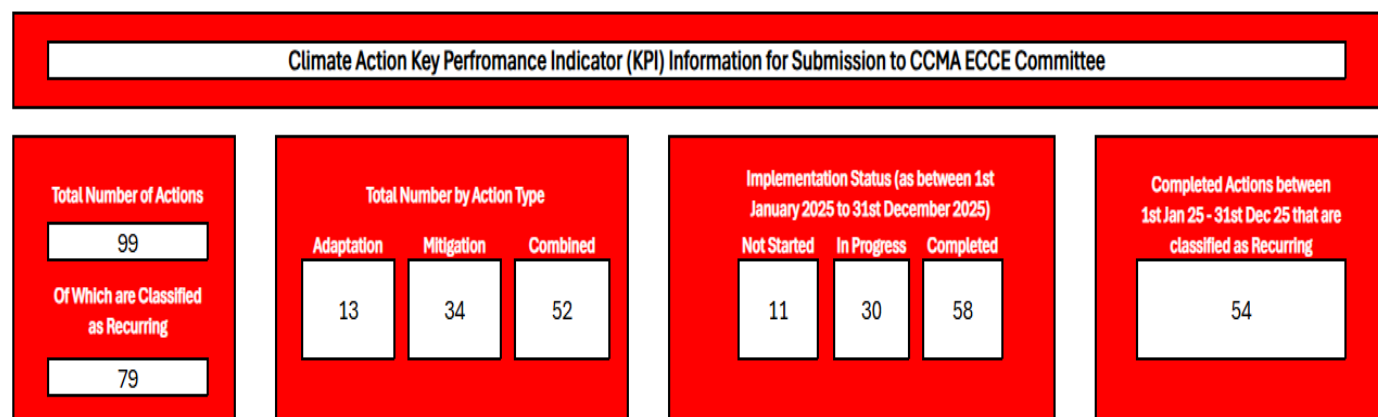
Applications received have now been evaluated against set criteria and are being prepared for submission to DCEE for final approval. Applicants will be notified of the outcome of evaluation April 2026 and where successful in receiving funding groups will have 18 months to deliver their project.

LAMA Awards 2026 – Best Green Sustainable Initiative

The Climate Action team were shortlisted in the *Best Green Sustainable Initiative*, for their entry “Championing Community Climate Action” at the All Ireland Community and Council Awards which took place at the Dublin Royal Convention Centre on Saturday 28th February 2026. Unfortunately, we were unsuccessful, well done to Waterford City and County Council.

Climate Action Key Performance Indicators

The Climate Action Plan contains 99 actions, comprising 13% adaptation actions, 34% mitigation actions, and 53% which are both adaptation and mitigation. 94% of actions within the Plan have been started and continued to be delivered in 2025.



ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

CCTV Pilot Update



Freshford BB



Grants Wood, Old Ballyragget Road

SITE	GPS
Loughboy BB, Aldi, Kilkenny	52.642316, -7.24698
Johnsewll BB, Kilkenny	52.66368, -7.23383
Freshford BB	52.73576, -7.4138239
Urlingford BB	52.717920, -7.587500
Grants Wood, Ballyragget	52.801336, -7.2506859
Mooncoin BB	52.296213, -7.261206

As of the 19th of February, the installation of CCTV cameras has been completed 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 above locations. The cameras will be in place for an initial 6 month period and will then be reviewed.

Tidy Towns Workshop- Thomastown Allotments



On Saturday 21st of February, members of the Tidy Towns forum undertook their 1st workshop of the year with Monica Fleming called "Gardening for Nature". This workshop took place in the Thomastown Allotments and demonstrated how communities can create edible gardens that support biodiversity and pollinators. Participants learned practical ways to plant, manage and maintain community spaces that provide food while enhancing habitats for bees, butterflies and other wildlife.

Green Flag Renewal Visits

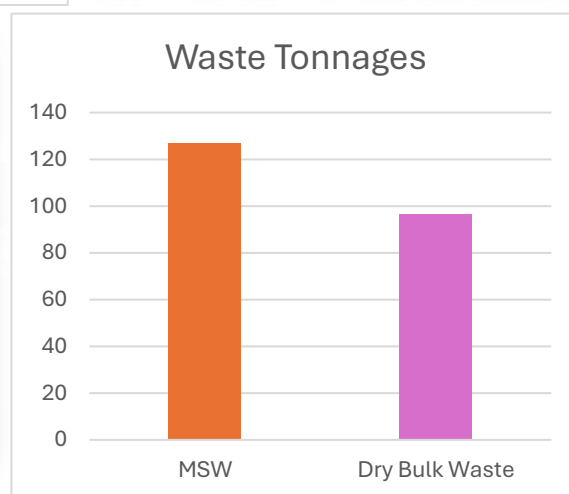
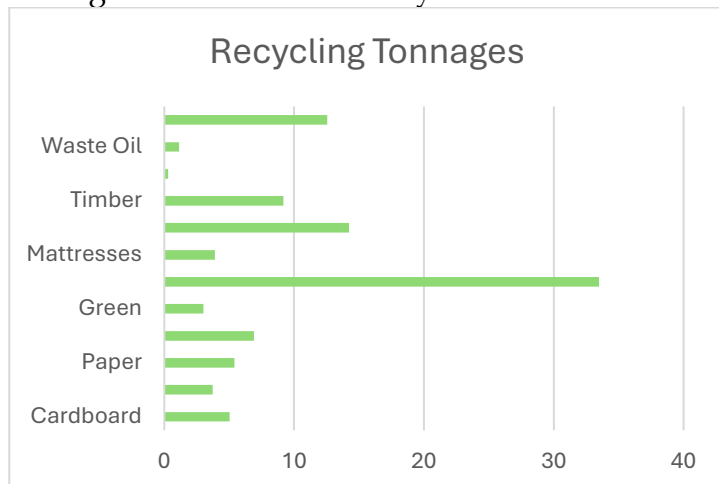
The deadline for schools to submit their applications for their respective Green School Flags is fast approaching. All applications and assessments need to be completed by the 20th March 2026. The EAO is undertaking a number of assessments throughout the City and County and will be making a final recommendation to An Taisce prior to the deadline.



WASTE

Dunmore Civic Amenity Site (CAS)

Tonnages of Waste and the various recycling streams deposited at the Dunmore facility during the month of February can be seen in the infographic below.



As part of the Landfill Aftercare the landfill gas flare continues to run 24hrs per day seven days per week extracting and burning approximately 30-35m³ of landfill gas per hour. The month of February also saw 184 tonnes of landfill Leachate tankered off site for treatment.

Construction & Demolition Seminar

On 12th February staff from the waste team attended a seminar in Tullamore held by WERLA (*Waste enforcement regional lead authorities*) and the EPA on construction and demolition waste. The aim was to provide guidance and assistance to support monitoring by Local authorities on the significant changes that have come into play in the past 24 months on how C&D waste is handled and the responsibilities of producers, hauliers and waste facility officers.



It was a timely conference in advance of the introduction from the 1st of March of the €10/tonne levy application for C&D waste recovered at smaller scale recovery sites typically permitted by a local authority. End of waste for recycled aggregates (*Article 28*) and By product greenfield soil and stone (*Article 27*) were discussed to ensure clarifications on understandings and criteria are met.

All of these introductions are part of the EU recycling target of 70% recycling of C&D waste by 2020 and the NWPCE target of 12% reduction in C&D waste by 2030

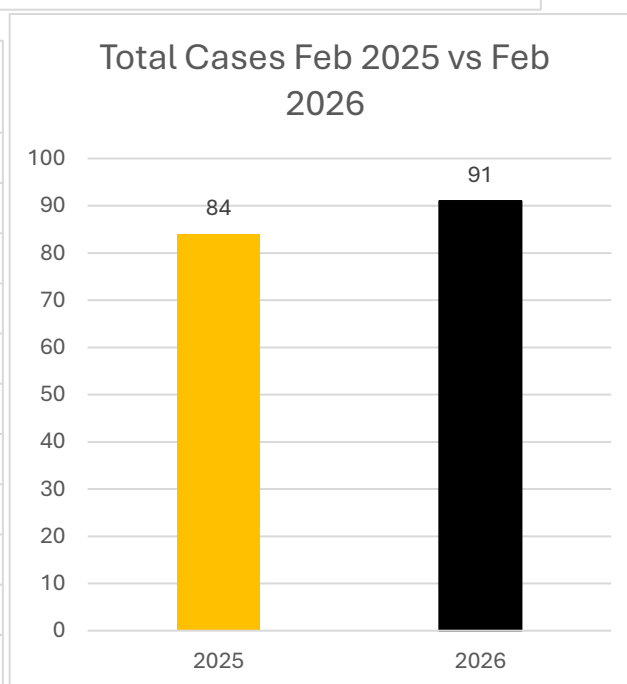
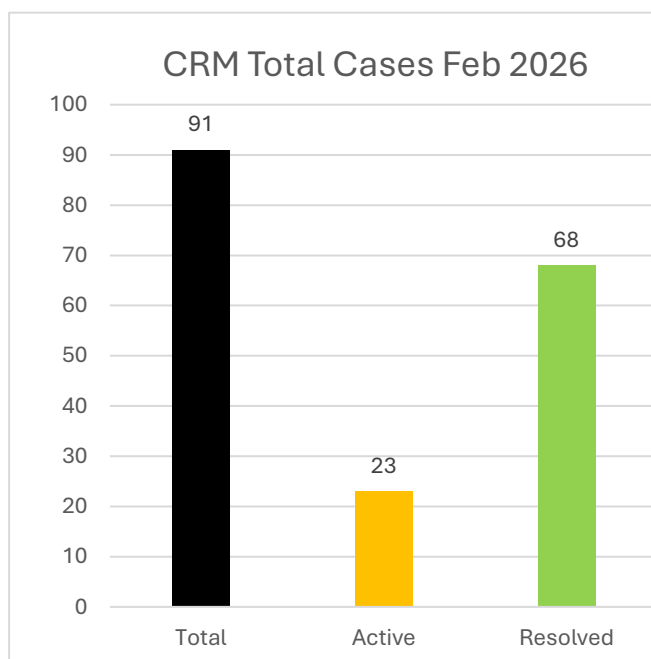
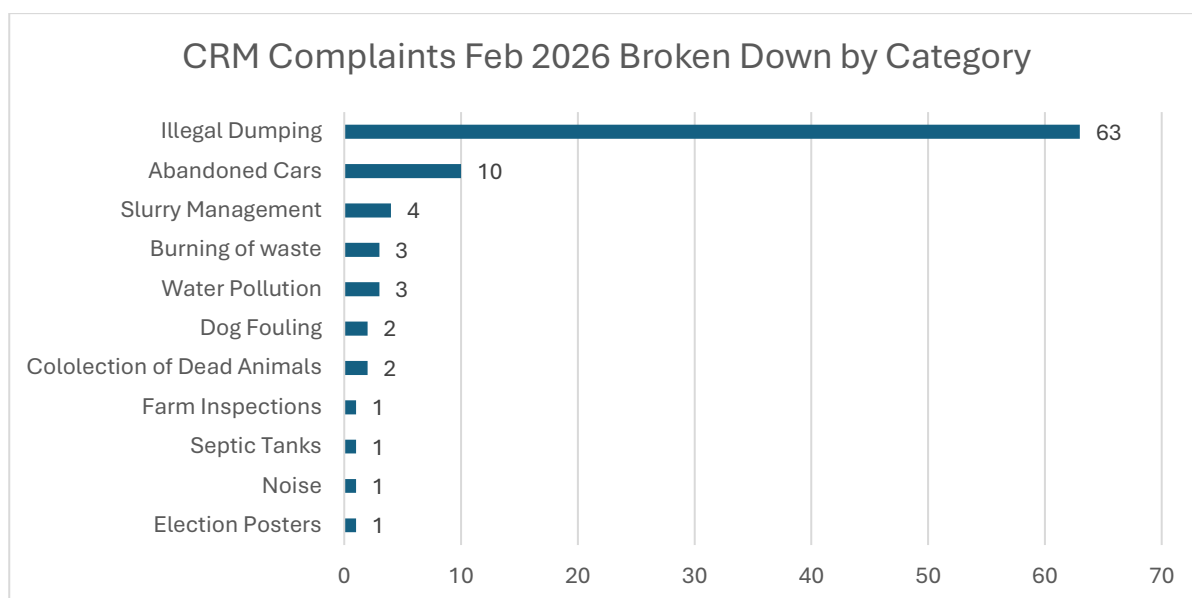


AIR NOISE WATER

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 February 2025.



Water Quality - Farm Inspections

The target for 2026 is 308 inspections. Kilkenny County council staff has started organizing inspections for 2026 and highlighting sub basins to be nominated for inspections. A new NAIP Agricultural inspector has recently joined the farm inspection team to aid with the completion of the 2026 program. Follow up GAP inspections from 2024/2025 are currently underway

Septic Tank Inspections

The target for 2026 is 62 inspections. Kilkenny County council staff has started organizing inspections for 2026 and highlighting households in high priority zones to be nominated for inspections. Kilkenny County Council are currently working on historical advisory notices in the hope to close some out before the 2026 program commences

Noise

Kilkenny County Council are in the process of purchasing new noise monitors for 2026.

Air

Staff will be monitoring the information received from air monitors. All solid fuel inspections have been identified for quarter 1 of 2026.

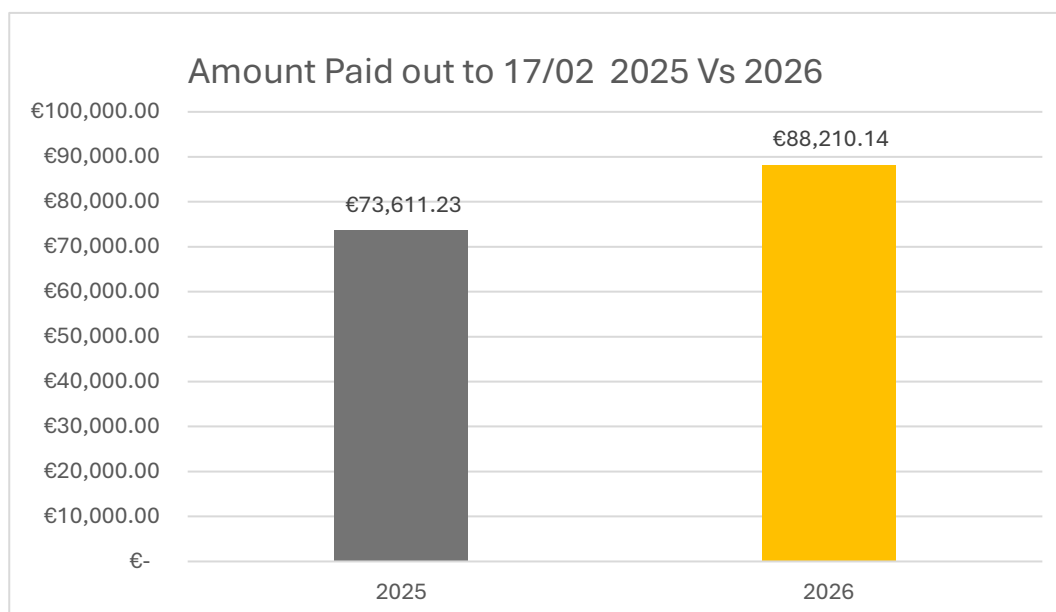
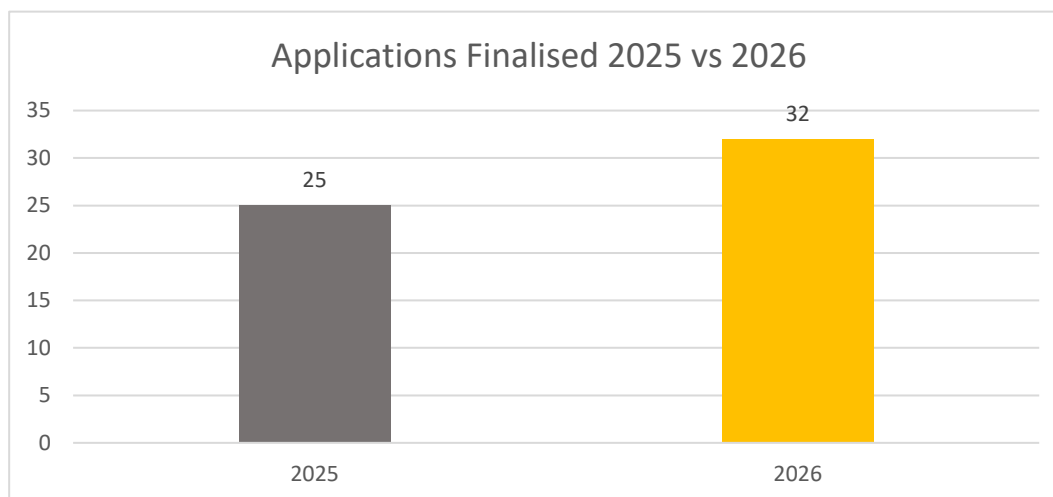
DISCHARGE LICENCES

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

RURAL WATER

Well Grants - Improvement Works to Private Water Supply

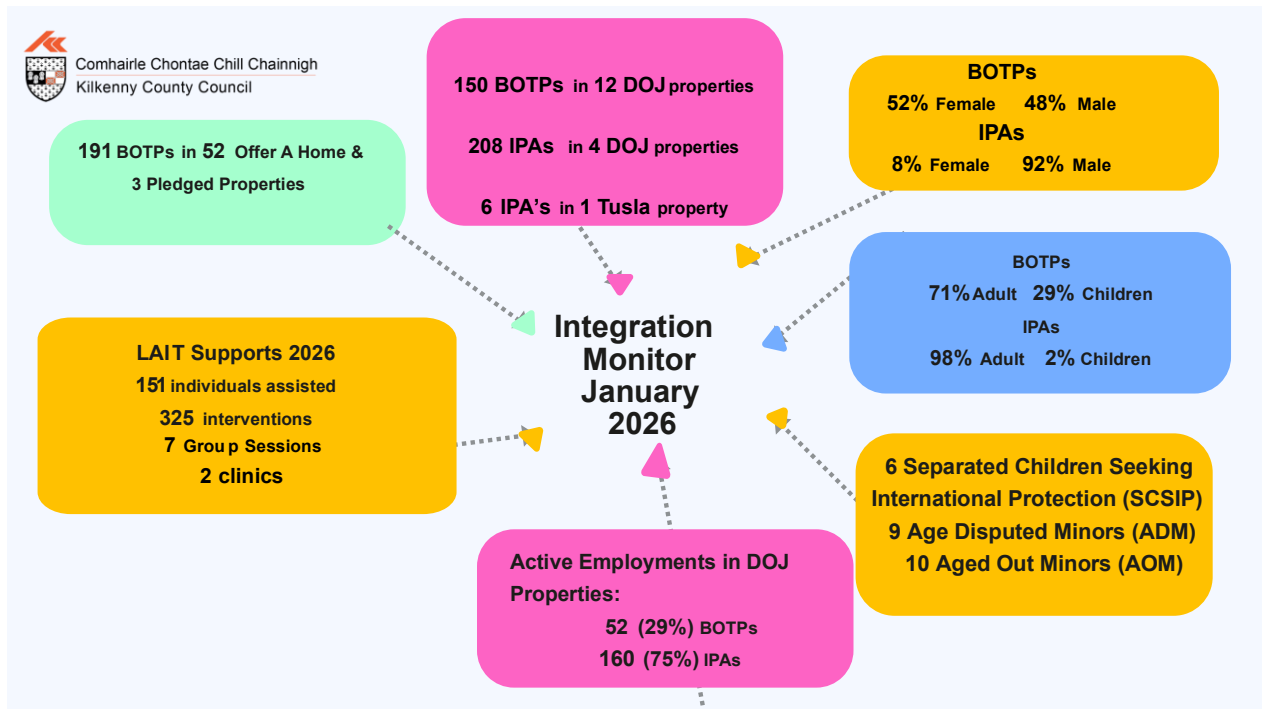
Well Grants Stats as at 27.2.2026



INTEGRATION

The Integration Team 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



EVENTS:

The Local Authority Integration Team (LAIT) continues to work closely with partner agencies. Here's a snapshot of what happened so far in February, 2026:

- **Community Integration Forum** – The success of the interagency collaboration among CIF members was featured in the most recent CIF newsletter from the LGMA, focusing on the premier performance by the Global Dance Club at the One Community Many Journeys event in December 2025.
- **Global Dance Club** – With continued strong energy and engagement, there are 2 remaining free dance classes with Jive, Salsa, Ugandan dance, Irish dance in the lead into the St. Patricks Day Parade, alongside continued rehearsals for our showcase. Keep updated by following on <https://www.instagram.com/globaldanceclubkk/>.
- **Africa Day** – The LAIT Team are in the process of preparing for Africa Day which will run on Saturday, 24th May, 2026. A committee has been established consisting of members of the African community and LAIT Team who are busy organising this event.
- **Weekly 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.



Offer of a Home and IRC Pledged Properties at 28th February, 2026

28 th February, 2026	Number of Pledged Properties	Number of Residents
Offer a Home Scheme	52	178
Pledged Properties (<i>shared and not shared</i>)	3	13
Total	55	191

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.

Changes to the eligibility criteria for the ARP scheme will be introduced under Part 3 of the [Residential Tenancies \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) Bill 2026](#). Once the legislation is in effect, new applications under this scheme in respect of properties that have been registered with the Residential Tenancies Board (RTB) at any time since 4 March 2022 will no longer meet the scheme's eligibility criteria.

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 information will be published in due course.

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.

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.

FIRE SERVICES

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. 121 incidents were responded to-date. These incidents included a significant number of road traffic collisions, outdoor rubbish, chimney fires, and automatic fire alarm activations.

Fire Safety Certificate Applications

Kilkenny Fire & Rescue Service Fire Senior Fire Officers advise on current Building Regulations in relation to the fire safety standards required for proposed developments. In addition, Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service fire prevention officers hold Fire Safety Certificate/fire prevention clinics under Section 18(5) of the Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003. These are held on a weekly basis and/or upon request in Fire Station HQ.

20 applications for Fire Safety Certificates were received to-date.

Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003

- Fire Prevention staff made targeted inspections of premises both to provide advice and to enforce legislation during the first few months of 2025.
- 1 Licence Application was processed under Section 24 of the Fire Services Acts 1981 & 2003.
- 2 licence applications under the Dangerous Substances legislation was assessed to date
- 8 Fire safety inspections of premises have taken place to date.

Recruitment of Retained Firefighters

Our current complement of Firefighting staff in our 7 Fire Brigades are as follows: Kilkenny City (13), Castlecomer (11), Freshford (12), Urlingford (8), Thomastown (11), Callan (12), Graigueenamanagh (11). The WRC recommendation is to have a minimum of twelve firefighters in all Fire Stations. As well as responding to emergency calls and undertaking community fire safety initiatives, Retained Firefighters attend weekly training nights to maintain competency levels and undertake routine checks on their equipment.

Training

Chainsaw training was provided to a number of fire fighters. This training aims to equip learners with the underpinning knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes to enable them to operate a chainsaw effectively, safely and competently.



A joint training course on the Bronto Skylift F20ALR with Westmeath County Council's Fire Service was held in Kilkenny. The course for Fire Service Instructors covered both the practical and theoretical the unit handling, rules and regulations, the outreach system, outriggers and booms, and the use of emergency procedures. Bronto Skylift aerial platform training for instructors gives them the tools and knowledge they need to instruct and operate the Bronto in all situations.

Community Fire Safety

Community Fire Safety (CFS) means promoting fire safety in the community, including in the home, whether in houses or apartments and is aimed at complementing the existing services provided by Kilkenny County Council to protect communities from fire. Where opportunities exist, operational crews will promote checks for working smoke alarms in neighbourhoods after attending incidents. Ongoing public messaging campaigns are maintained to encourage members of the public to install smoke alarms and to test their smoke alarms once a week to ensure that they are working.

Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service respond positively to requests for presentations on fire safety from community groups along with distributing and making available fire safety promotional material in Kilkenny City and County.

The fire prevention objectives in domestic premises are primarily addressed by engagement and education in the delivery of Community Fire Safety (CFS) Initiatives across the City and County of Kilkenny.



Fire Safety training was provided to Persons-in charge of Aurora premises in Kilkenny. The purpose of this training was to assist persons in discharging their statutory fire safety responsibilities. Persons in control of community dwelling houses have a statutory responsibility to take all reasonable measures to prevent the occurrence of fires and to ensure as far as reasonably practicable the safety of residents, staff, and other occupants, in the event of fire occurring on the premises.

The fire safety awareness training covered the implementation of a fire safety programme which should be an integral part of the day-to-day management and operation of a community dwelling house.

February 2026



27,650
library visits



3,379
free PC and
WiFi sessions



58,000
items borrowed



2,046
library
memberships



273
events with 4,090
attendees



5,554
engagements on
social media platforms



14,105
virtual newsletters sent



2,743
visits to www.kilkennylibrary.ie



12,597
followers on social media



23,422
eNewspapers and
magazines borrowed



3,563
eAudiobooks
borrowed



1,341
eBooks
borrowed



221
online learning
sessions



212
language
learning sessions



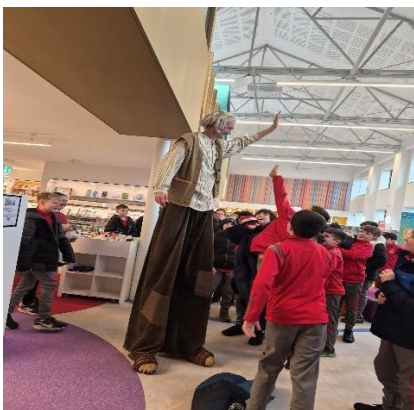
92
eComics borrowed

124
films and shows streamed



Ireland Reads

The National Ireland Reads Campaign ran throughout the month, culminating in Ireland Reads Day on Saturday 28th February across all of our libraries. Having set ourselves a target of 2026 memberships and 26,000 issues, we were thrilled to exceed these with 2,057 memberships and 32,000 items issued across Kilkenny. A promotion of reading for leisure for all ages, the varied programme including Storytimes, book clubs, and an illustration workshop all helped drive strong public participation and community engagement, strengthening the library's role as a valued cultural, educational, and community resource.



Fado Fado : Local History Competition

Our Local History competition for Primary and Secondary Schools, Fadó, Fadó: Sparking Memories, closed for entries on Friday, 13 February. Now in its second year, the competition received an exceptional response, with 167 submissions from 11 participating schools. Entries ranged from family history narratives to projects highlighting notable local figures and historic buildings.



The judging process will now begin, led by our appointed panel, and the initiative will conclude with a prize-giving ceremony in the Mayfair Library on Tuesday, 21st April 2026.

My Open Library Mayfair Library



Our My Open Library service at Mayfair Library continues to grow in popularity. Offering extended self-service access from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., seven days a week, the service reflects our commitment to ensuring flexible library access at hours that suit our users. In February, 754 members used the service, with 59 new members completing membership inductions. With school mid-term breaks and the upcoming second-level mock examinations, the service is proving particularly valuable for students seeking dedicated study spaces.

Kilkenny Carlow ETB Community Education Partnership

February saw the delivery of a diverse range of adult education courses across our branch network, delivered in partnership with KCETB. These courses continue to support our commitment to lifelong learning and community engagement. Highlights included a Haiku writing course at Mayfair Library, Smartphone Skills classes in Loughboy Library, Printing Workshops at Ferrybank Library, and a Spring Gardening programme in Graiguenamanagh Library. Collectively, these courses attracted strong participation and reinforced the role of our libraries as accessible hubs for upskilling, personal development and creative learning.



Thomastown Library Update

Thomastown Library is currently being handed over to Kilkenny County Council by the contractor. Once all fitout, stocking of shelving, implementation of ICT systems and services, health and safety services are in operation the library will be ready to open to the public at the end of April 2026.

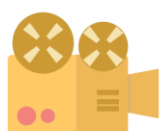


Library Activities

Our libraries hosted a diverse mix of events and activities throughout the month, including:

- Beginner's Chess Workshop – Ferrybank Library (*Saturday 7th February*)
- Punch Needling Workshop – Graiguenamanagh Library (*Tuesday, 10th February*)
- Chinese New Year Craft – Mayfair Library (*Friday 13th February*)
- Silent Book Club – Thomastown Library (*Wednesday, 18th February*)

- Cois Nore Information Pop-Up – Thomastown Library (Thursday 19th February)
- Toddlers Play & Music Class – Mayfair Library (Thursday 19th February)
- Midterm Bracelet-Making Workshop – Mayfair Library (Thursday 19th February)
- Comic Club – Thomastown Library (Friday, 20th February)



Digital Engagement

Library staff prepared, recorded, edited and published **313** posts and videos on our social media platforms in February. Our engagements for the month were **5,554** and our videos and reels had **9,666** views. Our virtual newsletter was sent to **14,105** email accounts.

Alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals



Library activities this month strongly supported **SDG 4: Quality Education** by expanding access to literacy initiatives, lifelong learning opportunities, and extended study spaces for students.



They also advanced **SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities** through free, inclusive events offered across multiple branches and extended opening hours that improved access for diverse communities.

ARTS

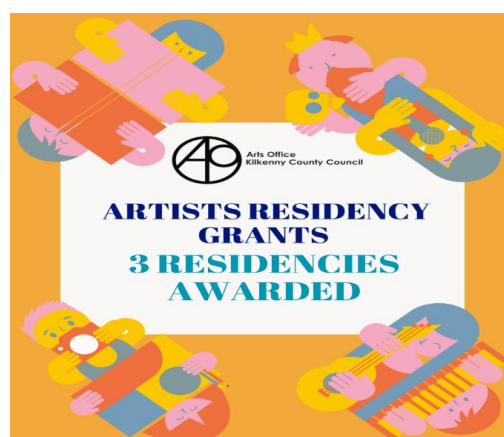
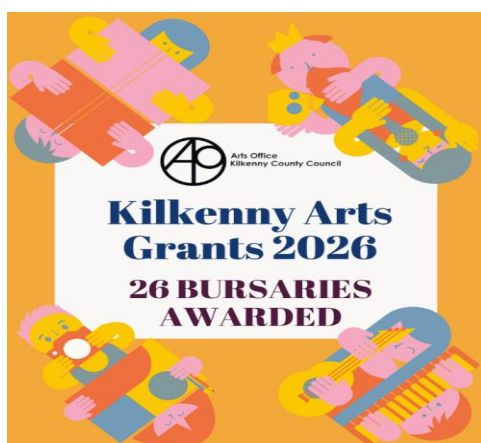
2026 Grants - Arts Act Grant

A total of 47 applications were received for the 2026 Arts Act Grants. All applications were assessed and brought to Council for approval. Following the evaluation process, fifteen individual artists and eleven arts groups were awarded funding, with a total allocation of €25,000.

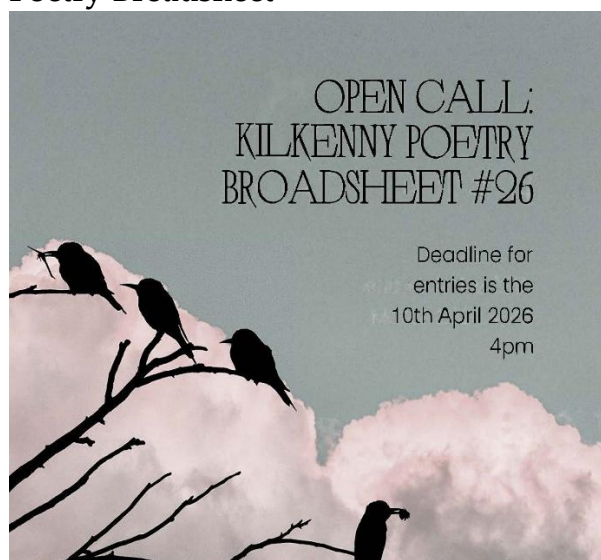
Artists Residency Bursaries 2026

The Arts Office offered three dedicated residency bursaries, each supporting a practitioner at different stages of their artistic development.

- **Greywood Arts Residency Bursary**
A total of ten applications was received for this bursary. Following assessment, writer Orla Mackey was awarded a one-week residency at Greywood Arts.
- **Tyrone Guthrie Centre – First-Time Residency Bursary**
This opportunity attracted twenty three applications from artists seeking their first residency experience at the Tyrone Guthrie Centre. Visual artist Arlene Caffrey was selected and awarded a one-week residency.
- **Tyrone Guthrie Centre – Performing Arts Residency**
This bursary received 4 applications from theatre-based practitioners. Actor Medb Lambert was awarded a one-week performing arts residency at the Tyrone Guthrie Centre.



Poetry Broadsheet



The Editor for the 2026 Poetry Broadsheet is eco-poet Jane Robinson, whose acclaimed collections *Journey to the Sleeping Whale* and *Island and Atoll* reflect her deep ecological awareness and engagement with the natural world. As part of this year's Broadsheet programme, Jane will host a poetry workshop on 28th March in Butler House and its surrounding gardens, offering participants an opportunity to explore poetry through an ecological and place-based lens.

The open call for poetry submissions for the Broadsheet has been issued, with a deadline of 10th April.

Creative Kilkenny

During February, the Creative Ireland and Cruinniú na nÓg grant processes were completed, with assessment panels convened to review all applications. Successful applicants will be notified in the coming weeks. The 2026 Open Call launched on 6 January and was promoted through a targeted social media campaign and circulation to established contact lists. Assessment panels, coordinated by Arts, Heritage and Libraries, met on 23rd February (*Creative Ireland*) and 24th February (*Cruinniú na nÓg*), with strong demand across both strands and funding requests significantly exceeding available budgets.

Creative Ireland Grants

- 57 applications received
- €224,999 requested
- €60,550 allocated



Cruinniú na nÓg / Night-Time Economy

- 28 applications received
- €91,850 requested
- €36,000 allocated



Additionally, a coordinated body of work was completed for Creative Health and Wellbeing, Live Music in Retirement homes and a Shared Island application, *Shared Stages* as a cross-border, comedy-led programme.

YOUNG PEOPLE

The **Rhyme Rag** literature programme is running this Spring with four groups taking part in Loreto, St.Kierans College and Colaiste Abhainn Rí. Each group will work with a poet for three workshops and then submit a poem in April to the Editor Enda Coyle -Greene.

Art of Change workshops are taking place in Colaiste Abhainn Rí, Colaiste Cois Suire, St. Kierans College, Loreto and Kilkenny Vocational Secondary. The students are learning upcycling techniques for clothing and textiles, learning about sustainable materials, and getting a chance to use and make their own eco-friendly art materials.



Artists Supports



Our Your Voice Matters programme has been launched and will be delivered through a combination of in-person workshops and group online sessions. The programme will include the following workshops 'Designing Atomic Habits' and 'the Art of revising and editing your work'.

We will also run a 'Coaching & Creative Process' Programme focused on bringing a series of individual writing projects to fruition. This will culminate in the design and curation of a celebratory event, undertaken by the participants supported by the Arts Office. We will also run a series of 'In-Person Writers' Coaching Clinics during the Kilkenny Arts Festival.



Asylum Productions – The Alice Project

Planning is underway for the August 2026 outdoor performances and all is well progressing well.

Fearghus Ó Conchúir – Extra Time

Summer consultations held with former hurlers, camogie players and officials has been completed, as has the two-week residency in Ballyhale. Filming undertaken across the County in January is currently being edited as we work towards the final film

Straymaker – Córa

Choir rehearsals began early February and have continued throughout the month. The final week of February has seen a very successful filming and recording element for the project as we work towards the final piece to be launched later this year

Emerging Curator Programme

Brendan McEvelly is working with the five assigned writers: Sara Muthi, Gustav Parker Hibbett, Jane Clark, Orla Mackey and Annemarie Ní Churreáin. We are currently procuring the designer for the final publication.

HERITAGE

Irish Walled Towns Network

The Irish Walled Towns Network, a Heritage Council Programme, held its AGM in Drogheda in February. There are 33 member towns in this All-Island Network who benefit from funding, training and networking opportunities. As a member town Kilkenny City was represented by Heritage Officer, Regina Fitzpatrick. Kilkenny City is one of five walled towns in Co. Kilkenny, the others being Inistioge, Thomastown, Callan and Gowran all of which are eligible for membership of the Network. An application has also been submitted to under the Irish Walled Towns Network Conservation Grant Scheme for a maintenance plan for the Kilkenny City Walls.



Members of the Irish Walled Towns Network at the AGM in Drogheda

Heritage Council's Community Heritage Grant Scheme now open

The Heritage Council's Community Heritage Grant Scheme 2026 is open for applications. This scheme is designed to support community groups and not-for-profit non-governmental organisations whether they are caring for places, collections, habitats, species, monuments, or intangible heritage. The closing date for applications is **20th March 2026**.

Community Monuments Fund 2026

Thirteen applications have been submitted to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage for the 2026 Community Monuments Fund. The Fund provides investment in Ireland's archaeological heritage and is prioritised for Local Authorities, private owners, custodians and community groups.

The aim of the fund is to:

- 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.

Applications have been submitted for the following projects:

KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL SITES	STREAM	DETAILS
St. Coleman's Church, Churchclara	1	Phase 2 of Conservation Works
St. Catherine's Church, Rathbeagh	1	Phase 2 of Conservation Works
Kellymount Medieval Graveyard, Paulstown	1	Conservation Works
St. David's Church, Castleinch	1	Conservation Works
St. Mary's Graveyard, Kilkenny City	1	Conservation of Funeral Monuments
Bessborough Mausoleum, Fiddown	2	Conservation Management Plan
Coolagh Graveyard	2	Conservation Management Plan
Lower Street Graveyard, Kilmacow	2	Conservation Management Plan
Kilbeacon Cemetery, Mullinavat	3	Phase 2 of Conservation Works
Clomantagh Church	3	Interpretation Signage
Tubbrid Graveyard	3	Interpretation Signage
PRIVATELY-OWNED SITES	STREAM	DETAILS
Ballyragget Castle	2	Conservation Management Plan
St. Canice's Cathedral	3	Interpretation

FINANCE

The expenditure by service division to the end of January is set out in Table 1. Total Expenditure for the period was €16.8m compared with the annual budget of €129m.

Table 1	Actual YTD February 2026	Budget Full Year 2026
	€'000's	€'000's
Housing & Building	4,761	36,921
Road Transport & Safety	2,226	33,045
Water Services	728	5,928
Development Management	1,414	16,101
Environmental Services	2,365	19,972
Recreation & Amenity	1,021	10,229
Agriculture, Education, Health, Welfare	38	348
Miscellaneous Services	1,456	6,847
Central Management Charges for Allocation	2,760	
OVERALL TOTAL	16,769	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.

Finance Update

The bank overdraft facility was not utilised in the two month period up to the end of February 2026.

The draft financial statements for 2025 are close to completion and will be presented to Council at the April meeting.

a