

# 2024



Bray & North Wicklow  
Area Partnership

## ANNUAL REPORT





## Overview of 2024

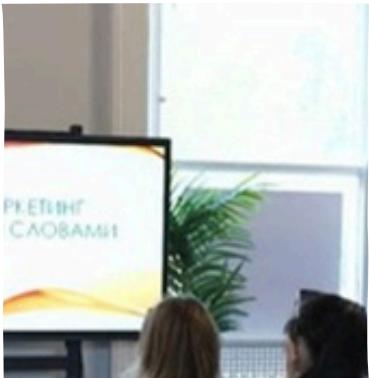
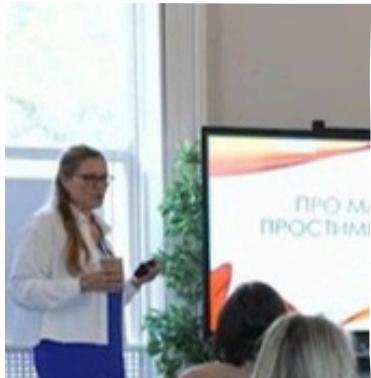
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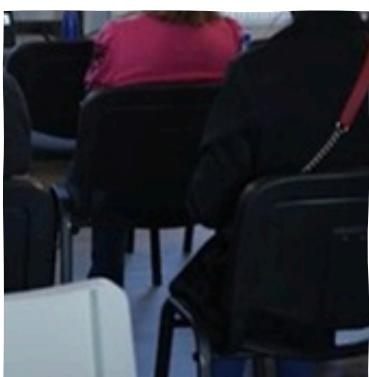
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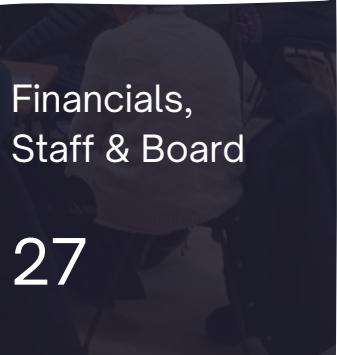
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# People and Communities

2024

**200**

Parents attended parenting groups

**39**

Expectant parents supported through the Preparing for Life home visiting programme

**174**

Social Prescribing service clients

**14**

Healthy Food Made Easy (HFME) courses

**147**

HFME course participants

**15**

Parenting groups

**5**

Baby massage groups

**33**

Families supported to transition to Early Years settings

**60**

Early Years staff upskilled in language development

**5**

HFME taster sessions

**150**

Christmas Community Lunch attendees

**120**

Climate Action event attendees

**229**

Faile Isteach classes regular attendees

**6**

Faile Isteach class locations in Wicklow

**70**

Faile Isteach volunteer tutors

**20**

We Can Quit Programme completions

**21**

Local Community Groups (LCGs) supported to address social inclusion issues

**32**

Menopause Programme participants

**220**

Attendees at 2 Health & Wellbeing Fairs

**30+**

Community organisations showcased at 2 Health & Wellbeing Fairs



# Working Together

**1,700**

Referred to the LAES

**1,600**

Engaged with the LAES

**97%**

Completed Personal Progression Plans

**148**

Received Economic Progression Supports

**628**

One-to-one interventions

**53**

Tus placements

**24**

Clients set up their own business

**4**

Start Your Own Business bootcamps

**93**

Self-Employment workshop attendees

**36**

Self-Employment Programmes for Ukrainians attendees

**18**

CE placements

**115**

People with disabilities provided with person - centred supports

**70**

People with disabilities received employment skills training

**23**

Salon Practitioner course graduates

**1**

Employment Progression & Opportunities event for graduates

**50**

Attended Industry Certified training

**17**

People with disabilities supported to secure paid employment

**4**

People with disabilities supported in current employment progression

**19**

Employers engaged with

**40**

Attendees at art course for new arrivals



Best Community-Based Media Literacy Initiative Award





# WELCOME

Peter Brennan, CEO and Aoife Flynn Kennedy, Chair

## to the Bray & North Wicklow Area Partnership (BNWAP) 2024 Annual Report.



Within this Report you are provided with an insight to the range of initiatives, supports and services we delivered over the course of the year. As always, the demand for our supports and services remained at a high level during 2024. Meeting this demand is challenging and requires the ongoing resourcing we receive from various Government Departments and state agencies together with contributions provided by a number of private sector firms. We also continued to collaborate with many local organisations and agencies to ensure that there was a joined-up approach to our inclusion focused work locally.

Similar to the past number of years, our work spans the life-cycle from early childhood engagement to older people supports. The breadth and depth of our work in 2024 covered interlinked action involving communication and signposting to increase awareness, knowledge and uptake of services; direct service delivery with respect to education and training programmes for adults and young people, welfare to work progressions, self-employment ventures, health & wellbeing initiatives, early years development & family support, engaging with new communities; local management of labour programmes such as Community Employment & Tus and building the capacity and skills in local communities. We provide a snapshot of the work undertaken in 2024 throughout this Annual Report.

A significant event in 2024 was our company name change. The new company name better reflects the work we undertake and the availability of the services and supports we provide to individuals, groups and communities within the greater Bray and North Wicklow areas. While some of our work has a wider geographic catchment area, such as the Local Area Employment Service that covers Bray, the rest of county Wicklow and county Kildare, the majority of the supports and services we provide are delivered using a placed based approach focusing on greater Bray and North Wicklow. Now we all just need to get use to being known as Bray & North Wicklow Area Partnership.

Many of the initiatives we deliver have very positive results. An example of this is the salon stylist training programme and the 23 participants who completed the course in 2024 with the award of industry recognised certification – you can read more on this in the pages to follow. Another important development was the selection of a collaboration initiative involving targeted neighbourhoods in Bray and South East Dun Laoghaire Rathdown for inclusion in the two-year Local Area Child Poverty Action Plan Pilot Programme. The projected work to be undertaken over the coming years is intended to focus on systems change and development resulting in enhanced services for families and children that address the drivers of poverty and provide for better outcomes across the life cycle.

The various programmes we manage and deliver have annual output targets that we are obliged to meet. It is again pleasing to note that we achieved and generally exceeded these targets across almost all aspects of our work during the year. Great credit is due to the people who contribute to this success including the Board Directors, committee members, collaborative partners and particularly our staff team members for the professional and dedicated manner in which they undertake their work. Long may this continue.

# About BNWAP

## People & Communities Working Together

Bray & North Wicklow Area Partnership (BNWAP) is a local development company working predominantly in the Bray and North Wicklow area.



## Vision

A strong, vibrant and inclusive society where everyone has an equal chance to achieve their potential and participate in the social, cultural, economic and political life of the community.

## Mission

Our mission is to work in partnership with all sectors of the local community to achieve a fairer and more inclusive society by increasing equality of access to basic services, education, training and employment for marginalised individuals and groups.

We work collaboratively to empower local people and communities to have a say on issues that affect them, identify their own needs and make positive changes in their lives.

### The people we work with and provide services for:

- Unemployed people
- Older people
- Travellers
- People with disabilities
- Refugees and asylum seekers
- Young people at risk
- Parents and carers of young people at risk
- Disadvantaged women
- Disadvantaged men
- Homeless people
- Ex-offenders
- Low income households
- Substance misusers
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people

# Child & Family

Our SPECS (Supporting Parents and Early Childhood Services) initiative continued to expand and provide a range of supports and services in the local community to improve outcomes for children and families; while a collaboration with Tusla and CYSPC supported new arrival families through play, learning and language development.

## Parenting Programmes and Family Support

SPECS delivered 15 parenting groups and supported over 200 parents in groups and individually through **Parents Plus Early Years** (1-6 years) and **Core** programme, **Parents Plus Children's** programme (6-11 years), **Parenting When Separated, Healthy Families, Circle of Security** and **Non-Violent Resistance** (NVR) Training. SPECS also delivered 10 parenting workshops covering topics such as technology, healthy eating habits and sleep.

## Preparing for Life (PfL)

PfL family mentors worked with 39 families starting from pregnancy, visiting families in their homes to provide support and information on topics such as child development, attachment and parenting.



## Parent and Baby groups

Groups supporting parents and babies together continued in 2024. Five baby massage and three PEEP groups were run supporting over 90 parents and babies.

## Early Years and Schools

SPECS supported 33 individual families to secure places in early years settings as well as making the positive transition into early education settings. **Roots of Empathy** is a school based programme run over 27 weeks with a baby taking on the teacher role in the classroom! In 2024 the programme continued to be delivered and supported across a number of schools in Bray.





## Language Development

SPECS, in collaboration with HSE Primary Care Speech & Language service, continued the roll-out of **Chatterboxes**, our language development programme in early years settings and primary schools. Three schools participated in running the **Talk Boost Key Stage 1** programme, with over 45 teachers now trained across the community and in excess of 120 children benefitting from improved language and communication skills.

The rollout of the **Early Talkboost** programme continued in four early years services in Bray. Four additional staff were trained and 85 children participated. The **Bringing Stories to Life** programme continued in two community crèches and this year parents joined in the fun and attended a session with their children. **Learning Language and Loving It** continued too with eight staff across five schools and services participating. A new early years programme targeting attention and listening skills got under way, benefitting 22 children and three staff.

## New Communities Family Support

In 2024 SPECS was delighted to further expand work with new communities in Bray with funding from Tulsa for a New Communities Family Support Worker. We were delighted to host a number of outreach and family fun events. One particular highlight was the Christmas party in the Esplanade Hotel which over 100 parents and children attended. Families had great fun celebrating together and special guests included a magician and Santa Claus himself!



## Pilot Plan: Local Area Child Poverty Action

In 2024 applications from across the country were open for the new Local Area Child Poverty Action Plan pilot. A group of dedicated organisations and practitioners came together across North Wicklow and Dun Laoghaire Rathdown. The area was one of only four locations in the country chosen to implement the pilot, which focuses on early childhood (pregnancy to age four) and aims to improve service coordination and family support, addressing systemic and intergenerational factors contributing to child poverty. With BNWAP as the lead agency, partner agencies include CYPSC and Southside Partnership.



## Infant Mental Health (IMH) Learning Network

SPECS coordinates the IMH Learning Network for the Bray/Wicklow area.

The Network brings professionals from a range of disciplines together, over lunchtime on a monthly basis, to discuss topics and build practice around the social and emotional development of babies and young children. Professionals include public health nurses, community workers, early years staff, mental health practitioners, social workers and speech and language therapists. The Network is chaired by a HSE psychologist who has a special interest in attachment and the early social and emotional development of the child. The Network promotes a deepened understanding of the importance of the first years in a child's life and advocates for supports for families during this crucial time.

## Initiatives for New Arrivals

In addition to our SPECS work we also collaborated with Wicklow Children & Young People's Services Committee (CYPSC) to deliver family activities and holiday camps to new arrival children in the area. Through this collaboration, staff also trained in the ***Peep Learning Together*** programme which helps parents, carers and practitioners to make the most of learning opportunities in every day life, supporting their babies and young children's development through play.



### New Arrival Parent and Toddlers Group

Recognising the need for activities for parents/carers with toddlers, we helped develop a support group offering safe, consistent, and child-friendly interactions. The group supported 21 toddlers, strengthening relationships and social development.

### Speech Therapy with New Arrivals

This programme supports bilingual children aged four to seven, helping them develop articulation skills in English while maintaining their mother language. With 15 children attending, the programme is vital for overcoming speech differences and will continue next year to enable sustained progress.



## Non Violent Resistance (NVR) Training

We ran a NVR Training programme with eight families in 2024. NVR training offers a way out of harmful patterns that can develop in a family when conflict occurs. It aims to reduce conflict, aggression and violence on the one hand; and, on the other, to repair the relationship between the parent and child.

# Education & Training

In 2024, we continued to prioritise accessible, inclusive learning opportunities tailored to community needs. Through a wide range of programmes, we supported individuals to build confidence, develop skills, and progress along personal and professional pathways. Our collaborative approach with education providers, community partners, and volunteers ensured that learning was relevant, empowering and rooted in real-world impact.

## Fáilte Isteach English Language Classes

Fáilte Isteach is a community education project that brings together predominantly older volunteers and migrants for the delivery of conversational English classes. Delivered in a relaxed and informal setting, the classes focus on building fluency and confidence, with volunteers supporting participants' immediate language needs through friendly, flexible conversations.

The programme is entirely volunteer-led, with tutors encouraged to foster a sense of welcome and connection while identifying learners' needs through dialogue.

In 2024, classes were held at six locations, supporting 229 participants, made possible by the dedication of over 70 local volunteers. The initiative is managed by BNWAP and supported by Third Age Ireland, which provides insurance, volunteer training and teaching resources.

## Art Course

We delivered an art course for 40 newly arrived individuals, focusing on basic drawing techniques and creative expression. Participants developed their artistic skills while creating beautiful pieces to take home. The sessions also offered a calming, meditative space, supporting wellbeing through art and relaxation.





## Salon Industry Training

In August 2024, we organised a series of introductory workshops for target groups, offering hands-on exposure to popular beauty techniques used in the salon industry. Around 40 participants attended, where they observed professional tutors and then practised techniques such as nail care, eyebrow design, and single eyelash extensions under expert supervision.

These salon industry workshops served as a gateway to a more in-depth, accredited six week training programme. BNWAP worked closely with the local Intreo office of the Department of Social Protection (DSP) to support eligible participants in accessing Tutor Support Grant (TSG) funding for the programme.

The six week course concluded in November and was followed by an Employment Progression & Opportunities event. Local salon owners were invited to share their career journeys and insights into working in the industry. The event also featured a certificate presentation ceremony, celebration, and networking opportunities for participants to connect with potential employers.

The initiative was a successful collaboration between BNWAP, DSP, local salon employers, and participants, supporting skills development and employment progression in the beauty sector.





## Industry Certified Training

We delivered a range of training opportunities to over 50 individuals in key employment areas such as Hospitality, HACCP Food Safety, Barista Skills, Manual Handling, Safe Pass, CV preparation, and guidance on accessing further education through providers such as Kildare & Wicklow Education and Training Board (KWETB).

A particular focus was placed on supporting young people under 25, in collaboration with partners including the Department of Social Protection (DSP), National Learning Network (NLN), KWETB Youthreach, and the Local Area Employment Service. These training programmes enabled participants to gain industry-relevant certification and improve their prospects for employment and further education.



## Media Literacy Project

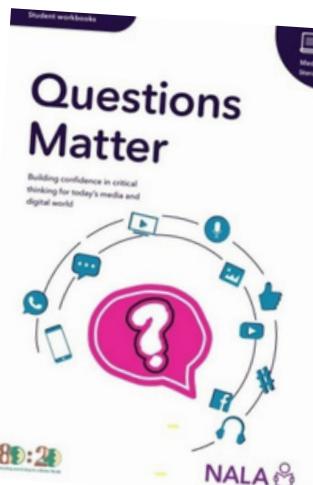
We collaborated with 80:20 Educating and Acting for a Better World, the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA), Kildare and Wicklow Education and Training Board (KWETB) and Bray Adult Learning Centre on an initiative called Questions Matter.

This project supported adult education tutors, literacy educators, and practitioners in developing critical thinking and digital citizenship skills to assess and challenge news and information. It aimed to empower educators to help adult learners explore and discuss key social issues such as poverty, migration, active citizenship, and community development.

Questions Matter used a blended learning approach, including:

- Workshops and consultations on current topics and educational materials
- Three micro-learning, on-demand WhatsApp courses, reaching 197 participants
- A learner-friendly magazine co-published with NALA, designed to counter disinformation through games, activities and exercises, distributed nationwide via adult education centres and community groups

The initiative was awarded Best Community-Based Media Literacy Initiative at the 2024 Media Literacy Ireland Awards.



# Enterprise & Employment

Our goal is to support everyone - the short- and long-term unemployed, those with disabilities, jobseekers or new businesses that are getting off the ground - to move towards economic independence. We help build skills and provide tailored guidance and training where needed.

## One-to-One Support

Our tailored one-to-one support meets the individual “where they are at” and supports them in identifying their development pathway towards employment or self-employment. This personalised guidance was delivered alongside structured training programmes designed to enhance skills, whether participants are seeking employment or self-employment.

Clients were also supported on a motivational level throughout the process, helping to build their confidence and resilience. Ongoing assistance remained available post business start-up, including acting as a sounding board for ideas, conducting business reviews, and offering support with financial planning and business development.



## The Journey to Self-Employment

Self-employment, whether full-time or part-time, can be a viable, flexible, and empowering pathway for a wide range of individuals. This includes those who are long-term or short-term unemployed, individuals seeking improved work-life balance or those ready to turn a business idea into a sustainable enterprise. BNWAP offers a comprehensive suite of supports to assist individuals at every stage of their self-employment journey with 149 attendances at our training.

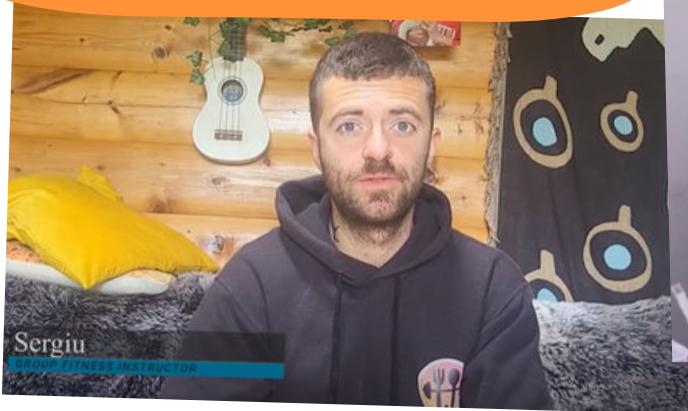
Four **Start Your Own Business** bootcamps were delivered, supporting participants in assessing the feasibility of business ideas and evaluating their own attitudes and aptitudes for self-employment. Attendees also received practical information and guidance on key areas including market research, legal structures, bookkeeping, taxation, pricing and sales.

An **Introduction to Online Advertising and Social Media** workshop provided participants with an understanding of the marketing mix, customer profiling, and the role of digital marketing in business growth. The session explored how to identify the most suitable online platforms for their specific business needs and how to effectively use social media and digital advertising tools to build brand awareness, engage target audiences, and drive sales.



Our **Bookkeeping** course was highly tailored to the specific needs of the participants. Key topics included how to maintain accurate financial records, an overview of allowable expenses for tax purposes, and the importance of keeping accurate and complete business finance records. Each participant received a customised Excel bookkeeping template pre-populated with formulas to assist them in managing their accounts from the outset.

Sergio progressed from unemployment to set up his gym and fitness business



Yulia was supported to set up her beauty business

**Completing Your Tax Returns** took our sole traders through how to complete their tax returns through Revenue's online system in a clear, step-by-step manner. The session covered key areas such as allowable business expenses, income reporting, and important deadlines and obligations under self-assessment. The course was highly practical and interactive while reinforcing the importance of maintaining proper financial records to support tax compliance.

## Courses for Ukrainian Refugees

In response to demand from the Ukrainian refugee community, two tailored programmes were delivered to support individuals interested in exploring self-employment opportunities in Ireland. Both programmes were delivered in Ukrainian by a native Ukrainian-speaking tutor who provided specific, practical examples of self-employment in Ireland. The first, **Would You Like to Know More About Self-Employment and Taxes?** provided participants with clear, practical information on the Irish self-employment system, including business registration, tax obligations, allowable expenses, and available supports.



The second, **Marketing for Ukrainian Entrepreneurs in Ireland**, focused on helping attendees understand how to effectively apply marketing tools to help grow businesses in Ireland taking into account cultural nuances and communication styles that may influence business success.

## Local Area Employment Service (LAES)

The LAES provides job search assistance, information on progression options, intensive one-to-one guidance and other employment-related support to job seekers referred by the Department of Social Protection (DSP). 2024 was the second full operational year for the Bray/Kildare/Wicklow (BKW) Local Area Employment Service (LAES).

We deliver our LAES services in a friendly and supportive environment to long-term unemployed clients farthest from the labour market with barriers to labour market participation.

The LAES is funded by the DSP. BNWAP is the contract holder for the LAES and we work in partnership with Kildare County Employment Centre to deliver the service across the two counties, with offices in Bray, Arklow, Wicklow Town, Baltinglass, Athy, Kildare Town, Naas, Newbridge and Leixlip.

1,700 referrals

1,600 engagements

97% completed  
Personal Progression Plans



## The Journey to Employment

In 2024, three targeted courses were delivered to support clients with career planning, specifically designed for participants of labour market schemes, Ukrainian refugees, and other eligible individuals seeking to enhance their employment prospects. These courses aimed to inspire confidence and motivation, and help to assess their career pathways and opportunities in a welcoming, non-intimidating environment.

Our **Exploring Your Options** programme supported participants in evaluating their personal interests and skills, helping them to assess their suitability and enthusiasm for both employment and self-employment opportunities. Through guided reflection and practical exercises, clients gained greater clarity on potential career paths, enabling informed decision-making about their future professional direction.

As a follow on, we offered a **Business Idea Generation** course which supported those with or without a clear business concept to explore the option of self-employment and develop viable ideas based on their qualifications, skills, and interests. Additionally, the course helped participants evaluate the potential viability of their business ideas and provided guidance on relevant qualifications, additional training, or work experience that could enhance their chances of success. This comprehensive approach empowered clients to take informed steps towards achieving their entrepreneurial goals.





Finally, our ***Identifying Your Strengths & Opportunities*** course supported participants in exploring their skills, interests, hobbies, qualifications, and work experience to gain a clearer understanding of their career options. They developed tailored CVs and personal profiles highlighting their strengths. They were also guided in identifying potential employment roles aligned with their backgrounds and aspirations, equipping them with practical tools to advance their job search and career planning.

## Labour Market Schemes

### Tús Initiative

Our Tús work placement initiative provided valuable opportunities for 53 unemployed individuals to gain hands-on work experience and develop practical skills. These placements took place within 20 local community groups and services, who in turn benefited from the participants' contributions to their day-to-day operations and wider community work. Tús remains an important local resource that strengthens both individuals and communities.



Throughout 2024, Tús participants were based in: BNWAP, Bray Emmets, Bray Family Resource & Development Project, BIFE, Bray Wanderers FC, Cornerstone at the Well, Delgany Tidy Towns, Enniskerry Youth Club, Festina Lente, Holy Redeemer Parish, Lakers Social & Recreational Club, Liberty Charity Shop, Vision Ireland (formerly NCBI) Home Charity Shop, Purple House, St. Fergal's Parish, Sunbeam House Services, the UCC, WHAD Residents Group, WH Five Loaves, and the Irish Deaf Association Shop.

### Community Employment (CE) scheme

During 2024, our Community Employment (CE) scheme provided jobs for 18 participants, offering valuable work experience, skill development and on-the-job training. Participants gained skills in office administration, time management, bookkeeping, reception duties, customer service, gardening and maintenance tasks.



Participants also completed a variety of training programmes, including First Aid, Manual Handling, Horticultural Tools and Equipment, Manual and Computerised Accounts, Digital Marketing, and Business Management. CE participants contributed to our Care And Repair Action, supported a local neighbourhood enhancement project and assisted in our BIA Food Poverty initiative.

With the skills and experience gained through the programme, participants are encouraged and supported to pursue open labour market part-time or full-time employment, either during their time on the scheme or upon completion.





## Supporting Social Enterprises

Our **BIA Food Initiative** continues to provide free food to individuals and families experiencing food poverty across the greater Bray and North Wicklow areas. We work in collaboration with local community groups to distribute food packs discreetly and efficiently to those in need.

Unfortunately, due to the ongoing cost of living crisis and broader economic uncertainty, the demand for BIA remains high. It continues to be a vital support service for many in our community. Each week throughout 2024, over 75 families and approximately 100 individuals received food support through BIA.

As a paid member of FoodCloud, BNWAP can access surplus food supplies, which are collected weekly and delivered to the BIA Distribution Hub for distribution to local households in need. We were supported by local groups and a private company in obtaining much needed food donations.

## Care And Repair Action (CARA)

Our **Care And Repair Action (CARA) programme** supports over 300 older, vulnerable people in the Bray and North Wicklow areas, helping them live more independently through a small jobs service. CARA's services included hedge and lawn cutting, minor carpentry, small paint jobs and the installation of hand and grab rails to assist with stair use.

The interaction between clients and CARA staff when booking and completing work helps reduce social isolation, along with the five coffee mornings throughout the year, providing a new social outlet and opportunities to connect for CARA service users. This project is primarily staffed through our CE Scheme and funded by the DSP.



"I am so grateful for this wonderful service. We had great difficulty with our garden until we found you. Thank you for everything! I also reconnected with a school friend at one of your coffee mornings, and we now meet up regularly!"



## IMPACT WorkAbility: Inclusive Pathways to Employment

Following the success and positive outcomes of the IMPACT Initiative delivered in 2022 and 2023, and in response to feedback from clients and stakeholders, BNWAP was delighted to be awarded funding from the DSP and the ESF+ (under the Employment, Inclusion, Skills & Training (EIST) Programme, administered by Pobal) for a new five-year IMPACT WorkAbility – Inclusive Pathways to Employment Programme, which commenced in January 2024.

The aim of the programme is to ensure that people with disabilities are fully supported to find and maintain employment. It also supports employers to ensure that employment outcomes for programme participants are sustainable and inclusive.



During 2024, our IMPACT WorkAbility - Inclusive Pathways to Employment programme provided person-centred supports to participants with disabilities to help them secure employment, progress in existing roles, or engage in employment-focused skills training to enhance their career opportunities. Supports included identifying suitable education and training options, securing work placements, professional CV writing, interview preparation, induction and in-work supports, and career progression advice.

This programme is targeted at people with disabilities aged 16 and over who wish to access employment (including self-employment), education or training in order to improve their employment outcomes. The five year programme will run until December 2028. It builds on the learnings from our previous IMPACT Initiative, delivered under the Disability Awareness Funding (DAF) Measure to Support the Employment of People with Disabilities.





Certified skills-based training was delivered to 111 participants, covering topics such as Communication Skills, Conflict Resolution, Job Ready Skills, Retail Operations, Customer Care, HACCP Food Safety, and Barista Training.

The programme actively collaborated with a range of local disability organisations and services, including RehabCare, Sunbeam House Services, Cairdeas Clubhouse, National Learning Network, and Festina Lente. BNWAP also developed and delivered a tailored Employment Skills Programme with Newcourt School.

In 2024, 17 participants were supported to secure paid employment, 4 participants progressed within their existing roles and 19 employers were supported in developing more inclusive workplaces. This included providing information on available government grants, such as the Wage Subsidy Scheme, and maintaining ongoing communication between employers and programme participants to support long-term employment success.



# Health & Wellbeing

In 2024, we delivered a wide range of health and wellbeing initiatives supporting individuals and families across the community. Through the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme (SHCP), Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) and HSE resourcing, we offered responsive, person-centred programmes and initiatives that empowered over 500 people to improve their physical and mental wellbeing, access local services, build social connections, and make positive lifestyle changes.



## Social Prescribing

Our Social Prescribing service is funded by SHCP and HSE resourcing. In 2024, Social Prescribing (SP) supported 174 people to enhance their social, physical, mental health and wellbeing by linking them into community activities and services. SP delivered a number of programmes to participants including:

- **Menopause Programme** This five week pilot in collaboration with Bray Family Resource & Development Project addressed the information gap/access to supports and health disparity for peri- and menopausal women.
- **Social Therapeutic Horticulture programme**. This six week pilot was delivered in collaboration with Festina Lente and a local Dublin Simon Community service.
- **Mental Health & Wellbeing** This four week taster session programme was delivered in collaboration with CHO6 ARCHES Recovery College.
- **Physical Activity** Three four week programmes delivered in collaboration with a local fitness instructor to promote physical health and wellbeing in a group setting in Bray.
- **Chair Yoga** This four week programme was delivered in collaboration with Tuath Housing and Greystones Family Resource Centre.

Our flexible and responsive Social Prescribing service, including the provision of the above programmes, bridged the gap in local supports and activities, created opportunities to foster collaborations with other services and providers, offered a time-limited social outlet to encourage participants to connect with other activities available in the community via supported transition and signposting, facilitated further promotion of social prescribing more widely in the community and to referrers, and provided a clear pathway for self-referrals. These programmes were also successful in engaging individuals in the community who were not connected with other services.

“It helped inform me on the different services in the area and gave me a good reason to get out and meet people”.



## Menopause Programme



We delivered a five week pilot Menopause Programme to 32 women in the Little Bray area providing information, resources and lifestyle options to address information gaps/access to supports and health disparity for peri- and menopausal women.

The programme was delivered under SHCP in collaboration with Bray Family Resource & Development Project.

Our Social Prescribing team developed the programme with a particular focus on the physical and mental health needs of women struggling in silence with inequitable access to menopause support and treatment options and often experiencing social isolation.

Experience of delivering the programme endorsed findings from the National Office of Mental Health Engagement & Recovery that menopause needs to be understood as a whole family and community issue. Participants got to hear input from expert speakers on a range of topics including medical options, nutrition, exercise, bone health and alternative options.

## Community Tobacco Work

Our Community Tobacco Work focuses on increasing healthy opportunities for individuals in the area who smoke, and reducing barriers to enable quit attempts. We prioritise work with those with chronic health conditions in disadvantaged socio-economic areas.

We delivered two **We Can Quit** programmes in January and September, with 20 people completing the programmes.

We Can Quit is a free, friendly and supportive group programme funded by SHCP for smokers who want support to stop smoking. The evidence suggests that if you commit to quitting and do not smoke for 28 days, use behavioural interventions such as the support offered within this programme as well as stop smoking medication, you are five times more likely to quit for good.

The We Can Quit model takes a holistic approach to smoking and health and incorporates elements of healthy eating, stress management and self-care that supports individuals on their quit smoking journey.





## Smoke Free Homes

The **Smoke Free Homes Challenge** is a four week programme that took place in April and July aimed at promoting a smoke/vape-free environment for families and is designed to protect children from the harmful effects of second-hand smoke. The programme is about encouraging and supporting families to make their homes and cars smoke-free so that everyone is protected from the harm of second-hand smoke.

## Mind Body Medicine Programme

Our **Mind Body Medicine** programme took place in Greystones towards the end of 2024 with SICAP resourcing. The programme gave people the space to understand their past traumas and, through creative therapeutic interventions, explore practical coping techniques and skills to manage a variety of mental health barriers in their everyday lives.



## Healthy Food Made Easy

The **Healthy Food Made Easy (HFME)** Programme is a basic nutrition and cookery course that helps people to change to a healthy diet, plan meals on a budget and make easy-to-cook meals. We delivered 14 HFME programmes with 147 people in 2024, made possible with funding from SHCP.

We delivered five open courses using community kitchens in the area, as well as delivering the programme with nine partner organisations working with a range of target groups including Travellers, People with Disabilities, people with poor mental health and disadvantaged young people. This year we also introduced our first and very successful HFME programme aimed at men.





## Health & Wellbeing Fairs

We delivered two Health and Wellbeing Fairs in 2024 in the Little Bray Community Centre in May, and Ballywaltrim Community Centre in October, in collaboration with HSE Health & Wellbeing team, SHCP, Ballywaltrim Community Centre and Bray Family Resource & Development Project.

In excess of 220 people and over 30 community organisations attended the fairs, which showcased a number of SHCP services available to people living in the community, such as the HSE Stop Smoking Service, Parenting Programmes, Healthy Food Made Easy, and Social Prescribing. A wide range of other community-based services involved in delivering health and wellbeing supports were on hand to offer advice and answer questions. Attendees also got to hear Chéile Community Choir.



## Community Food & Nutrition Work

Our Community Food and Nutrition Worker (CFNW) spearheaded a number of community based initiatives aimed at improving the local food environment and addressing food poverty in 2024 including;

- A pilot parent-child healthy eating and cookery programme to groups with complex needs within a school setting. 12 participants attended who were identified by the school's Programme and Additional Educational Needs co-ordinators
- **Healthy Eating for Healthy Ageing** talks to older adults
- **Healthy Eating for You and Your Child** talk and cookery session for parents of children linked in with Home School Community Liaison Coordinators in local DEIS schools.
- A **Healthy Eating for Menopause** talk as part of the BNWAP **Menopause Programme**
- Co-ordination of 14 **Healthy Food Made Easy** courses delivered in the community
- Delivery of 5 **Healthy Food Made Easy** taster sessions
- Supporting the facilitation of new Peer Leader Training where eight peers were trained

# Supporting Communities

In 2024, BNWAP worked closely with local community groups, networks, and individuals to strengthen community capacity, promote social inclusion and respond to local needs. Through targeted training, interagency collaboration, community events, and support for new arrivals and marginalised groups, we helped develop more connected, resilient, and inclusive communities across Bray and North Wicklow.

## Training to Local Community Groups (LCGs)

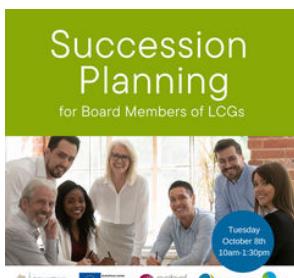
BNWAP worked with 21 LCGs in 2024 to build capacity to address social inclusion issues. We provided training opportunities for groups working with SICAP target groups, resourcing networks and developing opportunities for interagency networking and collaboration.



**Facilitation Skills** training took place with 10 people from LCGs including Festina Lente, Bray Community Addiction Team and local community activists. The training targeted workers and volunteers in community groups whose work involves facilitating meetings, training sessions, group discussions and planning initiatives.



**Introduction to Social Media** training was delivered to 10 people from a range of LCGs including Club Enclave, Greystones Family Resource Centre, Bray Community Addiction Team, First Responders and County Wicklow Volunteer Centre. The training gave groups the basics on social media, identifying the best social platform for your group and homing in on your target group and audience.



**Succession Planning** training was also delivered to members of the management committees at the Marian Centre and Bray Community Addiction Team. This is an emerging area of focus for LCGs, as organisations often face challenges in replacing skilled and experienced committee members and staff when they leave.

## Bray Homeless Forum

BNWAP continued to coordinate the Bray Homeless Forum in 2024 providing opportunities for local services and groups working with homeless people to network, collaborate and input to policy.





## Community Lunch

Over 100 people from the local community attended our Festive Community Lunch held in December. The event provided a space for people from community groups, agencies and public representatives to network, share information and make the kind of connections that enable them to work together more collaboratively for the benefit of the whole community. Those who attended were also able to browse information stands from a range of local services and community groups to find out more about the vital services and supports being provided in the community.



## Supporting New Arrivals in the Community

In 2024, BNWAP continued to operate the Ukrainian Community Centre, providing a welcoming and safe space for the Ukrainian community and newly arrived individuals to access support and connect with one another. The centre is staffed by BNWAP staff members, allowing for a wide range of social, educational and recreational activities to take place. Open Monday to Friday, the building is generously provided by St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church.



Throughout the year, there was a significant increase in newly arrived refugees and International Protection Applicants (IPAs) seeking assistance with translation, paperwork, and referrals to both government and local services that support integration. In response, our development workers continued to design and deliver programmes that meet emerging needs while fostering a supportive, therapeutic and inclusive environment for newcomers to connect and build community in the Bray and North Wicklow area.

Courses offered to new arrivals in 2024 included Yoga, English conversation classes, Singlish, HACCP certification, Barista training, Fitness sessions and Art workshops. The Art courses, in particular, highlighted the creative talents of participants, with impressive sculptures, canvases, and custom-designed t-shirts produced using a variety of artistic media. A diverse range of themed events and activities for children and families also took place, including cooking workshops, a Summer Project, Halloween and Christmas camps, Speech Therapy sessions, Baby Fitness, a Toddler Group, and family excursions. Additional activities included Skincare workshops, a Choir, and celebration days to mark key occasions such as the Peace Walk and Independence Day.



## Celebrating our Community Volunteers

We were supported in the delivery of services in the community by over 70 volunteers with help from Co. Wicklow Volunteer Centre! We thank each and every one of them for their dedication and commitment to our community.

## Local Resource Centres

We continued in 2024 to support the Bray Family Resource and Development Project to operate resource centres in Fassaroe and Old Court, providing funding of €100,000 through sub-contracting under the SICAP programme.

## Food Poverty

In 2024, Wicklow County Council's Local Community Development Committee, with funding from the Healthy Ireland initiative, provided support to BNWAP to employ a County Wicklow Food Co-ordinator. The initiative began in May with the appointment of the Co-ordinator, whose role is to lead the development of food partnerships across the county. In October, a series of consultation and information events titled **Food for Thought** were held across the county.



These events provided a valuable platform for collaboration, dialogue, and knowledge-sharing among voluntary groups and community organisations that support individuals and families experiencing food poverty, either directly or indirectly. Key issues identified through these consultations included the ongoing cost-of-living crisis, stigma associated with accessing food supports, lack of coordination among food-providing organisations, and concerns about the quality and suitability of emergency food provision.

## Disability Network

Our Disability Network provides a forum for people from local disability groups to:

- Network, discuss common issues, support one another and work together more effectively
- Identify local service gaps and policy issues that need addressing
- Take joint action to promote the full and equal participation of people with disabilities in the local community





## Climate Action Awareness

In partnership with the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications and Wicklow County Council, we hosted a climate action event in Greystones in September 2024. This inaugural gathering brought together over 100 attendees from local community groups to explore how the area can shape its climate action future.

Building on this, a second Climate Action Awareness event was held in November at Ballywaltrim Community Centre, focused on engaging local communities. The event featured stalls highlighting community-led climate initiatives and drew over 120 participants.

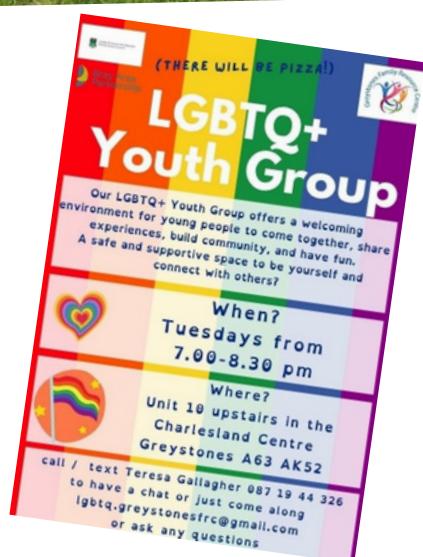
These events form part of our broader strategy to raise awareness of climate justice and promote community-driven climate action.



## Working with LGBTI Groups

We worked with Greystones Family Resource Centre (GFRC) and Wicklow County Council to access funding through the Dormant Accounts Project/Applications to support the delivery of the National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy.

GFRC was funded to carry out a consultation with the LGBTI+ community to determine what supports, activities and events they want to see happen and to develop a drop-in service in the Greystones area. The group secured additional funding through the 2024-2026 Dormant Accounts Fund from Department of Rural & Community Development to expand activities in 2025.



# FINANCIAL

Extract from Financial Statements for the year ended 31st December 2024

	2024	2023
	€	€
<b>Income</b>		
Dept. of Social Protection	2,674,476	2,134,012
Health Service Executive	274,161	227,562
Tus Programme	434,519	447,512
Receipts from Pobal	7,500	154,154
Wicklow County Council	1,049,869	1,032,316
Receipts from Tusla	508,778	427,840
Dept. of Rural & Community Development	56,761	31,531
Dept. of Health		6,059
Dept. of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth		12,000
Ukrainian Initiative	12,348	
Deposit Interest	5,613	
Other Income	12,542	13,680
	<b>5,058,055</b>	<b>4,486,666</b>
<b>WCC SICAP Expenditure</b>		
Administration & Monitoring	<b>263,044</b>	235,402
Goal 1 Costs	<b>304,075</b>	337,757
Goal 2 Costs	<b>437,580</b>	471,398
VAT	<b>15,207</b>	12,236
	<b>1,019,906</b>	<b>1,056,793</b>
<b>Other Expenditure</b>		
Wages / Administration / Support Costs	<b>3,924,807</b>	2,976,628
Depreciation	<b>13,487</b>	11,222
	<b>3,938,294</b>	2,987,848
<b>Net surplus</b>	<b>99,855</b>	<b>442,025</b>

# BOARD

Name	Sector	Organisation
Aoife Flynn Kennedy (Chair)	Elected Public Representative	Bray Municipal District
Caroline Winstanley	Elected Public Representative	Bray Municipal District
Lourda Scott (resigned June)	Elected Public Representative	Wicklow County Council
Mick Ryan (resigned June)	Elected Public Representative	Wicklow County Council
Orla Finn	Elected Public Representative	Greystones Municipal District
Dave Tew	Business Representative	Bray Chamber of Commerce
Judy Coolahan	Social Partner	Bray Council of Trade Unions
Ian McGahon	Social Partner	ICTU
Garvan Hickey	Statutory	Wicklow County Council
Louise Fortune	Statutory	Kildare & Wicklow ETB
Anne Marie McMorrow	Community /Voluntary	Bray Women's Refuge
Helen Furlong	Community /Voluntary	Lakers Club
Kate Byrne	Community /Voluntary	St. Margaret's
Moira Byrne	Community /Voluntary	Local Interest Member

# STAFF

## CEO

Peter Brennan

## FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION TEAM

Donna White	Finance Manager
Olivia Berry	Clerical Officer/Receptionist

## PROGRAMME RESOURCING

Ciara Mooney	Programmes Delivery Support Worker
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## SOCIAL INCLUSION PROGRAMMES TEAM

Jennifer D'Arcy	Social Inclusion Programmes Manager
Lorna Lafferty	Education Development Officer
Susanne Martin	Training & Development Outreach Worker
Jennifer Jones	Programmes Activation & New Communities Team Leader
Michelle Phillips	Community Development & Climate Action Worker (from May 2024)
Ivanna Ibragimova	Community Development Worker to Support Ukrainian Refugees
Sasha Sydorenko	Community Development Worker to Support Ukrainian Refugees
Mariana Yakubiv	Community Development Worker to Support Ukrainian Refugees
Louise Curtin	Community Food & Nutrition Worker
Karen Hammond	Community Tobacco Worker
Michelle Rogers	Communications Officer (to April 2024)
Grainne Rogers	Communications Officer (from September 2024)
Alexandra Kelly	Social Prescribing Co-ordinator
Jennifer O'Sullivan	Social Prescribing Link Worker (to October 2024)
Medbh Boyle	Social Prescribing Link Worker (from December 2024)

## IMPACT WORKABILITY TEAM

Orla Butler  
Kevin Kelliher  
Heather Redmond

IMPACT WorkAbility Manager  
Employment Facilitator  
Employment Facilitator

## LAES TEAM

Mary O' Carolan  
Sandra Jennings  
Cathy Heffernan  
Zelma Greene  
Lorraine Creighton  
David Whelan  
Karen O'Connor  
Margarita Corscadden  
Susan McGrane  
Linda Graham

LAES General Manager  
LAES Finance Officer  
LAES Case Worker  
LAES Clerical Officer  
LAES Clerical Officer  
LAES Clerical Officer

## EARLY INTERVENTION & FAMILY SUPPORT TEAM

Maryrose Costello  
Lulu O'Kelly  
Claire Murphy  
Deirdre Murphy  
Gillian O'Rourke  
Anita Boyle  
Sarah Louise Cole  
Nadia Conroy  
Brona Murphy

Early Intervention & Family Support Services Manager  
Senior Development & Support Worker  
Development & Support Worker  
Development & Support Worker  
Communications & Administrator Worker  
Speech and Language Therapist  
Family Support Worker  
New Communities Worker  
Transitions Development Worker

## ECONOMIC PROGRESSION PROGRAMMES TEAM

Eithne Gunning  
Gillian O'Neill  
Catherine Breathnach  
Niamh Burton  
Evdonne Harvey  
Michael Byrne  
Cillian Russell  
Tus Participants  
CE Participants

Economic Progressions Manager  
Enterprise & Employment Development Officer  
Social Enterprise and Economic Progression Officer  
Enterprise and Employment Progression Supports Worker  
Community Employment Supervisor  
TUS Workplace initiative Supervisor  
TUS Workplace initiative Supervisor  
up to 60 participants  
up to 18 participants

## FUNDERS & PARTNERS



Ríaltas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland



Arna chomhchistiú ag  
an Aontas Eorpach  
Co-Funded by the  
European Union



The Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) is co-funded by the Irish Government, through the Department of Rural and Community Development, and the European Social Fund Plus under the Employment, Inclusion, Skills and Training (EIST) Programme 2021-2027.



An Roinn Coimice Sóisialai  
Department of Social Protection

An Roinn Leaná, Michumais  
agus Comhionannais  
Department of Children,  
Disability and Equality

An Roinn Forbartha Tuaithe  
agus Pobal agus Gaeltachta  
Department of Rural and Community  
Development and the Gaeltacht

An Roinn Sláinte  
Department of Health

# Bray & North Wicklow Area Partnership

First Floor, The Boulevard  
Quinsborough Road  
Bray, Co Wicklow  
A98 Y4X2

T: (01) 286 8266  
E: [info@bnwap.ie](mailto:info@bnwap.ie)  
W: [brayandnorthwicklowareapartnership.ie](http://brayandnorthwicklowareapartnership.ie)

