

SPC Report July 2021

Library

Wicklow Library & Co Archive update + official opening

The new Wicklow library and Wicklow County Archive is almost complete. The architect led team has worked well with the construction firm to ensure that Covid related delays were as short as possible. Shelving is now installed in the adult and children's libraries, while construction approaches its final stages. Stock is being delivered there on July 26 and WCC Cathaoirleach, Cllr Shay Cullen will perform the official opening on Monday 30 August, in the presence of Minister Darragh O'Brien. Hold the date!

Rathdrum Library update

It is anticipated that the official opening of Rathdrum library will be in the days following the Wicklow library opening. Furniture is scheduled to arrive in early August and new stock is currently being processed. The official date has yet TBC, but an early September opening is anticipated.

Library Development Plan 2021 – 2025 + future capital projects

Wicklow County Council's current Library Development Plan (2021 -2025), which was presented to this SPC in March, was formally adopted by Wicklow County Council at its June meeting. Design and layout is now being finalised. A new library for Aughrim + extension to Balywaltrim library, Bray are the main capital programme features. Tenders have been received for an architect led team for these 2 projects. The stand still period will be completed on July 15. The proposed structural changes to the Baltinglass Courthouse 7 library project will be submitted for Part 8 approval, so that this project can be resubmitted to DRCD for increased Rural Development Funding at the end of 2021.

Libraries open for Browsing & outdoor activities

Staff of Wicklow County Council's 13 libraries + its mobile library welcomed the public back to its buildings in early May. The "browse and borrow" model has been in place since then, with no firm indication yet as to when study facilities etc will be reintroduced. Although indoor activities are not currently available, we have seen a return of our book clubs at libraries where outdoor spaces are available.



Sensory Areas

A number of our libraries have had the recent addition of Sensory features, which are now in place. Funding was provided from Dept of Rural & Community Development (DRCD) in 2019/20, but there was a delay in installation, due to Covid restrictions. While still out of bounds to the public, they will be much appreciated when full service resumes.

