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4 NEWS UPDATE

12 IRISH PLANNING AWARDS

With a strong level of interest in two new categories - 'Climate Change' and 'Planning Workplace of the Year' - 34 projects have been shortlisted across seven categories for the Irish Planning Awards 2020.

15 LOCAL GOVERNMENT AWARDS

Fingal County Council was named 'Local Authority of the Year' at the 16th Chambers Ireland Excellence in Local Government Awards, and also picked up two category awards for 'Best Practice in Citizen Engagement' and 'Festival of the Year'.

22 SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL

South Dublin County Council's five-year PlaySpace Programme provides a template to develop a greater number of play spaces for children and to support active community engagement in the county's neighbourhoods

26 CELTIC ROUTES PROJECT

Wicklow County Council, Waterford City and County Council and Wexford County Council are collaborating with their Welsh colleagues in Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion, as part of an innovative €1.9m Celtic Routes Project to jointly boost tourism in both regions.

32 HOUSING AWARDS 2019

Focus Housing Association was the Overall Winner of the ICSH Awards 2019 for the rapid delivery of its permanent housing project on John's Lane West in Dublin 8, and the judging panel believes the development has the potential to be replicated throughout the country.

36 CLIMATE ENERGY UPGRADES

A series of community energy upgrades will be funded to the tune of €20m this year, while

Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) programmes will also ring-fence funding to deliver group retrofits to scale up climate action in communities throughout the country.

37 CLIMATE ACTION INDEX

Rated as one of the worst performing countries in a recent major international survey, Ireland was described as a 'low' performer (listed in 41st place) by the 2020 Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI), which has ranked up to 60 states based on a series of criteria.

38 CLIMATE CHANGE VIEWPOINT

Ireland's Climate Action Plan has set out an ambitious framework for change, and local authorities need to be at the core of its implementation, says Dr Seán O'Riordáin, Chair of the Public Policy Advisors Network.

41 DUBLIN'S CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION

Dublin's four local authorities have collaborated for the first time to produce individual Climate Change Action Plans 2019-2024 in association with Codema (Dublin's Energy Agency) and the Dublin Metropolitan's Climate Action Regional Office (CARO).

45 INNOVATION IN POLITICS

Nine impactful and diverse Irish projects reached the final of the Europe-wide Innovation in Politics Awards 2019, presented in Berlin on 4 December. Despite not taking home any awards, it provided an opportunity for Ireland's politicians to share local initiatives with their European counterparts.

51 VACANT HOMES

Nearly 3,000 properties registered to date on VacantHomes.ie (the online platform initiated by Mayo County Council) have been identified as 'vacant' with 48% situated in Leinster while 36% are based in Munster.



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53 DESTINATION TOWNS

The €15.5m 'Destination Towns' scheme is part of a new initiative by the National Tourism Development Authority. The process of identifying the towns to receive funding through the scheme is being led by the local authorities in consultation with Fáilte Ireland.

55 ENERGY PERFORMANCE CONTRACT

Dublin City Council has awarded an eight-year Energy Performance Contract to Noel Lawler Green Energy Solutions to upgrade seven of the city council's sports centres, resulting in savings of up to €129,000 on its annual energy costs and a reduction in carbon emissions.

56 ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

The new President of the Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management (CIWEM) is firmly focused on the climate and ecological emergency, and to mobilise CIWEM's 10,000 members and the wider public into action to tackle this emergency.

59 CLARE COUNTY COUNCIL

Clare County Council has signed contracts in a joint venture with Jada Projects Ltd and Kelly RAC to

deliver a €2.7m upgrade and refurbishment of a building in Ennis, which will be the new location for Clare Civil Defence HQ.

61 KILKENNY ENERGY TOWNS

Kilkenny's inaugural renewable energy towns competition, saw the small town of Callan scooping €100,000 as winner of the competition. Kilkenny LEADER Partnership and 3 Counties Energy Agency (the organisers) now hope it will catch on nationally and believes it also has the potential to be replicated globally.

67 CONSTRUCTION SUMMIT

The counties of Cork, Limerick and Waterford have seen major delays on several road projects over the past 18 months, and the investment slowdown will threaten growth in region over the next five years, CIF's Southern Construction Summit in Cork heard.

72 WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

The former Ulster Bank building on Wicklow Town's Main Street was purchased in 2017 by Wicklow County Council as the location for the town's new Library and County Archives, which will see the old bank building transformed into a state-of-the-art facility.

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