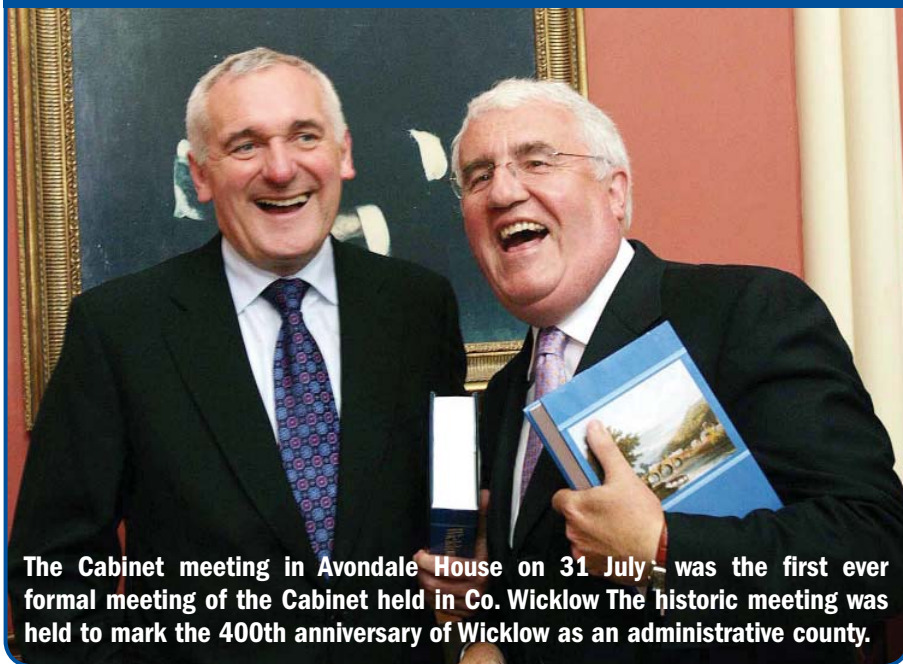


## GOVERNMENT MOVES TO THE 'GARDEN COUNTY'



The Cabinet meeting in Avondale House on 31 July was the first ever formal meeting of the Cabinet held in Co. Wicklow. The historic meeting was held to mark the 400th anniversary of Wicklow as an administrative county.

## NOISE POLLUTION

We live in an increasingly noisy world. Noise pollution is serious environmental issue. Excessive noise can be a very significant problem for people.

New Irish Regulations to give effect to an EU Directive on noise pollution have been signed into effect by Minister Roche. The new Regulations define environmental noise as 'unwanted or harmful outdoor sound created by human activities, including noise emitted by means of transport, road traffic, rail traffic, air traffic, and from sites of industrial activity.' The Regulations are aimed at managing overall noise in major urban areas and around major national infrastructure, and protecting quiet areas for the benefit of everyone.

## NEW MEANS TEST LIMITS FOR GP VISIT CARD

In June the Government announced that the basic income guidelines for the GP Visit Card are to be increased making more people than ever eligible. Full details of the Scheme and the new rates are available from your local health clinic, on the Citizens Information Online Service website [www.oasis.ie](http://www.oasis.ie) or the HSE website. Applications can be made at HSE local offices. If you have any problem getting the information you need, ring Dick Roche (01) 2863211

## DICK THROWS HIS WEIGHT BEHIND RATHNEW THIRD LEVEL PROJECT

When the County Council decided to purchase of Claremont Convent in Rathnew, with a view to promoting it as an outreach third level centre it got very practical support from Minister Roche who provided the Council with the necessary sanction to raise loan capital of €9million for the purchase. Minister Roche, a long term supporter of a third level outreach centre for Wicklow has indicated that he will give the Rathnew project every possible support.



## NEW PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE

Minister Roche provided funding for a new pedestrian bridge at Shillelagh as part of the record funding for Non National Roads in County Wicklow. Locals had been campaigning for the new bridge for many years. The narrow existing road bridge, built long before the era of the motor car, posed a serious hazard for pedestrians and in particular for residents from the nearby Cheshire Home.

## ROCHE PROVIDES MORE FUNDING FOR PLAYGROUNDS



Dick performing the opening of the Newcastle Community Playground

Minister Roche has doubled the funding for the provision of playgrounds in County Wicklow to €120,000 for 2006. Nationally Dick has allocated record funding of over €4m for the provision of playground facilities in 2006. Each City and County Council will receive a 100% increase on the amount provided in 2005. Councils may use the funding to provide playgrounds at up to four locations.

## GREEN LIGHT FOR €25m WICKLOW, ASHFORD & RATHNEW SEWERAGE SCHEME

Mr. Dick Roche T.D., gave Wicklow County Council clearance to look for tenders for the construction of a new wastewater treatment plant for Wicklow Town in early June.

The new plant will also allow for the decommissioning of the old treatment works in Ashford and Rathnew. Sewage from these locations will be transferred for treatment at the new facilities in Wicklow.

Dick has allocated €25million for the Wicklow Town Sewerage Scheme under the Government's Water Services Investment Programme 2005 - 2007.

Minister Roche said he was "delighted to be able to make the necessary funding available for this vital and long awaited project" and called on Wicklow County Council to "pull out the stops to get the scheme up and running as soon as possible".

## NATIONAL SMOKE ALARM SCHEME LAUNCHED

A National Pilot Project for the installation of smoke alarms has been launched by Minister Roche in Greystones at the end of July. The Pilot Scheme arises from research commissioned by Minister Roche which indicated that 20% of Irish households have no working smoke alarm.



Under the scheme, local authorities will, with the assistance of the voluntary sector identify those 'vulnerable households' where there are no smoke alarms and will arrange for the supply and installation of two smoke alarms in each such household. €2500 households will be dealt in 10 locations throughout the country under the pilot scheme. The Government will pay the costs of the local authorities.

The Pilot Scheme will run until the end of October, 2006, and a review of its effectiveness will then be carried out in consultation with the participating local authorities with a view to extending it nationwide next year.

## GRANTS FOR GREENER HOMES

The Government has launched a grant scheme that will allow individual householders, for the first time ever, to obtain grants for the installation of renewable technologies including wood pellet stoves and boilers, solar panels and geothermal heat pumps. The "Greener Homes" Scheme is administered by Sustainable Energy Ireland. Details and application forms are available on the SEI's website ([www.sei.ie/greenerhomes](http://www.sei.ie/greenerhomes)). Details are also available from a dedicated low-call phone line (ph: 1850 SEI SEI / 1850 734 734)

# DICK ROCHE

[www.dickroche.com](http://www.dickroche.com)

RAISING THE ISSUES. GETTING RESULTS. WORKING FOR YOU.

## LOCAL NEWSLETTER

9/2006

Dear Constituent,

The year to date has been an incredibly busy and positive period for the country in general and for the Constituency in particular. Hardly a working day goes by without some decision being made that will have an impact on all of our lives.

In this Newsletter I outline some of the decisions and announcements in which I have been involved both as your Dail representative and as the Cabinet member responsible for Environment, Heritage & Local Government.

The schemes, major & minor, that I have been in the happy position to approve will make a real difference when they come into effect. They will play a major role in improving living conditions and will also play a vital role in job creation and in building on the prosperity of our County and Country is currently enjoying.

I hope you enjoy reading this Newsletter. As always I would welcome your suggestions as to topics that you would like to see covered in future Newsletters.

Finally if I can be of assistance to you or to your family or friends do not hesitate to contact me at my Constituency Office at 2 Herbert Tce., Bray phone (01) 2863211, at the Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government, Custom House, Dublin 1, phone (01) 8882000, at any of my 'Constituency Clinics' or by e-mail at [dick.roche@oireachtas.ie](mailto:dick.roche@oireachtas.ie).

Le gach dea ghúí

Dick Roche, TD

Minister for the Environment,  
Heritage & Local Government

You can also contact Dick by phone, fax or e-mail at any of the following addresses:

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**FIANNA Fáil**  
THE REPUBLICAN PARTY

## ROCHE SANCTIONS €35M ARKLOW WATER SCHEME

In early July Minister Roche approved Wicklow County Council's Preliminary Report for the Arklow Water Supply Scheme. The Preliminary Report sets out the scale and scope of the scheme, together with the estimated cost. The scheme comprises 3 phases at a total cost of over €35 million.

The scheme will double the water supply capacity in the Arklow area.

Funding for the scheme has been earmarked in the Government's Water Services Investment Programme 2005 - 2007.

With Minister Roche's approval Wicklow County Council can now prepare contract documents for the scheme. The Minister has asked the Council to 'move on this scheme with 'all possible haste'.

## €40m FOR LOCAL HOUSING SCHEMES



Since becoming Minister for the Environment Dick Roche has allocated record funding for housing services in Wicklow. This year the County has been allocated an unprecedented €40m budget for housing. The results of this record funding are now evident throughout the County.

Recently Dick officially opened three new housing schemes in Avoca, Barndarrig and Newtownmountkennedy. Taken together, the developments consist of 111 houses, made up of 87 local authority houses and 24 affordable houses, and were provided at a cost of just over €14 million.

In July Dick approved proposals for 64 new social & affordable houses in Arklow and for 54 new homes at Farrankelly, Delgany



## MORE MONEY FOR LOCAL ROADS

Under the Local Improvements Scheme (LIS) County Councils in partnership with local residents improve non-public roads. The scheme is particularly important for rural areas where small roads are not in the charge of Councils. The Scheme has been something of a Cinderella until Dick Roche took over the Environment portfolio. In 1994 when Fine Gael & Labour were in office Wicklow received only €69,836. In 1997 the initial allocation was €88,882. This year Dick has approved an allocation of €398,855 for LIS work in Wicklow.

## APPROVAL FOR BRITTAS PIPELINE

The Government's Water Services Investment Programme 2005 - 2007 provides over €20m funding for the Wicklow Town Water Supply Scheme. The Scheme will provide an additional water supply for Wicklow Town and environs, including Brittas Bay.

To speed the Brittas Bay scheme Dick has given the Council approval to advance the planning of the Brittas Bay pipeline section of the Wicklow Scheme. This will put the Council in a position to begin work on the new pipeline speedily once an adequate supply of water for the Wicklow Scheme is secured. It is now up to the Council and the local Councillors to get on with the job.

## CLAMP DOWN ON ILLEGAL DUMPS

Long before becoming Minister for the Environment Dick Roche campaigned against illegal dumping throughout County Wicklow. In May 2005 Dick issued a Direction under the Waste Management Act setting out new requirements to be applied to lands that had been the subject of illegal or unauthorised dumping. While the Ministerial Direction has national application it has had a very significant effect on two landmark cases in West Wicklow.

In February the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) required Roadstone Dublin Ltd to carry out a full remediation of the illegal dumping site on its lands in Blessington.

The EPA refused the company's application for a landfill licence on the site and required that potentially polluting wastes would have to be excavated, processed and removed to authorised facilities elsewhere. The remediation work is about to get underway.

The second landmark decision was made in April when the EPA refused an application for a landfill licence in respect of the site at Whitestown.

Both decisions directly reflect the policy Direction issued by Minister Roche



**You can help to stamp out illegal dumping – use Office of Environmental Enforcement's Illegal Dumping Line (1850 365 121) to Pinpoint the Polluter**

## ROCHE ALLOCATES €5.5M FOR WICKOW RURAL WATER SERVICES

Under the National Rural Water Programme for 2006 Wicklow will receive €5.5m for Rural Water Services. The 2006 Wicklow allocation is more than 11 times the amount provided by the Fine Gael & Labour Government in 1997.

**Every part of the County will benefit. The funding will**

- Provide for improvements to public water supply schemes Enniskerry, Aughrim, Avoca/Ballinaclash and Redcross.
- New water treatment plants for Ballyknockan, Barnadarrig, Ballycooge, Coolboy/Coolfancy, Donard, Grangecon, Hollywood, Kiltegan, Kirakee, Knockananna, Knockanarrigan, Rathdangan, Stratford, Thomastown, Vallemount, Ballingate, Askinagap, Baltyboys and Humphreystown
- Connection to the Council's water supply for Cornagower, Tombrean/Umyr, Tomacork, Kilacoran, Blainroe, Manor Kilbride, Old Court, Hempstown and Tinode schemes; Crossbridge and Rossbane schemes will become the responsibility of the Council,
- Allow for the construction of new schemes serving Brittas Bay, Stranakelly, Ballynerin, Glendalough and Killadreenan. Blakestown, Raheen and Little Newtown schemes will be upgraded.

An allocation of €1m is being made in respect of small public water and sewerage schemes for Knockroe/Priestnewtown, Stratford, Ballycooge, Glenealy, Ballinaclash and Barnadarrig.

Minister Roche was congratulated by the President of the National Federation of Group Water Schemes for the massive increase in funding for rural water systems.



## NEW DEAL FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY

This Government has increased funding for Disabled Persons and Essential Repairs Grant Schemes dramatically. Capital funding for the schemes from 2000 to 2005 totalled some €336 million with almost 45,600 grants paid. The Government has agreed to a proposal from Minister Roche to allocate €65 million for the Disabled Persons and Essential Repairs Grant Schemes. The Minister has allocated an additional €7m to make local authority rented houses more accessible bringing the total expenditure in this area to €72 million.

In addition to the record funding, in July Minister Roche joined with the Taoiseach and other key Ministers launched the Government's National Disability Strategy. Proposals put forward by Dick under the Programme will include :-

- A major review of the Building Regulations governing access for people with disabilities.
- The development of a new Housing Strategy for People with Disabilities.
- Improvements in accessibility to the streetscapes, services, information, public buildings, facilities and amenities under Local Authority control.
- New local authority services and built facilities will be accessible to people with disabilities, with access built into plans and designs from inception to completion.
- Disability Access Certification for new commercial buildings and apartment blocks.
- An overhaul of the Disabled Persons Grant Scheme.

## HEALTH BOOST FOR ARKLOW, RATHDRUM & NEWTOWN

Dick has welcomed the announcement of additional funding for Wicklow health services. The funding will be allocated to the extension of the Arklow health centre (€1.5 m), replacement of the Rathdrum health centre (€2m), refurbishment of the Newtownmountkennedy health centre (€1.25 m). The funding will also provide for a Community care pilot project costing € 800,000 the location of which is not yet decided.



Speaking after the announcement Minister Roche said "I am delighted to welcome this capital funding for all of these valuable projects and I look forward to an early start of the works."

## FUNDING FOR CENTRAL HEATING PROGRAMME

Dick has allocated over €1.15 m in Government funding to Wicklow Local Authorities under the 2006 Central Heating Programme. The scheme provides for the installation of central heating, energy conservation facilities and smoke detection measures in Council owned houses.

The Minister said, "I am acutely aware of the hardship faced by the elderly and other vulnerable groups during the cold winter months. I am asking the Councils to make sure that this year's funding is fully drawn down and used effectively."

**For a full list of Dick Roche's Constituency Clinics please telephone 01 286 3211.**