

Notable Achievements

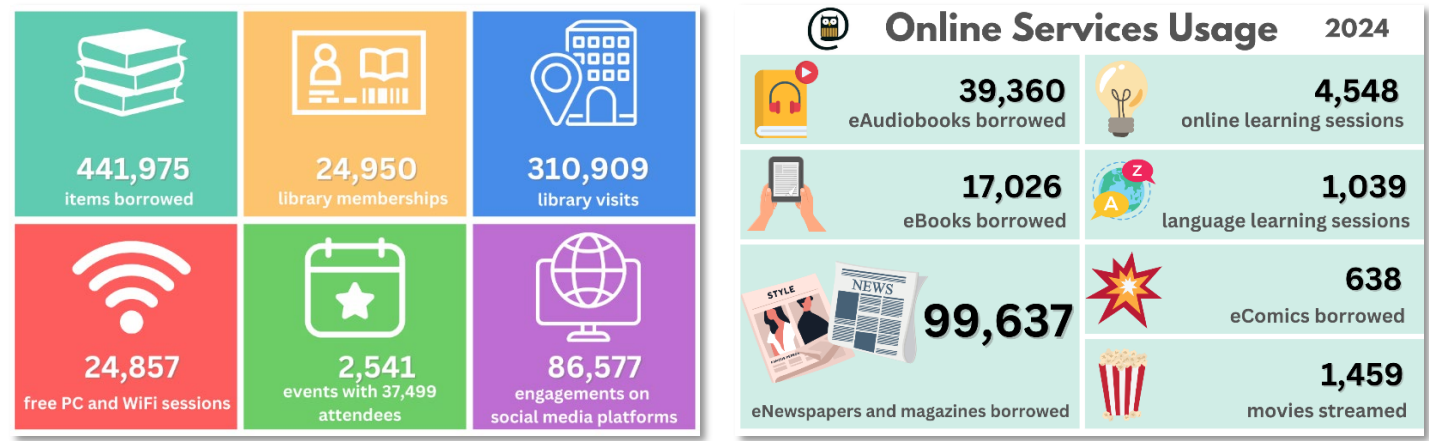
- Mayfair Library opened on 24<sup>th</sup> April, with over 100,000 items borrowed, over 129,000 visitors, and over 13,000 at events and workshops held in 2024.
- We hosted the 2024 National Public Libraries Annual Conference “*Libraries, a space for both an escape and exploration; a refuge from the world and a doorway into it*” in the Mayfair Library.
- An increase of **29%** on library memberships this year, which brought our total to **24,936**.
- **441,975** books, eBooks and eAudiobooks were borrowed throughout the year, reflecting an increase of **32%**.
- **310,909** library users came through our doors, reflecting an increase of **57%**

Other Achievements

- **13,000** Bookville Activity Books were distributed to all primary school children across Kilkenny as part of our Bookville Kilkenny Festival.
- As part of Kilkenny’s Toil and Trouble 700<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations, staff produced a school activity pack for primary schools, with **13,000** copies distributed to children all over the county.

New Developments

- Thomastown Library has progressed substantially in 2024, with an opening expected in Quarter 4, 2025.
- Grant funding of €180,000 from Department of Rural and Community Development towards the purchase of a new mobile library vehicle.

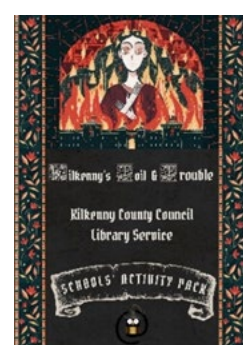


Programming

Programming across our network of branches attracted figures in excess of 41,000 participants of all ages, with over 2,700 events organised. The breadth of our programming continues to expand and includes tech upskilling, ciorcal comhrá, book clubs, gardening, upcycling, music, chess, biodiversity, coding, crafts, author visits, story-times & science workshops.

**Bookville 2024:** Our 8th Bookville Festival took place from October 10th to 16<sup>th</sup> with over 70 events taking place to celebrate all aspects of storytelling including creative writing, history, comedy, music, illustration, Gaeilge, drama, and poetry. There were 3,596 people in attendance and our ever-popular Bookville activity book was delivered to over 13,000 primary school children in the county.

**Storyteller in Residence:** Our Storyteller in Residence, Helena Byrne, continued to engage with families and communities in Kilkenny promoting literacy and fostering the habit of enjoyment of reading amongst children and young people.



## Local Studies

**Kilkenny's Toil and Trouble Festival :** We offered a wide-ranging programme of events for all ages as part of the Festival, from author visits, children's art workshops, candle making sessions, primary schools history workshops, plant lore workshops, walking tours, oral history sessions and we developed an educational activity pack for every primary school child in Kilkenny.

**Mna Feasa:** To celebrate 'Mná Feasa/Wise Women, we ran a social history workshop and podcast series comprising of stories, experiences & local lore from women of all ages in Kilkenny. The project focused on the art of oral storytelling culminating in the production of a podcast series and a storytelling performance by TY students in the Mayfair Library.

**Digital Archive:** The Kilkenny Digital Archive continues to make the collections of Kilkenny County Library's Local Studies' Department and Kilkenny County Council accessible to a wider audience, offering access to locally themed collections in a variety of formats.

## Climate and SDGs at Kilkenny Library



### Embedding SDGs for Impact

As we continue to embed the SDG's across our service delivery and programming, our climate impact also grew with 650 participants attending over 45 events.

### Community Energy Hub at Loughboy Library

Loughboy Library was chosen as a pilot location for The South East Energy Agency Community Energy Hub, an online platform offering energy advice and information on upgrade grants, and hosting Energy Drop-in Clinics for one-on-one consultations for the public.



### Climate Literacy

Our Climate Literacy at the Library programme for adults funded under the Adult Literacy for Life Strategy proved very successful with 61 participants learning about Food Waste, Fast Fashion, Biodiversity Loss and Waste Minimisation.

### Innovative sustainability with SETU Carlow

We partnered with the design department at SETU Carlow, explored creative and innovative ways to breathe new life into books that have reached the end of their journey. This project is more than just recycling; it's about reimagining and innovating.



## Digital

- Public PCs upgraded county-wide with new software, hardware, and Wi-Fi. Web-based PC booking now available.
- Mayfair Library now offers 3-hour in-house laptop loans, which are proving very popular.
- Eduroam is available for students in all branches, connecting directly to their local/international educational institution.
- Mayfair Makerspace was equipped with 3D printers, vinyl cutters, 3D scanning equipment, sewing machines, and art materials, and 3D printer in Loughboy Library upgraded.
- Kanopy movie streaming service now available members.
- Online Digital Skill Club for Children has expanded to include robotics and digital animation courses.

## Income

We successfully applied and were awarded €113,212 from a range of funding sources including Solas, Dormant Accounts Fund, Kilkenny Carlow ETB, Creative Ireland, LGMA, Commemorative fund, Night Time Economy funding and Calmast.



## Literacy and Reading support

We engaged with our educational partners hosting 509 class visits to our library branches and 59 outreach visits to ELCs, Primary and Post Primary schools.

## Mobile Library service:

On a monthly basis our mobile library visited over 60 schools, nursing homes and early learning centres across the county including 11 community stops in rural towns and villages. Our mobile library also continued to provide door-to-door book deliveries to borrowers who were unable to visit their local library branch.

## Service Development and Infrastructure

- On April 24th, we welcomed Heather Humphreys TD, Minister for Rural and Community Development, to officially open the Mayfair Library. This 1800 m<sup>2</sup> state-of-the-art facility offers cultural, community, and educational opportunities for all ages. The library features a community exhibition space, meeting room, study spaces, young adult area, dedicated children's area, makerspace with 3D printers and sewing machines, comfortable seating areas, WiFi, PC access, and printing, scanning, and photocopying facilities. The Mayfair Library is open Monday-Saturday, including two late evenings.
- Thomastown Library construction commenced.
- Callan library development progressed
- Carnegie Library funding application progressed and submitted.







## Workforce & Training

Our staff completed over 400 training sessions, enhancing our skills to meet the diverse needs of our community. Two staff members are currently pursuing professional qualifications in Librarianship.

We hosted the National Public Libraries Conference in November, featuring presentations on AI and countering disinformation and emerging trends. Staff led tours of the new library and presented the Alice Kyteler Project experience.

We began work on our 2025 Workforce Plan, exploring innovative ways to manage workloads and roles to ensure efficiency and maintain high standards for Kilkenny Library Service.

## Information and Communication

-  141,330 virtual newsletters sent
-  54,408 visits to [www.kilkennylibrary.ie](http://www.kilkennylibrary.ie)
-  12,431 followers on social media
-  3,020 social media posts and videos

