



NEWS RELEASE

September 12 2008

**Minister Hanafin opens new Social Welfare Local Office
in Bray, Co. Wicklow**

*Support and advice on social welfare schemes and services
available at new office - Hanafin*

Minister for Social and Family Affairs, Mary Hanafin T.D. today (12th September 2008) officially opened the new Social Welfare Local Office in Bray, Co. Wicklow.

The new office, located in The Cualann Centre, is in the heart of Bray on the Main Street. The Cualann Centre also houses Bray Town Council Offices, a HSE office, restaurants and an arts centre. According to Minister Hanafin, **“this modern new office is part of the social, civic and cultural hub of Bray and is at the heart of the local community.”**

The office serves an area with an overall population of some 65,000 people, stretching from Shankill as far south as Newcastle and inland to Kilpedder and Enniskerry.

The Minister said that the thirty four staff based in this new office **“will work hard to provide a high quality of information and support to a wide range of social welfare customers”**.

“Of course, there must be a particular focus at present on helping people who have become unemployed”, she said. **“Losing your job can be very stressful and upsetting. Local social welfare staff all over the country are dedicated to assisting people at that difficult time. Here in the Bray office, people can get the information and support that they need to**



figure out their options and hopefully get back to work as soon as possible.”

In addition to general service delivery and information staff and social welfare inspectors, the Bray office is also home to a Facilitator who has taken up work within the past year.

“The Facilitator helps people who are unemployed to develop their own individual plan for getting back to work and to avail of appropriate education or training opportunities. In doing so, they work closely with staff from other agencies - such as FÁS, the VECs and the HSE - as well as with employers and other education providers”, the Minister explained.

Bray Social Welfare Local Office is open to the public from 9.30am - 4pm and can be contacted at (01) 2117900. It is one of some 60 Social Welfare Local Offices providing services to the public throughout the country.

PRESS RELEASE ENDS