



# OFFALY COUNTY COUNCIL

artsplan  
2012-2016

question - connect - imagine - reflect





# OFFALY COUNTY COUNCIL

## artsplan 2012- 2016

Copyright © Offaly County Council 2012

### **Contact details**

Arts Office, Offaly County Council, Áras an Chontae,  
Charleville Road, Tullamore, Co. Offaly  
Tel 057 9357400 fax 057 9346868  
[arts@offalycoco.ie](mailto:arts@offalycoco.ie)  
[www.offaly.ie](http://www.offaly.ie)

### **Arts Staff:**

Arts Officer Sinéad O'Reilly  
Clerical Officer: Clare Dunne





# Contents Page

	<i>Page No</i>
Foreword	5
Introduction	6
Context	
Geographic	7
Economic	8
Demographic	8
Statutory	9
Who is this plan for?	10
Mission	15
Guiding values	16
Monitoring and Evaluation	16
Intention	18
The Arts Service in Offaly County Council	19
In partnership with the Arts Council	22
In partnership with the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht	23
<b>Strategic areas</b>	<b>25</b>
Economic value	26
The creative community	31
Young people and the arts	33
The creative individual	36
Spaces and places	39
Festivals	48
Public Art	51
FilmOffaly	52
Acknowledgements	54
Appendix 1: List of arts organisations in Offaly	55



Grand Canal Tullamore,  
see page 45



# Foreword



On behalf of the members and staff of Offaly County Council we are delighted to introduce this second published arts plan for the county for the years 2012 to 2016.

Offaly County Council recognises the importance of the arts in developing vibrant and creative communities. It believes the best way to achieve this is to empower, support and resource individuals, groups and organisations to achieve their best potential, so that their continued achievements are sustainable into the future. We invest in the arts because we believe in the power of cultural engagement to support civic participation.

We know that there is a growing energy in the Offaly arts community, one which is both resilient and progressive. We also know that there is a growing audience for arts events that are meaningful, exciting and original. We know

that those who have participated on a community level feel invigorated and proud with a renewed sense of belonging. We know this because we have witnessed it across the county, from community concerts to festivals and from book launches to workshops and theatre.

Despite the difficult financial environment, Offaly County Council remains committed to protecting investments to date, albeit in varying and new directions. It is intended that this plan will chart the way for an effective use of combined resources, coupled with the commitment of individuals, organisations and agencies. In the same way that we are proud of how the arts have developed over the course of our last Arts Plan, we very much look forward to the vision that this plan offers for the people of Offaly over the next five years and to supporting its implementation.

**Cllr. Danny Owens**  
Cathaoirleach

**Pat Gallagher**  
County Manager

# Introduction

**Culture and the Arts has become one of Offaly’s greatest assets in recent years. From a time of uncertainty in the arts, it has grown in confidence and leadership to punch confidently above its weight in areas such as film, arts and health and contemporary dance.**

Offaly has shown its capacity to assertively host national events such as the Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann and to boldly generate innovative new festival events such as the I.F.O.N.L.Y. Dance Festival and the OFFline Film Festival.

It has become a haven for artists with over 300 professional artists working in the county, many of whom are proactive citizens in the community at the fore of cultural and community development. Offaly is a place of rich histories and proud communities. There is a wealth of collective and individual creative activity contributing to the vitality of the county<sup>1</sup>

Our challenge and intention through this plan, is to manage our resources so that this recent cultural growth is not just sustained, but is encouraged further to enable all citizens and communities to find new ways to realise their preferred contribution to society and write the future cultural legacies of this county.

Our priority in a challenging financial environment is to invest in innovative projects and events that support excellence in arts practice, cultural tourism, social inclusion and increased access to the arts. The strategic directions outlined in this plan, are inevitably flexible to our changing circumstances.

1. See Appendix 1 on page 55 for a list of cultural organisations in the county



# Context

## **GEOGRAPHIC**

Offaly is one of four Midland counties. The north eastern part of the county is situated within the commuter belt of Dublin with the southern and western parts bordering the Slieve Bloom Mountains and the Shannon River. The commuter town of Edenderry in the north east and garrison town of Birr in the south are largely isolated from each other. Tullamore, the county town, is a largely a commercial centre; it forms an integral part of the NSS Linked Gateway Initiative with the other Midland towns of Athlone and Mullingar. More recently concerted investments are being made to enhance Tullamore's cultural and community potential with a recently developed town park, new library, a community arts centre, a refurbished heritage centre and canal amenities.

The Grand Canal intersects the county from Edenderry to Shannon Harbour and is an important characteristic of the county, with the potential to be developed into a 'cultural corridor' of national significance. Peatlands visibly dominate the landscape from Clonbullogue to Cloghan, and the regenerated Lough Boora Parklands is a significant natural resource with a sculpture park, fishing lakes, bird sanctuary, walk and cycle ways.

Offaly's unique landscape and built heritage has informed much of the cultural development of the county, such as Sculpture in the Parklands, the Slieve Bloom Storytelling Festival and Belmont Mills Artists Studios. Birr Theatre and Arts Centre has been the thriving hub of cultural activity since 2000.

## ECONOMIC

The economic context in which this plan is being delivered is unprecedented in comparison to the previous plan. We are in the throes of a recession with measures of austerity in public finances and service delivery set to continue over the majority of this plan. How local authorities will continue to support local cultural development is uncertain. However, we do know that much has been highlighted in terms of the significance of supporting the arts during this time, for its multiple values across cultural tourism, the creative industries, national reputation and community development. We also know that arts and culture is credited to contributing to a growth in innovation<sup>2</sup> and that the estimated turnover for investment in the arts is approx 120%.<sup>3</sup>

With this in mind, we have focussed a chapter on Economic Value as one of our Strategic Areas, which highlights the value of concentrating strategically on cultural development.

## DEMOGRAPHIC

The population of Offaly is 76,806 and of Tullamore is 14, 409 with Tullamore predicted to hold a quarter of the county population by 2016<sup>4</sup>. The Midlands (Offaly, Laois, Longford, and Westmeath) boasts the biggest percentage population increase in the country. Its current population of 251,664 represents a 12.1% increase on previous figures.

Predicted population growths for Offaly; 82,114 by 2016 and 86,771 by 2022

2. Innovation Ireland - The Smart Economy. Report of the Innovation Taskforce, March 2010 [www.innovationtaskforce.ie](http://www.innovationtaskforce.ie)

3. Total funding committed by the Arts Council to organisations and individuals amounted to 360.3 million in 2010. The estimated turnover of the Arts Council funded organisations and individuals in 2010 as stated, was 3135m – Source Arts Council's Assessment of the Economic Impact of the Arts in Ireland' Indecon Report 2011.

4. Offaly County Development Plan 2009 to 2015

Predicted population growths for Tullamore;  
20,207 by 2016 and 24,575 by 2022

From the most recent information available<sup>5</sup> we know that 22.5% of the county are aged under 15 (higher than the national average), that 66.5% are between 15-64 and 11% are over 65.

## STATUTORY

The first national legislative provision for the arts was the establishment of the Arts Act 1951, which was quickly followed by the establishment of the Arts Council. A result of the Arts Act 1973 and subsequently the Arts Act of 2003, local government has for the first time been given a legal mandate to plan for the arts. The statutory requirement is for local authorities to develop Arts Plans and to allocate grants for the development of the arts, the adoption of which is a reserved function of the elected members. This obligation recognises the unique leadership role of local authorities in the development of the arts.

*“arts” means any creative or interpretative expression (whether traditional or contemporary) in whatever form, and includes in particular, visual arts, theatre, literature, music, dance, opera, film, circus and architecture, and includes any medium when used for those purposes” - Arts Act 2003*

In addition, the Local Government Act 2001 sanctions local authorities to financially support cultural activities and in its administrative area.

*“In accordance with and subject to Section 66, a local authority may take such measures, engage in such activities or do such things (including the incurring of expenditure) as it considers necessary or desirable to promote the interests of the local community in relation to the matters indicated in subsection (2)”. The matters referred to in subsection 2 are “artistic, linguistic and cultural activities” – Local Government Act 2001, Part 9, Sect 67*

5. These figures are from the 2006 Census, the demographic analysis from the 2011 Census will not be available until May 2012



# Who is this plan for?

**This plan is inclusive of all people of all cultures and social standing in Offaly, from pre-school to our most senior of citizens.**

## **Offaly County Council**

So that Offaly County Council can authoritatively and persuasively present its vision for the arts to its local and national readers and can demonstrate how it will behave most effectively in its own operations and in developing and consolidating relationships with key local and national organisations.

### **This will impact on:**

#### **Professional Artists**

Professional or semi-professional artists: those whose careers are entirely in the arts and those who also augment their income with another activity related to the arts, (e.g. tutors) These are cornerstones of a creative and vibrant community. Without artists in our community to provide stimulation and inspiration, the quality of our lives would be greatly diminished.

## **Arts organisations, managers and project initiators**

These sectors are the most active in developing the arts in Co. Offaly mostly on a voluntary level. Their contribution to the growth of the arts in the county is fundamental and we recognise, support and encourage their endeavours in ways that will help sustain existing initiatives and promote new ones.

## **Community, Amateur and Voluntary Groups**

There are 181 groups registered with the Community Forum in the county, most of which run projects and events to foster community growth and the spirit of volunteerism. Participation in the arts is been increasingly used in aspects of this work.



### **The general public as an audience and a participator**

Many people who may claim to have no interest in the arts are in fact already participating in artistic activity. They may be avid readers, cinema buffs, festival goers, music fans or performers or parents of a children participating in a workshops. This plan is also for them. They are the audience, the appreciators and the participants and the plan will affect the quality and accessibility of the arts in their lives at whatever level interests them.

### **Young people**

Children have the most fertile of imaginations and have no fear of expressing themselves. Too often this is not promoted and encouraged enough into older childhood and teens and

young people's interest in being creative peters out. This is evident in the low take up in Offaly of creative career choices in third level education. This plan aims to encourage and validate creative interest and self-expression in our youth.

### **Senior citizens**

Senior citizens represent a growing proportion of our population and while many may be experiencing the arts for the first time (as a result of programmes supported by Offaly County Council Arts Office), many others have already demonstrated creative skills which can be passed on to new generations. By providing opportunities for them we can create new ways for older people to develop personally and contribute to the community.





*Touching Distance*, Legitimate Bodies Dance Company





Thinking outside the Box,  
a primary schools project for  
Engage with Architecture 2012

# Mission

## Offaly Local Authorities – Arts & Culture Mission Statement

“Offaly Local Authorities aim to provide leadership in quality, inclusive and innovative experiences of the arts for all and to demonstrate through best practice and partnership the value and benefits of increased access to and involvement in the arts for all our citizens.”

### The purpose of this plan is

- To provide a structure for the Arts Office in Offaly County Council to deliver its service within the overall framework and policies of the local authority
- To articulate Offaly County Councils priorities for the arts for 2012-2016

“To improve the quality of life for people in Offaly “

Strategic Priorities

- Assisting in developing vibrant and creative communities through the implementation of Offaly County Council’s Arts Plan.
- Supporting the development of arts spaces and infrastructure together with provision of supports for community arts activities.

*Offaly Local Authorities Corporate Plan  
2010 – 2014*

“To facilitate the creativity, imagination, talent and traditions of all people in Offaly, and the modes through which they are expressed”

“That all people in Offaly will enjoy equal opportunity and a good quality of life-that they will look forward to the future with confidence while cherishing the past”  
*A strategy for Economic, Social and Cultural Development 2002-2012-  
Offaly County Development Board*



# Our Guiding Values

## **Quality**

We aim to encourage and promote standards of excellence in artistic endeavour through our support for existing and new arts initiatives and through the provision of a varied and inclusive programme for the arts throughout the county.

## **Inclusion**

We aim to afford the widest possible access to and inclusion in all artistic endeavours within the county to all members of the community.

## **Capacity**

We aim to build the capacity of artists, arts organisations and community groups to lead high quality arts initiatives. We see this as a strategic investment leading to active citizenship, social profit and community development.

# Monitoring and Evaluation

Accountability and transparency are essential elements of local authority service provision. The Arts Office will carry out the objectives and actions in this plan over a five-year period. This will be implemented through annual service plans and the Office will monitor and evaluate each programme element on an ongoing basis.

Annual service indicators will be the measure of the Arts Plan's success as well as a complete and independent evaluation of this plan in preparation for the next.



# Our Intention

Based on the contexts laid out earlier, our guiding values and our recognition of the importance of promoting, enabling and developing a rich cultural environment, it is our intention to:

- Enable, promote and be a catalyst for the growth of culture and the arts in the county.
- Foster and encourage increased access to and participation in the arts by all sectors of the community.
- Encourage the development of audiences for and awareness and appreciation of the arts.
- Utilise funding for the arts through the government *per cent for arts* scheme and create an imaginative, innovative and co-ordinated public art programme.
- Recognise the importance of the artist in the community and to make Offaly an imaginative and supportive environment for artists.
- Further develop the skills and capacity of the local arts sector and to support increased professional standards.
- Consolidate existing partnerships and develop new ones in the provision of arts activity in the county
- Facilitate the development of and support the cultural infrastructure of the county to be strategic in their operations and programming.



# The Arts Service

The first Arts Officer employed by Offaly County Council was in 1996. A two-year arts plan was developed in 1997. That plan, while available to the public on request was not published.

Between 2000 and 2004, the Arts Service had experienced some inconsistency due to a high turnover of personnel and consequent gaps in the service. Since 2005, the service and therefore the local arts sector and broader community have benefited from the stability and strength of a strategic approach and its first five year plan 2007-2011.

The Arts Office is staffed by one full time Arts Officer and one full time Clerical Officer and is part of the Housing Corporate and Cultural Directorate. It has an integral role in the Housing Social and Cultural Strategic Policy Committee

whose function is to develop strategic policies to reflect the evolving commitments and contexts of the County Council.

## **In Offaly the role of the arts service has been defined as:**

- A developmental and advisory role to promote the growth of the arts in the county.
- Formulating local policy and plans and integrating national policy into best practice principles for the development of the arts on a local level.
- Supporting and advising on funding opportunities for individual artists and groups, (professional amateur and voluntary) of all disciplines.



Open Submission Exhibition,  
*Drawings*, Áras an Chontae 2008



- Identifying areas of developmental need, and implementing strategic projects/partnerships to achieve those requirements
- Advising Management Team and Members of scope for activity, opportunities for development and the cultural, social and economic impact of investment in the arts in the county.
- Facilitating the development of an infrastructure across the county of places and spaces where people can have access to and participate in the arts.
- Implementing the percent for art scheme under the auspices of Offaly Local Authorities Public Art Working Group
- To work across all service areas of Offaly Local Authorities, such as architecture, community and enterprise, corporate services, heritage, libraries and planning to work in partnership with, assist, inform and enhance the wider functions of the council.
- Developing ways to provide accessible information on the arts in the county.
- Consolidating existing partnerships and developing new ones for the provision of a strategic arts programme in the county.

# In partnership with the Arts Council

“The Arts Council has a responsibility to take an overview of the needs of the arts, to identify changes needed and champion these robustly, rigorously and in partnership with the arts community” (Arts Council, Partnership for the Arts 2006-10)

The Arts Council is a national organisation linked to central government and is the main policy maker and funder of the arts nationally. It carries out research and publishes information on best practice methods and provides advice and information to arts organisations.

The role of the Arts Council in Offaly is one of partnership with Offaly County Council. It provides programme funding through the County Arts Office in line with annual service plans and in the context of the County Arts

Plan. The Arts Office makes an annual application to the Arts Council for funding for planned programmes. Funding is then granted in line with common strategic objectives.

The Arts Council also provides separate grants to individual artists and arts organisations through its own funding schemes. The Arts Council is committed to working towards developing its relationship and partnership with Offaly County Council.

Offaly County Council Arts Office aims to work with the Arts Council to extend and enhance people’s experience of the arts in the county and to support the provision of an effective arts infrastructure.

As access and participation are central to our mission, our partnership with local authorities across the country is key. Our strategic focus in 2011-2013 will include engagement with local authorities in relation to arts provision within their areas so as to maximise coherence of planning and provision. The partnership will be based on a dialogue that respects the local remit and distinctive concerns of local authorities and the national remit and arts development concerns of the Arts Council.

*Arts Council, Developing the Arts in Ireland, 2011-2013*



# In partnership with the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht

Offaly County Council will work collaboratively with the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht to source capital funding for infrastructural projects and to participate in strategic national cultural events such as Culture Night and other activities as they arise.

In addition, during the planning process for this plan and over its lifetime, we will engage with the Department's Interactive Strategy for Arts and Culture, to pilot a continuous process of listing

and disseminating information, of inviting public input on an ongoing basis to inform policy and respond to opportunities. This interactive strategy arose out of and extremely challenging financial climate where arts and culture must be supported in ways that may often be outside of financial support. We will liaise with the Department to ensure that we participate in ways that are beneficial to our local context.





*At home in the world*, a public art project  
at Killane, Edenderry, by Ceara Conway, 2011

*I suggest that creativity is not only socially defined but that it is at its most powerful when located in culture and evaluated in terms of its contribution to citizenship.*

Michael D Higgins, *Creativity in Solidarity, Economy and Institutions*

# Strategic Areas

The following chapters are based on the needs we have identified through extensive research, evaluation and discussion. It takes into consideration the level of growth in the arts and in arts provision over the duration of the last Art Plan, the importance of protecting our investment to date, the challenges we face to maintain our levels of support and the need to support and nurture important new developments as they arise.

- 1. Economic Value**
- 2. The creative community**
- 3. Young people and the arts**
- 4. The creative individual**
- 5. Spaces and places**
- 6. Festivals**
- 7. FilmOffaly**
- 8. Public Art**

# Economic Value

This plan is being written in the grips of an economic recession, in a climate where prioritising support for cultural development is challenging. The current measures of austerity in public finances and service delivery are set to continue over the majority of this plan. How we will maintain our support of local cultural development is uncertain. However, we do know that much has been highlighted in terms of the significance of supporting the arts during this time, from:

- The first Global Irish Economic Forum at Farmleigh in September 2009 placed a new strategic priority on culture as a unique long-term strength and door-opener for economic recovery.
- The arts continue to be a major employer and contributor to Irish economic output; in 2010 the Arts Council's annual funding from the Exchequer supported over 2,600 jobs which in turn generated an annual turnover of €135 million with tax revenues (in the form of PAYE/income tax, PRSI and VAT), to the Irish Exchequer of €41 million.

- The arts sector supports 21,328 jobs and contributes €306.8 million in taxes.
- The arts too impact on the wider creative industry contributing €4.7 billion to the economy and supporting 79,000 jobs
- *Imagine Ireland* was Culture Ireland's year-long celebration of Irish arts in the United States in 2011, to reshape and reinvigorate notions of Ireland, what it means to be Irish and the potential for Ireland into the future.

The second Global Economic Forum at Dublin Castle in October 2011, invited cultural figures of international standing to participate which resulted in a proposal to boost cultural tourism by creating a global Irish homecoming in 2013.

While these are national and international statistics and initiatives, there is much we can achieve on a local level to support growth through cultural development, and these are outlined further in the following strategic areas.

*The arts are a significant economic contributor and employer in their own right, but they are also important building blocks for those economic policies the Government has identified as crucial for our economic recovery. The arts underpin policies in attracting foreign direct investment, in the creation of an imaginative labour force, in establishing an innovative environment in which the creative and cultural industries can thrive and in cultural tourism. By focusing on the arts as an element of social and economic renewal, we are playing to our strengths.*

Jimmy Deenihan TD, Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht - 16 Nov 2011

*In recent years we have been challenged to realize the economic importance of the arts. In 2010 the direct and indirect value of the creative sector was €11.8bn - if they were never important for economy, they were always important in their own right.*

Mary Hanafin TD Minister for Tourism Culture and Sport, Douglas Hyde Conference, 15 Oct. 2010





*Asian Hush II*, oil on canvas, Louise O'Brien







NTRE







Grove Street TV, a public art project by Michael Fortune  
www.grovestreet.tv, 2011



# The creative community

Creativity in society is everywhere. From book and film clubs, town and youth bands, to drama and choral groups, knitting clubs and dance troupes, there is an imperative in society to come together and share and participate in something creative. People experience opportunities in greater and lesser degrees, according to their level of interest and work, study and family commitments. Nonetheless, it is this activity that distinguishes us.

This section refers to arts activity which engages communities in a variety of creative and innovative ways and it reflects one of the largest growth areas in this plan. Typically this activity provides opportunities for artists to create and/or facilitate projects; it includes festivals, community events and arts in context such as arts and health. Offaly County Council acknowledges the immense voluntary commitment to developing much of this activity and the importance of encouraging and protecting these endeavours, both for community development and the local economy.

The objectives and actions below will consolidate the existing activity and support new projects/events that will forge communities, enhance community participation, create a pride of place and sense of identity.

## Objectives

1. Encourage and support quality arts programming in events to increase their capacity to attract and increase audience numbers and participation.
2. Continue to find ways to publish and disseminate information about the diversity and extent of arts activity in the county through local media, online information and social media including the Midlands Arts and Culture Magazine.
3. Advise on the quality of presentation and promotion of cultural events both locally and nationally.
4. Further incorporate arts and cultural activities into county development and local area plans and budgets.
5. Encourage the establishment of new arts events and activity around the county and provide advice and support to the voluntary effort in the host communities.
6. Develop ways to measure the impact of cultural activity in order to track its development and make the case for additional support and identify areas for development.

7. Facilitate the creation of clear branding guidelines to acknowledge the support of Offaly Local Authorities to events and projects.
8. Develop a greater awareness and anticipation of the diversity of the arts in Tullamore in advance of the new Tullamore Community Arts Centre.
9. Assist the development of a cultural action group in Edenderry to create more opportunities for the development of and engagement with the arts.
10. Maintain support to Anam Beo, the arts and health programme in their mission to provide non-judgemental process led art workshops within a safe health care and sociable environment.
11. Continue to facilitate a county wide programme for Bealtaine, the national festival which advocates creativity as we age.
12. Manage the Arts Act Grants as a reserved function of the members of the council to provide support for arts activity in the community which will stimulate public interest in the arts, promote the knowledge, appreciation and practice of the arts, and assist in improving the standards of the arts.
13. Promote the work of and support the development of local drama groups, musical societies, choral groups and town bands.
14. Source financial support to continue to develop the cross departmental project, Engage with Architecture.
15. Work with other agencies to find ways to integrate, support and include newer communities and cultures in arts activities in the county.
16. Networking and the sharing of resources among drama and musical societies has proved fruitful in some parts of the county and this could be encouraged more.
17. Participate in national coordinated events such as Culture Night, National Music Day, National Poetry Day and other national events as resources allow.
18. Work closely with Offaly's Library Service to deliver community arts events/projects in Offaly's libraries

# Young People and the Arts

In this plan we are focussing specific attention on articulating policy and strategic areas for how young people participate in the arts; from those who are already engaging and those who are yet to engage with the arts. This is reflective of the recent development in a number of accessible, high quality and structured arts projects, which allow for young people to shine individually and as ensembles, and to be the source of their own ingenuity and creativity. We believe that facilitating projects in which young people can freely and safely be expressive, is investment into their capacity to be confident independent and innovative thinkers.

Offaly Youth Theatre, Offaly Youth Dance Company and Hullabaloo! have to date engaged hundreds of young people, who have published anthologies, performed nationally and entered creative adventures never before imagined.

## Objectives

1. Continue to work to develop Hullabaloo! Offaly's Children's Arts Festival with communities in Birr and Clara and to seek opportunities to expand the festival into another town.
2. Establish the Hullabaloo Children's Choir as an outreach and year round project for primary schools by the annual Hullabaloo Children's Arts Festival.
3. Find ways in which to continue to engage primary and secondary schools with quality arts projects.
4. Work with the Offaly Westmeath Music Education Partnership to develop high quality, inclusive and accessible music education programme in the two counties through the Music Generation Scheme or other means.





Legitimate Bodies Dance Company and St. Brendan's National School, Birr in a performance of *Pinocchio*, 2009

5. Support Offaly Youth Theatre, a new organisation with chapters in Birr, Banagher and Tullamore, to establish itself further, participate in opportunities presented by the National Association of Youth Drama and expand into the north of the county.
6. Encourage the growth of Offaly Youth Dance to expand its points of access across the county and opportunities to perform nationally.
7. Evaluate previous youth literature projects and establish a process in which to provide young people with access to the skills and knowledge of professional writers.
8. Assess the existing Kindermusic project with the VEC and through this identify what supports will best maintain and develop the project.
9. Provide opportunities for artist facilitators to access Child Protection Training.
10. Work with organisations, such as Poetry Ireland, which has an existing national education programme, in order to support school visits by professional writers
11. Collaborate with OFFline Film Festival to facilitate means for young people to make films and have them shown in a professional platform.
12. Encourage community festivals to develop focussed and strategic youth arts projects and opportunities leading up to or during their events.
13. Support the Irish Midlands Youth Orchestra to develop their own strategy for development and assist in raising the profile of the organisation in the Midlands and nationally.



# The creative individual

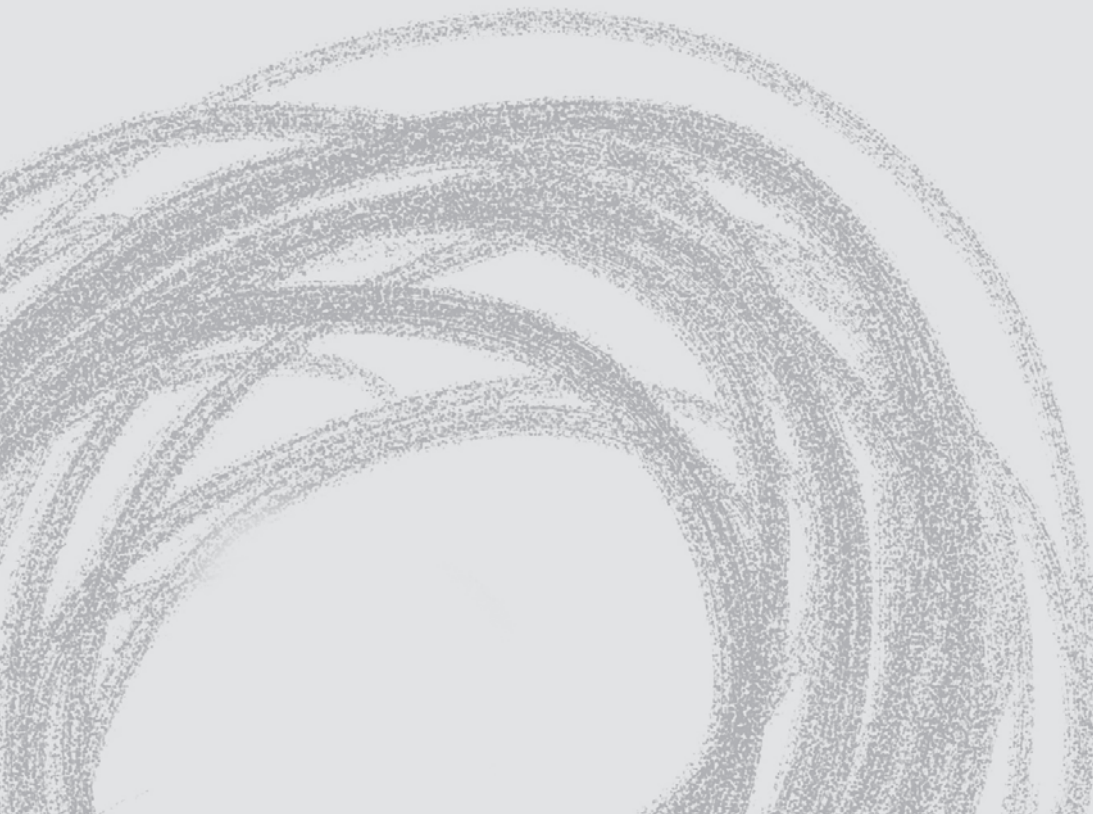
The creative individual in this context is the professional arts practitioner, such as visual artists, musicians, filmmakers, theatre practitioners, writers, performers, dancers; as individuals, collaboratives or companies. Supporting their practice underpins all other creativity in the county. Many artists teach, facilitate, volunteer and are at the fore of cultural development in the county and participate energetically in communities.

In our last arts plan we laid down clear supports to enable artists to expand and develop their practice, which has led to the sector becoming more professional, confident, articulate and open to broadening their practice. We need to acknowledge the concern of some artists that their work is being funded for the prestige of an organisation or a region and not appreciated in its own right. As a public body we seek quality

and integrity in arts production, and recognise that a formulaic approach or a 'safe bet' is of neither benefit to artists or to patrons.

Funding for the arts has to date used the language of 'grants' or 'support', denoting that the arts are still periphery and that artists are receiving 'hand-outs'. We need to recognise what it means to 'invest' in the arts; investing denotes faith, belief, hope, optimism and value.

Therefore we acknowledge that by investing in the arts or the artist, there may be risk taking and unpredictable outcomes, but this is the space where exciting and innovative creativity will emerge, not just a predetermined outcome/policy.



## Objectives

1. Evaluate the current support schemes for artists in the light of budget restrictions, in order to identify how to resourcefully and appropriately respond to the development needs of individuals, collaboratives and organisations and publish the results.
2. Facilitate a new writers group in the county which would broaden participation and provide a supportive environment for the professional development of both emerging and established writers
3. Support the development of theatre in the county by encouraging a professional theatre company to become established and opportunities for new writing for the theatre to emerge.
4. Identify and create opportunities for the professional development of all artist practitioners including drama groups and musical societies.
5. Work with visual artists to create a culture of "open studio" occasions as a way of increasing exchange and networking opportunities and raising the public profile and audiences for professional visual arts practice.
6. Encourage and support the importance of artist-led networking and a co-operative approach to information and resource sharing
7. Facilitate the importance of increased critical platforms and the value of professional documentation of arts practice, including those in collaborative and community contexts.
8. Promote a culture of professional practice that is based on resource sharing rather than being predominantly resource dependent.
9. Recognise and support where artists would like to expand out into the community to share their practice and skills and also be reciprocally informed through a collaborative process.
10. Recognise that a thriving creative community will survive through the promotion of excellence, both through professional practice and by generating a greater profile nationally and internationally of Offaly's vibrant cultural activity.
11. Support Legitimate Bodies as professional dance production and touring company in Offaly who also provide youth and community access to contemporary dance.





*Spectre*, Mairead Dunne, Áras an Chontae, 2009

# Spaces and Places

Spaces and places refers to infrastructure across the county where artists and audiences access and participate in the arts and includes venues, galleries and studios. Along with festivals they represent a growth area for Cultural Tourism and provide a focal point for the arts and a platform from which audiences can have access to a diverse range of quality national, international and local arts experiences.

Offaly's cultural infrastructure is unique, from one of the older theatres in the country to a restored mill and expansive sculpture park; the full potential of all these developments has yet to be reached, both individually and as a collective.

Over the lifetime of this plan Offaly's cultural infrastructure will develop and evolve significantly with the advancement of new arts centre for Tullamore. This proposed development will influence all other infrastructural projects and it is our intention to ensure that this influence will positively shape, inspire and be a catalyst for a greater participation and increase profile for the arts in Offaly.

The recent trend of pop up shops being used for artistic, cultural and educational uses has materialised in Offaly, albeit in a more ad hoc way, however this could be further exploited.

## **BIRR THEATRE AND ARTS CENTRE**

Birr Theatre and Arts Centre has been the home of the arts in Offaly, since 2000. It provides a venue for local, national and international productions and concerts, but also initiates many outreach, community and youth projects. This has firmly established the centre as pivotal to the cultural life of Birr and also the whole county.

At a time when many venues nationally are experiencing difficulties with audience numbers, Birr Theatre and Arts Centre has managed to increase its attendance between 2009 and 2011. Over the course of this plan, Tullamore Community Arts Centre is intended and this is inevitably a cause for concern for the Management and Staff. Offaly County Council will be mindful of this concern and further, be instrumental in encouraging a mutually supportive relationship between both venues.

### **Objectives**

1. Work with the board and staff to find innovative and effective methods and solutions to sustain both the management and programming of the centre in a financially unstable climate.
2. Recognise and alleviate the concern that a new arts centre in Tullamore could be a negative influence by encouraging a relationship that is mutually beneficial and

progressive in working towards a greater cultural participation locally and national profile for Offaly.

3. Continue to work in partnership to sustain recent collaborative projects and identify new areas for development.
4. Support the identified need for an additional building within the town in which to expand and provide services such as a rehearsal, workshop, meeting or dance space.
5. Work in an advisory capacity to develop its outreach and community arts projects.
6. Encourage and support initiatives to expand audiences on a local, regional and national level
7. Advocate for an advanced economic impact study of the centre on the town.

*The council acknowledges that the provision of an arts centre would be a valuable contribution for the people of Tullamore; the council also acknowledges the contribution of Birr Theatre and Arts Centre and will support same.*

Offaly County Development Plan  
2009-2015 P11-12

## TULLAMORE COMMUNITY ARTS CENTRE

At the publishing of this plan, a design for Tullamore Community Arts Centre has been chosen and design contracts have been signed. This centre is much anticipated in the town and an intensive and ambitious community fundraising campaign is underway. In addition, Offaly Local Authorities are currently refurbishing Tullamore Library, Grand Canal amenities and facilitating the redevelopment of Tullamore Heritage Centre to significantly invest in the town's community, cultural and tourism potential.

This development is being delivered by Tullamore Community Arts Centre Ltd., a partnership company between Offaly County and Tullamore Town Councils and the local community. The objectives in this plan are reflective of this partnership.

### Objectives

1. Continue to work with the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht on the capital award allocated under the ACCESS II scheme

2. Manage the building programme within budget and to a high standard.
3. Develop and implement a sustainable business model in which to operate the centre
4. Put in place a Board of Management to oversee the staffing, finance, marketing and programming of the centre when it is open.
5. Develop a relationship and partnership with the Arts Council and other agencies to develop the centres programming capacity.
6. Ensure that the staff is welcoming, enthusiastic, highly qualified and committed to the centre.
7. Work to support programming that is consistent, accessible, inclusive, stimulating and of a high standard.
8. Closely monitor audience engagement and development and where necessary propose initiatives that will expand participation.
9. Work in collaboration with other cultural infrastructure within the county, particularly Birr Theatre and Arts Centre, to develop initiatives, share resources, increase audiences and participation and raise the profile of Offaly nationally.

*It is council's policy, having particular regard to Tullamore's Gateway status and projected growth, to facilitate the development of a dedicated multipurpose arts centre in the town as resources permit.*

Tullamore Town and Environs  
Development Plan 2010-2016

TTEP 11-14

## **SCULPTURE IN THE PARKLANDS**

Over the course of the last plan, Sculpture in the Parklands has advanced significantly in terms of the quality and calibre of artworks commissioned, its international profile and its links with agencies and educational institutions nationally and internationally. This is entirely due to the vision and commitment of Kevin O'Dwyer who has managed the project since inception in 2002 up to 2011 with huge dedication.

In entering this new planning phase, the future of Sculpture in the Parklands lies very much with project partners of Offaly County Council and Bord na Móna who wish to protect the considerable investment both have made in the project since it began. Both recognise the value the project has in terms of cultural tourism to the county, but crucially understand the value of the high standard of artistic integrity which has elevated the project's international profile.



## Objectives

1. Establish a partnership organisation in which to continue to deliver a programme and commission artwork.
2. Build on the learning and evaluations achieved by the project to date.
3. Through a consultative process, prepare and publish a 5 year strategy for the period of 2012 to 2016.
4. Facilitate regular opportunities for all partners to convene and discuss strategic actions, concerns and opportunities.
5. Consider the implications of and opportunities in rebranding the project *The National Sculpture Park at Lough Boora Parklands*
6. Work closely with the Arts Council on maximising its potential through ongoing dialogue and avail of funding opportunities as they arise.
7. Balance the provision of new commissions with an dynamic programme of activities.

## BELMONT MILL

Belmont Mill Artists Studios has grown organically and slowly over the past 6 years to establish its reputation as an excellent space for creative work, acknowledged from the many testimonies from artists. This venue is privately owned and the proprietors have opened its doors for artists, tourists and community events at no capital cost to the local authority. Through an annual grant to the Mill, the owners have been able to attract visiting artists into Offaly, who largely have gone on to promote the county as they exhibit nationally and internationally. Further their exhibition, lecture series and community events are attracting new audiences annually into the venue. Alongside this, the complex also contains a fully restored mill and museum, which is open to the public seasonally.

Belmont Mill has become important for Offaly's Cultural Tourism capability and much more could be achieved to maximize this potential. Over the course of this plan we will work with the owners to raise the profile of Belmont Mill nationally, to promote it as a destination for artists and as an important hub for creativity in the community.





*Rualie Bualie* by Patrick Dougherty, 2008  
Sculpture in the Parklands



### Objectives

1. Enable financial support to continue to fund bursaries for visiting artists
2. Identify long term tenants at the studios who will enhance the Mill's artistic and community programme and subsidize the bursaries.
3. Find a way to re establish bursaries to college graduates, as a way of supporting emerging artists and developing links with art colleges nationally.
4. Establish a direct funding relationship with the Arts Council, through the Artist in Community Scheme and Project Awards.
5. Continue to host Bealtaine events and participate in other community, educational and national arts events such as Culture Night.
6. Continue to host a lecture and exhibition series alongside community events to broaden their visitor numbers.
7. Develop exchange opportunities between the Mill and other national cultural institutions
8. Attract visiting artists of national and international standing

### A CIVIC SPACE IN EDENDERRY

Edenderry needs a community and civic space in which, among other activities, cultural activity can be appreciated and participated in. We will work with agencies and the local community to advocate for a facility such as this, in order for it to become the objective of a partnership of agencies which can deliver upon it.

### Objectives

1. Enable a strategic cultural action group which will support and promote community and youth arts activity and raise the profile of existing provision in the town.
2. Promote benefit and viability of using of empty and unused buildings/shops as temporary arts spaces.
3. Support the growth of existing and new arts groups and organisations in the town
4. Advise on how the arts can be facilitated and integrated into any new civic facility in Edenderry

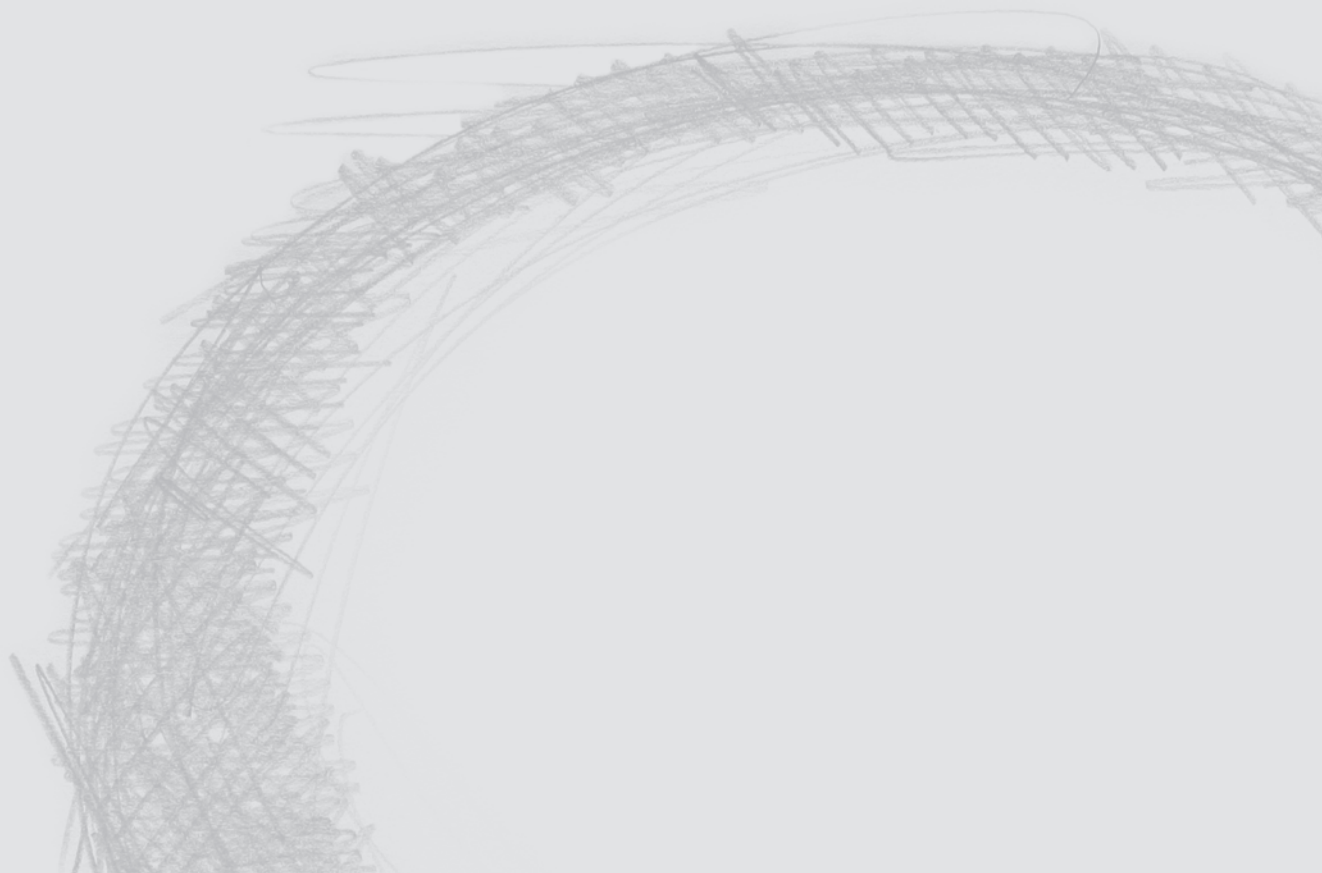
## THE GRAND CANAL

In 1960, the Grand Canal closed to commercial traffic. Today the Grand Canal is one of Offaly's best natural resources and it is an artery that we would like to celebrate further for its historical, cultural and social impact on the county. Through a Public Art Commission in 2012, we are fostering the idea of the Grand Canal in Offaly as a Cultural Corridor; to become a nationally visible cultural signature of Offaly.

By commissioning three artists of differing disciplines to make artworks in response to their journey and experiences along the Grand Canal, as a solitary pursuit or by engaging with communities, we are opening a new and creative dialogue around the canal and its future uses. The resulting work will form a collection of artistic responses to the Grand Canal which will be documented and displayed nationally and internationally in various ways over the next few years.

### Objectives:

1. Manage a touring exhibition of the artwork over Irish waterways and other venues/ festivals nationally and internationally and ensure its online presence through a website and other new media.
2. Work to ensure the Grand Canal in Offaly becomes nationally synonymous with artistic expression and devise an evaluation process to observe how this is developing.
3. Consider further commissions/projects of significance along the canal, including those with other agencies, which would meet similar objectives of creating a Cultural Corridor through Offaly.
4. Promote the processes and outcomes of the cultural development of the Grand Canal through multiple service providers, cultural and tourism agencies.





*Now, Then and Always*, Joseph Hillier,  
Midland Regional Hospital, Tullamore 2009





## **SMALL SPACES**

There are a number of independent and privately owned working spaces and studios, which from time to time are open to the public for workshops, talks and exhibitions. Studios like these offer informal opportunities for the public to have access to and participate in the arts and are important local resources in developing an awareness and appreciation of the work of the artist in the community.

There is also an opportunity for artists to develop a culture of exchange within their own spaces, which has been identified during the consultation process in preparing this plan. Artists are also eager to use non-art spaces to make, facilitate and perform art works, as a way of expanding their practice further into the community.

## **Objectives**

1. Through the Arts Act Grant Scheme provide an opportunity to support arts activity in these spaces, including community activity.
2. Investigate and where possible facilitate the opportunity for artists to access non-art spaces for projects that demonstrate excellence in arts practice and community engagement.
3. Encourage these spaces to become further linked with community and cultural development as a way to further imbed their relevance locally.



# Festivals

Festivals in Offaly are one of Offaly's best assets in terms of our cultural tourism and economic potential. We have a high concentration of festivals and events and new events appear almost annually. Since the last arts plan 3 new festivals have become well established (Hullabaloo, IFONLY, OFFline Film Festival) and newer ones are in development such as (Bo Leictreach Green Play Festival and Tullamore Arts Festival). We greatly appreciate the mammoth community and voluntary effort that goes into these events and have outlined here ways in which we can support and develop this sector.

## Objectives

1. Given Offaly's capacity to attract big events such as the Fleadh Cheoil/National Ploughing and the annual Tullamore Show, there should be an openness to accommodate new large events as they arise, particularly those which are professionally organised, culturally unique and would place the county on the map.
2. Review how festivals and major events are supported by Offaly Local Authorities and other agencies in Offaly and those who have a remit in the county, to ensure a strategic and synchronized approach.
3. Provide advice and information to festivals on their arts programming, and encourage the inclusion of youth arts projects/events and arts forms which have not been explored such as film, literature or dance as appropriate.
4. Create an annual calendar of events for Offaly that can be linked to service providers, tourism agencies and shared online.
5. Explore with other agencies how to build a greater national profile of the festivals and events in Offaly.
6. Develop a new funding scheme for festivals in Offaly that will reward innovative arts programming and those who are identifying new ways to engage audiences.
7. Facilitate and encourage festivals to think more strategically about their own planning and development in areas such as governance, programming and marketing.
8. Find ways in which festivals can develop an audience with the diaspora of their locality.
9. Facilitate potential festival venues, particularly public buildings and amenities to participate in the cultural celebration of their town, as appropriate.
10. Encourage and facilitate festivals and events to broaden and maximize their funding opportunities, such as the Arts Councils' Small Festival's Scheme, Failte Ireland, Offaly Local Development Company, and encourage local business to contribute in kind.
11. Encourage festivals to avail of specialist advice and funding opportunities aimed at the festival and voluntary, community sector.



Birr Vintage Week and Arts Festival





*Saints and Scholars*, Maurice Harron, Tullamore Bypass, 2009

*“Placing art identifies public arts space at community and parish levels, where it reflects and transforms the best imaginings of local people and artists in ways and places that simply couldn’t have been imagined before.”*

Medb Ruane, Foreword, Public Art Strategy, Group Report.

# Public Art

The *per cent for art* scheme is a government initiative established in 1978 and provides opportunities for artists of all disciplines to create work to exist in the public realm. Offaly Local Authorities have a responsibility to commission artworks under central government funded capital projects such as roads, water services, housing schemes, libraries and swimming pools. We recognise the resource that the per cent for art scheme offers for creative intervention with communities and expanding the county arts programme and are currently managing this opportunity through Offaly Local Authorities Public Art Working Group. We have already adopted a protocol for the use of this scheme, the aims of which include:

1. Embed the per cent for art scheme as an integral part of service provision in the Offaly Local Authorities
2. Outline our position and priorities in relation to how we use the percent for art scheme in Offaly.
3. Make best use of available per cent for art funding in Offaly through a creative, imaginative and diverse programme.
4. Provide leadership, guidance and advice to other organisations in both the public and private sector in their own artistic features/projects.
5. Ensure Offaly increases its national profile on the use of the per cent for art scheme
6. Enhance public spaces and communities by increasing accessibility to public artworks and quality art projects
7. Improve understanding and knowledge of the arts through meaningful engagement with public art works and art projects
8. Ensure all public art commissioners in Offaly are informed on best practice use of the scheme
9. Review our protocol during the period of this Arts Plan.

# FilmOffaly

Since the last plan, where investigating a film commission was merely an objective, this has become one of the biggest growth areas in the arts in Offaly. FilmOffaly was launched in 2008 as a project of Offaly County Council and it has since become one of the leading regional film commissions in Ireland and the only one in a county which is landlocked. This has opened the film industry to our diverse and unique landscape, a varied and distinctive built environment and a range of enthusiastic skilled production companies and film crew.

The potential economic impact of encouraging this development is also recognised, therefore an active approach has been our methodology. The introduction of the FilmOffaly Award in partnership with Filmbase in 2009, resulted in a selection of multi award winning short films being made here and a reinforced declaration that Offaly was open for business for filmmakers.

Since 2008 four feature films have been made, (*Becoming Jane*, *Eden*, *His and Hers*, *The Other Side of Sleep*) two RTE TV drama series (*Pure Mule* and *Hide and Seek*) and numerous short films (such as the award winning shorts *Noreen*, *the Moment* and *As the Light Leaks In*)

In 2009, funding was received from Shannon Development to carry out a feasibility study into the potential of Offaly to host a film festival that would be unique to other established ones

nationally. The study highlighted the central location, building film profile and niche angle of participation alongside viewing, as being the recommended features of a successful festival, and in 2010 the OFFline Film Festival was launched. The committee currently includes two members of FilmOffaly, not just for their expertise, but also for their interest in the festival as a strategic objective toward film development in the county. The festival is run as an independent organisation and is based in Birr.

The following objectives are aimed at building upon the surge of growth in this art form over the past four years.

## Objectives

1. In light of current resources, and the impact that increased investment could yield, we will identify the best way to maintain the current administrative capacity of FilmOffaly alongside improved financial opportunities, both internally and externally.
2. Continue to work in partnership with the Irish Film Board and Filmbase and identify other partnerships which would create mutually beneficial and effective opportunities to increase the profile of Offaly as a film friendly county, such as the FilmOffaly Award.



On set, Brendan and Brian Gleeson, *Noreen*, FilmOffaly Award 2009.

3. In partnership with the business community, identify and implement attractive coordinated financial packages which would further attract visiting film productions.
4. To manage the website and social networking as an active tool in which to raise the profile of Offaly as an attractive location.
5. Promptly assist with queries/requests from the film industry on locations, resources, access to public buildings, road closures, public services and open calls for casting or locations.
6. Encourage film as an art form in other festivals and events in the county.
7. Support and collaborate with OFFline Film Festival to increase its capacity for participation, audience development and profile.
8. Continue to build a national profile at industry events, festivals and seminars.
9. Support, encourage and disseminate opportunities to local filmmakers to raise their capacity to make film.



## THE PROCESS OF PREPARING THIS PLAN

September 2011	.....	Evaluation of previous arts plan
Jan 18 <sup>th</sup> 2012	.....	Public meeting, Edenderry (4 attendees)
Jan 23 <sup>rd</sup>	.....	Focus on Film Consultation, Tullamore (14 attendees)
Jan 24 <sup>th</sup>	.....	Public Meeting, Birr (26 attendees)
Jan 31 <sup>st</sup>	.....	Artists meeting, Tullamore (15 attendees)
Feb 2 <sup>nd</sup>	.....	Focus on Festivals meeting, Tullamore (13 attendees)
Feb 3 <sup>rd</sup>	.....	Closing date for written submissions (9 received)
Feb 9 <sup>th</sup>	.....	First draft brought to Housing Social and Cultural Strategic Policy
Feb 20 <sup>th</sup>	.....	Draft for approval for public consultation at County Council meeting
Feb 21 <sup>st</sup> to March 30 <sup>th</sup>	.....	Public consultation period and public information meetings
April 16 <sup>th</sup> 2012	.....	Arts Plan adopted at April monthly meeting of Offaly County Council

54

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Offaly County Council wishes to acknowledge all those who contributed to and participated in the development of the Arts Plan. In particular we would like to thank the arts community in Offaly who attended meetings, made written submissions and gave generously of their time, experience and expertise to the development of this plan.

### Particular thanks to

- Marcella Corcoran Kennedy TD
- Barry Cowen TD
- The Elected Members of Offaly County Council
- The Housing Social and Cultural Strategic Policy Committee
- The Elected members of Birr Town Council
- The Elected members of Tullamore Town Council
- The Elected members of Edenderry Town Council
- The Management Team of Offaly County Council
- The Arts Council
- The Board of Birr Theatre and Arts Centre
- The Board of Tullamore Community Arts Centre Ltd
- Offaly Local Development Company

Arts Officer Sinéad O'Reilly and Administrator Clare Dunne

Offaly County Council, Áras an Chontae, Charleville Road, Tullamore, Co. Offaly  
Phone 057 9346800 | Fax 057 9346868  
Arts Office Phone 057 9357400 | Email [arts@offalycoco.ie](mailto:arts@offalycoco.ie)  
[www.offaly.ie/arts](http://www.offaly.ie/arts)

© copyright Offaly County Council, 2012

# APPENDIX 1: ARTS ORGANISATIONS IN OFFALY (NON COMMERCIAL)

	CONTACT	TEL	EMAIL	WEBPAGE
<b>Art Centres</b>				
Áras an Chontae 'Atrium', Tullamore, <i>Exhibition Space</i>	Arts Office Offaly County Council	057 9357400	arts@offalycoco.ie	www.offaly.ie/arts
Birr Theatre and Arts Centre, Birr, <i>Arts and Theatre Centre</i>	Emma Nee	057 9122911	birrtheatre@eircom.net	www.birrtheatre.com
Tullamore Community Arts Centre, Tullamore, <i>Community Arts Centre in Progress</i>	Desmond Doyle	057 9357400	info@tullamorecommunityartscentre.ie	www.tullamorecommunityartscentre.ie
<b>Art Groups &amp; Associations</b>				
Anam Beo, Tullamore, <i>Artists working in health centres</i>	Julie Spollen		anambeoart@gmail.com	www.anambeo.com
Offaly Crafty, Offaly, <i>Arts &amp; Craft Association</i>	Cyril Stanley	0505 47025	info@offalyartsandcrafts.com	www.offalyartsandcrafts.com
Sculpture in the Parklands, Lough Boora, Cloghan	Arts Office Offaly County Council	057 9357400		www.sculptureintheparklands.com
Last Tuesday Club, Tullamore, <i>Artists Collective</i>	Arts Office Offaly County Council	057 9357400		Facebook
Birr Art Group, Birr, <i>Voluntary, Art Group</i>	Kathleen Gormley	087 6819990	kaygo3@msn.com	
Eden Art Group, Edenderry, <i>Voluntary Art Group</i>	Kathleen Nolan	046 9731077		
Tullamore Arts Group, Tullamore, <i>Voluntary Art Group</i>	Leonard Geoghegan	086 8320635	lgeogh@offalycoco.ie	
Wet Paint Project, Daingean, <i>Community Art Project</i>	Gillian Batty	057 9353977	bunsallaghat@gmail.com	Facebook
<b>Artist Studios</b>				
Belmont Mill, Belmont, Birr, <i>Studio and Artists Workshops - Offers artists residencies</i>	Tom Dolan	090 6457598	tom@belmontmill.com	www.belmontmill.com
Bramber Studio, Shinrone, Birr, <i>Studio and Artists Workshops</i>	Hazel Greene	0505 47025	info@bramberstudio.com	www.bramberstudio.com
Burns Cottage Gallery & Studios, Edenderry, <i>Studio and Artists Workshops</i>	Lorenza Mahon Burns	046 9731347		
Clonmacnoise Pottery, Clonmacnoise, <i>Studio and Artists Workshops</i>	Carole Quinlan	090 6454866	clonmacnoisepottery@eircom.net	www.clonmacnoisepottery.com
Crothu, Birr, <i>Studio and Artists Workshops</i>	Jackie Lynch	057 9120151	jlynchcrothustudio@gmail.com	
Enrica Bertolini Cullen Art Studio, Tullamore, <i>Studio and Artists Workshops</i>	Enrica Bertolini	057 9323086	enriccart@gmail.com	
Glasshammer Design & Studios, Rhode, <i>Studio and Artists Workshops</i>	Michelle O'Donnell	046 9739296	info@glasshammer.ie	www.glasshammer.ie
Rushbrook Studios, Edenderry, <i>Studio and Artists Workshops</i>	Catherine Mann	046 9632512	rushbrookstudios@gmail.com	www.rushbrookstudios.com
Tin Jug Studio, Birr, <i>Studio and Artists Workshops</i>	Rosalind Fanning	057 9121818	tinjugstudio1@eircom.net	www.tinjugstudio.com
The Good Hatchery, Daingean, <i>Studio - Offers Artists Residencies</i>	Carl Giffney	086 3391989	thegoodhatchery@gmail.com	www.thegoodhatchery.wordpress.com/
<b>Choirs</b>				
Birr Choral Society	Gerry Dolan	057 9120006	info@stbrendansbirr.ie	
Birr Church Choir	Gerry Dolan	057 9120006	info@stbrendansbirr.ie	
Birr Folk Choir	Katrina Ryan	087 9559444	katryan@hotmail.com	
Cantori Choir	Michael Moore	057 9352312	mooreschool@eircom.net	
Durrow Choir	Breda Mannion	087 9847575	breda.mannion@hse.ie	
Eden Chorale	Anne Conaghan	046 9731988	a.conaghan66@gmail.com;	
Edenderry Church Choir	Breda Slevin	085 1753585		
Family Mass Choir	Marie White	087 2717209	marie_white32@yahoo.com	
Le Cheile	Andrius Kozlovskis	087 7747967	lecheilesingers@yahoo.ie	
Perfect Harmony	Brian Shanahan	085 1108614	brianshanahan@ymail.com	
Rua	Siobhan Godley	086 1597292	siobhangodley@gmail.com	
Sacred Heart Church Choir	Madeline Fox	046 9730055		
Sacred Heart School Choir	Regina McCarthy	057 9332502	clonlost@eircom.net	
Scoil Mhuire Choir Tullamore	Majella Killeen	087 6870570	mkilleen1971@gmail.com	
Shalom	PJ Smyth	057 9341120	pidolly@iol.ie	
St.Manhhans Choir Boher	Majella Killeen	087 6870570	mkilleen1971@gmail.com	
St.Mary's Secondary School Choir	Colette Brady	046 9731457	stmmaryedy.ias@eircom.net	
Tormey Cunningham	Ed Cunningham	057 9351365	maureen.ed.c@gmail.com	
Tullamore Academy Chamber Choir	Ciaran Brady	086 0678250	info@theacademyofmusic.ie	
Tullamore Concert Choir	Bryce Collins	085 2152945	choir@brycecollins.com	
Tullamore Folk Choir	Paddy Foy	057 9352244	sheiladavisfoy@gmail.com	
Tullamore Gospel Choir	Geraldine Grennan	086 3616121	ggrennan@eircom.net	www.tullamoregospelchoir.com
Tullamore Parish Choir	Ciaran Gilligan	087 2227243	ciarangilligan@eircom.net	
Virtuoso Chamber Choir	Miriam Smyth	087 6322346	virtuosocc@gmx.com	
Youth Folk Choir	Sr.Genny	087 9834002	phenah@hotmail.com	
<b>Dance</b>				
Legitimate Bodies Dance Company, Birr, <i>Professional Dance Company</i>	Nicholas Bryson	086 1571660	legitimitebodies@gmail.com	www.birrtheatre.com
Offaly Youth Dance, Offaly, <i>Youth Dance</i>	Arts Office Offaly County Council	057 9357400	arts@offalycoco.ie	www.offaly.ie/arts
Red Embers Dance Troupe, Tullamore, <i>Eastern Oriental Dance Company</i>	Terri Dale	087 7530304	theredembers@gmail.com	Facebook
<b>Drama &amp; Musical Groups</b>				
Ballycumber Dramatic Group, Ballycumber, <i>Drama Group</i>	Derek Claffey	087 6592767	d.claffey@genemedix.com	on facebook
Banagher Drama Society, Banagher, <i>Drama Group</i>	Sean Corrigan	087 2210067		
Birr Stage Guild, Birr, <i>Drama Group</i>			info@birrstageguild.com	www.birrstageguild.com
Clara Musical Society, Clara, <i>Musical Society</i>		087 9366247	info@clarams.com	www.clarams.com
Clonbullogue Drama Group, Clonbullogue, <i>Drama Group</i>	Maura Allen	046 9730040	mauraallen1@eircom.net	
Coolderry Drama Group, Coolderry, <i>Drama Group</i>	Liam Marshall	087 2488234		
Daingean Musical Group, Daingean, <i>Musical Society</i>	Anne Corcoran	086 0600734	anniebigd@yohoo.co.uk	
Dream Drama Group, Tullamore, <i>Drama Group</i>	Mary Carroll	087 2512135	mary.carroll@scjms.ie	
Eden Drama Society, Edenderry, <i>Drama Group</i>	Jim Lawlor	087 9967604	jimlawlor66@gmail.com	
Killavilla Drama Group, Killavilla, <i>Drama Group</i>	Agnus King	087 2333294		
Lusmagh Players, Lusmagh, <i>Drama Group</i>	Michael Troy	086 8250948	mjmtroy@gmail.com	
Offaly Drama Project, Offaly/Birr, <i>Drama Group</i>	Fiona Breen	086 8904828	fionabreen247@gmail.com	

**Drama & Musical Groups (contd.)**

	CONTACT	TEL	EMAIL	WEBPAGE
Rath Drama Group, Rath, <i>Drama Group</i>	Edel Pey	087 2201697		
Riverview Resources Drama Group, <i>Drama Group</i>	Sinead Ni Dhomhnaill		riverviewresources@stannes.ie	
Seir Kierans Drama Group, Clareen, <i>Drama Group</i>	Deirdre Ryan	057 9137144		
St Mary's Youth Centre, Tullamore, <i>Drama Group and Youth Organisation</i>	Bill O'Hanlon	057 9322963	stmarysyc@eircom.net tads4all@gmail.com	www.stmarysyouthcentre.ie
Tullamore Amateur Dramatic Society, Tullamore, <i>Drama Group</i>	Denise Keoghnan			
Tullamore Musical Society, Tullamore, <i>Musical Society</i>	Brian Gunning	057 9352919	info@tullamoremusicalsociety.com	www.tullamoremusicalsociety.com

**Festivals**

Bealtaine Festival, Offaly	Arts Office	057 9357400	arts@offalycoco.ie	www.offaly.ie/arts
Birr Vintage Week and Arts Festival, Birr	Emma Nee Haslem	087 9226961	info@birrvintageweek.com	www.birrvintageweek.com
Bo Leictreach Green Play Festival, Birr	Angela Ryan	086 3638758	jasangotheatre@gmail.com info@castlepalooza.ie	www.castlepalooza.ie
Castle Palooza, Tullamore				
Daingean Homecoming Festival, Daingean	Joe Lynch	087 2122074	joelynch2110@gmail.com	
Hullabaloo Offaly's Childrens Arts Festival, Offaly	Arts Office	05793 57400	arts@offalycoco.ie	www.offaly.ie/arts
I.F.O.N.L.Y Dance Festival, Birr	Nick Bryson	086 1571660	legitimatebodies@gmail.com	
Johnny Keenan Banjo Festival, Tullamore	Chris Keenan	087 2817825	banjofestival@hotmail.com	www.johnnykeenan.com
OFFline Film Festival, Birr	Gary Hoctor	086 6065927	info@offlinefilmfestival.com	www.offlinefilmfestival.com
Shakefest, Tullamore	Terri Dale	057 9323040	shakecelebration@gmail.com	www.shakefest.net
Shannonbridge Music Festival, Shannonbridge	Fergal Morgan	090 9674973	info@theoldfortrestaurant.com	www.shannonbridge.com
Slieve Bloom Storytelling Festival, Slievebloom Villages	Christina Byrne	057 9137009		www.slievebloom.ie
Tullamore Arts Festival, Tullamore	Loughnan Hooper		info@tullamoreartsfestival.com	www.tullamoreartsfestival.com
Tullamore International Summer Organ Series, Tullamore	Gerard Gillen	087 2342360	gerard.gillen@nuim.ie	

**Film**

FilmOffaly	Arts Office	057 9357400	filmoffaly@offalycoco.ie	www.filmoffaly.ie
Good Company Productions Ltd, <i>Production Company</i>	Evan Chamberlain	086 8338628	info@goodcompany.ie	www.goodcompany.ie
Stitch Films, <i>Production Company</i>	Shirley Weir	086 3953460	info@stitchfilms.ie	www.stitchfilms.ie
Stand Manta, <i>Production Company</i>	Paddy Slattery	086 3597456	paddy@paddyslattery.com	www.paddyslattery.com
Hello Camera, <i>Production Company</i>	Gary Hoctor	085 2389416	info@hellocamera.ie	www.hellocamera.ie
Cardel Entertainment Ltd, <i>Production Company</i>	Carla Mooney		info@cardelentertainment.com	www.cardelentertainment.com
Mixed Bag Media, <i>Production Company</i>	Garret Daly	057 9362759	info@mixedbagmedia.com	www.mixedbagmedia.com
SWV Studios, <i>Production Company</i>	Noel Duffy	057 8640051	create@swvstudios.com	www.swvstudios.com
Rooftopbasement Productions, <i>Production Company</i>	Eve Daly		rooftopbasement@eircom.net	

**Literature**

Offaly Writers Group	Arts Office	057 9357400	arts@offalycoco.ie	www.offaly.ie/arts
Tullamore Rhymers Club	Ken Hume	085 2405961	kenhume79@gmail.com	Facebook

**Music Associations**

Tullamore Gramophone Society, Tullamore, Music appreciation Society	Kathleen Power	057 9351351	tullamoregramophone@gmail.com	
Comhaltas Offaly, Killeigh Branch, <i>Traditional Irish Music, Song, Dance and an Teanga Gaeilge</i>	Attracta Brady	087 2653586	attractabrady@hotmail.com	www.comhaltas.ie
Sacred Heart Orchestra	Regina McCarthy	057 9332502	clonlost@eircom.net	
Irish Midland Youth Orchestra	Margaret Flynn	087 6812156	magsflynn@gmail.com	Facebook

**Photography Clubs**

Slieve Bloom Photography Club, Tullamore, <i>Photography Club</i>	Goretti O'Dea	087 3245649	slievebloomphoto@gmail.com	www.slievebloomphoto.com
Birr Photography Club, Birr, <i>Photography Club</i>	Robert Revill	087 6681783	info@birrphotogroup.org	www.birrphotogroup.org

**Theatre**

Jasango Theatre Company, Tullamore, <i>Professional Theatre Company</i>	Angela Ryan		jasangotheatre@gmail.com	Facebook
Offaly Youth Theatre, Offaly, <i>Youth Theatre</i>	Janine Wilson	087 2071258	offalyyouththeatre@gmail.com	Facebook
Stage Craft Ireland, Tullamore, <i>Physical and Street Theatre</i>	Mariosa Hume	085 8112051	info@stagecraftireland.com	www.stagecraftireland.com

**Town Bands**

Tullamore Town Band, Tullamore, <i>Town Band</i>	Pat Doheny	086 8551011	tullamoretownband@gmail.com	www.tullamoretownband.net
Clara Town Band, Clara, <i>Town Band</i>	Marian Fitzpatrick	087 1549481		
St Colmcille's Pipe Band, Tullamore, <i>Town Band</i>	Pat Nolan	087 6101773	tullamorepipeband@gmail.com	www.tullamorepipeband.ie
St Brigid's Pipe Band, Mountbolus, <i>Town Band</i>	Breda Donnelly	086 1051525	cbjg77@hotmail.com	









# OFFALY COUNTY COUNCIL

Áras an Chontae, Charleville Road, Tullamore, Co. Offaly  
Phone 057 9346800 | Fax 057 9346868

Arts Office

Phone 057 9357400 | E-mail [arts@offalycoco.ie](mailto:arts@offalycoco.ie) | Web [www.offaly.ie/arts](http://www.offaly.ie/arts)

Edited by Sinéad O'Reilly and Clare Dunne

Designed & printed by Brosna Press

© Offaly County Council, 2012