

CULTURE - DONEGAL

Interactive
Newsletter



Collaborative Audience Development Plan for the North West

The culture departments of Donegal County Council (DCC) and Derry City & Strabane District Council (DCSDC) came together to commission an audience development baseline survey and programme across the North West to understand and increase the engagement of citizens in the area in arts, culture and heritage. There were 2 distinct parts to the project: gathering and analysing the data and research, and the co-design of the audience development programme to address the engagement gaps.

Data and Research

Methods included:

1. Face to face survey of residents

A face to face survey of 2,400 residents across DCC and DCSDC was carried out in 2019. The survey looked at the following with regard to participating in culture, arts and heritage:

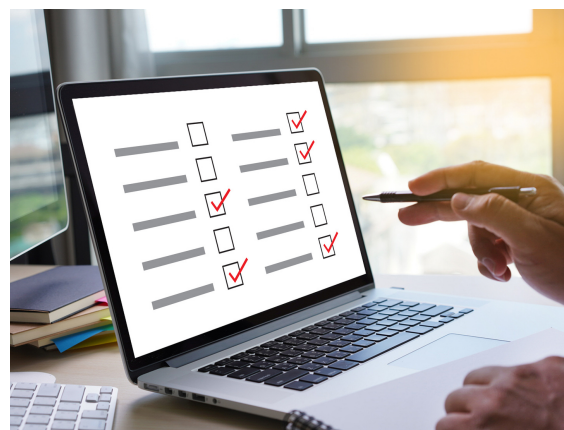
- Who is and is not attending or participating
- Where current core markets live
- Attitudes to the importance of arts, culture and heritage

2. Mosaic Profiling

This segmentation programme, created by Experian, allowed an analysis of the types of people living in the North West area.

3. Analysis of existing data on audience behaviours

The data that many arts, culture and heritage organisations already held helped us expand on what the baseline told us.



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Findings

98% of residents in the North West engaged in arts, culture or heritage in the past year, with 26% of North West residents crossing the border to engage in culture.

However, those aged 65+ attended and participated less than average; access was an issue; and, given the profile of the North West, families could be targeted to promote more engagement.

We are currently working on a plan with DCSDC and a range of cultural partners focusing on increasing audience participation with families and older people across the North West, incorporating accessibility across the board including the elements listed below.

Families

- Online platform to promote cultural events and activities in the North West Region
- Family programme over the summer months
- Accreditation scheme – including online and offline accessibility
- Playful venues
- Family panel



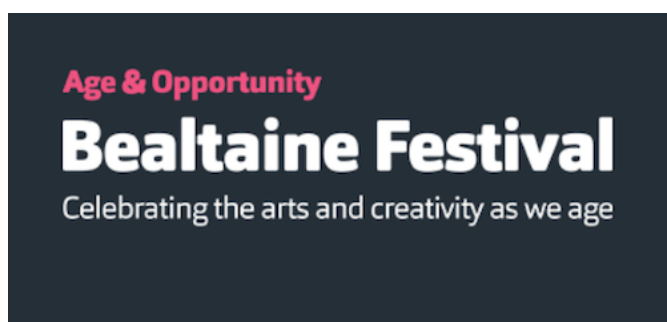
Older people

- Culturally specific Older People Panel
- Work with the Age Friendly Officers
- Accessibility Audits
- Extension of Bealtaine Festival and other festivals
- Cultural companions



Bealtaine 2021

The Bealtaine Festival 2021 will run throughout May. The programme will include wellness events, online cookery, and a variety concert organised by the Regional Cultural Centre. Check out our websites and social media for details of the upcoming programme.



Right: *Rural District Council archives.*

Photo: Paul McGuckin



The Archives Service has uploaded more of its Decade of Centenaries archives to its website and these are now available to view free of charge. The Ballyshannon Town Commissioner's volume containing its minutes of meetings spans the years 1896 to 1923. There were ten Rural District Councils (RDCs) in County Donegal from 1899 to 1925. Minutes of meetings from Ballyshannon, Dunfanaghy, Donegal, Inishowen, Glenties, Letterkenny, Milford, Strabane No. 2 (actually Lifford) and Londonderry No. 2 (parts of south Inishowen), dating from about 1915 to 1918 have all been uploaded for viewing. The years from 1918 - 1925 will be uploaded later this year. The 1916 minutes of the meetings of the Boards of Guardians (who ran Donegal's workhouses) are also available to view. See all these archives [here](#).

These early 20th century local records are of interest to family and local historians as well as students and academics. Local Authority records reveal the stories of the lives of ordinary people in extraordinary times, including council staff and councillors, tenants, trades people, ratepayers and workhouse residents. They allow us to follow and interpret the rapid changes that were taking place during this crucially important decade, from agricultural developments, improvements in infrastructure including roads, housing and schools, public health management, closure of workhouses, and local political views and military activities.



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ARTS

Music for Care Homes Programme

As part of the Keep Well Campaign in Donegal, the Arts Service and the Donegal Age Friendly Programme will offer a series of music, song and dance performances for residents of the county's residential care homes, over the months of March, April and May. A panel of experienced musicians, singers and entertainers has been assembled to deliver the series, which will involve up to twenty performances happening in thirteen longterm residential care homes across the five Municipal Districts.

The project continues the engagement by Donegal County Council, through the Culture Division and the Age Friendly Programme, with older people since the start of the current COVID-19 public health restrictions.



In consultations with the care homes, many of the residents expressed a particular likeness for Irish Traditional and for country music, so the series will respond to that need, as well as catering for other musical tastes and forms of entertainment. The care home presentations will be of the highest professional standards and will be delivered in a warm, informal style to facilitate maximum engagement between performers and audience.

The performances can take place indoors or outdoors, as the ongoing COVID-19 situation dictates.

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Coming This Spring!

Check out the County Donegal Heritage Office website for the following new and forthcoming publications:

- '[Wildlife in Buildings](#)' Booklet
- '[Spring into Heritage](#)' Bucket List
- '[Biodiversity in Your Garden](#)' Colouring Book
- Copies of the popular '[Gardening for Biodiversity](#)' Booklet are still available too.

Thatch Repair Grant Scheme

Donegal County Council's award-winning Thatch Repair Grant Scheme will open for applications in mid-March. The Thatch Repair Grant Scheme provides advice to owners on the conservation of thatched roofs and allocates funding for small-scale thatch repairs. Awards are usually between €200 and €3,000. The closing date for the receipt of applications is Monday, April 12 and further information is available [here](#).

National Heritage Week

National Heritage Week takes place from Saturday, August 14 until Sunday, August 22. This year's theme is 'Heritage for Everyone /Inclusive Heritage'. If you want to take part in Heritage Week, more information is available at: www.heritageweek.ie

Get Involved!

Support for your community-based heritage initiative is available. The Heritage Council's Community Heritage Grant Scheme, the National Monuments Service's Community Monuments Fund and Donegal County Council's Culture & Creativity Grant Scheme will open for applications in March. Further information will be available [here](#).

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LIBRARIES

Touch Type Read Spell

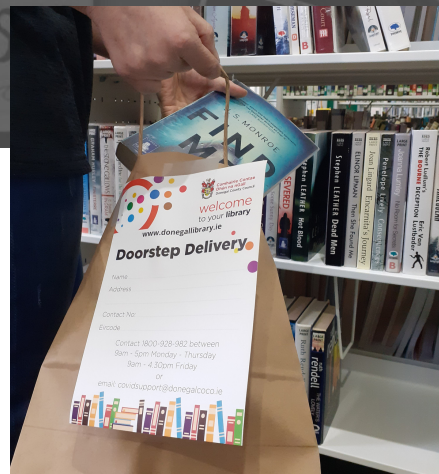
We are pleased to announce a new online service called Touch-Type Read and Spell (TTRS). TTRS is a wonderful literacy programme that has helped many children and adults improve their reading, spelling and touch-typing skills. For further information or to register for this resource please e-mail: ttrs@donegalcoco.ie

Grow It Forward Campaign

Keep an eye out for the new Grow It Forward Campaign launching on March 20. Free packs of seeds and a growing guide will be available to library members. For updates check out our [website](#).

Healthy Ireland at your Library

Dr Mary O'Kane will deliver two free online talks on Saturday March 20 and 27. Dr O'Kane is a lecturer in Psychology and Early Childhood Education. She shares her expertise in a warm and relatable way. Keep an eye on our [website](#) for more information.



Left: *Selecting items at Buncrana Library for a Doorstep Delivery.*
Photo: Library Staff

Doorstep Delivery

Our doors may be closed but we are now delivering books directly to your door! Click [here](#) for more information.

Spring into Storytime

Bring the magic of storytime into your home with our online storytelling sessions this April. Further details on our Spring into Storytime programme will be available on our [website](#) soon!



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“Women’s Voices from the Past - Revolutionary Times”

Donegal County Museum, the Regional Cultural Centre and the Museum and Heritage Service of Derry City and Strabane District Council have produced a series of six short video pieces which highlight the experiences of women during the Revolutionary Period (1919-1923). The video pieces were produced by Dark Daughter Productions with videography by Oath Film Studio.

- To view the Donegal films, click [here](#).
- To view the Derry Films, click [here](#).

The videos were supported by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media under the Decade of Centenaries 2012-2023 initiative.



Still from short video –
“Rose Ann Logue - On a Lonely Road”.
Courtesy Oath Film Studio

“From Conflict to Division 1919-1925” exhibition

The Museum is developing an exhibition on life in Donegal between 1919 and 1925. If you have any artefacts or photographs associated with this period which could be included in the exhibition please contact the Museum.



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www.donegalcoco.ie/culture/countymuseum

REGIONAL CULTURAL CENTRE

Living in Donegal Virtual Exhibition

Living in Donegal is a Peace IV funded socially engaged exhibition project produced by the RCC and starring twenty-seven people, who live in County Donegal.

It features a snapshot of the lives and stories of these individuals in 2020. Some were born in Ireland, have a parent or parents from another country, migrated here as young children or came to Ireland as adults.

Each person has been chosen because they are making a positive contribution to life in Donegal in many different ways; from sports to music, from food to art.

The exhibition launches on March 25 and will be available to visit: click [here](#).



St. Patrick's Day Online Festival

The RCC and Letterkenny Chamber of Commerce are delighted to present a virtual St. Patrick's Day celebration that will invite a worldwide audience into the Cathedral town.

The online celebration will feature a host of Donegal's top musical talents, Irish dancers and a late night live-streamed after party. We're also delighted to have great support from Highland Radio, who will broadcast the concert live on the airwaves from 8pm. County Donegal is extremely lucky to boast such a wealth of fantastic musicians and this year's celebration will feature professionally-filmed live sets from Goats Don't Shave, Tanya McCole, Megan Nic Ruairi, Brendan Quinn, Seamus McGuire & Steve Cooney, Martin Orr and Sailor Bill.



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