

**The Chairman and Members of
North West Area Committee.**

Meeting: 18th October 2016

Item No: 15

Dublin's Culture Connects: The National Neighbourhood Project

Dublin City Council's new cultural programme, **Dublin's Culture Connects**, was officially launched on the 27th September 2016 by The Lord Mayor Brendan Carr and Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, Minister Heather Humphreys, TD at a special event in The Mansion House. It was attended by all of the National Cultural Institutions in Dublin, many of the community groups who are involved in the projects, Dublin City Councillors and many more.

Following on the adoption of a new Cultural Strategy in 2016, **Dublin's Culture Connects** is a series of legacy projects developed from the Dublin 2020 Capital of Culture Bid. The National Neighbourhood Project is an innovative programme creating new connections and partnerships across Dublin between Neighbourhoods, National Cultural Institutions, City Libraries, Artists, and the City. Spanning the Dublin City Council region, the project, for the first time, brings together the Dublin City Council Arts, cultural and community resources in partnership with all eight National Cultural Institutions located in Dublin. These are The Abbey Theatre, The National Museum of Ireland, The National Library of Ireland, The National Gallery of Ireland, The National Concert Hall, The Chester Beatty Library, The National Archives and The Irish Museum of Modern Art. Each of the Council's five administrative areas has been partnered with National Cultural Institutions.

The core value of **Dublin's Culture Connects** is the public and cultural community working together to develop projects based on shared ideas. It was devised following extensive consultation with the city's communities. All of the programmes focus on new partnerships and on new ways of working, that acknowledge how culture can bring neighbourhoods together.

Lord Mayor Brendan Carr commented: "I am delighted to see that all the work that went into our Capital of Culture bid is being rewarded. Thousands of Dubliners engaged with Dublin City Council over a number of months to suggest projects and programmes and The National Neighbourhood is just one of the great ideas to come out of the process. Culture is an important part in building neighbourhood spirit and it is an ambition of Dublin City Council to continue to give the opportunity for people to learn and participate in the arts in their neighbourhood in all parts of the City.

Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs Heather Humphreys TD added: "A spirit of working together, of partnership, and creative collaboration has been the striking feature of everything we've seen throughout this special year of Commemoration.

We've seen how positively communities respond if you empower them to express themselves. I am delighted to see this approach to collaboration embodied in the Dublin's Culture Connects initiative. It is helping to build an ever expanding partnership between citizens and the cultural community, developing new audiences, encouraging participation and supporting our great artists and cultural organisations. By creating better links between members of the public and the cultural community, we can open communities up to the benefits of cultural engagement. Embedding cultural activity and expression within communities will help to create a healthier, more vibrant society. I hope the National Neighbourhood project can be used as a template for other regions and communities across the country, as we seek to constantly break down barriers to artistic and cultural participation."

About Dublin's Culture Connects: The National Neighbourhood projects

- **The National Neighbourhood: Press Play**

Dublin City Council will 'press play' on creativity in Finglas, Cabra, Ballymun and Whitehall. A series of pop-up contemporary museums of 'new treasures' will be created around the theme of play, in response to the Out of Storage exhibition at The National Museum of Ireland. Community partners include New Cross College, Margaret Aylward Community College, the Deaf Village and Cabra Parkside Community Sports Centre. The Abbey Theatre will also link with artists and the neighbourhood to create stories of identity, song and sport that grow from the pop-up museums.

- **The National Neighbourhood: It takes a Village**

What is it that creates a sense of neighbourhood in the place you live? Partnering with the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin City Council is looking at how a village is made. Artists such as Seoidín O'Sullivan and architect Roísín Byrne are partnered with Belmayne Youth Group and former Communiversity students in Coolock, who will share their experiences and consider alternative community hubs in their neighbourhood. Men's Sheds groups from Ayrfield, Artane, Priorswood and Donaghmede, Raheny, Age Friendly Group and St Benedict's Photographic Group, will work across the generations to support the residents across the area in new neighbourhood initiatives.

- **The National Neighbourhood: Around the Table**

Dublin City Council will connect communities old and new across Dublin's historic central area with artists of different disciplines and the National Library of Ireland to explore the Library's collection. Themes of mothering, belonging, words and work will be shared through mapping the story, role and journey of food in the city, from the docks, to the markets and from the streets, to the table. Artists Jennie Moran, Jeanette Lowe and Donal Fallon will work together with Dublin Adult Learning Centre, Mountjoy Square; Dublin Dockworker's Preservation Society, East Wall; Just ASK Afterschool Klub; Smithfield and Stoneybatter People's History Project; and The Snug Women's Group, Green Street.

- **The National Neighbourhood: (y)our Story**

Did you know that there are 185 languages spoken in Dublin by 182 nationalities? Dublin City Council is working with artists and communities in Ballyfermot, Drimnagh and South Circular Road on the theme of storytelling. The projects work on telling, sharing and co-creating 'our' story, with support and inspiration from the collection and programmes of the National Concert Hall and the Chester Beatty Library. Stephen James Smith will engage communities from theatre and Traveller

backgrounds through spoken word and poetry; the musician Sam Kavanagh will sing with 10-14 year olds of Irish and Filipino heritage at the Bosco Youth Centre. They will compose and perform a new song. Two women's groups from the South Circular Road - the Islamic Foundation Amal Group and the newly formed Local Women's Knitting and Craft Group - are working with visual artist Helen Barry, videographer Hanan Dirya and story teller Xanthe Gresham.

- **The National Neighbourhood: Light Waves**

A bus trip will take us on a journey of discovery through local neighbourhoods. Dublin City Council is working with CoisCéim Dance Theatre, Dublin City Gallery, The Hugh Lane and the National Gallery of Ireland with communities from Irishtown, Ringsend, Sandymount and Pearse Street. Together, the partners will work on exploration, connection and disconnection with neighbouring Dublin villages and each other. A specially commissioned Number 1 bus will connect these neighbourhoods to the Hugh Lane Gallery and the National Gallery, as well as to the sea, the river and the canal, and offers opportunities for participation along the route. Riccy's Youth Café; Sandymount Dodder Sea Scouts; Sandymount Tidy Towns; Spellman Centre and Andrew's Resource Centre along with visual artist James Ó hAodha will also work with some of these communities on a project that explores maritime signalling systems.

- About Dublin's Culture Connects

The Dublin's Culture Connects programme is made up of four pillars: Dublin's Culture Connects: The National Neighbourhood; a new EU Funding Unit; support and training for cultural and community groups in the area of fundraising, the Fundraising Fellowship partnership with Business to Arts; and a new cultural audit and mapping project as part of the recently adopted Dublin City Development Plan.

www.dublincultureconnects.ie

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