

Library Department –2024 Update

Launch of the Library Development Plan 2024-2029: Below is an overview of our actions in implementing the plan.

In the area of libraries providing a democratic space, Balbriggan library was awarded the title of Library of Sanctuary showing that all Fingal libraries are an open place for all. We enhanced our collections with new titles, added Kanopy a cultural and documentary streaming service along with the continued digitalization of our local history records.

In 2024, we began the process of introducing My Open Library technology into the newly refurbished & extended Skerries Library, which will commence operation in the months following the reopening of the library in Q2 2025. Donabate library will be relocating to Ballisk House during 2025 & the new library will see My Open Library operating in this new location. Blanchardstown & Malahide Library will see enabling works begin early in 2025 & both libraries will operate with extended opening hours through My Open Library later in 2025. Our MOL library Baldoyle is closed for renovation & improvement works currently & will reopen in Q3 2025.

Many actions have been covered in our library programming of events. An overview below.

Library programming and events.

The programming team in libraries were responsible for the roll out of an extensive calendar of events, workshops and talks across all ten library branches and at external events such as festivals and exhibitions. Over 55,000 people attended talks, workshops, and exhibitions in Fingal libraries in 2024.

We programme across the following areas: Skills for life including literacy. This includes financial, digital, and physical literacy.

- Children's and school events which include class visits and workshops by some of the best authors and illustrators working in Ireland at present.
- Age friendly events such as chair yoga and arts and crafts
- STEM including Lego building, engineering workshops and maths.
- Healthy Ireland events including talks on nutrition, menopause, anxiety, and mindfulness.
- Europe Direct events
- Events as Gaeilge for adults and children

The programming team also managed the following larger scale events.

- The Magic of Stories children's; literature event in Sword's castle which attracted over 2100 people this year September 2024
- The Festival of History in the new Carnegie library. A one-day event with concurrent events across the branch network October 2024
- The Write-time festival a celebration of the written word. This was a new 2-day event in the new Carnegie library in November 2024

Fingal libraries also attended at the following off-site events:

- The opening of Meakstown community centre
- Flavours of Fingal
- TY expo at the Helix
- Vintage Picnic

This year we also:

- Launched the Fingal Book Bike which was funded as part of the CE innovation fund.
- Launched two new story trails in St Catherines and Santry Demesne
- Welcomed the Lithuanian ambassador to Malahide library.
- Welcomed the Japanese ambassador to Blanchardstown.
- Worked with Fingal Community College and author Chris Judge to create a mural and graphic novel for the SCQ.

Coordination the implementation of Creative Ireland programme

84 Creative Ireland initiatives took place across the county in 2024, attended by almost **75,000** people.

Projects across various art forms, including all demographics with the inclusion of hard-to-reach and marginalised communities. Strong collaboration with other Council departments. These included:

- Festival in a Van - *Sounds like Summer*
- Tour of Fingal
- Brigid in Balbriggan
- The Magic of Stories Fingal Festival of Children's Literature
- Vintage Picnic
- Sustainable Art and Fashion workshops across communities including with Prosper Fingal, Forget Me Not Café, residential care homes, a COPD support group and Senior Citizen groups.

Community Grants awarded through an Open Call:

- Umoja - Let's Unite
- Helium Arts in Baleskin Reception Centre/Artist in residence in Connolly Hospital
- Song Tales sa Speir
- Weaving the threads of heritage
- Garden Party Crafternoons in The Séamus Ennis Arts Centre
- Swords Youth Choir Summer Camp

Cruinniú na nÓg Programme:

- Voice of the Child consultation
- Library programme across the County
- Cruinniú Ambassador appointed - Christian Campbell Age 13
- Orchestral Odyssey - Arts Office
- Garageland Galaxy- flagship live youth music festival in Millennium Park

Shared Island

- “Sharing songs-unforgettable voices” with the Forget Me Nots choir, Baldoyle and This Is Me choir, Larne. Cross-border musical recitals. Visit to Baldoyle 23rd October Project to continue in 2025

Total funding of €321,751.87 Core funding - **€186,394.05** Cruinniú na nÓg - **€84,157.82** **€26,200** in additional funding awarded **€25,000** in Shared Island funding