

**COMHAIRLE CONTAE FHINE GALL
FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL**

Arts, Culture, Heritage and Community Strategic Policy Committee

Wednesday 27th September 2023

Item No. 6

Literary Festival for Fingal - Councillor J. Hopkins - AI088919

Motion:

“That the Chief Executive make provisions for an Annual Arts and Literary Festival in Fingal, the goal would be to bring writers, artists and musicians to the next stage of their emerging development and share with a wider audience.”

Report:

As well as a full programme of events in our branch libraries which uses the skills of author, illustrators, musicians and other arts practitioners, Fingal Libraries have also developed a number of festivals. These includes the Children’s Literature Festival which comprises a full day of events in Swords castle (9th September 2023) and a school's programme which brought authors and illustrators to schools across Fingal. The Writetime Festival is held across the Fingal library network in September each year. In 2023, fifteen events will be held, with Fingal authors taking part.

January 2023 saw the expansion into Fingal of TradFest, Ireland’s largest traditional and folk music festival which celebrates extraordinary live Irish music and culture. This was followed by the inaugural Unison Festival, Fingal’s newest and most vibrant summer music festival, which took place over 2 days in July at Bremore Castle in Balbriggan and at Millennium Park in Blanchardstown.

Fingal Arts Office partners annually with the Irish Writers Centre to provide professional development opportunities to support Fingal writers through the National Mentoring Programme. The mentorship awards ensure an investment in the long-term literary reputation of Fingal. Four awards were offered to Fingal writers in 2023.

Professional artists are also supported in the development of their practice through 'Fingal Artists' Support Scheme.' This strand of funding allows professional artists to avail of an award up to €5,000 towards travel/professional development opportunities, a residency or towards the development of work. 148 professional Fingal artists were awarded in 2023.

In addition to the above, the Council continues to offer financial support and advice to individuals and groups, who wish to organise quality literary and arts events in Fingal, such as the recent Fingal Poetry Festival.

Source of Reply:

Sarah O'Neill, County Arts Officer

Lilian Whelan, Senior Executive Librarian