

REIMAGINING THE PAST FOR THE FUTURE

LOCAL AUTHORITY MUSEUMS' NETWORK STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2026



LOCAL
AUTHORITY
MUSEUMS'
NETWORK



12 LOCAL AUTHORITY MUSEUMS



61

FULL TIME STAFF

22

PART TIME STAFF

2 SHARED STAFF
4 CONTRACT STAFF



87+

VOLUNTEERS

FOREWORD

In the early 1990s, the Local Authority Museums' Network (LAMN) was established as the Local Authority Curators Group to promote cooperation between Local Authority Museums across Ireland. Our museums not only play an important role in the preservation of the material culture of our counties, but these diverse collections are used to promote social inclusion and tourism. In addition, they provide a valuable educational resource for our communities.

At present, our twelve Local Authority Museums are located from Donegal to Cork. Most museums are quite young; more than half of these institutions did not exist 30 years ago. There is however still a number of counties without a Local Authority Museum. Furthermore, a lack of uniform structures and resources has hindered the development of Local Authority Museums across Ireland.

The Heritage Council's Museum Standards Programme for Ireland (MSPI) is a voluntary programme which has been transformative for the museum sector. It has raised our standards, introduced best practice and given museums a voice within the wider cultural sector. All Local Authority Museums have achieved either Interim or Full Accreditation and now have a framework of standards and policies that are embedded in their operations. Our network is on an upward trajectory and this Strategic Plan acknowledges that there is strength in numbers and that the challenges that face us are also opportunities.

While preparing our 2022 – 2026 strategy, Local Authority Museums were profoundly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. We faced significant challenges, maintaining our collections while staff worked remotely, pivoting our service delivery to an online and hybrid system, sustaining rising costs and retaining our pre COVID-19 visitor numbers. On reflection, I believe these challenges have made our network stronger and more resilient in a changing and diverse society. Museums and cultural institutions provided support, creativity and much needed enjoyment through creative programming and the use of new technologies. Collectively, we emerged as strong and decisive leaders within our field of expertise. It's imperative that we continue to build on our increased profile. This strategic plan will give the network a focus for rebuilding and expanding our diverse audiences and communities, advocating for and supporting our growing networks and highlighting our collections and histories across the island. We have moved from survival mode to a sustained recovery. Ultimately, we will use this experience to build on our successes.

In conclusion, this plan would not have been possible without the dedication, focus and many virtual meetings of network curators. I would like to thank my colleagues for making this plan possible. I hope that, during the lifetime of this plan, the Local Authority Museums' Network will strive for resilience, sustainability and excellence.

Marie McMahon,
Chairperson,
Local Authority Museums' Network

INTRODUCTION

Who We Are

We are the Local Authority Museums Network (LAMN) and we represent 12 Local Authority Museums.

The LAMN comprises

- Carlow County Museum
- Cavan County Museum
- Clare Museum
- Cork Public Museum
- County Museum, Dundalk
- Donegal County Museum
- Galway City Museum
- Kerry County Museum
- Limerick Museum
- Monaghan County Museum
- Tipperary Museum of Hidden History
- Waterford Museum of Treasures

The members of the LAMN are designated museums under Section 19 of the National Monuments Acts 2004 and Section 68 (2) of the National Cultural Institutions Act, 1997. Under this legislation each Museum is legally entitled to retain archaeological objects on behalf of the State.

What We Do

Local Authorities throughout Ireland play a vital and proactive role in promoting and preserving culture and heritage, adding significantly to the quality of life of their communities. LAMN work in partnership with services across the wider local authorities, as well as with other organisations in their respective regions, with government departments and, of course, with communities, amplifying and contributing to the development of sustainable cultural and economic activity in our local areas.

Our Collections

The LAMN rich collections include some of the most inspiring and unique examples of Ireland's archaeological, historical, social, industrial and cultural heritage, all of which can be experienced in a diversity of ways. The wide and imaginative range of exhibitions and events provided by local authority museums locally and nationwide demonstrates how local museums can create social cohesion in their communities. As a group of professional organisations, one of the unique strengths of the LAMN is the ability to continually use their collections to pioneer new and imaginative programmes for engaging with communities of all ages and all backgrounds.

Standards

The members of the LAMN strive to achieve best standards across all areas of museum work. The Museum Standards Programme of Ireland operates under the auspices of the Heritage Council and sets out to raise standards of care across Irish museums and galleries. The programme aims to benchmark and promote professional standards in collections care and to recognise the achievement of those standards within the Irish museum sector. The Programme is fully supported by the LAMN and its members have variously achieved Maintenance of Accreditation, Full Accreditation and Interim Accreditation.

Who We Serve

Collectively the LAMN serve a population of over 2 million people, attracting over half a million direct visitors each year with a far - reaching impact in schools, communities and voluntary organisations across the country. They also play a significant role as engines of local and regional tourism and support the cultural identity and image of Ireland to overseas visitors. LAMN demonstrate resilience, creativity and imagination which firmly roots them and their work at the heart of local communities throughout Ireland.

museum
National Museum of Ireland
Ard-Mhúsaem na hÉireann



LAMN STRATEGY 2022 - 2026

Building on the success of our recent strategy 'Preserving Our Past, Shaping Our Future', the Local Authority Museums' Network is now setting out its strategy for the next five years. The Strategy will build on its achievements to date and focus on ways in which it can continue to strengthen and develop its role, in a sustainable way, for the enjoyment and engagement of communities into the future.

Policy Context

The LAMN Strategic Development Plan has evolved in the context of key policy areas such as Heritage 2030, Culture 2025 and Project Ireland 2040. Our goals and actions while specific to LAMN are aligned to these policy contexts to highlight how LAMN is central to the successful delivery and implementation of policy at the regional and local level.

The Covid 19 pandemic presented the LAMN members with unique challenges both in terms of collections management and interaction with our users. With our services closed to the public and our colleagues working remotely, the sector embraced new technologies and new ways of working to ensure that we continued to provide services to our communities while also ensuring the safety and care of the collections we hold in trust. We have taken the learning from this experience and reflected it in the strategic focus of the plan

Our plan is also aligned to the principles of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals which seeks to position the role of museums more centrally as part of the solution to the global challenges and opportunities linked in particular to cultural diversity and climate change.

In the implementation of the strategy we will collectively strive to meet the obligations of the Public Sector Duty (IHREC Act 2014) and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. We will also endeavour to support the work of each of our Local Authorities on the implementation of relevant strategies including the Climate Change Local Adaptation and Mitigation Strategies, the Migrant Integration Strategies and the Age Friendly Strategies.

Key Partners

Through this strategy, the LAMN will play an even greater role in the delivery of local, national and cross-border programmes working in partnership with a wide range of organisations including: Local Authorities, the County and City Management Association (CCMA), relevant government departments, the Heritage Council, National Museum of Ireland (NMI), Irish Museums Association (IMA), National Museums Northern Ireland (NMNI), Northern Ireland Museums Council (NIMC), International Council of Museums (ICOM), Local Government Management Agency (LGMA), Irish Museums Trust (IMT), Office of Public Works (OPW), Fáilte Ireland, Creative Ireland and the County Development Partnerships. We will also continue to work actively with the network of Heritage Officers, Archivists, Biodiversity Officers, Conservation Officers, County Librarians, Arts Officers, Tourism Officers and County Archaeologists.



**LOCAL
AUTHORITY
MUSEUMS'
NETWORK**



MISSION

We are a national network of Local Authority Museum professionals that advocate for the care, interpretation and promotion of our collections and aim to engage with our diverse communities through our cultural and material heritage.



VISION

To be a national advocacy organisation, working in partnership with local, regional and national organisations and agencies to develop the services we offer to the communities we serve.

VALUES

Local Pride and Identity

The LAMN places a high priority on promoting local pride and identity. Our regions have a rich mix of religious, social and community identities, which together form a complex mosaic of heritage and culture.

Social Inclusiveness

The LAMN are committed to working with individuals, groups and organisations to give those that are socially excluded the opportunity to interact with our services on a local, regional and national scale.

Life-Long Learning

The cornerstone of our member's services is the provision of life-long learning opportunities, building understanding and inspiring our communities through our collections. We believe this information empowers our community to become strong and successful.

Creating Better Access

A core aspect of our mission is the promotion of the historical richness and cultural diversity of the regions we serve to as wide an audience as possible. In all aspects of the LAMN's work, the goal of providing both physical and intellectual access to all our services is paramount.

Partnership

A key part of the LAMN's future success in providing a quality service to our communities will be in building on existing professional relationships with other organisations and creating new ones.

Professionalism

All LAMN members strive to achieve a high level of professionalism in all interactions with the users and potential users of our services.

Openness

The LAMN places a high value on an open consultative relationship with all our partners. As this plan demonstrates we intend to grow our organisation throughout the country. Valuing the ideas and contributions of the organisations and agencies we work with is integral to ensuring the success of our strategy.

STRATEGIC AIMS

1

STRATEGIC
AIM

Build our Relationships, Develop our Communities

ACTIONS

- Promote the LAMN Strategy within each relevant Local Authority
- Work with the Heritage Council to deliver on cultural heritage initiatives
- Develop a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Museum of Ireland
- Support and promote IMA advocacy initiatives

2

STRATEGIC
AIM

Celebrate the Stories of Ireland through Our Collections

ACTIONS

- Organise collaborative events with the relevant Local Authority services including Archives, Heritage and Arts.
- Develop a National Local History Initiative
- Work with ICOM to maximise the impact of International Museums Day in Ireland
- Hold joint event(s) with ICOM focussed on regional museums across the globe

3

STRATEGIC
AIM

Promote our Place in Society

ACTIONS

- Develop a website for the LAMN
- Examine 'Playful Museums' initiative in collaboration with the Northern Ireland Museums Council
- Collaborate with the Junior Cycle for Teachers team to support the delivery of the curriculum
- Collaborate with NIMC and the NMI on a Great Famine Project

Strategy Review date: 2024

OUR MUSEUM NETWORK



Carlow County Museum

Carlow County Museum is based in Carlow Town and is part of a complex that houses the Tourist Office and the County Library in the town's former Presentation Convent.

Among the items on display over four galleries is the famous 19th century hand carved pulpit from Carlow Cathedral; the remains of the last cigarette smoked by Kevin Barry, who was executed in 1920 at the age of 18 for his role in the War of Independence and the 16th century effigy of Robert Hartpole, Constable of Carlow Castle. Carlow County Museum, founded in 1973, is operated by Carlow County Council in partnership with the Carlow Historical & Archaeological Society.



Cavan County Museum

Cavan County Museum is housed within a magnificent 19th century building which was initially designed as a convent.

Cavan County Museum is housed within a magnificent 19th century building which was initially designed as a convent. The Museum is home to a varied assortment of material culture originating in County Cavan and surrounding districts and has achieved both Full and Maintenance of Accreditation under the Museum Standards Programme for Ireland. Exhibits include the 1,000-year-old Lough Errill log boat and a selection of medieval Sheela-na-Gigs. Galleries trace the story of the Gaelic Athletic Association in Cavan, the County's folklife and heritage, as well as The Percy French Gallery, and Farnham collections. Cavan County Museum is well known for its award-winning WWI Trench Experience, the largest outdoor replica of a trench open to the public in Ireland and the UK.





Clare Museum

Clare Museum was established in Ennis in the year 2000 in a former Sisters of Mercy convent and tells the history of County Clare over a period of 6,000 years.

The Museum features a permanent exhibition called the Riches of Clare which includes a large collection of objects on loan from the National Museum of Ireland. Included in the exhibition are excavated finds from sites in the Burren, including Poul nabrone Portal Tomb, Cahercomman Stone Fort and Knocknalappa Crannóg site. The Museum is also the home of the Clare Embroidery School collection. The Museum has an online presence and maintains a website to provide access to its collection, carrying photos of hundreds of objects from the collection.



COMHAIRLE CONTAE AN CHLÁIR
CLARE COUNTY COUNCIL



Cork Public Museum

Cork Public Museum was established in 1945, making it one of Ireland's oldest continuous Local Authority Museums'.

The museum and its collections are housed in a mid-19th century house and new extension that is situated in Fitzgerald Park, a short distance from the city centre. The museum continues to serve the people of Cork over seventy-five years after it first opened its doors. The museum's collections comprise of over 50,000 objects covering a wide range of subjects and topics from 7,000 years of Cork's material heritage from prehistory to modern times. The museum promotes understanding of Cork's past by collecting, preserving, and displaying our collections and making them publicly accessible in engaging and enjoyable ways for everyone.



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí
Cork County Council



County Museum, Dundalk

The County Museum, Dundalk is a designated Museum run and operated by Louth County Council. Opened in 1994, it charts the industrial, cultural and archaeological history of County Louth.

As a Designated Museum it is one of a select group of Museums' in the country which can accept and borrow items from the National Collection. The Museum boasts a collection of over 60,000 items ranging from favourites such as the Heinkel motorcar and tobacco Indian to everyday items such as flint arrowheads and domestic materials. The Museum recalls a wide range of themes including the archaeology, history and geology of County Louth as well the area's industrial, social and cultural life covering a period of 5,000 years.



Comhairle Contae Lú
Louth County Council



Donegal County Museum

Donegal County Museum is based in part of the original Letterkenny Workhouse, built in 1846.

The Museum cares for a comprehensive collection of artefacts which tell the story of the history and heritage of the County. In the first floor gallery the Museums' explores the history of Donegal from the Stone Age to the Twentieth Century. Through a series of temporary exhibitions, held each year in the ground floor gallery, the Museum examines a variety of topics related to the history of Donegal. The Museum also works with local groups and communities to organise a comprehensive programme of activities and events throughout the year both in the Museum and in venues throughout Donegal.



Comhairle Contae
Dhún na nGall
Donegal County Council



MÚSAEM CATHRACH NA GAILLIMHE
GALWAY CITY MUSEUM



Galway City Museum

Galway City Museum was founded in 1976 and was originally located in Comerford House beside the Spanish Arch.

The new Galway City Museum was officially opened in April 2007. The building was designed by the Office of Public Works and is a Galway City Council initiative to advance the cultural and heritage life of Galway City. The Museum is a spacious, modern building, situated in the heart of Galway city on the banks of the River Corrib and overlooking the famous Spanish Arch. It houses a variety of permanent and touring exhibitions representing Galway's rich archaeology, heritage and history.



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council



Kerry County Museum

Located in the Ashe Memorial Hall in the centre of Tralee, Kerry County Museum opened in 1991.

It comprises the Medieval Experience, which takes visitors through the sights, sounds and smells of the recreated town; the permanent gallery, which displays the archaeology and history of the county; and a large temporary exhibition space, which hosts major exhibitions. Our mission is to enable people to experience the culture and heritage of Co Kerry through collecting, caring, researching, interpreting and displaying the material history of our county for the enjoyment, education and benefit of all our users and visitors.



Comhairle Contae Chiarraí
Kerry County Council



Limerick Museum

Limerick Museum was established in 1907 and opened in 1916.

Its mission is to collect, preserve and display objects relating to the history and heritage of Limerick city and county. It has over 62,000 objects in its collection, some of which are on display and the rest can be viewed on the online catalogue. Since 2017, it has been located at the Old Franciscan Friary, Henry Street, Limerick City. The story of Limerick city and county is presented through its objects. Among the more unusual items are the 450-year old mummified Ireton's Cat and a 3 billion-year old fragment from the largest meteorite shower that ever fell in Ireland (which occurred in 1813).



Monaghan County Museum

Monaghan County Museum opened its doors to the public in 1974 becoming the first full time professionally staffed local authority museum in the country.

The museum's extensive collection covers the history of the county from the end of the last Ice Age to the modern day. In 2023 the Museum will move to its new home at the Peace Campus in Monaghan Town. This transformative new service will see the Museum grow as part of a large multiuse site. The collection will be at the heart of the new Museum's central goal to build better relations at local level using objects and stories as a catalyst to explore a shared history and a shared experience in the border region.





Tipperary Museum of Hidden History

Tipperary Museum's collection was first founded in the 1940's and was the first purpose-built Local Authority County Museum in Ireland.

This is a state-of-the-art visitor experience in Clonmel, Co. Tipperary. The Museum brings Tipperary's rich hidden history to life through characters and stories. Visitors can explore tales of two worlds, from rural life in 19th century Tipperary to the Big Houses on the Suir Valley. They can learn about one man and his boat and meet a host of heroes from the world of sports and entertainment. The Museum is dedicated to education and lifelong learning through engaging in-house and visiting exhibitions, workshops, schools and community projects.



Comhairle Contae Thiobraid Árann
Tipperary County Council



Waterford Treasures Museums

Reginald's Tower

Treasures of Viking Waterford

Reginald's Tower houses a permanent exhibition on the treasures of Viking Waterford, including the 9th century sword and weapons from a Viking warrior's grave and the magnificent Waterford Kite Brooch, the finest example of gold and silver secular metalwork in Ireland. The tower is managed by the Office of Public Works.



Comhairle Cathrach
& Contae Phort Láirge
Waterford City
& County Council

Medieval Museum

Treasures of Medieval Waterford

Treasures of Medieval Waterford incorporates the 13th century Choristers' Hall and a 15th century wine vault and takes visitors back to the great age of faith and chivalry. The museum galleries feature some of the great treasures of medieval Ireland and Europe, including the unique 4 metre long illuminated Great Charter Roll of Waterford (1373) as well as the sumptuous cloth-of-gold vestments (1460).

Bishop's Palace

Treasures of Georgian Waterford

The Bishop's Palace in Cathedral Square was conserved in 2010/11 and opened as a museum in June 2011, displaying the treasures of Georgian and Victorian Waterford. The ground and first floors are laid out as an historic house with displays of 18th century glass, silver, furniture and paintings. The top floor continues the story of Waterford up to 1970 ending with the Hucklebuck shoes.

Irish Museum of Time

Ireland's National Horological Museum

The Irish Museum of Time is located on Greyfriars Street in the heart of Waterford's Viking Triangle. The Museum is based in a refurbished gothic-style church and features the oldest Irish-made grandfather clocks, table clocks and watches in the world.



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Department of Housing,
Local Government and Heritage



An Roinn Turasóireachta, Cultúir,
Ealaíon, Gaeltachta, Spóirt agus Meán
Department of Tourism, Culture,
Arts, Gaelacht, Sport and Media



300,000+

COLLECTIONS



600,000+

PRE COVID VISITORS



2,000,000

SERVE A COMMUNITY



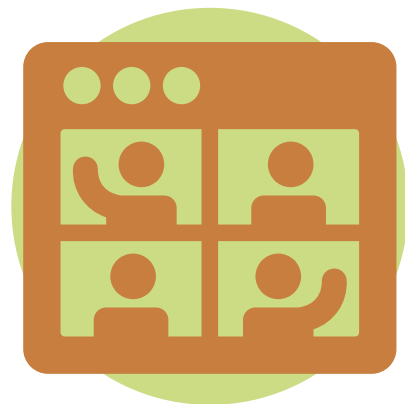
€6.5million

ANNUAL BUDGETS



600+

**PROGRAMME
EVENTS**



700,000+

**ONLINE DIGITAL
ENGAGEMENT**

