



# Comhairle Cathrach & Contae Phort Láirge Waterford City & County Council

## Waterford Cultural Quarter

### Metropolitan Arts and Culture Report November 2020

DO: GACH BALL DE CHEANTAR CATHRACH PHORT LÁIRGE  
TO: EACH MEMBER OF THE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT OF WATERFORD

#### Infrastructure

Tender documents are in preparation for renovations to **16-18 Barker Place**, O'Connell Street. WCCC Housing Dept has populated the apartments on the upper levels with tenants, and WCQ is now preparing the ground floor unit for use as a flexible community space and adult education space with large sliding doors onto the street allowing for entertainment, music and cultural offerings on to the street. The space will have a small office, kitchen, storage and movable interior walls to allow for maximum flexibility in day and evening times.

WCQ welcomes Rogue Gallery and Studios and The Walls Project to WCQ. It is envisaged that both arts groups will take up permanent residence in **Thomas Court, Thomas Street** once renovations are complete in 2021. Gallery, office space & storage will be first priorities to assist the tenants to make full use of the ground floor of the building.

#### Animation

**CreateFest**, Waterford's festival of creativity took place from **November 5<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup>**. The festival had been planned to take place in O'Connell Street, however with Level 5 Covid 19 restrictions in place, the decision was taken to move the festival to online platforms. Six panel discussions took place on Facebook and Vimeo concentrating on the role of the creative industries, support for emerging and professional artists and the creative economy. Participants included Brian Kennedy, singer, as well as social media influencers, designers, visual artists, photographers, musicians, theatre practitioners and others. All content is online and available for viewing for those who couldn't attend the live sessions.

WCQ plans to work with **Winterval 2020** to bring animation and vibrancy to the O'Connell Street area. The window of 16/18 Barker Place will be used as a art installation, and WCQ animation and flags will be hung along O'Connell Street.

**Pedestrianisation** of O'Connell Street from Thomas Hill to Gladstone Street took place over a number of weekends to assist in the economic recovery of the businesses in the WCQ area. Due to Level 5 Covid 19 restrictions the space could not be fully utilised in the manner hoped, however this "pilot" phase of pedestrianisation led to support for hospitality providers over those weekend. It is hoped to continue the pedestrianisation once restrictions are eased and events and entertainment can take place on the city streets.

### **WCQ Strategic Plan**

The WCQ Steering Committee, made up of representatives of Waterford City and County Council, arts and community organisations, business and local residents are currently in the process of reviewing the 2018-2020 Cultural Quarter Plan and preparing the 2021-2025 WCQ Strategic Plan. A number of sub-committees have been set up to facilitate discussion about the future development of the area. It is planned that a draft document will be presented to the Housing, Community, Culture, Fire, Sport & Recreation SPC in early 2021.