

# FERNS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

## *Community Projects Update*

### **The Creative Camino Concert and Launch Event – to be held at St. Edan's Cathedral on May 1st at 7.30pm followed by the Event Launch at 9pm.**

The concert will pay tribute to the music and song of Turlough O'Carolan, featuring The Allabair Trio, with Melanie O'Reilly on vocals, David Creevy on guitar and Brewen Favreau on uilleann pipes/low whistle. The concert will also include a new song composition by Melanie inspired by the life of St. Maedoc (St. Aidan). The Trio will be joined by local choir the 'Chord On Blues' for two songs. Funding for the concert and composition was sourced by Ferns Heritage Project through the Ancient Connections programme.

The concert will be followed by the Launch Event which will be a celebratory send off of pilgrims on the Creative Camino – an experimental and creative pilgrimage from Ferns to St. Davids in Wales. The Event Launch will feature medieval costumed locals alongside Lantern Presents who will provide an entertaining spectacle as a send off. Both concert and launch event are part of the Creative Camino

festival to be held on the Saturday and Sunday of the May bank holiday weekend.

To register for free tickets for the concert, go to [www.eventbrite.ie](http://www.eventbrite.ie) using #FernsHeritageProject or #TheAllabairTrio and County Wexford for location; or visit [www.fernsvillage.ie](http://www.fernsvillage.ie)

See centre pages for more information on fringe events. For more information on all events, visit [www.fernsvillage.ie](http://www.fernsvillage.ie)

### **Medieval Ferns Experience**

Wexford's newest visitor attraction is located in the refurbished front room of Ferns Community Centre and the area under the balcony in the main hall. The Medieval Ferns Experience tells the story of Ferns in the medieval period in an interactive and entertaining way. It showcases the Gaelic Kingship story, a story of 'power, intrigue and 'invasion' in an innovative way. The top 3 favourite items in the Experience are the Inauguration Stone Challenge, the short film narrated by Anne Doyle and the virtual reality headsets featuring key medieval sites in Ferns – the Ancient Capital of Leinster.

The Experience is being run as a social enterprise, (a not-for-profit enterprise) on a voluntary basis with the support of community employment workers. Feedback has been extremely positive, with many locals expressing surprise at how well the story is told - impressed with the content and surprised at some of the things they have learned on their visit.

The aim of the Medieval Ferns Experience is to showcase our significant medieval heritage and attract tourists all year round. We thank all those who have helped make this a reality especially those who have donated, sponsored or volunteered in any way.

A new entrance door was created into the 'Experience' and currently the finishing touches are being put to a new ramp to facilitate ease of access for people with mobility aids.



Over the coming weeks we'll have new signage going up, as well as fliers and other promotional material. The recently launch new logo for the Medieval Ferns Experience is getting a great response - showing 5 different elements of our medieval heritage.



Please help us spread the word of this new attraction and to those who haven't visited yet, we'll hold

another open week in the last week of May (24th – 28th), when locals can visit free of charge. The Medieval Ferns Experience is open from Wednesday to Saturday from 11am to 5pm with last entry at 4pm. From May 1st, it will be open from Tuesday to Saturday. Entry fees: €6, Seniors & Students €5 and children under 12 free. For more information – phone: 089-4946972 or email: [medievalfernsexperience@fernsvillage.ie](mailto:medievalfernsexperience@fernsvillage.ie)



Follow the Medieval Ferns Experience on Facebook, Instagram & Twitter and on web: [www.fernsvillage.ie/medieval-ferns-experience](http://www.fernsvillage.ie/medieval-ferns-experience)

## Christmas Lights

Because of continuing restrictions on indoor events, we held the Family Quiz online again last November. The funds raised at this annual quiz go towards putting up and maintaining the Christmas lights. This year we raised: €2,445 and received a grant of €1,500 from Wexford County Council. Because of the need to meet health and

safety requirements we need to pay for qualified people to put up and maintain the lights – the cost last year was €3,821. Thanks to those who attended and to our supporters and sponsors.

Depending on funds raised, we plan to add to our Christmas lights each year. Next year we will look at The Square area and see what can be added. We look forward to going back to in-person quizzes in future – they're a much more enjoyable experience for all involved.

To mark the switching on of the lights in December, we held a ceremony which was also curtailed by COVID restrictions. Despite this, it really was a very enjoyable event and was transmitted live on the FernsVillage Facebook page. What made it so special was Helena Dunbar and her talented students who provided music entertainment at the ceremony.

## Playground

Due to issues of maintenance and damage done, the new medieval themed playground was closed for a number of months. The cost of refurbishment and repairs was €5,539. The result of the work done has transformed the playground. Because of its popularity, we decided to go the extra mile and put in grass mats which means, there will be no mucky surface issues. We thank Wexford County Council for their contribution of €3,023. Thanks also to the Community Employment Scheme and RSS workers for their help. So much work done throughout Ferns would not be achieved by voluntary groups without the assistance of these schemes. Special thanks goes to Andrew Kelly for diligently working on the playground – all done on a voluntary basis. Where would we be without volunteers!



## Ferns Community Centre Update

The Ferns Community Centre Committee applied and were successful in getting LEADER funding for upgrading works on the Centre. Work is to start in the coming week on the toilet areas, replacement of an emergency door and replastering of an external wall at the back of the Centre. These works are part of a bigger plan to upgrade facilities in the Centre – future works will be dependent on funding resources.



Ferns Heritage Project and Ancient Connections present

# Creative Camino concert and launch event

St. Edan's Cathedral, Ferns  
Sunday 1 May 2022, 7.30pm



## 7.30pm Concert

### Turlough O Carolan in Music & Song

Performed by The Allabair Trio.  
**FREE event, booking required.**

Book early as seating is limited.  
To book, visit [fernsvillage.ie](http://fernsvillage.ie) or  
[ancientconnections.org](http://ancientconnections.org) or email  
[catherinemacpartlin@gmail.com](mailto:catherinemacpartlin@gmail.com)

## 9pm Launch Event

Performed by members of Ferns  
community and Lantern in the  
grounds of St. Edan's Cathedral.  
**Available to concert attendees**

## + fringe events

Tours, talks, art and music;  
see overleaf for full  
programme.

CEANGAL  
ARSA

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[ancientconnections.org](http://ancientconnections.org)   

Ferns Heritage Project

**Ferns Village**  
A COMMUNITY OF THE FUTURE



**MEDIEVAL  
FERNS  
EXPERIENCE**  
Ancient Capital Of Leinster

**LANTERN**

Arna mhaoiniú ag Ciste  
Forbraíochta Réigiúnaí na hEorpa  
tríd an gClár um Chomhar na  
Breataine Bige na hÉireann.

Ariennir gan Gronfa Datblygu  
Rhanbarthol Ewrop trwy  
Raglen Gydweithredu  
Iwerddon Cymru.

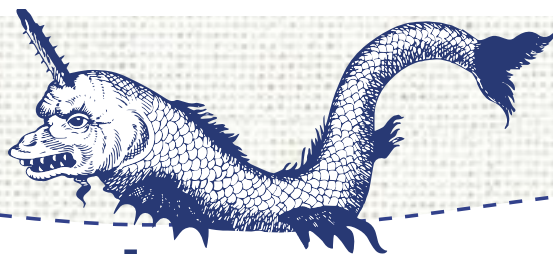
Funded by the European Regional  
Development Fund through the  
Ireland Wales Co-operation  
Programme.



Comhairle Contae  
Loch Garman  
Wexford County Council



**WEXFORD**  
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# Programme of events

May Bank Holiday weekend | 30 April – 1 May 1 2022 | Ferns, Co. Wexford

## Saturday 30 April

**9.30am** Mass in St. Aidan's Church, Ferns (History of Ferns Group).

**10am–5pm** 'History of St. Aidan Project' exhibition at Scoil Naomh Maodhog NS (History of Ferns Group).

**10am** Guided tour by History of Ferns Group of Clone Church, Father Murphy Centre, Boolavogue, Jameson's historic residence at Rockspring, Ferns. Collection by bus 10am from St. Aidan's Church carpark, Ferns.

**2.30–3.30pm** Talk on 'St. Aidan' by Christopher Power at Scoil Naomh Maodhog NS (History of Ferns Group).

**3.45pm** Mass Path Walk from Tombrack to Ferns Church to arrive for 6.15pm Mass (History of Ferns Group). Collection by bus to the start of the walk 3.45pm from St. Aidan's Church carpark, Ferns.

**7pm** 'Connection Over the Sea: a look at the connection points of cultural history of Wales and Brittany, with a stop in Ireland', presentation by Brewen Favreau at St. Mogue's Cottage (Ferns Heritage Project). Book on fernsvillage.ie

## Sunday 1 May

**10am–5pm** 'History of St. Aidan Project' exhibition at Scoil Naomh Maodhog NS (History of Ferns Group).

**11am** Tour of Historic Ferns led by Colm Morris (History of Ferns Group). Meet at Scoil Naomh Maodhog NS.

**2–4pm** Ui Cinnsealaigh History of Ferns House of Story Session, Camolin (History of Ferns Group). Collection by bus 2pm from St. Aidan's Church carpark, Ferns.

**4.30pm** Visit to Ballymore Historic Features, Camolin (History of Ferns Group). Please note, included on above bus tour. Bus returns to Ferns at 6pm.

**6pm** Artist's talk by Welsh internationally acclaimed artist Bedwyr Williams: 'Do the Little Things' and presentation on proposed new Public Art in Ferns. Scoil Naomh Maodhog National School (Contemporary Art Society & Ancient Connections).

**7.30pm** The Creative Camino Concert at St. Edan's Cathedral (Ferns Heritage Project). Book online: fernsvillage.ie or by email catherinemacpartlin@gmail.com

**9pm** The Creative Camino Launch at St. Edan's Cathedral (Lantern).

## All welcome!

To join in, please visit [ancientconnections.org](http://ancientconnections.org)

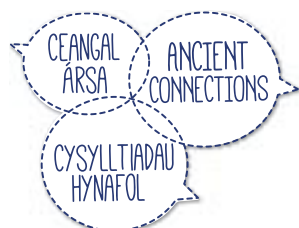
**Booking required for the Creative Camino Concert**

**Access to the Creative Camino Launch Event is restricted to attendees of the Concert**

**Booking required for the 'Connection Over the Sea' presentation**

**No booking required for History of Ferns Group events**

Please note: where cited, bus travel is free to all events, but you can also attend with your own transport.



[ancientconnections.org](http://ancientconnections.org)   

Ferns Heritage Project

Ferns Village



MEDIEVAL  
FERNS  
EXPERIENCE  
Ancient Capital of Leinster

LANTERN

Arna mhaoiniú ag Ciste Forbraíochta Réigiúnaí na hEorpa tríd an gClár um Chomhar na Breataine Bige na hÉireann.

Ariennir gan Gronfa Datblygu Rhanbarthol Ewrop trwy Raglen Gydweithredu Iwerddon Cymru.

Funded by the European Regional Development Fund through the Ireland Wales Co-operation Programme.

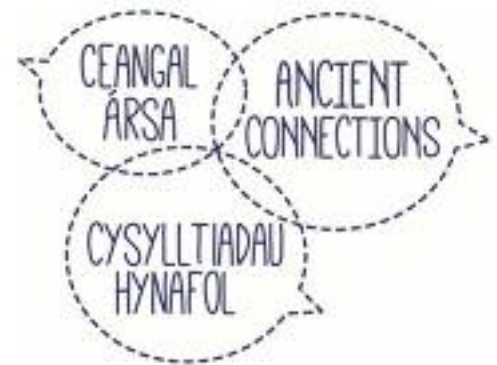


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County Council



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Wexford County Council (WCC) is running a

## FREE Social Enterprise & Enterprise Innovation Training Programme

as part of the *Ancient Connections* project. We are seeking local community groups, micro-businesses, entrepreneurs, Social Enterprises and individuals who are active in their communities to participate in this unique opportunity; so contact us and get involved!

The programme will provide structured training in capacity development and enterprise development to support local social enterprises and other tourism businesses, in a corridor stretching from Ferns to Enniscorthy and Gorey. The training may also appeal to groups who wish to become involved in the development of a proposed pilgrim trail, from Ferns (Co. Wexford) to St. Davids (Pembrokeshire), linking and reflecting the ancient connections between St. Aidan and St. David and their communities in southeast Ireland and Wales.

Areas to be explored will include models for effective Social Enterprise; Product & Service design and development; Marketing & Communication and Financial Planning & Resourcing for social enterprises and related tourism businesses. Participants will strengthen their strategic capability to achieve enhanced governance and effective financial planning for your community group; learn how to animate community talent and volunteerism; and how to bring your current vision to reality.... All within the remit of the *Ancient Connections* project to ensure long-term sustainability and flourishing of vital community enterprises in Wexford.

This free training will be run in modules over a 12-month period, offering flexibility for trainees or groups to undertake either the full course or selected modules to meet their needs.

**SLR Consulting**, will deliver the ***Social Enterprise Training and Enterprise Innovation Support Programme*** module of the *Ancient Connections* Programme, working with WCC.

To REGISTER or for more INFORMATION on this free training programme, please contact:

- **Deirdre Lewis, SLR Consulting** - Coordinator [dlewis@slrconsulting.com](mailto:dlewis@slrconsulting.com) / 087 653 6405
- **Eoghan Greene, WCC**— Project Officer, Rediscovering Ancient Connections—The Saints  
[Eoghan.Greene@wexfordcoco.ie](mailto:Eoghan.Greene@wexfordcoco.ie)

<https://ancientconnections.org>

Ancient Connections is an exciting heritage and arts programme that links communities across the Irish Sea, generating new works of art, community projects, events and activities inspired by stories that connect the two regions of north Pembrokeshire and north Wexford.





## Ferns Heritage Project

The Ferns Heritage Project (FHP) continues to develop and promote Ferns' significant medieval history. Archaeological digs held in recent years have revealed some fascinating insights into our medieval history, these include a horizontal wooden mill and underground boundary walls whose origins are still to be verified.

To mark St. Aidan's Feast Day in January the FHP held a Talk & Site Visit to the centre of the monastic site founded by St. Aidan in the early 7th century. The Talk and Site visit was the first in-person event held by the group since 2019. Barry Lacey gave a very informative talk on what archaeology has unearthed throughout the village of Ferns in recent years. He showed pictures of impressive boundary walls uncovered at last year's Irish Archaeological Field School community dig. The event was rounded off with a visit to St. Mogue's Well where Catherine MacPartlin talked about St. Aidan's miracles and the messages and meanings behind the miracles. All in all, a very entertaining and engaging event.



As an alternative to their annual Ferns Medieval Conference, the FHP is organising a concert as part of the Creative Camino Concert & Launch Event on May 1st. Funding for the concert and for medieval costumes was sourced under the Ancient Connections programme.

## Annual Golf Classic

Our Golf Classic for 2022 is planned for 8th July in Enniscorthy Golf Club and work has already started to make it as enjoyable and successful as last year's outing.

Last year's Golf Classic raised just over €6000 for the Ferns Community Development Association CLG. While we watch every penny, looking for as many grants as we can get, as well as getting a lot of voluntary support there are always ongoing costs to cover the range of new and ongoing projects.

Last year was a great success. Friday the 13th Aug 2021 didn't have any effect on a great day. The participants all enjoyed a wonderful day. The weather, the company, the golf and the 19th hole all added to a memorable day. We had 42 teams with the winning team of Gordon Peppard, Andrew Rynhart, Doreen Rynhart & Joan Dunbar scoring a magnificent 106 points. The presentation was held that evening outdoor in Dunbar's Corner Bar, a very enjoyable end to a wonderful day.

## Ferns Men's Shed

Things are starting to happen for the 'Ferns Men's Shed' following a slow start due to COVID19 restrictions. Over the past few weeks they have visited both the Ballycanew and Kilmuckridge Men's Sheds. The Ferns men were invited to visit so that they could learn from the experiences of the other groups, particularly about how to form a shed and to start to build a vision for their own shed. They had a great time sharing stories, laughing and asking questions.

The Mens' Shed has now been formed and a Committee agreed. They have secured a long term project premises and while the premises is being prepared they will be working out of the Community Centre. They are receiving support from the Ferns Community Development Association (FCDA), Wexford Local Development and Wexford County Council. They are asking the local community to get behind them to help them get started.

If you would like to join the group or offer support please contact John Kelly (Wexford Local Development - Community Development Officer) on 087-7940830.



## Smart Villages Survey

Four volunteers representing Ferns Community Development Association CLG, Ferns Tidy Towns, Ferns Community Centre and Ferns GAA completed an enlightening, informative and interactive 7-week Smart Villages training course in 2021/2022. The project is supported by Wexford Local Development (WLD).

The EU Action for Smart Villages initiative was launched by the European Commission in 2017. Smart Villages are communities in rural areas which build on and enhance the existing local strengths and opportunities through creative thinking and embracing innovation to create desirable places for rural people to live and work. Smart village projects take into account climate action and biodiversity and can be realised in areas such as transport, energy, governance, digital connectivity, health, local enterprise, remote working. In creating a Smart Village, community groups and individuals often overcome local challenges by exploring and implementing practical and tangible solutions.

The First Project is to carry out a community survey. This will give feedback from the community on what matters to them and help identify opportunities and challenges for the future of the village and greatly assist the Ferns Smart Villages Group and the community in drawing up a Smart Village Strategic Plan (SVSP). Meetings and focus groups will be held later in the year to ensure community inclusion in the final plan.

It is hoped that the survey will be launched on 10th May and closed on the 18th May. We hope that as many residents as possible will participate in the survey, to generate at least 500 responses.

## Ferns Community Mural Project

This is a participatory art project for youths from 12 to 18 years to be located on the back wall of the Community Centre. The project will celebrate local and county GAA achievements from 1956 to present and will also incorporate images of our local heritage. This is a unique project because it will not only be an art piece for all to enjoy but it will double up as a practice wall to hone the skills of the stars of the future.

Included in the project is the Public Wall Project where art boards will be placed around the Park giving an opportunity for people of all ages to express and show their artistic ability. The boards will be a temporary exhibition in the Park for the month after the mural is completed. The project is due to start in June – the precise date to be confirmed. Both projects are a great opportunity for local people to get involved and have ownership of an exciting new project. Funding was sourced by Ferns Community Development Association under the Ancient Connections programme and ongoing local fundraising projects.

## Community Alert

This is a government supported programme to help people living alone and to provide security in their homes and is available to those over 65. If you would like to avail or know of anyone who would like to avail of the service, please contact Colm Morris on 086-3866582.

## Job Fair in Ferns

In collaboration with Wexford Local Development and Waterford & Wexford Education & Training Board, Ferns Community Development Association will facilitate a Jobs Fair in Ferns Community Centre on May 20th. It is expected that there may be approximately 67 apprenticeship opportunities with a variety of employers and organisations having stalls at the Fair to give out information on available apprenticeships and jobs. Further information will be available on [fernsvillage.ie](http://fernsvillage.ie) closer to the date of the Jobs Fair.

## New gym opens at Ferns St. Aidans GAA Club

Ferns St. Aidans GAA Club has recently opened its new community gym, and is currently accepting memberships. You do not need to be a member of the GAA club in order to join. The gym features a full range of cardiovascular equipment and weights, and members have access each day from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. via a fingerprint recognition system. Standard membership rates are €150 per year for students and OAPs, €200 for a single person, and €300 for a couple. Memberships can be paid up front or in monthly instalments.

The gym is open to everybody aged 18 years and over, and new members must take part in an induction session before using gym equipment. Enquiries can be directed to Niall Byrne at (087) 9635667, Ian Byrne at (087) 6617667, or Paddy Rossiter at (087) 9385313.

The gym has been made possible through Sports Capital Grants and intensive fundraising by the club itself, and the club sends sincere thanks to all who supported these efforts in any way. For more details and a video tour of the gym itself, see [www.fernsgaa.com/gym](http://www.fernsgaa.com/gym)





## Ferns Tidy Towns

It's that time of year again when the volunteers will be at their busiest, planting, cleaning, and completing projects to help enhance the village and have it looking at its best whilst also promoting an awareness of and appreciation of our environment and promoting community involvement in and appreciation of our wonderful village. Ferns Tidy Towns represents the local community and liaises with public authorities at local and national level to improve infrastructure, enhance society and the visual appearance of the village, support the community, and raise awareness of the environment and how as a community we can come together and make a difference.

Ferns Tidy Towns encourage and promote environmental awareness and education including waste minimisation and reduction to our carbon footprint and are pro-active advocates for sustainability, biodiversity, preservation of local heritage and the vision of being a sustainable energy community.

Ferns Tidy Towns have received multiple awards over the last number of years for projects to help tackle climate change, increase local biodiversity and reduce waste. In 2021 we received an extra 12 points in the National Tidy

Towns Competition. We hope, with the help of the community to improve on this in 2022 and be ready for the judging which takes place in early June.

There are the ever-present ongoing issues of litter and dog fouling. We encourage all dog owners to please be responsible and clean up after their pets. Litter destroys our beautiful environment, and its removal takes up a lot of valuable volunteer hours. Again, we encourage those that are responsible for littering to please be responsible and dispose of your litter responsibly.

You can keep up to date with our activities on Facebook @Ferns Tidy Towns Twitter @Ferna\_Mor and Instagram @Ferns Tidy Towns

## Roving Reporter

We're looking for a roving reporter (volunteer)– someone to send in regular updates on upcoming events and report on what's going on. Information provided will feature on the community website and social media platforms. A great opportunity for someone interested in their local community and a great start for a budding journalist! If you're interested or would like to learn more, please contact [secretaryfcd@fernsvillage.ie](mailto:secretaryfcd@fernsvillage.ie).

## Ferns & District Meals on Wheels

This is a stand-alone service delivering hot meals every Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Meals are cooked fresh daily by County Wexford Community Workshop at a cost of €5 per meal and delivered by volunteer drivers. Enquiries to 087-4189740.

## Ferns BFriendly

A voluntary telephone befriending service in the Ferns area for people experiencing loneliness or isolation. Enquiries to: 087-1691919.



### Contact information:

Email: [secretaryfcd@fernsvillage.ie](mailto:secretaryfcd@fernsvillage.ie)

Website: [www.fernsvillage.ie](http://www.fernsvillage.ie)



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