



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe  
Galway County Council

# COMMEMORATIVE STRATEGY FOR THE COUNTY OF GALWAY



**2013-2023**

Deich mBliana Cuimhneachán Chontae na Gaillimhe  
The County of Galway Decade of Commemorations

## DECADE OF COMMEMORATIONS

**2013 - 2023**

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## **1. Introduction**

The events of the decade between 1913 and 1923 were momentous and defining ones. It was the decade that influenced relationships for a generation and was a period which saw the achievement of Irish independence and the foundation of our State.

It was also a period of transformation and cultural renewal in Irish society, following on electoral reform, land reform, education reform and migration. The demand for constitutional change was in parallel with the assertion of workers' rights and women's rights.

The decade was one of the most momentous of modern Irish history and justifies a comprehensive commemorative programme that recognises its importance, acknowledges the achievements of its generation and enhances the understanding today of the events that shaped our society.

## **2. National Context**

A national Advisory Group for the Centenary Commemorations was established by the Government in March 2012. The group, comprised of well known and respected academics and historians, will work from 2012 to 2016. The role of the Advisory Group is to advise the government and an all-party Oireachtas group on the Commemorative Programme seeking a tone that is inclusive and non-triumphalist, ensuring authenticity, proportionality and openness.

## **3. Commemorative Strategy for the County of Galway**

While the events that occurred between 1913 and 1923 had a huge impact nationally they had a particular relevance in the County of Galway. Therefore, Galway County Council in the context of its role in providing civic leadership recognises the importance of playing a positive and proactive role in leading commemorative celebrations and activities during the course of the decade.

This Strategy while building on and complementing the National Commemorative Programme will focus on the role of the County of Galway and Galway people in the historic events that occurred over the decade 1913 – 1923 and will also reflect on what was happening in the county at that time.

## 4. Public Consultation

To facilitate active public participation and engagement in the development of the Commemorative Strategy, the *Galway Commemorative Framework – Working Towards A Draft Strategy for the Decade of Commemorations 2013 – 2013*, was drafted by a Galway County Council Working Group and following consultation with the Corporate & Cultural Strategic Policy Committee was published in April 2013.

To coincide with the publication of the Framework, a public notice inviting written submissions, in accordance with the Guiding Principles as detailed in the Framework, for consideration in the drafting of the Commemorative Strategy and the annual commemorative programmes were invited, with an initial closing date of Friday, 31st May 2013. This closing date was subsequently extended to the 28th June 2013.

A copy of the public notice and a listing of the respondees to same are detailed in Appendix I & Appendix II.

## 5. Guiding Principles

The Guiding Principles that formed the basis for the development of this Strategy and that will guide its implementation are:

- **A strong commitment to the development of a comprehensive and balanced programme of commemorations.**
- **To recognise the totality of the history of the period, and the diversity that this encompasses.**
- **Mutual respect shall be central to all commemorative events and historical accuracy shall be paramount.**
- **Active engagement with all those who are interested in commemorating our history, in all its dimensions, with pride and with respect.**

The Galway County Council Decade of Commemorations Steering Group, comprised of representatives drawn from the various Directorates of the Council and operating under the strategic guidance of the Corporate & Cultural Strategic Policy Committee will, in the context of available resources, guide the implementation of this Strategy and the development of appropriate annual programmes of events to mark the centenaries of some of the most historic and significant events in Irish history.

## 6. Strategic Objectives

The Decade of Commemorations Steering Group will work in partnership with national, regional and local stakeholders and the wider community to:

- **Establish a programme of cultural, historical and educational events which Galway County Council will undertake to commemorate the events of the decade.**
- **Support and assist in the development of appropriate community based initiatives and activities in remembrance of events of local historical significance.**
- **Liaise with educational and cultural bodies, local historical associations and committees, and individuals in the development and delivery of a programme of events.**
- **Engage citizens and secure the participation of local communities and people of all ages in the commemorations.**
- **Recognise the value and importance of the active participation of the Galway diaspora.**
- **Explore options for funding, sponsors and strategic partners in the formulation and delivery of the strategy and commemorative events.**

## 7. Annual Commemorative Programmes

This Strategy provides a framework for the development of annual commemorative programmes to commemorate the defining historical events of the decade, within the confines of available resources.

The annual commemorative programmes will not duplicate other work that has already been or is being carried out, but will build on and complement commemorative events that are being planned at national, county and local level.

In accordance with the Guiding Principles and to support the achievement of the agreed Strategy Objectives the annual commemorative programmes will:

- **Cover events throughout the entire Decade, with the commemorative arrangements aligned, as far as possible, with the historic timeline of the anniversaries including an initial focus on a programme to mark 2016.**
- **Aim to strengthen the public interest in our national history and encourage research at local level to facilitate a new and inclusive discussion of our foundation stories to reflect on where we have come from, and where we are going.**

- Acknowledge that our history cannot be accurately viewed or properly understood through a single prism as the events of the decade did not happen independently and they cannot be evaluated or remembered in isolation.
- Honour the concepts of bravery, heroism and idealism in the context of the defining events which took place between 1913-1923, to help current and future generations gain a better understanding of our complex history - their heritage - and to acknowledge the sacrifices of our forefathers, and the reasons for them.

## 8. Commemorative Themes

To facilitate a series of coordinated, intergrated and inclusive commemorative programmes the following commemorative themes are proposed to guide the development of the annual commemorative programmes:

Year		Theme
1913	2013	<i>Aspects of Galway's Military History</i>
1914	2014	<i>Political Change and the 1st World War</i>
1915	2015	<i>Galway's Changing Landscape</i>
1916	2016	<i>1916 The Galway Dimensions</i>
1917	2017	<i>Social Conditions &amp; Political Change</i>
1918	2018	<i>Emigration &amp; the Diaspora</i>
1919	2019	<i>Democracy &amp; the People</i>
1920	2020	<i>Changing Times</i>
1921	2021	<i>Truce &amp; Transition</i>
1922	2022	<i>Birth of a Nation</i>
1923	2023	<i>New Beginings</i>

## 9. Strategic Actions

The Galway County Council Decade of Commemorations Steering Group will engage with stakeholders at national and local level to deliver, in so far as it is possible, the following strategic actions:

- **Support the development and delivery of a number of flagship projects in the County of Galway, to provide an appropriate legacy of the Decade of Commemortations 2013 – 2023.**
- **Organise a series of commemorative lectures focusing on various themes or events of the period e.g. Galway's Military History, War of Independence in Galway etc.**
- **Develop and hold a series of exhibitions relating to the events of the period within the county.**
- **Host touring exhibitions relating to the period that have been developed nationally.**
- **Carry out an audit & compile a listing of published & unpublished material relating to the period, and if possible make available on the Galway County Council website.**
- **Compile an outline listing of how events were reported in the local papers at the time focusing on 1916 and other selected periods.**
- **Research the historic photographs which exist from this period and compile a photographic exhibition.**
- **Explore the role and contribution of the arts in Galway during the period.**
- **Support the Beo Digital Heritage Project with National Schools.**
- **Organise a series of schools competitions to include poetry, art and the Irish language.**
- **Facilitate and host the screening of films and documentaries relating to the period.**

## **10. Flagship Projects**

### **(i) Connemara Cultural Centre at Pearse's Cottage**

Galway County Council will continue to fully support the proposal for the development of the Connemara Cultural Centre at Pearse's Cottage which will serve to highlight the outstanding natural beauty and distinctive landscape of Ireland's West Coast and in particular Connemara. It will also provide a hub for celebrating Irish as a unique contemporary living culture, while also providing an expanded interpretation on elements of Patrick Pearse, the linguist, educationalist, writer and visitor.

The proposed Connemara Cultural Centre at Pearse's Cottage will be the cultural focal point of Connemara for both overseas and domestic visitors as well as the local community. For visitors it will offer an authentic experience that links the Irish language and culture, the landscape and community with the past and the present in a way that cannot be replicated elsewhere. The centre will provide a physical platform with a full complement of services and facilities for visitors offering social, educational and cultural engagement and interaction between different groups it will serve; a place of learning, a place of listening, a place to experience the unique culture of the West, of Connemara and the Gaeltacht.

The Centre will celebrate the unique cultural identity of the Gaeltacht, providing a showcase for contemporary arts, music, drama, dance and creative writing. In doing so, the Centre will provide activities, events and a forum for engagement, sharing and learning.

### **(ii) Irish Language**

During the decade being commemorated (1913-1923) the efforts of the Irish language Revival were at their peak, having been established and commenced a decade or two earlier. Prominent figures from the decade being commemorated had strong links with the language and felt that it was an integral part of the Irish and national identity and of the new state that was being formed.

In that context an Irish language flagship project is proposed to promote and enhance the Irish language in communities and schools in County Galway. It is proposed to develop Irish language resource packs for Communities. The resource packs would provide guidance, practical tips and knowledge to Schools, Community Groups and Sporting clubs in how to promote and enhance the use of Irish in their organisations and in how to prepare Irish language activity plans. The packs would contain information on all resources available to them in this regard including funding sources, educational sources, online resources etc.

This community based approach would have a positive effect on the promotion of the language countywide and also in encouraging young and old in increasing their use of Irish. It would also assist in confirming and enhancing the role of the Irish language in the modern Irish national identity.



**(iii) Decade of Commemoration Memory Mapping Project**

Galway County Council will develop a county memory mapping project in partnership with Galway County Heritage Forum. The aim of the memory mapping project is to collect, collate and make available information in digital format information about events, places and people that relate to the Decade of Commemoration throughout the county. It is proposed that this work will be started in 2014 and work on an electoral area basis. Information will be in a GIS format and memories will be revealed in a text, audio, video and photographs on an interactive map that we will develop.

**(iv) Decade of Commemoration Publication**

Galway County Council will develop and produce a publication with regards to the 1913-1923 period in County Galway. The publication will seek to give an insight into the social, economic and political happenings in the county during this time period. It is proposed that this will be a composite publication with chapters being written by noted academics who have a thorough knowledge of this time period in the county from their research perspective. It is aimed at providing a greater awareness, knowledge and understanding of what was happening in the county during this very important period of our history.

## **11. Community Participation**

The Galway Commemorative Strategy and annual commemorative programmes shall encourage Galway people at home and abroad to remember our shared history and to reflect on the events which shaped us.

It aims to allow us to uncover and explore the many other stories of the period, that reveal the intertwining of our history and our lives, as we remember those times not just in exhibitions, books/publications and lectures but also through art, music and storytelling.

The Strategy and the annual commemorative programmes will place a strong emphasis on encouraging and enabling active community participation and engagement throughout the Decade of Commemorations.

Galway County Council will seek to maximise community participation by providing support and advice through the Decade of Commemorations Steering Group, and within the limits of available funding, by providing financial support, for appropriate community events that are in accordance with the aims, principles and objectives of the Commemorative Strategy, through the Community Grants Scheme.

## **12. Conclusion**

The Galway Commemorative Strategy will guide our approach and encourage all Galway people at home and abroad, to come together to commemorate our past and cherish our present in a way that enables us share and create hope and expectation for the future.

## Appendix I Public Consultation/Notice

### STRAITÉIS CUIMHNEACHÁIN NA GAILLIMHE DEICH MBLIANA NA GCUIMHNEACHÁN 2013 – 2023

#### COMHAIRLIÚCHÁN POIBLÍ

Tá Straitéis Cuimhneacháin na Gaillimhe dhá réiteach ag Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe faoi láthair chun Deich mBliana na gCuimhneachán 2013 - 2023 a chomóradh ar bhealach atá uilechuimsitheach, íogaireach agus oiriúnach.

Beidh Straitéis Cuimhneacháin na Gaillimhe dírithe ar chomóradh céad bliain de phríomhimeachtaí stairiúla a tharlóidh sna blianta seo romhainn a chomóradh, chomh maith le fócas ar chuimhnigh bliana fíor thábhachtach eile a tharlóidh idir 2013 agus 2023 le béim speisialta ar 2016.

Ba mhaith le Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe do thuairimí a fháil, i scríbhinn, ar phearsana iomráiteacha Gaillimheach an tréimhse, imeachtaí suntasacha Gaillimheach a tharla i rith na deich mbliana 1913 – 1923 agus moltaí d'imeachtaí cultúrtha, stairiúla agus oideachasúla do Chomhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe le machnamh a dhéanamh orthu i réiteach Straitéis Cuimhneacháin na Gaillimhe chun Deich mBliana na gCuimhneachán a chomóradh.

Tá sé tábhachtach a thabhairt faoi deara nach bhfuil aon mhaoiniú ar fáil faoi láthair d'imeachtaí nó tionscnaimh chun Deich mBliana na gCuimhneacháin a mharcáil agus beidh seachadadh Straitéis Cuimhneacháin na Gaillimhe ag brath ar na hacmhainní atá ar fáil.

Ba cheart d'aighneachtaí scríofa/ríomhphoist aird a bheith acu do na treoir phrionsabail mar atá sonraithe i gCreatlach Cuimhneacháin na Gaillimhe atá ar fáil ó Chomhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe agus ar féidir é a fheiceáil agus a íoslódáil ó [www.gaillimh.ie](http://www.gaillimh.ie) agus is cóir aighneachtaí a mharcáil le **'Deich mBliana na gCuimhneachán'** agus a sheoladh isteach ag tráth nach déanaí ná **5.00in ar an Aoine, 31 Bealtaine 2013**. Seol aighneachtaí scríofa/ríomhphoist mar seo leanas:

Rúnaí Contae, Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe,  
Áras an Chontae, Cnoc na Radharc, Gaillimh  
rphost: [decadeofcommemorations@galwaycoco.ie](mailto:decadeofcommemorations@galwaycoco.ie)

### GALWAY COMMEMORATIVE STRATEGY THE DECADE OF COMMEMORATIONS 2013 – 2023

#### PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Galway County Council are currently preparing a Galway Commemorative Strategy, to mark the Decade of Commemorations 2013 – 2023, in a manner that is inclusive, sensitive and appropriate.

The Galway Commemorative Strategy shall focus on marking the **centenary of key historic events** that will occur over the coming years, together with a focus on some other very important anniversaries that will occur between 2013 and 2023 and with a special emphasis on 2016.

Galway County Council would like your views, in writing, on the notable Galway figures of the period, significant Galway events that occurred during the decade 1913 – 1923 and proposals for cultural, historical and educational events for consideration by Galway County Council in formulating the Galway Commemorative Strategy to mark the Decade of Commemorations.

It is important to note that no funding is currently available for events or initiatives to mark the Decade of Commemorations and the delivery of the Galway Commemorative Strategy shall be subject to available resources.

Written/email submissions should reflect the guiding principles as detailed in the Galway Commemorative Framework, available from Galway County Council and to view and download from [www.gaillimh.ie](http://www.gaillimh.ie) / [www.galway.ie](http://www.galway.ie), and should be submitted marked **'Decade of Commemorations'** no later than **5.00 pm on Friday, 31st May 2013**. Please address written/email submissions as follows:

County Secretary, Galway County Council, Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill, Galway  
email: [decadeofcommemorations@galwaycoco.ie](mailto:decadeofcommemorations@galwaycoco.ie)

M. Owens, Rúnaí Contae

## **Appendix II      Public Submissions**

- 1)      Tomas Kenny
- 2)      Moycullen Historical Society
- 3)      Athenry 2016 (Sub Committee of Athenry Tidy Towns)
- 4)      Ballymoe Development Centre Ltd
- 5)      Mary Murphy