

The Out Mag

ISSUE 6 - JUNE 27, 2023

FESTIVAL EDITION
CELEBRATING
RURAL LGBT+
STORIES

PUTTING RURAL
IRELAND ON THE MAP



EXPRESSION OF
FREEDOM

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The Nationalist

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Letter from the Editor

This year we were more aware of on and offline transphobia. So we made a conscious effort to include more information about trans people in this issue. Including stories, experiences, and issues related to the transgender community helps increase their visibility and representation in mainstream media. This can be particularly meaningful in rural areas where trans individuals might feel isolated or overlooked. By featuring trans people, we provide an opportunity for their voices to be heard and their stories to be shared.

Rural communities may have limited exposure to diverse gender identities and experiences. Also rural areas like Carlow often have strong traditional values and social norms. Including trans people in the magazine challenges stereotypes and preconceived notions, promoting a more inclusive and accepting environment. The Out Mag has an opportunity in rural Ireland to educate in a powerful way to promote understanding, acceptance, and support for the transgender community. It helps create a more inclusive society where all individuals, regardless of their gender identity, can feel seen, valued, and represented. We hope you enjoy this magazine and see you July 2nd!!

John Paul Payne
The Out Mag Editor



Assessing the Ongoing Struggle: Unfulfilled Rights for LGBT+ Individuals in Ireland

By John Paul Payne

As Ireland proudly celebrated its landmark marriage equality referendum in 2015, it emerged as a beacon of progress for the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT+) individuals. However, it is crucial to acknowledge that despite notable advancements, certain rights and challenges still persist for the LGBT+ community in Ireland. In this article, we delve into the ongoing struggles and rights that remain unfulfilled for LGBT+ people in Ireland.

1. Gender Recognition for Non-Binary Individuals:

While Ireland has made significant strides in recognizing gender identity through the Gender Recognition Act 2015, there is a notable gap in providing legal recognition for non-binary individuals.

Currently, Irish law only allows individuals to identify as either male or female on official documents, leaving non-binary individuals without legal recognition of their gender identity.

2. Conversion Therapy Ban:

Conversion therapy, a harmful practice aiming to change or suppress a person's sexual orientation or gender identity, remains a pressing concern in Ireland. Although there have been discussions surrounding a nationwide ban, there is no explicit legislation in place, leaving vulnerable LGBT+ individuals at risk of being subjected to these damaging practices.

3. Blood Donation Restrictions:

The Irish Blood Transfusion Service (IBTS) continues to maintain restrictions on blood donations from men who have sex with men (MSM). Despite the relaxation of regulations in 2016, MSM are still required to abstain from sexual activity for 12 months before they can donate blood, perpetuating the stigmatization of this group and reinforcing harmful stereotypes.

4. Comprehensive Sex Education:

The provision of comprehensive and inclusive sex education in schools is crucial in promoting understanding, acceptance, and support for LGBT+ youth.



Although progress has been made in this area, many argue that the current curriculum fails to adequately address LGBT+ issues, leaving students ill-equipped to navigate matters of sexual orientation and gender identity.

5. Discrimination in Employment:

While Ireland has made significant progress in protecting LGBT+ individuals from discrimination in the workplace, challenges persist. There have been instances where LGBT+ individuals have faced unequal treatment, harassment, or dismissal due to their sexual orientation or gender identity. Comprehensive legal safeguards and further education

efforts are required to address this ongoing issue.

Ireland has undoubtedly achieved significant milestones in advancing the rights of LGBT+ individuals. However, it is crucial to recognize that several critical rights still remain unfulfilled. Ensuring legal recognition for non-binary individuals, banning conversion therapy, addressing blood donation restrictions, improving sex education, and combatting discrimination in employment are essential steps in achieving full equality for the LGBT+ community in Ireland.

Continued advocacy, legislation, and public awareness are necessary to address these challenges and ensure a more inclusive and equitable society for all.

Welcoming our new Committee Members



Sally McDonald
— Community Outreach Officer

Born in 1944 and qualified as a PE teacher in 1965. Married Larry McDonald, in 1966 and had six children. She now has fifteen wonderful grandchildren! Sally was a member of Carlow Little Theatre Society and acted in many plays with them. She was involved in a lot of community work, on a voluntary basis throughout the years. Sally was also a member of CMAC (now Accord) and organised Easter Fun Week, for primary school children, for many years, helped by wonderful volunteers.



Sally was a well known teacher in the Traveller Training Centre on Cox's Lane for ten years. She was also on both St Leo's College and the Presentation College's Parents Associations and both schools Board of Management.

Sally was also on the Board of Management of St Catherine's Community Services Centre and draws a lot of her experience from working in these roles. She did substitute teaching in various schools which led her to be involved in many successful Carlow Community Games for many years.

Sally is part of our community outreach team, and got involved with the Carlow LGBT group and the Carlow Pride Festival Committee in 2018. Sally brings her incredible work ethic and her ability to find new ways to create resources to help many people.

Alex Hayes
- Social Media Manager

Alex is our new social media manager and he is one of a kind! Coming with tons and tons of experience, drive and passion, he will be the person on the day showcasing Carlow to the world via social media. From graphics to designs he has got it all!



Ashleigh

Ashleigh was born and raised in Carlow. She joined the Carlow Pride Festival Committee as she loves her home county, and wants to help make it an inclusive and supportive place where everyone is treated equally.

In 2017, she graduated with a Bachelor in Human Resource Management. She is now working in a Learning and Development role, and is enjoying supporting learners with their professional development opportunities.

Outside of work; Ashleigh loves yoga, zumba, spending time with family and friends, traveling and walking her adorable dogs.

John Paul Payne
— Chairperson

John Paul has a long history of LGBT+ advocacy in Ireland and abroad. He has been acting chairperson for the festival since its inception in 2019 when he worked as a reporter and co-host for a national television show in North America, covering all current affairs LGBT+ stories. There he realised that LGBT+ people from Carlow, and rural Ireland, sometimes didn't have a voice.

He flew home in 2015 with a camera crew to document his journey to vote in the Marriage Equality referendum as a two part report. The first part was for "Be My Yes" campaign in North America for ex-pats who couldn't fly home to vote. He is also the editor of the local LGBT+ magazine The Out Mag.

John Paul works as a makeup artist and has his own studio in Dublin Street, Carlow. He launched his own cosmetics line in 2019.

He won the Volunteer Ireland Award for Arts, Culture & Media in 2019.



Ryan Shannon
— Inclusion Officer (He/Him)

Ryan was born and raised in Carlow town. He joined Carlow Pride because he wanted to be part of the change in Carlow, to help make it a more welcoming place for members of the LGBT+ community. Ryan himself identifies as bisexual. His mission is to break down the stigma and barriers that bisexual people face.

When he is not working with Carlow Pride, Ryan enjoys participating in local theatre groups and playing music. He has recently finished a degree in Applied Social Studies from Carlow College St Patricks and he is looking forward to what the future holds.

Ryan represents Carlow Pride Festival on the committee of the Ireland Pride Network, which is a network of pride organisers from around Ireland currently facilitated by the European Pride Organisers Association.



Niamh

Niamh spent much of her four years studying Game Design in TU Dublin volunteering for various causes - everything from picking up litter to organizing a month long charity fundraiser "Gaming for Good" for the Dublin Simon Community. Now she's back home in Carlow and excited to work with her local Pride Festival!

For Niamh, Pride is a celebration of queer joy, strength and community. It's commemorating the progress we've made and our continued commitment to working together towards a more equal society.

Outside of work and volunteering, Niamh enjoys drawing, baking, reading (science fiction, horror and fantasy) and playing tabletop role-playing games like Dungeons & Dragons.



Kathleen

Kathleen is a proud parent of two beautiful humans and has a background in advocacy, social and community action. The ethos and inclusion of Carlow Pride is what drove her into becoming a member of the committee. "We stand stronger together as a community and we can be the change we wish to see in the world"



Christine

My name is Christine Salter and I am a mother of 3 and grandmother of 2. I attended the first Carlow Pride in 2019 and was blown away by the organisation of the event itself and the attendance and support of the local community.

I am now very honoured to be a member of the committee and part of a wonderful group of people who will continue to promote social inclusion for all.

My life of volunteering

by Sally McDonald

I am from Carlow, married to Larry Mc Donald and we have six grown up children and fifteen wonderful grandchildren. I went to St Leo's primary school, then to boarding school in Sion Hill, in Dublin and then trained to be a P.E teacher. I taught in various schools around Carlow and got married in 1966. I was always interested in young people and was awarded the Carlow Junior Chamber

Award in 1979, for my voluntary work with the young people of Carlow.

I was also awarded the Voluntary Endeavour Award at the County Carlow Person of the Year Awards in 2004. I was a member of Carlow Little Theatre for many years. I was on the parents Council and a Board member of St. Leo's College and the Presentation College, for many years. I worked with Accord (formerly CMAC) on a voluntary basis, for many years, giving



talks to parents and to school children.

I taught in the Traveller Training Centre, for two days a week for ten years, under Tony O'Reilly, who is a wonderful man.

I was involved with County Carlow Community Games for over forty years! I organised Easter Fun Week, for primary school children, for over thirty years. I gave career advice to hundreds

of children before there were Career Guidance teachers!

I was on the Board of Management in St Catherine's Social Services Centre for many years.

Both Larry and I volunteered to go out to Uganda, as volunteers in 2019, it was an amazing, unforgettable experience, working in a little village out there! I went to a Mensana talk in November 2018, and they said that a young gay man was

speaking in Teach Dolmen the following night. I went along to hear him, as I had always been interested in the gay community and how they were treated in Carlow! John Paul Payne was the speaker and he was so inspirational. He and I set up the Pride Festival Committee and the rest is history!

We are having our fourth Pride Festival on Sunday, July 2 and everybody is most welcome!

You are not alone.

There are services to help. You have someone to talk to. A real person, who understands.

Here are some local and national numbers. Always remember you are never alone. Many of us have been helped by the following services.

Local

CARLOW REGIONAL YOUTH SERVICE
Tel 059 9130476
Email reception@carlowys.ie

MUI (MY UNIQUE INDIVIDUALITY)
Tel 082 2722379 / 059 9133714

FOLLAINE COUNSELLING
Call or text 085 2780307

National

BELONG 2
Tel 01 6706223
www.belongto.org

TENI (TRANSGENDER EQUALITY NETWORK IRELAND)
Tel 01 8733575
www.teni.ie

SAMARITANS
24 hour free phone 116 123
24 response email jo@samaritans.ie

LGBT KILKENNY
Tel 1890 929 539
Email info@lgbt.ie

Help is there.

Come join us on RainbowRoad on Sunday July 2nd



Carlow Town Park Info Map

Pauly Kavanagh : Carlow Pride Grand Marshall 2023

Pauly was interviewed for issue 4 of the OutMag about her life being non-binary in the travelling community in Ireland. Since her previous interview Pauly has been kept busy with her work as a hair-dresser in Carlow. When asked about how she felt reading her story in the OutMag Pauly said "I felt good having my story out there". Paul was glad to share a more private side of her life. Thankfully Pauly received a lot of positive feedback and support from her family, friends and the community. Pauly also said that someone had reached out and told her that they found her story inspiring to read.

Since her previous interview with the OutMag, Pauly has begun to exclusively use she/her pronouns. When asked about the change she said "I was in denial for a long time about who I was." Pauly said that making the change finally let her be who she felt on the inside. Pauly was relieved that many of her friends and family have been supportive of her decision but there are some who are still struggling with the change. "I appreciate everyone's support and I know it can be difficult to change

how you speak about someone you've known one way for so long in a different way, everyone just needs their own time to get used to it". Overall Pauly claims using she/her pronouns feels like a weight has been lifted from her shoulders and she can finally be who she is.

Pauly first attended Pride in 2016 when she travelled with friends up to Dublin Pride. She recalls that it was amazing to see everyone around, all the colour and how everyone supported each other. Back in 2016 Pauly felt that it was not an experience that she would ever have in Carlow. Pauly attended the first Carlow Pride in 2019. She said the day was amazing and one of the best days out she had ever had in Carlow to date. Pauly believes that Carlow Pride has helped to change how people in Carlow view the LGBT+ community and that there is more support and understanding for the community in Carlow now than there was previously. "It has opened people's minds to a broader perspective where they can learn about topics that they might not have ever heard about before". Pauly also

attended Carlow Pride last year, this time wearing drag, and again was blown away by the support from the town for the festival. "It was amazing to see so many people, there was a real sense of community in the town, like everyone came together to celebrate"

As already announced on the Carlow Pride social media, Pauly has been announced as Grand Marshall for this year's parade! "I was so shocked when they asked me, I didn't know what to say. All I could think was why me?" The committee informed Pauly about how inspirational her story is and whether she knew it or not she was someone that other people in the community could look to and see that no matter what walk of life they're from, they can be accepted for who they are. Pauly said she had received amazing support from her work, friends and family since she has been announced as Grand Marshall. People have been saying how proud they are of her and that they couldn't wait to support her on the day in the parade. Pauly continued "I would like to thank Carlow Pride for asking me to be Grand Marshall, it is



a huge honour for me to lead the parade this year. I am also glad I shared my story because it gave me the opportunity to show people that it's ok to be who you are inside no matter what community you belong to. We're all in this together!"

To finalise this interview we asked Pauly what her hopes are for this year's festival. "I just hope that everyone has an amazing day out and that people feel that it is safe for them to celebrate who they are"

Poem is written by Dany Morrigán who is a writer (poetry being a large love of theirs), researcher and psychologist living in Carlow. After they saw that the drag show has been cancelled because of threats they needed to get involved in any way to support LGBTQ in Carlow.

Dead Name,

This is my childhood home; I know the streets so well.
I've played in the parks, swung on the swings, spent summers on bridges with friends.
Now faces I can recognise but find them hard to place.
Where almost everyone knows your name, something I used to hate.

Hate might be a strong word, but I'm resentful of its weight.
Lived away for many years, I had forgotten the sound till today.
When someone called me Dania, it stung like frost on my cheek.
Like a stitch I couldn't rip apart, tight against my chest

"It's Dany" I will say, ready to launch into a practiced speech.
I only remember the faces of those who continue to repeat.
It's hard when you come home, to a place you used to know.
To follow a name long dead, buried 6 feet below.

See although we might feel strong and found something that's true!
A dead name doesn't want to stay in the ground, it wants to follow you.
So be kind if you can, for I am unashamed,
it's just it is not me, and I still want you to know MY name.

In other places I can slip away and take myself on the town
I've introduced myself, new people they remember.
Those close to me and those I love, THAT name they won't surrender.
I know it isn't done with hate, and just like them, I must be patient.

Hello
My name is Dany, no longer Dania.
It's nice to make your acquaintance.



Sunday July 2nd 2023

FREE EVENT



**CARLOW
PRIDE
FESTIVAL**

START

2:00pm - Carlow College

Official Town Photograph 

2:15pm - Rainbow Road Parade

Hundreds of us will walk, dance, march
and move our way through Carlow
Town towards Carlow Town Park

THE YAHOO STAGE

2:30pm - Carlow Town Park

Hosted by **Eddie McGuinness** and **Izzy Kamikaze**



**MARY
ANN
MUSIC**

Drag King
**Kenny
TODGERS**

**KYLIE
ALIKE**



Accessible
Route
& Festival



FOOD TRUCKS • PIZZA • ICE CREAM • MOCKTAILS • CAKES • VEGAN

6:00pm

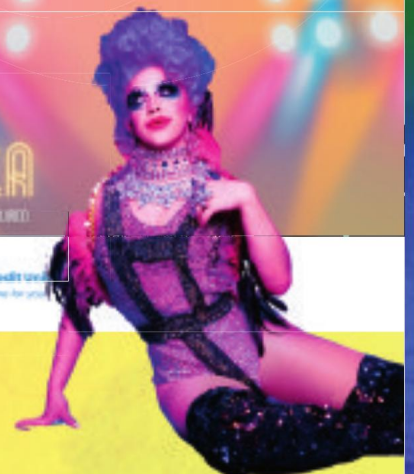
DICEY'S
Official
AFTERPARTY

Onya
BECKS AND GUESTS
SHOWGIRL EXTRAVAGANZA
PRIVATE EVENT - OVER 18S - GOVERNMENT ENDORSED

yahoo!



Carlow Credit Union
We are here for you



**THANK YOU TO ALL THE PEOPLE,
BUSINESSES, COMMUNITY GROUPS AND
GOVERNMENT ORGANISATIONS WHO
HELP US CREATE OUR AMAZING FESTIVAL**

Healthcare is a fundamental human right

by Niamh Byrne

This month we are celebrating pride. We have so many achievements to celebrate. But we also have members of our amazing community in this day and age struggling to attain Healthcare. The transgender community is being attacked globally by the far right. We need our allies to stand with us and say enough, this is not acceptable.

My name is Niamh, and I am a transgender woman living in Ireland. I'm hoping to shed some light on the state of healthcare for transgender people in Ireland and the wider global community. Healthcare is a fundamental human right, a right that has been denied to the transgender community.

People in Ireland are allowed to change their gender by self declaration to either male or female. Once you have this cert, you can apply for a new public service card which will hold your new gender and name if you so wish. Once you attain this card, you can apply for your new driving license and passport.

Currently Ireland has a new bill before this Seanad to combat hate crime and hate speech. If enacted, it will repeal the existing Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act, 1989. It will create new laws to deal with hate crimes, and more importantly expand the protected characteristics to include gender (including gender identity and expression) and disability.

On one hand Ireland is progressive with legislation, with the other hand they deny us healthcare. The healthcare service in Ireland is dismal for Trans people. In 2022 Transgender Europe (TGEU) conducted a study

of availability and accessibility of Trans healthcare in Europe. When the results were published in October, Ireland ranked the lowest. Ireland has one public clinic, which is under-resourced. Wait times for people seeking help ranges from 3 to 10 years. People lucky enough to attend the clinic are unfortunately diagnosed using an outdated model, which in itself is also harmful. This only leaves people with 2 options, with neither being ideal. Private or self medicate. Many people can not afford to go down the private route, and are left with the choice but to self medicate or wait for a public appointment. For those who can afford to go private the options are just as limited. There is one or possibly two private endocrinologists that will treat transgender people in the entirety of the Irish state. Outside of this there is an organization called GenderGP, but many general practitioners will not work with them.

I would love to say that this is as bad as it gets, but there are countries around the world far worse off than our tiny island. Unfortunately, the far right are leading a global attack against our small vulnerable community. Anti trans bills are being put forward to a government somewhere around the globe at an increasingly concerning rate.

We need allies, the LGBTQIA+ community needs allies. This means more than just supporting gay people, it means supporting the entire community. Being an ally means educating yourself and the people around you. Take time to educate yourself on transgender people, rather than listening to people who have their own agendas. If you take the time to get to know the trans



community, you will see that we are normal people who simply want to live an honest and peaceful life, get up in the morning and go to work and come home in the evening to spend time with our families.



At MSD diversity and inclusion is key. We encourage people to come to work as they are and take **pride** in who they are.

All of the team at MSD Carlow would like to wish the Carlow Pride Festival Committee continued success.

www.msd.ie

#IAmMeAtMSD



Carlow College, St Patrick's is home to the LGBTQIA+ (Pride) Society

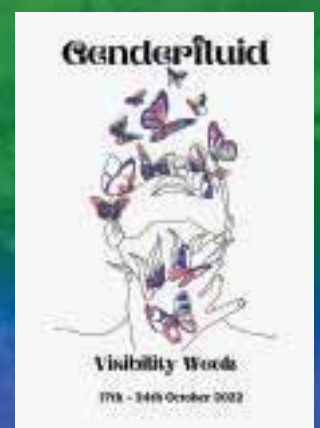
Carlow College, St Patrick's is home to the LGBTQIA+ (Pride) Society, who are all honoured to be included in this edition of the Out Mag. At its core, the society centres around inclusivity; Members include first to fourth years studying different subjects, members of the LGBTQIA+ community, and allies. Meeting regularly each week, the society often discussed potential ideas for events and campaigns we wanted to bring awareness to, while also having some fun and meeting other members of the community. Being a member of the LGBTQIA+ community is a beautiful experience, however, it can also be a dangerous one. Despite the amazing strides within Ireland over the last decade for the LGBTQIA+ community, there still remains a high level of risk for members. Discrimination, bullying or harassment from their peers, family members, or teachers, are real risks for young LGBTQIA+ students. These kinds of risks may prevent an individual from coming out due to fear of receiving abuse, preventing them from being who they truly are. This is why an LGBTQIA+ society is so vital to a student's life. It provides them with a safe place to be their true selves without any



fear. It gives them a chance to learn more about themselves from individuals who may have gone through a similar experience themselves. Most importantly, it can provide support to anyone who may need it. Allowing allies to join gives those who may be a little nervous someone to lean on as they get settled in. It also provides al-

lies a chance to learn more about the community they're supporting, showing them a perspective they don't often see. Our Pride Society is proud of our work this last academic year. At a time when we're still recovering from COVID-19, our society came together and worked on a number of college events to help spread

awareness and information on many things LGBTQIA+. On the 23rd of September 2022, the college celebrated Bisexuality Day with the rest of the world, marking the day with the raising of the Bisexuality flag. November saw us raise the Trans flag for the Transgender Day of Remembrance, along with our society head helping run a Trans Awareness Workshop. These flags waved proudly in the autumnal breeze and the supportive atmosphere was felt throughout the college. On March 1st, we gathered together to raise the Trans Flag, once again, as part of the Trans Day of Visibility. Celebrating this day, we proudly introduced the college to our society's Trans mascot: Marmalade the Transolot!!!! Everyone fell in love with their cute little face! One of our proudest highlights of the year was the work we accomplished for Genderfluid Invisibility Week (17th –24th October 2022). As International Pronouns Day (October 20th), fell in the middle of this week, there was a table set up in the Students' Union, where students were encouraged to write their desired pronouns on a sticker. Strolling the halls of the college were students proudly sporting their stickers, and their true



selfs, on their chests. Allies, too, sported their pronouns in solidarity. Throughout the college, staff and students alike have been placing their pronouns at the end of their emails. These small acts mean so much to those whose identity is regularly shunned or dismissed. As we go forward into the academic year 2023/2024, we have so many more exciting events planned! We are reaching for the stars, and we cannot wait to bring you along with us on this journey! If you are interested in finding out more about us, the LGBTQIA+ Society, give us a follow on Instagram at CC.PrideSoc

Litter Awareness and Recycling at Carlow Pride Festival

As we celebrate diversity, equality, and inclusivity, it's crucial to remember the importance of taking care of our environment. By making conscious choices and adopting responsible habits, we can contribute to a cleaner and more sustainable future. Let's explore how each of us can play a part in preserving the beauty of our surroundings.

Litter has far-reaching negative effects on the environment, wildlife, and human health.

The consequences of littering, such as pollution of waterways, harm to animals, and the unsightly appearance of public spaces. The connection between Pride, a celebration of love and acceptance, and the responsibility to care for the environ-

ment is something we all share.

Sort waste into different categories, such as paper, plastic, glass, and metal, to ensure proper recycling.

Some tips while at our festival:

- Bringing reusable water bottles, utensils, and bags to the festival.
- Avoiding single-use plastics and

choosing eco-friendly alternatives.

- Opting for digital tickets and reducing paper waste.
- Using recycling stations provided at the festival and educating others about their purpose.
- Encouraging carpooling or public transportation to minimize carbon emissions.

Fun ways we can educate and create with litter:

- Quizzes or trivia games on recycling facts and environmental issues.
- Recycling-themed arts and crafts workshops using recycled materials.

We encourage festival attendees to lead by example and spread the message of responsible waste management and recycling in their communities. You have the power of influencing others through personal actions and sharing knowledge gained during the festival. We believe by educating festival-goers about litter and recycling, we can make a positive impact on our environment. Let's work together to create a cleaner, more sustainable Carlow, ensuring that Pride celebrations align with environmental consciousness.

Remember, it's not just about celebrating love, but also about loving and caring for our planet.

Let's leave a legacy of Pride and environmental stewardship for generations to come.



Kathleen Geoghegan

Carlow born Kathleen Geoghegan is very frank and open about her interesting and somewhat traumatic experiences in life. Kathleen's mother, widowed at a young age, was a powerhouse of a woman. She strived to ensure that her children would receive the love and support which the family needed. She instilled a strong sense of justice in Kathleen who chose to donate to charities using her pocket money. The natural route for her was to volunteer with the Simon Community when she left secondary school.

Kathleen began to work with this charity in Dublin and it was an eye-opener for her. Despite being overwhelmed with the social issues that she was experiencing daily, she persevered with her role and became adept and confident in her position. There, she received several promotions and finally achieved the role of Housing Support Officer. In her personal life, things were not as straightforward. She had felt from a young age that she didn't quite fit in to the norms of society but could never pinpoint the reasons why. Kathleen found herself being drawn to a group of friends who were part of the gay community. She was unconsciously immersing herself in literature written by or based on lesbians. In retrospect, she was looking for her own identity, not sure if she was bisexual or lesbian and trying to discover what her "tribe" was.

Kathleen recalls the freedom of visiting gay bars and clubs and being able to



express herself as she wanted to. She discovered that she was attracted by a person's mind, not the appearance of their body. Eventually Kathleen found herself in a same sex relationship and remembers that this was one of the happiest periods of her life. When returning home to Carlow for visits, she felt that she had to hide this identity with which she was comfortable in Dublin. One night, despite being advised not to share her relationship status with her Mam, she took a breath and told her. Her mother's reaction was

more that Kathleen could ever dream of. She asked her if her partner made her happy and if she was being treated well. Kathleen felt loved and supported at that moment. In time, she introduced her partner to the family and there was total acceptance of the relationship. She felt that she didn't have to hide herself any more when home.

In 2004, Kathleen suffered a major setback; she was diagnosed with a rare brain condition which led to many painful traumatic treatments and eventually, a gruelling operation. While Kathleen was enduring the constant physical pain and the insecurity of her future, her partner provided support, love and humour in her life and enabled her to get through each day. However, the women were still very careful that their relationship was a secret from hospital staff and medical practitioners as there was such a prejudice in the country against same sex couples. Strain of the disease, effects of the treatments and stress eventually put pressures on the relationship and after a time, Kathleen and her partner sadly parted ways.

Kathleen returned home to recuperate and found herself in another relationship, this being heterosexual. She went on to have to children but unfortunately, the relationship did not last. Having been so through so much herself, Kathleen recognised needs that her children were presenting with. She fought tirelessly for supports for them and found that many a time, the doors were closed to her.

However, she has also achieved huge successes which have brought harmony to her family life. She credits Simon Lewis and the staff of Carlow Educate Together Primary School for their continuous understanding and support of her special family.

Kathleen's journey is far from over. She still experiences symptoms of her gruelling illness and treatments. She has recently taken a break from a degree in Politics, Sociology and Community Studies in order to focus on her physical and mental health and her family's wellbeing. As a former activist with Carlow LGBT, she recently connected with John Paul Payne from Carlow Pride and is enthusiastic about becoming a member of the committee. Her dream is to one day help create supports for young people growing up in Carlow as she recognises the lack of suitable programmes in the area. These supports would have been hugely beneficial to her when she was experiencing confusion regarding her true identity. Sadly, her Mam passed away three years ago and she has changed her name from "Kathy" to "Kathleen" in her memory; in this way she feels that she is reclaiming her childhood and living the life which she was always meant to live. She will be eternally grateful to her Mam for teaching her compassion, perseverance and open-mindedness and passing on the gift of being totally accepting of her children.

And Kathleen finally knows who she is.

The Irish Names Project: Honouring Lives Lost to AIDS and HIV-Related Illnesses

In the hallowed halls of Visual Carlow, an exhibition known as the Irish Names Project stands as a poignant tribute to those who lost their lives to AIDS and HIV-related illnesses in Ireland. This remarkable endeavour finds its inspiration in the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt, which originated in San Francisco in June 1987 under the guidance of the esteemed gay rights activist, Cleve Jones.

Mary Shannon, driven by a deep sense of compassion and a desire to create a meaningful memorial, took up the mantle to establish the project in Ireland.

Motivated by the powerful impact of the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt in San Francisco, Mary Shannon recognized the need for a similar endeavour in Ireland.

The Irish Names Project, seeks to commemorate the individuals who died due to AIDS and HIV-related illnesses, while also raising awareness about these diseases and promoting compassion and understanding within society. The project employs a unique medium to convey its message—a collection of quilts, each one a labour of love and remembrance.

As visitors enter the exhibition space, they are greeted by a profound display of intricately crafted quilts. These quilts, handmade with care, pay tribute to the lives lost and the stories untold. Each quilt is a patchwork of individual squares, stitched together to form a tapestry of memories and emotions. Every square represents a person, a cherished soul who fell victim to the devastating impact of AIDS or an HIV-related illness.

The quilts of the Irish Names Project are not just quilts; they are living testimonies, imbued



with personal stories and heartfelt messages. Each square is meticulously designed and adorned with the name of the individual it commemorates, along with significant dates, symbols, and heartfelt dedications. These quilts serve as a powerful reminder of the countless lives affected and lost to these diseases, fostering empathy and compassion in the hearts of those who encounter them.

Drawing inspiration from the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt, the Irish Names Project aims to create a sense of unity and solidarity within the community. By stitching together these individual squares, the project symbolically weaves together the stories of countless lives, creating a collective narrative that speaks of both tragedy and resilience.

The exhibition at Visual Carlow not only showcases the quilts but also provides a space for reflection and remembrance. Visitors are invited to engage with the quilts, to observe

the intricate details, and to read the stories that accompany each square. It is an opportunity to honour those who have passed, to learn from their experiences, and to remember the lessons that history has taught us.

The Irish Names Project serves as a testament to the ongoing fight against AIDS and HIV-related illnesses. It is a call for greater awareness, understanding, and support for those affected by these diseases. Through the power of art and personal narratives, the project sparks conversations, challenges stigmas, and encourages compassion, ultimately fostering a more inclusive and empathetic society.

The Irish Names Project at Visual Carlow stands as a tribute to the resilience and strength of the human spirit. It serves as a sombre reminder of the lives lost too soon and the ongoing need for education, prevention, and support. This exhibition, inspired by the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt, honours the memory of those who have passed while igniting hope for a future free from the burden of AIDS and HIV-related illnesses.

In the quiet corners of Visual Carlow, the quilts of the Irish Names Project whisper the stories of lives touched by AIDS and HIV-related illnesses. They remind us of the importance of remembrance, compassion, and the collective effort needed to eradicate these diseases once and for all. Let us be inspired by these quilts, let us learn from the past, and let us work together to build a future where no more names need to be added to this poignant memorial.

The exhibition is free and open until August 27th at Visual.



At MSD diversity and inclusion is key. We encourage people to come to work as they are and take **pride** in who they are.

All of the team at MSD Carlow would like to wish the Carlow Pride Festival Committee continued success.

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Towards a More Just Society: The Push for Hate Crime Legislation in Ireland

By Ash McGuirk

In recent years, there has been a growing recognition in Ireland of the need for comprehensive hate crime legislation. As a nation that values equality, inclusivity, and respect for all its citizens, the absence of specific laws addressing hate crimes has left vulnerable communities without adequate protection. However, momentum is building as activists, lawmakers, and concerned citizens rally together to push for hate crime legislation that will send a clear message: discrimination and hatred have no place in Irish society.

Hate crimes are offenses committed against individuals or groups based on their race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, or other protected characteristics. These crimes not only harm the victims directly but also instill fear and create divisions within society. By recognizing hate crimes as distinct offenses, legislation can provide stronger deterrents and ensure that those responsible face appropriate consequences for their actions.

Currently, Ireland does not have specific legislation that defines and addresses hate crimes comprehensively. While existing laws cover offenses such as assault and harassment, they do not explicitly acknowledge the discriminatory motivations behind these acts. This gap leaves victims of hate crimes without the legal recourse and protection they deserve, undermining the pursuit of justice and hindering societal progress.

By enacting hate crime legislation, Ireland would join numerous other countries that have recognized the importance of protecting vulnerable communities from targeted violence and discrimination. Such laws send a powerful message that intolerance and prejudice will not be tolerated, fostering an environment where diversity is celebrated and everyone feels safe and valued.

The call for hate crime legislation in

Ireland has garnered significant support from a wide range of advocacy groups, human rights organizations, and affected communities. These voices argue that specific legislation is crucial to ensuring that the law effectively addresses hate crimes and promotes a more inclusive and accepting society.

Advocates emphasize that hate crime legislation not only provides justice for victims but also serves as a deterrent, sending a strong signal that acts of hatred will face severe consequences. Moreover, it helps educate society about the impact of such crimes, encouraging empathy, and fostering a culture of respect and understanding.

Ireland has the opportunity to learn from the experiences of countries that have successfully implemented hate crime legislation. For instance, the United Kingdom, Germany, and Sweden have enacted laws that recognize the unique nature of hate crimes and offer specific legal protections for targeted communities. By studying these models and adapting them to the Irish context, lawmakers can develop robust legislation that reflects the values of equality and justice.

The push for hate crime legislation in Ireland represents a crucial step toward building a more just and inclusive society. By acknowledging the distinct nature of hate crimes and implementing specific legal protections, Ireland can ensure that marginalized communities are afforded the necessary safeguards against discrimination and violence. Hate crime legislation would send a clear message that Ireland stands firmly against intolerance and hatred, fostering an environment where all individuals can thrive without fear.

As citizens, it is our collective responsibility to support this important cause and advocate for the enactment of comprehensive hate crime legislation. By doing so, we can contribute to the creation of a society that truly values diversity, equality, and respect for all.

Unum Supports Carlow Pride Festival with Unique Custom Bunting



Carlow, a vibrant town known for its inclusive community spirit, is gearing up for its annual Pride Festival. This year, the festival promises to be even more colourful and captivating, thanks to the support of Unum, a leading provider of financial protection benefits. Unum has gone the extra mile by creating one-of-a-kind custom bunting that is being proudly displayed throughout Carlow, spreading joy and celebrating diversity.

Pride festivals play a vital role in celebrating and advocating for the rights and acceptance of the LGBTQ+ community. These events foster a sense of belonging, promote inclusivity, and showcase the unity of diverse individuals. Carlow Pride Festival has been an important fixture on the town's calendar, and each year it continues to grow, welcoming people from all walks of life.

Unum, a company dedicated to championing diversity and inclusion, has embraced the opportunity to support the Carlow Pride Festival. Recognising the importance of fostering an inclusive community, Unum has actively sought ways to contribute meaningfully to the event.

Unum's support for Carlow Pride Festival goes beyond financial backing. The company has designed and created a unique set of custom bunting to decorate the town's streets, giving them an eye-catching, festive ambience. This specially crafted bunting stands out with its vibrant colours, intricate designs, and messages of unity and love. The bunting serves as a visual reminder of Carlow's commitment to inclusivity and acceptance.

Bunting has long been associated with celebrations and festivities, often used to decorate public spaces during parades, festivals, and national events. In

the context of Pride, bunting takes on even greater significance. It serves as a symbol of support, solidarity, and visibility for the LGBTQ+ community and their allies. By adorning the streets of Carlow with this bespoke bunting, Unum is helping to create an environment that is visually stunning and all-inclusive.

Unum's involvement in the Carlow Pride Festival extends beyond the creation of bunting. The company is actively engaging its employees, encouraging them to participate in the festival's various events and activities. Unum's commitment to supporting the LGBTQ+ community is evident not only in its financial contributions but also in its dedication to fostering a sense of belonging among its own workforce.

Unum's collaboration with Carlow Pride Festival exemplifies the power of partnerships in creating positive change. By leveraging its resources and expertise, Unum is making a tangible difference in the lives of the LGBTQ+ community in Carlow. This collaboration serves as an inspiring example for other organizations to actively support and empower marginalised communities.

Unum's support for the Carlow Pride Festival and the creation of unique custom bunting demonstrates the company's commitment to diversity, inclusion, and community engagement. Through its visually striking and heartfelt display, Unum is helping to create a welcoming and celebratory atmosphere in Carlow. By standing together with the LGBTQ+ community,

Unum exemplifies the importance of acceptance, love, and equality. Their efforts remind us that we all have a role to play in building a society that embraces diversity and celebrates the uniqueness of every individual.

- Our walking parade begins at 2:30pm from Carlow College St Patricks.
- The town photograph will be taken around 2:30pm.
- We ask everyone to congregate inside the grounds of Carlow College St Patrick's. For traffic management and your own personal safety, we ask you not to stand or gather on College St.
- The entire route is wheelchair friendly.
- This is a walking parade, no floats or motorised vehicles, including scooters or other forms of wheeled transport (except for mobility scooters or wheelchairs).
- If you are bringing banners or flags please be aware of your surroundings and be careful of people around you.
- Always follow the direction and requests of our stewards and An Garda Siochana
- Please bring any litter home with you, or use one of our recycling / general waste bins provided
- The event in the park will have food trucks and a mock-tails tent. No alcohol is served at this event.
- Please put cigarette butts into the bin, and remember Carlow Town Park and Carlow College St Patrick's is a smoke free zone.
- Please be aware of the exits and entrances (see image)
- The water at Carlow Town Park is deep and dangerous. There is no lifeguard on duty.

- CCTV covers the entire route and Carlow Town Park.
- Please respect our neighbours in local houses who may not be attending.
- The event in the park ends at 6pm and we ask everyone to leave the park so a clean up can begin.
- The after party in Diceys (separate event to Carlow Pride Festival) begins at 6pm
- Toilets are located near the Maryborough St. entrance.
- Civil defense and An Garda Siochana will be in attendance
- Festival stewards can be identified by yellow hi vis and pride lanyards.
- Order of Malta ambulance is located at the main park entrance, in the park car park.
- Lost and found is located behind the main stage.
- Vendors selling pride merchandise on the day have no affiliation with Carlow Pride Festival.
- Children should be accompanied at all times.
- Bring water and sunscreen in case it is warm.
- The park is an alcohol free zone (local by-laws, the entire day portion of the festival is an alcohol free zone.
- Please park responsibly, we need all access routes to be clear in case of any emergencies. Parking on the day is available in the Town Hall Car Park.
- Please be aware of an evacuation drill, and follow the

- instructions of An Garda Siochana
- Please be mindful of animals and nature in the park. This is their home. Please do not disturb and wildlife, plants or trees.
- If you need to contact a member of An Garda Siochana or a festival organiser, just ask anyone in a high vis jacket.
- In an emergency call 999/112 or you can contact Carlow Garda Station on 059 9136620



Tadhg: A Carlow Man Live - An Incredibly Unique Show of Music and Storytelling

On July 15th, 2023, the Visual Carlow will come alive with the extraordinary talents of Tadhg as he presents his highly anticipated show, "A Carlow Man Live." Tadhg is not just a singer, songwriter, and composer; he is a captivating storyteller who weaves his narratives through his music, creating an incredibly unique and immersive experience for his audience.

"A Carlow Man Live" is not your typical musical performance. Tadhg's show goes beyond simply singing songs; it is an artistic journey that transports the audience into the heart of his homeland and his personal experiences as a Carlow man. With his rich, soulful voice and masterful command of various musical genres, Tadhg effortlessly takes his listeners on an emotional rollercoaster, sharing tales of love, loss, triumph, and the beauty of everyday life.

As a singer, Tadhg's vocal abilities are nothing short of mesmerizing. His voice possesses a rare blend of power, vulnerability, and authenticity that captivates the listener from the very first note. Whether he's belting out a soulful ballad or infusing a folk tune with raw emotion, Tadhg's vocal performances are heartfelt and compelling, leaving a lasting impact on all who have the pleasure of hearing him live.

But Tadhg's talents extend far beyond his incredible vocal abilities. As a songwriter and composer, he has a gift



for crafting melodies and lyrics that resonate with the human experience. Each song in "A Carlow Man Live" tells a story, reflecting the universal themes of love, family, and the struggles and triumphs of life.

Tadhg's compositions effortlessly blend elements of folk, rock, and traditional Irish music, creating a sonic landscape that is both nostalgic and contemporary.

What sets "A Carlow Man Live" apart is Tadhg's skill as a storyteller. Between songs, he shares personal anecdotes, offering glimpses into his life and the inspirations behind his music. His

storytelling prowess adds an extra layer of depth and connection, allowing the audience to truly engage with the songs on a profound level. Through his stories, Tadhg creates an intimate atmosphere, forging a bond between himself and the audience that is rare and special.

The Visual Carlow serves as the perfect venue for Tadhg's show, providing an intimate and immersive setting that complements the intimacy of his music and storytelling. The combination of Tadhg's powerful vocals, heartfelt songwriting, and captivating storytelling, along with the venue's ambiance, promises to

create an unforgettable experience for all in attendance.

If you have the opportunity to attend "A Carlow Man Live" on July 15th, 2023, be prepared to be

transported on a musical journey like no other.

Tadhg's unique blend of music and storytelling will touch your heart, leaving a lasting impression and a renewed appreciation

for the power of music to connect and inspire. Don't miss the chance to witness this incredibly talented Carlow man as he shares his artistry with the world.

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