



# Fingal Library Service Development Plan **2024 - 2029**





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# Foreword



AnnMarie Farrelly,  
Chief Executive



Councillor Adrian Henchy,  
Mayor of Fingal



Betty Boardman,  
County Librarian

Welcome to the Fingal Library Service Development Plan 2024-2029, which sets out a clear vision for the strategic direction of library services in the County. The Plan is based on four themes: Space and Place; Engagement and Collaboration; Access and Inclusion; and Culture and Knowledge. These themes are underpinned by actions which will improve library services in Fingal and in turn lead to enhancements in people's lives through engagement with literature, knowledge, culture, creativity and technology.

This Plan demonstrates that libraries in Fingal are not just buildings with books, but rather they are community hubs in which people can enjoy and experience events and activities, including talks and workshops on topics as diverse as healthy living, skills for life, environmental awareness and local history.

Libraries in Fingal are dynamic spaces, constantly adapting and anticipating new developments in reading trends, in technological advancements and in societal change. At the heart of this, as outlined in the Plan, are our core values such as intellectual freedom, diversity, inclusion and accessibility.

The Plan recognises the key role that libraries play in meeting the challenges of climate change. Over the lifetime of the Plan, Fingal Libraries will continue to deliver community education programmes in the areas of sustainability and climate action. We will also continue to deliver programming in line with the Government's national plan for the Sustainable Development Goals, to promote health and wellbeing, quality education and reduction in inequality.



The Plan took several months to progress through the various stages: consultation and engagement with stakeholders, policy mapping, desk research, survey development and survey results analysis. Consultant, Sinéad Begley, kept the process on track, providing expertise and a guiding voice as milestones were met in the development of the Plan.

The public consultation process was a key part in the development of the Plan, and we want to thank all those who responded to the survey and who took part in a series of consultation meetings. A total of 1,139 responses to the survey were received from library users, schools, groups and organizations. The responses reflect high satisfaction with libraries in Fingal, with most respondents feeling their needs are being met by the services provided. Unsurprisingly, the survey also indicated that users really value the friendly and helpful customer service they receive from staff. We are very proud of our library services in Fingal, and of the committed and hard-working staff who provide this frontline service.

Our overall vision for the service, as set out in this Development Plan, is that Fingal Libraries will continue to be a dynamic and inclusive community space supporting culture, recreation, literacy, education and lifelong learning in the County.



# Executive Summary

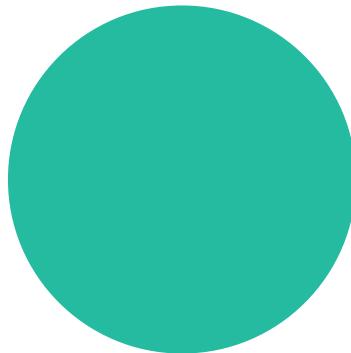


Under the Local Government Act 2001, the Council has a statutory obligation to produce a Library Development Programme to be adopted by the Council. The Fingal Library Service Development Plan 2024-2029, which is the second library plan for the County, will build on the progress achieved through implementation of the strategy for the period 2018-2023. We will continue to strive to provide a dynamic and inclusive space supporting inclusion, culture, recreation, literacy, education, and lifelong learning in the County in the context of the Council's vision for Fingal as a great place in which to live, work, do business and visit.

Over the period of the first strategy significant progress has been made in enhancing library buildings and facilities with the refurbishment of Malahide, Balbriggan, Baldoyle and Blanchardstown Libraries. The extension and refurbishment of Skerries Library is nearing completion and the My Open Library service, which offers extended opening hours was launched at Baldoyle Library in July 2022. In November 2023, the Council went to tender for the construction of the Swords Cultural Centre, which will house a County Library, theatre, gallery, events spaces, and a makerspace. The Centre will be a hub for reading, literature, literacy, knowledge, arts and culture for Swords and Fingal.

A Makerspace has been opened at Blanchardstown Library and a Maker in Residence appointed. The space enables the community to access and learn about innovative technologies in a unique setting, where creativity is encouraged and protected, and entrepreneurship, inquiry-based learning, digital literacy and creative approaches to problem solving are encouraged.

Fingal Library Service has continued to respond to the evolving needs of the whole community by offering services to Ukrainians coming to Ireland and providing a range of online and in person services during COVID. A range of new e-services including music streaming, genealogy, and coding are now available. Sensory resources and quiet times have been introduced, and all branches are signed up to the Age Friendly charter.

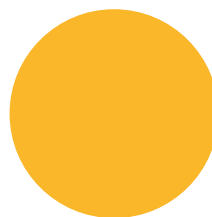




Libraries have been co-ordinating the Creative Ireland Programme in Fingal since January 2022. An eclectic range of creative and cultural programming has been delivered including story trails at Ardgillan Demesne and Kenure Park, Writers', History and Children's Literature Festivals, and exhibitions and talks to mark the Decade of Centenaries Commemorations Programme.

This new Plan reflects the direction set for libraries by the National Public Library Strategy 2023-2027, *The Library is the Place*<sup>1</sup>, which seeks to improve access, use and visibility of public libraries as an essential community service. The Strategy recognises the role of libraries in the development of sustainable, inclusive, and empowered communities that make an explicit contribution to meeting the challenges of climate change. The government's National Implementation Plan for the Sustainable Development Goals 2022<sup>2</sup> also recognises public libraries as sustainable institutions which play a big part in helping to provide knowledge, understanding, and resources in our communities.

Looking ahead we will continue to innovate and collaborate to deliver library services underpinned by the core values of intellectual freedom, accountability, integrity, adaptability, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility for everyone in our community.



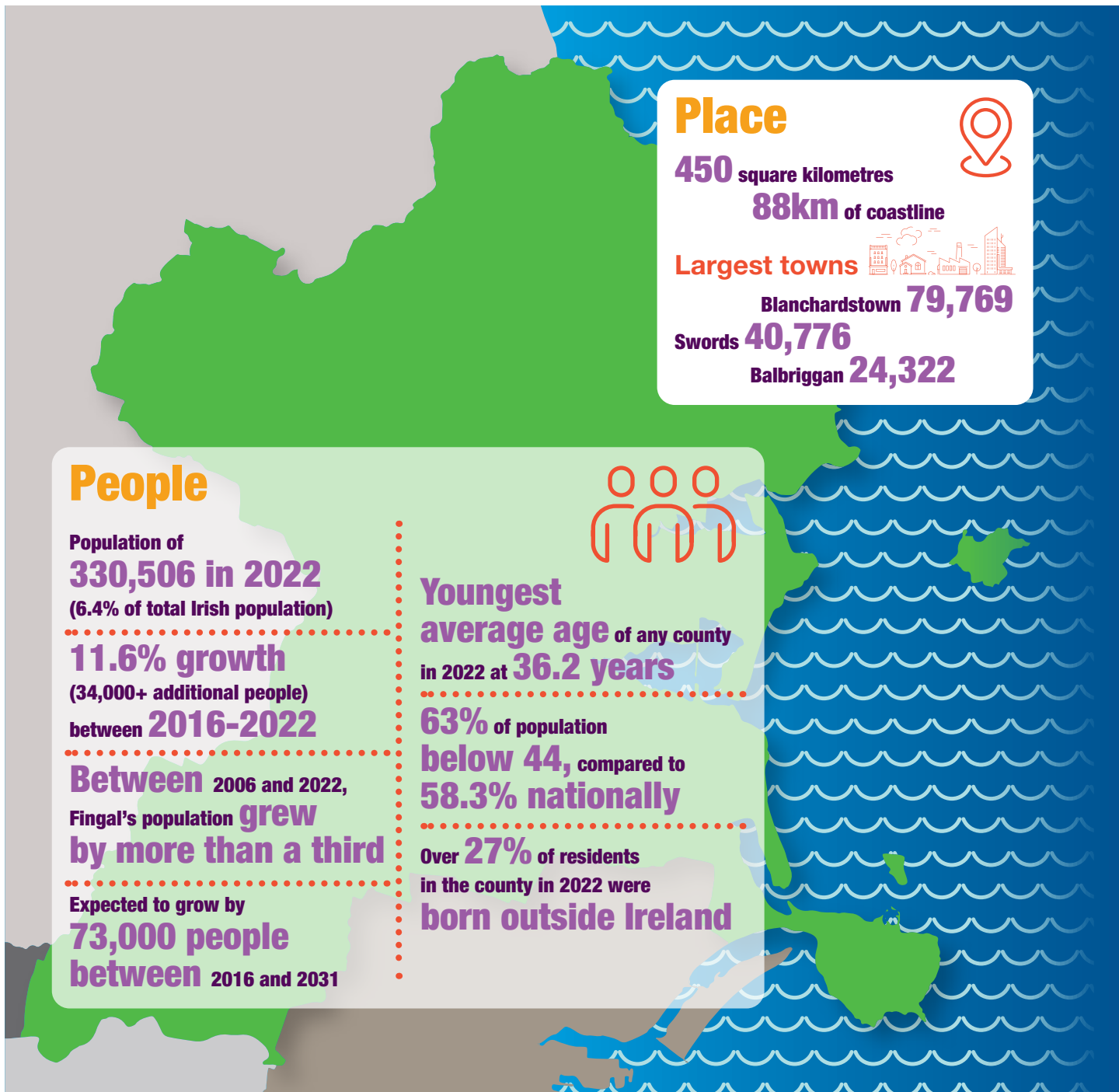
1 Source [National Public Library Strategy 2023-2027 \(librariesireland.ie\)](https://librariesireland.ie)

2 Source [gov.ie - National Implementation Plan for the Sustainable Development Goals 2022-2024 \(www.gov.ie\)](https://www.gov.ie)

# About Fingal



Fingal is a rapidly growing county with a young and ethnically diverse population. Fingal is rich in natural, cultural, and built heritage and has a diverse landscape with rural, urban, and suburban dimensions. The County's economic assets include Dublin Airport, proximity to Dublin City, road and rail infrastructure and a prime location on the Dublin-Belfast Economic corridor.







## Arts, culture, and heritage

**1,262** Archaeological Sites and Monuments

**127** Historic Demesnes

**32** Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)

**Fingal County Council Arts Office** is responsible for the Draíocht Arts Centre and the Séamus Ennis Arts Centre and funds the Lark in Balbriggan and the Millbank Theatre in Rush. The Arts Office partners with organisations across all art forms to provide twelve residency programmes and also looks after a residential studio in Malahide and a day studio in Loughshinny (two more are planned).

## Business

**Highest labour force participation rate in Ireland at 65.6% in 2022**

Key economic clusters in Fingal include:



**Agri-food and beverages**



**ICT**



**Pharmaceuticals**



**Aviation**



**Further strengths in** tourism, retail, hospitality, financial services, healthcare

Sources: Fingal County Council Local Economic and Community Plan 2023-2028, Draft Framework, December 2023, Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029 (Draft Plan), and Fingal Arts Office.

# Fingal Library Services



## Fingal Libraries a Quick Guide



**13 million** items to  
borrow nationally

**110,000** e-books and  
audiobooks to borrow



**10 Branches &**  
Local Studies and Archives

**4 Mobile Vans &**  
Housebound Service



**150 Staff**

**600+** Online e-learning  
courses available



**110** Language courses

**49 hours** Average  
opening hours per week



**7,000** e-newspapers,  
e-magazines

**Weekly** cultural and  
educational events



[www.fingal.ie/fingallibraries](http://www.fingal.ie/fingallibraries)

## Collections and Resources

Fingal Libraries' collections have expanded over the past five years, and offer enhanced physical and digital collections, designed to appeal to a wide range of interests, ages and needs.

To increase access to very high demand titles our branch stock now includes a short loan system, so users can borrow popular items for a limit of 10 days (multiple copies are available).

New additions to our physical stock include energy kits that can be used to measure how your home uses energy. We've also added sensory toys for use in-branch and greatly increased our stock of class sets of books for teachers to borrow.

As well as our key digital services, we now offer a wide range of literacy-enhancing services. LOTE4Kids, offers digital picture books in over 50 LOTE (Languages Other Than English). Touch Type Read and Spell teaches touch-typing to help children and adults to improve their reading and spelling skills.

The TumbleBook and TumbleMath databases have over 1,100 children's e-books and Maths books including animated talking books, read-along chapter books, graphic novels, puzzles, and games.

**“ I value the sense of losing myself in a calm environment where I can explore and learn.**

Respondent to consultation survey



Baby and Toddler Doodle, with author and illustrator Niamh Sharkey

## Creative Ireland, Fingal

“...a very friendly, welcoming place to encourage a love of books in my children. It’s not stoic and silent and serious. It is warm and inviting and my children love going. It’s a credit to the team there.

Respondent to consultation survey

The Creative Ireland Programme is an all-of-government initiative committed to enhancing access to, engagement with, and enjoyment of Ireland’s culture and creativity.

During the lifetime of the first Fingal Culture and Creativity Strategy, 2018-2022, Fingal initiated many projects that fostered creativity in the community. Some of the highlights included Cruinniú, the national day of creativity for children and young people, and the Festival of History, which builds on local and national expertise in the area of history.

The community funding stream of Creative Fingal has supported a wide range of projects and organisations from pipe bands, and photography clubs, to exhibitions, publication of recipe books, and creative play initiatives.

Building on the success of the previous strategy, the new Fingal Culture and Creativity Strategy 2023-2027 embraces the mission for Fingal to become a great place in which to live, work, do business and visit, and focuses on the following strategic priorities:

- Changing population and demographics.
- Making cities and counties great places to live.
- Climate action.
- Town centre first and the rural economy.
- Digitisation and ongoing transformation.



Blanchardstown Brass Band at Culture Night



Dublin Gospel Choir at Culture Night in Blanchardstown Library

## Fingal Library Events

Through its event programming, Fingal Libraries aims to meet the needs of a diverse community in the areas of information, learning, culture, literacy, life skills, enterprise, and leisure. Workshops and events include story time, board games, toddler time, mindfulness, genealogy, and literature and events for people with additional sensory needs.

Events are offered across all ten library branches and the mobile library service facilitates events offsite to extend the reach of programming to a wider audience. Three brochures are produced annually in Spring, Summer, and Autumn/Winter to promote both themed and one-off events.



Finding My Voice, Aoife Dooley at Swords Castle

Specialist festivals are also programmed including the Fingal Festival of History, the Children’s Literature Festival and the Write Time, the annual Fingal writers’ festival. Each of these events aim to connect expert creative practitioners including writers, illustrators, and historians to our citizens and to provide access to events and activities for free.



Virtual Reality headsets in Donabate Library



Children’s Festival of Literature 2023, Swords Castle



## Europe Direct, Blanchardstown

Europe Direct, Blanchardstown provides a link between Fingal's citizens and the institutions of the European Union. The dedicated Europe Direct centre is a welcoming, comfortable space, which provides access to EU publications and a variety of workshops, citizens dialogues, classes, podcasts, and opportunities to become informed active EU citizens.

Library staff are on hand to assist with queries ranging from how to obtain an EU passport to setting up a business in the EU, as well as consumer rights information. The Europe Direct Centre also promotes and supports the roll out of EU initiatives such as The European Green Deal, A Europe Fit for the Digital Age and EU Action on Mental Health.



The Summer Stars programme promotes children's literacy and reading development.



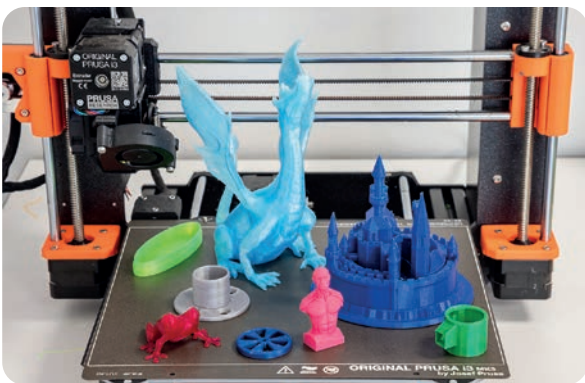
Maker workshop

## Fingal Makerspace, Blanchardstown

The Fingal Makerspace was established in 2021 and became fully operational in 2022. The space itself houses a range of modern equipment including, 3D printers, a vinyl cutter, laser cutter, hand tools and software programmes. This accessible, dynamic, and inclusive space is at the heart of Fingal County Council’s commitments to sustainability, community building and inclusion.

**“...It has been a real game changer to be able to access hi-tech 3D printers, laser engravers and vinyl cutters. However, the key ingredient has been the incredible support from staff who have taught us how to use these machines.**

Respondent to consultation survey



3-D printer projects at Fingal Makerspace

The Makerspace which offers a range of free programming and events including an introduction to 3D printing, electronic buggy building, and music production workshops, provides the public with access to equipment and technology.

**“It’s a fabulous public place where all members, of all ages can enjoy and grow the community, interests & skills.**

Respondent to consultation survey

Initiatives such as regular design meet-ups and the Repair Café also provide the opportunity for the public to experiment and forge connections with the wider maker community. All users can benefit from staff and volunteer expertise free of charge, and the practical nature of STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) activities fosters young people’s creativity and problem-solving skills outside of the school setting.



Fingal Makerspace, Blanchardstown Library



Launch of My Open Library, Baldoyle



Local Studies and Archives – Culture Night 2023

## My Open Library, Baldoyle

Fingal's first My Open Library service opened in Baldoyle in July 2022 and was officially launched by the Mayor of Fingal, Cllr. Howard Mahony. This service offers extended opening hours and provides library access to members from 8am to 10pm, 365 days a year.

The service has expanded rapidly increasing from 77 members, and 691 visits at the end of 2022 to its current membership of 340, with 2,954 visits made between 1<sup>st</sup> January and 8<sup>th</sup> December 2023. Study spaces remain the most popular aspect of My Open Library. May 2023 saw the highest recorded visits to date at 729 with the service being widely used by exam students.

Members also issue and return books, collect reserved items, and use the printing services. The busiest day of the week is Sunday when numerous families as well as students visit the library.

Feedback from My Open Library members has been extremely positive with increased accessibility cited as one of the main benefits.



Dublin County Council Minute Books

## Local Studies and Archives

Fingal Local Studies and Archives are based at 46 North Street, Swords. The service collects, preserves and makes available historic records relating to Fingal and Dublin by transfer, donation, and purchase. Outreach includes exhibitions, publications, talks, the Fingal Festival of History and participation in Heritage Week and Culture Night.

The Local Studies collections include photographs, postcards, maps, artwork and an extensive printed collection of local history books and periodicals, reference works, directories, and general genealogical and historical books. The Archive contains records of local government in County Dublin from 1775 to the present day, including the Turnpike Trusts, County of Dublin Grand Jury, Poor Law Unions, Rural District Councils, Howth Urban District Council, Balbriggan Town Commissioners, Dublin County Council and a variety of private collections including the Hely-Hutchinson Papers, Holmpatrick Papers and Hone Papers.



Artist's impression of the refurbished and extended Skerries Library

## Skerries Library

Dating from 1910, Skerries Library is a protected structure and considered to be a fine example of the series of Carnegie Libraries built in Ireland. It is a two-storey structure with a cut stone front façade and is flanked by St. Patrick's Church on one side and by Floraville Park on the other.

In March 2022, work commenced on site to refurbish the Library and to construct a substantial extension to the rear of the building, with associated siteworks and the upgrading of the public realm area.

The refurbishment of the library is being carried out in line with best conservation practice. The refurbished and extended library will re-open to the public in 2024 and will be a much-enhanced building with reading and study facilities, and meeting rooms. There will also be an events area and an opening directly into Floraville Park, to accommodate outdoor storytelling and other library activities.



Artist's impression of the refurbished and extended Skerries Library





Swords Cultural Quarter

## Swords Cultural Quarter

In November 2023, the Council went to tender for the construction of the Swords Cultural Centre. This iconic building will include a county library, theatre, gallery, arts spaces, a makerspace, and a café. It is planned to begin construction in 2024, with the new building due to open in 2026.

The Centre will be a hub for reading, literature, literacy, knowledge, arts and culture for Swords and Fingal. It will have a strong focus on people and experiences, and through the delivery of a modern, dynamic, inspirational and educational programme of events and activities, will become a destination and a focal point for the local community and visitors.



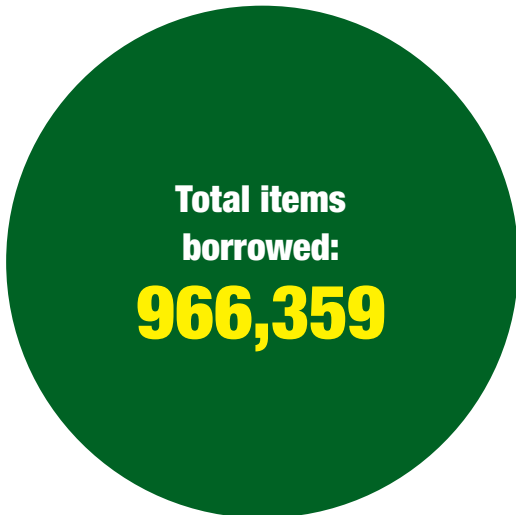
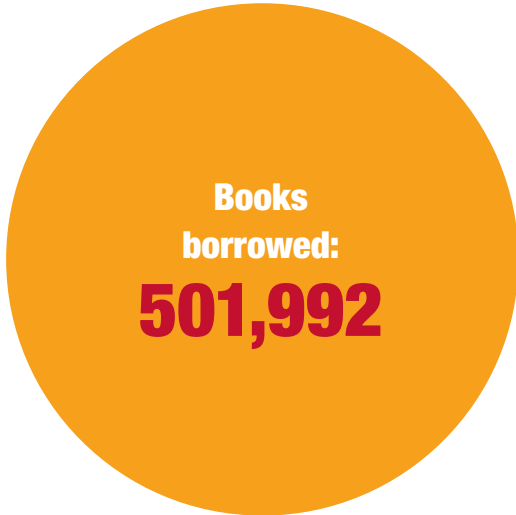
“ A place to bring my family to switch off from technology.

“ Time with my child. I love how her, as well as other kids, feel at home here. We love sitting down in a corner and reading books.

“ A welcoming and inclusive place with helpful, friendly and knowledgeable staff, where I can spend time without feeling under pressure to do or buy anything!

Comments from the consultation survey on the value of libraries.

# Fingal Libraries 2023



# Fingal Libraries Achievements 2018 - 2023



During the lifetime of our Development Plan 2018 – 2023 Fingal Library service has:

- Attracted **4.1m visitors**
- Issued **4.7m items**
- Refurbished** Malahide, Balbriggan, Baldoyle and Blanchardstown Libraries
- Completed the brief** for the new County Library
- Initiated the **refurbishment and extension** of Skerries Library
- Established a **My Open Library** service at Baldoyle Library
- Increased opening hours** at Baldoyle, Balbriggan, Rush, and Skerries Libraries
- Relocated Local Studies and Archives** to the Swords Cultural Quarter
- Introduced **four new** mobile library vans
- Developed a Makerspace** at Blanchardstown Library
- Appointed a Maker in Residence**
- Created story trails** at Ardgillan Demesne and Kenure Park
- Provided **services for Ukrainians** coming to Ireland
- Provided a range of **online and in person services during COVID**
- Co-ordinated the Creative Ireland Programme** (since January 2022)
- Introduced **sensory resources and quiet times**
- Signed up to the **Age Friendly charter**
- Programmed** Writers', History and Children's Literature Festivals
- Produced** exhibitions as part of the **Decade of Centenaries** Commemorations Programme
- Introduced **new e-services** including music streaming, genealogy, and coding
- Delivered community education in **sustainability and climate action**
- Delivered repair cafés in the Makerspace to **facilitate reuse and reduce waste**
- Delivered programming in line with the Government's national plan for the **Sustainable Development Goals** (e.g., health and wellbeing, quality education, reduced inequality)

# Context



The Fingal LDP 2024-2029 will align with and support delivery of the strategic objectives of the following policies (or subsequent updated plans and policies):

- Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029
- Fingal Corporate Plan 2019-2024
- Fingal Local Economic Community Plan 2016-2020
- Fingal County Council 2019-2025 Arts Plan
- Fingal Heritage Plan 2024-2029
- Fingal Culture and Creativity Strategy 2023-2027
- Fingal Age Friendly Strategy 2018-2023
- Migrant Integration and Social Cohesion Strategy 2019-2024
- Fingal County Council Climate Action Plan 2019-2024
- Healthy Fingal Strategic Plan 2021-2025
- Fingal Digital Strategy 2020-2023
- Fingal Irish Language Scheme 2021-2024
- Tourism Statement of Strategy and Work Programme 2017-2022
- National Public Library Strategy 2023-2027
- Public Library Standards and Benchmarks
- International standards: e.g., IFLA, UNESCO

# Vision, Mission, Values, Principles



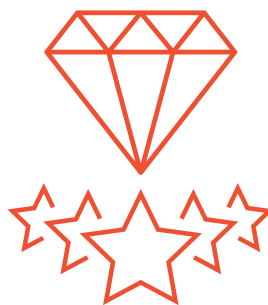
## Vision

Fingal Libraries will be a dynamic and inclusive community space supporting culture, recreation, literacy, education, and lifelong learning in the County.



## Mission

Our mission is to respond, preserve, and anticipate. We will respond to the needs of our diverse communities. We will preserve and make accessible Fingal's unique historical identity. We will anticipate future service needs.



## Values

We value: Innovation • Collaboration • Intellectual Freedom • Accountability • Integrity • Adaptability • Diversity • Inclusion • Accessibility.

# Looking Forward to 2024-2029



# Community



The overarching theme of this strategy is community. Libraries have a key role to play in building cohesive and sustainable communities, and in supporting healthy place-making, by providing inclusive community space, collections and programming that engage people and support culture, recreation, literacy, education, and lifelong learning in the County.



# Theme 1: Space and Place



Fingal Libraries will provide welcoming, democratic, safe, and sustainable hubs at the heart of our communities. We will work in partnership with other departments, to develop and maintain library buildings and services that meet the highest standard of construction, energy efficiency and service delivery.

Actions	Outcomes
Deliver the new County Library in the Swords Cultural Quarter.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A County Library for all Fingal citizens to enjoy, co-located with a theatre and gallery.</li> <li>● Increased availability of and access to library services.</li> <li>● Enhanced, library spaces and new buildings that support Fingal County Council's Climate Action Plan.</li> <li>● Well trained and skilled staff who are informed and customer focused.</li> </ul>
Open the newly refurbished and extended Skerries Library.	
Relocate Donabate Library to Ballisk House.	
Undertake improvement works at Baldoyle Library.	
Plan for future development of library buildings and services in the County.	
Develop library buildings in line with Fingal County Council's Climate Action Plan.	
Provide training, continuing professional development and educational opportunities for staff.	
Continue to use data on demographics and community to inform user-centred service design at local level.	

“**A comfortable space where there are no interruptions or distractions to study. no one places any time limits on length of stay. it has been a godsend in helping me with my thesis.**”

Respondent to consultation survey





# Theme 2: Engagement and Collaboration

Fingal Libraries will engage and collaborate with local, national and community groups, to provide inclusive, diverse, and relevant services and programming. We will communicate our plans and programmes through all mediums and look to engage with various models of delivery.

Actions	Outcomes
Engage and collaborate across council and government departments, local and national organisations, community groups, creative practitioners, and facilitators of library events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Full range of programming reflective of the diverse community in Fingal.</li> <li>● Strengthening of our reach to all communities.</li> <li>● A clear strategy message is communicated to stakeholders.</li> </ul>
Communicate Fingal Libraries' message across all communication channels including print, broadcast, digital and social media.	
Explore models of community engagement with the makerspace initiative across the branch network.	
Develop collaborative programming with the expertise of local and national groups e.g., youth, disability, literacy, age friendly, arts and culture.	
Deliver through the Creative Ireland programme a diverse range of community led and inclusive, creative, and cultural events.	

“ **Very nice library, well set up, comfortable attractive space, helpful and engaged staff, inter library loan system is great, very child friendly, a great service to the community.** ”

Respondent to consultation survey



# Theme 3:

## Access and Inclusion



Fingal Libraries will provide accessible and inclusive places for all to visit. We will improve opening hours through the My Open Library system and continue to develop collections, including special collections, digital and other resources that meet the needs of the County's diverse population.

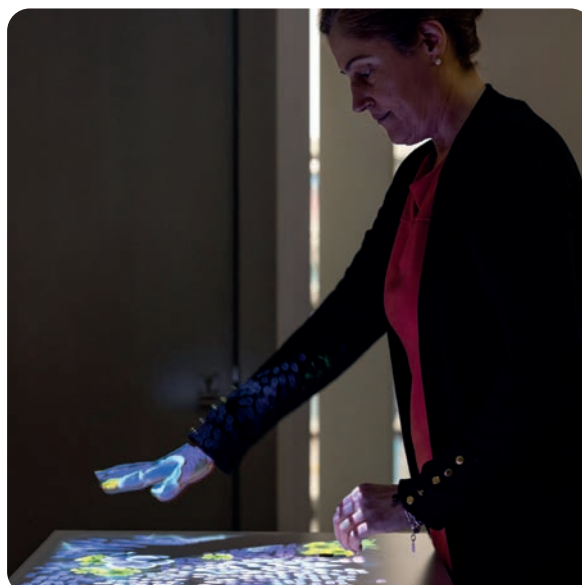
Actions	Outcomes
Provide greater access with longer opening hours through the provision of 'My Open Library.'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Extended opening hours and access to Libraries.</li> <li>● More events and services for marginalised groups.</li> <li>● Stronger connection with communities and schools.</li> </ul>
Ensure all our libraries are fully accessible and maintain their status as age-friendly buildings.	
Continue to review the reach of the Mobile Libraries and Housebound Services.	
Leverage Creative Ireland funding and the expertise of Fingal's community of creative practitioners to ensure that everyone has access to creative activities and learning opportunities.	
Continue to provide access to new technologies and services which support people in navigating the digital world.	
Continue to improve specialist collections and resources that support literacy, life skills and life-long learning, including sensory collections and inclusive technology.	

**“It’s a place where one can self-improve (learn, study, work) regardless of economic status.**

**“The fact that it’s there. It’s very accessible. It’s easy to get a card and you’re free to stay.**

**“Kids events and supportive, positive staff who constantly encourage reading with the kids.**

Comments from the consultation survey on the value of libraries.



Tovertafel, play tool for people with cognitive challenges

# Theme 4: Culture and Knowledge



Fingal Libraries will provide citizens with access to cultural, creative, and learning opportunities to reflect the lifelong learning needs of a changing society. We will reflect national programmes across themes of creativity, literacy, sustainability, and age friendly initiatives.

Actions	Outcomes
Enhance book collections, both physical and electronic, with increased book fund spend.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Access for all to high quality learning and creative opportunities in a democratic and informal space.</li> <li>● Dynamic library programming that reflects the current needs of the community and is responsive to change.</li> <li>● Increased public awareness and use of the Local Studies and Archives Service.</li> </ul>
Continue to programme in line with national programmes including Right to Read, Summer Stars, and Little Library Bags to encourage childhood literacy.	
Provide high quality informal educational and life-long learning programming across all ages and socio-economic groups.	
Continue to comply with Irish language legislation and expand stock and programming of events in Irish.	
Continue the digitisation programme at Local Studies and Archives including in-house digitisation and the uploading of digitised collections to the Digital Repository of Ireland.	

“ Ability to reserve any book. The Open Library extended access hours.

“ The temple of collective knowledge. What’s not to love about libraries.

Respondent to Consultation Survey



# How the plan was developed



The County Librarian convened a Library Services Development Plan Working Group in March 2023 and the process of developing the plan began. An analysis was undertaken to ensure that the Fingal Library Service Development Plan 2024-2029 would align with and support the delivery of strategic objectives of both national and Council plans and policies where appropriate.

As part of the process of developing the strategy a workshop was conducted with the management team to identify external factors that may influence the operating context for the development and implementation of the plan over the period of its implementation. Staff from across Fingal Libraries took part in online workshops (in April 2023) to assist in identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in relation to the library service in Fingal.

## Public consultation

A key part of the process of developing this Plan was the public consultation process, which invited the community, schools, groups, and organisations to give their views on the future of the public library service in Fingal. Two online surveys were developed (for individual members of the public and organisations and schools in Fingal) and made available on the Consult Fingal website [consult.fingal.ie](https://consult.fingal.ie) over the period from May to November 2023. The surveys explored if and how respondents use the library, how well their needs are met currently, what they value most about the library service and if they have encountered any barriers to availing of services. Suggestions for the future of library services were also sought.

The survey for the public was promoted extensively by staff in branch libraries, the mobile and housebound services, at library and Makerspace events, through posters and digital signage in branches, on the Council's website, and on social media. Staff also promoted the survey to members of the public in the Swords Pavilion Shopping Centre (October 2023). Foróige kindly assisted in circulating the survey link to youth workers to share with young people engaged with the organisation in Fingal. A total of 1,108 responses were received from users across all branches and service points. The survey for schools and organisations was shared with schools in Fingal, the Fingal Public Participation Network, and the Fingal Ethnic Network. In total twenty-eight organisations including ten primary schools responded to the survey.

In addition to the surveys a series of consultation meetings were conducted with Fingal Comhairle na nÓg, Foróige LEAD (League for Equality and Against Discrimination) and YAD (Youth Against Discrimination) groups, and Fingal Older People's Council.

The findings of the public consultation reflect a high level of satisfaction with services, with the majority of respondents feeling their needs are being met. Users value the friendly and helpful customer service from staff; free access to books and other resources and collections; and safe, pleasant, community spaces in which to read, relax, study, work, learn, connect with other people, or spend time with family or friends. Having access to technology and opportunities to attend events are also appreciated.

The findings of the consultation in relation to issues raised by users and suggestions for improving service both generally, and at branch level, will be very useful in planning for the delivery of services in the future. Issues most frequently raised include lack of library services in some areas, lack of space, issues with noise or conflicting user needs, and the need for differentiated study or quiet space, issues with facilities or maintenance (e.g., toilets, seating, lifts, or ICT), limited book stock, long waits on reserved items and restricted opening hours at weekends, evening, and bank holidays.

Some non-users of the library (both individuals and groups) indicated that they would be encouraged to use the library by some of the existing services including the availability of online resources, access to events, Makerspace and creative activities, and access to Wi-Fi and computers. This suggests that increased promotion of these aspects of services could further extend the reach of libraries.

# Schools, organisations, and community groups that took part in consultation (surveys or meetings)



Primary Schools	Organisations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Scoil Cheonain Senior National School, Swords</li> <li>● Holy Family Senior National School, Swords</li> <li>● Rolestown National School, Swords</li> <li>● Powerstown Educate Together National School, Dublin 15</li> <li>● Pelletstown National School, Dublin 15</li> <li>● Holmpatrick National School, Skerries</li> <li>● Skerries Educate Together National School, Skerries</li> <li>● St. Patrick's Junior School, Skerries</li> <li>● St. Mary's National School, Garristown</li> <li>● Scoil Réalt na Mara National School, Balbriggan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Fingal Older People's Council</li> <li>● Fingal Comhairle na nÓg</li> <li>● Foróige LEAD and YAD Groups</li> <li>● Foróige, North Dublin</li> <li>● Foróige, Castlemill Education Centre</li> <li>● Dublin and Dún Laoghaire Education and Training Board (DDLETB)</li> <li>● Sketchbound, Balbriggan</li> <li>● Baldoyle Men's Shed</li> <li>● Naul Community Council</li> <li>● Blanchardstown Brass Band</li> <li>● Al-Awal Quranic and Islamic Centre</li> <li>● St. Joseph's Intellectual Disabilities Family and Friends Association</li> <li>● Castleknock Toastmasters</li> <li>● Lusk ICA</li> <li>● 92.5 Phoenix FM</li> <li>● Glen Ellan and Sandford Wood Residents' Association, Swords</li> <li>● Castlevue Residents' Group</li> <li>● Glasmore Park and Windmill Lands Residents' Association</li> <li>● Miller's Glen Residents' Association</li> <li>● Swords Meals on Wheels</li> <li>● Bath Road Tenants' Association</li> </ul>

FORMATION



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