

Changing Fingal

Stories from my Place...



Main Street, SWORDS



SWORDS MAIN STREET 2026

- MAIN STREET WEST**

 1. Apartments
 2. Tanning Beauty Salon
 3. Platinum Barbers
 4. The Zip yard
 5. The White House
 6. Shoe repairs, Locksmith
 7. Roxy Takeaway
 8. Private house
 9. J2 Sushi and Bento
 10. Private house
 11. Colourtrend Paints
 12. Umami Food and groceries
 13. The Old Borough Hotel and Pub
 14. Private house
 15. Taxability Accountants
 16. Gadget +
 17. Swords Dental
 18. Dillon's Hair Salon
 19. Dillon's Barbers
 20. Men's Formal Wear, Coffee Works
 21. Tim Beyond, Mobile Phone Zone
 22. Former Ulster Bank
- MAIN STREET EAST**

 23. Flynn, O'Neill Dental Care
 24. Mizzoni Pizza and Pasta
 25. Redmond Property
 26. Medical Centre
 27. AJ Electronics
 28. Saks & Co, Chiropodist
 29. NU Youth, The Card and Party Shop
 30. Former Euro Giant
 31. Fingal Café
 32. Boyle Sports
 33. Private House
 34. Forty Four Main Street, Hotel & Bar
 35. Private House
 36. Dains
 37. Swords Barber Shop
 38. Summer Inn Takeaway
 39. Green Straw
 40. Sherry Fitzgerald
 41. MacNamara Pharmacy
 42. EBS
 43. AIB Bank
 44. Cupcakes and Counting
 45. Wine House Restaurant
- MAIN STREET EAST**

 46. Cab 2K
 47. The Betsy, Bar and Restaurant
 48. Hidden Hearing
 49. Suprem Barbers
 50. Pomodorino Restaurant
 51. Beauty Clinic Moda Donna
 52. Musashi Restaurant
 53. Pure Pharmacy
 54. Integrity Fitness
 55. Carnitas Mexican Grill
 56. Paradise Nails
 57. Jacked Paddy Everest Kitchen
 58. Mr iPhone
 59. Four Star Pizza
 60. Thunders Bakery
 61. Fingal County Council
 62. The Arch Bar
 63. Panda Asian Fusion / The Break Room
 64. Bank of Ireland
 65. Boyle Sports
 66. Camera Cabin
 67. Abbey Travel
- MAIN STREET EAST**

 68. Hennessy Perrozi
 69. Day Today
 70. Shannons, Peter Marks
 71. The Cock Tavern
 72. PTSB
 73. O'Donovan's Centra
 74. Oakberry Acai-Deli at the Cottage
 75. Swords Town Centre - Paddy Power
 76. Repairs
 77. Thermo Glaze.ie
 78. House Business Hub
 79. Vape Escape
 80. Members First Credit Union
 81. Dowling Jewellers-Baby scan
 82. Swords Plaza Village
 83. McDonalds
 84. Acme Blinds-Biofresh
 85. Surgery, June Rutland, Hair Salon
 86. June Rutland, Hair Salon
 87. Morton and Flanagan
 88. Garda Station
 89. Swords Pavilions
 90. Penneys

Comhairle Contae
Fhine Gall
Fingal County
Council



Ceangal
Clár den Chomhairle Oidhreacht
A Heritage Council programme



Changing Fingal – Main Street, Swords

Introduction

This project came about at a meeting of the Fingal Heritage Network, which my Society (FOIRA) is a member of, in which I suggested to the Heritage Officer (Christine Baker) that we should do something to celebrate the towns in Fingal and trace the story behind each place. It was decided that we would call it Changing Fingal-Stories from my Place.

Firstly we sourced a list of businesses dating back to 1900. Then we reached out to long time local

History

Swords Town’s origins date back to 560 A.D. when legend states that St. Colmcille blessed the well and named the town Sord (meaning clear/pure water). Swords was an important ecclesiastical site, centred on St Columba’s church and round tower, and is now the County town. To the east of the River Ward, which passes through Swords coming from Co. Meath and joins into

Niall McNeill to get his valuable input. We also had help from Barney Harford and Don Rennie of the Swords Photographic Group and Gavobi Design. I would like to thank them all for their contribution. In this leaflet you will find a list of businesses and a collage of Main Street, Swords today in 2026 and some small insight into the history of Swords by myself.

Paul O'Brien

the Broadmeadow River at Lissenhall, is Swords Castle and the medieval High Street, now Main Street. Swords Castle was built from the 1180s on and is open to the public with free tours. Swords has many attractions including the busy retail areas and pubs Swords’ population in the 1901 census was 944 and now we are home to over 41,000.

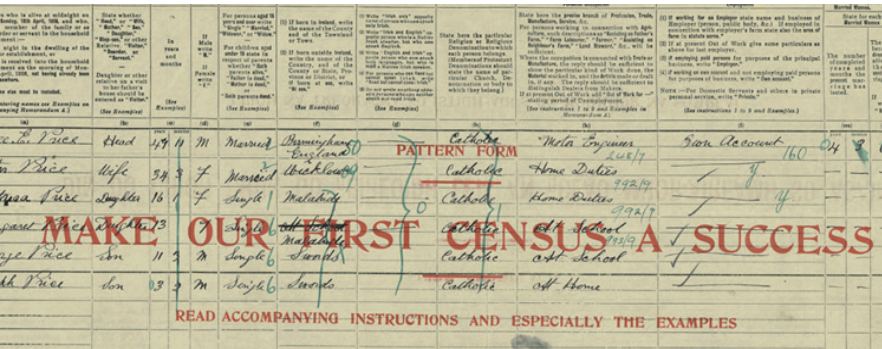


Swords Main St. c.1900 courtesy of Fingal Local Studies & Archives

The census records 52 families or households living on Main Street, Swords in 1926. As the entry for George E. Price shows, this was the first census of the new Free State. There are numerous families such as the McGreevys, Smyths, Swans, Thorpes with five or six children. Unsurprisingly given the previous decades of upheaval there are seven households headed by widows, many of whom were in their 30s and supporting young or teenage children. One widow, Mary Bell Plunkett was working as the caretaker of the Old Boro school while Mary Darcy worked as a maternity nurse for the Balrothery Union. In contrast there were just two widowers.

The 1926 Census reflects a main street with grocers (McGowans, McDermotts), victuallers (Howards, Taylors), a harness maker (Thomas Fagan), blacksmith (Franic McGovern), shoemaker (Thomas McLaughlin) and two publicans (Dalys and O'Connors). There also seems to have been a sweet shop. An Angela Pawley who lived with her McGonagle brothers is recorded as a sweet shopkeeper. Likewise old Swords family the Savages were shopkeepers, with two of their eight children listed as working as shop assistants.

At least ten families were supported through the building trade with many working as bricklayers (Coleman, Lowndes, Gannon), carpenters (McGreevy, McGonagle) or labourers for builders or the County Council (Browne, Dempsey). There were three farmers including widow Annie Branagan and several working as farm labourers. Three families had members working for the Post Office, the O'Tooles and Davis' in the G.P.O. and one locally (O'Neill). There were two members of the Royal Navy listed, one retired and another whose wife Annie Gaw was a national schoolteacher. The schoolmaster O'Donnell also lived on Main Street as did three RIC pensioners (Mescal, Bermingham, Thorpe). Many younger single people are also listed on the street, some nieces or nephews of the head of house, who worked as barmaids and assistants in shops, butchers or like Mary Byrne, in private domestic service. Some families note members as unemployed with others having lodgers or boarders. Mary Anne O'Neill who was 80 at the time is recorded as a Boarding House Keeper, although only her three single sons are listed on census night. Swords Main Street today may have less families living along it but it has numerous thriving businesses.



1926 Census. Reproduced with the kind permission of the Director of the National Archives



Swords Maain Street from Swords Castle 1970s. Fáilte Ireland C.C. Licence 4.0. https://www.europena.eu/en/item/438/_tm711c809

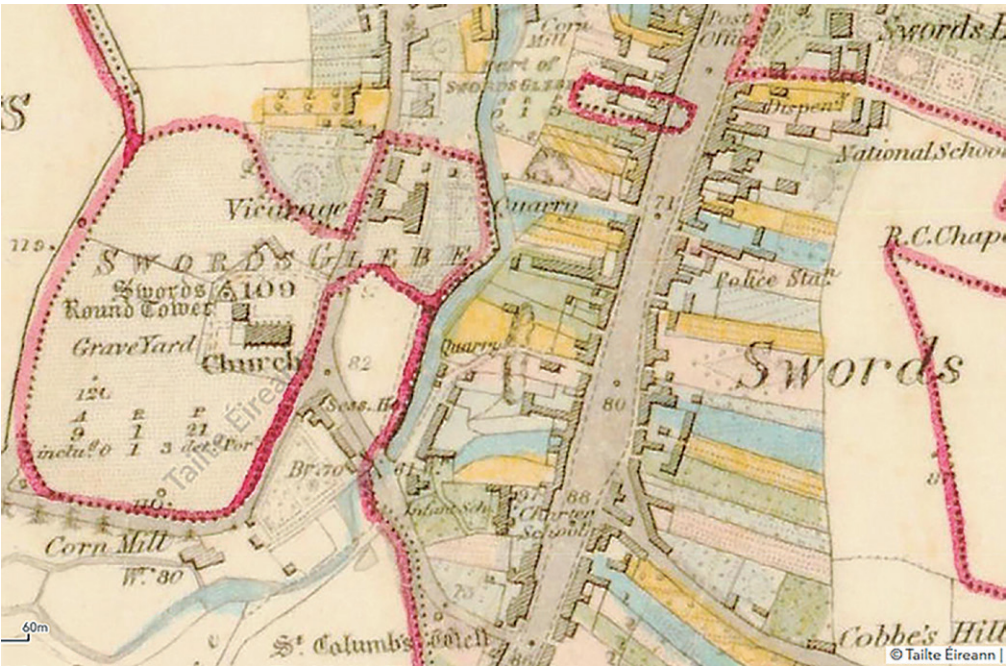
MAIN STREET

1. DAWSON (Grocer)
2. PHILLIPS (Draper)
3. SAVAGE (Sweet Shop)
4. POST OFFICE (Matthew Keane)
5. PADDY COLEMAN (Tailor)
6. JOE EARLEY (Farm, later a hotel)
7. COLEMAN, (Grocer)
8. BOLGER (Tailor)
9. R.I.C. IN RESIDENCE
10. KELLY (Later Howard)
11. LARRY McKENNA (Barber)
12. CONNORS (Lodging House)
13. CONNORS (Car Hire and Farm Produce)
14. SALMON
15. O'TOOLE
16. GANNON
17. CURATE'S HOUSE
18. DR. FULLAM (Dispensary)
19. McRODDEN (Registrar of Births)
20. McGONAGLE (Sweet Shop, Building Contractor, Carpentry)
21. SAVAGE (Sweet Shop)
22. BIRD (Shoemaker)
23. CHRISTY SWAN (Bakery Van)
24. GANNON (2 Storey Thatched)
25. HUGHES
26. McEVOY
27. JOSIE COLEMAN
28. MRS. DALTON (Midwife)
29. JOHNNY HANLON (Harness Maker)
30. JOE WALSH (Workshop)
31. JOE WALSH (Pump-Maker and Plumber)
32. OLD BOROUGH SCHOOL
33. DONNELLY (Blacksmith's Forge)
34. MICK CARROLL
35. MARTIN DOYLE
36. GOWHAN (Church of Ireland Sexton)
37. O'TOOLE'S PUB



SWORDS 1900

1. SWORDS HOUSE
2. THOMAS FAGAN (Harness Maker)
3. TAYLOR'S PUB
4. R. I. C. BARRACKS (Captured by the Fingal Flying Column in 1916)
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6. KNOWD (Drapery)
7. LAWLESS (Butchers)
8. KATIE & ANNIE KELLY (Sweet Shop)
9. "THE OLD WALLS" (Derelict)
10. TOMMY & MARY DUFF (Detatched farmhouse, meeting place for the Gaelic Movement and later Sinn Fein. Burnt by the Black and Tans – Circa 1922)
11. WELDON'S PUB (Later Connor's)
12. LODGING HOUSE
13. O'TOOLE
14. WEBB (Tinsmith)
15. SHAW (Shoemaker)
16. CLERY
17. COTTAGE – Owned by McEvoy
18. COTTAGE – Owned by McEvoy
19. COTTAGE – Owned by McEvoy
20. McEVOY (Sweet Shop)
21. McDERMOTT (Greengrocer/ Coal Dealer)
22. HOWARD (Butcher)
23. MAG WELDON
24. JOE WALSH (Cottages)
25. HEALY (Farmer)
26. DALY
27. LARKIN
28. BANNISTER
29. PINKERTON
30. CLARKE
31. DONNELLY
32. McGRANE
33. TOM & HESTER TYRELL
34. O'KEEFE (Band Room for Local Pipe and Drum Band)



Swords, c.1837. First Edition Ordnance Survey Map, © Tailte Eireann